



Lorn Archaeological & Historical Society

Comunn Eachdraidh Lathurna

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2007

Dear LAHS Members

Your Committee and others have worked hard on your behalf, and it was good to see both the winter programme and summer outings well attended. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their hard work. Two people in particular have invested considerable time this summer on behalf of the Society, Michael Turner who took on the post of Secretary and Martin Petrie, Librarian, for our collection of books, who also organized the stand in the Heritage tent at the Oban Games. They both sold the magazine which helps the publishing costs and researched and led a summer outing.

We now look forward to the Winter Lectures, listed in the newsletter, which Alistair James has put together, also the Members Night/AGM. This gives members a chance to socialize, express their opinions and offer suggestions. Please consider standing for election or becoming more involved. There will be spaces available on the Committee. We are fortunate to live in an area with such a rich diversity of archaeology and history. Joining the Committee or becoming an Office Bearer is not too arduous and often opens up new contacts and opportunities in understanding the past.

For those who didn't manage any of the Summer Outings, I hope that the summary here in Kenny's newsletter will inspire a walk or further exploration.

Presently the Society is not involved in any field work but the Scotland's Rural Past scheme, <http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/srp.html> would be supportive if a small group of people were interested in becoming active in this field, for example, surveying a ruined settlement.

Margaret Kay, our President, although no longer able to attend meetings, remains very interested in our activities.

Finally, as the acting Chairperson for the year, thank you to everyone for supporting the Society.

Alison Blackwood, FSA Scot
Acting Chairperson

Summer Outings

March 31: A coastal walk on the Island of Seil, in unusually fine weather, during which we were joined by Oban Walkers in a visit to three Iron Age forts, Dun Aorain, Dun Mucaig and the vitrified Cnoc and Tighe Mhoir. Simon Gilmore, the newly appointed Director of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland gave expert input.
Alison Blackwood

April 22: Twenty-five members and friends examined historical and archaeological sites around Kilinver. Sites ranged from a large Bronze-age burial cairn in the pasture on the seaward side of Kilinver House to the old hill-top burial ground where the medieval church dedicated to St. Bean once stood. The position of the early Christian site of Cill an Inbhire was pointed out. A building with cruick timber still in place, an ice house near the shore, and the Rock of the Dead where kings and noblemen of Scotland awaited burial, having travelled through Glen Lonan to be shipped to Iona were among several other sites visited. The day ended with home baking, tea and a look at the Society's library.

Martin Petrie

May 26: On this visit the objective was to see the main features of Luig's prehistoric early warning system, designed to guard against attack by sea. The details of how this complex system most probably worked have been investigated by Peter Lamont over a number of years. He was able to identify a spot near the fort of Leccamore, from which signals could be received and transmitted in such a way that the whole of the island's coastline could be covered by a small network of watchers. To accomplish this, the Iron Age defenders had cut through a ridge which obscured the view to an observation post on the North West coast. Before the Society's visit Mr Lamont had set up markers at the various points near the coast where outlying observers would have been located and these were visible through binoculars. 1500 to 2000 years ago smoke signals, reflections from a polished metal surface or fire at night would have been used.

Peter Lamont

June 30: The dun of Caisteal Suidhe Cheannaidh was perhaps the most spectacular site visited during an outing to Kilchrenan and its vicinity. Situated at a height of 210 metres, about a mile west of Loch Tromlee, it is one of the best preserved duns in Lorn; with walls five metres thick and a well defined entrance. The group then visited the 18th century church of Kilchrennan and at Auchachenna, about a mile south of the village, a Neolithic chambered cairn, one of only eight in Lorn. In addition, Jane Organ the landowner at Lower Auchachenna drew attention to other interesting sites on her ground.

Michael Turner

August 23: LAHS Stand at Oban Games. As one of the exhibits in the Heritage Marquee, this provoked considerable interest. One result was eight new members.

Martin Petrie organised the stand and was assisted by Alison Blackwood, Ann Houston and Michael Turner.

Martin Petrie

Still to come on **September 29:** Dunstaffnage Castle
Fiona MacDougall Te l: 01631 565697

Council for Scottish Archaeology

The May 2007 CSA Summer school week-end was based at Bettyhill Hotel, Sutherland.

An excellent booklet was given to every participant covering the sites to be visited. Coach and site guides shared their knowledge of the folklore and traditions of the area as well as the archaeological evidence. On the first day Smoo cave, Durness and the Loch Borrallie area were seen. The walk from Balnakeil to Borrallie goes through a multi-period landscape of grassland and sand dunes, cairns, hut circles, dun, and medieval and post medieval field systems. In the evening Olivia Lelong of Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division who had excavated in the area gave a lecture on the "Early Christian, Viking and Medieval periods in north Sutherland"

Next day the group went to Tongue House, an attractive, rambling Laird's house with a lovely walled garden, then on to the clearance villages of Grumbeg and Rossal, Strathnaver and the Neolithic chambered cairn at Skaill that has folklore association with the early Christian Saint Maol Ruadh of Applecross. After dinner Jim Johnston, Head teacher of Farr School spoke on the history, and geography of the area.

The third day sites visited included Achanlochy clearance settlement, Skelpick long cairn and Baile Marghaite, the sand dune area at the mouth of the river Naver where hut circles, cairns and cists have been revealed by the shifting sands. There were wild flowers such as mountain avens, and purple oxytropis growing in profusion as we climbed up to Sandy Dun broch which had stunning views down and across Invernaveer estuary to the Ice house, stepping stones, fish trap and dyke of the early fishing days of Bettyhill. Strathnaver museum and the Farr stone, a Pictish cross-slab was the last site of a memorable three days.

This well organized and popular annual weekend is fun. Participants vary from knowledgeable experts to members of the public wishing to learn about the history and archaeology of an area of Scotland. Three members of LAHS attended.

Accounts

Income 2006/2007

Subscriptions	535.01	(547.00)
Door Collection	52.00	(33.00)
Bank Interest	42.17	(39.79)
Magazine Sales	285.45	(143.30)
Donations	9.00	(67.00)
Miscellaneous	145.00	(170.00)
Total	998.63	(1000.09)

Expenditure 2006/2007

Subscriptions	95.00	(95.00)
Meetings	259.95	(210.00)
Magazine Printing	345.73	(235.63)
Expenses	138.71	(187.25)
Room Hire	149.00	(158.00)
Miscellaneous	0.00	(0.00)
Total	988.39	(885.88)

This years Income and Expenditure are almost evenly balanced. The increase in Expenditure is mostly down to the printing of extra copies of the Society's magazine, but this has been more than covered by extra sales. The miscellaneous income is the members contribution to the food and entertainment at the A.G.M. Although there was a slight drop in income from members subscriptions, this was balanced by an increase in the contribution made by visitors to the door collection. There is a balance in the Society's Saving Account of £1,815.18, and a balance in the Treasurers Account of £777.53., although there are still some expenses to be deducted from this. There will be an update of Accounts at the A.G.M.

Subscriptions

These are due at the beginning of October and cover a programme of winter lectures, summer outings, our magazine "Historic Argyll" that comes out in May and the Autumn Newsletter. Present rates are:-

Individual member	£8.00
Additional member same address (no extra magazine)	£4.00
Junior or full time student (with magazine)	£4.00
Life membership up to 65 years, a multiple of 15 times annual subscription	
Life membership over 65 years, a multiple of 10 times annual subscription	

Winter Lecture Programme 2007/8

All meetings will be held in The Undercroft, The Church Centre, Glencruitten Road, Oban at 7.30 pm. Non-members are most welcome. Non-members entrance £2.00

Friday 26th October 2007

“The archaeology of trees: the Neolithic of Scotland”

Gordon Noble, Glasgow University

It is difficult for most of us today to imagine what it would be like to live in a wooded environment, but in Neolithic Scotland (4000-2500 BC) everyday life was surrounded by the forest. Trees and woodland are rarely studied in any detail in prehistoric archaeology as they often only leave fragmentary traces in the archaeological record. However, timber formed an important resource in the Neolithic. This talk will outline the ways in which Neolithic communities in Scotland drew on the symbolism of the forest in everyday life and in constructing ceremonial monuments.

Friday 2nd November 2007 (£5.00 Entry)

Annual General Meeting followed by `The Old Oban Slide Show`

Robert McCulloch & Charlie Drummond, Oban Photographic Society

Take a trip down memory lane with this ever popular presentation of local photos, collected, updated and restored by the photographic society. Robert and Charlie will explain and date many of the landmarks and changes to the fabric of the town with reference to their astounding collection, and invite audience participation.

Friday 16th November 2007

“An environmental approach to an archaeological problem: The case of farm abandonment in medieval Iceland”

Kerry-Anne Mairs

Friday 7th December 2007

“The Silent Shores Speak”

Dr Paula Martin, Morvern Maritime Centre

Survey on the coast and inter-tidal zone in North Argyll has yielded sites from the medieval and recent past. Some relate to estates and farms, some to subsistence economy. Most are previously unrecorded, and some seem undocumented despite their relatively recent date. Some we cannot yet fully explain. Perhaps you can tell us about other sites, or give us more information about those we have already recorded?

Friday 18th January 2008

“Restoration”

Michael Davis

Michael's latest talk to the Society takes a different approach from his previous studies of Scots Baronial architecture or the social history of Poltalloch Estate. This time he looks at some of the Argyll personalities he has come across. The style is anecdotal; the format is vaguely autobiographical! But the subject is all loosely tied around the theme of “restoration”, from re-erecting archaeological features on a site on Loch Fyne, to the reconstruction of Scottish castles.

Friday 15th or 22nd February 2008 (Date TBC)

“Oral sources for the history of Lorn”

Dr Domhnall Stubbhairs, University of London

A brief tour around some of the less well-known sources of the land and the people of Lorn: the wealth of tradition, mainly in Gaelic, collected in the area during the late nineteenth century, especially by the very different characters of John Dewar (collecting for John Lorne Campbell), the Rev. Walter Campbell (for Dr Robert Craig MacLagan) and Alexander Carmichael. In this paper I shall talk about the collectors and informants themselves, the methods of collection employed, what was collected and what this material might tell us about the past when weighed together with more conventional archival and archaeological sources.

Friday 21st or 28th March 2008

“Loch Lomond GUARD project” (Title and Date TBC)

Gavin MacGregor



Dunollie Castle and Dog stone

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the **Lorn Archaeological and Historical Society** will be held at **7pm** on **Friday 2nd November 2008** at **St Moluag's Episcopal Church Centre, Croft Road, Oban, (near Atlantis Leisure)** please ask for directions. This is the time for members to take part in decisions, which affect the future of the Society. Food and refreshments will be available. Entry £5.00

Agenda

- 1 Members Present
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes of the AGM held on 3rd November 2006
- 4 Matters arising
- 5 Chairperson's report on the years activities
- 6 Secretary's report
- 7 Treasurers report
- 8 Editors report
- 9 Election of Office Bearers
- 10 Any other business
- 11 Date of next AGM

Present Committee

President:	Margaret Kay
Chairperson:	Alison Blackwood (Acting)
Secretary	Michael Turner
Programme Convenor	Alistair James
Treasurer:	Duncan Campbell

Committee	Kenny Carmichael (Autumn Newsletter)
	Martin Petrie (Librarian)
	Margaret Gravel
	Fiona MacDougall
	Julian Overnell

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible

New members welcome

Lorn Archaeological and Historical Society

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 3 November 2006 at St. Moluag's Diocesan Centre, Oban.

1. **Present:** Robert Walker, Chairman; Alistair James, Meetings Secretary; Duncan Campbell, Treasurer; Ann Houston, Assistant Treasurer; Kenny Carmichael, Newsletter Editor; Alison Blackwood, Liason Officer; Martin Petrie, and nine members and guests. Apologies were received from: Robin and Elizabeth Asprey, Bill Grant, Fay Harvey, Margaret Kay, Michael Kidd, Fiona MacDougall, Peter MacLeod and Val Marner. The Chairman wished Margaret Kay, President, well.

2. **Minutes of the AGM of 4th November 2005** had been circulated in the Autumn Newsletter and were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. **Chairman's Report:** Robert Walker said that despite the small Committee there had been very successful winter and summer programmes and that the magazine and newsletters had been published. The Librarian had resigned during the course of the year. Additions to the library, principally from Margaret Kay and Christa Studd had been received and these remain to be catalogued. Participation in practical archaeology, input to planning decisions and outreach to other groups had been minimal. Because of increased professional commitments and illness in his family, the Chairman felt it was necessary for him to resign.

4. **Secretary's Report.** In the absence of a Secretary there was no report.

5. **Treasurer's Report:** Duncan Campbell said that though income from membership subscriptions and visitor contributions was reduced, the Society was still in a healthy financial condition. This was in part due to speakers' generosity in submitting small claims for expenses. There was no need to increase the membership subscription. The meeting agreed that visitor contributions at lecture meetings should remain at £2. The report was accepted. Proposed Martin Petrie and seconded by Robin Harvey.

6. **Editor's Report:** The Chairman had assumed the role of Editor of the Magazine and thanked Robin Harvey for the format which he had inherited from him. There had been some good contributions from members. In discussion, Alison Blackwood suggested that lecture synopses should once more form part of the Magazine content and that these were particularly valuable when contributed by the speakers themselves.

7. **Election of Office Bearers.**

Treasurer: Duncan Campbell was re-elected (proposed / seconded: Martin Petrie / Robin Harvey)

Assistant Secretary: Michael Turner (proposed / seconded: Ann Houston / Duncan Campbell)

Librarian: Martin Petrie (proposed / seconded: Ann Houston / Michael Turner)

The following were re-elected: **Magazine Editor**, Robert Walker; **Newsletter Editor**, Kenny Carmichael; **Programme Convener**, Alistair James; **Information / Liason Officer**, Alison Blackwood.

The following were elected as **ordinary Committee members**: Margaret Gravell and Fiona MacDougall.

The posts of Chairman, Secretary and Assistant Treasurer remained unfilled

8. **Date for the next AGM:** 2 November 2007.

My thanks to all those members who contributed towards this newsletter

Kenny Carmichael

Proposed amendment and addition to the Constitution

AMENDMENT

The proposed amendment is for the terms of section seven wherein the word four in the said section to be replaced by the word `six`, whereupon the relevant section shall read **“The affairs of the Society shall be conducted by an Executive Committee consisting of the elected officers and six other members elected at the Annual General Meeting. These six members will hold office for one year but shall be eligible for re-election for a maximum term of three years”**.

ADDITION

1. The Society may be dissolved by at least a two thirds majority of members present casting their votes at an Extraordinary General Meeting, the notice for which specified the proposals to dissolve the Society. Any funds or assets remaining after proper payment of all debts and liabilities shall be given to an organisation or organisations having similar aims to those of the Society. If effect cannot be given to the aforementioned provisions, the residuary assets shall be applied to some other charitable aim or aims as the membership shall decide.

These items shall be discussed and voted on at the upcoming A.G.M

CONSTITUTION OF THE LORN ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Incorporating amendments made in 1963, 1965, 1968, 1971, 1979, 1987, 1994 & 1997)

2. The name of the Society shall be the Lorn Archaeological and Historical Society
3. The aims of the Society shall be to foster interest in archaeology and history in the Lorn area, to help increase our knowledge of the past and to help to safeguard the physical remains of the past.
4. Membership shall be open to all who subscribe to the foregoing aims.
5. Members of the Society shall pay an annual subscription which shall be agreed at the Annual General Meeting. A concessionary subscription of half the standard rate shall apply to each additional member of the same household or to individuals in full-time education or training. Corporate members and life members shall pay a multiple of the standard rate. All subscriptions shall become payable in November of each year.
6. The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, a Chairman, an Honorary Treasurer and an Honorary Secretary, all of whom shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting for a term of one year and shall be eligible for re-election.
7. An Editor of the Society`s official magazine shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting for a term of one year and shall be eligible for re-election.
8. The affairs of the Society shall be conducted by an Executive Committee consisting of the elected officers and four other members elected at the Annual General Meeting. These four members will hold office for one year but shall be eligible for re-election for a maximum term of three years. The Executive Committee shall, in addition, include `ex-officio` the Editor of the magazine, whenever the Editor is not in any year already on the committee. The Executive Committee shall also include, whenever necessary, any other member who may be undertaking special responsibilities for the Society in connection with its projects. The Executive Committee may co-opt members to fill vacancies. Such members shall serve until the next Annual General Meeting.
9. Four members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.
10. The Annual General Meeting shall take place in October or November.
11. The Society shall be affiliated to the Council for Scottish Archaeology and to the Council for British Archaeology.
12. At the Annual General Meeting, a report on the activities of the Society shall be given and the audited statement of account for the year ended shall be submitted for approval. Two weeks notice shall be given to all members of any proposals to mend this Constitution at an Annual General Meeting.