



Lorn Archaeological & Historical Society

## Comunn Eachdraidh Lathurna

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2008

### Dear LAHS Members

Inside you will find a brief account of the Summer Outings which I have co-ordinated. It is important to note that two related outings are due to take place at the end of September. Both are concerned with industrial archaeology, something not too well represented in Argyll. Julian Overnell hopes for a good turnout for these. If you are dubious about your walking capabilities, try to join the visit to Bonawe Furnace on 27th.

We have a full and varied Winter Programme catering for both the archaeologists and historians among you. This has been assembled by Alistair James, our Programme Convenor, who has come up with some particularly interesting speakers for this season. If you mislay these lists, please remember that you can find the same information, together with any last minute changes, on the LAHS website ([www.spanglefish.com/LAHS](http://www.spanglefish.com/LAHS)). The site was initiated on the Society's behalf by Jill Bowis early this year. The library catalogue, prepared by Martin Petrie is a particularly useful feature of the site. If you have information you would like to see posted, please contact me at [michaeltturner722@btinternet.com](mailto:michaeltturner722@btinternet.com) or send it to another Committee Member. Our application for lottery funding for new projection equipment and display stands is currently awaiting a decision by the Committee of Awards for All. I would like to thank Duncan Campbell and Denise and Julian Overnell for their inputs into this. I have been sent some photographs by an ex-member, Jim Mackay, showing some of the Society's activities in the early 1980s. There are, for example, images of Raschoillie Cave in Gleann Sheileach, none of which is included in the interim excavation report (Connock, Kenneth D., 1985, *Rescue excavation of the ossuary remains at Raschoille Cave, Oban: an interim report*, pp. 8 + 3 diagrams. L.A.H.S.), There are, too, pictures of the Society's excavation of a charcoal burners' platform at Fanans near Bridge of Awe in 1983, and even one or two images of the Society's most far flung visit, Crete in 1980! These may be of interest to some of you. They will be available from the LAHS Library.

Finally, I want to thank all of my fellow Committee members, without whose inputs, your Secretary's work would have been much more difficult.

Michael Turner  
Hon. Secretary

### Summer Outings 2008

Organisers' names appear below each entry

**Sunday, 16 March:** A field outing to the Kilmartin area, in which some fifteen members and guests took part, concentrated on a few of the numerous prehistoric rock carvings in the area. The initial goal was to see the set of carvings exposed by the fall of a tree during the preceding winter. Since these were still shrouded in protective coverings, only the general location was visible. The nearby carvings at Ach nabreck, the wooden stage among the trees, built for the 2007 Half Life archaeological festival, and the carved rocks at Cairnbaan were visited before lunch at Kilmartin Museum. Here we saw the superbly constructed table in the library and then travelled a couple of miles south to visit the carved rocks at Kilmichael Glassary. Finally we walked the half mile to Torbhlaran where we were fortunate to have good light for seeing the faint cups and rings on the most south westerly outcrop, which were only discovered in the 1960s.

Michael Turner

**Sunday, 27 April:** A joint outing with the Oban Walkers' group was attended by a small number of people drawn from both societies. The day was fine and the walk of some five miles began at Kilmartin and continued southwards towards the principal item of historic interest, the abandoned shell of Potalloch House, formerly known as Calton Mór, reached after a picnic lunch. Although ruinous, having been partially dismantled in 1957, the Jacobean style mansion, built in the mid nineteenth century still retained many impressive architectural details. Return via Slockavullin and tea at Kilmartin completed a fine day out.

Val Marner

**Sunday, 18 May:** Seven members arrived near Knipoch, Loch Feochan in good weather and were shown 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century settlement sites. Walking up above Knipoch Hotel the group discussed the details and implications of the Campbell of Cawdor murder of 1592 and also heard about the McInnes treasure. Later the party moved into Glen Gallain and walked on to the Braes of Lorn to see Laggan an Airgid, a settlement featured in this year's 'Historic Argyll'. The afternoon ended at Lodge Cottage, Kilninver with refreshments and a look at relevant maps including Roy's Military Survey of 1747-55.

Martin Petrie

**Sunday 20 July:** A visit to Ardchattan Priory, where the owner Sarah Troughton, kindly acted as an expert guide to the house and its adjacent grounds was attended by ten members. That people had eaten in the same dining space for at least 600 years was a startling fact. After the visit Charles Hunter led us to a circular stone structure

which he had recently noticed at Inveresragan near the foot of Glen Salach. This appears to be unrecorded, but needs more investigation.

Michael Turner

**Thursday, 28 August:** The LAHS stand at the Oban Games was well attended. People were interested to see a display of an expanded version of the list of names published in 'Historic Argyll' No. 13. Some sales of the Magazine were made and two corresponding members joined, one of them from New Zealand. Alison Blackwood, May Petrie and Michael Turner assisted.

Martin Petrie

**Saturday, 27 September 2008:** Visit to Bonawe Iron Furnace, Taynuilt  
Meet at 14:00 at the Bonawe Furnace car park (grid ref NN 009,319) for an introductory chat followed by a tour of the furnace concentrating on the process of the blast furnace. Afterwards it may be possible to have tea at Robin's Nest, Taynuilt.  
Leader: Julian Overnell. Telephone him at 01631 770255 if you intend to go. In part, this visit is intended as preparation for the outing on the 28<sup>th</sup> September, but it stands in its own right.

Julian Overnell

**Sunday, 28 September 2008:** Visit to Glen Kinglass Ironworks, Loch Etive  
Meet at 09:00 at the end of the (private) South Loch Etive road, near Inverawe (grid ref NN 025,317). Glen Kinglass will be approached on foot (approximately 6 miles there and 6 miles back). The track appears to be fairly flat on the map, but in practice it is quite steep and rough in places. You need to be fit. Wear stout footwear and bring a packed lunch. The leader is again Julian Overnell (see item for the previous day).

Please phone Julian at 01631 770255 if you intend to go or have queries.

Julian Overnell

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### **Archaeology Scotland (formerly The Council for Scottish Archaeology) Summer School**

Four members of the Lorn Society attended the CSA's annual Summer School, based this year in Blair Atholl, from 16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> May. This was an ideal centre from which to visit a large swathe of northern Perthshire. Most participants were based at the Atholl Arms Hotel.

Following registration, the distribution of a very well produced site guide and dinner, there were two lectures on prehistoric domestic buildings of Perthshire, the so-called pitcarnick houses and circular homesteads. During the following two days we saw examples of each, the Allean Homestead (a large roundhouse) near Queen's View

being particularly impressive. Travel was in two coaches, each accompanied by one of the School's organisers giving commentary on sites seen in passing and aspects of local history.

The visits to varied historic landscapes containing a wide range of different examples of people's activities from Bronze Age to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century were a particularly good feature of this weekend. They gave opportunities for walking in some quite high moorland areas for example at Kiltyrie near Ben Lawers (a multiperiod farming landscape) and at Glen Cochill, above and south of Aberfeldy.

Two of the churches stand out: Fortingall (1902) with its arts and crafts features, set in an area of outstanding early Christian remains, and St. Mary's Grandtully with its elaborately painted ceiling dating from the 1630s.

The last morning was devoted to an optional visit to the Hermitage near Dunkeld. Jill Harden of the National Trust for Scotland had spoken on this eighteenth century building the evening before, relating it to its context in the artificially created landscape designed to heighten the contrast between the civilised and the untamed wild beyond. The building was placed at the very boundary of the two domains and was itself cleverly designed to provide a shock as one moves through it from a place of calm and subdued light near the entrance, to the sudden vision and sound of roaring torrents

This is a very selective account of a packed three or four days. The Summer Schools are highly recommended as a way to see parts of Scotland you don't know and to meet interesting people.

### **Conference on Rome and Northern Britain**

Michael Turner attended this international one-day conference held on 31 May in Perth. It was part of the celebrations of the expected designation of the Roman frontier in Europe and North Africa as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Martin Petrie, our Librarian, holds a DVD which was compiled to show the various national sections of the frontier, for example the Limes in Germany. It may of course be borrowed by members. You can choose to hear the commentary in six languages including Hungarian and Arabic.

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## Winter Lecture Program 2008 / 2009

### Friday 17th Oct 08

**'The Challenge of Conserving Ruins: In Particular  
the Castles of Dunollie (Oban) and Moy (Island of Mull)'**  
Historic Building Consultant Architect, Martin Hadlington

### Friday 7th Nov 08

**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 14th Nov 08

**'Domhnach Place-Names: The Earliest Churches of the Gael'**  
Gilbert Márkus, Department of Celtic, University of Glasgow.

The Old Gaelic word domnach (borrowed from Late Latin dominicum 'church') appears in early medieval Irish documents referring to churches of some importance and antiquity. Conventional wisdom states that domnach appears in Irish place-names but not in Scottish ones. But there may be some domnach names in Scotland, and their distribution may shed light on the earliest stages of Christianity in this country.

### Friday 5<sup>th</sup> Dec 08

**'A MacDonald in the Camp of Sitting Bull'**  
Professor James Hunter CBE FRSE, Director, UHI Centre for History

Abstract: By way of a single family whose members have included chiefs of the Glencoe MacDonalds and leading figures in a prominent Indian tribe, Jim Hunter, born and brought up in Duror and a former pupil of Oban High School, explores the very similar fates of our Highland clans and the Native American peoples of the American West.

### Friday 23rd Jan 09

**'Steamships to the Hebrides, 1820-1930'**  
Dr Donald E. Meek, Falkirk and Tiree

The best-known name in West Highland shipping is that of David MacBrayne, but he was by no means the pioneer, or the sole entrepreneur, in the provision of such services. This lecture will consider the major roles of 'forgotten' figures like William Lang, Martin Orme and John McCallum, and the significance of the Western Isles Steam Packet Company and other groupings of shareholders. In particular, it will examine the impact of non-MacBrayne cargo services, and assess their contribution to the life and culture of the Hebrides.

### Friday 20th Feb 09

**'Archaeology and Storytelling: Encounters with the Past in Scotland and Cyprus'**  
Dr Michael Given, Dept of Archaeology, University of Glasgow

'Archaeology and storytelling' sounds like a choice between 'fact and fiction'.

But perhaps there are some surprising similarities; after all, both are a way of making sense of the world around us... I will explore this by telling the stories of two strange encounters. Both took place at archaeological sites, one in Scotland and one in Cyprus.

### Friday 27th Mar 09

**'The Archaeology of Crarae Gardens: Chambered Tomb to Coaching Inn'**  
Derek Alexander,  
West Region Archaeologist, National Trust for Scotland

### Venues:

Lectures will be held at 19:30 in **The Undercroft**  
**Church of Scotland**  
**Glencruitten Road**  
**Oban**

(Use medical centre car park opposite  
COOP store)

AGM will be held at 19:00 in **St Moluag's Episcopal Church Centre,**  
**Croft Road**  
**Oban**

(Near Atlantis Leisure, please ask for directions)

### Notice of Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the **Lorn Archaeological and Historical Society** will be held at **7pm** on **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 in the form of a Buffet Supper will be available. Entry £5.00

### Agenda

- 1 Members Present
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes of the AGM held on 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

### **LAHS Office Bearers and Committee Members**

- President:** Margaret Kay. Margaret was unanimously elected Life President at the 2007 AGM
- Chairperson:** 'Vacant'. Please put your names forward to the Secretary before the AGM on 7 November 2008
- Secretary:** Michael Turner (eligible for re-election)
- Treasurer:** Duncan Campbell (eligible for re-election)

### **Current Committee members (year elected):**

- Margaret Gravell (2006). Margaret wants to stand down from the Committee
- Alistair James (2005): Programme Convener. Alistair has completed his three years on the Committee, but is willing to continue as a co-opted member
- Fiona MacDougall (2006): Membership Secretary and Assistant Treasurer. Fiona wants to stand down from the Committee
- Denise Overnell (2007) (eligible for re-election)
- Julian Overnell (2007): Editor of 'Historic Argyll' (eligible for re-election)

Currently Co-opted, and now available for re-election to the Committee:

- Kenneth Carmichael: Newsletter Editor
- Martin Petrie: LAHS Librarian and LAHS Organiser for the Oban Games

**We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible  
New members welcome**

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### Accounts for the year ended August 31<sup>st</sup> 2008

#### **Income 2007/2008**

|                 |                |                   |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Subscriptions   | 754.00         | ( 535.01 )        |
| Door Collection | 24.00          | ( 52.00 )         |
| Bank Interest   | 56.27          | ( 42.17 )         |
| Magazine Sales  | 352.65         | ( 285.45 )        |
| Donations       | 7.50           | ( 9.00 )          |
| Miscellaneous   | 95.00          | ( 75.00 )         |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>1289.42</b> | <b>( 998.63 )</b> |

#### **Expenditure 2007/2008**

|                   |                |                   |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Subscriptions     | 77.00          | ( 95.00 )         |
| Meetings          | 200.69         | ( 259.95 )        |
| Magazine Printing | 303.52         | ( 345.73 )        |
| Expenses          | 143.17         | ( 138.71 )        |
| Room Hire         | 232.00         | ( 149.00 )        |
| Miscellaneous     | 144.95         | ( 0.00 )          |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>1101.33</b> | <b>( 988.39 )</b> |

This year the Society made a surplus of £188.09; mostly due to an increase in the amount paid in subscriptions and increased magazine sales. There was an increase in expenditure, mostly down to increased room hire costs, and insurance; but this was partly balanced by savings elsewhere. The miscellaneous income is the members' contribution to the food and entertainment at the A.G.M. The increase in income from members' subscriptions was due partly to the inclusion of two life membership subscriptions. This more than covered the fall in the contribution made by visitors to the door collection. There is a balance in the Society's Savings Account of £1,863.70, and a balance in the Treasurer's Account of £958.54, although there are still some expenses to be deducted from this.

### **LORN ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 2 November 2007 at 7: 00 pm at St Moluag's Episcopal Church Centre, Croft Avenue, Oban**

1. **Present:** Alison Blackwood, Nevin Blackwood, Jill Bowis, Tim Bowis, Iain Brown, Duncan Campbell, Bill Grant, Margaret Gravell, Charles Hunter, Colin Johnson, Jane Johnson, Fiona MacDougall, Margaret MacDougall, Archie McGill, Jane McGill, David Marshall, Valerie Marshall, Denise Overnell, Julian Overnell, Martin Petrie, May Petrie, Michael Turner
2. **Apologies:** Kenny Carmichael, Alistair James, Margaret Kay
3. **Minutes of the AGM held on 3 November 2006:** These had been circulated and were approved as a true record (proposed Margaret Gravell; seconded, Martin Petrie)
4. **Matters arising from the minutes:** There were none
5. **Chairperson's report:** Alison Blackwood paid tribute to the work of Committee members and described the Society's activities during the course of the preceding year. A copy of her report is in the Society's archives and can be consulted on application to the Secretary
6. **Secretary's Report:** Michael Turner described the steps it would be necessary to take before the Society could apply for a small lottery grant principally to buy modern projection equipment, utilising digital technology, from the 'Awards for All' scheme. Insurance was one prerequisite, not just for the application, but also as an important requirement for the Society generally. Some modification of the Constitution was also necessary
7. **Insurance:** in the following discussion, Nevin Blackwood stressed the importance of public liability insurance. Insurance for equipment and for library books was necessary. Sun Alliance was suggested (Duncan Campbell, seconded Charles Hunter) as a suitable insurer. Michael Turner would investigate and initiate.
8. **Amendments to the Constitution:** The following changes to the Constitution, last modified in 1997, were adopted:  

paragraph 7. --- consisting of the elected officers and **six** [formerly four] other members----

---These **six** [formerly four] members---

paragraph 8. **Five** [formerly four] members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

An additional paragraph 12: **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 proposal 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.**

Denise Overnell expressed some doubts about the changes to numbers of Committee members, but the changes were agreed by the meeting (proposed Julian Overnell; seconded Alison Blackwood)

9. **Treasurer's Report:** Duncan Campbell presented the summary accounts for the year 2006/2007, pointing out that income just exceeded expenditure by approximately £10.00. He therefore felt that again there was no need to raise the level of subscription charges. The report was accepted unanimously.

**10. Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members:**

**President:** Alison Blackwood read a short statement by Margaret Kay, in which she said that since she was no longer able to attend meetings, she would be happy to resign as President if that was thought to be in the best interests of the Society. Charles Hunter said that far from resigning Margaret should be asked to stay on as Life President. This was unanimously agreed

**Chairperson:** Thomas Clegg who had offered to take the Chairperson's post was no longer able to do so, because of ill health. Since no one else offered to fill the post, Alison, as outgoing Acting Chair suggested that the position could rotate among existing Committee Members. This suggestion was somewhat reluctantly adopted

**Secretary:** Michael Turner (proposed Martin Petrie, seconded Margaret Gravell)

**Treasurer:** Duncan Campbell (proposed Alison Blackwood, seconded Michael Turner)

**Programme Convener:** Alistair James (proposed Duncan Campbell, seconded Fiona MacDougall)

**Membership Secretary:** Fiona MacDougall (proposed Alison Blackwood, seconded Michael Turner)

**Magazine Editor:** Julian Overnell (proposed Charles Hunter, seconded Denise Overnell)

**Committee Member:** Margaret Gravell (proposed Denise Overnell, seconded Alison Blackwood)

**Committee Member:** Denise Overnell (proposed Michael Turner, seconded Martin Petrie)

The following were not eligible for re-election, but were willing to continue in their specialist roles: Martin Petrie (Librarian); Kenneth Carmichael (Newsletter Editor)

11. **Other Business:** Flowers were presented to Alison as outgoing Acting Chair and the Meeting accorded her its thanks for all her invaluable work in recent years

12. **Date of the Next AGM:** November 7 2008