

Forthcoming Events

Moray and Beyond PAS Annual Conference, Elgin 5–7 October

Elgin Museum Hall
1 High Street, Elgin, IV30 1EQ

The conference is being organised with the kind cooperation of the Moray Society & Elgin Museum.

Friday 7 October

Private view of Elgin Museum

Spend the evening perusing the Museum's collections which include a splendid array of Pictish sculpture. Refreshments included.

Saturday 6 October

Conference and AGM

A detailed programme with running order will be published in the next newsletter

Speakers at the conference include:

Steven Birch

(West Coast Archaeological Services)

Dr Jane Geddes (University of Aberdeen)

Dr Oisín Plumb

(University of the Highlands & Islands)

Dr Gordon Noble (University of Aberdeen)

Dr Nicki Scott and Steve Farrar

(Historic Environment Scotland)

Derek Jennings (Cameron Archaeology)

Craig Stanford (National Trust for Scotland)

Sunday 7 October

Field Trip

Travelling by mini-coach, we will visit cross slabs and symbol stones, including, hopefully, some that are in private ownership or usually behind locked doors.

A detailed program and booking slip will be included in the next newsletter. On-line booking via the PAS website will go live at the same time. Numbers for all three events will be limited so early booking is advised.

Spring Lecture Series

16 March 2018 – Cynthia Thickpenny

Making Key Pattern in Insular Art

For our March lecture, we welcomed back Cynthia Thickpenny who is now in the final year of her PhD at Glasgow University, researching key pattern. This abstract decorative motif is found in art the world over, from the classical civilisations of the Mediterranean to the native peoples of western America. In the Insular art of the British Isles, key pattern is one of the staple decorative motifs, along with interlace and knotwork, spirals and vinescroll. It appears in manuscripts, on metalwork and on carved stone monuments. It is key pattern on the sculpture of the Picts which forms the focus of Cynthia's research.

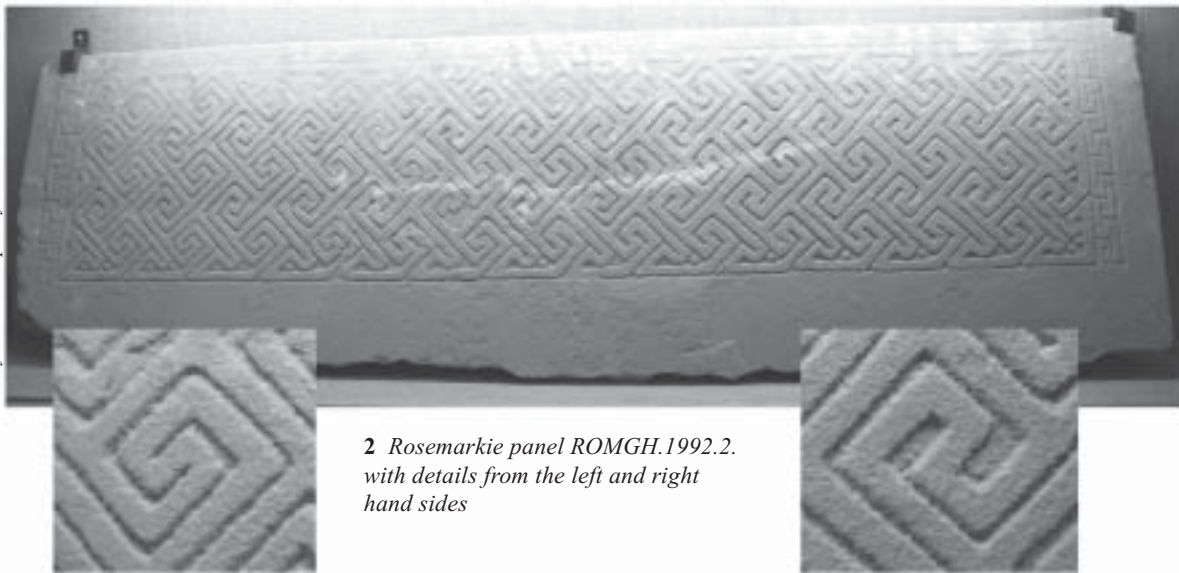
Cynthia outlined how antiquarian and subsequent research had concentrated much more on interlace and knotwork but had only really scratched the surface when it came to analysing key pattern. Previous studies had been classification-led and at times myopic. Allen's work (*ECMS*), which is still much-used as a reference, is prone to regularisation. A detailed analysis of interlace published in 2011 by Michael Brennan inspired Cynthia to re-examine key pattern but with a different focus. Her aim was not to update the work of Allen by compiling a classification system or to replicate the work of populist authors such as Bain by identifying grids to aid construction. Nor is she concerned with the study of key pattern as symbolism. Cynthia's aim is to study the properties of key pattern: the physical elements of its structure and the concepts, ideas and actions used by the artists to arrange and manipulate those elements.

For the purposes of the talk, Cynthia focused on two case studies, the first being a carved panel from Rosemarkie (catalogue number ROMGH.1992.2). Key pattern is composed of two elements, forming a negative and a positive space. In a sculptural context, the incised lines are the negative space, the raised surface the positive. When following the pattern, the negative space is contained and therefore comes to an end whilst the positive space continues on, like a path. Although composed of straight lines forming squares/rectangles (orthogonal) or triangles (diagonal), the key pattern motif is in fact a faceted version of a spiral (1). The creation of carved key pattern is a reductive process: the negative spaces are carved, leaving the positive spaces.

© Cynthia Thickpenny



1 A detail of key pattern showing how it is derived from a spiral.



2 Rosemarkie panel ROMGH.1992.2.
with details from the left and right
hand sides

The Rosemarkie panel appears at first glance to be very regular and consistent but Cynthia pointed out that the negative spaces (the incised lines) are longer on the left-hand side and along the bottom of the panel. The shorter lines on the right-hand side of the panel leave less space which means fewer turns of the spiral. The negative spaces on the right side of the panel are also broader than their left side counterparts (2). This sort of detail was missed by previous studies, which lacked attention to the structure of the pattern and focussed instead on a perceived symmetry and regularity. Cynthia believes that similar changes can be identified within panels of key pattern on other sculptures.

Cynthia went on to demonstrate how Allen's lack of attention to structural principles meant he did not identify how a component or part of one could be used as a 'mitre' to allow the pattern to turn corners. This oversight was apparent in her second case study, the cross slab St Vigeans 11, where the lower part of the cross shaft comprises a panel of orthogonal key pattern. Cynthia deconstructed this motif and showed how some of its structural components could be identified in a broad range of contexts, from the Kilmartin cross slab to the Harley Golden Gospel manuscript. Much of the discussion at the end centred on the Rosemarkie panel and whether or not the differences in the design were an indication of two different hands at work, the result of accidental drift during carving or a conscious and deliberate choice on the part of the sculptor. Although I have looked upon it on numerous occasions, Cynthia's talk certainly left me wanting to visit Groam House once more and look anew on panel ROMGH.1992.2. JB

PAS Newsletter 88

The deadline for receipt of material is

Saturday 17 August 2018

Please email contributions to the editor:

john.borland@hes.scot

20 April 2018 – Kirsty Dingwall

Romans on the River Dee: The discovery of 90 Roman ovens on the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route

For the second talk of the Spring lecture series, Kirsty Dingwall of Headland Archaeology came to tell us about some of the exciting new discoveries that were made during the construction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route/Balmedie to Tipperty (AWPR/B-T). The building of the new road offers a great deal of archaeological potential as it cuts across different types of landscape, raising the possibility of different sites of varying periods being revealed. That is precisely what happened with the construction of the AWPR/B-T. Sites were discovered dating from the Upper Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, Early Historic and Early Medieval periods, a span of tens of millennia.

The presentation focused on the discovery of 90 bread ovens from the Roman period, which were uncovered at Milltimber, on the north bank of the River Dee. The evidence from the initial geophysical survey of the site was not conclusive due to the stony nature of the ground so some trial trenches were dug, revealing pits with a lot of charcoal. It was clear from the charring of the surrounding sand and gravel that the charcoal had been burnt *in situ*. Interestingly, the trial trenches also revealed that the underlying topography was far more undulating than the modern field surface and these undulations seemed to be connected to the location of the pits.

Supposing that the river had likely moved over time, the team decided to try and find its earlier position by taking core samples. These indicated that the river had indeed run to the north of its present course and upon excavation the older river bank was revealed. Along the upper edge of this palaeochannel, keyhole-shaped pits were cut into the sandbank. Many were in groups of five to eight but one group numbered

17. More than 90 were found in total and it was obvious that they extended to the east and west, beyond the corridor of the new road.

Initial sampling of the site had revealed some Mesolithic remains so when the pits first appeared in the trial trenches, a scattering of Mesolithic camp fires seemed like a plausible interpretation. Now, with the pits being so numerous and ordered, and with the keyhole-shape being apparent, ovens seemed a much more likely explanation, specifically Roman ovens. Each pit had a rounded 'head' where the fire was made and the bread baked, a narrow 'neck' that could be plugged during baking, and a tail that tapered out into the channel. Kirsty said that it was hard to tell how many times each oven had been fired but the layered deposits scraped out from some ovens suggested they may have been fired 'a handful of times'. Others showed no sign of having ever been fired. One small group was stone lined, but it is not known why these should differ from the rest.

The burnt deposits were analysed to reveal a date of 90BC to AD321. Using a process known as bayesian analysis, this date range was refined to between 40BC and AD170, with a 95% probability. This strongly suggests the ovens were constructed by the Roman army during the Agricola campaign in AD83/84. No evidence of an associated camp was found. The nearest known Roman camp lies 3 miles to the west at Normandykes but this site has not been conclusively dated. However the camp at Kintore does offer a close parallel in terms of the number of ovens.

A lengthy discussion took place at the end of the presentation where lots of questions were raised. There was speculation about the possibility (or not!) of the Roman navy navigating the River Dee in support of the army as far as Milltimber and coming ashore to bake their bread. The discovery of these ovens is a fascinating insight into the past but, as is often the way, it leaves us with more questions than answers!

Jenny Rayner

18 May 2018 – Megan Kasten

Discovering and Recovering Inchinnan 5: Digital Imaging in the Study of Early Medieval Carved Stones

The final speaker of the season was Megan Kasten who is in her final year working on a PhD at the University of Glasgow. Megan is researching the collection of sculpture from Govan Old Church and in particular, the use of new digital methodologies to record and interpret them, so her PhD is being done in conjunction with the Glasgow School of Art: School of Simulation and Visualisation.

Pointing out that the concept of 3D recording was not new (Romilly Allen himself was an enthusiastic advocate of the making of casts), Megan then talked us through the various techniques she uses to capture 3D information: laser scanning, white-light scanning

and photogrammetry. She also described the photographic technique of Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI), which she described as 'not 3D but 2.5D'. Each method had its own strengths and advantages and depending on the nature of the sculpture in question, its size and location, the most appropriate recording method or combination of methods could be chosen.

Having covered the technical processes, Megan went on to describe how she has applied them to the study of the sculpture at Govan. Photogrammetry and RTI have allowed her to remove surface texture and reveal inaccessible surfaces. These processes have also assisted in the reconstruction and recovery of damaged and eroded pattern as well as groove analysis. Being able to capture individual motifs at a consistent scale has allowed her to consider (and pretty much dismiss) the notion that templates might have been used.

We were shown two views of the 3D model of the cross slab Govan 25, one with and one without surface texture. The difference in clarity of this heavily weathered stone was remarkable, the faint carvings being much clearer on the second image. A view of the interior surface of the monumental Govan Sarcophagus, with its surface texture removed, revealed evidence of wear in certain areas, opening up debate on its usage. By using the camera on her mobile phone, Megan was able to get images of the underside of each of Govan's massive hogback stones. These images were then added to the photogrammetric models constructed using a 'proper' camera to give a virtually complete 3D model of each stone and revealing a large recessed socket on the underside of two hogbacks.

Although the test to see if templates had been used in the figurative carving at Govan showed conclusively they had not, the comparative process did show a remarkable similarity in the shape and proportion of the crosses on Inchinnan 1 and Govan 12 (1). The ornament on both stones is very similar,



1 Inchinnan 1 and Govan 12. Although the crosses are of a different size, they are remarkably similar in proportion

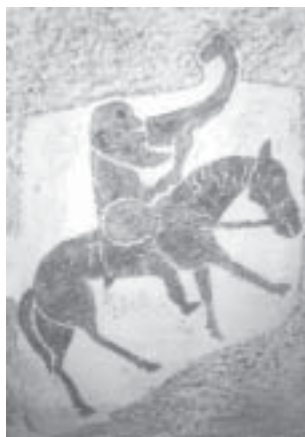
suggesting that they may well be the work of the same hand. The proportional closeness of the crosses may give us an insight into the process of setting out of a sculpture's design.

Megan then went on to talk about the use of 3D recording techniques in the recovery of eroded or damaged carving. Showing us a detail of a knot on Govan 14, she compared it to Allen's schematic drawing of what he believed it to be: knot 766. There was not a great deal of similarity. Using RTI images, Megan came up with an alternative interpretation which is far less regimented and regular than Allen's knot 766 and, like so many of the panels of knotwork at Govan, has loose ends.

In an interesting twist, it was demonstrated how panels of relatively well-preserved interlace can be recorded and digitally eroded; so that only the lowest points of the carving remain. These can then be used as a template and compared to panels that are actually worn so as to get a likely interpretation of their original design. Thus a relatively well-preserved Stafford knot motif on Govan 28 was used to convincingly identify the presence of a similar but much more worn motif on the cross shaft of Govan 14. Indeed Megan went on to show a completely reconstructed Govan 14. 3D recording techniques also allow groove analysis, with the hope of identifying carving techniques and possibly even the tell-tale signs of an individual hand.

The talk concluded with the identification of a new early medieval stone at Inchinnan. A community-led project there had seen some excavation carried out as well as photogrammetric recording of the 4 early medieval and numerous later stones. Megan was invited to access the digital material, given that the Inchinnan stones are clearly part of the Govan 'school'. Whilst examining the images she was very excited to identify the weathered remnants of a cross of early form with interlace on either side and below. One of the panels below the cross appears to be very similar to the circular knot motif on Govan 18. This discovery of a fifth early medieval stone from Inchinnan was an exciting end to a fascinating talk which demonstrated how the application of new technology can really unlock new information. *JB*

*Marianna's rubbing of
the Invergowrie warrior
See page 7*



BBC Civilisations Festival

9 March 2018 – Dr Jane Geddes

St Vigeans

To mark the launch of its new landmark series *Civilisations*, the BBC sponsored a Festival of Civilisation, encouraging local museums up and down the country to organise lectures celebrating their own local 'civilisation'. As part of this festival, ANGUSalive (the organisation that now runs Angus Council's museums) invited Dr Jane Geddes of Aberdeen University to give a talk on the Pictish sculpture at St Vigeans.

The talk was due to be held in Montrose Museum on 2 March but as the day approached, much of the country was still in the wintery grip of 'the beast from the east' so the event was postponed until 9 March and relocated to the usual PAS venue of Brechin Town House Museum. The first of our spring lectures (Cynthia Thickpenny – see above) was scheduled for the following Friday so, quite by chance, Jane's presentation served as an appetiser to the PAS talks.

Jane began by looking back at the original BBC series *Civilisation*, first broadcast in 1969, acknowledging that it was "of its time". Its author and presenter Kenneth Clark was a patrician classicist who graduated from Trinity College, Oxford in the days of Empire. So perhaps not surprisingly, the series was both Eurocentric and Christocentric in equal measure. Jane contrasted this with the new series *Civilisations* (already we can see in the plurality of the title a more inclusive and holistic approach). Its three presenters (David Olusoga, Mary Beard and Simon Schama) encompass different ethnic backgrounds, genders, and religious backgrounds. It is clearly a very different kettle of fish.

In the first episode of the original series, Clark set the scene by describing the onset of the Dark Ages, when hordes of barbarians bore down on Rome. In his view, the small enclave of Christianity which "clung on by the skin of its teeth" in western Ireland was a beacon of hope for all of Europe. Clark made no reference to the Picts or Pictish art but this mention of early medieval Ireland set the scene rather well for Jane's talk, St Vigean being of course the Picts' name for the Irish St Fechin.

Standing on the banks of the River Seine with Notre Dame Cathedral in the background, Clark asks, "What is civilisation? ... I can't define it in abstract terms – yet. But I think I can recognise it when I see it". Despite his self-confessed inability to define civilisation, Clark does list the attributes and qualities that separate a civilised society from a barbarous one:

Order is better than **Chaos**.
Creation is better than **Destruction**.
Gentleness is better than **Violence**.
Knowledge is better than **Ignorance/superstitious ritual**.
Sympathy is better than **Ideology**.
Courtesy is better than **Rudeness**.
Curiosity is better than **Fear**.
Confidence/hope is better than—**Cynicism/disillusionment/despair**.
Connection to others is better than **Isolation**.
Resilient institutions are better than **Ineffective organisation**.
We are part of nature is better than **Materialism**.

Jane then very deftly set Pictish art, and in particular the sculpture at St Vigean, against these measures. So, in the graphically simple but well-observed animal carvings incised on Pictish symbol stones and those carved in relief on cross slabs, such as the resting stag on St Vigean 19, we can see the Picts' oneness with nature. In the monumentally big freestanding cross St Vigean 9, of which only one arm now survives, we can see their confidence in the strength of their religion.

On the side of St Vigean 14, we can see the fate that awaits damned souls – a man is being devoured by two enormous beasts whilst an emaciated (and possibly headless) corpse is falling, presumably to hell. But the salvation offered by the carved crosses shows hope for the future – hope of salvation. The images on St Vigean 11 depicting Rogationtide, when the priest and congregation process around the fields of the parish blessing the crops, also display hope, trust and confidence.

The Drosten Stone (St Vigean 1) may follow a typically Pictish format but it shows the Picts reaching out beyond their own culture. The tableau of native wildlife – the eagle, salmon, bear, red deer stag and boar – and the imaginary creatures can all be identified in Pliny's Encyclopaedia of the Natural History. Parallels for some of the imaginary creatures on the stone can be found in illuminated manuscripts from far and wide, such as the Book of Durrow and St Cuthbert's Gospel. The vine scroll on one of the narrow edges has Anglo-Saxon origins whilst the inscription from which the stone takes its name displays a rich mixture of influences. The Latin alphabet, carved in Irish half uncial letters, records three languages: Pictish, Old Irish and Latin. So St Vigean 1 once again connects the Picts to the natural world but also shows them in possession of knowledge and making connections with others.

St Vigean 7's complex imagery encompasses many of the other criteria in Clark's list of requirements for civilisation. Flanking the cross are scenes which contrast good and bad religious practice. In the top left, the false priest Simon Magus falls to his death between SS Peter and Paul, after they pray to God to take away his demonic power of flight. Below, two tonsured monks carrying lights process towards the

cross, depicting the order of the Christian church. To the bottom right of the cross, a pagan priest kneels in a dark pit performing the Roman taurobolium sacrifice, representing superstitious ritual. Above him, SS Paul and Anthony break God's bread together, displaying gentleness and courtesy. This tableau of images contrasts pride with humility, light with darkness and the Eucharist with pagan blood sacrifice. The scenes depicted require an in-depth knowledge of Christian literature and classical pagan practice. Far from being a message to any pagans passing by, they are a reminder to the priests of St Vigean of the correct way to behave and the perils of false priests and as such, they show the Christian church as a resilient institution.

At the beginning of the talk, Jane said she hoped to place "little St Vigean into the lofty context" of the civilisations featured in the BBC series. Being a seasoned lecturer who knows how to weave facts and ideas together in such a way as to tell a good story, she didn't miss the mark. *JB*

Business as usual

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) carries on the task of recording Scotland's early medieval sculpture that was started by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS).



Photographers Lewis Matheson (left) and Steve Wallace (right) set up the camera and lights to photograph the shaft of Mugdrum Cross in Fife

Remembering Bob – an appreciation of Robert Henery

Members of the Society who have been delighted by Bob Henery's photographs of Pictish stones which have illustrated many editions of this *Newsletter* over the years will be saddened to know of his death on 1 April. For those who met him at talks, conferences and field trips there will be a sense of loss: Bob's tall, lean figure quietly listening and analysing with mathematical precision as he absorbed information was a familiar sight. On field trips, he would stand, his patience sorely tried, as we happy snappers took our photos before he carefully took his. He preferred, however, not to try to get decent images when he was part of a group; on solo visits he would have the peace and the time to get just the right shots.

As Dr Robert J Henery, he remained associated in an Honorary capacity with the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Strathclyde, where he had long worked and taught. As a statistician, Bob worked with scientists from a wide range of disciplines, but some of his single-author papers are intriguing, 'Permutation Probabilities as Models for Horse Races' for example.

He brought the disciplines of statistics and mathematical reasoning to his studies of Pictish stones: arguably Bob was the only member of PAS qualified to comment on the application of Shannon entropy to Pictish symbols (*PAS Newsletter* 56). Long before, he had applied statistical analysis to combinations between other symbols and mirrors and horsemen, in a talk to the Society in 2003. Unfortunately, neither the talk nor a summary was published. His name crops up in *Newsletter* articles, as authors acknowledged his generous contribution to the ideas that they published. We are left with memories of a gentle, quietly humorous scholar who shared his enthusiasms and his magnificent portfolio with his friends in the Pictish Arts Society. Bob will be missed.

Sheila Hainey



© The Estate of Bob Henery

Bob's photographs of both carved faces of Logierait 1

Marianna Lines – an appreciation

The American-Scottish artist Marianna Lines died on 5 June after a long illness. I first met Marianna at the 1985 Pictish Conference at Dundee University, staged thirty years on from the conference which led to the publication 'The Problem of the Picts'. On a group visit to the souterrain at Ardestie that weekend, this American woman marched up to me and said "Hello. I'm Marianna, who are you?" Over the ensuing years I got used to her forthright manner but little did I suspect then what meeting this extraordinary woman would lead to. A couple of years later Marianna came to Edinburgh from Edderton in Ross-shire – she had moved there from the Findhorn Community where she had first settled on arriving in Scotland. It was in her flat in Scotland Street that she and I, in total agreement that the main problem with the Picts was that not enough people in Scotland knew about them, decided to do something about it.

Already an established artist in America, where she had developed her 'rubbing' technique interpreting indigenous North American Rock Art, Marianna was deeply intrigued and inspired by the art of the Picts and



© David McGovern

Marianna in her studio

we decided to form a society. We came up with the name The Pictish Arts Society to make it clear we were interested in the Picts as much culturally as historically. The other founder members were ethnologist Bob Brydon, linguist David Clement, archaeologist Graeme Cruikshank and lawyer George Fraser, all of whom had attended that 1985 Conference.

It was at this point that Marianna's formidable talents began to make things happen. Always a master networker she reached out to the remarkable number of people she already knew in Edinburgh and we gathered together that first committee. It was her boundless energy and clarity of vision that made the whole project mushroom, helped by the fact that her marvellous rubbings made newspaper and magazine articles about the Picts, and their art, an easy sell. The society reached not far short of four hundred members in those heady early days and there is not a shred of doubt that Marianna's direct boldness and organisational skills were the driving factor.

Over the next few years we instituted monthly lectures, the original newsletter, then the first of the annual conferences. Our aim of raising the profile of the Picts was proving successful. As we became more high-profile some of the archaeological establishment began to

question the rectitude of Marianna's rubbings of the stones. This was generally said to be because there was considerable concern about imitators following suit, though I suspect that Marianna's very American directness may have upset some in the academic establishment. However, by the time that she agreed to stop creating her unique and sensitive interpretations of one of our nations' greatest archives, the initial aims of the Society had been fulfilled. People knew who the Picts were.

Although no longer creating her rubbings Marianna continued to be inspired by the art of the Picts as she developed the cards and prints that formed the core of her Stoneline business. She always continued to paint and in later years much of her work, both as a painter and as a designer focussed on birds, but the Picts remained close to her heart. Over the years she had her work exhibited in many illustrious venues, including in the late 1990s a major exhibition in the Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York. Her reputation was, and remains international. However it is in the legacy she has left for future generations of Scots that I think her greatest contribution lies. When we first formed the PAS in 1988 there were no books on the Picts currently in print. Go into any decent bookshop now and look at what is available. Back then the Picts featured briefly in Scottish History courses at our universities – that too has changed. Also since the inception of the official teaching of Scottish history in our schools for the first time as part of the Curriculum for Excellence, our children now are exposed to the history and art of the Picts. Although there were many of us involved in developing the Society, the too short-lived Journal being particularly welcomed in academic circles, without the sheer determination of Marianna Lines, it would simply not have happened. The nation of Scotland and its future generations are in her debt.

There nivver was a quine like her afore, an' it's no' likely there ivver will be again.

Stuart McHardy

A new cross slab for Forteviot

On 17 March, David McGovern's new cross slab was formally unveiled in the village square of Forteviot. By all accounts, a brisk easterly wind, the last remnant of 'the beast from the east' didn't detract from the celebratory mood on the day. For an account of David's talk on the design and creation of the stone, see *PAS Newsletter 86*. Better still, stop off in Forteviot and see the actual sculpture!



Stephen Driscoll

1



2



David McGovern

3



4

- 1 There were speeches ...
- 2 There was cake ...
- 3 And there were more speeches ...
- 4 And this is what it was all about –
David McGovern's cross slab for Forteviot

A Guide to the Images on the Forteviot Cross

In the form of a Pictish Cross-slab, the new cross celebrates Forteviot's status as an early Christian site and its association with King Cinaed mac Alpin.

The Pictish stone fragments that inspired the cross design can also be visited across the road in St Andrews Church (when open).

Key-pattern based on an example from Iona. Cinaed must have had support from the Church on Iona in order to become King.

Cross-arms 'pellet and interlace' design based on fragment in the local Kirk. The 12 pellets represent the 12 apostles of Christ.

The interlace pattern on the base is developed from a fragment in the local Kirk.

Centre motif based on 'seven spirals' design found on Pictish crosses at Aberlemno and Nigg and elsewhere in Europe!

Saltaire and interlace based on cross-shaft fragment in the Kirk. The saltires represent the Scottish & Pictish kingdoms and also reflect the local Kirk's dedication to St Andrew.

The 'sight hounds' are based on a stone at Meigle which also has a 'reliquary base' - suggestive of a time when the local Kirk held at least one important religious relic along with its bronze handbell.

The pair of 'sinister beasts' are based on a cross from Monifieth, Angus, and protect the subjects in the scenes below.

Cinaed rides a regal horse, with a royal eagle on his hand. The eagle represents both his royal status and ability to launch attacks against the Norsemen.

His sword is based on the Gorton Sword in the National Museum of Scotland. The King's features are influenced by the style of the Forteviot Arch, also in the Museum.

The saint and the 'dragon's tail' images are based on carvings at St Vigean. The dragon is based on a carving at Meigle.

The 2 outriders represent rival claimants to the throne. We know there was a power struggle before Cinaed became King. The message here is that the rival houses now ride with Cinaed, and only Cinaed can be king and defend the Kingdom.

The Pictish eagle 'cantles' its Norse raven adversary. It appears that the eagle is victorious, but the raven is still defiant - a message that the enemy will have to be faced again and again.

There is a local legend, predating Cinaed's reign, that St Serf defeated a 'dragon' at nearby Dunning using only his staff. The use of the image invokes St Serf's support for Cinaed and the battles to come!



Carved by David McGovern
FSA Scot
www.monikierockart.co.uk

The Stone for Forteviot was carved in 2017 for the Tay Landscape Partnership project.



www.tayip.org



LOTTERY FUNDED

Lines written on the inauguration of the new cross-slab at Forteviot

Dramatis personae, in order of appearance:

Hon. Alexander Dewar of Dupplin, heir of Baron Forteviot

Brigadier Melville S Jameson CBE, Lord-Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross

Dennis Melloy, Provost of Perth and Kinross

Rev James Aitchison, Parish Church Minister

Stephen Driscoll, Professor of Historical Archaeology, University of Glasgow

David Strachan, Director, Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust

Sophie Nicoll, Historic Environment Officer, Tay Landscape Partnership

David McGovern, stone-carver

We'll remember that Saturday, March seventeen,
At Forteviot, there, at the heart of the green,
A fair crowd was gathered round a fine stone cross,
Of spirals, key, interlace, but nary a boss.

On the back there are figures of horses and men,
Birds, other weird creatures, perhaps a wyvern.
What it all means defies explanation,
But a local sage proffered this information –

The top man, the chief, who owns all the sod,
In raiment real rich, well armed, and well shod,
The bonny heir o' Dupplin, beloved of the poor,
Proud sits on his steed, bold Sandy Dewar.

Mounted above him two stalwarts ride near,
The Queen's man, Jameson, an old Brigadier,
He's Lord Lieutenant of the county fair,
And behind him the Provost on an old grey mare.

Through Perth and Kinross, the country o'er,
These eminent men exercise their power,
O'er the folk of Strathearn and much of the Tay,
O'er Forteviot, Dupplin, and Invermay.

And then, there's a puzzling avian scene,
Of two birds in combat, rarely seen.
An eagle has pinned a crow to the floor,
But corbie's words stick in aquila's craw.

"Your king of the air while soaring around,
But I am superior lord on the ground.
I can feign death, all the livelong day,
When you loosen your grip, I'll soon be away."

In a panel below, a beast, droll and sinister,
Is beguiled by Aitchison, the parish minister.
But the look of the sculpture is real Roman-like,
Hardly fit, for a protestant acolyte.

But what of this place in times long ago?
Forteviot's history we all need to know –
Steve Driscoll's our man, the Prof with a story,
Of finds archaeological, proofs salutary.

He tells of a palace, a castle, a city,
Which you'll never see, oh dear, what a pity,
But for treasures and clues, he still hunts around,
He'll even come dig in your garden ground.

Dave Strachan's Director of Perth Heritage
Trust him, he's an expert on every age;
But if a partner in landscape you're seeking on Tay,
Sophie Nicol's the person to meet sans delay.

And what of the carver so keen and so smart,
McGovern's his name, of Monikie Rock Art,
For many long months while chipping away,
"The stone is his mistress," his wife would say,

"Whoa, tie a yellow ribbon round the ole sandstone,
It's been a long year, to be away from home.
If I don't see a ribbon round the ole cross stone,
Stay in the shed, Davy, and carve another one."

To celebrate King Cinaed and Scotland's cradle,
With national pride, bare-kneed and able,
Bedecked in tartan and the odd glengarry,
We honoured a stone from an English quarry!

The ceremony over, we retreated to the ha',
For food and drink, but most of all to thaw.
The good folk of the village laid on a welcome treat,
Adequately warm enough to reach our frozen feet.

So farewell Forteviot and mac Alpin's hegemony,
This auspicious day will linger in our memory.
Let Scots and Picts united be, together bound in harmony,
Forever shunning rivalry, in the Pictish Arts Society.