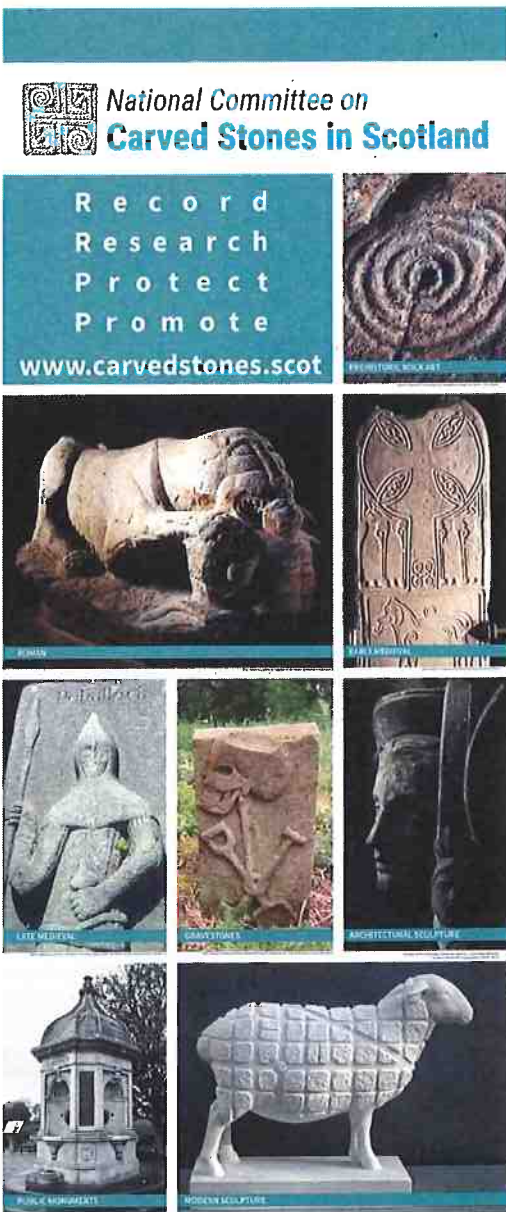




National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland

Annual Report 2017

The Committee met in Edinburgh on 17 March, 27 October and 15 December. We are grateful to Historic Environment Scotland (HES) for hosting these meetings, and for a grant to cover our costs, and for developing strategy (see below). We also thank Chris Purcell of HES for taking our minutes.



On 27 October we agreed a revised Constitution, as follows:

1. NAME

1.1 The name of the Committee is the National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland (hereinafter called 'the Committee').

2. OBJECTS

2.1 The Committee exists to draw attention to the threats to carved stones of all periods in or from Scotland, to promote their understanding and appreciation, and to encourage a common approach to their recording and preservation.

3. GENERAL OPERATING PRINCIPLES

3.1 The Committee shall strive to operate in an inclusive and open spirit of transparency, collaboration, partnership and free exchange of views, in the best interests of Scotland's carved stones.

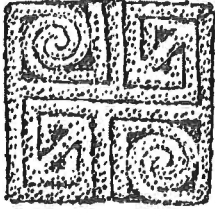
3.2 The Committee shall operate on an agreed statement of etiquette and effectiveness agreed by a majority of Members through a process agreed from time to time by the Committee.

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1 The NCCSS shall be an independent body of national organisations (Organisational Members) who have an interest in carved stones and support the objects of the Committee, plus an independent Chairperson, and co-opted Individual Members who also support the objects of the Committee.

4.2 All applications to become either Organisational Members or Individual Members of the Committee must be made using the procedure agreed from time to time by a majority of the Committee and must have the approval of the majority of the Committee.

4.3 All Organisational Members of the Committee must nominate a single



National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland

Representative and, if possible, a Deputy, to attend the Committee. Representatives and their Deputies shall act as the conduit between the Member Organisation and the Committee, contributing views and, where necessary, decisions on behalf of the Member Organisation, and keeping that Member Organisation informed of the Committee's discussions, decisions and activities. If the Representative or Deputy leaves the Member Organisation they shall cease to be able to attend the Committee unless they become an Individual Member.

4.4 Organisational Members, co-opted Individual Members, the Chairperson, Depute Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer may sit on the Committee for up to five years, but may re-join or be reappointed as required by majority agreement of Committee through a process agreed from time to time by the Committee.

5. HONORARY OFFICERS

5.1 At defined meetings, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson, Depute Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other Honorary Officers as it shall from time to time decide by a majority of Members.

5.2 The Chairperson shall be an expert whose specialist knowledge includes carved stones of any chronological period from prehistory to contemporary times, and whose employment (if any) will not cause conflict of interest. The Chairperson will not be an employee of or otherwise represent a Member Organisation.

5.3 The office of Chairperson may be occupied for up to five years, but can be reappointed for a further five years with the approval of not less than two thirds of those present and voting at a meeting of the Committee.

5.4 Other Honorary Officers shall be appointed by and from the Individual Members and Representatives of Organisational Members of the Committee by agreement of a majority of Members through a process agreed from time to time by the Committee.

5.5 A minute taker may be appointed who does not have voting rights and who is not considered a Member of the Committee. Alternatively a minute taker may be a Member of the Committee.

6. STATEMENTS BY THE COMMITTEE

6.1 Public statements may be issued on behalf of the Committee by the Chairperson where the issue in question relates to the work of the Committee and where the broad principles of the statement have been agreed at a meeting, or by other communication (such as mail, email, telephone, video conference), so that it has been ascertained that the views expressed are supported by the majority of Members. Statements on novel and contentious issues should be referred to, and require the explicit approval of, all Members.

7. RULES OF PROCEDURE

7.1 The Committee shall normally meet at least three times each year.

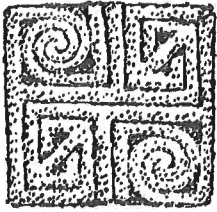
7.1.1 The quorum for any meeting shall consist of one third of the Members including the Chairperson or Depute Chairperson.

7.2 Save as otherwise herein provided, all questions raised at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote. Only Members and the Chairperson are entitled to vote.

7.3 Members unable to attend meetings, notice of which has been timeously circulated, may cast their votes on relevant matters by notifying the Committee in writing in advance, and the Chairperson or Depute will cast votes on their behalf.

7.4 The Chairperson (or Depute if the Chairperson is not present) has the deciding vote in the case of a tie.

7.5 In the event of any possible conflict of interest arising between the Committee's work and any Honorary Officer's employment, Individual Member's employment or role as a



National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland

Representative of an Organisational Member, that interest shall be declared and that Officer, Member or Representative shall be excluded from any vote on the matter.

7.6 Non-Members may be invited to attend meetings if the Committee wishes to seek specific information or advice outwith the expertise of existing members.

7.7 In the event of the absence of the appointed minute taker, the Minutes of the meeting shall be taken voluntarily by Members of the Committee. The Minutes shall in any case be initially viewed and commented on by the Chairperson and circulated to the Committee at least seven days in advance of the next meeting. The Committee shall approve the Minutes at the next meeting by majority vote, or by other written majority agreement (e.g. by email) if rapid approval is required.

8. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

8.1 Any alterations to the Constitution shall require the assent of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Committee present and voting (see 7) at a meeting for that purpose provided that notice of any such alteration shall have been received by the Chairperson in writing in time for circulation with the notice of such a meeting. At least 28 days notice shall be given for such a meeting.

9. DISSOLUTION

9.1 If the Committee by a simple majority decide at any time that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Committee, it shall call a meeting of all Members giving not less than 28 clear days notice and stating the terms of the Resolution to be proposed thereat. If such decision to dissolve the Committee is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting (see 7) at such a meeting the decision shall take effect immediately.

Dr Sally Foster was re-elected to Chair of the Committee; Dr Katherine Forsyth was elected as Deputy Chair, and Dr Susan Buckham continues as Treasurer.

Tertia Barnett accepted an invitation to join the Committee. Louise Baker took over from Dr Chris Bowles as the ALGAO representative; the Committee was extremely grateful to CB for his active contribution over many years.

Dr Katherine Forsyth assumed responsibility for co-ordinating casework at NCCSS meetings. We are grateful to external parties for bringing cases to our notice, and for completing the casework template. This enables the Committee to be more focussed, as well as making it easier to develop an oversight of developments.

Tom Gray passed away during the year and the Committee wished to acknowledge his significant contribution to the study of carved stone with particular reference to the excellent photography which is still being utilised by NCCSS.

Developing strategy

Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland: A Research Framework

Along with casework (see below), this was the Committee's main focus of attention.

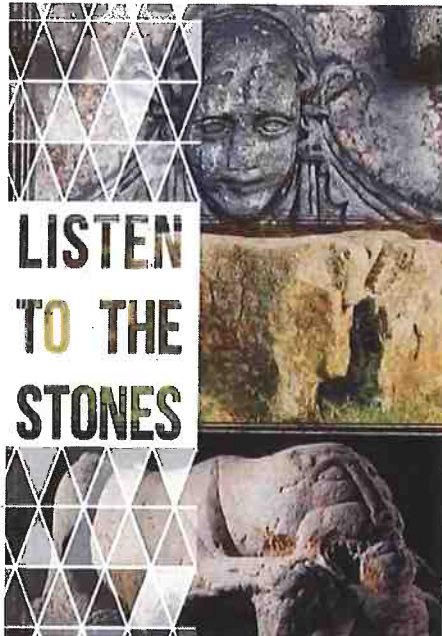
The Committee per Dr Susan Buckham was successful in obtaining a grant from HES for pathways to impact products and activities to progress the Research Framework, published online as part of SCARF in August 2016.

Co-ordinated by Dr Buckham, working with Carmen Moran (designer) promotional materials were produced:

- *Listen to the Stones*, a popular 24pp booklet written by Dr Adrian Maldonado, based on *Future Thinking* (1000 copies).
- Four designs of postcards (8,000) and banners to promote the *Listen to the Stones* resource, and hence the Framework.
- PDFs of the Framework core text and 39 case studies.



National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland



These resources were launched at the Community Archaeology conference at Strathclyde University on 11 November 2017, and the booklet and PDFs have subsequently been made available online.

Dr Buckham referenced *Future Thinking* in a policy briefing on Burial (Scotland) Act 2016, and she and SF used it at various public / community workshops, including the Stirling Global Challenges conference in early September.

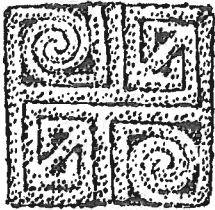
Research developments and outcomes

- We welcomed the establishment of Scotland's Rock Art Project by HES, PI Dr Tertia Barnett. Sally Foster is a member of its Advisory Board, which held its first meeting in August 2017.
- The Committee welcomed the news that Durham University, per Professor Sarah Semple, has been granted an award to complete the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture, possibly extending this to include the material north of the Border. More detail is awaited.

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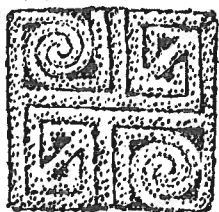
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Casework (including new discoveries)

New discoveries were made due to building work, recording programmes, community projects and chance observations. The most spectacular of these was the chance find during roadworks of a large stone incised with a naked warrior (early Pictish period), Tulloch, Perth. Another Pictish stone, a cross-slab, was found at Newark, Deerness, Orkney. Analysis of a digital scan made as part of a community archaeology project at Inchinnan, Renfrewshire revealed that a stone previously thought to be later medieval was in fact an early medieval slab of the 'Govan School'. Recording by HES in Caipie Caves & Constantine's Caves, Fife revealed previously unrecognised graffiti including animal carvings and potential new Pictish symbol. Work by a local heritage group at the Howff, Dundee, uncovered a medieval coped stone re-carved with a 16th/17th-century inscription. Later mediaeval carved stones (including a potential boundary marker, a calvary cross-slab, and architectural fragments) were also recognised built into later structures: at St Ninian's belfry, Stirling; Tealing Steading, Angus; and the parish kirkyard wall, Cupar; and near Melrose Abbey, Borders. An important early Celtic revival gravestone (1845) was recognised at Weemys.

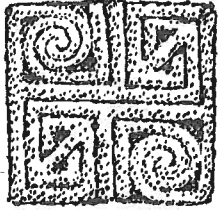
Curatorial concerns

The Committee noted a number of cases of curatorial concern: redundancy of the parish Church of Struan, Perthshire rendered vulnerable three cross-slabs and a Pictish class I stone. Recent photographs of a scheduled medieval gravestone with a rare depiction of a harper, St Comgan's, Glendale, Skye appeared to show significant deterioration since photographs taken in the 1960s. It transpired that the important harp depiction had not been noted on the original scheduling documentation. Other curatorial issues discussed included the importance of keeping communities informed regarding the status of stones removed from the local area for conservation or other purposes.

Examples of good practice

The Committee commended a number of examples of curatorial good practice and the celebration of carved stones, including some great examples of outreach and physical engagement: Simple and effective signage to improve protection of the carvings at the Caipie Caves, Fife (SCAPE Group); the erection of a large new high-quality cross-slab in Pictish style by David McGovern, Forteviot, Perthshire (community project); completion of renovation of the Lapidarium at Kilmartin (HES); public dissemination of 3D models of Advie symbol stone, Moray. Some lesser known items of Pictish sculpture were very effectively displayed, in the Picts & Pixels exhibition at Perth Museum in Aug 2017, which made innovative use of 3D models and virtual reality. A 30-minute long documentary film, 'Govan Young', about local primary school children engaging with their local carved stone heritage was shown at film festivals around the world, winning a number of awards.

Sally Foster, University of Stirling and
Katherine Forsyth, University of Chair
Chair and Deputy Chair of NCCSS
s.m.foster@stir.ac.uk
26 March 2018



National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland

Annual Report 2016

The Committee met in Edinburgh on 11 March, 9 September and 9 December 2016 (Figure 1). We are grateful to Historic Environment Scotland (HES) for hosting these meetings, and for a grant to cover our costs, support for a *Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland* workshop (see below) and new logo, designed by Ingrid Shearer of Northlight Heritage (see above).



Figure 1: The Committee at work in December 2016

We are also grateful to HES for providing a minute-taker for our meetings: Lucy White (to March 2016) and Chris Purcell (from September 2016; Figure 2).



Figure 2: Chris Purcell, new minute taker

After the December meeting, National Museums Scotland (NMS) kindly provided a tour of its Granton facilities, particularly its storage provisions for carved stones (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Committee members in the NMS at Granton

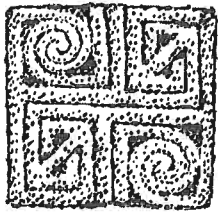
Developing strategy

Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland: A Research Framework

The main thrust of the Committee's work was contributing to the completion of this Research Framework. It involved over 30 authors, led by Committee members Sally Foster, Katherine Forsyth, Susan Buckham, and Dr Stuart Jeffrey of Glasgow School of Art. Other Committee members provided peer review, and contributed case studies and images.

The Research Agenda was launched as part of the Scottish Archaeology Research Framework (ScARF) on 24 August at Govan Old Church in Glasgow. Over the following months we have distributed 2,000 promotional bookmarks, mostly at events and conferences.

For the period 23 August to 23 October, this was the most viewed panel report on ScARF. It was also the second most popular landing page. Case studies were the most popular sections, notably that on the tomb of Robert the Bruce.



National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland

The Framework is only the beginning: we intend to make a concerted effort to take it forward armed with supporting materials that will meet the needs of wider audiences. In September we applied to HES for funding to produce an illustrated pdf of the full text (which certain stakeholders will find easier to use



<http://www.scottishheritagehub.com/content/future-thinking-carved-stones-scotland>



Figure 4: The banner, URL and sponsors of the *Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland* project

than an on-line version); a downloadable 24-page illustrated booklet targeting a wider audience; promotional materials for use at community etc conferences; and travel costs for strategic meetings with key organisations, the aim of which will be to next steps in taking forward the agenda.

Research developments and outcomes

- The Committee has prepared a list of 2016 publications relating to Scotland's carved stones for its website.
- A research seminar took place on 25 November at the NMS on Memorials of the Scottish Diaspora.

Casework (including new discoveries)

During the course of the year we learnt about and commented on new discoveries of carved stones of all periods. An increasing amount of the advice we offer is now handled by email between meetings. The Committee continues to try to enforce the use of a template for the reporting of casework so that we can

more effectively monitor progress of cases and take an overview of the issues.

Curatorial concerns

- In 2016 we were most forcibly reminded of the complications relating to the protection and conservation of carved stones that are in private ownership. This includes nationally important monuments. Their needs may not be very visible, because the stones are not publicly accessible - they are in gardens, private mausolea, etc. While some are in public places, such as cemeteries, their effective future preservation requires a local champion, but cash-strapped local governments and trusts are not well placed to intervene, even assuming they recognise they have a locus. This is an issue that requires quantification.
- Equally, we were concerned to see the implications of Council cut-backs, e.g. on service agreements for graveyard maintenance, or in seeking to pass important collections in museums out of their hands.

Examples of good practice

- Notable redisplays of carved stones took place at Elgin Cathedral (HES) and at Forteviot, where the local Landscape Partnership secured the future of a collection of loose and vulnerable stones.
- The Pictish Arts Society continues to be active in its efforts to secure the preservation of important stones.
- The BM/NMSCelts exhibition, co-curated by Committee member Martin Goldberg - carved stones featured prominently, not least in contributions to the accompanying book.
- Newcastle Rock Art Project has produced a Rock Art Portal and Phone App that permits an integrated platform for different users to share records.

Sally Foster, University of Stirling
Chair of NCCSS

s.m.foster@stir.ac.uk

27 March 2017



The Committee met in Edinburgh on 12 June, 11 September and 4 December 2015. We are grateful to the RCAHMS/HES for kindly hosting these meetings, and to what was Historic Scotland (HS) for a grant to cover our costs, support for a *Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland* workshop (see below) and new logo design for the Committee (see report for 2016 forthcoming).

Developing strategy

New website

The NCCSS launched its new website on 31 March 2015. Designed by Ingrid Shearer of Northlight Ltd, its structure and content was very much a team effort, with Committee members writing text and providing images.

Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland: A Research Framework



Developing a Research Framework for carved stones as part of ScARF (Scottish Archaeological Research Framework) was the main focus of activity for the Committee in 2015. Sally Foster and Katherine Forsyth, with support from Susan Buckham, organised four workshops. SF and KF had successfully obtained a Workshop grant from the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and the NCCSS successfully applied to HS for funds that enabled Workshop 3 to be free to anyone who wanted to attend.

The aim of the Framework is to link, inspire, mobilize and help direct the efforts of anyone with an interest in or responsibility for carved stones in Scotland. It is a venture that involves not only the academic community and the fragmented heritage and stewardship sectors, but also individuals and communities across Scotland and beyond. It is driven by a desire for a more strategic approach to the opportunities and challenges presented by Scotland's carved stones.

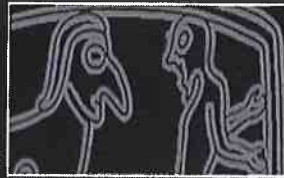
The [NCCSS](#) takes the view that addressing the underlying causes of these problems requires targeted research into what carved stones can tell us about both the past (their historical context) and the present (social value, national and community identity). Research is needed also into curatorial issues, including the identification of best practice: for example, auditing and monitoring the resource, techniques of conservation and management, display and interpretation, and the role of new technologies in all of these.

The heart of the *Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland* project was a series of workshops to take stock of existing and ongoing research and to identify priorities for future research. Priority was given to two specific areas that seemed particularly pressing or potentially fruitful. First, digital recording technology, a field in which Scotland aspires to play a leading role but where the emphasis to date has been on data capture rather than research. Second, carved stones associated with churches, where so many are inevitably found. This is because changes in the role of churches within local communities, specifically accelerating redundancy and changes of ownership, present particular threats to carved stones, while increasing use of heritage as a means of community regeneration offers welcome opportunities.

Workshop 1 *Digital recording of carved stones for research: where are we and where can we go?* (Glasgow School of Art Digital Design Studio, 12 February, invitees from England, Ireland, Scotland and Sweden). This focused on the corpus of carved stones produced in north-western Europe between AD 400 and 1200, but had implications for digital recording of carved stones of all periods.

Workshop 2 *At the door of the church? Research and carved stones at ecclesiastical sites* (Govan Old Church, 1 May, invitees only, from Scotland).

Workshop 3 *Future thinking on carved stones in Scotland* (Royal Society of Edinburgh, 26 August, open to all, attendees coming from England, the Isle of Man, Scotland and Wales).



Workshop 4 Future Thinking: ScARF for Carved Stones in Scotland (University of Stirling, 28 October 2015, authors and ScARF team).

The *Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland* project [website](#) reflects efforts made to communicate and involve people unable to attend the workshops.

Discussion of various issues at Committee meetings has helped to clarify issues addressed in the Framework document, and Committee members had the opportunity to comment on a draft of it, and were targeted for specific advice and case studies.

The Framework, co-authored by Sally Foster, Katherine Forsyth, Susan Buckham and Stuart Jeffrey, with contributions from nearly 40 individuals, will be published on the [ScARF website](#) in summer 2016, with a launch in August.

Research developments and outcomes

In addition to the strategic research efforts of the Framework, the following were particularly noted:

- The Committee published on its website a list of publications that appeared in 2015.
- With the University of Glasgow hosting three major international events (International Congress of Celtic Studies, European Archaeological Association and the 3rd Runes, Monuments and Memorial Carvings workshop), carved stones were a feature in their popular fieldtrips, as well as the subject of a number of research papers presented.
- The Pictish Art Society conference took place at Meigle; Fife Gravestones conference at Kirkcaldy.
- International research interest in replicas of carved stones continues (e.g. two conferences on plaster casts in Berlin in 2015). Sally Foster and David Clarke continue work on the replicas of early medieval sculptures in the NMS, photography funded by the Henry Moore Foundation and kindly facilitated by the NMS.

Casework (including new discoveries)

The Committee noted and/or dealt with a number of consultations, including the following:

- The Secretary Dr Susan Buckham met with the Scottish Government Burial and Cremation Team about its recent consultation on grave reuse because of concerns about the possible impact on the significance of historic graveyards.
- The Committee noted but was unable to respond to the consultation on the Prescription and Title to Moveable Property (Scotland) Bill. Advice received from the Treasure Trove Unit suggested that anything that fell under TT would be excluded from the new legislation.

The Chair wrote to Argyll and Bute Council with its concerns for the important collections of carved stones at Campbeltown Museum, which was being considered for closure/removal of professional curatorship.

To facilitate the presentation and sharing of casework, the Committee designed, trialled and modified a casework template.

The Committee was particularly concerned to note the condition of the Rossie Priory Pictish cross-slab, which is in private ownership and decaying inside a building because of the apparent absence of a damp-proof membrane. It notified the HES East Team of its concerns, and also advised the PKHT. This case raised the wider issues of how significant carved stones that are in private care, and may be essentially inaccessible, are satisfactorily monitored and managed.

Prompted by an external notification, the Committee discussed and forwarded its concerns about the vulnerability of the scheduled Anglo-Saxon carvings at Abercorn.

Prompted by an external notification, the Committee wrote to Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust to see if a local solution was possible for a cracked 19C monument at Rossie Priory.



The Committee noted mixed local responses to uncovering the Cochno prehistoric rock art in order to assess the monument's condition.

The Committee noted the potential of the early medieval carvings on Muck and Eigg for enhanced display and interpretation, as well as the discovery of two new cross-incised stones.

The Committee noted that fibreglass copies of Pictish carved stones formerly in Pictavia at Brechin have been donated to the Aberlemno Community Council.

The Committee noted a number of welcomed HS grant-aided projects to conserve medieval carved stones in private ownership. It noted that no archaeological work had been undertaken in advance of the relocation of the Luss hogback to the church, despite the fact it may have stood in an original or early location in the graveyard.

The Committee noted ongoing concerns about gravestone and memorial stability in graveyards, and the need for updated guidance developed in partnership with industry bodies.

Interesting new discoveries noted by the Committee include:

- A visit to the findspot of a prehistoric cupmark on Soutra Hill led to the discovery of a new henge.
- Early medieval cross fragments from Applecross, rediscovered during works on the graveyard wall.
- Gravestone of unknown date built into a building in Whithorn.
- A fragment of a possible 11/12C recumbent gravemarker from Cupar.
- Newly recognized ogham on the Maiden Stone.

Examples of good practice

Noted highlights included:

- Scanning of Wemyss Caves by York Archaeological Trust and resultant website.
- The Cradle of Scotland exhibition at the Hunterian Museum, which reported on new discoveries made by the University of Glasgow's SERF project. It combined original artefacts, digitisations and visualisations of carved stones to very good effect, including the Dupplin Cross.

This exhibition was visited by many of the attendees of the EAA conference in September.

- The Faith in Cowal project, an initiative of the Church of Scotland, has resulted in the new display of the cross from Kilmun and a wider initiative to promote faith tourism that exploits the evidence for early Christianity, including carved stones, in the area.
- The Luss hogback and other carved stones from the site by Loch Lomond have been conserved/redisplayed with HES funding.
- Edinburgh World Heritage's production of new graveyard leaflets.

Curatorial concerns

The Committee noted the difficulties of identifying carved stones in the indexes of the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* and *Discovery and Excavation Scotland*. The Chair contacted the Editors of both organisations, who were happy to receive guidance. It was decided to flag this issue, which needs considerable thought, in the Future Thinking project.

Access to/monitoring/management of carved stones in private ownership.

Failure to formally accession new discoveries in the past and its implications for current fieldwork.

Other

It also noted with pleasure that Tom Gray had been awarded an honorary degree from Aberdeen University for his contribution to photographing carved stones. This award reflects the significance of carved stones to Scottish culture as well as the achievements of Tom Gray in promoting their importance.

The Committee noted the need to review its Constitution and membership, and that it was desirable to do so informed by the outcomes of the Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland: A Research Framework. It will also provide members with greater clarification about their roles in relationship to liaison with their respective



organisations, and the desirability of sending a deputy if unable to attend.

The Committee spent time trying to seek support for the Secretary in her duties, but to no effect.

The year ended on a very happy note when a second member received an award in the New Year Honours list: Sharon Webb, Director and Curator of Kilmartin Museum, received a well-deserved MBE for services to Heritage and Archaeology in Scotland.

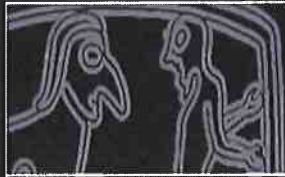


*Dr Sharon Webb MBE explaining the cup-marks on a standing stone at Nether Largie in the Kilmartin Glen.
Image © Sally Foster.*

Sally Foster, University of Stirling
Chair, NCCSS

s.m.foster@stir.ac.uk

12 June 2016 rev 11 Sep 2016



The Committee met in Edinburgh on 6 May, 15 August and 12 December 2014. We are grateful to the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust and RCAHMS for kindly hosting these meetings, and to Historic Scotland (HS) for a grant to cover our miscellaneous costs and ongoing website redesign.

Developing strategy

- This was at the forefront of our work in 2014. In order to clarify its role and develop a more strategic function, the Committee completed an analysis of the problems faced by carved stones, their causes and effects, the impacts the Committee aims to have on them, and how best to achieve this. This was followed by a SWOT analysis for the NCCSS in relation to the identified purpose, overall objectives and results sought, and, since communication was identified as a key issue, an analysis of our key audiences and what and how to communicate to them (see website).
- To improve our communication, and reflect better on our work, the Committee decided to initiate a short Annual Report. The Chair also produced a retrospective report for 2013.
- Redesign of the website is in progress (to be completed by end March 2015). Committee members have contributed to its content, while Northlight Heritage has been commissioned to undertake its construction and design. The planned URL is www.carvedstones.scot.
- To progress our strategic approach, the present and most recent chairs of the NCCSS (Sally Foster, University of Stirling and Dr Katherine Forsyth, University of Glasgow) applied in September 2014 to the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) for a £10k Workshop Grant, to be delivered in collaboration with the NCCSS: *Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland* (see details below). In December RSE confirmed that this bid was successful. In September, the Committee also applied successfully to HS for funds to enable wide participation in the largest of the planned workshop events.
- The Committee recognises that loose and vulnerable stones are a particular priority for strategic and joined-up action by heritage bodies and others, and that there may be scope for

improved legislation to add protection and clarify responsibilities. In late December 2014, Scottish Government announced its consultation on the Historic Environment Scotland Act - Secondary Legislation.

- Our December meeting ended with a seminar delivered by Dr Victoria Whitworth (Centre for Nordic Studies of the Orkney College of the University of the Islands and Highlands) entitled 'Early, innovative and influential: a reconsideration of hogbacked stones from Meikle, Govan and Inchcolm in their wider context'. This was a joint venture with the RCAHMS.

Research developments and outcomes

- *Future Thinking on Carved Stones in Scotland (RSE-funded workshops led by SMF and KF in collaboration with the NCCSS)*
This project, taking place in 2015/16, aims to generate a research agenda for carved stones in Scotland, filling what the heritage sector recognises to be an important gap in the existing Scottish Archaeology Research Framework (ScARF) (<http://www.scottishheritagehub.com>). Given the nature of the resource, research interests cut across periods, disciplines (humanities and sciences), and across the fragmented heritage and stewardship sectors. Four linked workshops will define priorities for future research from both a historical and curatorial perspective. This research agenda will be published on-line as a contribution to ScARF. Each workshop will bring together a range of participants for the first time. We aim to constitute one or more research networks directed at specific questions, and to lay initial groundwork for other potential future research collaborations. This is a strategic effort to link, inspire, mobilise and help direct diffuse communities with an interest in and responsibility for carved stones.
- A particularly notable project was the Tomb of Robert the Bruce project, which, among other things, deployed 3D-laser scanning for research purposes to reconstruct a very fragmentary and dismembered monument, not simply for the purpose of visual effects.



• *Bibliography of carved stones*

The Committee compiled a bibliography of publications dated 2014 (and retrospectively for 2012 and 2013), to be published on our new website. The Chair will be pleased to receive the full details of relevant publications as published, and to update the back lists. Our focus for the bibliography is work related to material in Scotland, although we are always pleased to learn of key publications about non-Scottish material that might inform our research and curatorial work.

• *Conferences*

Events which featured papers on Scottish carved stones included the Pictish Arts Society annual conference (Caithness Horizons, October 2014), the 7th International Insular Art Conference (NUI Galway, July 2014) and the University of Edinburgh's *Celtic Revival in Scotland* conference and exhibition (May 2014).

Casework (including new discoveries)

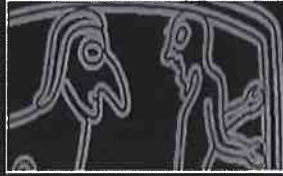
- We discussed 56 cases and projects, including a number of new discoveries of prehistoric to Modern-period date, as well as new observations made on existing stones in the course of recording. Examples included: new prehistoric rock art from Over Glenny near the Lake of Menteith (Stirling); part of a Pictish goose at Cotterton (Highland), a fragment of Pictish key and spiral carvings recognised at the collections in Aberdour Castle (Fife) and now more securely curated; unusual worked stones encountered during the Pictish Arts Society fieldtrip to St Thomas' Chapel, Skinnet (Highland); and graffiti on a stone from a garden in Duns (Scottish Borders) that appears to depict a medieval church.
- A query about a concrete look-a-like of part of the Aberlemno Kirkyard stone recognised in Gloucestershire prompted Committee members and others to draw on their collective memories about the production of garden furnishings based on carved stones.

Examples of good practice

- Further to the Hilton of Cadboll online jigsaw that was part of the Glenmorangie *Creative Spirit* exhibition in 2013, crowd sourcing is also a feature of the Wemyss Cave website, where visitors can search online scans to identify and analyse detail: <http://www.4dwemysscaves.org>
- *Adding a new dimension to Dundee's medieval carved stones* (<http://www.aocarchaeology.com/dundee-medieval-stones/>), a HLF-funded project, was a good example of how to involve the public in recording and understanding carved stones, in this case a neglected body of important medieval graveslabs that offer insights into Dundee's elite.
- Redisplay of early medieval monuments has been a key theme: HS's redisplay of the Kirkmadrine Stones (Dumfries and Galloway) opens in January 2015; the National Trust for Scotland has redisplayed the Pictish symbol stones at Leith Hall (Aberdeenshire); Caithness Horizon's redisplay of its carved stone collection; and plans are in hand for Forteviot as part of the Tayside Landscape Partnership. We also noted with interest the relocation of the Downpatrick High Cross in Northern Ireland.
- We noted that HS has improved its storage of *ex situ* architectural fragments at several of its medieval properties, and continues its recording programme for them.
- The excellence of the innovative lighting of the new displays of sculpture at Iona by KSLD was recognised by a series of lighting industry awards. See: http://www.kevan-shaw.com/projects/project_page/iona_abbey
- We noted that Manx National Heritage has published Statements of Significance for its Manx Crosses and Carved Stones:
- Govan Old Churchyard Conservation Plan.

Curatorial concerns

- We noted how difficult it is to use indexes in *Discovery and Excavation Scotland (DES)* and the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of*



Scotland to identify work on carved stones. We have brought this to their Editors' attention.

- Loose and therefore vulnerable stones that may fall between legislative provisions or curatorial roles is a perennial issue.
- The late medieval Roseneath cross (Argyll and Bute) was not located by one member on a recent visit to the churchyard. The early medieval, portable cross-slab from Innerleithen (Scottish Borders) has now been descheduled.
- We continue to be concerned about stones with conservation and other issues that are in the care of trusts that are not necessarily sustainable. The Shandwick Stone (Highland) is the prime example.

Sally Foster, University of Stirling
Chair, NCCSS

s.m.foster@stir.ac.uk

28 January 2015

Other

The Committee was absolutely delighted when its long-standing member, Ian G Scott, received a well-deserved MBE in July 2014 'For services to Archaeology in Scotland'.



Ian G Scott recording the Forteviot Stones. Image © Mark A Hall.



The Committee met in Edinburgh on 26 April, 23 August and 6 December 2013. We are grateful to Historic Scotland (HS) for a grant to cover our miscellaneous costs and the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust and RCAHMS for kindly hosting these meetings.

Changes in membership

Dr Sally Foster (then of Aberdeen University), succeeded Dr Katherine Forsyth (University of Glasgow) as independent Chair in December 2012. HS's Heritage Management Group expanded its representation to also include Mrs Sheila Clark.

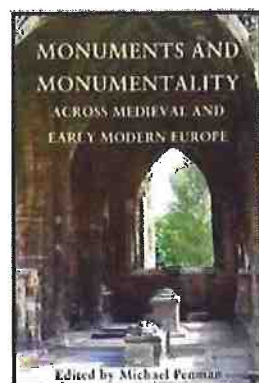
Developing strategy

In order to clarify its role and develop a more strategic function, the Committee initiated an analysis of the problems faced by carved stones, their causes and effects, the impacts the Committee aims to have on them, and how best to achieve this (an exercise completed in 2014 – see website). In September, in order to improve its communication, the Committee successfully applied for grant-aid from HS to design and re-implement its website (in 2014-15).

An important way that the Committee considers strategic issues and developments, as well as learns from best practice, is through invited speakers. We were pleased to welcome Professor Harold Mytum of the Centre for Manx Studies, Liverpool University to our December meeting to talk about his recent project to consult stakeholders in England about recording standards, data management and archiving of records for graveyard surveys.

Research developments and outcomes

We initiated an annual bibliography of publications relating to carved stones in Scotland (see website). This is intended to provide a resource for researchers and other interested parties, as well as helping to celebrate the breadth of



interest there is in carved stones in Scotland. A particularly noteworthy publication was Michael Penman's *Monuments and Monumentality across Medieval and Early Modern Europe*.

Casework (including new discoveries)

The Committee recognises that its role is not to undertake casework actively as a body. However, it also recognises the value in considering individual cases as they arise for three reasons. First, this overview of developments allows the Committee to identify and promote examples of good practice.

Second, it can recognise curatorial issues and broader trends that may need sector-wide solutions and explore how to contribute to addressing these. Third, it provides a forum for the pooling of expertise about diverse aspects of carved stones and their care which members, on behalf of their institutions, can draw on for help in identifying the nature and considering the significance of specific carved stones, and for exploring key curatorial issues.

Over the course of the year the Committee discussed 44 cases and projects, including a number of new discoveries, e.g. Neolithic scratch art found built into a ruined post-medieval building at Rhù Arasaig (Highland)(relocated to Arisaig Heritage Museum), early medieval sculptures ploughed up in a field at Craigellachie (Moray) and noted by a keen observer at Cill Choirill, Braes Lochaber (Highland), the excavation of a 13C Calvary cross-slab at Infirmary Street in Edinburgh, a medieval carved head from the walls of Coldingham Parish Church (Scottish Borders), and a probably 17C sundial found at a croft at Houlland (Shetland) along with other 15-17C worked masonry.

Examples of good practice

- The active role of the Pictish Arts Society, such as assisting with fundraising for the new display of sculptures at Logierait (Perth and Kinross) and securing the future of the early medieval sculptures from Glamis (Angus).
- The recording of important carved stone collections by the RCAHMS, such as the Kirkmadrine stones (Dumfries and Galloway), and



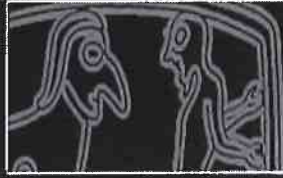
Curatorial concerns

- the continuing work of Ian G Scott, formerly of the RCAHMS, in Shetland.
- A working group including representation from HS aims to prepare a Conservation Plan for Wemyss Caves (Fife), while SCAPE and Northlight Heritage were involved in digital recording for the Visualising Wemyss Caves project.
- Govan Old (Glasgow) redisplayed its early medieval carved stone collection, launched by the Deputy First Minister, while the Nigg Trust redisplayed the Nigg cross-slab (Highland).
- Caithness Horizons improved the display of its carved stones.
- HS's conservation of the carved stones at Kirkmadrine (for redisplay in 2014) and creative redisplay of the museum of carved stones at Iona Abbey (Argyll and Bute), informed by new research.
- HS's loan of the Jedburgh Shrine (Scottish Borders) to an international exhibition at Paderborn in Germany, while one of the Govan hogbacks was lent to the British Museum for its Viking Exhibition.
- HS grant-aid supported conservation of Barbreck's Well, Ardfern (Argyll and Bute).
- Edinburgh World Heritage Site appointed a part-time Graveyards Development Officer.
- The Scottish Association of Family History Societies made public information about its graveyards inventory.
- In June 2013 a conference took place in Glasgow in honour of Isabel Henderson, while in October the Pictish Arts Society held its annual conference in Perth.
- Several Adopt-a-Monument schemes involved local communities in caring for graveyards.



Nigg cross-slab redisplayed.
©Sally Foster

- There were several instances of the sale of redundant churches which contained carved stones, sometimes of considerable significance, with implications for their future protection and preservation of the stones.
- Changes in ownership, including sale of churches to private owners, can affect access to important stones, such as the Glamis Manse cross-slab.
- We noted that some owners of carved stones are reluctant to allow continued access to those in their gardens, even when requested for purposes of recording and study.
- We noted the considerable challenges that museums, trusts and other bodies face obtaining funds to conserve and present their carved stones, and the practical struggles small, sometimes voluntary, bodies can face, as at Shandwick (Highland).
- There are still instances of prehistoric rock art being discovered by people who disturb the surrounding ground without archaeological supervision. This is a concern because there is increasing scientific evidence for potential archaeological evidence to survive that can help us to understand their creation and use through time.
- There is no easy way of easily establishing which carved stones have been laser scanned, and where the data is curated, so opportunities for others to use and recycle digital data for research and other purposes is being missed.
- The fate of loose and vulnerable stones remains a key concern because the locus of different bodies is confusing and/or they can fall between responsibilities. Issues include: that much depends on the significance attached to 'primary' locations, when biographies of stones mean that secondary locations are also significant; stones can change status as a result of accident of deliberate acts; the weight given to historical background as evidence; and how carved stones might be covered by scheduling and the implications of the 2011 Historic Environment Amendment Act for scheduling artefact scatters, i.e. technically portable things that are not *in situ*.



The National Committee
on Carved Stones in Scotland

Annual Report 2013

Other

The Committee noted the retirement in September 2014 of Norman Atkinson from Angus Council, who in his professional and personal capacity has made an outstanding contribution to the preservation and promotion of Pictish carved stones, in particular.

Sally Foster, University of Stirling
Chair, NCCSS

s.m.foster@stir.ac.uk

24 December 2014