



August Newsletter 2020

Dear Scottish Group members,

Welcome to the Scottish Group Summer newsletter!

It's been an eventful year so far, I hope everyone is doing well, considering the challenges that this year has brought for everyone. Due to **recent events there's been a bit of a gap since our last newsletter, but we're back on track now!**

In this issue we will be looking into: current events and Scottish archaeology; news and changes to the Scottish Group committee; recent publications in Scottish archaeology; changes to DES and OASIS; and a behind-the-scenes look at the Scottish Crannog Centre.

If you have any comments or queries about the Scottish Group, feel free to get in touch with us through our email, secretary.cifa.sg@gmail.com, or on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). We also have information on the group's [CIfA webpage](#).

Keep safe!

Josh Gaunt BA MCIfA

And the Scottish Group committee

#Black Lives Matter

The Scottish Group committee would like to state on record its support for the #Black Lives Matter movement.

The sector that our members represent and support – Scottish archaeology – can be one that is clearly unrepresentative in regards to the diversity of ethnicity, colour, religion, class, geographical origin, religious affiliation or gender that modern Scotland enjoys.

The Institute is committed to ensure that the Scottish Group maintains a diverse committee that represents the breadth of the profession and, more widely, the general public. The Group will also work hard to raise the profile of the organisation beyond the traditional bastions of Scottish archaeology. We will strive to ensure that the membership of Scottish Archaeology Group, and in turn CIfA, feel that they are part of an inclusive and forward-thinking organisation that shares and reflects their values.

We will always support pathways into archaeology that aim to broaden and diversify the profession.

Committee news

There are several changes of personnel on the horizon for the Scottish Group Committee

Two current committee members will be reaching the end of their time in key roles of the committee – Sam Fox will be stepping down as chair of the committee, and Tristan Boyle will be stepping down from the Treasurer and Social Media position. **Thanks to them for their time and energy that they've given to the group and we wish them the best in their next steps!**

As a result, there will be vacant positions on the Scottish Group committee, so if you have an interest in contributing to the Scottish Group by becoming a committee member then get in [contact](#). Our next AGM will be taking place in October – more details to follow.

We also have a new member joining the committee:

Josh Gaunt BA (Hons) MCI fA



Ordinary Committee member

Josh has been working as a commercial archaeologist since 2014, as a part of the team **at Headland's Edinburgh office.**

He has an interest in promoting technology, training and innovation within the industry, and has been involved in the development and implementation of training software, photogrammetry, drones and digital survey within his current role - and is keen to keep on top of upcoming developments that will benefit the profession.

Josh is an enthusiastic advocator for staff and has taken on the role of Lead Staff Representative for Headland. He strives to ensure all archaeologists are well trained, equipped and supported on every project.

Upcoming meetings

As a member of the CifA Scottish Group, you have the right to attend our group committee meetings if you so wish. Committee meetings are held each quarter. Members can attend in person or remotely with an internet connection via our videoconferencing facilities.

The next meeting is Tuesday 8 September 2020, from 1pm.

If you would like to attend, please send an email to secretary.cifa.sg@gmail.com.

In addition, our AGM will be held on Tuesday 13 October. Further details for this will follow, including the details of training that will take place as part of the day.

Recent publications

Dr Shirley Curtis-Summers

A recent publication in the *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* (vol. 31: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352409X20300948>) reports a large-scale stable isotope study on the adult skeletons from Portmahomack. Dr Shirley Curtis-Summers, Lecturer in Archaeological and Forensic Sciences at the University of Bradford, studied 137 skeletons buried under the old Tarbat Parish Church in Portmahomack. They span the 6th- to 17th-century and present hundreds of years of Highland history, including two periods of Pictish life: from a 6th-century small farming community, and subsequent Pictish monastic community, and also a late medieval parish church community. Results found stark differences between Pictish and later medieval diets that appear to reflect important social and religious changes over time. This is the first large-scale study on the Portmahomack skeletal assemblage that presents new isotope data, which gives much needed new insights into Pictish and medieval subsistence patterns, along with interpretations of influences on diet over time.

Melanie Johnson

We're delighted to announce two recent publications from CFA Archaeology Ltd.

The first, in volume 42 (March 2020) of *Scottish Archaeological Journal*, is currently the featured article and is available to read for free - [Excavation of two burnt mounds and a wooden trough near Ryeriggs, Fochabers, Moray, by Gary Savory](#). The report details the discovery of at least two burnt mounds during cabling work near Fochabers in 2016. A wooden trough was found beneath one of the burnt mounds, and post-excavation revealed it to be made of oak and alder planks, which were radiocarbon dated to 2465-1928 BC. The trough was very similar to that found at Beechwood Farm, Inverness and is the first of its kind found in Moray and one of only a handful across the country.

<https://www.euppublishing.com/doi/abs/10.3366/saj.2020.0120>

The second reports on the excavations at Musselburgh Primary Health Care centre, by Magnus Kirby, and is published as SAIR vol 89. This important excavation uncovered six Iron Age burials (four women, one man, one unsexed) in four graves, one of them being a stone-lined cist, and two graves containing two individuals – grave goods included penannular brooches. Roman period remains on the site included six Roman inhumations (all males) and a horse burial, the rampart of a possible Roman fortlet, and later Roman period field systems and middens. The inhumations are significant as, not only are Roman inhumations uncommon in Scotland but four of them had been decapitated after death, with the heads buried in the graves in anatomically incorrect positions and are the first evidence for post-mortem decapitation at a Scottish site. They belong to the same period as the Antonine occupation of Inveresk Fort above the site, and the report discusses the theories behind this burial rite and who these men might have been, including the results of isotopic analysis to shed light on their geographic origins.

<http://journals.socantscot.org/index.php/sair/issue/view/301>

Discovery and excavation in Scotland and OASIS are changing

Peter McKeague

Historic Environment Scotland

The way fieldwork is reported in Scotland is changing. Archaeology Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland have been working with the Archaeology Data Service and Historic England to redevelop the OASIS form which is now over twelve years old. The new form will combine the online Discovery and Excavation in Scotland form with OASIS so that you only need to report fieldwork once.

Making more of the knowledge you create

Information gathered through the form will still be shared with the relevant Historic Environment Record and the national record published on Canmore. Where licence agreements are in place, copies of the project reports (the Grey Literature) will be available through the Archaeology Data Service Library.

The data you enter once will work harder. Project details will be collated within the new form and downloaded to streamline the production of Discovery and Excavation in Scotland. Additionally, users can highlight significant discoveries through the new Research Frameworks module. Here they can add a brief note about how their work contributes against a geographically relevant list of questions. Information added will be shared with the relevant regional Research Frameworks panel following publication of Discovery and Excavation in Scotland.

The screenshot shows the OASIS form interface for 'Evaluation at Great Western Road'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Results' and 'Help' tabs, and buttons for 'Cancel edit', 'Save page', 'Previous page', and 'Next page'. Below this is a section titled 'Description - outcomes *' with a text box containing the text: 'The well preserved remains of the Antonie Wall ditch were uncovered during the course of the excavation in two of the trial trenches opened.' Below this is a section titled 'Research framework sections' with a sub-section 'National Scottish Archaeological Research Framework (SCARF)'. There is a search bar with the text 'Start typing to see matching questions' and an 'Add question' button. At the bottom, there is a table with three columns: 'Research Framework', 'Section/Question', and 'Summary of outcome'. The table contains one row with the following data:

| Research Framework | Section/Question | Summary of outcome |
|--------------------|---|---|
| SCARF: Roman | What can synthesis of small scale developer funded interventions around the Antonine Wall add to the story of the wall? | The excavation confirmed the presence of the Antonie Wall ditch to the North of the Great Western Road. |

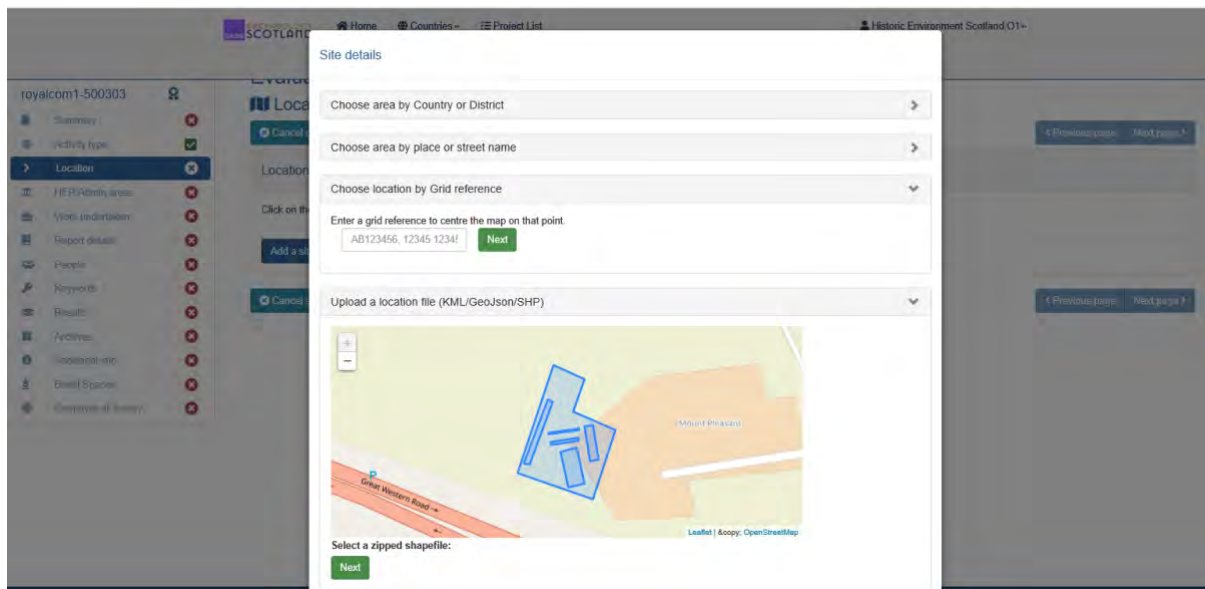
The Results screen enables users to report what was discovered during their project. As the regional and national Research Frameworks develop their questions, users may also contribute answers to specific questions through the form.

The new form will enable users to update their projects with post excavation details including quantifying the types of archive produced.

Improving quality

A lot of the fields in the existing form simply asked the user to enter information as free text. Inevitably misspellings and typos crept in. Also, terms used for monuments often did not match the classifications used in Canmore or Historic Environment Records. The new form has introduced pick-lists and look-up tables wherever possible to improve the quality of information reported. Using controlled terminologies drawn from <https://heritagedata.org/> ensures that a common vocabulary is consistently used to describe monuments, objects, archaeological activities from fieldwork through the archaeological record (and research frameworks) to publication in Discovery and Excavation in Scotland.

Reporting location has been the most common error in the existing form. On entering a grid reference it is all too easy to transpose digits or inadvertently include the 100Km map square digits as part of the NGR. You can still type in a grid reference in the new form but we encourage you to upload accurate plans of your project area (and trench locations for excavations) either as Shape file (Zipped), GeoJSON, or KML. On upload, the form will automatically populate the form with the correct Council and Civil parish and assign your record to the relevant HER (from a drop down list). We would recommend that you to use the file upload system to improve the quality of information reported. We can then share your project extents etc with the relevant HER and HES to improve their respective records.



Users may upload a boundary file showing the project extents to OASIS which then populates the Grid Reference and assigns the relevant administrative details in the form.

Projects reported through OASIS will no longer be stuck in limbo for years awaiting validation but (unless there is an embargo on the report) will be reviewed and released after a six-month delay. We can ensure that information reaches the public promptly.

We are introducing [ORCID](#) IDs for people associated with the project. An ORCID ID provides a persistent identifier that distinguishes you from every other researcher. It is easy and quick to register for an ORCID ID. That way we can start to link the person consistently with their outputs in the ADS Library and in time our own online databases. Read more about why this is important [here](#).

Migrating to the new OASIS form and training

As the existing OASIS application is a live system with records at various stages of progress, we will be migrating records gradually. This will be done on an organisation by organisation basis.

If you have only reported through the online Discovery and Excavation in Scotland form (or submitted entries by post) please continue to use this form for the next volume.

During 2020 we had planned to roll out a training programme for existing users as they were migrated across or on a geographic basis with Archaeology Scotland organising workshops and training events for community groups and independent researchers. With Coronavirus remaining a significant risk we are revising our training programme and hope to deliver online guidance.

Working in England?

The new form is also being introduced across England during 2020. As well as the usual legal and administrative differences, the English version of the form introduces a separate Buildings module (In Scotland we just use a single form). Training in England is being led by MSDS Marine (info@msdsmarine.co.uk) on behalf of Historic England.

To the future

Streamlining online reporting through a single form ensures that information is collected efficiently and follows established data standards. This will improve both the quality and consistency of information reported enabling data to be shared more effectively. The new form provides a long-term solution for reporting to Discovery and Excavation in Scotland, which remains the primary digest for recent archaeological research across Scotland. As the regional research frameworks develop, the form will help ensure they can be updated with new information. Future developments will engage more closely with the Scottish Finds Allocation Panel and museums. With the data recorded through the form we can start to monitor how effective we are at reporting fieldwork and ensuring that the project archives are secured for the future.

The Scottish Crannog Centre

Like many businesses in Scotland, the Scottish Crannog Centre unfortunately had to close its doors in March due to the coronavirus crisis. Thankfully emergency funding was available to soften the blow of closing before our summer season began, and although unfortunately we did have to furlough many of the staff, a few members of the team have been able to work remotely to ensure operations keep running behind-the-scenes.

Here are some of the projects we've been working on during lockdown:

10 Objects video series

Since the beginning of June, we've been releasing our new video mini-series *The Crannog Story in 10 Objects* each week, which looks at different objects within the collection excavated from Oakbank Crannog on Loch Tay. The series looks at artefacts such as a foot plough and boat paddles which were discovered during the excavations and tells the story of what each object might have been used for in daily life. Viewers can get a special glimpse into life in Scotland 2,500 years ago and be inspired to visit and view the collection for themselves when we reopen. The first 5 episodes are available to view on our YouTube channel, with new episodes out weekly.

Collection data cataloguing

Crannog Centre curator Fran has been working hard behind the scenes, getting our collection catalogue up-to-date and rehousing some of the objects that had previously been kept in poor condition. Starting essentially from scratch due to there being no previous catalogue, Fran has been patiently sifting through each item, collecting the data and entering into our new collection database, with plans to digitise it in the future so it becomes accessible for all.



Many of the objects have also been transferred into new bags and containers which will now make the artefacts easier to display and showcase to future visitors and academic experts.

Dalerb land purchase

We received some fantastic news in June that our application to purchase a large piece of land on the north end of Loch Tay was successful! Through the Community Asset Transfer process offered by Forestry and Land Scotland, we were able to prove our case for expansion – the current site on which the Scottish Crannog

Centre is built has reached capacity and is unsuitable for the progressive plans the Crannog Centre has for future projects. The area, called Dalerb, is roughly 12 times larger than the current museum and will help to ensure that we as an organisation can continue to work towards our mission, caring for and making accessible the find of Scottish crannog excavations for the benefit and enjoyment of everyone.



Friends of the Crannog

On 1 July we will be unveiling our new subscription scheme, 'Friends of the Crannog'. This scheme will be open to anyone who would like to support the Scottish Crannog Centre in delivering our mission, vision and values. For a small annual fee, friends will benefit from free, unlimited access to the Centre throughout their yearly membership, plus complimentary hot drink each visit and access to an exclusive newsletter with updates on operations and behind-the-scenes activity. Applications will be available to buy or gift on our website, www.crannog.co.uk.

The Scottish Crannog Centre aims to re-open on 1 August this year, with guided tours that will adhere to government guidelines on social distancing and hygiene. Our website will have space available to pre-book tours and we will be offering early morning and evening sessions, so keep an eye out on our website for full details. A big thank you to everyone who has helped and supported us through this difficult time – we look forward to welcoming everyone back through our doors very soon!

Oliver O'Grady – obituary

By [Joe Somerville](#) MCI fA

The Scottish Group committee was saddened to hear of the death of Dr. **Oliver O'Grady** (Olly), on 22 May 2020, at the age of 39, at his family home in Perthshire.

Olly leaves behind his partner, Lindsey Goring, and two sons Sam (9) and Finlay (5).

Olly grew up in Glasgow, the son of Tricia and **John O'Grady**. After school at Hyndland Secondary School, Oliver moved a stone's throw away to the University of Glasgow, where he undertook a joint MA (Hons) in Medieval History and Archaeology, an MPhil in Scottish Medieval Studies, and a DPhil in archaeology, graduating in 2008.

He was a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and a Committee Member of the Tayside and Fife Archaeological Committee. While not a member of the ClfA itself, he was supported at an early stage of his post-doctoral career through a (then) IfA bursary, in the role of Assistant Archaeologist at Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust (PKHT) in 2009.

Oliver crossed the floor between the academic, voluntary and commercial sectors numerous times in his foreshortened career. An accomplished lecturer, field archaeologist, and geophysicist, he was an excellent communicator with a passion for improving the practice of archaeology and public understanding of it. Olly provided the innovation, organisation and knowledge behind many recent community archaeology projects. Quoted in a recent Courier article, Falkland Stewardship Trust chairman Joe Fitzpatrick said of Olly *'his warmth, openness and encouragement were appreciated by all our excavation volunteers and staff. No one's 'theory' was dismissed and his patient explanations were educative and informative.'*

Dr Oliver O'Grady's funeral was on 12 June 2020.



Membership

Membership of the Scottish Group is free for CIfA members, and is £10 per year for non-CIfA members. Please feel free to circulate this newsletter and we would ask you to encourage your friends/colleagues to join the Group.

For more information, see [here](#).

Keep in touch with us via the Scottish Group's Facebook page, where information about events and the work of the Group will be publicised.

Newsletters are published four times a year and contributions from members are welcome.

The deadlines for articles in 2020 are:

Autumn Edition – 11 September

Winter Edition – 27 November

To make a contribution to forthcoming editions of the newsletter please email secretary.cifa.sg@gmail.com

