

# A TOUCH OF GAS


The Newsletter of Glasgow Archaeological Society



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Glasgow Archaeological Society, c/o Tho. & J.W. Barty, Solicitors, 61 High Street, Dunblane, FK15 0EH

 <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Glasgow-Archaeological-Society/106126069499502> click "like" to receive Society updates

 @GlasgowArchSoc

 There is now a Flickr account for members to download their photographs of Society events, moderated by Natasha Ferguson - <http://www.flickr.com/groups/gasmembers/>

Keep up to date with Society Activities on our website – [www.glasarchsoc.org.uk](http://www.glasarchsoc.org.uk)

## Lecture Programme 2017/18

### 2017

- 19th October Dr John Reid: **The Battle for Burnswark Hill**
- 13th – 16th November **The Dalrymple Lectures** (see details below)
- 21st December Members Night - Dr Kenneth Brophy: **The Cochno Stone**  
Euan Loarridge: **Tracking Glasgow students in the Battle of the Somme**

### 2018

- 18th January Andrew Nicholson: **Excavating the Galloway Viking Hoard**
- 15th February Elizabeth Davidson: **Reconstructing Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art**
- 15th March Dr Susanna Harris: **Textiles at Must Farm**
- 19th April Presidential lecture – Dale Bilsland: **The Art Bunker in Nuremberg**

Admission is free. Lectures are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7.30pm from October to April in the Boyd Orr Building, University Avenue, Glasgow University. The Dalrymple Lectures on November 13th to 15th are at 6.30pm but on the 16th at 7.30pm in the Sir Charles Wilson building. For more information go to our website

### *The Dalrymple Lectures 2017*

**Professor Roger Wilson, University of British Columbia**

#### **The Archaeology of Roman Sicily**

13 November 6.30 - Setting the scene: provincia Sicilia

14 November 6.30 - Living in luxury: the late Roman villa at Cadeddi on the Tellaro

15 November 6.30 - Philippius and his rural estate: recent excavations at Gerace near Enna

16 November 7.30 - Dining with the dead: life and death in an early Byzantine village at Punta Secca near Ragusa

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### **The Dalrymple Lecture Fund**

Jointly with Glasgow University the Society administers The Dalrymple Lecture Fund, a generous bequest by James Dalrymple to finance a series of free public Lectures on European topics of historic and archaeological interest.

The first Lecture Series was delivered in 1907, and recent speakers have included, Dr Chris Stringer, Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe, Ian Hodder, Professor Mike Parker Pearson, Professor William Hanson and Professor Roger Stalley.

The Fund also generously supports the publication of the Scottish Archaeological Journal.

## Alison Scott Brown (6th July 1931 – 30th March 2017)



With the sad (and unexpected) death of Alison Brown, the Society has lost one of its longest-standing members, and a member moreover, who had given sterling service to the Society for many years as Excursion Convenor.

Alison Scott Wright was a daughter of the manse, and was brought up in an atmosphere of service to others, an ethos which remained with her throughout her life. She was educated at Hutchesons' Grammar School for Girls and the University of Glasgow, from which institution she graduated MA in 1953. This was followed by a course in teacher training at Jordanhill College, and for some years she taught in schools in Rutherglen.

I first met Alison at a Scottish Summer School in Archaeology, held in the summer of 1954 in Aberdeen, with the subject of "Scottish Castles" In a very short time we had become firm friends, a friendship which proved lasting. At that time I was a very new member of Glasgow Archaeological Society, and she joined the Society in 1954. From that time the Society lectures and excursions became an important feature in our lives. We attended together the dinner which was held to celebrate the Society's centenary in 1956.

When Alison married Norman Brown in 1961, he was immediately put forward for associate membership. In 1992 Alison took on the office of Excursions Convenor and carried out her duties with exemplary care and diligence. With Norman at the wheel, a careful 'recce' was undertaken for each excursion, and Alison was always ready for unexpected problems or hazards. On one excursion in Fife, the intended visit to the Isle of May proved impossible because of weather conditions, but Alison had something up her sleeve, and we visited the Secret Bunker, which had only recently been opened to the public and of which most of us had never heard: it proved to be a most interesting visit. Alison's membership of the Society was a long one, and she was most touched and honoured to be awarded Life Membership in 2015.

Other interests included classical music, opera and early music. Alison was much involved in the work of her church, especially the Woman's Guild. She shared Norman's interest in Robert Burns, and held office in the Rutherglen Burns Club.

Kindly, thoughtful, lively and interested in everything, helpful to everyone and generous to a fault, Alison was a wonderful friend who will be most sadly missed. Our condolences go to her family on this second sad loss in two years.

Dorothy Lunt

### SCOTTISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

The Scottish Archaeological Journal is published by the Society. It is the latest title of a series of journals which have been published continuously by GAS since 1868. The editor welcomes all submissions, which are then professionally reviewed for publication. Members will be aware that the Journal also publishes Book reviews and Museum reviews and the editor welcomes submissions in these categories. The standards required for publication are listed at the back of the Journal and in the Journal's listing in the website of our publisher, Edinburgh University Press. Anyone thinking of writing for the Journal is welcome to contact the Editor, Jim Mearns, for information/advice via the contact form on the GAS website – <http://www.glasarchsoc.org.uk/index.php/contact-us>

Members can access the early Transactions of the Society through JSTOR which in turn can be accessed through university library systems

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**Membership Renewals – Subscriptions are now due and early renewal helps the Society. Please return your Renewal Form to Margaret Gardiner from whom Gift Aid Forms are also available.**

PRESIDENTIAL AWARD 2016-2018

This year will again be one in which the Society presents a Presidential Award. This award was the inspiration of our Past President, Dr. Alex Morrison to recognise and celebrate some of the outstanding personalities and individuals who have contributed to the life and work of the Society, and/or to the regional and national world of Scottish archaeology. It remains a fitting tribute to Alex and his commitment to Archaeology and this Society.

In previous years this has taken the form of a mosaic plaque by the outstanding Scottish mosaicist, Dugie MacInnes.

The terms of the award are –

1. The Award will be to an individual who has forwarded the study of and rendered conspicuous services to archaeology in Scotland.
2. The individual must be a member of the Society.
3. The award will be presented in the final year of the President's term of Office, and the ceremony will normally precede the final lecture of their term of Office.
4. Nominations for the Award may be submitted by a Society member on prepared Nomination Forms and notice of the Award will be advertised during the President's final term of office.
5. The final decision will be made by a simple majority of Council Members; the President casting the deciding vote if there is no majority.

A very warm and sunny Saturday morning in late May found G.A.S. members on the banks of the Forth & Clyde canal near Bishopbriggs ready to explore the remains of Mavis Valley, a village set on the north bank of the canal just a few hundred metres west of the bridge near the Bishopbriggs Leisuredrome. A large concrete block beside the towpath indicates where you turn right up a track and within a few metres you start to notice the building debris lying beneath your feet. As you carry on further up the path humps and bumps are evident to both sides of the path and building remains start to appear.



The village was built to house workers from the nearby mines and was in use from 1855 until it was largely demolished in the 1950s. At its peak it was home to over 1000 people. They were one or two storey houses, with no running water although there was a co-operative store. One of the surviving stumps does have a damp proof course so one house at least was of a slightly higher quality. Of course, if the men were killed or unable to work then they and their family had to leave the house.

At the north end of the path off the canal we followed a track leading from Hilton Farm (now East Dunbartonshire's cleansing depot) to the mine sites and after a scramble over rough ground and through undergrowth and tree branches we reached the site of Cadder 17 pit. A number of buildings remain (see picture) and access to the pit, now fenced off, can still be viewed.



On 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1913, a fire in the adjacent No15 Cadder pit owned by Carron Coal Co occurred killing 22 men, 6 from Mavis Valley.

Thereafter the party visited Lambhill Stables where there is a memorial to the miners killed in 1913 and some of the work done for the Coal, Cottages and Canal project is on view.

For more information about Mavis Valley please visit the website - <http://www.lambhillstables.org/lambhills-history/the-rows/> .

## G.A.S. trip to Ireland – June 2017

It was an early start to GAS' summer excursion to Ireland with the bus leaving from the university at 8:00. However, the weather was positively Mediterranean. We had a smooth crossing to Belfast and by 2:15 we were at The Titanic Experience. The Titanic Festival was on which, with the weather and the large crowds, gave a fiesta feeling to Belfast. The exhibition itself builds the story from general information about the life and times and industry of Belfast before and around the time the Titanic was built and culminating on the top floor with the sinking, the rescue and the aftermath. From windows looking north-east side, one can see an outline of where the Titanic lay when it was being constructed. We also had the opportunity to visit the Nomadic which was one of the tenders that served the Titanic at Cherbourg.



Monday dawned as another very warm day and GAS members made another early start to make the best of the day and the weather. We began by visiting Kells in County Meath. Unfortunately, our official guide failed to appear but GAS members were still able to view the round tower, monastic buildings and then, courtesy of a Mrs Carpenter (the key holder), were able to get access to Columba's house. She was also good enough to give a brief impromptu talk about the house. Columba's House is the place where the world-famous "Book of Kells" was probably finished and kept before, after various adventures, being presented to Trinity College Dublin in 1661, where it has been ever since.

Then it was on to Newgrange and Knowth, two spectacular Neolithic sites in the Boyne valley.



Shuttle buses took us from the visitor



centre to the two sites where Jimmy and Eleanor, from the Office of Public works, gave us a guided tour of Newgrange and Knowth, respectively,

The 5000-year-old main mound at Knowth, known as Knowth Site 1 is contemporary with the mounds at Newgrange and Dowth. The mounds are classified as Passage Tomb and are collectively are known as Brú na Bóinne.

The Knowth site consists of a large mound and 18 smaller satellite mounds. The large mound covering a hectare contains two passages, placed along an east-west line. The passages are independent of each other and each lead to a burial chamber. The eastern passage leads to a cruciform chamber, similar to that found at Newgrange. It contains three recesses and basin stones into which the cremated remains of the dead may have been placed.

Our final visit of the day was to see tenth century Irish crosses at Monasterboice. Last year's



Dalrymple lecturer, Roger Stalley, was on hand to give a whirlwind but nevertheless comprehensive explanation of the production, patronage & iconography of these high crosses. After a long hot but very interesting day we retired to the hotel for another lovely meal after which a vote of thanks was given to Margaret and her team for organising the excursion and to the bus driver for his efforts,

Our last day dawned cooler but still dry and sunny and we headed to Omagh and the Ulster America Folk Park. The park depicts the story of Irish emigration and brings it to life. After wandering round the indoor display on the background to the emigration from Ulster to America you can follow the emigrant trail as you journey from the

thatched cottages of Ulster to the log cabins of the American Frontier on the way meeting an array of costumed characters which gave a vivid picture of life for the emigrants in Ireland and then their new life in America. Sadly, it was then time to head back to Belfast for the ferry home to Cairnryan with the sun still splitting the sky.

## Forthcoming Excursions

The excursions committee are currently considering a number of future excursions including to Burnswark and vicinity (subject of the first lecture - by Dr John Reid - this season).

We may also visit the historic town of Dunfermline in Fife and Provan Hall to the east of Glasgow.

Confirmation of these trips and further details will be announced at society meetings and in the newsletter or on the website.

### GENERAL COUNCIL 2016-2017

President	Dale Bilisland
Vice-President and Lecture Secretary	Dorothy Gormlie
Treasurer	Stephen Stockdale
Minutes Secretary	Dr. Janet MacDonald
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Journal Editorial Board	Professor Stephen Driscoll, Dr. Kenneth Brophy, Dr. Phil Freeman, Dr. Sally Foster, Professor Niall Sharples, Professor Jane Downes
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Independent Examiners	Susan Hunter & Maureen Langford
Council Members	Dr. Anthony Lewis, Helen Maxwell, Gavin Wilson
Correspondence	Direct Correspondence to the Appropriate Official via the Website or to the President

#### Data Protection Act

Members are reminded of the Society's Policy under this Act.

Members' details are held electronically in computer and are used solely for administrative purposes of the Society. Details are not provided to any outside body other than Edinburgh University Press for the purpose of distribution of the Scottish Archaeological Journal.

Any member who wishes to exercise the right to have his or her name excluded from the database should contact Margaret Gardiner, the Membership Secretary

## Electronic Communication

It is our Policy to use E-mail communication where possible reminding members of the forthcoming lecture, other events of interest and to distribute A Touch of GAS and inform members of events that arise between issues.

We would urge members if possible to subscribe which can be done through the website. Council accepts that members may be either unable or unwilling to receive E-Bulletins (it is astonishing how quickly one's "Inbox" fills up!) and that is their right. We can assure members that they will not be disadvantaged by not subscribing inasmuch as they will continue to receive twice-yearly Newsletters.

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