



NORTH OF SCOTLAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY SCIO
Scottish Charity No SC044585

Annual Report & Financial Statements

For the Year to 31 August 2021

Trustees' Annual Report for the Year ended 31 August 2021

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report together with the financial statements and the Independent Examiner's report for the year ended 31 August 2021.

References & Administrative Information

Charity Name: North of Scotland Archaeological Society SCIO

Registered charity number: SC044585

Principal Address: 7 Ruisaurie, Beauly, Inverness-shire, IV4 7AJ

Trustees, on date of approval of Trustees' Annual Report:

Name	Office	Area of Responsibility	Period
Tim Blackie		Liaison with Highland Council Historic Environment Team	from 15/10/2016
Elizabeth Anne Coombs		Field Activities	from 15/01/2014
Catherine Dagg			from 19/10/2018
Richard Guest			from 20/10/2020
Duncan Kennedy		Students, particularly UHI	from 13/10/2018
Karen Kennedy			from 12/10/2019
Anne MacInnes	Secretary		from 05/03/2018
Annette McKittrick			from 20/10/2020
James Bruce McComas	Vice Chair	Website, FB page, Blogs	from 15/01/2014
Gordon Sleight			from 20/10/2020
Roland Spencer-Jones	Chair	JS Bone Collection, online MAD Evenings	from 15/01/2014
Gordon Cardew	Treasurer		from 05/03/2018
Sue Walker		Membership Secretary	from 10/10/2015
Jonathan Wordsworth		Minute-taker	from 12/10/2019

Note that three new Trustees – Annette McKittrick, Richard Guest and Gordon Sleight - were appointed at the 2020 AGM.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

NOSAS SCIO was granted Charitable status by OSCR on 15 January 2014 and it is governed by the constitution which was approved at its formation. That constitution is available to view on the NOSAS website, under the "Joining NOSAS" tab, here: <https://tinyurl.com/5xke7cxh>.

The original Constitution was amended at the 2018 AGM to change and define the length of time that both members and Officials can stay in place. In view of Covid restrictions it was modified again, at an online Extraordinary General Meeting of members on 8th July 2021, to allow further meetings of members to be held online rather than in person.

Appointment of Trustees

Members of the management committee, which normally meets every two months, are the charity's Trustees. Any member can be appointed as a Trustee, provided he/she is not an employee of the society. Trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting which is normally held in October. The Officers of the charity are elected at the first Trustee meeting thereafter, usually November. Under the constitution, the number of Trustees should not exceed twenty and not be less than eight. The committee may also appoint any member to be a trustee, outwith the time of the AGM. This appointment must then be approved by the members at the next Annual General Meeting.

Management

The Trustees are responsible for the management of the society. During the year we hold bi-monthly Committee (Trustee) meetings. At each meeting, a financial report is received from the Treasurer. In addition to the functions of the three Officers, some Trustees take responsibility for a particular area of responsibility in the life and work of the committee, as indicated on the chart above.

Objects & Activities

Charitable Purposes

The society is a membership based voluntary group that seeks to encourage people of all ages to learn about and engage with the archaeology of the North of Scotland, to enjoy it, and to protect it for the future. Its purposes are:

1. The advancement of education by arranging and supporting projects and events, formal and informal, which enable members and others to learn archaeological methods and associated techniques.
2. The advancement of the arts heritage, culture or science by
 - a. undertaking and supporting relevant archaeological projects adding to the public record of our heritage
 - b. promoting awareness and understanding of our heritage by arranging discussion sessions and exploratory walks, publications, and participating in public events.

The NOSAS Year

The year in question has continued to be affected by the presence of coronavirus in the community and the consequent series of changing restrictions imposed by both Scottish and UK governments. For most of the year it has not been possible for NOSAS members to meet either indoors or outdoors. Consequently, much of NOSAS activity has been undertaken by individuals or groups of 2-3, or online.

Field Events

Anne Coombs is the main person on the committee responsible for supervising and organising field events. However, it's been a tough year for this role, as she steered a route between government guidance on the one hand and members keen to meet up on the other. Eventually, the first field trip since February 2020 took place on 19th June when Anne led a trip to the Littleferry Links. Subsequent field trips were:

- 22nd July – Roland Spencer-Jones led a field visit to a newly discovered shieling site above Beauly
- 15th August – David Jarman led a field visit up the stalkers' paths in Glen Carron.

Monthly Archaeological Discussion (MAD) Meetings

These have always been an important focus of NOSAS activity during the darker months, when we can't get out so much. They are lively and interactive meetings, during which a presentation from someone with an interest or expertise in a topic is followed by a discussion from the floor. During lockdown the meetings went online and provided a vital connection for NOSAS members locked into their houses and communities. It was difficult to maintain the discussion element of the evenings on a Zoom platform, and yet the quality of the speakers has been excellent.

The talks during the last year were:

- September 10th – **Coralie Mills** – *Tree-rings, timbers and woodland heritage in northern Scotland*
- September 24th - **Darroch Bratt** – *'Archaeological Variety at Illicit Distilling Sites'*
- October 22nd - **Amanda Dolan** - *Processes of Vitrification in Scottish Iron Age Hillforts*
- October 29th – **John Wombell** – *Mesolithic Activity in the Landscape*
- November 5th – **Marc Chivers, Esther Renwick & Michael Stratigos** of the Moder Dy project, in Shetland - *Constructing Archaeological Maritime Narratives.*
- November 26th – **Anne Coombs** – *The cultivation, management, and archaeology of Flax*
- December 10rd - **Marion Ruscoe** – *The Inverness Southern Distributor Road*
- January 7th - **NOSAS Panel** – *Pre Improvement Agriculture in the Highlands*
- January 21st – **David Alston** - *Slavery in Suriname & Guyana - & the link to the Highlands*

- February 4th - **Piers Dixon** - *Deer parks, Traps and Hays - Hunting & Hunting Forests*
- February 11th - **Tanja Romankiewicz** - *Turf Worlds - the use of turf as a building material in later prehistory, from the High-Lands to the Nether-Lands*
- February 18th **Neil Bruce**, Historian – *The Highland Exclusion Zone in WWII*
- March 4th – **John Baldwin** – *Horizontal Mills*
- March 18th – **Andrew Wright** - *Thatched Houses and their Typology*
- Tuesday March 30th – **Michael Stratigos** – *The Crannogs of Highland Scotland*
- April 8th – **James' MacComas** – *The Tarradale video*
- April 22nd – **The JSB Team** – *Jim Bone's gift to the World*
- May 6th - **Aaron Watson** – *Experiencing Rock Art: From Kilmartin to Clava*
- May 20th - **David Newman** - *'Where have all the houses gone? Late Medieval and early modern period settlement in the Southern Outer Hebrides*
- June 21st – **Julie Bond, Steve Dockrill** - *"Excavating Swandro early Iron Age site on Rousay, Orkney*
- July 8th – **Anne Crone** - *"Excavations at the Black Loch of Myrton in Galloway"*
- August 5th – **Juliette Mitchell** - *"Skeletons in the Archive"*

Conferences

NOSAS members usually attend a range of local and national archaeological and heritage conferences during the year. However, not this year. Instead, most conferences went online, still providing the talks and presentations but missing out the vital chat and conversation that physical conferences provide.

The Highland Archaeology Festival went online. It was run on a virtual Teams platform by the Highland Council Historic Environment Team and proved very popular. There were no physical events or field trips, though.

One notable online conference that NOSAS helped to run was postponed from May 2020. The Picts in the North conference, 13th–14th March, was run by the Scottish Society for Northern Studies, the Pictish Arts Society and ourselves. The SSNS were the key players - taking the bookings, providing the online infrastructure over the weekend, and making the talks available online afterwards.

The NOSAS Projects

NOSAS works on the basis that as individuals develop interest in an area they then lead (champion) a project that involves others in the society. Numerous such projects have been adopted by NOSAS over the years. These are the projects that were active throughout 2019-20:

Tarradale Through Time (TTT)

This major NOSAS project, led by Eric Grant and assisted by a project management team (Anne Coombs, John Wombell, Jonie Guest [until May 2020], Tim Blackie, Jonathan Wordsworth [from May 2020]) seeks to engage the local community in investigating the multi-period landscape of Tarradale. The three-year project to survey and excavate five different parts of that landscape is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Environment Scotland, and NOSAS donors. It was due to finish at end-March 2020, although a delayed finishing date due to Covid-19 has been agreed with the main funder, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to be end-May 2022.

This is NOSAS's biggest funded project ever. Eric and his team deserve considerable praise for all the hard work they put in to firstly raise the money and then organise the various components of the project. The excavations and field work ended in October 2019 but plans for a further limited investigation of the area that Barri Jones had previously excavated had to be put on hold because of Covid. The management team met periodically over the year, planning the post-ex work, frustrated that so much of the reporting had been delayed by Covid. The project is described further on the TTT Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/tarradaletime/>.

Scottish Rock Art Project

This major national project to survey and record Scotland's rock art is organised by Historic Environment Scotland. Tertia Barnett is the HES national lead for the project. In 2016 NOSAS was

selected as one of three national pilot projects. Led by Alan Thompson, with assistance from John Wombell, NOSAS has organised field trips and training activities since summer 2017. This last year NOSAS members have continued in a personal way to record some sites - Tiree, Strath Sgitheach, and Moray. The ScRAP project has now formally finished, with plans in place for dealing with the data collected, seeing it transferred to the HES Canmore database, and providing advice for any future rock art recording.

The JS Bone Collection of Aerial Photographs

Jim Bone was a founder member of NOSAS, a previous committee member, and an enthusiastic pilot. During a flying career that started as a young man, he became involved in aerial photography of archaeology through a chance meeting with Professor Barri Jones in 1972. Just before he died, in May 2018, Jim gifted his entire collection of aerial photographs to NOSAS. This consisted of thousands of slides, negatives, prints and digital images. HES has now scanned all the physical images, converting them to digital images. These scans were fortuitously sent to us just before lockdown in mid-April 2020 so that we could work on them during the restrictions. Since then, a small team of NOSAS people has worked through all the images in order to: geo-reference them, give them a title, link them to known archaeology on the image, and describe the photo.

All the scanned or digital images are now uploaded to Canmore: <https://canmore.org.uk/collection/2111369>. There is now an online spreadsheet, linked from a [NOSAS website page](#), detailing all the approximately 5900 images that Jim left us. Each image on the spreadsheet has links to the image on the Canmore website, plus links to a Google Earth image of the area concerned. And the whole spreadsheet can be searched for names of towns, settlements, areas, etc.

The Conan Pictish Cross-Slab

A Pictish cross-slab was discovered in February 2019 by Anne MacInnes in Wester Logie burial ground.

That led to NOSAS agreeing to be the lead agent in removing this Pictish stone, and a smaller cross-incised stone, to a place of safety, and then arranging their conservation and subsequent mounting in Dingwall Museum.

A small team of NOSAS committee members plus Kirsty Cameron, Highland Council archaeologist, met periodically to supervise the management of the stone, to invite tenders for its repair and conservation, and to work with Dingwall Museum to develop an enhanced area in the Museum to house it. Anne MacInnes and Roland Spencer-Jones became the executive force for this team.

The conservation contract was awarded to Graciela Ainsworth of Edinburgh who had finished their work by May 2020. Due to Covid, however, the stones could not come to Dingwall until 18th August 2020. We then liaised with several local tradesmen and professionals to renovate the room in the Museum in which it would be housed and work out both how to move it within the museum and how to erect it in the window. All went smoothly, however, and a press-covered official "opening" of the stone took place on 15th December. Although the museum was closed all last season and over the winter, the brightly illuminated cross-side of the stone provided a bright spot in the High Street for all to see.

On 13th-14th March 2021, NOSAS, together with the Scottish Society for Northern Studies (SSNS) and the Pictish Arts Society, helped organise an online Pictish Conference, postponed from May 2020. The lead partner in the Conference was SSNS. A highly successful conference contained numerous presentations from those most involved in Pictish studies in Scotland.

The Crannog Project

Michael Stratigos, a postdoctoral Research Associate at the Leverhulme Centre for Anthropocene Biodiversity, gave NOSAS an online talk about crannogs in March 2021. That stimulated several people in NOSAS to take his work forwards in Highland by trying to identify more crannogs than are hitherto known. A working and planning group was formed under the leadership of Richard Guest,

meeting for the first time in April. Since then, the project has developed two arms. The first arm is an online search of all the lochs in Highland, registering known crannogs and identifying further possible, although previously unrecognised, crannogs. The second arm is field trips to assess both crannogs, and islands that could be crannogs. Although there are insurance issues about NOSAS members taking to boats to get to crannogs, individuals interested in the project will undertake the watery components and feed the information back to the main Crannog Project team.

Excavations and other NOSAS activities

Although commercial archaeology continued during the Covid lockdown, almost all research and university excavations ceased during the year.

Similarly, much of the routine NOSAS cycle of meetings, field events and just “getting out there” was suspended or severely curtailed. Individuals working on their own pursued their own surveys and investigations, but there was no formal NOSAS activity.

General Comments & other Activities

Paradoxically, despite Covid, our membership has actually grown slightly during the year, standing at 128 members. We now have two members in North America. Our student numbers are down, though. In autumn 2018 NOSAS decided to offer students at UHI free membership of NOSAS. This is an attempt to reach out to archaeology students, offering them information, connections, and access to all our activities. At the end of the 2019 year 20 UHI students had joined NOSAS. Perhaps because of the lack of NOSAS activity, this was reduced to eight students by the end of the current year.

Our digital presence continues to grow, with an up-to-date Website, Facebook page and Blog organised and updated by James McComas, with help from others. The FB page and Blog represent our online presence, with a wide reading audience both in the UK and around the world. Our Facebook page currently has 3683 followers. The NOSAS Blog is seven years old now, has more than 90 individual articles and has had over 120,000 total views. The NOSAS blog page received several new entries this year, allowing the contributors to consider an archaeological topic in detail. An impressive online presence!

Susan Kruse continues to supervise and cherish our library, housed in Dingwall Library. Access to the library was constrained during lockdown, but is available again now.

Sales of Meryl Marshall’s two books (Glenfeshie and Strathconon), Anna Welti’s book (Prehistoric Roundhouses) and the 2019 NOSAS book (A Year of Highland Archaeology) continue to provide a steady income to the society, despite lockdown. The ability to buy our books from the NOSAS website via Paypal seems to have made it easier for people to engage.

Achievements & Performance

Governance

As indicated above we have held six Trustee (Committee) meetings during the year. At each meeting, a financial report is received from the Treasurer. When subsequently approved at the following meeting, the minutes are uploaded to our website.

Strategy

This has not changed over the year. In a year of Covid-related restrictions we have tried to provide online activities to replace those physical activities that have been denied us.

People

The Society relies entirely on the enthusiasm and hard work of its members. The online meetings have been welcomed by our members who live outwith the Easter Ross & Inverness area, and some online meetings will therefore continue even as we get back to normal physical events. The NOSAS committee has been engaged with the decisions and challenges that have arisen during the year, for which I am especially grateful. There have been others outwith the committee who have contributed to projects and surveys. Without their input and enthusiasm, NOSAS would not be the organisation that it is.

Financial Review

The core charitable activities of NOSAS continue to follow the pattern of previous years, although there has been very little activity due to Covid restrictions.

No further grants or income were received in this current year for either the Tarradale Through Time or Conan Stone Projects. However, they continued to incur expected costs out of restricted funds already received resulting in a decrease in restricted funds held over the year of £14,305.

Reserves Policy

The policy of the Trustees is to maintain sufficient reserves to cover normal annual running costs and have sufficient funds to investigate, research and fund future projects. At the end of the year the society has reserves of £32,376 (2020 £44,604) of which £18,087 (2020 £32,392) is **restricted** for expenditure on specific projects and £14,289 (2020 £12,211) is **unrestricted** for general NOSAS use.

The Committee sees no reason to recommend a change to the membership fees.

Plans for Future Periods

The Trustees intend to carry on with the core charitable purposes of the society and will continue to encourage members to promote relevant new projects and activities.

Approved by the trustees on 20 October 2021 and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roland Spencer-Jones', written in a cursive style.

Roland Spencer-Jones
Chair

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Receipts and Payments Accounts

Year ended 31 August 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds to 31/8/2021 £	<i>Period to 31/8/2020 £</i>
Receipts					
Donations	4	2,702	0	2,702	8,498
Grants	5	0	0	0	39,220
Gross trading receipts	6	372	0	372	799
Bank interest		1		1	18
Total receipts		3,075	0	3,075	48,535
Payments					
Trading payments	7	0	0	0	135
Costs of charitable activities	8	5,558	9,696	15,254	35,618
Governance costs					
Independent examination		0		0	50
Other	9	50	0	50	220
Total payments		5,608	9,696	15,304	36,023
Net Receipts/Payments		(2,532)	(9,696)	(12,228)	12,512
Surplus for period		(2,532)	(9,696)	(12,228)	12,512

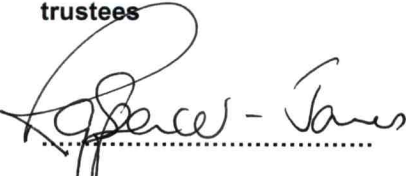
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Statement of Balances

Year ended 31 August 2021

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds (notes 2,10) £	Total Funds to 31/8/2021 £	Period to 31/8/2020 £
Opening cash at bank	12,211	32,393	44,604	32,092
Surplus / (deficit) for year	(2,532)	(9,696)	(12,228)	12,512
Closing bank	9,679	22,697	32,376	44,604
 Bank balances				
Bank deposit account			4,247	6,780
Bank current account			11,926	11,925
TTT account			16,203	25,899
Total bank balances			32,376	44,604

Signed by two trustees on behalf of all trustees



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Roland Spencer-Jones

Gordon Cardew

Date approval

26.05.2022
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26/5/2022
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Year ended 31 August 2021

1. Basis of Accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the receipts and payments basis in accordance with the Charities and trustees Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

2. Nature and purpose of funds

Unrestricted funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the trustees in the furtherance of the objects of the charity.

Restricted funds may only be used for funded projects as specified by the donor. During the year £0 (2020 £27,720) was received for the Tarradale Through Time project and £0 (2020 £17,958) was received re the lifting of the Conan Pictish Stone. See note 10 for detail of Restricted Funds.

No separate bank account is maintained for restricted funds. A separate bank account is however maintained for the Tarradale Through Time project

3. Related party transactions

In 2017 NOSAS was awarded Heritage Lottery Funding for the Tarradale Through Time archaeological project. The project management team prepared and advertised briefs for contractors to provide services to the project. Tenders were received and formally assessed.

The archaeological community in the North of Scotland is small and all the contractors were known to us. With the approval of HLF, four contracts were awarded where there was a declared relationship with NOSAS or the trustees of NOSAS or members of NOSAS. A contract for IT support for website and social media setup was awarded to James McComas. James is a trustee and currently Secretary and Vice-Chair of NOSAS. A contract for administrative and financial support was awarded to Alexander Gallacher. Alexander's mother, Susan Kruse, is a trustee of NOSAS. Two other contractors, AOC Archaeology Group, and Highland Archaeology Services, have close historic links with NOSAS but in the view of the trustees are not connected parties. In all cases the trustees of NOSAS are satisfied that these contracts have been awarded in an open fair and proper way and are consistent with our duties as a Charity.

During the year payments for the above mentioned contracts were made as follows: James McComas £0 (2020 £500)

RECEIPTS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds to 31/8/2021 £	<i>Period to 31/8/2020 £</i>
4. Donations				
Member subscriptions	1,885	0	1,885	1,798
Other donations	817	0	817	6,700
Total Donations	2,702	0	2,702	8,498

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Year ended 31 August 2021

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds to 31/8/2021 £	<i>Period to 31/8/2020 £</i>
5. Grants				
HES - Conan Stone			0	4,500
National Heritage - TTT			0	27,720
Highland Council - Conan Stone			0	2,000
Pictish Arts Society - Conan Stone			0	1,500
Fargher Noble Trust - Conan Stone			0	1,500
SSNS - Conan Stone			0	1,000
Clan Macaulay - Conan Stone			0	1,000
Total Grants	0	0	0	39,220
6. Gross trading receipts				
Gross income from sale of books	373		373	659
Events			0	140
Total Gross trading income	373		373	799
PAYMENTS				
7. Trading payments				
Events	0		0	135
	0	0	0	135
8. Costs of Charitable activities				
Funded project costs		9,696	9,696	20,639
Unfunded project costs	4,609		4,609	13,296
Equipment purchased	0		0	27
Training costs	0		0	616
Stationery post and consumables	81		81	0
Insurance	346		346	346
Discussion group hall and costs	0		0	366
Other expenses incl website	402		402	328
Library books	120		120	0
Total costs of charitable activities	5,558	9,696	15,254	35,618
9. Other governance costs				
SCIO AGM, accounts etc	50		50	220
Total other governance costs	50	0	50	220

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Year ended 31 August 2021

FUNDS

	Opening Balance £	Net Year £	Total Funds to 31/8/2021 £	<i>Period to 31/8/2020</i> £
10. Restricted Funds				
Tarradale Through Time	25,892	(9,696)	16,196	25,892
Lochourn	338		338	338
Conon Stone	6,162	(4,609)	1,553	6,162
	32,392	(14,305)	18,087	32,392

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of North of Scotland Archaeological Society SCIO.

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2021 which are set out on pages 2 to 12.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the 2006 Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.


Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Heather B McRae

Balnabruach House, Portmahomack, Tain, IV20 1YN

20 May 2022