**The J S Bone Collection**

Jim S Bone was born on 21st April 1935 and died on 16th June 2018 after a prolonged and wearisome illness. Although everyone knew Jim as Jim, when asked what his collection of photographs should be called, he thought for a moment, and then said *The J S Bone Collection.* So it is now called.

**The J S Bone Collection**

The collection consists of a total of 6265 digital images of photos that Jim took during a flying career that spanned more than 50 years. These images resulted from the scanning of slides, prints and negatives as well as images that started as digital images. The earliest image in the collection is from June 1962, the last was taken by him in July 2017. These 6265 separate photographs therefore represent over 50 years of aerial photography of archaeological and historic features. The majority are from locations in Easter Ross and Inverness-shire, although there is a significant number of images from Moray, Aberdeenshire, the Western Isles, the western Highlands, and Argyll. Copies of the digital images were gifted to Canmore. The physical slides, negatives and prints were scanned by Canmore, with the original photographic images being returned to NOSAS. Canmore then gifted a set of the scanned images to NOSAS.

**The Archive History**

After a protracted illness Jim Bone died in June 2018, aged 83. Just before he died, in May 2018, he gifted both his photo archive and the copyright to it to the North of Scotland Archaeological Society (NOSAS) of which he had been a founder member 20 years previously. The archive consisted of digital images, slides, negatives, and prints.

On JS Bone’s home computer there were approximately 34,000 digital images, in mixed folders, dating from 2006, when he first acquired a digital camera, to 2017. There were also numerous boxes of slides, envelopes and albums of prints, and other envelopes of negatives, most of which preceded the digital images in time. Over the next nine months two key personnel in NOSAS worked through this material to sort, reduce, and record it.

Many of the digital images were duplicated, often multiple times, in different folders on JS Bone’s computer. There were also many family and personal images in these folders that were discarded, as well as those images that turned out not to be aerial photos. The original 34,000 images were thereby reduced to 2,989 unique aerial photographic digital images, allocated to dates, presumably flight paths.

The slides, prints and negatives were sorted according to date, where known, and location (ie which photo album, numbered slide box, etc they were in). Where there was obvious correlation of negative and print, the negative was saved and the corresponding print kept separate, thereby ensuring that primary images were prioritised over secondary images (prints). This sorting resulted in 675 slides, 882 prints without corresponding negatives, and 1085 negative images.

Lastly, Highland Council had 624 slides that JS Bone had taken, resulting from commissioned flights that he had undertaken between 1998 and 2002. The ownership and copyright of these slides remains with Highland Council, although they were sorted and catalogued by NOSAS.

From late 1999 to February 2021, a small team of NOSAS personnel systematically worked through these >6000 images to geo-reference them, identify any known archaeology seen on the images, and then place the images in a geographical and historical context. This information was recorded on spreadsheets which were then shared with Canmore and Highland Council.

**Jim’s Flight Book**

**His precious flight book, detailing all his flights from 1984 until he stopped flying, was lent to us after his death by his widow. We photographed each page; t**he original paper flight book being returned to his family. The resultant digital images, now making a digital flight book, consist of 71 images. The first recorded flight in this book is 4th March 1984, the last 15th October 2014. However, as he is known to have flown and taken aerial photographs at least five times since October 2014, the assumption is that he was then a passenger. These digital images and corresponding spreadsheet form a record of the last 30 years of his flying career.

**Personal History**

Brought up in Argyll, Jim Bone was an agriculture adviser by profession. He had three additional passions, though – flying, photography and archaeology - that coalesced to produce a unique collection of aerial photographs of the north of Scotland. Shortly before he died he wrote an account of his relationship with flying and archaeology in a blog that is recorded on the NOSAS blogsite: <https://nosasblog.wordpress.com/2018/03/10/jim-bone-aerial-photography-of-archaeological-sites/>.

Jim’s first flight was age fifteen, as a passenger in an aged Anson. He used the opportunities that his school and then university (Glasgow, GUAS) gave him to experience more flying before he learned to fly himself with the RAF Volunteer Reserve during 1953-7. The next 15 years saw him move around the UK on various jobs, before he came back up to Scotland in the late 1970’s. He records a particularly poignant meeting in 1972 with Barri Jones, Professor of Archaeology at Manchester, who was interested in finding Roman sites in southern Britain from the air. Thus was born his interest in archaeology as he flew several flights over Herefordshire for Professor Jones as well as the Herefordshire County Archaeologist.

During the late 1980’s there were regular flights over both Moray and Inverness-shire driven both by the Moray Aerial Survey Project and the Royal Commission on Ancient & Historic Monuments (RCAHMs). The archaeologists taking the photographs needed used local pilots to fly them around, and Jim was keen to oblige. His interest in archaeology grew, such that when Aberdeen University started a distance learning programme in Field Archaeology in 1998, Jim signed up. That class of 1998 contained many interested people who wanted to continue their learning and field experience. They formed the North of Scotland Archaeological Society in 1998 as a vehicle for their interest.

Apart from being a founder member of NOSAS, Jim continued to support the organisation, serving on its committee for several years. He was generous with his photos, giving copies freely to anyone who was writing a paper, or giving a talk, or just out interested in a site. It therefore seems fitting that these images are now being made available online to everyone with an interest. May they prove useful as a series of historical snapshots revealing many wonderful sites not seen from the air before and charting change in towns and villages.