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Kinlochourn, phase two, has come and gone. Disappointingly the weather failed once again, but I feel I speak for all who attended when I say that we enjoyed it thoroughly nevertheless. Our thanks to John and Trina, and also to Donald and Aileen at the Lodge, for all their input. Read further for Johns account.

It was decided to send this newsletter by surface mail. Although a little more work and cost are involved, at least it is a bit more reliable. My apologies to those who didn't get the last one. I think the error was rectified eventually.

Meryl Marshall, 10 Riverford Crescent, Conon Bridge, Ross-shire, IV7 8HL, tel 01349 861824 or email Meryl.Marshall@tesco.net

Welcome to new member -

Brian Duff, 2 Rhuallan, Cawdor Road, Nairn, IV12 5ED. Tel - 01667 453163. Email -

brian.duff@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

New email for John Wood

john.wood@ecosse.net

and Emma Sanderson, new tel - 01847 890741, & new email emma.sanderson@thurso.uhi.ac.uk

Heritage Lottery Fund - Purchase of the equipment is now complete and some (not all) of the items are listed below.

For surveying and recording - ladder plus stabiliser, automatic surveyors level, digital camera, laser distance measurer, weather writers and weatherproof survey notebooks.

For excavations - base tent (yet to be delivered), miscellaneous hand tools and work gloves in several sizes

For reports - printer/scanner/copier plus inks and paper, laminator plus pouches and a thermal binder plus covers

A pair of two-way radios was also included and financial assistance was given towards the production of a report on the archaeology of Upper Glen Feshie, see later (MM)

Subscription Reminder. - This will be the last newsletter to all those who have not paid their 2003-2004 by the end of June. So, hurry, get your sub. in (or ring if you're not sure), to Alan Mackenzie Braeval, Brae of Kinkell, Conon Bridge, Ross-shire, IV7 8HZ. Tel 01349 866494. (£12.50 single, £20 double)

Salt Pans Survey – Brora, Clyne, Sutherland - 12th-13th and 19th-20th June

Jacqui Aitken writes - "I would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in participating in a survey project to record eroding salt pans and associated bell pits on Brora Back Beach.

The 'Inverbrora Coal Workings' was started by Jane, Countess of Sutherland in 1598. At that time 4 salt pans were erected to exploit the coal but the venture was short lived, and closed a few years later. Her son, the 5th Earl of Sutherland, opened the works anew in 1614 for a short while. The coal master in 1764 was John Williams and again salt pans were erected in connection with the extraction of coal, but both were abandoned in 1777. The last set of salt pans were erected in 1812 by the 1st Duke of Sutherland and closed in 1828 when the tax on salt was abolished.

The coal workings are probably one of, if not the oldest workings in Scotland, and have never been properly recorded. I contacted Tom Dawson (SCAPE), who is the co-ordinator of a project to record threatened coastal sites. Sadly, the oldest set of salt pans is being battered by yearly tides and I am afraid the last remnants may not last into next winter. Tom has agreed to come and supervise the fieldwork, which will involve an EDM survey of all the sites and drawing the eroding sections at the pan site.

The survey will take place on the 12th & 13th June and 19th & 20th June 2004. I would be delighted to hear from anyone who interested in participating in the recording exercise, hopefully it will be a chance to learn or brush up on surveying skills. If you can spare a day or longer that would be great.

If you are interested please let me know by contacting me on 01408 621338 or e-mailing Nick.Lindsay@highland.gov.uk This is a fascinating site and you won't be disappointed if you decide to come along."

I understand that Jacqui has already had at least 8 volunteers (for one or more days each) - this is great and is what NOSAS is all about. If anyone else has projects or assignments that they need help with please let us know, Emma Sanderson has agreed to be the events and projects co-ordinator- MM

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The **Recording and Plane Tabling at Rogart** on Sat. 28th Feb. was postponed due to snow. Anne C is hoping to run this day later on in the Summer, probably in August. More information later.

Thanks - My sincere thanks to NOSAS and the committee for the financial contribution (from the HLF) towards the recent publication of my project. This project, of surveying and recording the archaeology of upper Glen Feshie, has been a labour of love. I have enjoyed exploring the glen and its archaeology. From the outset I did not set deadlines and was in no hurry, therefore it has taken me 4 years to complete!! The report, which is roughly 150 pages long, includes plans, descriptions and photographs of the sites. I have also included my research into the history of the glen, which has revealed some fascinating details. Copies of the report have been sent to Historic Scotland, the NMRS, the SMR, the Kingussie Museum and the NOSAS library MM

The NOSAS contribution to **Scottish Archaeology Month (September)** this year will be a guided walk to Upper Glen Feshie on Sunday 19th September. It will include, not only the sites associated with a typical Highland glen, but also the early deer stalking scene (1820s to 1840s) and in particular Sir Edwin Landseer and the Duchess of Bedford. Members assistance will be sought to help on this day, as it is open to the public and expected to be quite popular. More information in the next newsletter.

Stop Press - we are exploring the possibility of a small scale excavation in the glen during the same week.

NOSAS T-shirts - choice of black with white lettering or white with black lettering - price £8.
Sweatshirts black with white lettering - prices £11. P&P additional £1.50 (in padded envelope)
Sizes: Small 36-38", Medium 40", Large 42", XLarge 44, XXL also available (all sizes look on the ample side)
Email Kate Sanderson with requirements and send cheque payable to NOSAS with cost of p&p if appropriate - KDSanderson@4u2give.com

Loch Hourn Survey 2004

The team this year saw just one change from 2002, with Kate unable to come, and Robin joining us from Edinburgh. Janet managed 3 days, and Tom Dawson from Shorewatch, our guide and mentor in chasing grants, joined us for one day. The weather was every bit as bad as in 2002, which was a big disappointment. Only the comforts of the lodge after the regular soakings kept us going.

Despite that, most of the main objectives were achieved with the walkover survey of 12Km of the south shore completed in good time. As we were unable to do any high ground work looking for sheilings, due to the weather, this allowed us to look in greater detail at the core area of Allt Mhogh Sgeir.



In the pouring rain we cut, pulled and gathered up great arm-fuls of dead bracken and built them into coles, which could be seen from miles away. This allowed a two team plane table drawing of the core area to be made, and a plan drawing of the largest building was about half completed

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before time ran out. Many new features stood out once the bracken had been cleared.

George and Trina braved the most awful weather to complete their drawing of Eilean Coinich, the tidal burial isle in Barrisdale Bay. Other highlights were a fish trap, a mystery cairn, a likely still site and 2 possible kilns close together, all around Barrisdale Bay. We located no less than 7 creel house footings at Lochournhead outwith the present day farm, some almost in defensive positions. All of Skiary was surveyed plus the settlements of Camus Ban, Runival, and Caolas Beag. In between these settlements were found a number of shore-side summer sheiling sites, one of which we can put a name to thanks to Roy, Camus na Croggan. We felled a 90 year old ash tree and a 75 year old ash tree growing within and threatening 2 sites, so we turned our hands to practical conservation as well.

Altogether nearly 200 new sites are ready to be entered into the SMR, and several sites first recorded by Robin in 1991 were re-visited to update the records. It is maybe too early to start drawing conclusions, but it does seem as if our hunch that the seasonal herring fishing camps were almost entirely confined to the north shore was correct, although Skiary and Lochournhead were developed as “ports”, (for want of a better word). It also looks as if places like Skiary and Caolas Beag may have been first used as summer sheilings then settled later. We still have so much to learn and to research. Plans are already being laid for a third season to excavate some of main buildings at Allt Mhogh Sgeir down to the first floor surfaces, to continue the survey westwards of the north shore, and to search for high ground sheilings. One could grow old at this game.

Tom Dawson persuaded me to enter the Project for the biannual British Archaeology Awards, in the Pitt Rivers category. This has been done and we shall just have to wait and see what comes of it. Many thanks to all who took part for the dedicated hard work and the very good company. JW 02/05/04