An archaeological excavation at Tolbooth Wynd, Anstruther

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with contributions by Derek Hall and Catherine Smith

Between 28th February and 28th March 1995, an excavation was carried out on the site of derelict former houses and a former joiners’ workshop, lying between Tolbooth Wynd and Cunzie Street in the burgh of Anstruther Easter (Illus 1). This investigation followed a site evaluation, carried out by the author in November 1994, in which a considerable depth of surviving archaeological deposits containing evidence of medieval activity was identified. The archaeological work was funded by the Kingdom Housing Association, which has created a sheltered housing development on the site.

Geological and historical background

Anstruther is a coastal town in eastern Fife, comprising the royal and parliamentary burghs of Anstruther Easter, Anstruther Wester, and extending eastwards to the royal burgh of Cellardyke. The site of this excavation is in Anstruther Easter.

The geological form of the East Neuk towns owes much to the changes in sea level during the most recent Ice Age. During relatively warmer periods part of the ice cap melted and the sea level rose more quickly than the land mass could rise, leading to the formation of temporary shorelines or ‘raised beaches’. The last recession of the ice cap left Anstruther with a raised beach at approximately 3m above sea level (Stevenson 1989, 2). It is this raised beach which forms the natural subsoil at the excavated site.

The name Anstruther is from the Gaelic sruth or sruthair, meaning a stream or place of streams. These streams still flow towards the sea underneath the modern streets of the town, one such stream being the Cunzie Burn, flowing beneath Cunzie Street to the east of this excavation.

The early history of Anstruther is poorly recorded. The earliest written reference to the settlement comes from the records of the Priory of May, founded on the Isle of May by King David I (1124–1152). His grandson, William I, granted the monks of the May ‘four pence from four nets of the fishing boats which may put in at their ports of Pittenweem and Anstruther for the purpose of fishing or of selling fish, and likewise from boats fitted with rudders’ (Barrow 1971, 258). There was evidently an abundance of fish in the waters around this part of the Fife coastline. The biographer of St Kentigern, writing in the 12th century, wrote of such good fishing around the Isle of May that Angles, Scots, Belgian and French fishermen were all attracted to the area and were sheltered in the havens of the island (Stevenson 1989, 7). Anstruther Easter was created a royal burgh in 1583 (Young 1993) and, in 1634, having previously been within the parish of Kilrenny, was constituted a parish in its own right, with its own church.

The burgh of Anstruther enjoyed mixed fortunes during the 17th and 18th centuries. Trade appears to have been at a low ebb in the early 17th century, for when a royal progress through the area was proposed in 1617, Anstruther protested that it would have great difficulty in providing food for the royal court. ‘Our town is aye very mean town’, protested the bailies, ‘yea, of all the burghs of this realm the meanest [poorest]; neither is there ane fleshier in our town, nor any other person accustomed with feeding of beef, we being all sea-faring men and fishers’ (Thirkell 1989, 13). In the 1670s, the burgh was so poor that no one could be found to hold the position of bailie, since it carried with it responsibility for the burgh’s finances and debts. One consequence of poverty was that the sea walls became so neglected that they were washed away in a great storm in 1670 and the harbour was destroyed. To an enquiry organised by the Convention of Royal Burghs into

Illus 1. Site location map.
their state of trade in 1691, Anstruther reported that it was without a fair, a market, ships and merchants, that it had no trade and only one fishing boat (Stevenson 1989, 13). However, circumstances improved in the 18th century. In 1710, a customs house was established in Anstruther, and a new quay was under construction by 1753. Many of the 17th- and 18th-century houses in the burgh were rebuilt in the 19th century, as appears to have been the case in Tolbooth Wynd.

This archaeological investigation, on the frontage of one of the early wynds in the core of the burgh, represents the first major investigation of its type in Anstruther. Little archaeological work had previously been undertaken in the town.

The excavation

Two trenches (A and B; Illus 2) were excavated. They were positioned with the objectives of investigating the maximum available area of the Tolbooth Wynd frontage and, in Trench A, to investigate deposits lying below the floor surface of the former joiners' workshop. Trench A also enclosed a well, uncovered by the demolition contractors shortly before the excavation commenced. A total area of 118 sq m was investigated.

Trench A, measuring 11.8m in length, with a maximum width of 7.6m, was located at the southeastern corner of the development area within the southernmost of the derelict houses on Tolbooth Wynd (labelled House 1 for recording purposes) and extending north-eastwards to include part of the area within the former workshop. Trench B, which had a maximum length of 13.5m and a maximum width of 4.3m, was located to the north-west of Trench A within the other two derelict houses on Tolbooth Wynd in which archaeological deposits survived (labelled Houses 2 and 3). A deep cellar, below which no archaeological deposits survived, was revealed within the derelict building at the north-western extremity of the development area. Within the completed sheltered housing development, House 1 corresponds to nos 8 and 10 Tolbooth Wynd, House 2 to nos 9 and 11, and House 3 to no 12.

The excavation was carried out by hand by a team of four archaeologists. Due to demolition work on the site continuing during the period of the excavation, Trench B could not be opened until the third week of the investigation. Because of this, some deposits in the north-western part of Trench B (House 3) were recorded by sectioning. Weather conditions during the excavation were generally good, although snow fell on three days and prevailing light levels were poor.
The excavation revealed five phases of activity on the site. These are described below.

Natural subsoil

The natural subsoil on the site consisted of coarse, loosely compacted, yellow to brown, shelly sand, representing raised beach deposits. These deposits were found to slope downwards towards the eastern side of the site (i.e. towards the Cunzie Burn), and their upper surface was located at depths of between 4.22m OD at the eastern side of the site and 5.05m OD at the western side. The depth of archaeological stratigraphy lying above the natural subsoil on the Tolbooth Wynd frontage was, therefore, less than that encountered elsewhere on the site.

Phase 1. Medieval deposits (Illus 3)

Phase 1 represents the earliest human activity identified on the site. This was in the form of two loam deposits, overlying the natural subsoil and detected only within Trench A, which contained pottery of exclusively medieval date (Contexts 52 and 100). These deposits survived only where they
had not been removed during the construction of later features.

A dark brown, clay loam deposit (Context 52), with a maximum depth of 0.27m, overlay the natural subsoil in the northern part of Trench A, on the northern side of Wall 49 (Phase 4). This deposit, which contained a pottery assemblage of 13th- to 14th-century date, had been cut during the construction of the stone-lined well (Phase 3) and by the foundation trenches of the Phase 4 walls.

Overlying natural deposits on the northern side of Wall 49 and the southern side of Wall 47 was a deposit of mid- to dark brown clay loam, with a maximum depth of 0.57m. This also contained a pottery assemblage of 13th- to 14th-century date. In common with Deposit 52, it had been cut through by several later features.

Phase 2. Early post-medieval activity (Illus 4)

Early post-medieval activity on the site, dated by pottery to the 16th or 17th centuries, was represented by a series of substantial cut features located in the north-western part of Trench B. These were recorded in section as time did not allow their total excavation.

Overlying the natural shelly sand was a layer of altered, redeposited subsoil, consisting of shelly sand mixed with loam (99). This survived only in one small area, and was cut by a small, oval pit with a sandy loam fill.

Cutting the natural shelly sand to a depth of 4.53m OD and running into the north-east-facing section of the trench was a ditch or pit with gently sloping sides and a shallow, concave base (135). The lowest fill of Cut 135 was a compact, shallow deposit of silty clay containing shell fragments and charcoal (131). A sample from this fill, sieved into fractions of >500μm and >1mm particle size, was examined microscopically, revealing that the charcoal was derived from wood species, with no seed or fruit remains present. Above Context 131 were three further fills consisting of sandy loam with moderate amounts of shell fragments (130, 129 and 138). Fill 129 contained pottery of 16th-century date.

A pit with a rounded, concave base (119) truncated the north-western edge of 135. The lower fill of Pit 119 was a mid-to dark brown loam containing occasional shell and charcoal fragments and several large stones (118). Overlying this was a more silty fill (133).

Truncating the upper fills of Features 135 and 119 was a shallow-sided, substantial cut (111). This was at least 2.9m in width, its south-western edge running into the trench section. Its lower fills consisted of sandy loam deposits (134 and 137). The uppermost fill (136), in contrast, contained numerous stones and fragments of sandstone rubble, which may have derived from the demolition of a stone-built structure.

Cutting through the lower fills of Cut 111 was a more steeply sided pit with an irregular profile (128). This pit contained large quantities of sandstone rubble in its fill and had sharply defined edges. It would appear that it was cut and then back-filled, largely with rubble, over a short space of time. Overlying Pit 128 was a clay loam deposit (105), which also contained sandstone rubble and represented the uppermost fill of Cut 111. This must also have been deposited over a short space of time, as the edge of Cut 111 was quite sharply
defined at this level. A folding knife (Catalogue no 10) was among the finds from Deposit 105.

A rubble and clay loam deposit (104) overlay Deposit 105. Both yielded pottery assemblages of 15th- to 17th-century date, that from 104 being a little earlier, suggesting that earlier deposits, possibly the lower fills of Cut 111, had been disturbed and redeposited in this area.

Interpretation of this series of cut features in Phase 2 presents some difficulty. However, the nature of the fills indicates the likelihood of demolition activities in the vicinity, accompanied by the dumping of quantities of sandstone rubble in this area, possibly to level up the ground surface in preparation for a subsequent construction phase.

Phase 3. Stone-lined well and hearths (Illus 5 and 6)

A well, lined with clay-bonded sandstone slabs (61; Illus 5), lay in the north-eastern part of Trench A, sealed below the floor of the former joiners' workshop. This well is marked on an Ordnance Survey map of 1893 but does not appear on later maps. The well cut through Loam Deposit 52 (Phase 1) and into the natural raised beach deposits. The cut for the construction of the well shaft was back-filled with redeposited, natural, shelly sand. A layer of large stones, set into the shelly sand to the south-west of the well (140) may represent a remnant of a stone surface or packing around the well shaft. The depth of the well was estimated by lowering a weighted line, and was found to be at least 5.8m below the modern surface (0.2m below mean sea level). The water level in the well was c 2.8m below the modern surface.

Lying approximately 3m to the west of the well was a clay-lined, roughly circular hearth, set into a shallow, concave cut. The clay lining itself exhibited a range of colours, from pale grey to brick red, and was partially fired as a result of heating from above. Very small fragments of iron were embedded in the clay, possibly indicating small-scale iron-working activity associated with this hearth. The activity represented by this evidence is more likely to have involved the repair of iron artefacts rather than manufacturing processes.

Above the hearth's clay lining was a layer of charcoal, varying in depth from 0.08m to 0.13m. A sample of this, sieved into fractions of >500um and >1mm particle size, was examined microscopically and found to contain small quantities of iron fragments. All the charcoal examined derived from wood.

Two phases of use were represented in the structure of this hearth. Directly overlying the clay-lined hearth and its associated charcoal deposit was a later hearth base (115), consisting of sandstone slabs arranged in a circular plan with a concave profile. It was truncated by the construction of Wall 50 and Drain 75 (Phase 4), hence only about a third of its area survived.

In the south-western part of Trench A, a further stone hearth base (70) overlay the natural raised beach deposits. This hearth base was very similar to the one lying c 5.5m to its north-east, described above. The two were set at approximately the same level and were likely to be contemporaneous. There was no trace of any earlier hearth beneath Hearth 70, as there was beneath 115. Immediately to the south of Hearth 70 was a thin deposit of charcoal-stained sand, overlain by a spread of stones. These may represent the remains of a stone surface associated with the hearth.

Two irregularly shaped pits with steeply angled sides and shallow bottoms (89 and 90) lay in the southern part of Trench A. Their fills were of mid-brown, silty sand. Cutting the edges of both was another, larger pit of similar form (30) with a clay loam fill. The steeply angled sides of these pits appeared to have resulted from spade cutting and rapid back-filling. If the pits had been left open for any length of time, their sides, being cut into the shelly sand of the raised beach deposits, would have slumped to some extent. Because slumping
did not occur, it seems probable that they represent quarry pits for sand, the digging of which may have coincided with the construction of houses along Tolbooth Wynd.

An extensive deposit of dark brown, compact silty clay (28) lay in the south-eastern part of Trench A and was stratigraphically later than the probable quarry pits. This deposit, which was very irregular in plan and appeared to have been patched with clay in a several places, probably represents a floor surface. It yielded a small pottery assemblage of 15th- to 16th-century date.

In Trench B, the beginning of Phase 3 was represented by several small cut features. In the south-eastern part of the trench was a narrow, roughly linear cut (85). Its irregular sides cut into the natural subsoil and it ran into the south-western section. This cut contained abundant fragments of coal and charcoal in its fill. It overlay a longer and deeper cut on the same alignment, filled by a dark brown, clay loam.

In the north-western part of Trench B, a rectangular cross-sectioned trench (117) cut into the altered natural deposit (99) (Phase 2). To its west lay a burnt deposit containing cinders and slag. Overlying these features was a series of rubbly loam deposits and above these, a roughly rectangular setting of stones (77), possibly for a hearth. A horseshoe fragment (Catalogue no 8) was recovered from among these stones. All of these features were sealed by a loam deposit. Butchered cattle phalanges recovered from this area may represent the remains of meals but may, alternatively, provide evidence for the production of oils (when rendered down) for lubricating leather (see Smith, below). The deposits in this sequence all contained pottery of 17th-century date.

Phase 4. Mid-17th to late 18th-century occupation (Illus 7 and 8)

At the end of Phase 3, a series of stone-built houses was constructed along the Tolbooth Wynd frontage, including Houses 1, 2 and 3, the interiors of which lay within the excavated area. The substantial rear walls of these houses were represented by Wall 47, revealed in Trench A, and Wall 55, which ran along the north-eastern edge of Trench B. Both walls were built from clay-bonded, roughly squared, sandstone blocks of various sizes and their foundation trenches cut into the natural raised beach deposits. The structure of these walls, when examined in the excavated sections, was found to closely match that of the lower parts of the surviving frontage walls of the houses. The two excavated walls probably joined between Trenches A and B.

To the north-west of House 1, in the north-
western part of Trench A, the foundations of further stone walls (48, 49 and 50) were located. These appeared to be roughly contemporaneous with Wall 47, being of a very similar structural style. The stratigraphic relationships between the walls and the nature of their interfaces, however, indicated that they were more likely to have been built over several years rather than as components of a single, continuous phase of construction. Wall 49, which had already been recorded in the site evaluation in November 1994, ran parallel to the rear wall of House 1 and was constructed before the two walls running off it at right-angles (48 and 50). Wall 49 is likely to be the west wall of a narrow structure lying behind the Tolbooth Wynd houses, depicted on Ordnance Survey maps of 1893 and 1914.

A drain, floored and capped with slabs of grey slate and lined along its sides with squared, sandstone blocks (75; Illus 8), ran parallel to Wall 49 on its north-eastern side. Part of the underlying hearth base (115; Phase 3) was removed during its construction.

The construction of Wall 50 appeared to be contemporaneous with that of Drain 75, as its foundations were carefully laid over the drain, leaving it intact. The foundations of the wall also cut through Hearth Base 115. During the cutting of the wall’s foundation trench, parts of the upper courses of the lining of the Phase 3 well shaft were dislodged and these courses were subsequently rebuilt in similar stone to that used for the wall. Wall 50 was built very close to the edge of the well, and the well shaft leans unevenly and at a slight angle away from the vertical, away from the wall. The weight of the load-bearing wall appears to have caused the well shaft to lean, perhaps not surprisingly, considering that the well was cut into unconsolidated shelly sand deposits.

A substantial loam deposit lay on both sides of Wall 50, overlying Hearth Base 115 and the foundation cuts for the walls. This loam deposit also finally sealed the surviving medieval deposits of Phase 1, which had been truncated during the construction activities of Phases 3 and 4.

Within House 1, two shallow, stone-lined cuts running roughly at right-angles from the frontage wall (23 and 36) appear to represent drainage channels beneath the floor of the house. The latter drainage channel, which overlay the Phase 3 clay surface (28), contained two rat bones, probably of brown rat (*Rattus norvegicus*). The drainage channel would have provided a safe place for rats to nest, particularly once it had gone out of use (see Smith, below). Also cut into the Phase 3 clay surface were post-holes, perhaps used to support timber scaffolding during the construction of the building.

A thin, compact deposit of clay and earth represented the Phase 4 floor surface. A stone spindle
whorl (Catalogue no 11) and two stone weights, possibly net or loom weights (nos 12 and 13), were found resting on this surface, providing evidence of activities carried out by the inhabitants of House 1. It seems possible that a diversity of small-scale craft activities, some directly associated with the local fishing industry, could have taken place alongside day-to-day domestic activities in houses such as this, not far from the shore. A square hearth (16) lay in the north-western part of the house.

House 2 appears to correspond with the house built in the mid-17th century by William Hamilton, a wealthy burgess. Between 1705 and 1718 this house served as the town manse (Stevenson 1989,
The archaeological stratigraphy within this building was very shallow, but this general phase of its occupation is represented by several features, including a probable sub-floor drainage feature (linear cut 107) and the heavily robbed remains of a stone slab floor. A partially robbed, square, stone hearth base (113) was also found within this house.

A bowl-shaped hearth (74) was located within House 3. This hearth exhibited two phases of use, with two charcoal-rich fills separated by a clay lining. A series of loam deposits containing pottery assemblages of 17th- to 18th-century date overlay the hearth. and above these were remnants of a stone slab floor.

**Phase 5. 19th-century occupation (Illus 9 and 10)**

The structure of the surviving walls of the houses on the Tolbooth Wynd frontage indicated that substantial rebuilding had taken place in the 18th and 19th centuries, extending the 17th-century walls upwards to add first and second floors. Extra storeys were added to houses in several streets near to the harbour in the 19th century, partly as a consequence of the increased prosperity of the fishing industry at that time (Pride 1990, 150), and echoing the motto of Anstruther Easter 'Virtute res parvae crescent' (By well-doing, poverty becomes rich), which stands above the crest of arms of the burgh. Probably as part of this rebuilding exercise, a floor of substantial stone slabs was laid in House 1 over the earlier, clay and earth floor (Phase 4).

Cutting through the earlier floor and set against the rear wall of the house was a rectangular feature (8) lined with reused wooden planks, supported by a group of stone blocks at the north-eastern end (see Illus 10). This plank-lined feature had no lining to its base, and had been back-filled with debris of 19th-century date, including bottle glass, leather and wood (see Catalogue nos 24 and 44). The function of this feature is uncertain, but it may have been used for sub-floor storage. It may have functioned as a meat safe, for example, before refrigeration was available. It could not have held liquid, since it was cut into sandy deposits and did not have a watertight lining. It is tempting to speculate that a sub-floor storage feature such as this may have been in some way connected with smuggling, which, as Stephanie Stevenson (1989, 154) notes, was a thriving business in the East Neuk in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In House 2, a layer of fine, clean sand sealed the Phase 4 features and acted as a bedding layer for a brick floor. A brick-built partition wall, a small remnant of which survived demolition, divided the building into two. These features were probably associated with the conversion of House 2 for use as a smoke-house, which was its function until modern times. In House 3, recent demolition work had destroyed much of the evidence for its 19th-century occupation, and the modern floor surface of the house had been removed by machine.

Behind Houses 1 and 2, in the area of the former joiners' workshop, sand bedding layers and a surface of substantial sandstone slabs (31) sealed the Phase 4 wall foundations and overlay the top of the Phase 3 well shaft. Small sherds of 19th- or early 20th-century pottery were recovered from the bedding layers for this surface. The slabs could have been laid as a yard surface, possibly associated with fish-curing premises which occupied the area in the 19th century (Stevenson 1989, 171-2) or with the later joiners' workshop.
The finds

Pottery (Illus 11)

Derek W Hall

These excavations produced a small assemblage of pottery (265 sherds). A total of seven different fabric types have been identified and they are discussed below.

East Coast White Gritty ware. Recent work has identified three potential production centres for this fabric in Lothian, Borders and Fife Regions (Haggarty 1984; Hall 1997). It has been found in Perth in association with 12th-century fabrics and appears to pre-date the East Coast Redware industry. It seems to cease production by the 15th century. This fabric is most commonly highly fired to a white or grey colour and contains quartz inclusions. Jugs and cooking pots are the most common vessels in this fabric type. The sherds from Tolbooth Wynd are mainly from jugs.

East Coast Redware. Fifteen years of archaeological excavations in the Scottish east coast burghs have identified this fabric type as forming a tradition of native pottery production apparently dating from the 13th to the 15th centuries. The few examples from the Tolbooth Wynd excavation date to the later part of this industry.

It is typically red-brown in colour with a grey core. Its external surface is most commonly slipped with a purple-brown wash on both internal and external surfaces. Where it is glazed it varies in colour from green-brown to yellow-green. The most common vessel form in this fabric is the jug.

Yorkshire wares. Vessels in these distinctively green glazed fabrics are the most common imports in the east coast burghs in the 13th and 14th centuries (McCarthy and Brooks 1988). The few sherds from this site are from jugs.

Reduced Greyware. This fabric type was first identified in excavations at Stirling Castle in the late 1970s (Haggarty 1980). It represents a late medieval transition from the East Coast Redwares described above and dates from the mid-15th to mid-18th centuries. It is heavily reduced to a dark grey colour and is glazed dark green. The most common vessel type is the jug.

North European earthenware. This fabric was manufactured throughout northern Europe and England from the 16th century onwards. There is no known Scottish production centre. It has been recovered from excavations at Kirkwall in the Orkney Islands (MacAskill 1982), Scalloway in the Shetland islands (Lindsay 1983), Pittenweem and Kelso. Its appearance at Anstruther is noteworthy for two reasons; firstly like Scalloway, Kirkwall and Pittenweem it has not been subjected to large scale Victorian or more recent development so deposits containing this ware still survive. Secondly its presence at Anstruther appears to confirm that there is a coastal distribution pattern for this fabric emerging.

It seems likely that the most common vessel type represented is a tripod pipkin, with a globular body, rounded base, three legs and a single handle (see Illus 11). These vessels were used as cooking pots, which is the reason for the external smoke blackening present on some of the sherds. This material may be imported from the continent possibly from Holland.

Tin Glazed earthenware. There are four sherds in a cream coloured fabric that is glazed white with hand painted blue decoration. These sherds are of Delft-type but it is not possible to positively identify their source, which could be Dutch, English or Scottish. On stylistic grounds it could date to the late 17th or early 18th centuries.

Early modern. There is a moderate group (86 sherds) of china, slipware, earthenware, porcelain and stoneware from the excavation. This material is all of late 18th- or early 19th-century date.

The pottery: discussion

It would appear that Phase 1 is the only one to be definitely of medieval date. The ten sherds from Contexts 52 and 100 are White Gritty ware and Yorkshire ware and suggest a date of the 13th or 14th centuries for this phase. Phases 2 and 3 seem to be of 16th- or 17th-century date and contain a moderate group of North European earthenware and a few sherds of Reduced Greyware. The construction of the houses in Phase 4 would seem to date to the late 17th or early 18th centuries based on the pottery from these deposits. The pottery from Phase 5 is largely made up of 19th-century china.

The main point of interest in this assemblage is the presence of sherds of North European earthenware. The absence of deposits containing this fabric in most Scottish burghs due to extensive later development means that it is not very well understood. Its survival in Anstruther may suggest that the Fife coastal burghs offer the best chance of recovering further quantities of this fabric.
Table 1. Pottery by phase.

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Fabric codes

WG East Coast White Gritty ware
Yo Yorkshire ware
RG Reduced Greyware
ECR East Coast Redware
NEE North European earthenware
ST Stoneware
TGE Tin glazed earthenware
Ch China
Ea Earthenware
Unid Unidentified
Tot total

Illustrated pottery catalogue

Reduced Greyware
1. Rim sherd from jar † glazed green on an exterior red wash. Context 67; Phase 4.
2. Handle and rim from tripod pipkin with lustrous brown glaze and traces of external smoke blackening. Context 67; Phase 4.
3. Leg from tripod pipkin, unglazed. Context 67; Phase 4.

North European earthenware
4. Strap handle from jug with vertical ribbing. Context 86; Phase 3.

East Coast Redware
5. Complete frilled jug base glazed green on a red wash. Context 86; Phase 3.

The artefacts

Adrian Cox

This excavation produced a reasonably large artefact assemblage, including a wide range of material types and representing a diversity of functional categories, including dress accessories,
horse equipment, possible fishing equipment, spinning equipment and containers.

A select catalogue is presented below, organised by material category, and within this by object type, context number and find number. Measurements are expressed to the nearest 1mm, with the exception of clay pipe stem bore measurements, which are expressed to the nearest 0.05mm.

Copper-alloy objects (Illus 12)

A possible buckle frame fragment (Catalogue no 1) was recovered from a stony deposit within House 3 which also produced pottery of 17th- or 18th-century date. No 2, probably a button, was found in a rubble deposit in House 3. A pin with its head formed by winding a length of wire tightly around the back of its shaft (no 4) was recovered from the fill of the foundation trench for the rear wall of House 3.

1. Buckle frame? Length 35mm; width 17mm; thickness 2mm.
   Possible corner fragment from a buckle frame of rectangular form. The moulded decoration on the upper surface includes a series of regularly spaced, diagonal grooves along the outer edges of the frame and a central, linear ridge on each side. The underside of the object is flat. (Not illustrated.)
   Context 58; Find no 7; Phase 4.
2. Button? Diameter 18mm; thickness 2mm.
   Probable button with a flat, circular face, part of the edge of which is broken. The underside of the
   object is obscured by corrosion products. (Not illustrated.)
   Context 96; Find no 4; Phase 3.
3. Pin. Length 14mm; diameter of shaft c 1mm.
   Pin shaft fragment of circular cross-section, in two conjoining pieces. Heavily corroded. (Not illustrated.)
   Context 11; Find no 6; Phase 5.
4. Pin. Length 33mm; width of head 2mm; diameter of shaft c 1mm.
   Pin with a wire-wound head and a bent, circular cross-sectioned shaft.
   Context 72; Find no 35; Phase 4.
5. Rivet or nail. Length 20mm; diameter of head 8mm.
   Rivet or nail with a slightly domed, faceted head and a tapering, possibly circular cross-sectioned shaft. Heavily corroded. (Not illustrated.)
   Context 86; Find no 5; Phase 3.

Lead-alloy object

A piece of once-molten lead-alloy waste (no 6) was found in the fill of a pipe trench in House 3, in association with 18th-century pottery.

6. Waste. Length 43mm; width 14mm; thickness 7mm.
   Piece of irregular, once-molten waste. (Not illustrated.)
   Context 59; Find no 2; Phase 5.

Iron objects (Illus 12)

A chisel or punch (no 7) was found in close association with Wall 48 in Trench A. A horseshoe fragment of probable 17th-century date (no 8) lay among stones forming a possible hearth setting, in Trench B. Recovered from among surface demolition deposits near the main, Tolbooth Wynd entrance to House 1 was a complete key with a rectangular bit and a kidney-shaped bow (no 9).

The uppermost fill of a substantial cut feature in Trench B produced a folding knife with rivets, bone scales (no 10). This knife, which is probably of mid- to late-17th century date, had broken with the blade extended, hence it possibly broke while being used. A handle from a folding knife recovered from an excavation at Scott Street, Perth is of similar form (Cox forthcoming).

7. Chisel or punch. Length c 140mm; max width c 28mm.
   Chisel or punch in heavily corroded condition. (Not illustrated.)
   Context 48; Find no 37; Phase 4.
8. Horseshoe fragment. Length 81mm; width 32mm; thickness 12mm.
   Horseshoe fragment with two rectangular nail holes. The shoe is broken at both ends and is heavily corroded. (Not illustrated.)
   Context 77; Find no 1; Phase 3.
Illus 12. The artefacts: nos 4 and 29, scale 1:1; nos 9, 11, 13, 16, 19 and 20, scale 1:2.

9. Key. Length 117mm; width of bow 43mm; depth of bit (including shaft terminal) 31mm. Complete key with a kidney-shaped bow and a circular cross-sectioned shaft, encircled by two decorative grooves near to the bow. The shaft has a hollow terminal and the key has a rectangular bit with two horizontal ward cuts. Find no 36; Unstratified.
10. Knife. Length 89mm; max width 24mm; thickness 15mm.
Folding knife, with its blade broken in an extended position. The handle has a broad, rounded terminal, with surviving, slightly convex, bone scales attached to iron side plates by means of small, circular cross-sectioned iron rivets. Traces of copper-alloy corrosion products survive on the outer surfaces of the side plates, hence they were probably plated. Heavily corroded. (Not illustrated.)
Context 105; Find no 3; Phase 2.

Stone objects (Illus 12)

A spindle whorl fragment and two weights were all recovered from a loam deposit which possibly represents a floor surface within House 1. The weights may have functioned as net weights or possibly as loom weights. Wear marks around the central hole of no 12 indicate that it was secured by string or cord. No 13, which is made from harder stone, does not exhibit these wear marks.

11. Spindle whorl. Diameter 36mm; surviving thickness 8mm.
Fragment representing approximately half of a circular spindle whorl of bi-convex form with a roughly central, circular perforation. The object has broken across its thickness.
Context 3; Find no 38; Phase 4.

12. Weight. Diameter 69mm; thickness 19mm; diameter of central hole 15mm.
Weight of discoidal form with a central, circular perforation. Wear marks radiating from the edge of the central perforation towards the outer edge of the object indicate that the weight was secured by string or cord. Parts of the outer edge are broken. (Not illustrated.)
Context 3; Find no 45; Phase 4.

13. Weight. Diameter 74mm; thickness 23mm; diameter of central hole 17mm.
Weight of discoidal form with a central, circular perforation. The edges of the hole are chipped and worn on one face of the object.
Context 3; Find no 39; Phase 4.

Stone building material (Illus 12)

Several stone roof-slate fragments were recovered from Phase 4 and Phase 5 deposits. Slates such as these were attached to roof timbers by means of a peg or nail, inserted through a drilled hole.
Two types are recognised among the assemblage. Nos 17 and 18 are made from less micaceous stone than the majority, are thicker, and have the nail or peg hole drilled from both sides. These may be representatives of a slightly earlier type than the majority, as they were found in the stratigraphically earliest deposits to produce roof slates.

14. Roof slate. Length 105mm; width 71mm; thickness 11mm; diameter of hole c 13mm.
Fragment with one surviving edge, broken across a drilled hole. (Not illustrated.)
Context 3; Find no 19; Phase 4.

15. Roof slate. Length 103mm; width 48mm; thickness 8mm; diameter of hole 13mm.
Fragment with irregular edges, broken across a drilled hole. (Not illustrated.)
Context 11; Find no 20; Phase 5.

16. Roof slate. Length 161mm; width 121mm; thickness 16mm; diameter of hole 12mm.
Fragment with two surviving edges and a drilled hole.
Context 29; Find no 44; Phase 4.

17. Roof slate. Length 196mm; width 136mm; thickness 14mm; diameter of hole c 13mm.
Fragment with one surviving edge, broken across a drilled hole. The hole has been drilled from both sides. (Not illustrated.)
Context 35; Find no 22; Phase 4.

18. Roof slate. Length 132mm; width 59mm; thickness 17mm; diameter of hole 11mm.
Fragment with two surviving edges, broken across a drilled hole. The hole has been drilled from both sides. (Not illustrated.)
Context 67; Find no 21; Phase 4.

Bone objects (Illus 12)

Species identification by C. Smith

A tubular bone object (no 19) was among the finds from the Phase 3 rubby loam deposits in Trench B. The external surface of the object is highly polished, probably as a consequence of repeated handling. The object's function is uncertain, but it may have been utilised as a handle or had a cord or rope passed through the natural central cavity. No 20, which was found in close proximity to no 19 although in a different context, is probably from the same object, although the two do not conjoin.

19. Worked bone object. Length 80mm; max diameter c 26mm.
Object derived from a large ungulate long bone shaft, in the form of a tapering tube, sawn across at both ends. Saw marks are particularly apparent at the wider end, where the cortex of the bone is thicker. A shallow groove encircles the bone near its wider end. Probably part of the same object as no 20.
Context 86; Find no 40; Phase 3.

20. Worked bone object. Length 24mm; width 15mm; thickness 4mm.
Small fragment, probably from the same object as no 19. This fragment represents part of the wider end of the tubular object.
Context 98; Find no 41; Phase 3.
Glass (Illus 12)

The most complete of several bottle base and neck fragments recovered from the excavation are described below.

The bottle base no 22 and neck fragments nos 24 and 25 are from vessels of broadly similar type and date of manufacture, being from wine bottles of 19th-century date. The neck fragments exhibit differences in size and rim type; no 26, for example, has a much more substantial rim form than nos 25 and 27, which were found together in the fill of a small rubbish pit in Trench A. A bottle base from a fine sand bedding layer beneath the joiners’ workshop floor (no 21) exhibits a more pronounced pontil scar than no 22 and has suffered greater surface deterioration. This base is likely to be of 18th-century date. The base of no 21, when placed on a level surface, is considerably more even than no 22.

No 23 is a base fragment from a small bottle, perhaps used to contain chemicals or medicine. This base has sheared across an imperfection in the kick-up which must have resulted in a zone of weakness.

No 28 is a neck fragment from a small vessel. Little of the original vessel form survives, as the fragment is broken at the junction of its neck and shoulder. The flaring rim and short, cylindrical neck survive. Found in a burnt deposit in Trench B, no 29 is probably a fragment from a vessel such as a wine glass.

21. Bottle base. Surviving depth c 36mm; diameter 95mm. Circular base fragment from a bottle in green to brown glass with a high kick-up, representing the maximum surviving depth. The underside of the kick-up exhibits a pontil scar. There is some surface deterioration. (Not illustrated.) Context 34; Find no 15; Phase 5.

22. Bottle base. Surviving depth 70mm; diameter 89mm. Uneven, circular base fragment from a cylindrical bottle in green glass with a high kick-up. There is some surface deterioration. (Not illustrated.) Context 40; Find no 10; Phase 5.

23. Bottle base. Surviving depth 17mm; diameter c 33mm. Circular base fragment in pale green glass with a high kick-up. The fragment is broken across a large void at the apex of the kick-up, and has an incomplete diameter. There is some surface deterioration, resulting in the presence of an opaque, iridescent surface patina. (Not illustrated.) Context 65; Find no 12; Phase 4.

24. Bottle neck. Surviving depth 100mm; external rim diameter 34mm; internal rim diameter 22mm. Neck fragment from a cylindrical bottle in green glass. There is some slight surface deterioration. (Not illustrated.) Context 4; Find no 9; Phase 5.

25. Bottle neck. Surviving depth 125mm; external rim diameter 32mm; internal rim diameter 24mm. Neck fragment from a cylindrical bottle in green glass, including part of the shoulder. There is some slight surface deterioration. (Not illustrated.) Context 40; Find no 11; Phase 5.

26. Bottle neck. Surviving depth 103mm; external rim diameter 37mm; internal rim diameter 24mm. Neck fragment from a cylindrical bottle in green glass, including part of the shoulder. There is some slight surface deterioration. (Not illustrated.) Context 40; Find no 13; Phase 5.

27. Bottle neck. Surviving depth 55mm; external rim diameter 33mm; internal rim diameter 28mm. Neck fragment from a cylindrical bottle in green glass. The fragment has broken across its circumference. There is some surface deterioration. (Not illustrated.) Context 40; Find no 14; Phase 5.

28. Bottle neck. Surviving depth 155mm; external rim diameter 22mm; internal rim diameter 12mm. Neck fragment from a small bottle with a flaring rim, in pale, green to blue glass. The fragment has broken at its junction with the shoulder of the vessel. There is some slight surface deterioration. (Not illustrated.) Context 35; Find no 8; Phase 4.

29. Vessel fragment. Length 35mm; width 25mm; max thickness c 3mm. Vessel fragment with raised decoration in the form of curving, intersecting ridges. The fragment tapers in thickness and its surface bears a thin, iridescent layer. Context 98; Find no 42; Phase 3.

Ceramic objects (Illus 13)

A ceramic alley (no 30) was found in unstratified demolition deposits in Trench B. No 31 is a fragment of an ornamental tile, probably originally square, of Delftware type. Delftware pottery and tiles were in great demand during the 17th and 18th centuries. This example probably belongs to the 17th century and was probably one of a set, applied to a wall or around a fireplace. Because of their effective damp-proofing properties, Delftware tiles were also used in cellars and kitchens, especially in their native Holland (van Lemmen 1986, 7). This fragment was recovered from an extensive loam deposit in Trench B.

30. Alley. Diameter 19mm. Complete, spherical alley with a buff glaze. (Not illustrated.) Find no 46; Unstratified.

31. Tile. Surviving length 110mm; surviving width 104mm; surviving thickness 15mm.
Tile fragment, probably from a square tile, with all edges broken apart from a small part of one edge, in a moderately coarse, streaky, buff to orange fabric with rounded and sub-angular inclusions. The upper surface is glazed and bears an apparently hand-painted design, possibly representing a bird or a dragon, within a circular border, in brown, blue and green/yellow. The lower surface is almost entirely missing.

Context 86; Find no 43; Phase 3.

Ceramic building material

A total of 77 fragments of ceramic roof tile was recovered from the excavation. Most came from Phase 4 and Phase 5 rubble deposits within House 3 and from the extensive Phase 4 loam deposit lying below the floor of the former joiners’ workshop.

Most of the tile fragments are from curved pantiles, some including nubs. Pantiles were imported into the East Neuk burghs in the 16th century as ballast in trading vessels from the Low Countries. Complete, unstratified examples recovered from the site are of two varieties: one type having a simple, concavo-convex curvature, the other having an S-shaped profile and a nib at one end. No 34 is the only example found of a glazed tile. No 32, though unstratified, provides an example of a locally made product.

32. Brick. Length 234mm; width 111mm; thickness 85mm.

Nearly complete brick in a coarse, red to orange fabric containing abundant, angular inclusions. One of the faces is stamped with the words ‘THOMAS WILSON – CLEPHANTON – ANSTRUTHER’, within a rectangular border. (Not illustrated.)

Find no 34, Unstratified.

33. Tile fragment. Length 35mm; width 131mm; thickness 16mm.

Nibbed fragment of a curved roof tile in a moderately coarse, red to orange fabric. (Not illustrated.)

Context 45; Find no 17; Phase 5.

34. Tile fragment. Length 40mm; width 26mm; thickness 16mm.

Fragment from a possibly flat tile in a moderately coarse fabric, buff to orange where oxidised and grey where reduced. Patches of an orange to green glaze occur on the upper and lower surfaces. (Not illustrated.)

Context 45; Find no 18; Phase 5.

35. Tile fragment. Length 56mm; width 108mm; thickness 16mm.

Nibbed fragment of a curved roof tile in a moderately coarse, red to orange fabric. (Not illustrated.)

Context 65; Find no 16; Phase 4.

Plaster

A fragment of painted wall plaster (no 36) was recovered from demolition deposits in House 3. This fragment contains tufts of animal hair (possibly cattle hair), which was used by plasterers to strengthen the material and was often a by-product of the tanning industry. A small tannery existed in the back yard of the Rugby Football Club building, adjacent to the excavation site.

36. Painted plaster fragment. Length 35mm; width 27mm; thickness 18mm.

Fragment of wall plaster with irregular edges, in a white to buff fabric with angular and sub-angular inclusions, including occasional mica. Tufts of animal hair are also among the inclusions. On the upper surface, three layers of paint overlie a layer of buff to white wash. The initial layer of paint is blue; the overlying layers buff and white. (Not illustrated.)

Context 45; Find no 27; Phase 5.

Wood (Illus 13)

Wooden boards (nos 37–41) formed the lining of a rectangular feature (Context 8; see Illus 10) lying against the rear wall, beneath the floor in the interior of House 1. These timbers were all reused and possibly represent components of a single wooden structure such as a large table, or modified ship’s deck boards. The species of no 41 was identified as silver fir (Abies alba) and the remainder of the boards appear to have been derived from the same species.

A stave fragment from a cask (no 42) was recovered from the upper fill of the wood-lined feature. The fragment, which is of oak (Quercus sp), has a lid seating below its upper edge and small dowels projecting from a vertical edge to secure it to the adjoining stave. Both fish processing and brewing activities, which were practised in the near vicinity of this site, involved the use of large numbers of wooden casks.

37. Board. Length 1018mm; width 397mm; thickness 34mm.

Rectangular board with bevelled edges. Fourteen square cross-sectioned dowels project from one face. (Not illustrated.)

Context 10; Find no 28; Phase 5.

38. Board. Length 813mm; overall width 434mm; thickness 19mm.

Part of a rectangular board with jointed cross-members, in two conjoining pieces. (Not illustrated.)

Context 10; Find no 29; Phase 5.

39. Board. Length 1023mm; width 179mm; thickness 26mm.

Rectangular board. Three square cross-sectioned dowels project from one face. (Not illustrated.)

Context 10; Find no 30; Phase 5.
40. Board fragment. Length 718mm; width 234mm; thickness 28mm. Roughly rectangular board fragment with bevelled edges. A hole, possibly for a dowel, lies near to one end. The opposite end of the object is roughly broken. There is part of a rectangular recess in one face, at the broken end. (Not illustrated.) Context 10; Find no 31; Phase 5.

41. Boards. Overall length 1008mm; overall width 1506mm; thickness 29mm. Three boards, secured together by dowels. Silver fir (Abies alba). (Not illustrated.) Context 10; Find no 32; Phase 5.

42. Stave fragment. Length 138mm; width 93mm; thickness 14mm. Stave fragment with a single, circular perforation near to a vertical edge and a groove with a truncated, V-shaped profile running around the concave surface, 18mm below the upper edge. Two small, roughly circular cross-sectioned dowels project from a vertical edge. Oak (Quercus sp). Context 4; Find no 33; Phase 5.

43. Off-cut. Length 108mm; width 11mm; thickness 1mm. Slender off-cut with gently curving, trimmed edges. (Not illustrated.) Context 3; Find no 47; Phase 4.

44. Off-cut. Max. length 301mm; max width 204mm; thickness 2mm. Off-cut sheet of irregular shape, from which two right-angled pieces have been cut out. There are also a further three straight, trimmed edges. (Not illustrated.) Context 4; Find no 48; Phase 5.

Clay pipes (Illus 14)
The clay pipe assemblage recovered from the excavation consists of three bowls (nos 45–47), a heel and stem fragment (no 48) and 27 plain stem fragments, all of which were found in deposits in Trench B.

The bowls are of bulbous form and have a forward lean, characteristics of 17th-century rather than later pipes. All three bowls are milled below the rim. The stamps on the heels of nos 46 and 47 appear similar in shape, although that on the latter bowl is more lightly executed. No 48, a heel and stem fragment, includes a design of raised pellets arranged in a circle above the heel.

45. Bowl. Height 36mm; internal rim diameter 13mm; stem bore diameter 2.30mm (6/64"). Bowl of bulbous form with a flat heel. The heel
bears a stamp of a five-pointed star within a circular border. Milling occurs below the forward-sloping rim. The bowl is stained red or orange.
Context 86; Find no 23; Phase 3.

46. Bowl. Height 37mm; internal rim diameter 12mm; stem bore not measurable.
Bowl of bulbous form with a flat heel. The bowl bears the letter ‘B’, in relief, on its right side just above the heel. The left side of the bowl may also have been marked but this part of the bowl is now missing. The heel bears a roughly rectangular stamp, within which crossed lines are visible.
Milling occurs below the forward-sloping rim.
Context 86; Find no 24; Phase 3.

47. Bowl. Height 33mm; internal rim diameter 10mm; stem bore diameter 2.65mm (7/64”).
Bowl of bulbous form with a flat heel, including part of the stem. The bowl bears the letters ‘W’ on one side and ‘B’ on the other, in relief, just above the heel. The heel itself bears a roughly rectangular stamp. Milling occurs below the forward-sloping rim.
Context 98; Find no 25; Phase 3.

48. Heel and stem fragment. Surviving height 15mm; length 58mm; stem bore diameter 2.85mm (8/64”).
Fragment including a small part of the side of a bowl, the heel and part of the stem. Relief decoration in the form of seven pellets arranged in a circle occurs on the right side of the bowl, just above the plain, flat heel. The stem is plain.
Context 105; Find no 26; Phase 2.

The animal remains
Catherine Smith

Introduction
A well-preserved animal bone assemblage was retrieved from the site, comprising some 537 fragments dating to the medieval and post-medieval periods. Other faunal material included shells of marine molluscs and one land snail as well as a few fragments of crustacean exoskeleton.

Methods and measurement
Identities were made by direct comparison with modern reference material. Those bones of mammals which could not be identified to species level were recorded as large ungulate (ie probably cattle, horse or red deer), small ungulate (ie probably sheep or goat) or indeterminate mammal. Thus, most of the mammalian vertebrae with the exception of the first two cervical vertebrae, the atlas and axis, as well as the caudal vertebrae of the tail, were described as large or small ungulate, as were the ribs. Fish bones were not identified to species but were merely recorded as such.
All anatomical measurements were made
Table 2. Total numbers of bones identified from each species.

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<tr>
<td>Goose (Greylag/domestic)</td>
<td>Anser anser</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duck (Mallard/domestic)</td>
<td>Anas platyrhynchos</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic fowl</td>
<td>Gallus gallus</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Meleagris gallopavo</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>probably Curlew</td>
<td>Numenius arquata</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herring/Lesser black-backed gull</td>
<td>Larus argentatus/fuscus</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guillemot</td>
<td>Uria aalge</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock dove/feral pigeon</td>
<td>Columba livia</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>412</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large ungulate</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small ungulate</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indeterminate mammal</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>537</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Excludes fragmentary skeleton of young dog.

following the scheme of von den Driesch (1976) and are expressed in millimetres.

Species of animals present

The mammalian species represented were: cattle, sheep/goat, pig, horse, red deer, dog, cat and rat sp. Although all caprovid remains were of necessity described as sheep/goat because of the well-documented difficulties in distinguishing their bones (Boesneck 1969) it was thought that all of the remains had in fact come from sheep.

Bird bones were also recovered from the site; these came from domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*), domestic or greylag goose (*Anser anser*), probable mallard duck (*Anas platyrhynchos*), turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*), gannet (*Sula bassana*), guillemot (*Uria aalge*), herring or lesser black-backed gull (*Larus argentatus/fuscus*), probable curlew (*Numenius arquata*) and rock dove or feral pigeon (*Columba livia*).

Relative frequencies of species

The numbers of bones from each species are shown in Table 2, alongside minimum numbers of animals based on the most commonly occurring bone from each animal. It can be seen that cattle occurred more frequently than other animals, both in terms of fragment count and of minimum numbers present. Sheep remains were also commonly found at the site but were less numerous than those of cattle, while pigs and horses were relatively scarce. Comparison with data from sites of medieval date elsewhere in Fife (see Table 3) reveals similarities in the preference for cattle and sheep and low usage of pig meat. However, at Anstruther, the uptake of pork was lower than in medieval St Andrews, as well as lower than in Perth, Elgin and Aberdeen. Cattle and sheep were the most frequently occurring animals at medieval sites in the burghs of Perth, Aberdeen and Elgin, due to the economic importance of their hides, wool and woolfells (skins with the wool still attached) (Hodgson 1983, 9).

There was no evidence of venison having been eaten in the town; the single fragment of red deer antler consisted of a fragment of tine which could have been imported to the site as a raw material to be used in the production of artefacts. None of the horse bones (which consisted entirely of bones of the feet) bore any evidence of butchery which might have suggested that the meat had been consumed by humans; however there was some
Table 3. Percentages of food-forming mammals at four sites in Fife, based on fragment count.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tolbooth Wynd</th>
<th>Cinema House</th>
<th>134 Market St</th>
<th>St Nicholas Farm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anstruther</td>
<td>St Andrews</td>
<td>St Andrews</td>
<td>St Andrews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep/goat</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red deer</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

some evidence of gnawing by dogs on some of the horse bones, which might indicate their deliberate use as dog food. Evidence of dogs themselves was furnished both by a single skeleton of a young animal (Context 40), although this may represent a fairly recent pet burial, as well as by a few stray bones in other contexts. Similarly, cat bones were not numerous, only two bones having been found on the site. The rat bones were fairly large and probably came from the brown rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) rather than the smaller black rat (*Rattus rattus*). The contexts in which the rat bones were found included a drain cut, which would have provided a safe place to nest, particularly once the drain had gone out of use.

The most commonly found bird species, as on other Scottish sites of medieval date, was the domestic fowl. Two bones from domesticated turkey, a galliform species related to the domestic fowl which was not introduced into Britain from the New World until the sixteenth century, were also found. The evidence for other domestic bird species was rather sparse; the single skull of duck was morphologically identical to wild mallard, which is the ancestor of today’s farmyard breeds, while the two goose bones could as easily have come from the true wild greylag as the domesticated variety, being similarly small in size.

Undoubtedly wild species that were exploited, however, were birds which would have bred in the vicinity, such as the gannet, or Solan goose, which was commonly harvested from the Bass Rock. Archaeological evidence from the Isle of May (Smith, in preparation) indicates that gannets also bred on other islands in the Forth, although they have ceased to do so at the present day. A single bone of guillemot, another commonly eaten sea bird, was also found, as was a bone thought to have come from curlew and one from herring or lesser black-backed gull, all of these species being considered edible in earlier times. The bones thought to be of rock dove were slightly problematical in that the feral pigeon which is somewhat of a nuisance in the modern town is derived from

the ‘Doocot doo’, once valued for its meat and eggs, and itself a domesticated variety of the true wild rock dove, *Columba livia*. The bones found on site were slightly larger than the bones of modern feral town pigeon (from Dundee) which were used for comparison, which may indicate that some of the birds in question were the well-fed Doocot type. Several of the pigeon bones, however, were found as a group, consisting of an articulated left foot, in association with some large cattle bones which may have been of fairly recent origin, so it is possible that these bones at least may have come from a feral bird.

A total of 93 shells of marine mollusc were also present on the site, the commonest species being the edible or common periwinkle (*Littorina littorea*) and the limpet (*Patella sp*). Oyster (*Ostrea edulis*), flat periwinkle (*Littorina obtusata*), mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) and common cockle (*Cerastoderma edule*) were also present. While the oysters and periwinkles were probably eaten by the inhabitants of the site, the limpets, having rather tough meat, may have been used primarily as bait in fishing.

Age of animals at death

Evidence of age at death, derived from observation of the rate of eruption and wear of the mandibular teeth, was rather sparse. Only two sheep mandibles provided evidence of the age at death: one came from an animal of between one and three years of age while another was between four and six years old at death. Two cattle mandibles came from immature or young adult animals while three were from older adults.

Long bones of cattle and sheep/goat were assessed as to the state of epiphyseal fusion. These results for cattle and sheep/goat were compared with data for medieval phases at Cinema House and 134 Market Street, St Andrews. At all three sites very few long bones of young domestic livestock were found, the majority having come from immature/adult or adult animals. The reason for this apparent lack of young animals may be either that the soil at these sites has not been conducive
to the survival of such delicate bones, or that meat from older animals was preferred.

As regards other animals, there was very little evidence for their age at death; however, two juvenile/inmature pig bones were found. In the case of the dogs, one young animal which had been deliberately buried (Context 40) was aged from about four to five months while one tiny tibia may have come from a newborn puppy. The other dog bones found at the site came from adults. One immature and one adult cat bone were also found.

Size of animals

Anatomical measurements on the bones of the cattle and sheep/goats indicated that the majority fell comfortably within the size ranges of animals of the medieval period. However, it has not been possible to distinguish between the bones of medieval and post-medieval animals, since no great changes took place in stock breeding in Scotland until the beginning of the 18th century, and even so the results of this agricultural improvement are not notable in animals of pre-19th century date. Thus on the basis of size it can only be stated that most of the domestic beasts from Anstruther were probably of medieval or post-medieval date. A very few larger bones may have been of more recent date.

Butchery

The style of butchery at the site conformed to the medieval or post-medieval pattern in that cleavers or axes rather than saws were used to dismember carcasses. There was some evidence that a pole-axe had been used to stun or kill cattle; several skull fragments showed signs of unhealed depressed fractures of the frontal bone, indicating that death had probably resulted from a blow to the head with such an instrument. Once the animal had been killed and drawn, the carcass was dressed by removing the lower limbs and head. Evidence of these processes was provided by cattle metapodials (cannon bones) with thin knife cuts ringing the proximal end of the bone at the point where the metapodial had been severed from the tarsals or carpals (Context 78), or by similar knife cuts around the edges of the tarsals themselves (Context 98). The same operation of lower limb removal, but this time involving chopping through the shaft of the metapodial, was also observed, as in a cattle metacarpal which had been chopped through the shaft using at least two separate blows. Removal of the head could result in knife cuts on the atlas, or first neck vertebra which supports the head, as in one example from sheep and one from cattle.

Once the head and lower limbs had been dispatched, the carcass was divided along the backbone into sides of beef or mutton; that this took place was demonstrated by the incidence of both large and small ungulate vertebrae which had been chopped neatly in half along the sagittal plane. The next stage in the butchery process was then to joint the carcass into cuts of meat: a cattle femur from which a slice had been chopped from the femur head provided evidence of disjoining of the hind limb from the pelvis.

Many of the bones bore evidence of the flesh having been removed by means of sharp metal knives. Knife cuts were particularly evident on several long bones of pig; numerous parallel knife cuts, running in a direction at right angles to the long axis of the bone, were found on a humerus and two femora. Since cutting cooked meat from a bone does not normally cause such extensive damage, it can probably be assumed that in these cases the meat was raw when filleting took place. Pork intended for pickling, salting or preserving in some other way was often boned out and this may be the explanation for these marks. Knife cuts were also found on bones of cattle, sheep, domestic fowl, turkey and gannet. In the case of the turkey, deep cuts were found on the proximal end of the radius, the lower part of the wing, which in this bird can provide a fairly substantial amount of meat. Knife cuts on a tibio-tarsus of gannet, in other words the bone contained in the drumstick, indicate that the meat from this bird was indeed eaten.

Cheaper cuts of meat which have fallen rather out of favour in the modern period were not scorned by the inhabitants of the site. Tongue was enjoyed, as shown by knife cuts on the hyoid of a sheep, that is, on the small bone which supports the tongue. Brains were probably also utilised as food (although they could also be used in preparing hides for leather). Several skulls of cattle and sheep had been split open in order to remove the brains, and in one case the direction of the hack marks indicated that the skull had been placed upside down, balancing on the frontal bone, before butchery (and thus had definitely been removed from the body first). Marrow was probably also eaten; many of the long bones, particularly of cattle, having been split lengthwise in the sagittal plane in order to gain access to it.

A number of cattle phalanges bore thin knife cuts circling the midshaft section which may indicate that they were used in the dish called neat’s foot (although the feet may have another use when rendered down to provide oil for lubricating leather) (Contexts 78 and 98). And finally, as a ‘tailpiece’, a group of six cattle caudal vertebrae were probably the discarded remains of an oxtail, which can provide a nourishing and tasty meal.
The animal remains: discussion

The bones from Tolbooth Wynd furnish an insight into life in early Anstruther. They reveal what the animals must have looked like – small, spindly legged sheep and small, sturdy cattle – as well as giving us some indication of the diet of the inhabitants of the site. Beef and mutton were more popular meats than pork. This low use of pork is notable, even when comparison is made to other sites in Fife, and may relate to the well-known superstitions prevalent among the fisher folk in the East Neuk regarding the 'uncleanliness' of pigs. For example, to have met a pig on the way to the boats was regarded as extremely unlucky and could even deter a fisherman from putting to sea that day, and to refer to a pig as anything other than 'the thing' was considered a risky business (Radford and Radford 1961, 264–5). Thus pigs may not have been abundant in the town of Anstruther in the medieval and post-medieval periods because of a belief that they could bring bad luck.

Evidence that the sea was exploited as a source of food was provided by the occurrence of fish bones, shells of marine molluscs and the bones of sea birds such as gannet, gull and guillemot. While some of the mollusc species would have been eaten, it is likely that others, particularly the limpets, would only have been used as food for humans in times of dearth, and were instead used to bait fishing hooks.

Discussion

This excavation has revealed evidence of around 500 years of human activity on and around this site. No associated structural remains were found with the medieval soil deposits of Phase 1 within the excavated area, any such remains possibly having been destroyed by later building activity. However, the quantity of relatively unabraded medieval pottery recovered from the excavation indicates the likelihood of medieval occupation in the close vicinity of this site.

The presence of substantial, rubble-filled cuts in the north-western part of the site in Phase 2 may indicate that this area was the focus of intensive re-modelling in the 16th and early 17th centuries, with stone-built structures having been demolished and the area levelled. The depth of stratigraphy in this area of the site was in sharp contrast to the very shallow deposits recorded just a few metres to its south-east.

Phase 3 marks the beginnings of quite intensive occupation of the excavated area, with the construction of a deep, stone-lined well and broad, stone-lined hearths which may have been associated with a different arrangement of buildings from the one represented by the surviving walls. The remains of a heavily patched, clay and earth floor surface in the southern part of the site provides an insight into living conditions in the post-medieval burgh.

By the beginning of Phase 4, the stone-built dwellings along the frontage of Tolbooth Wynd were certainly in existence, their associated wall foundations cutting through the earlier stratigraphy. Archaeological and map evidence complement each other in suggesting that a narrow pend ran behind the rear walls of these houses. Net weights and a spindle whorl found on the surface of an earth floor within House 1 indicate that the industrial and domestic spheres overlapped in these early households, as they must have done until relatively recent times. House 2, bought by the town council 'to be a manse in all tyme coming' in 1705 (Stevenson 1989, 170), eventually functioned as a smoke-house and finally as a storage area connected to the former joiners' workshop.

The recent history of the area behind the Tolbooth Wynd houses appears to have been concerned with some of the staple industries of the post-medieval burgh. Stevenson (1989, 171) records that a malt steading once stood behind the manse in Tolbooth Wynd, possibly in the early 17th century. Later, this area was the site of a fish-curing premises until 1896. Whether these activities encroached directly upon the excavated area is uncertain. Possibly the stone-lined drain recorded in Phase 4 ran from a malt-steading lying to its north-west. A small tannery existed in the backyard of the nearby Wald Academy Former Pupils' Rugby Football Club building in the 19th century, possibly the source of the assemblage of leather excavated in House 1. Other locally important industries, including brick-making, brewing and fishing, are also represented in the finds assemblage from the excavation.

The excavation has highlighted the intensity of post-medieval activity in this part of the burgh, as well as demonstrating the likelihood of medieval occupation. The results of this investigation have demonstrated the great potential for the survival of archaeological remains in Anstruther.
Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the Kingdom Housing Association, which funded the archaeological work, and to John Purves of the Jack Fisher Partnership for his assistance both before and during the excavation. My thanks are also due to Fife Council Archaeologist Peter Yeoman for his advice and support.

Species identification of the bone artefact was provided by Catherine Smith and those for the wood artefacts are by Ian Panter. Selected samples from the excavation were examined by Alan Fairweather. Special thanks are due to the excavation team and assistants, Simon Stronach, the late Neil Ross, Fraser Stewart, Sheila Tindal and Julie McGregor. The illustrations in this paper are by Dave Munro, apart from Illus 5, 8 and 14, which are by the author.

Finally, I would like to thank the people of Anstruther Easter for their enthusiastic interest in the archaeological work and for the friendly reception given to the excavation team.

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Abstract

An excavation by the Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust in advance of a sheltered housing development in the core of the burgh of Anstruther Easter revealed evidence of medieval activity in the vicinity and a complex sequence of post-medieval structural remains and deposits. This investigation, the first major archaeological project of its type in Anstruther, also produced important assemblages of pottery, artefacts and faunal remains.

Key words: Anstruther, hearths, well, medieval, post-medieval