



TAYSIDE & FIFE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
COMMITTEE
1870

Newsletter of the Tayside and Fife Archaeological Committee Issue Thirty-Seven – April 2021

TAFAC is registered in Scotland as a charity (SC002450).

Kinross (Marshall) Museum



Following TAFAC meetings held in Kinross, David Munro, chairman of Kinross (Marshall) Museum Trust, was invited to tell the story of the museum's origins and its activities since moving into the Loch Leven Community Campus a decade ago.

The Marshall Bequest

The making of a museum in Kinross owes its origin to a Victorian antiquarian named David Marshall (1831-1902), pictured left, a man of many talents ranging from book binding and barrel making to net fishing on Loch Leven and guiding visitors to the historic sites of Kinross-shire. He was a true collector of all things to do with the former county of Kinross and when he came to make his will in October 1869, he bequeathed his entire collection to the "inhabitants of Kinross"

provided that a "proper place for their reception" could be found. Following Marshall's death in January 1902, his Trustees eventually found a home for the Marshall Bequest in the Kinross Carnegie Free Library which opened its doors to the public in 1905.

Managed by the Joint Library Committee of Kinross Town Council and Kinross-shire County Council, there was limited access to the museum and no attempt was made to display the collection properly. Inevitably interest dwindled and, closed to the public, the collection gathered dust under lock and key. In the 1960s, however, interest in the Marshall Bequest was reawakened with the creation of the Kinross-shire Antiquarian Society, renamed Kinross-shire Historical Society in 1982, and the much-publicised discovery of a Bronze Age burial cist at Gairney Bank Farm during the building of the M90 motorway (see next page).

Note: All illustrations in this article are courtesy of David Munro. The logo of Kinross (Marshall) Museum designed by the late Jack Moffat, former head of the Art Department at Kinross High School.

A properly fitted out Museum, occupying an entire floor above the Carnegie Library , was opened in May 1974 with displays mounted by volunteer members of the local Antiquarian Society. A year later Kinross-shire was absorbed into Perth and Kinross District under local government reform and the museum was taken over by Perth Museum. With an exhibition that remained unchanged and visitor numbers falling, it was inevitable that the museum should be closed in 1996 and the collections forming the Marshall Bequest removed to Perth.

Right: the Food Vessel from Gairney Bank



The finding of a 'proper place'

The closure of the Carnegie Library and the Town Hall soon followed the closure of the museum, leaving a scene of desolation in the heart of the old county town. Attempts by the community to bring the Town Hall, library and museum back to life failed but in 1997 the Kinross (Marshall) Museum Trust was formed with the aim of looking for another home in which to house a local museum. In 2003 the Trustees were offered space in the proposed Loch Leven Community Campus and with help from Perth and Kinross Council and Perth Museum and Art Gallery, the Kinross (Marshall) Museum officially opened its doors to the public in February 2010.

Below: Kinross (Marshall) Museum exhibitions on display in the Loch Leven Community Campus.



The museum collection

Kinross (Marshall) Museum, which comprises a study room, storeroom and exhibition space, is fortunate in being able to draw on a pool of interesting material that allows it to change its exhibitions on a regular basis. While the museum is able to borrow from the original Marshall Bequest Collection held in Perth Museum, exhibitions also include items on loan from members of the community and other museums as well as a wide range of artefacts, photos, manuscripts, maps and books all held by the museum. In recent years important acquisitions have included Kinross Estate ledgers, the minutes and correspondence of Kinross Community Council, records of Kinross Parish Church and assorted items from the former County Buildings in Kinross, including the Provost's chair, photos of the Provosts of Kinross and over 100 Council area maps and plans.

Museum outreach

In recent years the museum has participated in several archaeological research projects including excavations on St Serf's Island in Loch Leven and historic landscape surveys forming components of the 2013-16 *Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership* and the 2017 *Our Portmoak* programme. The museum also collaborated with researchers from Glasgow University in the publication of the 733-page *The place-names of Kinross-shire* (Shaun Tyas 2017).

Educational resources have been developed and workshops undertaken with pupils and staff at Kinross High School and the primary schools of Kinross-shire as well as with reminiscence groups organised in association with Perth and Kinross Adult Learning Department. The museum has also worked closely with Perth and Kinross Library Service in offering family history sessions and public lectures.

Staffing and funding the museum

All of this activity is made possible through the engagement of a band of enthusiastic volunteers who welcome visitors to the study room and exhibition area, in addition to cataloguing the collection, answering research queries and helping to mount new exhibitions. Funding for the museum is derived from donations, from Friends of Kinross Museum subscriptions and from grants obtained for specific projects and for the acquisition of new display cases, conservation materials and computing equipment. To find out more about current displays and activities, visit the museum website at www.kinrossmuseum.org.uk.

Future Proofing Scotland's Heritage in the Digital Age

Rosie Thorp (Archives Officer), Historic Environment Scotland

As I'm sure many of you are aware, Historic Environment Scotland (HES) is the lead public body that investigates, cares for and promotes Scotland's historic environment. HES Archives contains over 1.6 million records relating to Scotland's archaeological, architectural, maritime and industrial history. Our archive material is increasingly 'beyond the physical', with both digital surrogates and born-digital material present, alongside the tangible forms of paper and vellum many associate with archives. Questions began to be asked in the mid-2010s: How do we adapt to the changing nature and scale of Scottish heritage material? How can we use technological developments, such as digital photography and image scanning, to protect and share our collections? In response, Digital Projects was launched. Digital Projects began in 2017, a fixed-term project that aimed to significantly increase HES Archive's accessibility and strengthen our long-term digital preservation practices. Through this project we have digitised at-risk collections, catalogued digital material deposited with us, and increased content on HES's online catalogue, Canmore. To date (March 2021), we have digitised 534,340 photographs, processed around 425,000 items and added over 377,600 items to the Digital Archive. In doing so, we have increased archival material on Canmore by over 107% - so there is plenty of material to peruse from the comfort of your home!

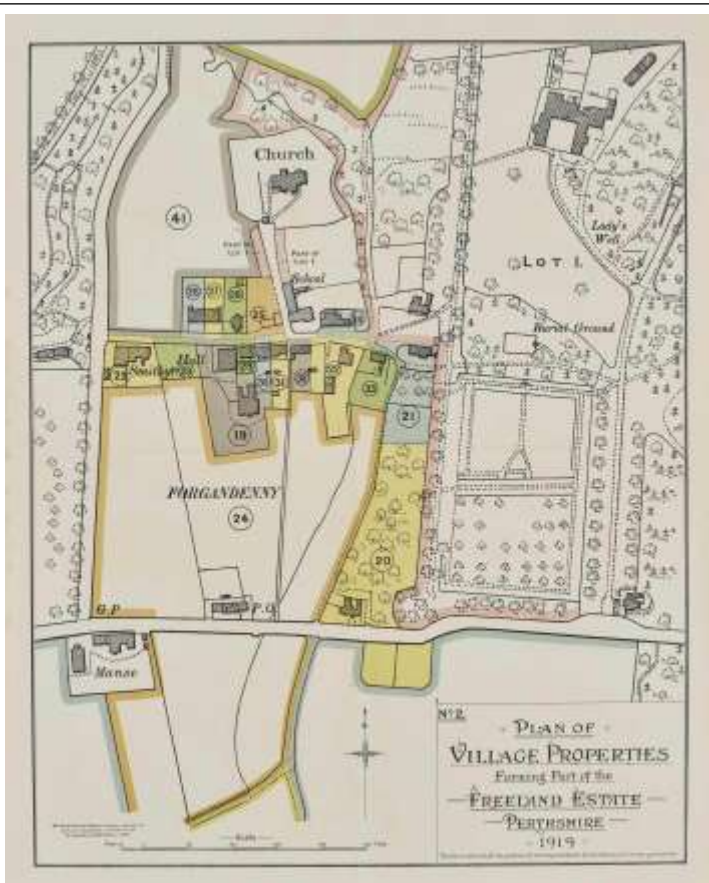
March 2021 marks the end of our Digital Project. It provides the perfect opportunity to mention some of the notable digital collections now available, thanks to this project, that relate to Tayside and Fife.



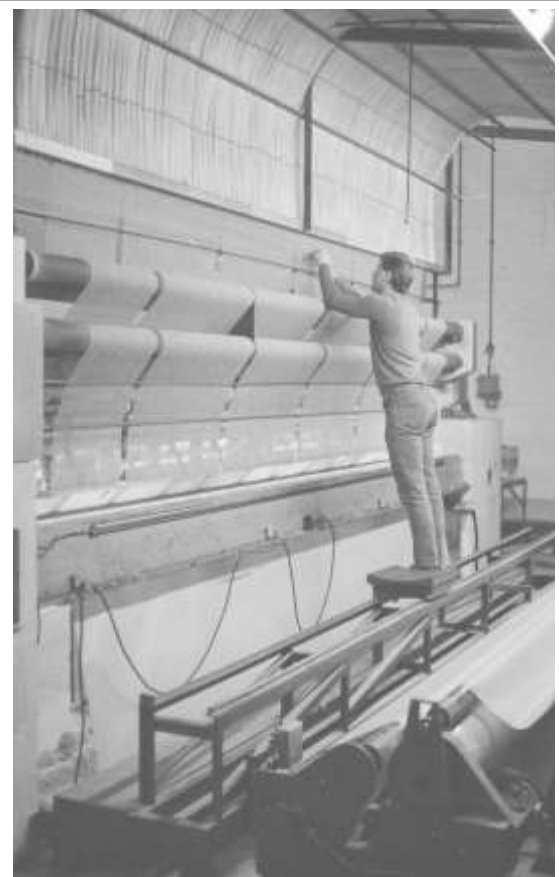
Croft Moraig Stone Circle, Aberfeldy. Image copyright: HES (SC2109186)



Excavation of Carpow Longboat. Image copyright HES (DP291267)



Extract from Freeland Estate Sale Brochure.
Image copyright HES (SC2160503)



Seafield's Works, Dundee. Image copyright:
HES (SC1824232)

Some born-digital projects now archived from Tayside and Fife include:

- [551 5/3/25](#) Archive from Standing Building Survey at Kellie Castle in Arbirlot, Angus
- [551 359/104](#) Archive from Carpow Log Boat Excavations at Carpow Bank, Perth and Kinross
- [551 5/12/17](#) Archive from Archaeological Evaluation and Historic Building Recording at Limekilns, Charlestown

Digitised collections include:

- Buildings of the Scottish Countryside – photographs taken between 1978 and 1985
 - [551 405/2/2/12](#) holds hundreds of images of buildings in Fife
- Estates Exchange Catalogues – records of estates from the late 19th and early 20th centuries
 - Local records include a [sales catalogue](#) from Freeland Estate, Perthshire, 1919 (SC 2160456 – SC 2160505)
- Scottish Development Department – we have 69,000 digitised images of buildings and sites across Scotland, taken by SDD investigators, from c.1965-1985
 - Local images include the interior of Seafield Works, Taylor's Lane, Dundee (SC 1824232)
- Historic Scotland Photographic Library
 - Local images include an excavation photograph of Croft Moraig Stone Circle in Aberfeldy, 1965 (SC 2109186)

If you want to find out more on the Digital Projects' work, please visit our online photo-illustrated Showcase, *Beyond the Physical: Future-proofing Scotland's Heritage in the Digital Age*, at canmore.org.uk/content/beyond-physical. We also include links to other collections and images we have worked with, so there's lot to explore. We hope we have helped to increase the number of digital resources you now have access to!

Some new discoveries

With the restrictions in travel that have been in place because of Covid, your Editor has replaced hunting unrecorded sites in the field with searching Google Earth and old maps. One remarkable site near Balbeggie that has been captured on Google aerial imagery is pictured to the right. It is a cluster of cropmarks that includes a complex souterrain and timber round-houses, in other words a small Iron Age farming settlement. It is possible to tell from the photographs that the passages of the souterrain measure only a little more than the tractor tracks that are also visible, so a little over 2m – exactly what would be expected. The fact that the passages are so clearly defined on the photos probably means that they are preserved to a reasonable depth below the plough-soil. Given its status as a small Iron Age farmstead, it should come as no surprise to learn that the top stone of a rotary quern (now in Perth Museum) was found nearby in the 1960s.



Image copyright: Google



Image copyright: Google

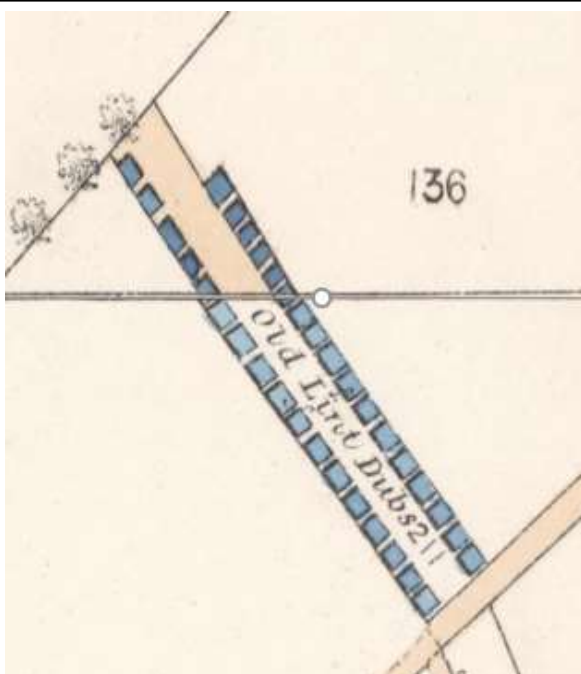


Image copyright: National Library of Scotland

Past Industries

The Scottish countryside is packed with evidence of old rural industries, much of it unrecorded and now no longer represented by surviving remains. This is especially true of the flax industry which was important in Eastern Scotland in the 18th and 19th centuries. As a result of landowners banning the rotting of flax in streams – because it killed the fish, man-made retting ponds were used instead. A fine example of these small, clay-lined pits formerly existed at Kinrossie. The 1st edition of the OS 25-inch map (Perth and Clackmannanshire 1866, Sheets LXXIV.16 and LXXXVI.4) shows 34 'Old Lint Dubs', each measuring about 20 ft (6m square). This represents the only record of this site. By the end of the 19th century the pits had been filled in and the site was under arable cultivation.