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Front cover Oblique aerial view of East Lomond hillfort from the West on 15 November 2007 (DP 036654 © HES)

Back cover 'Feart Maidens' (Drawn by Linda Allan)

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Introduction

Welcome to the Tayside and Fife Archaeological Committee Journal, probably now better known as TAFAJ, Volume 27, which we now continue to publish online. When I wrote my introduction last year as Chair of TAFAC, I mentioned the huge impact that Covid-19 made on all our lives last year, never realising that it would and will continue to for some time. However, there does appear to be a little light at the end of the tunnel. Thanks to the hard work of many who produced vaccines we are slowly seeing some normality coming back, although probably not quite as we once knew it.

Through these difficult few years archaeology, and all the different fields and sciences associated with it, have continued to work away, and produce interesting material, which continues to expand our knowledge of our predecessors. In this volume we see some of these results from Perth and Kinross as well as Fife, in which we are given an insight into people's lives from the Early Medieval period through to the medieval and later centuries. Our grateful thanks to all our contributors in this year's Journal.

The tragic lives of women from Perth who suffered horrendous deaths, as the result of being termed 'Witches', is presented by Irene Hallyburton. The continuing work being undertaken by the study of diet and multi-isotope analysis by Orsoyla Czére *et al* is a major work on the 'Blair Atholl Man', which helps to bring a Pictish man to life.

The study of parts of the landscape in our area again add more to our knowledge, with both Clare Ellis's paper on the 'Terraces of Logierait' and the survey undertaken of East Lomond Hillfort by staff

of Historic Environment Scotland – Łukasz Banaszek, George Geddes, Alison McCaig and Adam Welfare. Even further study of unusual Prehistoric stone objects or small medieval metal artefacts can produce interesting results. Fraser Hunter's paper on the 'Baledgarno stone disc', Lydia Prosser and Robert Webley's paper on 'Two Medieval pilgrim badges', and 'A new interpretation of the Foulden seal matrix' by James Andrew and Garry Strachan, are examples of this further research into such objects.

Without the financial backing of funders, who generously provide grants for the published papers in this journal, the Journal could not go ahead. This year we are indebted to SLR Consulting; Aberdeen University; Dunfermline Heritage Community Projects; Clan Strachan Society and Clan Strachan Charitable Trust, the Jimmie Cairncross Charitable Trust, Department of Scottish History and Archaeology at National Museums Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland.

As ever, several people commit their time to help publish this finished Journal, so I would again personally like to thank our Editor Derek Hall for his continued sterling work, along with his editorial team of Catherine Smith, John Sheriff, David Munro and Elspeth Reid. Again, very special thanks to Christina Unwin, our typesetter.

As Chair of Tayside and Fife Archaeological Committee I would like to thank you all, the readers, on behalf of the Committee, for supporting us throughout the years. We hope you find the papers interesting and enjoy reading them through our online TAFAJ 27 (2021).

Moir Greig, TAFAC Chair

