



TAYSIDE & FIFE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
COMMITTEE
RSCM

Newsletter of the

Tayside and Fife Archaeological
Committee

Issue Forty-eight – May 2025

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

Perth Museum up for awards

On behalf of himself and the rest of the TAFAC Committee your Editor wishes good luck to Perth Museum which has been nominated in three categories for 'Museum and Heritage Awards'.

The categories are:

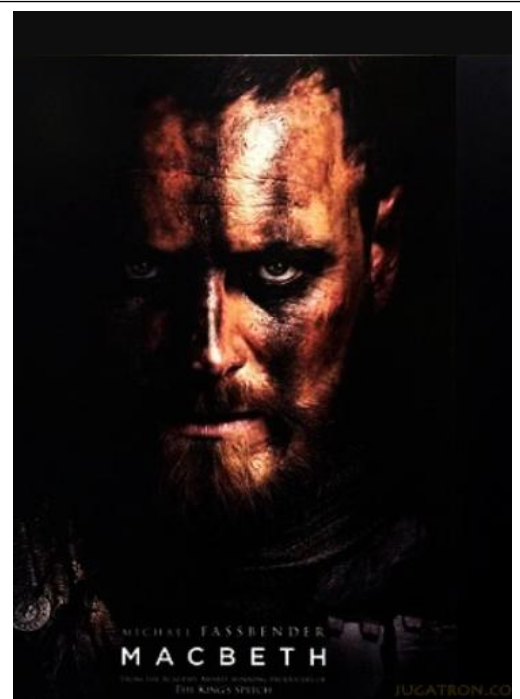
- Best Use of Digital – UK for the [Stone of Destiny Experience](#) at Perth Museum
- Marketing + Communications Campaign of The Year for the Perth Museum Opening Campaign
- Sustainable Project of The Year for [Waters Rising](#) at Perth Museum.

The Awards Ceremony will take place in London on 15 May 2025. The Museums + Heritage Awards represent the very best of the sector and celebrate museums, galleries, and cultural and heritage visitor attractions. To see the full list visit: <https://awards.museumsandheritage.com/2025-shortlist/>

New Perth Museum Exhibition

Readers may be interested in what promises to be a fascinating new exhibition at Perth Museum from Friday 25 April 2025. Costumes and props from the 2015 film '*Macbeth*', which were designed by Academy Award winner Jacqueline Durran and worn by Michael Fassbender and Marion Cotillard, will be on display.

Also on display will be a series of original illustrations by the illustrator Sir Quentin Blake. The drawings were specially commissioned for the Macbeth Collection by Livingstone Rare, a limited-edition series of Scotch whiskies, and they have not previously been on public display.



Michael Fassbender as featured on a poster for the film '*Macbeth*'.

An unusual feature (1)

Whilst out on the S face of Munduff Hill above Kinnesswood your editor recently came across something that he has never encountered in over fifty years of recording aspects of the Scottish countryside. A long length of drystone wall that runs across the face of the hill from ENE to WSW is surmounted by a series of wooden posts that have been inserted into round sockets drilled into the coping. The wall is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Fife 1856, Sheet 23) and the sockets most probably originally held iron posts. The wooden posts are clearly far more recent and possibly date to when the hillside was planted with conifers, 30-40 years ago.



All images this page copyright JR Sherriff. Photographic scale is in 200mm divisions.



Image left. One of a pair of lime kilns high up on the S face of Munduff Hill. Both kilns are clamp-type and this site is one of a number in this part of Kinross and Fife. Typically, two kilns will lie up to 10m apart, set into the southern face of an entirely natural slope or one that has been enhanced. The kilns were linked to a limestone quarry 200m to the W by a track.

An unusual feature (2)

There is a coastal walk between Inverkeithing and North Queensferry which is absolutely packed with interesting heritage remains, most of it unrecorded.



Image copyright: JR Sherriff. The photographic scale is in 200mm subdivisions.

Illustrated above is a general view and a more detailed shot of a boulder on which has been carved a small roundel containing a cross. The boulder now sits on the leading edge of an old quarry floor and is therefore clearly not in its original location. The question here must be 'Is this a recent carving, perhaps executed by someone sitting on the rock and enjoying the view across the River Forth?' Or is the carving of some antiquity, moved from its original (and unknown) location by quarry workers? We will probably never know. At least it has been recorded and its details will soon enter the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) and, via that, the Fife Council HER.

An unusual feature (3)

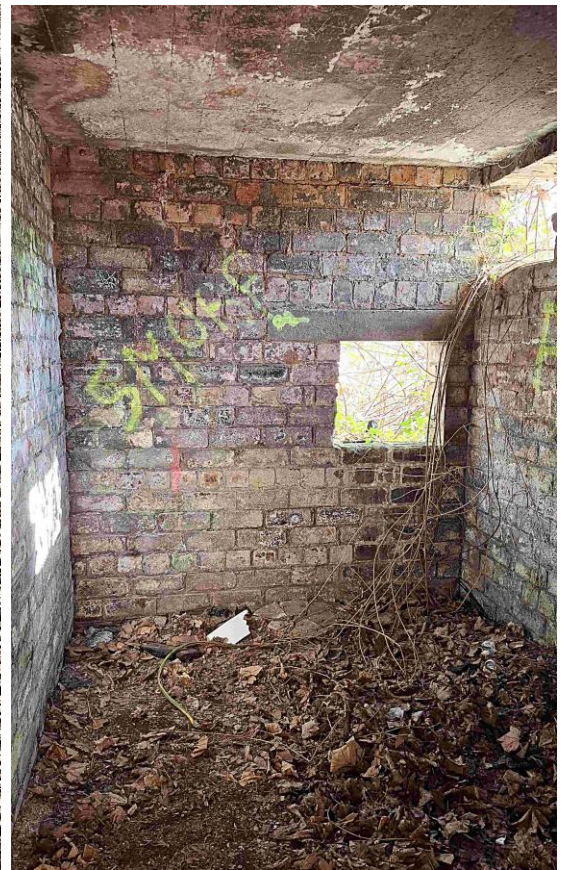


Situated in the same disused quarry as the carving noted above is a slab of whinstone on the upper surface of which has been carved a not very good representation of the 'Eye of Horus' from Egyptian archaeology/history. Unlike the first carving there can be no dubiety about its authenticity. Nevertheless these 'objects' should be recorded if only to avoid any possible confusion in the future.

The image left is copyright JR Sherriff. The photographic scale is in 200mm subdivisions.

Military remains

The Carlingnose Gun Battery at North Queensferry was one of the many installations constructed to defend the River Forth, in particular the Forth Bridge, the fleet anchorage and the Rosyth Naval Base, in the first half of the 20th century. The cliff-top site containing the holdfasts, magazines, fire control tower, etc., is comparatively well preserved and recorded (in the NRHE), but some elements of the remains have not been recorded. One structure that appears to have previously escaped attention is a small brick building with a flat concrete roof that stands below the cliff face, on the N side of the former track (now part of the coastal path) into a disused quarry. Whilst its presence adjacent to the track into the quarry might suggest an association with the quarrying, the flat concrete roof of shuttered concrete and the presence of an anti-blast wall at its entrance confirms its military role. Quite what that role was, however, remains unknown. In addition to a doorway in its W end, there is a single small square opening in its E end, providing a view along the track towards the disused quarry



All Images this page copyright: JR Sherriff. The photographic scale has 200mm divisions.



View from W.



View of side of marker

The military land at Carlingnose was defined by a boundary marked by at least eight boundary stones. Two were found on the date of visit. One (far left) is a sandstone pillar on the E side of the area and it has been incorporated into a roadside wall. The second lies on the S side of the area in a former quarry and it is a cast concrete pillar. The inscription on each has been chiselled off.



When the military established itself on Carling-nose the southern side of the area was defined by an iron rail fence, sections of which still survive (left). The fence runs close by the overgrown remains of a smithy (above) that was associated with the adjacent quarries. Both images: copyright JR Sherriff. The photo scale is in 200mm divisions.

The Lost Stones of Strath Tay: Community Excavation of Prehistoric Rock Art



Readers of this Newsletter may have missed an announcement by Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust at the end of last year of an exciting new project to excavate prehistoric rock art in Strath Tay. Two prehistoric rock art sites near Aberfeldy will be excavated in early September 2025.

The purpose and function of Neolithic rock carvings in Scotland, indeed anywhere in Western Europe, is unknown, but it is hoped that this project will help answer some of the many unanswered questions we have.

Folk who might be interested in being a part of this project (or simply want to know more about it) can contact [PKHT](https://www.pkht.org.uk) at:

Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust, 8 Bridge Lane, Perth, PH1 5JJ.

Phone: [01738 477080](tel:01738477080), Email: info@pkht.org.uk

PSNS (Archaeological & Historical Section) Summer outings

Please let Percy Shelley know if you are interested in attending any of the outings – at psns019@gmail.com or phone 07138 621648.

Please bring a packed lunch and a drink for day-time outings. Bring sunscreen and/or insect repellent if conditions warrant. Transport will be by private cars (sharing petrol expenses) or a minibus.

Sunday 25 May (11am)

Hopetoun House (guided tour) – meeting place to be confirmed - Cost £14.50, minimum of 15 people required. More info at [Hopetoun House website](#)



Saturday 7 June (10am)

Walk with Gavin Lindsay around Roman sites near Innerpeffray meeting place to be confirmed - Cost £14.50, minimum of 15 people required.

More info at

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gask_Ridge

Friday 4 July (11am)

Hill of Tarvit - meet at Broxden 10am – Cost £13.50 (£10.50) Free to NTS members. Car park free to members, otherwise £4.

More info at

<https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/hill-of-tarvit-mansion>



Hill of Tarvit Mansion. Image copyright NTS.

Monday 4 August (11am)

Guided tour of Dunkeld & Community Archive – meet at Broxden 10.15am – Free
More info at <https://www.historicdunkeld.org.uk/>

Kilmagad Wood

Kilmagad Wood in Kinross-shire is a community woodland, owned by [Woodland Trust Scotland](#) and managed by them in partnership with the Portmoak Community Woodland Group. This ancient wood on the SW flank of Munduff Hill extends to some 77 acres (31ha) and contains evidence of two industries that were so important to the area in the 18th and early 19th centuries – quarrying and limestone burning. The most obvious relic of the latter is the lime kiln illustrated below. It is a well-preserved clamp-type kiln of a type common to the Lomonds, Bishop Hill and Munduff Hill. Often occurring in pairs of chambers, this may also have been the case here because there is a sizeable grass-grown hollow immediately SE of the surviving chamber that may represent a robbed out feature. Some of the limestone that was burnt in the kiln appears to have been dug out of the slope a little to the S of the kiln but most of it was probably quarried from much further up the hill and transported down via well engineered trackway either on carts or possible sledges.



View from SSE of the lime kiln in Kilmagad Wood. Photographic scale in 200mm divisions. Images copyright (above and below): JR Sherriff.



Two images, (l and r) of one of the several trackways that snake down the hill. The tracks are well engineered – their upper edges have been levelled into the slope and the lower built up. And because the slope is so steep, the tracks employ switchbacks. Representing what must have been a considerable investment, the major tracks and the limekiln are depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Fife 1856, Sheet 23). However, by the 1890s they are not shown on the 2nd edition map (Kinross-shire 1896, Sheet XVIII.SE), presumably because they were by then disused.



ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD SCHOOL RETURNS TO – LINDORES ABBEY

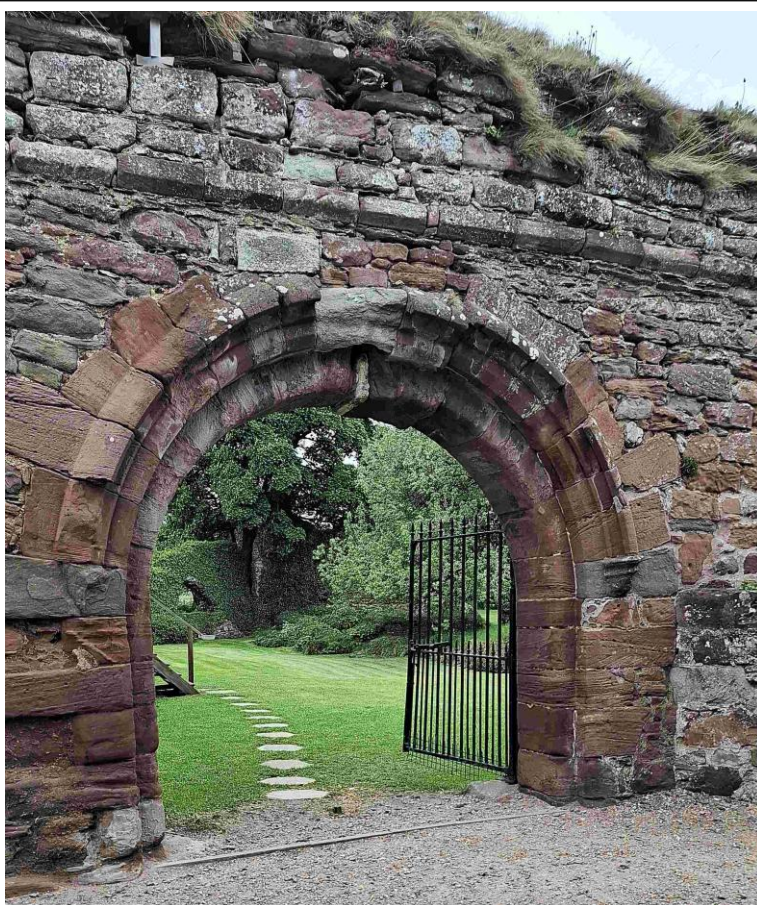
The [Monastic Archaeology Field School](#) has announced that it will be back in the field in the summer of 2025 for another season of excavations and surveys at Lindores Abbey, Newburgh, Fife. The team, which includes students from Global St Andrews Summer School, will be there from Monday 9th June to Friday 4th July. Excavation inside the abbey will include looking at the site of the refectory, the centre of the cloister, the reredorter, inside the church, and at the abbey's water gate overlooking the River Tay.

Research topics that will be addressed this year relate to the landscape around Lindores and the use of water, the environmental impact of water, water usage, and its manipulation at the monastic site and its surrounding area over time.

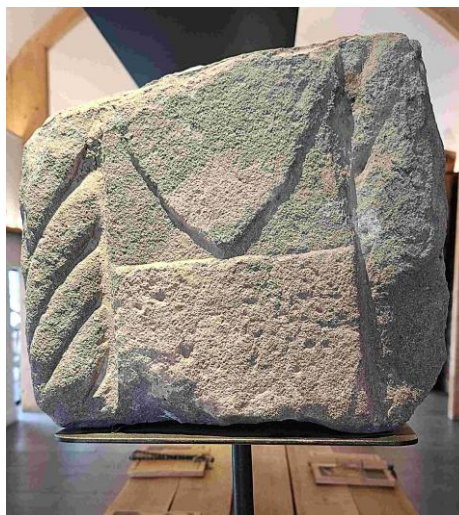
SITE VISITS

The team will welcome visitors to the site (Wed – Fri between 11am – 3pm). Access to the site should be made. You can access the site by parking at [Lindores Abbey Distillery](#).

The remains of the abbey are owned by the distillery, and your editor recommends a look at its website. This contains information about the owner's exciting plans for the monument and information about previous work.



View of the impressive medieval main gateway to the abbey precinct. Image copyright: JR Sherriff.



Left – a medieval grave marker now on display within the Lindores Distillery.

Right – two stone sarcophagi of very young children can be found within the abbey ruins.

Both images copyright JR Sherriff, taken on a recent visit.

