

## **NOSAS NEWS - July 2005**

Summertime, and there are lots of activities to take an interest in. Some diverse projects are taking place in Caithness, see last newsletter or contact Emma Sanderson for details. I understand Jacqui is running her excavation of threatened saltpans at Brora again and although the Glen Feshie excavation has been put off until next year we will be doing some survey work in the glen in late August. In the Autumn we also have the events and outings of Scottish Archaeology Month and Highland Archaeology Fortnight to look forward to. See you at something! Meryl Marshall, 10 Riverford Crescent, Conon Bridge, Ross-shire, IV7 8HL, tel 01349 861824 or email [Meryl.Marshall@tesco.net](mailto:Meryl.Marshall@tesco.net).

**Welcome to new member** - Elspeth Kennedy, 21 Dochfour Drive, Inverness, IV3 5EB. Tel 01463 234808. Email [em.kennedy@ukgateway.net](mailto:em.kennedy@ukgateway.net)

**New email:** [Anne.Coombs@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Anne.Coombs@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

**Heritage Lottery Fund** - NOSAS has been successful in gaining a grant of £2600 for a laptop, a laser printer and other equipment. This will be of enormous help in compiling the reports, in storing and processing the photographs and in making presentations. The committee emphasises that this equipment, as with all the other NOSAS equipment, is available for all members to use. John has purchased the laser printer and is prepared to run off reports for members at cost (subject to review), if the material is provided on disc. Jim and I have researched the laptop and hope to buy it in the next day or so.

**"Highland 2007"** - is a community programme designed to celebrate what is unique and special about Highland Culture in the year 2007. three principle funding agencies, Highland Council, Scottish Executive and Highlands and Island Enterprise have made available a considerable sum for both the capital and revenue funding of projects and events in 2007. It is hoped to leave a legacy well beyond 2007. The NOSAS committee is working on some ideas but members may be interested and have some ideas themselves. Visit [www.highland2007.com](http://www.highland2007.com) for more info.

**Glen Feshie - Thurs 25th Aug to Sat 27th Aug.** This year we will be doing some survey work in the glen for three days. The planned excavation to continue and build on the work we did last year when we established that the clearance cairn at Achleum was indeed a shieling, has been postponed until next year. We have permission to drive up the glen to Carnachuin this year and will, depending on interest, be plane-tabling: - 1. a corn-drying kiln, - 2. a truncated enclosure, thought to be a pond or reservoir constructed to facilitate the floating of felled timber down the river - 3. a settlement of 3 buildings. Also on the agenda: 4. "Exploring" a possible well, thought to be the "source" of the name for the nearby settlement of Stronetoper. Help is needed for any or all of the days. Unfortunately we have not been able to arrange accommodation this year, so folk will need to provide for themselves. If interested in coming or requiring more information, contact Meryl.

**Annual General Meeting** - Will be held at 5pm, October 15th, as usual after the Saturday seminar of Highland Archaeology Fortnight, this year in the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Inverness. Agendas and last years AGM minutes will be circulated nearer the time.

**NOSAS/Scottish Archaeology Month walk - "Archaeological Goodies in Glen Feshie, near Kincaig in Badenoch" - Saturday 3rd September** - An easy walk of 6kms. Come and hear about the history of this attractive glen and visit some of the sites that the group have been investigating, including those surveyed during this summer and excavated last year. The sites range from shielings and townships to sheep farms and shooting lodges. Meet at 2.00pm, at the public car park at Achlean, on the east side of the River Feshie. Conditions underfoot will be a little bit rough, so please wear suitable footwear and bring waterproofs. Help will be needed with the hosting/guiding of this walk which has often numbered as many as 2 dozen enthusiastic individuals. Please contact Meryl if interested- Tel 01349 861 824.

**"Highland Archaeology Week"** has, by popular demand, now been extended to "Highland Archaeology Fortnight" and will run from Saturday 1st - Sunday 16th October 2005 inclusive. The additional first week, which is the final week of the October school term, will help to promote more events in schools, with the aim of introducing young people to the archaeology and history of the Highlands. The second week will run during the school holidays and the seminar will take place, as usual, on the final weekend (15th/ 16th October). The programme is now being finalised, but anyone wishing to contribute an event, or request a programme (available from 1st September) could contact event co-ordinator, Hazel Anderson, on 01463 718505, email: [haw@rowan-tree-scotland.co.uk](mailto:haw@rowan-tree-scotland.co.uk).

**Dyke Remnants in the Gerrarchoille.** The Kyle of Sutherland Heritage Society and Gerrarchoille Community Wood Ardgay invite you to explore the dyke remnants and a raised feature in this beautiful, semi-natural ancient woodland on Sunday afternoon, 9th October 2005. The event is held in conjunction with Highland Archaeology Fortnight on the Hidden Heritage theme.

Some of the dykes are part of an old drove road, some seem to run in parallel with it, and some begin and end abruptly. But there are also other remnants of dykes which don't follow the natural contour of the landscape. They extend almost precisely south, east, north and west from a raised feature in the upper part of the wood.

People with plane-tabling expertise will be particularly welcome for hands-on project later if considered

worthwhile. For details please check the Highland Heritage Fortnight programme or email NOSAS member Brigitte Geddes for details ([study@allezweb.co.uk](mailto:study@allezweb.co.uk)). We hope to have a competition for the best (diagram or other) entry. Bottle of bubbly beckons!

**Birnie Excavation** - This exciting excavation, headed by Fraser Hunter of the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, is once again to take place this year, from 21st August to 16th September. Help is very welcome, but for 3 days or more. Contact Fraser if interested 07787 104952

NOSAS Autumn Weekend - The annual NOSAS Autumn weekend is planned for the 5th-6th November, so put this in your diaries. This year we are going to Skye and will most likely be staying at the Gaelic College, Sabhal Mor Ostaig. Kate Sanderson is organising and has been in contact with Steven Birch, who will show us some of the special archaeological sites in southern Skye. There will be something for everyone. More information in next newsletter or contact Kate, 01667 451269 [KDSanderson@4u2give.com](mailto:KDSanderson@4u2give.com).

**Caithness Archaeological Trust (CAT)** are to be busy over the Summer months and would appreciate any help from volunteers. Their projects include:

1. Excavation at the Battle Moss site at Yarrows, by Thrumster, nr. Wick, from July 11th to 1st week August
2. Also in the same weeks - Help to build and dismantle a chambered cairn (1 straight & 1 round) in Spittal Quarry (a public event)
3. And in July/August - A mix of surveying and excavation work on brochs. Run by CAT, AOC plus a group of university students.

For details of all these events check with Emma Sanderson of CAT, 01593 731 269 or email - [email@caithnessarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:email@caithnessarchaeology.org.uk).