



Hugh's News

Magazine of
The Friends of Hugh Miller

Issue No 45
September 2020

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Secretary

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WEIRD WORLD OF THE TRIASSIC

by Martin Gostwick

We are delighted to be able to confirm that the second Nigel Trewin Memorial Lecture is to go ahead on 25th September as planned, and we warmly urge all our members interested in earth science to take part. The lecture, carrying the most intriguing title of: *Chip Shops and Drain Cleaners: The Weird World of the Triassic*, will be given by Mr Nick Fraser, head of the natural sciences department at the National Museum of Scotland (NMS).



Nick Fraser studied under Nigel Trewin at an earlier stage in his career, and is now in charge of the marvellous Natural World galleries in Chambers Street, Edinburgh, while undertaking the continuous researches forming the basis of the talk.

It is being held under the joint auspices of The Friends of Hugh Miller and Edinburgh Geological Society. It will be given online at a Zoom meeting. The details for our mem-



bers, who do not need to book, are: zoom.us/j/5523459723. Meeting ID **552 345 9723**, password Trewin. Covid restrictions have made it impossible to use the NMS auditorium as originally planned. While the lack of a physical meeting is undoubtedly a loss, the organisers are confident it will prove very popular in this "new normal" Zoom format, and it is hoped attendance will be in three figures.



Atopodentatus unicus has been described as a "hammerhead herbivore," a plant-eating marine reptile located in Yunnan, SW China, dated around 244mya, and said to be between 2.5 and 3 metres in length. Photo, NMS.

The Triassic is notorious for some of the strangest vertebrates ever to have lived. Fossil assemblages around the world exhibit incredibly different types of fauna both in the terrestrial and marine realms. What brought about this remarkable diversity and why is it particularly relevant to our understanding of today's terrestrial ecosystems? Nick Fraser will attempt to provide some insights into a range of very different Triassic assemblages from around the world.

Emergency notice - SGM, see p2

WHAT'S INSIDE:

| | | |
|-------------------------|----|------|
| NTS rescue package | p | 2 |
| Special General Meeting | p | 3 |
| Mary Borley letter | p | 4 |
| Let the Stones Speak | ps | 5-11 |

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SCOTGOV RESCUES NTS

A support package worth £3.8 million is to be made available by the Scottish Government to the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) to aid the heritage organisation's recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. It looked almost certain as Hugh's News went to press that the Trust would achieve its crisis appeal target of £2.5 million from members and the wider public.



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

The package, together with the appeal revenue, will secure nearly half the jobs which NTS had threatened to axe when the news broke of its financial crisis, and will allow it to retain a broad range of expertise in countryside and ranger services in addition to curation and education. The rescue package comes with the condition that NTS works with the Scottish Government to consider the long-term sustainability of its operations and review its business model for future challenges.

Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop said: "This has been a deeply difficult time for NTS staff. I was absolutely clear that any support from Government would be to support jobs. "The severe impact of the pandemic means that unfortunately not all jobs can be saved but this funding will go far to protect as many critical roles across the National Trust for Scotland estate as we can." "The NTS is responsible for promoting and protecting many of Scotland's most important natural and built sites, which are crucial to our heritage and tourism sectors. Many issues remain, however I am committed to working with the new leadership to ensure the Trust is in a better position to continue this vital work in Scotland."

NTS chief executive Phil Long said: "I want to offer my profound thanks to the Scottish Government and particularly to Cabinet Secretary Fiona Hyslop. The Trust has faced the worst crisis in its 90-year history. "The Cabinet Secretary's task group with Scottish Enterprise enabled us to produce a plan that showed, with help, that the Trust could endure as a charity, continuing to care for Scotland's heritage and contributing to our society and economy."

Trade union Prospect's secretary for Scotland and Ireland, Richard Hardy, welcomed the package, but added: "However, we cannot and should not lose sight of the fact that over 200 people are still losing their jobs and this is bad news for the economy, for heritage and for Scotland". Approximately 188 compulsory redundancies, in addition to 44 voluntary redundancies, are still expected to be made by NTS.

Mr Long said The Trust's management team and Board of Trustees will concentrate on securing the charity operationally in the immediate future. Beyond this, they will prepare a re-jigged strategy and recovery plan to be presented to members at the Trust's AGM in September.

The decision to reopen the Hugh Miller Birthplace Cottage and Museum around Easter 2021 stands, and property manager Dr Alix Powers-Jones says she has been assured it will be adequately staffed.

GEOLOGY FESTIVAL

The Scottish Geology Trust is hosting the Scottish Geology Festival this year to encourage activity, events and engagement in support of Scotland's geology. The festival will run from 12th September – 31st October, 2020.

Gavin has just produced a third YouTube video on our fossil collection for the Scottish Geology Festival, entitled FossilCollectionTrust2020.



SCOTTISH
GEOLOGY
TRUST

The Trust has invited organisations, enthusiasts, and societies to create relevant events and activities, both visitor-attended and online, during the timeframe so as to receive Festival advertising and promotional support. They need not be strictly limited to geology, but may cover supporting areas, such as environmental sustainability and Scotland's landscapes.

EMERGENCY NOTICE

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING (SGM)

As members know, we were forced to postpone our 14th AGM due on 16th May last because of the pandemic lockdown. We had booked the meeting to take place instead on Saturday, 10th October, at The Stables, Cromarty, but we have now been compelled by the latest Covid-19 restrictions ordered by the Scottish Government on 10th September to cancel the meeting for a second time.

We propose instead to call a **SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING** as a substitution on the same date, **10th October**, to be managed and run via email by the Secretary on his own, with the assent of the membership. Enclosed within this edition of Hugh's News are forms inviting you to:

1. Approve the appointment of the Secretary as your proxy to attend and vote on your behalf.
2. Cast your proxy vote for the election of the Friends' office-bearers and Membership Committee.
3. Accept, reject or abstain on the Secretary's Report and the Treasurer's statement which appear in the four-page insert into this edition of Hugh's News.

There will be no other business put to a vote. Views concerning the contents of these documents will be invited for discussion by the Management Committee at a later date.

Documents produced by the Friends' consultative committee relating to the Miller Retold HMBCM refurbishment project will be circulated prior to the meeting. Our previously invited speakers, Raoul Curtis-Machin, Culloden Development Manager, and Alix Powers-Jones, Property Manager, HMBCM, will be asked to render brief statements to the SGM in response, and members' views will also be sought.

We are sorry the opportunity for good, constructive discussion on the major issues at stake, both for the Museum and the Friends, has been lost for a second time, but we hope you will be able to take part in this SGM, which is in the nature of a "stopgap."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

LESTER'S "TRUSTY HAMMER"

Dear Martin

I thought that your tribute to my husband Lester Borley in *Hugh's News* (No 44, July 2020) read very well, and covered his achievements very thoroughly, and I do not really have anything to add. I would say however that of all his projects with the Cromarty Arts Trust, the Hugh Miller Bicentenary Conference was closest to his heart, probably because his university degree was for geography and anthropology, geology being a related subject. Among the many "finds" in his study were shoe boxes with rock specimens, mostly gathered with his trusty hammer on car journeys here and abroad!

I was so glad to see that *Hugh's News* is still going strong and must particularly congratulate you on the success of the Hugh Miller Writing Competition, for which I thought the entries were of a very high standard. However, I share your worries about the effect of the pandemic on the future of Trust properties, and hope that the Museum will be able to re-open next year as planned.

With all good wishes

Mary Borley

NEWS

GAVIN'S YOUTUBE VIDEOS ARE A BIG HIT

Events organiser Gavin Berkenheger has received praise and encouragement from the organisers of the annual Inverness Science Festival (ISF) for his two videos, *How Fossils are made (for kids)*, and *The Friends of Hugh Miller Fossil Collection (ISF 2020)*.

He was urged to "carry on your video work," because the public's response "stats were really good." The fossils for kids got the second highest viewing at 152 visits on the Family Day, and fossil collection featured in the festival's daily activity it was seen over 200 times, the third highest viewing.

"If ISF is back to normal next year, perhaps I'll do a spot of video gold-panning for them," says Gavin, who is a professional gold prospector.

Hugh's News apologises, by the way, for making one reference to ISF as an "international" event in our last edition. It is certainly one of the Highland region's key events, attracting families in their thousands.



ELSA'S DINO FIND ON EIGG

Congratulations to member Elsa Pancirolli on her discovery of a fossil bone belonging to a stegosaurus dinosaur on the foreshore on the Isle of Eigg, the first such find in over 200 years of geologists' searching.

The bone is dated to the Middle Jurassic, 166mya. It is now in the National Museum of Scotland's collections. Hugh Miller discovered bones of a Jurassic marine reptile, a plesiosaur, on the island during his voyage, the *Cruise of the Betsey* in 1844 and 1845.

LET THE STONES SPEAK

We gratefully acknowledge as the main source for this article, a text by Dr Jim Mackay, entitled Hugh Miller's Dream, and the Letter Carving of Hugh Miller, for the Kirkmichael Trust's website.

by Martin Gostwick

The stonemason's profession has this advantage, that it educates his sense of sight - Hugh Miller

Many moving stories, often expressed with exquisite handiwork, are to be found in old memorials - a field in which Hugh Miller has left us the record of an 19th Century pastmaster. Memorials offer history cut in stone. They are, to borrow the title of the sparkling Hugh Miller Writing Competition anthology, *conversations in stone*.

Historian Jim Mackay, chairman of Kirkmichael Trust, recalls: "When I was a boy, growing up in the Black Isle, every home would have a few old Hugh Miller books tucked away in a corner, usually *Tales and Legends* or *My Schools and Schoolmasters* but also the occasional copy of his travel or scientific volumes."

That may not be the case today, nevertheless Hugh's literary brilliance is now the catalyst for some great new writing about the natural world. His career as a stonemason is also the mainspring behind new initiatives to record and celebrate his craftsmanship, and in the process revive the ancient craft of stone-carving. What follows is a review, based on Jim Mackay's research, of Miller the ornamental stonemason, and of the fine artisans who are emulating him in the 21st Century.

Let us start with Miller's last piece of stonework, the headstone for his daughter Eliza in the Old St Regulus Burial Ground. It is small, as befits a child who perished aged only 17 months; as our readers will know, the Friends has a project in hand to erect an artistic access railing up to this beautiful graveyard where Eliza rests in peace.

Here is what Dr Mackay makes of it: "The inscription is all in capitals, of three sizes. Rather than being sunk into a base like modern headstones it is of a piece with the undressed remainder of the slab which is buried in the earth. Traditionally the mason would carve a line up to which the headstone would then be sunk, but Miller's headstone appears to use the undressed shoulders as the depth indicator.

"It stands out from other headstones, partly because of the typical scalloped edges, but also because Hugh used



Captions, from top:

Eliza Miller's headstone. Photo Martin Gostwick

Conservator Karolina Kubisz stabilising the tomb. Photo Martin Gostwick

Sundial painting. Credit National Trust for Scotland

small capitals where perhaps another mason would have used lower case letters for readability. Capitals are more easily carved, and I wonder if Miller, though a grieving father, was pressed for time. As a headstone, it has collected quite a range of lichens which obscure the detail of some of the lettering. Nevertheless, this inscription is an excellent reference point for Miller's lettering, including his distinctive "M"s, "G"s and numerals, and is a testament to the quality of his carving." Dr Mackay well remarks that Hugh may have been rushed, although the care and skill he shows in the piece also speaks of his love and grief. He was surrounded by tasks, not least domestic, at this time. His wife Lydia was pregnant with their second daughter, Harriet. He had his day job at the bank. He was still writing stories for *Chambers' Journal* to supplement their meagre income. He was meeting and corresponding with leading geologists of the day about the Devonian fish discoveries which he was continuously bringing home from the beach. He wrote an Open Letter to the Lord Chancellor, Lord Brougham, protesting about the abuses of patronage. Leading evangelists were headhunting him to edit their new paper, *The Witness*. Eliza's unbidden, tragic death intervened in the midst of it all.

He had started ornamental sculpting more than a decade before, when he returned aged 23 from almost fatal work in masons' gangs in Edinburgh. It seems to have all started with his sundial pedestal, still to be seen standing proud in Lydia Garden behind the Birthplace Cottage. He hewed it for his Uncles James and Sandy, who had done so much for his education. It is dated XXXCV (1825) at the base, and signed H-Mer

This is a highly ornate piece with an assemblage of motifs displaying classical flora and symbols. We can best show it in the painting executed by Tain-based artist Mike Taylor, showing the convalescent Hugh chiselling away, lovingly watched by his mother at the Cottage door, and his future wife Lydia among a group on the left. The painting was commissioned by member Robin Cowen in memory of his late mother.

Hugh boasted that his skill in executing both sculptured tablets and in "introducing a better type of tombstone," had "distanced all my competitors in the art of inscription cutting."

But it seems that round about 1828, work dried up, and Jim Mackay has done well to unearth in the *Inverness Courier*, Miller's original advertisement seeking work on 22nd July of that year. He declares he can engrave 'Epitaphs on Stone, in the OLD ENGLISH, ROMAN and ITALIAN characters, in a neat and correct manner.' Sadly few examples remain of the many commissions he must have carried out between about 1825, and 1834, when he left Cromarty to be trained for working in a bank, but about a dozen or more of the "better type of tombstone" can still be identified in churchyards in Kirkmichael, Cromarty, and Old Nigg across the water.



Uncle James Wright's memorial. Photo James Mackay



Pedestal replica. Photo Alix Powers-Jones

Dr Mackay in a work of notable research has now analysed, and compared his techniques and style with other masons, in all these gravestones. He writes: "There was little subtlety about the letter carving of memorials in the Black Isle and Easter Ross in the early 1800s. Whilst the poorly-planned and executed inscriptions of the 1700s had been superseded by more considered lay-outs, the carving itself tended to be of a uniform depth without subtleties such as serifs.

"Miller developed a more sophisticated style of Roman type where he carved certain parts of a character more deeply and widely so that the eye running along the line of text could pick out the words more readily. Presumably not cutting all letters to equal depth helped to avoid spalling as well. Diagonal elements were particularly deeply and widely cut. Small serifs on the characters enhanced this effect."

Miller's use of thin and thick carved lines have been compared with the light and heavy strokes downward and upward of a quill, suggesting that Miller was aiming for a look which drew from handwriting. This is particularly evident in his lower case lettering.



Brewer Alexander Peter's inscription. Photo James Mackay

There are other means of confirming Miller as the letter carver on individual stones, of course. The distinctive scalloped edge on Eliza's headstone has already been noted, and it could almost be considered his trademark.

The "richest collection" of Hugh's letter-carving is to be found in Cromarty East Kirk's grounds, important because of both the family stories behind them, and the variety of styles he employed.

My favourite tomb, for its inscription's phrasing, is that of Hugh's Uncle James Wright, the harness-maker, story-teller and counsellor, who passed away aged 72 on 28th August 1828. Adjacent to him in the furthest corner of the churchyard is that of his other uncle, Sandy (Alexander) Wright, the sailor turned shoemaker and naturalist. Both tablestones have a typical design of bevel above scallop and bevel below.



*Tomb supports for brewer Alexander Peter, Cromarty East Kirk
Photo James Mackay*

James's tabletop carries this inscription: PLACED HERE BY / ALEXANDER WRIGHT, / IN MEMORY OF HIS BROTHER / JAMES WRIGHT, / AN HONEST WARM-HEARTED MAN, / WHO HAD THE HAPPINESS / OF LIVING WITHOUT REPROACH, / AND OF DYING WITHOUT FEAR. / HE DEPARTED THE XXVIII TH AUGUST / MDCCCXXVIII / IN THE LXII ND YEAR OF HIS AGE.

It is, Dr Mackay notes, "all in capitals, never ideal for reading, but perhaps that was the desire of Uncle Sandy? The use of Roman numerals is also unusual. However, the punctuation added by Miller assists the readability of this beautifully expressed inscription."

Did Hugh have a hand in the writing as well as the carving? Jim Mackay wonders. I am sure he actually composed it. He would of course have been guided about what to say by Sandy, the surviving uncle, the brothers being both close and deeply religious men,. However, its certainty about a life well lived and an easy death is surely the work of a polished writer. It has a cadence, minding me of a tolling bell, not in lamentation, but exaltation.



*Farmer James Gallie's tomb support at Nigg.
Photo James Mackay*

Sandy died 12 years later in 1841. Hugh may have hoped to return from Edinburgh at some point to cut an inscription, but this was not to be. And so there the brothers lie, together in death, as they shared a home in life. Hugh's two sisters, Jean and Catherine, who both died young, are also buried under a tablestone much closer to the kirk.

A notable difference in style is seen in the grave of Alexander Peter and Christian Stot, "This is a magnificent memorial, with classically ornamented supports and slab. The slab is one of Miller's bevel-pattern-bevel designs, only in this case instead of the pattern being his scallops it is a backwards simple Greek meander or key." This motif has already been noted on Hugh's sundial pedestal. "The drapes on the supports continue the classical theme."

Alexander Peter was, according to the inscription, a brewer in Cromarty. However, Dr Mackay has learnt he had been a labourer when his and Christian's children were born in the 1790s. "At some point, therefore, he had made good, and his memorial is designed to reflect the material wealth he had accumulated by the time he died. The inventory attached to his testament dative indicates that his estate was worth more than £1,100 sterling on his death. A substantial and imposing memorial was clearly called for."

The slab is "obviously quality sandstone which has retained the sharpness of the lettering for two hundred years, with the inscription providing one of the clearest examples of the letter-carving of Hugh Miller."

Dr Mackay has also come across some remarkable designs on the supports of tablestones. One of them sits in Nigg Old Church which Miller carved in 1829 in memory of a farmer, James Gallie, aged 59, "an affectionate Son/ and Brother / a kind Master / and the poor man's Friend."

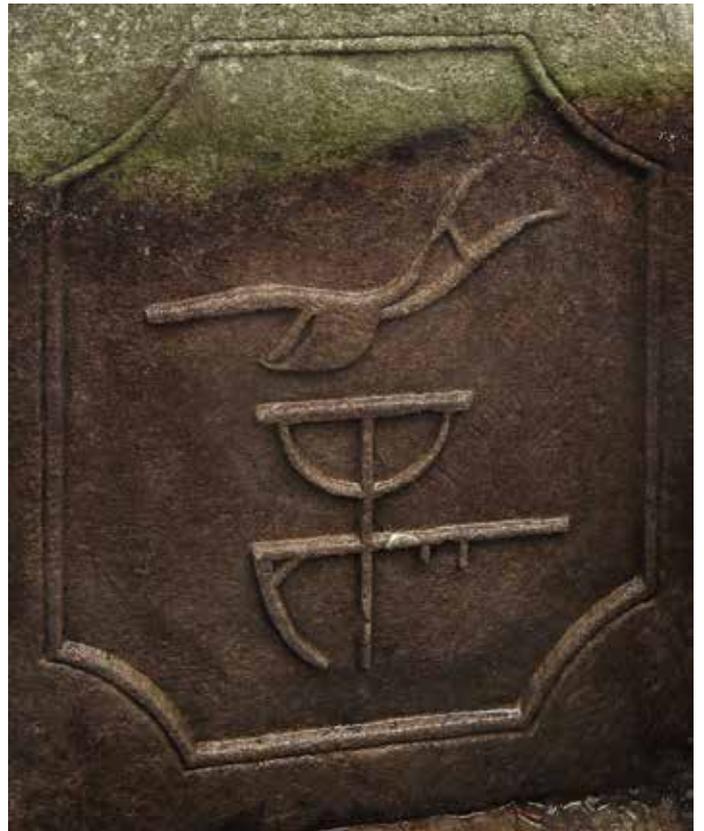
Nigg Old Church is incidentally well worth a visit, a place if anything even more tranquil and secluded than Cromarty's East Kirk. It is also the resting place under a fine Mull granite obelisk, of the Rev John Swanson, Hugh's companion on *The Cruise of the Betsey*.

Gallie died intestate, and the subsequent inventory of his estate amounted to more than £2,000 sterling – so a good memorial would be expected. This can be seen being fulfilled with the elaborate supports. They are ornamented with the common motifs of an hourglass and a winged soul flying to heaven, although the latter is set in a most unusual surround. And to either side there is another most unusual feature which Dr Mackay has not seen before. Where did Hugh find this odd design, he asks?

The inscription contains many of Miller's typical letter-carving features. Here are a good range of his lower case Roman characters and several numerals. In the middle you will see his distinctive "g" with the ear held tenuously by a thin cutting well above the mean line (the top of the lower case letters), and the collar and loop curving down below the baseline (the bottom of the lower case letters). These characters all remained consistent over his carving career.



James Mackay (right) at Widow Stewart's tomb with volunteers.
Photo Andrew Dowsett



The tomb's farming symbols. Photo Andrew Dowsett

Finally, we come to a remarkable find on a tablestone support in Kirkmichael kirkyard, a unique piece of work Hugh Miller is believed to have added to the inscription on top. The grave plot concerned had been purchased a little under a ten years before by an Ardeville farmer's widow, Elizabeth Stewart, a distant relative of Hugh's. She could never have imagined she would be burying three of her children there, all dying in their late 20s and early 30s, in the space of a year. When the funeral cortege of her eldest son William entered Kirkmichael, Hugh found to his horror that his grave had been dug on the very spot indicated in a fearful dream he had had five weeks earlier. He relates the dream in his autobiography, of seeing a giant metal gnomon-like pointer swinging to and fro, and coming to rest right there, an augury or premonition of impending doom.

Hugh would not inscribe the tablestone with the names of all three deceased until quite a while later. The epitaph (which is carved in one style, and is neat and tidy and clearly well planned) took him a week. Not surprising when you consider he had three names to do, with the full names and dates all correct.

For the Kirkmichael Trust team, transcribing the words was a challenge because of serious erosion caused by some family descendant who, no doubt with good intentions, had this and a neighbouring stone, chemically cleansed back in 2001. "Nevertheless, the lettering is still easy to read when the light falls obliquely upon it, particularly when, as photographer Andrew Dowsett and I found, raking light is applied at night-time."

Then, in midsummer this year, came the exciting find of locally relevant symbols in one of the supports lying half-buried under the tablestone. Dr Mackay tells the tale of his remarkable discovery: "In July 2020, I noticed that there was a pattern on the top of the west support that was not there on the other side. It has sunk badly and unevenly and a big chunk of a broken sandstone slab has been jammed in to prop it up. Only the very top of the support is visible and even that is very difficult to access as a Stewart relative, having made money in Honduras, had a low wall and metal railing erected around his adjacent family enclosure.

"It was with some difficulty that a volunteer excavated the soil from the narrow gap between support and low wall, but we were surprised and delighted to find that the support bears an exquisitely carved set of farming symbols: plough, rake and scythe, absolutely appropriate for the farming family of Stewart of Ardeville. Rural Black Isle kirkyards do not usually carry ostentatious ornamentation on their gravestones, unlike in southern regions like Perthshire and Angus. This is the only detailed example of symbols of employment within Kirkmichael, except for the simple tailor's shears on a headstone outside the door of the nave."

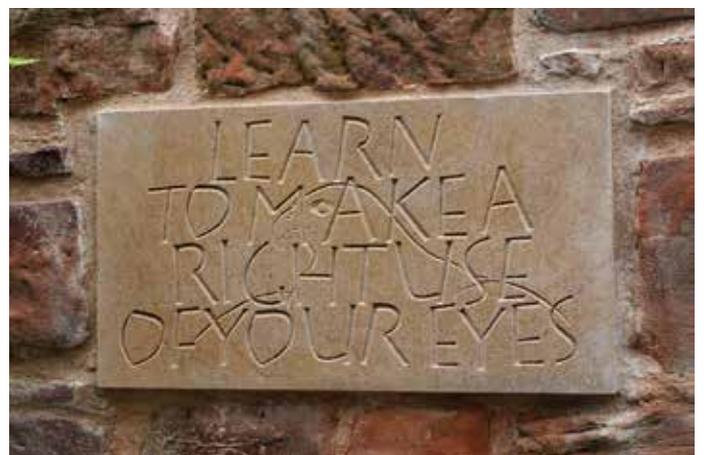
There is a wealth of more detailed analytical material on the Kirkmichael website, and I thoroughly recommend a perusal of it at

https://kirkmichael.info/Hugh_Miller_Dream_and_the_Letter_Carving_of_Hugh_Miller.html.

Nothing measures the march of time quite so starkly as kirkyards and the weathering of their gravestones. The deterioration of Eliza's headstone in St Regulus has been successfully slowed by Elgin-based conservator Karolina Kubisz in 2012 at the instigation of our members Lillemor Jernqvist and Derek Lancaster-Gaye. This raises the more general question for Jim Mackay as to whether or not the Kirkmichael Trust should stabilise the deterioration, caused by inappropriate conservation in the first instance, of Miller's Stewart memorial



Eyes plaque Photo Andrew Dowsett



Plinth in the Hugh Miller Museum's Garden of Wonders.
Photo Andrew Dowsett



at Kirkmichael? Are there others which are a candidate for conservation, he asks? Many of the inscriptions carved by Hugh Miller are slowly being eroded away and with their disappearance a very physical local connection to a great Scotsman would be lost forever.

Happily, this is not going to be allowed to happen, thanks to the enthusiasm of the Black Isle's conservation movement. The Cromarty East Kirk graves' inscriptions, and a map of their location are all available to the public in a document in the vestry, *The Survey of Inscriptions on Gravestones*. They can also be studied online at the *Cromarty East Church Archive Library*.

The studies were initiated by the Cromarty Courthouse Museum's then curator, David Alston, and published in 1993. Teams of volunteers carried out the laborious job of transcribing the details of the dead from amongst the mosses and lichens. Another investigation, jointly carried out by students of Mary Washington College, Virginia, USA, and Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, led to an exhibition, 'Did Hugh Hew Here?'

Kirkmichael Trust has also made a comprehensive record of their kirkyard's memorials, and their website proudly offers a *Story behind the Stone* series, supported by a picture gallery. When they rescued their kirk from ruin after a 20-year struggle, they launched a permanent exhibition within its walls which include two specially commissioned copies of beautiful medieval stones forming centrepieces in the chancel and nave.

Both Kirkmichael and the Cromarty Arts Trust have offered occasional workshops to give members of the public the chance to have a go with a chisel.

Hugh Miller Museum has played its part, in the first instance through one of those chance encounters which museums pray for but only rarely transpire, with a visitor specially brought there by a former Friends committee member, Rev Ken Dupar.

Ornamental sculptor Neil McBean of Forres called with Ken at the Cottage garden in 2008, and was at once struck by the perfection of Hugh's sundial pedestal, and resolved there and then to make a replica, which now adorns a corner of the Garden of Wonders behind Miller House. You can thus see how Hugh's showpiece would have looked when he finished it nearly 200 years ago.

About the same time, we were contemplating how to present Miller the master mason in the Garden of Wonders, and resolved on two plaques, one naming

Copy of medieval stone. Photo Andrew Dowsett

the space, the other quoting Hugh's famous advice to the young, "Make a right use of your eyes." We were recommended by a former NTS head conservator to a leading English letter-cutter, Charles Smith, of Great Ousedale, Yorkshire.

Charles came up to take stock, and, as my report said at the time (*Hugh's News* No 4, Winter 2007) he "immediately took to Hugh like a long lost brother." He sourced the stone at Clashach Quarry near Elgin, and



Carving workshop. Photo Andrew Dowsett

blessed us with his "delightful, informal free-hand lettering," which "both complements and contrasts with Miller's classical formality." And he underlined Hugh's message about sharp use of sight by incorporating a peregrine falcon among the letters.

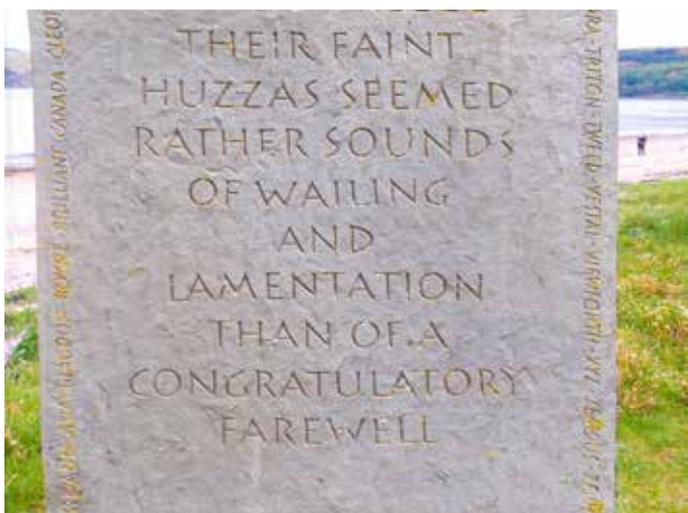
The plaques overlook a fine circular plinth carved in situ by two Caithness masons supporting sculptor Helen Denerley's remarkable scrap metal ammonite.

I was delighted to learn from Charles that he is still going strong, thanks to a quadruple heart bypass operation, and is currently lettering a poem "on a 15 ton block of Northumbrian Blaxter stone; part of a dry-stone wall maze" in Dalby forest, North Yorkshire.

Probably the most enduring, and certainly the most spectacular modern monument is of course the Cromarty Emigration Standing Stone on The Links, erected on Hugh's 200th birthday, 10th October 2002. It was carved by celebrated architect and stonecutter Richard Kindersley on a commission from Cromarty Arts Trust. He worked mostly on site watched by admiring locals, and subsequently gave master-classes to aspiring Highland apprentices.

The stone is a massive tribute in Caithness flag from Spittal quarry, over four metres high and more than a tonne weight, to the thousands of emigrants who departed Cromarty for the New World during the 1830s and 40s. Some 39 of these ships are named on the margins, and in the middle is an eloquent passage by the *Invermess Courier's* Cromarty correspondent, Hugh Miller, describing the departure in 1831 of the *Cleopatra*.

I like to imagine that the proud artisan Miller would have acknowledged in Richard's superb elegance and clarity of both letter-cutting and layout, a more than worthy match for one of his own "neat, correct" and superior epitaphs.



Cleopatra farewell script. Photo Martin Gostwick



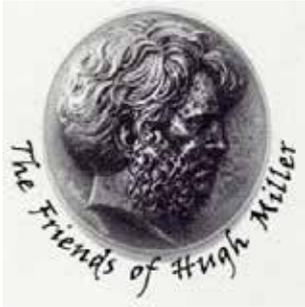
Emigration Stone. Photo Andrew Dowsett

INSCRIPTION CUTTING ON STONE.

HUGH MILLER takes this method of informing the Inhabitants of Inverness and its Vicinity, that he engraves Epitaphs on Stone in the OLD ENGLISH, ROMAN, and ITALIAN Characters, in a neat and correct manner.

Application may be made to H. M. at Mrs CAMERON'S, Factory Street.

Inverness, 22d July, 1828.



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Download and complete the forms below then send to the Secretary.

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| Junior (under 18) | £5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | * or more if so desired | | |

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Gift Aid is reclaimed by The Friends of Hugh Miller from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

In order for us to claim Gift Aid on your donation you must complete the form and the box below

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I give my consent to The Friends of Hugh Miller to claim gift aid on all donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years

(put an X in the consent box)

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please return this form, with your cheque payable to "The Friends of Hugh Miller", to:
Martin Gostwick, Secretary, The Friends of Hugh Miller,
c/o Russell House, 55 Shore Street, Cromarty IV11 8XL

The Friends of Hugh Miller is a registered charity: SC037351