



Crannog Loch Tay (Outer Hebrides)

Scottish Heritage USA

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ARTIFICIAL ISLANDS OLDER THAN STONEHENGE ?

A Study of crannogs in Scotland’s Outer Hebrides reveals some were built more than 3,000 years earlier than previously thought. The artificial structures, which are usually around 30 to 100 feet in diameter (*crannogs*) are now typically covered with vegetation as no grazing animals can reach them.

There are numerous examples of these “little islands” on the west coast of Scotland and on the islands of the Outer Hebrides. They are frequently made of timber and stone and are occasionally built on existing rocky structures. Until now, researchers thought most were built when people in the Iron Age (800-43 B.C.) created stone causeways and dwellings in the middle of bodies of water. However, in a recent paper published in the journal *Antiquity* leads us to believe that some of Scotland’s crannogs are much older – perhaps 3,000 years older – making them part of the Neolithic Age (4,000-2,500 B.C.).

The idea that crannogs may date as far back as the Neolithic resulted from a 1980’s excavation of an Iron Age islet in a lake on Scotland’s North Uist island when archaeologists discovered they were excavating a Neolithic site. But until more recently no other crannogs yielded Neolithic evidence. In 2012 a local diver found unmistakable Neolithic pottery in the water around crannogs in the Outer Hebrides.

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Loch Tay Crannog House



Loch Tay Crannog House

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

AND UPDATE ON GAELIC STUDIES



Alas we shall not be gathering at MacRae Meadows in July this year all because of a nasty little virus. But let us be there in spirit. I am still going for the weekend to make it a family vacation at Sugar Mountain. I will take a walk at the MacRae

Meadows and imagine I hear the music coming from the Celtic Groves and the pipebands and the smell of food wafting from the food vendors.

My first visit to Grandfather Mountain Games was in 1976. While attending Clemson University as a graduate student, I ran into a heavily bearded Scotiaphile who told me I must come to the Games. I confess I had never been to a Games while growing up in Scotland. I was amazed at what I saw – so many people passionate about their ancestry and traditions.

The following year I came back representing The Scottish Field magazine. The editor, Roddy Martine, decided to come at the last minute having been offered a free flight on British Airways Concorde flight to DC. Although he got there in 3 hours, his bag was left in London and took 3 days to catch up with him! Our tent was located in almost the exact same spot that Scottish Heritage has occupied for several years! Although we only sold a few dozen

SCOTTISH GAELIC STUDIES

As many of you will know our board decided to fund the visiting professorship in Scottish Gaelic Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill. The two-year pilot program has been a huge success under the ebullient leadership of Dr Tiber Falzett. The program was hosted by the English Language and Comparative Literature, and his lectures were also made available to students from the Department of American Studies.

The program will not be available in the next academic year as we are now working towards establishing a permanent chair within the next two years. This will entail a nationwide fund-raising campaign. In the meantime, Tiber will be taking up a full-time position at University College in Dublin and we hope he will consider returning to UNC. We will keep you posted of developments with updates posted on the website

subscriptions and several books, we were pleased with the response.

I have been to many of the larger Games in the US including Long Peaks, New Hampshire, Stone Mountain, and Pleasanton. I explain to people back in Scotland the phenomenon of Scottish Festivals across the US in that there is no other heritage celebrated as frequently as that of the Scots. More kilts are worn every weekend than you will ever see under the Highlandman's Umbrella in Glasgow on a Saturday afternoon!

I joined Scottish Heritage USA about 20 years ago. Our Chairman, Douglas Kelly invited me to join the board a few years later and I have since served as Treasurer. 2020 is my first year as President. I am hopeful that Scottish Heritage will continue to support the National Trust in its endeavors to maintain historical properties and sites in Scotland. We will also provide scholarships to deserving students of Highland Dance and Piping and grant funds to other non-profits to help spread the culture, history and crafts of Scotland and its people.

I urge you to maintain your membership in recognition of your ongoing support and your heritage. Scottish Heritage USA has been in existence for over 50 years, so let us keep it going for another 50.

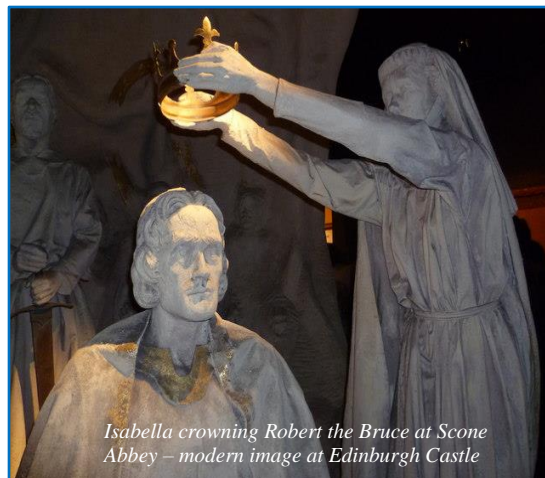
ISABELLA MacDUFF *Countess of Buchan (1270–1314 ?)*

Daughter of Donnchadh III, Earl of Fife, and Johanna *de* Clare, she was married to John Comyn, Earl of Buchan and thus was the Countess of Buchan (*the Earl was on the English side in the Scottish Wars of Independence and Isabella took the contrary*).

According to tradition, the crowning of the monarch was performed by a representative of Clan MacDuff and Isabella, arriving at Scone Abbey a day late for the first crowning, performed a second coronation to make it acceptable by being performed by a MacDuff.

Since she so publicly went against her family, she was now on her own, so she stayed with the royal party until their capture by the Earl of Ross in September 1306. Her crowning of Robert the Bruce was a clear challenge to Edward I and guaranteed no sympathy from England's king.

She was imprisoned in a cage at Berwick Castle for four years then moved to the Carmelite friary at Berwick. In 1313 she was put into the custody of Sir



Isabella crowning Robert the Bruce at Scone Abbey – modern image at Edinburgh Castle

Henry de Beaumont, co-heir of Isabella's husband. This is the last heard of her, but it seems likely that she died within the next year. Probably due to her health being destroyed by the years of deprivation; she was not among the hostages who were returned to Scotland following the victory at Bannockburn.

CRANNOGS *(continued from page one)*

Five artificially constructed islets with Neolithic origins were eventually found and verified by radiocarbon dating of stone-age pottery and ancient timbers discovered near the structures.

Although the islets themselves were reused over the centuries making it was difficult to find Neolithic remains, the water surrounding the crannogs contains nearly intact Neolithic ceramic vessels! And why, you ask, were the Neolithic people throwing their perfectly good china into the water? Researchers surmise that the crannogs were used for feasting and celebrating religious or social rituals since the islets appear to be isolated from everyday life - away from settlements and there are no tombs or human remains.

Perhaps the sites isolation and the pottery that surrounds them could point to rituals that marked life transitions - passage from childhood to adulthood, etc. which would make it inappropriate to take the pottery home.

How many more of these Neolithic monuments are out there? Only 20 per cent of Scotland's nearly 600 crannogs have even been scientifically dated. Time and hard work will tell!



CRANNOG HOUSE

Replication of a Neolithic Crannog House built on the artificial islet.



Breathtaking view of an ancient Crannog.



INTERESTING TID-BIT: The Skye Boat Song is not *entirely* Gaelic

As legend has it, the "Bonnie" prince escaped by sea dressed as Flora MacDonald's maid, Betty Burke. The wistful "Skye Boat Song" tells the story, as the lad that is born to be king is rowed away to Skye. The song is a traditional Gaelic rowing song and the tune probably derives from the song *Cuachan nan Craobh* or "The Cuckoo in the Grove", but the lyrics creating the connection with the prince were actually written by an Englishman, Sir Harold Edwin Boulton (1859-1935) of Copped Hall, Totteridge, Hertfordshire.

In 1892, Robert Louis Stevenson, author of the post-Culloden adventure, *Kidnapped* (1886), wrote his own version of the song with the first line "Sing me a song of a lad that is gone", made famous by the TV series, *Outlander*.

This is the second song that has surprised me as "Danny Boy" was also written by an Englishman!

Courtesy of National Geographic

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Scottish Heritage Members sponsor:

- ❖ *The First Scottish Gaelic Lectureship in the country at UNC Chapel Hill - funded by Scottish Heritage USA 2017-18 & 2018-19 and 2019-20*
- ❖ *Highland Dance and Piping Scholarships*
- ❖ *Grants to the National Trust for Scotland for maintaining properties in Scotland*
- ❖ *Grants to The National Trust Foundation in Boston for their work in the States and in Scotland*
- ❖ *Grants to non-profits in the States who promote Scottish Culture*
- ❖ *And many more*

WE ARE ALSO A PROUD SPONSOR OF THE GMHG CULTURAL VILLAGE!

If you are planning a trip to Scotland, the following benefits are granted to all members of Scottish Heritage USA

- Reciprocal membership to the National Trust for Scotland Foundation, USA
- Reciprocal membership in The National Trust for Historic Preservation (*27 sites in the US*)
- Free Admission to all (*over 70*) National Trust for Scotland properties
- Annual subscription (*six issues per year*) to "The Highlander" magazine
- Annual subscription to the National Trust's magazine published three times per year
- INVITATION to members only reception following the Grandfather Mt Highland Games AND if you join AT GMHG, the reception is FREE
- Discounts on all Scottish Heritage tartan merchandise plus, our Newsletter

Memberships range from \$25 to \$500 and are well worth the price!

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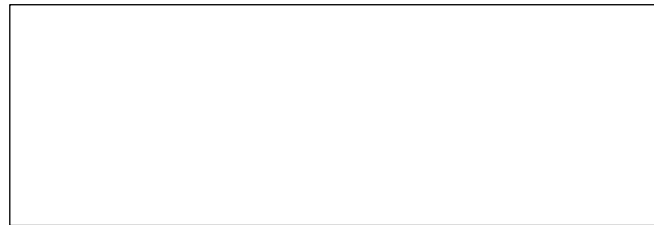
WANT A SCOTTISH CASTLE?

This lovely estate near St. Andrews in Fife is a steal for £875,000



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SCOTTISH KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

1. Which Scottish King founded the University of Aberdeen?
2. Where is Robert the Bruce believed to have spent his time in exile from 1306-07?
3. Who killed the Sheriff of Lanark in 1297?
4. Who wrote *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*?
5. Who wrote *A Window in Thrums*?
6. How many years was Mary, Queen of Scots kept in captivity by Elizabeth I?
7. Which Scottish nobleman was sued unsuccessfully by Oscar Wilde?
8. The first known film footage made in Scotland featured whom and where?
9. Where is the oldest coal mine in Scotland?
10. Which bank was formed in 1695?

Bonus: What was the name of the first lighthouse built in Scotland?

WELCOME NEW & RETURNING MEMBERS

Kelly Arran
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Kurt Rosenberg
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Kendall Squires
Layton Traver

James Turney

Tap O' North (from BBC News)

Archaeologists say up to 4,000 people may have lived in more than 800 huts perched high on the Tap O' North, an ancient hillfort in Aberdeenshire – one of the largest ever found.



BONUS: Kinnaird Head

1. James IV 2. Rathlin Island 3. William Wallace
 4. Robert Louis Stevenson 5. J.M. Barrie 6. 19 years
 7. The 8th Margruts of Queensberry 8. Queen Victoria at Balmoral
 9. Brova 10. The Bank of Scotland