

CONFERENCE  
ABSTRACTS

CONSERVATION  
OF HISTORIC  
GRAVEYARDS  
SEMINAR

TECHNICAL  
CONSERVATION,  
RESEARCH AND  
EDUCATION  
DIVISION





CONSERVATION OF  
HISTORIC  
GRAVEYARDS  
SEMINAR

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by

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TECHNICAL  
CONSERVATION,  
RESEARCH AND  
EDUCATION  
DIVISION





*Kirkyard, Mercat Cross and watch-house, Dallas, Moray*

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## CHAIRMEN

### **INGVAL MAXWELL DA(Dun) RIBA FRIAS FSAScot**

Trained as an architect at the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, Dundee, Mr Maxwell joined Historic Scotland's predecessor, the Ancient Monuments Branch of the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, in 1969. He has fulfilled the roles of Area Architect, Principal Architect, Assistant Director and, finally, Director of Technical Conservation, Research and Education (TCRE) - a new Division set up on 1 April 1993.

Mr Maxwell has the management responsibility for the Historic Scotland Conservation Centre and the Scottish Conservation Bureau, and is Historic Scotland's Head of Profession. He is co-author of the *Conservation of Historic Graveyards - Guide for Practitioners*.

The functions of TCRE are to undertake appropriate conservation research; to develop and define technical conservation standards and policy; and to promote the findings within Historic Scotland, relevant professions and the construction industry.

Mr Maxwell has an official involvement in a number of conservation groups and bodies. Included in these are the RIAS Conservation Working Group, RIAS Accreditation Panel, ICOMOS UK Executive Committee, and The Conference on Training in Architectural Conservation (COTAC). He was also a founder member, treasurer and Chairman (from 1990-1994) of the Scottish Vernacular Buildings Working Group.

He is the current Convenor of the SSLG and acts as Chairman of the Historic Buildings Fire Liaison Group, the Rural Buildings Conservation Initiative and the Scottish Conservation Forum in Training and Education. These groups have been set up by Historic Scotland to assist and enable the dissemination of TCRE publications, research findings and development work.

He has served as external examiner for Heriot-Watt University's post graduate Conservation Course and currently holds the position for the Architectural Materials Conservation MSc course at Bournemouth University. He has been involved in the Council of Europe Panel of Experts work and sits on the European Commission Management Committee for the Co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research (COST) Action C5 programme on Urban Heritage - Building Maintenance.

### **DR J N GRAHAM RITCHIE MA PhD MBA FSA FSA Scot**

Graham Ritchie worked for over thirty years with the Royal Commission on The Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, latterly as Head of Archaeology. He is currently President of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. He is also a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London. He is co-author with Anna Ritchie of *Scotland: archaeology and early history* and editor of *The Archaeology of Argyll*.

## FOREWORD

Oh Death! how absolute thy sway!  
At thy command we must obey;  
In hardy strength 'tis vain to trust  
Even stone thou crumblest into dust.

Epitaph of George Cunningham (died 1755), Haddington, East Lothian  
From Betty Willsher, *Scottish Epitaphs* (1996)

The author of this epitaph understood that decay of his memorial was inevitable. But natural decay processes are only one of the threats currently facing gravestones and graveyards in Scotland – anecdotal evidence abounds for damage, both wilful and accidentally inflicted, or caused by neglect or over-zealous conservation or cleaning methods. It is clear that a response to these threats must be mobilised.

We have a head start thanks to the pioneering work of Betty Willsher, but this seminar to launch the new Historic Scotland Guide for Practitioners *Conservation of Historic Graveyards* offers us the opportunity to look strategically at what action is needed now to secure the future of Scotland's graveyards.

The event is being jointly-organised by TCRE Division of Historic Scotland and the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. The programme for the day includes a review of developments in policy and of relevant legislation that affects owners and others with responsibility for gravestones and graveyards. An update on current thinking regarding record taking and keeping will be provided, both from the perspectives of the national bodies with responsibility for this task but also from family history societies and others who regularly undertake graveyard recording work. A number of case studies, from both Scotland and abroad, will demonstrate current best practice in recording, conservation work and management. The conclusion of the day will centre on the potential for integrating current initiatives.

Graveyards serve as valuable social history archives, geology textbooks, memorial design and lettering handbooks, nature reserves and areas for leisure. There are many individuals and groups passionately interested in them – but usually it is one aspect only, perhaps investigating family history, that provides the impetus to get involved. The broader context of graveyard conservation has received less attention to date, but this omission has been addressed by TCRE Division of Historic Scotland with the publication of the *Conservation of Historic Graveyards Guide for Practitioners* in February 2001. This guide provides a sure foundation for future work to develop appropriate graveyard management techniques. The document can also be a useful tool in establishing a more holistic approach to the recording, management and policy framework for graveyards. But we recognise that we must engage with others in order to progress this broader agenda. The intention therefore is to hold a stimulating and informative seminar in which we can establish the most productive formula for future joint working.

**Ingvál Maxwell**  
**Historic Scotland**  
**Edinburgh**  
**November 2001**



*Wall Monument, Sacrament House, St Mary's Church, Auchindoir, Rhynie, Gordon*

# SEMINAR PROGRAMME

Time		Time	
9.00 – 9.30	<b>Registration and Coffee</b>	12.10 – 12.30	<b>The management challenges of caring for graveyards: issues of Health and Safety</b>
9.30 – 9.40	<b>Welcome</b> Dr J N Graham Ritchie Ingval Maxwell		George Bell
<b>SESSION 1</b>			<b>Lunch</b>
<b>Chair: Ingval Maxwell</b>		12.30 – 1.40	
9.40 – 10.00	<b>Carved Stones Policy – new developments</b> Dr Sally Foster	<b>SESSION 2</b>	
10.00 – 10.20	<b>Statutory protection for graveyards</b> Dr Debbie Mays	<b>Chair: Graham Ritchie</b>	
10.20 – 10.40	<b>The role of the Gardens Inventory</b> Krystyna Campbell	1.40 – 2.00	<b>Recent casework - the conservation of gravestones</b> Stephen Gordon
10.40 – 10.50	<b>Brief description of the Historic Scotland Guide for Practitioners: The Conservation of Historic Graveyards</b> Dennis C M Urquhart	2.40 – 3.20	<b>The North Burial Ground Gravestone Restoration Project</b> Robert McMahon
10.50 – 11.00	<b>Launch of the Historic Scotland Guide for Practitioners: The Conservation of Historic Graveyards</b> Graeme Munro	3.20 – 3.40	<b>Integrated management: Mount Auburn Cemetery</b> Angus Fraser
11.00 – 11.30	<b>Coffee</b>	3.40 – 4.00	<b>Remembering the dead at Tarbat: caring, recording, communicating</b> Professor Martin Carver
11.30 – 11.50	<b>Record-taking and record-keeping for graveyards</b> Lesley M Ferguson	4.00 – 4.10	<b>Coffee</b>
11.50 – 12.10	<b>The role of family history societies</b> Angus Mitchell	4.10 – 4.40	<b>The role of the National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland</b> John Higgitt
		4.40 – 5.00	<b>New initiatives in the recording and the management of graveyards</b> Susan Buckham
			<b>Discussion, followed by Concluding remarks: the way forward</b> Ingval Maxwell



*The Bass and Little Bass are motte and bailey structures within Inverurie Cemetery in Gordon. Evidence from the site indicates that it has been occupied from Neolithic times.*

# CARVED STONES POLICY – NEW DEVELOPMENTS

DR SALLY FOSTER, SENIOR INSPECTOR OF  
ANCIENT MONUMENTS, HISTORIC SCOTLAND

Historic Scotland's present policy for carved stones was approved by the Ancient Monuments Board and published in 1992. We have been operating to widely discussed principles since our first ancient monument legislation in 1882, principles that have underpinned, for example, our public information leaflets on carved stones. Historic Scotland now plans to further develop this operational policy, for public consultation in due course, in the light of recent developments.



*Heritage Guide 2: The Carved Stones of Scotland, A Guide to Helping in their Protection*

The aim is a refreshed policy that will:

- Apply to all types of carved stones of cultural significance.
- Protect and best conserve what is significant for future generations.
- Understand the site and its cultural significance before making decisions regarding its future or any changes to its fabric.
- Care for the stone's setting. This will include, as far as possible and where appropriate, retention of the physical association of sculpture with its original site.
- Interpret the site in a manner appropriate for its cultural significance.



*Sueno's Stone, on the outskirts of Forres in Moray, now protected by a purpose-built glass shelter*

- Conform and contribute to current national and international best conservation and interpretation practice.
- Make use of existing expertise and further understanding of carved stones in general.
- Promote interest in carved stones by as wide an audience as possible, in order to further their protection, recording, conservation and management.
- Distinguish what Historic Scotland can do at its own hand, and what it should encourage and facilitate others to do.

Likely objectives include:

- **Legal protection:** ensuring that statutory provisions are appropriate and fully utilised to protect and manage carved stones, where applicable.
- **Raising awareness of vulnerability of carved stones:** ensuring that all relevant parties are aware of the threats to carved stones and are encouraged to take measures to address this. Threats include vulnerability to environmental erosion, inappropriate management practices and theft.



*One of the earliest of Scotland's hogback tombstones, on the island of Inchcolm in the Firth of Forth, which has now been removed to the visitor centre there.*

- **Conservation strategies and practice, including intervention:** ensuring that the highest standard of conservation strategies and practices are adopted, and that these are in the best interests of the carved stone. The aim of the conservation of carved stones is to retain their cultural significance, and must include provisions for their future needs, including security and maintenance.
- **Research, information:** promoting understanding and enjoyment of carved stones by all, targeting provision to the needs and opportunities of the different audiences.
- **Historic Scotland setting an example of best practice:** Historic Scotland ensuring in all its work with carved stones that it follows best practice and sets an example for others to follow.

Historic Scotland and its predecessor departments have always sought to ensure that the highest standard of conservation strategies and practices are adopted, and

that these are in the best interests of the carved stone. The aim of conservation of carved stones has been to retain their cultural significance whilst making provisions for their future needs, including security and maintenance. There is therefore a normal presumption in favour of retaining the physical association of sculpture with its original site. Where an upstanding sculpture is believed to be in its original location, the presumption is that it shall not be removed unless demonstrable conservation needs outweigh the significance of retaining the monument in its original archaeological, architectural or landscape setting.

In all aspects of this, Historic Scotland continues to seek to work in partnership with other bodies, not least the National Committee on the Carved Stones of Scotland.

These and other related issues will be explored during the course of this paper, with specific reference to historic graveyards.

**Dr Sally Foster, Senior Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Historic Scotland**

After taking a first degree in medieval archaeology at University College, London, Sally Foster came to Scotland in 1985 to undertake research at Glasgow University. She then worked as an Investigator with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland before joining Historic Scotland in 1991. Now a Senior Inspector of Ancient Monuments working in Orkney, Western Isles and Highland, her policy responsibilities include carved stones of all periods.

Her research interests lie predominantly in early medieval northern Britain and Ireland. She has written the best-seller *Picts, Gaels and Scots* (1996) for Batsford/Historic Scotland and edited *The St Andrews Sarcophagus: a Pictish masterpiece and its international connections* (1998). Other edited volumes and papers cover a range of subjects including aspects of cultural resource management. Her most recent publication is the 2001 Groom House Annual Academic Lecture, *Place, Space and Odyssey: the future of early medieval sculpture*. This explored the history and present status of policies for the protection of carved stones in Scotland, with specific reference to the early medieval period.

She is an Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Archaeology, University of Glasgow.

# STATUTORY PROTECTION FOR GRAVEYARDS

DR DEBBIE MAYS, HEAD OF LISTING, HISTORIC SCOTLAND

Graveyards grace the towns and countryside of Scotland providing rich documents of a nation's past, but they are often now disregarded, disused and poorly maintained. Historic Scotland offers protection for graveyards found to be of special archaeological, architectural or historic interest through the statutory mechanisms of scheduling and listing. Together these work to safeguard the character and special interest of a large percentage of Scotland's historic resting places. Over 1,200 of these places are listed under the 1997 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act, while a smaller percentage are scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979, and some form part of the Properties in Care of the state.

The criteria for the inclusion of churchyards, burial enclosures, mort houses, etc under the large umbrella of 'burial places' on the Scottish Ministers' lists are essentially the same as for other building types. Many factors are weighed up in the assessment, ranging from age and quality of design, detail, rarity, contextual importance, historic association, group interest, style, material and technological form, to name but a few. Each is set within its wider type and evaluated accordingly. Inspectors who make the selection through the resurvey or as part of the list maintenance exercise must be mindful of the development of public and private burial places over the centuries. For example, they must consider the evolution from the round churchyards of the later medieval period to the lairds' burial enclosures and mausolea which continued into the twentieth century, the regimented Victorian municipal or private cemetery and the memorial gardens of the modern Crematorium.

Similar but more rigorous criteria are required for the inclusion of monuments of national importance on the Scottish Ministers' schedules, but again the criteria applied to other monument types apply to graveyards. A monument is of national importance if, in the view of informed opinion, it contributes or appears likely to contribute significantly to the understanding of the past. Such significance may be assessed from individual or group qualities, and may include structural or decorative features, or value as an archaeological resource.

The vast majority of churchyards now depend for their maintenance on stretched local authority budgets, since the Church of Scotland (Property and Endowments) Act 1925 handed over responsibility for their upkeep from church to municipal park-keeper. The exception to this is the graves still tended by surviving descendants. Lodge houses (where they exist) tend to be occupied and provide a deterrent to vandalism, but the otherwise isolated, peaceful and passive form of graveyards lends them unintentionally to an unruly element of society. Neither Scheduled Monument nor Listed Building Consent can guard against wilful damage or day-to-day negligence, they can only work towards protecting the character in the event of change, seeing individual monuments conserved, the layout respected and projects such as the restoration of railings encouraged.

This paper will illustrate the breadth and variety of eligible structures in graveyards for the protection of listing and scheduling, considering the subject chronologically, while touching on the resulting powers of the control systems.

## **Dr Debbie Mays, Head of Listing, Historic Scotland**

Deborah Mays gained both her PhD and her MA(Hons) from the University of St Andrews, before joining Historic Scotland. She is currently Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings, Head of Listing and until recently was Assessor to the Historic Buildings Council. Her publications include articles on Scottish architecture in the later 19th to earlier 20th century, biographical work on Scottish architects, book reviews and two books *The Architecture of Scottish Cities* and *Visions of Scotland's Past*, in an editorial capacity. A former Secretary of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain, she is a full member of the Institute of Historic Buildings Conservation.

# THE ROLE OF THE GARDENS INVENTORY

KRYSTYNA CAMPBELL, LANDSCAPE HISTORIAN, HISTORIC SCOTLAND

Cemeteries, as well as graveyards, can contain important funerary monuments. It is important to conserve and manage the context of these funerary monuments, i.e. the landscape of these cemeteries, not just the monuments themselves. Although the *Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland* includes some cemeteries, its role in their conservation is limited. Its role is confined to the identification of those cemeteries that are also nationally important examples of designed landscape. Thus the 1988 edition of the *Inventory* included The Necropolis in Glasgow, which developed from a pleasure ground; a form of designed landscape aimed at providing ornamented grounds for amenity and recreation. The importance of a designed landscape within which to set funerary monuments was developed during the 19th century, with the Glasgow Necropolis being one of the earliest and most significant examples.

Since the publication of the *Inventory* (of 275 sites) in 1988, more sites have been added so that the *Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes* now includes some 425 sites, including a further two cemetery sites - Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh and Tomnahurich Cemetery, Inverness. It is important to note that the current resurvey programme has not yet been completed, areas still to be included are Banff and Buchan, Moray and the Borders. It is already becoming apparent that even major, national examples of designed cemeteries have not been identified on resurvey and the current mechanisms of identifying and including sites on the *Inventory* needs to be reappraised to allow for these and perhaps others, as yet unidentified, to be included.

The *Inventory* can offer only limited 'protection'. The major protection through the planning system is confined to a requirement for local authorities to consult Scottish Ministers, through Historic Scotland



**DEAN CEMETERY**

**OS 1864** Dean Cemetery  
**OS 1886** Dean Cemetery  
**OS 1906** Dean Cemetery  
**OS 1928** Dean Cemetery  
**OS 1948** Dean Cemetery  
**OS 1968** Dean Cemetery  
**OS 1988** Dean Cemetery  
**OS 2008** Dean Cemetery  
**OS 2018** Dean Cemetery

**DESCRIPTION**  
 Dean Cemetery is a large, landscaped cemetery in the heart of Edinburgh. It was founded in 1825 and is one of the largest and most important cemeteries in Scotland. The cemetery is a fine example of a designed landscape, with its layout and planting reflecting the principles of the Picturesque movement. The cemetery is a large, landscaped cemetery in the heart of Edinburgh. It was founded in 1825 and is one of the largest and most important cemeteries in Scotland. The cemetery is a fine example of a designed landscape, with its layout and planting reflecting the principles of the Picturesque movement.

**PLANNING**  
 Dean Cemetery is a Scheduled Monument and is also a Category A Listed Building. It is also a Category A Listed Building. It is also a Category A Listed Building.

**CONSERVATION**  
 Dean Cemetery is a Scheduled Monument and is also a Category A Listed Building. It is also a Category A Listed Building. It is also a Category A Listed Building.

**RESEARCH**  
 Dean Cemetery is a Scheduled Monument and is also a Category A Listed Building. It is also a Category A Listed Building. It is also a Category A Listed Building.

**REFERENCES**  
 Dean Cemetery is a Scheduled Monument and is also a Category A Listed Building. It is also a Category A Listed Building. It is also a Category A Listed Building.

Part of the Dean Cemetery entry for the new "An Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes - Supplementary Volume 1 Lothians"

and Scottish Natural Heritage, in respect of any proposal which involve, or may affect Inventory Sites (under article 15-(1) (j) (iv) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Scotland) Order 1992. However, by highlighting the importance of a site and evaluating its significance, a site on the Inventory may then inspire greater awareness and understanding in its local community and with the local authority, or in the case of a private cemetery with its managing company. This should lead to a greater understanding of the management needed to safeguard its more vulnerable elements, be they monuments, carved stones, ornamental planting or turf.

The idea of the garden cemetery developed during the mid-19th century onwards. Scotland, with her strong, world-renowned horticultural expertise, was a major contributor in the development and adoption of the garden cemetery in Britain. John Claudius Loudon (1783-1843), a Scot, landscape gardener and author, published a seminal work *On the Laying Out, Planting and Management of Cemeteries* in 1843. This drew on John Strang's *Necropolis Glasguensis* (1831), in turn inspired by Pere Lachaise, Paris. The idea of the cemetery grew beyond merely the disposal of the dead for, as expressed by Strang, '*a garden cemetery, and monumental decoration afford the most convincing token of a nation's progress in civilisation and the arts, which are its result.*' One of Loudon's principal concerns was that, in addition to the practice of hygienic burial, a cemetery *should improve the moral feelings* of the public. In addition to providing an attractive amenity within urban areas, a cemetery could even instruct the public in aesthetics and botany.

The concept that a landscape can offer instruction, through its design and layout is not unusual. Where this exists it offers us another form of understanding and appreciating contemporary society. Recent studies of

the Valley Cemetery, Stirling indicate that its design and organisation were structured so as to demonstrate a religious conviction underlying one of the most complex contemporary arguments current in mid-late 19th century Scotland. The Cemetery had a didactic role relating to mid-late 19th century philosophical and religious debates, which at that time literally raged and rocked people's fundamental beliefs. To our modern eyes and ears this level of understanding has been lost and superseded by other concerns.

William Drummond, who purchased land between the Castle Esplanade and the Valley Cemetery in 1862, was uncle to Professor Henry Drummond who sought to reconcile evangelical Christianity with evolution. He wrote *'The Ascent of Man'* (1894) which attempts to christianise evolution by laying stress on altruistic elements in natural selection. This echoes and responds to Darwin's *'The Descent of Man'* (1871). The cemetery was laid out in the 1850s under William's direction and incorporated statues of John Knox, Andrew Melville, Alex Henderson, Ebenezer Erskine, James Renwick and James Guthrie. All were prominent figures in the rise of Secession from the Established Church. In addition William Drummond's half-brother, Peter Drummond was the author of various religious tracts including *Post-office Sabbath Slavery* (1849), *Cyrstal [sic] Palace and the Sabbath* (1855) and *Sabbath travellers and railway proprietors; their responsibility* (1854).

In addition to the instructive evangelical theme of the cemetery it also incorporated Drummond's Garden', in the form of a Victorian pleasure garden, laid out with elaborate planting schemes below the Esplanade. This also incorporates symbolic imagery. A guidebook to the cemetery indicates that 19th century visitors were expected and encouraged.

#### **Krystyna Campbell, Landscape Historian, Historic Scotland**

Krystyna Campbell is an archaeology graduate (Southampton University) and chartered landscape architect, who is now Landscape Historian in the Historic Buildings Division. Previous experience has included work in private practice and the public sector, including the development and management of a grant scheme for the repair of gardens and designed landscapes (1989-1998) with English Heritage.

# BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW HISTORIC SCOTLAND GUIDE FOR PRACTITIONERS: THE CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC GRAVEYARDS

Historic graveyards are of great value since much of Scotland's recent past is commemorated only on the memorials contained within them. They also contain important archaeological and historic features, not all of which may be visible.

The Guide is concerned with post-Reformation Scottish graveyards, because most gravestones and other memorials seen in Scottish graveyards today usually date from the seventeenth century onwards. The issues addressed range from the maintenance of the graveyard as a tranquil public space for the living and an honoured place for the dead, to the practical steps required to prevent or control the accelerated deterioration of stone and other memorials. It is not intended to act as a guide to the routine maintenance of cemeteries.

Information is given on legal issues relating to the ownership and responsibility for burial grounds in Scotland and sets out criteria by which 'important' gravestones may be identified. The implications of Listing and Scheduling of both entire graveyards and individual elements in the graveyard are explored, including the treatment of human remains, archaeological excavations and ancient objects uncovered within graveyards. The Guide provides descriptions and examples of the range of headstones, mausoleums and burial enclosures likely to be encountered. Other types of built elements, such as walls, fences and railings, morthouses and watch houses and ruins are also included.

The action of a range of destructive agents is discussed and the mechanisms of decay explored. This includes reference to iron memorials as well as to a range of stone and composite types. Advice on the identification of headstones at risk, and the repair of headstones and monuments is presented, including guidance on assessing the priorities for repair. The procedures for the compilation of full and accurate documentation of monuments, while the stones still survive, are described. To assist in the task a comprehensive recording form on which details of individual gravestones can be recorded is provided, together with an assessment of its condition and details of any intervention undertaken.

Many historic graveyards are important sites for flora and fauna. Whilst graveyards should not be allowed to become overwhelmed by vegetation they can, where appropriate, be minimally and selectively maintained to provide the best natural habitats for indigenous flora and fauna. Advice is given on how to deal best with trees and hedges, ivy, micro-organisms and burrowing animals. Micro-organisms such as algae, lichens and mosses are ubiquitous on gravestones and comprehensive advice is given on these growths.

Six different case studies are provided to illustrate some examples of good practice. This is further expanded by the final section, which is a checklist of good practice.

## **Dennis C M Urquhart, Urquhart Consultancy Services**

Dennis Urquhart is a consultant building pathologist and building conservation scientist. Prior to his present position as principal of Urquhart Consultancy Services he was Reader in Building Pathology and Conservation Science at The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen where he was also Director of the Masonry Conservation Research Group. With extensive experience in the field of conservation research he is author and co-author of numerous publications, including research reports, technical advice notes and guides for practitioners on behalf of Historic Scotland. Recent work includes research into biological growths and biocide treatment of sandstone, the cleaning of sandstone and granite buildings, the treatment of graffiti on historic surfaces, risk assessment of market crosses in Scotland and environmental treatment of dry rot in historic buildings. He is also a director of the Scottish Stone Liaison Group and the Natural Stone Institute.

# LAUNCH OF THE NEW HISTORIC SCOTLAND GUIDE FOR PRACTITIONERS: THE CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC GRAVEYARDS

GRAEME MUNRO, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, HISTORIC SCOTLAND

It is appropriate that this seminar to launch the new Guide for Practitioners should be arranged in conjunction with the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. The Society has a long and distinguished record of promoting the understanding of Scotland's past as revealed through material remains.

Graveyards are places for the living as well as for the dead. They are a class of site that, perhaps more powerfully than any other, makes tangible the connection between the past and present. They are also sites in which we all have an interest – we may well find a resting place there ourselves (there cannot be a more direct interest than this!). We all filter our experience of graveyards through our own interests (try

visiting a graveyard with a lichenologist to see this in practice). This diversity of interests is a great strength in graveyard studies – but it is also important that there is a forum to ensure co-operation, and indeed integration, where this is relevant.

The publication of the *Conservation of Historic Graveyards* makes technical advice on appropriate conservation techniques widely available. We hope it will prompt a dialogue with others because, no matter our initial reason for being interested in graveyards, we all have common cause in ensuring that future generations will also be able to experience and learn from these sites.



*View of the burial ground from the tower of St Andrews Cathedral*

## **Graeme Munro, Chief Executive, Historic Scotland**

Graeme Munro was born and brought up in Edinburgh and East Lothian. He studied French Language and Literature at the University of St Andrews, graduating in 1967. He joined the Scottish Office (the principal Government Department in Scotland) in 1968 and has worked in a wide variety of policy and operational areas, including planning legislation, roads, health policy and finance, fisheries, criminal justice legislation and managed the Department's internal efficiency unit. In 1990 he became Director of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Directorate within The Scottish Office and spent a year preparing the Directorate to become an Executive Agency under the Government's administrative reforms known as the Next Steps Initiative. He became the first Chief Executive of the Agency, known as Historic Scotland, when it was established in April 1991. He still holds that position. The aim of the Agency is to "safeguard the nation's built heritage and promote its understanding and enjoyment".

# RECORD-TAKING AND RECORD-KEEPING FOR GRAVEYARDS

LESLEY M FERGUSON,

NATIONAL MONUMENTS RECORD OF SCOTLAND, RCAHMS

Publications dating back to the early 18th century record a selection of inscriptions from gravestones in Scotland. Few of these volumes, however, were illustrated and the visual nature of the stones and their symbology was rarely depicted. The importance and value of gravestones and the need to protect them was recognised in 1875 by Andrew Jervise, an active recorder and publisher of inscriptions, who stated ....*It must have appeared to many as well as to the Author a remarkable circumstance, that, while monumental inscriptions are admitted as evidence in Courts of Law, no legal step, so far as Scotland is concerned, should ever have been taken to secure their preservation. The Author is inclined to believe that the Legislature owes a duty to the country in this respect, and that an Act of parliament ought to be passed, not only to provide, as far as possible, against the decay of Funeral Monuments by time, but also to prohibit their destruction and removal in any, and every way, whether by relatives or others* (Jervise 1875, iii).

Writing in 1902, the then secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, David Christison, bemoaned the fact that little attention had been paid to graveyard monuments and in the closing lines of his article he exhorted others ...*to record the tombstones, with illustrations...*, recognising the possibility of their imminent decay or destruction. His paper in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* (1902, 457) was one of the first to examine the symbology, design and history of gravestones, and was to provide the inspiration and guidance for others to record local stones through the first half of the 20th century.

Credit for the systematic recording of inscriptions in graveyards should go to John and Sheila Mitchell, and the Scottish Genealogy Society. Parish by parish through Perthshire, the Mitchells produced outline drawings of graveyards, identifying and numbering the stones and listing all the inscriptions on pre-1855 stones. The results of each survey were presented in detailed typescript reports. However, it was through the research and publications of Betty Willsher that the wealth and artistic importance of Scotland's post-Reformation tombstones was brought to the attention of a wider public. Encouraged and supported by the Council for British Archaeology Scotland, the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and the Royal Commission

on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), Betty Willsher took photographs, recorded the inscriptions and compiled descriptions of stones, depositing the results of her work in the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS). Based on her experiences, Mrs Willsher wrote *Understanding Scottish Graveyards and How to Record Scottish Graveyards*, published in 1985, and encouraged others to carry out work in their local graveyards using a standard recording form. She travelled extensively throughout Scotland, lecturing to local groups, and attended the annual conferences of the Association of Gravestone Studies in the USA.

In recent years, further individuals and local groups have carried out comprehensive surveys of stones, regardless of date, recording in detail the inscriptions, as well as making a full photographic record of every stone. Staff in NMRS have provided advice and guidance, including: encouraging the preparation of a standard 'recording form' containing the absolute minimum of essential information; recommending relevant publications; advising on previous survey work undertaken; providing contact with other gravestone groups; and in some instances, helping by supplying photographic films. A more methodical and consistent approach to recording has been adopted and, recently, one local group were able to present the results of their full graveyard survey on the world wide web, complete with the mechanism to search for particular names.

From all the work that has been undertaken, an extensive and valuable historical record has been assembled, which sometimes illustrates stones now physically damaged or lost. Many of the records are accessible in the NMRS, and as the computerisation of the catalogues to the collections is completed, more of the information will be accessible through CANMORE, the NMRS database, which is available on the web. The system is currently not ideal for retrieving information on specific stones within a graveyard but with the use of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) in stone surveys, the introduction of images and geo-spatial referencing to the computer system, the possibilities for improving the accessibility of information on gravestones is expanding. In the future, it should be possible to reconstruct a graveyard on screen and to retrieve images of each stone,

alongside the inscription and summary description.

Records of graveyard surveys are spread throughout Scotland in local libraries, archive offices or local sites and monuments records. The comprehensive recording of both epitaph and stone has, however, been carried out for only a tiny minority of historic graveyards and even fewer cemeteries. With so much work having been carried out, and so much yet to do, it is vital that duplication of effort is avoided.

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*A study group surveys a graveyard*

### **Lesley M Ferguson, National Monuments Record of Scotland, RCAHMS**

Lesley Ferguson is Curator of Collections and Public Services in the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS). A graduate in archaeology from Edinburgh University, she has extensive knowledge and experience of Scotland's archaeological collections, from antiquarian research through to modern excavation and survey archives. In recent years, she has provided advice and guidance to individuals and groups interested in undertaking graveyard surveys, and has been encouraging the deposition of material in publicly accessible repositories.

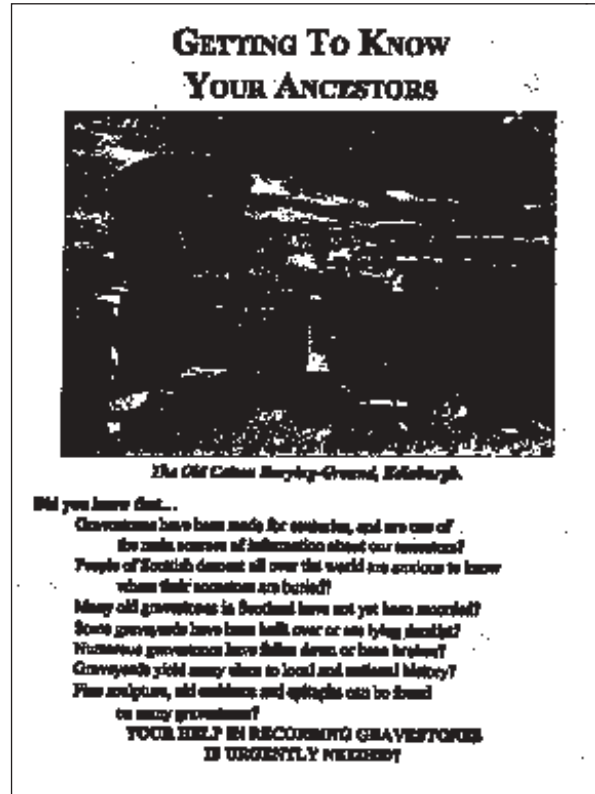
# THE ROLE OF FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETIES

ANGUS MITCHELL

Inscriptions on gravestones and church monuments are a valuable source of information about the lives of our ancestors, especially before registration of births, deaths and marriages became compulsory in Scotland in 1855; family historians usually describe them as “MIs”, an abbreviation for monumental inscriptions. Unless these inscriptions have become illegible, they often include not only names and dates but also age at death, occupation, place of residence and other members of the family. Gravestones in Scotland have a further advantage over other countries in that they usually record a married woman under her maiden name; and until the 19th century they often showed emblems of trade like a farmer’s ploughshare or a weaver’s shuttle. Some of the earlier stones, however, have only the initials of the deceased; that would have been quite enough to show the family and neighbours where he or she lay buried, but is much less useful to us now.

Because of the wealth of personal information to be found in old graveyards, and the growing interest in family history, people have been recording MIs for many years. A major contribution to this labour of love was made by my late parents, John and Sheila Mitchell, who spent over 30 years in systematically recording and publishing MIs across most of Central Scotland; other family historians have followed their good example, so that the lists which have been published by the Scottish Genealogy Society and other local societies now cover well over half of the graveyards in Scotland. The Society’s library also contains an extensive collection of unpublished lists of MIs for other areas, and the Society has recently published a complete index of these lists.

I estimate that between 10% and 20% of the graveyards in Scotland have not so far been recorded, and the Society has been trying to stimulate more local groups in these areas to complete the work. This is of course a race against time because of the alarming scale of damage and erosion documented by Historic Scotland in their admirable guide. My parents thought it right to give highest priority to the recording of inscriptions before 1855, because they are often the only source of information available before the start of compulsory



Front page of the leaflet “Getting to Know Your Ancestors”

registration. Many societies, however, now record all inscriptions up to the present date, since these provide a more complete picture of local history. Moreover, post-1855 MIs often provide information not given on the death certificate, such as relations who have died in England or overseas. Some groups go even further and make a complete archaeological record of the kind described in Betty Willsher’s excellent booklet “How to Record Scottish Graveyards” – but that takes much more time and effort and yields information of limited value to family historians.

While family historians have probably done more than any others to record old gravestones, we fully recognise that there are other stakeholders with important interests in this field. I would suggest that one issue which concerns us all is how to raise public awareness in this somewhat neglected part of our



# THE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES OF CARING FOR GRAVEYARDS: ISSUES OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

GEORGE BELL, ENVIRONMENT AND CONSUMER SERVICES DEPARTMENT,  
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Many of the cemeteries and churchyards controlled by local authorities date back to the early nineteenth century, with some historic churchyards founded significantly earlier. Due to the lack of maintenance, many memorials have become unstable and may pose a danger to the public. Sadly, it was not until the death of a child in 1995 that the extent of the problem was realised. Since 1995 two more children have been fatally injured in accidents involving memorial headstones in cemeteries. Cemetery Managers have always assumed that the sole responsibility for a memorial headstone lay with the persons (or their successors) who had purchased the Exclusive Right of Burial in that particular grave. In Scotland, the Rights of Burial are issued in perpetuity. However, in all the three cases mentioned above, the Health and Safety Executive prosecuted the cemetery authority under the Health and Safety Act, arguing that they failed in their 'duty of care'. These fatalities and court judgements have serious implications for cemetery authorities.

The Confederation of British Burial Authorities responded by commissioning a report on the Management of Memorials, which was published last year. The report examines all the issues relating to memorial management and includes recommendations concerning existing memorials, future memorials and inspection programmes. The outcome of the report, including the repair of dangerous memorials and recruitment of staff and support services to undertake

inspection has major financial implications for all cemetery authorities. In addition in March 2001, a House of Commons Select Committee on Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs published a series of recommendations on the future of cemeteries. These recommendations dealt with issues such as:

- Legislation
- Funding for cemetery maintenance and restoration
- Staff training
- Cemetery inspection

As yet no similar study and recommendations have been made for Scottish cemeteries and graveyards.

The management of memorials is an area of cemetery management that has received little attention over the years. This subject is currently being brought into a sharper focus as a result of three recent publications, namely the reports mentioned above, and now Historic Scotland's Guide For Practitioners on the Conservation of Historic Graveyards.

This paper will consider the recommendations set out in these publications for graveyard conservation and memorial safety in light of the day-to-day practicalities of managing cemeteries and graveyards within the public sector.

## **George Bell, Environment and Consumer Services Department, The City of Edinburgh Council**

George Bell has over twenty years experience in cemetery management. He is the Divisional Officer in Edinburgh City Council's Bereavement Services Department and is responsible for the management and administration of the Council's cemeteries, crematorium and public mortuary facilities. George Bell is a fellow of the Institute of Burial and Crematorium Administration, and an active member of the Lothian Cemetery Forum and the Cremation and Burial Services External Best Value Group for Edinburgh City, Aberdeen, Perth and Kinross, South Ayrshire and Clydebank.

# RECENT CASEWORK - THE CONSERVATION OF GRAVESTONES

STEPHEN GORDON, SENIOR CONSERVATOR,  
HISTORIC SCOTLAND CONSERVATION CENTRE

The stone conservation unit within Historic Scotland's Conservation Centre has responsibility amongst its other roles, for conserving carved stone ornament throughout Scotland, particularly on our own 'Properties in Care'. Our remit includes a vast range of subjects ranging from Neolithic rock carvings to Pictish symbol stones through to statuary, heraldic panels and other structural detail on the abbeys and castles of Scotland. We deal with historic monuments and buildings up to the Victorian period and even include some from the 20th century. Treatment of portable subjects takes place in studios at the Conservation Centre although much of the conservation work is implemented on site throughout Scotland.

We have undertaken numerous projects specifically involving gravestones and other memorials each of which have presented their own challenges. Whilst some of the problems encountered are common to stone conservation in general, others are specific to dealing with graveyard situations where for instance poor access can hinder operations and there is a need to respect the wishes of relatives and local communities. By carrying out practical projects, we have gained a better understanding of dealing with the conservation of gravestones.

Gravestones can be made out of many different materials such as timber, cast iron, sandstone, marble and granite or a combination of these. Often they are constructed from more than one material bonded with lime or cement based mortar and may also incorporate additional supporting cramps and dowels. They may take the form of monoliths supported in a base or as larger more complex memorials constructed from many component parts. They may be upright and free-standing, built against or into a wall or resting directly in the ground in a recumbent position.

They are subject to a wide range of decay phenomena and interventions. Some of the most commonly observed problems include: settlement due to inadequate or non-existent foundations resulting in structural failure; fracture damage from corroding ferrous fixings; delamination and powdering of stone due to the dissolution of soluble minerals or the crystallisation of soluble salts; freeze thaw action, the impact of pollutants and other atmospheric influences; damage from inappropriate repair materials, damage due to graveyard maintenance or deliberate vandalism.

The preservation of our most significant memorials could be ensured by removing them from exposed and vulnerable situations to more controlled environments such as that which a museum or specially constructed enclosure might provide. This is however only a viable proposition in exceptional circumstances as it requires extensive resources to take forward. There are also many other considerations to be taken into account: often there is resistance to such a suggestion from relatives or other local people; the overall impact on the significance of the stone will need to be assessed – when separated from its original site, its meaning may be diminished.

More realistically most treatments of gravestones will be carried out in-situ using sacrificial repair mediums that stabilise any particularly active decay processes, allowing the stone to continue to weather at a more controlled rate. Other intervention may include the construction of new foundations incorporating damp proof membranes, the removal and replacement of ferrous fixings with phosphor bronze or stainless steel and the replacement of ordinary Portland cement-based mortar with lime or other mediums.

The following three recent case studies may go some way to help illustrate the complexities of maintaining and conserving gravestones and other graveyard memorials carved from the indigenous stones of Scotland. These case studies demonstrate some of the methods of dealing with gravestones at risk and also illustrate the types of decay patterns and other problems that typically effect natural stone memorials.

## Case 1: *The Faichney Memorial, Innerpeffray, Perthshire*

This eighteenth century memorial was constructed by mason John Faichney for use as a family memorial. The memorial stands around 2.5 metres high and is elaborately carved, depicting members of the Faichney family and other detail. The monument is built into the boundary wall of Innerpeffray churchyard. It was first inspected by HSCC in 1994 and found to be heavily painted, apparently to mask earlier intervention to repair the monument. Our report recommended the dismantling of the monument to allow the removal of paint and ferrous fixings and also to allow a proper assessment of the condition of the stone that was apparently deteriorating beneath the paint.



*The Faichney Memorial prior to conservation*



*The Faichney Memorial after conservation*

The monument was dismantled from the boundary wall of the churchyard and transported to the Conservation Centre at South Gyle for extensive conservation treatment. It was subsequently returned and displayed inside the church at Innerpefferay.

We were requested to advise on the conservation of this monument by Gordon District Council and subsequently a grant was made available for the conservation recommendations to be carried forward.

*Case 2: The Annand Memorial, Ellon, Aberdeenshire*

The Annand monument was built at the beginning of the 17th century in the Old Churchyard of Ellon in Aberdeenshire. It was built by Alexandre Annand, the last laird of Auchterellon, to commemorate various descendants of the Annand family.

Treatment of the monument was carried out in-situ using sacrificial repair mediums to stabilise areas of delamination. Associated treatment included the removal of cement-based mortars to be replaced with lime mortar and the removal of ferrous cramps.



*The Annand Memorial*

*Case 3: West Highland Grave Slab Project, Islay*

This project came about through an urgent need to address the problems of deterioration associated with recumbent West Highland grave slabs throughout the Western Isles. Previous exercises to house these monuments in chapels and other roofed lean-to enclosures have proved very successful (such as at Kilmartin, Keills and Ardchatten) however, it is not possible or necessarily desirable to extend this approach to other sites.

Five graveyards on Islay were selected for this project and a few stones at each site were identified to be reset on specifically designed bases. The design of the base also negated any need to excavate or disturb the ground allowing the stones to remain in their original settings.

Scottish Conservation Projects took on the work with the assistance of volunteers and our task was to create a mock-up of one of the stones to work out a method statement for the lifting and resetting of the slabs using a minimum amount of resources and without risk to the often friable stones.



*A Grave Slab after resetting*



*Volunteers assisting at the West Highland Grave Slab Project*

**Stephen Gordon, Senior Conservator, Historic Scotland Conservation Centre**

Stephen Gordon served a craft apprenticeship as a stone mason in 1975 and worked in the Edinburgh area until 1980. Late in 1980, he acquired the post of conservator at Stenhouse Mansion, much of his time was spent either on site or at the conservation studios at Newbattle. Conservation projects undertaken during this period included: St. Johns Cross, Iona; Kineff Church Wall Monuments; Shandwick Stone; Barochan Cross

In 1995, he took over the running of the stone unit at the Conservation Centre as Senior Conservator. Main duties of the post include the conservation of carved stone ornament throughout Scotland; management of a conservation team and resources; project management including providing estimates; training in specialist conservation techniques; preparing specialist advisory reports; conservation projects for external bodies and individuals; environmental monitoring and assistance in research projects. Recent projects have included: Dupplin Cross; Keills Cross, Islay; Faichney Memorial; Stone of Destiny; Kilmaha Cross Slabs, Loch Awe.

# THE NORTH BURIAL GROUND GRAVESTONE RESTORATION PROJECT

ROBERT MCMAHON, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS,  
CITY OF PROVIDENCE, RI, USA

Founded in 1636 by Roger Williams, the community of Providence, Rhode Island relied on family burial plots and a few church burying grounds until 1700 when the City's population growth required a public place for burying the community's dead. In response to this need, the North Burial Ground cemetery was established by city leaders for a "burying ground, military training, and other public purposes".

For almost a century and a half, North Burial Ground remained small, occupying only 45 acres with only 14 acres used for burying. As part of the Rural Cemetery Movement that took place in the middle of the nineteenth century in America, the City hired a professional landscape architect and civil engineer to design an expanded cemetery in a picturesque style with rolling topography, avenues, and extensive landscaping. The cemetery became not only a peaceful final resting place for the dead, but a quiet and verdant environment for the living to escape the clamour and bustle of the city. By 1883, the cemetery had expanded to its present size of 110 acres.

The North Burial Ground contains an eclectic collection of funerary sculpture spanning not only three centuries, but also ranging from simple markers in the "potter's field" free burial ground to the elaborate mausoleum structures of Providence's finest families. The cemetery's 105,000 gravestones represent a wide range of stones representing all periods of American gravestone styles and carvings. Slate and marble slabs are the predominant stone prior to 1850, with granite the predominant stone over the last 150 years.

The gravestones, particularly the carvings on the stones, offer glimpses into the customs and culture of the people who lived in Providence. Religious development, family and social structure, birth patterns, slave patterns, social and humanitarian attitudes—all can be gleaned from the North Burial Ground gravestones.

Operating as an independent entity for most of its

existence, the North Burial Ground was recently transferred as a public space to be operated and maintained by the Providence Parks Department. The Parks Department is now faced with an enormous task of not only renovating the cemetery, which has fallen into serious disrepair, but also developing an entire new management system for operating and maintaining the cemetery. Of the many daunting tasks we are actively trying to resolve, one of the most critical and important areas of concern is the problem of gravestone repair. An initial survey has indicated an immediate need to repair 1,850 stones.

The survey revealed a typical assortment of gravestone problems found in most old public cemeteries: fractured stones, sunken stones, tilting stones, fallen stones, delaminated stones, and stones with serious micro-organism problems. We have quickly learned that jumping from problem identification to repair is quite a leap. We have discovered that there is no linear path in gravestone repair; rather, a complex set of decision trees is required with cost and preservation issues looming at every turn. After consultation with a variety of sources and the preparation of a Gravestone Repair Guide, the Parks Department is now undertaking a modest number of gravestone repairs each year knowing that the repair task before us will be a lengthy one.

The conference paper examines some of the major policy and technical issues being addressed by the Providence Parks Department in the North Burial Ground gravestone project. Of particular interest are the policies developed and used in prioritising repairs, in determining who will repair the stones, and in determining the type and level of repair. The paper also reviews some of the repair techniques, focusing, in particular, on examples of successful patching of stones that are missing portions or fragments.

## **Robert McMahon, Department of Public Parks, City of Providence, RI, USA**

From 1986 to the present, Robert McMahon has worked as Deputy Superintendent of Providence (RI) Parks Department. He is responsible for the management of all park improvements in a park system with 110 parks. Supervise the design, construction, and financing of projects which include historic building renovation, statuary restoration, landscape improvements, and playground improvements.

# INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT: MOUNT AUBURN CEMETERY

ANGUS FRASER, PRESERVATION SERVICES MANAGER,  
MOUNT AUBURN CEMETERY, CAMBRIDGE, MA, USA

Consecrated in 1831, Mount Auburn Cemetery gave rise to the rural cemetery movement in the United States, a movement that marked a shift in the way Americans buried and commemorated the dead. Mount Auburn evolved through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as tastes changed and the Cemetery developed. Today the Cemetery's 174 acres contain approximately forty thousand grave markers set within a renowned and diverse horticultural collection. Over the last ten years, Mount Auburn has increasingly made preservation of the monuments, grave markers, mausolea and other structures set in its historic landscape a priority. To meet this challenge has required increased awareness of the goals of preservation among all departments and improved communication among supervisors and managers regarding preservation issues. Mount Auburn's emphasis on the historic importance of the natural and built features in its landscape necessitates that a preservation consciousness be adopted and promoted among the entire staff. Integrated management of the historic site has resulted in creative modifications to grounds maintenance practices, sensitive development of burial space, and interpretative programmes for employees and the public, all of which have furthered the cause of preservation.

Many of the integrated management objectives and strategies originated with a comprehensive master plan completed in 1993. The master plan approached the historic landscape by addressing the issues regarding the preservation of the memorials within the Cemetery's horticultural diversity, while it also identified areas for future interment space that would be sensitive to the Cemetery's historic character. This master plan included a pilot survey and initial assessment of the most historically and artistically significant monuments. Whereas the monuments identified in this initial study are priorities for conservation treatment, recommendations were made to establish guidelines for the inventory and care of the remaining vast majority of monuments and memorials, especially those in the older sections. Basic care includes washing when appropriate, repairs, resetting of loose stones, and the modification of grounds maintenance routines that could potentially harm the stones (see below).

Accompanying the master plan was a historic

landscape report that provided an overview of the development and evolution of the Cemetery, thus establishing the historical context for future decisions regarding landscape design and the development of interment space. Important built features and landscape features were identified and recommendations were made on how best to preserve and enhance appreciation of those features. In certain areas, including the "historic core" of the Cemetery, the placement of new monuments is prohibited or restricted. In areas where additions are restricted, Cemetery staff review new monuments for their appropriateness in terms of materials, scale and design.

In addition to adopting broad policies aimed at preserving the historic character of large sections of the Cemetery, specific practices of the grounds maintenance staff were modified to minimise their impact on the memorials. The following list details many of these practices:

- Groundcovers are trimmed to keep them off the headstones and tombs.
- Shrubs and trees are pruned away from buildings, tombs and other structures.
- Trees overhanging highly significant memorials are regularly assessed and pruned to thin out dying branches and raise the canopy. Raising the canopy allows greater sunlight and air circulation, speeding the drying of wet stones.
- During dry summer months, large sprinklers shooting powerful jets of water have gradually been replaced by smaller, portable sprinklers that can be directed where needed.
- Underground tombs have been mapped and marked. Operators of machinery avoid these areas to prevent damage to underground vaults.
- Operators of grass mowers are held accountable for mower damage: mowers are identified by colour and operators are held accountable when damage is identified.
- Gardening crews are asked to look for stone fragments buried in ground cover and report any damaged or broken memorials.

In our continuing efforts to learn about the relationship between stone soiling or deterioration and grounds

maintenance practices, we try to document the types of herbicides and fertilisers used on the grounds and determine which may potentially damage stone. Finding suitable substitutes for these products, however, will require further research and co-operation. Direct contact between the chemicals and monuments is, however, minimised by clearing fertiliser pellets off the stone with leaf blowers. Hardy plants and species native to the north-eastern United States are usually chosen for any new planting, thus reducing the need for fertilisers or frequent watering.

Interpretation of the site and education of visitors benefit preservation of the landscape and the built environment by increasing awareness and appreciation of the Mount Auburn's history. Interpretative programs are directed toward groups with a wide range of interests, from trees and gardening to cemetery history. The following programmes directly relate to preservation of the memorials.

- Frequent staff seminars provide opportunities to observe the work of other departments and consider its effects on monument preservation.
- Guided tours, audio-tape walking tours and discreet interpretative displays highlight for visitors the significance of the landscape and the individual markers.
- Mount Auburn has sponsored seminars on graveyard preservation and hosted visits by groups studying graveyard history.
- Brochures are planned explaining our conservative approach to cleaning monuments and grave markers.

Public and private grants as well as fundraising efforts provide significant funding for the various interpretative activities.

These first steps already taken at Mount Auburn to integrate management of each aspect of the historic site, including the built environment, the natural environment and the cemetery operations, have successfully instilled a preservation awareness among most staff members. This awareness has already positively impacted long term preservation of the monuments and will serve as a solid base on which to build future preservation initiatives.

**Angus Fraser, Preservation Services Manager, Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, MA, USA**

Angus Fraser recently received his MA in Preservation Studies from Boston University, where he received a fellowship to participate in an ongoing survey of seventeenth century houses in south-eastern Massachusetts. His interest in architectural and monument preservation result from his experience as a carpenter and as a craftsperson at a firm specialising in burial ground preservation. Since at Mount Auburn Cemetery, he has applied his survey experience and his background in the preservation of historic building materials to developing a comprehensive strategy for the documentation, care and maintenance of stone and bronze memorials, masonry tombs and mausolea, and cast iron fences. He is also responsible for co-ordinating the assessment, repair and preventive maintenance of two masonry chapels, a granite gateway with attached gatehouses, and a granite tower overlooking the Cemetery and surrounding area.

Mr Fraser is also an active member of the Boston Conservation Forum, a regional group of conservators, cemetery managers and curators of outdoor sculpture that meets to discuss issues related to the preservation of monuments and memorial structures.

# REMEMBERING THE DEAD AT TARBAT: CARING, RECORDING, COMMUNICATING

PROFESSOR MARTIN CARVER, DEPT OF ARCHAEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Investigations at Portmahomack, Tarbat Ness, Easter Ross offer a sequence of 14 centuries of memorials. In a monastic cemetery beginning in the 6th century, graves were marked with a simple cross. In the mid 8th century we see a grand sarcophagus carved with animals in relief. In about 800, a monumental memorial cross slab was erected which combined monastic and secular themes and remembered the dead with a Latin inscription. Memorials are next adopted

in the 14-15th century, with recumbent slabs, and at the Reformation with cartouches in the church wall. The sequence continues in the graveyard with the great Dingwall Memorial (17th century) and numerous stone memorials of the 18-20th century.

The research programme at Tarbat is studying this varied rhythm of investment; conserving and recording the 400 carved stones and learning to communicate their messages to the visiting public.

**Professor Martin Carver, Dept of Archaeology, University of York**

Martin Carver has worked as a field archaeologist since 1972 and has conducted research projects for the British, French, Italian and Algerian governments. He has directed the Sutton Hoo project from 1983 and the Tarbat Discovery Programme from 1994 and helped to design their visitor centres (the Sutton Hoo Visitor Centre is due to open in March 2002). He is currently professor of archaeology at the University of York where he teaches courses on Early Medieval Britain and Field Archaeology.

# THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON CARVED STONES IN SCOTLAND

JOHN HIGGITT, CHAIRMAN, NCCSS

The National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland was set up in 1993 “to co-ordinate preservation and publication” of carved stones of all periods in Scotland. The committee consists of members who represent national organisations with a professional interest in carved stones, a number of co-opted members and an independent chair. The organisations represented are the following:

Association of Regional and Island Archaeologists  
Historic Scotland  
Council for Scottish Archaeology  
Institute of Historic Building Conservation (Scotland)  
National Museums of Scotland  
National Trust for Scotland  
Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, incorporating the National Monuments Record for Scotland  
Scottish Museums Council  
Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

The NCCSS is an independent committee and receives no funding. It has, however, been greatly assisted throughout by various organisations and individuals and in particular by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, by Historic Scotland and by the National Museums of Scotland. It has recently, with the generous support of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, appointed two volunteer assistants.

In July 1994 it agreed a set of *Principles of Recording and Preservation*. These *Principles* have formed the background to the policy and publications of the NCCSS.

The NCCSS sees its principal roles as promoting a co-ordinated approach to the recording and preservation of

carved stones and helping to raise awareness of issues relating to carved stones. It also serves a useful role in the exchange of information and ideas.

In trying to raise awareness of the issues, to promote good practice, and to seek practical solutions, the NCCSS has published two leaflets: *Carved Stones in Scotland: Threats and Protection and Protecting and Caring for Historic Carved Stones in Scotland*. In 1997 it also published, in association with Historic Scotland, an attractive booklet by two of its members Tom E Gray and Lesley M Ferguson, *Photographing Carved Stones: a Practical Guide to Recording Scotland's Past* (Pinkfoot Press, Balgavies, Angus).

The NCCSS is concerned with the preservation and recording of carved stones of all periods but has had a special interest in the question of carved stones in historic graveyards. In 1995 it organised, in association with Historic Scotland and with the help and advice of Betty Willsher, a very successful day seminar on post-Reformation graveyards in Scotland. It welcomes the publication of the Historic Scotland's Guide for Practitioners, *Conservation of Historic Graveyards*, and its promotion of research into the decay of carved stones through its Carved Stone Decay in Scotland Record Forms.

Lack of funding and the limited time of members has limited the public activities of the NCCSS but it is now preparing a web-site, with the help of the National Museums of Scotland and of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. We intend this to be a useful source of information and advice for anyone interested in the recording and preservation of carved stones and would like to include information on projects concerned with historic graveyards. We would be very grateful for suggestions on contents and links.

## **John Higgitt, Chairman, NCCSS**

John Higgitt is Chairman of the National Committee on Carved Stones in Scotland and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Fine Art in the University of Edinburgh.

His research interests and publications include Scottish medieval art, medieval inscriptions on stone and medieval illuminated manuscripts.

# NEW INITIATIVES IN THE RECORDING AND THE MANAGEMENT OF GRAVEYARDS

SUSAN BUCKHAM, CARVED STONES ADVISOR,  
COUNCIL FOR SCOTTISH ARCHAEOLOGY

The appointment of a Carved Stones Adviser indicates the growing appreciation of the value and vulnerability of one of the nation's most tangible links to its past: its historic graveyards. This Carved Stones Project is a joint initiative between the Council for Scottish Archaeology and Historic Scotland, with the National Committee on Carved Stones of Scotland and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland acting in an advisory capacity. The Project draws together Historic Scotland's Carved Stone Decay Recording Methodology with the pioneering research of the Practitioners' Guide to The Conservation of Historic Graveyards and Historic

Scotland's Heritage Guide 2: The Carved Stones of Scotland.

The Project has three overarching aims:

1. To establish and promote gravestone recording standards
2. To implement good graveyard management practice
3. To inform policy making for carved stones in general and gravestones and graveyards in particular.

In order to achieve these aims, the objectives and end products summarised in the table below have been agreed.

## CARVED STONES PROJECT: OBJECTIVES AND PRODUCTS

KEY AREA	RESOURCES	OBJECTIVES AND PRODUCTS
1. RECORDING	<p>Volunteer surveyors recruited from family, local history and archaeology societies.</p> <p>Other target groups include under/post graduate students, nature groups and cemetery professionals.</p> <p>Wider interest can be raised with members of the public via conferences, outreach events and the media.</p> <p>CSA Gravestone Recording Forms</p> <p>CSA Graveyard Recording Form</p> <p>Strategic liaison with the above and RCAHMS, NCCSS, CSA Churches Committee and academic research projects</p>	<p>To create and implement a standardised system for surveying gravestones that establishes the minimum standards for recording.</p> <p>I. Undertake initial analysis of carved stone decay data to produce report with recommendations for further study and the implementation of conservation practice and policy.</p> <p>II. Produce a recording manual to include a typology of memorial forms, with an illustrated glossary.</p> <p>III. Assess the National Assessment of Graveyards and Gravestones pilot project as a means of prioritising recording, archiving, and conservation effort. Transfer the project database to the internet in a usable format.</p>
2. MANAGEMENT	<p>CSA Graveyard Recording Forms</p> <p>Questionnaire for completion by cemetery managers and other burial ground landowners.</p> <p>Networks established by cemetery professionals (eg Confederation of Burial Authorities and the Institute of Burial and Cremation Administration).</p> <p>Historic Scotland's Practitioners' Guide to The Conservation of Historic Graveyards</p> <p>Heritage Safety Group.</p> <p>IBCA's report on the management of memorials.</p> <p>House of Commons Select Committee Report on Cemeteries</p> <p>Strategic liaison with the above and COSLA, NCCSS, and relevant academic research projects.</p>	<p>To develop and promote best practice in graveyard management through strategic liaison with representatives from the spheres of conservation and business practice.</p> <p>I. Create and disseminate a resource pack for graveyard managers and owners and monitor feedback. Information will include good conservation practice, funding opportunities, training, and health and safety.</p> <p>II. Establish a Scottish Graveyard and Cemetery Forum, with membership to include all parties with an interest in graveyard conservation and management (eg. relevant archaeological, family history, nature and other conservation bodies, and representatives from cemetery professionals, such as private and public sector cemetery managers, private landowners and religious institutions).</p> <p>III. Produce a report detailing examples of best and bad practice, funding opportunities, and the scope for burial grounds within rural and urban regeneration, with recommendations for future study</p>

KEY AREA	RESOURCES	OBJECTIVES AND PRODUCTS
3. POLICY	Historic Scotland Scottish Graveyard and Cemetery Forum National Committee on Carved Stones of Scotland	Enable policy to be developed with a greater appreciation of significance (for both local and nation contexts) and most efficiently target available resources.  I. In conjunction with relevant parties, develop HLF bid for funding to address national recording and survey of Scottish Graveyards  II. Preliminary report assessing the potential for cemeteries and other burial grounds within tourism, with recommendations for future study.  III. Preliminary report assessing the effectiveness of current legislation pertaining to gravestones and graveyards, with recommendations for future study.

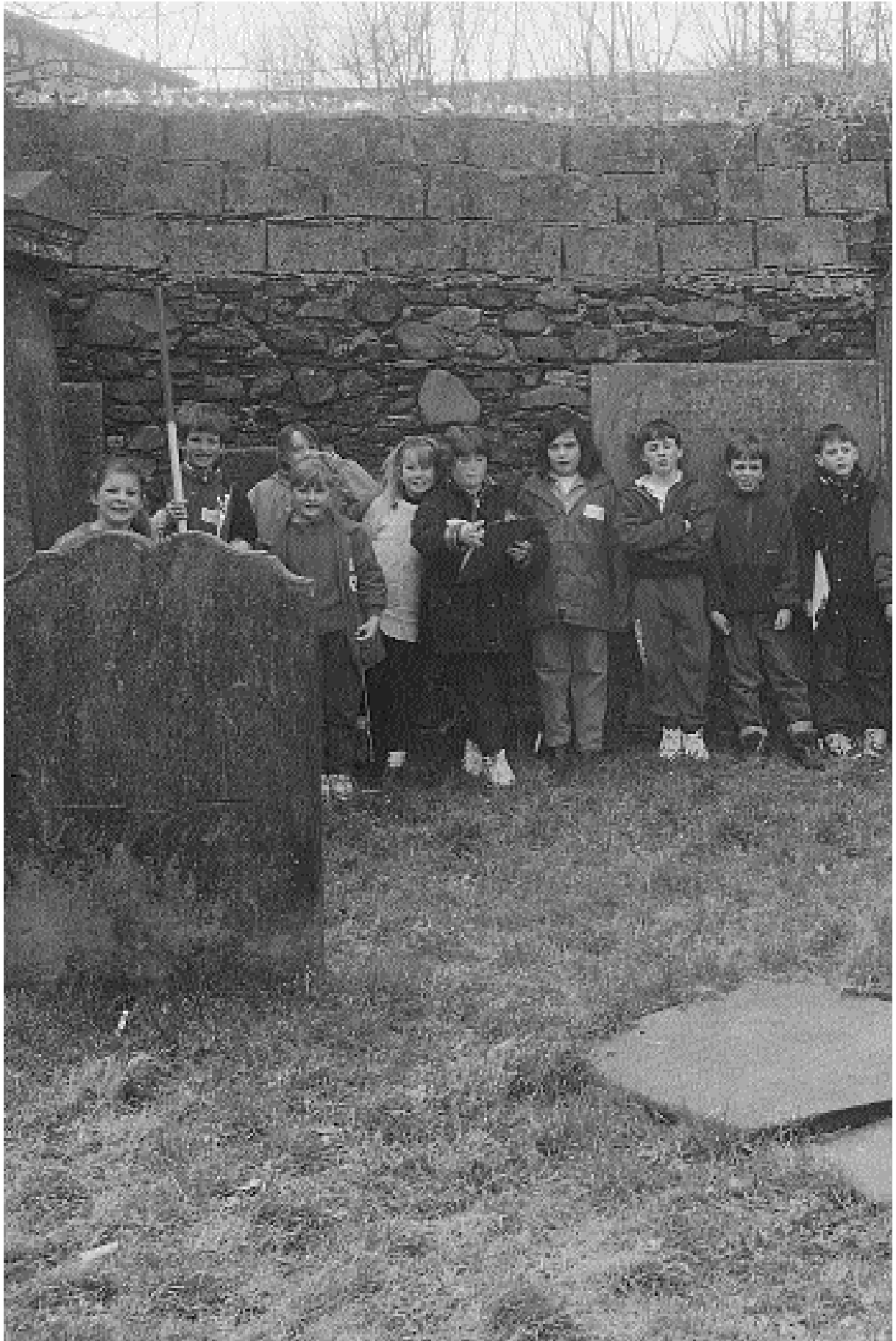
In addition to the actual methodology, the success of the graveyard recording hinges to a significant degree on the volunteer field surveyors. The recording methodology must embrace the range of volunteers' experience and expertise which varies enormously: from those who come equipped with lap top computers, digital cameras, and hand held GPS systems to individuals more happy with a pencil and paper. Equally important are the volunteers' underlying motivations and particular interests. Family History Societies have a longstanding, widespread, and committed record in graveyard surveying and are the best example of potential volunteers with a particular interest – in this case to recover genealogical information. Their motivation means that recording is frequently tailored to transcribing memorial inscriptions pre-1855 in date. The Carved Stones Project promotes a more inclusive approach to surveying in order to maximise the potential future use of data gathered. This includes capturing information on the physical environment and location of the memorial and its material aspects such as stone type, design and decoration, along with the physical attributes of the inscription text. A set of memorial recording forms with comprehensive guidance notes is being developed to encourage such holistic recording. These forms will be submitted for approval by all the major archaeological, conservation, historical, and cemetery management bodies, since their widespread use would ensure standardisation, enable comparative study and establish minimum recording standards. Gravestones are a resource under threat, with anecdotal evidence showing deterioration taking place at an alarming rate. Preservation, if only by record, is therefore crucial.

An important element in the preferred recording system is participation within the Carved Stone Decay in Scotland Project, which aims to identify, quantify and propose solutions to the problems of carved stone decay. No previous studies have attempted to examine in depth the state of carved stone preservation within historic graveyards. There is currently no way of quantifying the scale of the problem or appreciating the major factors that are causing decay, whether they be environmental, design or human factors.

Strategic liaison will be crucial to successfully implement the good management practice set out by the TCRC's Practitioners' Guide to The Conservation of Historic Graveyards. A wide variety of parties are interested in the management of graveyards: graveyards represent important cultural landscapes for art historians, family history groups, local historians, archaeologists, social historians, ecologists, and architectural historians – but they also operate within the public sector and as commercial ventures involved in the disposal and commemoration of the dead. Since any conservation measures must encompass the protection of both the built and natural heritage as well as embracing the needs of day to day graveyard management, the Carved Stones Project intends to establish a Scottish Cemetery and Graveyard Forum. This will offer an inter-disciplinary platform to develop best practice. It is likely that the forum will be arranged in conjunction with a national body, to ensure that it may continue outside the project's life-span.

**Susan Buckham, Carved Stones Advisor, Council for Scottish Archaeology**

Before taking up her post as the CSA Carved Stones Adviser in April 2001, Susan Buckham was completing her doctoral research in the Department of Archaeology at the University of York. Her thesis developed and tested several recording methodologies in the field and created a typological system to examine Victorian gravestone form and design. Her research interests include consumer choice within gravestone production and purchase, memorial pattern books, the commemoration of children and the relationship between religious affiliation and commemoration practices.



*Graveyard recording by Stranraer Young Archaeologists Club*

