

## ***Case 1 Dr William Maclean: A forgotten collector***

Copies of labels, which will tell you about each of the objects here, are available in the dispenser on the wall next to this case.

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Some of items in this collection are likely to be the result of Dr Maclean's exchanges and swaps with other collectors. This would explain the items such as the Danish axe-head being in the collection.

### **Flint**

The only known 'in situ' source of flint in the North of Scotland today is at Buchan. However, flint may have been sourced locally from gravels and pebbles – the erosion products of an earlier geological period when flint was more available in Highlands. Dr Maclean's collection includes around 60 specimens of arrowhead. While they were probably found locally there are no records to show the exact locations. The leaf shaped arrow heads are typical of the Neolithic Period (4000 BC to 2401BC) and the barbed and tanged arrow heads date from the Bronze Age (2400 BC to 551 BC)

#### **1 Box of miscellaneous flint flakes, scrapers, etc.**

##### **Probably found in Easter Ross**

X.2010.12.1-74

Seventy-four items, mostly flint scrapers, ranging from being light-grey to honey coloured. There is at least one leaf-shaped point; several blades; a few pointed knives and one awl.

#### **2 Leaf shaped Arrowheads**

X.AD 1711, 1715-16, 1721-22, 1726, 1759, 1763-66

Leaf shaped arrow heads from the area of Dingwall or the Black Isle. These are examples of leaf-shaped arrowheads, yellow to dark red in colour.

#### **3 Lopsided Arrowhead**

X.AD 1759

This arrowhead was used in hunting in the Late Neolithic Period.

#### **4 Barbed and Tanged Arrowheads**

X.AD1742, 1745 -49, 1753, 1760

Found either in Dingwall or the Black Isle, these are typical examples of Bronze Age arrowheads.

#### **5 Hollow Based Arrowheads**

XAD 1758, 1763

These are all believed to have been found in the areas of Dingwall or the Black Isle. This type of arrow head is unusual in the Highlands and is more commonly found in Ireland. They are typical of the transition period between the late Neolithic period and the early Bronze Age.

#### **6 Stone Cup**

X.AQ 95

This steatite rich cup with a handle was found at Meikle Ussie. It shows decoration on the outer bowl in the form of four cut grooves, one unfinished. It has a hole in the handle produced with a bow drill.

#### **7 Stone Mould**

X.BG 276

A button mould, made of schist, found in Dingwall. Buttons made in such moulds were cast in lead or pewter. This mould is incomplete and was probably re-used at a later date as a whetstone – see the smooth, polished face on one side

#### **8 Grooved pebble**

X.BG 277

A brown quartzite pebble found in Sutherland displaying a broad groove. It was probably used as a polishing stone.

## **9 Stone spindle whorls**

X.BE 467, 470, 472

Spindle whorls were used as ballast / weights in the spinning of threads. The weight, thickness and diameter of each whorl depended on the type of thread being spun. The whorl on the left was found in Brahan. It is made from grey sandstone with mica inclusions – see it sparkle! It is decorated with an incised herring bone pattern. The other two whorls were found in Clethorde and Mulbuie, respectively.

## **10 Stone macehead**

X.AH 189

This macehead was found at River Crofts/Heights of Brae. Maceheads take a very long time to make and are often associated with henge monuments. This one is believed to have been found close to what is described as a stone ring, but is likely to be a chambered cairn, at Fodderty. The central hole was probably created using a bow drill and an abrasive grit/sand and water paste.

## **11 Stone axehead**

X.AF 714

The find spot of this item is unknown but it was probably in Easter Ross.

## **12 Stone axehead**

X.AG 489

A flint axe found in Wickford, Essex.

## **13 Neolithic Flint Axehead found in Denmark**

X.BP 360

## **14 Stone axehead**

X.AF 710

This axe-head was found in Mulbuie, Black Isle. While it is associated with a specific Highland location it was made from porcellanite sourced from Rathlin Island, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland. The material of this axe was identified by thin section analysis in the 1970s. Porcellanite axes are often found to have been

re-used and re-ground, so they are often very petite.

### **15 Stone axehead**

X.AF 708

This axe was found in Back, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis.

### **16 Stone axehead**

X.AF 713

This axe was found at Anderson's croft, Balvraid, Bonar Bridge, Sutherland.

### **17 Flint Adzehead**

X.AF 707

The cutting edge of an adze is set at right angles to where it would be on an ordinary axe. They are especially useful for hollowing out and shaping timber log boats. This partially polished adze-head of grey flint may have been used in boat making. It was found on Tulloch Hill, Dingwall.

## ***Case 2 Caird's Cave Objects***

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## **Case 2 Objects recovered during Dr. Maclean's excavations at Caird's Cave, Rosemarkie.**

### **1 Decorated bone pin**

X.HM 237

The globular shaped head of this fine pin, made from a splinter of sheep or goat bone, was decorated with amber and perhaps other precious stone settings. Three of the settings remain. It has been dated by comparison to other examples to the 'Pictish' Period and is a unique example of its type.

### **2 Bone needles**

X.HM 234; 236

Two of the three needles, made from sheep or goat bones that were found during the excavations at Caird's Cave in 1907 - 1912. They were possibly crafted with a metal knife, fitted with a bone handle, much like the one on display here.

### **3 Bone pins**

X.HM 238; 239

Here you can see a bone pin with a cylindrical head and faceted point that is comparable with pins found Shetland associated with Viking and Late Norse settlements and a longer bone pin with a spatulate head. There are cut-marks on the shaft and the tip has been blunted by use.

### **4 Bone spatulate tool**

X.HM 245

The highly polished surface of this tool is the result of 'work wear'. This evidence of use and its rounded and chisel shaped end suggest that it may have been a weaving tool, polished by repeatedly being passed through warp and weft threads on a loom.

## **5 Antler handle**

X.HM 246

This handle made from a deer's antler is one of a great number of antler objects included in the Caird's Cave assemblage. There are punch marks and cut marks all over. The outer surfaces have been removed and one side shows a perforation.

## **6 Antler handle**

X.HM 249

This decorated handle is made from the point of an antler tine. There is a rectangular socket at the broad end where a knife blade may have been inserted. Concentric lozenge shape decorations have been incised onto the outside curve.

## **7 Bone splinter tools**

X.HM 241; 243

Two of the ten pointed bone splinters recovered during excavations at the cave.

## **8 Bone splinter tool**

X.HM 273

This worked fragment of a rib bone appears to have been worn by repeated use such as rubbing.

## **9 Antler tines showing working**

X.HM 261-2

Two points of antler tines. Both show signs of having been sawn and cut.

## **10 Antler tines showing working**

X.HM 251; 253-4

Three antler tines. All show signs of having been cut with saws or other metal implements. The tine on the left has a socket at the broad end, suggesting it was used as a knife handle. The outer 'bark' of the antler has been removed, or has been weathered away.

## **11 Bone fragment and Horn Core**

X.HM 276 & 277

The end of this fragment of the leg bone of an ox has been sawn across and the marrow has been removed. To the right, this section of a worked sheep horn core has been sawn across at one end and broken at the other.

## **12 Bone splinter tools**

X.HM 263; 266 – 67

A selection of bone tools that were probably used in the processing of animal skins.

## **13 Bone artefacts in process of manufacture, functions unknown**

X.HM 259; X.2010.13

Here as well as perforated worked bone, you can also see a bone or antler peg. Further research will help to identify the functions of these items.

## **14 Box of bone/antler working material**

X.2010.13.1-14

Fourteen items, including several polished antler plates, some cut with iron tools. These plates were possibly being made as parts of combs. Bone and antler objects, such as pins, needles and handles are often found on later prehistoric sites in Scotland.

## **15 Worked pebbles**

X.2010.15 -17

Three worked stone pebbles found during the excavations at Caird's Cave. The stones on the left may be unfinished objects; their purpose is at present unknown. The stone to the right is possibly a hammer stone that has also been used as a rubber or polisher.