

ACHVARASDAL BROCH

Before you lies the remains of Achvarasdal Broch, a typically Highland example of a defensive site, dating to the Iron Age period, some 2,700 - 2000 years ago.

The remains which you can see consist of thick windowless walls which would have been hollow, in order to accommodate stairs and passageways which would have led to the wall tops - these would have been much higher than they are today. Access to the broch would have been gained through the long entrance passageway to the SE of the cairn which would have been protected by a strong wooden door, constantly under the eye of a guard who would have sat in the small chamber off to one side. Outside the walls are the very faint remains of some outbuildings. These might have functioned as day to day living quarters for some of the community, animal sheds or store houses.

People would have lived within the broch too, but it is thought unlikely that the whole community could have been accommodated inside. Perhaps only the extended family of the head of the community lived in the broch on a daily basis, with the other community members only moving inside in times of unrest.

The people who lived here would have been farmers for the most part. They would have cultivated small plots of ground nearby to provide crops such as wheat - indeed a quernstone which these people would have used to grind their grain was found inside the broch at the beginning of this century. Animals such as cows, sheep and goats would also have been kept, providing another valuable food source.

Achvarasdal Broch is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, which means that it is protected as a monument of National Importance by Historic Scotland for the Secretary of State. It is an offence to damage or deface it. Please leave the broch as you found it for other people to appreciate. Note that loose stones can become dislodged and could cause injury - there are also tripping and slipping hazards. The Regional Council and the landowner cannot be held responsible for any accidents.

The remains you see today have been slightly restored over the years, and most recently, scrub and tree clearance operations have been undertaken by Highland Regional Council Dept of Planning to both conserve and improve the appearance of the site. Thanks to C.A.S.E. and HRC Dept of Libraries and Leisure Services for provision of this panel.

John

First Draft . Comments?

What about the comments attached? J.

4/8/95

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People would have lived ^{within} ~~inside~~ the broch too - ^{but} it is thought unlikely that the whole community could have been accommodated ^{inside} ~~within the broch~~. Perhaps only the extended family of the head of the community lived in the broch on a daily basis, with the other community members only ^{moving inside} ~~living within the broch~~ in times of unrest.

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