

Bob

— for some reason this landed on my Desk!

I have read it with great interest. I am about to do a note of the meeting with the Graham at al.

I think we the Dept. need to meet to or both grant. <sup>you and me</sup> <sup>to discuss</sup> <sup>the D-14 procedure</sup>

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18th February, 1993

Mr Bob Gourlay  
Highland Regional Council  
Department of Libraries and Leisure Services  
Kinmylies Building  
Leachkin Road  
Inverness  
IV3 6NN

Dear Bob,

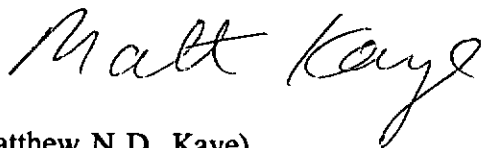
Re: Meeting at Grantown-on-Spey, 20th November, 1992

Please find enclosed your copy of the minutes as recorded by Mary. I apologise that I have taken so long to forward these to you but trust that you find them of interest and to your satisfaction.

At present we are working towards a more detailed account of the proposed phase-1 investigation as well as the establishment of a Lochindorb Heritage Trust. We will keep you informed of all new aspects to the project and I hope you will not mind me contacting you for your advice where necessary.

I enclose my business card should you wish to contact me during the daytime.

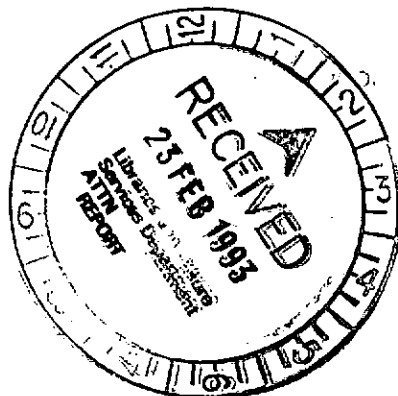
On behalf of Ken and myself,  
Yours sincerely,



(Matthew N.D. Kaye)

Report of ...  
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...



The Lochindorb Heritage Project

**Minutes of the Meeting to discuss  
The Lochindorb Heritage Project**

(Friday, 20th November  
at the Ben Mhor Hotel, Grantown-on-Spey)

December 1992

## Report of Meeting

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A meeting to discuss Phase 1 of The Lochindorb Heritage Project was held in the Ben Mhor Hotel on Friday 20 November, 1992 at 1500 hours.

Present:

Mr Ken McComiskie (in the Chair)  
Miss Barrie Andrian  
Dr Nicholas Dixon  
Ms Julie Downie  
Mr Bob Gourlay  
Mr Matthew Kaye  
Mr Alasdair Laing  
Ms Gwen Morrison  
Mrs Mary Young (reporting)

Apologies were received on behalf of Lord Cawdor

Mr McComiskie opened the meeting by giving a brief history of Lochindorb Castle, and by showing to the meeting, slides of the castle as it is now, and an artist's impression of how the castle would possibly have looked in the 14th Century. He stated that it is believed that the island itself may be a crannog.

Discussion took place with regard to the location of the castle structure. Mr Gourlay stated that he believed very little of the castle had been removed and that most of it had probably fallen into the water. This was supported by Mr McComiskie who had noticed underwater one large timber in particular, which he thought could possibly have been from the great hall. Mr Gourlay pointed out that the way in which the northern wall had fallen out indicated that it had gone over in one piece and the timbers were more likely to be roof timbers than from the floor.

Discussion took place concerning the dating of timbers, with Mr Gourlay stating that HRC (Highland Regional Council) would be able to take on timbers as they are conducting a programme on dating timbers. Dr Dixon confirmed that there would not be a problem in getting work done as a grant had just been obtained from Edinburgh University for dendrochronology (tree ring dating).

Mr McComiskie asked if it was known how much damage had been done to the castle when it was used as target practice during the war, as whole pieces of wall appeared to be in the water, but there was no real knowledge on this point.

Mr McComiskie invited Mr Kaye to address the meeting.

Mr Kaye stated that most of the searches to date had been concentrated around the northern and eastern parts of the island. He told the meeting of some of the more recent finds such as mortar bombs and in particular the pot, found by Mr McComiskie in the

summer. He explained that the stage had been reached where there was a need to lay down foundations for a survey of the loch, and to propose objectives.

Mr Kaye gave to the meeting a synopsis of how geological analyses of the organic remains and sediments, etc. would also be able to reveal much of the history. He stated that it was necessary to conduct a bathymetrical survey of the loch, the last one having been done in 1904. It would also be necessary to take a core sample from the deepest part of the loch (approximately 50') to a depth of one metre.

Dr Dixon confirmed that his team had been able to take over four metres' depth of core sample using aluminium tubes, so in his experience one could expect to be able to take a core down to a depth of more than one metre.

A brief discussion ensued with regard to the orientation and known characteristics of the loch. It was reiterated that vegetation exploration, correlation, and a peat survey were also required.

Mr Kaye stated that twelve months' work initially was required for a team to carry out the work. He confirmed that the sediment analysis work could be carried out at Halliburton's laboratory in Dyce. He envisaged that there would probably be a need to bring in specialists at some stages. He explained how the work would tie in with recorded history, and explained how a bathymetrical survey would be carried out, and stated that the team required a theodolite. He said that after conducting the initial survey, a more in-depth survey may allow the team to map out any major features.

A brief discussion took place with regard to the means by which surveys could best be conducted.

Mr Kaye concluded with a discussion of the report 'Proposals for a Preliminary Investigation of the Loch Bed surrounding Lochindorb Castle' and in particular the points set out on Page 3 of that report.

Dr Dixon was then invited to address the meeting.

Dr Dixon stated that Scotland's underwater heritage is richer than anywhere in the world and that Lochindorb fits very well into that heritage. He told the meeting of his team's work at Loch Tay and in Lewis, and spoke of a range of sites from the neolithic to those of 300 - 400 years ago. Dr Dixon explained what crannogs are, and what they could have been used for. He said that although a crannog looks like a mound of stone, it is in fact a mass of organic material; bracken, ferns, remains of house floors. The standard of preservation is fabulous, he said. Timber floors are still preserved. Sheep droppings are able to be examined, and pollen and parasite eggs found, still preserved. Hazel nut shells, all sorts of nuts, berries, nettles. He reminded the meeting that he was talking of material some 2500 years old. The material was three metres deep in some areas, but Dr Dixon pointed out that no destruction was involved in examining crannogs. He said that medieval sites were as important, and that the same materials will be found in Lochindorb. In Lewis there had been found red deer bone, tools and implements, antlers, textiles, a wide range of materials. He pointed out that it was necessary to consider the whole of the loch. Dr Dixon concluded by telling the meeting of his find of a dug out canoe on the bottom of a loch he had been surveying.

Mr Kaye suggested that the causeway might be found and Dr Dixon said that a bathymetrical survey should reveal it. Mr Laing told the meeting that a depth sensor had previously found a vague line, but there had been nothing conclusive.

Dr Dixon pointed out that there were many similarities between Loch Tay and Lochindorb. He told of the reconstruction of a crannog and display centre at Loch Tay, and stated that publicity was very important, as were the educational aspects, particularly with regard to school children and students. Dr Dixon stressed that any work done must be correct as the castle is a scheduled monument.

Mr Gourlay pointed out that the suitability of site must be considered when reconstructing a crannog. He said that the Lochindorb road is not very big and if there were many people, in particular coaches, the road would need to be upgraded and money found for this. He felt that Lochindorb may not be the best place to do the reconstruction and interpretation, as it would be a pity to spoil the area.

Dr Dixon asked whether any excavation was planned and Mr Gourlay said that it was not; he said that the east side of the wall had been pointed some time ago.

Dr Dixon said that he felt that this was an appropriate time, bearing in mind government constraints, to set up a project to build up credibility for future work. If resources and backing were available it may be possible at some stage to take over protection of the island, perhaps resulting in the castle being able to be descheduled.

Mr Laing was asked whether aerial photographs could be taken, and he confirmed that PLM would be able to take these.

Miss Andrian said that the avenue of approach required to be thought out. Dr Dixon said that in projects of this type one could be talking about a large volume of business.

Mr Laing stated that he was giving a word of warning. Speaking for himself and on behalf of Lord Cawdor, he said that it is highly unlikely that there would be any problems with regard to surveys or archaeology. But, he said, there would be more than likely to be a problem, in fact a certainty, with large-scale public access, the size of the road, etc. and any disruption to the way in which the land is run, as the estate has got to be able to be managed.

Mr Gourlay said that Lochindorb would not be the right location for a tourist development, and that Grantown, Newtonmore, or Carrbridge were possibilities.

Mr Laing pointed out that he was aware that there would be much outside opposition to any talk of development at Lochindorb.

Dr Dixon pointed out that there would nevertheless inevitably be more people visiting Lochindorb. Mr Laing and Mr Gourlay confirmed that the roadside quarry could be used as informal parking.

Discussion returned to education, and the need to involve schools.

Mr Gourlay suggested talking to Scottish National Heritage who are, he said, good with staff assistance.

Dr Dixon mentioned Scottish Conservation Projects and Mr Laing said that Lord Cawdor was looking to SCP with a view to stabilising the existing castle. This was continuing work that was done under MSC (Manpower Services Commission) some years ago. Personnel from SCP have looked at the castle in recent weeks.

There followed a discussion with regard to raising money for the project.

Miss Andrian pointed out that companies tend to loan equipment, etc. rather than come across with money.

Mr Laing asked what sort of money was required for a one year survey. Mr Kaye replied that the apparatus and means to do the survey, etc. were needed.

Mr Gourlay advised that equipment should be obtained on hire first of all.

Dr Dixon advised that a costing was required for everything that the team need to do.

Miss Andrian pointed out that running costs must be established; petrol, accommodation, etc. as one's own personal money can quickly be eroded.

Mr Gourlay advised that there should not be too much capital equipment, and advised approaching companies to try to obtain a loan of equipment, with a mention of the companies in publicity.

Dr Dixon confirmed that his team would be able to do a major part of the survey with the team. He stressed that the team must publish every line of work done, and to publish widely, with offers to academic journals, etc.

Mr Gourlay stated that HRC might be able to help with publications, viz. international standard book numbers and archaeological publications; geology; talking to SNH (Scottish Natural Heritage), etc.

Mr Laing asked the position regarding official permissions for this work. Mr Gourlay confirmed that it was in order if nothing was done below the foreshore at low water. He said that Historic Scotland should be informed that the castle was being used. If a platform was required to be built, consent would be needed. He advised using either himself or Dr Dixon on this aspect.

Mr Kaye asked where would be the most favourable place for storing artefacts. Mr Gourlay recommended caution with regard to lifting or moving artefacts. He confirmed that there had been permission given to put a hut on the island.

Dr Dixon and Miss Adrian explained the diving courses and qualifications needed and Mr McComiskie said that he was au fait with these requirements and would soon be completing the courses.

A discussion took place concerning the possible removal of artefacts, and concerning museums.

Mr Gourlay confirmed that the pot would ultimately go to Inverness Museum.



Miss Andrian felt that Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) will be required from the Secretary of State through Historic Scotland.

It was agreed, at this point, that the Lochindorb Heritage Committee would shortly be formed.

Mr Gourlay felt that it could be worth forging a link with Inverness Museum, because of their archaeologists, social historians, etc.

Mr Gourlay pointed out that if he backed the team, he was relying on the team to co-operate with him as the team's credibility was his credibility. This was supported by Dr Dixon. Mr McComiskie and Mr Kaye fully concurred.

Dr Dixon stated that it was necessary at this stage to talk to a lawyer with a view to forming a limited company with charitable status, properly constituted with audited accounts, an AGM, head office (usually the lawyers') with actively involved directors or trustees of the company.

Mr Laing made the point that it would be worth finding a lawyer with an interest in archaeology.

Mr Kaye stated that he had previously had sound advice from the Aberdeen Enterprise Trust and it was agreed that approaching the Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey Local Enterprise Company could be helpful.

Mr McComiskie confirmed that any reward monies from the find of the pot would be put into the funds of the company.

Mr Laing enquired about treasure trove with regard to the pot and Mr Gourlay explained that, in Scotland, the Crown can claim everything found below ground or in the water (except the sea for which there are different laws) as treasure trove (England; precious metals only). Normally, the right to reward would be to the finder, or landowner if he has claim to it. Normally, the reward paid to the finder is equivalent to market value less any conservation work. The reward is at the discretion of the Crown Office - there is no compulsion to offer a reward.

There followed a brief discussion with regard to deterring other unauthorised divers or any necessity for signs. It was decided that it was necessary to put out press releases and Mr Gourlay advised that all salient points should be put into the first paragraph, in case the material was chopped, and said that if people are mentioned in articles, copies of what was originally said should be sent to everyone concerned.

At this point Mr McComiskie brought the meeting to a close.

An interesting addendum, particularly with regard to the discussion on press releases. After some participants had left the meeting, a rather enthusiastic gentleman of the (presumably local) press put his head round the door to enquire about the meeting that he had heard was occurring at the Ben Mhor!