

FIFE FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY NETWORK (FFAN)

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday 21st February 2019

Present: Anne Campbell, Joe Fitzpatrick, Eric Franz, Roy Marsden, John Marshall, Lynn Marshall, Bob Nicolson, Joy Nicolson.

Absent: Veronica Laing

Approval of Minutes from 11th October 2018: proposed by John, seconded by Lynn.

Matters arising

1. **FFAN Website:** Joy has been waiting for the official adoption of the circulated constitution as a necessary step before going ahead with the application to Digital Fife for a website. The constitution was approved by members, and Joy will now progress with the appropriate application form and make the website live. It was agreed the website would be private rather than public for the moment.
2. **Social Media:** existing members of the Lochore Castle Facebook group were polled about and declined a proposal to amalgamate with a FFAN Facebook group. Consequently, a new FFAN Facebook group has been created by Veronica. This is a closed group, membership on application for approval by Veronica via Facebook.
3. **Membership:** new members are slowly being added to the group through direct contact with committee members. It was agreed that this is the most efficient method for growing the group in its initial stages.
4. **Insurance:** Eric reported back that for *organised* walks, the current main focus of the group, the group would have an element of liability because there is an assumption that a risk assessment has been done. This liability cannot be contracted out of by, for example, making someone sign a disclaimer. Official advice for this scenario is that we should have Public Liability insurance, estimated at about £200-£300.

A grey area seems to be the definition of 'organised'. If just walking as a group, mishaps would be classified as misadventures rather than incurring liability. It was proposed that at the moment no insurance would be sought, however reasonable precautions would be taken by doing a health and safety risk assessment briefing at the beginning of each walk. This will also be circulated by email with the instructions to members before each walk by the walk co-ordinator.

Inaugural walk

Joe expressed a warm thank you to Roy on behalf of the group for organising FFAN's initial walk to Drumnod hut circle, and Creich castle and medieval church. This was an interesting and previously unexplored part of Fife for most of the group, and the hut circle site in particular suggested possibilities for a return visit for a more focussed investigation by the group in the future.

Future Programme of Events

Walks

Suggestions for possible future group walks were discussed and the following were agreed:

1. **Wemyss Caves:** Su Hampstead from SWACS has kindly offered an opportunity to tour Wemyss Caves. It was suggested that this would be a good as a March event. **Action:** Eric to contact and liaise with Su to decide a suitable date for this.

2. **Norman's Law:** it was agreed that this is a site with spectacular views best enjoyed in good weather, so perhaps the end of April would be ideal. **Action:** Eric to organise
3. **Monimail:** Monimail tower and walled gardens, with possible other local historic landmarks. **Action:** Joy to look into what the visit could incorporate.
4. **Drumcarrow:** Drumcarrow Craig, site of possible Iron age broch, and nearby prehistoric hut circles. Possibly a longer walk to access. **Action:** Anne to investigate a walking route.
5. **Walking Between the Lomonds:** the rich landscape between East and West Lomond was seen as ideal for a summer walk. **Action:** Joe to organise
6. **Brown and White Caterthuns:** a pair of large hillfort adjacent to each other in Angus. **Action:** Bob to look into planning a visit.

In addition, the possibility of guided walk around the St Monans coastline and salt pans led by Ellie Graham (SCAPE) was discussed. Eric will contact Ellie to find out if this would be a possibility.

Archaeological Digs

May: East Lomond

Provisional dates for the 2019 dig on East Lomond are Wednesday 15th May till Sunday 2nd June. Slots will be bookable on Eventbrite. This year's dig will be a series of test pits based on results from an earlier geophysical survey on the hill.

July: Wemyss Caves

Joe informed the group there is a proposed dig taking place in Wemyss Caves in July. No further details available, but there should be opportunities for volunteers to take part.

August: Pittarathie Event Weekend

Pittarathie Farm near Arncroach is proposing to hold a weekend of events celebrating its rich historic landscape. There is a possibility of FFAN involvement, through Joe as main contact, in the form of some excavation activity in the grounds of Pittarathie Castle.

Talks

There was some discussion about the possibility of organising a series of talks for FFAN members to compliment the programme of walks.

An initial suggestion was put forward by Roy, who proposed delivering his existing talk on Placenames of Scotland. Joe also proposed organising a talk giving an overview of the East Lomond dig for group members, as an introduction to FFAN. The Stables on Falkland Estate was suggested as a possible venue for any talks, depending on numbers. It was decided it would be useful to gauge interest among non-committee members to help organise these.

Action: John to email (non-committee) members to find out the level of interest in attending Roy's Placenames of Scotland talk.

Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is Thursday, April 25th 2019 at the Lomond Hotel, Freuchie.