

REPORT ON A COASTAL ZONE ASSESSMENT SURVEY
ON THE ISLANDS OF COLL AND TIREE



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
COLL	7
TIREE	9
PUBLIC OUTREACH	12
THE SURVEY REPORT	15
BUILT HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY: ANALYSIS	18
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	26
RECOMMENDATIONS	28
THE MAPS AND GAZETTEERS: COLL	31
THE MAPS AND GAZETTEERS: TIREE	151
SITE DESCRIPTIONS: COLL	278
SITE DESCRIPTIONS: TIREE	314
REFERENCES	356

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INTRODUCTION

This report documents the findings of a coastal zone assessment survey carried out on the islands of Coll and Tiree in 2001. The aims of this work were to gather specific data on the nature and present condition of the coastal archaeological resource and to assess the nature and degree of future risk. Similar programmes have been carried out along other coastlines in Scotland and the combined results are currently being assessed in order to determine future management strategies.

The survey was carried out by Hazel Moore and Graeme Wilson, EASE Archaeology, with assistance from Martin Carruthers. This report adheres to the format and specifications set out in Archaeology Procedure Paper 4: Coastal Zone Assessment Survey (Historic Scotland, 1996).

A programme of public outreach was carried out in conjunction with the coastal survey. This comprised of public meetings, field trips and practical field work sessions carried out with the members of Coll Archaeological Association and a party of people with an interest in local archaeology on Tiree. This work was carried out primarily by Martin Carruthers with assistance from Hazel Moore and Graeme Wilson.

The work was commissioned by the SCAPE Trust and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland and Argyll and Bute District Council.

The Survey

The survey area covered the entire coastlines of the islands of Coll and Tiree, and where possible took in adjacent tidal islands which could readily be accessed on foot. As measured from a 1:25,000 scale map, the total survey area is estimated at 188.1 km. At a scale of 1:10,000 the total length of the survey is estimated to be 235 km.

Background to the Survey

A desk based review of the known sites and monuments found that seventy four sites had been recorded within the survey area. Of these, a total of forty were noted on Tiree, and thirty four on Coll. A total of four scheduled ancient monument sites were identified within the area, all located on Tiree. There is one listed building in the survey area which is situated on Coll.

Where possible, each known site was revisited and re-examined. In some cases it proved impossible to find previously recorded sites and in a few cases, sites were not visited due to hazardous access conditions.

Conditions

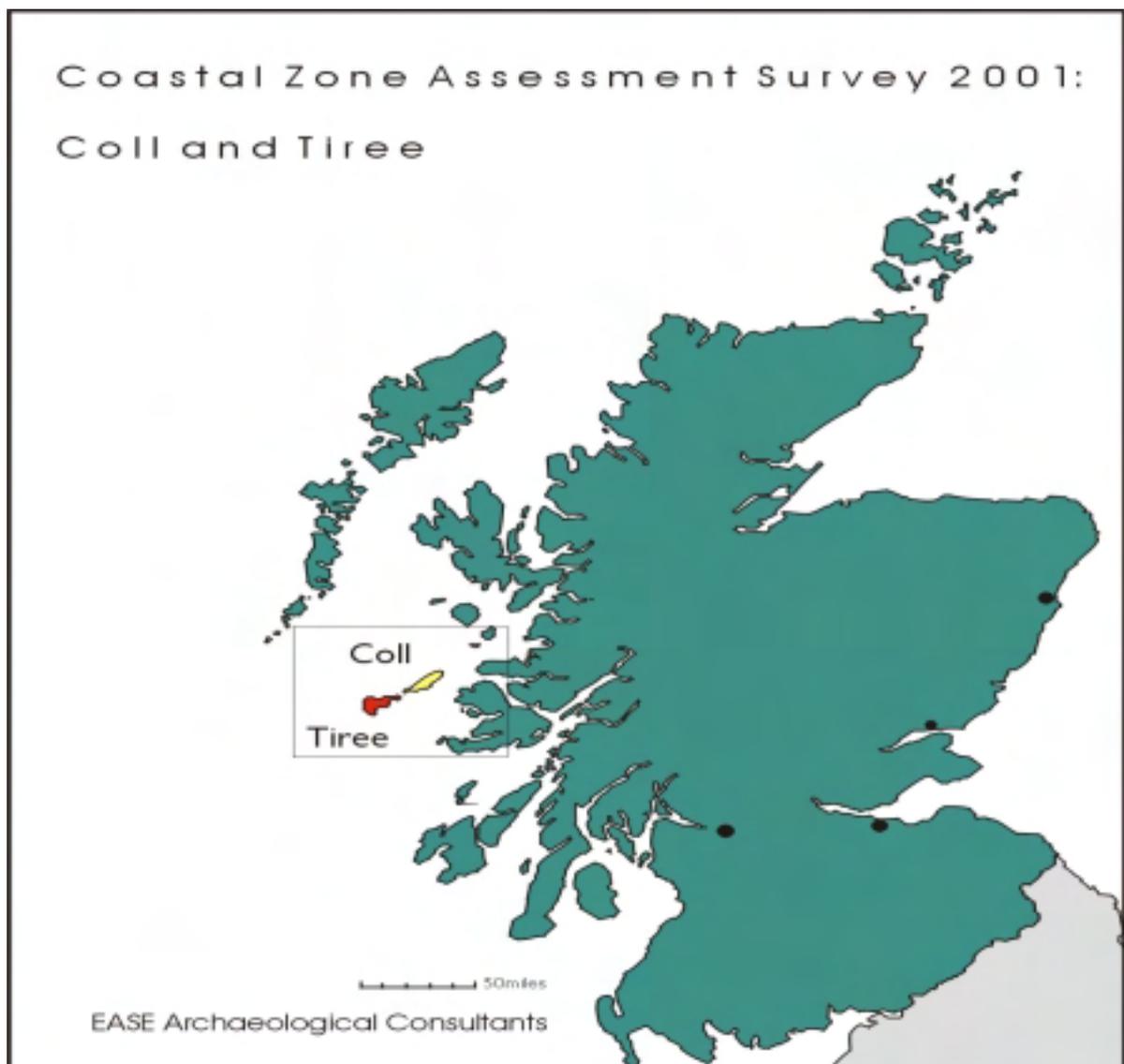
The coastal terrain varied enormously throughout the survey. In general, the landscape of Coll is more rugged and unenclosed than that of Tiree, and there are fewer roads or tracks giving access to the coast. There are, however, several areas on Tiree which are remote and rugged, just as parts of Coll are accessible and moderate in nature.

On both islands, the more rugged landscapes posed problems with regard to site visibility. Fre-

quently the vegetation cover of bracken, heather and long grass made archaeological remains difficult to find. This problem was further compounded where the ground surface was also covered with loose rock. Here it was hard to discern ruinous built features from amongst a mass of surrounding stone. On Coll the coastline between Sorisdale and Arinagour was particularly difficult to survey. The terrain was very rugged, the vegetation cover was dense and the topography of narrow high rock chasms impeded access to the coast edge and rendered the identification of archaeological remains especially exacting.

The sandy areas on both islands were more easily accessed, although site visibility was not always high here either. While a number of sites have been previously documented within these areas, few were visible at the time of this survey. It would appear that even within relatively stable dune areas, the constant movement of sand has the effect of exposing and then re-covering sites. In these areas more regular monitoring and in particular post-storm monitoring would be advantageous in pinpointing site locations.

The survey was carried out in October-November 2002 and, although late in the year, the weather throughout the survey were generally good and little time was lost due to adverse conditions.



Aims

The aim of the work was twofold. The first aim was to characterise the built heritage and archaeology of the coastal zone. The second was to liaise with local archaeological groups both to exchange information on the coastal archaeology and to build towards a programme of site identification, recording and monitoring.

The first aim was met by revisiting known sites within the coastal zone and by surveying the entire coastal zone of both islands and recording every new site noted there. Known sites were assessed to determine their present condition and to re-evaluate the information which had been previously documented about them. New sites were examined to determine, where possible, their nature, probable date range, specific characteristics and exact location. Sites of all types and periods within the coastal zone were included with the exception of occupied buildings (unless listed) and modern field systems and infrastructure. All sites were assessed with regard to their vulnerability to coastal erosion or degradation by other means.

A survey of the geology and geomorphology of the coastal zone was carried out simultaneously with the archaeological survey. This was designed to characterise the natural background of the survey area. The data gathered at this stage will provide a benchmark from which to assess future coastal change and to predict the possible impact of this on the archaeological resource.

The second aim was met through a series of public meetings, site visits and practical field work sessions carried out in conjunction with local people on both islands. On Coll, this part of the project was undertaken in conjunction with the Coll Archaeological Association. The absence of a local archaeology group on Tiree dictated that some aspects of the work, namely the practical field sessions, had to be replaced by general talks and individual site visits.

Methodology

The entire coastline of both islands was walked over and inspected both from the hinterland and foreshore, where possible. On occasion, especially on rough terrain where site visibility was impaired, it was necessary to conduct the survey using transects set at regular intervals and perpendicular to the coast.

The field record consists of a card system on which each site or site complex is ascribed a unique identifier. This is made up of an area code and a serial number. An example for Coll, where the area code is C, would be C15= Coll, site 15. The area code for Tiree is T. Some of the field records have been separated into more than one entry for the purposes of this report, while others have been amalgamated.

The dimensions and characteristic of every site was recorded. A measured sketch plan and photographic record was made for many of the sites. Measurements were calculated with a tape for smaller sites. The dimensions of larger sites were estimated through systematically pacing out the area. The sites were located using a Garmin global positioning system (GPS) and noted on a 1:25,000 pathfinder base map.

The Survey Areas

The Inner Hebridean islands of Coll and Tiree lie to the north west side of Mull, approximately 1 mile apart at their closest points. They are part of the Argyll and Bute Local Authority Area. Both are both low lying islands, characterised by extensive blown sandy deposits over an underlying bedrock of Lewisian gneiss. The rocky element is more apparent on Coll than Tiree, which is more comprehensively mantled with blown sand and improved soils. While much of Tiree is fertile and level, the landscape of Coll is more varied, with fertile areas occurring in smaller pockets between bare rock outcrops and more boggy land. Both islands have raised beach deposits. Peat deposits of workable depth occur on Coll but not on Tiree. While similar in area, differences in topography and particularly the extent of cultivable land, has historically sustained a larger population on Tiree than on Coll. The present population of Coll is in the region of 150, while that of Tiree is around 800. In the past, and particularly from the mid 1800's, both islands have had larger populations than could be sustained by their economies and this gave rise to great poverty and ultimately to largescale emigration. Today both islands remain primarily agricultural and increasingly depend on tourism for income. The fishing industry has dwindled in recent times and the collection of kelp for drying has come to an end. Some 43% of the Tiree population are bilingual in Gaelic and English; the number of Gaelic speakers on Coll is unknown.

COLL

Geomorphology and Land Use

Coll is approximately 13 miles long and 3 miles wide and extends to some 7685ha in area. The better quality land coincides with areas of blown sand deposits, predominantly at the western end of the island and in blocks along the north coast. The prime farmland on the island coincides with the largest area of alluvial deposits. These form a broad band extending across the width of the island from Loch Breachacha on the south coast to Hogh Bay on the north coast. Portions of this land is under cultivation, but much of the rest of the better quality land is currently utilised as grazing for both cattle and sheep. The poorer land provides rough grazing for sheep. Traces of extensive old cultivations were noted at the extreme eastern end of the island where the soils are sandy and free-draining. Smaller scale cultivation remains were noted throughout the coastal zone, even amongst the rocky wild land on the south east coast between Loch Eatharna and Sorisdale. This is indicative of past population pressure on the land and, possibly of the dual reliance on small scale agriculture and the exploitation of marine resources in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The highest point is Ben Hogh which rises to some 106m OD and is located towards the southern part of the island. The highest points along the coast edge occur to the south east. Here the highest points above the sea stand some 50m OD, with the summit of Meall na hIolair some 79m OD. Other high points along the coast occur at Ben Feall, the summit of which stands 66m OD, Ceann Fasachd at 47m OD and Dun Dubh which stands 50m OD. The highest points lie behind the coast edge, however, and much of the coastal shelf lies no more than 10m OD.

Archaeological and Historical Background

Occasional chance finds of flint tools amongst the sand hills on Coll indicate that the earliest human activity on that island probably dates back to the Mesolithic (Cowie, in Crawford 1997, 505). This period is defined as extending from the end of the last ice age to c.5000 BC. Sites of the Neolithic period (c.5000 to 2500 BC) have not yet been positively identified. This may be because the island was only settled intermittently during this period or, more likely, because little archaeological

fieldwork has been carried out to date and sites have yet to be recognised.

Both settlement and burial evidence of the Bronze Age period (c.2500- 800 BC) have been recorded, however. Both pottery sherds and flint objects of this period have been found amongst the sand hills. An inhumation burial in a pit, accompanied by an All-Over-Cord beaker vessel, was excavated at Sorisdale in 1976. The human remains were radiocarbon dated to 1934 +/- 46 BC (Ritchie et al, 1978). Part of an adjacent building, possibly a house, was also investigated, but was found to be poorly preserved. During the same period of fieldwork, two cists were excavated at Killunaig. The burials comprised both of inhumated and cremated bone representing some four individuals (ibid).

Iron Age (c.800 BC- 800 AD) remains on Coll are represented largely by chance finds and by crannog and dun sites. The paucity of Iron Age finds amongst the sand hills would suggest that the focus of settlement during this period lay out with these areas. Unfortunately, many of the coastal duns recorded on Coll are now very poorly preserved. A number of possible unenclosed settlements of possible Bronze Age- iron Age type have been also identified on the island and it is possible that at least some of these may hold out potential for further investigation in the future.

Sites of the Viking- Norse period are indicated by pot sherds from the sand hills and by a probable pagan Norse inhumation burial accompanied by a spear head reported at Grishipoll. There have also been finds of copper alloy dress pins of this period from Cornaigmore, Sorisdale and Gallanach. There is ample place name evidence for Viking-Norse settlement on the island. This includes elements such as -dalr in Sorisdale and numerous -bolstadr names. For this period there are also some documentary sources. Njal's Saga records that Earl Sigurd of Orkney (c.985-1014) ruled over the Hebrides through a tributary earl called Gilli, who was married to Sigurd's sister and who lived on either Coll or Colonsay. A series of distinctive 10th C cross slabs of mixed Norse-Celtic type from the Isle of Man were carved and inscribed with runes which tell that the sculptor was Gaut, the son of Bjarn from Coll (Crawford, 1987, 175). The mixed art style and the fact that, while Gaut and his father had Norse names, the crosses were commissioned by people with Celtic names, gives a glimpse of the interrelationships between native and settler within the busy western sea route from Scandinavia to Dublin on which Coll was also located.

By the 13th C, Coll was part of the MacDougall lordship of Lorn. The forfeiture of Alexander of Lorn and of his son Robert, led to the island being granted to Angus Og of Islay in the early 14th C. In 1354 the island was returned to MacDougall as the result of an indenture between John of Islay and John of Lorn. In the middle years of the 15th C, Coll was granted by Alexander Lord of the Isles to John Garbh, founder of the MacLeans of Coll. Soon after this time, the stronghold at Breachacha was built. The castle was enlarged and refortified on several occasions and in the second half of the 16th C was captured twice by Macleans of Duart during feuds with the MacLeans of Coll.

Towards the end of the 17th C a dispute between the MacLeans and Campbells led to the garrisoning of the castle. The feud was settled and soon after a new house was built to replace the castle. The population of Coll in 1793 was recorded as 1041, in 1831 as 1316. In 1841, the MacLean chieftain promoted the clearance of the island and half of the population of the island were sent as emigrants to Australia and Canada. The island was sold to John Lorne Stewart in 1856. The new laird at first encouraged clearance and emigration but later repopulated the island with dairy farmers from Ayreshire. The population in 1901 was recorded as approximately 400.

Built Heritage and Archaeology

The Statistical Accounts of Scotland 1791-99 and New Statistical Accounts of 1845 record general notes on some of the ancient remains to be found on Coll. A number of duns, then thought to be the strongholds of Danish invaders, are recorded, together with old chapel and church sites. The New Statistical Account notes that many of the ancient sites noted in the earlier work had vanished and ancient sites continued to be destroyed both by erosion and by stone robbing. Some eight duns and three chapels were known to exist at this time. Cist burials, standing stones and a silver coin hoard are also recorded.

The first published survey of archaeological remains on the island was carried out by Erskine Beveridge (1903) based on field observations made during visits to Coll between 1896 and 1901. This work is mainly concerned with what are classed 'prehistoric duns and forts', although references to many other sites including crannogs and sand hill sites of various dates are also discussed. Beveridge's work cannot be said to represent a systematic survey but it provides a detailed insight into the more visible monuments of the island and also records numerous chance finds and place name information. Beveridge states that the forts on Coll were less well preserved than those on Tiree, although from the descriptions given, it appears that they were better preserved at the time of his writing than they are now. In many cases, distinct features described by Beveridge could not be located and in fact several sites mentioned by him now appear to have no surviving archaeological remains whatsoever.

The first systematic survey was published by RCAHMS in 1980. Previous to this, archaeological observations were recorded by the Ordnance Survey. The findings of both surveys are now integrated within the online Canmore database. A total of thirty four sites are recorded within the coastal zone on Coll.

Recent published work on the archaeology of Coll includes a survey of crannogs and updated reports on known sites (Holley 1996 i and ii, 1998); the excavation of three burial sites and a review of chance finds (Ritchie & Crawford 1980); a survey and excavation at Breachacha Castle (Turner & Dunbar, 1973) and a report on find collections from sand hill sites (Crawford, 1977). The recently formed Coll Archaeological Association are actively re-surveying parts of the island and hold a database of local sites which it is intended to supply information to the Argyll and Bute Sites and Monuments Record and the National Monuments Record.

T I R E E

Geomorphology and Land Use

Tiree has an area of some 7834 ha which is predominantly flat and low lying. There are scattered areas of alluvium throughout the island but these are mostly limited in extent. Much of the surface of the island is covered with free draining sandy soils which have been improved and farmed over an extended period. Prior to 19th C improvements, crop yields per acre were lower than on Coll, and more prone to both drought and waterlogging and, occasionally, to blowing sand. Today, much of the land is fertile and, being down to grass, is generally stable and fertile. The land is currently utilised for cattle and sheep grazing, although some cultivation is also carried out. There are raised beach deposits throughout Tiree. These are particularly extensive at the west end of the island. Bare rock outcrops are to be found in a band to the centre of the island and around the eastern and western coastal fringes. The highest point on the island is Carnan Mor which rises to 141m OD. Higher ground within the coastal zone is centred on Hynish and Ceanna Mhara but the coastal shelf is generally no more than 10m OD.

Archaeological and Historical Background

Tiree is rich in archaeological remains, but to date very little fieldwork or study of collected artefacts has been carried out. As a result little is known about the earliest settlement on the island. It is probable that Tiree, as Coll, was occupied or visited in the Mesolithic period. This is also suggested by a few chance finds of flint artefacts of possible Mesolithic type. There is little evidence of Neolithic settlement, but it might be assumed that the easily workable soils would have been attractive to the first farmers. While there are no Neolithic chambered cairns on the island, Bronze Age funerary monuments are represented by several cist burials, cairns and mounds. Other sites of this period include standing stones, stone circles and probable settlement sites. A few chance finds of beaker pottery have also been made in the sand hills.

Iron Age sites, are by contrast, numerous and, unlike sites of this period on Coll, stand as visible monuments in the landscape. The majority of sites to which an Iron Age date can be ascribed have not been firmly dated and are, for the most part, so classified on account of their defensive appearance. Within this group there is much variety; from developed brochs, such as those of Dun Mor Vaul and Dun Boraige Moire, to enclosed settlements and promontories, such as Dun nan Gall, and defended fastnesses such as Dun na Cleite. The only one of these sites to have been investigated systematically in recent years is the broch at Dun Mor Vaul. This site was partially excavated in the 1960's and the results have been published (MacKie, 1974). Two phases of pre-broch settlement and a post-broch phase, comprising of a secondary building inserted inside the broch, were identified. Traces of extramural settlement were also discovered. Radiocarbon dating and typological comparison of the finds assemblages that the site was in use between the late 6th C BC to the 2nd or 3rd C AD. A large quantity of artefacts were recovered from the site and are held at the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow.

An undefended settlement of probable Iron Age date, excavated by Bishop in the early years of the 20th C, was briefly noted by Mann (1906) but more substantially by MacKie (1965). The site was located in the sand hills near Balevullin and is said to have been crescentic in plan, as indicated by a surviving floor deposit. Sherds of thick-walled pottery, charcoal and midden deposits were found covering the floor. Of particular interest is the alleged discovery of a complete or near complete animal skeleton in a pit within the floor. In more recent times, a survey of four crannogs on Tiree has been carried out (Holley, 1998). Several souterrains have also been reported over the years, but none remains visible today.

The arrival of Christianity on Tiree is thought to have coincided with the establishment of the religious house of Iona. From the Irish Chronicles it has been indicated that a monastery was established on Tiree in the mid 6th C, traditionally it is said by St. Columba. The purpose of this is thought to have been to supply the monastery in Iona with grain from the fertile lands of Tiree. The remains of several early chapels survive on the island, chief amongst them being St. Patrick's Temple or Chapel.

Viking and Norse period remains on Tiree are restricted to chance finds and old reports of burials. In the 18th C two coin hoards are said to have been found together with an ingot; while an oval brooch and a pin are said to have been found in a grave (Campbell & Batey, 1998). A description in the New Statistical Account of burials of humans and horses are said to have included grave goods of two-handed swords, shields and spears, likely also to have been of Viking date. With regard to place name evidence, a strong Norse influence on coastal and sea terms has been recognised and there are also frequent -bolstadr place name suffixes denoting a long continuous period of Norse settlement (Crawford 1987, 97, 102).

Traditionally, the Norse period is thought to have come to an end after the battle of Largs in 1266. The island then came under the control of MacDonal of the Isles. In 1517, Tiree was granted to MacLean of Duart and after a turbulent period, was subsequently granted to the Campbells of Argyll. The Dukes of Argyll have retained sole ownership of the island up to the present times. It is thought that the main stronghold during this period was located on an island within a lake to the centre of the island. This site is now occupied by Island House, the island residence of the Duke of Argyll.

The increase in population on Tiree from 2416 in 1792 to 4453 in 1831 led to farms being subdivided into ever smaller and eventually unsustainable units. The failure of the kelp industry in the mid 1800's, in combination with several years of crop failure and incidences of potato blight led to agitation for land reform and caused widespread emigration from the island. By 1901, the population had been reduced to some 2000. In 1940, during WWII, an airfield was built at The Reef at the centre of the island. RAF 218, 224, 304 and 518 squadrons were based here and charged with protecting the North Atlantic shipping convoys. They carried out anti-submarine missions, air-sea rescue and meteorological reconnaissance. The airport reverted to civilian use after the war and today provides a vital link to the mainland.

Built Heritage and Archaeology

The Statistical Account of 1791-99 and the New Statistical Account of 1845 mention the existence of 'Danish forts' or duns which were then thought to have been used as signalling towers to raise the alert to the coming of enemies. Several chapels are also noted, including that at Kilkenneth, where human burials had been uncovered by the blowing sands. Finds of silver coins in hoards are reported, together with the discovery of a gold ornament and warrior burials with horses at Cornaigbeg. By 1845, many of the ancient sites which had been earlier recorded had vanished and more were in the process of being destroyed either through stone robbing or through erosion or covering by blowing sand.

The first published survey of archaeological remains on the island was carried out by Erskine Beveridge (1903) based on field observations made during visits to Tiree between 1896 and 1901. Beveridge's work on Tiree is particularly concerned with the several types of brochs, duns, crannogs and 'rock forts' of the island and in drawing up a typologies for these sites. He recorded finds from these sites and recalls folk traditions associated with them. His work also covers probable settlement sites found amongst the sand hills, stone circles, of which four still existed, prehistoric and probable Viking/Norse period burials and early chapels.

The first systematic survey was published by RCAHMS in 1980. Previous to this, archaeological observations were recorded by the Ordnance Survey. The findings of both surveys are now integrated within the online Canmore database. A total of forty sites are recorded within the coastal zone on Tiree.

Published work on the archaeology of Tiree includes a survey of 'Ancient Sculpturing' (Mann, 1922) which details discoveries of cup and ring marked stones, rock cut basins and cross slabs. A note on pottery from broch and duns (Piggott, 1952) and a review of the earlier excavation of a probable Iron Age settlement at Balevullin (MacKie, 1965) have also been published. A full account of the excavations at Dun Mor Vaul, together with specialist analysis of the recovered materials has been published (MacKie, 1974), together with several lively re-examinations of the findings (e.g.

Armit, 1990, 1991, Mackie, 1997) . A survey of the crannogs of Tiree has recently been carried out (Holley, 1998).

As yet, Tiree does not have an organisation specifically dedicated to its archaeology. There is, however, a community archive of documentary material, An Iodhlann. This has been set up by Co-Roinn Ghaidhlig Thiriodh's Cholla, the Tiree and Coll Gaelic Partnership to promote the collection of material of all kinds relating to Tiree's past. Notable successes to date have included the opening of a reading room and the securing of the services of a resident archivist. Another recent advance has been the development of a web site dedicated to making available thirty hours of recordings collected by the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh from local people on Tiree during the 1950's (www.tiriodh.ed.ac.uk).

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Coll

The Coll Archaeological Association consists of a group of local people with a wide range of interest in matters relating to the archaeology, history and traditional life on the island. The group have been active in carrying out walk over surveys of the island to identify new sites. They have also re-investigated previously recorded sites to monitor change. They use a handheld GPS to plot the locations of all sites examined.

The Association have prepared a database of all the sites which they have found and are actively collecting information about the archaeology and history of the island from other sources. They have been ably assisted in both the recognition of archaeological remains and in research methods by their co-ordinator, Jim Hill. The digital version of the local sites and monument record has been prepared in database form by Robert Sturgeon.

Many of the members of the association have taken a keen interest in the archaeological remains situated on their lands or close to their homes. During the course of our visit several members kindly took us around their lands to visit a wide range of sites of both prehistoric and historic date. Many of these sites have not been recorded within this report because they are situated outside the coastal zone. A current project being carried out by members of the Coll Archaeological Association is the recording of the churchyard at Crossapol.

Public outreach on Coll consisted of an exchange of ideas and information between the survey team and members of the Coll Archaeology Association. On the day of our arrival, the team met with members of the association in the village hall to explain the nature and aims of the coastal zone assessment survey and to set out a diary for field trips, training and site visits.

The team gave a short talk on coastal survey, summarised the findings of similar projects carried out in the Northern Isles and put the overall aims of the work into a national perspective. Some issues were raised by the audience with regard to site designation and it was explained that the purpose of this work was to rapidly quantify the coastal archaeology of the island and not to designate sites. The meeting concluded with the opportunity to informally chat to members of the association and to arrange a number of outings. The team also had the opportunity to speak to local landowners and gain permission to walk over their land.

During our stay on the island, we had the opportunity on two occasions to go out on field walks

with the Coll Archaeological Association. On one occasion, the walk took in the Feall Bay- Caolas area. Members of the group pointed out sites, including a possible stone circle and probable hut circles situated within the hinterland of this area. These sites have been recorded by the Coll Archaeological Association. On another occasion a field walk to the Totronald and Acha areas was undertaken. Sites noted during this visit included a hut circle, a historic bridge and the extensive remains of probable prehistoric settlement and field systems.

A second public meeting was held in the village hall at an intermediate stage in the survey. The purpose of this meeting was to relate the progress of the work to date. Afterwards, a field trip was undertaken to visit Killunaig church and churchyard, prehistoric burial remains in the dunes behind Killunaig and a souterrain at Arnabost.

Individual site visits were carried out at Arinthluic with Jim Hill, at Friesland with John Doerr and at Fasachd with Pat Graham. At each location a number of historic and probable prehistoric sites were visited and most were found to be well preserved. The extent of archaeological remains in each of these three areas is such that systematic field survey to map out the field systems and plot the locations of probable houses and burials should be considered highly desirable. Most of the sites seen on these visits were situated away from the coast and are not recorded by this survey, although several have been recorded by the Coll Archaeological Association.

A field trip to revisit prehistoric burial sites in the dunes behind Killunaig was arranged. One mound which appeared to have a cist inserted into its surface was selected for recording. Participants were instructed in basic survey and planning techniques and succeeded in producing a plan of the mound.

A field trip to Crossapol churchyard was organised to practise survey and planning skills on the production of a plan of the perimeter of the churchyard. Despite torrential rain and high winds, the participants managed to produce a plan of the area and afterwards were given a short demonstration on the use of the theodolite in archaeological survey. The drawing produced during this session will provide a base plan for a programme of systematic recording currently being carried out by members of the Coll Archaeological Association. A second trip to the churchyard had to be cancelled due to poor weather.

A third meeting was held at the Village hall to discuss the results of the completed survey and to arrange a final field trip with the Coll group; this time to revisit some of the sites at Friesland.

In conclusion, the recording work currently being carried out by the Coll Archaeological Association will be of great benefit to developing a deeper understanding of the archaeological heritage of the island. The provision of some survey tools would be of assistance in this undertaking. The members expressed an interest in developing their archaeological skills and are particularly keen to attract guest speakers to the island to talk on matters relating to archaeology and history. The group have not yet adopted any sites under the shorewatch plan, but have expressed an interest to do so in the future.

Tiree

There is not yet an active local archaeology group on Tiree, but through An Iodhlann, the collection is being made of a wide range of materials relating to all aspects of life on the island, past and present. An Iodhlann is run by Co-Roinn Ghaidhlig Thiriodh 's Cholla, the Tiree and Coll Gaelic

Partnership. This group, initially set up to promote the use of the Gaelic language, has gone on to develop interests in all matters cultural and historical. Particular interests of the group include place name studies, family history and traditional life and lore. An Iodhlann maintains a reading room and has a resident archivist. It also houses a small museum collection of artefacts from the island.

Preliminary contacts on Tìree were made through Dr. John Holliday, MD and Chair of an Iodhlann, who kindly arranged a public meeting. Due to pressure of work, Dr. Holliday could not be further involved with this project. The Rev. Bob Higham, then minister, Tìree Parish Church, most generously took on the role of co-ordinator on the island during the course of the field work.

although there are several individuals who have expressed an interest in forming such a group

The public meeting was held in Scarinish at An Iodhlann's meeting room at the start of our visit to the island. A short introductory talk was provided by the survey team. Topics covered included the aims of the coastal survey on Tìree, the findings of similar projects carried out in the Northern Isles and the overall aims of the work within the national perspective. Interested people were invited to become involved with the survey and the audience was invited to communicate opinions on how public outreach might best be conducted. Over twenty people came forward to express an interest in being either involved in archaeological field trips or being kept informed of the outcomes of the work. Since no agreement could be arrived at for a group outing, it was decided to proceed with a number of field trips with small groups or individuals. Four field trips were conducted with parties of one or two people to visits archaeological sites. The site visits included trips to Dun Mor Vaul, Kirkapol, Caolas and Scarinish.

A second meeting was held at an intermediate stage in the survey. The purpose of this was to relate the findings thus far and to arrange further field trips and practical sessions. Following this, four more field trips to Balephetrish, Dun Mor Vaul, Dun Beag Vaul, the Ringing Stone, Balephuill, Millton, Caolas and Scarinish were conducted. Many local people kindly took the time to point out sites in their areas and to show us collections of artefacts, which included a beautifully preserved traditional crogan vessel.

A visit to talk to local school children was arranged and proved a great success! The talk described briefly what archaeology is all about, the types of work carried out by archaeologists, the types of archaeological sites to be found in the local landscape and how people can become involved in recording their local archaeological heritage.

At the end of this visit, it was concluded that there is much local knowledge and interest in archaeology on Tìree which could be developed through the aegis of an archaeology group. The lack of such a group at present appears to be due to the fact that some of the people expressing an interest are not full time residents of the island and amongst the residents, many people already dedicate a large amount of time to other groups. It is to be hoped that the enthusiasm shown during this visit may find an outlet within an organised archaeological group in the near future.