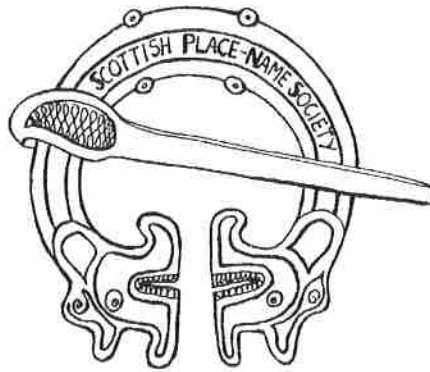


SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME NEWS

No.3

Autumn 1997



The Newsletter of the
SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME SOCIETY
COMANN AINMEAN-AITE NA H-ALBA

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THE SOCIETY'S FIRST AGM

Around 60 people from all over Scotland and beyond attended the Scottish Place-Name Society's first Annual General Meeting in St Andrews on 3 May this year. A full day's programme had been arranged at the Staff Club of the University, an appropriate venue for the first AGM, since it was here that the Society was launched in February 1996.

Members were welcomed by the Convenor, Ian Fraser, and various office bearers gave their reports. Some of the main points arising were:

- the Secretary, Richard Cox, did not stand for re-election, and the Vice-Convenor, Doreen Waugh, has kindly agreed to take on the duties of secretary for the time being. Richard was warmly

thanked for his important contribution to the Society in its formative first year.

- Morag Redford, a teacher living in Auchtermuchty, with a long interest in place-names, especially those connected with the early church in Scotland, was elected to the vacant position on the Committee.
- The Treasurer, Carole Hough, reported that the balance of income over expenditure at the moment was £968.47. This healthy state of affairs was partly due to the fact that both issues of the Society's Newsletter had been generously subsidised by the School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh (Newsletter no.1) and the Department of English Language, University of Glasgow (no.2). The annual subscription will remain at £5.
- Newsletter Editor, Simon Taylor, said that the long term aim of the Society must be to produce a journal of Scottish place-name studies - there was more than enough material, and interest, to warrant an annual journal, modelled on such journals as *Ainm*, the Bulletin of the Ulster Place-Name Society, or *Nomina*, the journal of the Society of Name Studies for Britain and Ireland. However, Committee members were fully stretched at the moment, and this

project would have to wait for the time being. It would also of course mean a rise in the subscription rates.

- The next event to be held by the Society would be a joint one -day conference with the Scottish Oral History Group in Stirling on 8 November. See separate sheet for more details and registration form.

Full minutes of the AGM will be available before the business meeting at next year's AGM. Anyone wanting to see them beforehand, please send a stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary, Dr Doreen Waugh, 7 Barnton Gardens, Edinburgh EH4 6AF.

The rest of the day's programme consisted of two talks, as well as a report-back session on projects being undertaken by members. John Stuart-Murray of the School of Landscape Architecture, Edinburgh College of Art, opened proceedings with an illustrated talk titled *Differentiating the Gaelic landscape of the Perthshire Highlands*. This presented the interim results of his important study relating language and landscape in the mountain-names of Highland Perthshire, defined for the purpose of the study as extending from Rannoch in the North, to the Trossachs in the South and from Breadalbane in the West to Strathbraan in the East. This area was chosen because its toponymy is almost wholly Gaelic, with a significant diversity of topographic terms.

Names studied were as follows: *Beinn* (76), *Bioran* (8), *Caisteal* (11), *Càrn* (23), *Cnap* (5), *Cnoc* (34), *Cruach* (6), *Dùn* (33), *Maol* (10), *Meall* (193), *Sgiath* (22), *Sgorr* (8), *Sithean* (13), *Sliabh* (4), *Sròn* (54), *Stob* (38), *Stuc* (16), *Tom* (89), and *Torr* (7) - 650 in total. This large sample size should compensate for cartographic inaccuracies, omissions and inconsistencies.

A map search of the terms was carried out at 1:25000 (Pathfinder) scale. Geology has

been omitted from the study, as it appears that there is little relationship between the distribution of name and rock type as evidenced by the 1:250,000 geological map.

Unfortunately space does not permit a full summary of results for each of the above names, but here is a sample. Definitions are from Dwelly's Gaelic to English dictionary. Absolute and relative heights are averages.

Beinn - *mountain, hill, pinnacle, high place.*

These are frequent (76), of the highest elevation (749m) and concentrated in the mountainous areas of Mamlorn, West Balquhidder and South Loch Earnside. Although only moderately rugged (290m), they are very likely to be dominant summits possessing outcrops and corries. They are always qualified and if coloured most likely to be grey (*liath*), red (*dearg*), grey-green (*glas*) or dun coloured (*odhar*).

Bioran - *stick, staff, any sharp pointed thing.*

These are rare (8), of medium height (562m), but very rugged (339m). They are very likely to be lesser summits with corries and outcrops. They are seldom qualified, implying a very specific form.

Càrn - *heap or pile of stones loosely thrown together. Cairn.*

These are infrequent (23), yet widespread, high (656m) and moderately rugged (239m). They are reasonably likely to be a lesser summit with outcrops and corries. They are always qualified, usually by colour.

Dùn - *heap, hill, hillock, mound. Fortified house or hill.*

These are frequent (33), and sometimes paired, in the low, rolling country found in the valley floors of upper Glen Dochart and

Strathearn (328m). They are likely to be rocky, outlying summits (197m) without corries, and to be qualified by size or biotically.

Sgiath - *wing, portion of land jutting into sea, shield.*

These are infrequent (22), of moderate height (462m) and ruggedness (276m) and, like *maol*, concentrated between Lochs Katrine and Lomond. Their physical similarity to *sròn* types, and the latter's absence from the same area suggest a dialectic substitution. They are more likely to be outliers than summits, with both corries and outcrops. They are always qualified, usually by colour (blue - *gorm*, the commonest) or biotically.

Sliabh - *mountain of the first magnitude, extended heath, alpine plain, moorish ground.*

Extensive tract of dry moorland, Mountain grass, moor bent grass.

Face of a hill.

These are very rare (4), of medium height (464m) and moderately rugged (253m). They are usually rocky with 50% being outlying summits with corries. All are qualified.

Further work

In the future the study will look at associations between name types, so that typical landform profiles can be established and drawn. Iconic sketches will also be made of certain specific types, where these have a distinctive form, eg *bioran*, *caisteal*, *cruach*, *sidhean* & *stuc*.

During the course of the study, it had become apparent that there was no clear relationship between toponymic density and landscape complexity. This may have been due to cartographic error and omission. A search of larger scale and historic maps of selected areas, such as upper Glen Almond, may lead to some resolution of this problem.

With digitised maps toponymic distributions can be related to other data sets such as soil and vegetation, using GIS (geographical information systems) technology. It is also proposed to map the incidence of Gaelic colours and textures directly, and relate these to the latter, and relative relief maps.

For more details of this study, please write to John Stuart-Murray at the School of Landscape Architecture, Edinburgh College of Art, or contact him on e-mail <j.murray@eca.ac.uk>.

REPORT SESSIONS

After lunch there was an open session, in which members were given the chance to make a short presentation of relevant projects.

PROJECT PONT

Margaret Wilkes and Chris Fleet from the National Library of Scotland Map Library had brought along a powerful computer and overhead projector in order to give a short presentation on the digitisation of the Pont maps of Scotland, as part of 'Project Pont', a multi-disciplinary initiative to explore Timothy Pont's late 16th century maps of Scotland. These maps throw a unique light on all aspects of 16th-century Scotland, its history, geography, architecture, landscape, as well as its place-names. They are being scanned into a computer, and the resultant digitised images allow them to be studied with greater ease and clarity. They constitute a vitally important resource for anyone working with place-names - in fact the compilation of a gazetteer of all of Pont's place-names is one of the aims of 'Project Pont'. All 38 manuscript sheets have been digitised, and although Pont's maps do not cover all of Scotland, there is good coverage of the north-west Highlands, Moray, Banff, Aberdeenshire, Perthshire, Angus, Dumbartonshire, Lanarkshire, and Dumfries-shire. An index sheet showing their geographical coverage is reproduced in Dr J. Stone's book, *The Pont manuscript maps of Scotland*, 1989.

For more information on **Project Pont** contact Map Library Manager, NLS, 33 Salisbury Place, Edinburgh EH9 1SL; telephone 0131 226 4531 x 3418, e-mail <maps@nls.uk> or call in at the Map Library at the above address.

STREET-NAMES

This was followed by a short report by Dr May Williamson on her work on street-names. Dr Williamson, who made such an important contribution to Scottish toponymics with her PhD 'Non-Celtic Place-names of the Scottish Border Counties' (Edinburgh 1943), has in more recent years been involved in the study of street-names, which she found so much more accessible for 'field-work' than topographical and settlement-names scattered widely across the Scottish countryside. She has brought out three publications to date, the titles of which appeared in the last Newsletter (Members Directory), but without publication details. We can now make good this omission.

The Origin of Burntisland and Kinghorn Street Names, Kirkcaldy District Council, 1992. Unfortunately this is no longer obtainable. However, there is a copy for consultation at Kirkcaldy Public Library, as well as at the Leven Tourist Information Office (Tel. 01333 429464).

The Origin of Street Names of South Queensferry and Dalmeny, privately printed 1993, obtainable from the National Library of Scotland shop, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh and the Bridge Bookshop, South Queensferry, price £1.50

The Origins of Street Names of Dalkeith, Midlothian Council Library Services, 1996, obtainable from Dalkeith and other branches of Midlothian Libraries, as well as from the NLS shop, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, price £6.99.

Please Note: the National Library of Scotland shop will be closed for the next year, as will the Library itself.

HIGHLAND PERTSHIRE

Dr Gregor (A.M.) Hutcheson then made a short report on the work which he has been doing over the years on place-names of Highland Perthshire. Dr Hutcheson, a retired geography lecturer, formerly at the Northern College of Education (Aberdeen Campus), began collecting place-names from both oral and written sources in Glengyle at the head of Loch Katrine. From there he has extended the scope of his work to include Wester Breadalbane (from Killin westwards), Glenfalloch and much of the Loch Lomond basin. He has divided this area up into four distinct areas. One of these areas, that of Wester Breadalbane, Balquhidder and Strathyre, is nearing completion, and will be ready for publication within a year or so. He would be delighted to hear from anyone who has a special interest in this area. His address is Glengyle, Collace, Perthshire, PH2 6JB.

Dr Hutcheson is also an active member of the Clan Gregor Society, a worldwide society with about 1000 members. He was formerly Chairman of Council, and is still a member of Council.

He has also written two articles in *SAGAT* (*Journal of the Scottish Association of Geography Teachers*) on Torridon and Aviemore. The purpose of these was to help geography teachers towards a better understanding and pronunciation of the place-names of two areas in question. They are 'Ordnance Survey 1:50 000 Torridon Map Extract; Selected Place-Names and Meanings', *SAGAT* no.7 (1978), 25-30; and 'Aviemore and the Cairngorms: Selected Place-Names and Meanings' *SAGAT* no.9 (1980), 34-39.

A Bibliographical Footnote: Professor W.J. Watson, of *Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* fame, wrote two important articles on the place-names of **Perthshire**, both appearing in consecutive volumes of the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*: 'The Place-Names of **Breadalbane**', vol.34 (1927-28), 248-79; and 'The Place-Names of Perthshire: **The Lyon Basin**', vol. 35 (1929-30), 277-96.

Collecting place-names from local sources in the North-West Highlands was the title of the second of the day's main talks, given by Roy Wentworth of South Erradale/Eàrradal a Deas, Torridon. Roy has worked for around 20 years on collecting place-names in Torridon from the Gaelic-speakers of the area. So far he has covered seven OS 1:10,000 sheets, running from Srath, Gairloch in the north, round the coast to Diabaig in the south: about 120 square kms of land, or 45 square miles. In this relatively sparsely populated area he has collected the surprising total of 1,300 place-names, the vast majority of them existing only in local oral tradition. The results of this work are lodged both with the Scottish Place-Name Survey, School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh, and with the Gairloch Museum. It would be interesting to compare the number of place-names for every conceivable local feature, including fields, in a similar area in a more densely populated part of Scotland. By focussing in on a one km grid square from map NG76SE, grid reference NG7861, which lies north-west of Lower Diabaig, Roy was able to give a dramatic illustration of just how inadequate the Ordnance Survey maps can be, especially in areas of very sparse habitation. If the Ordnance Survey were to be believed, there have never been more than two names in this grid square since the original collection was carried out in the 1870s. After intensive work with a local informant, Iain Mackenzie, 35 place-names from grid square NG7861 were recorded. Furthermore, it had already been established by the work of Bridget Gordon in 1961 that the two names which the OS did have - the names of two lochs, 'Loch nam Ball' and 'Loch Airigh a' Mhill' were in fact attached to the wrong lochs! Roy's important work is continuing, although the rich toponymic information he is collecting is disappearing, along with the Gaelic language, with alarming rapidity. His work is hampered by lack of funding: as Roy himself said, councillors and the Local Enterprise Company have shown themselves remarkably unsupportive of a

project which plays such a key role in the preservation of so much local lore, language and traditions.

The bulk of Roy Wentworth's talk will be appearing as an article in the Autumn edition of *Cothrom* (no.13), the excellent bilingual quarterly magazine of Comann an Luchd-Ionnsachaidh, for Gaelic learners and supporters. Details of this publication can be obtained from CLI, 62 High Street, Invergordon, Ross-shire IV18 0DH Tel./Fax 01349 854848.

Roy has produced two very detailed maps of the Gairloch area with place-names in Gaelic, and English translations. *Geàrrloch (1)* covers National Grid squares NG7977, 8077 and 8076 (Gairloch village); while *Geàrrloch (2)* covers the squares immediately to the south, namely NG8075, 8175, 8174 and 8074. They are available, price £1 each, from the Gairloch Heritage Museum, Achtercairn, Gairloch, Ross-shire IV21 2BJ. If ordering by post, please include a second class stamp for each map. Note also Ian Fraser's *Settlement names of Gairloch Parish*, published in 1972 by Ross & Cromarty Heritage Society, also available from the Gairloch Heritage Museum.

And while in the Scottish North-West, there is an excellent new book titled *Old Torridon: Notes on the History of Torridon* by Murdoch MacDonald, published by Torridon Publishing 1997 (ISBN No 0 9530978 0 3). It has much of interest to toponymists, including two chapters explicitly on place-names.

FIFE AND ANGUS PLACE-NAME FORUM

Many of those attending the AGM and day conference stayed on for an evening session on some aspects of Fife and Angus. It was introduced by a short slide-show by Simon Taylor illustrating the wide variety of types of place-names in Fife, especially from Gaelic and Scots, ranging from the purely topographical to those indicating early ecclesiastical activity, sites related to early judicial procedures and aspects of arable and pastoral farming.

Medieval Marches

The theme of the next two talks was medieval marches or boundaries. There is a wealth of toponymic detail in the boundary and perambulation charters of medieval Scotland, but because they are tucked away in unedited cartularies or even unpublished manuscripts they are often least known to the people who could throw most light on them - local people with an intimate knowledge of their landscape.

Mr Mike Henderson, who stays on the family farm of Easter Kinnear, Kilmany, in north-east Fife, brought together both a close knowledge of early documentation and of locality. With some excellent slides, he illustrated a 13th century boundary of the land of **Wester Kinnear** given to the monks of Balmerino Abbey. The results of this study are appearing in an article by Mike Henderson and Simon Taylor to be published next year (publication details in next Newsletter).

Morag Redford, a native of Angus, and new Society committee member, illustrated, with some fine slides, a section of the medieval march of Kingoldrum, a large parish which sits astride the Highland Boundary Fault in north Angus. A set of charters from the 13th to the 15th century from the *Arbroath Liber* detail this march, with names in both Gaelic and Scots, sometimes giving the names in both languages for the same feature, vivid evidence for a bilingual community in this part of Angus in the later middle ages. This march has been mapped by Professor Geoffrey Barrow in the new *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.416.

Maritime Fife: new Placename Research Project

For the Maritime Fife project, place-name research is an invaluable tool which will help us fill in the gaps in our knowledge about the maritime history and archaeology of Fife. There has clearly been a tremendous amount of maritime activity around Fife starting with seasonal settlers fishing the sea at Tenstmuir round 9000

years ago. The importance of Fife's coast historically can be shown in the fact that Crail, Inverkeithing, and Kinghorn were royal burghs by the 12th century.

According to the *Old Statistical Account* the new royal harbour at Kinghorn Wester became known as Burntisland - burnt island - because fishermen's huts were burnt on a islet near the present harbour (now incorporated within it). This perhaps happened when the harbour was being built in the reign of James V. Could this be true? Would any archaeological evidence for this settlement survive today?

Evidence for another of Fife's medieval industries, salt manufacturer, can still be found in many of the place-names e.g. Pan Haven near Crail.

For shipwrecks, there are many instances around Scotland where the event has become incorporated into a place-name (eg. Schooner Point). Is Maggie Brady's Rock near Crail named after a real person, or a vessel wrecked at that point?

A place-name which particularly intrigued me is Pluck the Crow Point at Newport. My imagination ran wild with the thought that perhaps this referred to the perilous rescue of a seaman who had climbed to the highest rigging (the crow's nest). The unfortunate seaman, knowing his ship was doomed, was counting on the vessel heeling over to allow him to be plucked from the crow's nest by townsfolk on the cliff. Could the shipwreck still be there? Perhaps perfectly preserved by the Tay's swirling waters?

I must thank all the kind listeners to my talk who have since written to give assistance at the start of our research. Pluck the Crow Point now has a much more plausible origin. [More on this name in the next *News* - ed.].

Maritime Fife is an inter-disciplinary research project exploring the maritime history and archaeology of Fife, based within the Scottish Institute of Maritime Studies at the University of St Andrews, tel. 01334 462997. We would be happy to hear from anyone who has information about Fife coastal names.

Deanna Groom, Archives Officer.

ANGUS INDEXES

Mr David Adams of Brechin informs Society members that there are two invaluable indexes of place-names available for consultation in the main Angus libraries of Arbroath, Brechin, Carnoustie, Kirriemuir and Montrose.

The first is an **Index of the First Edition Ordnance Survey Six Inch map of 1865**. Done by David Adams himself, it consists of 133 pages.

The second is an **Index of Ainslie's map of Forfarshire of 1794**. Done by John Sheriff, it consists of 64 pages.

BASDEN'S INDEX

Still on the subject of indexes: in *Scottish Place-Name News* no. 1 (p.8) mention was made of a 5,000-strong elements index of W.J. Watson's *Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, compiled by the late Dr E.B. Basden of Bonnyrigg, Midlothian in 1978. This immensely useful resource was then only available in hand-written form on the open shelves of the National Library of Scotland, and at the Scottish Place-Name Survey, School of Scottish Studies, George Square, Edinburgh.

Lots has happened on this front since last year. Society member Dr Alan James of Wiggan kindly volunteered to prepare the index for publication. He is doing a complete revision of the Index, taking out those entries which have nothing to do with place-names (Dr Basden also indexed all the Irish and Gaelic words which appear in poems and other passages quoted by Watson, including conjunctions, personal pronouns etc.). He is also adding accents, and introducing cross-referencing and preferred headwords. This is a huge task which Dr James reckons could take up to two years. He advised the AGM in May that, in the light of the importance of the Index, an interim copy, reproducing exactly Basden's work, should be made available. This work is now almost complete, made possible by a generous subsidy from a SPNSociety member. Thanks are also due to Mr Nick Basden, Dr Basden's son, who holds the copyright to the work, and who has taken a lively interest in the project;

and to Mrs Margaret Richards, the professional copy-typist who painstakingly transferred the work to disc with great accuracy.

Copies will be available around mid-November from the Scottish Place-Name Society, c/o School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh EH8 9LD: price £7 inclusive of p. & p.

THE NORTH-EAST

The *Leopard* is a monthly magazine which deals with the history, culture, language and traditions of the North-East. SPNSociety members will be interested to know that Professor Wilhelm Nicolaisen, distinguished scholar and honorary preses of the Society, has a page each issue dedicated to the place-names of the North-East.

Individual copies are £1.75, the annual subscription is £28. It is on sale in newsagents in the North-East. More details can be obtained from the *Leopard*, The Mill Business Centre, Udny, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 7RQ.

FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE LANGUAGES OF SCOTLAND & ULSTER

was held at Aberdeen University in the first week of August. This triennial conference was inaugurated in Aberdeen in 1985, and has been held in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. Its original aim was to provide a forum at which scholars and students in the Scots and Gaelic fields could become acquainted with each others' work. The first was held under the auspices of the Association of Scottish Literary Studies, but more recently their organisation has been undertaken by the Forum for Research in the Languages of Scotland and Ulster: the fourth in the series was the first of which the scope was officially widened to include Ulster. Place-name studies have always been represented by at least one paper at each conference: at the most recent this aspect of Scottish linguistic studies was represented by a plenary paper

from Doreen Waugh, entitled "Settlement Names in the South-West: Dumfries and Galloway". This paper, which aroused much interest and prompted extensive discussion, was chaired by that *éminence grise* of Scottish toponymics, Wilhelm Nicolaisen. The Sixth International Conference will be held in Northern Ireland and will be organised by John Kirk.

Derrick McClure
(Conference Organiser)
Department of English
University of Aberdeen

INVERNESS: (MORE) PLACE-NAMES AT THE MÒD

The annual Gaelic Mòd takes place this year in Inverness, in the week beginning 12 October. As at last year's Mòd in Blairgowrie, **Comann an Luchd-Ionnasachaidh** (CLI) are organising a series of informed talks in English on Gaelic heritage, and, also as last year, there are several which will be of particular interest to SPNSociety members. The programme is as follows:

Mon. 13 October: Niall MacGregor, 'Place-Names and Traditions of Strathspey' (note that this is a new, revised title, superseding the one published in *Cothrom* 12, p.26)

Tues. 14 October: Roddy MacLean, 'Inverness - First Town of Gaeldom', which will include references to place-names of the town.

Wed. 15 October: Duncan Ferguson, 'Gaelic Loose Ends - Ar Cànan is Ar Daoine'.

Thurs. 16 October: Prof. James Caird (himself a SPNSociety member), 'The Making of the Crofting Landscape'.

All talks are at 11 a.m. at Riverside Screen, Eden Court, Inverness, and are free and open to all.

For more details, contact CLI, 62 High St., Invergordon, Ross-shire IV18 0DH; Tel./Fax 01349 854848.

The CLI talk at the Blairgowrie Mòd last year which was most directly related to place-names was given by Simon Taylor, and titled 'Place-Names and Gaelic in the

Eastern Lowlands'. The text of this talk was published in two parts in *Cothrom* 10 and 11. Back copies of *Cothrom*, and membership details, are available at the above address.

DATA-BASE NEWS

The Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland has awarded a major grant of £26,650 for work towards the creation of an electronic Scottish Place Name Database.

This pilot project, linking scholars of several Scottish universities, will support the production of a manual of practical guidance for those inputting data and for potential users of the material and several focussed studies addressing the diversity of settlement patterns, language traditions and sources of evidence in Scotland.

This work will also receive a grant of £750 per annum for three years from the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland.

A full report will appear in the next Newsletter; in the meantime, if you would like more information, please contact Dr Margaret A Mackay, School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, 27 George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9LD (0131-650-4166).

A working structure of the Data-Base now exists, and the first major set of names are being entered: these are of the medieval and modern *parishes* of Scotland. This work is being done by Simon Taylor, Anderson Research Fellow in early medieval Scottish Sources at St Andrews University.

INTERNET NEWS

SPNSoc. member Henry Gough-Couper has volunteered to set up a Society Home Page on the Internet. More information in the next *News*.

LATIN PLACE-NAMES

The Latin Place Names File, sponsored by the RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee and the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University, U.S.A., is now available for examination and use at:

<http://www.lib.byu.edu/~catalog/people/rlm/latin/names.htm>

This file contains most of the Latin place-names contained in the imprint field of pre-1801 books in the catalogues of the University of Chicago, Yale University, the Huntington Library, and Brigham Young University, together with their modern English equivalent. It includes Scottish material. For more information, contact R. L. Maxwell, Special Collections & Ancient Languages cataloguer, 6428 Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602; Tel. (801) 378-5568; <robert_maxwell@byu.edu>

Also: J.G.T. Graesse's *Orbis Latinus* (Berlin, 1909) is available either via the above site address or via:

<http://www.columbia.edu/acis/ets/Graesse/contents.html>

The *Orbis Latinus* is a dictionary of Latin place-names from medieval and later documents, and includes Scottish material. Thanks to SPNSoc. member Thomas Clancy for drawing the above to the attention of your Newsletter editor.

NORWAY

Dokumentasjonsprojektet in Oslo is an ambitious project which aims to computerise and put on-line all the university-based archives in Norway, including place-name material (*Bustadnamnregistret* and *Norske Gårdnavne*). Read all about this and other projects on

<http://www.dokpro.uio.no>

Thanks to SPNSoc. members Arne Kruse and Tom Schmidt, head of the Project's Section for Name Studies, for this information.

If anyone has any other Internet information which they think will be of interest to Society members, please contact the Newsletter at the above address, or on <st4@st-and.ac.uk>.

PLACE-NAMES and WILLIAM WALLACE

In this the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Stirling Bridge, the **Smith Art Gallery**

and **Museum**, Stirling, is mounting an exciting and imaginative exhibition entitled 'Scotland's Liberator: the Life and Legacy of William Wallace'. One of the exhibits is a list of all the 100 or so place-names in Scotland which contain the name of Wallace, from Wallacetown in Shetland to Wallace's Hole in Wigtonshire. This is accompanied by a large map showing their position, with an indication of what kind of feature it is (antiquity, relief, settlement, water etc.).

The **Smith Art Gallery** is in Dumbarton Road (A81), Stirling, a short walk from the town centre. It is open Tuesday to Saturday 10.30 am to 5.00 pm, and Sundays 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm. Admission free.

The Wallace Exhibition runs until 15 December this year.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND PLACE-NAME PROJECT

This Project was established 1987 to study the place-names of Northern Ireland appearing on the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale map with a view to elucidating their origins, history and meaning. This is a subject which arouses a good deal of popular interest right across the community. While most of the names are of Irish Gaelic language origin, some derive from Norse, Norman French, Ulster Scots and English. To date the Project's highly skilled staff of five full-time researchers have produced seven substantial volumes on the place-names of Cos. Antrim, Derry and Down, and an invaluable archive of historical forms of Ulster place-names has been built up. The Project, based at the Department of Celtic, Queen's University, Belfast, was funded initially by the Department of Environment for Northern Ireland, and more recently (from March 1990) its funding came through the Central Committee Relations Unit. Sadly this funding ceased in March of this year. Various other sources are being pursued, including the Lottery Heritage Fund, whose rules changed this year to include applications relating to 'non-tangible assets' such as oral history and place-names. In the meantime one project

member, Dr Pat McKay, is being funded for a year by the Cultural Traditions Group of the Community Relations Council, amongst others, to produce a popular book on the best known place-names of old Ulster, that is the six counties of Northern Ireland as well as Cos. Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan. Fortunately the Project's office, with its extensive archive and library, is being kept on at Queen's University for the foreseeable future.

Dr Kay Muhr, former Senior Research Fellow

PITTENDREICH

SPNSociety member Mr J.G. Pittendrigh, resident in Geneva, has over the past few years undertaken an in-depth study of the Scottish place-name which has given rise to his surname, and which occurs usually as **Pittendreich** or **Pittendriech**, but also in the more reduced form of **Pendreich**. It is the most frequently occurring of all the *Pit*-place-names in Scotland, with Mr Pittendrigh's research uncovering thirteen definite ones, with two or three other possibles. They are also amongst the most widely distributed of *Pit*-names, to be found in every county down the east coast from Moray to Midlothian. The most likely derivation of the specific element is Gaelic *dreach* 'aspect', thus meaning 'estate' or 'holding of (good) aspect'. Mr Pittendrigh has visited almost every one of the sites, and is able to comment on the geographical location of each - the kind of practical field-work of combining name with place which Scottish place-name studies needs much more of. Mr Pittendrigh has written up the results of his research clearly and readably in a c. 24 A4-sided paper, which includes a distribution map and a full list of sources. This he has kindly agreed to make available to members of the Society. Anyone wishing to obtain his 'Notes on the place name **Pittendriech** and its variations', should write direct to Mr J.G. Pittendrigh, 16 Route de Sous-Moulin, 1225 Geneva, Switzerland, enclosing £3 to cover photocopying and postage. Please pay in UK £1 stamps and not by cheque.

DISTRIBUTION OF SPNEWS

Considerable effort has gone into the production and distribution of the SPNSociety newsletter. Special thanks for both financial and practical assistance must go to the School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, for issue number 1 (Summer 1996); to the Department of English Language, University of Glasgow for issue number 2 (Spring 1997), and the St Andrews Scottish Studies Institute, University of St Andrews for issue no.3 (current issue).

NOTES & QUERIES

As discussed at the AGM, it was decided to have a short 'Notes and Queries' section. Contributions please to the Newsletter Editor!

MALACHI IN KIRKLISTON

On looking through my press-cuttings file, I came upon a piece from the *Edinburgh Evening News* 21 October 1994, under the headline 'Unholy row over street name'. It was about a 'rebellion' in the Lothian village of Kirkliston over plans to name a new 60-home development and sheltered housing complex Malachi. Officials in Edinburgh's street naming department (*sic*) said that careful research had shown that this had been the name of the neighbouring field. They said that it was not the name of the Old Testament prophet Malachi, but was derived from the surname of the field's 'original' owner, spelled Malechi. They added that the Council had a policy of using historical names for new streets. Although everyone in Kirkliston who was quoted expressed shock horror over the name, no one actually spelled out what was wrong with it, although one resident said 'It rings of the poor house to me.' Was it the similarity (at least if you change the stress and say it with an English accent) to the word 'malarky'? Or am I missing something more obvious? I would be most interested to hear from anyone who knows what the outcome of this stushie was. Also, I very much hope that whichever body took over the responsibilities of the 'street naming department' in the new unitary council has kept to the laudable policy of their predecessors, despite Malachi in Kirkliston.

Simon Taylor

WHAT'S ON around Scotland?

• **ABERDEEN**

WHAT'S IN A NAME? A day conference on place- and personal names to be held on Saturday November 15 in the Fraser Noble Building, University of Aberdeen. Speakers include Professor W.F.H. Nicolaisen and Mr David Dorward (author of books on both Scottish personal and place-names). 10.30 to 16.00 (registration & coffee from 09.30). Cost £10; lunches available from the University Refectory c.£5. More information from: the Centre for Scottish Studies, William Guild Building, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen AB24 2UB, tel. 01224 272474.

• **GLASGOW**

NINIAN, COLUMBA & SCOTLAND, a day conference run by the Department of Adult & Continuing Education, Glasgow University, with the Association for Scottish Literary Studies, on November 15 in the Gregory Building, Lilybank Gardens, Glasgow. Speakers include Dr Simon Taylor on place-names and the early church, and Dr Thomas Clancy on the identity of St Ninian. Registration £14 (not including lunch). More information from DACE, 59 Oakfield Ave., Glasgow G12 8LW; tel. 0141 330 4394.

• **INVERNESS**

Mòd CLI Lectures, 13 to 19 October, Riverside Screen, Eden Court, Inverness. See **(MORE) PLACE-NAMES AT THE MÒD** (above p.8) for more details.

• **STIRLING**

Joint Scottish Place-Name Society and Scottish Oral History Group Conference on November 8. See separate Registration Form attached.

OTHER PLACE-NAME SOCIETIES

The English Place-Name Society founded in 1923 to carry out the Survey of English Place-Names. In return for the annual subscription members receive free of charge the current issue of the *Journal of the English Place-Name Society*, as well as the volume of the Survey allocated to that year's subscription. For full details contact the Hon. Director, English Place-Name Society, Department of English Studies, University of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD.

The Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland (SNSBI) has a Britain and Ireland-wide membership with an interest in both place-names and personal names. It produces an annual journal called *Nomina*, and holds a lively and varied Annual Conference over a weekend in Spring. Next year (1998) it will be in Maynooth near Dublin from 17 to 20 April. Annual Membership of SNSBI costs £15 (£5 for students), which includes a copy of *Nomina*. For more details, contact Dr Mary Higham, 22 Peel Park Avenue, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 1ET.

The Ulster Place-Name Society: publish a bulletin called *Ainm* (formerly *Bulletin of Ulster Place-Name Society*), which over the years has carried much important material of both direct and indirect relevance to Scotland. For more information on membership, as well as on back-issues, please write to Ms Rhian Andrews, c/o Department of Modern Languages, 7 University Square, Belfast BT7 1NN.

Dead-line for material for next
Newsletter: 20 January 1998

pp 12-14 Address list added
& corrigenda - withheld

