

SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME NEWS

No. 13

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The Newsletter of the

SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME SOCIETY
COMANN AINMEAN-AITE NA H-ALBA



St Margaret's Crag, Dunfermline, Fife. This prominent feature at the west end of the Cleish Hills marks the north-west boundary of the parish and abbey-lands of Dunfermline. Its name indicates to all and sundry that they are now entering the territory of St Margaret, patron saint of both the parish and the abbey.

(Photo by Simon Taylor)

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EDITORIAL

Over the past few months, members of the society have been actively canvassing their MSPs for support for Mike Russell's motion (see Newsletter 12 Editorial, and 'Place-Names Get Political'). Clearly, those of you who wrote to their parliamentary representatives have had a very positive response, especially from back-benchers. Those MSPs who hold cabinet office, however, have tended to be less positive in their responses. Overall, the reaction from MSPs has been very encouraging, and we await developments with interest. Meantime, we're most grateful to those members who became involved in the canvassing, and to Dr Anke-Beate Stahl who organised the entire process.

Our autumn conference in Glasgow on November 9th 2002 is an event which should not be missed. Glasgow has been a previous venue, but it is some time since we have gathered in Scotland's first city (or Edinburghers would say 'second'.) Full details are attached with this Newsletter.

Early April 2003 sees a unique event. The Society, together with the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland, and the Scandinavian equivalent, NORNA, join for a major conference in Shetland. This will bring together scholars from a wide range of fields, and it will be an opportunity to participate in what will be for many of us an exciting event. It is important that you make an early

commitment for this, as accommodation is likely to be limited, so we would urge you to return the attached application form as early as possible. We appreciate that a week-long meeting in Shetland is not a cheap affair, but the quality of the papers, and the chance to take part in some exciting excursions should make this a memorable occasion.

This issue records the deaths of five people who made substantial contributions to onomastic scholarship, and indeed to studies in a wide range of historical and archaeological matters. Three of these - Ruth Richens, Marjorie Anderson and Bill Gauld were members of the Society, and they will be much missed for their hard work and dedication, not only to name studies, but to the wider understanding of our past. Basil Megaw and Hermann Pálsson were both important figures in Scandinavian Studies and Ethnology, and they regarded name studies as highly significant in the interpretation of language, history and culture. We are all much diminished by their passing.

I.A.F

OS NAME BOOKS

The full set of 1st edition OS Name Books, with the original sapper notes from the third quarter of the nineteenth century, is held on microfilm in the library of the Royal Commission for the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland in Edinburgh. Very usefully, there is also a complete set of photocopies of the index pages from these books, organised by county. However, parochial (dis)organisation and legibility still present problems.

Now a project is under way to consolidate and computerise the indexes, which will be a boon to researchers. Thanks to the volunteer interest and efforts of former OS archaeologist Ian Fleming, occasional work has begun on transcribing the entries with added detail and presenting them in alphabetical order on hard-copy.

The RCAHMS intends to eventually computerise these documents.

Already typed-up are the indexes for Wigtownshire, Kirkcudbrightshire, Berwickshire, Buteshire, Morayshire, and, very shortly, Banffshire - these may be made available for consultation, though are not currently on the shelves. A typed transcription for all the names and descriptions for West Lothian has also been lodged by Ian Fleming with the RCAHMS library, and is to be found alongside the OS indexes.

Peadar Morgan

OBITUARIES

William Wallace Gauld

Bill Gauld died in Perth on June 2nd, at the age of 82. He was one of the Society's first members. Bill's interests were varied, but he was especially devoted to the study of early maps, maritime charts and routiers, particularly those relating to the Scottish coasts. His article in *Northern Studies* 26, (1989), 'In the Lee of Rockall' assessed the early map evidence for the name 'St Kilda' and its associated names. A number of articles followed. Bill will be much missed at our meetings where he was a faithful attendee until failing health curtailed his activities.

As we go to press, two distinguished scholars, both of whom made important contributions to onomastics, have died.

Professor Hermann Pálsson, Emeritus Professor of English Language at Edinburgh University and a foremost Icelandic scholar, died as the result of an accident while on holiday in Bulgaria on August 11th. He was 81. Hermann will be fondly remembered by everyone in the Scottish academic community as a teacher, translator and commentator on the sagas of his native Iceland. He also had a keen interest in onomastics.

Mr Basil Megaw, formerly Director of the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh University, died on August 22nd at the age of 89. He had wide interests in archaeology, material culture and ethnology, and contributed several

important articles on Scandinavian and native place-names in Man, Galloway and the Irish Sea coasts.

Ruth Richens

Mrs Ruth Richens died suddenly aged 82 at her home in Cambridge on 16 April this year. At the SPNSociety AGM in Dunfermline in May Simon Taylor paid a short tribute to her, a summary of which is printed below.

Ruth Richens née Scott was among the first members of the SPNSociety and one of the most loyal attenders at the conferences, despite the fact that she lived in Cambridge. She showed the same loyalty to *Project Pont*, attending every one of its annual conferences during the four years of its existence. I had the privilege of working with her on a paper given at the *Project Pont* Conference in New Lanark in April 2000 entitled 'Pont and Place-Names of Lesmahagow' using her meticulously collected and collated material from the sometimes almost illegible Pont manuscript map of Lanarkshire.

My first encounter with Ruth's work was her excellent 'Ancient land divisions in the parish of Lesmahagow', *Scottish Geographical Magazine* 108 (no.3), 184-189 (1992), in which she used 12th and 13th century charters of Kelso Abbey to recreate early land-units in that parish. Her love of Lanarkshire, especially of Lesmahagow, ran deep, since her father's family hailed from there, and she often visited there in her youth. Her great act of family homage was her edition of the letters of her grandfather, Gavin Scott, written between 1911 and 1917 to Gavin Scott's son George, a medical officer in Malaya. These she published in six books in the 1980s (see *Scottish Place-Name News* 5 (Autumn 1998), p.9). Ruth, in her work on Lesmahagow, as well as on family history, received impressive support from various family members, especially from her cousin Mrs Lilia MacDonald, North Queensferry, who was present at the Dunfermline conference, and from Mrs MacDonald's husband

Kinnear MacDonald, who has produced a digitised database of much of Ruth's Pont material, including a successful attempt at presenting Pont's river system in an electronic format.

Latterly Ruth had been working on the Hamilton Estate Rental of 1637, which details all the property held by the Hamiltons throughout Lanarkshire and beyond. She was applying her usual meticulous care on this work, as well as bringing to bear on it her formidable knowledge of Lanarkshire topography and toponymy.

The greatest tribute that can be paid to Ruth is to ensure that her work is continued, and published, and I hope that the SPNSociety will be actively involved in such a tribute.

A complete set of Your Loving Father, Gavin Scott: Letters from a Lanarkshire Farmer 1911-17 edited by Ruth Richens, 6 vols. can be obtained from Mrs M. Gow, 14 South Croft Road, Biggar ML12 6AJ; price £12 + p. & p.. Individual volumes range from £1.20 to £3.50 each.

Marjorie Ogilvie Anderson

On 27 May this year the death occurred of the eminent early medieval Scottish historian Marjorie O. Anderson née Cunningham. She was 93. She had been a member of the SPNSociety from its earliest days, and was a generous supporter of Scottish place-name studies. As an early medievalist, she fully appreciated the value of place-names as a tool for the understanding of pre-documentary Scottish history. An appreciation of her work, and that of her equally eminent husband, Alan O. Anderson, who died in 1958, will appear in the November/December issue of the bimonthly magazine *History Scotland*.

Simon Taylor

A NOTE ON JOHN MAIDEN, ED., 1998, THE RAGMAN ROLL & INDEX

The collection of documents known as the Ragman Roll lists the names of the Scots men and women who promised fealty to Edward 1 of England in 1296. It therefore amounts to a roll-call, incomplete but invaluable, of the middle and upper ranks of society, both ecclesiastical and secular, in late thirteenth century Scotland. The Roll tells us that the names were written down in his own hand by Andrew Tang, clerk of the diocese of York.

Many of the names listed contain a place-name acting as the surname, estate name, or place of origin or abode of the individuals concerned. This means that place-names are to a considerable extent the key to the Ragman Roll, as a knowledge of toponymy and the ability, if necessary, to recognise a location from an aberrant form of its name are required before the information in the Roll can be accessed properly. As yet no toponymic study of the Roll exists.

John Malden has transcribed the Ragman Roll from the second volume of Bain's *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland*, a hefty tome not always easy to access outwith the larger libraries, and it is good that he has set out to make this valuable reference tool available in a convenient format. The index Malden provides is also potentially a very useful addition.

Unfortunately however there are flaws that detract from the usefulness of this publication. Malden normalises or modernises the spelling of some place and personal names, but not others. To take section 200 of the Roll as an example, where Bain has Adam le Tailleur, Rogier Corbet, John de Makeswelle and Maucolum de Stratherne, for instance, Malden has Adam le Tailor, Roger Corbet, John de Maxwell, and Malcolm de Strathearn. This means in effect that Malden's reader cannot take it for granted that any of the forms given are identical to Bain's, and must at the end of the day go to Bain's Calendar to check.

And there are errors. To take section 200 once again, Bain's Lorn de Ardebethy, head of the senior cadet line of the kin group that emerged as the Maclarens, appears in Maiden as Lord of Ardebethy, with the appended words prioress of St Leonard Ardebethy resulting from the duplication of Ardebethy and the erroneous transposition of four words from the next entry but one.

Sadly, then, worthy though this enterprise is it has not resulted in a reliable stand-alone copy of the Ragman Roll. It is of use as a first port of call, and the index is certainly a helpful access tool, but check everything against Bain's Calendar all the same!

Angus Watson

PLACE-NAMES OF COIGACH, WESTER ROSS

Forty years ago Donnie Fraser of Raon Mor began collecting all the Gaelic place- and feature- names of his native village, Achiltibuie, and those of the surrounding area of Coigach in Wester Ross.

Almost at the northernmost edge of the Gaeltacht, Coigach lies in the country of the MacLeod's of Assynt and, because until the time Donnie started his collecting, it was accessible only from the sea, it had preserved and still preserves a great deal of its Gaelic.

Donnie compiled his lists but died before he could map them. His nephew, Alasdair, on retiring to Raon Mor, took up the work and continued, with more input from the two Ali MacLeods of Achnahaird, 'West' and 'Beag', locating and mapping the almost two thousand names. The maps and the accompanying book are displayed in our village hall. However, Alasdair and local enthusiasts decided to use modern techniques to create a CD of the project - the Coigach Gaelic Place Names CD. From the large maps was created a series of smaller, interlinking, clickable maps connecting the names to their locations and vice versa, backed by local music all

contained on a hybrid disk that can be used on any PC or Mac.

The project from its beginning with Donnie Fraser in the 1960s was unique. It remains unique in its CD form that was completed last month and is already being used by local schools as a geography, history and Gaelic language resource.

The Coigach Gaelic Place Names CD is a community project. It is for sale at £7.99 directly from us or on the Net. All profits go to the Coigach Good Fund, to be used for helping local people and projects. For more details in general in Gaelic and English, and more details of how to buy click onto:

<http://members.aol.com/coigich/CGPN.htm>

The Coigach Gaelic Place Names CD is the first of a Coigach series that will be made available over the next few weeks. The others will be of singers and musicians, past and present, who are or were local or had or have local connections. First in the series will be Alasdair Fraser - Raon Mor. He is also the uncle of the present Alasdair Fraser and was a fine Gaelic singer on the radio in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1953 he sat down to record on tape his repertoire. The tape has been handed down and once again modern computer techniques have allowed it to be cleaned and re-mastered to produce a wonderful record of a fine Gaelic voice.

If you would like more details of these and other Coigach recordings, simply let me know and I will let you know when they are available. If you would like more details of Coigach Gaelic Place Names or have anyone else in mind who might be interested in it or Coigach music, again do not hesitate to contact me.

From:
Ian Campbell Whittle
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WELCOME TO FOTHRIF

Summary of Simon Taylor's talk 'Welcome to Fothrif: an introduction to the place-names of West Fife', given to the SPNS Conference and AGM, Dunfermline, 11 May 2002.

I started by attempting a definition and an analysis of Fothrif itself. Rather than repeat this material here, I refer the reader to my chapter on Fife place-names in *The Fife Book* (see reference below).

A glance at the medieval map of Fife shows that Dunfermline parish represents a large, no doubt royal, early territory which stretched from North Queensferry in the south to the boundary of Cleish in the north, including Inverkeithing, which probably became a parish in the late 12th c. through the development of its royal burgh. In other words the territory of Dunfermline ran from Drumfarlane, a field name beside Broomhall on the coast, as far as Dummiefarlane, a hill-fort in the Cleish Hills. It looks very much as though both these names contain the same specific element as Dunfermline, and define an early territory toponymically, just as its old parish boundaries define it administratively. The map also tells us that the bishopric of Dunkeld was almost as important in west Fife as was the bishopric of St Andrews.

The languages spoken in west Fife over the past 1500 years or more, as well as their sequence and interactions, are similar to those for the whole of former Pictland between the Forth and Beaully Firths, with the earliest clearly identifiable stratum that of Pictish. Examples are Urquhart, an estate immediately west of Dunfermline, whose Pictish credentials are endorsed by the 8th century form *Air-chartan* of its name-sake Urquhart on Loch Ness, which appears in Adomnan's *Vita Columbe*. It means 'on the *carden' or '*carden-side'. The meaning of *carden*, so long assumed to be a Pictish word for 'wood(land)', must remain a matter for further investigation in the light of Andrew Breeze's important note in *Scottish Language* 18 (1999), which rightly questions the basis for this

interpretation, suggesting rather that it refers to some kind of enclosure. The word also appears in the estate-name Carden, better known in the west Fife mining village-name Cardenden (combined as an existing place-name with the Scots element *den* 'deep valley'). Other Pictish names in west Fife are Aberdour and Abercrombie, now known simply as Crombie, a village, formerly a parish, between Torryburn and Dunfermline.

Gaelic, which will have been well established in Fife by around AD 900, if not before, has left a rich stratum of names. One such is Calais (earlier *Kellohous* 1287 x 1299), probably *Coillius 'place of (by or in) a wood', Gaelic *coille* + location suffix *-us* 'place of'. Its origins have survived its Frenchified orthography, as it is still pronounced locally 'Kalis' (with the first element rhyming with 'ale'), although this has not prevented it from generating the nearby names Dover Strip and Dover Heights!

Scots, which was certainly being used to coin place-names in west Fife by the later 12th century, has also left many place-names, such as Crossford, probably 'ford marked by a cross'. West Fife has its fair share of humorous, and usually depreciating, Scots names, popular in the early modern period, such as Pilkembare ('strip them bare'), Hungerhimout, Gaithercauld, Glowrowrem and the cleverly named Little Honesty (part of the lands of Clune in Carnock parish). Sadly few of these names have survived.

Many names of Celtic origin (i.e. Pictish and Gaelic) must remain unassigned: besides borrowing several elements from Pictish, Gaelic-speakers will also have adapted, even part-translated, existing Pictish names, to an extent which is now impossible to quantify. One element borrowed by Gaelic-speakers is the well-known *pett* 'estate farm', which occurs more often in the Dunfermline area than in any other area in Scotland, except for Abernethy, Perthshire. This, and the fact that two of the *pett*-names are combined with an ecclesiastical element (Pitliver and

Pitbauchlie), suggests that there was an important church site at Dunfermline before the time of Queen Margaret (which I have argued for in my article 'Some Early Scottish Place-Names and Queen Margaret', *Scottish Language* 13 (1994), 1-17).

One name which may well have been adapted from a Pictish form is Dunfermline itself, which I tentatively suggested contains two burn-names, the Ferm (an old name for the Tower Burn) and the Lyne Burn.

I concluded the talk with a detailed examination of the place-name Pitbauchlie, 'estate of the keeper of the *bachall* or crozier', now a southern suburb of Dunfermline. I had discussed this name at some length in my above-mentioned article in *Scottish Language*, but it was only recently that I had become fully aware of an important piece of evidence showing remarkable continuity between the meaning of this early place-name and later tenurial history, at the same time confirming the above interpretation of this name.

The evidence is a *Registrum de Dunfermelyn* charter (no.339) issued between 1304 and 1313 by the abbot of Dunfermline to Mariota Cook, the present representative of the family which had been renting half the land of Pitbauchlie from the abbey for at least two generations. The charter specifically exempts Mariota and her heirs from various burdens including the payment of *dereth*' and *slother*. These are both Gaelic words: *dereth*' is from G *deòradh*, 'dewar, relic-keeper', while *slother* contains the G *sluagh* 'host, army', and probably represents an original *sluaghadh* 'hosting, raising an army'. This exemption is unique in Scotland, so we can rule out the idea that they relate to general burdens on lands. These two duties are in fact best explained as forming part of a very old tenurial agreement between the superior of Pitbauchlie and its tenant, who was as the name suggests, the dewar of a saint's crozier. This agreement was to do with the production of the holy relic for purposes

of law-enforcement such as the tracking down of stolen property (which was one of the duties of the keeper of St Fillan's crozier in Strathfillan in western Perthshire); encapsulated in the term *dereth*'. These duties seem to have been commuted to a money-payment by the time this charter was issued, and it is from this payment that the charter exempts them.

This analysis of Pitbauchlie is an excellent example of how toponymics and document-based history can complement each other and deepen our understanding of tenurial relationships in medieval Scotland.

One name which lack of time prevented me from discussing is the small area of east Dunfermline, near to where the conference was being held, called Transy. This first appears in 1781 as Transylvania, but in a sasine of 1812 we are informed that it is henceforth to be named Transy. If only all place-name change was so well documented. The uneasy question remains however: why Transylvania? The *bachall* of Pitbauchlie might have come in handy on dark nights in Transy.

For further discussion of place-names of Fife, both west and east, see S. Taylor, 'Place-Names of Fife' in The Fife Book ed. D. Omand (Birlinn, Edinburgh, 2000), 205-20.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Compiled by Simon Taylor (with help from Carole Hough). Note that this includes several articles from the past three years which had been mistakenly omitted from earlier 'Recent Publications' lists in *Scottish Place-Name News*.

Breeze, Andrew, 1999, 'The Name of Trailtrow, near Lockerbie, Scotland', *Northern History* 35, 205-7.

Breeze, Andrew, 1999, 'Some Celtic Place-Names of Scotland, including *Dalriada*, *Kincarden*, *Abercorn*, *Coldingham* and *Girvan*', *Scottish Language* 18, 34-51 [Other names

discussed are: Froissart's *Montres* and Melrose Abbey; William Worcestre on *Stormont* and *Dercongal*; William Worcestre on *Lough Hakern*, Islay; *Insula Leverith*, the old name of Cramond Island; *Penchrise*, near Hawick; and *Aberlosk*, near Moffat.]

Breeze, Andrew, 2001, 'The British-Latin Place-Names *Arbeia*, *Corstopitum*, *Dictim*, and *Morbium*, *Durham Archaeological Journal* 16, 21-25 [mainly dealing with names in north of England, but with material relevant also to southern Scotland.]

Breeze, Andrew, 2001, 'Brittonic place-names from south-west Scotland, Part 2: Ptolemy's *Abrauanus*, "Locatrebe", *Cumnock*, *Irvine* and *Water of Milk*', *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society* 75, 151-58.

Breeze, Andrew, 2002, 'The Battle of *Alutthelia* in 844 and Bishop Auckland', *Northern History* 39 (1: March), 124-5.

Breeze, Andrew, 2002, 'Pennango [now obsolete] near Hawick and Welsh *angau* 'death', *Northern History* 39 (1: March), 126.

Clancy, T. O., 2001, 'The real St Ninian', *Innes Review* 52 (no. 1 Spring), 1-28.

Coates, Richard, and Breeze, Andrew, with a contribution from D. Horowitz, 2000, *Celtic Voices, English Places: Studies of the Celtic Impact on Place-Names in England*, Stamford.

Close, R., 2002, *The Street Names of Ayr* (Ayr: Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society).

Cox, Richard A. V., 1999, '*Leumaragh-Leumrabhagh*', *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 19, 253-56.

Cox, Richard A. V., 2001, 'Maintenance of the Norse legacy in Scottish Hebridean nomenclature', *Studier i Nordisk Filologi* 78, 45-52.

Gammeltoft, Peder, 2001, *The place-name element bólstadr in the North Atlantic area*, (Copenhagen).

Gammeltoft, Peder, 2001a, "'I sauh a tour on a toft, tryelyche i-maket': on Place-Names in *-toft*, *-tote* and *-tobhta* from Shetland to the Isle of Man", *Nomina* 24, 17-32.

Grant, James H., 1999, 'The Gaelic Heritage of Rothiemurchus', in T. C. Smout and R. A. Lambert (eds) *Rothiemurchus: Nature and People on a Highland Estate 1500-2000* (Scottish Cultural Press, Dalkeith) [focussing on place-names].

Hannah, Angus, 2000, 'Bute farm names with personal name elements', *Transactions of the Buteshire Natural History Society* 25, 61-7.

Hough, Carole, 2001, 'Notes on Some Scottish Field Names', *Names* 49.1 (March 2001), 37-53.

Hough, Carole, 2001, 'The Place-Name Penninghame (Wigtownshire)', *Notes and Queries* 48, No. 2, June 2001, 99-102.

Hough, Carole, 2001, 'P-Celtic *tref* in Scottish Place-Names', *Notes and Queries* 48, No. 3, September 2001, 213-15.

Fraser, Ian A., 1999, 'Place-Names [of Perthshire]', in D. Omand (ed.) *The Perthshire Book* (Edinburgh), 199-210.

MacLennan, J., 2001, *Place-Names of Scarp*, edited by C. J. Mackay (Stornoway: Stornoway Gazette).

MacQueen, John, 2002, *Place-Names in the Rhinns of Galloway and Luce Valley*, Stranraer and District Local History Trust.

Nicolaisen, W.F.H., 2001, *Scottish Place-Names* (revised edition, Edinburgh; first published London; 1976).

Ross, David, 2001, *Scottish Place-names* (Edinburgh).

Særheim, Inge, 2001, 'Settlement names of two millenniums. The dating of the land-names and the semantics of the ending *-land*', *Northern Studies* 36, 91-107.

Taylor, Simon, 2001, 'Place-Names', in *Oxford Companion to Scottish History*, gen. ed. M. Lynch (Oxford), 479-84.

Taylor, Simon, 2001, 'The Cult of St. Fillan in Scotland', in *The North Sea World in the Middle Ages*, edd. T. R. Lyszka and L. E. M. Walker (Dublin), 175-210. [Full analysis of place-names containing the name, dedications, etc.]

Taylor, Simon and Wentworth, Roy, 2001, 'Pont and Place-Names', in *The Nation Survey'd*, ed. I. Cunningham (East Linton). [Looking at Pont's treatment of place-names in Fife and Wester Ross]

Taylor, Simon, 2002: regular series of articles on Scottish place-names in the bright new bi-monthly magazine *History Scotland* (available from most Newsagents): '**Reading the Map: Understanding Scottish Place-Names**', Vol. 2 no. 1 (Jan/Feb), p. 13; '**Norse in the Islands**' [with special reference to Peder Gammeltoft's work on *bólstaðr*-names; see also above], Vol. 2 no. 2 (March/April), pp. 42-5; '**Place-Names and the Changing Landscape: the Howe of Fife, a Case Study**', Vol. 2 no. 3 (May/June), pp. 49-51; '**Stormont: the Name and the Place**', Vol. 2 no. 5 (Sept/Oct).

Waugh, Doreen J., 2001, 'In (and around) Scatness', *Northern Studies* 36, 69-90 [Place-names in south Shetland; see also *Scottish Place-Name News* 10, 8-9]

Waugh, Doreen J., 2001, 'Fae da nort tae da suddart' in G. Fellows-Jensen (ed.) *Denmark and Scotland: the environmental and cultural resources of small nations* (Copenhagen) [Norse settlement in Shetland with special reference to Unst and Old Scatness]

REVIEW

W F H Nicolaisen: *Scottish Place Names: Their Study and Significance*, John Donald, Edinburgh, Second Edition, 2001 ISBN 0 85976 556 3, £12.99

Those of us who became involved in place-name studies over the years have used Nicolaisen's text virtually as a bible since it first appeared in 1976. It is fair to say that it is the most important work on Scottish place-names to have been published in the twentieth century, since it covers such a wide range of names, tackling the major issues with impressive scholarship, and skilful use of previously unexplored data. Bill Nicolaisen is the first to admit that in the quarter-century since the original appeared, the science of Scottish onomastics has moved on, and there have been significant developments in the use of distribution maps, digital processing, and linguistics. Moreover, archaeological research has revealed much more about our material history.

A preface to this new edition outlines the author's response to these new developments. Here, 'some of those aspects of the original publication which require clarification in a modern context' (p xvi) are discussed. For example, the distribution of names in Gaelic. *Sliabh* (Anglicised *Slew*) is now recognised as requiring modification in view of the fact that the element remains productive in parts of the Western Isles. However, Nicolaisen insists that the distribution (p.56) 'does not invalidate it in part as a visual impression of an otherwise geographically elusive early phase of the presence of Gaelic in Scotland.'

The overall text has been amended and rephrased to improve its overall acceptability to the general reader, and a substantial bibliography of publications since 1976 is included (pp.257-273.) This is considerably longer than the original bibliography, demonstrating the scope of Scottish onomastic research over the last quarter-century.

This book is very welcome, since the original hardback and, and the paperback version first published by Batsford in 1986 (and reprinted in 1989) has long been unavailable. The attractive John Donald edition, with a cover illustration of a map from Blaeu's *Atlas Major*, is a prerequisite of any library with a Scottish interest. At the competitive price of £12.99, it is excellent value, and should continue to serve as a standard text for many years to come.

WHAT'S ON?

The Scottish Local History Forum, Annual Conference, in conjunction with the *Scottish Maps Forum*, will be held in the Lesser Hall, Municipal Buildings, West Street, Falkirk, on Saturday, October 5th 2002. Speakers include Dr Geoffrey Stone, John Moore, Tristram Clarke, David Thompson, Dr Pat Dennison, Doreen Grove and our own Dr Simon Taylor.

For further details contact Mrs D Williamson, SLHF, c/o Scottish History Dept., University of Edinburgh, 17, Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8. 9LN. The cost is £14, which includes lunch and coffee.

E-MAIL POSTBAG

From: David Sim
<david.sim@arkl.lth.se>
Subject: Swiss Place Names
Date sent: Thu, 14 Jan 2002

Dear Mr Fraser

I actually didn't know of the existence of the Scottish Place Name Society until I read today's BBC on-line. As a Scot living abroad the BBC's always a good source of information.

I am very interested in the subject - especially with those places with Nordic-influenced names. I have a theory about Cupar but I will spare you my own ponderings.

I was in Switzerland this weekend attending the National Exhibition EXPO 02 and I was most impressed to find a pavilion devoted to the subject of Swiss place names. Apart from the interesting subject and the design of the pavilion (I teach at a Swedish Architecture School) I discovered the Swiss have produced an excellent interactive CD rom featuring Swiss place names along with short films and brief histories of those places. I would love to see such a CD rom about Scottish place names. Perhaps this Swiss initiative could be brought to the attention of MSPs as an example of where we could be going?

I hope this is of interest

best wishes

yours sincerely

David Sim
Lecturer, Lund University

From: Anthony Melling
<awm3@ukc.ac.uk>
Subject: Mushrooms
Date sent: Wed, 21 Aug 2002

greetings,

just a small enquiry really.

I am researching for my thesis in ethnobotany and am currently working on the association between pooka/puck and magic mushrooms that grow around the British Isles. I have been told that they (*Psilocybe semilanceata*) are referred to as pooka-piles at least around Kerry and Cork and parts of Scotland. What I am looking for is the antiquity of this association and related folklore. Any help in this area would be most appreciated.

many thanks,
Anthony Melling
Anthropology Dept,
Eliot College,
University of Kent
Canterbury
England



**Scottish Place-Name Society
Comann Ainmean-Aite Na h-Alba**

Dear Members

We are writing to ask for your support for a petition asking Parliament to ensure long-term funding to run a financially independent Scottish Place-Name Survey.

Unlike other European countries where there are Institutes of Place-Name Research which employ up to nine permanent members of staff, Scotland lost its only full-time onomastician, Ian Fraser, when he recently retired from his position in the Scottish Place-Name Survey. Although the Scottish Place-Name Survey is home to an extensive card index of place-names and the recently established Carnegie-funded Scottish Place-Names Database, there are currently no posts for appropriately qualified scholars to populate the database, work on it or to enable online access to the information it contains.

Interest in place-names is strong and not restricted to the research community. Place-names form an integral part of our local identity and many of them exist in oral tradition only. In some instances place-names supply the earliest information about places, revealing information on archaeology, agriculture, industry, settlers and their languages. They are a testament to Scotland's unique multi-cultural, multi-ethnic past.

Please sign the enclosed petition asking Parliament to ensure the long-term funding to operate an appropriately staffed Scottish Place-Name Survey. Help to make academic research into our Scottish place-name heritage available to the Scottish people.

Yours sincerely

Dr Doreen J Waugh
Convener, Scottish Place-Name Society

Return address for petition:

Dr Doreen J Waugh, White Cottage, Howgate, Penicuik, Midlothian, EH26 8QD.



Scottish Place-Name Society
Comann Ainmean-Aite Na h-Alba

Day Conference
Glasgow Caledonian University, City Campus,
Cowcaddens Road, Glasgow G4 0BA
Saturday 9 November 2001

PROGRAMME

10.30 – 11.00	Registration and Coffee
11.00 – 11.45	Dr Simon Taylor 'Place-names and languages of Glasgow'
11.45 – 12.30	Dr Thomas Clancy 'Kilpatrick and the cult of St Patrick in Strathclyde'
12.30 – 1.30	Lunch
1.30 – 2.15	Rachel Butter 'The ecclesiastical place-names of Bute'
2.15 – 3.00	Dr Gilbert Markus 'Pre-Columban churches in the Highlands'
3.00 – 3.30	Dr Carole Hough 'Pusk in Fife and other place-names from OE <i>pur</i>'
3.30 – 4.30	Tea/coffee and Report on parliamentary campaign

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The cost for the day will be £15.00 (cheques payable to 'The Scottish Place-Name Society' to Ian Fraser at the address below by Saturday 19 October) to include coffee, sandwich lunch and afternoon tea/coffee.

Name:

Address:

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Scottish Place-Name Society, c/o Department of Celtic & Scottish Studies, 27 George Square,
University of Edinburgh EH8 9LD