



Souter's Shop

When BCT acquired the Ballogie Souter's Shop in 2000, it compiled a list of its contents. BCT is now about to complete a project to record each item in detail and compile a comprehensive catalogue linked to the computerised database in BCT's Archive at Finzean Old School. The task has been a dusty one as very little has moved in the Shop since the souter, James Merchant, last worked there in the 1940s.



Dorothy Dinnie cataloguing the contents of the Souter's Shop. Photo © Eileen Bailey

The name or purpose of some of the contents have been difficult to identify, but local knowledge has been invaluable. Items of equipment and other material used in the shop, which was started in the 19th century, come from a wide range of locations. It is intriguing to wonder, however, how a book on Pitman's Shorthand, bearing the stamp of a bookseller in Karachi, India, found its way into the Shop.

Visits, Surveys & Case Studies

There continues to be a lot of outside interest in BCT as an innovative and successful local community initiative. As a result,

BCT is often approached to host visits by groups, contribute to research surveys and provide details for case studies. BCT tries to respond positively to all these requests whenever it can manage.



Stan Moyes (second left) at the Bucket Mill with some of a visiting group from the Royal Scottish Forestry Society. Photo © John Addy.

In recent weeks, for example, BCT has been involved with three case studies.

The first was about BCT as a leading example of the partnerships that Forestry Commission Scotland has with local communities for a publication about these later this year. The second involved BCT as one of four groups in Scotland selected as examples of pioneering local community businesses for presentations to a major UK conference about local development trusts with over 350 participants.

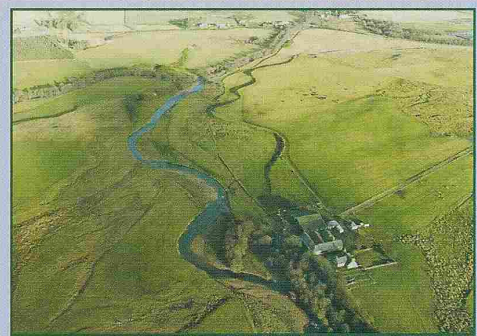
The third example involves the prestigious Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development which has been gathering evidence from around the UK and Ireland and will be using BCT as one of the special case studies in their final report because "it seems to embody many of the characteristics of the sustainable rural development which we are trying to promote".

Birse Kirk



The Crusader Stone in Birse Kirk. Photo © W. Bailey

Birse Kirk is one of the parish's most historic sites. The first documentary record of it is in a charter over 800 years ago and it is believed to have been one of the first Christian sites on Deeside before that. BCT has just completed a research project to locate and compile information about the history of the Kirk and plans to publish the results. BCT has also recently produced a comprehensive illustrated catalogue of the contents of the Kirk, including photographs of many of the items gifted to it or bought for it by the Congregation.



An aerial view of the confluence of the Aven and tree-lined Feugh near Whitestones. BCT and Finzean Community Council are planning a study with public agencies of how flooding can be better controlled and managed within the catchment of the Feugh, as a result of a public meeting in Finzean Hall. Photo © Aberdeenshire Council.

Donations to the Trust are vital for it to be able to continue its local work to conserve the parish's heritage. The Trust therefore very greatly appreciates any donations large or small. Please send your donation to BCT, The Old School, Finzean, Banchory AB31 6NY

Office / Studio space at Finzean Old School is available at very modest rates. For more details, please contact the BCT Office. Telephone 01330 850200