



Bronze Age Food Vessel, Pitmilly, Fife (c. 4,000 years old)

Discovered recently at Pitmilly, near St Andrews, this ornate early Bronze Age food vessel of the Yorkshire vase tradition was lucky to survive when the cist burial in which it was deposited was accidentally discovered during road works.

The quick thinking road workers managed to retrieve the 4,000 year old pot and to give it some on the spot first aid (the sticky tape) before professional help arrived.

Although considerable damage had also been done to the cist burial itself, enough remained to shed light on the discovery. Essentially, what the road workers encountered was a stone lined grave of early Bronze Age date (c. 2,000 BC). Within the grave chamber had been placed the cremated remains of an individual and a highly decorated pot of a style generally known to be a food vessel.

(left) the finder and foreman next to the stone-lined grave chamber where the skeleton and the pot were found.



(right) the finder with the pot.

(Fife Archaeology unit)

Racing against the sea at Carghidown Promontory Fort

A prehistoric settlement at Carghidown, near the Isle of Whithorn was investigated during 2003, by AOC Archaeology in order to save archaeological remains from encroaching coastal erosion.

Carghidown is a small site perched 100 feet above a sea cliff. It is one of around fifty promontory forts on the Galloway Coast, which have rarely been investigated by archaeologists before. Carghidown was chosen because of an ongoing threat of coastal erosion at the site.

Within the promontory fort, two roundhouses, defined by dry stone walls, were discovered. One of these contained a series of floor deposits, which is uncommon amongst such archaeological sites as floors have often been ploughed away. While no artefacts were found within either roundhouse, three unusual lead beads were recovered from just outside one of the roundhouses.

“Carghidown is an enigmatic site” said Project Officer, Ronan Toolis, who led the archaeology team.

“While it was probably occupied in the Iron Age, we don’t yet know exactly when it was occupied. Nor do we know why people chose to live at this very exposed place. We have only investigated a small area within the site but have discovered a roundhouse in which there are preserved a series of floor deposits that may yield vital evidence for the original occupation. However, if we don’t get back soon it is very likely that more archaeology will be lost to the sea.”

The Archaeologists hope to return during 2004 to excavate the site, in order to shed new light on how and why the Iron Age people of Galloway chose to occupy coastal sites like Carghidown.



Recording archaeology at Carghidown (AOC Archaeology Group).