

HIGHLAND FOLK MUSEUM

NEWTONMORE

Taigh-tasgaidh Sluagh na Gàidhealtachd
Baile Ùr an t-Slèibh



VISITOR GUIDE / IÙIL LUCHD-TADHAIL

The Highland Folk Museum, Newtonmore

Taigh-tasgaidh Sluagh na Gàidhealtachd, Baile Ùr an t-Slèibh



The Highland Folk Museum, Newtonmore, fulfills Dr. I.F. Grant's vision of having a larger open air, living history site.

Acquired in the late 1980s, the site is circa 80 acres (32 Hectares) and a mile long. It is bounded on the north by the old A9, the Kingussie to Newtonmore Road and, on the south, by the River Spey. The railway from Inverness to London, also passes along the middle of its length.

The Museum had its first main year in 1996 and has continued to develop as an award winning site. The site is divided into four main areas. "Aultlarie", the Museum's working farm; the "open air museum" with a developing Highland community of re-located buildings; "The Pinewoods" and "Baile Gean", the Museum's unique re-construction of an early 1700s Highland township.

The following pages, including a map in the centre, will give you further information. However, if you have any further questions our staff will be pleased to help.



"Aultlarie" Farm Steading

Àitreabh Tuathanas Allt Làirigh



Probably dating from the early 1800s, and interpreted for the 1930s, "Aultlarie" farm steading is the largest *in situ* building on the Museum's site. Traditional in form for a local small farm it comprises, a three horse stable, larger cattle byre (currently housing a World War II food rationing display), a barn with opposing threshing doors, a smaller cattle byre and a dairy.

"Aultlarie" is the original name for both the farm and the adjacent stream, probably coming from the Gaelic "*Allt Làirigh*" meaning "Burn of the Gorge".

From the mid 1800s, the farm, then owned by Balavil Estate, was farmed by Paul Grant, active member of the Badenoch & Rothiemurchus Farmers Society. Grant's family continued until the mid 1900s and after World War II the farm was taken over by Robert Kirk until the land was acquired for the Museum in 1987.

Aultarie Tin Cottage

Bothan Tìona Ailt Làirigh



Erected circa the 1890s and interpreted for the 1930s, the cottage is on its original site. Probably built by a local joiner, it is constructed of a timber frame clad in corrugated iron (*"crinkly tin"*).

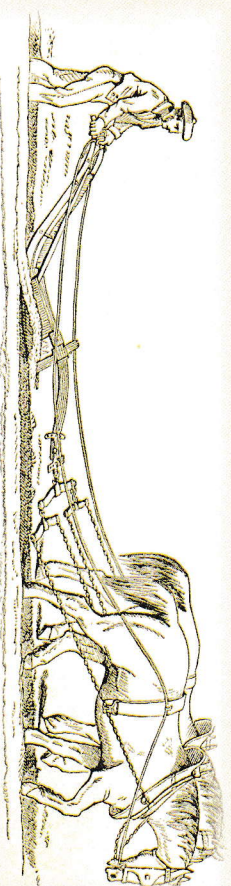
The main building comprises, first a best room or "parlour" walled with lining boards, second a central living area including an open fire for heat and cooking over and a bed recess, and third, a scullery type area that we have interpreted as a summer kitchen cum store. Note in this area the preserved wall paper, paper lace frieze and decorations from magazines as we uncovered them. The building's extension, not open to visitors, was used one time as a bathroom.



The Farm Implements

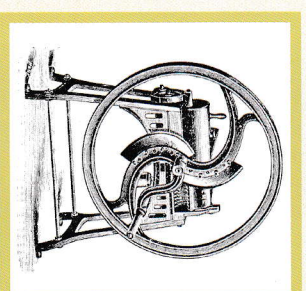
Na h-innealan Tuathanais

Around the farm you will see various agricultural hand tools, implements and machinery as might have been in use in the Highlands during the 1930s. For example, scythes, forks, sheep shears, horse ploughs, harrows, rollers, turnip sowers, carts (in the cart shed), hay rakes, etc. In season you might also see a broadcast sower, seed drill, mower, binder or a potato lifter pulled by the tractor in use.

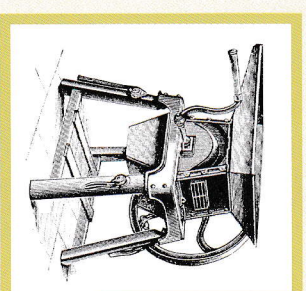


We represent Scottish manufacturers too. Look for the James Ferries of Inverness threshing "mill" that we still use, the G. W. Murray Barff Foundry "Tiny" hand thresher, the Dalgety Brothers of Aberdeen rolling mill, the Wallace of Glasgow two row potato planter and the McKidd of Thurso turnip "scarifier" (weeder).

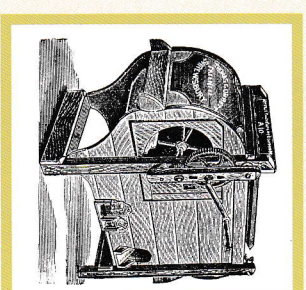
Our staff will be pleased to help you identify the implements or you may purchase our separate booklet: 'Farm Implements & Machinery'.



Chaff Cutter



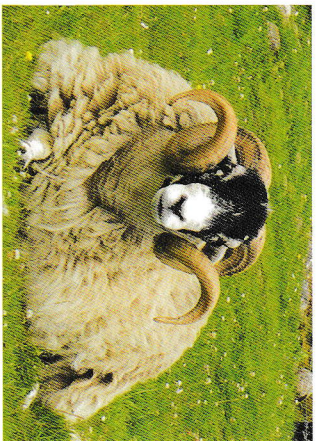
Turnip Cutter



Winnower

The Farm Livestock

Beò-chrochd an Tuathanais



As a part of our interpretation, the Museum is home to some traditional and rare breeds. As with any working farm through time, the breeds and numbers of livestock kept would vary from year to year.

Amongst the animals you might see are
Beef Shorthorn Cattle, a rare breed; traditional
Scottish Blackface Sheep; rare Soay Sheep at our
Township and a variety of poultry.

The Railway Halt

Goireas Rathad-iarainn

This building is interpreted as "Aultlariè" railway halt where people, farm goods and produce might have gone north to Inverness or south towards Perth. Locally during the 1900s there were short two carriage steam trains, "The Johnston" or "The Housewives' Choice" that regularly served this community purpose.

Originally, this "Hyland Railway" trackside building was constructed at Etteridge as, so we believed, a waiting room to serve the adjacent community. We now know it was a signal box, but did it also serve as a waiting room? At some point, circa the early 1900s, it was moved to the adjacent farm where it served as a "summer house". Then circa 1960 it was dismantled and re-erected in Newtonmore to be used as a workshop and shed before coming to the Museum.



Original Map
Reference:
NN684926
Originally built:
circa 1863.
Re-erected 2003.

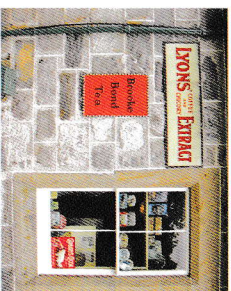
Aultarie Farmhouse

Taigh-tuathanaich Alt Làirigh



Aultarie farmhouse possibly dates from the mid-late 1800s. In the early 1900s it was the principal farm residence except when rented out to tourists. This locally common practice raised income for the farm.

Currently, the building houses the Museum's offices. We have, recreated a late 1930s living room in one of the downstairs rooms. The leather suite, for example, was first bought in Glasgow during the 1920s for use in Fort William and the fireplace came from Wick. We have, however, cheated with the wallpaper: From Glenlivet, it is genuine, but was found in a partly opened parcel postmarked 1946. WC Toilet and baby changing facilities situated here.



Kirk's Store

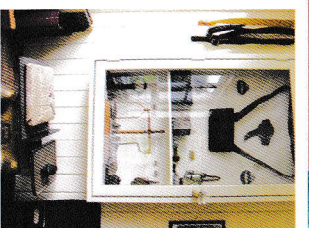
This small shop is named after the Kirk family who farmed Aultarie prior to the Museum being developed. The 'Store', created in one of Aultarie Farmhouse's ground floor rooms, is intended to represent a type of shop that was once common i.e. developed in someone's front room providing additional income for the owner and an essential service for the community.

Our shop interpreted for the late 1930s features many original artifacts including packaging from a variety of food and domestic items, some ironmongery and a till displaying pounds, shillings, and pence.

Visitors are also able to indulge their 'sweet tooth cravings' and or nostalgia too by buying traditional types of sweets including 'Soor Plums', 'Lucky Tatties', 'Liquorice Comfits', 'Barley Sugars', 'Dolly Mixtures' and many more.



Glenlivet Post Office Ofis a' Phuist Ghleann Lìobhaidh

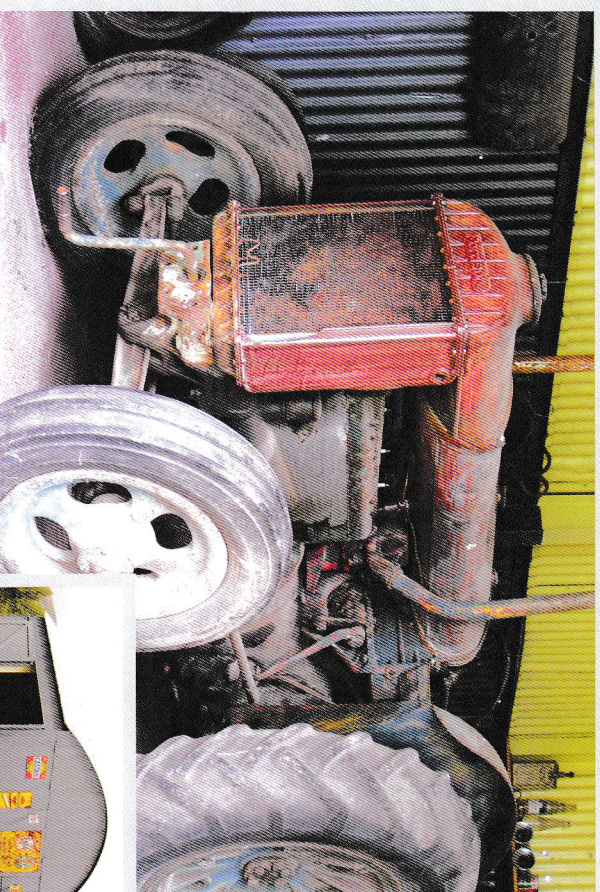


In 1913 Robert Stuart, carpenter and joiner, built "Glenlivet Post Office" onto his house, having taken on the role of sub-postmaster from the local blacksmith. Robert had not long moved to the old "Upper Banffshire" community from nearby Knockandhu where he had also been sub-postmaster. In 1950, Robert's son Tom took over, running the Post Office with his wife Ida. The Post Office moved to new premises in 1996 when they retired.

The complete Post Office was acquired by the Museum in 2000 from Tom and Ida's daughter Carole Stuart. It has been rebuilt exactly as acquired with fixtures and fittings from the counter to the clock. The blanked off doorway led to the sorting office and telephone exchange which we have yet to re-create.

Original Map Reference:
NJ196300
Originally built:
1913
Re-erected 2001.

The Garage An Garaidh



By the 1930s there were two Kingussie "Scottish Oil's & Shellmex BP Ltd" motor spirit and oil depots. One at the western end by the railway, and the other at Kerrow. Our corrugated iron "garage" was part of the former, built c. 1928 with a Lanarkshire Steel Co. Ltd. frame. "McCormack's Garage" took over the depot in the 1990s, using the "garage" as a workshop until 1998.

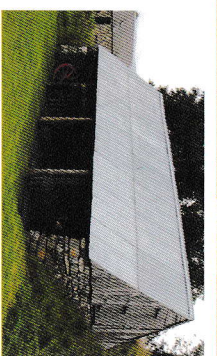
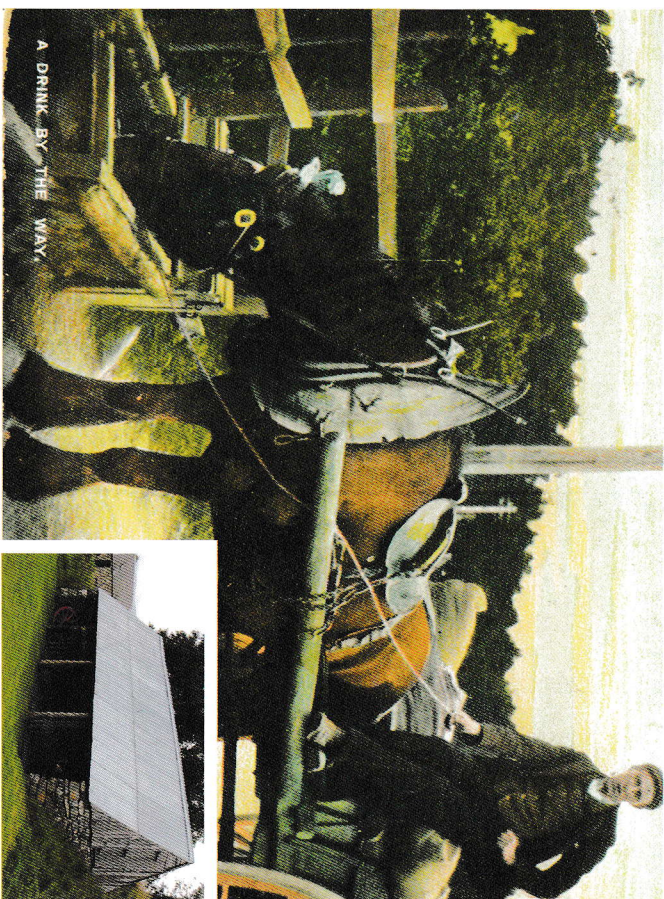
Now interpreted as our late 1930s garage, the building's contents include various early 1900s garage items, including several of the 2-gallon fuel cans that might have been re-filled at the original depot. Outside too is an original Shellmex-BP Mark IV fuel pump c. 1928.

Housed in the garage is a World War II 'Standard' Model 'N' Fordson tractor of a type that was first produced in 1929. Our tractor dates from 1941.

Original Map Reference:
NH753004
Originally built:
circa 1928
Re-erected 1999

The Cart Shed Bothan Cainte

This small building is part of the original Aultlaire farm steading. At ground level it comprises four open fronted bays into which horse drawn farm vehicles were backed when not in use. Above, under the corrugated iron roof, there is a loft for storage.



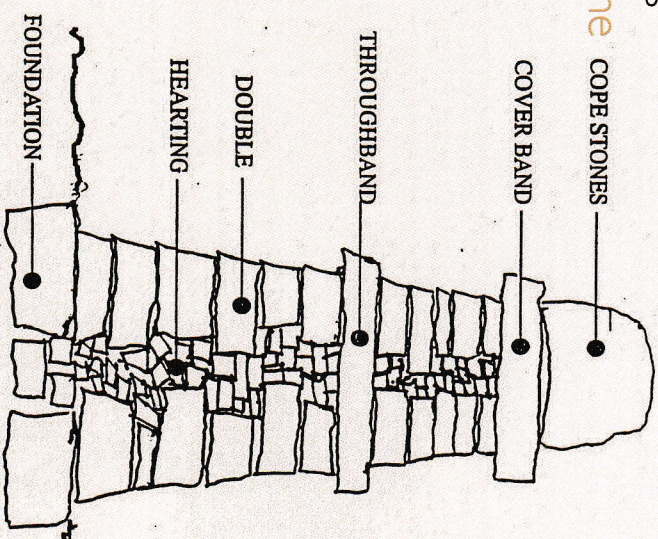
The building dates almost certainly to the 1800s but we currently do not know when. Its construction is interesting for it is cut into the bank behind, making full use of this for supporting the back wall. Note the walls are of dry stone construction, an older technique that contrasts to the mortared stone of the main steading.

The farm "box" or "coup" (tip) carts on show originally came from Ardverrick Estate, near Laggan. Their green and red colours are typical for this area. Note the carts' circa early 1900s traditional wooden wheels alongside the rubber pneumatic ones mainly used after World War II. The varnished gig in the end bay also came from Ardverrick Estate.

The Dry Stone Dykes Na Garaidhean Cloiche

Dry (without mortar) stone "dykes" or walls are a means of creating a stock proof field boundary whilst using locally available materials. The latter can sometimes include the stones picked off the adjacent fields. Their cross section is usually "X" shaped for strength, with sometimes "through bands" (stones going from side to side), and finished with a "coping" or top course of selected stones, rubble or even turf.

Leaving Aultlaire farm, along the road on your left is a local "Badenoch" style dyke of mainly rounded stones with "through bands" and coping stones. On the right, however, is an Isle of Skye type dyke of irregular quarried stone and a smaller rubble cope. At right angles to this dyke and between the fields is another Skye dyke with a turf top. The latter grows with a developed root system, stabilizing the top of the wall.



Along The Road Air an Rathad



To help create the impression of a rural landscape we have included different pieces of "road furniture".

The road signs, of which we would like more, were saved from the scrap yard. In particular near the farm note the quality of the cast metal one for "Slow Major Road Ahead", with its inserted individual reflectors. Note too the sign for the old county of "Nairnshire" near the clockmaker's workshop.

The cast iron mailbox near the farmhouse was donated by the Royal Mail in 1998. Last used in Blairgowrie, it is an uncommon "lamp box" design for use on telegraph poles that was produced in London following the coronation of King George VI in 1937.

The telephone kiosk, opposite Knockbain School, was originally situated on the A96 at Brodie between Forbes and Nairn. It is a cast iron type "K6", introduced circa the 1930s, made at W. Macfarlane & Co Ltd's "Saracen Foundry", Glasgow.

Shepherd's Botny and Fank Bothan agus Fainn a' chìobair



Constructed from about 65 re-used railway sleepers, the two-room shepherd's botny was relocated from Presnuchrach (Gaelic: *Scrubby field of the pigs*.) near Dalwhinnie by the Museum in partnership with Laggan Heritage.



The building gave shelter to the shepherd during, often snowy, spring lambing or accommodation for men helping with summer sheep shearing. The main living room includes the shepherd's bed, stove, table, chair, tools of his trade and his few requisite personal possessions.

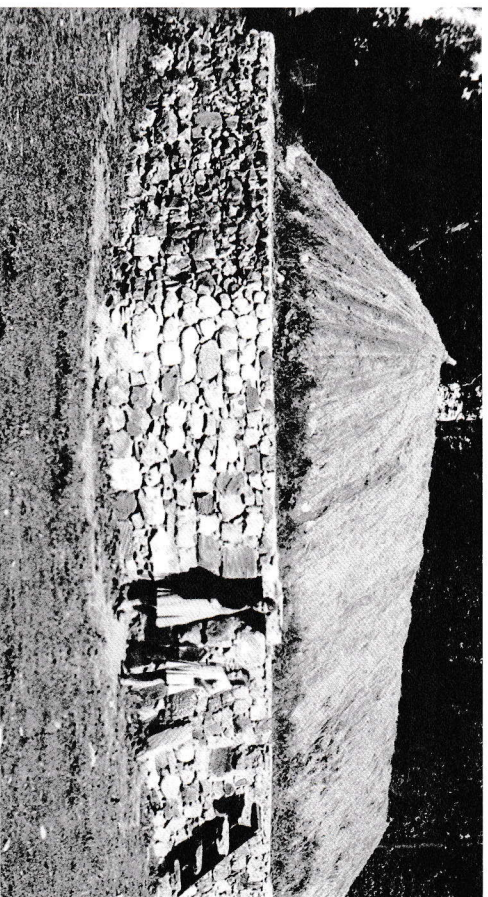
Associated with the botny is a dry stone walled 'fank', a series of pens and gates used to enclose and separate the sheep during annual shepherding processes such as marking, shearing, dipping, and 'smearing'.

Smearing, a mainly 1800s task involved coating the sheep with a softened tarry mixture to help keep out the winter weather or insects away. This mixture, as some sheep dips, was melted or heated in such as the 'boiler' next to the botny that was relocated from Breakachy by Laggan.

Original Map
Reference:
NN658881
Originally built:
early 1900s
Re-erected 2007

Blackhouse Taigh Dubh

Originally built:
1940s
Re-erected 2011



This reconstruction of a traditional blackhouse from the Isle of Lewis was one of three houses that I F Grant had built in the 1940s on the Kingussie site. These buildings formed the first mainland open air museum in Great Britain.

We have relocated this building from Kingussie as part of the amalgamation of the Museum's two sites and are interpreting it for the 1890s.

Blackhouses were constructed to combat severe Atlantic gales, with low walls, rounded corners and a well roped thatch. Built with an inner and outer wall, a core of sand or small stones filled the centre to act as a wind break. Blackhouses were normally built with the gable to the prevailing wind.

The house comprises three sections. The central area, scene of all social activity, is the living and sleeping area with a fire in the middle of the room. There is no chimney so the smoke filters out through the thatched roof. To the left of the door is the byre where the cattle are housed during the winter and beyond the central area is the 'ben' or good room. As social conditions changed in the 19th century, this room often became a bedroom or parlour.

The Knapper's Yard Togalach Luchd-obrach



(Photograph courtesy of the Bob Chanley Collection)

Many existing Highland roads were first "metalled" or surfaced with broken stone. They originated from the early 1700s military roads engineered by General George Wade and those created later in the early 1800s using the specifications of Thomas Telford. To keep the road surfaces up to standard they were maintained by road menders or "knappers", men assigned to care for a certain length of a highway.

We have re-created a roadside knapper's yard with a large heap of unbroken rock. Here the road mender would have sat using a small iron headed hammer on a long thin springy wooden shaft, continually cracking or "knapping" the rock into smaller pieces or graded "road metal" to repair or upkeep the road within his care. The size of the stone fragments and hence the finished road surface was determined by a set of gauge rings through which samples of the broken stone had to pass. Road menders were employed in the Highlands until the 1900s.

Daluaine Summerhouse Taigh-samhraidh an Dail Uaine

The summerhouse, as were many smaller Badenoch buildings, was built from re-used track sleepers from the Highland Railway that came through the Spey Valley in 1863. First constructed during the early 1900s, this small dwelling is interpreted for the 1950s.

Original Map
Reference:
NN719993
Originally built:
early 1900s
Re-erected 2009

As implied, the summerhouse gave seasonal accommodation to the owners of 'Daluaine' (*Gaelic: Green Place*), first called 'Bramble Cottage', as they rented their house to tourists visiting the area during the early 1900s.



The building was initially rendered in lime plaster. However, soon after it was clad in the more weather resistant corrugated iron. The fireplace with yellow 'Armadales' bricks from the Bathville Brick & Fire Clay Works brickworks, probably brought by train, is original as is the blacksmith made pot chain.

Highland Cottage Bothan Gàidhealtachd

Inspired by the circa 1890 photograph shown here, entitled 'Highland Cottage, Grantown' i.e. Grantown-on-Spey, this house has been recreated and interpreted for the same period.



Recreated 2009/10

The 'Cottage' is of an intermediary construction between the 1700s turf houses recreated in our Township and the stone and lime mortared cottages that became more common by the early 1800s. This house, probably 'home' built in the early 1800s indicates an aspiration on the behalf of the owner to progress from a turf dwelling to one of stone. It comprises a main living room with box bed; a larder and a 'good room'.

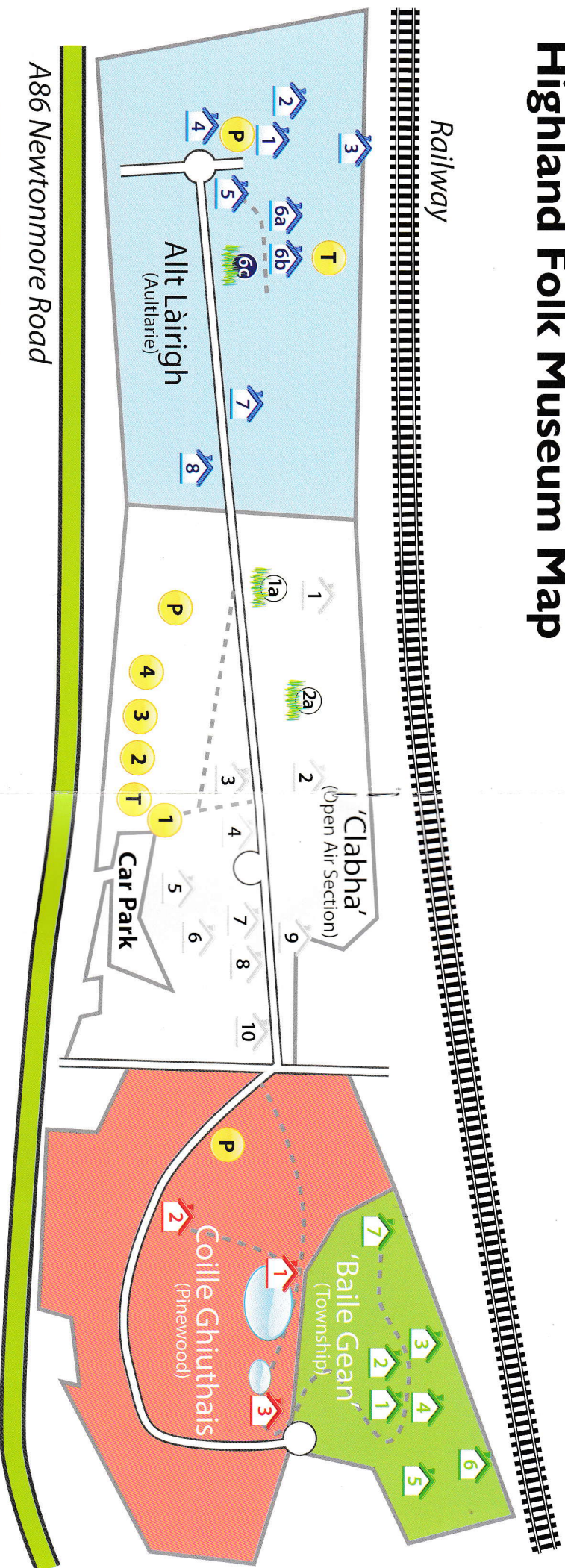
The construction of the house is interpreted as being of a later 'cruck' type construction with the posts within 'slots' in the dry stone and turf walls. The roof is covered with cabers, turf, and heather thatch but unlike the Township buildings the fireplaces are against the gable walls with 'hanging lums' above to take away the smoke. As indicated by other period illustrations the floor has been laid with flagstones.



HIGHLAND COTTAGE, GRANTOWN

Highland Folk Museum Map

Railway



A86 Newtonmore Road

AULTLARIÈ

- 1 Farm Steading
- 2 Tin Cottage
- 3 Railway Halt
- 4 Garage
- 5 Cartshed
- 6a Glenlivet Post Office
- 6b Farmhouse & Kirk's Stores
- 6c Croft Garden
- 7 Presnuchrach Bothy
- 8 Black House
- 9 Knapper's Yard
- T Toilets
- P Children's Play Area

OPEN AIR SECTION

- 1 Daltaine Summer House
- 1a Daltaine Garden
- 2 Knockbain School
- 2a School Garden
- 3 Highland Cottage
- 4 Telephone Kiosk
- 5 Leanach Church
- 6 Wind Generator
- 7 MacPherson's Tailors Shop
- 8 Clockmaker's
- 9 Tweed Shop
- 10 Joiners Workshop

FACILITIES

- 1 Reception
- 2 Audio Visual – Introductory DVD
- 3 Shop
- 4 Café (upper level)
- T Toilets
- P Children's Play Area

PINEWOOD

- 1 Curling Club Hut
- 2 Amphitheatre
- 3 Ardverikie Sawmill
- P Children's Play Area

TOWNSHIP

- 1 Tacksman's House
- 2 Cottar's House
- 3 Weaver's
- 4 Stockman's House
- 5 Kiln Barn
- 6 Exhibition Barn
- 7 Shellings

The Museum's Gardens Gàradh an Taigh Tasgaidh

The Museum uses gardens as a part of its interpretation. These include at Knockbain School, Daluaine Summer House and at Aultlarie Farm House.



The School's garden was added in 2005. The original Knockbain School had a garden, as did many schools in the early 1900s, to teach pupils how to cultivate the ground and grow vegetables and flowers. At that time many families relied upon the produce that they could grow themselves to supplement their provisions. Our school garden still features vegetables and fruit not only to raise awareness of them but to show that it is still possible to 'grow your own'.

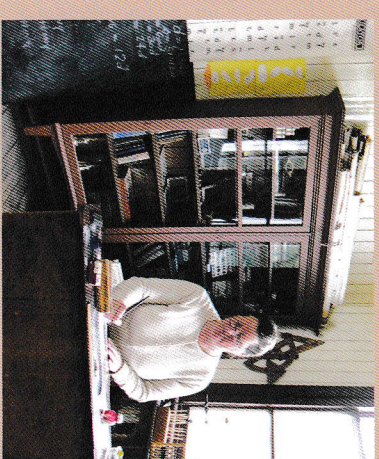
As the Museum continues to develop further gardens will be added as will other areas of cultivation and environmental planting.

Knockbain School Sgoil a' Chnuic Bhàin

From Kirrihill parish near Inverness, this single teacher, timber and corrugated iron "kit" school was erected beside the existing late 1800s stone school overseen by Principal, John N. Macleod. Known as the "Green Hut", it comprised a classroom, cloakroom, teacher's room and toilet. Its original purpose was to accommodate considered deprived, "social overspill" children from the Glasgow area. Soon after both buildings and the pupils were amalgamated.

Interpreted for 1937, the circa forty desk classroom, includes the original cast iron range used both for heating and domestic science classes. There is also the original "Coates of Paisley" glass fronted cupboard as donated to many Scottish schools. On display too is original school equipment, books, maps, school bells, an original Lochgelly tawse ("the strap!") and a card of hardened chewing gum chipped off the desks!

Original Map
Reference:
NH553433
Originally built:
1925
Re-erected: 1999



Leanach Church Eaglais Leanach

Leanach Church was erected as a "Mission Hall" in partnership between the Church of Scotland and the Free Church to fulfill a community need for a place of worship on land that once formed part of Culloden battlefield. The land was rented (ten shillings in 1924) from "Leanach" farmer Alexander Munro. The Church became *redundant* in the 1980s, and so, with the land reverting to its owners, the Museum acquired it.

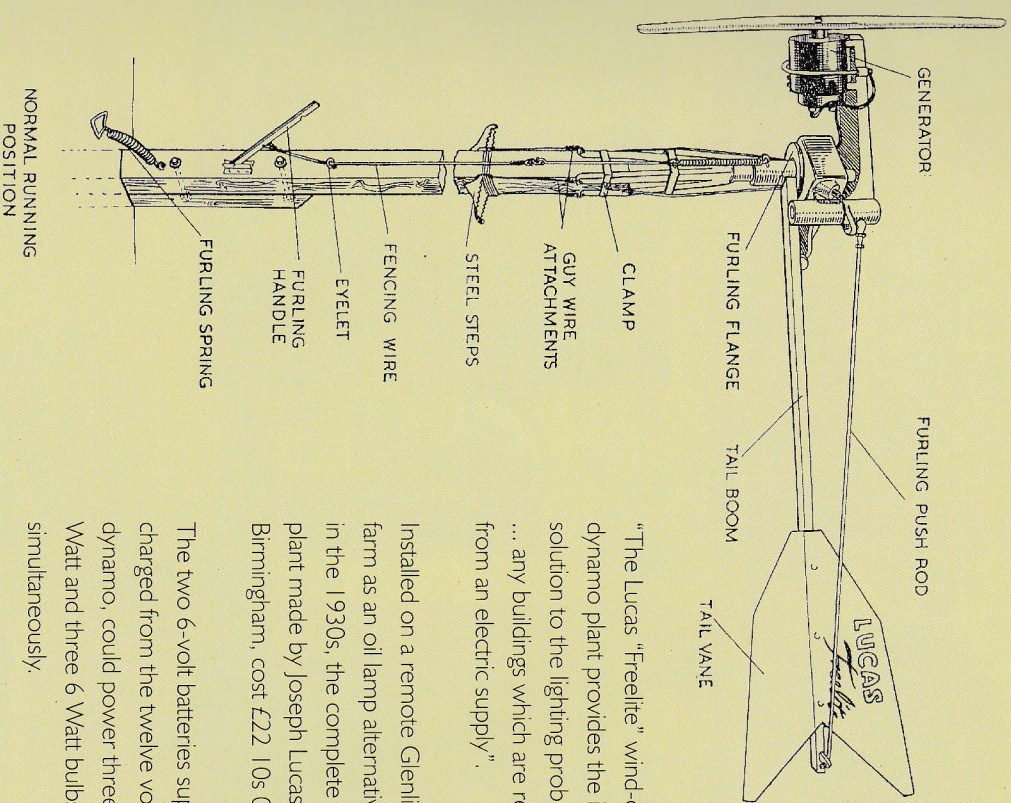
Original Map Reference: NH750451
Originally built: circa 1900
Re-erected: 1987



A timber and corrugated iron clad "kit", Spiers & Co. of Glasgow supplied the building at probably less than £200. The main hall measures 43 feet by 21 feet and the pulpit 7 by 6 feet. Originally there was a hall heating stove and light was by oil lamp. The pedal organ, left, and the communion table are original. The background sounds are "presented" Gaelic psalms commonly associated with the Free Church.

The Wind Generator An Gineadair Gaoithe

"Provides light from the wind"



"The Lucas "Freelite" wind-driven dynamo plant provides the ideal solution to the lighting problem in ... any buildings which are remote from an electric supply".

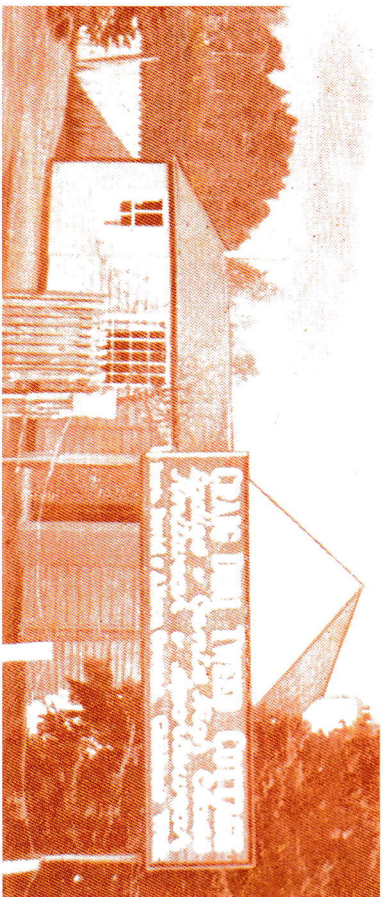
Installed on a remote Glenlivet farm as an oil lamp alternative in the 1930s, the complete plant made by Joseph Lucas Ltd. Birmingham, cost £22 10s 0d.

The two 6-volt batteries supplied, charged from the twelve volt dynamo, could power three 24 Watt and three 6 Watt bulbs simultaneously.

Re-erected: 1998

Craigdhu Tweed Cottage

Bothan Clò Chreag Dhùbh



This building was used as a shop and workshop during the 1950s until Mr and Mrs David Gowans, the owners moved the business in the 1960s to Ivy Cottage on the Main Street of Newtonmore.

Mr Gowans was taught to weave by a local man and produced home spun tweed to sell in the shop along with manufactured goods such as knitwear, wool and tartan. The loom that he used is on display in the shop along with other original fittings and items from the tweed shop business.



Built in the early 1900s as a summer house for the main house of Craigdhu it was known as 'Little Cottage'. Constructed of a timber frame clad with horizontal weather board, the interior is finished in stained lining boards.

We are interpreting the Tweed Shop for the late 1950s.

Original Map

Reference:
NN714992

Originally built:

circa 1900

Re-erected: 2011

MacPherson's Tailor's Shop

Bùth Tailleir Mhic a' Phearsain

From Newtonmore, this small "Shop and Workroom" was constructed by builder, Alexander MacPherson, for his son Donald ("Donally") on his return, wounded, after World War I. Donald was a "Ladies' and Gentlemen's Tailor and Outfitter" who in a local 1929 advertisement promised "Satisfaction Guaranteed" with "Prompt and personal attention to all orders".

During the 1940s, Donald closed the shop and went to work for Shannon's of Greenock. After that, the building became a sheep shelter and latterly a store.



We have recreated the shop and the work room for the late 1930s with replicated fittings. In the workroom, with all the windows for light, only the fireplace is original. The tailor's cast iron stove for heating his irons came from the Grantown on Spey area. All the other fittings, artifacts, and textiles were obtained from a variety of sources.



Original Map

Reference:
NN713986

Originally built:

circa 1918

Re-erected: 2002

D. MacPherson,
Ladies' and Gentlemen's
High-class
TAILOR AND OUTFITTER.
Newtonmore.

⚡

Your Patronage is Solicited.
Satisfaction Guaranteed.

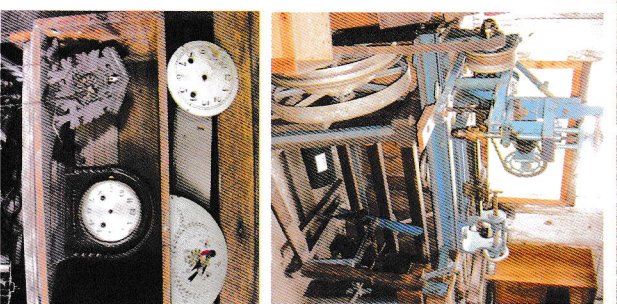
Prompt
and
Personal
Attention
to all
Orders

The Clockmaker's Workshop Bothan-obrach an Uaireadairiche



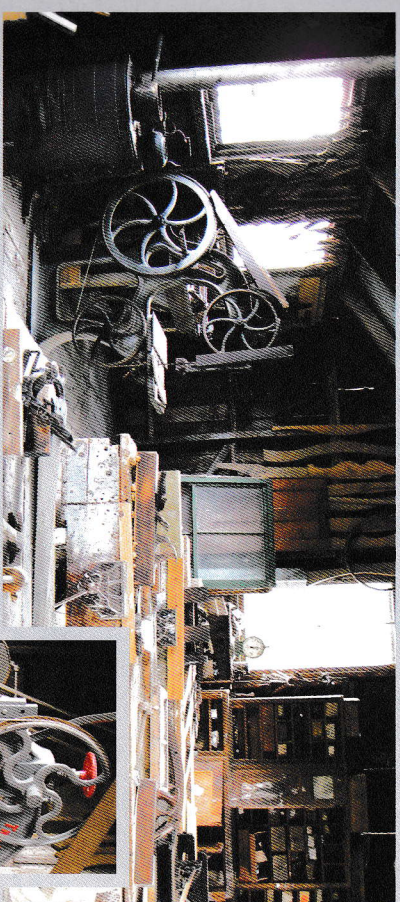
Alexander "Alick" McIntyre lived at Rose Street, Nairn. By occupation, he was a bicycle salesman and repairer working for "Knowles & Cumming" of Nairn for about thirty years. However, early in his life he built at the bottom of his garden "Alick's Shed" to carry out his passion for "horology", the study, construction and repair of clocks as well as to store his comprehensive collection of clock cases, dials and movements.

Alick was an avid inventor, making many of his jigs and machines such as the combined treadle lathe, drill and saw. Note too his "Old" and "New Jones" cross-cut saws including sewing machine and other parts. Other inventions included the shed door's hidden locking mechanism. These and other designs he carefully documented including, for example, the fact that the combined drill was altered for precision on September 5, 1951 and painted blue on the 11th.



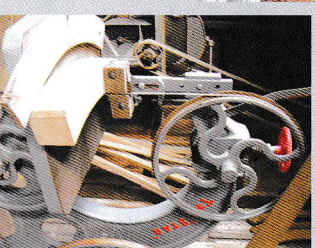
Original Map
Reference:
NH880560
Originally built:
circa 1930s
Re-erected: 1998

The Joiners' Workshop Bothan-obrach an t-saor



Records date this traditional two storey joiners' workshop from King Street, Kingussie, to 1904 when Donald Fraser first paid £5 annual rent. Trading as "D. Fraser & Co. Joiners and Cabinetmakers", he undertook all forms of woodwork from building parts to cart repairs and coffins. Fraser bought the building in 1915. In the 1930s he handed over to Macgillivray and Macpherson who ran it until acquired in 1963 by K. Macrae of Wick. The business ceased in 1996.

We have relocated the main building and re-created the later machine shop for the 1930s. In the former, the ground floor was the timber store and the first floor the workshop. The workshop benches, some tools and many other items are from Fraser's time. The machine shop has a ground floor "Lister" petrol engine for belt driving the first floor machinery, such as the band saw. A paint store is also incorporated within the engine area.



Original Map
Reference:
NH759007
Originally built:
1904
Re-erected: 2002

The Pinewood Coille-ghluithais



The Pinewood's principal trees are not of natural origin, such as the locally surviving remnants of the prehistoric "Caledonian Forest". They are, in fact, the result of deliberate planting intended as a commercial timber crop circa the 1920s. Previously the land had been farmland and latterly part of a ladies golf course.

The trees are mainly "Scots Pine" with some naturally regenerated "Rowan", "Birch" and at the top of the hill (Tom Baigearn) Scots Pine coming up through the "Heather". In and around the main trees the principal ground cover plants are "Blaeberries" (Bilberry).

In the pinewood may be found various lichen, mosses and, at the appropriate times of the year, fungi.

The Pinewood is also home to Red Squirrels and a variety of birds may be seen.

The latter include Buzzards, Coal Tits and the rare Crossbill.

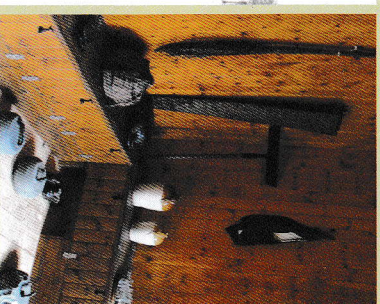
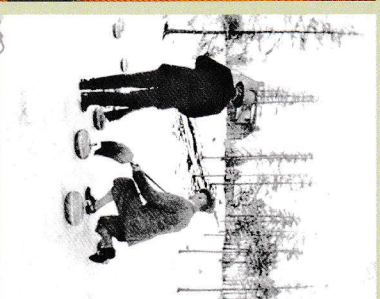
Human life is represented by a Travelling Peoples encampment. Travellers often used the natural environment as a source for their craft raw materials such as heather for pot scrubbers to barter and sell.

The Museum is actively involved in looking after the environment in our care. We regularly review all aspects of our business including recycling and energy saving procedures and welcome suggestions on how we can improve. At Reception and in our café visitors can read our Green Policy and current action plans. The Museum has achieved a Silver Green award through GTBS.

Newtonmore Curling Club Hut Bothan Chomann Croilaidh Bhaile Ùr an t-Sleibh

A winter ice sport, curling, well established in Scotland by the 16th Century, forms part of the Winter Olympics and is still popular world wide today.

At our curling pond we have replicated the original Newtonmore Curling Club hut situated close by at Loch Imrich. Erected from used railway sleepers and dated on the door lintel "19NCC30", the hut is finely finished inside with wall lining boards and personal lockers.



The hut, as has the Museum's, sheltered local people engaging in "bon spiels" or curling matches when the hard winter frosts deeply froze the water. On the ice, teams slid or "delivered" their curling stones, made of turned granite rock, from the "hack" along the 50 yards long rink towards the concentric circles of the "house". The competition was to get closest to the target, often a turned wooden "'bottle", at the house's centre.

In the hut there are a selection of curling stones of different types and ages, bottles and other artifacts.

Ardverikie Estate Sawmill Muileann-sàbhaidh Oighreachd Àird Mhairgìdh



After 1863 Alexander Cameron installed this water powered sawmill machinery next to his meal mill at Craigmore, Nethy Bridge. In 1937, his son Alexander moved to and gradually re-installed the machinery at Ardverikie Estate near Laggan. There, the principal saw power was water via the 12 feet diameter overshot wheel until the 1940s when a paraffin powered Fordson tractor with a pulley drive was also used.

Although the machinery is original we interpreted what we thought the sawmill building looked like as only an image of the building's gable wall remained. Since our re-creation, we now know there was only one central side opening for rolling the logs onto the saw bench.

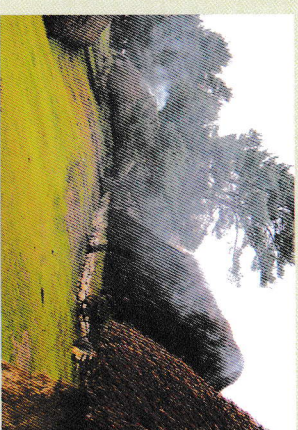
In use until the late 1950s, products such as larch fence posts and rails, pine and oak boards and birch firewood from the Estate's own timber came "off the saw". Most of this was for use on the estate.

Nethy Map
Reference:
NJ01 9209
Originally built:
1860s; re-built 1937
Re-erected: 1999

"Baile Gean" Township Baile Gean

Defined as a community of rural tenants, our "Township" (Gaelic: "The Township of Goodwill") is based on the original larger Badenoch settlement of Easter Raitts, situated high up the Spey valley side above the current hamlet of Lynchat. Our early 1700s township recreation is founded on archaeological excavation, both physical and documentary research and practical experimentation.

Raitts, the principal settlement prior to the 1790s "planned town" of Kingussie, was on a pack horse and drove route that crossed the River Spey to an equivalent township of Ruthven on the south side. Although there is evidence of prehistoric activity at the site, the surviving township remains are thought to be medieval through to the early 1800s.



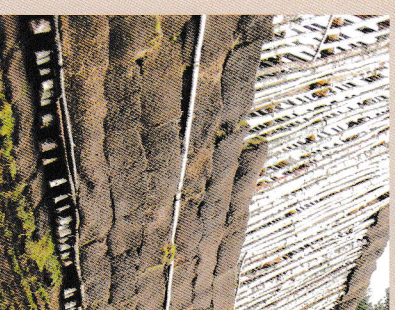
Building Construction

Cur ri Cheile Togalaichean

Most of the buildings comprise the following elements, wholly created from natural or organic materials:

- A foundation of stones to create a low dry stone wall on which to construct the main turf wall.
- The "cruck" timber frame where the paired frame "couples" form both wall posts and principal rafters. Individual couples may be cut from one arched timber or formed of peg jointed pieces. Horizontal "collars" and "tie beams" give strength to each frame
- Roof timbers. Longitudinal "purlins" which join each frame to create an internal "boy". "Cabers" (common rafters) which lie on the purlins to support the roof
- The Walls of either solid turf, alternating layers of stone and turf; dry (no binding mortar) stone; or where the thickness of a turf wall is reduced and supported by an internal woven wattle paneling (Creel) or vertical timbers.
- The roof under a layer of turf laid grass side down on top of the cabers.
- The thatch of locally collected vegetation such as heather, broom, bracken or reeds. Heather thatch predominated. Straw, unless very plentiful, would be kept for feeding the inhabitant's livestock.

Again, as a generalization, most domestic building doorways faced south to maximize the heat and light from the sun. Some buildings had no windows and smoke from a central hearth escaped through an opening in the roof.



"Baile Gean" Township

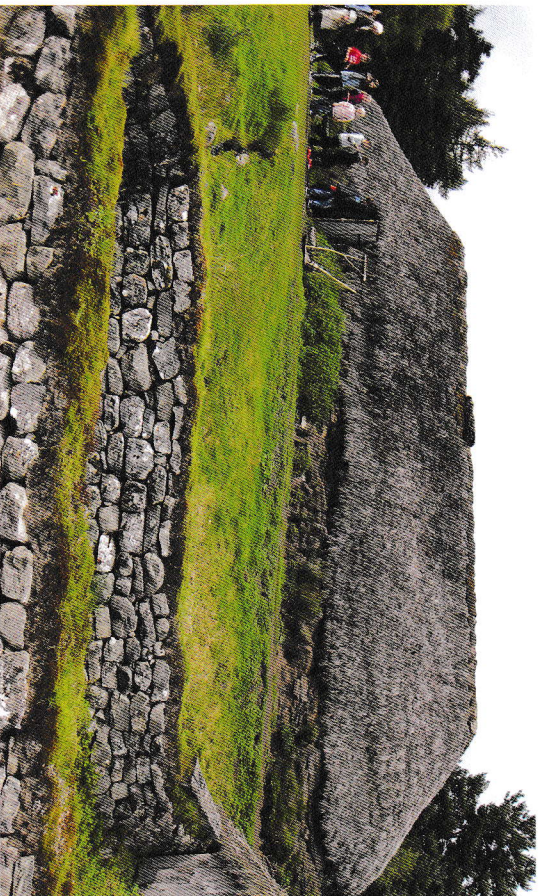
Survey of the Raitts site has revealed over thirty main structures. These include dwellings both with and without integral "byres" (cattle bays), barns, corn drying "kiln barns", enclosures including possibly for the overnight holding of cattle being driven south, and the "head dyke", a wall of alternating layers of turf and stone that defined the township boundary.

We have used part of the "footprint" of Raitts, indicated by such as surviving stone foundations, doorways, cobbling, byre drains and domestic hearths, on which to base our re-creation. Where we have re-created a structure it is faithful to the revealed archaeological evidence other than our overall township plan which is a mirror image of the original owing to our having to accommodate the Museum site's landscape.

The following pages will explain the construction and interpretation of principal structures recreated at "Baile Gean", the Gaelic name we have given our township, as well as give an insight into the life of the inhabitants.

The Tacksman's House Taigh Fear a' Bhaile

The largest "Baile Gear" domestic structure erected, comprising seven cruck frames to create six internal plus two end bays, we have interpreted this heather thatched house as the "tacksman's" or principal tenant's house. Usually the tacksman negotiated, collected and paid the rent as well as liaised on the behalf of the other township inhabitants with the local laird, their landlord. As such we have equated the size of the tacksmen's dwelling with his community status and possible better wealth.



We have interpreted this as a "cree" house as the more involved wattle wall construction increases the internal space. Inside, to the left of the front door, is the cattle byre with its cobbled floor and drain. To the right, behind the wattle partition is the central living area with an open hearth below a "hanging lum" (chimney). Adjacent are the "box beds", the family's sleeping accommodation. At the far end of the building, this is interpreted as the "guid room" (good room) for guests, possibly births, deaths and marriages. The back door is not accurate having been introduced to comply with building regulations.

The Cottar's House Taigh a' Choitear

This dwelling, recreated in 2008, replaces the 'feal' or turf walled house, the first Township building to be recreated in 1996. The latter building, being a part of the experimental archeology process, was not perfect but lasted with repairs until 2007.



A photograph (shown) taken circa the 1920s by the Museum's founder Dr. I. F. Grant was used to inform the new construction. The 'cruck' frames were made closer together and lighter; the turf wall, supported internally by timber, only sits on the stone foundation; and the roof was made steeper to increase the rain shedding efficiency of the heather thatch.

The house is interpreted as belonging to a cottar, a tenant who also cultivated some land. The building comprises a main living area with a central hearth and box beds that open towards the hearth and an internal cattle byre that might have accommodated about four of the small, traditional black 'kyloe' (cattle). Note the covered 'y' shaped gully that both takes urine away from the byre yet takes ventilation directly to the fireplace.



The Barn An Sabhal

Set at right angles to the rear of the Cottar's House is a barn. This building has been constructed with wattle walls to allow air through to help sheaves of oats or 'bere' (an early form of barley) to dry.



The opposing barn doors are to take advantage of a cross draught created by the prevailing winds to assist the separation of threshed grain from the chaff during the winnowing process.

Within the barn may be seen some replica implements including a flail that would have been used for threshing, a 'caschrom' or foot plough which would have been used to cultivate the land and a 'fauchter spode' that would have been used to pare turf for use in wall building and covering roofs.

The barn is partially thatched with bracken. This would not have been as common in the 1700s as now. However, it does create a very efficient thatch.

The Weaver's House Taigh a' Bhreabadair

This two chamber, turf walled and thatched with local Irish Marsh reed dwelling is interpreted as a craftsman's, a weaver's house because it has no byre. We have considered that the weaver created, traded and sold his cloth for food and other goods rather than raise cattle and crops for his living.

The weaver's loom is a replica of a 1700s example held in the Museum's collections. It is capable of producing a complex weave, which when coupled with different vegetable colour dyed yarns, could have resulted in not just plain weaves but also sought after tartan plaids. Note the single small window intended to throw light onto the loom.

The living chamber, like the other dwellings has an open hearth for heat and cooking. In this house rather than box beds, we have recreated a bed platform of turves with a central partition and storage loft above. On such a platform, straw filled mattresses and blankets, perhaps from the weaver's own loom, might have been laid on a layer of soft heather for the night.



The Stockman's House Taigh Fear na Stoc

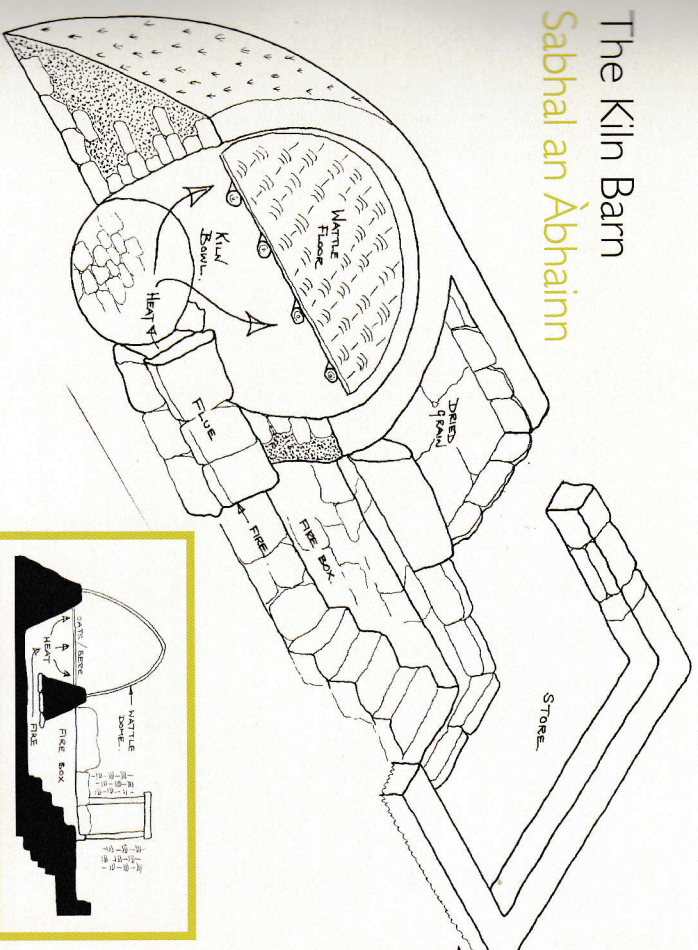


Cut into the slope behind to lessen wall construction, this heather thatched dwelling includes building using both dry stone and alternating layers of stone and turf.

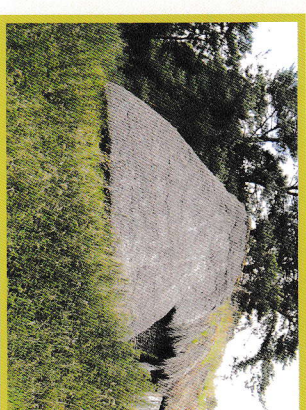
When first recreated, this building was given the name "The Pigmans" because of the cobbled, stone walled run and pens associated with it. Contrary to myths, pigs were kept in parts of the Highlands. However, when we put two young pigs in the run, they virtually destroyed it. On this basis we now believe the run was probably for goats. Goats, important to township communities, were kept in their thousands by Highlanders being a good source of both milk and meat. The meat was also believed to have medicinal properties.

Internally, having no associated cattle byre, the living quarters are interpreted simply as if the dwellers are poorer members of the community. There is an open hearth and minimal furniture including no formal bed. The emphasis has been put on the principal inhabitant's possible role as the community's livestock keeper such as goat or cattle herd.

The Kiln Barn Sabhal an Àbhainn



The "kiln barn" is a wattle walled ventilated barn building with a peat fired corn (oats, bere or barley) drying kiln and stone slab threshing floor. Our example is based on one excavated at Glen Banchor, Newtonmore (Grid Ref: NN690997) rather than the unexcavated Raitis kiln barns.



In use, a small peat fire was set at the mouth of the flue at the bottom of the stone fire box. Draught drew the heat through the flue to the bottom of the two metre deep kiln bowl. Here the heat rose to dry sheaves or ears of corn lying on a wattle floor, supported on joists called "simmers" at the top of the large stone built bowl.

Barn or stack stored in the sheaf after harvest, the corn was dried as required prior to threshing, winnowing (sorting the grain from the chaff) and grinding into meal. It is possible that such kilns were used to create malted barley flavoured with "peat reek" (smoky peat taste) as part of the, including illegal, whisky making process.