



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

Property in Care (PIC) ID: PICO44

Designations: Listed Building (LB39866, Category A)

Taken into State care: 1998 (Ownership)

Last Reviewed: 2020

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SUNNYBRAE COTTAGE



We continually revise our Statements of Significance, so they may vary in length, format and level of detail. While every effort is made to keep them up to date, they should not be considered a definitive or final assessment of our properties.



© Historic Environment Scotland 2020

You may re-use this information (excluding logos and images) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated.

To view this licence, visit <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3> or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this document should be sent to us at:

Historic Environment Scotland
Longmore House
Salisbury Place
Edinburgh
EH9 1SH

+44 (0) 131 668 8600
www.historicenvironment.scot

You can download this publication from our website at
www.historicenvironment.scot

Cover image: © Crown Copyright HES

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SUNNYBRAE COTTAGE

CONTENTS

1	SUMMARY	2
1.1	Introduction	2
1.2	Statement of significance	2
2	ASSESSMENT OF VALUES	4
2.1	Background	4
2.11	Pitlochrie	4
2.12	Sunnybrae	5
2.13	Description	5
2.14	Key vernacular elements	7
2.14a	Couples/Cuppils	7
2.14b	Thatch & roofing materials	9
2.15	Development of the cottage	10
2.15a	Phase 1, 18th century	10
2.15b	Phase 2, early 19th century	11
2.15c	Phase 3, late 19th century	12
2.15d	Phase 4, mid - later 20th century	12
2.15e	Phase 5, early 21st century	13
2.2	Evidential values	13
2.3	Historical values	14
2.4	Architectural and artistic values	15
2.5	Landscape and aesthetic values	16
2.6	Natural heritage values	16
2.7	Contemporary/use values	17
3	MAJOR GAPS IN UNDERSTANDING	17
4	ASSOCIATED PROPERTIES	18
5	KEYWORDS	18
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	18
	APPENDICES	
	Appendix 1: Timeline of Occupiers, 1841 - Present Day	20

I. SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

Sunnybrae Cottage stands at the western end of Pitlochry's main street - Atholl Road - at its junction with Larchwood Road. It is a small, single-storey rubble-built whitewashed cottage, with a red corrugated iron roof. Its earliest phases are thought to date to the mid- to late-18th century, with a more modern addition to the rear containing a kitchen and bathroom. Though it appears quite ordinary, the cottage retains some rare vernacular features only apparent on the inside, including its original timber frame and thatched roof.

The cottage lies within rubble boundary walls surrounding a small garden to south and east, and the plot is raised above the level of Atholl Road. It was acquired by Historic Scotland and taken into State care in 1998. It is currently Category A listed¹.

After acquisition, the cottage was subject to intensive archaeological investigation and recording, which included the removal of some modern finishes, and a programme of conservation works to repair key elements of the structure. It currently (2020) remains in this part-stripped state with many of the key aspects of interest exposed to view; it has not been "restored back" to a particular period.

The cottage is not generally open to the public, but it is regularly opened for pre-arranged visits, for example for specialist tours and on Doors Open Days². These events are generally very well attended.

1.2 Statement of Significance

Sunnybrae Cottage is important because it preserves evidence of the development of a small-scale domestic dwelling of a type once very common throughout Scotland, but now increasingly rare. The extensive archaeological investigation and recording project has allowed a detailed picture of its development and use to be built up. It can thus tell a story relevant to the lives of many 'ordinary' people from the 18th century, and allow visitors first-hand experience of original physical features and spaces. For Sunnybrae, the primary importance is perhaps in the telling of this developing and ongoing narrative, with all its quirks and layers of alteration

¹ For Listing Description please see:

<https://portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/LB39866>

² For access information please see: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/sunnybrae-cottage/>

and modification. It is not currently presented as a restoration back to a particular time period, but as a site for investigation.

Key aspects of the site's significance include:

- The survival of original construction features, such as the ash 'couples' which support the roof, the roof timbers and layers of thatch. Survival of these features is becoming extremely rare, as such buildings are either modernised or fall into dereliction.
- The relatively complex development of the cottage over time, as interpreted by the archaeological project, stands as a representative of how such houses were modified by their inhabitants to suit changing circumstances. This value depends largely upon the quality of research undertaken, and the sharing of the story of the place.
- Sunnybrae is relatively rare among sites managed by HES because of its vernacular nature, small size and relatively late date. Among the HES portfolio it is particularly valuable as a demonstration of the lives and homes of 'ordinary' people. It is also one of a small group of vernacular buildings in disparate locations which are managed by various agencies as heritage sites. It should be considered within this grouping.
- Some limited understanding of the stories of individual occupants is possible. There are hence stories to tell which mirror the development of Pitlochry from agricultural and manufacturing town through to a tourist centre.
- Sunnybrae is notable within its local context for its association with the Stewart of Shierglass murder. It also has some streetscape presence within Pitlochry, marking the western end of the old town centre.

The following paragraphs summarise the development and history of this property and provide a more detailed discussion of its various heritage values and significance.



Figure 1: Sunnybrae Cottage location plan, including Property in Care boundary. For illustration purposes only.

2. ASSESSMENT OF VALUES

2.1 Background

2.1.1 Pitlochry

The village of Pitlochry developed from a scatter of three fermtouns identified in the early 18th century as Nether Lettoch, Midd Clauchrie and Pitclauchrie³. Sunnybrae is located close to the site of Nether Lettoch.

When General Wade oversaw the construction of the Great North Road in 1727, he took the route through Pitclauchrie bypassing the much older settlement of Moulin from which the parish takes its name. Moulin is located on higher ground to the north of Pitlochry and is the site of the early parish church.

³ Liddell, C. Pitlochry, *Heritage of a Highland District Perth* 1994, p63

With the advent of the military road, Pitlochry became a somewhat more significant place, and in the 19th century it became more prosperous with mills and distilleries creating employment. It also developed its reputation as a holiday resort, especially after a visit by Queen Victoria in 1844, and the coming of the railway in 1863, with several hotels and large villas being constructed.

The character of Pitlochry today is very much that of a tourist centre, with its proximity to the A9 and the main railway line making it an easily reachable destination.

2.12 Sunnybrae

The name Sunnybrae is derived from a large Victorian villa⁴ named Sunnybrae built in 1871, for which the much older cottage became servant's accommodation. Prior to this it was part of the Faskally estate. As might be expected, there are no firm documentary or graphic sources that allow the early history of the site to be detailed. By the mid-19th century the picture becomes clearer, with both early Ordnance Survey maps and Census records allowing a picture of the cottage and its occupants to emerge.

There is a strong local tradition that in the later 18th century the cottage was a "dram shop", and in 1775 was the site of a notorious murder (see [section 2.3](#)).

2.13 Description

The cottage is described in great detail along with its various building phases in the published Historic Scotland Research Report: *Sunnybrae Cottage, Pitlochry*⁵ (hereafter *Research Report*). The following paragraphs describe the cottage as it stands in 2020, with its historical development outlined in subsequent sections.

The cottage occupies a rectangular piece of garden ground set about one metre above the present road level at the junction of Pitlochry's main street and Larchwood Road. It is single storey and built of whitewashed rubble. It has a simple pitched roof covered in corrugated iron, with chimney stacks at each gable. The ground plan is a simple rectangle with a more modern outshot extension to the rear elevation containing the former

⁴ The villa is situated to the north west of the cottage, and is privately owned.

⁵ The full research report is accessible at:

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationid=d576c4b8-ecf1-4e7b-aef7-a5c300c1bb7e>

bathroom and kitchen. The front elevation has two small windows flanking a central doorway: while it appears symmetrical, it is not strictly so.



Figure 2: Plan of Sunnybrae Cottage © Historic Environment Scotland

The interior is presently (2020) partly stripped out and can therefore appear confusing to visitors until the intricacies of the place are explained. When HES's predecessor body, HS, took ownership of the cottage in 1998 it had recently been occupied and the interior represented the culmination of various upgrading and redecoration projects common to most older houses. The interior was largely plasterboard with modern emulsion paint and wallpaper, with all the normal services that might be expected, such as electricity, plumbing, heating, a bathroom and kitchen. However, the conservation approach taken by HS was to treat the cottage as an archaeological exercise in peeling back the various layers to reveal, in glimpses, the anatomy of the building. The cottage is effectively dissected into sections allowing visitors to see the structure from wall core and structural timbers through various phases of masonry and timber linings to accumulated layers of wallpaper. The interior of the cottage therefore resembles a sort of building site and in this has a very different character to most of the properties within the care of HES.

The very careful "dissection" of the structure undertaken as an archaeological project has allowed a detailed set of interpretations of the development of the site to be produced. This has indicated that despite its small size, Sunnybrae has a building history just as complex as many a larger structure.



Figure 3: View of the partially stripped interior of Sunnybrae Cottage; the environmental conditions of which are closely monitored. © Rob Thomson

2.14 Key vernacular elements

While the whole of the cottage represents a series of vernacular details and building techniques, two stand out as rare survivals: the timber “couples/cuppils” and the thatch roof.

2.14a Couples/Cuppills

The key structural mechanism of the cottage consists of two pairs of timbers which carry the load of the roof; the walls themselves are not load-bearing. These pairs of timbers are known as couples, or in old Scots, *cuppills*, meaning a pair or couple of timbers used to support a roof. The term is first recorded in Scotland in the 1400s. There are various

spellings⁶ and for simplicity, in this document, the term “couple” is used to avoid confusion. The nearest English equivalent is “cruck”, and couples of the Scots type were initially thought to be primitive forms of English crucks. However, as the *Research Report* points out there are significant differences in the structural principles between the two systems.

The *Research Report* outlines the particular structural properties of the Sunnybrae couples, where the pairs of timbers are slightly angled to increase their stability, producing a slightly parallelogram plan. In this more organic conception, squared-off right angles, usually taken as a mark of advanced building, are not what is aimed for. Stability is obtained by careful positioning of the couples either by the use of a ‘parallelogram plan’ or by slightly angling the couples in a way that is barely discernible. There is no use of cross bracing members as in cruck framed structures. These are identified as the main differences between the Scots couples and the English cruck frame system.

At Sunnybrae, several building phases can be discerned over the course of about 250 years, but the likelihood is that the two pairs of couples have survived from the very first structure.

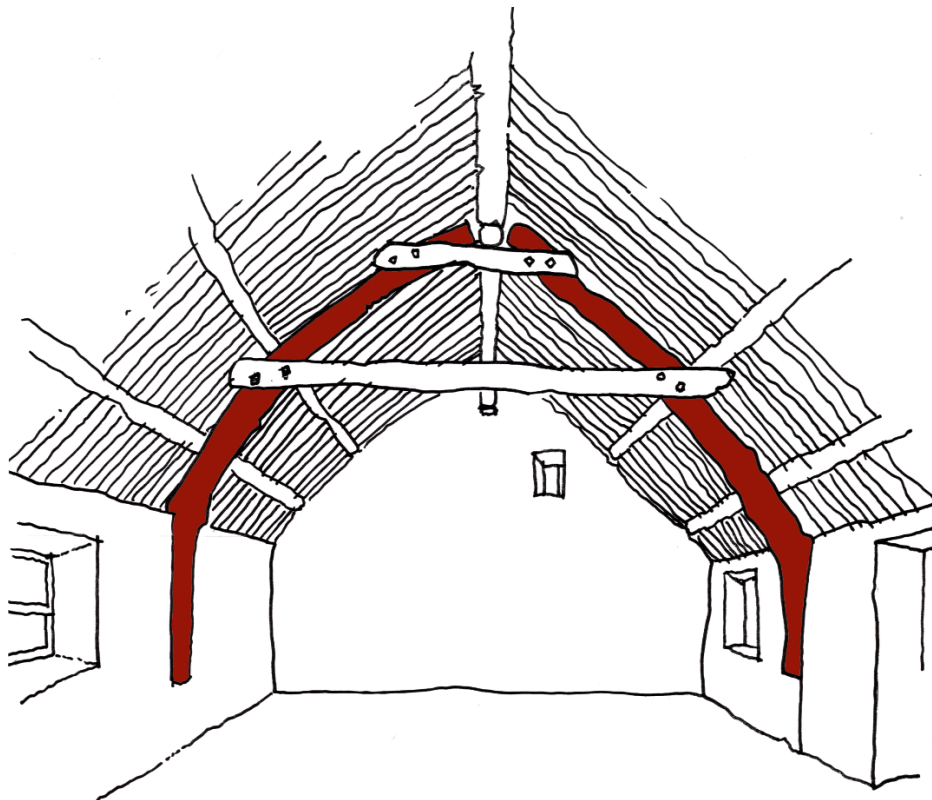


Figure 4: Illustration of ‘couple’ roof construction within Sunnybrae Cottage © Crown Copyright: HES.

⁶ See *Dictionary of the Scots Language*. 2004. Scottish Language Dictionaries Ltd. Accessed 22 Jul 2020 <https://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/cuppill_v> cuppill; cuppil; cuppal; cuppail



Figure 5: Detail of apex of east couple, with visible pegging © Crown Copyright HES

2.14b Thatch and roofing materials

The archaeological approach taken in the *Research Report* included a detailed analysis of the thatching materials used, and of the underlying timbers.

The couples are ash wood, each pair being the two halves of one tree; there are short ash wood collars and oak pegs which join them to the couples near the apex. The long principal beam or 'roof tree' is of Scots pine and the cabers are birch or pine. On the cabers is laid a layer of turf which forms the sub-stratum of the thatch roof. The initial roof covering seems to have been rye straw, with various layers or repairs and re-thatchings over the years including broom, oat straw and bracken. Broom was used particularly at the eaves and ridge, perhaps because it was the toughest material.

All of this material was preserved under the corrugated iron roof, believed to have been installed around 1870.



Figure 6: Detail of thatch, preserved beneath the corrugated iron roof © Crown Copyright: HES.

2.15 Development of the cottage

The *Research Report* identifies four main phases of development. Inevitably, the earlier phases are least certain as the evidence available is incomplete. However, the following paragraphs outline the main phases as far as it is understood from the 18th century through to the 20th century.

2.15a Phase 1, 18th century

It has not been possible to identify a precise date for the initial construction of the cottage, but sometime in the mid to later 18th century is likely. Features from this period are the couples⁷, collars and wall foundations; some of the cabers and lower levels of turf/thatch may also date to this phase. At this date it is likely that the cottage may have been a byre-dwelling, utilising the west end as the living end, and a sleeping loft

⁷ The couples have been sampled for dendrochronological potential, but as yet there is not a sufficient chronology of native ash wood to allow comparison and dating.

above the livestock at the east end. There was likely a central hearth with smoke-hole offset above, alternatively the smoke may have filtered out through the thatch. The original walling material may have been turf laid on stone footings; probably these walls were of considerable thickness and there may have been no window openings.

2.15b Phase 2, early 19th century

The second phase saw the replacement of the thick turf walls with stone walls, with windows provided either side of the door. The cottage assumed the appearance of an “Improvement⁸” dwelling with whitewashed stone walls⁹ bound with a clay mortar. The upper parts of the gable walls may have been turf built. The cottage retained its thatched roof; the use of broom in the thatch is believed to be a repair of this phase. Chimney stacks were added at each gable end to fit in with the standard appearance of an Improved cottage (note the stack to the west gable was false, see footnote 10 below). There is some evidence that a structure of some sort was built against the west gable; this may perhaps have housed cattle or ponies previously kept in the byre end of the cottage.

Internally the cottage was also much modified, being divided into two rooms. The west room accommodated the kitchen/living room, retaining an earth floor but with the hearth repositioned to the west gable against which a hanging chimney¹⁰ was built. The east room, or bedroom, had a suspended timber floor, some timber wall linings and a timber ceiling. Box beds were arranged along the north wall. The east gable contained a flue for the new fireplace. The internal walls were whitewashed and successive layers of newspaper was used to line the walls; these have yielded dates of

⁸ The term *Improvement* refers to the practice from the mid-18th century onwards by which landlords sought to maximise profits by instituting new farming systems. This was not confined to agriculture but was a wholesale revolution in the countryside whereby traditional practises and forms were discarded in favour of new modes seen as rational, efficient and modern. In terms of housing, many landlords sought to improve the condition of tenants and provide “improved dwellings”. These usually followed a simple pattern: single storey, three-bay symmetrical cottages with slate roofs, gable chimneys and sash windows. The older vernacular cottage forms continued to co-exist, but became rarer, and many were upgraded to the Improvement pattern.

⁹ It is possible that the rear wall was not built in stone but was built from timber “backs” or offcuts from sawn logs; a common vernacular feature.

¹⁰ A hanging chimney or ‘hingin lum’ is a canopy chimney set against the gable wall to gather in smoke from the fire; sometimes food could be hung within the chimney to cure or smoke. It is important to note that this arrangement meant there was no flue within the gable wall (as in the east room at Sunnybrae) but saw the fire lit against the gable wall. The chimney stack above the west gable is therefore “false” and must have been built purely for the appearance of symmetry, the smoke escaped instead from a chimney outlet butted up against the “Improved” chimney stack.

1852 and 1861. The likely date of the Phase 2 work is therefore estimated around 1840.

2.15c Phase 3, late 19th century

The principal feature of this phase was the adoption of corrugated iron for the roof covering. This necessitated some modification of the gable walls and eaves to accommodate this. Materials such as brick, and lime mortar were used during this phase. Externally, projecting stone footings were hacked back to give a neater appearance.

Internally there was a general “squaring off” and straightening of the cottage to more closely fit “Improved” patterns and allow timber floors and timber-lined walls throughout. A mid-room was created between the west (kitchen) and east room. In addition to newspaper layers of wallpaper were used to line walls.

A brick chimney breast was constructed at the west gable in place of the hanging chimney. Smoke collected in a flue exiting through a brick chimney butting against the earlier false stack.

The dating of this phase of works is believed to be around 1871, possibly coinciding with the acquisition of the site by Arthur Anderson. He is known to have had an interest in improving living conditions for ordinary people and had recently completed the construction of Sunnybrae House for himself.

2.15d Phase 4, mid - later 20th century

The most significant changes to the cottage in this phase began in 1945 when it became, for the first time, an owner-occupied property. A lean-to extension to the rear was built to house a kitchen and bathroom. As part of this work a slapping was made through the north wall, and the configuration of the mid-room altered. Gradual upgrades were undertaken over the rest of the 20th century, including the installation of modern services, electricity and gas-fired central heating; lining with plasterboard and further interior decoration.

A range of timber sheds and “chalets” were erected in the garden ground (the timber structures surviving when HS acquired the site have been disassembled and are in safe storage off-site).

2.15e Phase 5, early 21st century

This phase includes acquisition by Historic Scotland in 1998 and the undertaking of careful stripping out, survey and analysis of the building, followed by repairs and ongoing maintenance. Material such as wallpaper and thatch samples are preserved within the collections of HES along with some small finds.

2.2 Evidential values

The evidential value of Sunnybrae is very high, partly because of its rare surviving details and relatively complex building history, but also for the degree to which these have been recorded, analysed and studied. While archaeological excavation and recording of domestic-scale early/pre-Improvement structures is relatively widespread, these are often field remains rather than upstanding roofed buildings.

Similarly, taking an archaeological approach to “disassembling” a building rather than a “preserve as found” approach is relatively rare in the case of heritage sites. Finally, to study a small vernacular structure such as Sunnybrae in such detail is itself a rare event. While there have been examples of detailed survey and recording (e.g. Auchtavan, Torthorwald, Cottown, Moirlannich, Arnol) of upstanding vernacular structures in the 1980s – 2000s, these were generally linked to retaining existing “historic” interiors or to adaptive re-use projects. Whereas at Sunnybrae, only fragments remain of what would be considered “historically interesting” interior features.

Sunnybrae therefore provides the visitor with a rare (if not unique) experience of a once commonplace vernacular type ‘from the inside out’ with all the various layers of structure and alteration laid bare. The physical evidence is there to be seen and experienced at first-hand, rather than as documents, drawings or video recording. Fragments of surviving wallpaper and paint scrapes add to this sense of peeling back the layers of time.

Historical documents, and oral history help ‘populate’ the cottage and put it in the context of 18th – 20th century Pitlochry and society. The *Research Report* collects this evidence together, and there is probably more scope for investigation of local privately-held archives to yield additional evidence.

There is potential for further archaeological examination of the wider site, including gaining more understanding of the former outbuildings, and also to review potential for dendrochronological dating as chronologies of, for example, ash, improve.

The ongoing monitoring of internal environmental conditions at Sunnybrae (see Figure 3) has some value in adding to our understanding of the conservation needs of this kind of structure.

2.3 Historical values

The historical value of Sunnybrae is primarily in its capacity to demonstrate past ways of life, and specifically the domestic conditions of more ordinary families. From the 1841 census onwards there is some potential to identify families and occupations and to gain some insight into the lives and social standing of Sunnybrae's inhabitants. For the 20th century there is more evidence that can directly link people to aspects of the structure (e.g. the kitchen/bathroom extension, and Sunnybrae's use as Bed and Breakfast accommodation).

Again, the rarity and importance of this lies in the combination of exposed physical evidence, the degree of public access and the research that can illuminate this history. Many houses of similar date exist which can tell comparable tales of occupation; far fewer will retain the rare vernacular features known to those historic occupants; and fewer still will be available for research and public access, with the intention to preserve the physical features for the future.

Within its geographical context, Sunnybrae is of importance in Pitlochry as probably the oldest surviving house in the town, and also for the association to the Stewart of Shierglas murder.

Local tradition holds that in 1767 Sunnybrae was the site of the fatal stabbing of John Stewart of Bonskeid by his brother-in-law Donald Stewart of Shierglass. The event took place to the west end of Pitlochry and while the tradition is strong that Sunnybrae was the location, there is nothing to substantiate this. The Scots Magazine of that year reports:

letter from Pitlochry in Athol, Oct 2

...a most tragical affair happened here about one o'clock this morning. Several gentlemen having met at the house of James Stewart, vintner in the place, some dispute unhappily arose between Capt. John Stewart of Bonskeid and Donald Stewart of Shierglass, when the latter, suddenly plunging his knife into the body of Bonskeid, killed him on the spot. Shierglass immediately made his escape. In the scuffle his under-lip was cut through with his own knife.¹¹

¹¹

https://books.google.co.uk/books?redir_esc=y&id=11wAAAAAYAAJ&q=Bonskeid#v=onepage&q=Bonskeid&f=false Scots Magazine 1767 vol xxix, p498

Donald Stewart was indicted for murder but absconded, apparently fleeing to Holland to escape arrest.

In general though, the owners and occupants of the cottage are not in themselves particularly noteworthy in a national or regional context. But they are important for the light they shed on the story of the cottage and the life they bring to it, especially in relation to the known historical development of Pitlochry. They mirror the development of Pitlochry from agricultural settlement, through mill workers and later gardeners employed to take care of the Sunnybrae House gardens, the development reflecting Pitlochry's emergence as a tourist centre.

There is potential to capitalise on connections to Gaelic language and culture as the Census reports show most of the occupants to have been Gaelic speakers. Additionally, many of the terms for traditional building features and techniques are Gaelic or have Gaelic origin.

The use of the cottage in the 1950s as a Bed and Breakfast is perhaps most vividly brought to life with oral histories and memories. The then owner, Mrs Jean MacDonald, provided B&B in the mid-room of the house and in specially constructed chalets in the garden. Many of her guests were lorry drivers as the main road through Pitlochry was at that time the main A9 road northbound.

2.4 Architectural and artistic values

Sunnybrae is important for what it helps us understand about the technical aspects of vernacular construction, and for the high degree of surviving original and early features.

As part of the development of the *Research Report*, the technical aspects of the couples and their slightly offset bracing was studied in detail: this allowed a better understanding of couple construction more broadly. It underlined the differences between this system and conventional cruck construction, allowing the Scottish couple construction to be re-evaluated as distinct and legitimate rather than as a naïve or “poor relation” of the cruck.

The survival of early vernacular features (as outlined in 2.1.4) is relatively rare; particularly aspects such as the timber and thatch elements. A key aspect of the Sunnybrae project was the opportunity to study and conserve the thatched roof and its underlying structure. The *Research Report* effectively provided an archaeology of the thatch, allowing an understanding of different repair schemes and materials to be identified.

Through the research work undertaken it is possible to reconstruct the interior layouts of the cottage over time, including some aspects of fixed

furniture, such as box beds. Once common features such as the layers of newspaper used to line walls, and the different types of timber linings are now all rare as survivals and it is relatively unusual for such features to be displayed and interpreted to the public.

The *Research Report* also placed Sunnybrae in a wider context of Perthshire vernacular building allowing a much better understanding of these building practices.

A further aspect of interest is the way in which the early cottage was “squared-up” and straightened to more closely approximate the ideal of the typical 18th/19th century “Improved” type of cottage. The type is universal throughout Scotland: a single storey three-bay symmetrical cottage with central door. At Sunnybrae modifications included practical improvements such as the replacement of thick turf walls with thinner stone walls, provision of windows and chimneys, and the covering of the thatch roof with corrugated iron. It is also interesting to note that some modification to conform to the Improvement norm was primarily aesthetic, for instance the false chimney at the west gable.

2.5 Landscape and aesthetic values

Though small in scale, Sunnybrae Cottage does make a considerable contribution to the Pitlochry streetscape. It is known as the oldest house in the town, and its position at the corner with Larchwood Road in some way marks the north end of the “old” main street of the town characterised by houses and shops set on the street. Beyond it lie a series of villas and larger houses set back from the main road.

Aesthetically the whitewashed walls and red corrugated iron roof are generally thought attractive, with an old-world charm. Internally however, conventional aesthetics is not a key value, though most people are impressed by the couples and the thatch roof. The appearance is currently that of a building site rather than a finished house or a “presented” visitor attraction. That said, most visitors are fascinated by the experience of being inside the house and many can relate to it in terms of memories of houses of parents or grandparents, or indeed to house improvement projects they may be familiar with.

2.6 Natural heritage values

At the time of writing (August 2020) the site was not subject to any special natural heritage designations. The single storey building is surrounded by a small area of amenity grassland.. There is little natural interest associated with the cottage grounds, the thatched roof of the

cottage, however is an excellent habitat for invertebrates, and bats are known to be active around the cottage.

2.7 Contemporary/use values

There has not been a formal study of how Sunnybrae is perceived by local and visiting communities. However, the initial impetus to involve HS in the future of the cottage came from a local heritage group, and the cottage features in guidebooks and information about the town. The Heritage Trust information board positioned by the gate recounts the story of the Stewart murder, which is always a point of interest.

The exterior of the cottage and information boards are easily accessible, but interior visits are infrequent. They tend to occur in conjunction with the Doors Open Day scheme, but bespoke tours are also available for groups who contact HES. Groups who do visit are usually very appreciative and are fascinated by the stories that such a small building can tell.

The cottage is particularly valued by special interest groups such as vernacular building enthusiasts, and also by those with an interest in Pitlochry's history.

3. MAJOR GAPS IN UNDERSTANDING

- It has not yet been possible to identify a precise date for the initial construction of the cottage. The couples have been sampled for dendrochronological potential, but as yet there is not a sufficient chronology of native ash wood to allow comparison and dating. This should be reviewed as chronologies advance.
- The surrounding garden ground deserves further study. The timber sheds which occupied the ground were taken down by HS and are in storage and could provide more evidence on how the site functioned over the years.
- A trawl of private estate archives and maps could improve understanding of the site, its occupants and the various phases of building. Any archival material relating to the Faskally estate would be a good starting point.

- The relationship of the cottage to the local community, how they understand and value it, could be explored further.
- A comparative study/review of a group of similar small/domestic-scale historic buildings held and managed for their conservation and educational value could help focus attention on these important individual sites which may face common issues of conservation, access and management.

4. ASSOCIATED PROPERTIES

The Blackhouse, Arnol, Lewis; Camserney Longhouse, Aberfeldy; Moirlanich Longhouse, Killin; Highland Folk Park, Kingussie; Auchindrain Township, Inveraray; Old Schoolhouse, Cottown; Cruck Cottage, Torthorwald.

5. KEYWORDS

Sunnybrae, cottage, Pitlochry, couple, cruck, halan, thatch, cottage, hanging lum, corrugated iron, ceangail, sgrathan. Gaelic, vernacular building, byre-dwelling.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(A fuller bibliography is available in the *Research Report* <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationid=d576c4b8-ecf1-4e7b-aef7-a5c300c1bb7e>)

Carter, S, 2001. *Sunnybrae Cottage: thin section of samples of turf and thatch from the roof apex*. (Headland Archaeology).

Crone, A, 2001. *Analysis of the Roof Timbers from Sunnybrae Cottage*. (AOC Archaeology Group).

Currie, G, 1998. Black house bought for the nation, *The Scotsman* 3 September 1998.

Dunn, A, 1999. Sunnybrae Cottage, watching brief, *Discovery Excav Scot* vol. 1999, p. 73.

Headland Archaeology, 2000. *Pitlochry, Sunnybrae Cottage, Report on the detailed recording of the thatch, the gables and the roof.*

Holden, T, 2000. Sunnybrae Cottage, Pitlochry, building recording, *Discovery Excav Scot* vol. 2000, p. 73.

Holden, T, 2001. *Sunnybrae Cottage: the botanical element of the turves from the roof.* (Headland Archaeology).

Holden, T & Baker, L, 2001. *Sunnybrae Cottage, Pitlochry Phase 2. Archaeology: Part II.* (Headland Archaeology).

Holden, T & Engels, M, 2000. *Sunnybrae Cottage, Pitlochry: Data sources.* Unpub archive report submitted to Historic Scotland.

Holden, T & Walker, B, Historic Scotland Research Report: Sunnybrae Cottage, Pitlochry, Edinburgh 2012. Accessible at: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationid=d576c4b8-ecf1-4e7b-aef7-a5c300c1bb7e>

Kirkdale Archaeology, 1999. *Sunnybrae Cottage, Pitlochry* . Unpub report for Historic Scotland.

Liddell, C, *Pitlochry, Heritage of a Highland District*, Perth, 1994.

Ponsford, M, 2001. Post medieval Britain and Ireland in 2000, *Post-Medieval Archaeol* vol. 35 (2001), pp. 249-250.

Walker, Bruce 2008a 'The Celtic Cuppill and its implications in building construction and design' *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* 52. 71-106.

Walker, Bruce 2008b 'Hanging chimneys, smoke chimneys or smoking chimneys in Scottish domestic buildings' *Vernacular Architecture* 39. 78-85.

Walker, B, McGregor, C & Stark, G 1996a *Thatches and Thatching Techniques: A guide to conserving Scottish Thatching Traditions.* Edinburgh: Historic Scotland Technical Advice Note 4.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: TIMELINE OF OCCUPIERS, 1841 – PRESENT DAY

Compiled from *Research Report*.

Date	Owner	Occupier	Comments
1841	Archibald Butter of Pitlochry	The house is occupied by Alexander Scott, his wife and daughter Margaret Scott, Will Dick, Margaret Campbell, Ann Dewar and John Campbell	In 1841, the earliest census to work by households shows the house (Sunnybrae Cottage) to be occupied by Alexander Scott, farmer and distiller, age 35; his wife age 30; and daughter Margaret age 2; William Dick, - agricultural labourer age 18; Margaret Campbell, female servant age 20; Ann Dewar age 10 and John Campbell age 14
1857	Archibald Butter of Pitlochry	In the valuation rolls of 1857 the tenant is thought to have been either Christine Duff or Isabell Campbell	
1871	Arthur Anderson and his wife Juliana M Anderson (nee Renny) built Sunnybrae House	In 1871 the occupants of "Sunnybrae Cottage" appears to be Alexander Strang, his wife Helen Strang, daughter Margaret Strang, and a farm servant Archibald Campbell	The census shows Alexander Strang (farmer and carrier), age 59 years; his wife Helen Strang, age 59; daughter Margaret Strang, age 22; and a farm servant Archibald Campbell, age 16 occupying a house with two rooms. Arthur Anderson MD was Inspector General of Hospitals in HM Service, CB (Companion of the Bath). He died in 1896. Both the ground to build Sunnybrae House (1 acre 14 poles) and the existing cottage, later to be known as Sunnybrae Cottage were feud from Archibald Buttar of Faskally Estate by Arthur Anderson.

Date	Owner	Occupier	Comments
1881	Arthur Anderson	In the 1881 valuation rolls J. Ward, was the gardener in "Sunnybrae Cottage".	
1891 - 1893/4	Arthur Anderson	Peter Ward takes over the tenancy from his father.	The 1881 census has Peter Ward, head, age 18; Ann, mother, age 43; Mary, sister, age 14 (millworker); Agnes, sister, age 11; John, brother, age 10; and James, brother, age 7.
1896	Arthur Anderson	Donald Cameron, his wife Ann Cameron (nee Macdonald) and daughter Miss Annie Cameron were tenants.	Donald Cameron is described as a retired gardener and Miss Annie Cameron as a housekeeper, probably both at Sunnybrae (House). The Cameron family were confirmed as joint liferenters by Authur Anderson's trustees in 1896.
1896 - 1934/5	David Murie Stewart is given as the owner of Sunnybrae House from 1897 in the Valuation Roll.	Donald Cameron, his wife Ann Cameron and daughter Annie Cameron continue in occupation.	Miss Annie Cameron's father Donald died in 1900. Although he was survived by his wife, it was Miss Annie Cameron who then was designated proprietrix. At that stage Annie gave the cottage name as "Sunnyside" but as early as 1901 it is referred to as by as "Sunnybrae Cottage". In the 1901 census for the occupants are given as: Ann Cameron, head, widow, age 77 last birthday, born Little Dunkeld, speaks: English and Gaelic, and Annie Cameron, former housekeeper, age 43 years last birthday, born: Little Dunkeld, speaks English and Gaelic.

Date	Owner	Occupier	Comments
1934/5	On the death of Miss Annie Cameron, the title of Sunnybrae Cottage reverted to Thomas M Nesbit.	The cottage stood empty from 1935 to 1936 and was then tenanted by Miss Annie McDonald from 1936 to 1945.	
1945	Mary R Nisbet, the then owner of Sunnybrae House, and Susan Annie Kerr (nee Nisbet).	Annie McDonald	Mary and Susan were daughters of Thomas Nisbet
1945 - 86/7	Jane M Macdonald (nee Storie and known as Jean) purchased the property outright in 1945 from Mary R Nisbet the then owner of Sunnybrae House.	Jane was the wife of Alexander Macdonald, Painter, Delta, Pitlochry	
1986/7 - 1998	John S Macdonald either purchased or inherited the cottage after the death of Jane MacDonald.		
1998 - present	Historic Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Ministers purchased Sunnybrae Cottage on the death of John Macdonald.		