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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

CORRIMONY CHAMBERED CAIRN



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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

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HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

CORRIMONY CHAMBERED CAIRN

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1 Summary

1.1 Introduction

Corrimony Chambered Cairn comprises an excavated 'Clava type' passage grave. It is Bronze Age in date, thought to date to around 2000 BC. It is sited on the level flood plain of the valley of the River Enrick, which feeds into Loch Ness at Drumnadrochit.

The cairn, defined by a kerb of slabs set on edge, measures about 15m in diameter and is composed of water-worn pebbles and boulders. The kerb stones would originally have projected about 0.3m from a surrounding platform or ramp, 1.8m wide and 0.6m deep. Large quantities of broken quartz may have been deliberately strewn during construction, but no evidence for forecourt rituals was found. In the centre of the cairn is a drystone-built, corbelled chamber, about 3.6m in diameter, entered from a passage on the south-west; both were backfilled in antiquity. A large, flat, cup- marked stone lies on top of the cairn and may originally have been the capstone.

The site was partially excavated in 1952 by Stuart Piggott¹ and was subsequently consolidated for public presentation between 1964 and 1969. Piggott's excavations revealed the stains of a crouched inhumation burial (thought to be a woman) and evidence for the construction and original form of the cairn. A degraded possible bone pin was found in the entrance passageway.

Around the cairn is a setting of 11 stones, about 4m from the kerb, which may pre or post-date it. The stones range from 1.5m to 1.7m in height. The excavation revealed an area of cobbling, apparently an original feature, between two of the stones on the north-west.

A round grassy mound is situated approximately 30m to the north-east, which may represent the remains of another burial monument and could indicate that Corrimony once formed part of a cemetery, similar to that at Balnuaran of Clava.

The site was taken into guardianship in July 1955 and was designated as a scheduled monument in 1994. Corrimony is open to the public all year round as an unstaffed property in care. A visitor car park is situated close to the site and the cairn is signposted from the car park and the main road. There is an interpretation panel at the site which provides visitors with background information. As it is an unstaffed site with no visitor counter facilities, the annual number of visitors is currently unknown.

The Good Stones: a new investigation of the Clava Cairns (2000) by Richard Bradley is a comprehensive account of archaeological investigations at Balnuaran of Clava ('The Clava Cairns'), as well as a range of information and

¹ (Piggott, 1956)

observations from other Clava Cairns. It is through this framework that we interpret and understand the cairn at Corrimony.

1.2 Statement of significance

- Corrimony cairn is a **well-preserved and representative** example of a regionally distinctive group of Bronze Age monuments, the type site for which, **Clava**, is also in HES's care. Unlike at Clava, the roof of the passage survives and almost all of the corbelled central chamber. It is therefore significant for its **group value**, and its potential to enhance our understanding of regional identities and differences in Bronze Age Scotland. It is also the **most complete** known example of a Clava Cairn passage grave.
- Piggott's excavations in 1952 demonstrated the high archaeological potential of the site. The results made a significant contribution towards our understanding of this monument type; the evidence for a single primary inhumation burial being one of the most significant findings, especially for what it tells us about the beliefs and funerary practices of the society who built the monument.
- It has high intrinsic evidential value for the potential it has to shed light on past belief systems and ritual and funerary practices during the Early Bronze Age. Though the cairn has been extensively excavated, areas of the site do remain undisturbed and are likely to be of high archaeological potential. In addition, given its excellent state of preservation, there is still potential to investigate the materials used to construct the cairn, its orientation and possible astronomical alignments, and its relationship to the wider landscape.
- The orientation of the passage towards the south-west and its situation in a south-west north-east running valley is a distinguishing feature and shared with other Clava Cairn sites. While we cannot be sure of the intended astronomical alignment of Corrimony at present, it is evident that Clava Cairns were closely associated with annual cycles. These cycles were likely to have been symbolic and are thought to have been marked by ceremonies or ritual activity. Corrimony cairn therefore has high potential to inform our understanding of prehistoric belief systems.
- The large cup-marked stone slab is one of the larger examples of prehistoric rock art in northeast Scotland.
- Corrimony Cairn may have formed part of a larger cemetery or ritual landscape; there is a considerable number of broadly contemporary archaeological sites in the valley around Corrimony, though much more archaeological work is needed before its immediate context can be understood.

2 Assessment of values

2.1 Background

Corrimony cairn is a well-preserved and representative example of the group of 50 or more monuments known as Clava Cairns. This well-defined regional group, found around the Moray Firth, combines attributes of the ring cairn, the passage grave and the stone circle. Richard Bradley's work at Balnuaran of Clava has, for the first time, provided scientific dating for such monuments². It is through Bradley's work on a closely associated group of monuments that we now understand and interpret Corrimony. Rather than being late Neolithic, as previously assumed, radiocarbon dates from Bradley's investigations indicate that they date from about 2000 cal BC (the Early Bronze Age) and, at Balnuaran of Clava, have evidence for extensive reuse in Late Bronze Age (around 1000 cal BC) (see appendix 2, section 1 for further detail).

The monument comprises two key elements: a passage grave, with its entrance passage orientated towards the south-west, and a stone circle, or surrounding ring of monoliths. The round cairn measures around 15m in diameter and is defined by a kerb of 45 stone slabs set on edge. The kerb stones would originally have projected about 0.3m from an enclosing platform measuring 1.8m wide and 0.6m high. The cairn and kerbstones consist of both water-worn boulders and pebbles taken from the nearby River Enrick, and larger blocks quarried from nearby outcrops. All of the stone used appears to be locally sourced. The body of the cairn itself is composed of water-worn pebbles and boulders, with larger stones forming the lowest levels of the cairn.

At the centre of the cairn is a round chamber of drystone construction measuring about 3.6m in diameter, with a corbelled roof. The lowest course of the chamber consists of 15 large low stone blocks, sunk into the ground, with rows of rough drystone-walling above up to a height of about 2m. The chamber may originally have been capped with the large flat, cup-marked stone which now lies on the northern side of the cairn. In the early 19th century the capstone was recorded as being on the west side of the cairn, but was moved to cover the central chamber by the late owner Mr Ogilvy in 1830³.

The chamber is entered by a narrow, low passage orientated to the southwest. The passage runs for a length of approximately 9m, widening along its length in the direction of the chamber; at its outer edge it extends slightly beyond the line of the kerb and is defined by a pair of large upright stones which form a funnel-shaped entrance. The inner part of the passage survives with roofing lintels largely intact. The length of the passage is formed of large upright stones, laid on end. Piggott's excavations identified a small round block set into the floor part way along the passage, which hints at the existence of a door or blocking stone in antiquity. The floor of the chamber

² (Bradley, 2000)

³ (Jolly, 1882). Jolly speculates that the original position was as an upright standing stone on the south east side of the circle, though this seems unlikely. It has laid in its current position since Piggott's excavations.

and passage were found covered with small rounded boulders which Piggott interpreted as evidence of deliberate infilling and blocking of the tomb in antiquity⁴.

A setting of eleven irregularly placed stones surrounds the cairn, about 4m from the kerb. It is not clear whether the stone circle pre or post-dates the cairn, though Bradley's excavations at Balnuaran of Clava suggest that the monuments were designed as part of a single scheme and are likely to be broadly contemporary⁵. Four of the eleven standing stones are modern additions: the two composite stones to the west of the entrance were erected before 1874; the two stones to the south of the entrance have been set up since 1882; Piggott argued that two further stones, immediately adjacent to the burn, had been set in the current position in modern times, with one stone (see Figure 2, stone 9) having an Ordnance Survey benchmark. The stones range from 1.5m to 1.7m in height. The excavation revealed an area of cobbled stones between two of the stones on the north-west, where there is a larger gap between two uprights.



Figure 1: View of central chamber from top of cairn.

⁴ (Piggott, 1956) (Henshall A. S., 1963)

⁵ (Bradley, 2000)

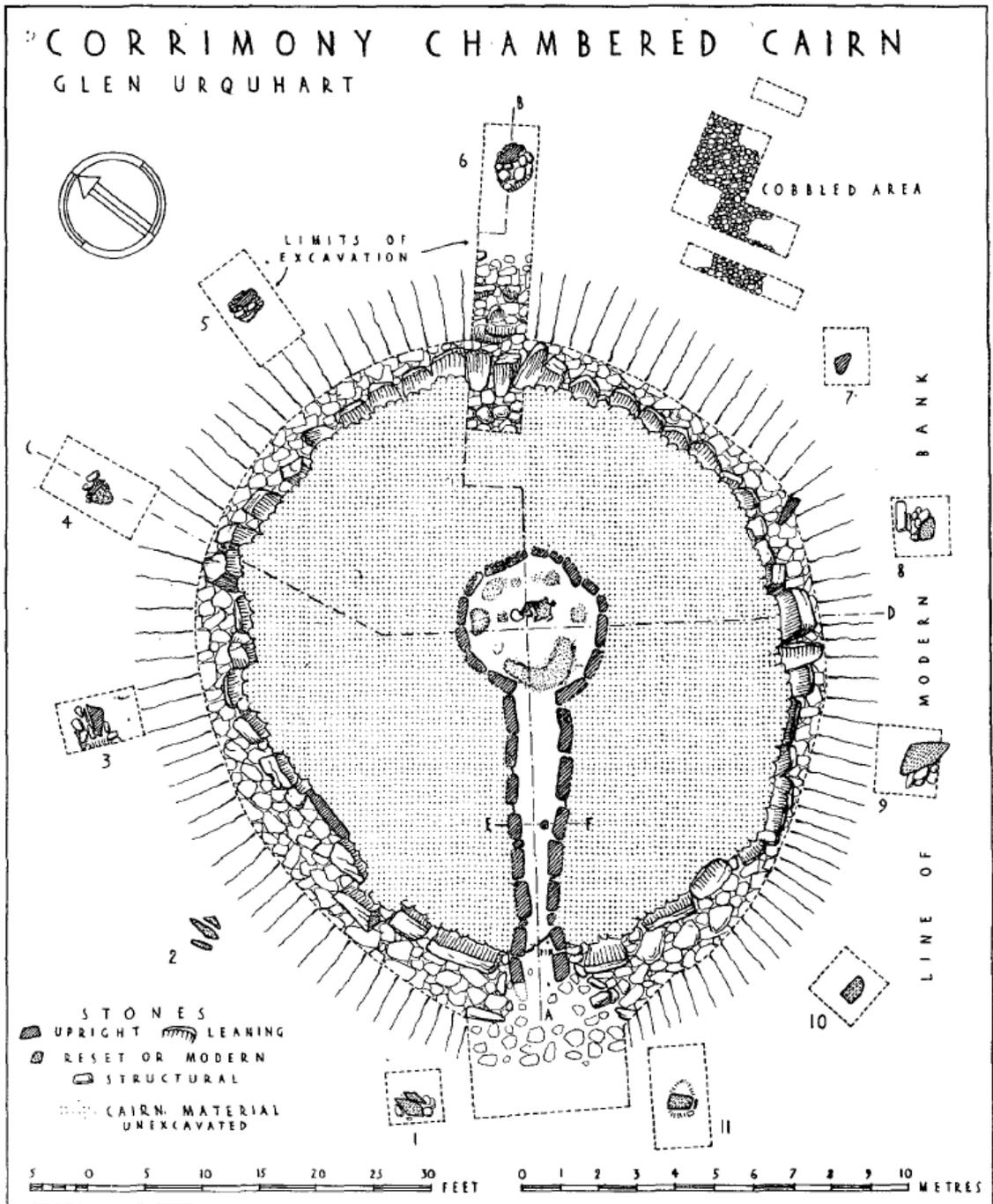


Figure 2: Piggott's excavation plan, 1952.

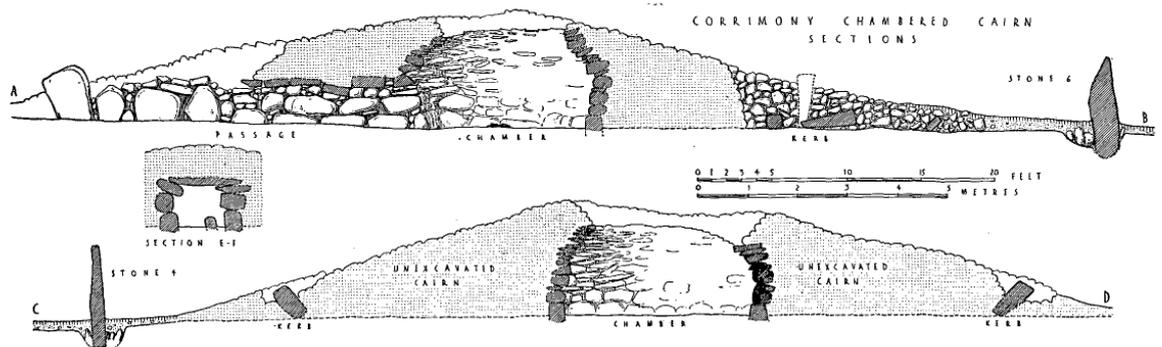


Fig. 3.

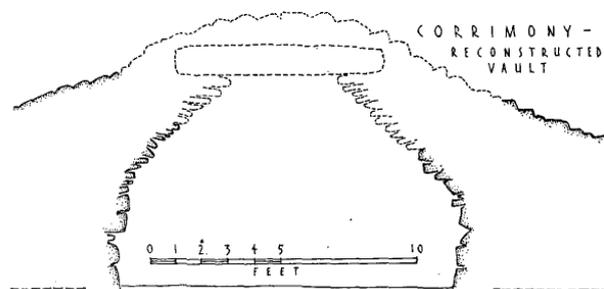


Fig. 4.

Figure 3: Section drawings from Piggott's excavation.

Early Bronze Age

Based on the scientific dates obtained from other Clava Cairns and Bradley's comprehensive study, the cairn at Corrimony most likely dates to the early Bronze Age, around 2000 BC⁶. It is probable that both the passage grave and surrounding stone circle were designed and constructed as part of a single scheme. Excavations elsewhere, at Balnuaran and Raigmore have revealed evidence for earlier occupation in the immediate vicinity of the cairns, suggesting that they are built in landscapes where communities are already well established.

During Piggott's excavations, at the centre of the chamber an area of flat stone slabs was uncovered, with concentrations of charcoal fragments around and between them. Beneath this layer was a grey, purplish-black and white stained area, the outline of which resembled a crouched inhumation burial, with the outline of the skull being particularly clear⁷. Piggott interpreted the deposit as the remains of a single crouched inhumation burial, being the primary and sole interment of the burial monument, with the bone having degraded due to the acidic soils. Phosphate analysis of the area strongly supported this interpretation, with the results in the stained area being

⁶ (Bradley, 2000)

⁷ (Piggott, 1956, pp. 182-3)

significantly higher than other areas of the chamber floor⁸. Though the gender of the individual was not speculated upon by Piggott, Bradley has suggested it may have been the burial of an adult woman⁹. No grave goods or artefacts were found within the chamber and only a single find was recovered from elsewhere. A highly degraded possible bone pin was found in the passage.



Figure 4: Stain of crouched inhumation burial in central chamber. Photograph by Stuart Piggott, 1952.

Deposits of charcoal found overlaying the burial and covering slabs in the central chamber, and repeated layers of trampled sand, hint at repeated use and access to the cairn, though we cannot be sure of the activities these

⁸ (Piggott, 1956, pp. 200-207)

⁹ (Bradley, 2000, p. 165) This is a highly speculative argument, based on the size of the stain and the arrangement and position of the body in the chamber, in comparison with other female burials of the Beaker period in north-east Scotland. Studies of the orientation of Beaker burials in north-east Scotland indicates a correlation between the sex of individuals and the position and orientation in which they were buried, with females generally laid on their right hand side, facing west, and males laid on their left hand side, facing east (Shepherd, 1989, pp. 79-80). While there does appear to be a strong correlation, we cannot be certain that burials at Clava cairns followed the same pattern – it has already been clearly demonstrated that these burial monuments represent a regionally distinct tradition. Furthermore, all that remained of the individual at Corrimony was a stained outline, making any interpretation of sex purely speculative.

represent. At a later date, though presumably during the Bronze Age prior to the monument falling out of use, the site was closed and at least partially infilled¹⁰. There is no evidence for subsequent reuse of the monument at a later date, as has been attested to at Balnuaran of Clava, though this cannot be ruled out¹¹.



Figure 5: Excavation of the entrance passage.

¹⁰ (Piggott, 1956)

¹¹ There is evidence for the insertion of much later cremation burials into the body of the cairns and the platforms at Balnuaran of Clava. Piggott's excavations revealed no evidence for cremations within the cairn material or platform at Corrimony, though the large parts of the body of the cairn remain unexcavated.



Figures 6 & 7: Removing the capstone during excavations, 1952.
From David Wallace's archive.

19th & 20th century

The cairn attracted interest from a number of antiquarians and we have several early descriptions and plans which tell us something of the condition in which the monument has come down to us.

1830 – Capstone moved by Mr Ogilvy¹²

1874 – Recorded and drawn by James Drummond & Arthur Mitchell¹³;

1882 – Recorded by Jolly¹⁴.

Piggott's Excavation 1952 – 7

The site was excavated by Prof Stuart Piggott in July 1952 with the aim of enhancing understanding of this monument type, their date of construction and function. The capstone was lifted and moved to the side and the central chamber, passage and bases of standing stones were excavated as well as an area on the northeast side between two of the upright stones.

Piggott's excavations at Corrimony were conducted alongside survey work at this and a number of other Clava cairn sites, as well as small scale excavation at Druidstemple, Kinchyle of Dores and Balnuaran of Clava. His work marked an important development in our understanding of this monument class and was the first scientific investigation at a Clava-type monument. It remains the only significant study of Corrimony.



Figure 8: Students excavating the central chamber.

Bradley's Research

Between 1994 and 1996 Richard Bradley conducted survey and excavation work at Balnuaran of Clava and landscape studies of a wider group of Clava cairns, though Corrimony was not investigated at this time. Bradley's work provided the first scientific dates for Clava Cairns, identifying them as Early Bronze Age as opposed to Neolithic. This is also the only study which

¹² (Jolly, 1882)

¹³ (Mitchell & Drummond, 1875)

¹⁴ (Jolly, 1882)

considers the landscape setting of Clava Cairns and the significance of this. This research represents the most comprehensive study of Clava Cairn monuments to date and has had considerable influence over how we now interpret the cairn at Corrimony.

In 1989 another cairn was discovered 30m to the north-east of Corrimony, just beyond the guardianship area. It is a round mound, approximately 25m in diameter and appears to be manmade¹⁵. This is undated and could be earlier or later, but there is also the possibility, that as at Clava, that there was a cemetery site here.

Guardianship

Following Piggott's excavations, the monument was temporarily backfilled. It came into guardianship on 22 July 1955, but works to present the monument did not take place until 1964. In line with practices at other passage grave sites, it was originally proposed to cap the cairn with a concrete roof and provide access to the central chamber via a trap door and ladder. It appears that this was abandoned due to lack of resources and funds¹⁶.

The first information panel was erected in 1969. A new and updated interpretation panel was designed in 2016, with installation in 2017.

Designation

The site was scheduled on 22 February 1994 as *Corrimony, chambered cairn 600m ESE of*. The present scheduled area measures 60m south-west/north-east by 30m north-west/south-east, to include the chambered cairn, the circle of stones and an area around¹⁷. Piggott notes that site was scheduled before this date¹⁸, though no documents can be found relating to this.

2.2 Evidential values

The only evidence we have for prehistoric society and culture comes from the physical remains that survive. Our understanding of millennia of prehistoric culture and society is based solely on interpretations of these physical remains.

The primary evidential values of Corrimony are:

- Its physical fabric and setting: the cairn is comparatively well preserved retaining structural features such as the passage roof, not surviving elsewhere
- The high potential that further archaeological study would yield more information, both from the in care area and in the surrounding landscape
- Clear evidence recorded of a single inhumation in the main chamber, which has wider implications for the study of similar passage graves

¹⁵ (Harden, 1989)

¹⁶ (SRO, 1961-69)

¹⁷ <http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/SM90081>

¹⁸ (Piggott, 1956, p. 173)

- The quality of research available upon which to base an understanding of Corrimony is good with high potential to improve with further research, particularly of the cairn's relationship to the surrounding landscape and associations with the solar and lunar cycles
- Research to date has proved that in design, form and function the Clava Cairns are distinctly different to other passage-grave types such as Orkney-Cromarty cairns; Corrimony makes a key contribution to this understanding.

Physical fabric

Corrimony is one of the best- preserved examples of a Clava Cairn passage grave and as such is particularly significant for the evidence it can provide for prehistoric society. Its high archaeological value has already been demonstrated through Piggott's partial excavation of the cairn in the 1950's. It retains considerable potential to yield important information about the construction, use and function of the cairn, the prehistoric landscape and Bronze Age society in general.

Corrimony's good state of preservation and completeness enables appreciation of the technical and design aspects of its construction which are dealt with more fully in Section 2.4 (architectural and design values). Placing the evidence of Corrimony within the expanding corpus of knowledge about Clava Cairns enables us to gain some understanding of the function of the site and draw out its meaning within Bronze Age society; this aspect is more fully dealt with in section 2.3 (Historic values).

Evidence revealed by archaeological investigation

The only recorded archaeological investigation at Corrimony cairn is Piggott's excavation of 1952. This focused on the chamber, passage and entrance area, an area around the base of 10 of the standing stones, and an open area between two of the uprights on the north-east side of the cairn. The excavation was one of the earliest scientific investigations into this monument type and revealed considerable evidence for the cairn's construction and use and for prehistoric burial practices. Unfortunately it was not possible to attain radiocarbon dates as part of this project. However Corrimony retains potential for such analysis as the site has not been completely excavated. Piggott's investigations at Corrimony and a number of other Clava Cairns shed much light on the construction and function of the cairn and of Clava Cairn monuments in general.

Of the Clava Cairns which have been excavated to date, the information from Corrimony remains the most convincing evidence for these cairns being constructed for a single primary burial. This is in contrast to many other passage graves outwith the Clava group which are typically characterised by multiple interments.

Apart from the evidence of inhumation, there were no other significant artefactual finds, but considerable quantities of quartz were recovered from the site. Piggott noted the frequent occurrence of quartz fragments, with

around 800 pieces recovered from a section of the western half alone. These appear to have been deliberately incorporated into the cairn material and strewn around the kerbstones (see appendix 2 section 2 for further details on the use of quartz).

The excavations also provided insights into the monument's construction, original form and evidence to suggest multiple phases of use. The charcoal deposits on the floor of the central chamber were suggestive of later use or access to the chamber in antiquity. Piggott noted evidence for multiple deposits of imported sand which appeared to have been trampled or compacted, again suggesting continued access and use after the burial. A layer of small water-worn pebbles covering the chamber floor and passage were interpreted by Piggott as evidence for infilling or closure of the monument at a later date, presumably during the Bronze Age.

Investigation of the standing stones surrounding the passage grave provided valuable evidence for their authenticity and how they were erected. Documentary research, combined with excavation revealed that four of the stones were modern additions to the site, and two more had been re-erected in modern times.

On the northeast arc of the circle an area between two of the upright stones was excavated, where there is a greater interval between these two stones. Investigations sought to determine whether there had once been another standing stone in between; no evidence for a socket was identified but an irregular area of stone cobbles was revealed forming a level area between the two stones.

Further research potential

While Piggott's excavations were fairly extensive, the underlying levels of the cairn have not been disturbed by excavation and therefore retain high archaeological potential, as does much of the area immediately around the cairn, between the standing stones and the area beyond this. There also remains the potential to obtain scientific dates through further investigation of the cairn, as well as palaeoenvironmental data.

The degree of completeness of the cairn provides further opportunity to investigate the design and construction of the monument and to study the materials used. Such studies at Balnuaran of Clava, and other ritual and funerary monuments, have provided valuable insights into the design and symbolism of these monuments. It also offers the potential to observe and record the orientation and alignment of the cairn and to further investigate this aspect of its significance, including its relationship with the solar and lunar cycles (see section 2.3 for further information on the significance of these associations).

There is considerable potential for study of the wider landscape around Corrimony, and its relationship with other sites in the vicinity. The area would benefit from a study similar to that carried out in Richard Bradley's research. The presence of a similar mound nearby may represent the remains of

another cairn and it is possible that this and Corrimony cairn formed part of a cemetery as at Balnuaran. There are at least two single standing stones recorded in the wider vicinity as well as outcrops of cup and ring marked stones on the hillside to the northeast of Corrimony¹⁹. In addition to this, there are numerous traces of potentially contemporary prehistoric occupation in the form of hut circles, enclosures and burnt mounds on the surrounding hillsides, notably to the northeast at Buntait. Much more of the surrounding landscape remains unsurveyed and poorly studied, though there is excellent potential to conduct research into the potential relationship between these sites, the cairn, and the wider landscape. Such research could shed light on the communities who built and used the cairn, its later significance as a landscape feature, and the significance of siting of such monuments in the landscape.

2.3 Historical values

The primary historical values of Corrimony Cairn settle upon its ability to demonstrate past ways of life and society, specifically Bronze Age society, its structure, beliefs, ritual and funerary practices. While interpreting these themes at Corrimony relies upon study of a wider Bronze Age context and the whole Clava Cairns group (see 2.2). A further set of historical values lies in its association with the increasing interest and scientific approach to archaeological monuments in the 19th and 20th centuries. Corrimony is able to demonstrate the following themes particularly strongly:

- Burial rites and funerary practices
- Ceremonies and belief systems
- Bronze age society in general
- Antiquarian and later archaeological study

Burial rites and funerary practices

As with other Clava Cairns, one of the primary functions of Corrimony was a place of burial. The evidence at Corrimony for a single crouched inhumation provides an insight into the beliefs and funerary practices of the society who constructed the monument. From the limited burial evidence associated with Clava Cairns, it seems that these monuments were designed and built for a single individual which was placed in the central chamber, in stark contrast to earlier passage graves which often held multiple individuals. Evidence from Balnuaran of Clava and other sites indicates that additional cremation burials were inserted into the cairns at a later date, long after this initial episode of activity. Corrimony is unusual in that the burial was found to be an inhumation rather than cremation, though there have been too few excavations of this monument type to determine if this is an exceptional example. The use of both inhumation and cremation practices could perhaps suggest that the funerary activities were not as important as the significance attached to the place of burial, but again much more research is needed into this monument type and the sequencing of burials before such arguments can be made.

¹⁹ Interestingly these are situated on the same south-west north-east axis as the valley and the alignment of the passage at Corrimony.

The construction of Clava Cairns such as that at Corrimony are suggestive of established belief systems, shared by a regional group, and provide us with evidence for a belief in an afterlife. The ways in which Clava Cairns differ from other ritual and funerary monuments of the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age may be indicative of changing beliefs and practices in the Early Bronze Age. Bradley notes the 'striking contrast between the number of people needed to build these cairns and the number of individuals who were buried there' suggesting that the individuals selected for burial may have had a special status, but this also strongly suggests well defined belief systems and some form of organised religion²⁰. However, while the use of these monuments for single burials suggests a shift towards a focus on the individual, their architecture and the apparent wider ritual function of these monuments hints at greater inclusion of community in the use and experience of the monument after the initial burial²¹.

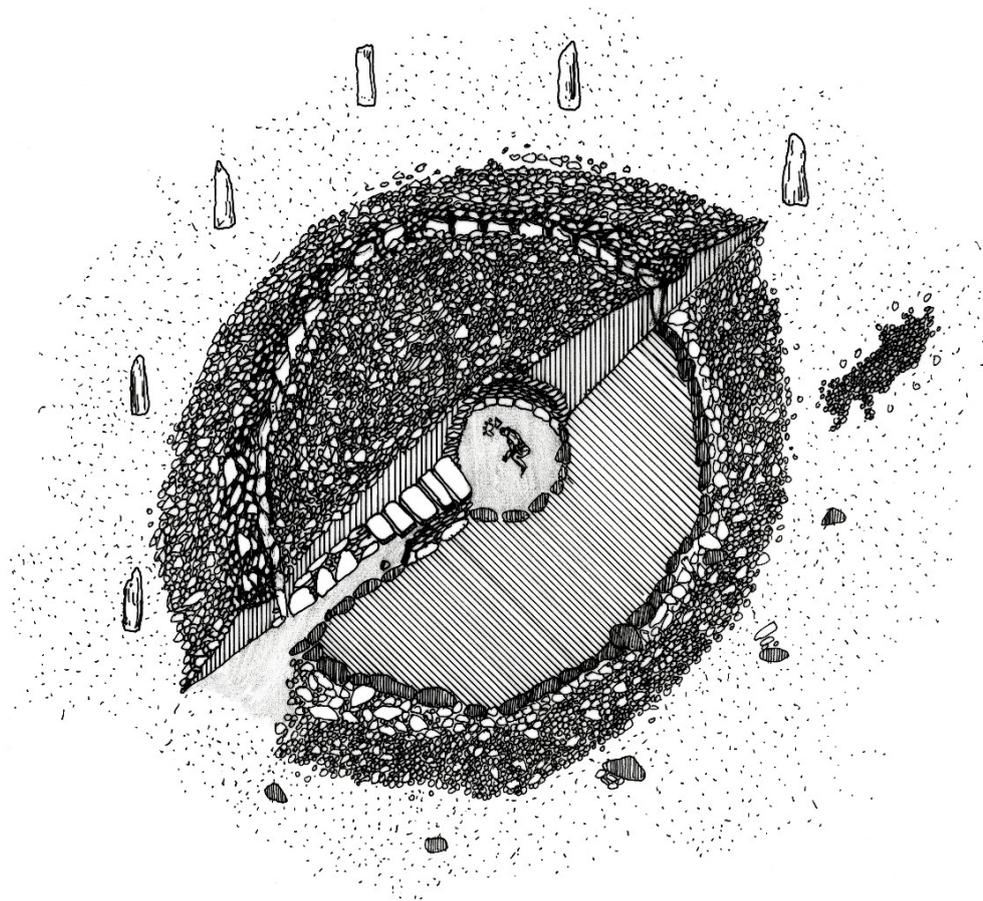


Figure 9: Reconstruction illustration showing burial at Corrimony.

Ceremonies and belief systems

²⁰ (Bradley, 2000, p. 165)

²¹ (Bradley, 2000) (McCarthy, 1996)

Evidence from both Corrimony and other Clava Cairns strongly suggests that these monuments were not just places of burial but were intimately linked with seasonal cycles and were likely important places for ceremonial gatherings and ritual activity. The unique design of Clava Cairn monuments, with a central cairn, surrounding platform and stone circle, further suggests that they were more than just places of burial; they may indicate developments in belief systems and ceremonial practices into the Early Bronze Age period²².

One of the distinguishing features of Clava Cairn passage graves, including Corrimony, is the alignment of their entrance passages towards the south-west. At Balnuaran of Clava the passage graves are aligned on the setting of the midwinter sun, this association is not clear at Corrimony, though it has been suggested that it is aligned with key dates in February and November²³. Considerable planning must have gone into the design and construction of these cairns to create such an alignment. This not only suggests that the area was occupied and lived in prior to the cairn's construction, but also that this was a significant annual event for those who built the cairn.

The interest in marking of key points in the year, such as midwinter, is evident in a range of monuments from the late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age. Midwinter would undoubtedly have been a significant point in the calendar for Bronze Age farming communities who relied upon the land and were governed by the seasons, marking the shortest day of the year. There may have been gatherings or ceremonial activities at the site at key points in the year, such as midwinter.

In addition to the orientation of the passage, the surrounding monoliths may also have been positioned to align with key points in the calendar year, acting as seasonal markers. This idea has been investigated at Balnuaran of Clava, where it has been demonstrated that several of the surrounding monoliths have an association with other key points in the solar calendar such as equinoxes or Quarter days²⁴. The very presence of a ring of standing stones, surrounding either a ring cairn or a passage grave a, defining characteristic of Clava cairns , strongly suggests this element had an important function in the use of monument²⁵.

Further evidence to suggest the significance of these key seasonal events can be seen in the design and planning of Clava Cairn monuments. Investigations into Balnuaran of Clava have demonstrated careful and deliberate use of colour and certain size stones of these monuments to emphasise the south-west/north-east axis and their alignment on the midwinter

²² (McCarthy, 1996)

²³ (Scott, 2015) Investigations by Dougie Scott have suggested that the passage is not specifically aligned with midwinter solstice, but that the setting sun also enters the passage and chamber in early February and November. These too are key dates in the solar calendar, known as Quarter Days and are also associated with Celtic/Gaelic traditions.

²⁴ (Trevarthen, 2000)

²⁵ (McCarthy, 1996)

setting sun. Red, white and grey coloured stones are deliberately placed for effect, providing a clear contrast between light and dark, midsummer sunrise and midwinter sunset, with stones graded in height towards the south-west and the use of red and pink coloured stones for dramatic effect²⁶. At midwinter, the red and pink stones appear to absorb the sun's rays, glowing red, whereas at midsummer, lighter coloured stones, containing mica and quartz reflect the light and appear to have been designed to 'sparkle' in the rising sun. The considerable attention to detail suggests that these seasonal events were of great importance to the communities who designed and built these monuments. That the design of these monuments was intended to create a dramatic visual effect at key points of the year strongly suggests they were intended to be experienced and visited and that this experience was not solely reserved for occupants of the central chamber²⁷. Furthermore, Bradley has suggested that the materials used and the overall design and appearance of the cairn seems to have been more important than the structural quality or longevity of the monument, which adds weight to the argument that this patterning of colour and type of stone had a symbolic meaning or religious significance²⁸.

Corrimony has not been studied in as great detail as the monuments at Balnuaran of Clava, however, the same careful selection of stones by size, with larger stones sited on the south-western arc, was noted by Piggott²⁹. From the comparatively limited investigations at Corrimony the use of quartz seems to have been significant and there may very well be similar patterning in the design and construction of this site too. Unfortunately the surrounding monoliths on the western side of Corrimony are those which appear to have been re-erected or added to the site at a later date, making the original design of the monument difficult to determine.

As noted above, the design of these monuments suggests they were meant to be experienced and viewed from the exterior and perhaps indicates a shift towards more inclusive and public ceremonies or ritual activities taking place here at key points in the year. It has also been speculated that the platforms may have been used as spaces for ritual. This is supported by the presence of quartz fragments at Corrimony. The platform was not fully excavated at Corrimony, but excavations from the passage graves at Balnuaran of Clava have found worked flint and quartz fragments in the area of the platform, as

²⁶ (Bradley, 2000) (Trevvarthen, 2000)

²⁷ Trevvarthen (Trevvarthen, 2000) has carried out research into this use and patterning of colour and speculated on its meaning and symbolism. The use of red, white and black is a recurring feature, not just at Clava Cairns, but many other ritual and funerary monuments in Britain – it is also a pattern seen across many different cultures and time periods around the world. Trevvarthen considers it to be a 'primal colour triad'; these colours seem to have a deep symbolic meaning in many different cultures. Generally white is perceived as symbolic of good or pure, red can be a powerful force, warmth, or represent a liminal state, and black may represent death, dark, or evil.

²⁸ (Bradley, 2000)

²⁹ (Piggott, 1956)

well as an abundance of sea shells , both of which have been interpreted as evidence of continued ritual activity at the site during the Bronze Age³⁰.

The cairn at Corrimony can provide a valuable insight into the function and use of these type of monuments, and clues about the beliefs and practices of those who built and used the monument. The evidence at Corrimony and other Clava cairns, points towards the changing seasons being an important part of Bronze Age life, with key points marked by these monuments. We can however, only speculate as to the symbolism and meaning imbued in these monuments and the ceremonies that may have taken place at fixed points in the year. The association with the rising and setting sun, the cyclical changing of the seasons and the arrangement of light and dark coloured stones may be symbolic of cycles of life and death and of fertility and regeneration.

Bronze Age society in general

Clava Cairns are found in a relatively confined area around the Moray Firth and Inverness. Their distribution complements that of Orkney-Cromarty cairns to the north and recumbent stone circles to the east. The unique geographical distribution and architectural form of these monuments may be illustrative of regional variations in beliefs and ceremonial practices. Taken further, Clava Cairns may be able to inform our understanding of social organisation and regional differences between communities in the Early Bronze Age.

In general, the survival of monuments such as Corrimony brings us close to the Bronze Age community that built and used the monument and tells us something of their social identity. Its excellent degree of preservation also provides a valuable insight into the technological skill of those who built it.

The apparent use of Corrimony, and other Clava Cairns, for a single central burial may be indicative of increasing social stratification. Only select individuals were chosen for burial within these monuments. As yet we have very limited evidence to suggest why these individuals were selected or whether they had a special status in society, but the evidence certainly supports the wider impression of increasing social hierarchy and the emergence of elite individuals in the Bronze Age.

Associative

As with many other well-preserved prehistoric monuments, Corrimony attracted antiquarian interest from an early date (see bibliography for details). These early accounts form a valuable archive, providing a useful record of the condition of the monument as it has come down to us, and subsequent modern alterations , most notably the addition and re-erection of several of the standing stones, and the movement of the capstone.

Piggott's excavations are significant as they were the first systematic and scientific investigations into Clava Cairn monuments. As Professor of Prehistory, and successor to Gordon Childe in holding the Abercromby Chair,

³⁰ (Bradley, 2000)

at the University of Edinburgh, Piggott was an important figure in British archaeology and his publication the *Neolithic Cultures of the British Isles* (1954) was highly influential. His excavations at Corrimony, and Balnuaran of Clava among other sites made valuable contributions to our understanding of Neolithic and Bronze Age Scotland. The excavation in 1952 attracted a number of pre-eminent British prehistorians including R.J.C Atkinson, who worked on iconic sites such as Stonehenge, Silbury Hill and West Kennet Long Barrow, and V. Gordon Childe. One of the students involved in the excavations has produced an archive including notes and photographs from the dig (see appendix 2 section 4).

2.4 Architectural and artistic values

The architectural, design and artistic value of Corrimony is particularly high because of its state of preservation and the careful recording of Piggott's excavation allow us a very good understanding of the physical nature of the site. Key aspects of Clava's design values are:

- Within its related group of Clava Cairns it stands out in preserving structural elements which do not survive elsewhere
- The key elements of the design ;the passage grave and surrounding stone circle, are largely intact
- Aspects such as use of different types and colours of stone, shows a sophisticated aesthetic, probably allied to an understanding of the cairn in symbolic terms
- Cup and ring marked stones, believed to pre-date the cairn are incorporated in the design in a deliberate (and probably symbolic) way
- Corrimony's setting, its orientation and its relationship to the wider landscape and astronomical events is imperfectly understood, but there is huge potential for further study to address this gap.

Architectural

Corrimony is one of the best- preserved examples of a Clava Cairn passage grave. These distinct monuments uniquely combine elements of ring cairn, passage grave and stone circle architecture. While in plan and overall form they appear to combine elements of other monument types, the combination, design and construction of Clava Cairns sets them apart as a distinct group. Clava cairns share affinities with a number of other ritual and funerary monuments. There are other passage grave monuments with a south-westerly orientation, or tombs with surrounding standing stones but Clava Cairns are set apart by their Early Bronze Age date and the suggestion that they were designed and constructed as a whole³¹.

The passage and chamber at Corrimony are remarkably well preserved allowing the original form and layout of the monument to be appreciated. It is the only surviving example of its class where evidence for the passage roof and corbelled vault of the chamber survive. Piggott's excavations found the chamber almost complete, with corbelling intact almost

³¹ Recumbent stone circles are commonly cited as sharing the closest structural affinities with Clava Cairns, see appendix 2 section 3 for further detail.

to the top. It is also rare that the [presumed] original capstone is still in close association with the cairn. It is the only known example where any length of the entrance passage roofing survives intact. This is significant as it allows us to appreciate the original appearance of the cairn and to observe the view along the passage from the chamber.

The architectural form of Corrimony, and other Clava Cairns, demonstrates the considerable care that went into the construction of this grave. Investigations at Balnuaran of Clava demonstrate that the cairns were very carefully designed and constructed, with a careful and deliberate selection and arrangement of stones, using colour, size and shape to dramatic effect, to emphasise light and dark sides of the monument and enhance the effect of the rising and setting sun, and the overall appearance of the cairn when viewed from the south-west³². The patterning of different sources and sizes of stone is evident at Corrimony too, though it has been studied and recorded to a lesser extent (Piggott, 1956). As at other Clava Cairns, both water-worn boulders and quarried local stone are used to construct the monument, but are carefully arranged, with larger stones used on the south-western arc. Bradley has studied this element of cairn construction at Balnuaran in much more detail and suggests that the cairn builders deliberately created a 'front' and 'back' to these monuments, on a north-east/south-west axis³³.

While Corrimony shares similar architectural forms – such as a passage grave, corbelled chamber, and standing stones with other ritual and funerary monuments, the techniques and materials used are distinctly different. The overall appearance of Clava cairns in general is much rougher and almost ad hoc, and they generally lack the sophisticated architecture of many earlier passage graves. However, Bradley's investigations at Balnuaran of Clava strongly suggest this is not the case. The degree of effort that appears to have gone into the selection of materials and design of these monuments, seems to have had an important symbolic meaning; the materials and architectural form of the cairns does not seem to have been chosen with structural stability as main intention. The architectural design of this, and other Clava cairns, can almost be seen as an embodiment of the seasonal cycles and the movement of the sun, a physical marker of the changing seasons – and perhaps of life cycles too³⁴.

Artistic

The careful patterning of colour and stone sources in the design of Clava Cairns can be viewed as an artistic element. In addition to this, the cairn at Corrimony displays evidence for prehistoric rock art, in the form of cup-markings. It was recognised from an early date for its prehistoric rock art; Jolly sketched the site in 1882, recording at least 9 cup-marks on the capstone and a further 4 on a standing stone on the north-west side³⁵. The cup-markings on

³² (Bradley, 2000) (Trevvarthen, 2000)

³³ (Bradley, 2000)

³⁴ (Bradley, 2000, p. 126)

³⁵ (Jolly, 1882)

the capstone are still clearly visible today, though the authenticity of those on the standing stone have been questioned more recently.

The function of such art is not known, and it is possible the carved capstone was brought from elsewhere for reuse in the tomb. However, many 'hidden' cup- marked stones were found during Bradley's examination of the Balnuaran of Clava complex and it is clear that the cup-marked stone at Corrimony was not a chance inclusion. The examples at Corrimony seem to have been positioned to be seen by those outside the cairn. Cup-marked stones are found widely across Europe, both incorporated into megalithic monuments and on natural rock outcrops. The meaning of these carvings has been much debated, one suggestion is that they are associated with route ways, territories or cosmologically significant places in the landscape. They are now widely accepted as Neolithic in date, but are often found reused in later monuments, such as Clava Cairns. It is possible that cup-marked stones were deliberately selected for reuse as links to ancestors or the land, or that they were perceived as having special qualities.

Setting and landscape; clearly the location and orientation of Corrimony is key to understanding the monument and its function. This aspect is as yet imperfectly understood; for a discussion of its relationship to astronomical phenomena see 2.3. For a discussion of its landscape and aesthetic values, see 2.5.

2.5 Landscape and aesthetic values

The landscape and aesthetic values of Corrimony Cairn encompass both its relationship to its setting in prehistory and how it is perceived in its modern day setting. Key aspects include:

- The importance of orientation and siting to the original construction
- Within the topography of the landscape, the quality of its being somewhat hidden or enclosed, which it shares with other cairns in the Clava group
- The way the hilltops and skyline bound the views from the site in all directions
- Its possible relationship to ancient routeways
- The modern setting which determines the atmosphere of the site today.

Corrimony cairn is situated at the edge of a river valley on a level floodplain of the River Enrick. The river runs approximately south-west to north-east along the stretch of the valley where the cairn is located; in general the valley is also on this south-west/north-east axis. The landscape setting of the cairn is closely defined, as it sits within a topographic bowl, close to the valley edge and is enclosed by hills on all sides. This is reflected in the name Corrimony which is derived from the Gaelic 'Coire Mhonaidh' (corrie, a glacial hollow, in the moor/hills). The hills immediately to the north and south restrict outward views to those across the low-lying fields to the south-west and north-east. More distant views are available towards the hills at *Carn nam Bad* in the north-east. This is similar to other Clava Cairns in that they tend to be situated close to rivers, in valleys and river terraces and natural basins, often with a south-west/

north-east alignment, and enclosed by surrounding hills. They typically are found in relatively isolated or secluded locations, that they were ‘insular and private [in] nature’³⁶.

Today, the cairn is situated within a modern agricultural landscape, immediately adjacent to a canalised burn and minor road. The surrounding area is characterised by agricultural land, with some native and commercial forestry. The only large-scale, industrial development in the vicinity of the monument consists of 3 or 4 large OHL pylons which are visible to the north-east. Despite these modern elements in the landscape, the setting of the cairn feels relatively secluded and peaceful.

The passage of the cairn is aligned towards the south-west, on roughly the same axis as the valley in which the cairn is set. It is speculated that the passage may have been constructed to enable sunlight to enter the passage and chamber at certain times of the year, such as midwinter as at Balnuaran of Clava. Sunlight from the setting sun and entering the passage has also been observed at Corrimony in November and February³⁷. It is possible that observations of the moon may have also been observed at Corrimony as well as other Clava Cairns. Whatever the symbolic meaning and purpose of this alignment, it is clear that the south-west/north-east alignment and axis was a defining characteristic of the cairn at Corrimony, as with other Clava Cairns.

While this alignment and views along the valley were evidently significant factors in both the siting and construction of the monument and its use, wide outward views in all directions do not seem to have been an important consideration. Of the Clava cairns investigated in Bradley’s study, none seem to have been designed to command extensive views. Corrimony shares this trait, as there are good views along the valley, but these are not extensive and are tightly defined by the surrounding hilltops. Clava Cairns are typically situated in inconspicuous locations and do not seem to have been located in dominant positions with the intention of being highly visible. However, they do dominate their immediate surroundings on the level valley floors.

As a ritual monument, Corrimony would have been the focus of prehistoric rituals in and around the monument, and it is likely that this wider landscape played an important part in these. The cairn may well have formed part of a wider ceremonial landscape too, as can be seen at Balnuaran. A mound is situated just 40m to the north-east of Corrimony, which may represent the remains of another cairn; further afield there are standing stones and cup and ring marked outcrops.

Studies at other Clava Cairns has indicated that these monuments were typically sited in places that were suitable for settlement, on good agricultural land and close to sources of water. They were clearly part of the inhabited landscape, which provides us with an insight into Early Bronze Age attitudes towards realms of the living and the dead and the arenas in which ceremonies

³⁶ (Bradley, 2000, p. 182)

³⁷ (Scott, 2015)

took place. Sites such as Balnuaran of Clava and the ring cairn at Raigmore have provided evidence of settlement and cultivation in the immediate area of the cairns prior to their construction³⁸. This not only suggests that such monuments and associated ritual activity were an important part of the domestic sphere, but also implies that the area was already significant in some way for the communities that inhabited the landscape. Such evidence has not been found in the immediate vicinity of the cairn at Corrimony, however there are traces of numerous hut circles and field systems in the hills surrounding the valley which supports the argument that this landscape was populated in prehistory and suggests it was much more densely settled than at present.

2.6 Natural heritage values
To be completed

2.7 Contemporary/use values
Visitors & visitor amenities

Corrimony cairn is an unstaffed site which is open all year round and therefore it is not known how many visitors there are to the site over the course of a year, though a rough estimate of 500 has been suggested. A number of local private tour groups include a visit to Corrimony cairn as part of their itinerary, including Jacobite Tours. A Visit Scotland office is located at Drumnadrochit and there is a signpost to Corrimony at the Drumnadrochit crossroads. There is a visitor car park close by and the cairn is signposted from this. Visitor interpretation is available at the site, and there are plans to upgrade this in Spring 2017 as part of a rolling programme.

The success of the Outlander novels, and hit TV series, by Diana Gabaldon may have had a positive effect on visitor numbers to the site. The story has an association with a group of standing stones near Inverness, where the main character is transported back in time. While the cairns at Clava are most strongly associated with the story, it would appear that there has been increased interest at Corrimony too and it is included in a number of Outlander themed tours. It is of particular interest to visitors as there are split stones on the southern side near the entrance that may resemble the split stone Claire Randall fell through in the story.

The cairn features on a number of websites and social media pages as a recommended visitor attraction, including Facebook, Undiscovered Scotland and TripAdvisor. There are over 100 largely positive reviews on TripAdvisor, made by visitors from around the world including across the UK, USA, New Zealand and Australia. Figures from TripAdvisor suggest the site is regularly visited, with the summer months being the most popular. Many visitors comment on the quiet, secluded nature of the site and the attractive landscape setting. The impressive degree of survival, its history, and the authentic feel of the site are also noted in many visitor comments. It provides a rare, tangible and tactile experience of the distant past to visitors.

³⁸ (Bradley, 2000)

Astronomical associations

There is considerable interest in the astronomical alignments of megalithic monuments and the meaning behind this. Owing to the excellent survival of the central chamber, passage and surrounding stone circle, these potential alignments can still be investigated today. Douglas Scott has conducted over 30 years of research into the astronomical alignments of such monuments and has carried out investigations at Corrimony which suggest it is aligned with the equinoxes in February and November³⁹. These seasonal associations are still considered a significant element of the sites, and a draw for visitors and researchers today⁴⁰.

Folklore

As with many prehistoric monuments, there are numerous folk traditions associated with the cairn at Corrimony. Letters on NRS files and information in David Wallace's archive hint at local superstitions associated with the site. There seems to have been significant local opposition to Piggott's excavation over fears that the crops would suffer or there would be a natural disaster or violent death if the 'Druid tomb' was disturbed.

Historically there has been a tradition that the name Corrimony may be associated with nearby Mony's Stone, where Mony was supposedly the son of a King of Denmark. While the place name Corrimony clearly has a Gaelic derivation (see 2.5) the tradition in itself is interesting. It is not clear when the story became associated with Corrimony, but it reflects a desire to ascribe a certain importance to the site.

Spiritual Values

It is evident that people visit the monument at key points in the year, today as in the past. Though the midwinter connection is not certain at Corrimony, visitor comments online suggest that experiencing the monument at key points in the solar calendar is a draw for visitors to the site today. The HES District Architect has noted that people leave 'offerings' and ashes in and around the cairn which again suggests that the site possesses religious or spiritual significance for some visitors to the cairn, though these values are highly subjective and presumably vary between individuals and groups.

During his investigations at Balnuaran of Clava, Bradley observed a number of rituals taking place at these cairns, including two religious celebrations at Easter. He also noted that many visitors leave offerings of ashes, coins and gemstones, all deliberately placed at significant parts of the monument⁴¹. It is

³⁹ Details of his investigations can be found online: <https://watchersofthedawn.wordpress.com/>; he has also produced an ebook and DVD 'Watchers of the Dawn' sharing his results of investigations into alignments with the sun and moon and exploring the Celtic and Gaelic folklore and associations with these sites and key points in the year.

⁴⁰ Something that is demonstrated by a range of proposed theories relating to Corrimony that can be found online.

likely that there are modern visitors for whom this site is a place of religious or mystical significance.

The monument seems to be treated with respect and reverence by many visitors, who understand and acknowledge the spiritual significance of the site. Several comments from visitors to the site describe their experience as moving, and others express caution over entering or walking on the cairn.

3 Major gaps in understanding

- No scientific dates exist for Corrimony and while Piggott's excavations shed valuable light on the construction of the cairn, the chronology of its development sequence could be much better understood
- The significance of the alignment of the passage has not been tested in the same way that it has at other monuments. Further observation could confirm whether the midwinter sunset aligns with the passage and chamber and whether it is orientated on other solar or lunar events
- There is considerable research potential in studying the wider landscape around Corrimony, including the possible burial mound to the north-east and the prehistoric settlement evidence on the surrounding hills. Much more research is needed to fully understand the significance of Corrimony cairn in its wider landscape context and how it relates to other monuments in the vicinity. We need to find out more about the immediate setting of the monument, the extent of any cemetery and where and how the people who built and used this lived
- There has been no detailed study of the materials used to construct Corrimony, as there has been at Balnuaran of Clava; this too could shed further light on the significance of the monument, its function, and its association with the solar and lunar calendars
- It has been pointed out in The Scottish Archaeological Research Framework (SCARF) panel report for the Chalcolithic and Bronze Age that ritual monuments of this period in general have been given far less attention than earlier monuments. In order to gain a more complete understanding of Early Bronze Age ritual monuments, their meanings, use and the developments through time, much more research is needed⁴².

4 Associated properties

Clava. Monuments of similar date are to be found at **Kilmartin**. Stone circles with some related features can be visited at **Tomnaverie** and **Loanhead of Daviot**. The nearest Historic Scotland property is **Urquhart Castle**.

5 Keywords

Clava
Cairn
Cup-marks
Burial
Passage grave

⁴² (Downes (Ed.), 2012)

Tomb
Archaeoastronomy
Stone circle
Standing stone
Prehistoric rock art
Bronze Age (Walker, 1965)
Highland

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Timeline

- c. 2000 BC** Corrimony cairn constructed
- 1830** Landowner moves the large cup-marked slab to cover the central chamber
- 1874** Site recorded and sketched by James Drummond
- 1882** Drawn and recorded by William Jolly
- 1952** Excavations by Piggott carried out in July
- 1954** Initial proposal to take into guardianship
- 1955** Site taken into guardianship on 22 July 1955
- 1964** Consolidation works take place, including insertion of bronze supporting bars in the passage and the use of mortar in the upper levels of the chamber to secure the wallheads
- 1994** Scheduled on 22 February 1994

Appendix 2: Additional background information

1. Chronology and sequence of construction
The dating of Clava Cairns had long been a subject of debate. Their architecture combines features of both Neolithic and Bronze Age ritual and funerary monuments, though their passage grave architecture had led scholars to believe they were most likely Neolithic in date. Bradley's work in the 1990's transformed this view, clearly indicating that these monuments are Early Bronze Age in date.

There are no scientific dates for Corrimony cairn, but the limited radiocarbon dates from other sites are consistent. The only dates for Clava Cairn passage graves comes from the north-east cairn at Balnuaran of Clava; all of these dates fall between 2150 and 1700 BC, with the date most likely being between 1850-

1770 BC⁴³. There are dates from a wider range of ring cairn sites, though these are less consistent and tend to be a few centuries earlier. Bradley has cautioned that the dating evidence in general for Clava Cairns is very limited and that those dates from Balnuaran of Clava may not be representative of other Clava Cairn passage graves. Nevertheless Bradley's publication represents a significant development in our understanding of these Early Bronze Age monuments.

Investigations at Balnuaran of Clava also provided new evidence for the sequence of construction of Clava Cairn passage graves, suggesting for the first time that the cairns seem to have been devised and constructed as a whole. It had been thought that the stone circle and cairn elements of Clava Cairns belonged to two different phases of construction though in light of Bradley's research this has been brought into question. The distinctive external platforms that surround Clava Cairns had been interpreted by some as a form of blocking, formally closing the monument at the end of their use⁴⁴. However, the excavations at Balnuaran of Clava suggest that the external platform was integral to the structural stability of the cairn, acting as a buttress to prevent the kerb stones being pushed over by the weight of the cairn material. This idea can be supported by evidence from Corrimony where the surrounding platform is much narrower and, as Piggott has noted, almost all of the kerb stones have been forced outwards by the pressure of the cairn⁴⁵. The platforms do seem to have been constructed a short time after the central cairn was completed, but prior to the monument being 'closed'. This development sequence is supported by the evidence from Corrimony, where the external platform is interrupted by a 'porch' like feature at the entrance, indicating that the platform did not block off or close the monument. Piggott's excavations did reveal evidence for subsequent blocking at a later date though. Several courses of stone were found crossing the entrance passage and a layer of small rounded boulders was found covering the passage and central chamber; both were interpreted as a deliberate blocking of the tomb⁴⁶.

2. The use of quartz

Quartz has been found in large quantities at many ritual and funerary sites ; at recumbent stone circles, other burial cairns, and rock art sites. For Clava Cairn monuments it seems to have been an important raw material used in the construction of the monument and potentially used in ritual activities. Bradley and Trevarthen have noted the deliberate use of stone containing quartz to emphasise light and dark sides of the cairns at Balnuaran⁴⁷, this has not been investigated at Corrimony, though quartz is visible within the body of the cairn material. It has been suggested that lighter coloured stones with high quartz content were deliberately positioned for visual effect, to reflect the rising midsummer sun on the north-east side of the cairn. Furthermore, Piggott's excavations revealed a dense concentration of quartz fragments on the

⁴³ (Bradley, 2000, pp. 160-161)

⁴⁴ (Barclay, 1992)

⁴⁵ (Piggott, 1956, p. 175)

⁴⁶ (Piggott, 1956, p. 180)

⁴⁷ (Bradley, 2000) (Trevarthen, 2000)

platform at Corrimony, particularly in association with the kerb stones. The surface of the cairn may have been covered with quartz at the time it was in use, which would undoubtedly have been an impressive sight.

The prevalence of quartz fragments at such monuments strongly suggests that it has a symbolic meaning and was perhaps used in rituals. Bradley has suggested that the white, reflective material, may have had a symbolic association with the moon. He also notes that when struck, quartz emits a green spark and that the act of creating the fragments may have been an element of ritual activity; quartz may also have been perceived as having magical qualities. The contrasts between light and dark materials at Clava Cairns could be seen as symbolic of life and death⁴⁸.

3. Recumbent stone circles

Clava Cairns share several affinities with recumbent stone circles (RSCs) and the distribution of the two monument types complements each other, with RSCs being distinct to the northeast of Scotland, found largely in Aberdeenshire. Both monument types feature monoliths graded in height with an emphasis on the south-west quadrant. Where the Clava Cairns have larger upright stones or passages aligned towards the south-west, RSCs are defined by the large recumbent stones on the south-west side. Both monuments have clear associations with astronomical alignments, though the lunar cycle seems to be the dominant association in the case of RSCs and both are associated with funerary practices in addition to other apparent ceremonial functions. Clava Cairns may also have links to the lunar calendar, particularly with the major and minor lunar standstills that occur approximately every 18 years, though this is an aspect that needs to be studied further. For further discussion of these parallels see Bradley (2000) and Burl (Burl, 1970).

4. David Wallace archive

David Wallace, an archaeology student who was involved in the excavation at Corrimony in 1952 produced archive material relating to the excavation, which can now be found via Canmore⁴⁹. The archive includes photographs from the excavation, David Wallace's dig diary and an advert for the excavations which was posted at the University of Edinburgh. The archive provides an interesting and rare personal insight into early Scottish excavations.

⁴⁸ See Trevarthen (2000) and Section 5 'Identity, Society, Belief Systems' in the ScARF Chalcolithic and Bronze Age panel report (Downes (Ed.), 2012) for further discussion on the significance of quartz and use of colour.

⁴⁹ <https://canmore.org.uk/site/12256/corrimony>