

Appendix E
(Added 10th January 2007)

Since issue of the main report on Friday 4th January 2007 and Appendix D on Monday the 7th January 2007 the following summarises the most recent correspondence:

An e-mail was received from Neil Curtis Senior Curator at Marischal College (9 Jan 2008).

Neil suggested contacting Treasure Trove re the two missing stones.

S. Bruce reply (9 Jan 2008).

A copy of the main report and appendix D was e-mailed to Treasure Trove for their information.

An e-mail was received from Gavin Bell, ANEFHS (9 Jan 2008)

Gavin had some question regarding Appendix D and these were:

(1) Your Appendix D quotes Lady Forbes as saying the stones could be returned "if Aberdeenshire Council arranged for them to be picked up." I imagine that would not be a particularly cheap operation - **is the Council prepared to foot the bill?**

S. Bruce reply (9 Jan 2008).

A copy of Gavin's e-mail (9 Jan 2008) was forwarded to Richard Leith at Aberdeenshire Council, **we await his response.**

(2) If they are returned, where would they be returned to? None of the sources I am aware of include any sort of plan showing where the individual stones were. RCAHMS quotes a number of surveys at various dates during the last century. The earliest suggests that in 1911, 4 stones "with unusual designs" were out in the

churchyard. A later survey in 1961 has one of the 4 inside the church. The most recent survey (1996) manages to locate only 3 stones. So where would the stones go?

S. Bruce reply (9 Jan 2008)

During my visit 7th November 2007 I clearly remembered a hole in the ground outside the church perhaps 10 feet from the east wall, attached is a photo showing the hole in the ground (outside the east wall of the church basically at the NE corner) to my mind this is the home of one of the stones now in SE England and because the stones are different shapes we may be able to determine which one fits in the hole (Once we have definite sizes we can investigate further).

If the nettles inside of the church in the first instance are cleared without disturbing the ground too much we may also be able to determine where the other one should lie - perhaps it's the hole I put my foot in back in 2005.



Hole in the ground outside the east wall of St Medden's church.

(3) The surveys reported by RCAHMS also mention (1961) "... several other small sculptured stones in the church." The 1996 survey states: "A number of other carved fragments formerly lay along the S wall of the burial enclosure, but since a previous visit in 1991, these have been removed, and their present location is unknown." Might Lady Forbes also have these?

S. Bruce reply (9 Jan 2008).

A copy of Gavin's e-mail (9 Jan 2008) was forwarded to Richard Leith at Aberdeenshire Council, we hope that Richard can make contact with Lady Jane Forbes, and we await his response.

Homecoming Scotland 2009

Gavin Bell also advised of the following in his e-mail (9 Jan 2008):

Over the past 3 months, I have been a member of a group comprising representatives of local authorities, statutory and voluntary organisations in the NE of Scotland which has been meeting to decide the area's contribution to "Homecoming Scotland 2009". The sub-group to which I am assigned ("Ancestral Roots") has already agreed in principle that, as many overseas Scots are keen to find where their ancestors are buried, we will devote efforts to providing online access to relevant information not currently online*.

But at the next meeting of the main group we have to decide whether we can come up with convincing plans for an event which would qualify for some of the earmarked funding available. It strikes me that the "homecoming" of these gravestones, and their installation in a (discreetly) tidied-up and "interpreted" St Meddan's might well be the sort of thing that would appeal to the holders of the purse-strings. But we will have to move quickly. The deadline for applications is 26th February, and the local group meets in just 10 days time. **You previously proposed a meeting to consider the "rescue" of St Meddan's - this now seems very urgent!**

S. Bruce reply (9 Jan 2008)

Forwarded Gavin's e-mail of 9th Jan 2008 to Richard Leith at Aberdeenshire Council stating that Gavin's suggestion re 'homecoming' seems a good one to me. Also advised that Gavin mentioned that funding may be available and that we need to act quickly; within the next week or so, **we await his response.**

9 Jan 2008

Discussed St Medden's with Kevin Duguid at the Evening Express.

9th Jan 2008

S. Bruce sent by e-mail information to www.electricscotland.com re the grave stone – 'John Seton of Disblair died 1563'. This will be added to this week's newsletter in the hope that more information on John Seton can be found.

10th Jan 2008 received a phone call on behalf of Alex Salmond MSP for Gordon and First Minister of Scotland.

A meeting was arranged for S. Bruce to discuss St Medden's with Alex on 14th Jan 2008.

10th January e-mail reply received from RCAHMS

RCAHMS is responsible for recording, interpreting and collecting information about the built environment but we are not involved in the maintenance of sites.

We do have a detailed record of this site and further references which may be of interest:

http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/pls/portal/newcanmore.newcandig_details_gis?inumlink=19445

I hope that this is of help to you. If you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely, Eleanor Rideout, Public Services Officer, RCAHMS Education & Outreach.