

The summer has seen a busy programme of activities, including the Bute Connections Exhibition – the Museum's contribution to Homecoming Scotland 2009. Special thanks must go to Margaret Lamb, Allan Martin and Jean McMillan for their efforts in producing a superb display. Due to popular demand the exhibition will be on show again, in the Museum Library from Wednesday 23rd September to Wednesday 30th September inclusive for those who missed it the first time round or those who just want another chance to visit. The team are currently working on producing a publication based on the exhibition. More information about this will be available in due course.

The Rural Settlements Survey group have had a very busy summer too. In April, in addition to completing the surveying and drawings of Branser, members were involved in survey walks with the Discover Bute Landscape Partnership Scheme (DBLPS) and the Royal Commission for Ancient & Historic Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS). During the summer, group members have 'flown the flag' for the Society & the Museum at several conferences and represented our interests in the DBLPS Archaeological Steering Group. At the end of August a visit by the Commissioners from RCAHMS enabled them to see first-hand the work of the Settlements group, the Society and the Museum. They clearly enjoyed their visit, were very appreciative of Bute hospitality and enchanted by both the island and the Museum.

Circumstances dictated that we had two outdoor events on the weekend of June 13-14th. A visit by the Scottish Wildlife Trust Glasgow group on Saturday 13th June was a great success. Several BNHS members joined them in a walk around the south end of Bute in glorious weather. Thanks to Ian Hopkin for arranging the minibus. On Sunday 14th, a dozen members took an excitingly fast trip on an RIB from Kilchattan to Wee Cumbrae. The bracken was a bit high to have a good look at some of the island's interesting sites, but the weather was glorious. We hope to arrange further visits to Wee Cumbrae but, in view of the bracken, these have been deferred to the spring – please tell Glyn Collis if you are interested. Meanwhile John Steele, last year's speaker on Horse Island, will be speaking to the Society about Wee Cumbrae at our meeting on Tuesday 8th December.

Angus Hannah made an interesting botanical discovery on Wee Cumbrae – Woad, only the fourth known site in Scotland for this plant. And in August Norrie Mulholland was able to add a new butterfly species to the Bute list – the Speckled Wood.

Most recently, Alex Hale and George Geddes of RCAHMS led a walk from Glecknabae to visit a number of archaeological sites in the Kilmichael area. We visited the chambered cairn at Glenvoiden, excavated by Dorothy Marshall in the 1960s, the deserted settlement site of Ardnagave with its unusual outshot bed alcove, the buchts (sheep-handling pens) by Altmore and the promontory fort beside the gorge near Cretriach. The interpretative skills of Alex and George were much appreciated, and the walk was greatly enjoyed by all who took part.

Forthcoming events

National Moth Night 2009 will take place on Friday 18th and Saturday 19th September. Contact Glyn or Dawn Collis via the Museum or on 504429 if you would like to be involved.

This year's Geology talk and walk by Julian Hill will take place on Saturday 3rd October. The talk will be at 10.30am in the Museum. We will assemble at 2.00pm outside the Museum to rationalise car usage for the guided walk, which will be in the Stravannan area.

Our speaker programme begins on Tuesday 13th October. At the time of writing this, we are still awaiting confirmation of the speaker for that evening – details will be posted in the Museum as soon as they are known. We have three reserves eager to come to speak to the Society, but none can manage that particular evening.