

Roinn na
Gaidhealtachd



Highland

Department of Libraries and Leisure Services
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Please ask for Mr R Gourlay

Our ref. HND 06 SE 012

Extension No. 447

Your ref.

Date 26.10.89

Dr Lesley MacInnes
Historic Buildings and Monuments
20 Brandon Street
EDINBURGH

Dear Lesley

SAM: TULACH BUAILLE ASSERY CHAMBERED CAIRN, CAITHNESS (ND05756019)

Please find a note from Mr George Watson, Caithness, and copies of photos taken by a friend. These show the interior of a chamber within this cairn taken as described. The hole was noted as 'new' by Audrey Henshall in 1956, and by others subsequently, but perhaps it is widening and becoming a threat. My experience with farmers would suggest that it should be blocked to prevent lambs getting in (and people), but perhaps a different method of dealing with it may be necessary. Anyway, I have advised George to leave it for the time being, until you can find time to take a look. If you want me to do anything in the meantime, please ask and I will try!

Regards

Robert Gourlay
Archaeologist

14 St Andrews Drive
Thurso
Caithness
KW14 8PY

15 October 1989

Dear Bob,

Tulach Buaile Assery ND058602

I mentioned briefly at the Viking Congress that during a Field Club outing we had noticed a sizeable opening into this cairn which is on the west side of Loch Calder. The opening would appear to be much older than I thought as Mercer in his Field Survey Vol 111 (82-83) p19 says that Audrey Henshall noticed it in 1956. The entrance is quite small but the passage quickly opens out as you can see from the enclosed pictures taken by Calum MacKenzie. He took them by sticking the camera down the hole as far as possible and shooting blind.

Keep these prints for the record. If you think that the opening should be filled in let me know and the Field Club will provide some labour. However I will do nothing until I hear from you, for perhaps a professional would like a look in while its still open.

I will send copies of the prints to Miss Henshall as I know she will be interested.

All the best


George Watson.

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Mr George Watson
14 St Andrews Drive
THURSO
Caithness KW14 8PY

Dear George

Thanks for the photographs, which will be put into the record. Who should I put in as copyright holder?

The hole was recorded by Henshall in her first volume after her visit in 1956 when she notes it as 'made recently'. However, as it seems to have increased in size since then, I will pass your information to Historic Buildings and Monuments, as this is a Scheduled site, and any blocking would require Scheduled Monument Consent.

Is the hole big enough to get in through? It might be worth a quick look, but I think I would recommend to HBM that it be closed up, if only to stop lambs getting in.

Thanks again for the photographs and information. I will be in touch again if there is any progress.

Regards