

# Archaeological Society

**The recently formed Sutherland Archaeological Society has acquired two rooms in the Strathnaver Folk Museum at Bettyhill to use as an exhibition area for any of their finds.**

Mr Keith Godfrey, of Tongue Post Office, who was elected treasurer at the AGM of the society in Lairg Community Centre in June, said last week: "The Society has hundreds of untouched archaeological sites and the Society will be excavating the most important of these over the coming years for the benefit of Sutherland, Scotland and also to create a further attraction for tourism.

"We have recently acquired these two rooms at the Farr Museum, in Bettyhill, which we would hope to use as a museum, to display artifacts and other items of historical interest."

Some 20 people attended the AGM, and members of the steering committee were voted on to the management committee with additional members.

Mr K Earnshaw, of Kinnauld, Rogart, was appointed chairman, his wife Mrs A Earnshaw, secretary, Mr Godfrey as treasurer, Mr Elliot Rudie as field officer and Mrs Dundas as field officer for the East coast.

Two other committee members appointed were Mr White and Mr Norman Henderson. It was unanimously agreed that children should be allowed on all appropriate digs.

On the question of protection of sites, Mr Godfrey raised the question of unlawful digging at archaeological sites, whether they were listed or unlisted. This raised the question of the definition of an archaeological site.

Mr Ian Telfer, Divisional development officer, who was present, said an archaeological site was one marked on an Ordnance Survey map.

Details of listed archaeological sites were requested for each member of the society, so that they could watch the sites in their own locality.

An official Society identification card was mentioned if the necessity arose to prove their identity. A decision on this has been deferred to a later meeting.

The question of powers to prevent unlawful digging was raised and it was decided to take police advice and report to the next management committee meeting.

It was suggested that all official digs should be reported to the society so that their position could be logged.

Mrs Earnshaw reported that after the Society had been registered, approaches would be made for funds to Mr R Gourlay, archaeologist for Highland region; Mr Harold Wilkinson, director of leisure and recreation; Mr Donald Munro, the district amenities officer for Sutherland and Mr D W Martin, chief executive of Sutherland District Council.

Annual fees for membership of the Society were fixed at £5 for adults, £2.50 for pensioners, and £1 for children.

The likely first dig by Society members would be at the Hut Circle at Bettyhill, on the suggestion of Mr Elliot Rudie, who described the site in some detail.

Mr Telfer described a site at Langwell Farm, in Strathoykel, which would be an appropriate field trip in his opinion. He said it was an Iron Age Celtic Fort and Dun with a guard cell. Mr Telfer also described many types of sites to be found in the locality.