

Book tribute to historian

AS A tribute to the late James K Bell, who was one of Dornoch's and Sutherland's leading historians, the Dornoch Heritage Society have published a 90-page book entitled *Abandoned Buildings the Evelix Valley* by co-authors Dr Struan Robertson and Dr Graham Park.

I was slightly reticent when George Munro asked me to review it, as he suggested I might find it somewhat technical on the archaeological content, a subject which, although I have an interest in it, is definitely not my forte.

Any doubts were unfounded as the sheer interest engendered by the clarity of the text and the illustrations made for a most informative read.

Most of the work for this book was carried out during an extensive survey between 1987 and 1993 by Struan Robertson and James Bell and covers a wide local area formed by the upper, middle and lower Evelix valley. In historical scope we are taken from the Neolithic period with its hut circles and chambered cairns to the clearances and "improvements" of the middle and late 19th century up to the condition of these settlements at nearly the present day.

The text is illustrated by many line drawings, a number of which are by Struan, and 16 pages of coloured location maps and a selection of colour photographs showing the main sites and buildings in the valley.

There will be few in the Dornoch area who are not living near or familiar with many of the sites that are detailed and discussed.

It is a most interesting, informative and will produced read and there will be many who will want to have it on their bookshelf alongside other Dornoch history books and as a valuable volume of future reference.

Historylinks and Doctors Robertson and Park are to be congratulated for producing such a worthy tribute to the much respected Jimmy Bell.

The book is available from the Dornoch Heritage Society at Historylinks Museum or from the Dornoch Bookshop, price £9.99. ISBN 978-0-9544253-5-7.