

Scottish Stone Liaison Group

NEWSLETTER

Stone Industry Project Team

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Nature does not wait

While building maintenance is something that can always be put off until another day, it is patently obvious that NATURE operates to a different cycle and tends not to wait. The above pictures were taken, from ground level, during the SSLG's Chief Executive recent visits to these cities / towns / villages. But the following question arises – If he can photograph these on just one visit to these areas then what exactly do those who live there actually see?



Does nobody care?

Are these photographs examples of the POOREST MAINTENANCE or the greatest growth – or have other readers seen worse?



With modern central heating and the advent of satellite dishes, trees can be seen growing out of old chimneys and redundant TV aerials swinging in the wind. Surely such examples should prompt concern for public safety. Buildings with such visually obvious defects, coupled with grass in the gutter, damaged down pipes and distressed windows all highlight a serious lack of maintenance.

Prize (on offer)

The SSLG would be very interested to receive photographs from readers of other examples of “nature fighting back” and will publish such examples in future Newsletters – a prize is also available!!

A copy of the new NSI publication entitled “*Building With Scottish Stone*” will be awarded if the submitted pictures are subsequently used. There is no prize for guessing the locality of the photographs but it would be interesting to hear from those who think they can identify the areas in question.

(Note: the Editor's decision re the selection of future photographs will be final)



A prize winner Moray Stone Cutters

Moray Stone Cutters, Elgin is to be congratulated on winning the contract to supply sandstone for the restoration and repair of the Gothic cathedral in Barcelona the foundation stone of which was laid in 1298. The building was completed in 1460 with the Gothic façade not actually completed until 1913.

The architects responsible for this work visited Moray at the end of March and were impressed by both the company and the stone it produced. This contract will result in Scottish stone being exported to Spain over the next three to four years. Mr Drew Baillie, Managing Director, anticipates that this particular contract could well result in more European contracts in the future and these are indeed important as they all contribute to the viability of any indigenous stone producer.

The most significant buildings to have used Clashach stone in a new build situation are the new Museum of Scotland in Chambers Street, Edinburgh and the extension to the National Gallery, Edinburgh. In addition, Moray Stone Cutters has also supplied stone for the 9/11 memorial in New York.

Congratulations to Peter Cameron Churchill Fellow of 2005

Having dedicated his life to the issue of stone and the appropriate skills and materials, Peter has been awarded a Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowship and later this year will visit Germany, France, Spain and Italy as part of a fact finding tour seeking to look at the manner in which these countries address the needs of their built heritage and he will pay particular attention to the issue of masonry conservation skills.

As Historic Scotland's Regional Works Manager at Fort George, Peter was instrumental in setting up the training facility at Elgin Cathedral workshops. The facility in Elgin, oversubscribed every year has the best record in Scotland for attaining SVQs.

It is hoped that, in due course, Peter will supply the Newsletter with some details of his trip.

Fyvie Castle Centre of excellence

On the 13th June a meeting was held at Haddo House, Aberdeenshire to develop the concept of the "Centre of Excellence" at Fyvie Castle. The project proposes to form a centre

Masonry training intake

The SSLG continues to monitor the stone masonry trainee intake on an annual basis and is encouraging but it is stressed that the trade, and indeed the entire industry, if not Scotland's built heritage, is indebted to those companies that provide these important

that would provide conservation training for a range of skills that are so urgently needed. The ready availability of properties, belonging to the National Trust of Scotland, will indeed be an ideal source for the necessary “hands on” experience.

The SSLG has continually supported this venture and made constructive input to the development of the Business Case as devised by Pricewaterhouse Cooper. Whilst the SSLG is of the view that there remains a number of issues to be addressed, it continues to lend its support to this exciting prospect. On the 14th June the RGU held a series of workshops and constructive ideas appear to have been at least developed.

The SSLG’s Chief Executive attended both events.

training opportunities.

The SSLG continues to make the case that clients, when placing contracts, should enquire of those tendering if they do indeed provide training spaces. By doing so contractors can be seen to be putting back something back into their industry. It could be argued that the converse may also apply.

If the client decides on PRICE alone then it has to be said that such decisions only compound the problem. The most recent figures (listed below) suggest that there is still room for improvement.

Over recent years the trainee intake at the three Colleges, that offer stone masonry trainee courses, is as follows:

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004
Telford	10	10	12	17
Glasgow Met	8	19	12	10
Elgin	6	7	9	6

Please note the Inverness College facility at Elgin can only accommodate 6 trainees per annum and has a waiting list of trainees. Trainees who cannot be accommodated are also given the opportunity to attend central belt colleges.

But again it is emphasised that NOT sufficient employers offer training places.

Appointments of a heritage training adviser

At the time of writing the CITB is about to appoint a HERITAGE TRAINING ADVISER for Scotland and this very positive and pro-active appointment is both welcomed and applauded by the SSLG.

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