

2 Introduction by *Paul R J Duffy*

The site was initially discovered by Mr Donald Angus Mackay, when a number of flat stone slabs were uncovered at a depth of 1.5m during annual peat cutting. The discovery was promptly reported to Dr Mary MacLeod, Regional Archaeologist, who concluded that the form and morphology of the remains was suggestive of a cist, potentially containing a bog body. Based on this interpretation, Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD) were commissioned by Historic Scotland to undertake an archaeological excavation under the provisions of the Human Remains Call Off Contract. With the agreement of Historic Scotland, a team from Northamptonshire Archaeology who were in the area were commissioned to undertake the fieldwork according to a written scheme of investigations prepared by GUARD. The work was undertaken in June 2002.

The site of Gearraidh na h'Aibhne (NGR: NB 2333 3068) is located on flat ground, 10m above Ordnance Datum, on the upper river terrace of the west bank

of the Abhainn Dhubh (Black River). The excavation area is located 200m west of the river, 80m from the main road (B8011). The remains were at a depth of just over 1.5m in a south-facing peat cutting. The area is currently used for grazing, peat cutting and sporting activities. It is covered with blanket peat and has a typical acid moorland vegetation profile of coarse grasses, mosses and heather. The peat is currently undergoing cutting. Local geology is mapped as glacial till overlying Lewisian Gniess.

The specialist reports below are edited versions of the full texts, which form part of the site archive. The site archive has been sent to the National Monuments Record of Scotland, RCAHMS, Edinburgh. No conservation was undertaken on the wood, following an assessment by AOC Ltd Edinburgh, and it is currently being assessed by the Treasure Trove Advisory Committee. It is anticipated that a hyperlink to this document detailing final archive location will be inserted following a decision on the disposal of the material.