

ATTACHMENT A [to letter to HS re slab 150 of June 2013; IRM]

5.2 From my book :- **“RECOMMENDATION.** Reginald’s attribution is clearly a very distinctive prospect and as he is in fact the very founder of this entire existing medieval abbey as it stands today, an examination of this grave site seems to be vital. His very rare pilgrim staff (as on graveslab no. 161) should have been buried with him, eg : the Bishop of The Isles, Angus MacDonald, d.1441, was buried “with his crozier and Episcopal habit, south side of the great choir” as was King Edward The Confessor’s staff. There does not appear to have ever been any scientific exhumation of the bones (and possibly artefacts) of any of the Lords of The Isles. Nor has there been any less intrusive and less costly ground piercing radar (GPR) examination of what are shallow graves.

5.3 If this is the case, it would be a most informative archaeological exercise of significant historical interest to see what is in each of the graves as I have described and in some cases attributed. And, if able, perform Y-DNA tests and radiocarbon dating. Y-DNA (and carbon dating) from any genuine burial bones found would be very interesting as the current Clan Donald Chiefs are all Norse R1a1. There is no record of them being grave robbed, unless the Iona Club had a “private collection”.

5.4 The highly publicised and recent exciting discovery of King Richard III’s burial is pertinent because the University of Leicester says :-

*“Projects developed in this way may become more common in future [as non-specialists increasingly become users, stakeholders and participants in academic research](#)”.*¹ Philippa Langley, originator and initial funder of the ‘Looking for Richard’ project has not been denied public “accreditation”, and she only “had a hunch, felt a chill on a hot summer’s day as she walked through the area” {her 6 seconds; my 6 years!}.

6.1 **RECOMMENDATION.** A joint project between Historic Scotland, led by Dr Caldwell, and the University of the Highlands and Isles, which has the added benefit of faculties of both Archaeology and [Masters in the History of the Highlands and Islands](#) {module : “Lords of the Isles”}, is I would think a very good proposition to thoroughly examine burials in St Oran’s Chapel. I have already “shaped the intellectual frameworks” and a project model is already available from Leicester University – a team of Archaeological Services, School of Archaeology and Ancient History, and Department of Genetics to do the final design and execution. Specialist experts on medieval “death and burial” such as Mike Parker-Pearson, Paul Binski could be hired on a needs basis. Who should be the ‘non-specialist originator’ of the “Looking for Reginald and Somerled Project”? This basis of this suggestion is in my 2012 submission to the Iona Research Conference and my book, website.

¹ ‘What is somewhat different from the ways in which archaeological professionals and amateurs have generally worked together is that in this case the non-specialists played a role in shaping the intellectual frameworks of the project, although the final project design (including how questions could appropriately be asked of the evidence), and the execution of the project in practical terms remained in the hands of the archaeologists’.