

Rubh' an Dùnain Through the Ages

Mesolithic
8000-4900 BC

Evidence of stone tools from itinerant hunter/gatherer communities at a small rock shelter.

Neolithic
4900-2000 BC

A chambered cairn has produced a beaker and many flint tools. Evidence of farming.

Bronze Age
2000-800 BC

A smaller cairn nearby shows continuing burial tradition. Ruins of round houses also visible.

Iron Age
800 BC - 1 AD

Construction of a large defensive wall (Dun) provides evidence of fortification. The rock shelter now appears used as a smelter and workshop.

Medieval
800-1500 AD

Outlet from loch to the sea converted to a tidal canal. Faering-style boat timbers found in Loch na h-Airde carbon dated to 1100 AD suggesting boat building/repair. Underwater survey shows wharves inside loch.

Post-Medieval
1500 AD - 1800 AD

Extensive evidence of settled farming, as the focus of MacAskill clan activity, including acting as coast watchers and bodyguards for the Macleods.

Industrial/Modern
c.1800 AD – present day

1790-1860: Highland Clearances herald rapid depopulation in favour of sheep farming.

1854: Rubh' an Dùnain finally abandoned. Substantial ruins of MacAskill tacksman's house.

1932: first archaeology surveys.

2000: first boat timbers discovered in Loch na h-Airde.

2009: major archaeological survey supported by Historic Scotland.

2015: MacAskill Society launches virtual information point.

2017: Designated formally Historic Monument by Scottish government.

2020: Friends of Rubh' an Dùnain Repopulation project launched.