

# Forest Heritage Scotland

*Discover your roots in Scotland's forests*

[www.forestheritagescotland.com](http://www.forestheritagescotland.com)

## Hogmanay at Halloween

*by Bob Pegg*

There were two men who'd been out one Hogmanay to buy some whisky from the local still and they were coming back through the glen when they heard the sound of pipes high up on the hill and they looked up and there was a light and the man with the whisky was a bit of a piper himself and he liked the sound of what he was hearing so he persuaded his companion to come with him while they investigated and as they climbed up the hill, as they got closer, they realised that there was a door open in the top of the hill and they realised it must be the door of a sìthean - a fairy mound. When they got closer still and looked inside the mound, they could see tables full of food and drink and people dancing to the sound of the fairy piper. And the man with the whisky leapt into the mound and he linked arms with the dancers and began to join in and before his companion could do anything about it, the door of the sìthean slammed shut and he was left alone out on the cold, dark hillside. So he went back to the village and told everyone what had happened and of course they didn't believe him. So shortly after that, he was in court in Inverness on a charge of murder but there was no body so they couldn't convict him and he went back to the village.

And about nine months later, at Halloween, he was out in the glen again. He had been doing a bit of poaching. He had with him a gaff, a wooden pole with a metal hook on the end, and he was coming back home with his catch

when he heard the sound of pipes from high up on the hill. He looked up. There was a light so he went up the hill to investigate and, as he was climbing, realised that the door of the sìthean was open again. When he got there, he looked inside and there was his friend with a jug of whisky still over his shoulder, still dancing around. So he jammed the gaff in the door to stop it closing. Reached in, grabbed his friend by the elbow, hauled him out, pulled out the gaff, the door slammed shut. There they were on the cold, dark hillside. And his friend, although he'd been in there for nine months, thought he'd just been there for a few hours. They went back to the village and of course everyone was overjoyed to see them and they were especially overjoyed to see the jug of whisky. So that night they had a party and they celebrated Hogmanay at Halloween.

This is the transcript of the audio file available at  
[www.forestheritagescotland.com](http://www.forestheritagescotland.com)

