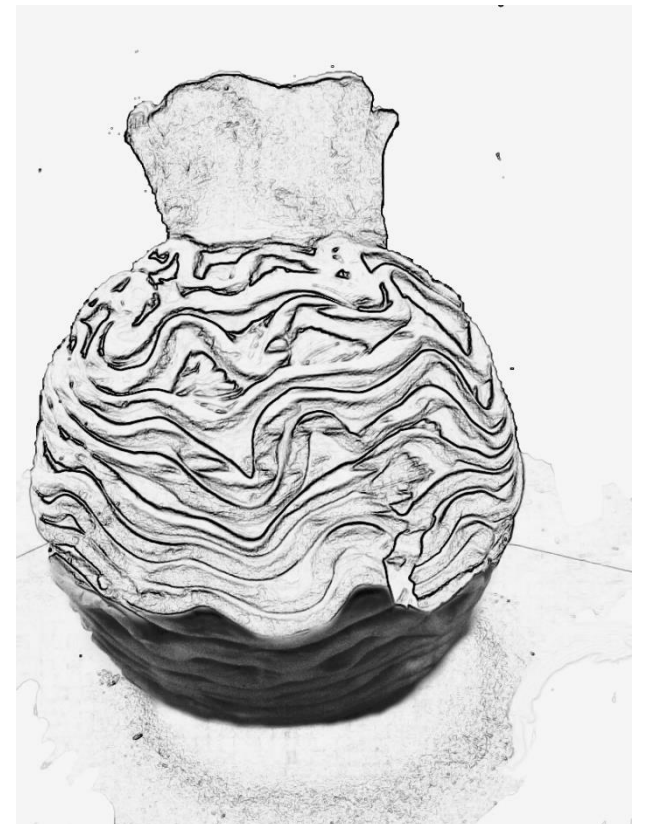


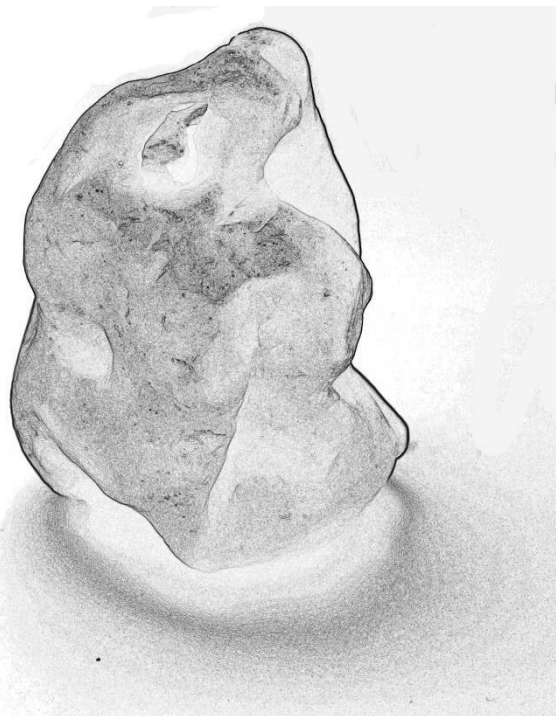
# THE CRICHTON COLLECTION

Found by local resident Elizabeth Crichton in a peat bog on North Uist, the exact date and origin of these vessels is unknown. Their delicate colourings of fiery oranges and smoky greys suggest that they have been fired in a peat kiln close to where they were found. The excavation showed that they were encircled in a stone structure that may have been the base of the kiln or some form of storage chamber. They were found in close proximity to a megalithic standing stone where traditionally Beaker Pottery is found belonging to people living in prehistoric Western Europe from 2800 – 1800 BC. Whilst these pieces may be from a similar period they do not have the distinctive shapes and patterns of Beaker wear.

These vessels are all quite different from other pottery found in the area. The rather beautiful dish (1) reflects the shapes of the sandy shores of the island. Other fragments found suggest that this was part of a larger vessel perhaps used for storage of vegetables or for smoking fish and shellfish over the fire.



This rather odd shaped vessel (2) and bowl (3) have been glazed in milk a practice common amongst the inhabitants of Lewis in the 1700s and so would suggest that these pots date from around this time and were bought here by traders or other travellers.



Rather roughly made, this pot (2) is not likely to have been an item intended to be used for decoration, it is more likely to have had a ritualistic or functional purpose. The shape of the pot suggests that it was used as a burial urn, the shaping resembles that of a somewhat contorted body, and the glazing would have enabled it to hold liquid or ashes that could have accompanied the deceased on their journey either in the ground or by water.

The bowl (3) that was found with these items is likely to have been made at the same time and place as item (2), and is most probably some form of ceremonial cup or Quaich. The texture of the pot is interesting and unusual in vessels of this period. The pattern may reference fish scales and it is thought that this may have been used in ceremonies giving thanks to the Norse God Ægir for safe passage.

