

Bronze Sunflower Pin

Period: Bronze Age (c. 2500 – c. 800 BC)

Material: bronze

Complete item

This bronze pin and example components are based on one found at a Bronze Age roundhouse near Dirr Wood, Dores. Known generally as ‘sunflower’ pins, they have been found across Scotland, northern England and Ireland, where they date to the Late Bronze Age, around 1000 – 800 BC. The disc-shaped head and the long pin shaft have been cast separately with only some of the decoration detail. Once the ‘pouring cups’ of excess bronze



Pinhead from a hoard found near Dingwall

were removed, the rest of the decoration was added by carving lines into the surface of the disc. The shaft and head have then been joined, and the whole pin polished. The shape and gleam of these objects are reminiscent of the sun, so there is speculation that they may represent this.



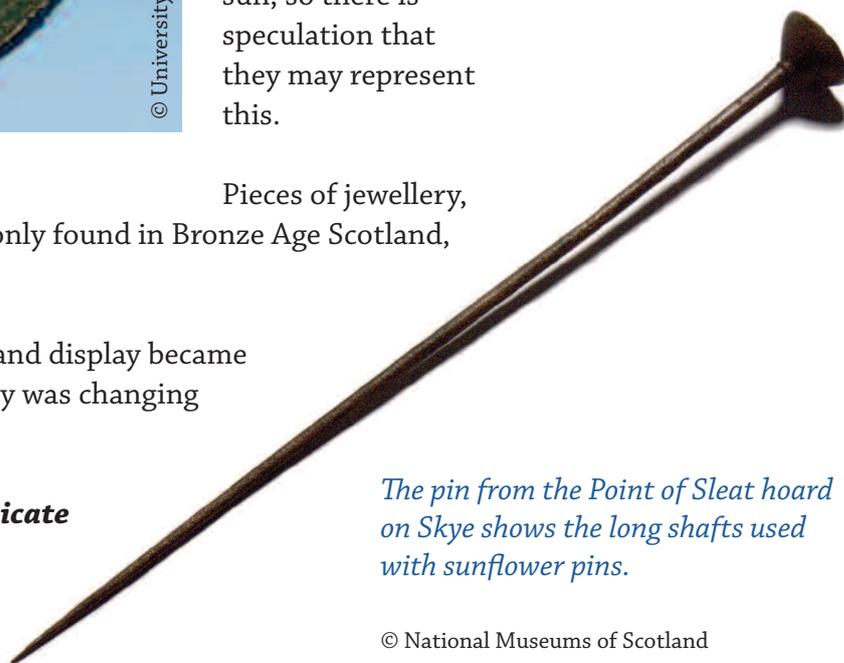
Sunflower pinhead from Dores, now in Inverness Museum. It has discoloured over time

Pieces of jewellery, such as pins and beads, are quite commonly found in Bronze Age Scotland, but not in earlier periods.

This may suggest that individual status and display became increasingly important in the way society was changing during the Bronze Age.

What does wearing jewellery communicate to others?

Why do you think the pin has such a long shank?



The pin from the Point of Sleat hoard on Skye shows the long shafts used with sunflower pins.

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See also:

When? Bronze Age
CT Bronze Casting

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