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My Weekend

This weekend Grace came home. We also had a surprise movie night at Shirva for the children of Fair Isle. I had a lot of fun making a poster to put up at school to invite everybody.

The next day Grace and I listened to a comedian we like whilst Grace finished a jigsaw. Later Dad and Grace made a STAR WARS Lego set whilst I made places for the characters to live. It was loads of fun!

During the weekend we also played two games. We played the Sherlock mystery game and Robo Rally. None of which I won. That evening we went to Thomas's leaving do. There were loads of yummy snacks!

On Sunday, church was at John's. We stayed for biscuits, then before we walked back to Shirva, we went down to the old slip way because there is a bit of stone that makes a mini whirlpool and then fountains all the water out. We got quite wet!

On Monday we found out that we might be going on a school trip to Foula in April, I am quite excited as this will be the first time I have been to Foula since I was only one or two days old! We are also going on a school trip in March which will be lots of fun and I will get to see Grace!

Freyja (10)

My Weekend

We all went to Freyja's on Friday for a cinema night. We watched a movie and ate popcorn and sweets. The next night there was a party at Setter. The kids all played upstairs and we had a brilliant time. I also got a new game on my dad's computer called Garry's Mod.

Harris (8)

My Very Busy Week!

Last week it was an extremely busy one! There were birthdays on nearly every day! On 2 days we didn't get together with friends. It was nice because we were having a very busy day. The weekend was nice. On Friday we went to the Parnaby's and watched a movie. They didn't have popcorn but we had thousands. Whoopsy I said thousands by accident, I meant about 10 packets! Let's carry on, where were we? We had a sleepover at our grandparents.

Luca (7)

Cheerio Thomas!!



The crew of the Good Shepherd: Ian, Steven, Thomas and Deryk. Photo - Robert Mitchell

This week we said good-bye to our friend and neighbour Thomas who is off on adventures new in Glasgow. Thomas came to Fair Isle to help put up the new wind turbines back in 2018, deciding to stay after the project ended. He dutifully took up his position on the Good Shepherd and with the fire service, as well as crofting and working with FIBS. We wish you all the best and look forward to seeing you again soon!

Photo right – some desperate attempts to keep Thomas in the Isle were made, but failed to tempt him!

Photo – Ruth Stout



Da month dat's awa – from our friend and isle lass Jenny Stout, aka Jen Stout acclaimed journalist recently returned from Ukraine.

Weel bairns. It seems I arrived on 28th December, blinked a few times, and suddenly a month had gone by and I was at Tingwall again. I'm writing this in bonny (no, driech) Aberdeen, just off the boat.

Among my favourite things to do are lifting heavy stuff and dancing, so the timing was excellent; sheep feed came in that afternoon I arrived and I got to help heft it about at Barkland and Skerryholm and Shirva, and enjoy a ride on the back of the big truck under the stars (it probably wasn't starry, but memory is a wonderful thing). And just a day later, a dance! I miss it so much, as I know a lot of folk do; I gave up going to 'ceilidhs' in Glasgow and Edinburgh because they're too terrible and chaotic to really enjoy. Apparently I get 'bossy' at them. So though the Christmas dance was a peerie een, it made me very happy, all those memories of big dances bubbling up; being 4-ish and sitting on the red chairs, watching the flurry of feet stamping and whirling past you, is something I mind very vividly. Magic.

Also kinda magic was biding in Taft this time: a place full of memories too. It's changed a lot inside since we were there in the 90s, but the shape of a home never really changes - and it still has a 'Taft smell', as Clare said one day (a good comforting smell). I was thinking about Ella and all the peerie porcelain figurines she had, and then us moving in and dad painting the sitting room walls with orange splodges. The windowsill in the back bedroom was my best bed; I had a piece of foam for a mattress, perhaps taken from Vicky the Volvo (RIP), and I could watch the beam from the south light swing round over the land and shine right into my eyes. I loved it there. I realised this time that I can actually still fit on the windowsill; haven't done much growing since the age of 9, clearly.

Hogmanay definitely *was* a starry night, because I took a picture to prove it. Walking up the hill to Shirva after tea I had to keep stopping to take it in: the sea still and shining under a big moon, that silvery light cast over the isle. The guisers were terrific: special mention to Lowri's uncanny Mr Wilson. A smashing party at Burkle and I lasted till 6am or so before wandering over the hill with Vivian.

I'd meant to have a few days off to start the year, but it wasn't to be, and the horrible cold that everybody caught put paid to socialising anyway, so work it was. Grim news just before hogmanay that a young woman I'd photographed in Ukraine, just a few weeks before, had been killed in Donbas. She was a medic and drone pilot, a deeply impressive and determined person, and in normal life a rising star of Kharkiv's pharmaceutical university. The newspaper wanted a piece about her life, so I spent a few days trying to contact her family and friends. It's not a nice job, and journalists get a lot of stick for it, but often people are keen to talk about the person, to tell the world what they were like, what they believed in. She was called Vladislava Chernykh, 28 years old.

I didn't escape the cold but wasn't nearly as ill as others, so felt lucky. Sleep often deserts me these days - it means ample time to listen to audiobooks about WWII in those unmagical hours of 2-5am, but I get fairly wabbit during the day. Another deadline for a long magazine piece on 4th January - also a grim story, about a children's writer the Russians killed in March. I'd met his family and tried, along with other journalists, to piece together what might have happened to him. It is jarring to be in two different places at once: in my head, in Kapytolivka, the small sleepy village where this writer lived, houses half-destroyed by shelling, and then I come out of this writing dwam and look out at the Skerries and realise where I actually am. And the dog's needing a walk and the wind is howling. People often say it's easier to write about something, or somewhere, when you have some distance from it, but I'm not sure; it's definitely disconcerting.

Once everyone's struggled back to something approximating health we can hang out, and my usual diet of cabbage soup and beans (who can be bothered with cooking for one? Not me) is greatly improved by other people's hospitality, especially many evenings at Shirva, doing jigsaws with Freyja and annoying David and eating the delicious things Susannah concocts - Ukrainian dumplings! - and generally just feeling very at home. It was a month with many opportunities to feel extremely grateful for the folk in my life.

A kind of routine falls into place, working early in the morning and then heading out - with Iain's help get the lambs at Pund eating, and Fly is always keen for a walk. Generally I hate sitting on the computer and want to be outside, but I like sitting down to work early with a strong coffee. Perhaps a combination of the lovely clear focus at that time of day, and some sort of Calvinism: 'Ha! I've got so much done and it's only 8am!'. The flipside is that by 3pm I'm totally useless for any kind of concentrated work. Opposite of a night owl.

Whole days are lost to researching grant and scholarship applications: the amount of work for each one is ridiculous, and then you realise that 'fully funded' means 'actually, you still have to stump up several grand'. The world is a strange place. Journalism in particular is increasingly a gig for rich kids with deep parental pockets. Anyway, one looks plausible, a three-month stint in Vienna, and I get the application in just before the deadline and celebrate that achievement with a glass or two at Haa.

Uncle Kenny is a big miss. Still seems strange that he's not waving from Brecks window, or standing at the crane controls on the boat. I don't think we can fill these big holes that people leave behind - or I can't, at least - just have to live with them as best we can. It's lovely to see Sue when she comes home on the 9th, and the plane brings not just Sue but also my very beloved Nikon camera - I'd left it in Glasgow - a fantastic distraction from the pile of work to do! The snow comes a few days later, and the isle looks so beautiful in that low winter light and dark, dark snow-skies to the west. I skip around happily taking photos with a battered old Tamron lens, 90mm, which when it feels like working is just beautifully crisp and sharp. A few days later I spend hours aiming it at maalis on the banks, but they're almost always too fast. I love the way they glare at me, that baleful beady eye fixed as they swoop round again and again. I could spend whole days just lying on the cliff edge, the best place in the world, watching these birds soar around.

And suddenly it's 26th January and time to go. Racing around cleaning and packing and getting a last cuddle with the dog - what a sweetie she is - and as I drive to the airstrip I'm thinking of all the walks I didn't quite have time for. But that's what the summer is for. When, hopefully, I'll see you all.

Jenny

NOTICES

Cake sale in aid of earthquake appeal - We have decided to have a cake sale here on Saturday to raise some money to send to Turkiye and Syria following the horrendous earthquake. The boys and I will be baking lots of nice cakes and biscuits so please drop in to Houll between 3pm and 4.30pm on Saturday to buy a tasty treat and give a donation to those who really need it most. We will give all money raised to Disasters Emergency Committee and Unicef.

Thank you in advance

Eileen

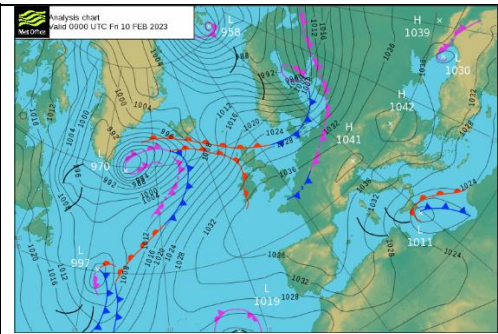
NTS visit – Clea and Sheona will be visiting the Isle on Thursday this week, anyone wishing to see them, please make an appointment with David Parnaby or Eileen asap.

Chapel – we are back to the Chapel this week, all welcome to join. John will be leading the service.

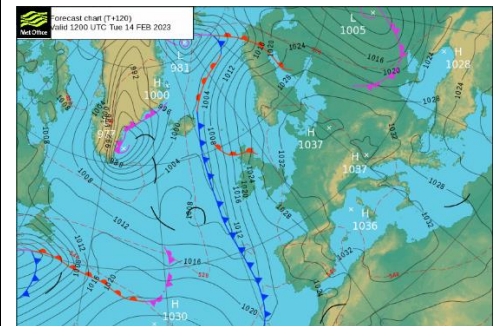
Is this pan yours? >>> Please collect from the Hall porch, left over from the Christmas party. Thanks



FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



**Analysis Chart 0000 UTC
Friday 10th February 2023**



**Forecast Chart 1200 UTC
Tuesday 14th February 2023**

GENERAL SITUATION **Friday 10th February 2023**

Presently in the warm sector of a vigorous depression west of Iceland the strong south-westerly airflow will veer westerly and strengthen as the cold front clears east over Fair Isle around midday. The weekend should see high pressure over northern France building north across the UK putting Shetland in an easing mild south-westerly airflow. Monday into Tuesday with high pressure forecast to drift east the airflow will back more southerly before freshening south-westerly midweek as Atlantic fronts move towards western Scotland. Slow moving fronts then affect Shetland later in the week with an Atlantic depression tracking past Shetland bringing a wet and windy weekend.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Mild with temperatures 8° or 9° Celsius by day and 7° or 8° overnight.

FRIDAY 10th: Occasionally heavy rain in the morning, brighter in the afternoon with some showers. F6-7 SW'ly veering W'ly F7 to gale F8 easing F6-7 later. Mainly dry overnight with a F5 W'ly.

Sea State: Mostly rough with a 3 or 4 metre W'ly wind swell. East of Shetland moderate to rough at 2 to 3 metre.

SATURDAY 11th: Some patchy light rain at first then mainly dry with brighter spells. F5-6 WSW'ly winds. Cloudy with a few showers overnight.

Sea State: Mostly rough with a 3 or 4 metre W'ly wind swell. East of Shetland moderate to rough at 2 to 3 metre.

SUNDAY 12th: Rather cloudy, some early showers then mostly dry. F5-6 WSW'ly winds easing F5 overnight.

Sea State: Mostly rough with a 3 metre W'ly wind swell. Moderate east of Shetland.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK 7° or 8° Celsius by day, 5° or 6° overnight.

MONDAY 13th: Mainly dry and rather cloudy. Fresh SW'ly winds, moderate later.

Sea State: Mostly rough with a 3 metre W'ly wind swell. Slight to moderate east of Shetland.

TUESDAY 14th: Cloudy start, some sunny spells by afternoon. Moderate S'ly winds freshening later with rain overnight.

Sea State: Mostly moderate with a 2 metre WSW'ly wind swell. Slight to moderate east of Shetland.

WEDNESDAY 15th – SUNDAY 19th: Wednesday mainly dry with brighter spells. S'ly winds strengthening with rain and gale overnight. Showers at first on Thursday then dry with easing winds before more rain and strong winds overnight. Friday and the weekend wet and windy with risk of gales.

Sea State Wednesday: Mostly moderate with a 2 metre SW'ly wind swell. Slight to moderate east of Shetland.

Dave Wheeler

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NURSE, FLISS ON PASSING HER PRESCRIBING COURSE
WELL DONE FLISS!! 😊**

No Maavi this week as he is stuck in Lerrick, or mibbe just hidin in the banx!
Whit neest!

Thank you to David Parnaby for this excellent photo of Hestigeo out of sight in Lukki Minnie's butter this week. Lukki Minnie's butter is what we call sea foam. *Lukki Minnie* was a trow (troll type character from Fair Isle folklore) who lived at the top of Malcolm's Head until her untimely demise. Now she kirns (churns) her butter from the sea... Better make some bannocks for all yun butter!

