

VOLUME 46 ISSUE 25

PUBLISHED SINCE 1978

8th SEPTEMBER 2023

My Fantastic Week

This weekend Grace came home I was very excited because it was the first time in three weeks! When she arrived, we watched Asoka which is a new STAR WARS series about Grace and my favourite character. It is really good although sadly we can't watch it for another three weeks because we always wait until Grace is back. Before that we had tea which was an Indian takeaway, our favourite! On Saturday we went to Busta to knit. Currently I am knitting a cushion with pink so bright it hurts my eyes! I am doing a patchwork front and a fleece back. Later, we played a game called Baker Street which as you may have guessed is a game about Sherlock Holmes. There is a board similar to Cluedo but instead of rooms there are buildings. Every time you enter a building you get a clue and then work out the answer. Normally I lose the game and so I was very happy to win the 7th time we played it.

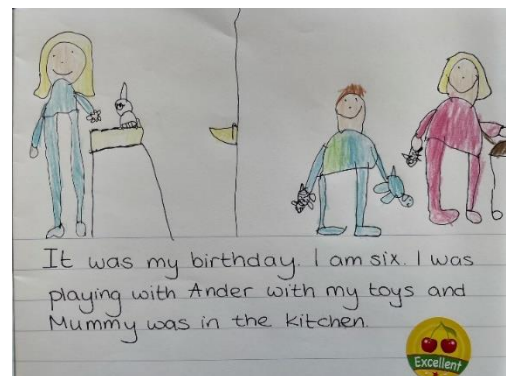
On Sunday we went to church and then Sunday school, Grace and I drew afterwards. Dad, Grace and I walked back to Shirva and on the way we stopped at the pier steps at south harbour to watch the waves. Grace and Dad both got splashed but I ran away just in time. Before tea Mum and I made halloumi to eat later in the week. It is one of my favourite cheeses! I had a fantastic weekend. I hope you did too!

Freyja (11)

New Slide!

At school we got a new slide in the playground. It is amazing! Freyja chose it. It has got a really slippery slide. It has also got a fireman's pole which is going to be good. Iain and Andy built it, the boxes were sitting outside the playground for a while. Thank you Iain and Andy. I am looking forward to going down the fireman's pole!

Luca (8)



Heidi (6)



Ander (5)

New Star Wars Game

At the weekend I got a new game on the Xbox.

It's a Star Wars game. You have to fight Jedis or Siths. For the goodies, I like to play Anakin Skywalker and for the baddies, I like to play Darth Maul, General Grievous and Count Dooku.

Heidi was 6 on Monday. She got loads of presents and I got a little Grogu key ring and a Grogu toy. Grogu looks like Yoda but is a baby version and he can use the force too. Everyone came to our house after school for Heidi's birthday. I played Minecraft with Luca and Freyja. There was a cat piñata that was quite hard to break open. We all whacked it loads with my wooden sword! Eventually the piñata broke and we shared out the sweets.



Harris (9)

Da Week Dat's Awaa

Friday - That I have largely retired is still sinking in, the garden as a result is getting more attention and at a time when harvested areas are starting to grow weeds, I have decided to sow a green manure crop as an experiment to hopefully improve and protect the soil and this weather is getting it off to a good start. My fridge is full of veg from both green house and garden, most notably aubergines, a first for me this year. Moussaka jumps to mind and having produced most of the necessary ingredients, including the minced lamb (I'm showing off now!), I look for recipes. I find one which says preparation time half an hour, the author of the recipe obviously can't tell the time, but it was well worth it in the end, I think the Houlleens who joined us for tea would agree too. The evening was so beautiful that after eating we took a walk up the road to look for mushrooms. The sun was low on the horizon, casting a shimmering wedge of light towards us, beautifully framing the Northlink boat sailing south, and behind us the moon was rising over the east banx. Later I receive a lovely photo of the isle taken by a friend from that boat.

Saturday - The Good Shepherd goes to Grutness at the usual time. I do some cleaning, feed the sour dough starter and listen to Radio 4, the little rituals that mark the weekend and anchor the week. The tomatoes are coming to an end now so I'll soon have space to plant the leeks that will be ready for eating in the spring. I decide to phone the hairdresser this morning knowing I could book an appointment and not worry too much about the timing of it. I think I'll even stay overnight and have a catch up with Gina too.

Sunday - As forecast, there is rain and low cloud, I don't mind too much as the ground will benefit from some more rain. The house fills with the smell of a newly baked sourdough loaf, and we get ready to go to the Chapel. Once there, I become aware that something isn't quite right, no bell! Sadly, the clapper had

broken off, I love the sound of the bell and hope it will be possible to repair. Watching the sky for showers, we go for a shortened walk, the wind picks up, gusting easily to gale force, fortunately it was warm because I had to remove my hat off before it blew off! I enjoy cricket and am pleased to see it back on terrestrial TV, I have happy early memories growing up in Manchester, sitting on the sofa watching cricket with Dad. Later we watch Country File followed by the Antiques Road Show, I'm aware of the changing season as I close the curtains and note we'll have to take the dog for a walk earlier, before it gets dark!

Monday - I'm a morning person, so waking to bright sunshine starts the day early and well for me. Late morning there is a meeting for all islanders who might be involved with the delivery of services for those tasked with the delivery of the new harbour works and ferry replacement. It was very interesting, and I start to appreciate what a big project this is, spread over the next 2 years. They get a taster of the travel issues they might encounter when poor weather at Tingwall causes the cancellation of the afternoon flight, so they have an overnight stay and a trip on the Good Shepherd the next morning.

From my kitchen I see Fliss's furniture being loaded onto the lorry, ready to leave tomorrow. She has been a good nurse and I wish her well in her new job and she promises to return. There is a haze over the south end of the isle produced by thunderous crashing waves which started yesterday, despite that a message came through to say a humpback whale had been spotted off the South Light, to add to the recent daily sightings of cetaceans. It is Heidi's 6th birthday today and I was both amused and impressed by her birthday cake which definitely tasted better than it looked, I'm sure the bairns' F.I.T. will explain that!!! *(Editor: I will embellish as the bairns were reporting on other news – the excellent cake was a cat, in litter tray with added 'deposits')*. In the early evening Neil appears with a **convolvulus hawkmoth** he'd found in the garden, with it gripping onto my finger I set it in the garden on a fragrant lily and next to honeysuckle, which they like to feed on.



Tuesday – Fortunately the sea has calmed down a lot and the stranded passengers from yesterday definitely make the right decision to go on the boat because unfortunately the plane was cancelled due to a technical fault. Through the morning the sun came out and the wind fell away, and it felt hot! I think the whole of Britain is having the same fine weather today. Ross is in Ullapool for a few days with Alan Wilson, ex of Houll and John Mouat, a family friend from Shetland. The beauty of WhatsApp means that I'm sent almost real time pictures of their stunning mountain hike.

Wednesday – I wake to hear the wind but don't see much because of low cloud! Oh, you can never get bored with our weather! A fine day to do indoor things like make another batch of sweet chilli jam and bottle some chillies and perhaps freeze some chillies and maybe look for some more chilli recipes, yes, I have a glut of chillies!!! This afternoon is music with the bairns at school. With vocals and instruments and a lot of fun, we're developing one of the "Lost Shetland songs" Jenny Sturgeon introduced us to last term. Recorded in Unst, "King Orfeo" is a retelling of Orfeus in the Underworld, the chorus is in Norn, the old Norse language of Shetland. With no improvement in the weather, we get several phone calls to book passengers on tomorrow's boat. This damp, warmish weather is good for mushrooms and so when we

take Don for his evening walk, we find a perfect, newly emerged mushroom and because of the time of day, managed to get it before Luca does!!!

Thursday – More fog this morning but the sun is trying to break through. Out of the corner of my eye I become aware of something moving along the dyke, I wonder if it's a migrant bird skulking in the vegetation but soon realise it's a Fair Isle mouse, with its bright white stomach. I watch it with enjoyment, the mouse springing from stone to stone until it eventually disappears. I can hear some of the moths flapping about in the moth trap, reminding me it's time to open the box. With my usual anticipation I lift the lid, the distinct shape and colour of a **Herald** meets me (image right), only the third I've ever caught.



Then a Pink barred sallow as lovely and unusual as its name plus many of the usual moths. Finally, an *evergestis extrimalis*, a micro moth which is a rare visitor to the southeast of England, let alone here! Current weather and climate change all having an impact. After school I join Eileen and all the bairns in the playground to enjoy the late summer sun. Come teatime a blanket of fog slowly lowers over the whole isle and the boat returns from Lerwick with very little visibility, they do such a good job and will be on the sea again at some point tomorrow with another load of lambs to market.

Pat

ISLE NOTICES

- Shetland Islands Council, along with representatives from Stantec and Mott McDonald, will be running a community engagement event at the Fair Isle Community Hall on the 13th September to discuss the ongoing Fair Isle Ferry Replacement project as it approaches the construction stage. Please come along between 11:00-13:00 to discuss any concerns regarding the potential impacts of construction, as well as what updates you would be interested in receiving during construction, and how best to communicate these updates.
- Following on from the meeting for service providers for the pier project, would any B&B/guesthouse/accommodation operators please send me their availability from April onwards if they would like to host the workers. If you could send me brief details of availability, costs, terms & conditions etc, then I will collate and forward to the team. Thanks, Eileen
- This weekend marks the centenary of the War Memorial in Fair Isle, located in the graveyard. With this in mind, the Sunday service at the Chapel will be short, and then we gather at the War Memorial for a brief act of remembrance celebrating the erection of the Memorial 100 years ago. John.
- New MPA officer – Katie Cubbon is visiting the Isle this weekend. There will be an informal meet and greet, with coffee and cake, at the Committee Room on Sunday at 4.30pm if you would like to come along and meet Katie

1923 10th September - The War Memorial here was unveiled today. The school children marched down to take part in the ceremony.

M. M. Holman's entry in the school log book for that day. He had been school teacher/missionary for just short of a year, had himself seen service in the Great War, and now had around 20 pupils under his care. It was a Monday and I am sure the



march was appropriately formal, from what I have heard of Mr Holman.

Before 1918 British monuments tended to be in honour of famous figures or the aristocracy. Whether some of them deserved such approbation is another story but the carnage on the battlefields of France and Belgium marked a recognition by the general population of the value and courage of the fathers, husbands and sons who never came home, and that the horrendous waste of life should be acknowledged clearly and publicly in a way that it could never be forgotten.

Communities throughout Britain took on the task of creating their own memorials. The parish of Dunrossness put together a committee to raise money for memorials for the small communities within its

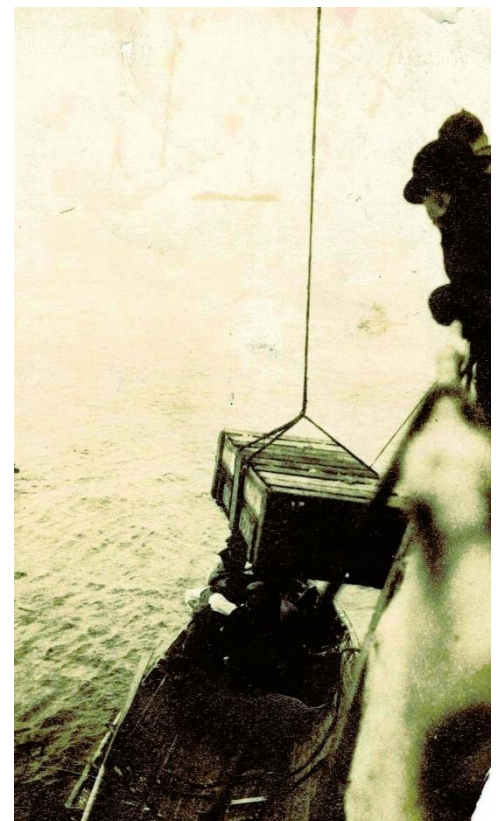
remit, including Fair Isle.

Funds were raised through donation and subscription and the design of the stone was a committee/community decision. The chosen design is, I think, perfect for its various locations.

As can be seen, transporting a monument of the size and weight concerned can't have been easy. A lot of skill was required to get it from the steamer on to a yawl in an the open sea, row it ashore, then manoeuvre it from the yawl onto an oxcart and haul it to the graveyard. The stone, complete with the names of the eight Isle men who died in the service of their country, was erected in the area what was once the floor of the old kirk, and was unveiled by Polly Eunson of Upper Leogh who had lost two sons in 1915.

1914-18

Stewart and Polly's sons -18 year old Robert Eunson RNR, training at HMS Excellence, the gunnery school on Whale Island, Portsmouth, and 24 year old Stewart Eunson RNR, in training at HMS Vernon, the torpedo school at Portsmouth. They both died of meningitis in the Royal Naval Hospital, Haslar within three months of each other. Another casualty who was training at HMS Excellence was William Stout RNR, Taft, who died of pneumonia on September 7th 1915, age 24. William Eunson, Schoolton, Leading Seaman RNR died of



meningitis in Lerwick on April 18th 1916, age 36. He left 6 children - the oldest had just celebrated his 9th birthday and the youngest was born 5 months after his death.

Two sons were lost by the McLean family in the school house. 22 year old Pte Charles McLean, 44th Canadians; died of shrapnel wounds on October 22nd 1916 and his brother Pte Kenneth Mclean, 44th Canadians; age 28, killed three days later. Both perished in the Battle of the Somme. They had been living in Canada, Charles working for the Hudson Bay Company and Kenneth in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan where he had his own farm, but they were still Fair Islanders. The month of November was a bad one for the Shetlanders. The Shetland News of 30th November 1916 headlined 'SHETLAND SOLDIERS IN THE ANCRE BATTLE - HEAVY DEATH TOLL & CASUALTY LIST.'

Pte George Stout, RAMC, Busta, died from wounds received on a French battlefield on November 13th 1916. He was 28, and was leading a party of stretcher bearers when he was mortally wounded. A keen and knowledgeable bird watcher, he was one of the first to put Fair Isle on the ornithological map. The last on the 1914-18 list is Lance-Corporal Jerome Wilson of the Highland Light Infantry His parents were Andrew and Barbara Wilson and the family lived in Stackhoull until the 1890s when they moved to Edinburgh. Jerome was found "dead on the battlefield" on April 9th 1918. He was 34 years old. The fact that he is commemorated on the memorial in Ploegsteert near Ypres can give us an indication of where he fell.

1939-45

Stewart Wilson L/Corporal, 1st Division Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders was lost in the 1939-45 conflict. His name was only added to the memorial this century. Son of Jerome and Mary Jean Wilson, Springfield and husband of Valerie Devine, Dover; he was killed in action in Tunisia, North Africa on March 4th 1943. His son was 5 weeks old.

The effect of both wars on many Fair Islanders was profound. A hundred years on the world doesn't seem to have learned a lot but we must be thankful for those young men and all the others who stood between us and destruction. Thanks to the foresight of a long forgotten committee and all of the individuals who gave time and money to ensure that these memorials were erected even in small communities like ours, we can remember them and celebrate their courage.

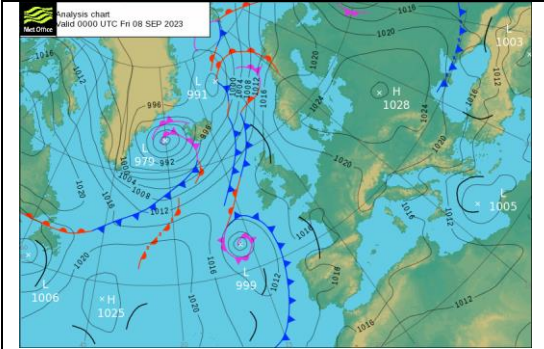
Busta Anne



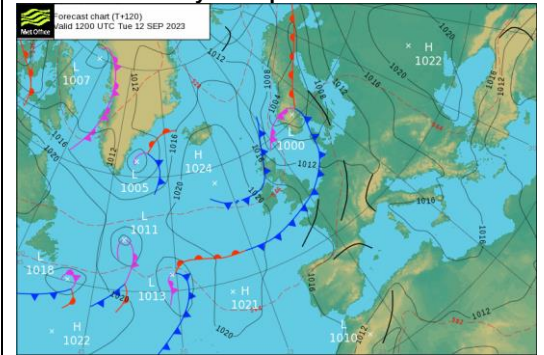
HMS - His Majesty's Ship
Pte - Private
RNR - Royal Naval Reserve
RAMC - Royal Army Medical Corps

With thanks to Angus Johnson, Jon Sandison and to Jimmy for lending me the Roll of Honour

FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



Analysis Chart 0000 UTC
Friday 8th September 2023



Forecast Chart 1200 UTC
Tuesday 12th September 2023

GENERAL SITUATION

Friday 1st September 2023

High pressure over the Baltic and northern North Sea currently blocks a cold front to the west of the Northern Isles. As a depression near Iceland moves into the Norwegian Sea and the high declines the front will reach Shetland later Saturday. Slack, shallow low pressure looks set to persist to the north of Shetland into the start of next week before Atlantic high pressure ridges northeast across northern Scotland on Tuesday. The ridge soon sinks south with a new depression between Iceland and Scotland bringing an unsettled changeable and autumnal spell of weather from midweek.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Temperatures 16° or 17° Celsius by day 12° overnight.

FRIDAY 8th: A dry day with some long spells of warm sunshine although low cloud may come and go across northern parts of Shetland. Mainly light SW winds backing SE later. Dry this evening with some late sunshine. The rest of the night will be mostly dry although haar may return, along with chance of a shower later. **Sea State:** Slight with a 1 metre S'y wind swell.

SATURDAY 9th: Mostly cloudy with some occasional rain, and misty with low cloud and risk of haar. SW F4-5 wind easing F4. Further outbreaks of showery rain spreading from the west overnight. **Sea State:** Mostly slight with a 1 metre W'y wind swell, S'y east of Shetland..

SUNDAY 10th: Cloudy with outbreaks of rain, occasionally heavy. Wind S or SW F3. Showers and mist patches overnight. **Sea State:** Becoming moderate with a 2 metre W'y wind swell. Mostly slight east of Shetland at 1 metre.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK

Cooler with temperatures around 14° Celsius by day 11° overnight.

MONDAY 11th: Some rain or showers to start the day, then drier and brighter with some showers and a moderate SW to W wind. **Sea State:** Mainly moderate with a 2 metre W'y wind swell but slight inshore east of Shetland.

TUESDAY 12th: Early showers dying out then mostly dry with sunny spells. Cooler with moderate or fresh W to NW winds. **Sea State:** Moderate to rough with a 2 to 3 metre NW'y wind swell but slight inshore east of Shetland.

WEDNESDAY 13th – SUNDAY 17th: Mainly dry though cloudy on Wednesday then changeable with rain and fresh S to SW winds Thursday followed by showers as winds veer W to NW for Friday and the weekend.

Sea State Wednesday: Mainly slight with a 1 metre NNW'y wind swell.

Fair Isle's Warmest September day!

Yesterday 7th September the UK experienced a record-breaking very warm day. Fair Isle was no exception with our temperature reaching 18.2° Celsius – the highest September temperature since I began recording the weather here in 1974! The previous September highest was a respectable 18° Celsius in 1998. September maxima normally lie within the range 14° to 16°, average 15.1° Celsius.

Dave Wheeler

Update - New September record this morning (Friday) with 18.9° at 1110LT!

