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Happy New Year to you all and welcome back to the Fair Isle Times. We change our header every 2 years and are delighted that Fair Isle artist Alice Best has created the header that we will see for the next while. I think you will agree that it is beautiful! Alice's mum Lise was the editor of the Fair Isle Times for many years and often designed the header so it is wonderful to have Alice involved too. Thank you and all the best for 2024,
The Fair Isle Times editors.

Christmas Fun

I had a good Christmas holiday. I got lots of amazing presents. I got a dark saber, Boba Fett stuff, Star Wars Lego, a remote controlled Grogu, clay and a new Xbox controller that was gold!

After Christmas dinner we went to Houll. I played with Rona, Ander, Luca, Harris (Thomson) and Heidi.

I have played a lot of Fortnite online with my big cousin Milo, my dad, Orla, Alex and Thomas. I have also played a lot of Grounded. Rona and I are good friends. I will miss her but she is back in Fair Isle in the summer.

Harris (9)

Christmas and Staying at Pat's Again

It was the 24th of December so Ander and I set up a snack for Santa. We were very excited because, well, it was Christmas Eve of course! On the 25th of December I woke up Ander and we rushed down the stairs and sprinted into the sitting room. Our Santa socks were full to the brim! My favourite presents were a set of Hot Wheels and some money for the iPad. I will spend it on Minecraft.

You already know that I was staying at Nannan's a while back because my mum and dad were gone when Ander had to go out on a helicopter and Dad went to Argentina. This has happened again (I'm serious). My dad is stiiiiiiiiiiiiii in Argentina and my mum had to go to hospital on Monday because her heart wasn't feeling very good. Ander and I are now staying at Nannan and Daddad's again! I hope my mum comes home soon and she is feeling better.

Luca (8)

My Holiday Highlights

This Christmas Nana and Gramps were coming up to Fair Isle! They, thankfully, got in on the right day however school didn't end until the 22nd, so Grace wouldn't see them for that long so it was quite a surprise to see her in the porch on Friday the week before school ended! It was the best! That also meant that, during the weekend, since I was a bit ill, I got to play loads of Mine Craft with Grace! I

also got to stay off school on Monday since I still wasn't better. The best bit about that was that Nana and Gramps were coming in on the plane that morning so I got to see them for that whole day! The next day I was feeling better so went to school which, for the first time ever, I was very happy to be doing because since it was the last week of term we got to spend most of the time doing STEM! (science, technology, engineering and maths).

We spent the run up to Christmas socialising with people visiting for Christmas. On Christmas Eve, we had duck for tea then we watched Muppet Christmas Carol, which we watch every year ONLY on Christmas Eve!

On Christmas morning, Grace and I were up at seven to wake everyone up (including Nana and Gramps!). We opened all of the presents in the morning. My three favourite presents were Mine Craft Dungeons, make-up and a book about the characters in one of my favourite TV shows. We then went to the Christmas service. When we got back, Grace and I played my new video game. It's really fun plus we weren't terrible at it!

Soon it was time for lunch. We had lobster and hot smoked salmon. For the rest of the day we looked at our presents and played some games (and I ate my chocolate!).

Later it was time for tea. We had roast turkey and Christmas cake. Since I don't like fruit cake, I get to make my own one. I made a mud cake, which is a bit like a brownie cake! Since it was Christmas, I got to douse it in chocolate ganache! It was the best cake ever!!!

Boxing Day was spent playing with our presents and sleeping after quite a late night! Grace and I played lots more Mine Craft Dungeons.

Later on in the week, it was the Christmas Tree Party! The panto was really funny and Grace was in it! Afterwards we had tea at the hall and all the children played on the stage. After everyone was finished, we got ice creams and did some dances. My three favourites were Sheep Hill, Strip the Willow and Old Lang Syne. After everyone had got their breath back, we played some party games. I love playing Islands because you have to squish each other on a piece of newspaper!

A couple of days later it was New Year's Eve. Dad, Mum and Grace went out guising so Nana, Gramps, John and I stayed in to watch the guising. All the groups were super! I had the best Christmas holidays ever!

Freyja (11)



Heidi (6)



Ander (6)

Fair Isle Electricity Company – Important notice. Only one engine is currently operating. Please can customers avoid overloading the system – be conservative with your power consumption e.g. don't put the washing machine, dishwasher and kettle on at the same time. Thank you

The FIDC Annual General Meeting will be held on 24th January 2023 in the Community Hall at 7PM. An email with links to the Agenda and documentation pertaining to the Articles of Association and Action Plan has already been circulated. These items will be discussed/voted on at the AGM. Everyone has also been asked to complete a new membership form to allow us to update our membership database. Everyone is invited to attend the AGM, we hope to see many of you there.
Fair Isle Development Company.

Chapel this Sunday at 11am, with Susannah leading the service – all very welcome to join

Next we have another festive instalment from our Fyntan in Antarctica. Thanks to all the readers for the great feedback on Fyn's adventure, we might need to send him somewhere else exciting to keep the fascinating stories coming in! Enjoy...

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Antarctica! I hope everyone had a lovely time over the holidays.



I've now been at Kohnen station for over a month, and while simple, it's very cosy. The technicians do a good job keeping the station running, and we all help out a few times a day with Schmelzen (shovelling snow into a big bag which is lifted by a crane and emptied into the big snow melter, providing water for the station). The group dynamic in general is pretty friendly, which is good considering we've all been stuck with each other! Despite the festive time of year, I've been busier than ever with field work. Shortly after arriving at Kohnen Station, we were joined by Alex, a former PhD student from my group at work. The two of us set about taking snow samples from 20 different locations up to 52km away, so that involved a lot more skidoo driving.

It was very physical work, and each location took about 2 hours to retrieve all the samples, so most of my time in the first two weeks of December was spent on this task.

On the 19th of December, 3 more scientists flew in, including my supervisor, Thom, and another PhD student in our group, Nora. While they were taking time to acclimatise to the 3km increase in altitude, Alex and I finished up the snow sampling. Once Thom and Nora were feeling fit enough, we began

work uncovering the boreholes for our temperature profile studies, which involved... even more digging (there's a lot of stuff stored under the snow in Antarctica!).



The team on Christmas Eve throwing gloves in the air!

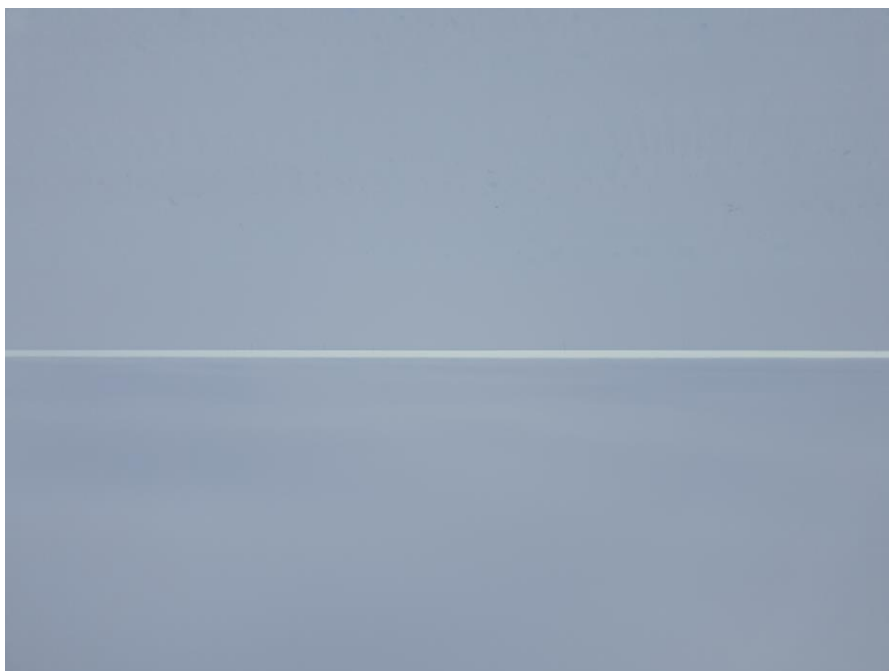


Our igloo

Work continued until the evening of the 24th, which is when Germans have the main Christmas celebration. We had a fun party, including drinking Gluhwein inside a big igloo that some of the technicians had built.

The next day was unexpectedly incredibly stormy, so a slow morning wasn't possible as window shutters had to be quickly closed and things at the borehole camp had to be rescued. The visibility was very poor and the camp was 300m away, so Thom and I had to attach ourselves with a long rope to the station and carefully make our way towards where we thought the tent would be. Thankfully nothing had blown away, but there was quite a mess of snow over the equipment.

In between digging out and drilling new boreholes for Thom and Nora to work on, I also helped Alex with her ground penetrating radar system. This involved a radar on a sledge, attached to a skidoo, and then driving at 8kmph while the radar takes measurements. The paths were up to 10km away, so two people and two skidoos were required for safety. Considering the speed we were going, this was quite a boring job, but gave me a much needed break from the more physical work.



Soon it was New Year's Eve, on which we finished work slightly earlier at 5pm. We had another party, and at one point we blew some bubbles in the huge storage trench and watched as they froze in mid-air. I was hoping to get a nice picture of blue skies and sunshine at midnight, but unfortunately the clouds rolled in after dinner. However, I did get a really cool photo of the sky just barely visible above the horizon (*photo left*)

After New Year Thom suggested taking some more snow samples and radar measurements at a scientifically interesting location, but it was over 60km away and so would take too much fuel and time to drive back and forth to the station over many days. He proposed we camp out for one night, allowing us to take all the measurements over two days.

So Thom, Alex, Nora and I set off on the morning of the 4th of January, with a tent, sleeping bags, food, a cooker, etc, all the usual camping gear, as well as our scientific devices. For safety we had satellite phones, and contacted Kohlen station every hour to let them know we're OK, with an SOS button for urgent emergencies. Unfortunately, at 3pm Thom accidentally triggered the SOS message on his satellite phone while it was in his pocket, and didn't notice for a good 10 minutes. After many concerned calls between us, Kohlen, Neumayer and the phone company in the US and it was resolved. At least it was good to know the system works!

After measurements were finished, we set up camp and cooked some pasta soup, which took a long time since it was -30C. We didn't get into our sleeping bags until midnight, and we all stayed fully clothed given the temperature. It took me over an hour to warm up enough to be able to sleep, and having to get up to pee at 4am was not fun, but I got a good 5 hours sleep before we started again at 8am. Pretty extreme circumstances for my first time properly camping!



Me next to a 10m ice core



Nora and me cooking on the mini-traverse

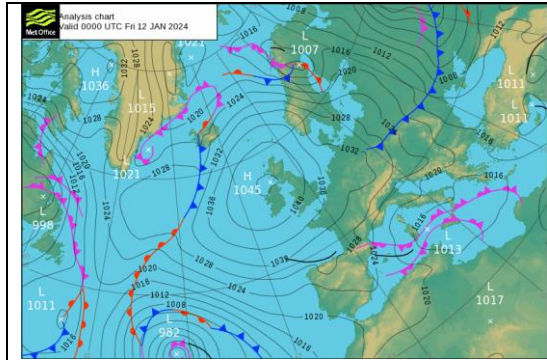
I'm due to leave Antarctica on the 19th of January, so there's less than a week left when you read this.

It's been an amazing experience but I'm very much excited to return home to normal. Although it might take some time to get used to German winter after 24 hour daylight for 11 weeks!

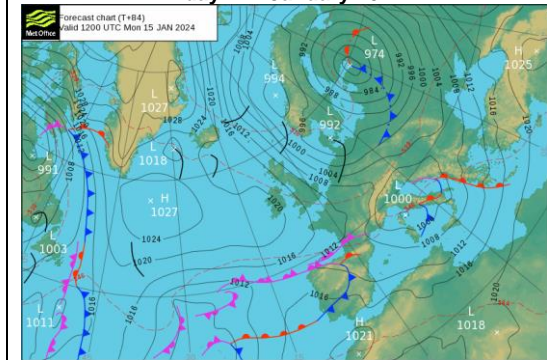
I might write a final piece if anything interesting happens in the last week, but if not I'll see some of you when I visit Fair Isle sometime in the next couple months :)

Fyntan

FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



Analysis Chart 0000 UTC
Friday 12th January 2024



Forecast Chart 1200 UTC
Monday 15th January 2024

GENERAL SITUATION

Friday 12th January 2024

With an anticyclone centred just west of the British Isles expected to move further west today the cloudy westerly airflow will veer north-westerly overnight as a front associated with a low in the Norwegian Sea moves east over Shetland. A cold front moving south will then bring arctic air down across the Isles on Saturday, the airflow tending more northerly by Sunday as low pressure moves east into Scandinavia. With low pressure forecast to persist to the east and high pressure to the west the cold northerly airflow is likely to continue through much of next week.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Temperatures 6° or 7° Celsius by day, around 3° or 4° tonight. Turning much colder over the weekend with risk of snow and ice.

FRIDAY 12th: Cloudy with patchy drizzle and F5 WSW winds increasing F6. Outbreaks of rain spreading southeast during the evening, becoming heavy for a time before clearing to showers overnight. F6 W winds veering F6-7 NW. **Sea State:** Moderate with a 2 metre NW'ly wind swell.

SATURDAY 13th: A brighter but colder day with sunny spells and showers, these turning wintry during the afternoon. Strong F6-7 NW winds and wintry showers overnight.

Sea State: Rough with a 3 to 4 metre NW'ly wind swell.

SUNDAY 14th: Cloudy with frequent wintry showers turning more to snow, with some drifting in strong to gale-force NW winds. **Sea State:** Rough with a 3 to 4 metre NW'ly wind swell.

FORECAST FOR NEXT Cold with temperatures 2° to 4° Celsius by day around 0° to -2° overnight. Risk of ice on untreated surfaces.

MONDAY 15th: Cloudy with snow showers, some heavy and reducing visibility significantly with local accumulations. Strong NW winds. **Sea State:** Rough with a 3 to 4 metre N'ly wind swell.

TUESDAY 16th: Cloudy with outbreaks of mainly light snow. Fresh NW to N winds.

Sea State: Rough with a 3 to 4 metre N to NW'ly wind swell.

WEDNESDAY 17th – SUNDAY 21st: Remaining cold with fresh NW to N winds and further snow showers with likelihood of risk of icy stretches on untreated surfaces. **Sea State Wednesday:** Becoming mostly moderate with a 2 metre NW'ly wind swell.

Dave Wheeler

