

FAIR ISLE TIMES

VOLUME 48 ISSUE 31

PUBLISHED SINCE 1978

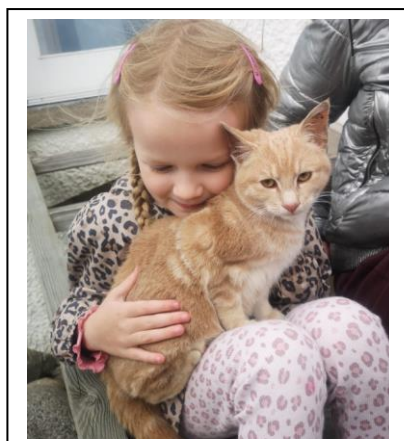
12th OCTOBER 2024

My Time on Fair Isle

In the October holidays I am moving to Hamnavoe in Shetland. I will go to Hamnavoe Primary School. I have really enjoyed living on Fair Isle. Some of my favourite things at school have been: gardening with Pat, art with Fiona, daily mile with Hollie and of course school trips. I have made good friends with Luca, Freyja and Ander. Some of the best things I have done outside school were: going on play dates at Shirva and Houll, going swimming at Gunglesund and going up Malcolm's Head with Lucy and Luca. I also love swimming in the sea at North Haven. I have always enjoyed working with sheep. I helped feed the Burkle sheep sometimes and also Rammington at Shirva. Recently I went on my first Sheep Hill. Luca and I helped gather the sheep and sort the lambs. It was great fun but very tiring! My very favourite thing has been exploring different places around the isle. Thank you Hollie for helping me with my work every day and for chatting with us all at lunchtime. Thank you Fiona for being such a fun teacher – you make me laugh and I like joking with you. Thank you Pat for teaching me about Fair Isle, gardening and the ukulele. I loved Line Rider in music too. Thank you Lucy, George, Ruth, Margaret, Mike and Catherine who have all been my supply teachers. I will miss Fair Isle but I am looking forward to exploring new places in Shetland. I hope to come back and visit Fair Isle and my friends one day.



Harris (10)



Bye-bye Fair Isle

I am going to move house. I am going to Shetland and I will be going to a new school. I enjoyed living in Fair Isle. I really liked playing with Ander in nursery. We had fun playing in the sand and water trays. I also liked playing in the mud kitchen. In school I liked learning my phonics and going on school trips. I like Fiona's kitten Misty and her brother Pudims at Kenaby. I liked Blackie the sheep too. My favourite thing was Ander coming to my house to play. I am going to miss living on Fair Isle a lot.

Heidi (7)

Farewell Tea for Harris and Heidi

We had a little celebration in school this week to say goodbye to Harris and Heidi. They were gifted a photo album of their time at FIPS and a card full of lovely messages – both beautifully put together by Amy who has a real talent for making things look pretty and perfect! Freyja was back from high school early so it was lovely to have her celebrating with us too. We all enjoyed eating delicious cakes (thanks Eileen), chatting and looking at the photos. Harris and Heidi were also given memory jars with little rolled up scrolls with favourite memories from everyone – many thanks to Lucy for organising this the previous week, and also for the beautiful thank you card the children secretly made for me too! What a lovely sentiment! Harris and Heidi have had a great couple of years at FIPS and it has been wonderful to see them flourish during this time and this is thanks to the exceptional staff and children who have all had a positive and lasting impact on them. Thank you all so much for making such a difference 😊



Thank you Fair Isle



Many thanks to Eileen and Hollie for organising farewell drinks for us on Wednesday and for being such fab hostesses! It was a lovely evening and a great opportunity to catch up with you all before we head off next week. We are incredibly touched by everyone's kindness and generosity to gift us one of Marie's beautiful Fair Isle throws – the colour is perfect and it will have pride of place in our new house. My apologies for not saying a few words in the moment the other night (Tom is way better at impromptu speeches and I would probably have shed a few tears) so now is my opportunity ...

Teaching at Fair Isle Primary, and being part of this wonderful community, has been a real privilege and a pleasure. I will be forever grateful to have had this opportunity and I feel lucky to have met so many fascinating, knowledgeable, skilled and resilient people – you really are a remarkable and kind bunch! Since the moment we arrived, we have felt welcomed, accepted and supported as a family.

Fair Isle Primary is a fantastic school in which to teach – the exceptional staff makes it a very happy place to work, as do the amazing families who have been a dream to work with! The move to teaching a multi-composite class, and teaching my own children, was a new challenge made all the easier with Hollie and Pat by my side in the classroom. Stepping up to the demands of the leadership side of the job was much less daunting thanks to the excellent handover from Ruth who had everything extremely well-organised.

The approach to teaching in this environment is so unique, relaxed and fun with amazing opportunities on our doorstep and the best surroundings for outdoor learning. The children learn so much through Fair Isle and its folk. Here is a small flavour from the last few years: gardening and learning about local flowers with Pat, museum trips and talks with Anne, learning from Nick – our nature encyclopaedia - whether pond dipping, rock pooling, bringing us moths to look at (or lose out the window - sorry), visiting Stewart's workshop to see Fair Isle straw-backed chair-making, learning about weather at Field with Dave, visiting Marie's studio, Peerie Makkers knitting sessions, croft visits to see lambs, daily mile around the isle with Hollie, scrambling up the Rippack rocks for exercise on a sunny day, visiting the nurse's surgery, working with FIBO rangers, creative workshops with Jenny, Eve and CHROMA, Fair Isle MPA events – I could go on! The children are incredibly lucky to learn in this way and they truly feel part of their community. Last week's Sheep Hill was a prime example ... the children soaked up the whole experience, whether hands on or watching. When I saw Brodie arrive for a look, it hit me that he was one of 4 generations at Sheep hill that day with Luca, one of 3 with their sleeves rolled up in the cru – I just loved this – history repeating itself and community spirit at its best!

Thank you all so much. I am glad we are not moving far so please keep in touch and know you are welcome to stop by anytime you're in Shetland.

All the best, Gillian xxx



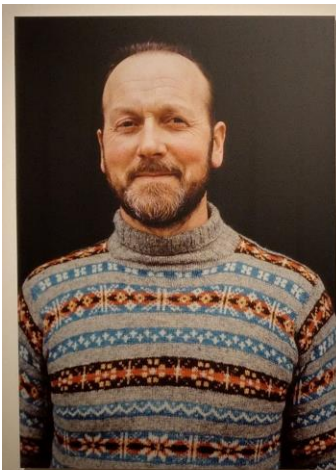
Here are Hollie & Gillian in the beautiful throw made by Marie, any captions for this one?

Shetland Wool Week 2024 – a week of smiles

It's Thursday and plans for Friday suddenly took a step forward; weather induced of course. I leave on the afternoon flight as Sidney arrives to keep Barry company. I get to Lerwick and settle in. Note – the Sound Service Station is amazing. We all need to forget the big boys and shop local. In the Isle we are lucky to have Stackhoull, Lerwick is lucky to have Sound. It is vital we use them to make sure we don't lose them.

On Friday there are a good few beanies in evidence (for the uninitiated, SWW comes out with a new beanie hat pattern every year, designed by the current patron. This will be the 15th). Lerwick is full of people as there is a cruise ship in. Most of Victoria pier is cut off and parking is a nightmare. There are no flights to Fair Isle, so I feel justified in my hasty departure! A quick trip to Scalloway and I have my hair cut. I no longer feel like "*a moos lukkin trow oakum*"

Saturday – loads of beanies stand out from the crowds of another cruise ship's passengers. The street is packed and you can't even get in to the Shetland Times book shop or Jamieson's wool shop. Everybody is smiling. In the afternoon I pick up Mary and go to the photographic exhibition in the Shetland Museum. The display is a trip down memory lane to the days when we Shetlanders all wore hand knitted patterned jumpers before sweatshirts took over. Taken by world famous videographer and photographer Chris Morphet, it's a brilliant exhibition of portraits of 'weel kent' friends and neighbours arrayed in Fair Isle knitwear, along with examples of knitted garments from the museum's collection - and is not to be missed. Chris's question and answer session chaired by Jane Moncrieff in the boat hall is informative and entertaining. He was in Shetland and Fair Isle in 1970 specifically to take photos of Fair Isle jumpers, having seen and photographed his friend Pete Townsend wearing one on stage and having become aware of Fair Isle worn as a fashion statement in the streets of London at the time.



On Sunday I head for Mareel and the Makers Market. Lots of cards, woodwork, 'oo' and fibre related crafts, silver jewellery, pottery - the list goes on. It's heartening to see how much talent is here and how diverse the skill base. In the evening the Shetland Wool Week Welcome (opening night) is held in Clickimin Leisure Centre and is a sell-out. I can tell you that if you ever want to see enthusiasm and delight, not to mention beanies to the power of infinity, this is the place to be. I am there by invitation but am still surprised that I was allowed in without one. I do contemplate donning my Fair Isle Fisherman's kep but decide that that may be a step too far. A super evening which includes an introduction to the Doull family, this year's patrons; a walk through by the North Mavin Up Helly Aa Jarl Squad and music from Shetland band Vair, a next generation of brilliant musicians. We all leave smiling.

The beginning of the week was a bit chaotic – getting together with old friends and meeting new ones; drawing up a plan of action with Helen Robertson for our workshop which included dinner (Fjara), lunch (Islesburgh), lots of coffee (Sletts Road and Robertson Crescent), final choice of slides for my PowerPoint presentation, me panicking over connecting my laptop to the screen in the Methodist Schoolroom and managing to purchase the wrong lead, a last minute decision to include the Fair Isle Fisherman's Kep story in the hand out pack and putting the packs together. Thank you Mairi for producing 12 perfectly printed full colour copies in time. I did spend a couple of hours in the Shetland Museum filling in information on the Fair Isle section of Chris's photos. I was delighted to find that he had spent time in Unst and his selection included one of Harry Thomson, Dad's brother and a very dear uncle, wearing a V neck sleeveless knitted by Mum. A photo I hadn't seen before. My initial plan to get to some workshops fell by the wayside. I do however get a dental appointment fitted in. Lerwick is full of beautiful, intricate, multi-coloured knitted outfits and more smiles.

Thursday morning and we are faced with **The Workshop**. Australia, Canada, the USA and Taiwan are all represented. Everyone is dedicated, enthusiastic, delightful and delighted to be here. Helen's Mac and my flash drive are happy to play with the aforementioned screen and everything works. The official workshop description reads '*Fair Isle Fisherman's Kep history and design workshop. Designing your own kep. Authentic, traditional motifs. Includes an illustrated talk about Fishermen's Keps' and the women who made them.* Designer Helen's skill and my segments of history seem to hit the spot, and we have a morning of fun with lots of Fair Isle and knitting history, coffee and cakes, pattern planning and colour-work thrown in. It was fascinating to see the different approaches to colour, pattern and a sheet of graph paper. Much to our delight Liz (Musser) joins us. When the Kep project began for the tall ships visit in 2011 Liz and Lise were the originators, so it is very fitting that she becomes part of the team on Thursday. After class we head for Fjara, lunch and another planning session for tomorrow. A good part of my afternoon is spent at the dentist - again!

Liz also joins us on Friday at Helen's 'Puffin Day' workshop. '*Following a local RSPB bird expert lecture, you will create three items, a knitted lace scarf sample, a knitted puffin head and a cute puffin pompom*'. And most of us do. As this is a full day, lunch is added to the coffee/tea breaks and Liz becomes a vital part of the backup team of Joan and Winnie (Helen's mum and mum in law). The class is international and a brilliant bunch. Helen Moncrieff's talk on puffins sets us off to a good start. Once knitting begins, puzzled expressions on reading charts soon disappear, talk and laughter combine with satisfaction as colourful lace knitted samples, very cute puffin pompoms and puffin heads materialise. I find myself wondering what my Fair Isle ancestors might make of one of their descendants knitting a puffin head. Horror and hilarity in equal measure I suspect.



Saturday dawns, the last day of Wool Week and another Makers' Market, this time held in the Anderson High School. Advertised truthfully as 'a great chance to meet local makers and purchase beautiful Shetland Wool pieces' I am delighted to find Eve with a lovely display and demonstration of her straw chair back and basket making skills. The two halls are crowded with beautiful Shetland pieces and yarns, and everyone is still smiling.

It's a morning of hellos and goodbyes as many of the SWW visitors are heading home over the next days. The organisers, tutors, community groups and all involved in this massive community event can soon relax with the assurance of a job well done before they must start thinking about SWW 2025. For the hundreds of visitors, the whole week has been filled with workshops showcasing and teaching so many different, mainly wool related, skills from Viking tablet weaving to modern machine knitting, with visits and tours to workshops, farms, community halls, exhibitions and knitting groups from Skaw to Sumburgh, Sandness to Symbister. The question on everyone's lips is "when is 2025 Wool Week? We need to book accommodation now." Shetland Wool Week 2024 has been a week of dedicated and enthusiastic knitters encouraging, applauding and supporting each other's efforts with no desire to control or dominate, and all very happy to be here and having a great time. I was lucky enough to be part of a similar scenario in Washington DC working as part of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in 2003, soon after 9/11. In 2011 getting together on winter Wednesday evenings to knit keps to barter was the same. Maybe a few world leaders could learn a thing or two from us knitters?!?

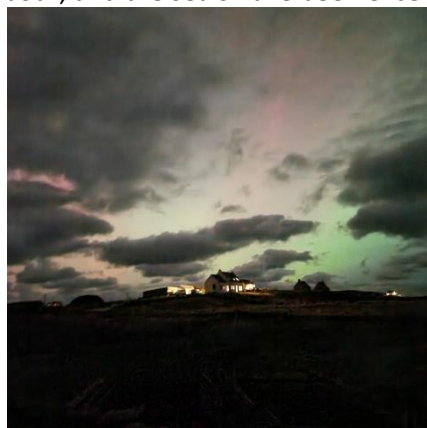
Anne, Busta



Da Month's Dats (Nearly) Awa

It's so good to be back – and in a new season! So far I've been here in dead of winter, in spring and in summer, and now I'm getting a taste of autumn. More to see and more to learn.

For example, I've come across mushrooms I've never seen before, from beige to neon yellow to bright red. And I never knew there were so many different kinds of small, tabby-coloured birds in the whole world, let alone on one small island, all flitting about so fast and so un-photographably. Even the fabulous hoopoe I saw near Lower Leogh was beyond my phone's ability, though I now have a large collection of failed attempts. I am in awe of the photos I see on Instagram from the Birds Ob crew and Tommy and others. And the southerly winds have made for mesmerizing waves in the South Harbour, and the seals have been excellent company.



But every time I come there's always some aspect of Fair Isle that hits me more than any other, and this time it was the skies.

Joan Lennon – Lower Leogh

ISLE NOTICES

Harvest Festival - Sunday 13th October

- **11am – Chapel – All welcome for the Harvest thanksgiving service**
- **3.30pm - Fair Isle Hall** for delicious home bakes, tea & coffee; sales table, games and raffle (please bring items for sale/raffle by 3pm). Please bring cash if possible (you can take out cash at Post Office)

This year we are fundraising for the Goodwill Children's Village in India & Care International's Gaza & Lebanon Crisis Appeal

Everyone very welcome, please tell visitors too. If you have prizes or want to help with homebakes, please let Eileen know (07765602683). Thanks!

Oral History Sessions - Would anyone be interested in attending fortnightly sessions over the winter period where we discuss different aspects of Fair Isle's history? This would be a real opportunity to record the oral history of the isle so it can be preserved for future generations. Each session would focus on a different topic and it would be great if folk would come along with their stories, recollections, anecdotes and even photographs, if you'd be willing to share those. As we're coming up to Hallowe'en, I thought for the first session we could talk about folklore and isle legends, superstitions and how different holidays/events in the isle have traditionally been celebrated - and if you have any spooky stories from the isle, even better!

The first session will be held at 1900hrs on Friday 25th October in the Committee Room. Everyone welcome and I'll provide coffee and cake! Rachel, Barkland

Good Shepherd sailings reminder and upcoming refit – Please note that owing to the forecast and crew availability, there will be no Tuesday trip this week but the aim is to sail on Thursday, weather permitting of course. Apologies for any inconvenience caused by the change of schedule. Also, a reminder that the refit is scheduled to take place from the 23rd October until the 6th November. The Snolda is booked to cover the route during the refit period. Ian



Caption Competition from last week. Thanks to all who submitted entries – not all were printable in a family newsletter!!

“Quick - hide from Nick!” Ian

“No need to be afraid, I do love you!!!” Harry Edwards

Is the guy in the background saying “Is that a rare bird I see nesting up there” Robert

“Dunna worry sheepy, I’ll protect dee fae that mad wife wi da shears!” Eileen

“What better time to break in our new Super Mario guising gear?” Jonnie

“I can't tell where her fleece ends and my beard begins” Jonnie

Happy tattie hentin holidays!

That's a wrap for this term dear readers. As ever Hollie and Eileen are hugely grateful to our excellent contributors for making the Fair Isle Times a good read for you all. First and foremost the staff and bairns of the Fair Isle Primary School who always start us off with something interesting and often very insightful! To Maavi and Dave for keeping us right, both humour-wise and meteorologically – we'd be lost without you. And to all the other regulars (and irregulars) who send us lovely stories, weeks dats awa, and photos. It is much appreciated.

Special thanks and au revoir to our friends, the Maxwells. You have been a brilliant addition to our isle this past 2 and-a-half years and will be a huge miss, but as you say, Burra is not that far and we will see you again soon.

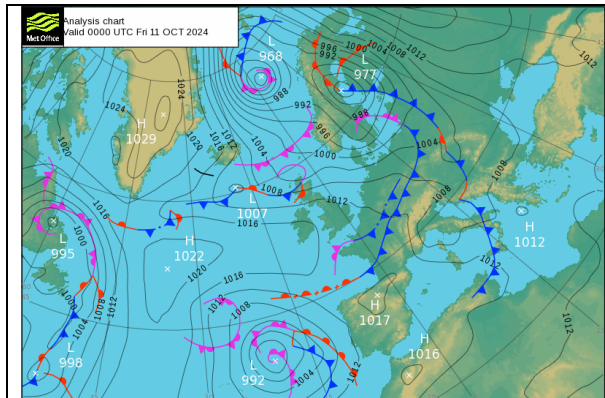
Here's to fine weather for boats, lifting tatties and getting lambs home,

The Editors

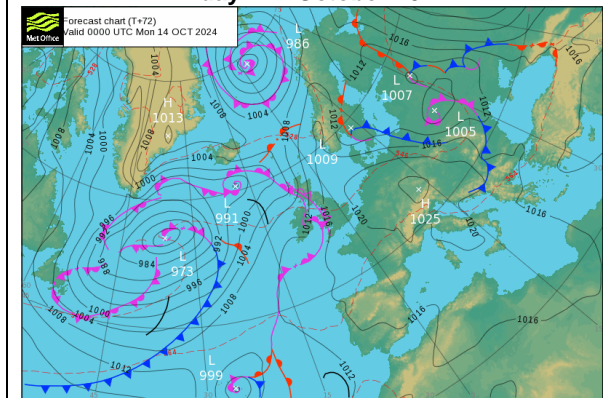
And look, Maavi has indeed learning to flap with his other wing...



FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



Analysis Chart 0000 UTC
Friday 11th October 2024



Forecast Chart 0000 UTC
Monday 14th October 2024

GENERAL SITUATION Friday 11th October 2024

The cold north-westerly airflow eased overnight as an occluded front moved south across Shetland. A small wave low developing on the front is expected to move northeast, the centre probably tracking over Fair Isle tonight bringing a fresh northerly airflow on Saturday. This eases on Sunday and backs southerly as a narrow ridge of high pressure builds north over Scotland.

On Monday a complex area of low pressure mid-Atlantic drives the first of a sequence of fronts eastwards in a strengthening southerly airflow. With high pressure likely to persist across Scandinavia the first set of fronts are expected to make little progress eastwards however further fronts do reach us later in the week.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Temperatures 6° or 7° during the day, 3° or 4° overnight.

FRIDAY 11th: Cold, cloudy at first but soon brightening to sunny spells and scattered showers. F3 NW winds freshening F5. Fewer showers and sunny spells for the afternoon with cloud thickening as winds fall light. Rain and strengthening E winds overnight.

Sea State: Mostly rough with a 3 metre NNW wind swell.

SATURDAY 12th: Cold with sunny spells and scattered showers, perhaps wintry. F6-7 NNE winds becoming F6 N and NW F5-6 overnight.

Sea State: Mostly rough with a 2 to 3 metre NW wind swell.

SUNDAY 13th: A few early showers otherwise dry, cold and bright with F5 NW winds backing SSW by evening. **Sea State:** Moderate or rough with a 2 to 3 metre NW wind swell.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK

Temperatures a milder 12° or 13° by day, 10° overnight.

MONDAY 14th: Rather cloudy perhaps with a few spots of early rain otherwise mainly dry with a fresh occasionally strong SSW wind. **Sea State:** Moderate with a 2 metre NW wind swell becoming SW.

TUESDAY 15th: Mostly dry, bright with sunny spells. Cloudier later. Fresh S winds occasionally strong.

Sea State: Mostly moderate with a 2 metre S wind swell.

WEDNESDAY 16th – SUNDAY 20th: Wednesday cloudy but dry with fresh SSE winds. Thursday similar but with lighter winds. Strengthening SE winds bringing likelihood of rain by the weekend.

Sea State Wednesday: Moderate or rough with a 2 to 3 metre S wind swell.

Dave Wheeler

A note from Dave on the weather in the past 24 hours: Early evening yesterday there was a frost with -2.8° Celsius on the grass before temperatures rose overnight and we had extremely heavy rain. At 0258LT the rainfall rate was 45mm/hour! Total rainfall overnight 12-09h UTC was 23.0mm and for the 24 hours 09 – 09h UTC 25.4mm. Wettest place in UK last 24 hours was Tulloch Bridge with 34.0mm. Our 25.4mm put us in second place