

FAIR ISLE TIMES

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Whelk Hunting!

Last Sunday we went whelk hunting at North Haven with Mum. We managed to catch the huge whelk and I was happy. I wonder what it eats?

By Ander (P2)



On Sunday we drove to the North Haven pontoon to look for the muckle common whelk that we saw on Saturday with Mum and Ander. On Saturday we had seen it but had knocked it down to the bottom by accident. On Sunday we returned and it was back in exactly the same position. I felt delighted. Why does it grow so big because then it is easier to spot? I would have thought it wanted to be more camouflaged.

Common Whelk Fact File

Group: Molluscs

Size: 6 to 10cm

Diet: carnivore, worms

Habitat: rocky coastline

Distribution: North Atlantic

Shell: calcium



By Luca (P5)

In old school days, we often had challenges between the lads. Here is an example for any of you to beat using the whole alphabet. (My list is long). John at Utra

A Apple pie.

B - Bit it. Baked it. Burnt it. Borrowed it. Bashed it. Begged for it. Bequeathed it. Buried it

C – Cooked it. Chewed it. Cut it. Consumed it.

D - Damaged it. Divided it.

E- Enjoyed it

F - ... - *try adding your own!!*

...Z - Zigzagged the crust.

Panto 2024

As usual, we were treated to a brilliant pantomime this Christmas by a superb team of actors led by Fiona. This year it was 'Mother Goose', although perhaps a suitably different version to the original. Here are a few photos of that stars of the show. Thanks to Fiona and Robert for photos



Place names are the hot topic of January here at the Fair Isle Times – always happy for contributions and discussion. Feel free to send comments to me, Eileen.

It was not my intention to so soon subscribe to our local press, but the article concerning place names, I felt, was open for further discussion, and even contradiction, so please forgive me, Eileen.

Until 1910, the two Reva's were joined, and James Anderson, my great grandfather from Setter, had just crossed over and was at Shirva when they heard the fall of rock, and there became two Reva's, South Reva becoming part of Shirva croft, and Nort Reva part of Stackhoull croft. The croft house at Stackhoull being

derelict, the croft was run by Anderson at Setter, and when they moved to Myers (Midway), on the 12th of January 1921, the Stackhoull land, along with Gaila, became the Midway croft. But to the point in question, the Reva's were always Nort Reva and South Reva.

Similarly, it was the Nort Haven, and at the other side, facing south, the Sooth Haven.

South Harbour, at the south end of the Isle, was always just 'Sooth'. Good Shepherd I was generally anchored there, Good Shepherd II only occasionally, and, so far as I remember, Good Shepherd III only on one occasion, when there was heavy snowfall.

The anchorage was the Taft hoose over the point o' Sample and the Soond O' Reevie open. There were, and still are, mooring rings cemented into the rocks round about and lines were put out for extra safety.

Finniequay is the geo and the 'gully' in question is the Ghyll O' Finniequay – 'ghyll' being a ravine or narrow dale... referenced from Jacobson's 'Place names of Shetland', so the English 'Gully', is not too far wrong.

The name 'ghyll' is much the same as 'glufr', which is a ravine, and so can suit the 'Glig' in Skinner's Glig.

Finniequay itself may have to do with trows (*Editor – similar to trolls*)- Finnie, there being another Finnie at the south end, called on the map 'Hole of Willie Finnie', which may have formerly been more substantial.

Certainly there is a 'Hole O' Finniequay' which I have explored for driftwood. There was no sign of trows, although it was quite dark at the inner end!

The Andersons of Setter often moored their yoal in Finniequay and there is a ring cemented into a rock at the south end of the beach there. We often moored the 'Pamir' in Maversgeo, and there too is a ring in the rock, about half-way out on the Landberg side. The 'Pamir' was not for two or three men hauling on a beach and forty or fifty years ago the Nort Haven was often not such a hospitable place as it is today, and we would have been working creels in the South Haven.

So, there are a few facts, and no doubt also a few points for discussion!

Jimmy, Skerryholm

Chapel – The vents at the Chapel are currently causing a lot of draughts so this week we will gather at Utra at 11am for worship. Susannah will be leading. All very welcome to join.

Stamps – anyone with stamps collected from Christmas, please get to Anne at Busta asap or drop off in a pigeonhole in the Shop porch. Anne will be sending off to Clan House in Aberdeen soon.

An Evening in the Long Hall. A few of us isle folk logged in for the first in series of very interesting talks last night, I would highly recommend signing up if you are interested in the Viking sagas or writing and history in general!



If you read the *Saga of the Earls Orkney (Orkneyinga Saga)* you quickly learn that the folk of Orkney and Shetland liked nothing better in winter than sitting around, enjoying each other's company and telling good yarns. In an attempt at imitation the Ragna's Islands team invite you to join them for an evening in the long hall.

So why not settle down with a home bake, a mug of tea or in true saga style a glass of homebrew, and listen to winter talks. These will be informal gatherings with short presentations lasting around 20 to 30 minutes on some of the subjects we are currently pondering.

➤ **Thursday 23rd January 6:30 pm**

Matthew Blake: *Orkney: the intertidal names of the North Isles*

➤ **Thursday 30th January 6:30 pm**

Corinna Rayner: *In a flat place... slope and hills names in the islands*

➤ **Thursday 6th February 6:30 pm**

Judith Jesch: *Fair Isle, a curious name...*

➤ **Thursday 13th February 6:30 pm**

Matthew Blake: *Bird place-names: flights of fancy in North Ronaldsay, Papay and Fair Isle*

If you are on our mailing list (i.e. I pester you with emails about the project) there is no need to book. If you are not on the list then email me matthew.blake@nottingham.ac.uk to book your free spot.

Islands and *Islandness*: a Poetry Workshop

with

Charlotte Eichler

Thursday 20th February, 7:30-9:00 pm, online

This workshop is aimed at beginners and experienced writers alike, as well as the merely curious. It will be a friendly and relaxed session with plenty of writing time and the chance to meet people with a shared love of writing and islands, nature and place.

There will be writing exercises and prompts designed to kickstart new poems, and an opportunity to share and discuss your work with the group (if you would like to). In this workshop we'll look at poems that explore islands and *islandness*, especially the islands of northern Scotland.

We will take inspiration from poets writing today, such as Jen Hadfield, Christie Williamson and Niall Campbell, as well as poets of the Viking Age whose works survive in *The Saga of the Earls of Orkney*, and many others in between. If you have previous island poems that you've written and would like to share with the group, please do bring these along. Equally, if you'd prefer to just listen without sharing work, that's fine too.

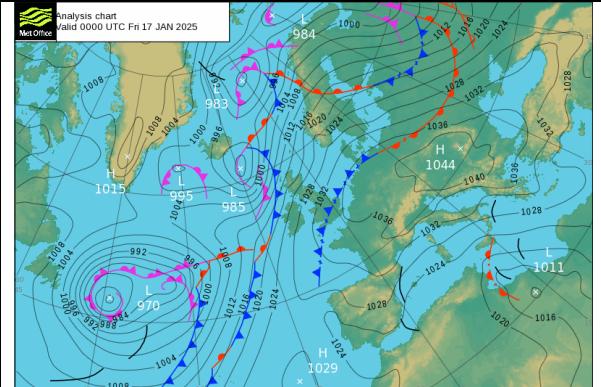
To book a slot or if you have any questions please email charlotte.eichler@gmail.com



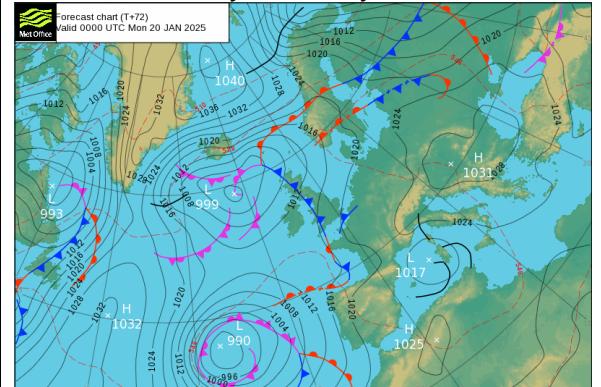
Charlotte Eichler is a poet based in West Yorkshire, UK. Her first collection, *Swimming Between Islands*, was published by Carcanet in February 2023 and shortlisted for the Seamus Heaney First Collection Poetry Prize. She is poet-in-residence for the Ragna's Islands project, and is working on new poetry inspired by the islands of North Ronaldsay, Papay and Fair Isle.



FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



Analysis Chart 0000 UTC
Friday 17th January 2025



Forecast Chart 0000 UTC
Monday 20th January 2025

GENERAL SITUATION Friday 17th January 2025

With high pressure across the near-Continent and SE England a moist, mild south-westerly air flow persists with weak fronts brushing close to the Northern Isles. Little changes until early next week when a small low is expected to track east past northern Scotland bringing unsettled conditions followed by a cooler northerly airflow by mid-week. As an anticyclone developing east of Iceland migrates north-eastwards, the airflow veers south-easterly before strengthening later in the week as a deep Atlantic depression approaches the British Isles.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND Mild at first, temperatures 9° or 10° by day, 7° or 8° overnight. Sunday a less mild 7° or 8° with 6° overnight.

FRIDAY 17th: A cloudy morning with patchy light rain or drizzle. F5-6 SW winds easing and backing S F4. The afternoon brighter and mostly dry but chance of mist and drizzle evening and overnight. SE wind freshening F5. **Sea State:** Mostly very rough at 4 to 5 metre W. Moderate or rough east of Shetland at 2 to 3 metre SW

SATURDAY 18th: Dry, a cloudy start but becoming brighter with sunny spells. F4-5 SSW winds. **Sea State:** East and south of Shetland moderate at 2 metre WSW. West and north very rough at 4 or 5 metre.

SUNDAY 19th: Mostly dry with bright or sunny spells, a F3-4 S wind freshening F5. **Sea State:** Mostly moderate at 2 metre SW.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK Temperatures at first 8° by day, 7° overnight. Cooler by midweek at 5° to 7° by day, 5° overnight.

MONDAY 20th: Cloudy but mainly dry at first. A moderate SE wind veering WSW bringing chance of showers later and overnight. **Sea State:** Moderate or rough at 2 to 3 metre W but 2 to 3 metre N east of Shetland.

TUESDAY 21st: Cloudy with patchy drizzle. Becoming mostly dry but remaining cloudy as moderate or fresh W winds veer NW or N. **Sea State:** Moderate or rough at 2 to 3 metre NW but N east of Shetland.

WEDNESDAY 22nd – SUNDAY 26th: Colder and cloudy on Wednesday with a fresh N wind. Thursday cool, mostly dry with a fresh NE to E wind. Chance of showers later. Rain with risk of SE gale and rough seas on Friday. SE winds easing a little for the weekend but remaining cool and cloudy with rain at times. **Sea State Wednesday:** Moderate or rough at 2 to 3 metre NE.

Dave Wheeler

