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My Fair Isle Story

In June 1967, aged 25, my Mum spent 2 weeks on Fair Isle. She travelled by steamer from Edinburgh to Aberdeen then the P&O and Good Shepherd II to Fair Isle. She stayed at Quoy with two of her friends and a Swedish volunteer called Jan!

Mum always talked very fondly of her time on Fair Isle so in summer 2003, I joined one of the National Trust work camps. We stayed in the Puffin, lighting candles in the evening when the generators went off. I remember it being a warm, dry, sunny few weeks. We were dispatched in pairs to different crofts each morning and given many different jobs including building a compost heap at Kathy's, painting a fishing boat, removing ragwort, mini bailing, and a lot of fencing and ditching with Glen. We were even trusted to shear some sheep. Weekends were different. We explored the island thoroughly and sat for hours on Malcolm's Head watching the fulmars. Church was part of our Sunday routine. I loved the music and we admired Patrick's stained glass and Stewart Wilson's beautiful paintings in the Kirk. I had a very happy three weeks and was sad to leave.

It is a small world and not long after that, I became good friends with Ailsa Murray through our Edinburgh mountaineering club.

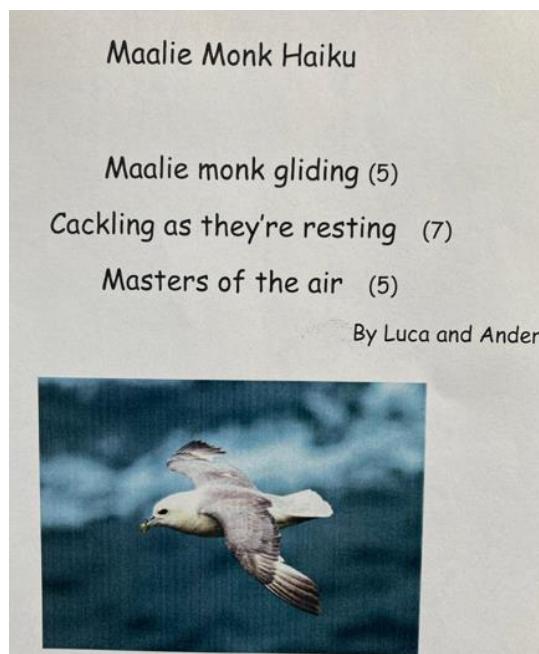
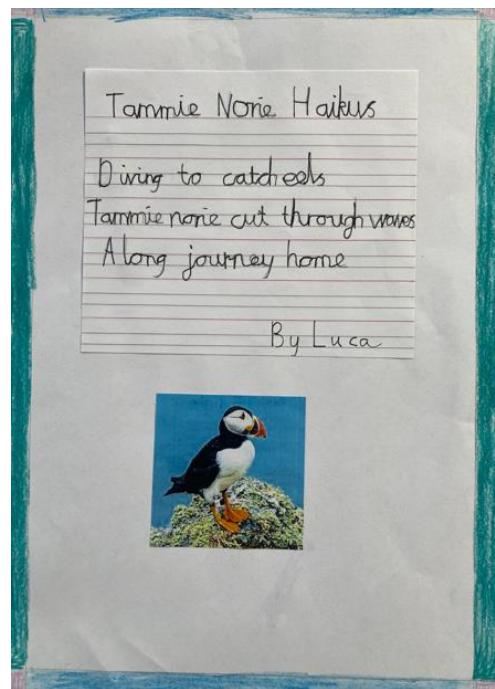
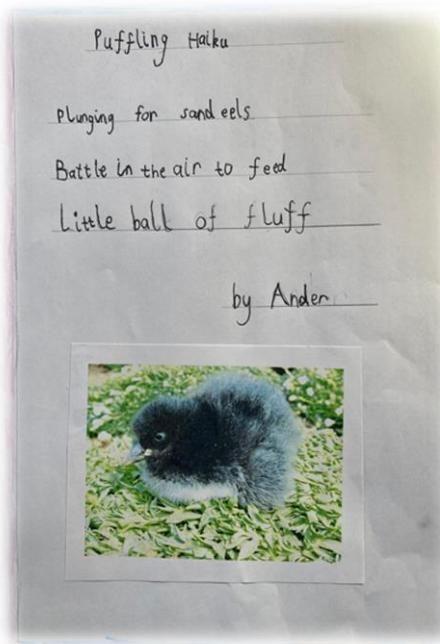
I wasn't sure about returning. I knew things would have changed and part of me didn't want to spoil such special memories. However, 20 years later, in May 2023, 3 of us from that work camp did come back. Tommy made us very welcome and we coincided with orcas and the snowy owl. I also met Gillian who showed me around school and explained how difficult it was to get supply teachers!

The rest is history and I feel very privileged to have been part of your community, working with Hollie and teaching Luca and Ander over the last few months. We have had lots of fun together! Highlights have been our gymnastics display, our school trip to the Pantomime in Lerwick, our Japanese feasts and all of our outdoor adventures. Jonathan is very lucky to be coming here.

Thank you for making first Mum and then me so welcome on Fair Isle. I've made some really good friends and will definitely be back.....whether Jonathan needs a supply teacher or not!

Lucy Spark

Last week the children wrote Haikus and we thought we would share them with you:



A BIG thank you to Lucy and our other willing supply teachers (Ruth, George and Gina) over the last 6 months. It is thanks to you all that the children have continued to thrive and learn during this interim period. The school has been a lovely place to be for the pupils and staff alike and we are all looking forward to next term with Jonathan as our new Principal Teacher.

A question from John Best - What famous Fair Isle landmark has disappeared recently? Betty, as the new nurse, was told of its significance and history in our first week on the Isle in the 70s by Helen of Busta.

ANSWER: The answer is the two support posts that used to stand high on Utra Brae.

The flying flag indicated to the passing boat that help was needed to get a patient to the hospital. An island wooden yoal would take the patient out to the ship. An islander told Betty the story of a recent pregnant patient who had an additional problem as she had to be rescued after falling into the sea between the two boats.

Betty later arranged for all future pregnant women to have accommodation at the hospital two weeks in advance of producing the babies.

NOTICES: Sunday Service: 11am, in the Chapel led by Susannah – all welcome

This is our last issue before the Easter Break. Thank you to all our contributors, both regular and occasional. Have a peaceful and happy Easter and we will be back with you all later in April. The Fair Isle Times Team

CONGRATULATIONS to Fyntan Shaw from Burkle. Fyn has spent the last 3.5 years in Potsdam, Germany, studying for a PhD in Geosciences titled '*Optimising the Recovery of Water Isotope Signals in Deep Ice Cores*'. During his time there he attended conferences in Paris, Vienna (3 times), Crans-Montana (in Switzerland) and Venice. He took part in Training Schools in Copenhagen, Finse (in Norway), Bremerhaven (in Germany) and Leissigen (in Switzerland). He completed a glacier safety course in Imst-Pitztal (in Austria) prior to travelling to Antarctica (via Cape Town) where he spent 3 months. During his time in Antarctica he traversed 700km from one research station to another on a skidoo over 11 days, taking thousands of snow depth measurements. Fyn submitted his thesis in December last year and on 21st March 2025 he *defended his thesis* in Bremen, Germany in front of a panel of professors, scientists and peers. Some of his family and friends attended in person and many more watched online. As is tradition in Germany, once his defence was over and he had survived the intense half hour of scientific questions, he was presented with a hat, made by his colleagues, depicting highlights of his PhD journey and personal interests. The hat included a detailed map of Fair Isle next to one of Antarctica, a Lego skidoo, an ice core made from a glue gun stick, lots of photos and of course, several Celtic Football Club references.

Congratulations again **Dr Fyntan Shaw!**

Fyntan in action during his 'Defence'

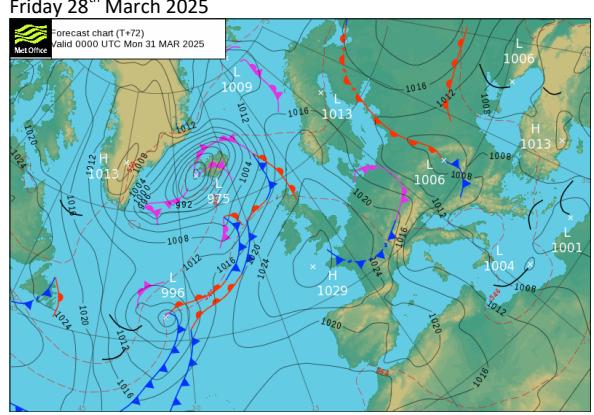
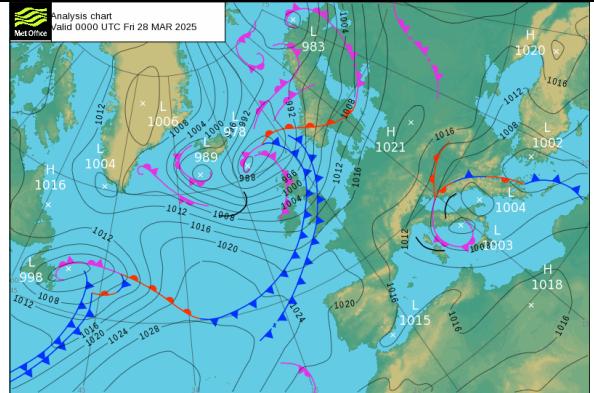


The top of the hat showing Fair Isle and Antarctica



Proud parents, brother and best friend!

FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



GENERAL SITUATION Friday 28th March 2025

As a depression near Faroe drifts east north of Shetland a strong south-westerly airflow will veer to a cooler, showery westerly which eases during Saturday as a brief ridge declines east over Scotland. A southerly airflow strengthens on Sunday ahead of fronts driven east as the next depression tracks east south of Iceland and across Shetland. An anticyclone building over southern England pushes a ridge north over Scotland on Monday before migrating across the North Sea. Hopefully, as high pressure is forecast to persist to the north of the UK next week brings mostly settled conditions.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Cooler with temperatures around 9° by day 4° or 5° overnight.

FRIDAY 28th: A cooler showery day with sunny spells and showers, these more frequent from early afternoon as F5-6 SW winds veer F6-7 W. Clear spells and fewer showers overnight with F5 NW winds. **Sea State:** Mostly very rough at 5 metre WSW but east of Shetland moderate or rough at 2 to 3 metre SW.

SATURDAY 29th: Dry start with some early brightness but thickening cloud bringing rain from the west by midday as F5 W winds back S to SSE Rain clearing to showers overnight as winds veer F4-5 NW. **Sea State:** Rough or very rough at 3 to 4 metre NW but east of Shetland moderate or rough at 2 to 3 metre N.

SUNDAY 30th: Early showers then mostly dry with sunny spells and F5-6 W winds. **Sea State:** Rough or very rough at 3 to 4 metre W but east of Shetland mostly moderate at 2 metre N.

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FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK Temperatures 9° or 10° by day, a cool 5° overnight.

MONDAY 31st: A dry start with some sunny spells then clouding over with outbreaks of rain. Fresh occasionally strong WSW winds. **Sea State:** Rough at 3 metre SW, but moderate 2 metre east of Shetland.

TUESDAY 1st: Mostly dry with sunny or clear spells and moderate SW winds. **Sea State:** Moderate or rough at 2 to 3 metre W but slight at 1 metre east of Shetland. **WEDNESDAY 2nd – SUNDAY 6th:** Wednesday and Thursday dry, bright and sunny and, with light winds cool overnight. Remainder of week dry though possibly cloudier with light variable winds. **Sea State Wednesday:** Moderate at 2 metre WSW.

Dave Wheeler

