

FAIR ISLE TIMES

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Fair Isle Primary School News

A busy week or so...

Brodie (4) Becomes an Internet Sensation

We were delighted for Brodie to make it out to the Shetland Folk Festival. Lots of logistical efforts were made and we were very grateful to Airtask for opening early so he could make the start time. Brodie boogied his socks off and we encourage anyone to go to the Shetland Folk Festival Facebook page where an exclusive video of some of his brilliant moves was posted. What a lovely day, with both him and Hollie meeting up with the nursery from Foula, who also flew out to attend.



Da Voar Redd Up is a Huge Success

Khalicee (6) writes:

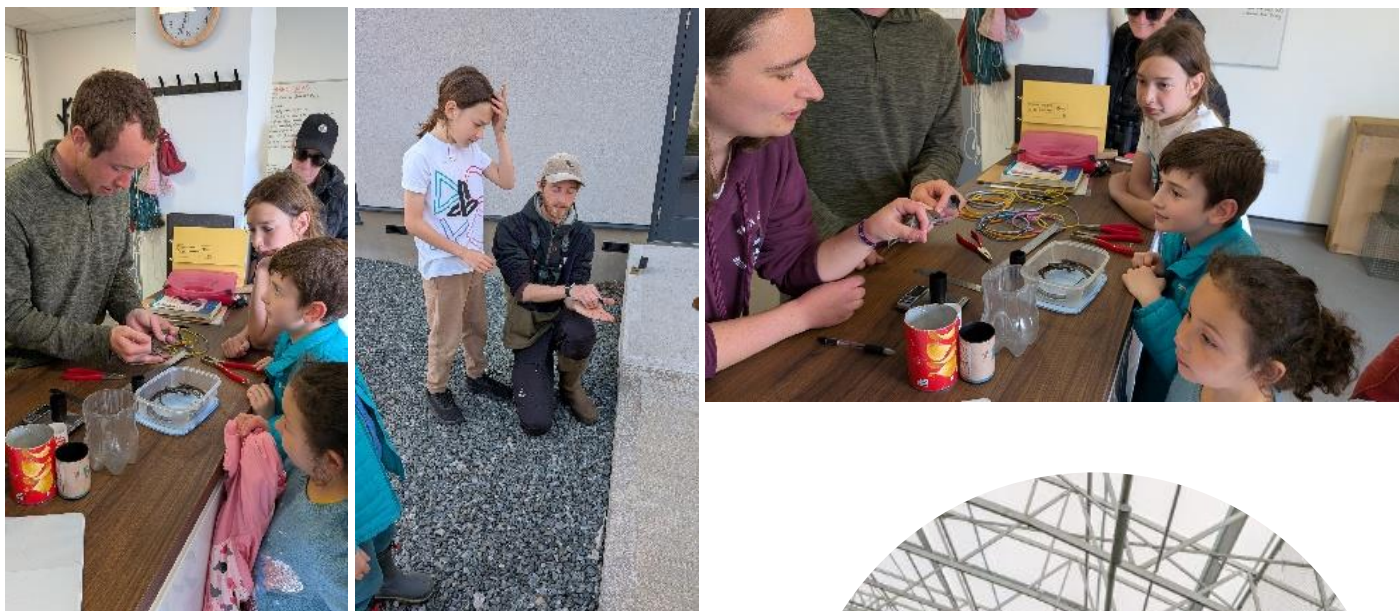
A week ago we had lots of fun doing Da Voar Redd Up. My mummy joined us. We found lots of rubbish as we walked from the school down the road. Hollie let us see lambs in the shed. They were so cute and I did not want to stop stroking them. We kept on walking until we reached Eileen's house and fuelled ourselves up with lots of cake. I enjoyed it a lot.



Another Amazing Session with the Bird Observatory

Ander (8) writes:

Last Friday we went bird ringing. Have you ever seen a bird which has a ring on its leg? Well, we were putting the rings on! We caught 5 birds. There were 2 chiffchaffs, 2 blackcaps and a Sedge Warbler. I would like to say a big thank you to the ornithology team for taking us bird ringing and seeing how it works. My favourite part of the bird ringing was letting go of the birds because they are feathery and it is cool watching the bird fly off your hand. If you catch a bird in a trap, you need to put it in a bag to calm it down to not get feisty.



A Fantastic P5-P7 Small Schools Sports Event in Lerwick

Luca (10) writes:

Yesterday (Wednesday), Jonathan and I flew out to Lerwick for the Small School’s Sports Event. The weather flying out was ‘interesting’, we flew through a snow shower, fog, sunshine and rain and it took two attempts to land (the second attempt was successful).

The event took place in the 60/40 (a building next to the Clickimin Leisure Centre). There were five different sports stations went around when someone blew a whistle. The stations were: archery, frisbee, rounders, football and benchball (which is a bit like netball).

Overall, my two favourite sports were football and benchball. Football was my favourite just because I love football. There were about 70 children there and I loved it. Surprisingly, I did not get overwhelmed by being in a large group of people.



which we

ISLE NOTICES

Next cruise ships After a disappointing start to the cruise ship season this past week, we have 4 coming up this coming week. Here’s hoping for better weather! As ever, the Hall and Museum will be open for all visitors and isle folk too. Eileen

15/05/26	Friday AM	Sea Spirit
17/05/26	Sunday AM	Greg Mortimer
19/05/26	Tuesday TBC	Greg Mortimer
20/05/26	Wednesday TBC	Sea Spirit

Chapel this Sunday at 11am On Sunday morning at 11am we will be returning to the Chapel. To mark this we are going to have a special ‘Songs of Praise’ service, featuring favourite hymns to which everyone is very welcome to come along. (I will just add though that the chapel has been unheated over the winter and though I can guarantee the warmth of the welcome, a coat might still be advisable)

Dave at South Lighthouse

Salvage – Eve Eunson

Some folk might have been wondering what was going on in Steensigeo the other week, so I thought I'd better explain!

At the end of last year, I applied to Shetland Arts' *Creative Shetland Commissioning Fund* - a fund from which freelance creatives can ask for money to deliver a creative project or idea. My submission, titled *Salvage – A 21st Century Fair Isle Strawback Chair*, proposed to create a contemporary Fair Isle Strawback Chair entirely from beach-recovered materials gathered on Fair Isle.

As we know, Fair Isle is small and remote and building materials have always been difficult to come by. Islanders are therefore, by necessity, incredibly clever in the reuse of materials and objects – every house and croft on the isle boasts structures that make use of salvaged materials, whether from the sea, lighthouses or other infrastructure projects. Salvage and re-use was, and still is, part and parcel of Fair Isle life.

As well as the salvaged items, the act of “going tae da banks” was once an integral part of island life, even as a child growing up in Fair Isle in the 1980s and '90s, this was something ingrained in me. Today, almost all of the material found on our beaches is broken, man-made material, with little productive re-use. With “improvements” in services and availability of consumables, few people take the risk to venture over the edge of Fair Isle's cliffs for scran – it is one aspect of our intangible cultural heritage that is nearly lost.

As a designer raised in this culture of salvage and re-use, I was keen to explore these changes in my work with Fair Isle Chairs. For me, this project is not so much about the creation of a beautiful final piece, but more about exploring, story telling and connecting throughout the process. I see three key stories:

- the story of our cultural heritage of salvage, ship wrecks and going doon da banks
- the story of marine litter, where it comes from and what its effects are on our environment
- the story of the processes of making the chair using unknown materials and new techniques

I was in the isle on 21st April to gather beach bruk from Steensigeo and will be coming back on the 13th of May to tackle the next phase – the making side of things. The biggest challenge will be turning plastic into a useable material to make the chair frame. I had a vague idea of how this might work and luckily there is a fantastic YouTube Channel called *Brothers Make*, which talks you through all sorts of different plastic recycling projects to do at home - <https://www.brothersmake.com/>

I will record the bruk as I go using the Marine Conservation Society's survey sheet, provided by David Parnaby. This is the same method that has been used in the previous regular beach cleans done by FIMRO and is a great initiative that builds up a really interesting data set. Not all marine litter is created equal, and the litter we see in Fair Isle is often very different from that seen in other areas.

I'm not clear yet how the project will culminate, as it's very much about exploring and not like anything I have done before - but it's a splendid excuse to get back into the isle and go doon da banks! So I'm taking it one step at a time and will hopefully manage to pull off something beautiful and interesting in an exhibition at Mareel later this year.

SALVAGE PROJECT – DO YOU HAVE ANY BANKS STORIES?

I'd love to hear Fair Isle Times readers' stories/info about going around da banks, whether its recent or historic - eg. shipwrecks, best finds, complicated recoveries/rescues...

I'd also love to know folk's thoughts on beach bruk – eg. how its changed over the years, and how it affects nature / wildlife. If anyone has photos of pollution or animals that have been entangled, that would be really interesting.

If you fancy dropping me a line or having a yarn, then it would be brilliant to hear from you.
Cheers, Eve (Eunson)

E: eve@eveeunson.com, T: 07919156827, M: 7 Bank Lane, Lerwick.

Da Week-ish Dats Awa – thanks to isle lass Eve (now based in Lerwick) for her diary of a week or so in the isle recently

Tuesday 21st of April – Boat

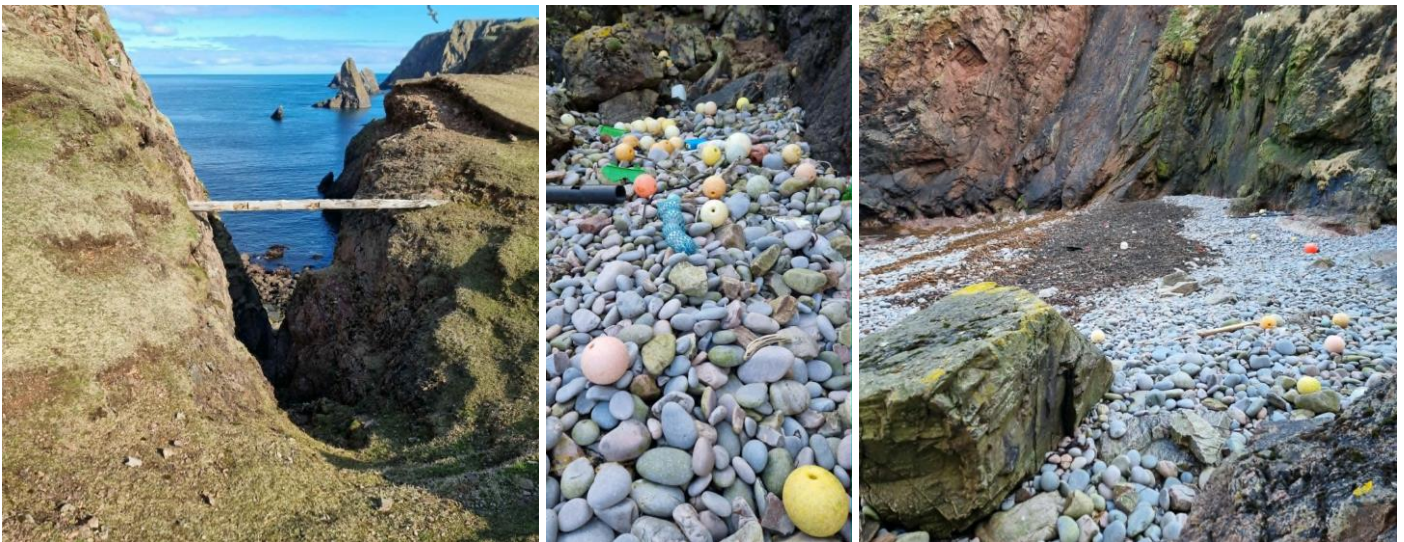
Boarded Good Shepherd IV in Lerwick. Normally I would fly but I had a fair bit of luggage and the forecast was looking good, so the boat was the easiest option. I was also conscious that I might not have many more chances to sail on GS IV before she is replaced by the new ferry later this year. GS IV came into service in May 1986 - right around my 6th birthday. Despite all the years of horrific spewing memories, I'll always have a soft spot for her.

After a perfect crossing we arrived alongside the old pier in a frenzy of harbour works activity. It's probably been a few decades since I last got off the boat there and it wis kinda surreal running back and fore with parcels up the length of the pier, like we would have done back in 1986.

Wednesday 22nd April - Steensigeo

My first job for the project was to pick a beach to salvage from. I had originally imagined Hjukni Geo, but it's been a wet winter and I wasn't convinced the grass and pool at the bottom would make safe access. I decided to start by heading down Steensigeo, which is a banks I've been going down since I was knee-high. There is always a bit of uncertainty the first time you go down Steensigeo after the winter – the way down is built of a lot of shaley rock gravel, held together by a covering of girse. The bottom section is often re-shaped by winter swell and you don't always know what you'll find. Today though, it was all pretty easy.

It felt good to be on this familiar beach, hauking about the muckle boulders, sketching and spying plenty of bruk - I decided not to over-complicate things by looking at other geos and resolved to come straight back in the afternoon and start clearing. I had bought half a dozen tonne bags for the job – hoping that I would fill them and then drag them up to the top of the banks. I decided early on to leave the trawl floats on the beach, but to tidy them up into one corner.



I ended up with two part-filled bags of miscellaneous man-made bruk, about four smallish pieces of driftwood, 2 pieces of salmon pipe and a tyre. There will be many more small bits of plastic hiding in the deep seaweed and the beach itself, but all in all, I left it clean and I'm surprised how quick the process was.

Thursday 23rd April – Workcamp

Marie has had her parents and their friends over from France for the past few weeks. They have been helping her with lots of jobs around Pund – painting, re-cladding the bothy and filling pot holes. Today I joined the “French Workcamp” at Pund and spent the morning clearing Marie's shed, which was very satisfying.

Even more satisfying was skipping off at 3pm to go swimming in Gunglesund with Eileen, Obs Ruth and Grace – it was absolutely GLORIOUS! I don't think any of us expected the water be so nice in April but it was, and we stayed in for a good while swimming lengths and chatting.

Friday 24th April – Quad

Konrad knocked off early and we set about retrieving the bruk fae Steensigeo. I knew from the start that I was going to need help getting anything up the banks, and a quad was the perfect tool for the job.

After negotiating the gates through Upper Leogh and onto Malcolm's Head, we positioned the quad right in the corner where it borders with Steenistap. We threw a rope over from the quad and then both went down the geo to assess the job from below. There were some overhangs and I wasn't sure how well this would go, but in the end it was all relatively straightforward and the lifts didn't stick much on the cliff face.

The first lift was the most dramatic with me legging it down the beach to avoid the showers of rocks spanging doon and bouncing towards me! Luckily there was a handy hard hat in one of my bruk bags and I wasn't shy about using it!



We got everything back and stashed in Konrad's garage, ready for sorting. Big shout out to Konrad at this stage – without the quad it would have been a very difficult job to recover my scan. In fact, he has tolerated this nonsense so well that I've engaged his services for Phase 2!

Saturday 25th April – Carrots

A slow start to the morning and a coffee date at Quoy to catch up with Stewart and Triona. I left 3 hours later with a bag full of carrots to turn into soup.

Drams and cards with the Houll eens and Marie at the Obs in the evening. There was a nice mix of isle folk, Obs staff and harbour workers in - it really is pretty special having such a lovely, family-friendly venue to enjoy on a Saturday evening.

Sunday 26th April - Fusion

Sorted through my beach proil and planed some plastic – it behaved well and I now think I have a firm(ish) plan for the next steps.

Up to Taft for French crepes and a showing of the Japanese Fair Isle documentary from 2019 – it's still hilarious!

Monday 27th April – Bothy

Today I helped Marie turn her beautiful bothy into a display space for her knitwear stock. We moved furniture and boxes down from the Obs and then arranged the space until we were happy with it. In the end it was surprisingly easy to settle on a layout – Marie and I have a lot of years' experience working together now and manage to do so pretty efficiently. I'm always impressed by Marie's drive and creativity and it's really nice to be able to help her achieve her goals, even if I *do* do a bit of eye-rolling along the way!

Tuesday 28th April – Rikki in charge

Boat day, so Rikki (Konrad's dog) was making sure I didn't cause any trouble while left unsupervised at the South Light. We sorted out more of the rope in the garage and then chased a couple of fat brown mice outside - didn't catch them.

Then Rikki went to Taft to hang out with Fly and I went visiting at Houll and then Busta, leaving with some excellent archive info on the Kirk – another of my current areas of interest.

Wednesday 29th April - Away

Helped Marie with parcels in the morning then went out on the late plane. It's always sad to leave Fair Isle but this time I'll be back soon. It was really nice to get home to, the kitten I got from Steven last year. He was furious that I had left him, but couldn't stay mad at me for long!

Eve

A first for Fair Isle on the 1st of May!



After an enjoyable census, with some new migrants including the first Whinchat and Pied Flycatcher of the year, along with two Long-eared Owls, I felt motivated to head down the south end of the Isle after lunch to see what else had arrived during the afternoon. I had just left the Bird Observatory when Deryk offered me a lift as he was heading that way. I gratefully accepted, and during the short drive he mentioned he'd had a brief sighting of a possible Short-toed Lark by the Kirk - a bird that would make a nice addition to the year list.

I hopped out at Setter and wandered south, glancing into the croft gardens as I went. Keen to look for the lark though, I wasn't especially thorough. I arrived at the Kirk and started doing laps to search for it. After only five minutes, I noticed two large white birds circling high over Da Water. I quickly lifted my binoculars: two gorgeous SPOONBILLS!

There was no mistaking them - brilliant white plumage and unmistakable spatulate bills. They spiralled down and landed on Da Water. I hastily sent a message to the bird WhatsApp chat before dashing around the Kirk and peeking over the wall for a better look. My first view was of them squabbling, probably blaming each other for ending up on this tiny rock in the middle of the North Sea. Within a few minutes the first twitchers arrived, and it was brilliant to share these regal birds with so many delighted islanders. After no more than fifteen minutes' rest, they took flight and headed purposefully southwest, eventually disappearing as tiny dots out to sea.

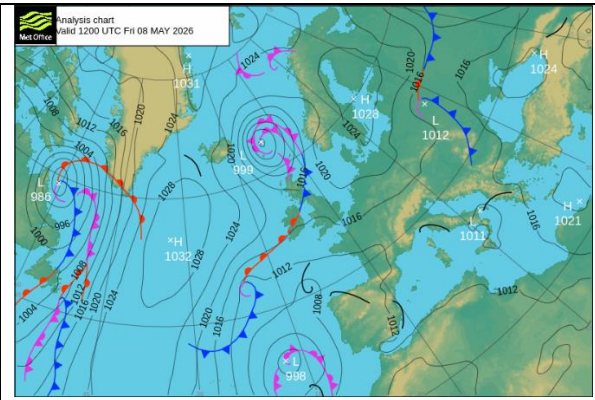
Had it not been for the lift from Deryk, I might have missed them entirely!

Tom at the Obs

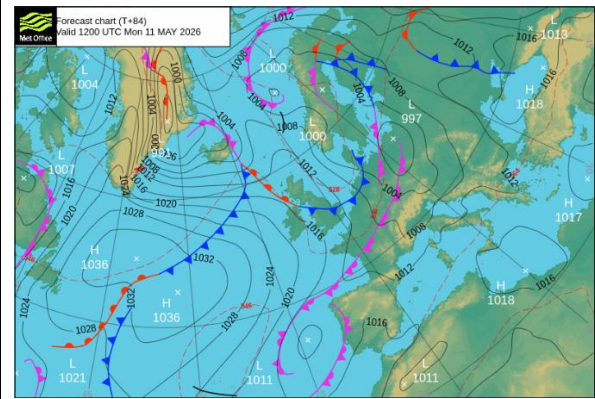


Silver Endeavour was due to visit the isle on Thursday but strong southerly winds meant they were not able to bring guests ashore. They did, however, find a sheltered spot to moor at the north end of the isle where guests were treated to zodiac cruises to enjoy the spectacular views. Thanks to Luke at the Obs for this photo

FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



**Analysis Chart 1200 UTC
Friday 8th May 2026**



**Forecast Chart 1200 UTC
Monday 11th May 2026**

GENERAL SITUATION Friday 8th May 2026

A depression midpoint between Iceland and the Norwegian coast results in a fresh showery southwest to westerly airflow for the Northern Isles. This eases through Saturday as the low moves away north before freshening southerly on Sunday as a shallow secondary low drifts east towards Faroe before continuing east over Shetland on Monday. Current forecast suggest this then tracks north along the Norwegian coast resulting in a northerly airflow across northeast Scotland possibly persisting well into next week.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Temperatures 9° or 10° today 5° overnight. Saturday and Sunday cooler at 8° by day 6° overnight

SATURDAY 9th: Sunny spells and occasional showers. A F4 NW breeze occasionally F5. **Sea State:** Mostly rough at NW 3 metre. East of Shetland moderate at W 2 m.

SUNDAY 10th: Cloudy with rain. A F4 NW wind. **Sea State:** Moderate or slight at NW 1 to 2 metre.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK Temperatures 8° to 10° by day, around 6° overnight.

MONDAY 11th: Drier and brighter with fresh NW winds. **Sea State:** Rough at NNW 3 metre.

TUESDAY 12th: Cloudy with showers and fresh NW winds. **Sea State:** Moderate to rough at NW 2 to 3 metre.

WEDNESDAY 13th – SUNDAY 17th: Wednesday cloudy with showers and a fresh N breeze. The latter part of the week perhaps cloudy and drier with a N breeze. **Sea State Wednesday:** Rough at WNW 3 metre. East of Shetland moderate at W 2 metre.

Dave Wheeler

