FAIR ISLE TIMES

VOLUME 49 ISSUE 28 PUBLISHED SINCE 1978 9th OCTOBER 2026

Fair Isle Primary School News

School's Out For The October Holidays

The first term of the 2026-2027 academic year has absolutely zoomed by. We are so proud of all that our children have achieved so far in what has been a whirlwind of a term. The phrase "well-deserved holidays" has never seemed more appropriate.

The end of term saw us fly out to Lerwick for our first school enrichment trip of the year. The P4 and P7 children have completed some cracking writing to tell you all about it with some excellent caption and pictures complementing it from our P2 learners. We hope you enjoy finding out about our endeavours as well as looking at the pictures.

Finally, we are all very sad to say farewell to "Queen Hollie", who has worked at Fair Isle Primary School for the last fifteen years. She has worn many hats (along with her crown) over the years and we are going to miss her immeasurably. The children and staff put together a lovely leavers assembly for her last Friday, with favourite memories and even a sketch to perform as we invited parents and staff into school to share the moment with us. She has been a massive part of school life and is very much an unsung hero behind the scenes so it was lovely to sing her praises and wave goodbye in style.

Ander's School Trip Recount

It was a shame that we could not get out on Monday but we did not mind when we got away on Tuesday.

Day 1: We hopped in the car and drove up to the airstrip. Soon, we were in the air. It was a little bumpy. When we landed, we jumped into the taxi bus and drove to Lerwick. We got to the Anderson Halls, dropped off our bags and went to Harry's. I bought football cards. Then, we had a delightful and delicious hot chocolate at the Peerie Shop Café. Before tea, I ran and dashed as fast as I could at the running track and in the end I ran two miles! I was super proud of myself but my thighs were still hurting on Thursday.

Day 2: In the morning, we wandered to the canteen to eat breakfast. With full bellies, we hopped in the car and travelled to Sandwick. I did Music and Maths. Also I made lots of new friends. So we went back to Lerwick and walked to the pool and had a swimming lesson. I like doing the "push and glide" (where we pushed off the slide of the pool). We briskly walked back to the hostel, met the Foula children and walked to Hayfield Park.

Teddy's School Trip Recount

After the Monday flight was cancelled, we had to wait for the Tuesday flight we got out for the first trip of the year.

Day 1: First, we got off the plane and were picked up by the taxi bus who dropped us at the hire car, which was a nine-seater (later named party bus). We then had a late lunch. After that, we piled into the party bus, then, we had the destination of Harry's department store, where we all had ten pounds each to spend. Secondly, we went to Peerie Shop Café and we had a hot chocolate with Lucy, which was marvellous. Soon after that, we decided to go to the running track which we dashed, darted, daringly, as fast as we could. After tea, we drove to the Marts where we watched the Shetland ponies get judged. It was different and definitely unusual.

Day 2: Day 2 was packed with entertainment; the busiest day by far.
With an early start, I did a 1.5 mile morning run with Jonathan at 6:50am around Clickimin Loch. After breakfast, we travelled to Sandwick and joined their P6/7 class. They were doing story writing with a twist. Playing football is more fun because there are more people to play with. After that, it was time to plunge to the pool at Clickimin. We had to have 30 minutes to play in the pool and then we did a 30-minute lesson, where we tried to do some diving. Finally, we met with the Foula kids at Hayfield Playpark. Because we saw a zip-line, we decided we wanted to try that particular park.

Luca's School Trip Recount

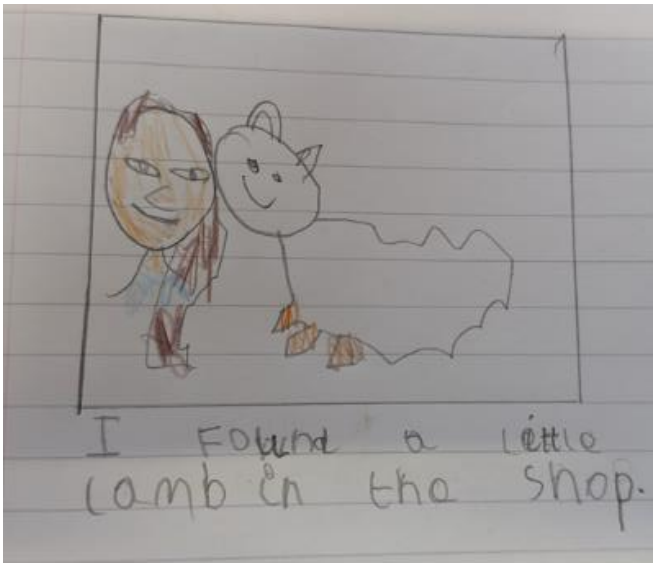
After the Monday flight was cancelled, it was worth the wait to get.on our first trip of the year.

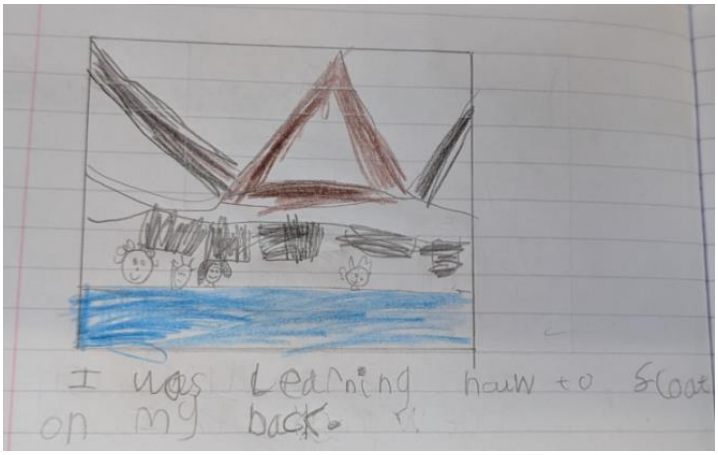
Day 1: As soon as we landed and got our monster of a car, which had nine seats, we drove to Harry's (as always) and spent our £10 on toys we wanted. Next, after we had bought toys at Harry's, we wandered to the Peerie Shop Café for a delightful hot chocolate with Lucy (the hot chocolate had cream on top!).

When we were driving back to the hostel, Ander wanted to go to the running track, so we did. We all zoomed around the track and when I crossed the finish line I was as red as a tomato. After the running track, we gorged ourselves with breaded haddock accompanied with chips. Teddy ate a truck load of it, as shown in this picture.

Day 2: After Tuesday, we were keen to get started with Sandwick and swimming lessons.

As soon as we had woken up, we had breakfast and brushed our teeth. We hopped into our outrageous nine-seater van and drove off to Sandwick School. When we arrived there, me and Teddy got welcomed to our class. Our first lesson was story writing, I wrote about an evil banana skin of doom, despair and badness for no particular reason. It was ridiculous. Later on in our jam-packed day, we did swimming lessons. Teddy and I got more secure on our front crawl. Afterwards, we joined up with the Foula school bairns at Hayfield Park and we played an exciting dinosaur game. Overall, the school trip was a massive success and we all had a great time.





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<u>Our Favourite Memories of Queen Hollie:</u>

"My favourite memory was when Queen Hollie played Pirate Ship with us and then ogres with us." (Hetty).

"My favourite memory was when Queen Hollie cheered me on at the climbing wall during our school trip. I made it all the way to the top with the encouragement." (Khalicee).

"I remember when I held your hand taking off and landing on the plane. I had the best time in nursery with you." (Ander).

"I remember when you read "On this Day" and other funny books with us at lunchtime and watching you play the ogre game instead of me concentrating playing football." (Teddy).

"I remember when you were arguing with Freyja that she had to run round the Kirk eleven times and that she was telling you to run round it fifty one times." (Luca).

Thanks again to all who donated so kindly to our Harvest Festival this year. You might be interested to read about the work done at the Goodwill Children's Village in India, to which we donate every year. You can read their newsletter here

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Da school term dat's awa. Or mibbe da hairst dat's awa…

Spot which Fair Isle Times editor didn't remember to ask anyone to write for the times this week…

I've a hard act to follow at the moment with, and I hope you agree, some excellent quality writing in the Times recently whether from our regular diarists or from our very welcome newer ones. As one reader commented, *"it might not always be easy to get excited over an account of finding a small brown bird, but Alex writes so well"*. True enough, and after such a poor September, birds and weather wise, it was lovely to finally feel the excitement coming from the birding section of our community, with a much anticipated arrival of a few rarities. I am no bird enthusiast (unless it's pink, flamboyant or both) but the sound and sight of dozens of swans has been a treat for us all. Weather has been classic October in my mind – i.e. anything, with this week having included shorts weather and winter coat and light-the-fire days too.

Back to last weekend, Guillermo got home after a few days away with work, and after a busy time it was nice to just have the 4 of us at home for a few days. We had a lovely visit from Parnaby and his two side-kicks, Ciaran and Doddy, to belatedly celebrate Parnaby turning 50. We had a few beers, lots of crisps and pork scratchings, and a good catch up, whilst also enjoying watching England absolutely hammer Croatia. The boys enjoyed showing the guys their football sticker books and wallcharts – very popular in Houll. I took the kids up to the Obs quiz that evening, it was great fun actually, and not overly birdy. I really enjoyed the cryptic round, reminding me of Mum's knack of getting the cryptic clues in the Independent newspaper crossword. Not an easy quiz though, but good fun and our team didn't do badly at all, with Steven Wilson even beating our birdy reps Luke and Tom to a bird question!

We were meant to have aunt and uncle Gina and Glen to stay for the weekend, but with Monday having a poor forecast and Mum and Dad needing out for appointments, they all had a weekend in mainland Shetland instead. Quite wise, as Monday was no use for any transport at all! Likewise, friends at Setter and Upper Stoneybrake managed to get away on Saturday ahead of schedule, all deserving their holiday and chance to meet the family's newest addition, peerie Lowrie down in Stirling. Like in Fair Isle often means changing travel plans, it's essential to be adaptable and pack ahead of time!

The Obs season is always so busy that we often don't see as much of our Obs-based pals as we'd like until it closes later this month, so we took the chance to have Jonnie and Alex down for tea on Sunday, tea being lamb curry and a fantastic beetroot curry made with the beautiful Setter veg from the harvest. It was VERY pink. Ander won one of Jonnie's stunning lino-cut prints of a lungvi so it was nice to show it off to Jonnie now that it's pinned up in its new home in my kitchen. On that topic, our bairns did phenomenally well in the raffle last week, with us (aka me) winning the afore-mentioned print along with a gorgeous green Fair Isle jumper by Triona and a handknitted scarf by Grace. What a talented bunch isle folk are.

Monday was indeed very windy, with the first proper autumnal gale hitting us. The light hitting the waves after I picked the bairns up from school enticed us to the South light to watch them crashing ashore, straight over the Tail o' Uren and landing in Muckle Urigeo. The boys were disappointed about missing the first day of their school trip, with the planned trip to the climbing wall in Eid, but Tuesday looked a better day.

Tuesday was indeed better, with 4 flights needed to catch up with the back log of passengers. The bairns got out for their school trip (spot the giddy bairn-free parents) and Marie welcomed another of her knitting groups, where guests spend a week learning to knit something Fair Isle, while enjoying a busy week of isle

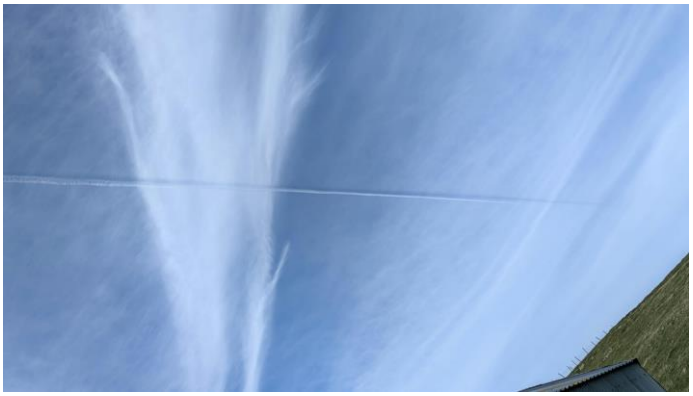
culture, history and of course great food and hospitality at the Obs. I went to make my acquaintance with the Parnaby ram, Ciaram, and the 2 hens as I'll be looking after them while David, Susannah and the girls go off an a very exciting trip to Namibia!

With my folk away Don dog has come to Houll for his holiday, where he is spoilt rotten. Well, he is allowed in the house anyway and gets to run around the road a lot! Don isn't allowed cake meaning he is the only being to stay here and lose weight!

The Shepherd made it out on Wednesday with the final run to Grutness and back before the boat has to go to Lerwick for a few weeks only (hopefully) until the cradle and winch here are operational and she can be safely hauled out of the water in bad weather. The works at the Haven seem to have leapt on a bit, with the enormous new winch and engine having just arrived, those of us meeting the Shepherd enjoyed watching the team manoeuvre these gigantic items up the pier. We should be back to the proper pier soon, much need, though the crew and associates have done so well loading and unloading from the old pier this past 6 weeks or so. I like to help out Robert and Fiona with shop deliveries, because a) I get to drive their nice new van and b) I get to nosey at what new goods they have to sell as we unload. Robert knows I'm a sucker for new sweeties and crisps! With Robert and Fiona taking very well deserved retirement from the shop before too long, my only advice to whoever takes over is to do exactly the same as them! You'd be hard pushed to find such a good island shop anywhere else.

Thursday is a truly beautiful given day, where all inside work is instantly put on hold and folk are out in force, with plenty of washing on lines, bird watchers happily wandering about the isle and even sheep being shifted. The Shepherd makes use of the lovely day to get Hollie and Deryk's flock out to market, with a few of us loading up and getting on the deck of the shepherd ready for sailing. A bittersweet moment for sure, and for all we have known for a while now that our good friends Hollie and Deryk would be heading for pastures new, it really hits me at the pier and I can't hold in the tears. That's a first, I am usually delighted to see sheep leaving on the boat! Hollie later joins me for a lovely walk in the afternoon, as we take the dogs out for a play and we catch up. Funny how you can live across a field from someone but a busy summer means you don't always get time to properly chat.

Very tired but happy bairns come home after school, their school trip having been a huge success and I head back to the airstrip to collect Mum and Dad. The weather has been glorious all day, with a spectacular halo around the sun and interesting contrails and clouds in the sky (see below)



It's a day for cetaceans with many sightings of minke whales and white-beaked dolphins popping up in various WhatsApp groups. I could see them from the road by Setter as I drove to the airstrip, so jettisoned the car on my return and picked up Tammy and Alice, along with Katy and her mum Lesley to cross Taing and end up at the broo o Klingersgeo where we were mesmerised by dozens of fins as the dolphins and whales leapt and played, presumably catching fish all the while.

With Anne away enjoying her autumn adventure in the Netherlands, Marie asked if I would step in and show her knitting guests the museum. While no expert, I do enjoy sharing a bit about the isle's history and culture with the interested guests and the museum is a treasured collection for many of us.

So it's Friday again and indeed the end of the first term. It has been a quick one with plenty of sociability, music, new pals for the bairns in school and for us adults, school inspections (which I am fairly sure will be glowing, how couldn't it be??!), lambs being shipped and of course change on the horizon. To quote our dear Lise Sinclair again, "*far isna far*" and indeed Vidlin isn't far thankfully so when it comes to dear friends departing, it is more a case of *au revoir* rather than *adios*.

Hope you all have a lovely October, and get your tatties up in the holidays!

Eileen at Houll

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Celebrating ten years of the Fair Isle Demonstration and Research MPA!

When? Friday the 6th of November from 7.30pm
Where? Fair Isle Community Hall
What? A showcase and celebration of Fair Isle DR MPA project milestones over the last ten years including: exhibitions, short presentations from myself and David Parnaby, FIMRO Q&A, 10-year anniversary film premiere (produced by Liz Musser) Followed by drinks, cake, and nibbles!
Who? All very welcome!

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A good-bye from editor Hollie...

So that's me done as editor of FIT. Not that I've done much these last few years, just a proof reader for Eileen's carefully crafted copy.

But it's been a pleasure to be part of what is such a beacon for community life and friendship. I started helping way back when we left the Obs in 2011. First helping Lise or Florrie when the other was away, cutting out and sticking photos and hand written pieces onto A4 paper to make up the master copy FIT. Always before tea on a Thursday evening at Skerryholm, sometimes with a Jimmy-poured G'&T'. Then early Friday morning (after we had got the weather and Maavi), printing and stapling 50+ of them together and writing the house names in the top right hand corner (in pencil) for each Isle household. I always seemed to forget Stackhoull, no idea why (sorry Fiona and Robert). Then delivering the isle copies to the shop for Friday morning shop opening time. Once a month I printed address labels and we posted a month's worth to all our 'off isle' subscribers.

When we lost Lise I stepped in to help Florrie every week, although I could never begin to match Lise's creative and thought provoking additions between pieces and in the notices, which we still hand wrote at that stage. And then we lost Florrie too. It was hard to think of the Fair Isle Times without these two amazing women, but we continued and Eileen joined me, firstly as co-editor but in more recent years as main editor. During Covid we ventured into 'fully digital' production so there was no longer any need to meet every Thursday before tea, or Friday before shop opening time, no more postal copies, no more jammed photocopiers. I've missed those times these last few years (luckily the photocopier still jammed at school regularly enough to help me cope).
And now it's time for me to bow out. I have been lucky to be a part of the Fair Isle Times story for 15 years, through big changes and terrible losses. That weekly connection with those three wonderful

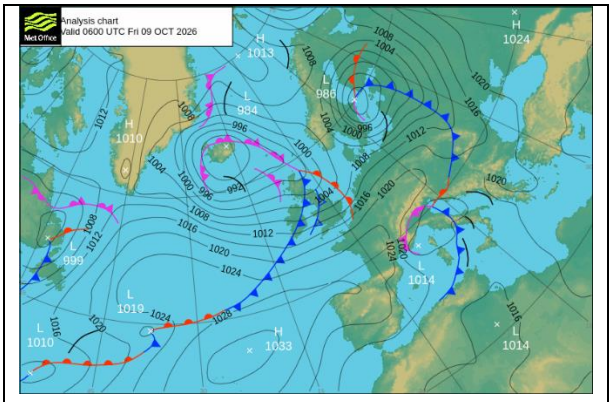
women will remain with me forever. The stalwart contributions from Dave Wheeler (weather), Neil Thomson (Maavi) and of course whatever cohort of Fair Isle Primary School children there were at the time, have really been the foundation for this paper. I doubt there are many similar examples of such a long standing, positive and informative small community paper.

I wish Eileen, the rest of the FIT team and future editors all the very best, I look forward to reading my FIT in Vidlin.

Hollie

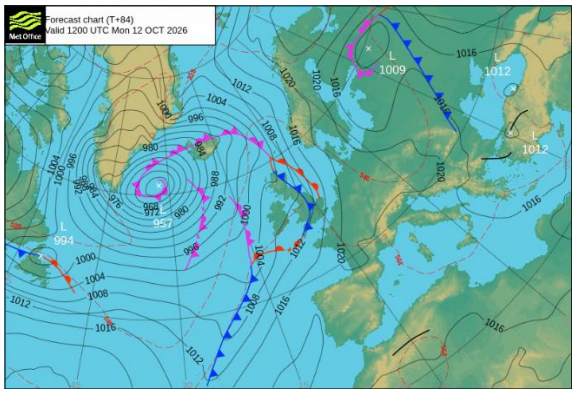
Thanks to resident cartoonist and artist extraordinaire, Jonnie, for the fantastic robins!

FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



Analysis Chart 0600 UTC

Friday 9th October 2026



Forecast Chart 1200 UTC

Monday 12th October 2026

GENERAL SITUATION **Friday 9th October 2026**

An occluded front having cleared east this morning, a strong westerly airflow is now established across Fair Isle. On Saturday, as a low centre moves east close to Shetland the airflow becomes a light north-westerly. On Sunday a weak ridge crosses from the west and the airflow then starts to freshen southerly as Atlantic fronts approach the British Isles. These cross northern Scotland on Monday. The weather then remains unsettled and often windy with risk of gales next week as a sequence of small but active secondary lows run quickly northeast close to northern Scotland.

OUTLOOK FOR TODAY AND THE WEEKEND Temperatures 10° or 11° by day, 6° to 8° overnight.

FRIDAY 9th: A dull start with mist, rain or drizzle soon clearing to sunshine and blustery showers as F5-6 SE winds veer F5-6 W. Further showers overnight with fresh W winds.

Sea State: Moderate or rough at SW 2 to 3 metre.

SATURDAY 10th: Sunny spells and showers, occasionally heavy with F4-5 NW winds. Scattered showers and clear spells overnight. **Sea State:** Rough at W 3 metre. East of Shetland moderate at 2 metre.

SUNDAY 11th: Mainly dry with sunshine and light NW winds falling calm then light S later. A dry night though with increasing cloud and a strengthening S wind. **Sea State:** Moderate or rough at NW 2 to 3 metre.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK Temperatures 11° or 12° by day, 7° or 8° overnight.

MONDAY 12th: A cloudy misty day with rain and strong SSE winds. **Sea State:** Mostly rough at S 3 metre.

TUESDAY 13th: Rather cloudy with blustery showers, occasionally heavy and strong W winds. **Sea State:** Mostly rough at SW 3 to 4 metre.

WEDNESDAY 14th – SUNDAY 18th: Wednesday rather cloudy with rain then showers as strong to gale SSW winds veer WSW. Showers and strong W winds overnight. Showers and fresh W winds Thursday and Friday. The weekend showery with strong SW winds. **Sea State Wednesday:** Very rough to high at SW 5 to 6 metre. East of Shetland rough or very rough at S 4 to 5 metre.

Dave Wheeler