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tale of da  
docks

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contest

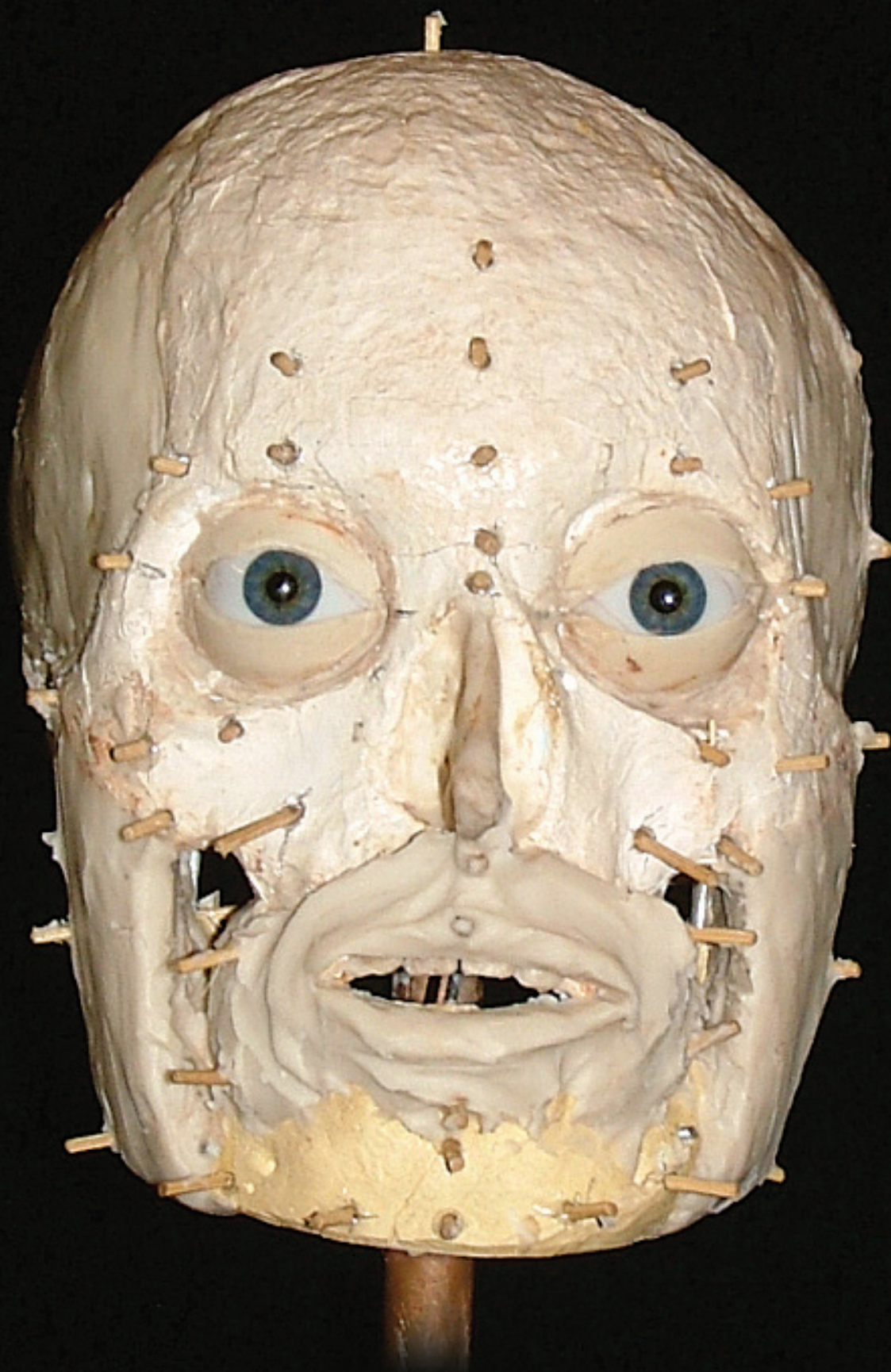
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**The Shetland Times**

Friday, 25th May 2007

# **museum & archives**



## **REVEALED: 5,200-year secret**

Meet isles' oldest resident restored to former glory

See  
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II

**Your step by step tour of museum, pages X & XI**



# Meet the maid of Sumburgh...

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

THIS lady has been in Shetland for longer than anybody else, for she's an early Shetlander of at least 5,200 years ago.

Why is she in a display case? Curator of collections Ian Tait explains.

"In our archaeological collection from the early Neolithic period there isn't much of a human touch. It's mostly stones and bits of bone, so we decided to recreate a person from that era.

"We were fortunate in that the earliest known burial uncovered so far in Shetland contained most of a skull – fairly certainly a woman's skull.

"She was buried around 3,200BC, in a grave that was uncovered in 1977 during excavations on a site next to the present control tower at Sumburgh Airport.

"The date places her in the first dozen generations or so of native Shetlanders, descended from settlers who arrived by sea, probably from the south."

"How was she recreated?" I asked.

"The expert reconstruction begins with the setting up of a clay core of similar dimensions and shape to the skull.

"From what's there, experience in anatomy allows the restorer to replace the missing bones first of all. In this case, the jaw had to be made.

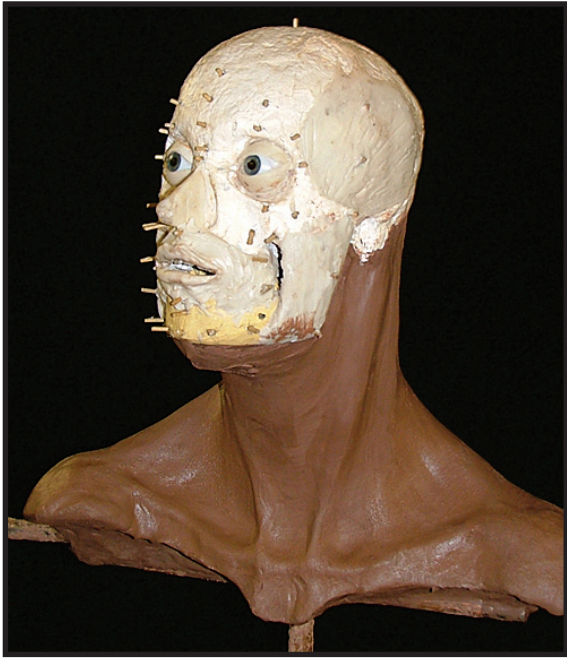
"Next, the numerous individual muscles that make up the head are added, starting from those nearest the bone.

"The proportions of the lower muscles can be assessed from measurements of their attachment to the skull, although again, anatomical knowledge and experience play a big part in such a reconstruction.

"The features of the face emerge as the process continues, finally appearing when the skin is moulded.

"This clay head is then used as a mould for a cast in a more inert and permanent material, the cast coloured, eyes put in and all the hair added.

"Who is she? Well, everybody who sees her will be looking for a resemblance to somebody else, and probably find one! Let's just say she's definitely of Celtic stock."



OVERALL the process and various scientific studies to reconstruct the head took over a year of work (although not continuous) undertaken at Manchester University.

Museum curator Tommy Watt explained: "We conducted a pathology report and dental report. A cast was made of the original skull then built up from there. Final version in wax with real hair was done by RN-DS Partnership."

1. First a copy of the skull is taken. This skull has been CT scanned to ensure no damage occurs to the original skull. Copies can also be produced in plaster. The skull is then mounted on a stand in the Frankfurt plane.

2. Pegs are then inserted into the skull to represent the average tissue depth at those points determined by the age, sex and racial origin of the individual. Wax is used to build the muscles onto the skull. The first muscles to be modelled are the temporalis and the masseter.

3. Frontal view of the early muscle stage detailed in step two.

4. Only the broad muscle groups are built onto the skull. A rough indication of the general shape and size of the nose can be added, in line with the commonly accepted rule of proportions.

5. The muscles are developed further by adding those used to convey facial expression. As all these muscles are built up over the skull, their shapes and contours will develop, determined by the bone to which they are attached or over which they lie. The ears are added.

6. All the precisely calculated anatomical modelling is now covered up by strips of clay laid over its surface to simulate the outer layers of subcutaneous tissue and skin. In this example, only half of the skin layer has been added to show how closely it resembles the anatomical side where the muscles are still plain to see.

7. After the final modelling of the superficial features has been completed, a mould is made of the head and then cast in wax. Other materials (bronze resin or plaster) can also be used for the final finished head.

8. The finished head with colouring and hair added. These details are added following consultation with archaeological experts of the period.



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MUSEUM & ARCHIVES SPECIAL

# Can you help kit out boat hall exhibits?



An overview of the boat hall.

## Flagship opens doors to voyage of discovery

**“For visitors I see it as a gateway to Shetland – both virtual and real – an introduction to the islands and a guide to further exploration; the museums network, cultural events, land and sea, flora and wildlife.”**

**Jimmy Moncrieff,  
Shetland Amenity Trust's manager**

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

BEFORE 1966, there was no Shetland Museum; before 1976 there was no Shetland Archives. Each was a huge step forward in its own time, and in its own way a stepping stone towards increasing knowledge and understanding of Shetland.

It didn't take long for both museum and archives to become packed to capacity and beyond, and the need for a better home for both was recognised many years ago now. Shetland Amenity Trust's general manager Jimmy Moncrieff refreshed my memory of events recently, when I went to see him.

“Things got going in the 1990s; Shetland Islands Council did a site selection exercise, and a feasibility study with costings. The site wasn't chosen immediately, but it was clear the project would be fairly costly.

“An important step came when, almost out of the blue, Hay's Dock was offered for sale to the Amenity Trust. This came about as a consequence of the North Ness redevelopment project ongoing at the time, and the trust accepted immediately. Securing such a historic site made its use for a museum appropriate and inevitable.

“The council made slow progress with the project and it stalled somewhat, before Shetland Amenity Trust was asked to take the project forward in 1999. That was fairly appropriate, in the sense that the trust's remit

included the provision of heritage and culture services to Shetland. Building design and fund-raising took a long time; it's a landmark project.

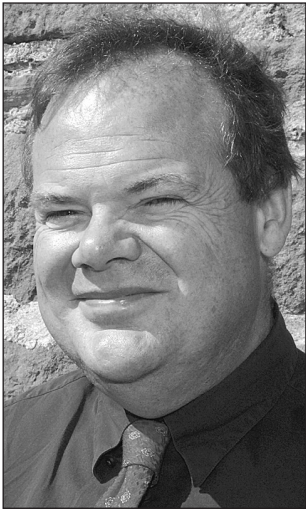
“The project team wanted to create on one hand a new modern building to provide a secure environment for the preservation of Shetland's Museum and Archives collections, efficient display and good accessibility.

“On the other hand we sought a building of high quality and craftsmanship using recycled materials where appropriate; a building that would truly engage with the visitor. I think we've achieved that; in a sense, everything was designed with Shetland's story as the starting point, working outwards from the display requirements, wrapping all the other facilities around the core. We then combined museum artefacts, archive material, commissioned models and art, interactive displays, to bring the story to life.”

Jimmy sees the project very much as an essential part of a bigger picture, safeguarding and celebrating Shetland's heritage and culture in a co-ordinated manner – in effect a significant part of the Shetland Brand.

“Having the Museum and Archives together is a significant fusion in the first instance, and the Hay's Dock site is entirely appropriate. We've saved and restored what was a crucial structure in Shetland's industrial history.

“It's a pleasant building to visit,



Jimmy Moncrieff

and its surroundings are a pleasant place to be. We now have the research facilities, the meeting places, space for social events and

indeed the workplaces for traditional skills to make it an enjoyable place of activity, learning and recreation.

“For visitors I see it as a gateway to Shetland – both virtual and real – an introduction to the islands and a guide to further exploration; the museums network, cultural events, the land and sea, the flora and wildlife.

“Our heritage and culture is a huge resource, worthy of integrated promotion, a big part of the Shetland Brand effort.

“Linking all the various facilities, services and products in this way creates a strong brand image for the whole heritage sector. Heritage and culture belong to everybody – it's our museum, our archives – things everybody in Shetland can value and be proud of. With the project at Hay's Dock nearly complete, that's the next challenge!”

WITH around 3,000 artefacts already placed on show in the new museum, and thousands more in store, you might think the staff can source all that's needed for just about any kind of display.

According to curator of collections Ian Tait, this just isn't so, and he's appealing Shetland-wide for a range of items to fit out one of the boats on display.

He said: “In our boat hall, we have a particular boat requiring gear which is simply not in our collection. She's the white motor boat, built by John Bruce of Whalsay and used primarily as what was called a ‘drag boat’ to transport a fishing boat's crew from beach to mooring. With an inboard Stuart Turner engine, she's very typical of her kind, and we want to display her with a man on board, all ready to set out for a day's fishing – in the 1950s.

“That's the challenge; we need 1950s items. Some we have, such as a wooden fish box, a bait board and knife, a fuel can and a grub box, but others in store are of the wrong period. Specifically we need a 1950s-type Thermos flask – not the tartan-sided one, and a gas-mask satchel or the like to keep it in. We could also do with a genuine 1950s murderer and headline on a sool – no synthetic twine or stainless hooks!

“To rig out our crewman, we're looking for a navy or khaki battledress tunic and a high-necked gansey with a zip, real dungaree breeks with a snake-buckle belt, a long oilskin coat preferably black – or a white oilskin smokie – and rubber boots of the old up-to-the-knee style, or flankers to cut down. A Capstan or Players' packet would be nice, and finally we don't have a genuine 1950s slightly rusty tin filler funnel.

“I'm appealing to folk to have a look for any of these, among old bruck in sheds or up in the loft. All contributions will be very gratefully received!”

## Museum opening marks red letter day in history

**4000 BC** – first inhabitants come to Shetland

**500 BC-AD 200** – society is very organised with chiefs in charge. Obsession with defence and around 100 forts are built throughout the islands

**AD 800** – Viking colonisation: biggest cultural change in Shetland history. Way of life revolutionised – language, religion, buildings, art

**1195** – following a period of rule by the troublesome earls of Orkney, the Norwegian king takes control and rules Shetland directly from Norway

**1450** – German merchants begin to trade with Shetland, building booths around the islands, they traded in beer, flour, linen and pottery in return for fish and butter

**1469** – Shetland becomes part of Scotland with the marriage of Princes Margrethe of Denmark and King James III of Scotland

**1600-1900** – three centuries of Dutch supremacy in the herring fishery; Netherlands our closest trading ally

**1793-1815** – Napoleonic War; hundreds of Shetlanders are captured by ‘press gangs’ to serve in the Navy. Islanders were sought for their boating knowledge

**1800** – Shetland's own language, Norn, mostly dies out

**1870s** – Shetland's population peaks at over 30,000, followed by extensive emigration

**1880s** – the Up-Helly-A' festival develops, with men dressed as Vikings and a longship is hauled through the Lerwick streets with a torchlit procession

**1914-1918** – First World War; huge numbers serve in the Navy and merchant fleet, and highest rate of casualty anywhere in Britain

**1920s** – Fair Isle knitwear becomes a fashion item and a main export

**29th June 1966** – the old museum opens, based at the Hillhead, where it remains until 2005

**May 1976** – the first Shetland archives open

**2nd June 2007** – the Shetland Museum and Archives opens at Hay's Dock in Lerwick

● *Opening weekend celebrations, see page VIII*

## 20,000

words written on one side of an A4 sheet written by Laurence Williamson of Mid Yell and held in the archives

## My favourite thing

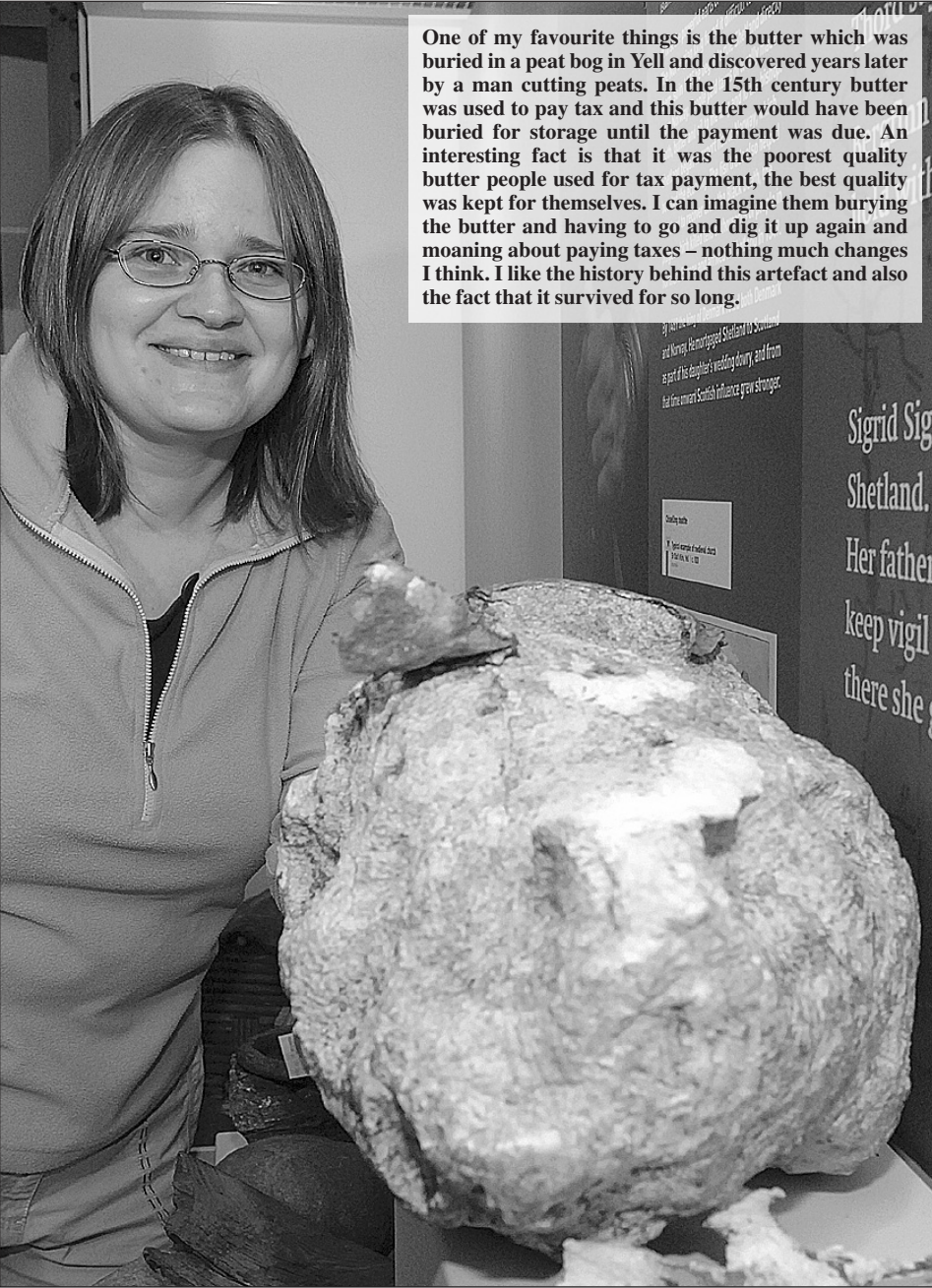
**Ross Cluness**  
Architectural Heritage Foreman



**The model of the Earl of Zetland as it reminds me of my childhood. As my father was the boatman in Uyeasound, and I often accompanied him, I must have been on that boat thousands of times, although I very rarely travelled on it.**



My favourite thing Hazel Adamson  
Museum Assistant



One of my favourite things is the butter which was buried in a peat bog in Yell and discovered years later by a man cutting peats. In the 15th century butter was used to pay tax and this butter would have been buried for storage until the payment was due. An interesting fact is that it was the poorest quality butter people used for tax payment, the best quality was kept for themselves. I can imagine them burying the butter and having to go and dig it up again and moaning about paying taxes – nothing much changes I think. I like the history behind this artefact and also the fact that it survived for so long.

Portrait of a sheriff

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON  
OVER the years Shetland Museum has built up a collection of around 600 original paintings and prints of specifically Shetland interest. In oils, water-colours and pencil sketch, the islands, their features and their people were depicted, especially in the days before photography. A portrait in oils is seen as a mark of the distinction of its subject, even today. Prominent people in Shetland were no exception in this respect, and portraits proliferated in the 19th century. Many of those in the museum's collection are now on display, including one recently restored portrait of a Victorian public figure, notable mainly for its subject's quaint portrayal and the painting's ignominious fate. George Thoms, son of a Dundee Provost, was appointed sheriff and vice-admiral of Orkney and Shetland and Sheriff of Caithness in 1870, and held office until 1899. He was as important a personage as his offices suggest. He inherited his father's fortune in 1882, and became a philanthropist. In 1883 he donated one of the biggest windows in the new

Lerwick Town Hall, and also opened Lerwick's new Harbour Works. He was a founder of Lerwick Boating Club – and the man who organised the famous rowing race in which a crew of Trondra lasses beat a crew of Royal navy men. He died in 1903 in Edinburgh; his will bequeathed the residue of his estate – £60,000 – to the burgh of Kirkwall for the maintenance of St. Magnus Cathedral, while he wished his portrait to be hung in the County Buildings in Lerwick. The portrait arrived in 1904, addressed to the Sheriff Clerk, who was also County Clerk. Zetland County Council did not appreciate the portrait, depicting the good Sheriff's likeness right enough – but in fancy dress! Here he was, in a strange outfit, representing none other than the fictional Magnus Troil, a character from Sir Walter Scott's Shetland-based novel *The Pirate*. ZCC offered the painting to Lerwick Town Council on the flimsy pretext that there was nowhere suitable in the County Buildings to hang it. Lerwick Town Council liked it even less, and sent it back. Some unfeeling minion in the County Buildings then crammed the painting into a cupboard where it lay unwanted and neglected for fully 70 years until somebody took pity on Thoms and sent him to the museum. Today restored, the good Sheriff – or Magnus Troil if you prefer – gazes haughtily out of a display case past other objects relevant to his profession. I wonder if that's where he really wants to be?



Sheriff Thom.

My favourite thing Carol Christiansen  
Curator & Community Museums Officer Assistant

I chose the WWI nurse's uniform, which belonged to Miss Nellie Gilbertson, Staff Nurse with the Territorial Force Nursing Service 1914-1918. It is my favourite object because as a uniform, it manages to be both commanding and feminine at the same time. Its design must have given nurses respect and authority, as well as being a symbol of help and comfort to the distressed and wounded soldiers in their care. I imagine that when Miss Gilbertson wore her uniform, it must have instilled in her a sense of duty, which would have helped her cope with the most difficult aspects of her job.



460 the weight in kilos of a seven-foot long leather-back turtle from which a cast was taken. The turtle died after getting tangled in the ropes of a creel boat off Yell in November 2000. The remains were kept in cold storage until it was cast in May 2004. The carcass is now being used for educational purposes in the National Museums of Scotland in Edinburgh.

Shedding light on boats

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON  
IN THE early days of Hay & Ogilvy only small open boats could be built indoors, while bigger decked sailing vessels had to be assembled out in the open. Hay & Company took over Freefield in 1844, and one of their early developments was the construction of the boatsheds at the head of the slipway. This made boatbuilding less dependant upon weather and daylight, and less of a seasonal activity. Most importantly for the economy of the whole of Shetland, the Freefield boatbuilding and herring curing activities created, for the very first time, significant year-round employment in skilled trades – with weekly wages. This was in contrast to all other forms of local income which were net shares in the proceeds of seasonal fisheries, or the surplus from harvests. The boatsheds were the hub of the whole enterprise, because the boats it produced caught the herring that were cured and exported. It required the import of timber and spars, ironwork, cordage, nails, sailcloth, and paint. Shipwrights, carpenters, sawyers, blacksmiths, sailmakers, riggers and labourers created the fishing boats, which in turn gave more work for coopers, gutters, carters, and more labourers. Trading vessels were needed to transport the imports and exports, while all the workers in the enterprise needed homes. All this activity and growth was the foundation of the modern Shetland economy and a crucial factor in the expansion and prosperity of Victorian Lerwick.

The names of the men in charge of the sheds, the most renowned local tradesmen of their day, are still venerated. David Leask, foreman for more than 40 years, supervised the building of his biggest and last creation – the *Swan* – in 1900, and was succeeded by John Shewan. Many innovative craft were produced in Shewan's time, including the dual-purpose *Maggie Helen* of 1904 – now back in the sheds as the *Loki* – the motor-powered *Venture* of 1909 and a number of launches and sailing yachts. Boatbuilding virtually ended after the First World War, although repairs kept its tradesmen busy, and through the 1930s Shetland's RNLI lifeboats were overhauled annually in the sheds. For many years the 'Docks Boys' contributed large model ships for burning at Lerwick's Up-Helly-A', and in 1912 they were asked to build the Norse galley. Out of the boatsheds came an elegant 30-foot longship, whose design is still reflected in present-day galleys. More galleys followed, built in the boatsheds until 1939. Post-war the sheds were a quiet place, used mainly as a hardwood store for 50 years. Now, it resumes its boat-orientated role, albeit in a new way as the home for most of the Museum's boat collection; not only a store but a workplace where boats are repaired and restored. Visitors will therefore see demonstrated all the maritime skills – now 'traditional' and rare – whose first establishment at Freefield represented a very fundamental shift towards the modern Shetland economy.



A look inside the restored boat sheds.



## MUSEUM &amp; ARCHIVES SPECIAL



Museum curator Tommy Watt.

## Dock set for new illustrious chapter in its history

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

BUILT BY the renowned business partnership of the Hay and Ogilvy families, Hay's Dock dates from the period 1822-31.

The firm's leading light was William Hay, born in 1787 into a family of Lerwick-based traders and smugglers.

In 1822, William entered a partnership with his in-laws that became Hay and Ogilvy a decade later, during which time the firm's Freefield complex of docks, quays, shipyard, warehouses and workshops was built.

The firm was an early local investor in the herring fishery, which began to expand rapidly. Herring caught by the firm's vessels were landed for curing at Freefield.

Serving this growing trade required a shipyard, cooperages and smithies of industrial scale to produce boats and barrels; stores for salt, housing for tradesmen, warehouses for provisions.

The shipyard turned out many herring boats, cod smacks, trading schooners and even the barque *North Briton* – the largest vessel ever built in Shetland – and repaired many more.

Freefield and the Docks were thus at the very heart of Shetland's 'Industrial Revolution', which saw the islands' economy move irrevocably away from 'cottage industry' production and self-sufficiency, towards an era of more capital-intensive production methods and an accompanying demand for imported goods.

Before the Freefield docks came, there was nowhere in Shetland for a ship of any size to berth, which meant that all cargoes both inward or outward had to be moved in small amounts – 'flitted' – by open boats between beach and anchored ship.

By 1839 the firm was busy and prosperous, owning or managing 100 fishing vessels, but a series of poor fishing seasons and bad harvests drained its resources, along with those of the Shetland Bank in which the Hays and Ogilvys were majority shareholders. When the Royal Bank of Scotland foreclosed on both in 1842, the collapse triggered years of recession.

The partners were bankrupted,

## 20

the height of the Boat Hall in metres

but it was the Hays who clawed their way back into business first. Hay & Company, a firm of William Hay and his sons, regained tenancy of the whole Freefield enterprise in 1844.

For the next 80 years 'Hays' remained Shetland's foremost import and export company, trading as fishcurers, factors, wholesalers and retailers, with many branches around the isles. Their yard built many boats from fourerns to the 67-foot *Swan* of 1900.

After the First World War the company concentrated primarily on import and supply, while boat building gave way to boat repair only.

Up to about 1980 almost all of Shetland's timber, coal, cement and building materials came through Freefield's sawmill and stores. After the Second World War, while the dock remained the base for Lerwick's fleet of small whitefish boats, some of its quays were used for timber storage and the remainder built over.

Almost three decades of disuse followed before Hay's Dock became the site of Shetland's new Museum and Archives, and its regeneration a valued element of the project.

# Curator Tommy's ideal home

**“The new museum is a storybook, where the old one was a toy-box,”**

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

AWAY back in 1822, William Hay entered a business partnership with his brother-in-law.

They created a dock complex and brought industrial scale working to Shetland, employing sawyers, shipwrights, carpenters, sailmakers, coopers, blacksmiths to build ships, catch and cure herring, import and supply all manner of goods throughout Shetland.

Hay & Company went on to become Shetland's foremost trading business for many decades.

Ever since, generations of employees at Freefield have been known as da Docks Boys, to this very day.

Museum curator Tommy Watt is

proud to be one of this select band today, for his links to Freefield go back a long time, as he explained to me.

“My father's grandfather came up from the Moray Firth, the first of three generations of Lerwick fishermen whose base was Hay's Dock for many years.

“Later, my father kept our small boat there, and the dock was something of a playground for most Lerwick boys! My mother's father, Tammie Thomson – ‘Toshie’ – worked at Hay's for years as handyman and driver; I worked in Hay's shop in the school holidays, and stacked timber exactly where the new building stands today.

“I started in the old museum in 1979 as museum assistant; in those

days the museum simply held a historical collection of artefacts, on display in their categories, with little to inform the visitor. That's mostly all the museum was for; it kept all these exhibits in Shetland.

## 32,000

people a year visited the old museum before it closed

“Nowadays the emphasis is very much more on interpretation and learning; the new museum is a storybook, where the old one was a toy-box.

# Adie's 'bruck' priceless artefacts!

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

THOMAS Mountford Adie began trading at Voe as a teenager in 1830, and built up a thriving business there by the mid-1850s, as farmer, shopkeeper and general merchant.

In 1872 he had shops in Voe, Papa Stour, Stenness and Skerries, and 400 haaf fishermen from Delting and Northmavine on his books.

The family firm of T. M. Adie & Sons became a major player in the cod fishery of the 19th century, owning a fleet of sailing smacks which fished for cod as far afield as Rockall, Faroe and Iceland.

In the 1880s they invested in sailing drifters to catch herring for curing on their own account. Later, the hosiery and weaving trade became Adie's mainstay into and through the 20th century.

The complete production of tweed – apart from spinning – was done at Voe, along with the finishing of hand-knitted garments made by outworkers all over the north part of Shetland. The shop and post office at lower Voe served a wide area, while its bakery – established to supply bread to Royal Navy ships based in Busta Voe during the First World War – sent Voe bread and biscuits all over Shetland.

In 1950 there were 95 people on the firm's payroll, making Adie & Sons a major employer in the North Mainland. The firm became famous nationwide in 1953, for it supplied jumpers to the successful Mount Everest Expedition. With the eclipse of the national textile

industry Adie's business slowly contracted, finally winding down through the 1980s as staff approached retiring age, and ceased trading in 1991. The bakery was sold in 1964 and still trades of course, while other buildings survive in new roles. The shop is a bar and restaurant; the knitwear shed is now the Sail Loft, one of Shetland Amenity Trust's camping bōds, while the pier was recently rebuilt as part of a major marina project.

Given Adie's long association with just about every aspect of Shetland trade both ashore and

afloat for such a long period – and the large number of stores and buildings owned at Voe – it was natural that much “old bruck” had gathered over the years. It wasn't bruck to Ian Tait though, as he soon found after proprietor James A. Adie – great-grandson of Thomas – wisely invited Shetland Museum to come for a look, before anything was cleared out or the buildings disposed of.

As Ian put it: “There was an incredible selection of all manner of artefacts of the utmost value to our collection, along with examples of textile products and

business records. Around Adie's premises there were umpteen sheds and lafts – and it seemed as if nothing had ever been thrown away!”

Over several visits to Voe, Ian selected over 500 items which were eventually all taken to Lerwick; the artefacts to the museum and the paper business records to the archives. For lack of display space the bulk of the pieces had to be kept in storage initially, and it's only now with the new museum that over 200 items of the Adie collection will be on display, most of them for the first time.

You'll find them everywhere through the upstairs galleries, reflecting the firm's broad interests; they're in the fishing cases, the maritime and trade displays and the shops section. Above all, they form a significant element of the Shetland hosiery production and marketing section, and indeed make up the bulk of the items concerning the weaving industry. Without James Adie's insight and generosity, an important chapter of the museum's Shetland story would have been much less brightly illuminated.



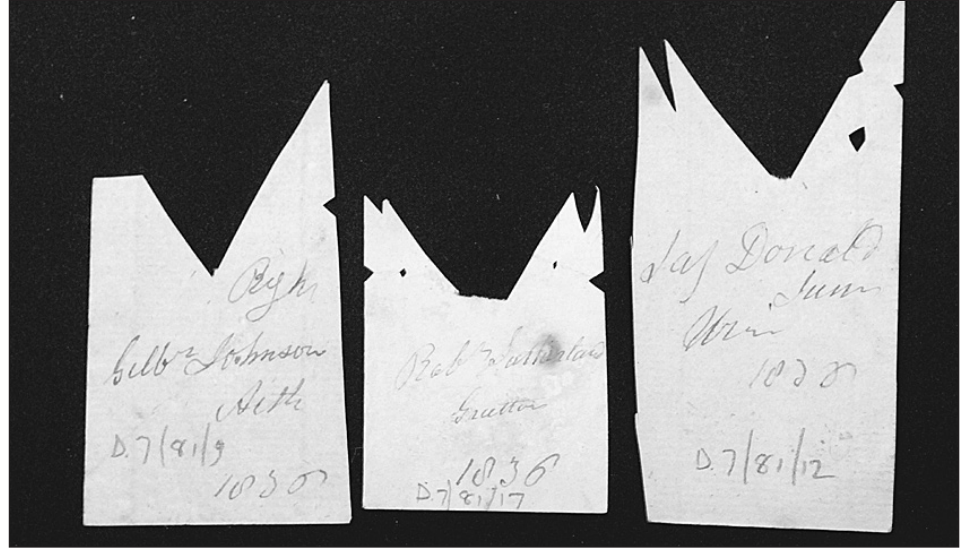
Part of the Adie collection on display.



# Weird and wonderful – from pilk to lug marks



Pilk – a lure, which resembles a small fish, used to catch bigger fish.



Shetlanders distinguished their sheep from each other by choosing family 'lug marks'. There are several collections of lug templates in the Archives, cut out of paper. The marks in this photograph are part of a collection of 139 from Fetlar in 1836.

## Pride of place for Whalsay man Stewart who left archives legacy

**85,000**

photos in the museum's photographic archive

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

IN HIS foreword to the 2005 book *Folklore from Whalsay and Shetland*, archivist Brian Smith wrote, of its author John Stewart, "no Shetlander made a greater contribution to Shetland studies: archaeological, linguistic and folkloristic".

Brian was writing from an informed perspective, for all of John Stewart's original papers are now in Shetland Archives, a substantial and significant collection, especially in the field of Shetland's place-names.

John Stewart was born in Brough, Whalsay in 1903. After graduating MA in Aberdeen University he made his career as a teacher in the city, becoming deputy head of Skene Square School before retiring in 1970.

His lifetime hobby was the study of the archaeology, history and culture of Shetland, his output prodigious when one considers he taught full-time and raised a family of six. He produced papers and

articles on dialect, place names, history and archaeology, wrote plays and short stories, contributed to newspapers and magazines.

He was especially interested in Shetland place-names, and concerned that they, and in particular the local field-names, should not be lost.

By 1950 he established a project to record all of Shetland's place-names. With some financial assistance, and help with distribution from the council's education department, around 5,000 questionnaires were given to schoolchildren, for their parents and grandparents to list names of places on the croft, in the hill, at the shore, or in the sea. By May 1951 almost 1,200 of the forms had been returned, containing an estimated 30,000 names.

Listing, plotting, annotating and indexing this mass of information took up thousands of hours of John Stewart's spare time over many years. In this age before computers, everything had to be handwritten or typed, while maps had to be traced and hand-coloured. He undertook fieldwork during school holidays, travelling around the isles, checking lists of names, verifying locations, seeking more places. In addition, he found time to collect local folklore, customs,

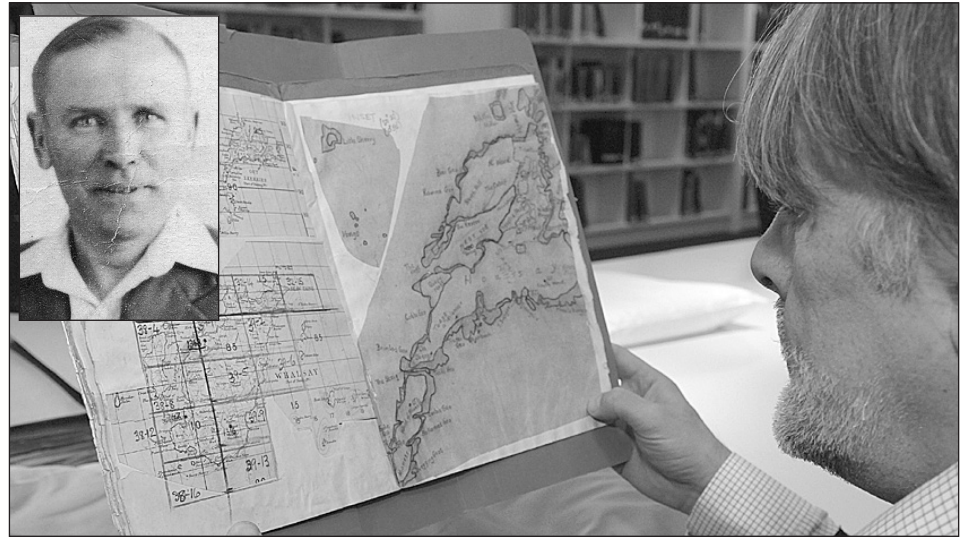
sayings, proverbs and even spent time excavating Neolithic house sites in Whalsay.

He wrote and presented several papers on his place names study,

**5,200**

years old – the age of the oldest manmade artefact in the museum.

but sadly none of it was published before his death in 1977. Brian Smith edited his typescript of island and farm-names, published as *Shetland Place-Names* in 1987. A few years ago all of his papers were placed in the Shetland Archives, and their new accessibility allowed major progress to be made in the Shetland Place Names Project by project officer Eileen Brooke-Freeman. With the passage of time, the precise location of many of the names on the list could no longer be identified. However, Eileen was able to copy all of the original recording sheets returned to John Stewart in 1951, and made his name familiar again to community groups all over Shetland by taking the lists back to their origins for study. By this means many places were "recovered" and correctly sited – with



Archivist Brian Smith with one of John Stewart's (inset) documents.

the luxury of computer databases and digital mapping, tools probably beyond John Stewart's wildest dreams, but certainly in furtherance of his aims, as he put it himself in 1968:

*One must not forget that a place-name was in origin a spoken and meaningful word. We can get behind the names and learn much about the people themselves; some of their personal names, their homes and their holdings and*

*animals and daily pursuits, their material culture and social cohesion, their sense of the appropriate in sound, their humour, their fears and superstitions and even longings.*

The significance of John Stewart's contribution to preserving Shetland's culture was evident among his other papers. In the 1950s he began to make notes on folklore, customs and folk tales,

starting with those from his native Whalsay and continuing through his lifetime; a broad miscellany that included proverbs, sayings, rhymes, songs and dreams, collected by him or learnt from friends. This collection was published by Shetland Amenity Trust as *Folklore from Whalsay and Shetland* in 2005, a fitting tribute to John Stewart's immense works in so many fields of Shetland heritage and culture.

## My favourite thing Mark Ryan Smith

Archives Assistant



My current favourite thing in the Archives is the complete set of the now 60-year-old magazine *The New Shetlander*. Whenever I look at any edition it amazes me that a quality literary journal of this kind has been continually produced in Shetland for such a length of time. For a view of writing in, and about, Shetland since the middle of last century, there is no better place to look.

## My favourite thing Angus Johnson

Archives Assistant



I don't know if I have a favourite recording, but the one where a Scalloway schoolboy explains the intricacies of otter hunting for a 1950s children's radio programme must come close. A good illustration of social change, of course.



MUSEUM & ARCHIVES SPECIAL

# and fishing trophies to makkin wisps...



Weather vein which was awarded along with a trophy to the *Jessie Sinclair*, LK 509 herring fishing boat, in 1954. The trophy was presented to the fishing boat with the largest catch of herring during the East-Anglian season by Madame Prunier, a famous London Restaurateur. The *Jessie Sinclair* catch was 272 crans.



Makkin Wisp – an early form of knitting belt, which was placed under the arm, unique to Shetland.

## How to track your history...

“Every Shetland family has something of itself here,”  
**Brian Smith, *Shetland Archives***

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

BEFORE Shetland Archives came into being only 30 years ago in 1976, Shetland’s written records were scattered here, there and everywhere.

The first archives was a former school building, hardly ideal for the purpose. The expanding collection included books and audio recordings; it soon filled the available storage facilities, limited staff working space, and left very little room for researchers.

Brian Smith has been Shetland’s “Mr Archives” – and far more – for over 30 years now. Scholar, historian, writer, editor, debunker of historical myths, illuminator of historical truths, his

renew spreads far beyond our own shores.

He’s a pleased lad these days, in his new Archives, the culmination of years of planning and hard work. The result is a superb establishment in all respects, where Shetland’s history in paper, tape or film can be conserved and stored in state-of-the-art repositories. Perhaps more importantly – for archives are meant to be used – everything is easily accessible; documents, books, recordings, microfilms.

Brian says: “The paper repository room is among the best of its kind, conforming to all relevant British Standards for archives, with close control of temperature and humidity, and an inert gas fire extinguishing system. Tapes and film are kept in a dedicated store with its own optimum conditions.

“The public face of the archives is the Searchroom, where on request visitors can study the

documents, consult any of the 3,600 books, listen to hundreds of hours of audio recordings, or browse in the photographic collection of over 60,000 images.



Archivist Brian Smith.

“There’s table space for 12 readers, five computers and two microfilm reader/printers – room for 20 people easily. A staff member is always present to advise and assist. The Search-

room’s set of five historically relevant wall installations is worth a visit in its own right.”

There’s a perception that our archives are only for the serious academic or researcher. Brian is keen to dispel this notion.

“Every Shetland family has something of itself here. Our Sheriff Court records go back to 1490, the Kirk Session records to 1685. Local authority records date from the 1750s. Crown records include those of the local police, Procurator Fiscal and Customs and Excise, with the fishing boat register of particular value.

“Private records include account books of Hay and Company, along with gifts of papers from families, estates, societies and individuals, ranging from a huge scrapbook collection covering events of the 19th and 20th century down to single documents.

“There’s a lot of original Shetland material in national collections, but we have it all on microfilm copy. This microfilm archive includes parish registers, censuses and complete sets of both *Shetland Times* and *Shetland News*. The

7 the date in June, 2004 when Florence Grains laid the foundation stone to mark the completion of the foundations.

Goudie and Reid Tait book collections are now in the archives making its collection of Shetland books probably the biggest anywhere.

“All the books are readily accessible, along with the audio tape catalogue containing oral life histories, recordings of music and folklore and the BBC Radio Shetland sound archive.”

Another common notion is that archivists are merely “keepers” of documents. This is very far indeed from the truth, according to Brian.

“Indeed, we ‘keep’ the material – once it’s repaired or conserved. We also catalogue everything comprehensively, so that it can be located very quickly for study.

“The catalogue is of course on computer database, making searches very rapid. The audio archive took thousands of hours to cata-

logue and digitise; now you can retrieve any tune, or folk-tale, at the touch of a button. Besides, as

**1490**

the year the oldest archive document dates from

we work with the material, we’re always coming across fresh information on a huge range of topics. This can help someone complete a research project, or prove to be conclusive evidence in a long debate, or solve a particular historical puzzle.

“We regularly publish our more notable findings locally; that in itself creates feedback and often adds to our knowledge – which is, after all, the whole point of the exercise.”

## Ancient document loaned by Danes

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

THE OLDEST known surviving document concerning Shetland will have pride of place during the opening of the Museum and Archives, on special loan from the Arnamagnæan Institute in Copenhagen.

It dates from 1299, the same year duke Hakon Magnusson became king of Norway in succession to his brother Erik. Shetland was a province of Norway, and firmly under Norse Law. Duke Hakon controlled Shetland, through his “sysselman” Thorvald Thoresen of Papa Stour, whose responsibilities included the collection of Shetland’s scat – tax – due to the Norwegian crown.

Demonstrating that taxation has forever been a contentious matter, the document, pertaining to a conflict of opinions over the assessment of tax on the farm of Brekasætr in Papa Stour, is a letter by the lawthingmen of Shetland concerning allegations made against Thorvald Thoresen, beginning:

*To all the men who see or hear this letter, all the lawthing men of Hiatland send God’s greeting and their own. Be it known to all you that, in the year when 1299*

*winters had passed from the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, fiornalldr fiorisson had testimony brought before us at the lawthing concerning the words spoken by Ragnhilldr Simunardottir . . .*

The letter continues with Ragnhilldr’s statements regarding Brekasætr and her doubts about Thorvald’s integrity, and affirms the wish of those accused by her to deny these accusations in person before Hakon himself. Seven of the lawthingmen attached their personal seals to the little document in authentication; today only three seals survive.

Apart from its intrinsic value, what can be gleaned from the letter? It hints at the role of the Norwegian tax-collector in Shetland, the islands appearing to be a fairly strong and self-confident community not afraid to keep the king’s man in check. The economics of land assessment appear, along with some insight into the workings of the lawthing. Moreover it says something of the status of women in this 13th-century society, where at least one was bold enough to contradict Thorvald on matters of history, and cast some doubt upon the honesty of his dealings.

Most significantly perhaps, it was mentioned in the letter that Ragnhilldr made her first accusation “in the stofa of the ducal farm in Papay”. A stofa is basically a wooden dwelling-house, common throughout Scandinavia as the architectural successor to the

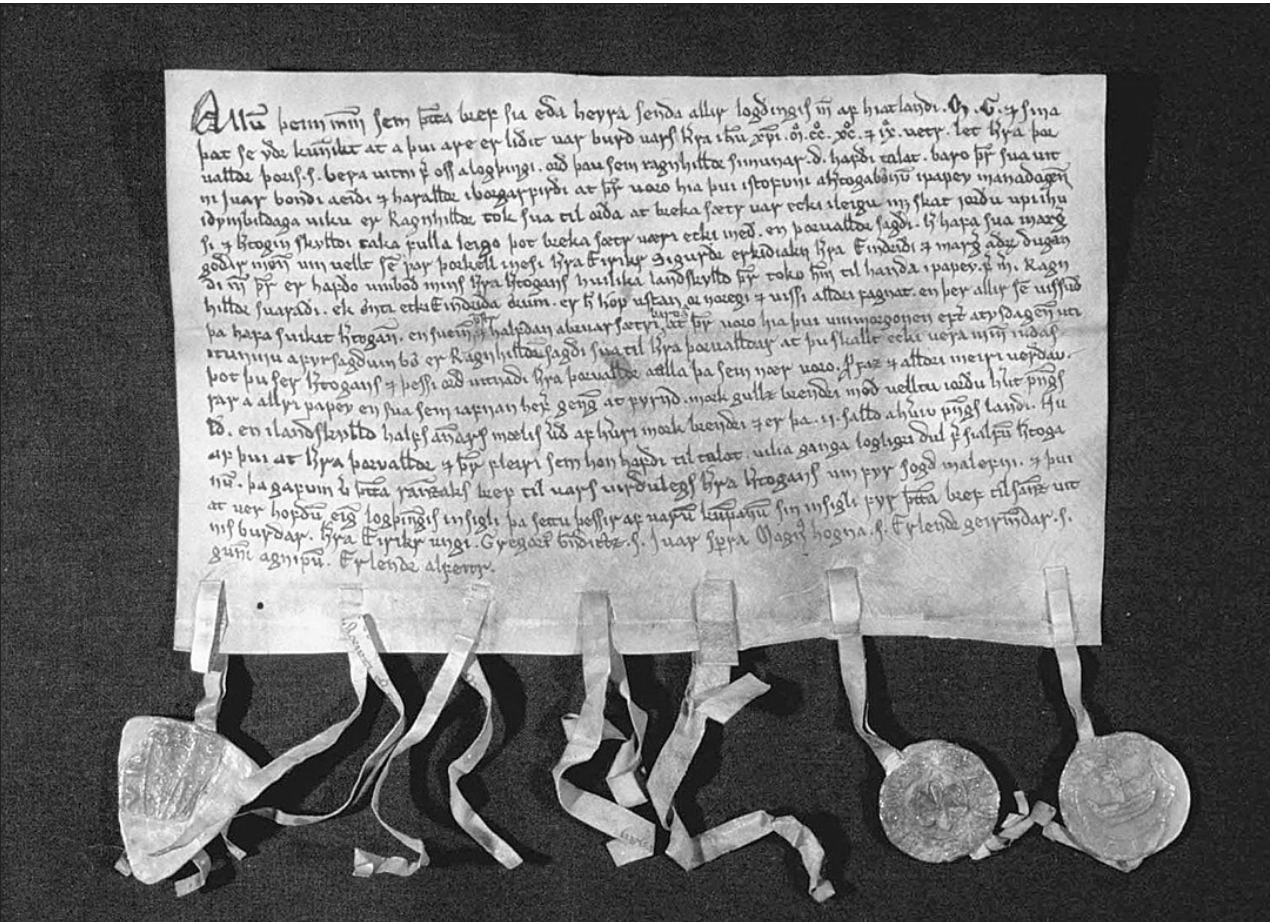
Norse stone-built longhouse, but hitherto unknown in Shetland. The reference led historian Dr. Barbara Crawford of St. Andrews University into several years of excavation

at the Biggins in Papa Stour, culminating in the discovery and positive identification of such a stofa building. This discovery emphasised Shetland’s place

in the Norse world of the North Atlantic, and confirmed the origins of a building style in Shetland that lasted for many centuries.

**3,300**

hours a year approximately the building will be open



**1859**

the year of the largest archive document – a plan of the scattalds of Sandsting.



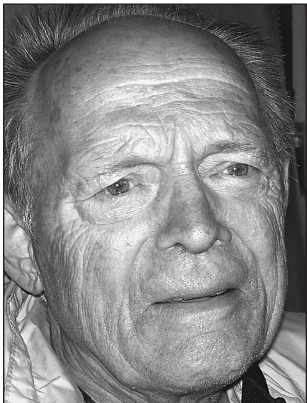
# Flinn's theory's a chip off the "Old Rock"

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

SHETLAND's oldest rocks have long been "adrift on an ocean of time", moving almost from pole to pole on the imperceptible slide of tectonic plates while warmings, coolings, submergence and emergence created sediments to overlay new rocks.

Around 600 million years ago lava erupted, continents collided, mountains rose. Shetland was thus fashioned out of an extremely varied mixture of rocks, constantly eroded by wind, water and ice.

Up in the north-west corner of Northmavine, there's gneiss known to be between two and three billion – yes, thousand million – years old, almost half the age of the Earth.



Derek Flinn, the geologist.

Photo: Brian Smith

Only 10,000 years ago the last Ice Age ended, and meltwater raised sea levels as much as 200 metres, creating our islands. Further winds and waves redefined the outer coastline of cliffs and the

17

artefacts have come back to Shetland on long-term loan from the National Museums of Scotland

sheltered reaches of voes and sounds.

The result was a three-dimensional puzzle of extreme complexity for those who came to study and analyse Shetland's structure and the influences that produced it. Minerals of value were of prime interest, and the main topic in the first published accounts of Shetland's geology – late in the 18th-century – concentrate on metallic ores, gemstones and the like. Through the 19th century visitors added to the knowledge, beginning also to understand the forces that formed the rocks, and the order in which the processes occurred.

The British Geological Survey began to map Shetland's geology in the 1920s, and the professionals really got going thereafter, studying and analysing right up to the present day, always increasing our understanding of the "Old Rock".

In this respect, no geologist has



Paul Harvey shows a piece of rock thought to be 2.5 billion years old.

made a bigger contribution than Derek Flinn, Professor of Geology at Liverpool University for many years, and fieldworker in Shetland for more than half a century. Derek Flinn's first scientific paper on Shetland – concerning the rocks of Munness and Uyea Isle – was published in 1952; since then he has produced major papers on many Shetland geological topics, and jointly produced the first really

integrated account of the geology of Shetland.

Presenting the complicated picture of Shetland's geology, to the layman in a museum setting, has always been a challenge. Professor Flinn put together a comprehensive Shetland mineral collection for the first Shetland Museum, along with rock specimens and display maps, so it was natural he should be closely involved as consultant for

the interpretation in Zone 1 covering "Early Beginnings".

His most important minerals are on display, along with a completely new kind of geological map of Shetland. It's designed to be useful to layman and academic alike, using colours for age, and textures for individual rock types.

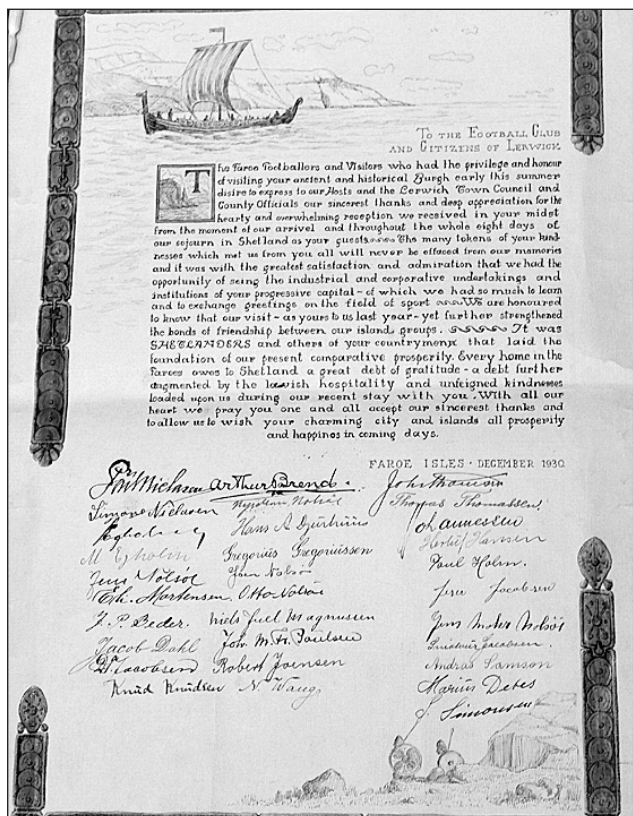
Professor Flinn has uncovered more of the origins of Shetland than anybody else, and has now

helped to bring the story to more Shetlanders and visitors than ever before.

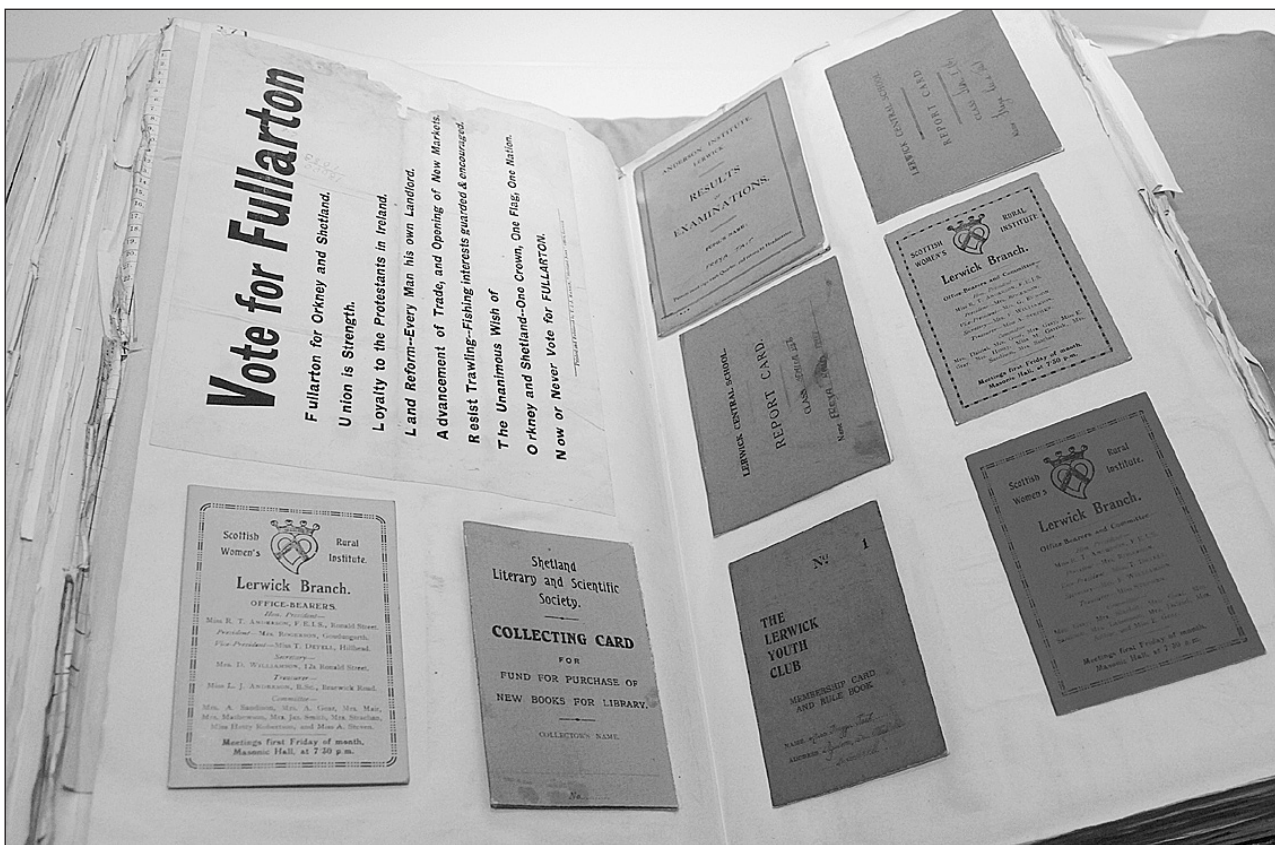
40

years the Sixareen, now in the Boat Hall, had been waiting to be exhibited in the museum

## Weird and wonderful – football letter and scrapbook



In the 1930s football enthusiasts promoted matches between Shetland and the Faroes. On one occasion the Faroese players sent this beautifully decorated message of thanks to their Shetland counterparts.



One of the scrapbooks made up by the antiquarian and draper E.S. Reid Tait. Seymour Tait collected every local book and document he could find. This scrapbook contains thousands of items, from dance tickets and school report cards to funeral notices and invitations to Masonic meetings.

## Weekend of events on offer to help public celebrate museum's opening

A WEEKEND of special events is planned for the 2nd and 3rd of June to celebrate the opening of the Shetland Museum and Archives.

You are invited to:

- listen to Shetland musicians performing a wide range of music from traditional to modern;
- have a go at a range of art activities for the young and young-at-heart;
- find out more about our Public Art Project in Da Gadderie and auditorium;
- examine historical documents in the archives searchroom;
- explore the museum galleries, viewing artefacts old and new and some which have been waiting up to 40 years to be displayed;

- design your own Fair Isle pattern or go fishing through some of the interactive displays;
- sample the delights on offer in the Hay's Dock Café Restaurant and complete the experience with a visit to the gift shop.

A museum spokesperson said: "We hope everyone will come along and join us for this truly historic occasion."

The Museum will be open 10am-6pm on 2nd and 3rd June; Usual opening hours begin on Monday, 4th June.

- Admission is free
- The first temporary exhibition in Da Gadderie will be an overview of the Public Art Project in the Shetland Museum and Archives
- PRINCE Charles, Duke of Rothesay, and

the Duchess of Rothesay will be joined by Her Majesty Queen Sonja of Norway to perform the official opening of the new Shetland Museum and Archives at Hay's Dock on Thursday (31st May).

Shetland Amenity Trust manager Jimmy Moncrieff said: "It's going to be a tremendously historic occasion to have representatives of the royal families from Britain and Norway here. This is a tremendous recognition for this project and for Shetland."

Museum curator Tommy Watt said: "It's great that we have managed to get people from both royal families which reflects very much the nature of our collections – Scandinavian and English and Scottish influences."



One of the many display cases in the new museum.

All photographs by Keith Morrison



## MUSEUM &amp; ARCHIVES SPECIAL

# Karen helps artwork to go public

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

SHETLAND Museum and Archives commissioned over 60 individual pieces of artwork, placed both inside and outside the building in foyer, galleries, archives and restaurant.

All are part of a Public Art Project aiming to celebrate local artists and bring new work to the islands, in disciplines including textiles, carvings, sculptures, drawing and film.

"All were made in Shetland or for Shetland," is how project co-ordinator Karen Emslie puts it – everything is inspired by our culture and heritage.

## 170

artists from Shetland, the UK and Europe registered their interest in the Shetland Museum and Archives Public Art Project

Put another way, Made in Shetland, showcases the work of Shetland artists and makers, and Made for Shetland, brings artwork by international artists made especially for Shetland to Shetland. Got it?

Prominent on the quayside is the 'Shetland Receivers' installation, resembling four small satellite dishes on poles – inspired by such installations on Shetland's hilltops. When you approach them, you can hear whisperings, voices, music; conversations and songs that are a little sound-window giving glimpses of historical and contemporary Shetland life.

Indoors, the five panels in the Archive searchroom are sure to become favourites, making the room well worth a visit even if you don't need to search. They depict



Public art co-ordinator Karen Emslie beside one of the pieces by Yell based artist Mike MacDonnell.

notable historical themes – emigration, the clearances, boats, and fisheries – in a delightfully whimsical yet impressive fashion.

Those involved in the project have taken an innovative approach to the selection of fixtures and fittings in the building. Where pos-

sible creative ways had been found to showcase local creativity and skills rather than buying items "off the shelf".

Several community art projects have also taken place. These included Extreme Redd Up a project that saw local young people com-

bing kayaking and abseiling with making art from beach bruck and a Shetland/Faroe collaborative project based on making art and design work from the raw produce of sheep, such as wool, horn and bone.

The community projects were co-ordinated in partnership with

other local bodies such as Shetland Islands Council, Shetland Arts and Shetland College. There will be temporary exhibitions of the work made as part of these projects.

The project was funded by the Scottish Arts Council and the Esmeé Fairbairn Foundation. In

addition Shetland Islands Council, Shetland Arts, LEADER+ and Shetland Enterprise have contributed to individual projects.

There are too many pieces by too many artists to mention them all. Anyway, everybody will find a favourite!

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# John and Charlie step back in time

In 1966, the first Shetland Museum was staffed by only two people, Tom Henderson the curator and John Walterson – the building’s caretaker. Charlie Simpson became the temporary summer assistant. Here John takes us all on a guided tour of the new museum – and Charlie reports...

WE’RE met at the back door by Kirsty Kennedy the Lifelong Learning officer who whisks us to the ground floor in a gleaming lift.

We come out beside the main front entrance – closed meantime – into the lofty and spacious foyer with its wonderful flagstone floor.

John is a craftsman of renown, so the various building materials and quality workmanship catch his eye immediately.

The massive reception desk turns out to be the recycled keel of a wooden ship, black and gnarled yet neatly glass-topped and functional.

We pass through another portal to a lobby showing an introductory film, then we’re into the display area proper.

The exhibition space is divided into 12 themed zones, and the first

one is **Early Beginnings**, dealing with geology, showing how Shetland was formed and displaying its rich diversity of rock types. Right away, John admires the display cases. “We have 65 permanent ones,” explains Kirsty, “all made to order to accommodate all the elements in the story. You could say it’s the biggest ‘fitted kitchen’ ever!”

She takes us through to **Early People** which covers the period after the first human settlement. Stone walls add to the atmosphere here, as we pass the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages, into Pictish and Viking times. We recognise many familiar artefacts from the old museum such as the bead necklace John reconstructed, and the steatite pot I once dug up at Catpund.

In nearly every display case a

big enlarged photograph provides a suitable background, along with paragraphs of text to tell the story, while the beautiful early house models add to one’s ease of understanding. We’re almost tempted to

**3** the weight in tons of the heaviest artefact in the museum – the Bressay lighthouse optic

try our hand at creating our own Pictish decorations on the magic magnetic Symbol Stone game.

**Home and the Land** is a big zone, taking us from the beginnings of Scottish rule in 1469 to about 1800. Kirsty reminded us

that although there was war, and disruption from time to time, the life of ordinary Shetlanders didn’t alter a great deal over this long period. Agriculture and fishing hardly changed, while clothing and housing were created from natural materials available locally.

The displays illustrate the theme vividly, with models, film and photographs while the Shetland coo and her products are given suitable prominence. In the reconstructed but end we marvel at the realism of the smouldering fire, while a cunning device gives out puffs of peaty reek to complete the ambience. Dried fish hang among the sooty and cobwebby rafters, above the grice safely tethered to the restin chair.

With pleasure, John notices a wooden lid he fabricated many years ago, still atop its three-legged pot. I say I remember how busy he used to be, creating case interiors from chipboard or making perspex mountings and clips for the exhibits. “Well, you see,” he replies, “Tom had an awful lot to do just keeping track of all the donations that just flooded in. He had to type the catalogue himself. I did what I could, in between looking after the building – and

sometimes driving the library van!” Further on, we’re pleased to see again John’s remarkable carved panel depicting peat-flitting with ponies.

**Customs and Folklore** is the next zone, where we try out the listening chairs, enjoy the ring of lovely dialect words above us, and listen to the voices and sounds. It’s easy to get absorbed here, for there are fascinating things to study – weddings, births, deaths, events in the old Shetland calendar, or the reconstructed gue. Kirsty levers open the hidden entrance of the Trowie Knowe for us; we peep in and move on, just in case we get waylaid.

**Zone 5** is all about the sea that surrounds Shetland and the sustenance it has provided from time immemorial. Cases display the food fishes, especially the piltocks, on which survival often depended. There are the other marine resources, the seabirds, seals and whales, driftwood and seaweed – and the shipwrecks. There’s a case on the subject of the early traders; John’s craftsman’s eye is immediately drawn to the fine new ship models which Kirsty tells us were sponsored by the Lerwick Port Authority. In this

section the sea fishing traditions and methods are explained and displayed, while for the bairns there’s a computer touch-screen game that takes you fishing. True to life, you only catch fish if you use the correct gear, and go to the right fishing ground!

From the sea section, we appropriately arrive in the lofty **Boat Hall**. The massive shape of the sixern brings us to a silent standstill for a moment, for no photograph ever does justice to such a boat. She’s big and black, massive and graceful at the same time; the iconic object of Shetland’s past if ever there was one. Our homage over, curator Tommy Watt joins us here briefly; he’s been handling something boaty, for his fingers bear the delicious and nostalgic waft of Stockholm tar. We suggest he should have a smell machine here too, in competition with the peat reek in the old house. Tommy reminds us that although the boat fished in her time, she was mainly used first as a Foula mail boat, then as a flitboat in Walls. Her last owners actually gave her to Shetland Folk Society for preservation, 40 years ago.

The cases and models tell of the haaf fishery and its shore activities, the curing and beach-drying of fish. In a corner stands a massive iron liver kettle complete with drain spout. Our eye is drawn upward here; above the sixern, boats soar aloft in the upper levels of the hall. Before we go upstairs though, we peep into the vast space of the new workshop. John marvels, while Kirsty explains that it’s designed to accommodate the sixern, which can be wheeled through from the boat hall should the space be needed for some other function. Next door is **Da Gadderie** – a huge improvement on the old museum’s back gallery which was the only art exhibition gallery in Lerwick for decades. Da Gadderie is state-of-the-art exhibition space, with moveable partitions and track-mounted lighting to accommodate any format of exhibition.

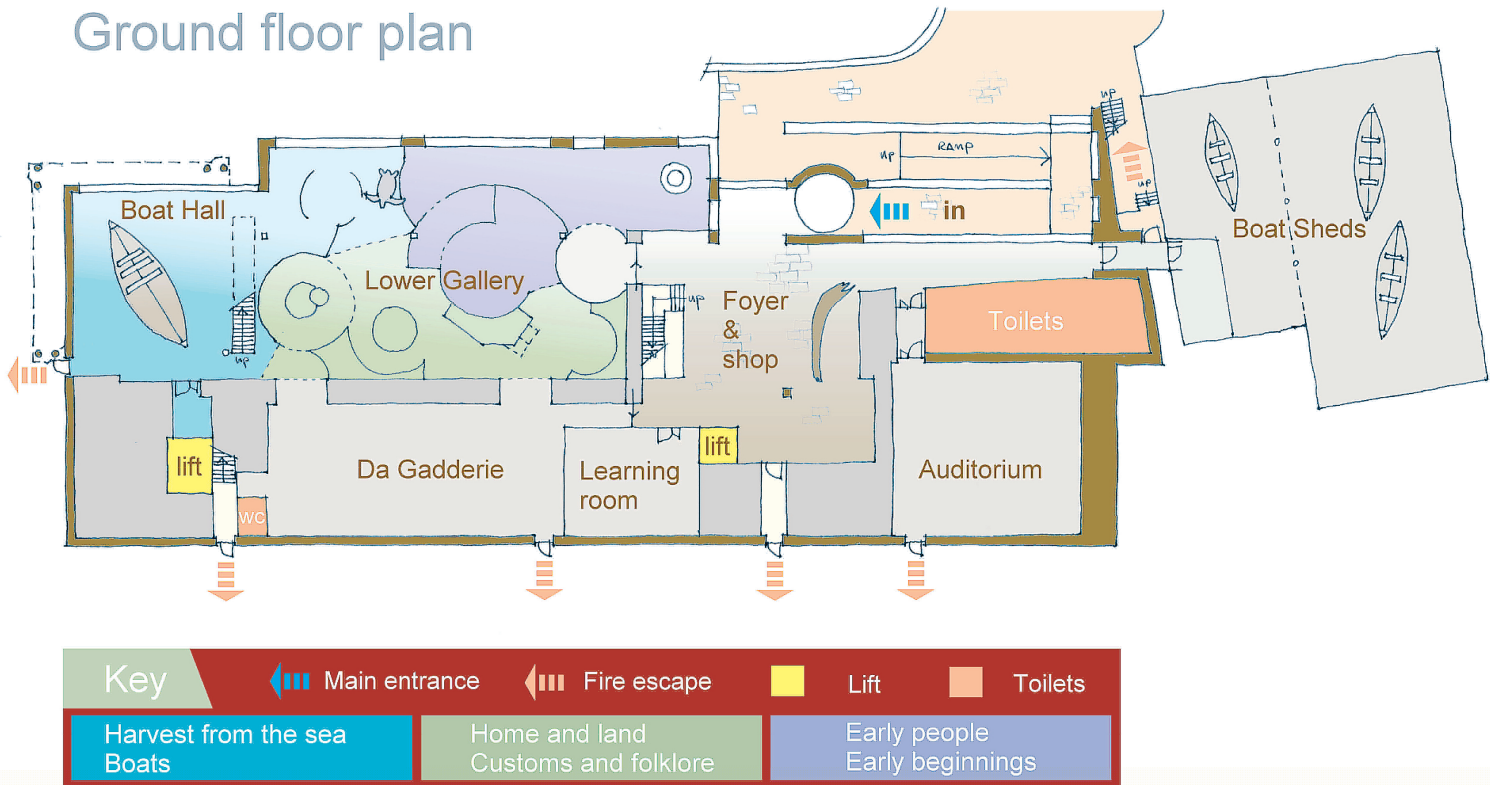
We go up the boat hall stairs; as we ascend the fourern and motor boat hulls come into view and from the first floor viewing gallery we still have to crane our necks to take in all of the Barracoutta, sailing fully rigged through space.

Space is in our minds, too, by this stage. All through the zones and galleries, one never feels enclosed. The mass of exhibits, images and interpretative material is also carefully laid out without clutter, very much lived in and highlighted, as I mentioned before, by the big photographic backdrops. We pass the **Shetland Gateway** computers where the photo-archive can be browsed. John remembers the vast space in the old museum workrooms taken up by drawer upon drawer of glass negatives; “Tom was forever printing negatives, and I seemed to be framing pictures all the time!” Today, as Kirsty reminds us, all 60,000-plus images are digitised and catalogued. “Searching for a particular image takes only moments nowadays. Once you find the one you want – it only takes seconds to make a copy.”

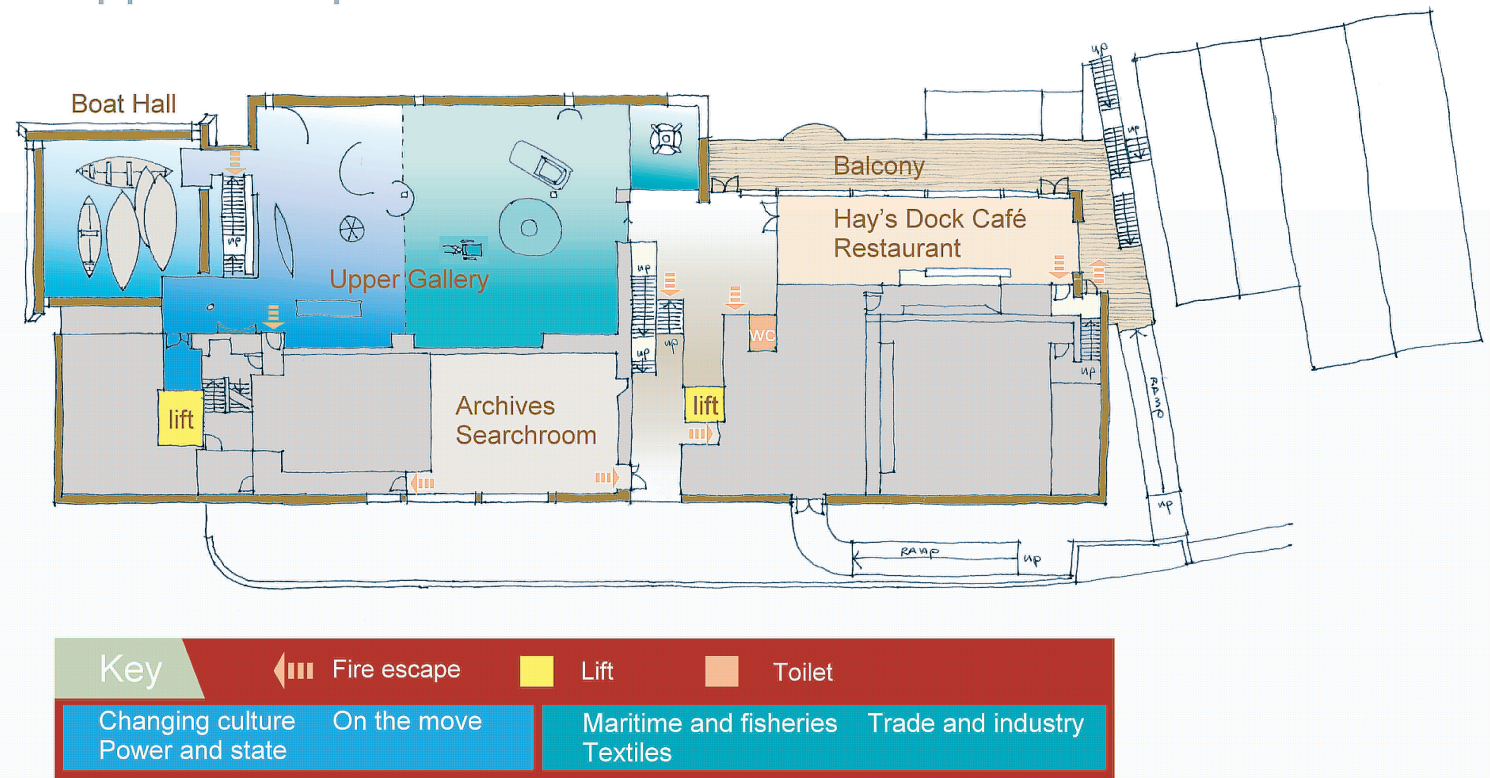
In the upstairs exhibition zones, the displays feature topics and activities after 1800, taking us right into the oil boom era of the 1970s. We look into cases explaining the changes in society, some through government initiative, some through economic forces. Lairds, gentry and ministers gathered fine goods about them and had portraits painted, while many people struggled still to subsist in a more cash-orientated economy.

We admire the Victorian naturalist’s desk, John reflecting that hardly any of its specimens – birds and eggs especially – could be

## Ground floor plan



## Upper floor plan





# for walk down memory lane

## Recycling initiative



Former employee John Walterson gets a preview.

legally assembled today. Here on a shelf we recognise another old friend, the baby whale in a glass jar that was always a prime attraction for bairns although its place was always in the workroom of the old museum. Further along I enjoy the **Up-Helly-A'** display and the Tom Anderson neuk, while Kirsty shows John the light foldaway stools supplied throughout the displays so folk can "dip them" while studying the exhibits.

Zone 8 – **On the Move** – takes us into the realms of emigration, steamship services, roads; a population more mobile than ever. People emigrated, people moved into Lerwick. The superb landscape model showing three ages of Lerwick from 1766 is bound to be a highlight for many visitors; I always wondered what the area west of the Hillhead once looked like – now I know!

Nostalgic displays are a sobering reminder that the new mod cons – gas, water, sewers, electricity – are all relatively recent amenities. We remember the steamers and the planes and the old country buses. A model of the *Earl of Zetland* brings back fond memories and the realisation that of Shetland's inhabitants, 40 per cent were born after the inter-island vehicle ferries revolutionised movement through our isles.

Next we come to the trappings of authority; institutions of state, law and order. Along with these came the benefits of education or health, the drawbacks of wars or epidemics. Reeking of discipline, fierce old ministers and Sheriff Thoms glower out of their portraits, and the Provost of Lerwick's cocked hat, ermine-trimmed robes and chain of office remind us of a more formal era. John was born right at the end of the First World War and served through the Second. The displays bring back many memories, even to a post-war baby-boomer like me.

On a happier note, we're now among trades and industries and ships and modernisation in agriculture. Kirsty reminds us to keep looking up as we go along, so as not to miss what's on show on the case-tops. Right above us is an Iron Horse – and below, a favourite cartoon on the subject, by John's brother Frank. A case of tradesmen's tools fascinates us; John because he's a skilled user of tools, me because my grandfather was a cooper. Then there's the shop case with its scales and signs and commodities; next door Victorian tourists gaze out of the case, from the early days of what's now an important part of the economy.

We come to the **Textiles Zone**,

showing how an ancient subsistence art became a valuable element of trade, then an industry, before dwindling away again. This zone is cleverly sited along the back wall away from the windows, so that light, always the enemy of delicate fabrics, is minimised. To demonstrate the measures taken in this respect, Kirsty suddenly hauled on a handle, and a case containing a beautiful lace shawl slid straight out from the wall. We were allowed a quick look, then the case slid back to restore darkness once more. Here too is the knitting and weaving machinery, most of it from the wonderful Adie collection. We marvel at Kirsty's design-a-garment computer game, but confess neither of us can make.

The final zones bring us back to familiar ground, dealing with things marine and maritime, from the Arctic whalers to today's fish farmers. There are ship models aplenty, some old friends remembered, others refurbished or newly created, sail, steam or motor. Again with his craftsman's eye John enjoys the carved ships' figureheads and nameboards – sadly most of them the product of marine misfortune. These bring memories of Tom Henderson, an assiduous

collector of marine objects over many years, without whom many wheels, bells and other shippy bits would have been lost to Shetland, and whose efforts brought protection for our historic shipwrecks.

In front of a window overlooking the north harbour is a ship's bridge simulator, a reality game for bairns of all ages. It's complete with ship's wheel, navigation aids, engine controls – and out of the windows you see a moving vista of Lerwick Harbour. The trick is to control your ship and steer her safely through the channel, a challenge guaranteed to separate the mariners from the landlubbers.

Prominent also in this gallery are the complete whalecatcher's harpoon gun – surely the ultimate piece of sailor's booty ever – and the smart Singer Sports saloon, proceeds of a good season's work in the Antarctic. "Sailing" in the Merchant Navy is almost a thing of history; we wonder who today buys all the teasetts and conch shells, the dolls and the brass dishes, that sailors always took home?

The home-based fisheries all have a section – the cod smacks, the herring drifters, through to

today's high-technology industry, along with the shore processing from beach to freezer factory. We pause by the section on lifesaving and lifeboats particularly, remembering the ins and outs of rigging a breeches buoy, and finally study the lens and lamp mechanism from the Bressay Lighthouse, now mounted here proudly, two floors high, clockwork and weight-driven, still able to rotate.

From the stairhead we'll have the option to go across to the cafe restaurant after the official opening, but we take a detour into the first-floor archive search room for John to meet Brian Smith and see the superb search facilities and the striking wall art, before going downstairs again and through to the **Boat Sheds**. We find the *Loki* hauled up – the *Brenda* is outside on the slip – and a bonny new yoal from Fair Isle. Here the museum's boat collection will be kept and maintained, and Kirsty tells John that soon a sixern will be built in the shed, part of an ongoing project and a great opportunity for visitors to see rare skills in action. At last it's time for a cup of tea – in the top floor staffroom. Kirsty takes us up, and we reflect upon what we've seen.

It's a huge project, and the staff have moved mountains and worked miracles to complete it. We're both mightily impressed with the feeling of spaciousness and light everywhere, and the superb way in which artefacts, archive documents and photographic images are all combined to make the displays both entertaining and informative. John reckons it'll be easy for young eens to get lost in the spaces, while Kirsty tells us that several hundred schoolbairns are already booked to come in school parties "which is when we'll find out whether we've closed off all the places peerie bodies aren't supposed to get into!" I can't help thinking it's going to be very hard to get many of the bairns out, once they're absorbed in all the displays and activities and touch-screen games.

It's raining heavily as we take our leave, after a marvellous tour. Kirsty arranges for us to go out through a ground floor door, nearest the car. Despite the rain we linger in admiration, looking back from the car park to the Museum and Archives, the restored dock and the boats. John Walterson has the last word: "What a building!"

RENOVATION, recycling and a commitment to using traditional building methods is at the heart of the Shetland Museum and Archives project.

You're never very far away from something that has been recycled or salvaged from a former life, to serve anew.

Most notable are the floor surfaces, where reclaimed oak and pitchpine flooring are laid throughout the galleries and restaurant, with flagstones in the entrance foyer.

Both inside and out are Enviroglass paving slabs made mostly from crushed glass, many

**I**

The Museum and Archives has already been recognised as a fore-runner for Scottish sustainable architecture by the Scottish Executive.

of them with names inlaid with local serpentine.

A lot of wrought iron went into the renovation of Hay's dock, while the part of the keel of the ship *Elinore von Flotow*, which once lay in the dock, has been transformed into the main reception desk in the foyer.

Building stone came from demolished buildings, while the stone for the Early People gallery came from Old Scatness.

Impossible to source new today, the cobblestones along the dock walkway were originally laid on the Esplanade, and salvaged during road surfacing work in the 1960s.

Three of the local contractors involved in the project describe how they used their skills to reconstruct vital parts of the new building.

**150,080**

square meters of Cum-brian slate on the roof

Eddie Haston, DITT's site agent, said: "The Pier Store was the most interesting aspect of the reconstruction for me.

"We used traditional working methods such as forming wooden joints using fish tail joints all pinned with wood and timber hinges with leather washers to hang the doors on the upper floor of the building.

"The most challenging aspect was the restoration of the point of the Finger Pier which involved hand building of stonework in tidal conditions. I live in Browns Road and every day I can enjoy looking at the finished work."

Bruce Wilcock said: "To be involved with the Hay's Dock restoration project was, for me, an opportunity to use wrought iron just as it was worked in the early 1800s, and having to use a coal forge and anvil on site put the clock back by 150 years to when this style of working was in everyday use. Each stone placed into the masonry is an artefact in its own right."

Robbie Arthur, stone mason, said: "During my time at the Museum and Archives, I built the semi-circular stone work at the entrance to the main building, but the main part of my work was in the restoration and renovation of the surrounding Hay's Dock.

"Using salvaged stones and new-formed blocks from local sources, I re-constructed the small pier. The new stones were roughed out using plugs and feathers before being hand-dressed to size. The large stones were moved using Lewis lifters to place them into position. Natural lime mortar was used on stonework as required.

"I lifted and re-laid the large stone setts over the whole of the Finger Pier, before laying a walkway from there back to the main Museum and Archives building using reclaimed cobblestones. I found it very gratifying to see the revival of Hay's Dock and its link to the Shetland Museum and Archives."

## Weird and wonderful – King Konga



Konga poster for the North Star Cinema which was adapted by an Anderson Institute art teacher in 1961, to look like Konga was destroying the Lerwick waterfront.



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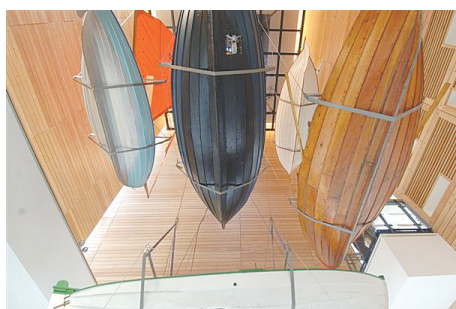
**Shetland Museum and Archives**

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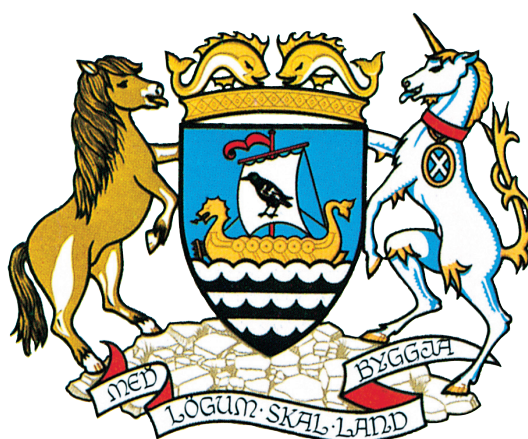
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*On the occasion of the opening of the new Shetland Museum and Archives, Shetland Islands Council congratulates the Trustees, General Manager and Staff of the Shetland Amenity Trust, together with all others involved in the project, on an outstanding achievement.*





## MUSEUM &amp; ARCHIVES SPECIAL

*My favourite thing*John Anderson  
Museum Attendant

One of my favourite things is an 1896 copper boiler which, after I had spent time cleaning it up for display, I discovered was from Springbank House in Scalloway. This was very interesting as my daughter now lives there and the roll top bath, which was originally filled by water from this boiler, is still there and in use today.

*My favourite thing*Brian Johnson  
Museum & Archives Technician

I suppose my favourite artefact must be the old Bressay light-room machine and mirrors. It seems only a few years since I was servicing and maintaining machines the same as, and similar to, this one when I worked as an engineer with the Northern Lighthouse Board. Now they are museum pieces, albeit this one is driven nowadays by electric motor rather than the original weight and clockwork mechanism as in the old days.

# Dr Data sorts 3,000 artefacts

**"It'll make sense if you think of it as a book telling a story,"**  
**Dr Ian Tait.**

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

THE MAN whose task it was to organise over 3,000 of the museum's collection of artefacts in a way that explained Shetland is Dr Ian Tait, a Shetlandophile if ever there was one.

Employed in the museum since 1984, he's a living database, able to recall nearly every piece, its provenance, purpose, and place in the chronology.

He explained to me the layout of the collection, unorthodox at first sight to a layman accustomed to the confined classifications of the old museum.

"It'll make sense if you think of it as a book telling a story," he says. "We first got the story clear in our minds, then planned the layout of the galleries in such a way as the visitor is drawn from

one to another in chronological order. The story starts near the main door, telling of Shetland's formation millions of years ago. It progresses through the first settlement into the Stone Age, the Viking period, then carries on down the years. The last ground floor gallery takes you to about 1800, when a long period of settled 'subsistence' scale living and trading was altered by industry, travel, and innovation of all kinds.

"This brings you to the boat hall with its suspended boats, then upstairs we show different facets of life into modern times; changing culture, travel and transport, politics, church and state, maritime and fisheries, textiles, trade and industry. The artefacts therefore are displayed according to their place in the story, rather than in

categories, and we've added lots of pictures and words to add to the detail."

I mentioned the reconstructions I had observed during my tour of the galleries; an essential part of the story, according to Ian.

"There were gaps in the collection, from a time-line viewpoint, and some things best explained by a reconstructed house, or the cow and the grice. We've used models to give the best impression of a township, or the growth of Lerwick, and reconstructs such as the skekler's dress.

"Less noticeable perhaps is the range of Shetland items we've secured on long-term loan from the National Museum, such as a superb laird's candlestick, a carved armorial panel which is the only surviving wooden fragment of

Muness Castle, and a peerie belt buckle of the Lerwick Infantry unit of the Napoleonic Wars.

"Elsewhere, we've commissioned faithful replicas of some pieces from national collections that we couldn't have on long-term loan. The St Ninian's treasure replicas we had already, but soon they'll be joined by the fabulous Viking gold bangle from Oxna."

The bangle is formed from four gold rods plated together. It is a standard Viking plaited rod arm ring, but is unique in Scotland in that it's made of gold. Found about 1900 by James Fullerton on exposed earth on Oxna off Scalloway. Purchased by the NMS in 1913.

I asked how near their Shetland story comes to the present day. "We go right into the oil era," was Ian's reply; "don't miss watching BP's 1970s film for incoming oil workers!"

I was also intrigued by what are

called the 'Focus' display cases here and there through the galleries.

"There are nine of these altogether," said Ian, "and I have to admit we haven't discarded the old 'magpie' collection habit altogether!"

"We have many gorgeous or fascinating objects that don't fit exactly into the chronology, yet they're exemplary in their own right and too good to leave permanently in store, so we can show them in a focus case.

"For example, Alexander Fraser rose to be an Admiral in the Royal Navy in the Napoleonic wars; we have his full-dress formal court uniform, worn at the coronation of King George IV.

"Another case holds the curious hoard of old whisky bottles recently unearthed in town and notable for the range of Lerwick grocers' own labels. As you can see, that's a very broad spectrum!"



Dr Ian Tait

**30**  
tonnes of lead used on the roof

## Weird and wonderful – dolphin

Baby Dolphin – this was one of the most popular behind the scenes artefacts in the old museum.

**21,000**

tonnes of steel contained in the building

**50**

unique public art pieces on permanent display within the building and dock





# Town built on trade of its busy port

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

THERE was a time, of course, when Lerwick did not exist as a populated place. Before the time when hundreds of Dutch fishing craft came to Bressay Sound to await the start of their herring fishery Lerwick was merely a grassy part of the scattald belonging to the township of Soond.

Even in the 17th century though, Shetlanders didn't readily let slip an opportunity for gain, and came in droves to barter stockings and provisions for the Dutchmen's

**31,000**

bricks contained in the museum building

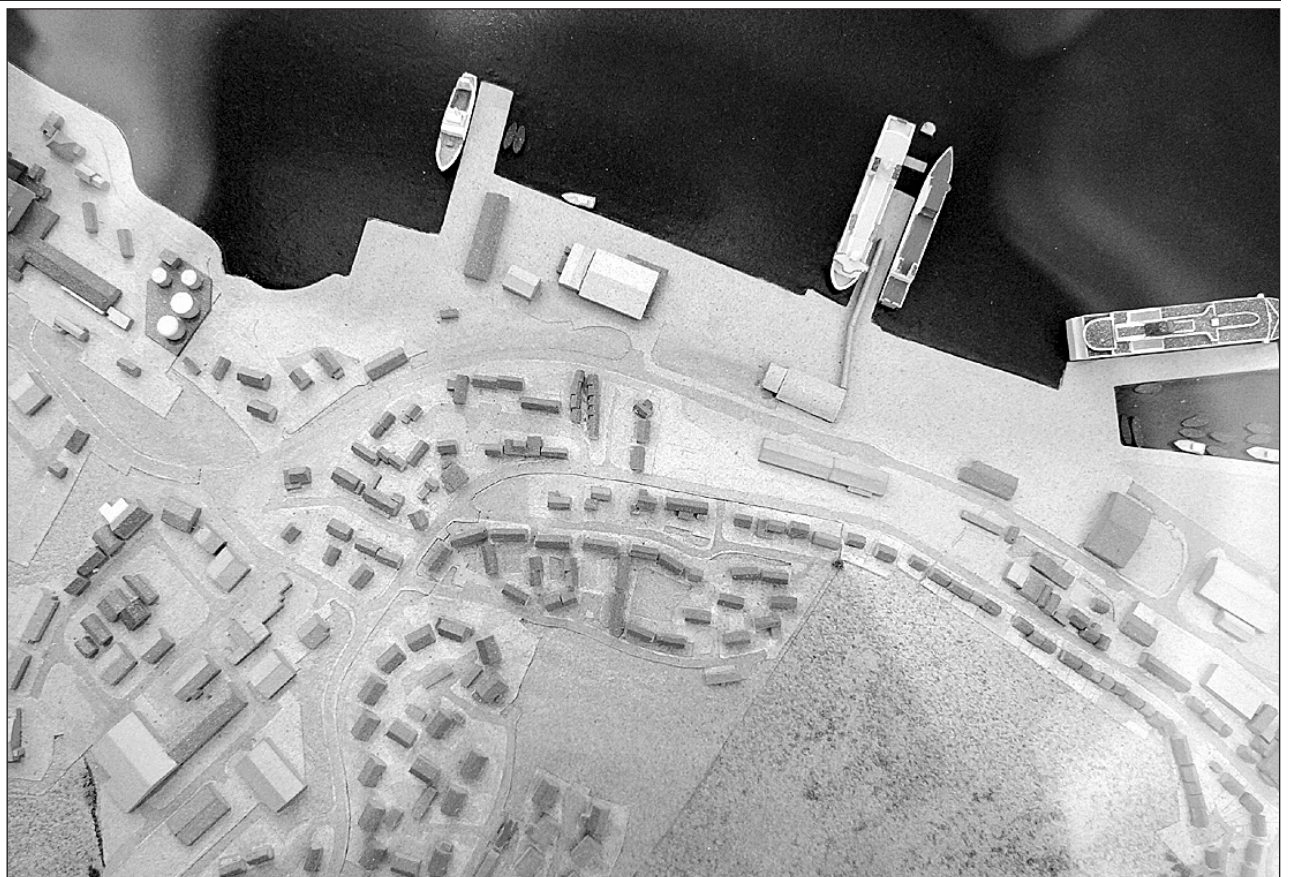
tobacco and gin. These were exciting times, obviously in a festive atmosphere of good fun and high jinx. Soon buildings appeared on the shore, all the better to store goods for trade, and entertain.

Authority in Scalloway was not amused. In 1625 the Sheriff-Principal ordained that he had been *informat of the great abominatioun and wickedness committit yeirlie be the Hollendaris, and cuntrie*

*people, godless and prophane persons repairing to them at the housis of Lerwick . . . void of all fear of God . . . drukines . . . troubling and abusing . . . adultrie and furnicatioun with women evill inclined quha resortis thither under the pretext of selling of sokis . . . blasphemy . . . abuse . . . wickedness . . .*

Accordingly, he ordered *the said housis to be utterlie dimolished and downe cassin to the ground be the awneris thereof - and banned women from the place altogether: na women of quhat-sumever rank or qualitie sall repair to the said Brassay Sound syd for selling of sokis to the said Hollendaris bot sall caus thair husbandis, thair sones or servandis sell and buy . . .*

As ever, it was too little, too late; the trading potential of Lerwick, on the shore of Shetland's best harbour, was too good to ignore. New buildings went up, this time legally, and people came to stay. Fort Charlotte was begun in 1675, Scalloway lost its capital status, and Lerwick just grew, and grew. By 1700 its population was about 700; the 2001 figure is 6,830 – nearly one Shetlander in three.



Part of the Lerwick models funded by Lerwick Port Authority.

In Zone 8 – covering the subject of people on the move – you'll find a superb illustration of our capital's growth as both town and port, in the form of a model of Lerwick, commissioned specially for the museum by Lerwick Port Authority as part of its substantial contribution to the project. It's actually three models fitting alongside each other to make a circle, showing the town and

harbour at three different periods. The first is based on a map of 1776, showing the whole town occupying only the slope east of the present Hillhead, south of the Fort.

The second model made from the Ordnance Survey map of 1901 is twice as big. There are piers and docks; the town now reaches north around to Garthspool and west to the Burgh Road, while curing stations line the North Harbour.

The third model showing 2001 is twice as big again, with more harbour developments and the spread of housing both south and west beside the Staney Hill, and into almost every other part of the old town.

This three-dimensional model displays Lerwick and its harbour in a way no map or photograph ever can, affording an overhead viewpoint from any angle. If like me

you ever wondered what the place looked like before there were any houses, you can now get a clear impression from the 1776 model. Some people might almost wish it had stayed that way!

**1,000**

cubic metres of concrete contained in the building

## Oldest building dates back to Neolithic times

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

THE DISPLAYS in the new museum tell the story of Shetland, with artefacts, illustrations and documents used to embellish the tale wherever possible.

Early Shetland buildings proved to be something of a challenge to explain clearly, for excavations of buildings usually uncover little more than ruins or fragments of a structure.

The only fairly complete ancient buildings are Mousa Broch and some hilltop cairns, while plans, diagrams and photographs of these and other structures are only two-dimensional.

To give visitors a clearer illustration, four models of early structures were commissioned from a local archaeological model maker, for display in Zone 2, "Early People". These are to scale and give a very vivid impression of

the completed buildings as they would appear in their original settings and in use.

The oldest is a dwelling from Neolithic times, of a general type that probably existed for several thousand years after the coming of the first settlers, although the simple lack of evidence cannot

**68**

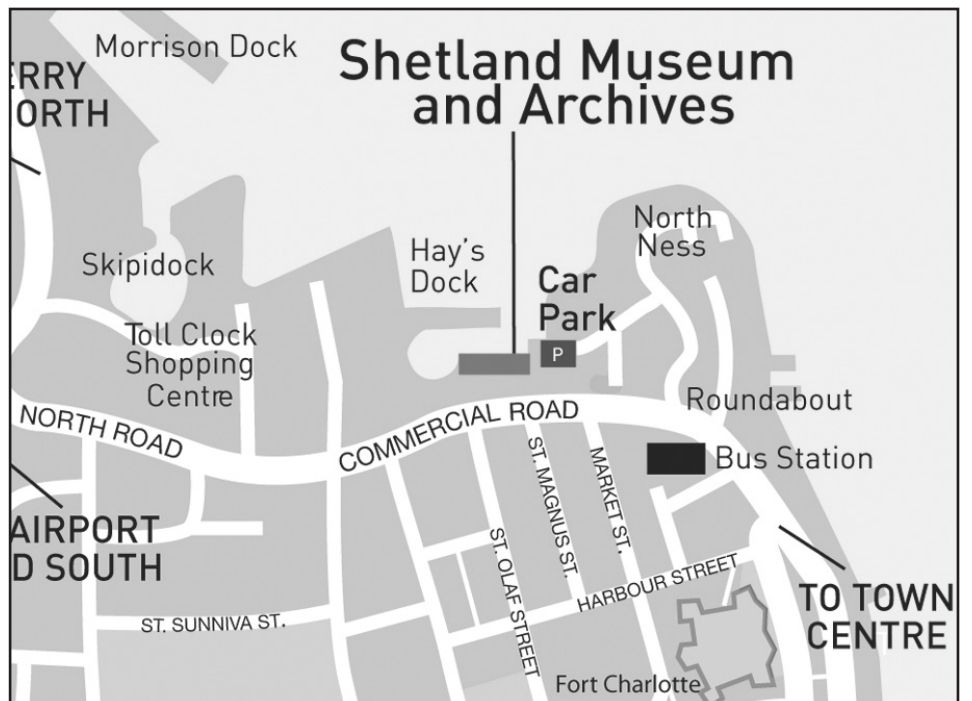
tonnes of Cumbrian slate used on museum roof

exclude the possibility of a wooden house type of this period. Roughly contemporary with the house is the burial cairn, usually but not always on an exposed hill site. Cairns were of various types, some chambered inside.

Most enigmatic of the structures is the burnt mound, heaps of burnt

stones whose precise purpose – or purposes – is still the subject of learned debate. Certainly not habitable dwellings, there are over 300 of these on record all over Shetland on land below 100 metres. Most are near good land; all are close to a water source. The jury is still out on this one, so to speak.

The most recent building dates from the medieval period of the Norse settlement, for it is a wooden house of the "stock-stove" type originating in Scandinavia and still common throughout some North Atlantic regions of Norse influence. Such a dwelling, using imported wrought timbers and birch-bark, was excavated and identified in Papa Stour in the 1980s, and there is written evidence and folk memory of the survival of the type in Shetland well into the 19th century.



Ian Tait and archaeological model maker Sheila Johnson show two of the recreated early Shetland buildings.

## Weird and wonderful – water bottle



Water bottle with shrapnel hole, which saved the life of Lieutenant Ted Adie in 1918.



## MUSEUM &amp; ARCHIVES SPECIAL

# My favourite thing

Lynsey Anderson  
Curator and Exhibitions Officer

This sewing kit belonged to Karl Manson, who was killed at war aged 19, in 1917. I like it as it's such a personal thing – a little sewing kit with a tiny tube of needles and some buttons for fixing up his uniform, all packed neatly into an everyday oxo tin. I imagine his mother getting the bits and pieces together, and him sticking it in his pocket before leaving home without a second thought. I really like the graphic on the tin as well, it's a nice thing in its own right. I remember the first time I came across it – wondering why there was an oxo tin among the war collections, then opening it just expecting it to be a tin, and finding all the neat little buttons and needles inside. I wondered who it belonged to, and why it was in the museum. I find it very moving: the loss of life at such a young age is so sad. It's amazing that of all the things that might have survived, such a dinky personal sewing kit made it through the war and is now in the museum's collections.



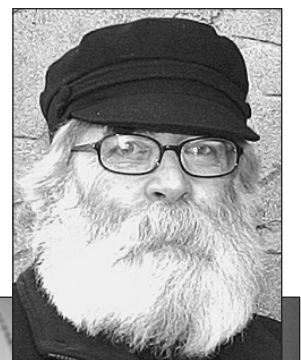
**9** temporary exhibitions planned in Da Gadderie in 2007

**7** the date in February, 2006, the first artefact, a 1930s sports car, was installed

**40** entries were received for the competition to name the temporary exhibition space. The winner was Da Gadderie entered by two people.

**3,300** cubic metres of rock removed from the site to build foundations

## A tale of a boy, a duke and a 54-year wait for an exhibit



Peerie boy Charlie Simpson poses with the peerie boat in the summer of 1953.



Lerwick Provost George Burgess shows the model sixern to Prince Phillip in Islesburgh House, October 1953. Inset above: Charlie as he is today.

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

EVERY one of the thousands of artefacts exhibited in the new museum has a story. Most of them are unknown, but I can tell you one exhibit's story – a tale of a peerie boat, the man who built her, the peerie boy in whose care he left her, and why it took so long to put her where he wanted her to go.

The peerie boy was me, and my side of the tale begins in 1953, when I was six years old.

I remember my father bringing home one summer's day a model sixern, fully five feet long and complete in every detail: hull, oars, spars, rigging, rudder, helm, ousing shovel and auskerri.

Not long after I was taken to a cottage in Bigton to meet Harry Leask, who built the

boat. Soon after that, we went to Scalloway one day, to Houl Road where my father collected a long package from a house there. In the package was a yard with a sail, a properly made miniature sail with boltropes, brass eyelets and reef points. We rigged the boat and set the sail there and then; I was as pleased as punch.

We had to take her out into the garden to get a picture of her, to send to her builder in Bigton. To my disappointment, my father then explained, very clearly, that this wasn't a toy for me to sail in the garden. She was, I was told, only in our care until there was a museum in Lerwick that could display her in a glass case.

We named her the *Hetta* after her builder's daughter, and for the dozen years following, she sat unrigged on top of a

bedroom wardrobe, taken down now and then to be dusted and admired. She made one voyage only, to Islesburgh House in October 1953. There an exhibition of all things Shetland was set up, for the Duke of Edinburgh to see after he had opened the King George VI playing fields. As the photo shows, she at least caught the Duke's attention. The peerie boy grew up and eventually got to play in real boats, and when the Shetland Museum opened in 1966, we put her into Tom Henderson's care. Too big for any of his display cases, she spent years unrigged on top of a case until the new museum store gave her a home. Tom knew boats, and I remember him telling me that although she had six oars, strictly speaking she wasn't a sixern but a variant perhaps five or six feet

shorter, called a "winter boat" by Bigton men and a "haddock boat" in Burra.

My father came to know Harry Leask on the old steam *St Clair* when father was second mate. Harry had spent most of his time at sea in engine rooms, but came ashore after the war for a change and worked in Scalloway at David Howarth's boatyard, until he had what his daughter Hetta thinks was a mild stroke. He built the model boat at home while recovering, then went back to sea on the *St Clair* as a greaser – the man who oiled the steam engine by hand to keep it running. Harry had another slight stroke and was hospitalised in Aberdeen. Hetta told me my father visited Harry in hospital and regularly brought news of his progress to his family back home in Bigton. It was for this reason that Harry de-

cided that "the mate's peerie boy" should get to keep the model boat. Harry Leask died in November 1954, aged only 59.

As a matter of interest, mine was the third model boat Harry made. The first became a raffle prize and the second was auctioned in aid of the Gilbert Bain hospital, before both also ended up years later in the Lerwick Museum. The sail we collected in Scalloway was made by Magnie Coutts; he emigrated to New Zealand, where his son Jim is prominent today in the Wellington Shetland Society.

When I saw Harry's boat set up again, in a glass case in the new museum a few weeks ago, I was very pleased, as you can imagine. Fifty-four years it took; for all that, I know old Harry would have been delighted.

## Weird and wonderful – painted whale eardrum



Painted whale eardrum – this is a typical example of whalers' craft, which were once common in ex-whalers' houses.



Charlie Simpson's boat in its new home.



# Children will love exciting view of past

**“There’s so much to do, we’ll never get you out of the building!”**

**Kirsty Kennedy,  
museum’s lifelong learning officer**

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

“SO,” I asked Kirsty Kennedy, “if I was 50 years younger, what would I find to amuse me, if I got bored looking at old stuff in glass cases?”

Kirsty is the museum’s lifelong learning officer. Her main job is to organise lectures, school workshops, arts and crafts sessions and all kinds of enjoyable educational events for all age groups.

She’s based in the new museum, but she’ll be travelling out and about to schools and community groups, as part of the education programmes of the service.

In April the first such event held in the museum auditorium – a conference on the role of Shetland women throughout history – was a great success by all accounts.

Her main task during the setting up of the museum galleries recently has been organising the ‘hands-on’ learning aspects of the

museum, the objects and interactive things outside the glass cases that amuse, interest, educate or simply entertain bairns – of all ages.

“There’s so much to do, we’ll never get you out of the building,” said Kirsty, “and remember, there are so many bits of information and interesting archive documents in every display, it takes days to read it all! Things begin to happen right at the gallery entrance, with a film to set the scene. When you enter the Lower Gallery, right away you’ll hear the glacier creaking, and there’s a touch-screen game about rocks.

“You can make your own design on the magic Pictish symbol stone, and as you go through the galleries you can pause at listening posts to hear stories explaining crofting work, or you could grind some grain in the quern, handle a kishie, even try on rivlins!



Kirsty Kennedy tries out the miniature quern stone where children can try grinding their own flour.

“You’ll love the tales in the Trowie Knowe, or you can just sit in a listening chair and hear tales and stories, or learn the meanings of all the lovely old dialect words in the word ring.

“In the sea harvest section there’s a computer screen game that takes you fishing, and a similar screen in the boat hall where you can design your own boat.

“On each floor we have a ‘things to do’ cupboard, full of pens and paper, story sacks, colouring-in pictures, word searches and suchlike.

“Upstairs we have the Shetland Gateway computers where you could have a look at the thousands of old pictures in the photograph archive.

“Then there’s the naturalist’s

desk, with fossils, eggs, stuffed birds, specimens in jars – including the famous baby whale!

“There’s Up-Helly-A’ gear to dress up in, and a computer giving information on emigration, while another one in the textile section lets you design your own jumper.

“There are sounds of nature – and a film from the early days of

the oil boom. Right at the end, we have a ship’s bridge. It’s a computer game, where you have to steer your ship safely through Lerwick Harbour.

“That’s not a complete list; there are fifty-up things full of marine surprises, microscopes to magnify naturalist’s samples, and lots more. Would you get through all that in one day? I doubt it!”

## Plenty for youngsters to get their hands on

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

FOR young visitors to the new museum galleries, there’s more to it than just looking.

Twenty-first century Shetlanders are used to screens and games and pressing buttons to make things happen; there’s plenty of that to do, but in addition there are things purely for touching and feeling, a separate experience altogether.

There are rocks to touch in the Early Beginnings Zone, and drawers with items man-made from these rocks.

Next door you’ll find Stone Age tools both real and replica, and a magic standing stone on which young Picts can create their own designs, fridge-door magnet style.

It’s a far cry from the modern kitchen to the old croft but-end where nearly every object bar the kettle was made at or near home, from materials immediately to hand.

In the Home and the Land Zone, bairns will find a selection of everyday objects, specially made for them to examine and handle by local craftspeople.

There’s a muckle hand quern for grinding meal – no packeted breakfast cereals in the old days! – that can be turned, maybe with a few puckles of grain to grind.

The kishie, not the supermarket bag, was the

universal carry-all, so there’s a selection of these, just the right size for peerie bodies, along with the simmens from which kishies were made.

The Shetland cow was an absolutely essential asset, for she could survive on pretty ordinary grazing and give milk for butter and cream, calves to sell, dung to fertilise the crops. In death she yielded meat, hides for leather, horn for lots of uses. That’s why Zone 3 has its very own Shetland cow – a real one stuffed, not a reconstruction in this case. Beside her are real rivlins to handle, and lots of spoons and cups cleverly created from cow horn – definitely not plastic, but similar in looks.

The Customs and Folklore Zone is more relaxed, less active; its chairs are for sitting listening to folklore stories and explanations of the dialect words. The adjacent Trowie Knowe is a reconstruction, of course, where peerie visitors are welcome inside.

Upstairs in Zone 7 the naturalist’s desk has microscopes for examining samples, and lots of specimens to handle, while further on there are Up-Helly-A’ helmets and shields for dressing up.

Here and there on this floor you’ll also come across activity cupboards containing story sacks, colouring in sheets, wordsearches and other hands-on material, all guaranteed to keep young hands busy and young minds occupied.



Design your own Fair Isle pattern on one of the interactive displays.

## My favourite thing

**Joanne Wishart**

Assistant Archivist

This small piece of paper has about 20,000 words written on it in absolutely minute hand writing. It was written by a man called Laurence Williamson from Mid Yell. He compulsively wrote lists and words about the folklore and traditions of Fetlar underneath a magnifying glass on any scraps of paper he could find. We have hundreds of tiny bits of paper like this and it’s amazing to think of the hours it must have taken him.





## MUSEUM &amp; ARCHIVES SPECIAL

# From Down Under with love – thanks to the grice...

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

DO you remember Shetland Museum's 'new' grice?

The story – that a long-extinct Shetland animal had been re-created – came out last November, when it was announced that a model Shetland grice would be on display in the new Shetland Museum.

It was the kind of quirky tale that captivates news editors everywhere, and it was widely reported all round the world.

At home in the town of Edgecliff, New South Wales, Australia, a couple (who modestly don't want to be identified) read the story and learnt of the new Shetland Museum and Archives project in faraway Lerwick.

This prompted the husband to dig out his forebears' sketchbook – with its amazing selection of water-colours of Shetland, painted 180 years ago.

The forebear was Thomas Woore RN, an Irishman originally who spent the summer of 1828 in Shetland waters commanding the cutter *Woodlark*, assisting with the Navy's ongoing hydrographic survey of Shetland.

Woore (1804-1878) was a gifted watercolourist who sketched coastal views and shore features, then completed them in colour at leisure, the 19th-century equivalent of a modern tourist's holiday snaps.

Woore later served in India and Australia, where he resigned from the navy through ill-health. He



Joanne Wishart displays two of the nineteenth century watercolours by Thomas Woore RN.

settled in New South Wales, becoming a magistrate and one of the colony's leading sheep farmers.

Thomas Woore's diary, sketchbook and other papers were preserved in his family through

several generations, so upon hearing of the Shetland Archives it was decided to send copies of Woore's Shetland material to Shetland, and soon the images arrived in Lerwick.

There are 14 pages of water-

colours altogether, some with more than one subject or sketch, all executed in great detail with great skill.

The subjects demonstrate that Shetland's attractions have changed very little in nearly two

centuries, for the views include such 'standards' as da Grind o da Navir and the Cradle Holm o Noss, while among the shore features are Scalloway Castle, Baltasound Kirk and a watermill interior.

This is a very important addition to the collection of Shetland images from pre-photography times, its existence completely unknown in Shetland until a quaint news story brought it to life again on the other side of the world.

## My favourite thing Kirsty Kennedy Lifelong Learning Officer



These two engraved brass tobacco boxes were found in the shipwreck of the *Kennemerland* during an underwater archaeology excavation in 1974. The *Kennemerland* was wrecked on Skerries in 1664 and was a typical example of a Dutch East Indies ship of its time. During the excavation there were half a dozen of these boxes found, indicating that they may have been part of the cargo to be sold to the Dutch East Indies settlers. I like these objects as they are part of a larger story – I think it is very interesting why these ships were passing so close to Shetland in that period – as well as being very beautiful in their own right – you can still clearly see the intricate hand engraving. It is also amazing to think that they survived in such good condition underwater for 300 years.

**26**

textile artists designed and made table inlays for the Hay's Dock Café Restaurant

## And don't forget the shop and the café...

BY CHARLIE SIMPSON

THE MUSEUM Shop, off the foyer on the ground floor, is a showcase for imaginative products from local craftspeople and artists, inspired by Shetland's history or heritage, along with a selection of quality mementoes for visitors that reflect the standard of the presentation of Shetland's story by the Shetland Museum and Archives service.

This ethos is repeated in the ambience of the Hay's Dock Café Restaurant upstairs, where table service indoors or – weather permitting – on the veranda is provided seven days a week, serving a wide choice from light snacks to full evening dinner. Its chef manager Mike Skinner told me more.

"We want it to be a relaxed and unpretentious place, serving food of the highest quality, in a friendly atmosphere. We can seat 50 easily, with room to spare, so customers will certainly feel comfortable, and we'll never rush anybody!"

I wanted to know about the food, and asked if we might expect some traditional fare in keeping with the ethos of the whole establishment.

"You'll have a choice from cafe or restaurant menu; both will be inspired by our culture and cuisine, using as wide a range of the best local produce as possible. That obviously doesn't mean serving bannocks, reestit mutton and salt fish only!"

"We can take traditional locally-produced ingredients and use these in dishes originating all over Europe, for there's so much symbiosis among them all."

"Having said that, I've already unearthed a classic sassarmaet recipe from the archives, and there's lots more to come. I'm looking forward very much to that aspect of the job, to see what we can rescue and restore to the table."

● During the summer Hay's Dock Café Restaurant opening hours will be Mon-Sat 10am-5pm and 6pm-9pm (last orders for food); Sunday noon-5pm.

Winter hours will be Mon-Wed 10am-5pm; Thurs-Fri 10am-5pm and 6pm-9pm (last orders for food); Sat 10am-4pm and 6pm-9pm (last orders for food); Sun noon-4pm.



Hay's Dock Café Restaurant manager Mike Skinner.



## Your chance to make lasting impression

THE SHETLAND Museum and Archives and *The Shetland Times* have teamed up to launch an exciting new competition, to find the best of young artistic talent in Shetland. So get your drawing materials ready!

With the Shetland Museum and Archives opening on 2nd June, you are being given the unmissable chance to have your winning piece of art displayed alongside some of the islands' most valuable and historical treasures.

You are invited to submit artwork depicting either the Shetland Museum and Archives building or you can take your pick from any of the 3,000 artefacts found within.

Packed full of exciting items and collections, you will be sure to find something that will get you itching to create your artistic masterpiece. The famous Shetland pig, the Shetland cow, the vintage car, the Bressay lighthouse mechanism or even something magical from the Trowie Knowe, could inspire you to create your picture using any technique you wish – be it drawing, painting or collage. So what are you waiting for?

The competition is split into two categories, with one winner chosen from each:

- 4-11 years (Primary category)
- 12-16 years (Secondary)

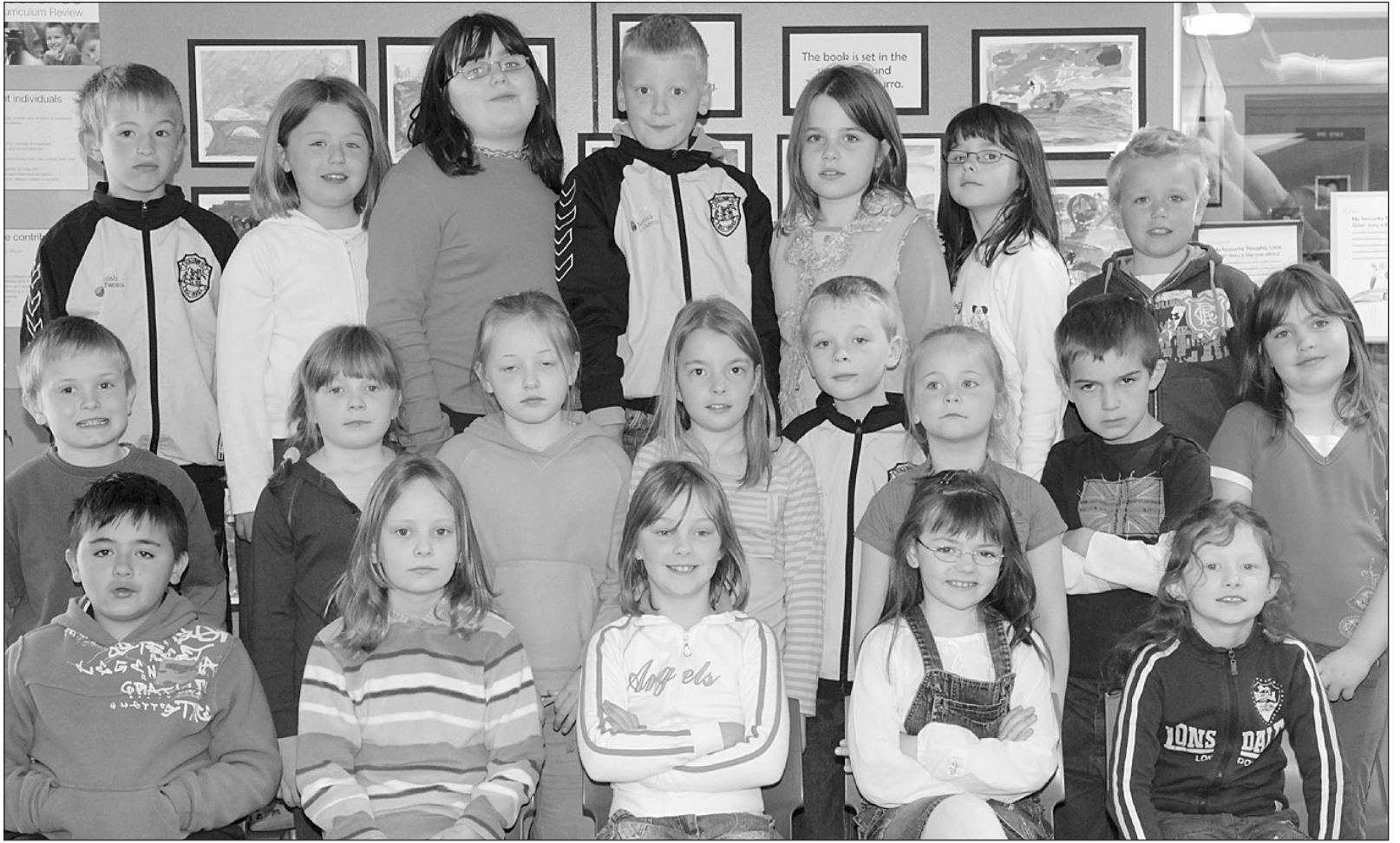
Submissions must be A4 in size and must be in by 15th June. The lucky winners will be announced and photographs of their artwork will appear in *The Shetland Times* on 22nd June.

To submit your drawing to the competition all you have to do is send it to Museum Art Competition, The Shetland Times, Gremista, Lerwick, ZE1 0PX.

## 76

linear metres of display space on offer in Da Gadderie

# Pupils go behind closed doors



Scalloway primary three and four. Back, from left: Ally Young, Autumn Leask, Nicola Wright, Callum Nicol, Stacey Fullerton, Heather Isbister and Scott Young. Middle: Nathan Rosie, Mareel Halcrow, Erinn Abbott, Jenny Irvine, Hamish Hunter, Kaila Johnson, Josh Clark and Sadie Simpson. Front: Owen Sandison, Iona Nicol, Sinead Blance, Leah Setrice and Iona Leask. Missing from the picture is Lenny Allan.

TWO teachers from Scalloway Junior High School, primary department, Meta Stewart and Dawn Mainland were on a week long teacher placement at Shetland Museum and Archives last month.

The placements were part of Excellence in Education Through Business Links.

The main area the teachers focused on was devising an introductory tour and activities for primary pupils in conjunction with museum staff.

The "Highlights Tour" will be available for the last six weeks of the school term and aims to give pupils and teachers a taster of the fascinating new exhibits.

The activities will involve pupils, working in mixed ability teams, investigating displays, read-

ing and gathering information, recording their findings, drawing and presenting.

Work was also done on some of the visits that will be available to schools from the start of the new school year – in particular "What is a Museum?" which enables pupils to learn about the purpose of a museum by undertaking some of the jobs staff do such as curating and designing an exhibition. Also available will be workshops and tours on The Victorians, World War Two the Home Front and Crofting.

The Highlight Tour was then piloted the following week on Mrs Stewart's primary three /four class. Although the artefacts were still being installed, the pupils had a great day and following this pilot a few changes were made to the tour.

Lifelong Learning officer Kirsty

Kennedy said: "We are delighted to have the opportunity to develop school visits with Meta and Dawn. The experience and enthusiasm they brought to the placement was invaluable. It was particularly useful to have had the opportunity to try out the tour we developed with their pupils and has enabled us to make changes before we open to school visits in June."

Meta Stewart, class teacher Scalloway Junior High School, said: "We feel extremely privileged to be involved with the setting up of school visits to the new Museum and Archives."

"The Customer Services Team at the Museum is immensely enthusiastic about welcoming and informing pupils of all ages and stages. They are keen to ensure that the visits will be enlightening

and broaden the outlook of every young visitor. As teachers, we have worked collaboratively with them to produce thought-provoking activities to enhance the museum experience and to cover a myriad of learning outcomes.

"The tours can be adapted to suit any school's topic requirements or focus. The new Museum and Archives is a fantastic new resource for teachers, right on our doorstep. Pupils in Shetland are incredibly lucky!"

● To book a school tour contact Lifelong Learning officer Kirsty Kennedy on (01595) 695057.

**That's what the teachers thought, but what did the kids think? Here are their thoughts on the most memorable parts of their visit along with a selection of their drawings.**

**Oot Fishing (pic 1)**  
by Iona Leask, primary three

When people went out fishing how would they eat? Would they salt the fish and then eat them or would they bring food? I was amazed how when people went off fishing they sometimes bought their animals and their boats never sunk! Now I have figured out that they brought the animals and ate them – well I think that's right, is it? Anyway, it was fabulous! I can't wait to come again.

**Who lives in the Trowie Hoose**  
by Iona Nicol, primary three

If you ask who lives in the Trowie hoose nobody knows. If you want to know, find out yourself. Trowes can kidnap you if you had a fiddle because they love fiddle music. They might even become your friend.

**Cool Car (pic 2)**  
by Lenny Allan, primary three

I saw a car at the Museum – it was an old car. The car is about 60-100 years old. It was white and green and it had one door. How did they get the car in the Museum?

**What are Brochs for?**  
by Nathan Rosie, primary four

Archaeologists do not know what brochs are for. Some think they were for defence and some think everybody in their street lived there. No body really knows. When the Vikings raided Shetland, the Shetlanders were not happy and they made brochs.

It was fun!

**M.N. News**  
by Josh Clark, primary four

It was fun. Even the café was fun. Not everything in the Museum was fun – there was scary things. The baby was scary. Even the tape recorder was scary. The café was the wow part.

**Old Shetland House! (pic 3)**  
by Stacey Fullerton, primary four

At first it was creepy then it started to be ok. When I saw the cradle rocking I thought someone was in there because there was singing in the house behind the door. The old Shetland house looked very warm, not cold. It looked safe but it was very little. The bed in the house was a box bed and most of the family slept in it. It was very amazing.

**The Toilets**  
by Jenny Irvine, primary three

Before we went upstairs we went to the toilets. It was really cool because of the soap. It felt like jelly.

**The Cucumber Fish**  
by Erinn Abbott, primary three

The Cucumber fish was fat and big – it looked very slimy.

**Shetland Museum & Archives**  
by Autumn Leask, primary four

My favourite part was the croft house because the woman sings beautifully. The museum is great because it tells the story of Shetland a long time ago

**The New Museum and Archives**  
by Heather Isbister, primary four

It was tremendous! We really enjoyed it because it was sooo awesome! I loved the style of the restaurant. We had biscuits and juice there, plus I went on the balcony. It was superb. It was fantabystastic and if you want my opinion you should definitely go there for lunch. The view from the balcony was great.

**My visit to the Museum and Archives**  
by Hamish Hunter, primary three

The croft house was scary – very scary. There were lots of boats. There was lots of fishing. There was a wooden desk downstairs. It was amazing because it has very old things in it.

**The trip to the new Shetland Museum**  
by Kaila Johnson, primary three

I was so excited to get into the building. I was just frozen. At last I had got into the building! Kirsty said: "do you know what the floor is made of?"

"Yes," I said, "that's the pavement from the street in Lerwick."

**The Cow by Mareel Halcrow,**  
primary three

After a long time we saw an artificial cow I liked it so much, it was my favourite thing in the whole museum.

## My favourite thing Sonny Morrison

Museum Attendant

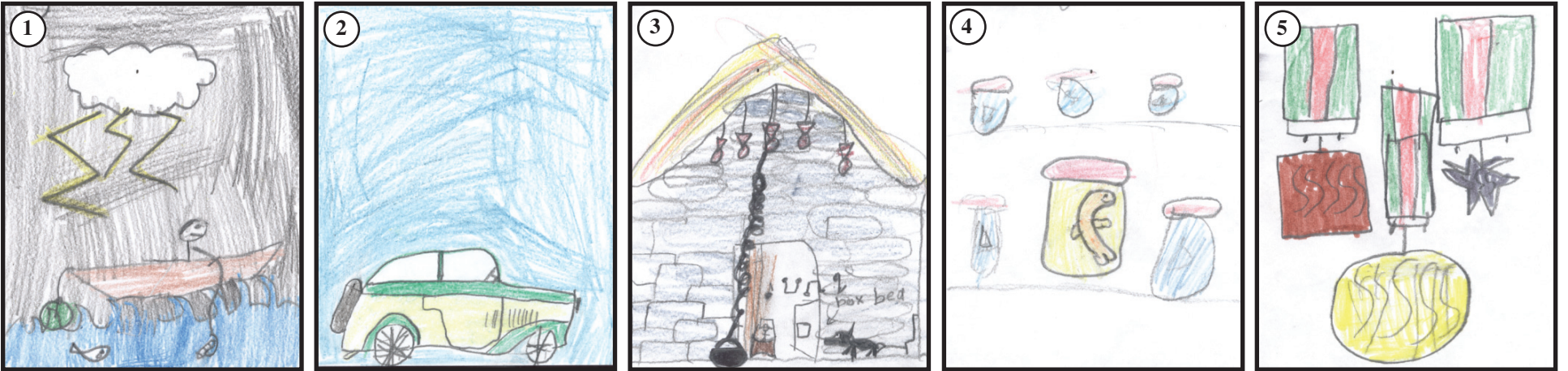


My favourite thing is the museum boat collection as I have always been interested in boats and boat repair. I particularly enjoy rigging up the boats in the collection, which has a good coverage of both boat type and age. It is fine to see many of them on display in the new museum – both in the galleries and Hay's Dock as well as being worked on in the boat sheds.



## MUSEUM &amp; ARCHIVES SPECIAL

## to make sure museum is child friendly



An Aladdin's cave of Shetland's historic gems await you in the new museum and archives at Hay's Dock.

**Volcanic rock**  
by Ally Young, primary four  
We saw volcanic rock and it is very light. They look like normal rocks with little holes in them.

**The Shetland Museum**  
by Nicola Wright, primary four  
When we got there I felt astonished. My favourite parts were everything but my most favourite thing was a woman from

5,200 years ago. She made me feel excited. The girl from the Stone Age seemed to lead a healthy life.

**Trip to the new Shetland Museum**  
by Sinead Blance, primary three  
Then we went around the corner and saw a croft house. The fire was outside and there was a Grice tethered to the chair.

**The Dolphin (pic 4)**  
by Leah Setrice, primary three  
The dolphin is little. Its colour is peach with a little bit of pink. The dolphin was in a jar and there was a special liquid in it.

**At the Museum**  
by Callum Nicol, primary four  
Upstairs one of the cases showed a boy who stole 12p and was sent to prison for 24 hours. He

was also given six hits with the birch.

**War Medals (pic 5)**  
by Owen Sandison, primary three  
I saw amazing war medals. The medals were circle and square shapes and were silver, gold and bronze. They were from different wars and they had bright colours.

**The New Shetland Museum**  
by Sadie Simpson, primary three

The museum was really exciting. The thing that I really liked was the balcony because of the glass panels.

**Boat Hall**  
by Scott Young, primary four  
I saw a boat in the Boat Hall, it was enormous!

**0** Curator Tommy Watt says the history of the new Shetland Museum and Archives starts here...

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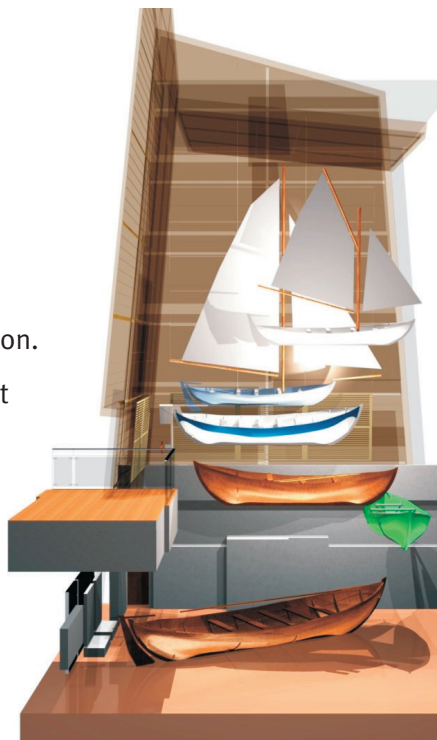


We are proud to have helped bring this historic project to fruition.

We would like to wish the team at Shetland Museum and Archives every success for the future in their stunning new home.

[www.gbdm.co.uk](http://www.gbdm.co.uk)

01382 562257



Groves-Raines Architects congratulate Shetland Amenity Trust on the opening of the new Shetland Museum and Archives and are pleased to have provided architectural services on the restoration of Hay's Dock and pier storehouse.

Current work on Shetland includes Belmont House, Brough Lodge, Vaila Hall, St Magnus Church, Lerwick Town Hall, Sumburgh Lighthouse and a new visitor centre at Old Scatness.

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# The Gateway for Shetland's Heritage and Culture

Shetland Amenity Trust would like to extend a message of thanks and congratulations to all who have helped bring the Shetland Museum and Archives project to fruition, especially the project funders and supporters:

Shetland Charitable Trust  
Heritage Lottery Fund  
Shetland Islands Council  
HIE Shetland  
Historic Scotland  
Scottish Natural Heritage  
Scottish Arts Council  
Esmeé Fairbairn Foundation  
Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
Lerwick Port Authority  
Shetland Development Trust  
LEADER +  
Interreg IIIB



**And all the Shetland Amenity Trust staff and to everyone else who has contributed to this historic project.**







Highlands and Islands Media Awards

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

# The Shetland Times

Established 1872

Printed and published in Shetland

Friday, 1st June, 2007 • 70 pence

## Royal seal of approval for museum



Prince Charles chats to archivist Brian Smith during a tour of the new Museum and Archives yesterday afternoon. Photo: Keith Morrison

Royal visit  
special  
pages 2-5

## Fishing boom sparks plan for brand new fishmarket



Sandra Laurenson

BY JOHN ROBERTSON

LERWICK is to get a brand new fishmarket to cope with a dramatic turnaround in whitefish fortunes and the runaway success of the electronic auction.

Plans are being hatched for a much larger building and a new quay to handle the flood of fish being landed by the Shetland fleet and visiting boats.

Lerwick Port Authority has identified at least three possible sites it might build on. The most radical plan is to use land which does not exist yet, between the Shetland Catch pelagic factory and the Lerwick Marina. It will be formed from material dredged from the bottom of Bressay Sound

over the next year and a half to create new development space around the north harbour.

A second option is to extend the old Shell base pier at Holmsgarth northwards to provide new quay space for a market. These days that area is the centre of shore activity for the whitefish fleet.

The third and least-likely option is to extend the existing fishmarket quay into deeper water. But it will mean serious disruption for boats and buyers during construction and still leaves the problem of poor road access in the town centre.

Port authority chief executive Sandra Laurenson estimated that it would be three years at least

before the new market is ready. At this stage all market users are being asked what they want from a building so an idea can be gained of the size and possible layout required.

The existing market, next to the Malakoff boatyard, is awkward for boats to land at in south-easterly gales and the area to the rear is too congested for the larger lorries that are needed for the bigger landings.

Inside the building, more space is needed for all the re-weighing and grading that is carried out these days.

That there is a need for a new market is a sign of remarkable recovery in the fishing sector which, two or three years ago,

seemed doomed with boats being scrapped, going bankrupt and struggling to survive on small quotas and huge fuel costs.

Fish salesmen were giving out dire warnings that so little fish was being landed each week there was a danger the market would become unviable.

Since then, fishing fortunes have turned full circle with record grossings by local trawlers from much larger landings.

Another crucial factor in the success has been the electronic auction system introduced at Lerwick nearly four years ago in a bid to increase sale prices. That was coupled with a council-funded

(Continued on page seven)

### Trust probe

THE CONTROVERSIAL use of £8 million of community funds to save Scatsta Airport's oil jobs is to be examined by Shetland Charitable Trust in the wake of public concern.

● Full story, page 7

### Obituary

TRIBUTES have continued to pour in for music legend "Peerie" Willie Johnson who died last week.

● Obituary pages 24 & 25.

### Sport worry

FEARS have been raised over the future of the junior inter-county competition which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year

● Full story, back page

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# A day to remember as royals



Prince Charles commends the new museum and archives.

Photo: Keith Morrison



The royal visitors arrive for the opening ceremony.

Photo: Keith Morrison



Queen Sonja remembers the historical links between Shetland and Norway during her speech.

Photo: Keith Morrison



Shetland Amenity Trust general manager Jimmy Moncrieff outlines the history of the project during his opening address.

Photo: Keith Morrison

## Families join in the flag waving as crowds turn



Eleanor Hutcheon, aged eight and Mark Hutcheon, five, from Lerwick.

Photo: Jim Nicolson



The Smith family from Lerwick enjoying an "I was there" moment. From left: Lewis, aged eight, Luke, four, Estella, two, Christian, nine, with their parents Charles and Estelle.

Photo: Jim Nicolson



## ROYAL VISIT SPECIAL

# open jewel in isles' crown



An overview of the scene at the opening.

Inset: A right royal occasion as the commemorative plaque is unveiled.

Photo: Jim Nicolson.  
Photo: Keith Morrison

BY MELISSA DUNCAN

AS THE convoy of blacked-out 4x4s carrying the Duke of Rothesay, Prince Charles, the Duchess of Rothesay, Camilla, and Queen Sonja of Norway, pulled up outside the new Shetland Museum and Archives a splattering of flash lights greeted them.

A mêlée of reporters, cameramen and radio journalists jostled for prime position in the press area. Everyone was hungry for the best shot of the royal threesome and tempers were fraying trying to steal the best vantage point.

All of this, however, was gloriously unnoticed by the royal party as they were led through the Shetland Museum and Archives doors.

Prince Charles was dressed in the Rothesay tartan. His attire complemented Camilla's cerise coat, which also had hues of the tartan at various cuts of the garment. Queen Sonja's outfit was more demure. She opted for a lilac skirt suit and Chanel handbag. She was also wearing, what appeared to be, a Shetland silver brooch.

Shetland Amenity Trust general manager Jimmy Moncrieff, curator Tommy Watt and curator of collections Ian Tait took the

Norwegian monarch and the Duke and Duchess on a tour of the museum and archives before the official opening ceremony.

Mr Moncrieff welcomed everyone, stating that it was a very proud day for Shetland.

He said: "I have many fond memories of playing here amongst the boat and timber sheds as a bairn whilst my father was restoring the *Loki* just here.

"I know my experiences were shared by many others who live, worked and played in this area in the past. Who would have thought that 40-odd years later I would be standing here on such a momentous occasion and I am extremely proud and privileged to do so on this historic day. It is something the whole community has been looking forward to for many, many years.

"They say the proof of the pudding is in the eating, but in our case it is in Mike Skinner's chocolate nemesis cake. Seeing is believing and I hope that you, the public will enjoy the building and its displays which are ultimately about Shetland's living heritage, the past the present and the future."

Queen Sonja then said a few words. "Having enjoyed the tour

through 5,000 years of your history, I must admit that I am impressed. Impressed with the rich history of the islands, and impressed with the way it is presented throughout this magnificent museum.

"It has been said that those who do not learn the lessons of history are bound to repeat their mistakes. I have the clear impression that we do not have to worry about Shetland in this respect.

"The new Shetland Museum and Archives demonstrates that you give priority to taking care of your historical and cultural heritage, to the benefit of the islands and the whole of your immediate neighbourhood.

"Thank you for being such a good neighbour. We are looking forward to sharing the next thousand years with you up here in the north east corner of the Atlantic."

Before the three dignitaries unveiled the plaque, Prince Charles told the crowds that he had enjoyed looking at the "treasure trove" of items the new building was able to display.

He said: "It's a particular pleasure for my wife and I to be here seven years since my last visit. In fact it was during that trip in 2000 that Jimmy Moncrieff, the

tireless general manager of the Shetland Amenity Trust, kindly suggested that perhaps I could come back to open the new Shetland Museum and Archives.

"We have thoroughly enjoyed our tour and it has been a real pleasure to meet so many of you who have devoted so much time and effort, not only to the building, but to the fascinating contents on display."

After the unveiling Ina Irvine and her daughter Linda Shearer presented Queen Sonja and Camilla with items of hand-knitted lace and Kenneth Rae of Shetland Jewellery gave Prince Charles a replica spoon from the St. Ninian's Isle Treasure.

For Mr Watt the official opening was the icing on the cake for what has been several years hard work.

He said: "It's a relief and an absolute pleasure to get it over with. For me it's so exciting to see the folk flowing in. The doors are open and it's all go from now."

He was particularly impressed by how knowledgeable the royals were about the artefacts and displays.

"They showed genuine interest in the objects on display and what was meant to be a 20 minute tour

turned into more than 40 minutes. Even then it was a rush to the end.

"The prince particularly liked the cow and commented on the two kye he got at the commonwealth show and he was keen to get a bull.

"The Duchess and Her Royal Highness were totally enthralled by the knitwear and the Fair Isle knitwear on display. They were amazed by the colours and the patterns and yarns.

"They were all very friendly and approachable. I think you could feel the buzz of excitement that we were getting this recognition."

The first thing Queen Sonja said to Mr Watt was "Ornaph sends his regards". Ornaph Opdahl is a prolific Norwegian artist and Queen Sonja is an avid collector of his work. He is also a good friend of Mr Watt.

"Ornaph could sell tissues for thousands," he continued "and he has promised a painting for the new museum."

Dr Tait saw a more humorous side to Prince Charles and Camilla when he helped take them on tour.

He said: "We could clearly see that they weren't just treating the gallery walk time as a mere formality. They have to run to a very

rigid timetable but continually they would see artefacts or graphics that interested them.

"There was a graphic of a coo being hoisted onboard a boat and the duke was very interested at that with him being in possession of a farm. He made some humorous comments about that.

"I asked the duchess if she cared to guess what the bog butter was. She scrutinised it very closely and said 'I suspect it's a bit of a man'. Once the issue of butter arose that invigorated the discussion all the more."

SAT chairwoman Florence Grains was also part of the official tour. She said: "They were very, very pleasant. Charles was asking if everything in the building was finished or if they were still knocking in nails. 'I said everyone had worked so long and well and we were giving them a day off tomorrow.' He was very glad to hear that."

Former curator Andrew Williamson and his wife Dorothy braved the chilly wind for several hours to witness the official opening. He was delighted to see the new building opened to the public.

He said: "We said to Queen Sonja that she had done us a great honour to be here on this occasion. She said she hoped that she would be back in a more private capacity some time soon."

Mr Williamson, who started work in the former museum in 1974, added: "It's fine to see this at last. It all went off very well."

Mr Moncrieff's daughter Lyla, 11, shook hands with Camilla and Queen Sonja. "They said the museum was good and they were really nice. He asked if it was half-term and I was off school. We had to say no and that we'd just taken the day off."

And almost as suddenly as they arrived, the royal party was whisked off into blacked out 4x4s and swept away to their next engagement.

m.duncan@shetland-times.co.uk

## out to greet royal visitors to Lerwick...

BY ROSALIND GRIFFITHS

UNDER a leaden sky the future King and his wife stepped from a silver BMW.

The band was playing in a covered area some distance away and in the dock boats were dressed overall. A small crowd lined the car park for the occasion, straining to catch a glimpse of the couple. They, and another Queen, quickly disappeared from sight. The crowd waited patiently in the cold.

Prince Charles, Camilla and Queen Sonja of Norway had come to open the multi-million pound museum and archives – but people in the crowd, although delighted about their new visitor attraction, were hoping for a glimpse of the royals. People climbed on walls and sought vantage points, trying to see or catch some words of the opening ceremony.

The police and security guards brought in to keep them in check were hardly needed. The members of the public behaved impeccably as the royals, preceded by a police car and silver Land Rover, drove into the car park. The royals were hardly visible in the narrow area in front of the museum, which was

full of local media and pin-striped royal reporters. The crowd was good-humoured and waited while the tour of the museum took place. "This is an exciting day, I'm delighted to be here," said Betty Black of Lerwick.

"This is a special occasion," said Charles Smith of Lerwick, who was there with his wife Estelle and four children, all four with Union flags and wearing Norwegian jumpers. He said: "Royal visits like this only happen once in a while and it's unique to have the Queen of Norway here as well, it's an 'I was there moment.'"

Diana Blance from Lerwick, who has only been in Shetland one year, said: "It's a great pleasure to see Prince Charles, it's the first time we [she and her daughter Anisha Ivory] have seen him." She caught sight of the royals leaving the car – Prince Charles in a kilt and Camilla in deep pink with a length of tartan over one shoulder.

Someone else who was managed to see them was Pamela Turberville of Sandwick, who said: "It was good to see them close – Camilla looked really good."

Sisters Lesley Mullay and

Margaret Manson from Lerwick agreed. Mrs Mullay said: "Camilla looked lovely but they came out of the car too quickly." But Mrs Mullay was going to have a second chance of a sighting: "I'm going to Sandwick as well, my grandson goes to school there."

Reawick couple Joe and Jean Fraser said: "We've enjoyed being here but we'd like to see them walk round the crowd."

For student nurses Victoria Maitland and Michelle Winton from Aberdeenshire the royal visit was a bonus while on a placement in Shetland. They said: "We can't wait to see inside and find out about the history of the place."

Another person in the crowd thought some more flags would have been good. Four were flying in the car park – the Union flag and the flags from Shetland, Norway and Scotland. But there were lots more down on the water – on the *Swan*, the *Dim Riv* (complete with Vikings) and on the pilot boats *Knab* and *Kebister*, which were firing water cannon outside the shelter of the dock. Lerwick lifeboat joined them to be there for the special day.



Diana Blance from Lerwick with her 13-month-old daughter Anisha Ivory.  
Photo: Jim Nicolson

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## ROYAL VISIT SPECIAL



Queen Sonja addresses the crowd in Scalloway.

Photo: Keith Morrison

## Queen of Norway pays tribute to brave seamen at Scalloway

BY MARK LATHAM

AFTER attending the opening of the new Shetland Museum, Queen Sonja of Norway parted company from the British royals for a visit to Scalloway.

Arriving at Norway House just after 3.20pm dressed in a cream cloak and hat, Queen Sonja was accompanied by Shetland's deputy lord lieutenant Ian Fraser and Shetland Bus Friendship Society chairman Jack Burgess as she walked down a bunting-strewn Main Street to the sounds of the Lerwick Brass Band.

On her way to the Shetland Bus monument Her Majesty was shown Crown Prince Olav's Slipway. A decent-sized crowd of folk, including some in traditional Norwegian costumes, had turned out to see the royal visitor and Norwegian flags were flying from many buildings along the Scalloway waterside.

Although it was a bit windy for her visit, the weather remained dry.

At the monument Her Majesty met various local dignitaries and members of Shetland's Norwegian community before being officially welcomed to Scalloway by Mr Fraser.

A wreath-laying ceremony at the monument was followed by a minute's silence in memory of those who have lost their lives at sea including the crew of the *Bourbon Dolphin* which sank off the coast of Shetland last month.

After the minute's silence the band played the Norwegian national anthem.

The Norwegian queen then gave a speech in which she thanked those involved in the *Bourbon Dolphin* rescue operation which helped bring seven crew members to safety.

Referring to the Shetland Bus memorial she said: "To build a

monument with stones from both Shetland and Norway is a beautiful way to symbolise that the Shetland Bus was a joint effort.

"I am grateful to those who contributed to the establishment of this monument which forever will remind us of our co-operation in a difficult but heroic period."

"I have the strong feeling that there is a deeply felt wish both in Shetland and in Norway to build on these close relations which exist between us. I feel confident that we will succeed in this endeavour."

After the speech Queen Sonja visited a new antiquarian book shop in Scalloway which was exhibiting a number of historic books about Norway.

She then walked to the nearby Scalloway Museum where she was shown Shetland Bus memorabilia by curator Robbie Johnson and assistant curator Carol Fullerton.

Queen Sonja also went to the North Atlantic Fisheries College where she met Meg and Billy Moore, the wife and son of the late Jack Moore – the former owner of the Scalloway shipyard.

The Norwegian queen also spoke to Hughie Hughson, a trainee at the shipyard during the war, Karen Anderson, daughter of Shetland Bus man Kåre Iversen and Janna Martin, granddaughter of one of the Shetland Bus members.

The event was attended by the managing director of Bourbon Offshore Norway Trond Myklebust who said that he wanted to attend the memorial event in Scalloway as a mark of respect to the eight crewmen who died in the *Bourbon Dolphin*.

For her visit to Scalloway Queen Sonja was also attended by the Norwegian ambassador to the

UK and the Norwegian consul in Edinburgh.

Yesterday's visit by Queen Sonja was the third visit to Shetland by a member of the Norwegian royal family since the Second World War.

In 1942 Crown Prince Olav visited the slipway in Scalloway that bears his name.

As King of Norway, Olav returned to Shetland in 1981 when he stayed with the British royal family on board the royal yacht *Britannia*.

Queen Sonja was born Sonja Haraldsen in 1937 and married the then Crown Prince Harald in 1968. She became queen of Norway in 1991.

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A wave from Queen Sonja of Norway as she walks down Main Street in Scalloway.

Photo: Keith Morrison



A proud moment for Meg Moore as she is introduced to Queen Sonja of Norway.

Photo: Keith Morrison

## What lies in store for you when the museum

BY MELISSA DUNCAN

PREPARE to be overwhelmed and truly in awe when the iconic new museum and archives finally throws its doors open to the public tomorrow morning.

Almost five years since the £11.6 million project was approved the finishing touches have been added and staff have been working around the clock to ensure the queuing masses will be treated to a dazzling reception.

From the moment you step foot into the imposing building the feeling of space and airiness is one of the first things to hit you.

The foyer is incredibly bright and welcoming and, despite its size and height, genuinely homely.

The use of reclaimed materials is plain to see throughout the building. It is especially evident in the reclaimed oak and pitch pine floor boards in all

three galleries and Hay's Dock Cafe Restaurant, recycled flag stones in the foyer and the recycled glass bottled pavers made by Enviroglass.

Part of the keel of the 19th Century German fishing boat *Elenor Von Flotow* was refashioned into a reception desk by artist Stuart Hill and a substantial amount of wrought iron was used for much of the external ironmongery, including door handles and hinges, mooring rings and handrails, by Bruce Wilcock.

The environment was a top consideration when buying lighting and heating for the building.

Astronomer Chris Brown was consulted on exterior lighting to limit the amount of light pollution and heating was supplied by the District Heating Scheme, so that costs are kept down and damage to the environment is kept to a minimum.

Stone for the main building was recycled from demolished buildings, particularly at the North Ness

and Quendale. The dock walkway consists of recycled granite cobbles, which were previously laid on the Lerwick promenade until they were lifted and replaced with tarmac in the 60s.

Even the stonework in the early people displays has come from Shetland Amenity Trust's archaeological excavations at Old Scatness Broch.

This theme of weaving the old in with the new is a striking feature of Shetland Museum and Archives. The building itself is contemporary and modern, yet completely fitting to Shetland's heritage and traditions.

For curator Tommy Watt as time ticks quickly nearer to the official opening he is unreservedly excited but also filled with a little trepidation.

He said: "To see it get to this stage, gee whizz, it's a relief, but it's also quite a panic. We have been intimately involved in these displays for so long and

we have grown to know them but the public hasn't – it's them we are doing it for.

"It's like an artist having an exhibition – they're putting themselves on display. We are exposing ourselves here. This is the first time we have had the chance to do this. Very few curators get the chance to completely redesign a collection. It's quite an exciting and anxious time.

"But, this is just the beginning. We want to get back to delivering a service and an increased service. We have a lot of ideas about what we can do post-opening. This year is very much about evolution and feedback. It's a great foundation block for building for the future."

Mr Watt praised the efforts of the staff, especially over the last few months, as they had worked around the clock to ensure everything is just right for tomorrow.



## ROYAL VISIT SPECIAL

# All smiles for pupils at Sandwick



Sandwick school bairns get a chance to chat with Charles and Camilla.

Photo: Jim Nicolson



Camilla is instructed by youngsters on how to plant seeds and bulbs at Sandwick school.

Photo: Jim Nicolson



Camilla receives a bouquet flowers before her departure from Sandwick school.

Photo: Jim Nicolson



Smiles all round as these three women enjoyed their chat with Charles at Sandwick school.

Photo: Jim Nicolson

## BY JOHN ROBERTSON

PRINCE Charles and Camilla will have won respect, even from Royal doubters, for the way they charmed hundreds of children and adults in the chilly grounds of Sandwick Junior High School.

Arriving in their silver 7-series BMW, they were introduced to headteacher Brian Wishart, his deputy, Gillian McElvogue, and teacher Neil Finlayson, the school's eco-coordinator, who guided them through the grounds.

With little over half an hour to pack in lots of sights, Mr Wishart was relieved it was not an occasion requiring him to make a big speech.

The children had been waiting expectantly for nearly an hour and a half in the stiff breeze and overcast skies. The mood was determinedly positive. People kept saying: "At least it's dry."

The Royal couple and their entourage set off on a guided tour through the school grounds to see a multitude of gardening, recycling and tree-planting projects and speak to the children involved.

The school has this sort of event every year regardless of VIPs but given Charles' famous lifelong attachment to plants and the environment, he seemed the perfect choice of guest.

He laughs often as he talks to Tamsin Jack and

other children from the school's eco committee. At the seedling-planting table he engages Daniel Jamieson, 12, in a long conversation about composting, growing tomatoes and crofting, firing a salvo of questions at the young lad like an investigative reporter nailing an exclusive.

Daniel, from Sandwick, answers the big man in broad Shetland dialect, telling him how his grandfather no longer grows tatties but still has sheep. Charles tells him sheep "get everywhere", which at this time of year, is fairly true.

The prince didn't ask about the accent but Daniel said he hoped he understood.

Sandwick pair Emily Lyall, 12, and Kayleigh Leask, 12, found plenty to talk about when Charles sidled up to them and shook their hands. Emily said he asked all about their school-life, how they get home and if they have gardens. "They were quite cool," she said of the couple, which is quite an accolade for old fogies to receive from a soon-to-be teenage lass!

The prince watches seeds being sown in a small vegetable patch while Camilla moves on to the school's immaculate Community Garden to pose with young kids for the press snappers with their very long lenses.

The Shetland Times crew was greatly assisted by

fifth-year lass Vaila Harvey, on her last day at Sandwick school, who gathered names for captions and kept us informed of who was who.

Boys discuss Lord Lieutenant John Scott's ceremonial sword as he passes to join Charles who is talking avidly to the boys and lasses in a Muck and Bruck squad. Afterwards, John McNeill, 14, from Levenwick, admits he's not in favour of the Royal Family but even he is won over. "He was nice enough. I was polite."

Christopher Halcrow, 14, from Cunningsburgh, adds: "He was down to earth."

The prince soon got right down to earth, spending a long time in the Wild Garden before moving on, picking up an impossibly shiny spade and shovelling some soil over a sapling.

Camilla stopped to watch a gang of secondary school dancers who had learnt their impressive routine in just two days of tuition from visiting teachers Y Dance.

The booming house techno of Bob Sinclar and *Everybody Dance Now* roared from a huge ghetoblaster, providing a rather odd soundtrack to the regal procession.

The Royal couple joined forces again to walk along the line of well-wishers on the way to their car, frequently stopping to talk. Both of them picked out

Linda Tait and talked about her lively two-year-old daughter Sophie, who was clearly taken with the thumping dance music.

"I must have that Royal look," Mrs Tait joked after her double Royal whammy, adding: "They're very laid back."

Charles' minders might have twitched a bit when he approached a youth dressed in sports casuals and a baseball cap. The prince's radar obviously didn't warn him this might be a ned offering abuse rather than friendly banter. But he and Peter Cox, 15, of Sandwick, got on famously with Charles quizzing him about his hand being in plaster and his skateboarding antics. Maybe he's not such an old fuddy-duddy after all.

Camilla was probably glad to board the BMW again, if not for any other reason than she must have been cold to the bone. Charles hung back for what seemed like an age before finally joining her to cheers and appreciative applause from the crowd.

With the Royal entourage safely on its way to Sumburgh, Ms McElvogue could relax. The school had put on an impressive show and she was delighted: "It's gone very well. They were very relaxed and natural. Very warm."

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## opens its doors to the public from tomorrow?

He continued: "The staff have been working long hours and they're quite tired and they just want it to be 100 per cent there. There are simple things we could leave till post-opening but they're just so proud of what they're doing they want it done 100 per cent, even 110 per cent."

Mr Watt was aware that the first year would be unusually busy, but he wanted to use that to monitor what appeals to people and what doesn't.

The museum literally has something for everyone. The first thing you come to, as you walk through the doors, is an introductory film setting the scene for what you are about to experience.

After that you move through to Early Beginnings where there are interactive displays of Shetland's environment and geological creation, before coming face-to-face with Shetland's first known inhabitant in early people.

A recreated croft house interior in Home and Land relates stories of rural subsistence, while bairns can enter the underground trowie house in Customs and Folklore, at their peril!

Visitors can explore the rich waters with a giant turtle and jellyfish overhead in Harvest From The Sea before moving on to boats where there is a stunning display of suspended Shetland boats in the museum boat hall.

You can then make your way upstairs to the upper gallery, listen to some contemporary Shetland music and experience the Up-Helly-A' festival in Changing Culture.

The growth of Lerwick is explored in On The Move and displays here include a stunning commissioned model of Lerwick Harbour, and a multimedia programme exploring the impact that Shetlanders have had around the world.

Power and State looks at every day objects relating to education and health, as well as some extraordinary objects illustrating Shetland's contribution to the world wars. Displays in Maritime and Fisheries, with an interactive harbourmaster's station and suspended breeches buoy and trade and industry, come next before the displays end with beautiful examples of lace and knitwear in Textiles.

The tour is finished off with a fresh cup of coffee and a bite to eat in the delectable Hay's Dock Cafe Restaurant, run by manager Mike Skinner.

He and his staff have been busy finalising menus and making sure the panoramic eatery looks its best when the doors open tomorrow.

He said: "It's been nerve racking. We are anticipating it being extremely busy this weekend so we are just making sure we can provide a service that's reflective of what we will be doing in the future."

"I have virtually all my staff and will be calling on part-time staff too to cover for the extra workload."

Mr Skinner is dedicated to using sustainable stocks of fish including saithe, piltocks and mackerel and wherever possible he will be sourcing fresh fruit and vegetables locally.

He will also be using free range chicken and free range eggs. He said: "I fully intend the menu to be reflective not only of Shetland, but Scotland too. We are going to be specialising in the traditional, good old Shetland food, slightly updated."

Nervous about the opening Mr Skinner added: "I'm very apprehensive and very, very excited at the same time. The staff are the same. We all see it as a great opportunity and chance to develop food in Shetland."

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