

Spring  
2022

# NEWSLETTER



*Photo by Ingrid Tulloch*

# Message from the Chair of the North Ronaldsay Trust

By John Scott

Welcome to the Spring edition of the NRT Newsletter, hope you enjoy it. Great to see so many contributors and range of articles.

Please do take the time to read the article by Cloudnet, in my personal view the provision of internet via a fibre network would represent an essential step forward for the NR community and we ought to support this initiative, in the same way as we have seen happen in Papay. You can register your support by accessing the link <https://tinyurl.com/NRonaldsay>, if not already done so – only takes a few seconds. The link is also on the North Ronaldsay Community Connect Facebook page. I understand it is time critical for Cloudnet to have all responses asap. If there are any queries or questions, please contact Helen at Rue, or Greg at Cloudnet.

NRT would like to congratulate Heather Woodbridge on not only having a resounding result in the North Isles Ward for local councillor elections, but also securing the role of deputy leader. This is a very significant achievement and incidentally one of the objectives in the previous NR Development Plan was to have a North Isles Councillor from NR. Am sure Heather, Mel and Stephen shall do their utmost in representing all the North Isles.

The CDM report outlines much of what is currently happening and since Sara's report was completed, Sara and Rael have decided to move to Spain. Sara has been a great asset to NRT and indeed the island and her input and enthusiasm shall be hard to replace, we wish her and Rael every success for their future life in Spain.

Pleased to advise the Meat Larder has been granted Planning Permission.

NRT shall now be recruiting a new CDM, see later in the Newsletter for the job advert. In addition to the CDM vacancy, we have recruited a further Sheep Dyke Warden (Carla Alexander) and shall also be recruiting one or two additional wardens. The warden roles shall enable more work to be completed with the aim of averaging 40 hours per week overall. There shall also be an opportunity for someone to work on the digitisation of North Ronaldsay Archive Project records and material, more details to follow outlining what is required and how this shall be implemented. There are opportunities being advertised by OrkneyLORA and Transition North Ronaldsay shall be advertng two roles – one for the Community Garden and one for plastic recycling. Quite a number of opportunities and for those which cannot be filled locally, we need individuals for the roles and houses for them to live in!

Work has commenced on refurbishing the Lighthouse Cottages, these are a fantastic amenity and shall benefit from being refurbished and from further work on water and heating systems. We have moved the cottage booking onto an online system, at present this can be accessed via the NRT website or via [www.northronaldsay.co.uk](http://www.northronaldsay.co.uk) any queries or suggestions can be sent to [lighthousecottages@northronaldsay.co.uk](mailto:lighthousecottages@northronaldsay.co.uk)

As part of the planned works at Trebb, we are looking to convert the upper floor of the house into a flat and as part of the funding process are conducting a housing survey, which is included with the Newsletter, please do complete and return to Sara at Holland, or if preferred shall also be available online via WhatsApp and North Ronaldsay Community Connect.

Finally, if anyone is interested in conducting lighthouse tours, please email [admin@northronaldsaytrust.com](mailto:admin@northronaldsaytrust.com)

## Welcome to the Spring 2022 Newsletter

Thank you to everyone who contributed their wonderful articles and pictures and time proof reading. Reprints are £6 each plus £2 postage. Please send your articles, special announcements, interviews, quizzes, photos, art etc. to:

[alexandrawright70@gmail.com](mailto:alexandrawright70@gmail.com) or 01857 633323 or 07809770082



*Laura Stenzel, Bird Obs volunteer, coastal sketching during Science Festival*

## **Sheepdyke Warden Update**

**Zander Scott**

Hello, I'm Zander, a Sheep Dyke Warden whose main responsibility is to rebuild and repair the island's Sheepdyke.

Since being appointed to the position, I have worked all over the island rebuilding sections of the dyke that have been knocked down due to the stormy winds and rough seas over the Winter, including a couple of the ponds at the Northern end of the island.

I have also been rebuilding parts of the dyke that have been down for longer periods of time, with the aim of one day having the entire dyke restored. Another one of my roles is to check bits of fencing around the island to make sure that it's suitable enough to prevent sheep from getting into any unwanted land.

During this time, I have been fortunate enough to work with numerous volunteers and hope to get the chance to work with even more of the island's community over the Summer.



# Community Development Manager Update – Winter 2021-22

By Sara Macias-Rodriguez, Holland Farm

After a long, harsh Winter, an optimistic start of the Spring brings lots of exciting news for the island, with a good number of projects currently ongoing and others ready to begin. In order to manage the increasing demands of the CDM role, The North Ronaldsay Trust has increased working hours from 17.5 to 20 hours per week, beginning from the 1st of April.

## ● Trebb

The biggest news to announce is the award of £985,460 through the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, which will allow the Trebb Hub project to go ahead. Please see separate article on page 6.

## ● Meat larder

An extension for the project has been granted and we currently await planning permission. Equipment such as freezers and a vacuum pack machine have been acquired and stored in Trebb, and more equipment is to be ordered. The project is expected to be completed by the end of the Summer.

## ● Lighthouse Complex heating upgrade and energy efficiency studies

Historic Environment Scotland workers came to the island in March to carry out measurements and tests on the buildings, with contractors due in May/June to do an energy options study, providing expert advice about the best options for the heating system at the Lighthouse Complex. The study will include finding solutions to maximise the use of electricity generated by the wind turbines, and avoid it going straight into the grid. The air source heat pumps and storage battery, funded by the CARES project, will be installed once all equipment is available, most likely during the Summer.

## ● New Island Development Plan

Many thanks to everyone who participated in the writing of the new Island Development Plan. A significant proportion of the island residents took part in the survey and consultation sessions, meaning the plan should be representative of the interests of the majority of the people living in North Ronaldsay. The final version of the plan will be ready very soon. A document summarising the results of the plan will be uploaded onto the North Ronaldsay Trust website, and if you would like to read the full plan, you can ask for a copy.

## ● Lunch Club grant application

VAO has launched an initiative to re-start day/lunch clubs in Orkney, with grants up to £1,000 available. Funding must be spent by the end of March 2023 and, if successful, will provide subsidised meals for older people. The Lighthouse Café and Bird Observatory have agreed to take turns to be the venue for the day club. I will be getting in touch with everyone eligible to find out who would be interested in joining, before putting a funding application together.

## ● Cycling Scotland Cycling Friendly Community Fund

Cycling Scotland is offering funding of up to £20,000 for bikes or facilities that make cycling more accessible. We will be submitting an application to improve the island's bike hire service, and to provide resources to make cycling more available to residents. We've identified a current priority as funding to acquire children's bikes, as neither the bike hire nor school currently have any. If you have other ideas about improving access to cycling on the island, please get in touch.

If you would like to get in touch about any of the above-mentioned subjects or other projects, please feel free to contact me on:

Email [cdm@northronaldsaytrust.com](mailto:cdm@northronaldsaytrust.com)

WhatsApp 07340 495768

Landline 01857 633353

# An Update on the E-bike Project

by CDM, Sara Macias-Rodriguez

In early 2021, the Trust was awarded funding from the Energy Savings Trust, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme to acquire two e-bikes, two e-trikes, a new bike shed and other equipment such as trailers, helmets, lockers and more. The project is now complete and we are finally able to make use of the equipment.

## Open day for e-bikes and trikes testing to be held at Trebb (date TBC in May/June)

After some difficulties obtaining a reasonable price for the insurance of the e-trikes, all is finally sorted and some residents have been testing the e-bikes and e-trikes, with very positive results. As one of the aims of the project is to give residents the opportunity to trial the equipment and provide long-term leases, we'll be holding an open day for trialling the equipment in May or June. Everyone is welcome and you'll have the chance to ask any questions, as well as arrange trials and leases. Residents who have already used the bikes and trikes will be present to share their experience and demonstrate how to use them.

## Review from islanders:

"It's been an absolute delight testing out the Raleigh e-bike - a well-built, sturdy, and comfortable machine. It has a quick-release catch on the seat bar so it can easily be adjusted to suit a range of heights. My only complaint is that the battery sits on the frame and my legs catch against it slightly, but that is no problem for the length of rides on North Ronaldsay. An important benefit on our exposed island is that the power assist makes cycling in the wind so much easier. If you have not had a go with an electric bike, I'd recommend it, it is very easy to use and is still good exercise as you have to peddle, but it feels more like pedaling on a slight slope. It is definitely kinder to my knees than a regular bike and I'm going to start saving up to buy my own, not only for exercise but to reduce my use of diesel." - Alex Wright



"Throughout the month of March, James and I were lucky enough to trial one of the e-bikes and one of the e-trikes. We are both well-acquainted with electric bikes, having inherited one from my mother in 2020, so it was great to see how these compare!

Though the interface on the e-bike is the same, you can feel how smooth, new and quietly it all runs inside. The e-bikes themselves also have a beautiful white design, with a great frame for getting on and off easily. These bikes are absolutely perfect for North Ronaldsay, as they are highly responsive to your pedalling. This means that if you want to speed on into the wind, the bike will feel your effort and match it, but if you want to pedal casually and enjoy the sights, the bike will recognise this and slow down with you.

The e-trike was something quite different altogether! This is apparent as soon as you attempt to turn, hit a side-wind, or encounter a dip in the road. Anyone who is used to riding a bike will naturally attempt to counterbalance by leaning against the tilt keep the bike upright. But, because the e-trike has all three wheels firmly on the ground, this isn't possible, which feels very odd to begin with. This can make the trikes more prone to tipping over, but after getting used to the boundaries (take corners slowly!), you can start to appreciate its advantages: the e-trike has a huge amount of power behind it, with very little input required through peddling. Unlike the e-bike, which responds to your effort levels, the e-trike can continue to zoom you forward even after you have stopped peddling! This can be a little disconcerting if you need to apply the brakes, but quite good fun as you casually sail past your companions. Its ability to stand on its own also means there is no minimum speed for sightseeing. As is standard, both the e-trike and the e-bike have four speed settings ranging from just enough to counteract the weight of the vehicle, to smugly sailing past the puffing push-biker on the Brae o'Holland.

We would recommend the electric bikes to anyone who can cycle, and think they are a fantastic addition to the island. As for the e-trike, expect a pretty significant 'settling-in' period for this quite exciting vehicle" - Daryl McLeod

## An Update on Trebb

by CDM Sara Macias-Rodriguez

News of the Trebb Hub project being awarded £985,460 through the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund was very excitedly received at the end of last year. This is a huge achievement for a small charity like The North Ronaldsay Trust, and recognition should be given to everyone who has made this possible through several years of hard work.

- **Project Manager role:** we will soon be advertising for a Project Manager.
- **Plans:** an architect will soon be appointed and we will be sharing the plans with residents - visual aids always help to paint a picture.
- **Housing:** The Rural and Islands Housing Fund has recently awarded the Trust £4,818 for the Feasibility Fund element of the project, to carry out feasibility work on the first floor of Trebb, including design options for the conversion of this space into a two bedroom flat, which will be available for affordable renting. Further funding is being sought to fund the refurbishing.
- **Match funding and working in partnership:** one of the CDM's current priorities is to source match funding for the Trebb Hub project.

### Other elements of the project include:

- Working with the NHS to gain financial support for the new Health Centre, and talks about the future of Linklet House.
- Working with OIC and Sports Scotland to design and fund the new Community Gym.
- Working with Highlands and Islands Enterprise to gain match funding for the restoration of the ground floor of Trebb into an office and multi-use space.
- Working with different partners to gain match funding for the installation of renewable energy systems.
- Clearing out: volunteers and members of the Fire and Rescue Service have spent many hours clearing out different spaces in Trebb so that it's ready for refurbishment work to begin in the near future. All items that weren't sold at last Summer's sale were packed and sent to the Blue Door in Kirkwall, filling a lot of the space in the shipping container at the pier store!

*More updates will be shared as the project progresses.*

## Welcome to North Ronaldsay

A warm welcome to June and Malcolm (a dog Wilma and pony Zara), who moved into beautiful Bewan at the end of April.





## Community Development Manager

20 hours per week • salary £20,571

The North Ronaldsay Trust (NRT) is looking to appoint a Community Development Manager (CDM), to take over from the current CDM. The CDM position is to support the NRT in taking forward specific community projects. The position is due to run to March 2024.

This role will include promoting projects identified by the North Ronaldsay Trust and the local community which develop the use of assets or provide services which have the potential to generate income, in accordance with priorities identified in the Island Development Plan. This role will also involve identifying and sourcing funding for potential projects including funding for the CDM role post March 2024.

The successful applicant will be flexible, computer literate, have excellent communication skills and preferably have experience in project management. You will have a strong interest in the community of North Ronaldsay and will have the ability to use your own initiative. Although not essential, we would prefer that the candidate lived in North Ronaldsay.

To discuss this role, please contact [rosalind.aitken@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:rosalind.aitken@vaorkney.org.uk)

Applications are available at Voluntary Action Orkney, Anchor Buildings, 6 Bridge Street, Kirkwall, KW15 1HR; online at [vaorkney.org.uk](http://vaorkney.org.uk) or at [rosalind.aitken@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:rosalind.aitken@vaorkney.org.uk)

The closing date for applications is 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022. Interviews shall be held by the end of June 2022. The successful candidate shall be expected to commence the role from July / August 2022.

This post is funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Scottish Government.

## Community Research Coordinator Job

### Seas of the North Isles

Are you outgoing and friendly?

Do you like to bring people together in your community?

Do you enjoy local history and capturing the stories of the isles?

Can you use Microsoft Word and email?

Wessex Archaeology are currently looking for a Community Research Coordinator on your island as part of the Seas of the North Isles project for the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme. The topics will be **Maritime Cultural Landscapes** and **Shipwrecks**.

The research can include traditional archival research, looking through old collections of local newsletters or advertisements, learning from older members of the community about disappearing knowledge and traditions, cataloguing items or parts of wrecks that have washed ashore / were taken ashore historically/ been used in buildings etc.

Wessex Archaeology will run a research training session on each island at the start of each topic.

**The job is flexible, can fit your schedule and will involve half days/ evenings between June 2022 and January 2023.**

For the Job Description please email Natalia Bain at [nilps.sea@wessexarch.co.uk](mailto:nilps.sea@wessexarch.co.uk)

**The closing date for applications is June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022.**

## Practice Information



Surgery times are usually 9.00 to 10.30 every weekday with the nurse practitioner or 9.00 to 10.30 with the GP on Tuesdays.

Please phone beforehand to book an appointment slot so that we don't get people too close together in the waiting room.

The surgery number is 01857 633 226 and the mobile number is 07876651885.

Routine requests can be made via WhatsApp as long as it isn't urgent.

Please remember face coverings are still compulsory in health care settings in Scotland.

## Community Association News



### Welcome Back Orkney Coffee Morning

On the 12th of March we hosted an island coffee morning. Many thanks to Charlotte and Laura for baking delicious cakes, and thanks to VAO, HIE and the Scottish Government for sponsoring the event, which was well attended.

### New Community Centre Laptop

We received a grant from Welcome Back Orkney for the purchase of a new Dell Laptop and external CD drive. Many thanks to Sara for organising the purchase.

*Charlotte, Heather, Ingrid and Louis setting up for the VOA Welcome Back Orkney coffee morning*

### Jubilee Event

The plan is to light a 'beacon' (bonfire) on TorNess on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June at around 5pm, (weather permitting), followed by a BBQ & refreshments.



# SheepFest Returns for 2022!

## Plus: call for Sheepdyke Supervisors and Festival Crew

By Kate Traill Price, Holland House

The Sheep Festival Committee is delighted to announce that this year's annual event will be taking place from 1st-12th August.

As well as our usual host of workshops, activities and daily Sheepdyke building sessions, this year we are pleased to be recruiting paid positions for both Sheepdyke Supervisors and Festival Crew.

**Sheepdyke Supervisors** will be responsible for overseeing and guiding small groups of volunteers during the dyke rebuilding, with each day comprising of two 3-hr sessions (morning and afternoon). This is a fantastic opportunity to really get stuck in with the rebuilding, be compensated for your time and effort, and meet new people who've travelled to North Ronaldsay to celebrate its unique culture and history. Supervisors will be paid £60 per day, over the 10 (week) days that the

festival runs.

There is no rebuilding over the weekends, and there is flexibility on the number of days you may wish to work, should you be available for fewer. We have funding from Awards from All Scotland to cover four full-time supervisors, 8 part-time, or a mix of the two.

**Festival Crew** - SheepFest relies on a happy, friendly team of faces who our volunteers can turn to with a question or advice on what to see and do on the island during their stay. The Festival Crew will be on hand after "building hours", with responsibilities such as overseeing the smooth running of workshops, talks and activities. Crew will be paid £10 an hour, with funding from Voluntary Action Orkney and the Lennox Hannay Charitable Fund, and available for between 1-2hrs per day. There are 4 positions available. Crew is the perfect position for anybody looking for low-hours involvement in the festival, who likes meeting and chatting to new people, or for young folk who might want to make some extra money over their holiday. You will also receive your very own Festival Crew t-shirt.

If you are interested in applying, or would like to know more about either position, please contact Kate via email at [sheepfest2022@gmail.com](mailto:sheepfest2022@gmail.com)

Finally - we are also looking for a driver(s) to taxi volunteers to rebuilding sites. If you have wheels and would like to earn some money for using them, please contact Kate to discuss, at the email above.

The North Ronaldsay Sheep Festival, and our umbrella charity The Orkney Sheep Foundation, would like to thank all our sponsors for their ongoing and generous support for SheepFest'22.



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## Bird Observatory Update

### Sightings

By George Gay, Bird Warden

It's been a pretty good start to the year at the Bird Obs with early migrants such as Wheatears and Chiffchaff arriving 'as scheduled' and the former is now starting to set up breeding territories around the island. We performed our first of two Tystie censuses on 2nd April and recorded a new island record of 1145 birds around the coast. A trio of Short-eared Owls spent nearly a week hanging around Hooking and Peckhole in the long grass while multiple Merlins have been making the most of the arriving Pied Wagtails and Meadow Pipits. On the ringing side of things we've caught two exciting foreign controls, a Chiffchaff ringed in Gedser in Denmark and a Redwing that was ringed outside of Reykjavik in Iceland both give a small indication of where the islands migrants are arriving from. Things are looking exciting for the week ahead and we're hoping to add more to our yearlist as the month progresses.



*Snow Bunting*



*Wren*



*Short-Eared Owl*

### Meet the New Staff

#### Felicia Brady

##### Volunteer



Hello there! My name is Felicia Brady, I'm 23 years old and was born in Bad Homburg, Germany. I spent all of my childhood and teenage years going to school in my hometown but was quick to leave after graduation. Just after New Year's in 2018, I jumped on a plane to Narrm (so-called Melbourne) to stay on the other side of the planet for the next 2 ½ years of my life. I spent those years well, volunteering with WOTCH and GECO amongst others, two forest conservation groups that operate in the mesmerising eucalyptus forests that cover the Central Highlands and East Gippsland of so-called Victoria. A few people there were keen birders and that's where I must've caught the bug. In July 2020, I was up for a change of pace and left the forest to move back to Germany – this time to live on the East Frisian island of Spiekeroog in the Wadden Sea, located just off the North-West coast of Germany. On that beautiful island, I counted all migratory waders and wildfowl every two weeks with just one other volunteer. In spring to early summer we spent fantastic never-ending days in the field to collect data for Lower Saxony's governmental bird conservation organisation breeding birds program.

Finishing up my year-long volunteer work there, I decided to do some island hopping and gain some bird ringing experience on Heligoland. After briefly hopping back to Spiekeroog and visiting my parents on the German mainland, I arrived on North Ronaldsay on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February. Being lucky enough to stay at NRBO for the whole season, I am hoping to grow the depth of my ornithological knowledge while here. Although birding has taken up a considerable amount of my time recently, I do enjoy plenty of other things just as much. For instance, I am known to go for the occasional run and for sneaking off to practice playing the clarinet. Every now and again, I might even pick up pen and paper or a brush and some watercolours to dabble in the arts. In any case, I look forward to spending many excellent months on North Ronaldsay.

## **Viviana Biazzo**

### **Housekeeper**

Hi there! I'm Viviana and I'm from South Italy. I moved to London in early 2012, with the mindset it was never going to be my permanent residence. Well, it took me 10 years - and a pandemic wrecking havoc on my former career path - to push me into a change.

I've always been a keen wildlife photographer, but the free time gained during the Covid pandemic gave me the opportunity to get full on immersed into the bird world.

After getting a First honour degree in Media Management and doing some part time work to get through the past few years, I finally decided to make the big jump and so here I am at the North Ronaldsay Bird Observatory, where I'll be spending the whole 2022 season by both doing housekeeping work and volunteering to hone my bird knowledge.

After that is still shrouded in mystery, but I look forward to the next months and hope to capture and share the beauty of the island at the best of my ability.



## **Aidan Branch**

### **Assistant Warden**

Hi, I'm Aidan, I'm 23 and I am the Assistant Warden at the Bird Observatory for the 2022 season. My passion for ornithology started at my local nature reserve RSPB Leighton Moss, Lancashire, where a school trip when I was 12 got me intrigued and wanting to learn more. Since my passion began, I have been lucky enough to travel to over 40 countries in the pursuit of birds and other wildlife however for the last 2 years I was working and living in Canada, working as a research assistant/ assistant bander all over the country from British Columbia to Ontario.

I had never been to the Orkney Isles before taking the position, but North Ronaldsay has blown me away (not just with the weather....) but the outstanding beauty, amazing wildlife and the friendliest residents and I look forward to getting to know you all individually over the course of my time here.



*Aidan in Jasper, AB, Canada whilst looking for Ptarmigan*

# Transition North Ronaldsay - Progress Update

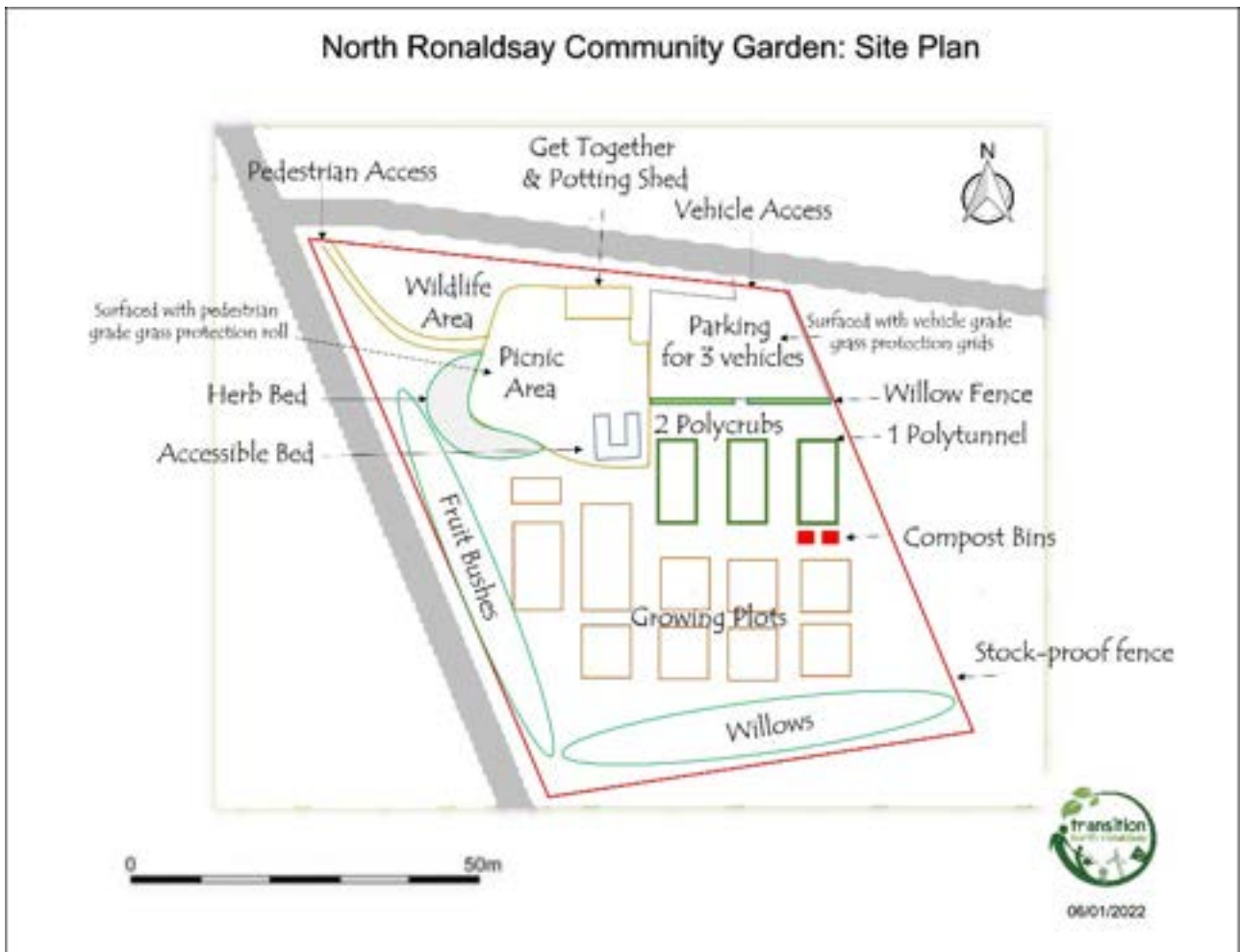
By Olly Gibb, Milldam

## Community Garden



We're excited to announce we were granted planning permission to go ahead with the Community Garden this Summer. Alex was also successful in securing a grant from Volunteer Action Orkney for a large shed to be used for potting up and socialising on windy days. We are pleased to be collaborating with OrkneyLORA and testing out some of their innovative products.

We are making good progress with the garden. The polytunnel is up and an outside growing area has been fenced



## Plant and Share Event

On Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May we held a Plant and Share Event at the Community Garden as part of a national celebration of home grown foods. The weather was mild and we had a convivial turn out of 19 people aged from 4 to 95. In addition to plenty of chatting, tea and coffee drinking we made newspaper plant pots, transplanted seedlings, watered plants and dug over more of the garden.



*Charlotte, Edie, Benji, Olly, Louis, Chris, Liz, Jean, Anne and Rex*



*James and Chris*



**JOIN OUR TEAM**  
**OPEN POSITION:**  
 Gardener

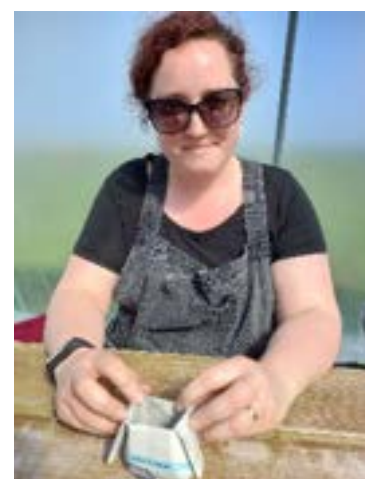
**TO FIND OUT MORE AND APPLY PLEASE EMAIL:**  
 transition.northron@gmail.com

**OR HEAD TO THE WEBSITE:**

The deadline for applications is May 31st



*Daryl, Louis, June and Malcolm*



*Charlotte*

## Beach Plastic Recycling Project

With Spring upon us the recycling project has taken a backseat to the Community Garden. The equipment has been installed but unfortunately the shredder has wiring problems which has presented difficulties. However, we are pleased to announce that funding for the creation of a Plastic Warden job has been successfully granted by the Highlands and Islands Environmental Foundation and the post will soon be advertised.



*Electric Vehicle consultation at the Community Centre and the Nissan Leaf from Co Wheels*

## Electric Vehicle (EV) Chargepoint

This project partnered us with Community Energy Scotland to gather information from the community to find out where folk would most like an EV chargepoint. Thank you to those who took part in the survey and came to the consultation. The Airport was a strong favourite and we will be looking into this in the future. It is our hope this would pave the way for an Electric Community Vehicle as it has done on other islands in Orkney.

We also tested out the Car Club for 2 weeks, with a Nissan Leaf from Co Wheels, to encourage the uptake of EV's on North Ronaldsay. It is brilliant that at present, and probably for some years, North Ronaldsay has one of the highest ratios of Electric Vehicles per person in Orkney and perhaps in the whole of the UK!

We hope to share the information we have gained from CES regarding grid connections and EV Chargers, please do get in touch if you are interested in installing a charger at home.



*Starlings have been displaying well this spring. Birds on the wires by Ingrid Tulloch, Purtabreck*

## Sid Ogilvie 1940 - 2022

By Anne Ogilvie, Currister



Sid was born 8th July 1940 in Newcastle. He was the youngest of 5 siblings.

On completion of his apprenticeship as a terrazzo tiler Sid travelled the country before settling down in London after marrying his first wife, Rashida, with whom he had 3 children, Tanvia, Richard and James.

In his early 30's he had to give up terrazzo laying which had caused problems with his back and knees. He was persuaded to study to become a teacher of history.

After his divorce from Rashida he met and married Anne and they moved to Yorkshire where Sid renovated 2 houses in his spare time. He retired from teaching when he was 50 due to ill health and he and Anne moved to North Ronaldsay where they bought the general store at Roadside which Sid proceeded to turn into a pub and b and b.

He loved living in North Ronaldsay, the natural history, the human history, the semi- communal farming of sheep, the people and the beauty of the island.

Sid was a man of many parts, artist, woodcarver, poet and writer of stories and pantomimes, the last of which he completed shortly before his death.

In recent years he suffered from ill health, and hated the fact that he wasn't able to be his normal busy self.

### Memories of my Uncle Sid

by Karen Laws, Screenwriter

When I spoke to Tanvia and asked her what we should say about her Dad today, the first thing she mentioned was his singing. It was the first thing I'd thought of too. He had a beautiful voice. He sang at parties and family gatherings and at Christmas. So our childhood was filled with his songs.

Twice a year, every Summer and Christmas holidays, Sid, Rashida, Tanvia, Richard, Jimmy and the dog would pile into Sid's car and he'd drive up to us in Newcastle. They'd stay for weeks at a time. It was the highlight of my year. I lived in Walker, with my Nanna, Mam, Auntie Doris and Uncle Tommy. For those weeks the house would be filled with the noise of everybody talking and squabbling and the dog barking and us kids running around. And at New Year, Sid would sing. And everyone would fall silent and listen.

Once a year we'd go up the coast to Amble. Tanvia reminded me of rainy days in a tiny caravan. Sid entertaining 4 kids under 10, getting us to draw pictures or paint stones and pebbles. He was patient and practical and creative. My best wedding present many years later was a wood carving he did. It's one of my most prized possessions and I boast about him to everyone who visits.

All 4 of us remember those wonderful holidays. All of us at some time have re-visited those places of our childhood. Long days on the beach exploring rock pools. Or castles. Or museums. Everywhere we went he knew about the stuff we were looking at. He could explain the world to a child. But he also made us laugh. And when he talked about politics, (which he did often in those days), we didn't understand a word. But we did understand it was about compassion and fairness. He'd grown up in the West End of Newcastle. The youngest of 5. And he was determined to transform those tough early years into something positive. (Though his siblings did remember years later how he would deliberately do the washing up very badly so he'd never be asked again, much to their annoyance).

I can't possibly sum up what he meant to us. All I can do today is give you 3 snapshots.

One is a holiday in Northumberland. It's the early '70s. A hot day. We're all walking through heather on our way back from a waterfall. Suddenly the dog jumps and yelps, a black mark on its neck. It's been bitten by an adder. Sid picks it up and runs to the car. We're all terrified the dog's going to die. But he gets it to the vet, just in time.

The second snapshot is a rainy day in Northumberland. It's a few years later. We kids are standing round a muddy bog, watching a terrified sheep gasp for air. We watch Sid pull it out of the dirt. It takes him forever. He's exhausted but he won't

give up. And eventually he does it. The sheep runs off. He's covered in mud. And he stinks. But we're proud of him. He's our hero.

The third is a couple of years after that. A sunny day on a beach in Alnmouth. We've been playing all day. We're sunburnt and happy. And we haven't noticed the tide coming in. Before we know what's happened, we're cut off on a separate part of the beach. Totally stranded. Sid carries each one of us to safety, wading ever deeper into the incoming tide. By the end it's up to his waist. And then us, safe on the other side, laughing, oblivious to the terrible danger we've all just been in, unaware how close we came to tragedy.

I used to walk behind him on the beach and try to get my feet in his footsteps in the sand. I guess to some extent I've always been doing that. Tanvia said she hasn't heard him sing for years. Neither have I. But today, without him, we can feel the empty silence he's left behind. We loved him. And our hearts are broken.

## **A letter to Anne**

**From Howie Firth**

Dear Anne

I am so sorry to hear the sad news. Sid was someone who was always such a pleasure to meet, with his warmth and good humour, and he always seemed to find so much to enjoy in life, whether out for a walk along the shore or carving wood or helping a project in the community.

It was amazing how much he knew, and I remember one evening when a group of Norwegian students came to the island with a very catchy song, Sid listened and came up with the words, which were wonderful, about "the man who waters the workers' beer". He was the only person I have ever come across who knew the song and the words.

He had such a joy in life and there was a feeling of contentment about him, and of feeling at home, and he seemed to put that enjoyment into everything he did.

I do think that when good people pass on, the good and the warmth and the brightness that they put into the world continues after them, through the memories of them and also through all the kindness and help and encouragement that they have put into the lives of those around them. George Mackay Brown expressed this so well when he wrote:

"I have a deep-rooted belief that what has once existed can never die: not even the frailest things, spindrift or clover-scent or glitter of star on a wet stone. All is gathered into the web of creation, that is apparently established and yet perhaps only a dream in the eternal mind; and yet, too, we work at the making of it with every word and thought and action of our lives."

With deepest sympathies to you, and warmest thoughts and happiest memories of Sid

Howie

## **Pantomimes**

**By Anne Ogilvie**

For a few years now I had been thinking of putting all Sid's Pantomimes together to make a book of them for Sid's birthday present. I knew he would be thrilled to have an actual book published of some of his writings, something he did more and more as he became less physically active.

I was deterred by the size of the task knowing that I would have to type out all of the pantos again as those copies we had were all well used and, to be frank, in a mess! I happened to mention the idea to Alex who immediately became enthusiastic and so, with her help, we mapped out the tasks to be done to get a book of sixteen or so pantos published. We are now well on the way to completing the revision of the pantomimes, those already performed and the two yet to be staged. If anyone has any photos, scripts, anecdotes, videos etc we'd be very happy to know of them and use them for the book. We will, of course, make one available for the archives and if anyone would like a copy, then we'll make those available too. All profits to go towards future island ventures. I know that Sid would be so happy to be remembered in this way.

## First Calf at Mildam since 1986

By Olly Gibb, Mildam

On a bleak and blustery evening in early March Benji cycled from the Bird Obs to Milldam to help with the evening rounds. I was away on a Fire Service course and Sian was down South to pick up goats, but Mango the Jersey cow was due to calve in April, so the vets said...

Benji diligently fed and watered the menagerie in miserable conditions. As he finished, he spied something behind a pallet of fencing stabs. Despite what must have been a strong urge to pedal home to a warm room in the hostel he investigated.

He peeped round to discover a tiny ginger calf sprawled on the ground, getting buffeted by the winds. He called in the reinforcements and Alex chugged up the road with a torch and distant cow-care memories from her childhood on a beef and dairy farm. Together they lifted the calf and coerced the mum into the byre and out of the raging winds. The piglets had to be evicted from their snug barn and its heat lamp, to make way for the calf and mum. They were re-homed after extensive electric fence rearrangements, which in high winds is akin to eating noodles with chopsticks while riding a bike, something Benji would probably excel at.

With no sign of the wee calf suckling from her mum, Alex and Benji salvaged an old wine bottle, filled it with colostrum milked from Mango and fed that to calf. Then they watched and waited. 1 hour became 8 and humans and coos slept (or tried to!) together on the straw in the byre until morning broke and the calf suckled at last.

With relief we shared the news on social media and learnt that Apricot, a Jersey/Shorthorn cross, was the first calf born at Milldam since 1986. The mum/calf pair are happy and healthy and we are extremely grateful to have friends who saved the day with their time and efforts. We hope to repay them with bottles of fresh milk for many years to come.



## Dark Skies Update

By Alex Wright, Breckan



The Dark Skies Walk on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May was our very enjoyable local contribution to the International Dark Skies Week, which in traditional North Ronaldsay style, we put on slightly late due to weather conditions. We began at the Bird Observatory by watching a video from the International Dark Skies Association called “Losing the Dark” which is a good introduction to Dark Skies. It highlights the various problems caused by the overuse of lighting, such as waste of energy, disruptions to natural

processes, damage to human health and the loss of the beauty and wonder of a dark night.

I showed the attendees how to use the Sky Light Metre and the recording form. We need to take readings at least twice a year to maintain our Dark Skies Status, so it is important that several people know how and where to do this. The monitoring places are 1) Bird Obs, 2) Standing Stane, 3) Old Kirk, 4) New Kirk, 5) Nether Linnay and 6) Community Centre car park.

We then set off into the fog for a walk to all the monitoring points except the Community Centre. Conditions were not perfect for the light measuring as it was both foggy (should be clear skies) and also a week or so too late for recording as the sun had not dipped far enough below the horizon to reach true astronomical darkness.



An advantage of walking in the fog was that the island lights were well defined. The new down lights at the pier, installed in December could clearly be seen to be working (see photo above). Their light cast a tight cone downwards where the light is needed, rather than lighting up the sky above.

We concluded our walk with a drive up to the lighthouse, which is truly awe inspiring in the fog and Viviana took this fantastic photo. The lighthouse can feel like a odd addition to a Dark Skies Island but the beams are not directed up to the sky and the splendid darkness of North Ronaldsay make the show from the beams even more spectacular.



## Greetings from Stronsay

By Louise McQuaid, Project Officer, Stronsay Development Trust



Hello North Ronaldsay! For those of you who didn't meet me at the science weekend, I'm Louise. I have recently started working with Stronsay Development Trust in collaboration with the North Isles Natural Wellbeing Project. I must admit, if it wasn't for this new job, I probably wouldn't have endured the expedition from Stronsay with two ferries, two planes, and two overnight stops to travel 10 miles as the crow flies! But despite Isles logistics, I'm glad I did and met so many wonderful, accommodating people and learned how different life really is between the two islands.

My role is to set up initiatives to promote community wellbeing by using nature and the geography to work with the five pillars of wellbeing: connect with other people, be physically active, learn new skills, give to others, pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness). At the end of the 18-month project, they would like a toolkit that the North Isles could utilise to replicate events or activities that have been completed successfully. I'm not here to come and bring in new ideas that you don't want! What is important is to forge the links between the North Isles so we can share information and where something has been successful, tap into each other's hard work and knowledge and use it to benefit other rural and isolated communities.

When I interviewed for the job, I did say that my way of working was to make links by getting out and meeting folk because you find out so much more from having a chat than being an anonymous person behind an email. Saturday evening at the Bird Observatory I enjoyed Dr Jenni's talk followed by an informal chat with everyone who was there; everything from hauliers, to how do we do shopping, what are the monks up to, and how come there is a Laird's house here, because we don't have one on Stronsay! A real eye opener for me.

I am really looking forward to coming back to North Ron. Everyone at the Bird Observatory was so accommodating and welcoming and it really was lovely to meet some of you driving me around the island, tackling slippery seaweed rocks together and having a good old chat! I hope to meet more of you in the future.



*"Striding high there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing in his ecstasy!"*

From "The Windhover" by Gerard Manley Hopkins

Jean Tulloch and Anne Ogilvie, regular Paths for All Health Walkers. Join them every Saturday 11:30. Contact Alex or Olly for more information. 07809770082

# Joycie and Zara's Voyage from Wester Ross to North Ronaldsay

Photos by June Purvis, Bewan



## North Ronaldsay Movie Night

Community Centre

Monthly - Doors open at 7pm for 7:30 Start

Refreshments available from Robin's tuck shop

Free entry, Everyone Welcome

Contact Chris for more information 07393190078



## Rolly's Pizza Night

Home-made pizza on North Ronaldsay

Every Tuesday

FREE delivery around North Ronaldsay

Call, Text or Whatsapp

07538321720



Deliveries are allocated first come first serve within 30 min time slots from 5pm to 7:30pm, special requests always considered

Payment by cash, paypal or card

# COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2022

## NORTH RONALDSAY

Community Council elections are due to happen this June/July. Community Councils have a consultative role, and feed back information to Orkney Islands Council about local matters. They also help to administer council funds at a local level, which are used to support community projects, voluntary groups, tourism ventures, kirkyard maintenance and community halls.

Any individual aged 16 and over may stand for election for the Community Council representing their home address, providing they are on the Electoral Register.

The election is carried out by postal ballot using an alternative voting system, details of which are shown below. Papers are due to be issued to households on Friday, 24 June 2022 and should be returned to Orkney Islands Council no later than 5pm on **Monday, 11 July 2022**.

It is hoped that current members will consider standing for re-election and that others who are interested in standing for election are encouraged to do so. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Community Council Liaison Officer on [communitycouncils@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:communitycouncils@orkney.gov.uk) or by telephone 873535 ext. 2264.

### ALTERNATIVE ELECTORAL VOTING SYSTEM

Orkney Islands Council agreed to implement an alternative method for the election of Community Councils in areas with less than 150 individuals on the electoral register for that area. Voters will be asked to enter up to seven names of individuals they wish to have elected to North Ronaldsay Community Council.

The returned ballot papers are opened in the Council Offices, under the supervision of the Returning Officer. The total number of votes cast for each individual will be counted and the seven individuals with the highest number of votes will each be invited to serve as a member of the Community Council.

In the event of there being an equality of votes among the number of candidates at any stage of the proceedings, in accordance with the usual practice, the choice of the person to be invited to serve will be drawn by lot in the presence of the Returning Officer.

It is important to note that, as no member of the community has been officially asked, or agreed, to serve on North Ronaldsay Community Council, it may well be the case that one or more of those who obtain the highest number of votes may decline. If any individuals should decline an invitation to become a member of the Community Council, those with the next highest number of votes cast in their favour will be invited to serve on the Community Council and this procedure will continue until the requisite number of Community Councillors is reached. To avoid any potential embarrassment, the number of votes cast for any individual will only be disclosed if they agree to serve on North Ronaldsay Community Council and after the requisite number of Community Councillors has been reached. Confirmation that any individual will become a Community Council member will only be given when his/her agreement has been received by Orkney Islands Council in writing.

A list of those who have agreed to serve on North Ronaldsay Community Council will be published as soon as possible, but there may be some delay if any of the individuals who receive the highest number of votes should be unreachable or decide to decline an invitation to serve on the Community Council.

20 February 2022 to 29 October 2022

		Monday									
Notes											
Flight Number	LM	700	702	703	704	705	706	707			
KIRKWALL	dep	07:35	08:40	09:40	10:50	15:30	16:30	17:30			
Eday	arr										
	dep										
Stronsay	arr		09:49								
	dep		09:56								
Sanday	arr		10:01			16:43					
	dep		10:08			16:50					
Westray	arr		08:55								
	dep		09:02								
Papa Westray	arr		09:04		15:45						
	dep		09:11		15:52						
Westray	arr		15:54		16:01						
	dep										
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52		11:07			17:47				
	dep	07:59		11:14			17:54				
Papa Westray	arr			11:24							
	dep			11:31							
Eday	arr	08:09									
	dep	08:16									
Stronsay	arr						16:55				
	dep						17:02				
KIRKWALL	arr	08:26	09:26	10:21	11:46	16:16	17:11	18:11			

		Tuesday									
Flight Number	LM	701	708	709	719	710	711	707			
KIRKWALL	dep	07:35	08:30	09:30	10:30	15:30	16:30	17:30			
Eday	arr										
	dep										
Stronsay	arr		08:39								
	dep		08:46								
Sanday	arr		08:51		15:43						
	dep		08:58		15:50						
Westray	arr		09:45								
	dep		09:52								
Papa Westray	arr		09:54		10:45		16:45				
	dep		10:01		10:52		16:52				
Westray	arr		16:54				17:01				
	dep										
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52		11:02			17:47				
	dep	07:59		11:09			17:54				
Papa Westray	arr			11:09							
	dep			11:16							
Eday	arr	08:09									
	dep	08:16									
Stronsay	arr						15:55				
	dep						16:02				
KIRKWALL	arr	08:16	09:11	10:16	11:26	16:11	17:16	18:11			

		Wednesday									
Flight Number	LM	700	713	714	715	716	710	711	707	707	
KIRKWALL	dep	07:35	08:40	09:40	13:35	14:45	15:30	16:30	17:30	17:30	
Eday	arr									17:40	
	dep									17:47	
Stronsay	arr		08:49								
	dep		08:56								
Sanday	arr		09:01			15:43					
	dep		09:08			15:50					
Westray	arr		09:55								
	dep		10:00								
Papa Westray	arr		10:02			16:45					
	dep		10:09			16:52					
Westray	arr		16:54			18:54					
	dep					17:01					
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52		13:52			17:47	17:57			
	dep	07:59		13:59			17:54	18:04			
Papa Westray	arr			14:09							
	dep			14:16							
Eday	arr	08:09									
	dep	08:16									
Stronsay	arr						15:55				
	dep						16:02				
KIRKWALL	arr	08:26	09:21	10:24	14:31	15:12	16:11	17:16	18:11	18:21	

		Thursday									
Flight Number	LM	701	708	709	717	710	711	707			
KIRKWALL	dep	07:35	08:30	09:30	14:20	15:30	16:30	17:30			
Eday	arr										
	dep										
Stronsay	arr		08:39								
	dep		08:46								
Sanday	arr		08:51		15:43						
	dep		08:58		15:50						
Westray	arr		09:45								
	dep		09:52								
Papa Westray	arr		09:54		16:45						
	dep		10:01		16:52						
Westray	arr		16:54		18:54						
	dep				17:01						
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52		14:37			17:47				
	dep	07:59		14:44			17:54				
Papa Westray	arr			14:54							
	dep			15:01							
Eday	arr										
	dep										
Stronsay	arr						15:55				
	dep						16:02				
KIRKWALL	arr	08:16	09:11	10:16	15:16	16:11	17:16	18:11			

		Friday									
Flight Number	LM	701	708	709	719	710	711	707			
KIRKWALL	dep	07:35	08:30	09:30	14:20	15:30	16:30	17:30			
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52									
	dep	07:59									
Stronsay	arr		08:39								
	dep		08:46								
Sanday	arr		08:51		15:43						
	dep		08:58		15:50						
Westray	arr		09:45								
	dep		09:52								
Papa Westray	arr		09:54		14:35		16:45				
	dep		10:01		14:42		16:52				
Westray	arr		16:54				17:01				
	dep										
Eday	arr										
	dep										
Stronsay	arr						15:55				
	dep						16:02				
North Ronaldsay	arr						14:52				
	dep						14:59				
KIRKWALL	arr	08:16	09:11	10:16	15:16	16:11	17:16	18:11			

		Saturday									
Flight Number	LM	720	721	722	723	724					
KIRKWALL	dep	08:30	09:30	10:30	15:00	16:00					
North Ronaldsay	arr			10:47	15:17	16:17					
	dep			10:54	15:24	16:24					
Stronsay	arr		09:38								
	dep		09:46								
Sanday	arr		09:51								
	dep		09:59								
Westray	arr		08:45								
	dep		08:52								
Papa Westray	arr		08:54		16:34						
	dep		09:01		16:41						
Westray	arr										
	dep										
Eday	arr										
	dep										
Stronsay	arr										
	dep										
North Ronaldsay	arr										
	dep										
KIRKWALL	arr	09:16	10:11	11:11	15:41	16:56					

		Saturday Refit (26th Feb & 5th Mar)									
Flight Number	LM	722	723	724	725	726	727				
KIRKWALL	dep	08:00	09:10	10:20	14:00	15:00	16:05				
North Ronaldsay	arr										
	dep										
Stronsay	arr				15:09						
	dep				15:16						
Sanday	arr				10:33	15:21					
	dep				10:40	15:28					
Westray	arr				09:25						
	dep				09:32						
Papa Westray	arr				09:34	14:15					
	dep				09:41	14:22					
Westray	arr				14:24						
	dep				14:31						
Stronsay	arr						16:15				
	dep						16:22				
North Ronaldsay	arr										
	dep										
KIRKWALL	arr	08:51	09:56	11:01	14:46	15:41	16:56				

		Sunday									
Flight Number	LM	725	726	727							
KIRKWALL	dep	10:30	16:00	17:30							
North Ronaldsay	arr										



<b>Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b>		<b>Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b>		<b>Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b>	
Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0800	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0800	Kirkwall	dep 1030
Papa Westray	arr 1220	North Ronaldsay	arr 1040	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 1040	Papa Westray	arr 1220
Papa Westray	dep 1250	North Ronaldsay	dep 1110	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 1110	Papa Westray	dep 1250
North Ronaldsay	arr 1405	Kirkwall	arr 1350	Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1350	North Ronaldsay	arr 1405
North Ronaldsay	dep 1435			Papa Westray	dep 1525			North Ronaldsay	dep 1435
Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715
<b>Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022</b>		<b>Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022</b>		<b>Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022</b>	
Kirkwall	dep 0700	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0700	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0700
North Ronaldsay	arr 0940	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0940	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0940
North Ronaldsay	dep 1010	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 1010	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 1010
Kirkwall	arr 1250	Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1250	Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1240
		Papa Westray	dep 1525			Papa Westray	dep 1525		
		Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715		
<b>Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022</b>		<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022</b>		<b>Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022</b>	
Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0700	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0600	Kirkwall	dep 1030
North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0940	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0840	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310
North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 1010	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 0910	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340
Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1240	Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1150	Papa Westray	arr 1455
Papa Westray	dep 1525			Papa Westray	dep 1525			Papa Westray	dep 1525
Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715
<b>Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>		<b>Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>		<b>Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>	
Kirkwall	dep 0700	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0600	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0630
North Ronaldsay	arr 0940	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0840	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0910
North Ronaldsay	dep 1010	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 0910	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 0940
Kirkwall	arr 1240	Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1150	Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1220
		Papa Westray	dep 1525			Papa Westray	dep 1525		
		Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715		
<b>Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>		<b>Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>		<b>Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022</b>	
Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0600	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0600	Kirkwall	dep 1030
North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0840	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0840	Papa Westray	arr 1220
North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 0910	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 0910	Papa Westray	dep 1250
Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1150	Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1150	North Ronaldsay	arr 1405
Papa Westray	dep 1525			Papa Westray	dep 1525			North Ronaldsay	dep 1435
Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715
<b>Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2022**</b>		<b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022</b>		<b>Friday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2022</b>		<b>Friday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2022</b>	
Kirkwall	dep 0600	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0600	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0900
North Ronaldsay	arr 0840	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0840	Papa Westray	arr 1220	North Ronaldsay	arr 1140
North Ronaldsay	dep 0910	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 0910	Papa Westray	dep 1250	North Ronaldsay	dep 1210
Kirkwall	arr 1150	Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1150	North Ronaldsay	arr 1405	Kirkwall	arr 1450
		Papa Westray	dep 1525			North Ronaldsay	dep 1435		
		Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715		
<b>Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022</b>		<b>Friday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2022</b>		<b>Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b>	
Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0700	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0800	Kirkwall	dep 1030
North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0940	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 1040	Papa Westray	arr 1220
North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 1010	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 1110	Papa Westray	dep 1250
Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1250	Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1350	North Ronaldsay	arr 1405
Papa Westray	dep 1525			Papa Westray	dep 1525			North Ronaldsay	dep 1435
Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715
<b>Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b>		<b>Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b>		<b>Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b>		<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022</b>	
Kirkwall	dep 0600	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0800	Kirkwall	dep 1030	Kirkwall	dep 0600
North Ronaldsay	arr 0840	Papa Westray	arr 1220	North Ronaldsay	arr 1040	North Ronaldsay	arr 1310	North Ronaldsay	arr 0840
North Ronaldsay	dep 0910	Papa Westray	dep 1250	North Ronaldsay	dep 1110	North Ronaldsay	dep 1340	North Ronaldsay	dep 0910
Kirkwall	arr 1150	North Ronaldsay	arr 1405	Kirkwall	arr 1350	Papa Westray	arr 1455	Kirkwall	arr 1150
		North Ronaldsay	dep 1435			Papa Westray	dep 1525		
		Kirkwall	arr 1715			Kirkwall	arr 1715		

All North Ronaldsay and Papa Westray departures times are estimates and are subject to alteration due to cargo operations.  
 Sailings are all weather permitting and subject to confirmation the day before sailing.  
 All arrivals in Kirkwall subject to change due to cargo operations  
 \*\* Subject to change – Sanday Show

## Loading Times for the Summer Timetable

Tuesday 0800 -1000

Thursday 0800 - 1200

There will be some flexibility in the above times but this must be discussed and agreed in advance.

<p><b>15 May 2022</b></p> <p>Kirkwall dep 0920            Westray arr 1045                      dep 1055            Sanday arr 1145                      dep 1155            Eday arr 1215                   dep 1620            Sanday arr 1640                   dep 1650            Westray arr 1740                   dep 1800            Kirkwall arr 1925</p>	<p><b>22 May 2022</b></p> <p><b>Kirkwall</b> dep <b>0840</b>            Eday arr 0955                      dep 1005            Stronsay arr 1040                      dep 1050  <b>North Ronaldsay</b> arr <b>1220</b>                                  dep <b>1550</b>            Stronsay arr 1720                      dep 1740            Eday arr 1815                   dep 1825  <b>Kirkwall</b> arr <b>1940</b></p>	<p><b>29 May 2022</b></p> <p><b>Kirkwall</b> dep <b>0900</b>            Sanday arr 1025                      dep 1035  <b>Papa Westray</b> arr <b>1130</b>                                  dep 1140            Pierowall arr 1205                      dep 1550            Papa Westray arr 1615                      dep <b>1625</b>            Sanday arr 1720                   dep 1740  <b>Kirkwall</b> arr <b>1905</b></p>	<p><b>05 June 2022</b></p> <p><b>Kirkwall</b> dep <b>0920</b>            Westray arr 1045                      dep 1055  <b>North Ronaldsay</b> arr <b>1215</b>                                  dep <b>1620</b>            Westray arr 1740                   dep 1800  <b>Kirkwall</b> arr <b>1925</b></p>
<p><b>12 June 2022</b></p> <p>Kirkwall dep 0840            Eday arr 0955                      dep 1005            Stronsay arr 1040                      dep 1050            Westray arr 1210                   dep 1600            Stronsay arr 1720                   dep 1740            Eday arr 1815                   dep 1825            Kirkwall arr 1940</p>	<p><b>26 June 2022</b></p> <p><b>Kirkwall</b> dep <b>0900</b>            Sanday arr 1025                      dep 1035            Eday arr 1055                      dep 1105  <b>Papa Westray</b> arr <b>1220</b>                                  dep 1230            Pierowall arr 1255                      dep 1500            Papa Westray arr 1525                      dep <b>1535</b>            Eday arr 1650                   dep 1700            Sanday arr 1720                   dep 1740  <b>Kirkwall</b> arr <b>1905</b></p>	<p><b>03 July 2022</b></p> <p><b>Kirkwall</b> dep <b>0900</b>            Sanday arr 1025                      dep 1035  <b>North Ronaldsay</b> arr <b>1155</b>                                  dep <b>1600</b>            Sanday arr <b>1720</b>                   dep 1740  <b>Kirkwall</b> arr <b>1905</b></p>	<p><b>10 July 2022</b></p> <p>Kirkwall dep 0840            Eday arr 0955                      dep 1005            Stronsay arr 1040                      dep 1050            Sanday arr 1125                   dep 1645            Stronsay arr 1720                   dep 1740            Eday arr 1815                   dep 1825            Kirkwall arr 1940</p>
<p><b>17 July 2022</b></p> <p><b>Kirkwall</b> dep <b>0920</b>            Westray arr 1045                      dep 1055  <b>North Ronaldsay</b> arr <b>1215</b>                                  dep <b>1620</b>            Westray arr 1740                   dep 1800  <b>Kirkwall</b> arr <b>1925</b></p>	<p><b>24 July 2022</b></p> <p><b>Kirkwall</b> dep <b>0840</b>            Eday arr 0955                      dep 1005            Stronsay arr 1040                      dep 1050  <b>Papa Westray</b> arr <b>1225</b>                                  dep 1235            Pierowall arr 1300                      dep 1510            Papa Westray arr 1535                      dep <b>1545</b>            Stronsay arr 1720                   dep 1740            Eday arr 1815                   dep 1825  <b>Kirkwall</b> arr <b>1940</b></p>	<p><b>31 July 2022</b></p> <p><b>Kirkwall</b> dep <b>0900</b>            Sanday arr 1025                      dep 1035  <b>North Ronaldsay</b> arr <b>1155</b>                                  dep <b>1600</b>            Sanday arr 1720                   dep 1740  <b>Kirkwall</b> arr <b>1905</b></p>	



## Westness Update

By Jack Straw, Breckan and Westness



As the light returns to the isles once again, I am pleased to bring you the latest news from Westness.

After the first twelve months spent tidying up the croft we (actually Dan Elves from Papay Westray and his peedie digger), created numerous shallow scrapes for wading birds, these were mainly in the area of land known as "the mire". The mire - as its name suggests - was always wet, an attempt had been made many years ago to drain it but those drains had clogged up long ago. Dan came out to the island at the beginning of November and spent an extremely rainy week digging out the scrapes.

That was excitement enough before Christmas, after the holiday break, Alex and I, helped by two other islanders, got on with putting up a one kilometre long grazing fence along the southern side of the Westness land, this includes ten gateways to allow easy access for all on foot. We began the fencing at the beginning of January and finally completed the job at the end of March. As soon as the fence was up, the five Shetland Cattle were given access to lightly graze the whole thirty acre site. Many thanks to NILPS for funding the work and for the RSPB for organising and advising us.



*Wader scrapes in the sunshine. The edges have been made muddy by the cows and provide soft ground for wading birds to feed in.*



*Shetland cows are well suited to conservation grazing projects and it supports a rare breed. The cow on the right is wearing a "No-Fence" collar which will allow precise control over the grazing areas*



**Welcome to Westness... We have baby birds!**

**Please do visit, but please avoid the red area**

 Lapwing

 Oystercatcher

 Curlew

 Snipe

 Redshank



 Black Headed Gull

 Common Gull

 Shoveler

 Teal

 Eider

**Please keep dogs on leads**



By James Wilson, Quoybanks

The North Ronaldsay Science Festival took place on the weekend of the 18th-20th March. We held last year's festival online, which was an interesting challenge, but this year we were keen to return to an in-person event- and it was a huge success! It was so lovely to have people visiting from other islands again. In total we had 33 people in attendance.

There was a strong shore theme running through the festival itinerary, with intertidal walks, rock pool investigations, beach litter surveying, and shore sketching sessions. We also had some wonderful talks on snorkeling excursions, round the world flights, marine non-native species monitoring, and a new Orkney based tech business Orkney LORA.

Most of the daytime events were held outside, right on the shore line. The 40 –50 mph winds were par for the course, but it was lovely, sunny and dry, which was better than we had hoped for!

We are grateful to the North Ronaldsay Bird Observatory for hosting the lunchtime events, evening talks, and for accommodating the guest speakers and attendees.

Another massive thank you must go to the funders of the festival- NILPS and British Science Association.

I organised all the shore events this year as part of my position as a Community Leader, a scheme run by the British Science Association. I was given support and several full-day training sessions, as well as some funding to make my ideas a reality.

My project aim is to help engage Orkney people with the wonderful wildlife of the shoreline. Over the next year or so, I am planning to visit other Orkney islands with similar shore events. I will be reaching out to community members from other islands, but if interested, please contact me at [j.wilson987654321@gmail.com](mailto:j.wilson987654321@gmail.com).

In the meantime, please enjoy reading about the events!

### North Ronaldsay Science Festival

Edited by Sue Taylor from writings by *Jack Straw, Louis Craigie, Benji Flemming, Henry Memmott, Louise McQuaid, Hannah Roe, Daryl McLeod and Anne Ogilvie*

A good crowd of 22 islanders and visitors heard Katy Firth and Holly Peek relate their **snorkelling** experiences in the sub-tidal zone round Orkney's coastline, with tales of kelp forests, swimming through blockships and face-to-face octopus encounters. Then Robert Foden gave a captivating detailed talk about the **world's first circumnavigation flight** which took place via Orphir almost 100 years ago in 1924.



Next morning, we were off on a **tour of Westness croft** to learn about its history both recent and distant. Contemporary highlights were the fast progression of the new fence, and the well contained cows, who are grazing the land to improve the area for wildlife.

*Gathered for the tour of Westness*

In the afternoon, we moved on to a **sheltered shore survey** of the intertidal zone. Islander James Wilson explained the differences in temperature and salinity which organisms face, and we identified species with the help of Dr Jenni Kakkonen, marine environmental scientist from Orkney Marine Services. The kids enjoyed slipping on the seaweed, and a highlight was finding a small group of hermit crabs.



After supper, Jenni Kakkonen talked about **coastal non-native species monitoring**, a way to identify if or when invasive species have made their way to our waters, either by currents or on visiting vessels. Those big red buoys that appear in Orkney seas over summer are there for taking scrape samples. Interestingly, non-native does not necessarily equate to being invasive.

*Dr Jenni Kakkonen*

Sunday morning began with a **marine litter survey** down at the beach. Samples were taken, and the results will be added to a national database to help inform scientists about the extent of marine litter in different parts of the UK. We all trudged back up the beach, tired, but happy that we'd battled the wind to do something important for our marine environment.



After lunch, James and Jenni took us out to the exposed shore by Lurand and we all tried our hand at a few **field sketches**, such as dulse, limpets and rockweed (*fucus distichus* - left), a seaweed found for the first time on North Ronaldsay.

On Sunday evening, we watched three excellent new videos by Sian Tarrant about **island innovations**, including scrapes to encourage birds, mob grazing (keeping animals in small areas of grazing and moving frequently to encourage plant growth and diversity), and the exciting no-fence system, whereby animals wear an electronic collar to prevent them overstepping the mark.

The final presentation was about islander Chris Kerslake's business **OrkneyLORA**, a new technology with investment opportunities that allows long-distance low-cost transmission of data, promising to enable people from the isle and beyond to connect to the "internet of things".

# First Circumnavigation of the World

By Louise Craigie, Lochend



Robert Foden gave a captivating detailed talk during the Science Festival weekend on North Ronaldsay on the 18<sup>th</sup> March, about the world's first circumnavigation flight which took place almost 100 years ago in 1924. After the talk there was a video shown of photographs as well as real video footage taken from different steps of the journey.

There were several unsuccessful attempts made by many nationalities around this time including the Argentinians, the Portuguese, the French, the Italians and the British. But it was the Americans who first succeeded. The American expedition was well organised and had almost unlimited funding. Spare parts were positioned at certain stopovers around the world including engines, pontoons and enough parts of airframe to make two complete aircraft. There were also support vessels positioned at various locations throughout the world along the planned route of the flight. A few possible models of aircraft were considered for the expedition. Eventually it was decided to use a converted torpedo bomber called the Douglas World Cruiser. Five were converted including one prototype used for testing. Each plane would carry 2 men and were numbered one to four and also named after cities in the United States.



They were as follows:

- “Seattle” with Major Frederick Martin and Alva Harvey.
- “Chicago” with Lt Lowell Smith and Leslie Arnold.
- “Boston” with 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Leigh Wade and SSgt Henry Ogden.
- “New Orleans” with Lt Erik Nelson and Lt John Harding Jr.

*Robert's model of a Douglas World Cruiser*

The planes had no radio or compass or any form of navigational equipment. Men had to rely on their own skills of dead reckoning.

The 4 planes departed Santa Monica, California to Seattle which would be their official starting point on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 1924. They set off following the coastline north into Canada then into Alaska. During their flight over Alaska “Seattle” blew a 3 inch hole in the engine's crankcase and had to make an emergency landing. A new engine was fitted and “Seattle” continued on till for 5 days when the plane then crashed in dense fog. The crew survived and then walked for 6 days till they found shelter and then rescued.

The remaining 3 planes continued on over the Aleutian Islands and then to Bering Island, Soviet Union to which their stopover was rather short as they saw men arriving by boat with guns! Their journey continued to Tokyo, Japan to where they were received a warm welcome. Then it onwards to Korea followed by Haiphong, Vietnam. Enroute to Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon). “Chicago's” engine broke a connecting rod and was forced to land about 25 miles from the former Imperial capital city of Hue. “Chicago” was then towed to the harbour in Hue by three paddle powered Sampons for over 10 hours! A new engine shipped up from Ho Chi Minh City was then fitted.

The aeroplanes then continued on to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, then to Thailand, Burma and Calcutta, India. While in Calcutta, Lt Lowell Smith fell while walking after dinner one night and broke a rip but insisted he was ok

to carry on with the expedition. En route to Karachi, Pakistan, “New Orleans” engine began to fail but managed to limp on with intermittent power to the city for repairs.



Douglas World Cruiser No. 3 "Boston" at anchor in Houton Bay.

Their journey continued through the Middle East and then into Europe, arriving in Paris on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 1924 which is Bastille Day, France’s National Day to which there were a lot of people out celebrating. Departing Paris they flew onwards to London, then Brough, East Yorkshire to the former Blackburn Aircraft factory and airfield for an overhaul. Then three planes then flew on northwards into Scotland and to Orkney.

“Chicago”, “Boston” and “New Orleans” arrived at Houton, Orkney on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1924. The men were greeted by crowds of

hundreds of people. While in Orkney they enjoyed a boat trip around Scapa Flow viewing the scuttled ships of the German Navy. They were delayed in leaving Orkney to Iceland due to thick fog for several days. Then when they eventually did take off, “New Orleans” became separated from the other two planes. “Boston” and “Chicago” decided to turn back to Orkney where they dropped a message inside a canister about the missing plane. The canister landed on top of what is now Harbour Fry. Unbeknown to the crew of “Boston” and “Chicago”, “New Orleans” had made it successfully to Iceland. However while “New Orleans” had made it, “Boston” was forced down into the sea due to an oil pump failure between Orkney and the Faroe Islands. “Chicago” then flew on to the Faroe Islands to where they dropped a note onto the USS Richmond. The USS Richmond then sailed to the site of the crashed plane. The men in “Boston” luckily survived, however while attempting to tow the crashed plane to the Faroe Islands it capsized and the decision was made to sink the aircraft as it would be a hazard to shipping.

The two remaining aircraft continued flying along Iceland’s coastline to the capital Reykjavik. There the crew met the crew of another expedition attempting the same journey around the world led by an Italian called Antonio Locatelli. “Chicago” and “New Orleans” then flew on for what would be their longest leg of their journey to Greenland.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> August the aeroplanes reached Labrador, Canada after a fuel pump failure on “Chicago.” The crew managed to arrive there though after hand pumping the fuel for 4 hours! From then on they flew to Nova Scotia to where they were joined by Wade and Ogden from the downed “Boston” with a new aircraft, the prototype which they called “Boston 2.” From then on they flew to Boston (the city) and then to various cities throughout the US before arriving in Seattle on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 1924. The journey took a total of 175 days and they had covered over 26,345 miles. Each aircraft had their engines changed 5 times and their wings twice.

The Douglas aircraft company adopted the motto “First around the World, First the World around.”



## News from the Looms

By Hellen Galland, Rue



So the new year is well under way and the looms have been clattering away. I was lucky enough to get a gift to enable me to purchase a brand spanking new table loom to replace to ancient one I bought online which was far from a joy to work with. This new loom has a fair width (width of cloth able to be woven) and 8, yes 8 shafts- that's 4 more than I've worked with before. And, unlike my lovely trustworthy floor loom, they are all independent so I can raise or lower as many or as few as I want.

So the first project on the new loom (after putting the thing together as it arrived flat packed, but thankfully the instructions were designed for idiots) was a waffle weave in North Ronaldsay hair yarn.

I've always wanted to have a go at this weave so it didn't disappoint, now I've completed the sample I'm itching to have a go at a much bigger version.

Since the Upholstery Course funded by Creative Scotland via the National Lottery, Orkney Islands Council and Highlands & Islands Enterprise I have a few UFOs (unfinished objects) so I set about in the dark of February to finally commit to completing them- a few upcycled items bought from Restart Orkney and a creepie made for me by the talented Billy Jollie. All North Ronaldsay hair yarn woven covers, with North Ronaldsay hair stuffing.



For initial projects I'm quite pleased at the outcome and the next step is getting fire regulation status on my fabrics. It should be standard as wool is naturally fire retardant, but I like to do these sort of things that affect the purchasing public, by the book, and not bypass rules and regulations (esp as a fire fighter!!) and then hopefully a line of matching items for the home will emerge from Studio Woolly Wally!!

Find Woolly Wally on Facebook and Instagram and at [www.woollywally.com](http://www.woollywally.com). [woollywally@gmail.com](mailto:woollywally@gmail.com)

# An Interview with Greg Whitton from Cloudnet Solutions



By Helen Galland, Rue

**Hi I'm Helen, your volunteer island Cloudnet representative. I'm here with Greg Whitton of Cloudnet Solutions. Hi Greg, tell us in a few sentences who you are and why Cloudnet came about?**

CloudNet was established in 2011 and we setup originally to provide Internet services to the hard-to-reach areas in and around Orkney. We setup in recognition that there was no alternative solutions and began building our networks in South Ronaldsay. We also looked at innovative ways to provide better Internet and we introduced TV Whitespace into rural areas, and also onto the North Isles ferries. This was a first in the world, and still provides Internet to-date.

CloudNet are a self funding company, and build the networks from the ground up. In terms of the Company, there are three principal partners in the company. Nikki Linklater, Trevor Spence and myself. All of which have worked together for 25 years and are very much a close nit family.

**So as a small family business you have been very busy over the last few years. Can you tell us what Cloudnet have been doing to date to deliver Internet to hard to reach places of Orkney?**

CloudNet have built up a reputation of delivering in very hard to reach areas over the years, and this demonstrates we understand what challenges there are in front of us, we have learnt more, and put in place practices to strengthen the networks. While we understand the issues, we do not have unlimited funds, yet we re-invest and strengthen the networks.

CloudNet has complimented its residential solutions, by developing innovative solutions and technologies. Primarily because of where we live and work.. We know the terrain is challenging. This said, we have worked with many reputable companies to help them understand the issues, and also to develop new technologies that ultimately we can then use here for our communities.

We have also worked alongside companies such as:- Faroe Telecoms, Cisco Systems, BEA Naval Systems, Royal Navy, Stenaline Ferries, Orkney Ferries, University of Strathclyde, UK Government, Scottish Government, NHS Scotland, Orkney Islands Council, Scottish Sea Farm, Stena Oil Rigs, HIAL and Prosafe Oil Rigs.

All of which we do not boast about, but we have a reputation that has gained industry recognition and credit for. This has allowed us to develop our networks to strengthen and build upon.

The CloudNet team have also been delivering Wireless solutions since 2001, and Fibre networks since 2014.

Orkney is not an easy area to build networks, and to connect to the Internet, is a challenge. If it was easy, then we all would have superfast broadband. CloudNet are small and local. We seek to deliver a personal service, and whilst we admit we can do better, we always commit to resolving problems, rectifying problems and doing what we can to give everyone the best service we can..

In comparison to BT, we look to local folk to help us resolve issues. Helen is a great example, whereby we ask Helen to triage and be first line support, to ensure we can resolve folks' problems if this is a single incident. We try to look at making sure we have support where we can to limit outages. As opposed to the major providers, we try to resolve in minutes and hours not days or weeks.. However, technology and problems can become out-with our control. It is important to recognise this and to also note that we use the same technology that all islands use for providing any comms solutions such as BT who use professional microwave equipment. We aim to ensure the links are as good as any network provider.

We also committed to providing the best solution we can. When we first developed our North Ronaldsay solution, we did this on limited budgets and fully invested in the island. When we developed the North Ronaldsay solution, the investment from a government perspective was only to provide the radio and router that went onto your homes. However, the main backhaul network to deliver the solution to North Ronaldsay was NOT government funded. This investment we had to do and in all honestly implement a solution to you whereby many did not pay for until we were confident we could deliver a solution at the time to the best of the networks abilities.

**That's fantastic and I'm sure a lot of people with previously poor or zero Internet access are feeling like they can finally communicate with the rest of the world, as now seems to be everyone right. But you**

## **haven't finished yet have you? What are the next steps towards even better Internet access that Cloudnet are taking?**

CloudNet have signed up to a number of Government Initiatives. Namely the R100 programme, and also the Scottish Government Fibre Charter Scheme. The Fibre Charter - we are one of only 5 companies in Scotland who have received this recognition, and stand tall alongside BT, CityFibre VirginMedia, whereby we commit to deliver to the same standard as these multi million pound companies do. This means the work we do is to an industry standard, and recognise at all levels and CloudNet aspire to provide the confidence in our communities that we know what is needed deliver it, and continue to build upon this and keep developing.

Secondly we are a supplier to the R100 programme that is to deliver broadband speeds of up to 30mbps. There is now significant investment available to allow us to build robust networks, and the only way to do this is by building fibre networks...

Why fibre? Well this is known as the gold standard. It is not affected by weather, electricity, lightning, and is a small strand of glass that provides communications into homes. Fibre is upgradeable and as a life time of 20 years +. It does not erode or deteriorate, unless the fibre is cut or dug up and can simply be rectified by joining back up again. Whilst the R100 programme provides funding for the wireless services, we want to make sure our communities get the best investment and technology they can to ensure the best service there is.

However, for the fibre programme to work, and make North Ronaldsay have a sustainable network will need the island to pull together and bridge the digital divide futureproofing the island with better communications. This programme need the Island to support the full fibre or it will be left behind. It cannot work if a few choose to have fibre delivered. It would not be cost effective to do for a few, because investment is needed and the Scottish Government will assist in delivering. It needs the islands community to back CloudNet.. This way the investment allows us to deliver for everyone. Otherwise alternate solutions will need to be used and will not be as long lasting as fibre is.

It is important to note we are delivering Fibre to every property in the same way BT will deliver to other island communities who are getting fibre. We are using the same technology they are and this is North Ronaldsay's chance so have the same. Don't Waste this opportunity.

The Scottish Government are supporting us in delivering, and they are excited to be supporting Papa Westray who have embraced this opportunity, and will be the first island in Scotland to have full fibre delivered to every home in the island. The government see this as what the R100 programme is for, and they want to make sure that our communities are not left behind. This is a significant milestone and achievement for Orkney, our islands and North Ronaldsay

## **So what does Cloudnet need from the residents of North Ronaldsay in order for fibre optics to be the future of fast internet for us?**

CloudNet need you support. We need you to sign up to the delivery of the Full Fibre project:

**<https://tinyurl.com/NRonaldsay>**

This is a short weblink that you can register on. It is a simple form, does not ask much, and simply is name, Property name and contact email address and number. You will be sent an email back once completed so you know you have filled in the form.

**PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IS CORRECT HOWEVER**

We will then build the project and pass this to the government and we will begin the design of the network for the island.

For clarity, we work with the R100 programme, and we have to provide a full design brief, and because of the Papa Westray build, have their full backing and support.

CloudNet will also signup any of its existing customers on North Ronaldsay to the programme, as our commitment to you and to ensure that we deliver to the best of what technology has to offer today and for the future.

**Thank you for your time Greg. I hope that has clarified some things for the residents of North Ronaldsay**

Laird's Kirk  
North Ronaldsay

To Beatrice  
Best wishes from pupils  
and staff June 1980.  
(By David James, Martin, and Gerald May)

Many thanks to Beatrice Thomson for providing this photo collection of the Old (or Laird's) Kirk.





## An Interview with Calum Kirkness of Polycroo Polytunnels



### ***Tell us a little bit about yourself?***

My name is Calum Kirkness. I was born and brought up in Orkney before leaving in my mid 20s to go to university. Throughout my working career I have worked on construction projects across the length and breadth of the UK. A few years ago, I became totally disillusioned with the industry and moved to Malaysia and develop other interests. Business is my passion and I am also the author of 3 books and an international public speaker.

In June 2020 during lockdown, I decided to return home to Orkney, and had the idea to develop a robust, low maintenance, environmentally friendly polytunnel suitable for Orkney and the rest of the world. I built the first Polycroo polytunnel for my mother and the business and product took off from there! I named the business and product Polycroo after the Orcadian term planticroo, which was the name traditionally given to stone built raised beds / sheltered areas for growing fruit and vegetables and the poly part comes from the polycarbonate sheeting that is used for the cover. I believe croo means small enclosed structured in the Orkney dialect.

### ***What were you doing in North Ronaldsay?***

In February / March 2022, we built a 4m x 7m Polycroo polytunnel with raised planter beds and a suspended timber decking floor for the North Ronaldsay Trust as an outdoor learning space for the North Ronaldsay School. The North Ronaldsay School is the first school to have a Polycroo polytunnel.

We really enjoyed our time working in North Ronaldsay and I am delighted with the feedback from the school and happy that the children have an outdoor learning space where they can learn how to grow their own food. The high levels of natural light, warmth from the sun and air quality from being surrounded by plants, makes a Polycroo polytunnel a very cosy, nice, and healthy space to learn, work and relax in. I believe there is a peedie ceilidh being organised to take place in the Polycroo polytunnel in North Ronaldsay!

### ***Tell us about the design of the Polycroo and why it is so suitable for Orkney?***

Polycroo polytunnels are strong, robust and low maintenance. The shape is based on the tried and tested Nissan hut which was initially developed in 1916. Nissan huts were built in Orkney for many years and are still a common site, so the shape is tried and tested. The curved shape means that the wind flows over the structure, which reduces the wind forces being applied to the structure. The pipe in the main framework that forms the curved roof shape is upcycled from the aqua marine industry, so it gives the material a new and extended life and has significant environmental benefits as it saves a lot of the plastic pipe from going to landfill. The clever design of the Polycroo polytunnels means that we upcycle more plastic pipe per polytunnel than any other company. The plastic pipe is combined with modern technology and materials such as twinwall polycarbonate sheeting, which provides a strong clear cover that allows lots of light in and has insulation properties to help retain the heat. The foundations are strong concrete foundations dug into the ground.

### ***What other projects are you working on?***

We carry out projects for the education, healthcare, residential and commercial sectors. We are currently working on a project to build 3 Polycroo polytunnels at the Balfour Hospital in Kirkwall for NHS Orkney as part of their Greenspace project. I am delighted to be carrying out this project for NHS Orkney and that they recognise the health benefits that Polycroo polytunnels can offer. We are also currently building a Polycroo polytunnel the same as the one in North Ronaldsay for a customer in Birsay. After that we have a Polycroo polytunnel to build for another school in Orkney followed by quite a few more for private residential homeowners. I also have a few other ideas in the pipeline, but these are not quite ready for release just yet!

### ***What is the approximate cost of getting one built?***

The cost of a Polycroo polytunnel varies depending on several factors, mainly size, location, accessibility and specification. Material prices over the last 2 years have increased significantly and now with the rise in fuel and energy prices, we are seeing material prices continue to increase. It is always best to contact us regarding your project and we will be happy to offer a free site survey, consultation and fixed price no obligation quotation.

### ***What sort of sites are suitable or not suitable?***

The ideal site would be a sheltered, flat level site with easy access, a layer of good quality topsoil with firm clay underneath and no buildings or obstructions close by that would block light and the sun shining on the Polycroo polytunnel. It's also best to avoid building near services. The most challenging sites are ones on a steep slope, with hard rock ground conditions, with difficult access, and close to existing services.

A Polycroo polytunnel can be built on most sites, but site levels, ground conditions and accessibility all affect the cost. With rising inflation leading to rising material and food prices, and talks of food shortages coming, people are recognising that the best time to have a Polycroo polytunnel is as soon as possible! I think we are only just at the beginning of much tougher times coming in terms of food costs and availability, etc!

### ***Do we need planning permission?***

That's a good question and tricky to answer!...there is no easy yes or no answer!...Sometimes planning is required and sometimes it's not. It's a complex area! Some properties have permitted development rights to develop Polycroo polytunnels without applying for planning permission. For example, the Polycroo polytunnel that we built in North Ronaldsay didn't need planning permission as it was covered under permitted development rights, whilst the project we are currently building at the Balfour Hospital for NHS Orkney did require a planning application for full planning permission. Most projects for private homeowners do not require planning permission, but there is some strict criteria that must be met for permitted development rights to apply. We need to see the site in order to be able to provide some advice on whether planning permission is required or not.

Polycroo offer a full turnkey package where if planning permission is required, we can prepare and submit the planning application on behalf of the customer, meaning the customer only has one company and person to deal with from initial enquiry all the way through to project completion and handover of the keys.

### ***If someone else was interested in getting one built how would they go about reaching you?***

Anyone interested in having a Polycroo polytunnel can reach me on Facebook. I have 2 Facebook pages, one is Calum W Kirkness Ltd and the other is Polycroo. I can also be contacted by telephone or Whatsapp on 07860 783982 or by email: [info@calumkirkness.com](mailto:info@calumkirkness.com). I have plans to develop a website, however due to the high demand for the product, we haven't had time to make it yet!



# Our New Polycroo

North Ronaldsay Community School (through The North Ronaldsay Trust) secured £14,995 from the Healthy Islands Fund for the purchase and construction of a Polycroo polytunnel. Work began on Monday 21st February and the children kept a photo diary of the Polycroo being built.

## Monday 21st February

The first cut of turf. We dug the first hole in the ground.



We found out that there was a road to the old school where the Polycroo will go. During the digging we found an old coin from the 1920s. We were amazed by it.

## Thursday 24th February



The builders are building the planters and the base but the weather is fierce today so it must be hard to nail the planks down.

## Monday 28th February

Calum is telling us about how to make the concrete for the base from stones, sand, cement and water. The long, black, plastic tubes are recycled from fish farms and are bent so they slot into the little tubes at the sides. They were filling the planters with earth today too.



## Tuesday 1st March

It's quite windy today so tricky to put on the sheets but there are now 3 on. The sheets have blue film on the top part. The blue side goes on the outside and protects it from UV light. The sign helps you to keep safe. The blue is for what you need to do, the red bit is for 'don't' and the yellow bit is an alert.



## Thursday 3rd March



We made our own Polycroo models, choosing from a variety of materials. Calum kindly gave us some feedback on them. We were pleased with them.

It's our first time inside the Polycroo! The sheets are all on and the window and door frames are beginning to go up.



## Friday 4th March

The floor is down and it feels nearly complete now.

The tools and equipment ready to go down to the pier to go back into Kirkwall.



### Monday 7th March

We showed Jen the Polycroo, she was out to make some art and music with us for the TVV project. We spoke about how it might be good place for a wee ceilidh.



### Wednesday 9th March

The Polycroo is complete and we said goodbye to Calum and Carl and a big thank you! It has been so interesting watching the Polycroo being constructed and hearing them tell us about what was happening each day.

Since it was finished we have been reading, making crafts and preparing the raised beds in the Polycroo. We're really excited to start growing things in it after the Easter Holidays!

### Thursday 31st March

Making 'Guardians of the Polycroo' with Holly Willmott, Training Officer from Learning Through Landscapes.

Commenting on the past few weeks Robin said, 'it was fun to watch the Polycroo go up - I really loved making the model of it too!'

Phoebe said, 'it's good to have a lovely warm space like the Polycroo to work in. I'm excited to grow strawberries and have a little dance in there when Papay school visit next term!'



'It's bright and cosy, I'd like to grow peas and mangos!' Isabella.

Calum Kirkness of Polycroo said, "the North Ronaldsay School are the first school to have a Polycroo Polytunnel. I was delighted when the order came through and would like to thank Helga Scott the Principal Teacher at the North Ronaldsay School and the Board of Directors at the North Ronaldsay Trust for selecting Polycroo. It is very rewarding and satisfying for us at Polycroo to see children taking an interest in the build process and having the facilities to learn how to grow their own fruit and vegetables and use the space as an outdoor classroom for other activities as well. Despite the additional logistics of working on a remote island with only one ferry service per week, we really enjoyed working in North Ronaldsay and meeting the people there. Everyone was very welcoming and helpful, which contributed to the smooth construction process. Polycroo offer a full turnkey hassle-free service, where customers only have one point of contact from start to finish. I think this really appeals to customers."

Thank you to Calum Kirkness, Managing Director of Polycroo, The North Ronaldsay Trust, Peter Donnelly and Ian Deyell.



*Pied Wagtail, Photo by George Gay*