

## Tom Henderson remembered



Professor Jørn Sunde.

On 30 October Professor Jørn Øyrehagen Sunde of Bergen University gave the first annual Shetland Museum and Archives Memorial Lecture. Entitled 'From a Shetland lairdship to a Norwegian Barony - The Mouat

Family and the Barony Rosendal, 1558-1723', the lecture related how the Mouats of Ollaberry became rich landowners in Norway in the seventeenth century. This first memorial lecture was in honour of



Tom Henderson at the helm.

Tom Henderson, founding curator of the Museum, who had a keen interest in the historical relationship between Shetland and Norway.

The lecture will be available in various formats, please contact the archives for more information.

### Winter Opening Hours

Museum:

**Monday-Saturday** 10am-5pm, **Sunday** 12pm-5pm

Archives:

**Monday-Friday** 10am-4.30pm, **Saturday** 10am-1pm,  
**Sunday** closed

Hay's Dock Café Restaurant:

Daytime: **Monday-Saturday** 10:30am-5pm,  
**Sunday** 12pm-5pm

Evenings: **Thursday-Saturday** 7.00pm-late, last orders 9pm.  
To book, phone 01595 741569

**The Museum and Archives will be closed on 25th and 26th December, and 1st and 2nd January.**

## What's On Guide

### November

**2nd November: Fishy Fun.** 2pm - 2.45pm. Make a colourful fishy collage to take home. Free, booking essential. Suitable for kids aged 3 and 4 years old (bring an adult!)

**8th Nov -8th Dec. Exhibition: 'Harmonies & Discords' by Mike McDonnell.** Collage, paintings and sculpture.

**10th November: Going Potty.** 10am - 10.30am and 2pm - 2.30pm. Make your own clay pot using ancient techniques. Free, booking essential. Suitable for kids aged 3 and 4 years old (bring an adult!)

**29th November: Films by Margaret Tait.** 1.30pm -3pm. Introduced by Andrew Parkinson of the Pier Arts Centre, Orkney. Free, drop in.

### December

Join us for festive fun throughout December.  
See local press for event details

**All events are held at the Shetland Museum and Archives, unless otherwise specified. There may be a charge for some events. For more information phone 01595 695057 or just pop in.**

## Big draw fun for everyone



At this year's The Big Draw, artists from Veer North encouraged everyone, regardless of age, to get drawing.

## Festive treats at Hay's Dock

This holiday season, why not try Hay's Dock Café Restaurant for a new twist on traditional faïre? Chef Mike Skinner has designed two menus on offer throughout December.

The three-course lunch menu offers some unusual choices: a Bloody Mary soup with feta cheese croutons, traditional favourite roast turkey and trimmings, and a new take on Christmas Pudding – turning it into cheesecake!

The five-course evening menu has a more decadent feel, with mains of fillet and braised shoulder of beef, roasted guinea fowl, and

roast halibut with poached lobster.

Full details and pricing can be found on the special events page of the Café Restaurant website, [www.haysdock.co.uk](http://www.haysdock.co.uk).

As a further treat, throughout December the Café Restaurant is offering bottles of Cava at the special price of £12.50.

The lunch menu is available daily 12 to 3pm. The Café Restaurant's normal evening hours are Thursday – Saturday from 7pm. Group bookings of 8 or more can be made throughout the week. To book please call 01595 741569.

## St Magnus records now available

St Magnus Episcopal Church opened in Lerwick in 1864. Since then it has provided education and charity, as well as religious support for many people in the town.

Staff at the Archives were delighted to accept the records of the Church into their collections recently. The donation from the St Magnus vestry will prove interesting for local and family historians alike.

The collection includes the first baptism register and registers of service as well as vestry minutes. There is a lot of information about the Church's ministers in obituaries and detailed correspondence. The history of the Church's buildings can be studied in letters, receipts and legal documents.

The original architect's drawings are included in the collection, although many are torn and are in poor condition, and will need conservation.

Vestry member Rodney Jamieson kindly volunteered to help sort and catalogue the material, and it is now available to researchers.

The Archives also holds the records of the Church of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland, the United Free Church, and the Methodist Church in Shetland.

## Show on Museum and Archives' theme

The latest exhibition in Da Gadderie will highlight the twelve themes of the Museum and Archives' galleries. Yell sculptor Mike McDonnell was commissioned to create a permanent piece for the opening of the building in 2007, which showed the twelve themes in one artwork, this can be seen just inside the main entrance. The artist now has created a number of individual pieces for each theme and has imbued them with his characteristic mirth and sarcasm, in what he himself describes as a 'tour de farce'. The show runs from 8 November to 8 December.

## COMMUNITY HERITAGE NEWS

### Sound recording survey

Shetland Heritage Association and Shetland Museum and Archives are considering a joint project to ensure that old recordings of oral histories, events, music, etc. are preserved and made more accessible. The first step in this process is to find out how many hours and in what formats these recordings exist. We are calling on history groups to help us, by finding out what your group holds, and what may be held by individuals in your community. For more information, contact Community Museums Officer Carol Christiansen on 01595 741560, [carol@shetland-museum.org.uk](mailto:carol@shetland-museum.org.uk).

### SHA Away Day

This summer members of the Shetland Heritage Association executive held an Away Day at Saxavord in Unst. This was highly successful, with members working hard to generate ideas for the future of the organisation. Strengths were identified within Shetland's heritage

sector: the uniqueness of the organisations, well-motivated volunteers, excellent heritage centres and museums, and strong links with local communities. The group pulled together a plan to take the Association forward. Of course after all this activity it was time to relax in good company with a 'peerie dram' and yarns about old times! Since the Away Day, a series of meetings have taken place to progress compiling a promotional publication, holding a celebration event, and looking at long-term strategies for the sustainability of local heritage groups.

### Hold Her Steady Boys!

An historic Cunningsburgh landmark, presumed to be a lifeboat from the White Star liner *Oceanic*, was recently moved to storage, prior to finding a new home in the district. The *Oceanic* was wrecked on the Shaalds of Foula during the First World War, while on her way north to join the 10th cruiser squadron. Cunningsburgh History Group members Jack Duncan, Alan Halcrow and Alan Nicolson moved



the boat from Quee. It had been in the yard there for many years and had been turned into a workshop with a small window placed on one side.

Due to the boat's fragile state, moving it required much preparatory work by Jack and Alan. A wooden framework was built inside as a support and heavy wooden battens placed underneath so that lifting strops could be attached. The skills of all involved, including Andrew Nicolson who drove the lorry, were proved excellent as the boat was safely unloaded and stored at Broonie's Taing until a suitable site is identified for its display.

# Reflections on Summer 2008



Visitor Services Assistants Steven Christie, Zuzanna O'Rourke and Mark Anderson.

Another summer season has come to a close and we felt it was time to reflect on what has been a marvellous season for all of us in visitor services.

Two major highlights this season were the loan of the St Ninian's Isle Treasure and the launch of the first sixareen built in Lerwick for 100 years.

The Treasure created huge interest. As a result, we introduced a special tour allowing all visitors to have a more detailed insight into the mystery surrounding the hoard. We also held various workshops, where children and adults made objects inspired by the treasure's decoration.

The launch of the Sixareen *Vaila Mae* and haddock boat *Laura Kay* brought in over 1000 visitors on the day and events were held in the Boat Shed and the Museum. It was fantastic to see so many people on such an important day. For the rest of the summer we offered rowing trips (weather permitting) on the *Vaila Mae*, led by our own Captain Pugwash, better known as Trevor Jamieson. As an added cultural experience, Trevor sometimes played his guitar and sang to his crew.

Another highlight this season was the arrival of our 100,000<sup>th</sup> visitor, Robbie Jamieson from Whalsay, who was accompanied by his grandparents. Robbie won a fishing trip onboard the *Pilot Us* and a model of her from the shop.

We were lucky to have the Guild of Spinners, Weavers, Knitters and Dyers in the Museum every Sunday giving demonstrations. Visitor's got first-hand experience of how historic handicraft was done and much knowledge was exchanged.

It gives us great pride to show off the island's vast and varied history to all who visit. As a tourist from the USA remarked, 'A true history of an island people with depth and human interest, it was so much more than I expected, FANTASTIC'.

Mark Anderson and Zuzanna O'Rourke  
Visitor Services

# The Ham Herring Fishery, c1880 – 1914



The fleet of herring sail drifters passing the Taing of Ham, Bressay in the 1890s.

Photo: Shetland Museum Photographic Archive

During the heyday of the Ham fishing village project (1880 – 1910) – and for a few years thereafter – a small-scale herring fishery was carried out from Ham, Bressay, during the months of June, July and August by a few 40' herring boats fitted with lug sails.

One such boat was the *Seabird* and her crew members were:

Francis Gordon, South Maryfield  
George Yates, Ham  
John Yates, East Ham  
William George Tait, Seaview  
Laurence Twatt, Seaview  
John Gifford, Anntown

Skipper  
Mate  
Crew Member  
Crew Member  
Crew Member  
Crew Member

The herring grounds were 12 miles southeast of the Bard, Bressay's southernmost headland. This was a time when the Dutch fleet were fishing in large numbers in Shetland waters, and the age-old practice of smuggling was not an unknown activity. Everyone concerned in this illegal activity was very wary of H.M. Customs, who meted out severe penalties to those caught in the act.

On one occasion the crew of the *Seabird* had obtained several earthenware 'pigs' of gin and a quantity of tobacco, in

exchange for eggs and Bressay new tatties. Rather than take a chance and come into the harbour with their "booty", they landed John Gifford at the mouth of the Veng burn and he carried it in over the Blackhill and hid it in his peat stack to be retrieved later.

The herring fishing continued until the First World War. Before 1909 the crew of the *Seabird* sold their herring in Lerwick. In that year the Ham station was established, and the boats began to land their catch to Bob Milne, fishcurer at the station, and with whom they had an agreement.

Once the season finished the boats were hauled up on the Ham beach where they lay until the following June. After August the crews reverted to the winter haddock fishing in their small open boats.

Another herring boat was the *Betsy Sim* Lk 333, of which Andrew Strachan of Ham was skipper. This boat later became a flitboat used to transport herring guts from stations situated around the north harbour to the Aithsvoe meal and oil factory. In the 1920s this flitboat was crewed by John Smith of Midgarth, Lowrie Anderson, Ham and Lourie Manson, Brough.

L.F. Anderson  
Bressay History Group

This page is dedicated to research on all aspects of Shetland's history and heritage. Contributions are welcome.

## Get in touch

We are keen to include contributions from anyone who has something interesting to share about Shetland's heritage. Deadline for the next issue is Friday 12th December. If you would like to stock our newsletter or distribute copies to your group, let us know.

Email: [info@shetlandmuseumandarchives.org.uk](mailto:info@shetlandmuseumandarchives.org.uk) Telephone: 01595 695057 Fax: 01595 696729

Post: Newsletter, Shetland Museum and Archives, Hay's Dock, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0WP

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