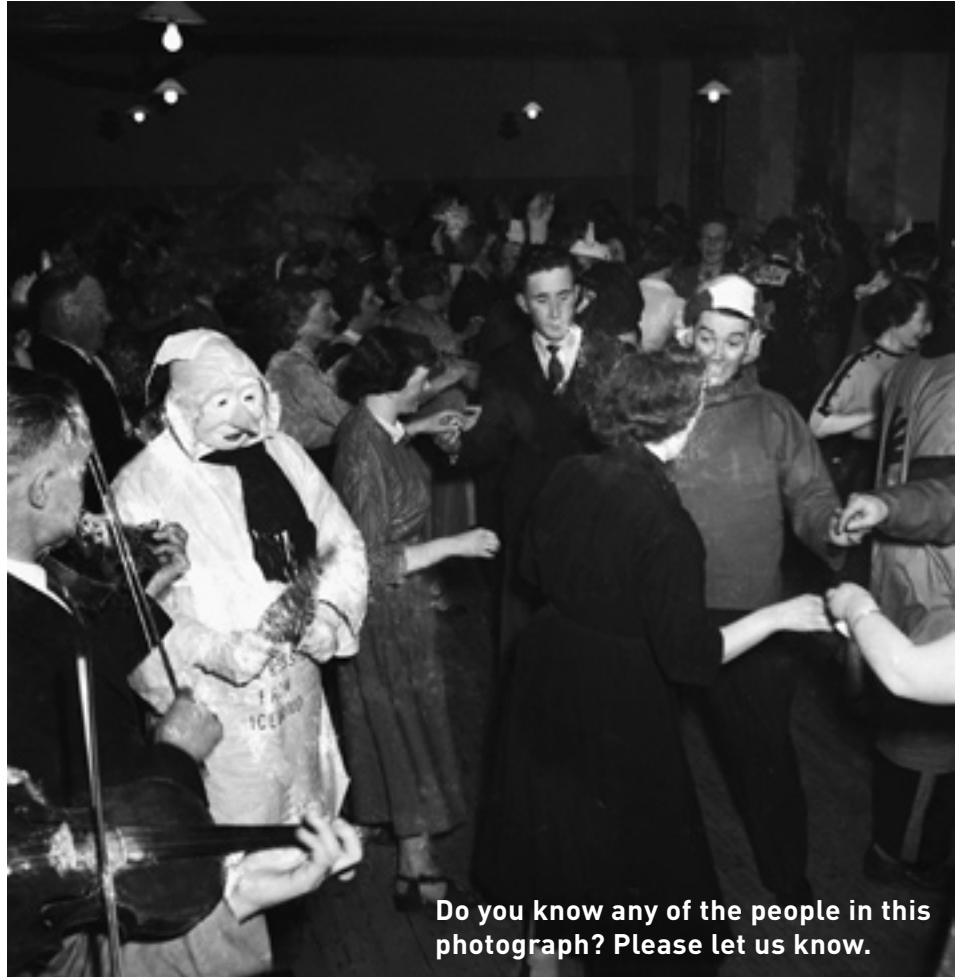


Up Helly Aa funs at Hay's Dock

The Shetland Museum and Archives are hosting an Up Helly Aa fun day for all the family on Sunday 29th January. The Learning Room will be transformed into a galley shed. Come along to make your own helmet, shield and torch between 12 and 2pm. Then join traditional dance instructor, Maria Leask in the Auditorium from 2 to 4pm for dance lessons. Brush up on your Boston Two Step, St Bernard's Waltz and Eightsome Reel, ready for Tuesday night's festivities. Both events are free, but participants are asked to book a space for the dance lesson.

The Café Restaurant will be offering a Viking platter of roast lamb and beremeal bannocks for a limited period over the Up Helly Aa festivities. Reestit mutton soup and bannocks will also be on the menu on Up Helly Aa day to help keep out the cold.

(Continued on page 2)



Do you know any of the people in this photograph? Please let us know.

Opening Hours

Archives

Monday-Friday 10am-4pm

Saturday 10am-1pm

Museum

Monday -Friday 10am-4pm

Saturday 10am-5pm

Sunday 12pm-5pm

Hay's Dock Café Restaurant

Daytime:

Monday -Friday 10.30am-3.30pm

Saturday 10.30am-4.30pm

Sunday 12-4.30pm

Evenings:

Friday and Saturday 6.30pm-9pm
(last orders)

To book call 01595 741569

What's on Guide

January

Daily -18th March:
Exhibition: 'Spreading the Word', Church of Scotland Records, archives focus display, free.

7th-5th Feb: Exhibition:
'Auto Portraits', paintings by JJ Breannan, Da Gadderie.

7th-5th Feb: Exhibition:
'Traces, Elements, Atmosphere', drawings by Rob Colclough, Da Gadderie.

19th-20th: Groovy Galleys: Mootie Moose workshops, 10.30-11.30am & 2-3pm, ages 2½-5, £7.50 for three Dec-Feb sessions, booking essential.

23rd - 5th Feb - Up Helly Aa in years gone by: slideshow and audio showcasing museum and archive collections, first floor foyer.

28th-1st: Tour: Origins of Up Helly Aa, 1pm Sun, 10.30am & 3.30pm Sat/Mon/Wed, free, ask at reception.

29th: Up Helly Aa Fun Day: learning room, 12pm-2pm, drop-in event.

29th: Traditional Dancing with Maria Leask, 2pm-4pm in the auditorium, free booking required.

31st: Jarl Squad Visit: Main Foyer, 3.30pm.

February

11th-18th March:
Exhibition: 'Shetland Needleworkers', Da Gadderie, free.

3rd-24th: Hidden Treasure: Mootie Moose workshops 10.30-11.30am & 2-3pm, ages 2½-5, £7.50 for three Dec-Feb sessions, booking essential.

All events held at Shetland Museum and Archives. To book, or for more information, please visit Reception or call 01595 695057.

Up Helly Aa funs at Hay's Dock contined...

(Continued from front page)

Our visitor services staff will be running the popular 'Origins of Up Helly Aa' tour on the 28th, 29th, 30th Jan and 1st Feb for anyone who would like to learn the history of the festival. The tours are free, please see the What's On Guide on the front page for times.

We will also be showcasing

some aspects of our museum and archive collections with an Up Helly Aa themed slideshow. Photographs from the museum's collection will be projected on to the wall on the first floor foyer and alongside will be a listening post where interviews with ex-Guizer Jarls John Gear (1935), Sonny Young (1961) and Tammy Moncrieff

(1965) who, tells about how his Up Helly Aa was the only one to ever be postponed.

We hope that between the dancing, crafting, new dishes, tours and slideshow there will be something for every member of the family to enjoy during Up Helly Aa 2012. For more information please ring 01595 695057.

Pupils remember Shetlanders at war

150 first-year pupils from Anderson High School commemorated Armistice Day by taking part in activities about war and conflict, with the theme 'Why should we remember?'

Pupils learnt about Karl Manson from Lerwick, who was killed in the First World War. His father produced the Roll of Honour in tribute to his son and other men who fought in the Great War. Karl's story was presented through extracts from family letters and diaries. Students examined artefacts and recorded their thoughts, words, and feelings in a series of 'mind maps'.

Pupils presented work on conflicts from the Boer War to Afghanistan: who was involved, key events, and impact on communities. They discussed reasons why and how people remember conflict, and why it is important. Archival material, including James Pottinger's WWI and WWII diaries and Napoleonic War era documents were examined.



Pupils studying WWI rifle.

Pupils discussed why conflict takes place and how it can be avoided. Issues raised included poverty, intolerance, cultural misunderstandings and hatred. Archivist Brian Smith read a poem by Archives

Assistant Mark Ryan Smith, which encapsulated the issues covered. We hope to repeat the event next year.

Kirsty Clark
Lifelong Learning
Officer

Paupers in Tingwall

A fascinating collection of Tingwall Parochial Board and Parish Council records was recently transferred to the Archives from the Scalloway Museum. The minute books, registers, pay rolls and cash books give incredibly detailed information about people who received financial and medical help from the parish.

Parochial boards were set up in Scotland in 1845 to administer relief to poor people. Records for those who received help contain name, age, place of birth, marital status, details of spouse and children and sometimes details about the state of the person's health. There are also records for those who applied for relief but were refused.

People needed help for a variety of reasons. Some were too old to support themselves, others had no family to help them, while some couldn't work due to injury or poor health. People with mental health problems were sometimes sent to asylums on the mainland and these cases are recorded too.

Here are a few examples from the Record of Applications: In 1884 80-year-old Adam Hunter from Easter Houll and his 75-year-old wife applied for poor relief on the grounds that he had to pay £3 rent but only owned one young cow, one sheep and an old boat. He had to vacate his croft a few months after he applied and had nowhere to go, most of his children were away working and he received no support from them. He was also supporting one daughter and her child. Despite his problems the board decided he was not destitute and his application was refused.

Mary Stout from Lee was living with her aunt in 1890. The twenty-seven-year-old, who usually worked as a knitter, had two dependent children, but was confined to bed due to illness and had no means to support them. She was offered relief until she recovered, and in 1892 was offered a place in the poorhouse.

Lastly, Jemima Williamson from Whiteness usually worked as a domestic servant. She went to visit her sister in Lerwick, and while it's not clear what happened, she was 'unable to return'. Shortly after she came back to Whiteness, she was certified insane and in June 1886 was sent to an asylum, possibly at Montrose. She was sent home, cured, in August.

The records begin in 1864 and some continue until the 1940s, although records less than 100 years old may be closed under the Data Protection Act. The documents are in the process of being cleaned and catalogued and will be available shortly for consultation in the Archives.

We appreciate the Scalloway Museum handing these items to the Archives. Parish council records belong with the Zetland County Council Collection, which is already housed at the Archives. It is important that parish council material is left with the Archives so it can find its rightful place in this collection.



Renewed interest in fossil

In 1981 this fossilised coral (NAT 81420) was donated to Shetland Museum. It was catalogued, stored and unquestioned until this year, when experts began to examine corals found around Sandness. The museum record states that the fossil was exposed by coastal erosion at Melby beach. This assertion has been questioned by experts, who believe the fossil could not have originated in Shetland. During the Devonian period, Northern Scotland, Orkney and Shetland were covered by a series of freshwater lakes known as the 'Orcadian lakes'. This type of coral is found only in marine environments, so it is highly unlikely it came to Melby by natural means. So how did it get here? It is unlikely to have arrived through glacial movements, as it is a one-off and no other examples have been found. Was it taken here as ballast for a boat before being chucked out? Perhaps it was placed as a scientific joke? This may be a mystery that is never solved; to find out more information, please see Adrian Hall's article online at <http://www.landforms.eu/shetland/melby%20coral.htm>

Courses in artefact care

Shetland Museum and Archives is offering two free courses for local history group members. The first course is on care and basic conservation of paper items and will include step-by-step instructions on paper flattening. The second course is on storage and display of textiles and participants will learn how to make different types of storage and display mounts. The paper course will take place on Tuesday, 14 February from 10am to 1pm; the textiles course will be held Thursday, 1st March from 10am-4pm. Both courses will be held at the Museum's Store on Staney Hill, Lerwick and space is limited. For more information, or to book, contact Laurie Goodlad at 01595 692741, laurie@shetland-museum.org.uk.

The writing of *Shetland Fireside Tales*

George Stewart's book *Shetland Fireside Tales*, recently republished by the Shetland Times, is an important landmark in our literature. In the late nineteenth century there was a flourishing in local letters, which saw writers such as Haldane Burgess, Basil Anderson and Jessie Saxby produce work of lasting significance. Stewart's book, which was first published in Edinburgh in 1877, comes right at the start of this period and, in a special copy which has recently come to the archives, we are given a unique glimpse into the circumstances of its composition.

Shetland Fireside Tales is a rather odd affair. It isn't really a novel, but is a kind of compendium of material about Shetland. A novel does form part of the book, but it also contains poetry, long sections of Shetland dialect writing, folk stories, and many valuable notes on ethnology, superstition, and local customs.

It was published when George Stewart, a Levenwick man, was 52. By that time he was living in Edinburgh, running a successful import/export firm, and was the father of 10 children. The rum which bears his name is still a popular tippie in Shetland today. Despite this busy life, however, he always found time to write (several notebooks of his poems are in the Archives) and *Fireside Tales* is the culmination and sole product of his literary endeavours.



George Stewart

But, never having written or published a book before, Stewart found a willing helper in another Shetlander living in the capital. The copy of *Fireside Tales* which has recently come to the Archives originally belonged to the antiquarian Gilbert Goudie. Goudie's books form a large part of the library of his relation, E.S. Reid Tait. This collection, which is probably the most comprehensive collection of Shetland books anywhere in the world, is filled with unique items. Many of the books have letters from authors and editors pasted into them, giving valuable insights into the volumes. In his copy of *Fireside Tales* Goudie wrote:

This book was brought to me, by my esteemed old friend the author in manuscript, and its overhaul

and preparation for the press occupied many most pleasant evenings with him in the Book-Room at 39 Northumberland Street. Its conception and framework are nothing to me – only the revision of the original text and its re-perusal in the proofs. The work was the author's first, and only, formal effort in literature.
G.G.

When Stewart was working on his book, Edinburgh was home to a number of Shetland writers. Basil Anderson, Jessie Saxby, and L.J. Nicolson, for example, all knew each other and sometimes read their work at the Shetland and Orkney societies which sprang up in the capital. In Goudie's little note, and in the picture it gives us of Stewart arriving at the more experienced writer's house with his manuscript, we see a community of writers who were willing to help, critique and encourage one another. It is perhaps somewhat ironic that many of the key Shetland works of this period – Anderson's poem 'Auld Mansie's Crö' and Saxby's novel *Rock Bound*, for example – were written by people who didn't live in Shetland. But, in the capital, the atmosphere of encouragement and literary exchange that Shetlanders created helped our literature thrive.

Mark Smith
Archives Assistant

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.

If you would like to stock *Unkans*, or distribute copies to your group, let us know.

Email: info@shetlandmuseumandarchives.org.uk Telephone: 01595 695057 Fax: 01595 696729

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

heritage
Shetland
culture

DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR NEXT ISSUE IS NEXT ISSUE IS FRIDAY, 17 FEBRUARY, 2012.