



- Meet The - **Experts**

Brian Smith

**Hi
THERE!**

I'm Brian Smith. My colleagues and I work at the Shetland Archives. We look after documents and books about Shetland's history and show them to the public. I like reading things and thinking about the past, the present and the future .

We interviewed Brian about the St Ninian's Isle Treasure. Here are his answers!

Why was the treasure not discovered till 1958?

People were living on St Ninian's Isle until the 18th century. By that time the treasure had been buried for nearly a thousand years. The Isle became a sheep farm and everyone left. When Professor O'Dell came to Shetland the Isle had been long abandoned.

What happened to the people who owned the treasure?

It sounds like the Vikings created such havoc in Shetland that the owners could not get back to it. Maybe the Vikings killed them? Shetland changed from being a Pictish society to a Norse one.



Why do you think the treasure was buried?

I'm sure it was to hide it from raiders. At some stage people must have heard about the Vikings who were raiding the east side of Britain. They must have been worried about their precious silver. They must have thought it would be safe in a church. The Vikings did not respect that - they wanted to get their hands on it!

Do you have any interesting facts about the treasure?

When I was 15 years old, a friend and I volunteered to guard the treasure overnight while it was on loan in Shetland. It was kept in a secure cabinet in the library. It was rather strange being there in the middle of the night; but there were books to read and biscuits to eat!

