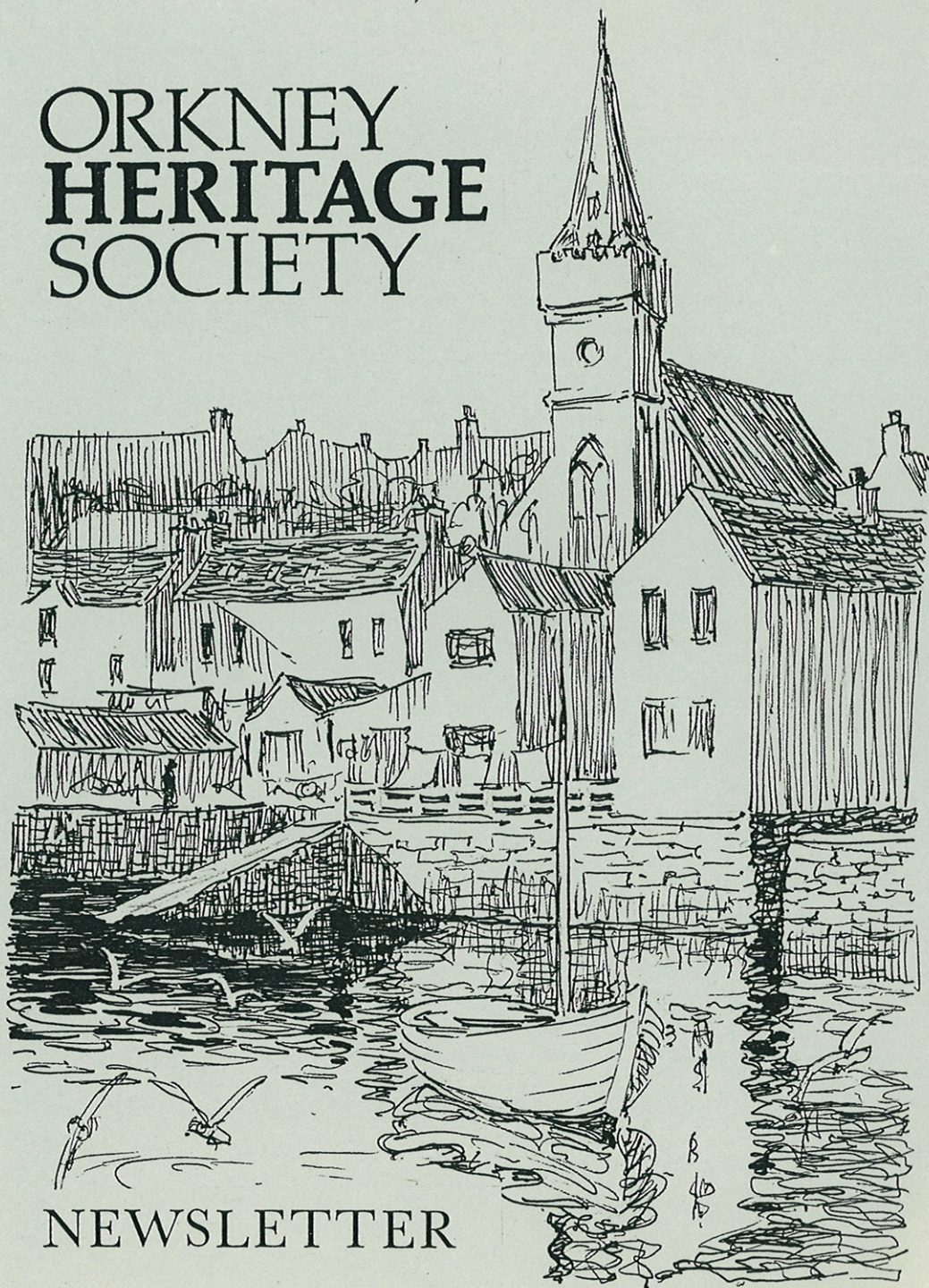


ORKNEY HERITAGE SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

Ian and Iris Heddle very kindly loaned the Society their collection of past newsletters to allow this project to be completed. Ian had some later amendments to his published opening remarks, which are transcribed below, with amendments highlighted.

FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN

In the 1987 Newsletter I put my plea for the Hall of Clestrain to be returned to something like its original beauty. What form it would take was not clear to me then, but even so my ideas have aroused considerable interest. This enthusiasm is only just beginning, but I feel sure that, with careful research and patient application, we shall be able to spread it to include many people and organisations who might be overlooked if we were to proceed too quickly.

We have already had promises of several thousands of pounds before any form of appeal has been launched, so I feel greatly encouraged that, when finally our plans are drawn up for the conversion and our proposals are announced to like-minded people in Britain and across the Atlantic, we shall find a willing response. So how might this come about? I hope to establish that Mr Ivan Craigie is willing to sell to the [Orkney Heritage Trust](#) the Hall and a small area of ground around it for access and car parking. I have all along stressed to him that we must have regard to the interests of his farm, as the Hall is right in the centre of it. His willingness to let our proposals come to fruition must be balanced by our determination to safeguard his interest.

Are my proposals realistic? I would like to tell the history of the Hall of Clestrain – how it was built by [Patrick Honeyman](#) around 1768 [...], later how it became the home of John Rae, who was the agent for the Hudson Bay Company and whose son John, born in 1813, was to become Dr John Rae – and how John Rae and his wife were hosts to Sir Walter Scott and his party who dined there in 1814. All this can be shown in displays. I have established personal contact with the Curator and Archivist of the Scott Polar Institute in Cambridge who was wholeheartedly enthusiastic when I explained my ideas, giving him a photograph of the Hall (as it is!) and a copy of the 1987 Newsletter. I was promised “all the help we can muster except money!” He explained that he meant maps, prints of Dr Rae’s letters and reports to the Hudson Bay Company, to the Royal Society and to the Royal Geographical Society, as well as Franklin Expedition material.

I believe that the basement could form [a part of](#) the dwelling on the first floor [for](#) a living-in caretaker who would have a lovely home with a wonderful view. The once beautiful staircase has enough of the balustrade intact for it to be replaced exactly. The front entry steps will need to have the stone walling removed so that there can once again be a graceful sweeping wrought-iron balustrade to “set off” the imposing entrance. I am certain that the exterior can be made to look as it did originally, when it was built in a style influenced by the work of the great Inigo Jones. If the ground floor is restored and furnished, perhaps in the style of the late 18th century, I am sure those people who contribute will feel that their money was used towards a very worthy project.

It is my view that Dr John Rae¹ was Orkney’s greatest son and I hope that we shall be able to commemorate his achievements as well as preserve one of Orkney’s most charming buildings. Dr John Rae died on July 22nd 1893. Can we get the Hall of Clestrain back to its full beauty by 1993?

IAIN HEDDLE

¹Dr John Rae, MD, LL,D, FRS, FRGS: Born 30/09/1813, died 22/07/1893: Chief Factor Hudson Bay: Company: Explored and mapped North Canadian mainland coasts, established unique exploration methods: Established unique exploration methods: Acknowledged discoverer of the fate of the North-West Passage Expedition led by Sir John Franklin

THE SOCIETY'S OBJECTIVES

The aims of the Society shall be to promote and encourage the following objectives by charitable means, but not otherwise:

- a) To stimulate public interest in, and care for, the beauty, history and character of Orkney.
 - b) To encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic interest.
 - c) To encourage high standards of architecture and town planning in Orkney.
 - d) To pursue those ends by means of meetings, exhibitions, lectures, publications, conferences, publicity and the promotion of schemes of a charitable nature.
-

ORKNEY HERITAGE SOCIETY

PRESIDENT	LADY GRILOND
CHAIRMAN	IAIN HEDDLE
VICE CHAIRMAN	MARY BAIN
SECRETARIES	MARJORIE LINKLATER & MONA SINCLAIR
TREASURER	BRIAN DOUGLAS

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P. Leith, A.J. Firth, A.D. Welsh, A.J. Hicks, M.R. Hayes,
A. Tulloch and Dr R.G. Lamb.

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EDITORIAL

"Dr. Rae was Orkney's greatest son". This statement invites an interesting debate and we were certainly forced back to the Sagas to discover possible challenges to this claim for a remarkable Victorian. His honesty got him into trouble, less drastic than that which overtook Earl Magnus for sure, but in his day to be denied honour and recognition (apart from his monetary reward) was a sad fate for a brave and honest man. His physical feats were at least as remarkable as Livingstone's and if some day the economic potential of Northern Canada exceeds that of Africa, he may well get his proper place in our Pantheon. No reason therefore why we should not anticipate history by putting his birth place, the Hall of Clestrain, in good order.

There is every reason too, why what was once the Free Kirk should retain its towering presence over Stromness, but with a new function. It was built by a Stromness entrepreneur. A close examination of that building will show that, in his trade, a high standard of craftsmanship was as necessary and, in his case, more enduring to him than financial agility.

We give approval to the suggestion to use the old Stromness Academy for a maritime museum. While one may have reservations about the extent of the museum industry nationally, the fact that Orkney has on occasions been at the centre of our maritime history, and at other times an important place en route, makes a maritime museum here as appropriate as a railway museum in Darlington or York.

There is now an opportunity to repair the vandalism perpetrated on the Stromness street by the Orkney County Council when it removed the paving stones, broke them up for easier removal, and replaced many of them with not very durable and uniformly ugly concrete slabs. We understand that the present operations on Stromness street will continue for ten or more years; ample time, we think, to open the old quarry and restore the street to its old beauty.

In the 1987 Newsletter I put my plea for the Hall of Clestrain to be returned to something like its original beauty. What form it would take was not clear to me then, but even so my ideas have aroused considerable interest. This enthusiasm is only just beginning, but I feel sure that, with careful research and patient application, we shall be able to spread it to include many people and organisations who might be overlooked if we were to proceed too quickly.

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Are my proposals realistic? I would like to tell the history of the Hall of Clestrain - how it was built by Robert Honeyman around 1699/1700 and plundered in 1725 by that very ineffectual pirate John Gow, - later, how it became the home of John Rae, who was the agent for the Hudson Bay Company and whose son John, born in 1813, was to become Dr John Rae, - and how John Rae and his wife were hosts to Sir Walter Scott and his party who dined there in 1814. All this can be shown in displays. I have established personal contact with the Curator and Archivist of the Scott Polar Institute in Cambridge who was wholeheartedly enthusiastic when I explained my ideas, giving him a photograph of the Hall (as it is!) and a copy of the 1987 Newsletter. I was promised "all the help we can muster except money!" He explained that he meant maps, prints of Dr Rae's letters and reports to the Hudson Bay Company, to the Royal Society and to the Royal Geographical Society, as well as Franklin Expedition material.

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IAIN HEDDLE

SECRETARY'S REPORT

1987 - What a year! The truly remarkable celebration of the 850th anniversary of the founding of St Magnus Cathedral surpassed expectations. It was also the centenary of the birth of Edwin Muir and the Society fulfilled its commitment to organise the celebration of this event.

The pilgrimage to Wyre (see last year's Newsletter) took place as planned on Saturday, 16th May, an event which revived the poet's happy memories of childhood. Mr David Craigie of the Bu not only welcomed us to Wyre but also bade us welcome to see over the house where the Muirs lived in those halcyon days. Poetry reading and readings from Edwin's autobiography by the Flaws family and Aimée Leonard in the precincts of St Mary's ancient church, Cubbie Roo's castle and finally the Wyre band to set us dancing - all this was sustained by the generous catering of the women of Wyre.

"Edwin Muir - a Tribute" was the opening performance of the St Magnus Festival, 19th June, in the Orkney Arts Theatre. A programme of poetry and prose, read by Elizabeth Bevan and David Grieve, was introduced by Janet Adam Smith who, as literary editor of The Listener and later The New Statesman had become friendly with the Muirs when they went to live in London. Her lively reminiscences of Edwin and Willa set the tone for the sensitive and moving tribute which followed. The programme was devised by Robert Calder, sponsored by the Heritage Society, with fiddle music played by Len Wilson and Johnnie Morrison.

Throughout the Festival an exhibition in the foyer of the Town Hall showed MSS, photographs, letters etc. from the archives of the Orkney library. This "small but evocative exhibition" was arranged by Ann Manson, assistant archivist with the library, helped by Ann Brundle from the Tankerness House Museum. It included interesting items from the National Library of Scotland.

1987 was also the tenth anniversary of the death of Ernest Marwick to whom the Heritage Society owes so much - not only the Society but the whole of Orkney. He was a student at Newbattle Abbey when Edwin was Principal and as a tribute to

both these quiet scholars we print, by courtesy of the Orkney Library, Ernest's poem, "Lecture in the Crypt".

The Fereday Prize. The panel chosen to judge the entries for this annual competition were Iain Heddle, Peter Leith, Marjorie Linklater and Dr Raymond Lamb. The Rector of the Grammar School and the Principal Teacher of English had selected 25 out of 80 or more entries. Out of these the following prize-winners were chosen:- 1st: Anne L. Clouston with "Granny's Days in Service", 2nd: Mark L. Holmes with "Melsetter House", 3rd: James D. Hogarth with "Old Bottles". Jacqueline Robertson was awarded a special prize and the 21 runners-up were Highly Commended and Commended. Dr Ray Fereday who was in Orkney in the summer was impressed with the form these entries now take. That is to say, there is genuine research into and documentation of the chosen subject with illustrations including photographs, diagrams and statistics along with lively description. Dr Fereday is delighted that his name is associated with subjects recording Orkney's heritage which could, quite possibly, be of interest to future archivists.

Conference - St Magnus in the XIth Century. This was commissioned by the Orkney Islands Council and owed its success largely to the expertise of our archaeologist, Dr Lamb, who devoted a great deal of time to its organisation. Dr Barbara Crawford was the leader of a distinguished band of academic experts and, at the final gathering in the Kirkwall Hotel for the farewell dinner, she, together with Mr W.P.L. Thomson, Dr Lamb, Professor Donaldson, Dr Cant and Mr Cruden were awarded the Munch Medal by the Norwegian Royal Society.

It has been confirmed that the OXY covenant will be renewed in the current year for three years. We must hope that the OIC will recognise the enormous contribution made by Dr Lamb towards the Council's schemes - a theme running through all our annual reports.

Dr Maurice Lindsay's talk and video on Conservation in Europe (30th October) was not well attended. Last year there was a disappointing turn-out for John Gerrard, Director of the Scottish Civic Trust - reminding us, perhaps, that this is an island and therefore isolated from affairs outwith Orkney.

The Outing - 1988 will be on Saturday, 25th June. The tour of West Caithness, postponed last year because of the General Election, will be led by Donald Omand who made the East Caithness tour such a success. This year we shall cross the Pentland Firth both ways in the St Ola. Later, either in July or September, a trip to Eynhallow in the ro-ro ferry the "Eynhallow" is a possibility. Any other suggestions are welcome.

As we go to press we have before us the proposal to turn the old Academy buildings in Stromness into a Maritime Museum. The concept is on a grand scale and would include, perhaps, the construction of a lighthouse using the lens donated by the Lighthouse Commission to the Heritage Society when the Brough of Birsay lighthouse went automatic.

MARJORIE LINKLATER

Lecture in the Crypt, Newbattle

Up to the window's edge the sand-hued stone,
Sun-lanterned through the leaves, affirmative of the light
... Shadows flickered his face, as the soft voice spoke on
To the room's chiaroscuro, half-day and tenebrous night.

Some chafed at the hesitant lips, impatient of pause,
Untutored to join that eye, illimitably seeing,
While the poet groped meekly for words to give hint of the cause
Which shone like light on the leaf, more light in his being.

He had time for the leaf, for the tree - budding, leafing, bare
(In thirty seasons, wood pulp for millions of "Mails");
But the technocrats have no time: they can always spare
Both poet and tree, as they rivet them fast with their nails.

Though the few eyes seeing, freed from the labyrinth of sense,
Opened to sapphire suns for the catch of a breath,
The owl's eyes, bred for the night, grew angry and dense -
There are still more slums to erect, and important death.

Yet the lightest whisper of leaves ever means
Eden, Gethsemane, Spring; and a stammering voice
May sing that true history of man, till the very machines
Forget how to thunder and slay, and in silence rejoice

Ernest W. Marwick

MUSEUMS - A GROWTH INDUSTRY

With every year that passes, Orkney museums creep closer to an adequate portrayal of the main themes - archaeology, natural history, man on land and sea. This is not easy in an area with the population of a small mainland borough but the historical wealth of a small island nation.

For well over a century, the onus was on the Orkney Natural History Society's museum in Stromness to collect and display in all areas - something like pouring the contents of a brewing kirm into a pint pot. Just twenty years ago, the situation was somewhat relieved when Tankerness House Museum opened its portals with a heavy bias towards archaeology. It became clear to many that the two museums would complement one another, giving each the opportunity of pursuing certain subjects in greater depth. With the appointment of a full-time Museums Officer in 1975, Tankerness House was registered as an approved centre for the deposition of archaeological artefacts. Since that time it has acquired many thousands of artefacts from recent archaeological digs, and expects that the collections will increase markedly over the next decade. To this end, the Orkney Islands Council are initiating a purpose-built Reserve and Study Centre where the bulky reserve collections may be cared for and made available to researchers.

In the 1960s the Orkney County Council purchased the ruined farm buildings of Midhouse in Corrigall, Harray, with the purpose of portraying Orkney's farming traditions. After many delays, work finally got going under the Manpower Services Commission, and Corrigall Farm Museum opened in 1980. It proved popular with Orcadians and visitors alike, and won three awards. The addition of Kirbuster, Birsay, in 1987, through the generosity of the Argo family, gives us, as well as the last example of a central hearth and lum, valuable additional space for the museums service's extensive collection of implements and farm machinery up to the end of the horse era.

While Stromness Museum has a general collection, its strengths are in maritime and natural history, and in recent years these themes have been emphasised. Its collections are remarkable, having been gathered over 150 years, but it lacks the space to do them justice. A major drawback has been the lack of space for a boat collection, at a time when the Orkney yole is fast disappearing. This has led to the present discussion of the possibility of establishing in a much larger building, the old Stromness Academy, an Orkney Maritime Museum which would absorb the present Stromness Museum.

The development of museums has gone hand in hand with the growth of tourism, and this has influenced displays, e.g. the German Fleet exhibition at Stromness Museum, the Lyness Interpretation Centre, the Smiddy Museum at St Margaret's Hope, the annual displays at Balfour village etc. While it is natural that different parishes and islands should wish to develop interpretive displays for tourists, it is desirable that they emphasise whatever is strongest in their own area, leaving general displays to the main museums and thus avoiding duplication of effort. Sometimes a well illustrated graphic display is sufficient to convey information and is a desirable alternative to establishing a museum, which imposes a heavy responsibility for the housing and preservation of donated artefacts.

BRYCE S. WILSON, Museums Officer

THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS BOARD for SCOTLAND

I have been a member of the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland since 1979, so it is high time that I gave OHS members some brief account of that body and its activities.

Originally set up to serve the UK as a whole, it was re-organised as the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland under 1953 legislation and is now part of the Scottish Development Department, Historic Buildings and Monuments Directorate, for short, HBMD.

A number of Acts of Parliament have made the State responsible for the re-scheduling of sites and monuments as a pre-requisite for safe-guarding the relics and buried treasures of pre-history. As well as HBMD the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments for Scotland is closely involved with the Schedule of Monuments and with rescue archaeology in respect of threatened sites. They are also partners with OHS and OIC in the employment of our Field Archaeologist, Dr. Raymond Lamb.

The main function of the Ancient Monuments Board was originally to advise the Secretary of State for Scotland in his functions in scheduling, but later this was expanded to include advice relating to the establishment of archaeological areas under the 1979 Act, for taking into care and guardianship certain monuments and for the administration of grants to those who may apply, as in the case of the Historic Buildings Council, in order to assist with their upkeep.

Since 1953 the Board must also publish an Annual Report; in practice its advice is increasingly sought to include the management and presentation of the very considerable estate of the department, including many national monuments such as Edinburgh and Stirling Castles, Glasgow Cathedral, the Border Abbeys and, ofcourse,

Skara Brae, Maeshowe and other of Orkney's famous sites which attract visitors from all over the world in numbers comparable to, and in some cases surpassing, many on the mainland of Scotland.

Members of the Board are chosen by the Secretary of State, apart from three members nominated by the following Scottish bodies: the Society of Antiquaries, the Royal Incorporation of Architects and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments. At present there are twelve Board members appointed each for a four year term. They receive no salary but can reclaim expenses incurred in travel to the four annual Board meetings and during the annual three day tour which visits different parts of the monuments' estate in Scotland.

Since the appointment of the present Chairman a refreshing new approach to its tasks has been adopted by the Board and pursued by the Directorate. Unlike their English counterpart, now English Heritage, the Board strongly resisted proposals that it become what is known in civil service jargon as "a non-departmental public body". Our advice was heeded, but the corollary has been a new impetus towards generating income from the considerable assets we possess, as the National Trust has already shown is possible without making concessions to undesirable commercial pressures. A much higher profile is being developed with the public, and new ways of providing information to visitors. There has been consultation with the Scottish Education Department to investigate the promotion of a knowledge of the place of archaeology in history for pupils both in primary and secondary education, since in the long run there will only be support for conservation in a democracy where the public value it. The promotion of industrial archaeology has already made progress, particularly since the appointment of Mr John Hume to work in the Directorate, and it also owes much to Harry Smith, one of our Board members, who is chairman of New Lanark Trust. Obviously the scheduling of sites is a continuing pre-occupation and after a period of slack this is picking up again with large numbers coming on stream again in the last two years. However, there is anxiety about the shortage of archaeological manpower in Scotland which is essential both for survey of those large areas whose archaeological treasures are still unrecorded and is carrying out rescue operations when sites are threatened.

A growing threat from which mercifully Orkney and Shetland are immune, but not our neighbour in Caithness, lies in the the indiscriminate planting of coniferous forests. Trees with their invasive roots can destroy archaeological remains beyond trace and owing to existing incentives to owners at a time of receding farm incomes, the threat is imminent. This matter is a major anxiety for the Board and the RCAHMS with whom it works closely.

10.

A recent project sponsored by the Board has been the creation of the "Friends of the Scottish Monuments", an association which offers amongst much else, free access to 330 sites in Scotland, as well as information through newsletters to its members. Those interested in joining can do so by post, to:-

Friends of the Scottish Monuments,
c/o Historic Buildings and Monuments, S.D.D.,
P.O. Box 157,
Edinburgh, EH3 5RA.

Cheques are payable to the Scottish Office: Adults £7, Family £12, Reduced (OAP and under 16) £3.50, Senior Citizen Couples £6. These subscriptions may also be paid at Maeshowe or Tormiston Farm via Mr Schlater.

Some OHS members may be aware of criticisms aroused by what was felt to have been lack of liaison between the department in Edinburgh and owners of scheduled sites, which left owners in ignorance of their responsibilities, sometimes even of their ownership, particularly in matters such as "scheduled building consent" where they might wish to carry out works on a scheduled site. To counter this, better communication with owners by way of regular correspondence has been set up; also the appointment of part time monument wardens has been begun, whose task will be to monitor the condition of monuments in their area, make contact with owners, and report back to Edinburgh.

Of the 4000 scheduled monuments in Scotland, Orkney must possess the largest number for any comparable area of its size. The blue vans of the SDD which carry staff of the now HBMD on their errands round the county are familiar sights on Orkney roads; so are the men who travel in them. The department employ around 14 to 15 staff, under Mr Drever, B.E.M. at Hatston. Amongst them are masons, including two apprentices receiving training, labourers, and ofcourse, two full-time custodians well known to the public and to visitors at Maeshowe, Skara Brae, on the Brough of Birsay and in Kirkwall during summer months. There are also part-time staff at Gurness and key holders on the mainland and throughout the N. Isles. So the monuments play a part in Orkney's economy by the direct employment of labour, a much larger one by their care of the many outstanding places which the past has handed down to us, and which, great and small, are an increasing attraction to visitors at all times of year.

One of the special advantages that Orkney owns is the unspoiled character of the settings. Standing in the centre of the Ring of Brodgar you can survey an extraordinary landscape of loch and hill, sea and islands, forming larger concentric circles round the ancient stones, all enhancing the numinous quality of this mysterious monument so that standing in its centre the onlooker feels the site must have been chosen for this purpose.

In making sure that the considerable resources and expertise of the Directorate in Edinburgh and of the Board itself continue to be used with the help of local knowledge and advice from Orkney itself, OHS and its own archaeological advisors can be of indispensable importance.

LAURA GRIMOND

Our MSC scheme, which started the work of transferring the Sites and Monuments Record on to computer, and made substantial progress with it, expired in August, and was immediately followed by a new one. We have used the OIC grant which accompanied the scheme, to add to the computer equipment, and the work of computerising the archaeological data-base is now on the verge of completion. The main task of the current MSC team is the creation of teachers' resource packs for schools' project work.

The Orkney sites and monuments record is now the most technically advanced in Scotland. In September it was shown to assembled Scottish regional archaeologists, at the regular gathering held this year in Orkney. The party also visited Isbister tomb and the Eday Heritage Walk. Both the Eday Heritage Walk and the computer system attracted favourable comment and the ideas look like being applied elsewhere.

The latest addition to our system is a modem, a small instrument which links the computer into the telephone system and so makes the SMR accessible, by arrangement, to anyone with a similarly equipped microcomputer. The main reason for doing this is to make the use of our system possible, in connection with the educational projects, by schools on the outer islands as well as those on the mainland. The modem however also makes it feasible for researchers in remote universities to receive and send data from and to us, and for us to maintain a constantly updated exchange of information with the National Monuments Record of Scotland. As the Orkney SMR is the first to equip itself in this way, it will inevitably take some time to build up contacts. Because of our drawback of isolation, Orkney has particular need to encourage the formation of such networks, but for the same reason, is not the easiest place in which to conduct pioneering experiments; we feel acutely the lack of anyone in the office with real expertise in computer operations.

R.G. Lamb

PAPAY'S HERITAGE

I can write with some acquaintance of Papa Westray, having spent fourteen years of my teaching service there, from 1968 till 1982. Living in the friendly environment of this little outer Orkney isle, with my duties in the family atmosphere of the island school, these island years passed pleasantly. I am glad of this opportunity to pass on some details of the abundant and varied heritage with which I discovered Papa Westray had been so well endowed, especially when it is realised that the isle is only about 4½ miles long from North to South, and about 1 mile wide. No less wonderful is the contribution

made to Papay's heritage by the tiny, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile long, off-shore Holm of Papay, with its native Orkney sheep and its large chambered cairn.

Although an Orcadian, I found I had to get to know Papay

Although an Orcadian, I found I had to get to know Papay house names unfamiliar to my ears. Derived from the past, these names, such as Moustier, Backiskail, Skennist, Breckiskail, Bilboa or Bewing indicated the island's links with its past.

Near the present school was the unoccupied old school, whence the pupils, in 1877, had been transferred to the school then new, on the present site. Happily, the old school was renovated within recent years, and still remains, with much of its former structure retained, as a comfortable family home.

A bit up along the road from the school, we could see a row of old, vacant cottages which, formerly, had been the homes of the farm workers of Holland Farm; somehow these houses were still called the "new hooes". But times were "a-changing".

At first, a cottage standing a little apart from the rest was modernised to become a comfortable dwelling-house again. The rest, by a major undertaking, were converted progressively into an up-to-date self-service Community Co-op and Hostel for visitors. Later, a Guest House was added. The traditional nature of the cottages was retained, with the facade keeping up its former appearance. The shop entrance was by a cottage type doorway. With my rural background, I fully appreciated such homely touches, agreeably reminding us of the little homes, where so many of us here in Orkney grew up. Through their enterprise to encourage tourism, the islanders manage to share their heritage nowadays with people from near and far. The late Dr A.C. Dow who was minister of the island church expressed the hope that Papay would become a friend to the world.

I found it refreshing to walk in the peaceful atmosphere, under the lee of the massive old gray "dry-stane" dykes beside the road up the gentle slope (past the shop) towards Holland House, the former stately home of the Traills who were the island lairds. Former workmen, despite their modest earnings, kept up their praiseworthy efforts, and through them, the dykes they have left behind are still a boon as shelter for the farm animals in the fields of Holland, whose land is unusually well-surrounded by dykes. When Holland House, a "listed" building, was renovated, a detail with which I was impressed was the skilful replacement of a large window, with a similar reproduction, containing many small panes of glass. In Holland's farm steading is a circular, walled-in, horse-mill course which has a conical roof. Inside this building, two or three "pair o' horse" walked round the mill course pulling the shafts that drove the machinery of the mill.

No reference to Papay's heritage would be complete without mention of the Knap of Howar, both of which words mean, as I understand, "mound", where there is a place of special archaeological significance. At the Knap are what remains of two Neolithic stone dwelling houses, built with skilled mason work no less than 5,000 years ago. These buildings have been established as the oldest of their kind known in North West Europe that still have their walls upstanding. West of Holland, the road shorewards leads towards the Knap of Howar which lies ahead to the North West, just above the shore. Not far from Holland, near this road, stands the "Doocot", long since gone out of use, a reminder of a past way of life.

It would have been in 1973 that I took the pupils along to the Knap to see some excavation in progress there, under the direction of Dr Anna Ritchie. When we arrived, a TV camera team was there taking photos, probably for one of the TV educational programmes - another way that Papay shares its heritage. A fascinating artefact unearthed at this "dig" was an axe head of such well-kept, unworn appearance that Dr Ritchie deduced that it may have been used only for some ritual purpose.

To the North is the ruined Church of St Boniface. As its reconstruction is being considered, we await developments with interest. This church contains a "seat of repentance" which is in a wall recess, quite high up, near the pulpit. On a Sunday, the transgressor would be seated on this stony slab aloft and in face of the congregation. Out in the churchyard lies the flat, "hog-backed" stone of obscure origin. According to local lore, this is "The Witch's Gravestone". Apparently something undefined happened "once upon a time", before that stone came to be in the kirkyard. One day two schoolboys who had wandered into old St Boniface's with its broken down pews got a scare when they surprised an otter inside the kirk and the furry creature suddenly sped out past them. Their visit was cut very short. It is pleasing to think that otters may still frequent the Papay shores.

By amicable agreement with the island farmers who hold grazing rights on the North Hill, this renowned ornithological site has been an RSPB reserve for ten years. With amazing regularity the Arctic terns fly in each May to make this area the largest ternery in Britain and at least, a large extent of Europe.

An S.W.R.I. outing with a difference took place when our little island branch went for a tour round the North Hill one summer evening. Maggie Marcus had brought along her tractor and trailer, and I had a view of the unspoilt scene from my bumpy seat in the trailer. Disturbed by our invasion, wheeling skuas and dive-bombing terns hovered above, flying as close to our vehicle as they

dared, and uttering their raucous cries. It was past hatching time and Maggie had to steer carefully to avoid the occasional plump, gray fledglings, crouched and attempting to hide among the short, hilly vegetation.

When a nearby cottage became vacant, it was bought by the RSPB as a residence for the warden who stays in the isle over the summer months. The Fowl Craig holds numerous sea-birds on its ledges. We felt concern when oil spillage caused some oiled up birds to be found on the shores. Busy people still took time to search the beaches and help the victims. I recall when Richard Fresson sailed his yacht to the isle with the idea of putting up a memorial plaque on the Craig, at the place where Papay's famed Great Auk had its last roosting place. The plaque was erected, but exposure to the elements caused it to disappear for ever, before long.

The flock of small, hardy sheep on the Holm are privately owned and managed. For sheep dipping and clipping, other willing helpers in the isle lend a hand. Delicious mutton from these sheep is the traditional meat served at the island's annual "Muckle Supper", after the "hairst" work is completed. Dr Anna Ritchie returned another time and did some excavations of burial places on the Holm, where ancient bones were unearthed. Dr Dow reckoned that people were carrying out burials on the Holm when Abraham, the patriarch of bible times was alive. I recall one summer when a few of Orkney's young ornithologists camped on the Holm for a few days. Perhaps they were rewarded with the sight of some of the sea-faring stormy petrels which find nesting places there.

The outsize St Tredwell's Loch in the South end of Papay is so named after the legendary figure of long ago, to whom a chapel at the edge of the loch was dedicated. Only a fragment of the original chapel remains. A traditional model yacht regatta is still held annually at the loch. Meantime we await the result of plans afoot to stock this loch with trout. By the East shore stands the roofless shell of an old water mill. In spite of being unprotected from the winter gales for many years, the high peaked gable end is still upstanding and unscathed. Due to so many types of habitat, numerous kinds of wild flowers are rather plentiful, but include some rare species to be found, somewhere in Papay!

Some of the island cats looked a bit out of the ordinary. One that lived in the neighbourhood was black with rather long, tapering ears. I learned that these cats were descended from a cat brought ashore from the shipwrecked "Bella Vista", when that vessel was wrecked on the North coast of Papay about forty years ago. This ship's cat became the mother of kittens at her new island home.

The late John Drever of Cott spoke with high regard of his little collie dog. Mr Drever used to take his turn of going on coastguard watch duty at the coastguard look-out hut at the top of the North Hill. Night watch could mean travelling at insociable hours in rough weather on a winter night. However, he said that when

he took his dog along with him he did not have any worry about the hazards of losing his way in mist or in darkness. The dog knew how to find the way better than he did and could be trusted to guide him safely; surely a record of devoted service on the part of both dog and man. Nowadays, the look-out hut has found another use as a place from which bird-watchers can observe the bird scene on the hill.

There is room for speculation as to what may yet await discovery, when I think of the ancient sand enveloped Castle (Broch) of Bothehan, or of the Monkerhooose monastic settlement, or of that burial place of Earl Rognvald Brusasson of Saga fame. Within recent years, and before oil made the impact it has on Orkney, traces of oil were found at the site of the New Pier when it was under construction. If the outlook began to look promising, I am afraid this find did not lead to any further oil discovery on the Papay scene. For Papay, the oil may, as yet, just be a pipe dream!

EDITH SINCLAIR

THE ORPHIR KIRKYARD SURVEY

The gravestones in the Orkney Kirkyards are a valuable resource for local historical and genealogical research and are of interest to resident and visitor alike. Scarce a summer goes by, but Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders and Americans of Orcadian descent, can be seen anxiously scanning fast eroding stones for traces of their forebears. The Orkney sandstone, alas, is not kind to them; it does not withstand the battering of Northern gale and rain and, frequently, the engraving on the older memorial tablets is indecipherable.

With this in mind, a number of OHS members have formed a small group to make a permanent record of Orkney gravestones, starting with the Orphir Kirkyard next summer. This is a pilot project which, if successful, can be repeated in Stenness and, ultimately, throughout the islands in those parishes where local enthusiasts have not already made a record.

The people of Orphir (especially the members of the SWRI) are very interested, members of the Orkney Camera Club are bringing their expertise and it is hoped that next summer, many helpers will make it a light task. When the recording is complete, a one-day photographic exhibition in the Community Centre is planned, and we hope this will release untapped stores of knowledge about the people and the families of the parish.

To start the project, the Orphir and Stenness Community Council have generously agreed to sponsor the newly formed Orphir Local History Group for a 60/40 grant

from the Orkney Islands Council, and it is hoped to obtain a grant from the New Horizons Trust to enable the publication of a small book. The New Horizons Trust provides funds for local projects of benefit to the community. The one proviso, however, is that at least 50% of the group must be over sixty. We hope members of OHS will join us in our efforts and, needless to say, the over-60s will be doubly welcome!

As well as recording the details of the people buried in the kirkyard, the group will note the style of the gravestone (the cross, the obelisk, the flat stone etc.); the embellishments (from weeping angels to hour glasses and scythes) and even make a record of the masons' marks. If, at some future date, the results are computerised, it should be possible to trace the movements of people and families throughout the islands, the working of itinerant masons - in fact, study the very stuff of local history.

There are two very fascinating little booklets published by the Council for British Archaeology and written by Betty Willshire which are well worth reading by those who are interested. They are: "Understanding Scottish Graveyards" and "How to Record Scottish Graveyards". If any Heritage members would like to help, please ring Daphne Lorimer at Orphir 255.

DAPHNE HOME LORIMER

The following "Orkney Books", a varied but not necessarily comprehensive list, appeared in 1987:

History of Orkney - William P.L. Thomson - Mercat Press
 Keepers of the House - George Mackay Brown - The Old Style Press
 Tales of an Orkney Island - W.M. Gibson - B P P Kirkwall
 Disability, Faith and Acceptance - W. Graham Monteith - Saint Andrew Press
 Second Orkney Hospitals' Recipe Book - The Orcadian
 Reflections, Glances of Eday Life Past and Present - The Kirkwall Press
 Magnus (in paperback) - George Mackay Brown - Richard Drew Publishing Company
 Jo Ben's Orkney - translated and printed by Margaret Hunter
 Fae Abune the Hill - Norman Baldwin - The Orkney View
 Orkney Economic Review No. 7 - O.I.C. - Dept of Economic Development
 Murder the Foundation Stone
 Kali Kolsson's Polychrome Cathedral - Elizabeth Hourston - The Kirkwall Press
 Churchill's Prisoners - The Italians in Orkney 1942-44 - compiled and published by James MacDonald of Orkney Wireless Museum, St Margaret's Hope
 The Golden Bird - George Mackay Brown - John Murray
 A mention also for a "Scottish" one with plenty of interest for Orcadians, and a charming cover:
 Country Life in Scotland - Alexander Fenton - John Donald Publishers Ltd.
 Reprint: The Orkneys and Shetland - John R. Tudor - John Dunlop, Edinburgh (facsimile reproduction of 1883 edition)
 St Magnus Cathedral 850 years - a celebration - The Orkney View
 Magnus' Saga, new translation - Hermann Pálsson & Paul Edwards - Perpetua Press
 And so far in '88:
 Twelve Light Years - Margaret Aitken - Albyn Press

TREASURER'S REPORT

We are at present managing to make ends meet with the initial computer expenditure now behind us. A dehumidifier has been purchased to eliminate the problem of dampness and keep the archaeological records in good condition. The three main sources of the society's income are, 1) the Occidental deed of covenant, 2) Orkney Islands Council grant and 3) interest on the Marwick bequest fund. The Occidental covenant ends this year and we have not, to date, received any confirmation that this will be renewed. If it is not renewed then the society would certainly not survive much longer bearing in mind the archaeologist's salary which the society must pay, and the rather small grant provided by the Orkney Islands Council specifically for this salary. These important items will require our attention over the coming months. Notwithstanding the aforementioned sources of income, our members' subscriptions are important and we are always pleased to welcome new members to the society. An ordinary membership costs only £3 per annum and this can be paid by completing the attached form and returning it to me.

BRIAN DOUGLAS

BANKERS ORDER FORM

To your BANK:

Your address:

.....

 Date:.....

Please pay to the Royal Bank of Scotland plc, 1 Victoria Street, Kirkwall, (83-24-07) for the credit of Orkney Heritage Society (A/c No. 00 233 290), the sum of £3.00 (three pounds sterling) on 1st June, 1988, and annually thereafter. This cancels all previous orders payable to the Society.

SIGNATURE

NAME

ACCOUNT NUMBER

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Laura Grimond