

# STRONSAY LIMPET

FUNDED BY STRONSAY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

ISSUE 66 DECEMBER 2010

Published on the last Thursday of the month



## HOGMANAY 2010—OPENING HOURS

Stronsay surgery: Closed Sat, Sun, Mon & Tue (1-4 Jan)  
In case of emergencies phone 616321 at any time

Stronsay Arts & Crafts shop: closed from Friday 24 Dec, re-open Wednesday 5 January

### Other Stronsay businesses

| Date       | Post Office            | Ebenezer      | Hotel  | Olivebank     |
|------------|------------------------|---------------|--------|---------------|
| Wed 29 Dec | 8:30am—12pm            | 9am—6pm       | Normal | 8:30am—6:30pm |
| Thu 30 Dec | 8:30am—12pm<br>1pm—3pm | 7:30am—7:30pm | Normal | 8:30am—6:30pm |
| Fri 31 Dec | 8:30am—12pm            | 7:30am—7:30pm | Normal | 8:30am—6:30pm |
| Sat 1 Jan  | Closed                 | 10am—12pm     | Closed | Closed        |
| Sun 2 Jan  | Closed                 | 10am—1pm      | Normal | Closed        |
| Mon 3 Jan  | Closed                 | Normal        | Normal | Closed        |
| Tue 4 Jan  | Closed                 | Normal        | Normal | Closed        |

## THANKS

I'd like to thank everyone who has worked so hard during the challenging wintry weather to keep the roads open, especially the surgery road thus allowing medicines to be safely transported to the surgery and allowing patients to travel to the surgery. Business has been able to continue almost as normal.

Dr Roger Neville-Smith

## WANTED!

Old Stronsay photographs, to help the children and young people working on the Stronsay Community Art Project. I wouldn't ask for originals, since I know how valuable these photographs are, but if you had printed copies to spare ( or I can get them scanned and printed ) it would be greatly appreciated.

Thankyou

Jenny (Park Cottage, Stronsay. 616475)

The next edition of The Limpet will be published on Thu 27 Jan. Items for inclusion in that edition should be submitted by Sat 22 Jan. Contact details on back page



## **Peter Morrison Chalmers 1924 - 2010**

Born 2nd March, 1924, at Rosebank, Stronsay, the youngest of three children to Alexander (Sandy) Chalmers and Margaret Morrison, Peter spent all his life in the " north end " at Rosebank.

After leaving the North School at the age of fourteen years, Peter was employed on farm work at Rosebank and at Newark, Sanday, until being called to war, serving as a Private in the Gordon Highlanders.

He saw service in North Africa, but sadly his war effort came to a sudden end at the landings in Anzio, Italy, when a German shell exploded in the trench where Peter and his fellow soldiers were sheltering, resulting in Peter receiving severe wounds to his left arm which had to be amputated. Following the explosion, Peter regained consciousness in hospital, the day after his twentieth birthday.

As a result of this, Peter was invalided out of the army and returned to Stronsay, where, undaunted by his injuries, he again took up work on the farm, drove tractors and cars, worked in the harvest etc, adapting tools and instruments to compensate for his disability.

In 1945, he successfully applied to the Post Office for the job of postman in the North End and Whitehall Village area, taking over the job of his next door neighbour, John of Oddie. With his sister Roseanna as his unpaid assistant, they were a very welcome sight in their pony and gig, especially at Christmas time when they could hardly be seen among the parcels piled high on their gig.

In 1959, Peter married Violet Anderson in the Moncur Memorial Church, and together they raised four children, Cora, Tom, Patsy and Jim at Rosebank Cottage, which at the time of the marriage, was a one roomed house. With the help of his brother Jeemie, Peter gathered stones from around the Huip sea-shore, and together they built three more rooms onto the cottage.

Due to the ill-health of his sister Roseanna, Violet became his unpaid assistant, and together they continued delivering the North End post in their Reliant Robin motor car until March, 1984 when he retired at the age of sixty, having been postman for a total of 39 years.

A hard working, well respected, good natured, family man, he will be sadly missed by his family, friends, and all those who were privileged to know him.

Bill Miller, Glenmanna, Stronsay.

## **LATEST NEWS ON THE LIGHT HAULAGE AND ENTERPRISE ZONE.**

I hope that this article will clarify the situation as it currently stands.

### **1. Light Haulage.**

It is with much regret that the Stronsay Development Trust (SDT) has had to come to the decision not to proceed with the purchase of the light haulage side of Jim Holland's business. The simple fact is we cannot make it a viable proposition without a very large increase in pricing.

Our management accountant, after having factored in all the extra costs that would be incurred by running it as a separate entity, advises SDT that the financial figures show that the business would be unsustainable. The main factors are; high staff costs and paying extra staff to cover for holidays and any other absences. With the nature of some of our cargo it would also be necessary to invest in expensive training to certify each driver and holiday relief in the transportation of dangerous goods. The same would apply to forklift operator training, first aid and risk assessments.

Of course we could go ahead and factor in these increased costs but the net result would be a minimum 75% increase in all prices which we feel would not be acceptable to the community and would have an adverse effect on existing businesses.

Added to this is the difficulty in finding sufficient numbers of volunteers to form the management committee to oversee and run the company. These would be busy and responsible roles with a workload that would mean we should offer at least two paid positions. This will add to staffing costs.

If however the time came when the light haulage was to cease running we would revisit the purchase of this lifeline business, but the fact would still remain that the service would have to be sustainable and a large price increase would be inevitable.

I would like to thank all those who supported or opposed this venture because all the feedback has helped us to reach a decision as part of the overall feasibility study.

### **2. Enterprise Zone.**

We intend to continue with this aspect of the feasibility study. The need for employment opportunities and business units has been identified in many surveys and is part of the 2007 development plan. We do however recognise the need to discuss the enterprise zone and its uses further and to continue with community consultation.

Julia Crocker  
Chair  
Stronsay Development Trust.

## A NEW ROUTE TO STRONSAY

By Joyce Maples

(A resident of Bath who is spending Christmas with John & Sue Holloway)

Having missed my usual Autumn break on Stronsay and along with it my anticipated 90th birthday celebrations due to a 'wonky' knee this year, I was determined that nothing would get in the way of my annual 3-weeks Christmas and New Year visit. I even decided on a 'split' journey - Bath to Bristol by taxi and then on to Inverness by air, followed next day by a flight from Inverness to Kirkwall and then the afternoon ferry - or a flight with Loganair if there was room - to Stronsay. Lots of spare time in the system there - just in case there were any minor hold-ups. I should perhaps say here that I have visited Stronsay 40 or so times since 1989 - at all times of year and by just about every route possible - bus, rail, plane and ferry. You name it, I've done it - even being re-routed through South Wales on the return journey one January due to flooding in the Bristol area. That was a record for me - Scotland to England, on to Wales and then back to England - and still home indoors by 9pm. The 70mph winds on the Kirkwall to Aberdeen ferry the previous night had already added a bit of spice to that journey home but then I've been on the Varagen in a SE gale!

So there I was on Thursday last week saying good-bye to Eunice and Brian at the b&b in Inverness and stepping into the taxi waiting to take me to the airport. Inverness looked lovely - everything was white and the taxi-driver joked about me getting stuck and having to come back for another night's b&b. And how right he was - the forecast had lived up to expectations and my flight to Orkney was cancelled, then cancelled again, and then for good. Eunice and Brian were very understanding and next morning I was up with the Waxwing and off to the airport again. Inverness looked even whiter that Friday - and I soon learnt that so did Kirkwall!

By lunchtime I was sure that I knew all the airport staff by name and everyone was being very helpful but then I detected a 'huddle' behind the Flybe desk and by the odd glances in my direction I suspected that I was the topic of conversation. Suddenly a member of staff quietly called across to me: "Miss Maples, would you come to the check-in desk please? We have an idea."

I then thought I heard the words 'Sumburgh' and 'Lerwick' and thought they must have called up the wrong person. After all - I was heading for Orkney not Shetland! Then a very pleasant young lady smiled and said rather apprehensively "We think we've found a way to get you to Orkney". I sensed her uneasiness as she read out the proposed itinerary - "We can fly you to Sumburgh followed by a 25mile taxi-ride to Lerwick and then back to Kirkwall on the Lerwick to Aberdeen ferry. You'll arrive at Hatston by about ten-thirty tonight." I sensed her relief when I jumped at the idea - but I hadn't been to Shetland for fifty years and I wasn't going to miss this opportunity!

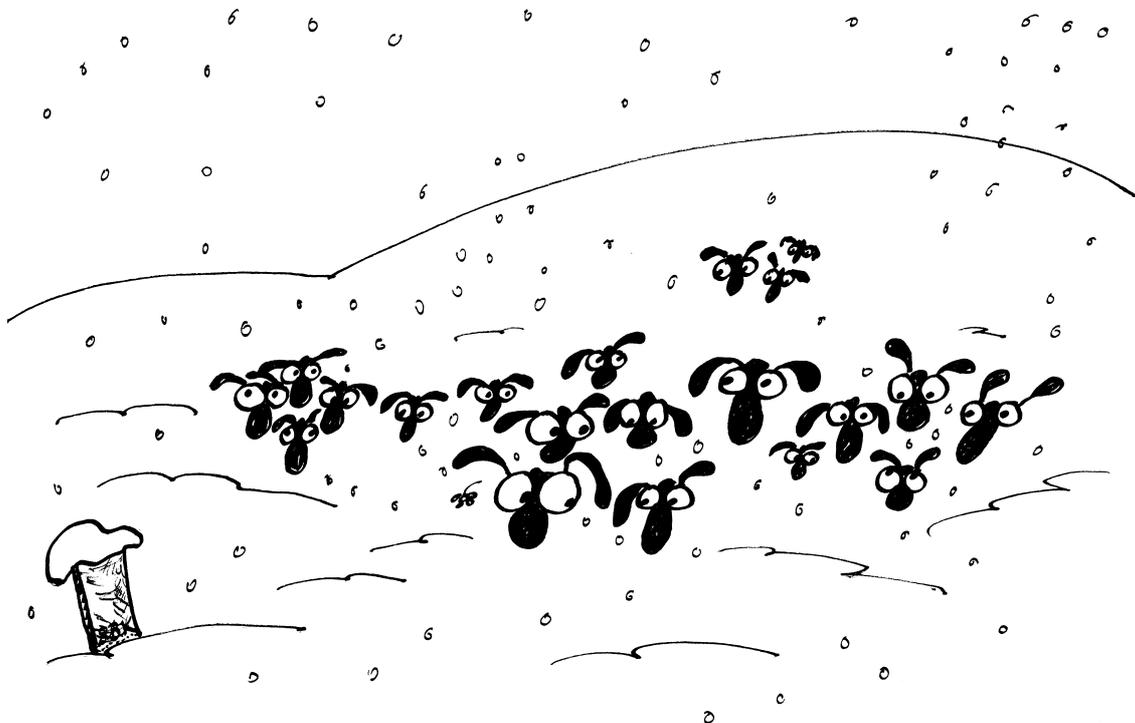
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So just over an hour later I was on the plane heading north past snowbound Orkney and I found myself giving a small wave as we passed by. Shortly after three o'clock I was in a car heading north once again - courtesy of a fellow passenger who was meant to be in Shetland - taking in the wonderful scenery I hadn't seen for so long. As I stepped out of the car alongside the Hrossay in Lerwick harbour it suddenly dawned on me that I was now roughly 100 miles too far north - and once again everything was white! I looked up at the Hrossay, half hoping that it was already pointing south. I had had enough of 'pointing north' and as I boarded the ferry my mind went back to my previous journeys to Shetland all those years ago - once in a Dakota aircraft and once on the St Clair. Then I remembered the Sumburgh 'Roost' at the southern tip of Shetland Mainland - one of the most notorious stretches of water in the world - "What would it be like tonight?" I thought.

I needn't have worried the boat trip was a delight - almost flat calm and I even managed another wave as we passed by to the east of Stronsay. The whole of the East Atlantic and North Sea had been swept by northerly gales for 2-3 days just before my voyage but just five hours after leaving Lerwick we were 'tying up' at Hatston.

"Almost there" I thought as I left the Ayre Hotel on Friday morning and after a few hours shopping in Kirkwall I joined the afternoon ferry, arriving in Whitehall at 6.45 pm. But the weather hadn't quite finished with me yet and just as a I stepped off the boat a blizzard and strong SE wind hit the island! Now it was my turn to be white - but the whole experience was worth it. I had found a new route to Stronsay!  
Joyce Maples, Bath.

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**We rose to the occasion and we're putting on a production called  
"Away in a snowdrift" for our climatically challenging, themed  
Christmas play. Hooo! Brrr!**

## **BIRD REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2010**

The Waxwing invasion gathered strength towards the end of October and on 24th birds were reported from many sites. The first - a single seen by Marion at 'Blink' - was quickly followed by birds at Holin Cottage, Castle, Lower Millfield, and Seaview where Butch and Flora had a party of twelve on the rose bushes right outside their kitchen window and a Mealy Redpoll feeding on the ground below. Given the OK by Nigel and Juliet, we alerted the BBC Autumnwatch crew to the Lower Millfield birds, steering the cameraman and his assistant into position by the back gate. A short sequence of their footage appeared the following evening on BBC1. The camera crew were amazed at how confiding the birds were, and several of the Autumnwatch team subsequently visited Castle to watch the birds at very close range - down to just 3-4 feet and no binoculars needed!

A dozen Waxwings were seen by Jean Reid at Airy Cottage on 25th at the same time as a party of 18 arrived on The Reserve. One was seen at the South School next day and a flock of 30 were in the Castle garden on 30th after which numbers slowly dwindled, the last being a single at Castle on 7th November.

Several other colourful birds were seen in late Autumn/early Winter including 2 male Bullfinches - 1 found by Sue at Lower Millfield on 9th November at the same time as a flock of 50 or so Snow Buntings flew over - and another seen by Sheena at Sunny-side on 24th. Several Goldfinches have been seen during the last month, including parties of 2,4 & 5, and other interesting finches - the majority attracted to the unharvested crop behind Northbank - include several Mealy Redpolls, 2 Greenfinches, and 2 Chaffinches. This area is invaluable to small seed-eating species and a mixed flock of Twite & Linnets numbering at least 600 birds has taken up residence there this winter, some commuting between Northbank and the similar crop at Dale. Most of these birds roost in the bushes in nearby gardens and Jennifer and Robin often see mixed flocks - including Mealy Redpolls - in the Manse garden. A late Pied Wagtail has been seen by Norman at Dale on 2-3 occasions and both Song Thrush and Wood Pigeon have also been seen in the area recently. Several birds of prey have been seen - 2-3 Hen Harriers including a lovely pale grey male; 2-3 Merlins; 1-2 Kestrels; 2-3 Peregrines (including two young birds together over Bomasty), and a Buzzard. A Jack Snipe, dazzled by the car head-lights and watched for some time in The Reserve drive as we returned home one evening in late October, was seen on 3-4 subsequent occasions. Jack Snipe is noticeably smaller than Common Snipe and the bill just about half the length of that of the common species.

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Very few Fieldfares and Redwings were seen in late Autumn and virtually all had departed before the snow arrived in late November. There have been several sightings of Long-eared Owls - including at Breck (Alison), and Dale (Kath), and birds roosting in the day-time have been seen on occasions. Long-eared Owls are mainly winter-visitors to Orkney, arriving from the continent with big 'falls' of Blackbirds in late Autumn. Also associated with these arrivals is the Woodcock and it is no surprise that there have been several recent sightings of this species on The Reserve and elsewhere. However, virtually all Woodcock sightings are a surprise and looking for this species invariably ends in disappointment.

A few Red-breasted Mergansers have been seen regularly between the piers in Whitehall and can be very easy to observe - between dives!

Once again, almost on the deadline for our *Limpet* 'piece' yet another spectacular sighting - albeit rather small - this time a Shorelark between Mt Pleasant and The Bu on 20th December (see photo below).

Thanks once again to all who have alerted us to their sightings during the year - this is always a reminder of how many birds we miss and a lesson that as far as Stronsay is concerned where birds may be found just about anywhere, the best approach to bird-watching is often to go outside and just wander about!

Happy Christmas to all.

John & Sue Holloway



*Waxwings feeding at Castle in late October - photographed from the front porch*



*Finches in the small tree in Jim Sinclair's garden on 3rd December - part of the huge flock in the area this winter. Linnet (top); Mealy Redpoll (bottom left), and Twite (bottom right).*



*An amazing find on the Bu links, this Shorelark is just the third Stronsay record. A new species for Joyce Maples - up for Christmas again and now 90 years old - who has been birdwatching for almost 75 years*

## **BOXING DAY DIP ON STRONSAY**

Inspired by the Clic Sargent Boxing Day dip in Scapa on mainland, some intrepid Stronsay folk (and Gary) decided that a Boxing Day dip here on Stronsay to raise funds for Clic Sargent would be a great idea too. Photographs below show Stronsay's bravest (& coldest!) at the Ayre o'the Myres, Stronsay on Boxing Day.



## **MASONIC NEWS**

At the Installation meeting of Lodge Kildinguie, held at the Masonic Hall, Stronsay, on Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2010, two of the brethren received Jubilee Certificates to celebrate fifty years in the Lodge. John Banks Fiddler and Colin Stevenson Cooper joined Lodge Kildinguie in 1960, and in presenting them with their certificates, the outgoing Right Worshipful Master, Brother Michael Cooper, spoke of their dedication to the Lodge and of their support of the various Masonic and non-Masonic charities. Pictured from the left are Colin Cooper, the current Right Worshipful Master Brother John Walsh, Michael Cooper and John Fiddler.

Bill Miller, Secretary



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## **STRONSAY HEALTHY LIVING CENTRE**

### **OPENING TIMES FROM 5th JANUARY 2011**

|             |                                |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| Mon/Wed/Fri | 10.00—11.30am and 4.00—5.30 pm |
| Tue/Thu     | 7.00—8.30pm                    |
| Sat         | 10.00—11.30am                  |
| Sun         | 10.00—11.30am                  |

**INDUCTIONS ARE FREE IN THE NEW YEAR!**

Unfortunately though; there is a small increase in prices due to the changes to VAT – sorry!

Any changes to this schedule will be advertised in shops and on HLC notice board

## ENERGY EVENING

This was to have been held on 16<sup>th</sup> December but due to the weather was postponed. Hopefully we can re-schedule it for January. Once a date has been set posters will go up in the shops.

## LOVE FOOD HATE WASTE

Launched by Zero Waste Scotland, this is a programme created by the Scottish Government to support delivery of its Zero Waste Plan.

At this time of year when most of us are fortunate enough to be buying in lots of goodies and stocking cupboards and freezers it is worth a thought about saving money on food throughout the year. The average Scottish household throws away £430 of food waste every year!

If we stopped wasting all this food, we could prevent carbon dioxide emissions equivalent to taking 1 in 4 cars off the road.

The main reasons we waste our food are that we cook or prepare too much and that we let our food go past its use by date or simply forget we have it.

The Love Food Hate Waste campaign provides practical hints and tips to help us avoid wasting food and will be a regular feature in the Limpet.

**LOVE VEGETABLES AND SALAD HATE WASTE - £100 million of vegetable and salad waste is thrown away by Scottish households every year.**

**Tips** – Keeping fresh vegetables in the fridge will help keep them fresher for longer. Potatoes are best stored somewhere cool and dark. If your salad is wilted, refresh and revive it by submerging it in a bowl of cold water and putting in the fridge. Your salad should be crispy again within an hour.

**Recipe** – Frittata *Spanish Omelette* by Wendy Barrie  
Serves 4. Makes a very thick omelette so serve in wedges hot or cold.

### Ingredients

- 10ml (1 dessertspoon) vegetable oil
- 1 onion
- 1 clove garlic, peeled, chopped
- 150-200g leftover vegetables eg. Peas, green beans, mushrooms, carrots
- 1 tblsp grated strong cheese
- 1 red pepper, deseeded and sliced
- 100g leftover cooked potatoes, sliced
- 6 beaten eggs
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley/basil. Salt, pepper.

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## Method

- Heat oil in frying pan and fry onion and garlic until softened. Add pepper.
- Wash vegetables and trim into bite size pieces. Any uncooked vegetables need blanched (part cooked) for 2 minutes in boiling water. Drain.
- Pre-heat grill.
- Add all the vegetables (including cooked potatoes) and herbs to pan and toss lightly to mix together with the oil.
- Pour eggs into pan and stir to combine., season with salt and pepper.,
- Stir together then reduce to a medium heat and allow to cook without stirring – about 5-8 minutes.
- When fully set and golden underneath and still soft on top, scatter with cheese and transfer to pre-heated grill to finish off the top. The dish is cooked when the egg is set.

For more hints and tips for leftovers visit [www.wasteawarelovefood.org.uk](http://www.wasteawarelovefood.org.uk)

**It would be great to hear your hints, tips or recipe ideas to reduce food waste by sending them into the Limpet.**

All above information reproduced from Love Food Hate Waste, Zero Waste Scotland leaflets.



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## **CHRISTMAS AT CLAREMONT**

By Maureen Fletcher

“Right troops, fall in! Attention! Roll call!”

“Apple sauce?” “Aye.”

“Wine?” “Aye.”

“Home-made stuffing?” “Aye.”

“Veg?” “Aye, 8”

“Potatoes (Roast & Boiled)?” “Aye, both.”

“Gravies?” “Aye.”

“Festive pudding? Cream? Custard?” “Aye, all present & correct.”

“Cheese, biscuits?” “Aye.”

“Pork?” “Present.”

“Beef?” “Aye.”

“Chicken? Chicken?? CHICKEN! Where is the chicken?”

All turn to look at cat who says “Not guilty, only like beef or fish.” So, chicken has gone AWOL. Big search but still no chicken.

Plan B – raid deep freeze for Number 2 Chicken and quickly defrost in microwave.

Meanwhile rest of troop is near to completing last of Christmas dinner – and it’s nearly late tea-time. Number 2 chicken, guarded by six Pigs-In-Blankets, is almost ready. Christmas dinner finally complete, cook sergeant collapses in chair clutching glass of wine, still pondering disappearance of Number 1 Chicken. In spite of near disaster a good meal was enjoyed as was the remainder of a most enjoyable Christmas.

## **KELP MAKING & RIOTS IN STRONSAY**

Stronsay has been associated with kelp making for centuries, and in fact James Fea of Whitehall, Stronsay, was credited with making the first kelp in Orkney in 1719, which he sold to Newcastle.

Initially, kelp was used in the making of glass, dyes and soap, in factories in the north-east of England, it being rich in potash, soda and iodine. Eventually alternative sources were found for the production of iodine, and slowly the industry went into decline with the last kelp burning in Orkney being in 1937. The gathering of tang in Stronsay was continued for short periods in the 1940s and 1950s, and the gathering of tangles however, continued sporadically until 1998.

Tangle gathering and kelp burning are remembered as winter and spring work, but to fit in with farm work, in 1810 for instance, kelp work at Huip began in April and ended in July, using workers from Caithness who were free from the ties of farm work. The expense incurred in bringing in workers from across the Pentland Firth, reduced the profits considerably and was discontinued.

The work was carried out mainly by farm workers and crofters, who paid their rent and received meal, in exchange for working in the kelp and doing other menial tasks for the lairds. They were known as "oncas" as they were always "on call" to the laird.

Working with the tides, they could be out cutting seaweed at all hours of the day and night, resting when the rocks were covered by the tide. Although this was back-breaking work, it could be a pleasant task on a nice sunny day with both men and women taking part.

Rock-weed was cut with serrated hooks leaving the "stool" to grow again for about three years when it had its highest alkali content and would be again ready for cutting. Floating seaweed was often dragged ashore with a ware-pick or "klooro".

Tangles came ashore during the winter gales and could be found piled high along the shoreline.

They were brought up onto the fields and dried, and although rock-weed was preferred for the burning of kelp, tangles were also utilised for this purpose. Many people utilised tangles for burning in their homes, but as coal was cheaper than kelp, some lairds brought cargoes of coal up in kelp ships and sold it to the kelp workers to maintain and preserve the supply of the more expensive kelp. Tangles used in kelp burning had to be dried as quickly as possible to preserve the alkali and iodine content, and so they were built up on "steethes", rough walls of beach stones about fifteen inches high on which a layer of tangles, two or three deep were placed across the steethe, then alternate layers were laid at right angles until they were between three and four feet high. Air passed through the steethes and dried the "beek" of tangles ready for the kiln.

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The kelp kiln was a circular pit about six to eight feet across and one foot deep cut into the ground. Some had sides lined with flat stones, but most were just a circular earth pit. A fire would be lit in the centre of the kiln using dried tang, driftwood or anything flammable. Once the fire was alight, seaweed was piled on top and replenished whenever the fire showed red. Burning a kiln would start early in the morning and continue throughout the day consuming several steethes of tangles by late afternoon when the kelp became a boiling liquid ready for raking.

Several men or women were needed for the raking which was done with a kelp rake which had an eight foot handle and a turned down metal toe, or sometimes two or three prongs. Kelp had to be raked for at least half an hour to ensure all the weed was burnt into an even texture. As it began to set, two men would beat it with kelp shovels and this was known as sealing the pit. Heavy beach stones would then be placed on top of the solid kelp to help compress it further and protect it from the elements.

After about two days the kelp would be sufficiently cool to be broken into lumps weighing about two stone, and then carted off to the kelp store where it was kept dry until shipped off to the buyers.

The years 1739 -1742 were years of extreme famine with crop failure, dying animals and starvation. Ironically the parishes where kelp was burnt did not have any deaths from starvation, unlike some where no kelp burning took place. Nevertheless, the burning of kelp and the resulting acrid smoke, was blamed for the problems, and it all came to a head in May of 1742 when some of the islanders decided to sort it all out.

On Sunday 16th May, 1742, Edward Miller who had been the Bailie's Officer for some 20 years, and also acted as the church beadle, was approached by Peter Fea of Dunatoon (Situating along the shore between Springwell and Furrowend) who asked him to intimate at the church door that a meeting of all "boundsmen" or farmers was to be held at Milnfield the next morning for the purpose of stopping the burning of kelp. The next morning about 50 protesters gathered at the Mill of Milnfield, and armed with stout sticks, set off on a tour of destruction. Their first stop was at Clestrain where they expected to find James Fea burning kelp, but he was out of Orkney at the time. There was however, an angry exchange between his wife Barbara and the rioters. There was a scuffle between the rioters and some of Fea's farm servants and some kelp tools were broken before the rioters set off for Huip.

At this time, Huip was the biggest of the kelp farms in Stronsay, and there, they found a kiln full of burning kelp. Thomas Balfour's kelp workers were the main target of the rioters who stated their intention of tying them up and setting them adrift in a boat. Elizabeth Cockburn was in charge of the kelp making and she had managed to hide the workers in a secret room where, despite a search by the rioters, they were not found. The rioters then beat up Elizabeth and her maid-servant, extinguished the kelp kiln, threw already made kelp and seaweed into the sea, and smashed up kelp tools, before heading off for Strenzie (now Whitehall ) where they could see the smoke of another burning kiln.

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There, the man in charge, Malcolm Delday, refused to stop burning and despite his protests, the kiln was extinguished and kelp and tools were destroyed, before the rioters set off for further raids in other parts of the island.

On the following Thursday, Thomas Balfour of Huip who was a merchant and landowner, applied to Andrew Ross, the Steward-depute, for a warrant for the arrest of the rioters including Peter Fea.

The execution of the warrant was entrusted to Steward-substitute, John Riddoch, and he was instructed to head for Stronsay with such armed forces as he deemed necessary to make the arrests.

Riddoch was no stranger to such tasks having been shot at point blank range by the Laird of Burray when trying to arrest a deserter who was employed by the laird.

The location of the embarrassing wound made it quite difficult for him to sit down for some time.

Worried by the number of people he was supposed to arrest, Riddoch swore in about a dozen Kirkwall tradesmen, armed them with swords and pistols, and set off for Stronsay on the Saturday.

Considering that an element of surprise might be the best tactic, they approached Peter Fea's house in Rothiesholm at around midnight. Breaking down the door, they found Peter and his wife in bed, and upon being asked to get out of bed, Peter refused. He was therefore dragged out by the legs with his hysterical wife hanging on to him. She then fainted, and when Peter told his daughter to run to a neighbour for brandy, Thomas Balfour, who had joined the poss'e, pointed a loaded pistol at the girl and stopped her leaving. Unwilling to leave Mrs Fea in this distressed condition, Riddoch allowed Peter to stay with her on the promise that he would surrender himself at a later stage.

Riddoch and his assistants then set off to make four further arrests which were successful, and by morning they and their prisoners were on the grounds of Holland, still accompanied by Thomas Balfour of Huip, and his brother William Balfour of Trenaby, and they were heading for Cleat to arrest John Fea, the brother of Peter. They did not have to go looking for him as he appeared in front of them with a mob of about sixty rioters. As the mob kept its distance, Riddoch left his prisoners tied up in the custody of the Balfours and, accompanied by Edward Miller, the Bailie of Stronsay, approached the mob and read them "The Riot Act", giving them a formal order to disperse in the King's name, but they refused to do so. As the mob pushed forward, Riddoch was forced to draw his pistol while the Balfours retreated with the prisoners towards the relative safety of Holland.

However a second mob appeared on the skyline of Stebb Hill, about half a mile to the north. Word had spread around the island that Riddoch and his men were "dragging naked men and women from their beds and making them prisoners". This mob then charged down the hill led by Peter Fea calling on his people to follow him and "spare none"

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Thomas Balfour drew his pistol and his brother William stood beside him with sword drawn. Richard Angus of Milnfield threw Thomas Balfour to the ground and was grappling with him when brother William came to his rescue and wounded Angus with a blow from his sword. William also wounded John Fea before being overcome by the mob.

Meanwhile Peter Fea, armed with a cudgel, made for Riddoch, knocking his hat and wig off, and causing a severe wound to his head. Other rioters cut the ropes binding the prisoners and it was all over in a few minutes, but the rioters were unsure what to do with their victory. Everyone - rioters, prisoners and the Steward's men headed for Holland, talking, arguing and tending their wounds.

Riddoch and his party left for Kirkwall without being opposed but they took no prisoners with them.

The success of the Stronsay rioters spread to other islands and parishes and violence spread to every corner of the County. There was almost a kelp riot in Harray, a parish without kelp!

Eventually many of the rioters across the County surrendered, but Peter and John Fea were the only two from Stronsay who were tried.

The Earl of Morton, viewing events from the comfortable safety of his London home, thought that a great fuss was being made over the affair, and recommended leniency. John Fea was fined £60 Scots and had to find bail of 300 marks to keep the peace for three years. Patrick, whose part in the riots was more serious, was fined £140 Scots, and was forced to stand in custody until he appeared at the door of the churches in Kirkwall, St Andrews, Deerness, Firth, Orphir and Stronsay, all kelp making districts. He was forced to stand at the church door immediately before divine service, bareheaded and with a placard around his neck, on which was written a summary of the verdict and sentence. Failure to pay the fine would result in a whipping or banishment.

Next year the crops were better and there was no more talk of destroying kelp kilns.

Henry Leask of Haukhouse, Stronsay, was the kelp grieve for the island, and in 1803, received a total of 52.5 tons. Does anyone know where Haukhouse was?

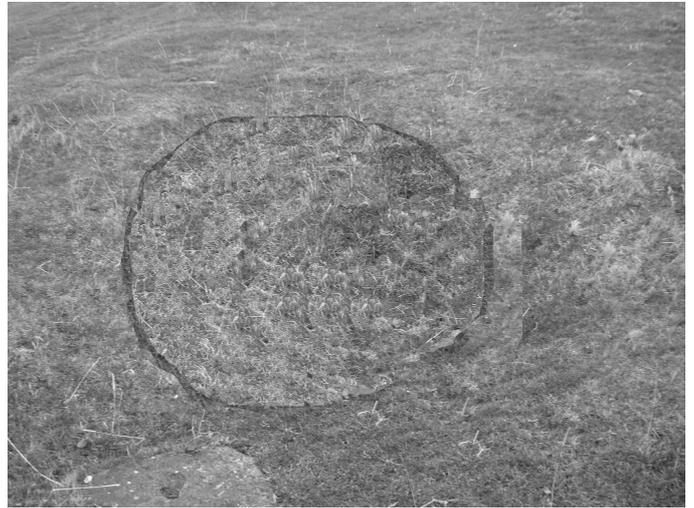
The fifty years from 1780 to 1830 saw the "Great Kelp Boom" when around three thousand people were employed in kelp making in Orkney, and kelp accounted for about two-thirds of Orkney's exports, totally dominating the economy of the islands. In 1830 however, boom prices were drastically reduced, and although it recovered somewhat, the expansion in agricultural exports resulted in kelp playing a relatively minor role in the economy of the islands. Ware however, was used extensively on the land to enrich the soil and produce better crops.

*(continued on next page)*

In the 1700s, kelp workers received about £1 per ton of kelp. In 1998, the last Stronsay tangle gatherer, Ellie Harrison of Newfield, received £170 per dry ton and on an average day would throw up around 4000 tangles. In that year she worked hard for over 900 hours in all sorts of terrible weather, and amazingly succeeded in collecting 18.575 dry tons, for which she received just over £3 thousand pounds. Unfortunately for Ellie, despite all her hard work, this was still less than the minimum wage at that time.



*Tangle Steethe*



*Kelp Kiln*

Take a walk around Griceness or most of the other Stronsay shore-lines and you will still see the tangle steethes and the kelp kilns where our forefathers struggled hard to make an honest living.

Bill Miller, Glenmanna, Stronsay.

**HAVE YOU VOTED FOR “BT INFINITY”?**

Go to [www.racetoinfinity.bt.com/the-race-explained](http://www.racetoinfinity.bt.com/the-race-explained) and vote.

# **OSCAR AND MISS MUPPET'S CHRISTMAS PARTY**

By Christine Richings.

Oscar was a large, long-haired Black and White cat who lived in a house on the hill in Rousam with his sister, Miss Muppet, a daintier ginger and white cat. Oscar thought he was the boss and Miss Muppet thought she was so this brought about the occasional disagreement. Oscar liked to get the cosiest place in the house, the seat nearest to the Rayburn, where he would happily spread himself out. He knew Miss Muppet liked to go out hunting so he let her do just that and when she caught something and brought it home he would finish off what was left. Oscar loved to stroll around the garden watching the birds; sometimes he would sit quietly under a bush waiting for an unsuspecting bird to land, this would make his owners cross.

He had an advantage over other cats if he did feel like hunting as he did not have a tail to swish about as cats tails do when they are getting ready to pounce; he had been in an accident when he was young, luckily he had survived this but his tail had not. Miss Muppet liked to sit and preen herself to make sure she looked her best. She would travel furthest from home as this meant that she would meet other cats on her travels. Winter had come and Christmas was not far away. Miss Muppet and Oscar usually spent Christmas together snuggled up in their box homes in the garage. They had extra treats, plenty of milk, a selection of food and regular visits to check on their health. What more could they want you might think - but this Christmas so a party was planned. Miss Muppet had invited some of her feline friends who lived in the dunes nearby to join in the festive fun. Ben the black and white cat was also invited, he lived in the house down the road. It was very cold, the ground was covered in a fine dusting of snow, stars twinkled and the moon shone brightly lighting the way to the garage on the house on the hill.

Oscar and Miss Muppet were waiting for their first guests to arrive and it was not long before two small green eyes could be seen in the darkness. A small black cat with a white bib cautiously peeped in through the small gap in the door. "Come in and welcome this is my brother Oscar" Miss Muppet meowed. Then a small, black, half-grown kitten appeared, shortly afterwards Ben the neighbor's cat joined the party. They played hunt the mouse, pass the parcel (which was in fact an un-opened packet of cat food) and Tag, a game that required a lot of energy racing up and down ladders planks of wood and along beams. Oscar decided to sit that game out and Ben came last as he was not keen on the game either. They chatted a while before sitting down for a meal of chicken in jelly, beef in gravy, salmon flakes, tuna and vegetable crunches, finished off with a good helping of milk. They all wished each other a happy Christmas. Ben trotted off home first as he could hear his owners calling in the distance. The Black cat with the white bib and its half-grown kitten bid farewell and headed back across the field for a nice grassy hollow in the dunes to spend the night as they always did. But tonight they were especially happy for they had won the pass the parcel prize.

# **A PIECE OF CAKE!**

By Ellie from Newfield

So you're not a gourmet cook  
And your menu is restricted.  
You slice your custard with a knife  
And the gravy's flow is restricted.  
Home-made bread he calls "Peter",  
So named for a solid rock.  
And he says it's through his stomach  
His heart's reached; Oh, surely not!  
Me cake mix turns out lumpy,  
Not perfect one hundred per cent.  
You can't be an expert on all things  
And I mix a wicked cement.  
"I'll build us a byre from your buns!"  
He jokes with misplaced glee.  
Will he still be laughing, I wonder  
When that's all he's got for his tea?  
"I should bury that cake in the garden."  
He's rocking with laughter, close to tears.  
"Archaeologists will dig it up  
And survey it in future years!"  
He knows he's lucky to have me  
Because I tell him all the time,  
But his stomach growls so loudly he says  
I would need to mime.  
"Wasting away" he complains,  
"Hand-in-hand with progressive starvation."  
So why then, I wonder,  
Did he not eat my latest creation?  
I'm not designed for cookery,  
I'm more your "brickies mate";  
More at home with a breeze block.  
Wait till THAT lands on his plate!

©Helene Harrison

# **DAFT HOMEMADE POETRY BY BILL EMBLETON**

(Number 32)

A Christmas cracker

On Christmas day I was fourteen stone as I tucked into my dinner.  
Then the missus brought in the custard and pud, which really was a winner.  
I washed it down with a bottle of wine and cans of Brown Ale and such.  
By the odd After Eight and mince pies later on, I knew I had eaten too much

I ate and ate on Boxing day, I made a right pig of myself.  
I stuffed myself with all she put out, not giving a thought to my health.  
Bloated, I waddled out of the front door, to sample a breath of fresh air,  
Swigging a bottle I held in my hand, while chomping on crisps without care

Each day after that was much the same, my wife heaped the food on my plate.  
Tempting treats, strategically placed, were devoured by me at a rate.  
I really was enjoying myself and by now was at sixteen stone four.  
But I couldn't resist the food she put out, though my pants wouldn't fit any more

By New Years Eve I was twenty stone, but the wife said it mattered not;  
She would love me whatever my size, I was not to give a jot.  
Come January I couldn't stop eating as my belly had got such a size  
I was having a job to fill it, but Belle kept me going with pies.

Then one day when the mail came, two letters dropped on the floor.  
I couldn't bend down to pick them up, so the letters I had to ignore.  
Later I inquired what the mail was about,  
She said it was the electric bill and deliberately left one out

Suspicion started to plague my mind, what was in the other one?  
So while she went shopping for pies for me, I searched while she was gone.  
I found the missing letter, addressed 'Private' to my wife,  
It confirmed her massive increase to the insurance on my life

Her vigorous shaking woke me from my doze on the settee.  
“You must have been having a bad dream pet, as I heard you swear at me.  
Your Christmas dinner is on the table, come and get it while it's hot”  
When I arose I wasn't fat, I must have dreamed the lot.

***PRIVATE SALES & WANTS, GREETINGS etc***

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Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year  
From Roy, Cora and the girls  
(Owing to a family bereavement we won't be sending any Christmas cards this year)

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**BUTCH & FLORA**

would like to wish all our friends in Stronsay a HAPPY NEW YEAR  
and "ALL THE BEST FOR 2011".

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**TO FLORA AT SEAVIEW, WHITEHALL**



Many happy returns on your birthday (24 Jan 2011)  
All the best from your loving sister and brother-in-law and family in Canada  
and Dad & Owen in Stirling

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**Business adverts**

Up to 25 words - £1.50. 25 word advert with photo - £3. 25 to 50 words - £3 and so on.

**Private adverts (for sale, wanted, birthday greetings etc)**

Up to 25 words - £1.00. 25 word advert with photo - £1.50. 25 to 50 words - £1.50 and so on.

Adverts for the next (January) edition of *The Limpet* must be placed by Saturday 22 January

Contact details for *The Limpet* are on the back page

## ***LOCAL BUSINESSES***

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### **INSTANT PHOTOS**

Passport, visa, travel pass, driving licence,  
gun licence, etc.

Personalised birthday, Christmas & get well  
cards with your own special message or  
photograph.

Business/Invitation cards.

You name it! Tell me what you want & I'll  
supply it.

*Call Bill Miller on 616420*

### **STRONSAY ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOP**

Stronsay and Orkney craft products,  
Fiction and non-fiction books, cards,  
Gifts, maps, Rowan and North Ron wool  
stockist.

From 29 Sept the shop will be open on  
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday

12.00 to 17.30

Tel 616434

*www.stronsayartsandcrafts.co.uk*

### **STRONSAY ARTWORKS**

Original paintings of Stronsay Landscape;  
Limited edition prints, greetings cards and  
postcards which are available for sale at lo-  
cal shops, Post Office, Hotel, B&B's and  
the Fishmart. Commissions taken.

*Phone Jenny on 616475*



### **“NEIL'S ON WHEELS”**

All mechanical work undertaken, welding specialist,  
MOT prep work, home start, towing service, no call out fee.

MOBILE: 07723 304 260      HOME: 01857 616454

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#### **Business adverts**

Up to 25 words - £1.50. 25 word advert with photo - £3. 25 to 50 words - £3 and so on.

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## **GROUPS, CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS**

### **APOLOGY AND CORRECTION** **TO THE CHURCH CHRISTMAS GREETINGS**

Rosanna Dawson's birthdate was wrong. It should read: 26th May, 2010 (not 24th June as printed).

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### **SINGING CLASS**

New 10 week session starts on Monday 17th January 2011

7pm—9pm in the Community Centre

No need to be able to read music, all you need is enthusiasm!

Contact Brian Crowe on 616464 for further details.

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### **STRONSAY HEALTHY LIVING CENTRE**

#### **OPENING TIMES FROM 5th Jan 2011**

|             |                                |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| Mon/Wed/Fri | 10.00—11.30am and 4.00—5.30 pm |
| Tue/Thu     | 7.00—8.30pm                    |
| Sat         | 10.00—11.30am                  |
| Sun         | 10.00—11.30am                  |

**INDUCTIONS ARE FREE IN THE NEW YEAR!**

Unfortunately though; there is a small increase in prices due to the changes to VAT – sorry!

Any changes to this schedule will be advertised in shops and on HLC notice board

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### **WHY NOT WRITE TO THE LIMPET?**

The Limpet is always on the lookout for new contributors. Have you a Stronsay-related story to tell? Why not put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) and send in your story; please include your own contact details when you write.

Contact details for the Limpet are on the back page.

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**Announcements by charities, local groups, clubs and organisations are FREE!**

Items for the next (January) edition of *The Limpet* must be placed by Saturday 22 January

Contact details for *The Limpet* are on the back page

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## ***GROUPS, CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS (continued)***

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### **MOBILE LIBRARY**

Next visit - **MONDAY 17 January**

Council Houses: 9.00am-11.00am

Stronsay School: 11.30am-2.00pm

Stronsay Kirk: 2.30pm-4.30pm

Stronsay School: 6.30pm-8.00pm

Kirkwall library contacts - 01856 873166 or [general.enquiries@orkneylibrary.org.uk](mailto:general.enquiries@orkneylibrary.org.uk)

Kirkwall library website - <http://www.orkneylibrary.org.uk>

Kirkwall library online book catalogue - <http://212.219.208.10/TalisPrism>

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### **FRIDAY NIGHT GAMES CLUB**

Ages 10 or over only

Friday night 8pm until 10pm

Entrance £1

Come along for a fun filled night

Air hockey table

Pool table

Play station 2

Nintendo Wii & Sing Star

Snooker

Juice, crisps and sweets available

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### **STRONSAY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

Rooms for hire from only £2 per hour plus hydro charge.

Special event coming up? Why not hire the disco equipment with rotating glitter globe and pulsating coloured lights for only £5 plus room and hydro charge? A DJ from the Hall list must be used.

Also available for hire: badminton, table tennis and snooker all at £2 per hour plus hydro. All equipment provided.

Adult supervision (over 18) must be present during hire.

For details and booking contact Colin on 616446.

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## ***USEFUL INFORMATION***

### **POST OFFICE OPENING TIMES**

|                           |                 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Monday, Wednesday, Friday | 8:30—12         |
| Tuesday                   | Closed          |
| Thursday                  | 8:30—12 and 1—3 |
| Saturday                  | 9—12            |

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Post collection times . . . . .      | 07:30, Monday to Saturday                          |
| Replacement bin bags. . . . .        | Telephone OIC (Technical Services) on 01856 873535 |
| Sunday service at the Kirk . . . . . | 11 am  |
| Our Lady's chapel, pier head . . . . | Daily Masses at 7:30 am and every Sunday at 9 am   |
| Next Special Collection . . . . .    | 04 Jan 2011  |

|                            |              |                             |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Doctor . . . . .           | 616321       | Castle Bird Reserve . . . . | 616363       |
| Nurses . . . . .           | 616480       | Balfour hospital . . . . .  | 01856 888000 |
| Medical emergency . . . .  | 01856 888000 | Hydro . . . . .             | 0800 300 999 |
| Registrar . . . . .        | 616239       | Kirkwall Library . . . . .  | 01856 873166 |
| Hall bookings . . . . .    | 616446       | Kirkwall Police . . . . .   | 01856 872241 |
| Post Office . . . . .      | 616217       | Vets:                       |              |
| Companions . . . . .       | 616261       | Flett & Carmichael . . .    | 01856 872859 |
| Kirk . . . . .             | 616311       | Northvet . . . . .          | 01856 873403 |
| Stronsay Hotel . . . . .   | 616213       | Dentists:                   |              |
| Fish Mart Hostel . . . . . | 616263       | Great Western Rd . . . .    | 01856 879683 |
| Olivebank . . . . .        | 616255       | King Street . . . . .       | 01856 875348 |
| Ebenezer stores . . . . .  | 616339       |                             |              |

### **HOW TO CONTACT THE LIMPET**

Send an email to [ricardian@btinternet.com](mailto:ricardian@btinternet.com), phone Bruce Fletcher on 616297 or write to *The Limpet*, Claremont, Stronsay, KW17 2AR

*The Limpet* is published on the last Thursday of the month. Items for inclusion in *The Limpet* must reach Bruce by the Saturday before the last Thursday in the month. The cut-off date for the next (January 2011) edition is Saturday 22 January.

### **SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE LIMPET**

Why not send a subscription to a friend or relative for a birthday present?

12 editions for £10.00 including P&P

Please make cheques—UK banks only—payable to “Stronsay Development Trust”  
(UK only. Non-UK subscriptions, please ask for a quote)

Contact Bruce, details above

The Stronsay Development Trust, a Scottish Charity SC038888

<http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/SDT>

Supported in its activities by HIE Orkney, Orkney Islands Council,

Communities Scotland, The Crofters Commission and

Orkney Community Planning Partnership