



ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE
OF AMERICA TOURS

Exploring Scotland's Orkney and Shetland Islands: *A Walking Adventure*

June 15-25, 2013 (11 days)
with AIA Lecturer & Host Mary MacLeod



A ruined Haaf fishing station on Fethaland, the most northerly point of mainland Shetland

This unique new tour is more active than our usual land tours and features daily hikes that are easy to moderate in difficulty. To fully enjoy and visit all the sites on this itinerary one should be in good walking condition (and, obviously, enjoy walking!).

Two minibuses, each with a local driver/guide, will accompany our group, which is limited to only fifteen participants. Our guides will explain in advance the difficulty of each day's walk(s) and, if you prefer, you can opt out of any walking excursion and be driven to the next stop; but, bear in mind that a few sites can only be visited if you walk to them. The duration of each walk is estimated within the following itinerary.

AIA lecturer Mary MacLeod lives and works in Scotland, and has lectured to acclaim on many AIA Tours. **All meals are included, and you will enjoy comfortable accommodations:** four nights at the historic *Orkney Hotel*, a comfortable overnight ferry to Shetland and back to Aberdeen, and three nights at the remote and charming *Busta House Hotel*.

This is the perfect opportunity to **explore all that Scotland's Northern Isles have to offer:** prehistoric stone circles, burial chambers, and settlements; early monasteries and medieval castles; quaint villages; huge seabird colonies; and remarkable plant life—all amidst dramatic landscapes. **This will be Scotland seen slowly, with time for in-depth exploration at each site.**

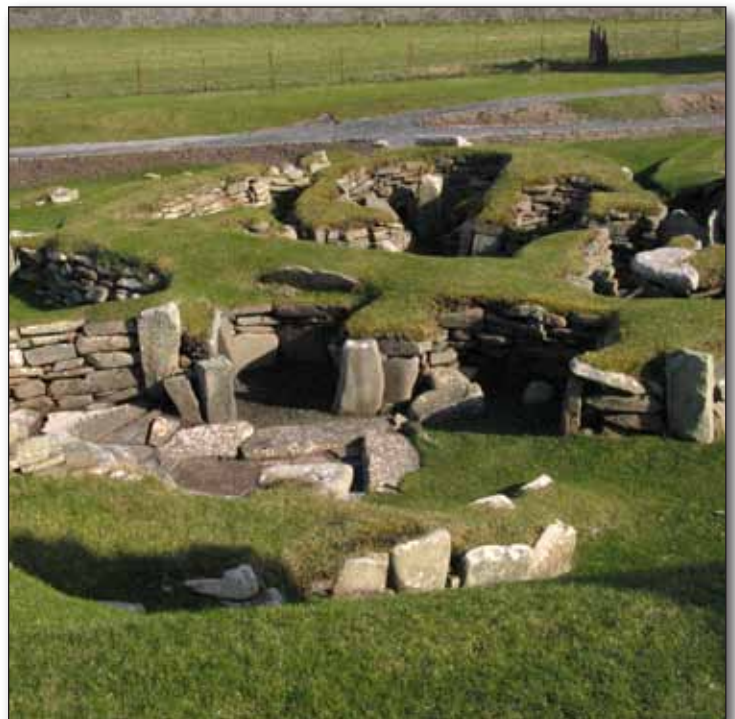
The Orkney and Shetland islands have an amazing wealth of archaeological sites dating back 5,000 years. Together the islands have more than 18,000 known sites, with new discoveries being made every year. **This archaeological saga is worth the telling, and nowhere else can the evidence be seen in more glorious a setting.**

Highlights include:

- The “Heart of Neolithic Orkney,” inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1999, including the chambered tomb of **Maeshowe**, estimated to have been constructed around 2700 B.C.; the **Stones of Stenness**; the 4,000 year old **Ring of Brodgar**, one of Europe's finest Neolithic monuments; **Skara Brae** settlement; and associated funerary monuments and stone settings. These are unquestionably among the most important Neolithic sites in Western Europe.
- “The Crucible of Iron Age Shetland”—including **Mousa Broch**, the best-preserved known broch in the world, **Old Scatness**, and **Jarlshof**—where the lack of intensive modern farming means that the preservation of these sites and their landscapes is exceptional.
- The Isles are a birdwatcher's paradise, and **one of the major seabird breeding and feeding areas in the North Atlantic.** More than a million birds breed in very large colonies.



Above & Bottom: The archaeological site of Jarlshof, dating back to 2500 B.C. Below: A view of the Atlantic from the northern Shetland island of Unst.



Itinerary - June 15-25, 2013 (11 days)

B= Breakfast • L= Lunch • D= Dinner

Saturday, June 15, 2013 - DEPART HOME

Sunday, June 16 - Aberdeen, SCOTLAND | Kirkwall, Orkney

Upon your arrival in Aberdeen, Scotland, at no later than 3:00pm, you will be met and transferred to the ferry terminal in Aberdeen, where our group will board the ferry to Kirkwall, Orkney. We will have dinner aboard the ferry, arrive in Kirkwall at about 11:00pm, and transfer to our hotel. Overnight at *The Orkney Hotel* for four nights. (D)

Monday, June 17 - Kirkwall | Mainland Orkney | Kirkwall

Distance 5 mi. Height climbed: negligible

For centuries, people have assumed that the Ring of Brodgar and the Standing Stones of Stenness were the main Neolithic focus of this area, but recent excavations question that interpretation. The stone circles might have been merely on the periphery of the true ceremonial center—a massive ceremonial complex that, in its heyday, must have completely dominated the landscape. Following breakfast, we will visit several important Neolithic sites on mainland Orkney, from the Standing Stones of Stenness to the Ring of Brodgar, via other Neolithic monuments, to Maeshowe, which is Britain's largest chambered cairn. This, the 'Heart of Neolithic Orkney,' which also includes Skara Brae (a site we will visit on June 19) was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1999. (B,L,D)

Tuesday, June 18 - Kirkwall | Isle of Rousay | Kirkwall

Distance 4 mi. Height climbed: 300 ft.

This morning we will take the ferry to the Isle of Rousay, where we will wander the most important archaeological mile in Scotland, through 5,000 years of history, visiting a number of burial cairns including Midhowe, Pictish brochs, Viking settlements, and remains of the period of the Earls and the troubledcrofting times. Back in Kirkwall, we will walk around the town, visiting the magnificent St. Magnus Cathedral, founded in 1137 by the Viking, Earl Rognvald, in honor of his uncle, St. Magnus; and the remains of the Bishop's and Earl's Palaces, the most accomplished pieces of Renaissance architecture in Scotland. (B,L,D)

Wednesday, June 19 - Kirkwall | Skara Brae | Kirkwall

Distance 3-6 mi. Height climbed: 300-600 ft.

We start the day with a visit to the impressive Broch of Gurness (Aikerness Broch), which remains one of the most outstanding known examples of an Iron Age settlement. Continue on to Skara Brae, possibly Orkney's most exciting archaeological site, which was buried by a sandstorm in about 2450 B.C. It was well preserved and then revealed by another storm in 1850. Walk south along the spectacular coast with geos, natural arches, caves, and sea stacks, visiting en route the Broch of Borwick, perched high on a headland. Return to our hotel in Kirkwall for our last night on Orkney. (B,L,D)



Above: Skara Brae, where the original village dates back to 2450 B.C. Below: The Ring of Brodgar, a stone circle that is 341 ft. in diameter, is the third largest in the British Isles.



Thursday, June 20 - Kirkwall | Isle of Hoy | Kirkwall

Distance total 6.75 mi. Heights climbed: 250 & 550 ft.

This morning we will check out of our hotel and take the ferry to Hoy, the highest and wildest of all Orkney Islands. Our walk will take us to the 5,000-year-old monument known as the Dwarfie Stane, an immense block of sandstone lying within a natural amphitheater. This is the only example in northern Europe of a rock-cut tomb similar to the chamber tombs of the Mediterranean. Drive through a glen, along what could be burial mounds, to Rackwick, from where we will walk to the world famous sea stack (at 450 ft.) known as The Old Man of Hoy. Return by ferry to Kirkwall, mainland Orkney, in the afternoon. Dinner tonight will be at *The Orkney Hotel*, before we take the overnight ferry from Kirkwall to Shetland at about 11:00pm. (B,L,D)

Friday, June 21 - Lerwick, Shetland | South Mainland | St. Ninian's Isle | Brae, North Mainland

Distance 3 mi. Height climbed: negligible

We arrive in Lerwick in the morning, after breakfast on the ferry. Travel south today, visiting Jarlshof and Old Scatness, two archaeological sites that were occupied for more than 4,000 years. There is a remarkable sequence of stone structures: late Neolithic houses, a Bronze Age village, an Iron Age broch and wheelhouses, a Norse longhouse, a medieval farmstead, and a 16th-century laird's house. The crucible of Iron Age Shetland, including Old Scatness, Jarlshof, and Mousa Broch (a site we will visit on June 24), was added by UNESCO in 2012 to the Tentative List of cultural World Heritage sites. Our next stop is St. Ninian's Isle, which is connected to the mainland by a tombolo (a bar of sand, or shingle). The island was settled in pre-Norse times, and the remains of an old chapel are still visible. We will visit the site of the chapel and walk on the island before transferring to our hotel, located near Brae. Overnight at the *Busta House Hotel* for three nights. (B,L,D)

Saturday, June 22 - Brae | Fethaland | Brae

Distance 6 mi. Height climbed: 450 ft.

Fethaland is the northernmost part of Shetland's mainland. We walk to a ruined Haaf (meaning "open sea") fishing station dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. The ever-enterprising lairds established this and other Haaf fishing stations on remote northwestern parts of Shetland to profit from the catch of ling and cod during the summer months. Extremely brave fishermen ventured out (50 miles) into the Atlantic Ocean in open boats called sixareens. Set within the fishing station are a large, circular Neolithic house and a ruined Iron Age broch. Other places of interest that we will encounter during our walk are a Viking soapstone quarry, and a 6th century chapel site and settlement, both situated on precarious headlands. (B,L,D)



Above: Travelers visiting the Broch on Isle of Mousa.
Below: Old Scatness on south mainland, Shetland.



Sunday, June 23 - Brae | Isle of Unst | Brae

Distance 3-6 mi. Height climbed: 330-660 ft.

This morning we will take the ferry to the Isle of Unst, where the excavation of three Viking/Late Norse settlements forms the center of the much larger, multi-faceted Viking Unst project. A replica longhouse has been constructed, adjacent to which the replica longship, the *Skidbladner*, is a copy of the 9th century *Gokstad* that was discovered in Vestfold, Norway. We will also visit the northernmost cliffs of the British Isles, which are home to over 100,000 breeding seabirds. (B,L,D)

Monday, June 24 - Brae | Isle of Mousa | Lerwick

Distance 3 mi. Height climbed: negligible

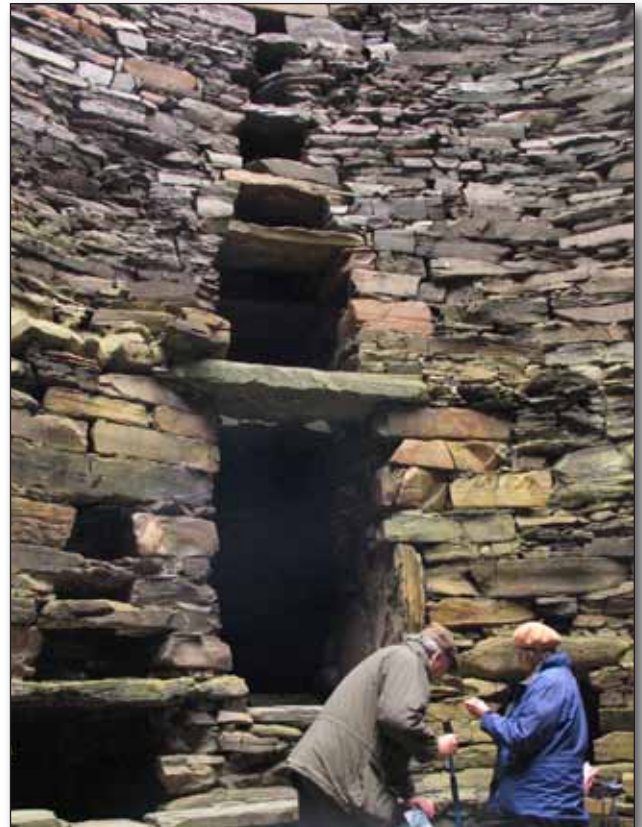
This morning we will check out of our hotel and travel south for the boat to the uninhabited island of Mousa, which is famous for its Iron Age broch—the world's best-preserved Pictish broch. It rises to 40 feet, and the skill and accuracy of its builders has resulted in a 2,000-year-old construction that appears today as though the builders have just laid the last stone and gone home for the night. Back on mainland we will drive to Lerwick. You will have some free time to explore Lerwick, its shops, and the excellent Shetland Museum & Archives, before we take the overnight ferry to Aberdeen at about 5:30pm. We will have dinner aboard the ferry. (B,L,D)

Tuesday, June 25 - Aberdeen | FLY HOME

Arrive in Aberdeen this morning, and transfer to the airport for flights home-ward. Flights should depart Aberdeen no earlier than 11:00am. (B)



Top: Puffins on the Shetland Islands. Middle: Jarlshof, Shetland. Bottom Right: Mousa Broch. Bottom Left: The Old Man of Hoy stands 450 ft. high on the Isle of Hoy, Orkney Islands.



Archaeological Institute of America Lecturer & Host



Dr. Mary MacLeod was born in London, England, to a Scottish-Canadian family. Her father's family was from Scotland's Outer Hebrides, and she spent a lot of time in the Hebrides as a child. Dr. MacLeod earned her B.A. from the University of Cambridge, and her M.A. from the University of York. She worked and studied in different parts of the world, including five years in Sweden, until she finished her Ph.D. at the University of Glasgow in 1999. Her publications include many articles on the archaeology of the Viking Age, and of the north of Scotland, and her unpublished dissertation explored "Scandinavian Settlement on the Isle of Lewis." Dr. MacLeod is fluent in Swedish, and has a reading knowledge of various other languages. She began her present job as an archaeology lecturer at the University of the Highlands and Islands in 2009, after eleven years as the Regional Archaeologist for the Outer Hebrides. She lives on a family croft on the Isle of Lewis, which she runs with her husband, landscape painter Simon Rivett. Dr.

MacLeod has been a popular and highly-rated lecturer on five previous AIA tours since 2002, and looks forward to sharing this in-depth exploration of Scotland's archaeology and history with our AIA group.

Accommodations

We will stay in small, charming, good-quality hotels, and have a couple of overnight ferry trips.

Hotels

June 16-19 (4 nights): Orkney Hotel, Kirkwall, Orkney
(www.orkneyhotel.co.uk)

The hotel dates back to 1670, when local merchant John Richan built it as a family home, and it is situated in the heart of the ancient royal burgh of Kirkwall. The hotel offers every modern convenience, while retaining most of its original features, and its award-winning local cuisine combines with traditional Orcadian hospitality.



Orkney Hotel

June 21-23 (3 nights): Busta House Hotel, Busta, Shetland
(www.bustahouse.com)

The oldest part of the house was built in 1588, and it was extended in the 17th and 18th centuries. All the bedrooms are named after islands around the coast of mainland Shetland and are individually decorated to give each a unique character. The cuisine features lots of local produce.



Busta House Hotel

Ferries

June 20 and 24: Cabin on overnight ferries

The ferry company we use for transits Aberdeen / Kirkwall, Kirkwall / Lerwick and Lerwick / Aberdeen is Northlink Ferries (www.northlinkferries.co.uk/). On June 20th and 24th, travelers will stay in two-berth, outside cabins, and single travelers will have a two-berth cabin for single occupancy. One dinner will be served, while breakfasts and an additional dinner are self-service.

NOTE: All the other ferry crossings will be short (between 10 and 30 minutes each). On those ferries there are passenger lounges and rest rooms.



Restaurant



Outer twin cabin



Bar

What to Expect

This is a good introduction to hiking in Scotland for people with basic fitness, combining hiking and visits to archaeological sites. Daily walking distances will not exceed 6.75 miles, with varying amounts of ascent, and we do not expect to hike for longer than four hours at a time. Most hiking will be on paths, tracks, or quiet roads, although the surfaces can be wet and rough. There will be some steep sections along the way, but no climbs as great as thousand feet, even in total. The actual itinerary is subject to variables such as the abilities and interests of the group and the weather conditions. The local guides know the area very well, and an easier alternative hike is possible on most days. Lunches will be packed and eaten (mostly outside) at appropriate points during excursions/hikes. There will be two local guides with the group, and a minibus for those who choose to skip a walk/hike. Average temperatures in June range from the 50s to 60s F with a fair chance of some precipitation.

Main Tour Prices (Per Person)

Double Occupancy\$4,995.

Single Supplement\$845.

Single room supplement will be charged when requested or required (limited availability). Prices based on a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 15 participants.

Your Trip Includes:

- Leadership of AIA lecturer/host Mary MacLeod;
- Round-trip transfers between Aberdeen (airport, hotel, or train station) and the ferry terminal on group arrival and departure dates;
- Seven nights' accommodations in finest available hotels, as per the itinerary;
- Two nights aboard overnight ferries;
- All meals (including water and welcome & farewell dinners with drinks);
- All excursions and entrance fees as per the itinerary;
- Surface transportation by air conditioned minibuses, with filtered water provided;
- Services of two professional, English-speaking guides/Tour Manager;
- Gratuities to hotel & restaurant staff and porters;
- Gratuities to the Tour Manager/Guides and drivers;
- Baggage handling at hotels (one bag per person);
- Comprehensive pre-departure information, including a suggested reading guide, travel guide, and packing list.

Rates Do Not Include: Airfare from/to home; passport and visa fees; inoculation fees; all airport fees and departure taxes; cost of personal, trip cancellation, and baggage insurance; transportation of excess baggage; personal tips; items of a personal nature, such as laundry; alcoholic or other beverages (except as noted above); taxi, telephone, and fax charges; optional excursions or deviations from scheduled tour.

Payments: A deposit of \$1,000 per person is required to reserve your space on the tour and is payable by Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or check made payable to EOS-Passenger Escrow-AIA Scotland6/13. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure and must be by personal check only; credit cards are not accepted for final payment. By submitting your deposit you are bound by the terms and conditions delineated throughout this brochure. Due to space limitations, this is abbreviated information. Complete terms & conditions will be sent upon confirmation and are available upon request. Prices, itinerary and lecturer are subject to change. Prices quoted are based on group participation and no refunds will be made for any part of the program in which you choose not to participate. It is understood that refunds cannot be made to passengers who do not complete the tour for whatever reason.

Passenger Cancellation Penalties: All requests by passengers for cancellations must be received in writing. Cancellations received at least ninety (90) days prior to departure are fully refunded less an administrative fee of three hundred dollars (\$300) per person. Cancellations received between sixty (60) and ninety (90) days prior to departure are fully refunded less an administrative fee of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per person. Cancellations received within sixty (60) days of departure are subject to 100% of the tour cost. For this and other reasons, participants are strongly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance. An application will be sent with confirmation of receipt of your deposit.

Air Arrangements & Transfers: Round-trip airfare between home and Aberdeen, Scotland, is not included. Complimentary transfers between Aberdeen (airport, hotel, or train station) and the ferry terminal on group arrival and departure dates are included, but you must arrive in Aberdeen no later than 3:00pm on June 16th and depart Aberdeen no earlier than 11:00am on June 25th. **Please check with our office before booking non-refundable airline tickets.**

The Archaeological Institute of America & the AIA Tours Program: The Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) is the oldest and largest archaeological organization in North America. The AIA seeks to educate people of all ages about the significance of archaeological discovery. For more than a century the AIA has been dedicated to the encouragement and support of archaeological research and publication, and to the protection of the world's archaeological resources and cultural heritage. By traveling on an AIA Tour you directly support the AIA while personally gaining the benefit of the AIA's network of scholars and worldwide contacts.



**For questions and to make a reservation
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