

# **STRONSAY LIMPET**

**FUNDED BY STRONSAY DEVELOPMENT TRUST**

**ISSUE 68 FEBRUARY 2011**

*Published on the last Thursday of the month*



## **OLD MANSE—PROGRESS REPORT**

Since New Year we have made great progress at the Manse. We have all but two partitions up and plaster-board on one side, we cannot put the other side on until we have the plumbing fittings in place. We have just ordered more wood to finish the last two partitions and then we will focus on the plumbing. We are waiting for the electrician to return and complete the next step then the switches and sockets can be put in place. Our scaffold tower blew over in the wind but thankfully didn't do any damage. Hopefully more to report next month.

Steve & Yvonne



The next edition of the [Limpet](#) will be published on Thu 31 March. Items for inclusion in that edition should be submitted by Sat 26 March. Contact details on back page

## JAMES ROBERT STOUT (PEEDIE JIMMY) 1951 - 2011



Jimmy was born at Linksness, Stronsay and attended the Stronsay Central School until the age of fifteen years. On leaving school, he became a fisherman working on his father's boat the Ocean's Gift, and at the age of sixteen years in 1968. took part in a daring rescue in Eynhallow Sound when the fishing boat "Flourish" was in extreme danger with a fouled propellor and was being driven onto the rocky shore in a very heavy swell.

With no thoughts to their own safety, Jimmy Stout Senior and his crew maneuvered the Ocean's Gift through the rocks and managed to get a tow-line onto the Flourish and dragged her out to safety. This daring rescue was recognised as the most meritorious and gallant rescue in Britain for that year, with Jimmy Senior being presented with a gold watch for his outstanding courage and seamanship.

Jimmy also took part in several rescues on the Stronsay Lifeboat of which his father was the coxswain, and up until his death was a member of the Stronsay Branch of the R.N.L.I. guild. A collection at his funeral raised the sum of £370 for the R.N.L.I.

After several years as a fisherman, Jimmy decided that he wanted to become a chef and trained as such at Inverness, following which he worked in various hotels around the Inverness and Evanton area.

After breaking his leg in a skiing accident, he returned to Stronsay to recuperate and helped his mother Fiona in the Stronsay Hotel.

When his father retired as Harbour Master, Jimmy stepped into his shoes, and was Harbour Master and Pier Master for several years.

He maintained his passion for boats and anything to do with the sea. his latest acquisition being a twenty feet yacht.

Jimmy was a well known and well liked figure walking around the village and the harbour with his dog Lyka. He will be sadly missed by his family and many friends.

Bill Miller, Glenmanna, Stronsay.

## **JOHN HOLLOWAY'S BIRD REPORT**

There were a few signs of birds moving north towards the end of January, with 2 Shelducks on the Matpow, 3 Oystercatchers flying past Bomasty, and a trickle of Redwings and Fieldfares elsewhere. 10 Fieldfares were at Eastbank on 30th, and a male Sparrowhawk was seen hunting over The Reserve/Mill area several times on 30th & 31st. Sheila reported a Dunnock at Helmsley around this time - a favourite area of this species, the only known attempt at nesting in the last twenty years or so being in the overgrown garden between the Smithy and the Post Office. Sheila also reported at least two Goldfinches in the Helmsley garden in mid-February and a Robin singing. Blackbirds have also been heard singing and with warmer weather promised for the next few days it may not be long before the first Skylark is heard.

Another sign of an early Spring was a Pied Wagtail feeding on the main Pier in Whitehall on 5th February - over a month earlier than the usual arrival date for the species. Several pairs of Pied Wagtails nest on Stronsay annually, the majority being typical 'British' types with mainly black upperparts, but occasionally an individual of the 'Continental' type may be present at almost any time between March and October, giving rise to confusion with the badly-named Grey Wagtail. These continental Pied Wagtails are in fact more 'grey' than Grey Wagtails, the latter having a bluey-grey mantle. Grey Wagtails are very uncommon here - perhaps one every three or four years - and Norman & Kath Kent had the good fortune to find one bathing in their bird-bath at Dale on 3rd October last year - see photo below. This appears to be a young bird, and as can be seen in the photo, the tail is extraordinarily long - noticeably longer than that of Pied Wagtail. A pair of Grey Wagtails have bred in the burn at the Wellpark Garden Centre in Kirkwall for the last two years and it is well worth taking a careful look for these when in town. The birds seem quite happy in the sheltered culvert and have been seen there at all times of the year. The bright yellow under the tail - seen well from behind - is a good clue to the identification. The birds occasionally visit the water-feature in the garden behind the centre's cafeteria.



*Grey Wagtail at Dale on 3rd Oct 2010. Photo from kitchen window by Norman Kent*

A few Redwings arrived on 8th February - one seen by Hazel in the Airy garden; one at Sunnybank, and one in the Reserve drive. 14 Oystercatchers were on the Blan Loch next day and a Mealy Redpoll paid a brief visit to the Castle garden on 10th. Colin reported a Fieldfare at The Hill and Oystercatchers could be heard after dark as they began to arrive in bigger numbers. The finch flock at Northbank has reduced in size somewhat but there is still a good mixture of species there, including Chaffinches, Mealy Redpoll, and Greenfinches among the more numerous Twite and Linnets.

## **PANCAKES AND PYJAMAS NIGHT**

The Games Club held a "Pancakes and Pyjamas Night" on Friday 18th February to raise funds for their parent organisation "The Orkney Association of Youth Clubs". 55 people came along for an evening of fun and delicious pancakes and over £100 was raised. Thank you to everyone who came along to support us and to everyone who helped in any way-especially the cooks!

Sheena Cooper



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## **STRONSAY MEDICAL PRACTICE**

### **SURGERY TIMES QUESTIONNAIRE**

Thank you very much to all those who completed the questionnaire which was available for six weeks from 1st Nov to 15 Dec 2010 from the shops and the surgery. The responses were as follows:

- Numbers returned (17)
- Everything about the current arrangements fine (16)
- Prefer all appointments to be booked (2)
- Prefer all appointments to be open (1)

Comments included:

- Separate bell for Katrina - Practice Manager (2)
- Comfortable chairs for waiting room (1)
- Appointments for KGS students (1)

It has been really helpful to have these responses. We are planning to:

- Continue the open surgery between 9.30 to 10.30 in the morning
- Continue the booked surgery between 3.30 and 4.30 in the afternoon
- Continue urgent appointments on Saturday morning between 9.30 and 10.30

When the regular ferry timetable is restored I will be in Eday on Thursday so there will be no surgery on that day in Stronsay and in addition to this:

- We are exploring the purchase of a separate bell for the practice manager
- We have requested suitable and more comfortable chairs from Orkney Health Board
- KGS students may attend on Saturday mornings during the 9.30-10.30 surgery

Dr Roger Neville-Smith



Are you interested in growing flowers, fruit and vegetables? Or maybe you have been growing produce for years.....Then this is for you!

## **HORTICULTURAL TRAINING DAY**

**“Getting ready for the new growing season”**

**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March 7pm-9.30 pm**

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 9.30-2pm**

**Stronsay Community Hall**

### **Training will include:**

Soil and cropping plans. Propagation, crop nutrition and pests and diseases.  
Training is aimed at all levels of knowledge

### **Guest experts:**

- **Dr. Audrey Litterick**—former horticultural lecturer at Scottish Agricultural College who now works as an environmental consultant
- **Norman Stephen**—Scottish Agricultural College soil scientist and a tutor of SAC distance learning courses in organic farming.

**There is no fee attached to this course!**

For a full programme and/or book a place (booking is essential) please contact Marion on 616354 or email: [powerdown.stronsay@gmail.com](mailto:powerdown.stronsay@gmail.com)

It is possible to attend only one of the sessions and still receive course materials.

Lunch will be provided!

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## **INCREASE IN COST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS TO *THE LIMPET***

New or renewed postal subscriptions occurring on or after 01 April 2011 will be at the new rate of £15.

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

Contact Bruce, details on back page.

Don't forget, the *Limpet* is available online at [www.stronsaylimpet.co.uk](http://www.stronsaylimpet.co.uk) and it's free!

## **REVEREND SKENE'S 1924 CALENDAR**

Dear reader,

I hope you are finding the quotations in Reverend Skene's 1924 calendar interesting. I will be submitting one each month until the end of the year if Bruce will be kind enough to print them.

I also intend to compile a 2012 calendar on the same lines, which I hope will be ready in plenty of time to be printed and bound before next Christmas. The sale proceeds of this calendar will all go to the Stronsay Junior High School Parents Council, for the S.O.S. (Support Our School) Fund. With cutbacks anticipated, this fund will help to defray the cost of purchases thought necessary for the benefit of the kids.

What I respectfully ask you to do is to contact me with a short quotation, few lines of poetry, birthday or wedding anniversary wishes etc., and I will insert them on the appropriate date. With the quotes and poetry, let me know when your birthday is and I will try to enter it on that date. I also need your name and address, the same as in Reverend Skene's one.

I will also be inserting items of historical interest to Stronsay such as when the Ro Ro ferry Service started etc. and any item along those lines would also be welcome.

If you are willing to take part in this, and support the school kids, please contact me by telephone on 01857-616420, by email on [glenmannal@btinternet.com](mailto:glenmannal@btinternet.com), or by letter to Glenmanna, Stronsay, Orkney, KW17 2AS.

I will need 366 entries, so all you Stronsay residents, exiles, and anyone else who wants to take part, please get your thinking caps on and contact me as soon as possible so that I can make an early start on this project.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Bill Miller, Glenmanna, Stronsay.

*(The Rev Skene's calendar for February 1924 is on the next page)*

**Friday — February 1st.***"Time and Tide wait for no man."*

Mr John Smith. Scoulers, Stronsay.

**Saturday — February 2nd.***"It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul."*Mrs Richmond. Iris Bank, Mitchell Square,  
Blairgowrie.**Sunday — February 3rd.***"Happiness is a perfume that one cannot shed over another  
without a few drops falling on one's self." — Anon.*

Mrs Clelland. West U.F. Manse, Wick.

**Monday — February 4th.***"The palm grows; the coral increases; and man departs." —  
Tahitian Proverb.*

Dr D. McPhail. Sanday.

**Tuesday — February 5th.***"Love one another."*Rev. G.C. Kirk. Straloch, Enochdhu,  
Blairgowrie.**Wednesday — February 6th.***"To thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."  
— Shakespear.*

Mrs Brims. Catherine House, Carnwath.

**Thursday — February 7th.***"Not enjoyment and not sorrow  
Is our destined end and way,  
But to act, that each tomorrow  
Finds us further than to-day."*

Miss Skene. Holburn Street, Aberdeen.

**Friday — February 8th.***"My fragrance of past joys abide  
In tender memory,  
Lending a charm to future days,  
As sweet pot-pourri."*

Magnus Dennison. Kirbuster, Stronsay.

**Saturday — February 9th.***"Life is a jest, and all things show it;  
I thought so once, but now I know it."*

Mary S. Gorie. Clestrain, Stronsay.

**Sunday — February 10th.***Mind, my lads, whichever way you take it (that is an  
interpretation of some text) keep the character of God clear." — A  
Welsh Collier.*

Mrs Haggie. U.F. Manse, Sandwick.

**Monday — February 11th.***And I smiled to think God's greatness  
Flowed around our incompleteness—  
Round our restlessness, His rest."*

— E.B. Browning

Miss Durran. 10 Drumsheugh Place,  
Edinburgh.**Tuesday — February 12th***"And man, whose heaven-erected face  
The smiles of love adorn —  
Man's inhumanity to man  
Makes countless thousands mourn."*

Jessie Cooper. Blinkbonny, Stronsay.

**Wednesday — February 13th.***"Wherever I roam, whatever realms I see,  
My heart, untravelled, fondly turns to thee."*

Rev. Robert Webster, M.A. U.F. Manse, Stenness.

**Thursday — February 14th.***"Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;  
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,  
The short and simple annals of the poor."*

Mr A. Chalmers. Fairhill, Stronsay.

**Friday — February 15th.***"Life is already a very splendid thing:  
Let us therefore make it better."*

James Shearer. Sunnybank, Stronsay.

**Saturday — February 16th.***"From compromise and things half-done  
Keep me with stern and stubborn face,  
And when at last the fight is won,  
God, keep me still unsatisfied."*

Mrs F.H. Chakravarti. Calcutta.

**Sunday — February 17th.***"Then stretch forth your hand like a brother,  
Remember that life's but a span;  
It's your duty to help one another,  
And do a good turn when you can."*

James Millar. Banks, Stronsay.

**Monday — February 18th.***"As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair women which  
is without discretion."*

James Maxwell. Myres, Stronsay.

**Tuesday — February 19th.***"Old friends are best. King James used to call for his old shoes;  
they were easiest for his feet."  
— J. Selden.*

Thomas T. Smith. 1 East Road, Kirkwall.

**Wednesday — February 20th.***"Labour with what zeal we will,  
Something still remains undone;  
Something uncompleted still,  
Waits the rising of the sun."*

Mary Ann Cock. Linkhouse, Stronsay

**Thursday — February 21st.***"Kind hearts are more than coronets,  
And simple faith than Norman blood."*

R. Fotheringhame. Boondatown, Stronsay.

**Friday — February 22nd.***"The more you know, the more you know you don't know."*

Doris Flett. 52 East Church Street, Buckie.

**Saturday — February 23rd.***"Always realise the best, and expect the worst, until you are  
perfectly sure of the worst, and then make the best of it."*

David Millan. Clayquoy, Stronsay.

**Sunday — February 24th.***"Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season  
we shall reap, if we faint not."*

— Galatians vi. 9.

James Twatt. Lodge, Stronsay.

**Monday — February 25th.***"When a task is once begun  
Never leave it till it's done;  
Be the labour great or small,  
Do it well, or not at all."*

Anna Margaret Millar. Schoolhouse, Stronsay.

**Tuesday — February 26th.***"Laugh, and the world laughs with you,  
Weep, and you weep alone."*

M.B. Croy. Hatrowdale, Stronsay.

**Wednesday — February 27th.***"A nation is on the downward grade that eliminates God from  
its council chambers."*

Henry Meil. Samson's Lane, Stronsay.

**Thursday — February 28th.***"Pleasures are like poppies spread —  
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;  
Or, like the snow-falls in the river —  
A moment white, then gone for ever."*

Miss Twatt. Bridge Strett Lane, Kirkwall.

**Friday — February 29th.***"The highest hopes we cherish here  
How fast they are and faint,  
How many a spot defiles the robe  
That wraps an earthly saint."*

Samuel Maxwell. Millfield, Stronsay.

## BEAUFORT WIND SCALE

The next time you are on the ferry and wondering how strong the gale is, have a look at the waves and work it out yourself from the Beaufort Wind Scale.

Force	Wind speed in knots	Description	State of sea	Probable wave height in metres
0	0	Calm	Sea like a mirror	-
1	1 to 3	Light Air	Ripples but no foam crests	-
2	4 to 6	Light Breeze	Small wavelets. Crests do not break	0.15 to 0.30
3	7 to 10	Gentle Breeze	Large wavelets. Crests begin to break. Perhaps scattered white horses	0.60 to 1.00
4	11 to 16	Moderate Breeze	Small waves becoming longer. Frequent white horses	1.00 to 1.50
5	17 to 21	Fresh Breeze	Moderate waves, long with many white horses formed	1.80 to 2.50
6	22 to 27	Strong Breeze	Large waves form, white foam crests more extensive everywhere. Spray possible	3.00 to 4.00
7	28 to 33	Near Gale	Sea heaps up, and white foam blows in streaks along direction of wind	4.00 to 6.00
8	34 to 40	Gale	Moderately high waves of greater length. Crest edges break into spindrift. Foam is blown in well marked streaks	5.50 to 7.50
9	41 to 47	Strong Gale	High waves. Dense streaks of foam. Crests begin to topple, tumble, and roll over. Spray may affect visibility	7.00 to 9.75
10	48 to 55	Storm	Very high waves with long overhanging crests. Foam in great patches blown in dense white streaks. Sea surface takes white appearance. The tumbling of sea becomes heavy and shocklike. Visibility affected	9.00 to 12.50
11	56 to 63	Violent Storm	Exceptionally high waves. Sea completely covered with long patches of foam. Edges of wave crests blown into froth	11.30 to 16.00
12	64+	Hurricane	Air filled with foam and spray. Sea completely white with driving spray. Visibility very seriously affected	13.7+

*Bill Miller, Glenmanna, Stronsay*



## **STRONSAY DEVELOPMENT TRUST**

It has been a busy year with big grants awarded to the Trust and some really hard work from a lot of folk that has transformed the grants into successful projects.

With the cuts in public spending and reduction in future grants, the voluntary sector is going to be expected to do more - with less - so we are fortunate that the income from the new wind turbine could help all Stronsay community groups achieve projects in the long term that make a real difference. We need to rally round and become stronger groups to do the work and see things through.

The Trust exists for all Stronsay residents, both members and non-members. This year we shall be sending an annual report to every household in advance of the AGM in late April.

All residents are welcome to attend the AGM but the advantage of being a member (no cost involved) is that you have the right to vote.

We shall also be asking for nominations to become directors/trustees on the board. This does involve more work than being a member but it gives the opportunity to become involved in the planning and decision making. We welcome all backgrounds, talents, experience and age groups on the board.

If you are interested in getting involved then please contact Lisa De Geer at the Post Office or email [sdtcompanysecretary@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sdtcompanysecretary@yahoo.co.uk)

Thank you

Julia Crocker

Chair



## **ENERGY EVENING**

This took place on 27<sup>th</sup> of January. There was quite a good turnout and people asked a lot of questions. As a result at least one future home visit was booked and several queries that needed following up were mentioned and taken note of. Jill Spence from Orkney Energy Agency gave a presentation on energy efficiency reports and what they are used for; the Thermal Image Camera and how useful it can be identifying areas where heat is leaking away; and all the different tariffs available for improving energy efficiency and renewables. Colin Risbridger from Energy Saving Scotland gave a detailed presentation on home renewables and left quite a lot of us with plenty of food for thought about generating our own home electricity and saving money in the long run.

During the afternoon before the event and the following morning Jill carried out several home surveys and is planning on being out in Stronsay again in February to do the ones on her list she didn't have enough time for on this occasion. Colin will be out too so **if you are interested in home renewables and would like a visit to your home please call the Home Energy freephone helpline on 0800 512012**

## **BOILER SCRAPPAGE SCHEME**

Scotland has one of the most ambitious CO2 emission reduction targets in the world. The installation of an efficient heating system is one effective way of reducing your household energy bills and CO2 emissions. To help address this, the Scottish Government has announced £1million in funding for the boiler scrappage scheme for owner/occupiers in Scotland..

The Energy Saving Scotland Boiler Scrappage Scheme builds upon its earlier success from its launch in May 2010. It will offer owner/occupiers £400 towards the cost of upgrading inefficient boilers with an Energy Saving Trust Recommended (ESTR) boiler in their property. The scheme will open for applications at **12.30pm on Tuesday 1st February 2011.**

Upgrading your boiler can result in: Lower running costs, Reduced CO2 emissions, Lower energy bills.

Private Sector Landlords Boiler Scrappage Scheme – find out if you are eligible for a voucher.

What are the eligibility criteria?

- You must be replacing a working boiler with a SAP2005 efficiency rating of less than 70% as detailed on [www.sedbuk.com](http://www.sedbuk.com). If you wish to clarify if a system is eligible, please contact the Home Energy Scotland Hotline on 0800 512 012.

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- However, if you are aged over 60 and have a boiler that is not working but has a SAP2005 efficiency rating of less than 70%, you may still apply.
- You must be installing an Energy Saving Trust Recommended (ESTR) boiler or a Microgeneration Certification Scheme accredited microgeneration technology. (Please note, an A-rated boiler does not automatically qualify as ESTR). You can find a list of ESTR boilers on our website or should you require further assistance please contact the **Home Energy Scotland Hotline on 0800 512 012**.
- The property where the boiler is to be installed must be a domestic address in Scotland.
- You must be the owner/occupier of the residential property (in Scotland) in which the new boiler will be installed.
- You must have received a written/verbal quotation for your boiler replacement before making an application.
- You must make an application and receive your voucher before having the boiler replaced.
- Work on the installation must not have commenced before the date on which the rebate voucher is received.
- You have not received, nor will you be receiving, an Energy Saving Scotland home renewables grant or home loan offer, and/or any CERT funding towards the installation of your new boiler.
- The installer must be a member of a recognised industry body such as CLE, SNIPEF or OFTEC. Installation of a microgeneration technology must be carried out by a person qualified under the Microgeneration Certification Scheme.

#### How do I apply?

- Get a written/verbal quote from an installer for your new boiler.
- From 12.30pm on 1st February 2011 when the application process opens - apply for a voucher online or by telephone on 0800 512 012.
- Arrange the installation of your new boiler by **25th March 2011**.
- Pay for the boiler and installation work up-front.
- Claim back the £400 by sending the completed voucher and invoice back to us by 25th March 2011.

## STRONSAY HEALTHY LIVING CENTRE



### **New timetable of supervised sessions Sat 26th Feb – Sun 27<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

	<b>am</b>	<b>pm</b>
<b>Monday</b>	10-11.30	4.00-5.30
<b>Tuesday</b>	Buddy	7.00-8.30
<b>Wednesday</b>	10-11.30	4.00-5.30
<b>Thursday</b>	Buddy	7.00-8.30
<b>Friday</b>	10-11.30	4.00-5.30
<b>Saturday</b>	Closed	*2.00-3.30*
<b>Sunday</b>	*10.00-12.00*	Closed

\* Note change in hours

Under the 'Buddy' system members may use the gym with another gym member who is over 18 and has pre-paid. Buddy system operates from 8am weekdays in term time until last session of the day

A code is needed to access the gym.

12&13 year olds have to be with an adult member at a supervised session.

14&15 year old members must attend supervised sessions.

16 & 17 year olds must be with an inducted member who is over 18 or at a time when a fitness advisor is on duty.

New inductions by appointment only.

TEL No : 616449

**INDUCTIONS are FREE until end of March !**

## **HUNTING RABBITS IN STRONSAY**

Run rabbit, run rabbit, run, run, run,  
Don't give the farmer his fun, fun, fun,  
He'll get by without his rabbit pie,  
So run rabbit, run rabbit, run, run, run.

This song, immortalised by Bud Flanagan and Chesney Allen, was particularly appropriate in 'days of yore', when Stronsay men, unwilling to face the shame or embarrassment of signing on the dole, provided for their families by hunting rabbits, shooting wildfowl and fishing. As a wee boy I remember my father with rabbits and wild duck hanging all around the house, and a good old stewed rabbit or duck, with tatties and neeps, was hard to beat.

Rabbits however, were a pest to the farmer, eating the grass and crops meant for his animals, and every sandy links was over-run by them. The main links were at the Bu, Bay, Myers, Holland, Torness, Housebay, Holin, Linkshouse, Schoolbrae, Sandybank and Hunton. Apart from a small area at the Sandy Geo on Griceness, the 'north end' was comparatively rabbit free.

Farm records from well over a hundred years ago show that rabbits were being hunted and sent away on a commercial basis. For example, in the five weeks between 7<sup>th</sup> December, 1895, and 11<sup>th</sup> January, 1896, William Tait, farm manager for David Pottinger in the Bu of Rousam, sent off 185 pair of rabbits and 637 skins, a total of just over one thousand rabbits killed in the Rousam area alone. The skins had to be properly dried, so perhaps this large amount had been collected for drying over a lengthy period. On the other hand, it may be that, with all his farm servants and the people of Rousam all eating rabbits as a main part of their food supply, William was the central agent, shipping skins on behalf of the others.

Jim and William Work of Daisybank recall the tale of how at one time, David Pottinger was not happy with the condition of the rabbits in his links, and came to the conclusion that they were inter-breeding too much, so he took some of his servants and set off in his sailing boat from the Bay of Bomasty and sailed to Auskerry. There, they dug out a load of buck rabbits, took them back to Rousam and released them in the links bringing new blood into the rabbit warrens.

Despite the fact that the hunters were doing the farmers a favour, most large farms charged a rent for the sole use of the particular links, or in some cases, actually demanded a percentage of the catch from the hunter.

There were different methods of trapping the rabbits. Snares- a wire noose attached to a wooden stake which was driven into the ground and placed strategically where rabbits were known to travel between fields for example. Gin-traps- nasty spring loaded metal traps, now highly illegal, which snapped shut on the rabbit's leg as it stepped on it.  
*(continued on next page)*

The snares and traps were emptied and re-set each morning and evening. Another method was the net, measuring anything from 50 up to 250 yards long and up to three feet high, held in place by wooden stakes, and set in the dark, downwind of the area where the rabbits were grazing. The trappers with their dogs would then circle around the rabbits, light up their carbide gas lamps and drive the rabbits into the nets where they became entangled and captured. They were then 'cuffed', a short, sharp blow to the back of the neck which killed them instantaneously. Dogs were also used to catch rabbits, but if they damaged or marked the rabbit, it could not be sold, so the dogs were trained to catch up with the rabbit, nudge it with its nose, knocking it over, and then pick it up by the scruff of the neck.

The lamps used were either bicycle lamps or gig lamps, run on carbide and water which, when mixed, created a gas. I remember my father had a gig lamp which gave out a brilliant light. Carbide could be bought from Magnus Dennison's shop at Ellerslie and came in long tin containers. Alternatively, if you were friendly with Eddie Seatter who farmed Papa Stronsay, and looked after the lighthouse and fog-horn which ran on carbide gas, in exchange for a few rabbits or the odd lobster, your light would keep shining !

Nana Peace recalls that in the early 1930s, her father Willie, or Banky as he was affectionally known, and her brother Willie, were hunting rabbits in the Housebay and Holland links. They usually hunted from a Thursday evening until Saturday morning, and on Monday morning would ship in the region of 200 rabbits. On one particular occasion, brother Willie wanted to go to a dance on a Friday night as he was courting his wife-to-be, Cissie Chalmers, and Nana, at the age of thirteen, volunteered to stand in for him. On this particular night, the net was to be used, and in the pitch darkness, she helped to stretch the net across a corner where the rabbits would run out of the field, which was the kirkyard field at Holland. This had to be done very quietly by the light of a torch so as the rabbits did not hear from where they were grazing further up the field. Once the net was in place, followed by their dog "Peedlo", who knew all the tricks of the trade, they went up the field and drove the rabbits into the net where Peedlo ensured that none escaped, and they ended up with 66 rabbits for their night's work. Once all the rabbits had been carried up to an outhouse at Holland Farm, they bedded down for the night in her Aunt Helen's house until daylight, when it was off to check, empty, and re-set the snares and traps, resulting in a total of 80 rabbits for their night and morning's work. Not bad for a 13 year old helping out !

Sometimes on a Saturday morning, her father and brother would go along the rabbit burrows with Peedlo, and if he stopped, they knew that their was a rabbit in there and they would dig it out. If Peedlo passed by, they knew the burrow was empty. This was a great asset to them.

Before her father hunted for a living, rabbit was always on the menu, but having to gut hundreds of rabbits put them off, as the smell was not too nice. To this day, she still will not eat rabbit, which is unfortunate, because to her mind, a well cooked rabbit was hard to beat.

*(continued on next page)*

During the Second World War, her husband Stewart and Willie Stevenson from Dousquoy, hunted the Holland and Housebay links, and shipped the rabbits "Sooth" where no doubt, they were much appreciated in towns throughout Britain, with food scarce and also rationed. She also recalls one unfortunate incident where Stewart found a dead otter in one of his snares.

Jim and William Work recall how as ten or eleven year olds, living at the Lodge, they used to go to the rabbits with Davie Smith of Waterside who was a horseman at the Lodge. He would get them to go into the Bay Kirkyard in the dark and flush the rabbits out towards the gate, where he would stand with his gas lamp and a stick, rapping them on the head as they came past. This was a bit of an eerie job for the two young lads.

At this time, Jim and William's grandfather, Robert Learmonth was farming the Bay, and on one occasion he saw lights moving around near the kirkyard, and suspecting that poachers were on the links, he crept up to the kirkyard gates and in the distance, he recognised Davie Smith from Waterside and a friend, to whom he had given permission to work the links. However, he found a pair of dead rabbits hanging on the kirkyard gate, and for a prank, took the rabbits, hid around the corner and waited for Davie and his pal to come back for their rabbits. Of course, there were no rabbits on the gate, and Davie immediately berated his pal for not making sure the rabbits were dead before hanging them on the gate. Robert gave them the rabbits back the next day.

On another occasion, Robert saw poachers in the links and stood in the darkness near to the kirkyard gates. Two men approached, deep in conversation so Robert grabbed one by the arm and found that it was someone he knew, who shall remain nameless, who denied knowing the name of the other man who had run away. Now call me simple if you like, but the chances of meeting a complete stranger while poaching rabbits in complete darkness in the Bay Links in the middle of the night, must be somewhat rare. The captured poacher was let off with a warning, but Robert never did find out the name of the second man. There's loyalty for you eh?

Tinkers were regular visitors to Stronsay in those days, selling all sorts of merchandise from their packs, and they would buy the dried rabbit skins from the trappers, and sell them on, making a reasonable profit also.

Jim and William later moved to Holland Farm, where they recall Andrew Burghes from the Smiddy in the village, and Willie Chalmers from Mirland Cottage, renting and working the Holland links in the mid forties to early fifties. They would hunt from Monday to Saturday, living in one of the Holland cottages, and at the weekend, they would pack up all the rabbits to be shipped off to Leeds.

Andrew and Willie had two very well trained dogs, and Jim recalls one evening he was in the cottage listening to Andrew's interesting stories. One of the dogs was very restless and Willie said, "Go on then, go and get a rabbit", letting it out the front door. Within a few minutes, the dog was back at the door with a live rabbit in it's mouth.

Andrew had an old car and it was not unusual to see him driving to the village with rabbits piled up all around him.

*(continued on next page)*

Eddie Cooper of Wardhill recalls that one year he worked with Johnny Devin who had rented the Sandybank Links, but this was not very successful. He also remembers that there was a lot of poaching going on at times and you had to be careful not to get caught by the farmer who owned the links. On one occasion during the war, he was working the net on Linkshouse links with Dod Burghes, and as it was war time, they were not allowed to use lights because of the 'black-out'. As they were gathering up their rabbits from the net, they could just make out this huge black object in the middle of the net. Thinking that perhaps they had netted a wild cat, they carefully rolled up the net with the animal wrapped up in it, and when it was safe to do so, shone their torch only to find that they had caught a huge black rabbit which weighed in at seven pounds.

On another occasion, working traps on the Schoolbrae links with Alfie Meil from Samsonslane, they found a gin-trap with a rabbit and a crow in it. They came to the conclusion that the crow was attacking the rabbit just as the trap snapped shut, and both were trapped.

Eddie's main involvement with the rabbits was as a postman at the post office when the rabbits were being shipped. The men would arrive with their rabbits in bundles of perhaps three or four rabbits to each bundle, with a strip of sacking sewn around the middle, the head and legs hanging out each end. This had to be weighed and could not exceed fifteen pounds. Each bundle had a label attached and after being weighed, postage stamps were attached to the label.

Jim Fiddler was the Post Master, and rather than put them in bags overnight, he would just pile them up under the Post Office counter to keep them a bit cooler. Now this was not too bad if the rabbits had been gutted when they were cold and stiff, but if they had been gutted when still warm, the smell in the Post Office was something else.

Eddie would then load these bundles on to his horse and float, sometimes assisted by Peter Chalmers of Rosebank with his horse and float, and they would transport all the bundles down to the steamer to be shipped off to places like Glasgow and Leeds.

This obviously generated quite a bit of revenue for Stronsay, but then in 1955, the terrible disease myxomatosis was introduced to the island and this finished the hunting and shipping of rabbits.

The rabbit population is quite high in Stronsay at present, and the farmers are also plagued by wild geese. At the last count there were 75 thousand wild geese in Orkney. Perhaps it's time we found a market for wild geese!

Many thanks to Nana, Jim, William and Eddie for sharing this information with me.

Bill Miller, Glenmanna, Stronsay.

## **THE LOST THIMBLE**

By Christine Richings.

Grandmother limpet would always make new or mend old sea weed blankets, she would use a sharp needle made from a slither of spout shell. She would go out at low tide and collect long pieces of thin green seaweed and flat pieces of brown kelp then sew them together to make special warm blankets for cold winter weather. But try as she might this day she could not find her thimble and Grandmother limpet could not sew without it. She asked every limpet she saw if they had seen it and if they would search far and wide to try to find it for her as it was very precious. Several days passed and still no thimble, she just could not understand what had happened to it.

Grandmother limpet just began to think that she had lost the thimble forever when a loud squawking and chuckling was heard as a big old black raven flew past. In its beak Grandmother limpet saw something glistening; she gasped, realizing where her thimble had gone. Ravens were not the limpet's best friends and Grandmother limpet wondered how would she ever get it back when all of a sudden another large black raven flew in and there began a battle in the air over the thimble. Grandmother limpet watched in horror as the two ravens tussled feathers flying each trying to keep their treasure. The thimble passed from one ravens beak to the other then all of a sudden it fell from the ravens and as luck would have it, it landed with a splash into the rock pool right next to Grandmother limpet. She quickly picked it up and hid quite still under the pile of seaweed she had gathered. She was very frightened as she could hear the ravens close by squawking and hopping about from rock to rock looking for the thimble but luckily they soon got fed up and away they flew. Grandmother limpet was so pleased to have her thimble back as she had been given it by her grandmother who had taught her the art of blanket making and soon the time would come when she would pass it on again to her granddaughter. She lost no time and set to work sewing again, as winter was fast approaching.

## **TO SWIM IN SIN!**

By Ellie from Newfield

So, what can be bad about chocolate?  
It's certainly not the taste  
And no matter how large the bar is  
There's never any waste.  
It seems somehow to be 'naughty'  
And to eat it seems considered a 'sin'  
But the devil in me is active  
As in chocolate I would wickedly swim,  
Be up to me eyes in Easter Eggs;  
Temptation, I'm all up for that.  
And who cares how big me bum is?  
No, definitely not me cat.  
For it wears such an addictive perfume,  
Has me drooling I have to admit it.  
And it's to be eaten all at once, oh yes.  
Do not settle for 'just one bit'.  
It should be opened only in private  
As tempting the others wouldn't do.  
And once they'd had one piece of it  
They'd maybe drool all over you.  
Nay, there is nothing wrong with chocolate,  
Me taste buds keep telling me that.  
And if I am under its wicked spell,  
Well then, so is me cat.  
For she often shares just a 'snippet',  
Just a taste to keep her sweet.  
Then out the door I insist she goes  
Or else she's begging at me feet.  
Nay, there's nothing bad about chocolate,  
It soothes away all your troubles,  
There's a 'type' for all life's problems.  
Now, I'm on the one with the bubbles!

©Helene Harrison

# **DAFT HOMEMADE POETRY BY BILL EMBLETON**

(Number 34)

## **TRYING TO KEEP UP**

Lets face it, I am a thirties child.  
This new technology is driving me wild.  
I was born you see before World War 2,  
Now I find it hard to use anything new  
I still think in yards, inches and feet.  
Centimeteres have got me beat.  
Pounds, pints and ounces worked for me,  
Why couldn't the powers just leave things be?  
When our currency changed, I was confused,  
so different from the half crowns I used.  
If my car conked out it was simple to mend.  
These modern ones have me round the bend.  
Lift the bonnet now and what do I see?  
Mysterious black boxes confronting me.  
I managed to master my colour TV,  
My remote, video, and DVD.  
But my mobile has me up the wall,  
I cannot fathom the thing at all.  
It never does a thing I bid,  
I'm forced to go and ask some kid,  
With a computer I thought I'd try my luck  
But apart from emails, I'm really stuck.  
It's so full of stuff, that I haven't a clue  
If clicking on things, what damage I'd do.  
I dread to think what they'll bring out next.  
But what ever it is, I'm bound to get vexed.  
I will plod on, I'm determined to try  
To embrace technology until I die.  
New things that came out when in my youth  
I handled no bother and thats the truth.  
By reaching old age, I'm worldly wise  
but I think my brain has shrunk in size.  
My memory now is on the blink  
To do anything new I must stop and think.  
I first realised my brain had shrank  
When they paid my pension into the bank  
Because shopping by card is doing me in,  
I can never remember my blasted PIN!

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY JODY**

18 on Saturday 26 February



From Mum, Dad, Craig, Christine and the cats

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Mae and Geoff wish to thank all their friends on Stronsay and Mainland for the sympathy and support shown to them following the sad loss of Mae's mum, Mrs Elizabeth [Libby] Laverie, on 28th December, 2010.

Mae's mum enjoyed the trips she managed to make to Orkney and never tired of hearing news about Stronsay.

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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 (March) edition of the *Limpet* must be placed by Saturday 26 March

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*

### **RED HOUSE PLANTS**

Orders now being taken for:

Veg plants

Bedding plants

Perennial plants

*Phone Lindsay or Gil on 616377*

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

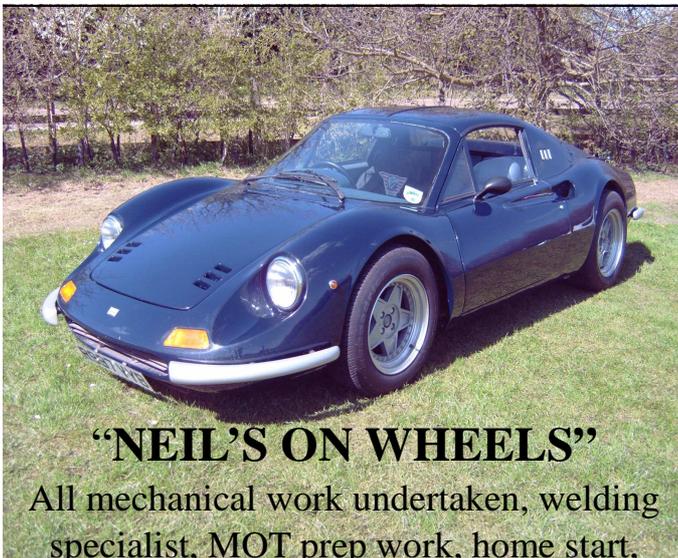
Orkney books, cards, gifts, photos, local  
handicrafts, craft supplies

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday

12.00 to 17.30

*Tel Julia on 616434*

[www.stronsayartsandcrafts.co.uk](http://www.stronsayartsandcrafts.co.uk)



### **“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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### **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*

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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***

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### **SINGING CLASS**

New 10 week session started 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 TELEPHONE DIRECTORY**

The Stronsay Telephone Directory has recently been up-dated and copies can be purchased from the school, Olivebank, the Post Office or Ebenezer at a cost of £1.50.

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### **BINGO AND BEETLES**

7:30pm for 8pm on Saturday 26th February in the Community Hall

Admission £1

Prizes, raffles, 100 club

Tea and sandwich supper

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### **STRONSAY KIRK—CHOIR**

All who are interested in a kirk choir which will perform at festivals such as Easter & Christmas are invited to a rehearsal on Wednesday 9th March (Ash Wednesday) at 7:45pm in the kirk hall and every Wednesday until Easter. The intention is to perform one piece on Easter Sunday.

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

Items for the next (March) edition of the *Limpet* must be placed by Saturday 26 March

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

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### **MOBILE LIBRARY**

Next visits:

#### **MONDAY 14 MARCH**

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 . . . . .	?

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Doctor . . . . .	616321	Castle Bird Reserve . . . . .	616363
Nurses . . . . .	616480	Balfour hospital . . . . .	01856 888000
Medical emergency . . . . .	01856 888000	Hydro . . . . .	0800 300 999
Registrar . . . . .	616239	All water enquiries . . . . .	0845 601 8855
Hall bookings . . . . .	616446	Kirkwall Library . . . . .	01856 873166
Post Office . . . . .	616217	Kirkwall Police . . . . .	01856 872241
Companions . . . . .	616261	Vets:	
Kirk . . . . .	616311	Flett & Carmichael . . . . .	01856 872859
Stronsay Hotel . . . . .	616213	Northvet . . . . .	01856 873403
Fish Mart Hostel . . . . .	616263	Dentists:	
Olivebank . . . . .	616255	Great Western Rd . . . . .	01856 879683
Ebenezer stores . . . . .	616339	King Street . . . . .	01856 875348

### **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 be submitted by the Saturday before the last Thursday in the month. The cut-off date for the next (March 2011) edition is Saturday 26 March.

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### **SUBSCRIPTIONS TO *THE LIMPET***

**NOTE**—new or renewed subscriptions taken out on or after 01 April 2011 will be at the new rate of £15. Still available for free online at [www.stronsaylimpet.co.uk](http://www.stronsaylimpet.co.uk)

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

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The Stronsay Development Trust, a Scottish Charity SC038888

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

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