



SHETLAND HAMEFARIN 2010

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Shetland in Stats

- Lerwick's Up-Helly-Aa 2010 saw 956 Guizers march in the procession, with 880 carrying torches.
- The Guizer Jarl's squad this year was 61 Vikings strong.
- A total of 46 squads visited 11 halls in Lerwick.
- This year's proclamation was adorned with an embroidered headpiece of a sailing galley. It featured 361,895 stitches and took 2,448 hours to produce.

Other News

- Shetland band Fiddlers' Bid have been nominated in the Spiral Earth awards for Best Instrumental Album of the Year. Visit www.spiralearth.co.uk/spirals2010/instrumental.asp for more info. Voting is open until 12 February 2010.



NEW YEAR, NEW WEBSITE

As the summer approaches, the momentum has picked up for the Shetland Hamefarin 2010 preparations.

The Hamefarin website, www.shetlandhamefarin.com, has been redesigned. Web designer **N B Communications** has provided the site with a full overhaul which will provide a quick and easy source of news and information on the upcoming celebrations for visitors and locals alike.

Among the changes that have been made to the website is a new **schedule of events**, reproduced in this newsletter, which provides users with information on times, dates, venues and which events are free or ticketed. Hopefully this will make planning your personal itinerary much easier.

A brand new feature on the website is a section where Hamefarers can register to become **official**

members of Shetland Hamefarin 2010.

An official membership is free of charge and will offer benefits to Hamefarers, details of which will be included in future newsletters and on the website. Registering as a member also helps the Shetland Hamefarin 2010 Committee to keep track of how many Hamefarers we can expect and to plan accordingly.

Up to 40 members of your party can be registered online, but please contact us through the website if you need to register more.

There is much more available on the website, including in-depth area guides and links to places of interest. We hope you will find this useful as you plan to visit us this summer.

Hamefarers should be sure to check the **travel** and **accommodation** section. The travel section contains information on how to get to

Shetland and how to get around when you are here, and provides links to Northlink Ferries, Flybe and public transport timetables. Hamefarers are reminded of the special discount from Northlink Ferries, details of which can be found on the website

The accommodation section contains information on B&Bs, hotels, guest houses and self-catering properties around Shetland who are holding rooms specifically for Hamefarers. Links to websites are also included. This section also includes an accommodation enquiry form, through which bookings and queries can be made. Upon posting, the forms are submitted to **John Leask & Son**, who are acting as official accommodation agents for the Hamefarin and will deal with all bookings and enquiries relating to the event (contact details on p.4).



**SHETLAND
HAMEFARIN 2010**

MONDAY 14 JUNE

TO

**SATURDAY 26
JUNE**

2010

UP-HELLY-AA 2010

Massed ranks of bearded, armour-clad Vikings, rub shoulders with Imperial Stormtroopers, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band and Priscilla, Queen of the Desert.

It's January, it's Shetland, it's **Up-Helly-Aa**.

It is said that the timing of Up-Helly-Aa coincides with an early Pagan festival the purpose of which was to banish winter weather to clear the way for the oncoming spring. It may not work anymore, in these days of climate change, but the weather couldn't have been further from the minds of the 900 massed guizers and from one in particular—**Guizer Jarl Rae Simpson**.

This Up-Helly-Aa was a particularly proud one for the Simpson family. Not only was Rae occupying the hallowed position of Guizer Jarl, but he was the third generation of his family to do so, following on from his father Magnus in 1987, and his grandfather, the late Thomas Simpson in 1968.

The culmination of many years of waiting and hard

BROADCAST NEWS

Douglas Irvine, Head of Business Development for Shetland Islands Council and a key organiser of the Shetland Hamefarin 2010, was delighted to be invited to talk about the Hamefarin on Australian radio. Douglas spoke to ABC Hobart presenter Christopher Lawrence, whose great-grandfather was a Shetlander, on his Evening show.

Douglas and Christopher discussed the Hamefarin during a feature on reunions, and the discussion touched on the reasons for the mass emigration of Shetlanders and return of many members of the 'Shetland diaspora' next year.

The show was broadcast on Thursday 14 January 2010 at 1900 DST (0600 GMT).

Douglas' interview is available on the Shetland Hamefarin website in the News section.



Guizer Jarl Rae Simpson, aka Sigurd 'Snake-Eye' Ragnarsson, salutes his burning galley, the Avie Jane

work, the Guizer Jarl—who adopted the persona of Sigurd 'Snake-Eye' Ragnarsson for the day—begins his day early on the morning of the last Tuesday in January, as he and his retinue (the 'Jarl Squad') parade through Lerwick, followed by a ceremony at the Town Hall at which he is given the freedom of Lerwick by the Convenor of Shetland Islands Council and the Lord Lieutenant.

The Jarl then pays visits around Lerwick, before the main event of the day—the procession. Nine hundred guizers, a few dozen squads and as many outlandish costumes, perform a march through the streets of Lerwick before the ceremonial burning of a galley lights up the winter sky.

After the procession it is time for the squads to pay visits to the various halls around Lerwick, singing, dancing and performing. This goes on well into the night, with 8am not considered to be a late finish. As this occupies a particularly important place in the Shetland calendar, the following day is a public holiday for rest and recuperation.

The Jarl and his squad don't end their duties here, and have a year of ceremonial duties and visits ahead of them, many outside

of Shetland.

Liam Summers, a member of both the Up-Helly-Aa Committee and the 2010 Jarl Squad, said 'Up-Helly-Aa 2010 has been a brilliant experience. Work began with Rae (Guizer Jarl) and his squad a year and a half ago working on the suits. When the day finally arrived it went in a blink, but was worth all the effort; the suits looking fantastic and Rae doing the squad and his family proud.

'The Up-Helly-Aa Committee have also had a busy time. Preparations began to hot up from October, with each of the 17 volunteers having their own duties to make sure our superb festival was successful, organised and safe yet again.' I

The Up-Helly-Aa Committee is also preparing for an extra special event this summer—a procession of all ten Jarl Squads from throughout Shetland, plus the Lerwick Junior Jarl Squad, to salute the Hamefarin and the visitors who have travelled to Shetland to celebrate.

Of the special Hamefarin procession, Liam said 'Work is well underway with torches and a galley being worked on as we speak and I'm sure it will prove to be a special finale to the Hamefarin' in June.'

Keep track of all things Up-Helly-Aa at www.uphellyaa.org.

“THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND...”



The deserted croft of Burg, Muckle Roe built from blocks of 400 million year old red granite seen in the cliffs opposite.

The ‘Auld Rock’ is the affectionate, but very appropriate, appellation exiles have for Shetland. Intending Hamefarers will know something of Shetland’s cultural, historical and archaeological heritage but how many realise that all of this is due to Shetland’s three billion-year-old Earth heritage.

During this immense stretch of time Shetland has been on an incredible geological journey; the Shetland we know today is actually a product of tropical seas, volcanoes, deserts, ice ages and ancient rivers. Our rocks tell of a geological ‘voyage’ from close to the South Pole across the Equator to our present day

position at the crossroads of the North Atlantic.

Our inheritance from this journey is an amazingly diverse and scenic landscape enclosed by a coast stunning in its variety and grandeur from an outer coast showing some of the most spectacular cliff scenery in the world to an inner coast of tranquil voes adorned by sandy ayres. As well as being the best place in Europe to encounter seals and otters, our hills and coasts are now home to over one million seabirds and our moorland provides breeding grounds for rare species such as ‘da Bonxie’, ‘da Rain Gös and ‘ da Peerie Whaap’.

Our Earth heritage has also been the bedrock of

Shetland’s human culture and history for the last 7,000 years. The very nature of our inherited hills and coasts has dictated how and where land was settled, cultivated, dwellings constructed and where we fished. Thus our climate and landscape defined Shetlanders unique identity that the exiled took with them all over the world. Their Shetland was in so many ways a different place from the Shetland our Hamefarers will see, but only on the surface.

Shetland’s unique Earth heritage has won it the accolade of an UNESCO Global and European Geopark. In exploring Geopark Shetland we see what every past inhabitant of these islands has seen. Of course we will often interpret things in a very different way, but the hills and coasts of Geopark Shetland are a common heritage we share with all our ancestors.

This article was written by Alan Fraser of [Shetland Geotours](#), who will be offering daily tours for groups and individuals throughout the summer.

For more information contact [Shetland Geotours](mailto:info@shetlandgeology.com) at info@shetlandgeology.com, or visit the website: www.shetlandgeotours.com.



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SHETLAND LIBRARY EVENTS

Shetland Library will be delighted to welcome Hamefarers both to special events and as everyday users of library facilities.

Conveniently situated between Islesburgh and the Shetland Family History Society, in the former St Ringan’s Church, the Library offers free wi-fi and Internet access, back copies of all Shetland newspapers on microfilm readers with printing, an extensive collection of Shetland books for reference and loan, visitor borrowing and much more.

The events will start with daily introductory tours of the Library facility. This will be an

informal introduction to all that the Library has to offer, and of particular interest to Hamefarers will be the Shetland Collection and microfilm copies of Shetland newspapers.

The introductory tours will take place daily at 0930 and 1400, except for Sunday 20 June, and is free to all.

The Library will also host a Shetland Evening on Tuesday 15 June. This will be an evening of readings, taking in poetry and prose in Shetland dialect. This event is free to attend.

The Library will also be hosting Shetland Story Time, for pre-school children with

stories, all with a Shetland theme, open to visitors and locals alike.

Pre-School Shetland Story Time will be held on Wednesday 16 and 23 of June, from 1400-1430, and is a free event.

For more information visit www.shetland-library.gov.uk.



The Shetland Library

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Produced by the Shetland Hamefarin 2010
Committee

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The schedule of events is continually building and we will add events to the website as they are confirmed.

In addition to the daily events, the **Hamefarin Club** will run throughout the Hamefarin in Islesburgh Community Centre where there will be a programme of talks, workshops and much more.

Monday 14 June

Hamefarers' Welcome
Reception—Clickimin Leisure
Complex

A Kist of Emigrants book
launch—Shetland Museum and
Archives

Guided Walk—Mousa RSPB
Reserve

Tuesday 15 June

Local Area Coach Trip—North
Isles (Fetlar, Unst and Yell)

Introduction to the Archives—
Shetland Museum and
Archives

Shetland Dialect Evening with
Poetry and Readings—Shetland
Library

Wednesday 16 June

Local Area Coach Trip—West
Mainland

Lecture on Crofting Life—
Shetland Museum and
Archives

Pre-School Shetland Story
Time—Shetland Library

Tammy Anderson Tribute
Concert—Clickimin Leisure
Complex

Thursday 17 June

Local Area Coach Trip—North
Mainland

Date with Nature—RSPB
Sumburgh Head

Lecture on Emigration—
Shetland Museum and
Archives

Thursday 17-Sunday 20 June

Flavour of Shetland—Victoria
Pier, Lerwick

Thursday 17-Monday 21 June

Lerwick Methodist Church
Exhibition



**Bannock-Making Demonstrations—a highlight at last year's
Flavour of Shetland event**

Friday 18th June

Local Area Coach Trip—
Whalsay and Skerries

Date with Nature—RSPB
Sumburgh Head

Lecture on Shetland Textiles—
Shetland Museum and
Archives

Saturday 19 June

Midsummer Carnival—Lerwick

Shetland Field Studies Group—
Guided Walk, Bressay

Sunday 20 June

Shetland Field Studies Group—
Guided Walk, Weisdale

Lerwick Methodist Church—
Songs of Praise

Lecture on Brochs—Shetland
Museum and Archives

Date with Nature—RSPB
Sumburgh Head

Monday 21 June

Local Area Coach Trip—Lerwick

Introduction to the Archives—
Shetland Museum and
Archives

Guided Walk—Mousa RSPB
Reserve

Lecture on Crofting Life—
Shetland Museum and
Archives

Tuesday 22 June

Local Area Coach Trip—South
Mainland

Wednesday 23 June

Local Area Coach Trip—Nesting
and Vidlin

Lecture on Shetland
Literature—Shetland
Museum and Archives

Pre-School Shetland Story
Time—Shetland Library

Shetland Youth Jazz
Concert—Lerwick Town Hall

Thursday 24 June

Local Area Coach Trip—
Scalloway, Burra and
Tingwall

Date with Nature—RSPB
Sumburgh Head

Open Evening—Lerwick
Boating Club

Friday 25 June

Lecture on Clearances—
Shetland Museum and
Archives

Hamefarin Dance—Clickimin
Leisure Complex

Date with Nature—RSPB
Sumburgh Head

Saturday 26 June

Date with Nature—RSPB
Sumburgh Head

Final Fling—Clickimin Leisure
Complex. The evening will
finish with a torch-lit Up Helly
Aa procession, culminating in
the burning of a galley on
Clickimin Loch.

Daily Events

Introductory Tour—Shetland
Library (excluding 20 June)

**Ticketing information for the
various trips and events will
be announced soon.**