



SHARING SHETLAND

Free Virtual Conference
22 October 2022

www.shetland-fhs.org.uk

(Scottish Charity No. SC020018)

Thanks for your interest in the conference. If you missed some or all of the presentations you still have a [chance to catch up here on YouTube](#). Our new website is now live and there is lots to explore: <https://www.shetland-fhs.org.uk/>. Over the coming months we will be adding more, including gravestone photographs from across Shetland. So far we have added 21 of the Monumental Inscription books and all the indexes to the full series of MI books.

Vote for the Shetland Times!

The British library newspaper site contains the Shetland Times for 1872-1911 online. They state that they intend to put the period 1912-1950 online, but seem to appreciate lots of requests from the public before going ahead. It would be splendid to have that material available, because the local press contains all sorts of things, notably obituaries and historical articles, as well as day-to-day news. The more people with Shetland interests who contact them the better!

One way to let them know is to submit a request here:

<https://help-and-advice.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/forums/243704-newspapers-we-should-add-next/suggestions/39676984-the-shetland-times-1912-1950>. You can simply 'vote' for the newspaper to be added.

Sadly John Goodlad's Internet connection failed us on Saturday and he was sorry to be unable to answer your questions. Instead, he has provided written answers to these questions:

Q - Currently half way through John Goodlad's book Cod Hunters and would like to ask him who the crewmen were when crofters were tied to the Haaf fishery for their landlord?

A - They tended to be younger men - often the sons of the crofters who were tied to the haaf.

Q - fishermen became prosperous with the Herring boom but what about others not involved in fishing? did the rest of Shetland experience greater economic wealth.

A - Indeed it did to a huge degree. The curers all made large profits (many of the big houses on King Harald Street are said to have been built by curers). Also many people obtained



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employment for the first time such as the coopers who made the barrels (regarded as a skilled job and reasonably well paid). And of course the thousands of gutters - not well paid but it was the first time a large number of women could earn their own wages working in Shetland.

Q - Why have Whalsay folk come to dominate the modern pelagic fishing?

A - That is a PhD that still has to be written. At the time of the herring boom in late 19th century and early 20th century, all communities in Shetland had herring boats and curing yards (even Foula had 3 herring boats!) As the industry contracted it became concentrated in Burra and Whalsay. By the early 1970's it was clear that drift netting for herring was an obsolete technique and the future lay with the more efficient purse seine method. The Whalsay fishermen took the bold step to invest in these larger boats while the Burra men abandoned the herring and invested in white fish trawlers. The rest is history as they say.

Q - NB The Adenia featured in a TV programme in just the last few days. Is that a Whalsay owned boat? A - Yes

Also discussed during the Q&A were the excellent resources available from the National Library of Scotland. There are many resources available to you wherever you are in the world, but if you live in Scotland you have additional records available to you for free in the 'eResources' section: <https://auth.nls.uk/eresources/>. There are also further resources available in their buildings if you are fortunate enough to be able to visit.

The British and Irish Women's Letters and Diaries was discussed. This is a digital library of letters and diaries written by British and Irish women. Covering more than 400 years of writing, it also includes biographies. [Here is the link.](#)

A few books were mentioned. Here is the information from Alan: "A Vehement thirst after knowledge" by John J Graham., published by the Shetland Times 1998, ISBN 1 898852 41 3. This is a history of education in Shetland. John was headteacher of the Anderson High School in Lerwick (and my father's cousin!). The book is still in print - £20 from the Shetland Times Bookshop, which is online.

With Naught But Kin Behind Them, by Norah Kendall, Melbourne, 1998, ISBN 0 646 34985 6. This book was mentioned by Brian Smith and has a section on the emigrants from Shetland to Adelaide, South Australia in 1852. This book starts with a summary of Shetland history, which would be helpful to people unfamiliar with the isles.



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Shetland Family History Society presents:
'Beginning Scottish Family History' by
Emma Maxwell

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Beginning Scottish Family History Research

by Emma Maxwell

Genealogist Emma Maxwell delivered 'Beginning Scottish Family History' at the 'Sharing Shetland' conference on Saturday 22 October 2022. In the presentation, Emma showed how you can trace a standard Scottish family from the 1930s back to the 1830s.

Emma is a genealogist and along with her husband, Graham Maxwell, she runs the family history website www.scottishindexes.com. Over the years Graham and Emma have indexed health records, criminal records, poor relief records, paternity records and more. These can help you trace your family history, especially when you have a brick wall but they also help you find out more about the lives of your ancestors.

This presentation focused on the basic skills we all need to get started. To learn more, take a look at the Scottish Genealogy Learning Zone on www.scottishindexes.com. There you can find articles and videos to explain how to take your research to the next level as well as reminders on the basics covered in this presentation.

Keep learning:

[Be the Detective - Your Free Guide to Tracing Your Family Tree](#)

[Civil Registration](#)

[Births, Marriages and Deaths in Scotland before 1855](#)

[Census in Scotland](#)

[Kirk Session Records](#)

[Poor Relief Records in Scotland](#)



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Shetland Family History Society presents:
'The reach of the Shetland fishing industry
throughout history' by John Goodlad

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The reach of the Shetland fishing industry throughout history

by John Goodlad

John says, "Referring to my two books, I will look at the three great Shetlands fisheries (the halibut, the cod and the herring) and how these connected Shetland to the wider world. Using readings from my books I will tell this story through the lives of real people who were involved in all three fisheries. Finally, I will look at how these fisheries, and the people involved, shaped the social and economic history of Shetland during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries."

John Goodlad is a Shetlander who works in the seafood industry. For many years he was the voice of the Shetland fishing industry when he led the Shetland Fishermen's Association. He then became a fish farmer and now advises various national and international seafood organisations and companies. His previous book, *The Cod Hunters*, was shortlisted for the Maritime Foundation's Mountbatten Award for Best Maritime Book in 2020. His new book, *The Salt Roads*, will be published in September 2022.



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Shetland Family History Society presents:
'In habits, in character, in fact [in] everything
except language ... like the
Norwegians'? New Zealand's Shetland Migrants,
1840-1920' by Rebecca Lenihan

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In habits, in character, in fact [in] everything except language ... like the Norwegians'? New Zealand's Shetland Migrants, 1840-1920

by Rebecca Lenihan

In 1871 Lerwick-born Robert Stout, who would go on to become Minister of Lands and Immigration and ultimately Premier of New Zealand, wrote to the New Zealand Government suggesting that, in light of the recent Government sponsored recruitment of Scandinavian immigrants, it might perhaps also be inclined to assist the migration of some British migrants who were 'in habits, in character, in fact [in] everything except language ... like the Norwegians' – that is, migrants from Shetland. Were these migrants so very different from those from the rest of Scotland at this time? What set them apart? What is their story? This talk sets the migration of Shetland migrants to Aotearoa New Zealand into the wider history of Scottish migration to those far-flung islands.

Dr Rebecca Lenihan is a New Zealand historian whose love of Scotland, and of Shetland in particular, arose from her PhD research on Scottish migration to New Zealand, published as *From Alba to Aotearoa: Profiling New Zealand's Scottish Migrants, 1840-1920*, (Otago University Press, 2015). Her recent research investigates British soldiers serving in New Zealand in the 1860s (<http://www.soldiersofempire.nz/>).



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'Political families of Shetland' by James
Stewart

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Political families of Shetland

by James Stewart

Local political historian James Stewart looked at the close family links between Shetland's political elite in the 19th and 20th century.

James Stewart has been researching Shetland's political history since 2009. Having worked in Politics after university, he is now a software engineer based in Ayrshire where he and his wife also operate a cafe.



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Shetland Family History Society presents:
'The Giffords of Busta: a family tragedy
and its consequences' by Marsali Taylor

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The Giffords of Busta: a family tragedy and its consequences

by Marsali Taylor

In 1748, the four sons of the wealthy and influential merchant Sir Thomas Gifford of Busta were drowned in a boating accident, leaving him without a legitimate heir. He left his estate to his illegitimate grandson, Gideon. Gideon's son's tenure was challenged by a cousin in a lawsuit in 1832, and the documents of this case give us eye-witness memories of the tragedy and the personalities involved.

Marsali Taylor's writing career began with plays for her school pupils to perform in the local Festival. Her first Shetland-set crime novel starring quick-witted, practical sailor Cass Lynch and Inverness DI Gavin Macrae was published in 2013, and there are now ten in the series. Reviewers have praised their clever plotting, lively characters and vividly-evoked setting. Marsali's interest in history is shown in her self-published *Women's Suffrage in Shetland*, *The Story of Busta House* and *Forgotten Heroines: The Diaries of Ysabel Birkbeck*, Ambulance driver on the Roumanian Front, 1916-17. She's also written a Norse-set crime novella, *Footsteps in the Dew*. She's a regular reviewer for the e-zine *Mystery People* and a columnist for *Practical Boat Owner*. Hobbies include sailing her 8m yacht, drama and learning to play the flute. She lives on Shetland's scenic westside with her composer husband and three extremely spoiled cats.

Marsali Taylor is the author of eleven contemporary Shetland murder mysteries starring quick-witted sailing sleuth Cass Lynch. She's also written *Women's Suffrage in Shetland*, *The Story of Busta House*, and *Footsteps in the Dew*, a half-length Norse murder mystery. She edited *Forgotten Heroines*, the diaries of Ysabel Birkbeck, ambulance driver on the Romanian Front, 1916-17. Full details are on her website, www.marsalitaylor.co.uk and all her books are for sale on Amazon.