

# Orkney Archaeology Festival

**10-14 September 2025**



*Talks*  
*Walks*  
*Workshops*  
*Exhibitions*  
*Storytelling*  
*Tours*



[https://orkneyarchaeologysociety.org.uk/  
oas-festival-of-archaeology/](https://orkneyarchaeologysociety.org.uk/oas-festival-of-archaeology/)

Version 2 (29/08/2025)



HISTORIC  
ENVIRONMENT  
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD  
EACHDRAIDHEIL  
ALBA



**ORKNEY**  
ISLANDS COUNCIL

**UHI**

Archaeology  
Institute

Institiud  
Arc-eòla



# Orkney Archaeology Festival 10 – 14 September 2025

## *Wednesday 10 September*

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*The first day of the Orkney Archaeology Festival overlaps with the last day of the Orkney International Science Festival (see: <https://oif.org/>) beginning with one joint event and two Science Festival events with an archaeology theme:*

### **Science at War: a focus on 771 Squadron Photographic Unit**

10.00am – 4.00pm

Venue: HMS Tern, Twatt, Orkney, KW17 2JH

A temporary display of cameras and new photographs from HMS Tern's 771 Squadron. Local archaeologist and historian, Andrew Hollinrake, will be on hand. This event is organised by Birsay Heritage Trust and is part of the Science Festival. Entry is free, donations to the renovation are welcome.

### **Shipping Stones to Stonehenge**

10.00am – 11.00am

Phoenix Cinema, Pickaquoy Centre, Kirkwall

How to transport a 6-tonne stone slab many hundreds of miles, from Scotland to Stonehenge? Tickets £7 and £5, see: <https://oif.org/fest-event/shipping-stones-to-stonehenge/>

### **The Bones of Blomuir**

11.30am – 12.30pm

Phoenix Cinema, Pickaquoy Centre, Kirkwall

Only a few of Orkney's Neolithic cairns have produced bones of the people from that time, but the number has now increased with an excavation at Blomuir in Holm. Tickets £7 and £5, see: <https://oif.org/fest-event/the-bones-of-blomuir/>



# Orkney Archaeology Festival 10 – 14 September 2025

*Thursday 11 September*

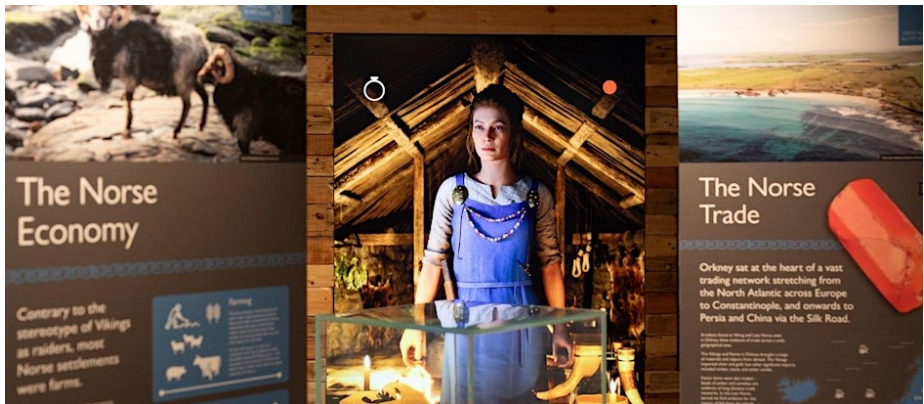
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## **Guided Tour of the new Viking Exhibition at the Orkney Museum**

09.30am – 10.30am

Venue: The Orkney Museum, Broad Street, Kirkwall, KW15 1DH

A very special opportunity to view this new exhibition when the Gallery is closed to the public. Booking required, maximum number 16 people, tickets £16.96 per person (booking fee included). Book here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/orkney-archaeology-festival-private-tour-of-the-new-viking-gallery-tickets-1578733708019?aff=oddttdtcreator>



## **Ranger Walk at the Stones of Stenness and Barnhouse**

10.00am – 11.00am

Venue: Meet at the Stones of Stenness Car Park

Organised by Historic Environment Scotland. This is a free event, booking is not required.

## **Informal drop-in, show and tell event with the Ness Directorial team**

12.00pm – 2.00pm

Venue: Maeshowe Visitor Centre, Stenness

Come along and meet the Ness Directorial team. There will be Ness material to show and discuss. You will also get a chance to look into the Ness exhibition (boards from 2024 Orkney Museum exhibition, no artifacts). This is a free event, booking is not required.

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## Ranger Walk at the Ring of Brodgar

1.00pm – 2.00pm

Venue: Meet at the Ring of Brodgar Car Park

Organised by Historic Environment Scotland. This is a free event, booking is not required.

## UHI Post Graduate Student Research

3.00pm – 5.00pm

Maeshowe Visitor Centre, Stenness

- Holly Young - Shore Life: the contribution of marine molluscs to Iron Age subsistence in Northern Scotland.
- Kath Page – The Deer Turn: reimagining nature and culture duality through human-red deer relations in Scotland's Archaeological Past.
- Lucille Rodrigues – Finding Mesolithic Time: assessing Scotland's Mesolithic stone tools as an international heritage resource.

This is a free talk but booking essential:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/orkney-archaeology-festival-uhi-post-graduate-research-tickets-1508067413229?aff=oddtcreator>

## Behind the scenes of Time Team with Dr John Gater

(Time Team/SUMO GeoSurveys)

7.00pm – 9.00pm

Venue: Stromness Town Hall, Stromness

This talk will not be recorded. This is a free event, but booking is essential:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1526797234629?aff=oddtcreator>



# Orkney Archaeology Festival 10 – 14 September 2025

## *Friday 12 September*

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### **Ranger Walk at the Stones of Stenness and Barnhouse**

10.00am – 11.00am

Meet at the Stones of Stenness Car Park

Organised by Historic Environment Scotland. This is a free event, booking is not required.

### **Special Graffiti Tours, St Magnus Cathedral**

10.00am – 10.50am, 11.00am – 11.50am, and 12.00pm – 12.50pm

Meet at the Custodian's Office, inside the Cathedral

£15 per person, Minimum aged 12. Booking essential, phone 01856 874894. The majority of the tour is in the Upper Levels which contain uneven surfaces, many steps, and narrow corridors and is not accessible for anyone with mobility challenges. This tour visits parts of the cathedral not normally seen on standard tours.

### **Protecting and Managing World Heritage in Orkney**

11.00am – 12.00pm

Maeshowe Visitor Centre, Stenness

With Joss Durnan and Oliva Anderson, Historic Environment Scotland. This is a free event, but booking required: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1541973737959?aff=oddtcreator>

### **Ranger Walk at the Ring of Brodgar**

1.00pm – 2.00pm

Meet at the Ring of Brodgar Car Park

Organised by Historic Environment Scotland. This is a free event, booking is not required.

### **The Cairns, an update from Martin Carruthers**

3.00pm – 5.00pm

Upper Room, Kirkwall East Church, King Street, Kirkwall, KW15 1JF

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This is a free event, there will be a raffle, and donations are welcome. This event will be recorded and made available on the OAS YouTube channel in due course. Booking is essential: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1508072699039?aff=oddtcreator>

### **Guided Tour of the new Viking Exhibition at the Orkney Museum**

5.30pm – 6.30pm

The Orkney Museum. Broad Street, Kirkwall, KW15 1DH

Booking required, max 16. £16.96 (includes booking fee) per person. Details to follow: <https://orkneyarchaeologysociety.org.uk/event/guided-tour-of-the-new-viking-exhibition-at-the-orkney-museum/>

### **Viking Experience at Scapa Beach**

6.00pm – 8.00pm

Scapa Beach, Kirkwall

£25 (general admission) / £15 (children). Organised by Orkney Time Travel. Booking essential: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/orkney-time-travel>

You will be a Viking for the evening: around the campfire, we try out some Viking life skills such as fire striking, baking on a griddle and butter making. You will hear stories from Norse mythology and the Orkneyinga Saga. Enjoy fun and games like the Vikings did!

### **Ben Saunders, Wessex Archaeology - The Wreck Detectives: assembling the evidence for identifying the Sanday Wreck**

7.00pm – 9.00pm

Upper Room, Kirkwall East Church, King Street, Kirkwall. KW15 1JF

This is a free event, there will be a raffle, and donations are welcome. This will be recorded and made available on the OAS YouTube channel in due course. Booking is essential: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1508077232599?aff=oddtcreator>

# Orkney Archaeology Festival 10 – 14 September 2025

## *Saturday 13 September*

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### **A walk and talk to the Knowes of Trotty in the West Mainland**

10.00am – 12.30pm

11.30am – 2.00pm

Meet at Harray Hall, Harray, KW17 2LB

The walk is led by Professor Jane Downes of UHI Archaeology Institute. Come dressed for the weather - there will be refreshments at the Hall. This is a free event but as numbers are limited you will need to book a ticket in advance:

10.00am start: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1508080402079?aff=oddtcreator>

11.30am start: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1634495623409?aff=oddtcreator>

### **Grassroots Heritage in Scotland Roadshow**

10.00am – 4.00pm

St Magnus Centre, Palace Road, Kirkwall and on-line

Organised by the Scottish Community Heritage Alliance. This free event is a celebration of community heritage, source of useful information for grassroots groups and an opportunity to meet up with others working in or with an interest in heritage in the region. It is also an opportunity to join the Grassroots discussion and have your views represented at a national level in the Grassroots Heritage in Scotland review of the current state of community heritage. Booking essential: [scottishcommunityheritage@gmail.com](mailto:scottishcommunityheritage@gmail.com)

<https://www.scottishcommunityheritagealliance.org/>

### **Professor Chris Morris, Birsay: Centre of the Viking Earldom and Bishopric of Orkney, and its antecedents**

7.00pm – 9.00pm

Birsay Hall, Birsay, KW17 2NB

Exploring nearly two centuries of archaeological investigations from the mid-19th Century to the early 21st Century. This free event is an OAS Legacy event, and event will be recorded and made available on the OAS YouTube channel in due course. Booking essential: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1508089078029?aff=oddtcreator>

## *Sunday 14 September*

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### **Special tour of Ness Battery with local historian and archaeologist, Andrew Hollinrake**

10.00am – 11.30am

Meet at the Point of Ness Campsite,  
Stromness

This will include the wider context of the area as well as the Ness Battery itself. This is a free event, donations will be welcome. Booking in advance is essential as places are limited to 25:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1508092317719?aff=oddtcreator>

### **Viking Family Session**

10.00am – 4.00pm

Skaill House Gardens, Skaill House,  
Sandwick, Orkney KW163LR

Entry by donation, no booking necessary. Organised by Orkney Time Travel.

### **Tomb of the Eagles events**

11.00am – 12.30pm, 1.00pm – 2.30pm, 3.00pm – 4.30pm

Tomb of the Eagles Visitor Centre, South Ronaldsay, KW17 2RW

Meet the team who are working to re-open the Tomb of the Eagles. These tours start at the Visitor Centre and will then include a walk out to the Tomb via the Burnt Mound. Space at the tomb means places are limited to 20, cost is £10, pay on arrival. Advice booking essential.

11.00am: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1533822146329?aff=oddtcreator>

1.00pm: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1533837943579?aff=oddtcreator>

3.00pm: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1533838154209?aff=oddtcreator>



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### **Carved Stone Balls: a drop-in workshop**

11.00am – 3.00pm

Maeshowe Visitor Centre, Stenness

An event run by Historic Environment Scotland to learn more about carved stone balls and make a clay version to take home. Suitable for all ages, come at any time over this period.



### **1940's experience at HMS Tern**

11.00am – 12.30pm, 2.00pm – 3.30pm

HMS Tern, Twatt, Orkney, KW17 2JH

Tours of the site by the team who are carrying out the renovation. All volunteers will be in period dress, feel free to join in. Tea, Coffee and period style tray bakes will be on sale. To make the most of these events there is a limit in numbers of 25, tickets are free but will need to be booked in advance.

11.00am: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1508095677769?aff=oddtcreator>

2.00pm: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1508098526289?aff=oddtcreator>

### **Archaeology Story-telling event, with the Orkney Storytelling Trust**

2.00pm – 3.00pm

St Peters Kirk, Sandwick, KW16 3LS

Tales from local storytellers including Tom Muir, Marita Lück, and Fran Flett Hollinrake. £8 per entry, pay on the day, with profits to the Orkney Storytelling Trust. No need to book in advance but, if it is chilly, please wrap up well.

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**Bere, the Ancient Grain: Stories, Superstition & Sustenance**

3.00pm-5.30pm

Barony Mill and Birsay Community Hall, Birsay

This is an Orkney Time Travel and Immersive Orkney event, maximum number of 10 people. Ticket price: £30 includes mill tour and baking session.

Ticket booking link: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/orkney-time-travel>

The event begins at the historic Barony Mill, Orkney's last working watermill, where the ancient grain bere barley is still milled using traditional methods. As you explore the mill, you will uncover the fascinating customs, beliefs, and healing traditions surrounding bere and food preparation. The journey continues at Birsay Community Hall, where local chef, Lorraine Johnston, will guide you through a hands-on baking session. You'll learn to make traditional bere oatcakes and, while the oatcakes bake, enjoy captivating storytelling by Ragnhild Ljosland, bringing Orkney's myths and history to life.



## *Throughout September*

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### **Exhibition: Last paintings at the Ness**

10.00am – 5.00pm, Tuesday to Saturday

The Loft Gallery, St Margarets Hope, South Ronaldsay, KW17 2SL

Painting by Ness artist in residence, Jeanne Bouza Rose.

### **Tours of St Magnus Cathedral**

Different tours most days

St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall

Tours of the ground floor (cost £10), upper floors (£15) and Graveyard (£10). Booking essential for upper floor (01856 874894). For dates and times, see:

<https://www.orkneymuseums.co.uk/st-magnus-cathedral-tours/>

### **Orkney Museums and Historic Scotland**

Please also see the extensive archaeology selection in Orkney Museums (see:

<https://www.orkneymuseums.co.uk/>) and the Historic Scotland sites (see: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/>).



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# Orkney Archaeology online shop

Visit the shop for Festival merchandise and all things  
Orkney Archaeology:

- Orkney Archaeology Review
- 2026 Calendars
- Books
- Mugs
- Coasters
- Ness of Brodgar merchandise

<https://shop.orkneyarchaeologysociety.org.uk/>

