



ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE
OF AMERICA TOURS

Limited to
15 participants

Hiking Scotland's Orkney & Shetland Islands

August 16 - 26, 2018 (11 days) with archaeologist Mary MacLeod Rivett



"This was my fifth trip with the AIA and one of the best ever...I loved every minute of the trip [and I] cannot recommend it enough. No wonder it sells out each year." - Leslie, California

All cover photos © Op



This unique 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!).

AIA lecturer Mary MacLeod Rivett lives and works in Scotland, and has lectured to acclaim on many AIA Tours. **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 some sites can only be visited if you walk to them. The duration of each walk is estimated within the following itinerary.

All meals are included, and you will enjoy comfortable accommodations: four nights at the elegant *Lynnfield 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; 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:

- A **private tour of the active Ness of Brodgar** excavations, a ceremonial site in the "Heart of Neolithic Orkney" that was in use for around 1,000 years. The site is within the UNESCO World Heritage site on Orkney, which also includes 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

B= Breakfast • L= Lunch • D= Dinner

Thursday, August 16, 2018 - DEPART HOME

Friday, August 17 - Aberdeen, SCOTLAND | Kirkwall, Orkney

Upon your independent arrival in Aberdeen, Scotland, at no later than 2:00pm, you will be met at the airport for a short group flight to Kirkwall, Orkney. Transfer to our hotel, settle in, and gather for dinner this evening. *Overnight at The Lynnfield Hotel* for four nights. (D)

Saturday, August 18 - Kirkwall | Skara Brae | Kirkwall

Distance 3 mi. Height climbed: 360 ft.

We start the day with a visit 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. This, the "Heart of Neolithic Orkney," which also includes the Ring of Brodgar, the Stones of Stenness, and Maeshowe (sites we will visit on August 20th), was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1999. 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. (B,L,D)

"Every moment of this trip was interesting and illuminating!"

- Jane, Virginia

Sunday, August 19 - Kirkwall | Isle of Rousay | Kirkwall

Distance 2.5 mi. Height climbed: 360 ft.

Today 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 troubled crofting times. (B,L,D)

Monday, August 20 - Kirkwall | Mainland Orkney | Kirkwall

Distance 2 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 at the Ness of Brodgar 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 Ring of Brodgar to the Stones of Stenness and Maeshowe, which is Britain's largest chambered cairn. Excavations will be in progress at the Ness of Brodgar, and we will take a private tour of the site. Return to our hotel in Kirkwall for our last night on Orkney. (B,L,D)



Above: Skara Brae, a late Neolithic settlement.

Below: The Ring of Brodgar, a stone circle that is 341 ft. in diameter, is the third largest in the British Isles.



Tuesday, August 21 - Kirkwall | Isle of Hoy | Kirkwall

Distance total 6.75 mi. Heights climbed: 100 & 720 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 Lynnfield Hotel*, before we take the overnight ferry from Kirkwall to Shetland at about 11:00pm. (B,L,D)

"I found the archaeology absolutely fascinating though I'm not an archaeologist. Each site we visited had its own unique character and interest."

- Nancy, New York

Wednesday, August 22 - Lerwick, Shetland | Old Scatness | Isle of Mousa | Brae, North Mainland

Distance 2.5 mi. Height climbed: 215 ft.

We arrive in Lerwick in the morning, after breakfast on the ferry. Travel south today, visiting Old Scatness Broch and Iron Age village. This is part of the crucible of Iron Age Shetland, also including Mousa Broch and Jarlshof (a site we will visit on August 25th), that was added by UNESCO in 2012 to the Tentative List of cultural World Heritage sites. In the afternoon we will take 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 transfer to our hotel, located near Brae. Overnight at the *Busta House Hotel* for three nights. (B,L,D)

Thursday, August 23 - Brae | Isle of Unst | Brae

Distance total 5 mi. Height climbed: 165 & 525 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)



Above: Old Scatness on south mainland, Shetland.
Below: The Broch on Isle of Mousa.



"I really liked the intense archaeological experience. After all, that is why I take AIA tours!" - Mary, California

Friday, August 24 - Brae | Fethaland | Brae

Distance 5 mi. Height climbed: 1065 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)



Saturday, August 25 - Brae | Jarlshof | St. Ninian's Isle | Lerwick

Distance 1.25 mi. Height climbed: 130 ft.

This morning we will check out of our hotel and travel south for a visit to Jarlshof, an archaeological site that was 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. Our next stop is St. Ninian's Isle, which is connected to the mainland by a tombolo (a bar of sand, or shingle). St. Ninian's was settled in pre-Norse times, and the remains of an old chapel are still visible. We will walk across the tombolo and visit the site of the chapel. 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 7:00pm. We will have dinner aboard the ferry. (B,L,D)



Sunday, August 26 - Aberdeen | FLY HOME

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

"The lecturer and guides were attentive, helpful, and extremely knowledgeable about the archaeology, geology and history of the area." - Richard, Virginia



Top: Puffins on the Shetland Islands. Middle: Jarlshof, Shetland. Bottom left: Travelers on the Orkney Islands. Bottom right: The Old Man of Hoy stands 450 ft. high in the Orkney Islands.



— Archaeological Institute of America Lecturer & Host —



Dr. Mary MacLeod Rivett 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. Mary 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.

"It is a great pleasure to travel with someone as knowledgeable, informative and charming as Mary MacLeod. She never tired of sharing her expertise with us." - Judith, Ontario

Mary began her present job with Historic Environment Scotland after eight years as an archaeology lecturer at the University of the Highlands and Islands, and eleven years as the Regional Archaeologist for the Outer Hebrides. She lives between Edinburgh and the

Outer Hebrides, where she has a family croft on the Isle of Lewis that she runs with her husband, landscape painter Simon Rivett. Mary has been a popular and highly-rated lecturer on eleven AIA tours since 2002, including three previous departures of this Orkney and Shetland hiking program, and she looks forward to revisiting northernmost Scotland's archaeology and history with our group.

Accommodations

Hotels

August 17-20 (4 nights): Lynnfield Hotel, Kirkwall, Orkney
(www.lynnfield.co.uk)

The Lynnfield is centrally-located and in an ideal position to tour Orkney. Adjacent to the world famous Highland Park Distillery, it has spectacular views looking out over the town to the north isles. The restaurant's excellent menus change daily to accommodate deliveries of fresh local ingredients.



Lynnfield Hotel



August 22-24 (3 nights): Busta House Hotel, Brae, 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 of the bedrooms are named after islands around mainland Shetland and are individually decorated to give each a unique character. The cuisine features lots of local produce.



Busta House Hotel



Ferry

August 21 & 25: Cabin on overnight ferry

The ferry company we use is Northlink Ferries (www.northlink-ferries.co.uk/). On August 21st and 25th, travelers will overnight in two-berth, outside cabins, and single travelers will have a two-berth cabin for single occupancy. We will have access to the comfortable Magnus Lounge during both crossings (Kirkwall/Lerwick and Lerwick/Aberdeen), and meals will be served. 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.



Above, outer twin cabin. Above left, the ferry's Magnus Lounge. Left, ferry exterior.

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 1100 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 August range from the low 50s to low 60s F, with a fair chance of some precipitation and an average breeze of 14mph.

Prices 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 to the right); taxi, telephone, and fax charges; optional excursions or deviations from scheduled tour.

Passenger Cancellation Fees: 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 eighty nine (89) and sixty one (61) 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 a penalty of 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: Round-trip airfare between home and Aberdeen, Scotland (ABZ), is not included. A group flight from Aberdeen to Kirkwall is included on August 17th. You must arrive in Aberdeen no later than 2:00pm on August 17th. Once you have received your final payment invoice, you should book your flights. If you are considering booking non-refundable airline tickets before this time, please contact our office first. We do not accept any liability for cancellation penalties related to domestic or international airline tickets.

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 Account-AIA NorthScotland8/18. 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 or elsewhere published.

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.

Due to space limitations, this is abbreviated information. Complete terms and conditions will be sent upon confirmation or upon request, and can be viewed online at www.aiatours.org.

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.



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Tour Prices (Per Person)

Double Occupancy (13 to 15 participants).....	\$5,645
Double Occupancy (10 to 12 participants).....	\$5,845
Single Supplement	\$765

Single room supplement will be charged when requested or required (limited availability).

With fewer than 10 participants, a small group surcharge may be added.

Your Trip Includes:

- Leadership of AIA lecturer/host Mary MacLeod Rivett;
- Group arrival airport transfer, and departure transfer from ferry terminal to Aberdeen (airport, hotel, or train station);
- Seven nights' accommodations in finest available hotels, as per the itinerary;
- One internal flight from Aberdeen to Kirkwall;
- Two nights aboard an overnight ferry;
- All meals (including water, and welcome and 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 and 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.

For questions and to make a reservation please contact us:



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