

Eday

... Heart of the North Isles

The drawing room floor of Carrick House still has a dark stain said to be the blood spilled by the notorious pirate Gow during a failed escape attempt.

Situated centrally among the North Isles of Orkney, 14 miles north-east of Kirkwall, Eday, the isthmus isle, eight miles long and pinched at the waist, according to the novelist Eric Linklater, offers a unique blend of heather-clad hilly moorland with panoramic views over sea and islands, sheer cliffs, sweeping beaches and sand dunes.

Most of the crofts and farms are located on the fertile coastal strip and the numerous derelict houses are clear indicators that Eday's population was once much greater.

There is a wealth of evidence of man's presence on this island over many thousands of years from the mysterious Standing Stone of Setter, often compared to a giant's hand and probably the finest stone of its type in Orkney, to 17th century Carrick House and the dwellings of today's farmers and crofters.

The great outdoors

In all seasons Eday offers a wealth of interest. Spring provides an abundance of birdlife. Below the sea cliffs of the Red and Grey Heads, Guillemots, Razorbills and Puffins dive into the clear waters in pursuit of darting fish while high above Fulmars ride the air currents, showing off their white wing flashes, Great Skua and Arctic Skua chase gulls and Arctic Terns until they drop their beakful of fish. Above the heather moors Short-eared Owls hunt their prey and over oat stacks Kestrels hover, targeting unwary mice.

A survey was taken in 1996 and Miss Elaine Bullard states that 120 species of wild plants were recorded.

Seals & dolphins

Both Grey and Common seals can be seen around Eday. The dog-like Common seal frequently hauls out at low tide along the east side of Calf Sound. If you visit Eday in June or July you may see very dark newly-born Common seal pups on the shore or swimming with adults. The heavier Grey seal can be seen anywhere around the coast and both species haul out on Seal Skerry at low tide. The elusive otter is also present in Eday.

Ancient monuments

The first settlers arrived in Eday some 5000 years ago. These early people were farmers and their chambered tombs are the most notable monuments on the island. It is thought that each of these tombs belonged to a small community and served as communal burial places. There were various types of tomb in use over a long period from well before 3000 BC until some time after 2000 BC.

On the Calf of Eday, the group of structures, including prehistoric houses, chambered tombs and traces of field boundaries, is one of the most important prehistoric sites in the British Isles. Also on the Calf there are ruins of 17th century saltworks which are probably the best surviving examples of their type.

Industry and crafts

Many skills and crafts associated with Eday's traditional way of life can still be seen. Fishing and shell fishing is carried out and fresh lobsters, crabs and scallops are available during the season. Sea fishing trips can be arranged and fishermen still make their own creels or lobster pots. Peat, once exported as far as the Edinburgh distilleries, is still the main fuel and is cut during the early summer using a traditional tool called a 'tuskar'.

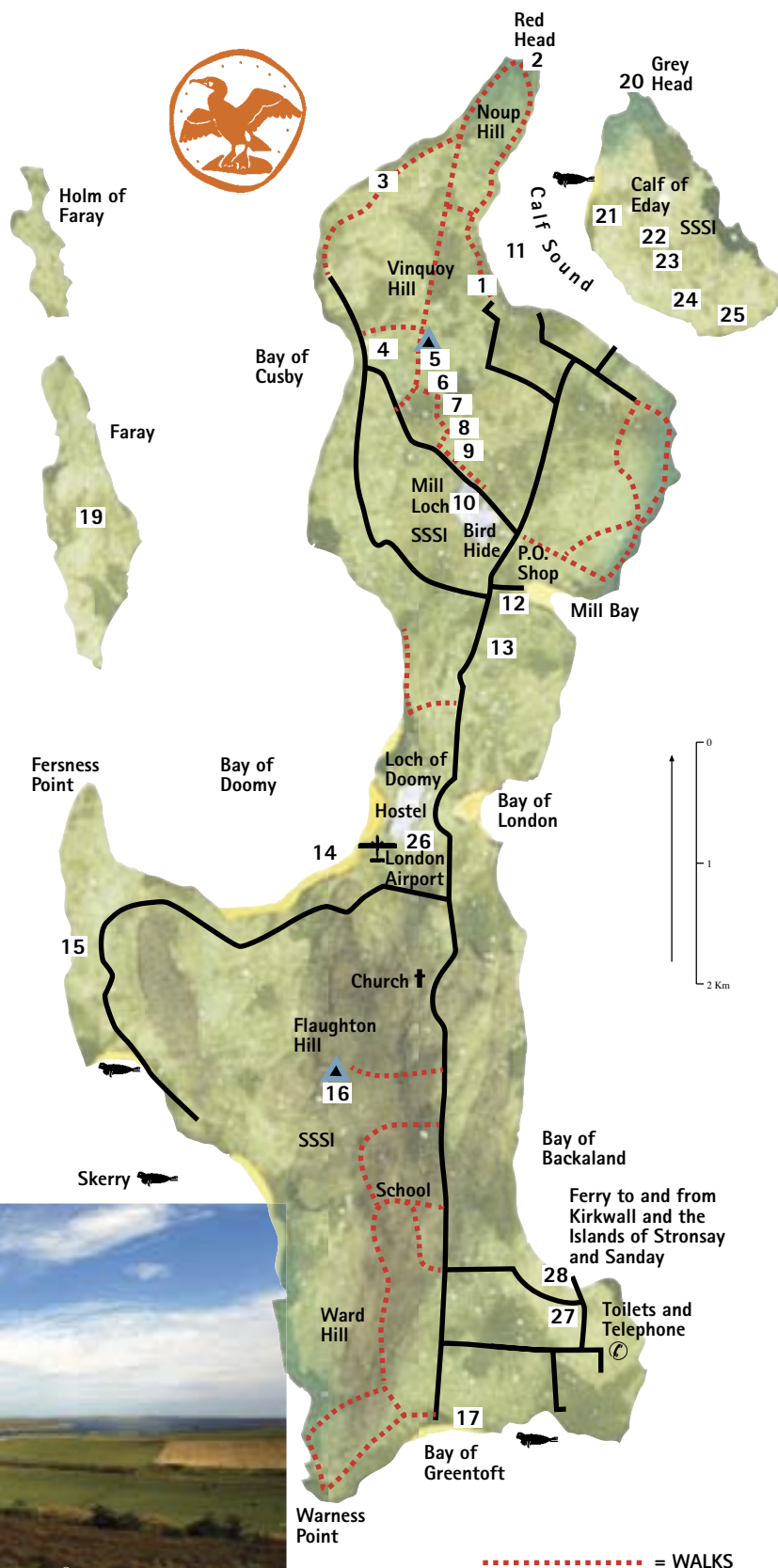
Points of interest

- 1 Carrick House:** Standing on the shore the house was built in the early 17th century, a keystone dated 1633 is found on the courtyard gateway. John Gow the pirate was held here in 1725.
- 2 Cliffs of the Red Head:** Red sandstone cliffs with panoramic views of the North Isles and Fair Isle.
- 3 Prehistoric House and Ancient Field Boundaries:** Some of the best preserved field boundaries in Orkney sweeping round a large unexcavated prehistoric house containing a saddle-quern, a stone for grinding grain.
- 4 Red House Croft Restoration Project:** Includes home built water wheel to drive a small croft threshing mill.
- 5 Vinquoy Hill Chambered Cairn:** This tomb consists of a central chamber with four small compartments.
- 6 Huntersquoy Chambered Tomb:** This tomb had two chambers one above the other, reached by separate passages. The only other example of this in Orkney is on Rousay.
- 7 Braeside Chambered Tomb:** The roof of this tomb has been removed and its centre dug out but the internal layout can be made out.
- 8 Fold of Setter:** A circular enclosure marked by a low bank and protruding stonework some 90 metres in diameter.
- 9 Stone of Setter:** Probably the finest prehistoric single standing stone in Orkney. Though weathered this monolith is still over 15 feet high and is sited between the Bay of Calf Sound and Mill Loch.
- 10 Mill Loch:** This loch supports numerous pairs of Red-Throated Divers, one of the densest concentrations of this species in the British Isles. Please use bird hide provided. Start of Eday Heritage Walk, information board.
- 11 Calfsound:** Sea caves, cliffs, a sheltered cove. Views of cormorant colony on the calf of Eday.
- 12 Estate Mill:** Once used to grind corn for the island.
- 13 Chambered Tombs:** Two well-preserved chambered tombs. Most interesting visible aspects are the horns or spur-walls which extend out from the corners.
- 14 Mussetter & Doomy Sands:** Behind the dunes Birds Foot Trefoil can be found. An excellent beach.
- 15 Burnt Mounds:** Two large hillocks of burnt stones – possibly an ancient cooking station dating from the Bronze Age (1500-500 BC).



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- 16 **Whitemaw and Flaughton Hill:** Eday submountain heath supporting Orkney's only regular breeding Whimbrel.
- 17 **Castle of Stackel Brae:** A small Norse castle dating from 11th, 12th or 13th centuries and Norse burnt mound. At the eroding shore edge can be seen walls and the burnt mound.
- 18 **Muckle Green Holm:** The Norse island of Hellisey where Viking Sweyn Asleifsson hid in a cave to escape his pursuers.
- 19 **Faray:** This uninhabited island is grazed by sheep and its caves and beaches are a major breeding ground for Grey Seals.
- 20 **Grey Head & Calf of Eday:** The Calf of Eday supports 32 species of breeding birds.
- 21 **Saltworks:** The ruins of 17th century saltworks and one of the best surviving examples in the UK. These works are thought to have begun operating in the 1630s.
- 22 **Stalled Cairn:** A long cairn containing two chambers of different periods.
- 23 **Iron Age Houses:** The main house was a large roundhouse with radial internal divisions and dates from the Early Iron Age, the last few centuries BC.
- 24 **Chambered Tombs:** Two chambered tombs of the Bookan type, the first built into the hillside. The second is complete except for the hole in the roof through which it was entered in 1855.
- 25 **Cormorant Colony:** An important Cormorant colony with over 100 nests.
- 26 **London Airport:** Named after its location at the Bay of London.
- 27 **Sui Generis:** Fine furniture designer and maker.
- 28 **Information Board:** Pier Car Park.



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John Gow the pirate

The island of Eday and Carrick House are associated with the capture of one of Orkney's most notorious sons, John Gow the Pirate. In February, 1725, Gow in his ship 'Revenge' set out to raid Carrick House, the home of the laird James Fea. Unfortunately for Gow, his ship ran aground on the Calf of Eday. Gow required a large boat to refloat 'Revenge' and sent ashore five fully-armed men to force assistance from the islanders. The pirates were met peaceably and taken to an inn for a drink and subsequently overpowered. Gow was held prisoner in Carrick House until he was transported to London for trial. The pirates were hanged at Execution Dock, Wapping on June 11, 1725. On a visit to Orkney in 1814, Sir Walter Scott collected tales about John Gow which he incorporated into his novel 'The Pirate' published in 1821.

Building blocks

Eday is made up of red and yellow rocks of the Middle Old Red Sandstone, the sandstone magnificently displayed in the cliffs of the Red Head. The quality of Eday stone has long been recognised. Much of the stone used to build St Magnus Cathedral and the Earl's Palace in Kirkwall was quarried at Fersness on Eday.



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EMEC

Eday is home to the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC), the first and currently, only, marine energy test centre in the world. The substation and test site on the west side of the island have seen two developers putting their tidal turbines into the 4m/s (8knot) tides. The first, OpenHydro (www.openhydro.com), based in Dublin, has generated electricity for the first time to the National Grid at the end of May 2008, the first in the UK from a tidal turbine. Their device can be seen at the North end of the Fall of Warness. See www.emec.org.uk and the Eday Heritage Centre for a display of EMEC's activities in Eday.

Services

Accommodation

Accommodation providers listed below are members of VisitScotland's Quality Assurance Scheme and have been graded as part of the national scheme. Please refer to the disclaimer on the inside of the back cover.

SELF-CATERING

Sties, self catering, sleeps 4 (★★★SC) - Dr W.J. Cormack. t: 02089 415291.

Accommodation providers listed below are not participants of VisitScotland's Quality Assurance Scheme. Please refer to the disclaimer on the inside of the back cover before booking.

Other Services

The Eday Ranger. Our island ranger organises events and activities throughout the summer including rock pooling, guided walks, moth recording and sketching walks. There is a regular guided walk along the Eday Heritage Trail every Wednesday at noon, from the Mill Loch Bird Hide and walks on request are available every Friday. For more details call Anne on t: 07908 148004.

Shop: Eday Community Enterprises Ltd., general store, fuels and off licence. t: 01857 622283.

Post Office: Mrs S. Tchaikovsky, Millbounds. t: 01857 622339.

Eday Kirk: Johan Robertson. t: 01857 622251.

Doctor: Dr G. Mackay, Heatherlea. t: 01857 622243.

Eday Tourist Association, For visitor information including transport, tours and accommodation. Contact www.visit-eday.co.uk or t: 01857 622262.

Visitor Attractions

Eday Heritage & Visitor centre. After many years of voluntary community effort the new Eday Heritage & Visitor Centre opened in July 2008 and offers a new and interesting "any weather" attraction to the island.

The old Baptist Chapel has been beautifully renovated to provide an exhibition area, café seating area and licensed bar space.

Although the café opening times vary a help yourself hot drinks facility is always available in the café area. Functions and events are advertised in advance.

The exhibition area displays include artefacts, working models and a range of information, documentation & photographic material about Eday - including an interpretation board for the Eday Ranger and a display of the materials gathered through the Eday Oral History Project. The work of European Marine Energy Centre, whose Tidal Test site is based on Eday, is shown through the provision of a DVD and display materials.

The centre is open every day from 9am to 6pm between Easter and mid-October and 10am to 5pm, Wednesdays and Sundays throughout the winter.

Group bookings for parties and functions or to hire the facility are welcome and enquiries can be made through contacting Katrina Byers on 01857 622288 or Kate Townsend on 07917523582, e: cathryntownsend@btinternet.com or katrinabyers@btinternet.com.

Carrick House. Open occasionally by appointment only. t: 01857 622260.

Redhouse Croft Restoration Project. Ongoing project to restore c.19th century croft complete with kiln, water wheel and byre. Tea Room serving teas, coffees, home cooked lunches and afternoon teas. Evening meals most nights but booking is essential. Quilt display, lovely garden, crafts and plants for sale. Info on local history, archaeology and genealogy. Free tours of the croft. Looking forward to meeting you! Open June-September 2009. Tuesday-Friday 10am-5pm. Weekends happily by arrangement. t: 01857 622282, Mob 07785 186384 or www.redhouseeday.co.uk.

Old North School Classroom - Old school display, model boats and aircraft. Also, walk through submarine display of the control room of HMS Otter as seen on "Channel 4 Collect's Lot" Submarine exhibits and archives. Situated close to Eday shop. Open most days. Entry is free of charge. M llett 01857 622225.

Sui Generis, Colin, Sherry Kerr and son Leo, workshop/galleries/gardens. A display of unique furniture, created in varying styles, also Bookbinding and art in wood. Admission charge. Open all year by telephone appointment only. t: 01857 622219.

e: enquiries@sui generisfurniture.co.uk
www.suigenerisfurniture.co.uk

Walks on Eday

Warness Walk - Arrow on map indicates beginning of walk which takes approximately one hour of easy, flat walking. It embraces panoramic views of the Green Holms, Mainland and Hoy.

Heritage Walk - Arrow marks start of walk which passes through some of the most interesting sites on Eday (see map). The walk takes approximately 4 hrs 30 mins.

Transport Hire

J & J car hire and taxis near to pier. Stackald, Eday. t: 622206/07526 735350.

Loch Ventures, self drive car and motor home hire. 07739 286350/07785 971404.

Eday Minibus Tours - Please telephone 01857 622206 for details, see page 49 for full advert.

Transport links

Eday

Effective from 3 May until 28 September 2009

The services to Eday are carried out by the vessels **m.v. Earl Thorfinn** (190 passengers and 25 cars), **m.v. Earl Sigurd** (190 passengers and 25 cars) and **m.v. Varagen** (144 passengers and 32 cars). Canteen facilities are available on all vessels at modest prices. Bookings should be made at the Kirkwall Office: t: 01856 872044, f: 01856 872921, e: info@orkneyferries.co.uk See page 46 for occasional extra Sunday inter-island connections.



t: (01856) 872044

		Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Kirkwall	dep	0900A		0740B	0700B	0700B		0700B
Sunday	arr			0905				
Sunday	dep			0915B				
Eday	arr							0815
Eday	dep							0830B
Stronsay	arr				0835	0835		0905
Stronsay	dep		0815A		0850B	0850B	0730B	0920B
Eday	arr	1015	0850	0935	0925	0925	0805	
Eday	dep	1025A	0905A	0945B	0940B	0940B	0820B	
Kirkwall	arr		1020	1100	1055	1055	0935	1055

Kirkwall	dep		1035		1010		1010	
Sunday	arr	1045	1200					
Sunday	dep	1720A	1210					
Eday	arr	1740	1230		1125		1125	
Eday	dep	1750A	1240		1135		1135	
Sunday	arr				1155		1155	
Sunday	dep				1205		1205	
Kirkwall	arr	1905	1355		1330		1330	

Kirkwall	dep	1915A	1600	1700	1600	1600	1600	1600A
Eday	arr	2030	1715	1815	1715	1715	1715	
Eday	dep	2035A	1730	1825	1730	1730	1730	
Stronsay	arr		1805		1805	1805	1805	1735
Stronsay	dep		1815		1815		1815	1745A
Eday	arr							1820
Eday	dep							1835A
Sunday	arr	2055		1845				
Kirkwall	arr		1950		1950		1950	1950

A - Vehicles must be booked before 1430 hrs on Saturday.

B - Vehicles must be booked before 1600 hrs the day before sailing.

NOTES:

- 1) Vehicle check in times: **20 minutes** before departure. Passenger check in times: **10 minutes** before departure.
- 2) **No show Charges** - All cancellations must be made not less than 24 hours before the intended date of travel or full charges may apply.
- 3) In order to accommodate certain local events these timetables will be subject to change. (See page 47).
- 4) For conditions of carriage of passengers and cargo see notices exhibited in the Company's vessels, offices and premises.

For full fares please enquire at Orkney Ferries Offices



WEDNESDAYS			
Dep Kirkwall	Arr	Dep	Arr Kirkwall
1005	1035	1042	1050
1645	1653	1700	1730

This timetable is subject to contract. Visitors should check with the Airline for full details and reservations.

LOGANAIR 01856 872494/873457