



Carleton
ALUMNI ADVENTURES

Explore the world

Hiking Scotland's Orkney & Shetland Islands

July 13-23, 2018 (11 days) with Carleton Professor Clint Cowan '83

"Wonderful hikes with fantastic scenery and the guides were top notch. The trip was planned in an incredibly professional, expert way that was seamless."

- Peter, New York



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Dear Carleton College Alumni and Friends,

I invite you to **join Carleton College geologist Clint Cowan '83** on this unique hiking tour in Scotland's little-visited Orkney and Shetland Islands!

This is the perfect opportunity to **explore on foot Scotland's Northern Isles' amazing wealth of geological and archaeological sites**. Their rocks tell the whole story, spanning almost three billion years. On Shetland you will walk on an ancient ocean floor, explore an extinct volcano, and stroll across shifting sands, all in the space of a day. In contrast, Orkney is made up largely of sedimentary rocks, one of the best collections of these sediments to be seen anywhere in the world. Both archipelagoes also have an amazing wealth of archaeological sites dating back 5,000 years. **This geological and archaeological saga is worth the telling, and nowhere else can the evidence be seen in more glorious a setting.**

This active land tour features daily hikes that are easy to moderate in difficulty, so **to fully enjoy and visit all the sites on this itinerary one should be in good walking condition** (and, obviously, enjoy hiking!).

Highlights include:

- The "Heart of Neolithic Orkney," inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1999, including the chambered tomb of **Maeshowe**, estimated to have been constructed around 2700 B.C.; the 4,000-year-old **Ring of Brodgar**, one of Europe's finest Neolithic monuments; **Skara Brae** settlement; and associated monuments and stone settings. These are unquestionably among the most important Neolithic sites in western Europe.
- Excavations at the **Ness of Brodgar**, a massive ceremonial complex that, in its heyday, must have completely dominated the landscape.
- **Eshaness**, with some of the most spectacular coastal scenery in the Northern Isles.
- The view from **Ronas Hill** on a bright day, showing all of Shetland.
- **Birdwatching** in the Isles, one of the major seabird breeding and feeding areas in the North Atlantic, where more than a million birds breed in very large colonies.

Three 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 hike(s) and, if you prefer, you can opt out of any hiking excursion and be driven to the next stop; but, bear in mind that a few sites can only be visited if you approach them by foot. ***The hiking duration for each day is estimated within the following itinerary.***

All meals are included, and you will enjoy comfortable accommodations: three nights at the elegant *Lynnfield Hotel* on Orkney, a comfortable overnight ferry to Shetland, four nights at the remote, charming *Busta House Hotel*, and a final night in Aberdeen.

Sincerely,

Sarah Ladner Maris '85

Sarah Ladner Maris '85
President, Carleton College Alumni Association



Above, the archaeological site of Jarlshof, dating back to 2500 B.C. Below, a view of the Atlantic from the northern Shetland island of Unst. Bottom, Old Red Sandstone, the building blocks for most of the archaeological monuments on Orkney.



Itinerary

B= Breakfast • L= Lunch • D= Dinner

Friday, July 13, 2018 - DEPART HOME

Saturday, July 14 - Aberdeen, SCOTLAND | Kirkwall, Orkney

In Aberdeen, Scotland, you will be met at about 2:30pm and transferred to the ferry terminal where our group will board the ferry to Kirkwall, Orkney. We will have dinner aboard the ferry, arrive in Kirkwall at about 11:00pm, and transfer to our hotel. Overnight at *The Lynnfield Hotel* for three nights. (D)

Sunday, July 15 - Kirkwall | Neolithic Orkney | Kirkwall

Distance 5 mi. Height climbed: negligible

Following breakfast, we will visit several important Neolithic sites on mainland Orkney, from the Ring of Brodgar, via the Ness of Brodgar excavations, to the Standing Stones of Stenness and Maeshowe, which is Britain's largest chambered cairn. This, the 'Heart of Neolithic Orkney,' which also includes Skara Brae (a site we will visit tomorrow), was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1999. (B,L,D)

Monday, July 16 - Kirkwall | Skara Brae | Stromness | Kirkwall

Distance 3 mi. Height climbed: 300 ft.

Today we witness the wreckage of the mountains as represented by the Stromness Flagstone group of rocks. These were ideally suited as building materials and were used by the builders of the Neolithic settlement of 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. After visiting Skara Brae we will walk south along the spectacular coast with geos, natural arches, caves, sea stacks, and outcrops of igneous basement rocks; and visit the town of Stromness, an intimate stone-built port huddled against the sea. (B,L,D)

Tuesday, July 17 - Kirkwall | Isle of Hoy | Kirkwall

Distance 5 mi. Height climbed: 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 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)



Above, Skara Brae, where the original village dates back to 2450 B.C. Below, the Ring of Brodgar, a stone circle that is 341 ft. in diameter, is the third largest in the British Isles.



Wednesday, July 18 - Lerwick, Shetland | Isle of Mousa | Jarlshof | Brae

Distance 4 mi. Height climbed: negligible

We arrive in Lerwick in the morning. After breakfast on the ferry we 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 visit a Viking soapstone quarry on a near industrial scale as well as Jarlshof, which was occupied for more than 4,000 years. The site boasts 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. Overnight at the *Busta House Hotel*, located near Brae, for four nights. (B,L,D)

Thursday, July 19 - Brae | North Roe | Brae

Distance 6 mi. Height climbed: 450 ft.

Today we visit the oldest rocks in Shetland. In addition to the ancient basement rocks, similar to those of Greenland, we see a good exposure of a major fault (similar to the San Andreas) that crosses the highlands of Scotland as well as Shetland. (B,L,D)

Friday, July 20 - Brae | Isle of Unst | Brae

Distance 3-6 mi. Height climbed: 330-660 ft.

Unst consists of a block of oceanic crust thrust, which is very much out of place. These enormous masses of thrust rock (called ophiolites) give a rare glimpse into the Earth's deep interior. Along our way we will encounter some very interesting botany, a Viking longship and replica longhouse, and the northernmost cliffs of the British Isles, which in the spring are home to over 100,000 breeding sea birds. (B,L,D)

Saturday, July 21 - Brae | Eshaness | Brae

Distance 4.5 mi. Height climbed: 200 ft.

The Eshaness peninsula tells a fascinating story of a long extinct volcano. The spectacular cliffs we see today cut right through the flank of what was the Eshaness volcano. It is the best section through the flank of a volcano in the British Isles and a geological 'must.' The sea has exploited cracks in the volcanic bedrock to carve out the dramatic array of stacks, geos, and blowholes including the Hols o Scraada (Old Scratch, or the Devil), which were formed when the roof caved in at the end of a deep and narrow sea cave stretching more than one hundred yards from the coast. Another highlight is an active storm beach still being shaped by hurricane force winds from the Atlantic in the winter. (B,L,D)

Sunday, July 22 - Brae | Ronas Hill | Lerwick | Sumburgh | Aberdeen

Distance 5 mi. Height climbed: 800 ft.

Ronas Hill is Shetland's highest hill (1475 ft.) and topped by a prehistoric chambered burial cairn. The granite summit has a subarctic climate, with patterns in the stony soils created by freezing and thawing and some rare Arctic/Alpine plants. Our walk to the top of Ronas Hill starts at 700 ft. and offers the chance to examine its granites and the freeze-thaw features. On a bright day the views from the top are spectacular. After the walk we will drive to Lerwick for some free time to explore its shops and the excellent Shetland Museum & Archives. Transfer to the airport for a short flight to Aberdeen, and check-in to a conveniently-located hotel. *Overnight at Holiday Inn Express Aberdeen Airport.* (B,L,D)

Monday, July 23 - Aberdeen | FLY HOME

Check out this morning and walk the short distance (five minutes) to Aberdeen airport. (B)



Above, hikers traversing the Isle of Mousa. Below, Hermaness on the Isle of Unst, Shetland.



What to Expect

This is a good introduction to hiking in Scotland for people with basic fitness, combining hiking and visits to geological and archaeological sites. Daily walking distances will not exceed 6 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 thousand 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 hike. Average temperatures in July range from 50° F to 60° F with a fair chance of some precipitation.

Air Arrangements & Transfers: Round-trip airfare between home and Aberdeen, Scotland (ABZ), is not included. Complimentary transfers are included between Aberdeen (airport, hotel, or train station) and the ferry terminal on the group arrival date. You must arrive in Aberdeen no later than 2:00pm on July 14th. **Please check with our office before booking non-refundable airline tickets.** We do not accept liability for cancellation penalties related to domestic or international airline tickets.



Tour Prices (Per Person)

Double Occupancy (13 to 15 participants).....	\$5,345
Double Occupancy (10 to 12 participants).....	\$5,645
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 Carleton College Professor Clint Cowan;
- Transfers between Aberdeen (airport, hotel, or train station) and the ferry terminal on the group arrival date;
- Eight nights' accommodations in finest available hotels, as per the itinerary;
- One night aboard an overnight ferry;
- Internal flight from Sumburgh to Aberdeen
- 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 and a 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.

Prices Do Not Include: Any international airfare; passport and visa fees; all airport fees and departure taxes; alcoholic beverages (except as indicated above); excess baggage charges; personal and baggage insurance; any activities not specified in the itinerary; all items of a personal nature such as laundry, medical expenses, and room service.

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 sixty (60) and ninety (90) 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.

Prices, itinerary and leader 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.

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-CAA Scotland7/18. 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.

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 <https://apps.carleton.edu/alumni/adventures>

**For questions and reservations, please contact
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