



SHORESIDE NOOST SURVEY,  
SHORESIDE, BRIDGE OF WALLS, SHETLAND  
July/August 2019  
Marc Chivers & Esther Renwick

MODER DY CIC

[www.moderdy.org](http://www.moderdy.org)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 Summary .....	3
2.0 Introduction.....	3
Site Location	
Site History	
3.0 Objectives.....	8
4.0 Methodology	
5.0 Results	
6.0 Conclusions	
7.0 References.....	11
8.0 Appendix.....	12

Cover Image:

Shoreside, Photographed by Peterson, J. 1956. ©Shetland Museum & Archives PO4959

## SUMMARY

An archaeological survey was carried out of a probable late 19<sup>th</sup> century boat noost at Shoreside. The site is located on the coast edge at Bridge of Walls on the West Mainland of Shetland. The noost is integrated into a drystone wall adjacent to Shoreside croft house, directly above a dry stone / modern concrete slipway. The work was carried out between late July and early August 2019 and restricted to the boat noost for the purposes of recording ahead of its demolition to make way for the construction of a boat shed on the site.

## INTRODUCTION

### Site Location

The site is located at HU 26608 51059, accessible by private road off the A971.

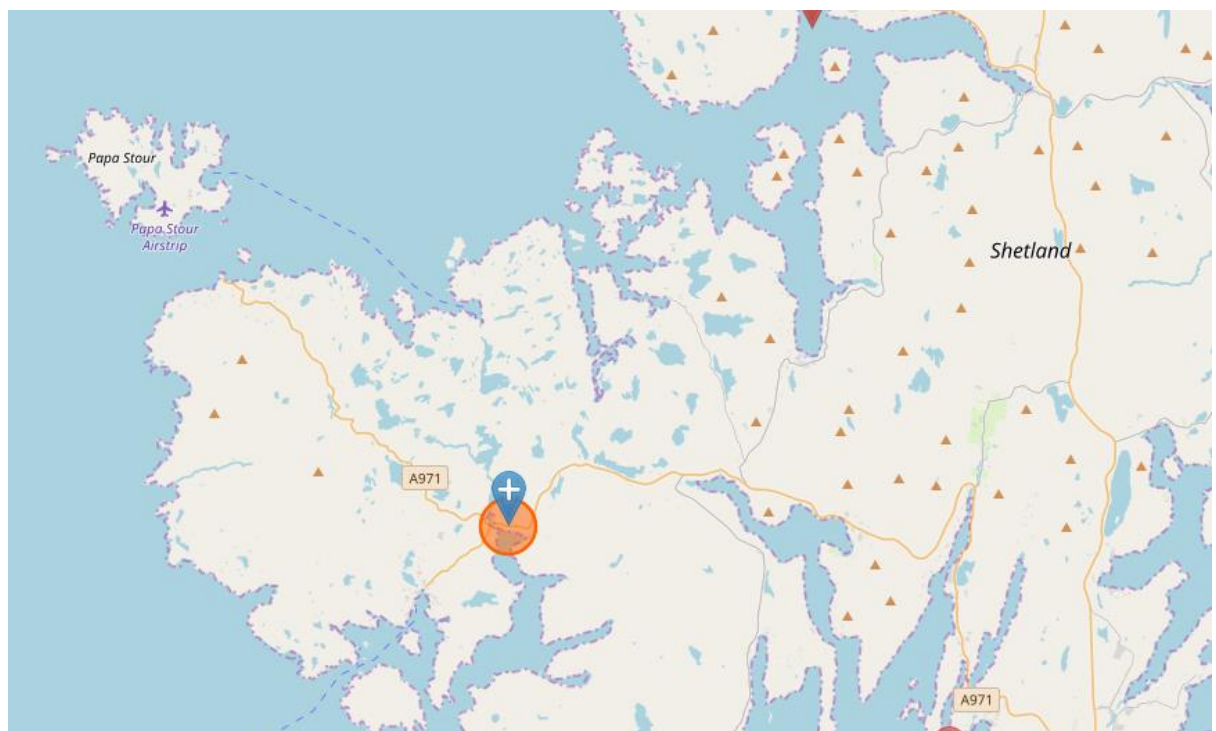


Figure 1. Shoreside is located at Bridge of Walls on the West Mainland of Shetland. © OpenStreetMap

### Site History

Shoreside is a well-preserved example of a 19<sup>th</sup> century croft house with associated field walls, outbuildings and boat noost.



Figure 2. Shoreside. Photograph © Moder Dy 2019

A roofed structure on the same orientation and location as the current house at Shoreside is visible on the first Ordnance Survey map. Shetland mapping was undertaken in 1877-8 (National Library of Scotland); the structure continues to be visible on the same alignment in subsequent maps, suggesting the current house was standing by 1877.

Archive evidence suggests that the existing house at Shoreside was constructed during the 1870s. Timbers used in the house construction are attested to come from the vessel *Sieka* registered to Veendam, Netherlands, this is supported by the survival of the boat name plate within the house.

In February 1863 *Sieka* was laden with coal, bound from Granton, Edinburgh to Bremerhaven in Germany when she shipped a heavy sea. The crew jettisoned some of the cargo to lighten the vessel and *Sieka* managed to reach Gruting Voe on the 10<sup>th</sup> February. Entering there she grounded but was later freed. It was initially reported in the local newspaper that she was to be repaired; then at a later date that the *Sieka* was to be sold. Bertie Bruce stated that he didn't know what became of the vessel (Bruce, R, S. Shetland Museum & Archives SA4/2267/13, p.33). However, it is evident that this vessel was broken-up in Gruting Voe at some point during this period, with some of the timbers being re-used in the construction of Shoreside.



Figure 3. Photograph of the name plate of the galliot *Sieka* from Veendam Netherlands. Photograph ©Moder Dy, 2019.

Current evidence suggests that the Henry family from Foula settled at Shoreside during the late 1870s. James' occupation was listed as 'fisherman' on the 1881 census, as was his youngest son Thomas, who also appears in the fishing boat register of 1860 as the owner and skipper of the *sixareen Eastern* LK 548. Their son James Henry married Joan Moncrieff on 8th December 1881 and daughter Margaret died at Shoreside on the 30th December 1889 of asthma aged 27. James Henry's eldest daughter Williamina was born in 1883, she married Peter Johnson and they remained in the house along with Williamina's sister Maggie. Maggie died in 1954, followed by Williamina in 1956. Peter Johnson died at Shoreside in April 1964 aged 74. [See appendix for the Henry family tree].



Figure 4. Fourareen at Shoreside, Photographer Peterson, J. circa 1920. Photograph ©Shetland Museum & Archives P00002



Figure 5. The same view in 2019 © Moder Dy 2019



Figure 6. Shoreside, Photographed by Peterson, J. 1956. ©Shetland Museum & Archives PO4959.

The noost can be seen with a boat drawn-up in front and another boat lying alongside the wall.



Figure 7. George Henry at Shoreside baiting haddock lines with mussels. Photographer Peterson, J. circa 1939-46. Photograph ©Shetland Museum & Archives P03719.



Figure 8. Meena, Maggie & Robbie Henry, planting potatoes at Shoreside. Photographer Peterson J. (1937) Photograph ©Shetland Museum & Archives P02999

## OBJECTIVES

To record the boat noost ahead of demolition.

## METHODOLOGY

Following a desk-based assessment the archaeological survey was carried out using tape and offset method to produce a 1:100 sketch plan and a photographic record.

## RESULTS

Fieldwork was undertaken on 25 July 2019. The boat noost measures 6.6m by 2.7m (external measurement), stands to a height of approximately 1m and generally appears to be well preserved. The noost dimensions and construction are in keeping with typical noosts of the period and region, there is no evidence of reuse or remodelling.



Figure 7. The boat noost viewed from the West. @Moder Dy 2019





Figure 8. The boat noost viewed from the East @Moder Dy 2019

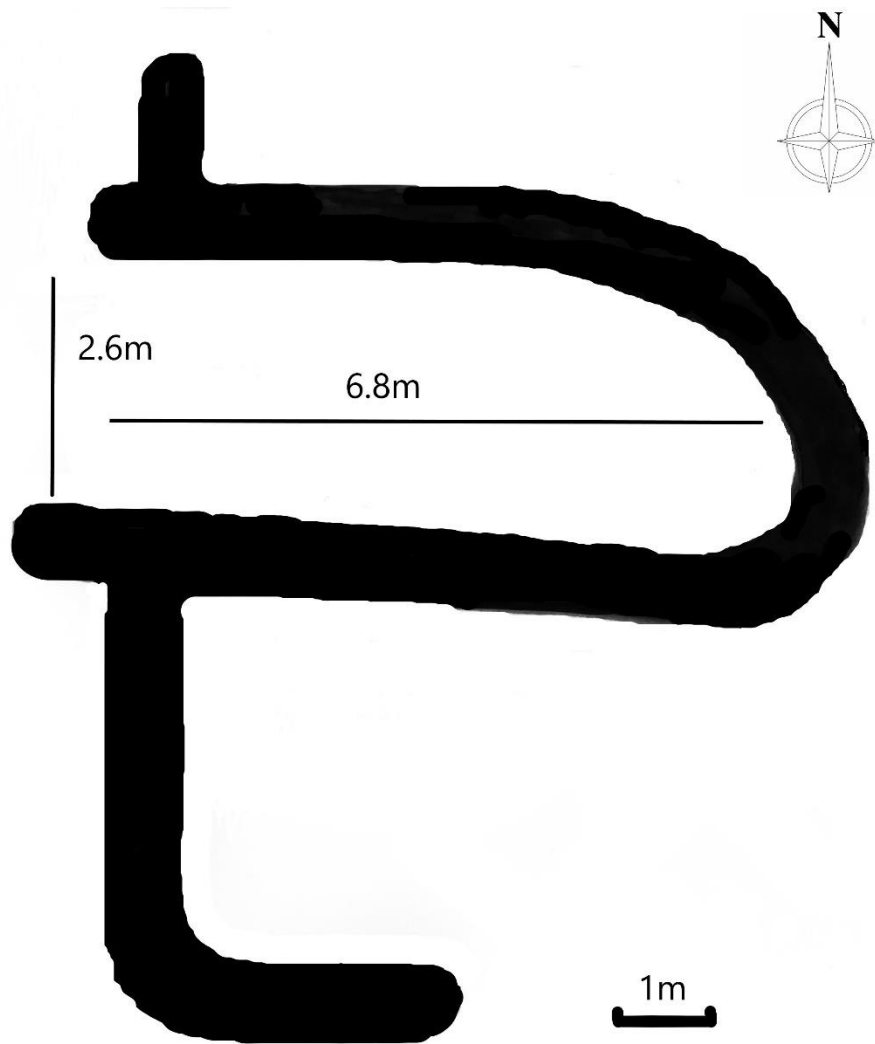


Figure 9. Sketch plan of noost. 1:100 scale.

## CONCLUSIONS

The results from both the desk-based assessment and fieldwork suggest that the construction of the boat noost can be dated to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably related to the current house construction which appears to have taken place between 1863, when the *Sieka* was wrecked, and 1877, when the house appears on the first ordnance survey map. The noost is typical, in both size and construction, of noosts on the west mainland of Shetland. The internal dimensions of the noost would allow it to house a typical large fourareen as seen in figures 4 & 6 used for commercial and subsistence fishing, travel, going to the shop and flitting peats and other cargo.

## REFERENCES

Bayanne family history [online] available from <<http://www.bayanne.info/Shetland/>> [07.08.19]

Bruce, R, S. Shetland Museum & Archives. SA4/2267/13, p.33

Fishing Boat Register (1869) CE85/11/5-6

1881 census

National Library of Scotland [online] "Survey and revision dates for county series mapping, 1843-1943" available from <<https://maps.nls.uk/os/county-series/dates.html>> [17.08.19]

APPENDIX

Henry Family Tree 1786 - 1956

