Welcome to our Heart of Neolithic Orkney

This is a map with a difference - a Community Map. It maps things that matter to the people who live, work, play and go to school around the World Heritage Site. These places are important for their archaeology and history but they matter for lots of other reasons too. People have shared some of those reasons in their pictures, poems and stories, and you can see them on this map.

Some people love visiting the sites in all weathers and hearing the birds calling.

Some people remember special occasions or walks with their Gran.

Some people know stories about the stones from long ago.

What’s your favourite memory or story?

Look more closely!

Today there are 27 stones standing at the Ring of Brodgar, but once there might have been as many as 60. Today there are 27 standing at the Ring of Brodgar, but once there might have been as many as 60. How many standing stones can you count? How many birds can you find on the map?

What kinds of birds are they?

Can you spot any sheep?

What are they doing?

Next time you’re out and about around the Heart of Neolithic Orkney, take a closer look - maybe you can see some of the things on the map too!

We ran Go-Orkney for 14 years 1982-94 and visited Brodgar and Stenness every day for 6 or 7 months each year. Perhaps I have been to the Stones about 2000 times. When we started we always told our visitors that stones usually look like or a pair of binoculars that you look through into the past. We ran Go-Orkney for 14 years 1982-94 and visited Brodgar and Stenness every day for 6 or 7 months each year. Perhaps I have been to the Stones about 2000 times.

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Imagine real people and real lives surviving their sadnesses and joys and imagining the future. Imagine real people and real lives surviving their sadnesses and joys and imagining the future.

Picture yourself coming to this dark and mysterious tunnel that has behind the gateway you will discover.

You can see moorit sheep as you go by Maeshowe.

I have never been to Maeshowe but would love to go into No 1 house and play.

I also on my way to Stenness and just arrive there. There are some strange stones in the sky above the Stones and they are silhouetted down to indicate me things.

The Barnhouse settlement is in an area that was called Anterness at one time. The Barnhouse settlement is in an area that was called Anterness at one time.

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Our children and children’s children.

Expressing their souls and understanding of the earth and their place in the sun the moon and the sky.

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There are friendly people everywhere. Make you should go on this tour! Many things have been in this dark and mysterious tunnel that has behind the gateway you will discover.

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In 2015 my best friend’s daughter died. Eight weeks later she visited us in Orkney. Walking round the ring we played some music and had a cry - it was very cathartic. A beautiful setting to remember a beautiful girl.

Me and my auntie were walking down the road near the stones and a big bunch of midges came and started chasing us. I could hear the buzzing above us. It always felt creepy going so close on the road past the Watch Stone.

People got married by clasping hands through the Odin Stone. Then they were married.

There is a legend that, in Orkney, there is a man buried in a gold coffin. On New Year’s Day the Watch Stone bends down to drink. Anybody that’s watching will always fall asleep or be distracted just when it happens. Reminds me of House of the King by Focus!

We celebrated a special birthday at the Ring and the children put a drop of champagne on each stone and some in the very middle - ‘Brodgar’.

Ring of Brodgar, Summer Solstice 2015, 3.30am. Grey dawn, pouring rain, all through the dawn. A hand-fasting ceremony, wonderful, romantic, etc. Stewed the car up on the way home.

Visitors who felt they were so privileged to be at the Ness as it was being discovered.

Ness of Brodgar I remember the first day of the 2015 dig, moving hundreds of tyres. Hot day getting wet from the winter water on the plastic. We came to see the excavations for two or three years before we found it open - excellent.

Standing Stones, moonlit walk and hot chocolate. Call of curlews, geese, silence.

Barnhouse reminds me of a smiley face. A place to walk meditatively - drink cocoa and walk through Northern Lights as the New Year enters.

Comet Stone, where we found a mobile phone signal in 2003 and made an offer for our house.

The stones remind me of my teeth.

Traffic noise intrudes. A lost processional route. If only there were no cars and I could walk and sense the space.

Sounds of the geese on the fields in the distance; a flurry when others fly in to join them.

Brig o’ Waithe ‘When Dunkirk was being evacuated, our servicemen were trying to cross the Channel to Britain. I looked very uncertain. We at home got a letter from Ancient Monuments in Edinburgh about two known in our hill land, asking us not to touch them. Seemed not to be important at that time!

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Maeshowe - I would have always liked to spend the night in there. Jim Knight did for a bet. He said it was fine. An old-fashined small place, could and should.

Maeshowe always reminds of the Winter Solstice seeing the light from the sun come through the door in a truly magical moment.