This is the perfect opportunity to explore Scotland’s Northern Isles on foot and discover their wealth of geological, archaeological, and natural sites in a glorious setting. Their rocks tell the whole story, spanning almost three billion years. Orkney is a place of open skies, rounded hills, beautiful beaches, and well-kept farms. Beneath many of today’s modern farms are the remains of Viking farms and, beneath that, layers of occupation stretching even further back in time. Shetland is an archipelago of islands 100 miles north of the Scottish mainland. It enjoys almost 24 hours of daylight during the summer, which brings a quality of light that is quite unlike anywhere else in Scotland. Both archipelagos also have an amazing wealth of archaeological sites and nature lovers are drawn because of the abundance of wild flowers, birds and marine wildlife.

GROUP SIZE: 10-15 guests

PRICING: $4,995 per person double occupancy / $5,750 single occupancy

STUDY LEADER: DANIEL SMAIL, Frank B. Baird, Jr. Professor of History and Chair of the Department of History. In medieval European history, his work has explored the social and cultural history of the cities of Mediterranean Europe, with a focus on Marseille in the later Middle Ages. He has covered subjects ranging from women and Jews to legal history and spatial imagination, which was the subject of his first book, *Imaginary Cartographies: Possession and Identity in Late Medieval Marseille* (1999). His recently published book, *Legal Plunder: Households and Debt Collection in Late Medieval Europe* (Harvard University Press, 2016), approaches transformations in the material culture of the later Middle Ages using household inventories and inventories of debt recovery from Lucca and Marseille. Smail’s work in deep history and neurohistory has addressed some of the methodological and theoretical underpinnings of these approaches to the human past. His most recent article in this vein asks whether there is a history of the practice of compulsive hoarding. His books include *The Consumption of Justice: Emotions, Publicity, and Legal Culture in Marseille, 1264-1423* (2003); *On Deep History and the Brain* (2008), and, with Andrew Shryock and others, *Deep History: The Architecture of Past and Present* (2011).

Smail has received awards and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, and the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, and his publications have received several prizes. In 2007, he received the Joseph R. Levenson Memorial Teaching Prize from the undergraduates of Harvard University, and, in 2014, the Everett Mendelsohn Excellence in Mentoring Award from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.
SCHEDULE BY DAY
B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23
DEPART U.S.
Depart the U.S. on independent flights to Scotland.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24
ARRIVE ABERDEEN / KIRKWALL
Arrive in Aberdeen today for a 3:00 pm transfer to the ferry terminal where the group will board a ferry to Kirkwall, Orkney.
Enjoy dinner aboard the ferry. Arrive in Kirkwall around 11:00pm and transfer to your hotel.
Overnight: Lynnfield Hotel (D)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25
MAINLAND ORKNEY
Today, visit several important Neolithic sites on mainland Orkney including: The Ring of Brodgar, Ness of Brodgar, Stones of Stenness, and Maeshowe, Britain’s largest chambered cairn. These sites make up the “Heart of Neolithic Orkney,” a UNESCO World Heritage site.
Hiking distance: 5 mi. Height climbed: negligible
Overnight: Lynnfield Hotel (B, L, D)

MONDAY, AUGUST 26
SKARA BRAE / KIRKWALL
Begin the day at Skara Brae, possibly Orkney’s most exciting archaeological site, which was buried by a sandstorm in about 2450BC and revealed by another storm in 1850.
Later, walk south along the Old Red Sandstone coastal cliff scenery, which features geos, natural arches, caves, and sea stacks.
Visit the town of Kirkwall this afternoon to view its Cathedral and palaces.
Hiking distance: 4 mi. Height climbed: negligible
Overnight: Busta House Hotel (B, L, D)

TUESDAY, AUGUST 27
HOY
This morning, take the ferry to Hoy.
Your walk today will bring you to the world famous sea stack known as The Old Man of Hoy, which has attracted generations of climbers, not to mention nesting seabirds.
Dinner tonight will be in the hotel before you board an overnight ferry to Shetland at about 11:00pm.
Hiking distance: 5 mi. Height climbed: 720 ft.
Overnight: Ferry, 2-berth outer cabin (B, L, D)

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28
SOUTH MAINLAND / ISLE OF MOUSA
Disembark the ferry in Lerwick this morning and head south to visit Jarlshof. The site, which was occupied for more than 4,000 years, boasts a remarkable sequence of stone structures: late Neolithic houses, a Bronze Age and an Iron Age village, a Norse longhouse, a medieval farmstead, and a 16th-century laird’s house.
This afternoon, take a boat to the uninhabited island of Mousa. The wildlife here includes harbour and grey seals. The island is also famous for its Iron Age broch, which, at 44 feet, is the world’s tallest and best preserved Pictish broch.
Back on the mainland tonight, travel north to your hotel.
Hiking distance: 4 mi. Height climbed: negligible
Overnight: Busta House Hotel (B, L, D)
THURSDAY, AUGUST 29
FETHALAND / VIKING QUARRY

Begin today in Fethaland, the northernmost part of Shetland’s mainland. Walk to a ruined Haaf (meaning “open sea”) fishing station. From the 15th century until the beginning of the 20th century, extremely brave fishermen ventured out 50 miles into the Atlantic Ocean in open boats to catch ling and cod.

Another place of interest that you will encounter during your walk is a Viking soapstone quarry.

_Hiking distance: 6 mi. Height climbed: 450 ft._

Overnight: _Busta House Hotel (B, L, D)_

FRIDAY, AUGUST 30
UNST

Today, travel via Yell to Unst using two ferries. Unst is one of the North Isles of the Shetland Islands. It consists of a block of oceanic crust thrust that 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 the way, encounter some very interesting botany, a Viking long ship and replica longhouse, and the northernmost cliffs of the British Isles, which are home to some large gannet colonies.

_Hiking distance: 3-6 mi. Height climbed: 330-660 ft._

Overnight: _Busta House Hotel (B, L, D)_

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31
ESHANESS

Today visit the Eshaness peninsula, which tells a fascinating story of a long extinct volcano. The spectacular cliffs you see today are the best section through the flank of a volcano in the British Isles and it is a geological ‘must’. The sea has carved out a dramatic array of stacks, geos, and blowholes.

Another highlight is an active storm beach.

_Hiking distance: 4.5 mi. Height climbed: 200 ft._

Overnight: _Busta House Hotel (B, L, D)_

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1
RONAS HILL / LERWICK

Today, visit Ronas Hill, Shetland’s highest hill (1475 feet) topped by a prehistoric chambered burial cairn. The granite summit has a subarctic climate, with patterns created by freezing and thawing in the stony soils and some rare Arctic/Alpine plants.

Your walk to the top of Ronas Hill starts at 700 feet and offers you 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 you will drive to Lerwick. There you will have free time to explore the town, its shops, and the excellent Shetland Museum & Archives before boarding the overnight ferry to Aberdeen.

_Hiking distance: 5 mi. Height climbed: 800 ft._

Overnight: _Ferry, 2-berth outer cabin (B, L, D)_

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2
ABERDEEN

Arrive in Aberdeen this morning and depart for home. (B)