

Fair Isle South Lighthouse

Light Established

1892

Engineer

David A & Charles Stevenson

Position

Latitude 59° 30.9'N

Longitude 01° 39.0'W

Character

Flashing (4) White every 30 Secs

Elevation

32 metres

Nominal Range

22 miles

Structure

White tower 26 metres high. There are 96 steps to the top of tower.

Fog Horn

Horn (2) every 60 seconds

History

There are two lighthouses on Fair Isle the South (Skaddan) and the North (Skroo). The machinery and equipment at the South Light were almost identical to that at the North Light. A noticeable difference to the visitor, however, is that the height to the light from the ground is 73 feet - another 26 feet of stair-climbing against that required at the North Light. During an air attack in December 1941, the wife of an Assistant Lightkeeper (Mrs Sutherland) was killed and her infant daughter slightly hurt. Six weeks after this the wife and daughter of Principal Lightkeeper (Smith) were killed when a second air attack produced a direct hit on the main dwelling block at 3.45pm on 21 January 1942. Two bombs were dropped in this attack, the first registered a direct hit on the west gable end of the main block of dwelling houses. The main building and spare caught fire and were completely burnt out. Roderick Macaulay, Assistant Lightkeeper, walked 3 miles from the North Lighthouse where he and his daughter had a narrow escape in a former raid. Through snowdrifts and gale force winds he journeyed to lend a hand in restoring the South Light to operational order, and back again in the dark to take his own regular watch; he received the BEM for outstanding services. A plaque in memory of the War dead was erected by the Northern Lighthouse

Board and Scotland's Lighthouse Museum on the boundary wall of the Station in March 1998.

There is no mains electricity supply on Fair Isle apart from a local wind generator and constant running generators were provided in a modernised engine room. These were diesel driven sets of 50 kVA capacity, the prime movers being of Gardner manufacturer. The alternators were "Brushless" from Markon Engineering Ltd, of single phase type. The fog signal used compressed air type where the energy can be stored in the air receivers and quickly expelled to give the character of two blasts of 1.5 seconds duration every 60 seconds. The compressors to supply the necessary air were electrically driven from the main station generators. The fog signal was replaced with an electric emitter type during the automation.

The Keepers left Fair Isle South Lighthouse on the 31 March 1998 for the last time; this was the last Scottish manned lighthouse to be automated.