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Fair Isle Primary School News
Positive Musical Vibes!

We have been looking at the power of music in our Health and Wellbeing lessons this week; how we can use music to make us feel uplifted. The children were set the challenge of producing a “Positive Pickup Playlist” and they certainly did not disappoint! Without further ado, here it is, along with some further written thoughts from the children themselves.

What would you put on your pickup playlist, we wonder?

**FAIR ISLE PRIMARY
SCHOOL
POSITIVE PICK UP**

- Solsbury Hill - Peter Gabriel
- Sledgehammer - Peter Gabriel 
- Material Girl - Madonna
- Shake It Off - Taylor Swift
- Billie Jean - Michael Jackson
- Karma Chameleon - Culture Club
- Africa - Toto
- I Like to Move it, Move It - Madagascar the Movie
- Hips Don't Lie - Shakira
- Down Under - Men at Work 



Khalicee's Choice

I like Taylor Swift because she has a good voice and I think she is cheerful.

Ander's Choice

I chose Billie Jean because it makes me feel much better if I am sad. Also, I just like Michael Jackson

because he is a really great singer. And if it pops up on the radio, I shout a big “yaay” in my head. Music is very powerful and it can turn a frown upside down.

Luca’s Choice

In our Health & Wellbeing lessons, we have been looking at how music can be powerful, change your mood and make you feel positive.

I chose Sledgehammer by Peter Gabriel because it is an all-time classic. I really like the song because it is upbeat, it has great lyrics and a good rhythm, it also makes me feel cheerful.

I also put Hips Don’t Lie on the playlist because when I was in my mum’s tummy, she listened to it and I started to dance and kick her tummy. When you listen to it, it’s impossible for your hips not to move.

Beach Clean

As part of the school’s commitment to take responsibility for and clean Muckle Uri Geo four times a year, we will be heading down with Ranger Carla this coming **Monday 18th May** and will commence cleaning at **9:45am**. All community members are most welcome to join us to spur the children on in their beach cleaning efforts.



SESSIONS & SAIL

Sessions and Sail

North Isles tour 2026

The tall ship Lady of Avenel and her musical crew, led by wir ain Barry Nisbet, will be plundering the harbours of Orkney and Shetland this summer — catch them at one of these ports if you dare!

May 22-24: Stromness (Orkney Folk Festival)	June 19: Skerries Hall
May 25: Pierowall Hotel, Westray	June 20: Lerwick Boating Club
May 27: Fair Isle	June 21: Vidlin Hall
May 29: Lerwick	June 23: Cullivoe Hall and Pier
June 15: Waas Sailing Club	June 24: North Roe Hall
June 18: Baltasound Hall	June 27: Scalloway
	June 28: departure for Mallaig

Sessions and Sail run open sessions; so bring along your fiddle, accordion, moothie, voice or dancin shoes, and join wis for some fine tunes!

Come and join the Sessions and Sail tour when they visit the isle on Wednesday 27th May.

The crew and musicians on-board will be stopping at the isle for an evening of music, song and folktales. All very welcome to join at Kenny’s Bar in the Obs. Bar will be open from 6pm

Bring your instruments to join in a session or simply come along and enjoy the atmosphere. All very welcome

Inspired by Eve Eunson's article last week on salvage and the past time of going down the banks, Jimmy has contributed this piece on the goings-on in the isle over 40 years ago

1983 was, apart from the pit-props (*Editor: a large number of pit-props washed ashore, which were keenly collected and used by islanders for many years – some are still going strong!*) a very interesting year on the Isle.

It was the first year that the hill lambs were divided 'equally' rather than having been earmarked, as was the custom. Times were changing, and the young men had to be working to earn a living, rather than running over the hill ear marking mostly other peoples' lambs.

It was the year that Sue and John Holloway gave up the shop and left the Isle, being replaced as shopkeepers by Cathy and Nigel Hallet, who later moved to Schoolton. Cathy and Nigel were an integral part of Fair Isle Crafts, which, in that year, *'continued to thrive, with most households contributing, in one way or another'*.

Also, the houses at the North Light were to be demolished, and the block of two 'sheltered' houses at Aesterhoull were completed. Perhaps the SIC did not know that three houses were available north by, however they could not have called them sheltered!

In February of that year, the very same Nick Riddiford, who later, along with Elizabeth were the wardens of the Bird Observatory, completed a very successful lecture tour of the NE United States. The tour was successful in itself and in the subsequent visitor numbers at the Observatory.

1983 was the first full year of an aero-generator on the Isle, on the top of The Houll. The report states that *'the smooth and efficient operation of the system is largely due to the skill and dedication of Barry Sinclair'*. Also in '83, Fair Isle was assessed for the award of a European Diploma, which became a fairly prestigious fact in 1985. At that time there had been 60 applications, of which 20 were awarded, only 3 of those being in the UK. So we were quite rightly proud of the recognition, especially as we were not required to change our way of life in any way.

The year '83 also brought the plan for our breakwater and the present Good Shepherd nearer reality, the breakwater at an estimated cost of £2.25 million. Ironically, Scotland's first elected SNP, Winnie Ewing, visited the Isle on different occasions, and fought fiercely on our behalf for the provision of a breakwater. I remember standing on Bunes years before with our MP Jo Grimond, discussing where a breakwater would best be built, but at that time our ambitions were aimed a bit higher than the reality!

1983 was also the year that Andrew Stout left the ferry, when they went from Setter to live on Mainland Shetland. Fortunately, after I became skipper of the new ferry, he returned to help on various occasions. Coinciding with Andrew leaving, that year was the first of many for Neil Thomson in the job. The wages for the job at that time were a little over £4000 per year, but there were no Thursday sailings at that time.

Looking back one hundred years to 1883, I read that sheep were put on the Sheep Rock on the sixth of June, for grazing! Two years later in 1885, the Rocket Station on Tirriefield was completed, but its use was discontinued one year later. In the Second World War, the German air-force dropped two bombs which narrowly missed the derelict building which surely they had been advised was for storage of rockets, which would translate to ammunition!

Jimmy, at Skerryholm

Da week dat's awa at Shirva

Thursday was an important day, being Grace's birthday (there's a lot you could say about the elections, but not as nice, so I shan't). Although she wasn't home we managed a few chats during the day – luckily exams fell on the previous two days, so it was a more relaxed revision day with the bonus of getting to choose hostel supper. Otherwise much of the morning was spent on the quarterly VAT return submission for work; whilst I remain in awe of anyone who makes a living as an accountant it felt very positive to discover I do finally understand the VAT scheme we fall under after a year of working with it. Living on Fair Isle often means taking on roles and tasks that you didn't originally envisage would be part of your life (writing a modern slavery policy declaration was also an unexpected part of this week's paperwork). It might not always feel like a fun challenge at the time, but it's good to still have an opportunity to keep learning.

In the afternoon I get a catch-up phone call from my mentor on the Methodist Local Preacher training course. Fortunately I have managed to submit some work since we last spoke, so I don't feel too guilty when the phone rings, and it's mostly a nice chat about chapel here and on Unst.

The weekend is full of contrasts. Saturday is gloriously sunny and although a good chunk of the morning is spent catching up on tour admin, ahead of our first Shetland tour starting on Sunday, I make it out into the kailyard eventually and get underway with planting tatties and onions. There's still a way to go and everything is late, but with a week of northerly airflows ahead, it's perhaps not too bad to be a bit behind. Dinner is a very yummy steak pie from the shop (thanks Robert) and fried potatoes. We're just at the end of last year's tattie crop and David has taken the time to peel all the little leftover ones, so there's enough for one last meal. I have an Indian recipe for curried 'marble' potatoes so we can't be the only ones to use even the little ones, but I suspect in a drier climate it's a bit easier to clean the soil off than having to go through peeling them all.

Sunday, we finally make it to chapel for a service – probably the first since the New Year with the heating system challenges, stormy weather and bugs that have been doing the rounds, meaning we've mostly been meeting in various homes in the meantime. It's lovely to see the clusters of violets on the path up to chapel and a few spring squill buds just starting. With so much time away, we opt for lots of singing, with everyone picking a favourite hymn. One of the things I love most about Fair Isle is how inclusive music is here – I remember early on Lise trying to get me to join choir and me explaining I couldn't sing, to which she replied 'Nonsense, everyone can sing!'. Her faith may have been greater than my ability, but her encouragement still has me singing.

The early promise of Sunday is somewhat shattered by a message from David that he needs help with one of the ewes still hanging on in the lambing park. Instead of going on a day of sunshine, she's waited until the sleety showers of Sunday afternoon and as it's her first year lambing she's quite confused by the concept of a lamb. The result is a really skittish Shetland ewe it takes ages to get in and a very cold lamb. Warming such a shivery lamb without a heat lamp consists of sitting on the floor next to the kitchen radiator with the lamb tucked up under my jumper whilst it wees on me repeatedly. Happily in the end it's warm enough to feed and go back in the byre, but David lands the short end of the stick, cleaning the ewe's claggy back end to make it easier for the lamb to latch on.

With improving weather on Monday, Grace makes it home after her last exam, bringing a Chinese takeaway with her too. For those who may be asking, having Grace home is definitely the best bit, but the takeaway was a nice bonus! The Shepherd makes a Lerwick run, coming back with a very full boat, including our first gas bottle purchase for a few months, which meant we got to see just how much gas prices have increased, and some just in time Lamlac for the lambs. There's always a point where the lambs really kick up a gear in terms of feed and you suddenly discover there's a lot less Lamlac left than you thought!

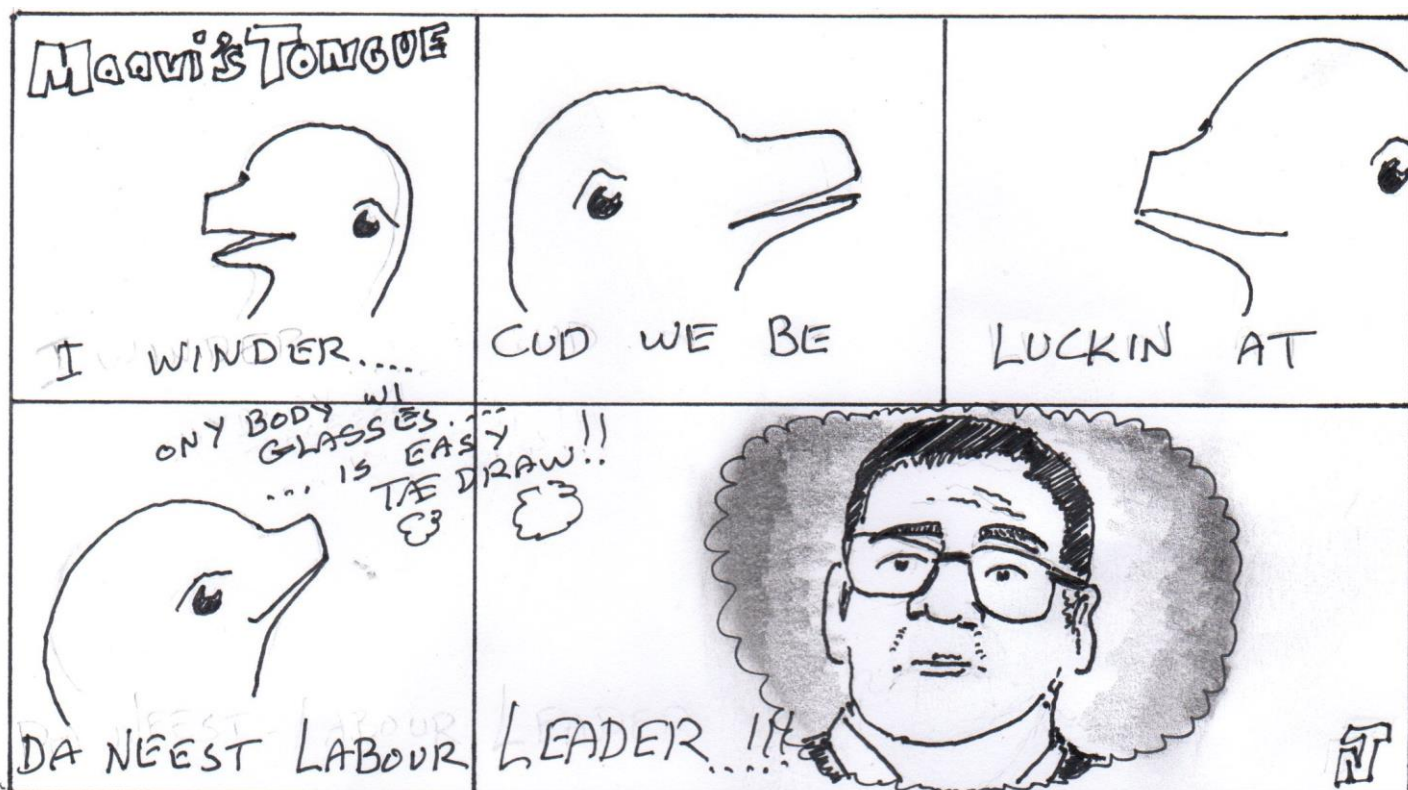
We designate Tuesday as Grace's birthday, with cake and presents in the evening. Birthday dinner in our house is usually a mix of all your favourite things, providing an opportunity to put together all sorts of flavour combinations (is there anything that isn't improved by dulce de leche?). It's then back to work on Wednesday and we get a visit from Konrad delivering heating oil, which should hopefully see us through a good chunk of the summer. I find a bit of time to get the kefir grains I ordered underway. I first tried to start making it over Christmas, but didn't manage to keep up with the changeovers and gave up. I thought I'd try again now the house is a bit warmer. We have a bit of family history with kefir – trying to clean a tub of kefir from behind the radiator we'd knocked it down in a Norwegian holiday cottage is probably not one of my parent's favourite holiday memories! I'm still not 100% confident about fermenting stuff, so we'll see how this goes – but if I know anyone who's super into fermenting, do get in touch with advice.

Susannah at Shirva

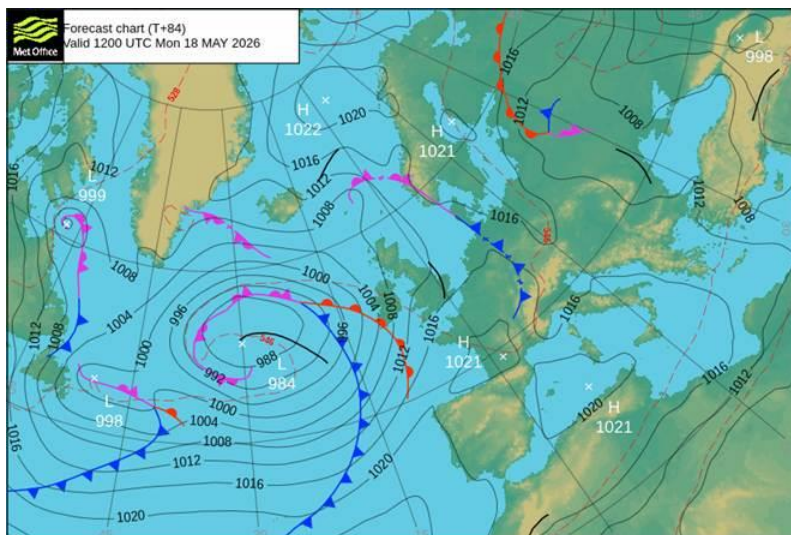
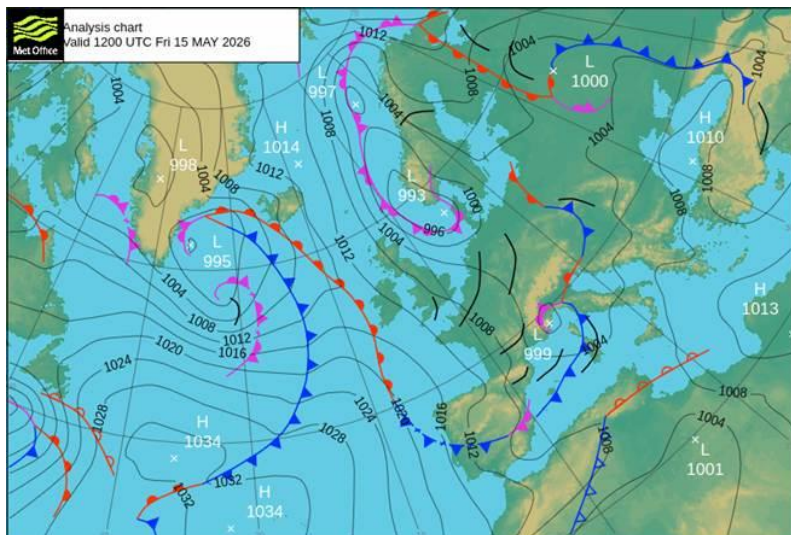
Cruise ship visits this week – After a disappointing start to our cruise season, we are hoping the wind currently rattling the house will die down for this weekend's visits. As ever this is weather permitting but hopefully the ships will manage to get folk ashore and the Hall and Museum will be open for all guests plus isle folk and visitors too:

16/05/26	Saturday AM	Sea Spirit	Hall & Museum open 9.00-11.00am
17/05/26	Sunday AM	Greg Mortimer	Hall & Museum open 9.30-11.30am
19/05/26	Tuesday AM	Greg Mortimer	Hall & Museum open 9.30-11.30am
20/05/26	Wednesday AM	Sea Spirit	Hall & Museum open 9.30-11.30am

No Chapel this weekend due to a cruise ship call at the same time. The chapel rafters were surely lifted by all the singing last week after a prolonged absence, here's to more Sundays like that!



Forecast on the next page... Keep reading!



FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST

GENERAL SITUATION

Friday 15th May 2026

With trough of low pressure east of Shetland a fresh showery north-westerly airflow persists. This will ease and veer northerly before falling light as the trough fills. Early next week a milder south to south-easterly develops ahead of fronts pushed towards the British Isle by a mid-Atlantic depression. Currently it appears fronts are likely to be held out to the west for a time as pressure builds across southern Scandinavia maintaining a relatively mild freshening southerly airflow as fronts draw closer.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Temperatures 10° or 11° by day 4° or 5° overnight.

FRIDAY 15th: Cloudy with showers these becoming fewer as F5 occasionally F6 NW winds slowly ease F5. Mostly cloudy overnight with scattered showers. **Sea State:** Rough at NW 4 metre.

SATURDAY 16th: Mostly dry with sunny spells. A F5 NW breeze easing F4 later.

Sea State: Easing moderate at N 2 metre.

SUNDAY 17th: Mostly cloudy. Dry at first with chance of patchy rain or drizzle later. A F2-3 SW wind backing SSE. **Sea State:** Mostly moderate at W2 metre.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK

MONDAY 18th: Rather cloudy with occasional showers. Feeling warmer with a moderate S breeze.

Sea State: Moderate at W 2 metre. East of Shetland moderate at SE 2 metre.

TUESDAY 19th: Cloudy with outbreaks of rain. A fresh SE wind. **Sea State:** Moderate at SE 2 metre.

WEDNESDAY 20th – SUNDAY 24th: Wednesday and Thursday drier and brighter with scattered showers with a moderate S wind. The latter part of the week rather cloudy with chance of rain or scattered showers and a fresh SSE breeze occasionally strong later. **Sea State Wednesday:** Moderate at S 2 metre.

Dave Wheeler