

FAIR ISLE TIMES

VOLUME 49 ISSUE 23

PUBLISHED SINCE 1978

11th SEPTEMBER 2026

Fair Isle Primary School News

The Kirk Time Capsule Project

We were very excited to receive a message from Marie and the stonemason working on the Kirk, Magnus, inviting us to take part in a time capsule project. For those of you wondering what that is, a time capsule is something you bury (in this case hide in the stone pillars in the wall at the entrance of the Kirk) for people to find in centuries to come. We visited the Kirk and Magnus told us all about it, including how it should be stored in plastic, as metal would rust.

The idea is that we will take the time capsule down to the Kirk on Tuesday at 2:00pm where there will be another plastic container for members of the community to put things into if they would like. It would be the size of an ice-cream tub so small but meaningful items. Folk are welcome to join us there or drop items off at school for us to transport down.

After spending some time thinking about what the world may look like in the future, we decided people who unearthed the capsule should know about our lives today. Here are our own information cards for people to look at in years to come. We think they are very creative.



My house:
I live in
Nedder
Taft in
Fair
Isle.
My
name
teddy I
am 11.



My Favourite
online game is
Minecraft.

My favourite toy
is Lego and Sealy
Seal and Bunty
the Dachshund.

I also like
Monopoly.



Life on Fair
Isle
✓ Lots of
sheep
✓ Putting
creels in
the
water
✓ Class
with 5
other
children.

My prediction for the
future:

- ✓ There will be no
sheep
- ✓ more A.I
(Artificial
Intelligence)
- ✓ More robots
- ✓ The Good
Shepherd XXV will
be taking
passengers from
Fair Isle.

My favourite
Place in school is
The STEM room:
S=science
T =technology
E=engineering
m=mathematics
I also like hall and
playground.



me!
Ander Ag08.



I would like to be a pilot when I am older.



my favourite place in the school is the S.T.E.M.

Science
Technology
Engineering
Maths

my house is



Houll.



Life in Fair Isle

- There are 50 people in Fair Isle.
- There are 6 children in the school
- There is one nurse serving the island

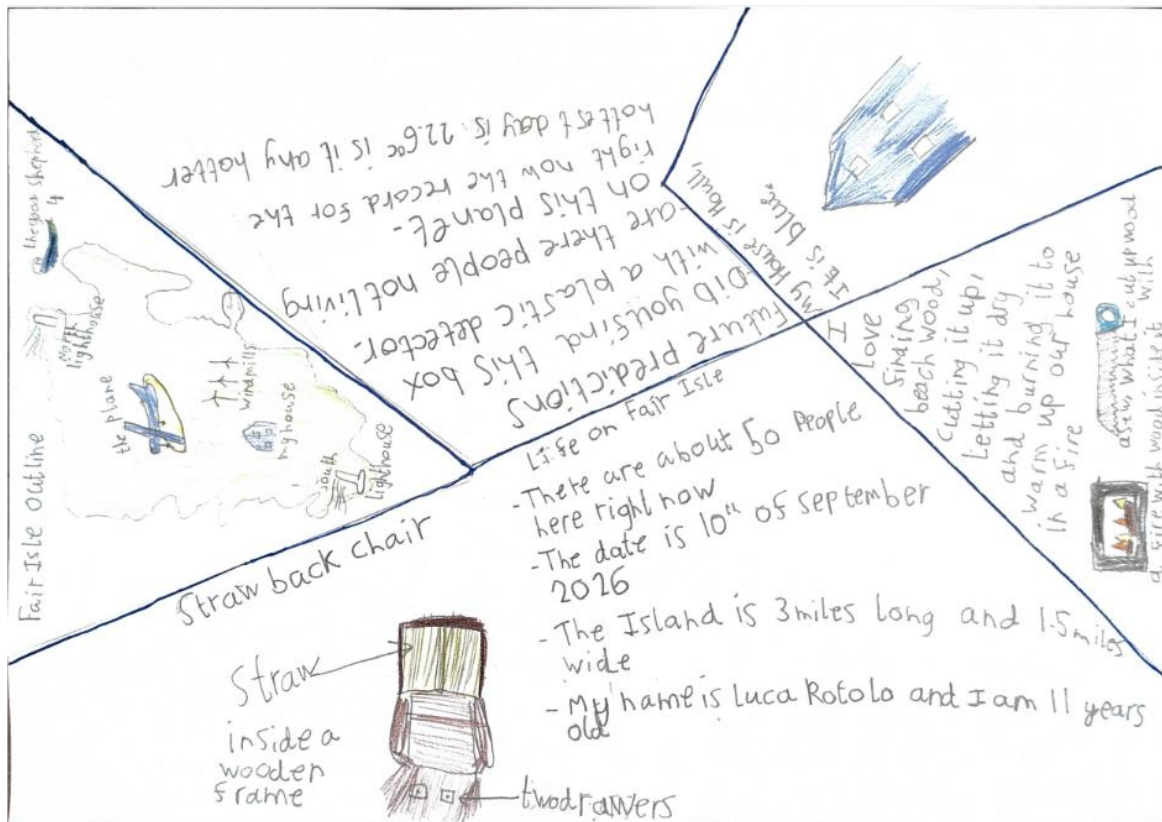
My prediction for the future is that everyone will wear glasses.

Life in Fair Isle:
The children are safe to go all over the island and it is lovely.

My prediction for the future is there will be no clocks.

Life in Fair Isle:
I love having lots of play dates. I feel safe here.





Also...

We had some very important visitors, who came to our school this week. They loved every minute of their trip and felt very welcomed by the community. A special thanks to the Bird Observatory staff, who went (as they always do) above and beyond in accommodating them and a thank you to all of you who spoke to them. The report will be due in a few weeks but, in the meantime, we can say we are pleased with the outcome.

All the staff and children at Fair Isle Primary School.



Business Opportunity: Stackhoull House & Shop

Stackhoull House and Shop (tied) is currently seeking new owners.

Due to requirements related to the Post Office and licensing, a formal employment process will be followed.

Key Details

- Property Lease: Managed through the National Trust for Scotland.
- Stock & Fittings: A separate negotiation will be made with the present owners, Robert and Fiona Mitchell, for the shop outfitting and stock.
- Application Deadline: 1st October 2026

How to Apply: Interested parties should email their expression of interest to angusmurray@nts.org.uk

Angus N Murray | Operations Manager | Canna, Fair Isle and Shetland

Tel: 07484086809 email: angusmurray@nts.org.uk

CONGRATULATIONS - to Ruth and Iain at Setter on the birth of their grandson Lowrie Brian Stout on 11th September. A first bairn for Daniel & Katie in Stirling.

And HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Ythan of Burkle, 23 on the 11th



CHROMA in Fair Isle

CHROMA's "Shetland Blues" begins in Bigton - back again with our Bigton Collective friends Alice and Jonathan Ritch, who we first met 20 years ago in Unst on "Odysseus Unwound". We work with the young musicians of Bigton, the Shetland Youth Orchestra, and give a concert at Hymhus.

Then Fair Isle – always a delight since 2002 (24 years since "Given Days"!) Wheels down at the Fair Isle airstrip on Monday at 8.30am, with time to settle at Kenaby and Lower Stoneybrek before heading to the Hall in the afternoon to introduce the children to team CHROMA, the week's theme of Blue, with project inspiration Marie explaining how she made her piece of giant knitting "27 Shetland Blues". The children lift it up to feel just how heavy it is, climb under it, then sit on it while we introduce each of our musical instruments: Chihiro's violin, Jo's bassoon, Stuart's clarinet and Jess on piano. After this Marie asks the children to look at her coloured yarn sticks and choose their favourite colours of blue - she reads them the lines of poetry for their chosen colours as written by Joan Lennon on her visits to Fair Isle.

Mornings are for music: Stu starts with a warm up, followed by some music – singing, percussion or playing the tuned bells, then sitting down to the compositions the children are writing based on 12 bar blues. They start with their rhythm section for percussion using graph paper marked up with the different elements of a drumkit. They work to 4

beats split in to 16, using fractions to create simple rhythms, cross rhythms, complex rhythms and syncopation. (The marked-up graph papers look a little like those used to create patterns for Fair Isle knitting.) The next day they work on their basslines, also on squared paper Stu has prepared, and after that they listen back to the percussion and basslines, add some flourishes, make some choices about which instrument should play the bassline and the interjections - the instrument left over plays the melody. Stu is making Dorico files with the children's musical choices and instructions (which beat of the bar the melody starts on, for example) which will become sheet music and a sound file to give the children.

After only 4 days the children have completed their compositions. For the final composition session we sit down to rehearse the new pieces on the instruments, consulting with each young composer regarding what dynamics, speed and colour should be given to their works. Some of the alternatives are quite subtle, but their listening is excellent and they remain engaged through the fine-tuning of each work (2 hours of complete focus!) - equally interested in their classmates' works as their own. They all develop more confidence in their musical instincts and opinions - which is great to see.



Afternoons are for art and craft: exploring blue through watercolours, acrylics and cyanotypes. I start with a tour of "blue places" – the children are particularly interested in the blue decorative tiles of Samarkand and the Silk Road, so we talk about that for a bit. We create watercolour paintings using only the colour blue – working with a palette to create gradients of blue, and building up washes.

I introduce the children to Anna Atkins, pioneer botanical illustrator who used cyanotype to record seaweeds, algae and other botanicals (publishing the first book of photographs in 1843) – we do an experimental round of cyanotypes with found objects and Matisse-inspired cut-outs. The next day we have an open-to-all session at Muckle Urigeo (Jonathan and the school plus Nick, Alice, Katy, Chris, Suzi and Lyn) to forage for items that would make interesting prints, and return to Hall to set our compositions up in the sun. Some very splendid cyanotype results!

We move onto the story of lapis lazuli as a source of the pigment blue and the history of its use in art, with detours to talk about blue squeezed from a special snail and the widely used indigo plant. I give the children gold and turquoise acrylic paint, along with the standard blue watercolour paint - they work out their own techniques (blowing on the paint, moving it about the page, blotting one page over the other etc) that make stunning pieces of art. They are prolific artists – the pieces being laid out to dry rapidly mount up! I watch them take the materials and make inventive and brilliant choices with

confident mark making and good colour intelligence - it fills my heart to see such an abundance of creativity.

Marie comes back on Thursday to start the giant knitting of a single Fair Isle motif with the children with giant “yarn” she’s made on her knitting machine and giant knitting needles crafted by Ian. She sets Teddy and Luca maths to solve – how much length of yarn required according to stitch quantities needed (graph paper out!) while Ander, Hetty and Khalicee start on yarn rolling and knitting. They take it in turns to knit, with those not knitting coming back to the paint to make more artworks. The piece is finished off on Friday and it looks amazing.



Marie and Ian install it on the wall of the Hall where it is joined by an exhibition of the children’s artworks and the cyanotypes made during the week. I install this during the open-to-all music rehearsal aka the inaugural session of the new International Fair Isle Choir – Pat, Eileen, Grace, Abby and Phil. Neil joins us on guitar and after some harmonising fun with Summertime, they rehearse up Moon River ready to perform at the concert later.

Then its concert time and the world premieres of our young composers’ 12 bar blues pieces. We play them to a packed hall, and they take their bows to great applause. After progressing through blues, jazz and some classical pieces on a theme of blue we come to the choral highlight – Moon River sung beautifully, not sounding at all like we’d just pulled it together that afternoon, but rather as if we’ve performed it together many times!



For New Orleans Funk Stu divides the audience into three percussion sections, with Luca and Khalicee leading “boots and cats”, Teddy and Hetty leading “boom boom boom chikkie chikkie” and Ander leading “donkey donkey kong” (they’ve been using these percussion riffs for warm ups in the week). Together these create the percussion break in New Orleans Funk, and everyone gets into the groove with such gusto that they continue when the band come back in, right to the end. To use Ian’s word – it was GLEEFULL.

Another incredible week of music, art, craft, gastronomy, friendship and joy.

(and plenty of ideas and requests coming in from you for themes and content for the next one!)

Huge thank yous to:

Marie for the inspiration and the giant knitting; Eileen for all the organising and hospitality (Pavlovextravaganza!); our generous hosts Ian, Pat and Neil; Jonathan for allowing us to fill the school week with music, art and random bits of history and maths; the schoolchildren for being so quick on all the uptakes and generally brilliant; the community of Fair Isle and all the visitors who joined us, made cyanotypes, came along to the concert, percussed impressively and increased the fun!

For more photos (and videos of Moon River and the New Orleans Funk percussion break) see the Shetland Blues blog on CHROMA website:

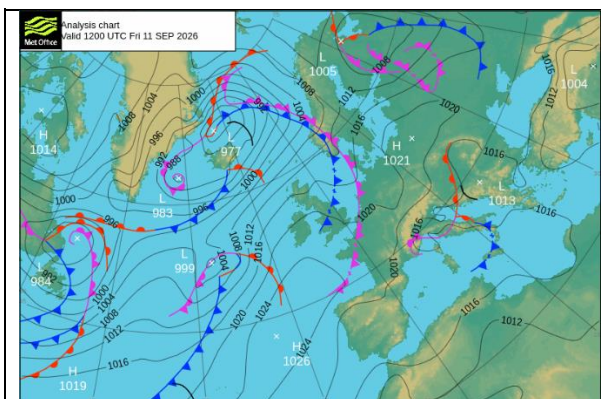
www.chromaensemble.co.uk/shetland-blues-blog

Claire Shovelton, Creative Producer CHROMA

ISLE NOTICES

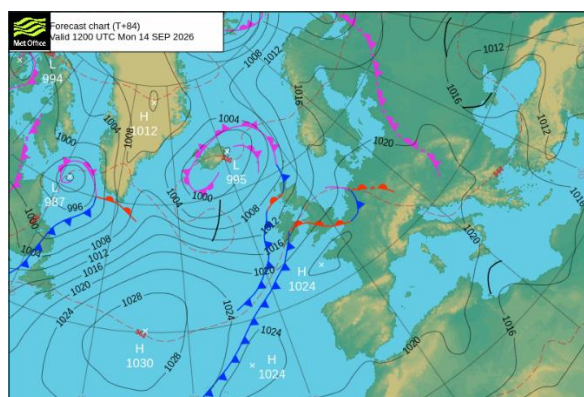
- **Chapel** this Sunday at 11am – all welcome. Dave B will be leading
- **Fair Isle Committee Quarterly Meeting & EGM of FIDC.** 7.15pm on Monday 14th September in the committee room. All island committee members and FIDC members welcome
- **NTS property Fire Extinguishers** – have been checked by the engineer, please collect from the Hall porch and take home.
- **Harvest 2026** – we plan to hold the Harvest festival on **Sunday 26th September at 3.30pm-5.30pm** in the Hall. Please take any home produce and crafts for display to the Chapel at 2pm on Saturday 25th and all other raffle prizes etc to the Hall on Sunday afternoon - thank you in advance! We'd love to see some lovely arts and crafts for prizes for the raffle from you talented folk ☺ Get in touch if you have prizes and/or produce to donate and if you would like to help with the Sunday teas. As usual we will donate half of the funds raised to the Goodwill Children's Village in India, with the other half going to a different good cause – any suggestions to Eileen please. The Fair Isle folk and visitors frequently raise hundreds of pounds for charity on this special and fun day. Any questions please get in touch with me. Thanks, Eileen

FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



Analysis Chart 1200 UTC

Friday 11th September 2026



Forecast Chart 1200 UTC

Monday 14th September 2026

GENERAL SITUATION Friday 11th September 2026

A spell of wet and windy weather on Saturday as an Atlantic depression runs quickly northeast past western Scotland. A ridge of high pressure moving west to east across the UK brings a better day on Sunday. A developing wave low on a trailing front then runs quickly northeast across Scotland then brings further unsettled weather for Monday. This clears to a blustery and showery north-westerly by Tuesday. A brief quieter interlude Wednesday then further unsettled conditions quickly follow for the end of the week as a deep depression tracks east south of Iceland.

OUTLOOK FOR TODAY AND THE WEEKEND Temperatures 13° or 14° by day, 10° or 11° overnight.

SATURDAY 12th: The morning wet and windy with rain with heavy at times and F6-7 S winds. A brighter showery afternoon as F6 winds veer SW, then W and later NW F5-6. Drier overnight as winds back F4-5 W. Sea State: Rough at SW 3 to 4 metre. East of Shetland moderate or rough at 2 to 3 metre. **SUNDAY 13th:** Bright and mainly dry with F3-4 W winds backing SSW F2-3. Cloud thickening overnight as S winds freshen with rain soon arriving. Sea State: Moderate or rough at W 2 to 3 metre.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK Temperatures 12° or 13° by day, 10° or 11° overnight.

MONDAY 14th: Cloudy with rain and mist. Fresh or strong SSW winds. Rain turning lighter during the evening as winds ease. Sea State: Moderate at W 2 metre. **TUESDAY 15th:** A cloudy day with rain or showers and fresh NW winds. Sea

State: Moderate at W 2 metre. **WEDNESDAY 16th – SUNDAY 20th:** Wednesday cloudy with scattered showers and moderate SW winds freshening later. Strong WSW winds and showers overnight. Thursday windy with rain or showers and strong SW winds. The week perhaps ends with showers and easing NW winds. Sea State Wednesday: Rough at W 3 metre. East of Shetland moderate at 2 metre

Dave Wheeler

