

TIMELINE

How this music came from Trevor's piano to Carol's dulcimer

The Scotland Connection...

1949

Trevor Morrison, a 10-year-old piano student, learns St. Kildan songs from his piano teacher at his school in the Isle of Bute.



2005

Stuart McKenzie, an IT consultant and volunteer who helps residents of Edinburgh care homes learn how to use computers, meets and works with Trevor Morrison, now a 66-year-old resident of Silverlea Care Home. Trevor now rarely plays the piano due to his failing health, but asks, "Can these things record music? I've some melodies I'd like to get down."



2006

Stuart records Trevor playing four of the songs he could remember on the home's "dodgy" piano, and turns the songs into a CD for Trevor's friends.

2008

Stuart tries to find a wider audience for the recordings and asks a friend, Alan McCusker-Thompson, to help. Alan has connections with the music industry and brings an electronic piano into the home to rerecord the melodies from the original piano. By then Trevor has remembered another four songs.



2010

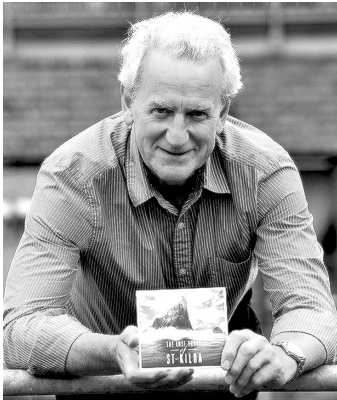
Alan seeks funding to create an album with new rearrangements by the Cairn String Quartet.

2012

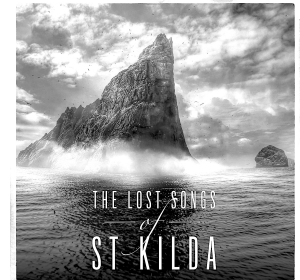
Trevor contracts pneumonia, and passes away. His tunes are played at his funeral. Sadly, work on the Cairn project ends.

2016

Fiona Pope, the cellist in the Cairn String Quartet, happens to get a job at Decca Records UK in their Artists & Repertoire Department, where she tells them about Trevor and his Kildan music. Decca is intrigued and commissions several well-known composers to orchestrate Trevor's piano renditions, and later that same year, a CD is released: *The Lost Songs of St. Kilda*, which includes Trevor's recordings along with the commissioned arrangements, performed by the Scottish Festival Orchestra, conducted by Sir James MacMillan. Stuart is recruited



by Decca as the main publicist for the album and appears in newspapers, radio, and a live TV feature. The album quickly rises to the top of the classical music charts, becomes an "Album of the Year" at a UK national classical music station, and is now listed as the UK's fastest selling posthumous debut album in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. An Edinburgh bookshop asks Stuart to present the story at a promotional event. This has now been developed and shared with many other groups of interested people.



The Oregon Connection...

2006 (the same year Stuart made Trevor's first CD)

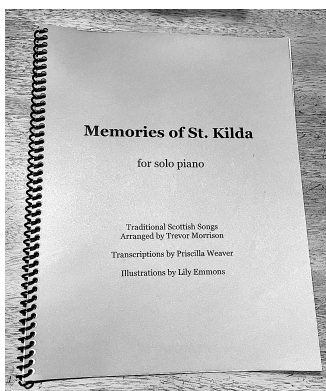
Priscilla Weaver and her husband begin their retirement project in southern Oregon breeding Soay sheep descended from the ancient flocks indigenous to St. Kilda.



2016

A friend of Priscilla's, Ida Mercer, a cellist from Ohio, who has joined Priscilla to assist during lambing seasons, sends Priscilla an article from a BBC music magazine that tells about the Decca release.

Priscilla, who also happens to have a degree in piano performance and a master's degree in musicology, is astounded by the serendipitous connection of both her music and her sheep, and goes on a quest to find piano sheet music of Trevor's recordings.



2020

Priscilla finds no such sheet music and decides to create her own, producing *Memories of St. Kilda*, a transcription of Trevor's arrangements.

Priscilla's book may be purchased here:
Priscilla@saltmarshranch.com

Meanwhile, back in Scotland...

2020

One of the people in Edinburgh who purchased Priscilla's book happens to be good friends with Stuart McKenzie (six degrees of separation is *real!*) and tells him about the new piano book. Until that moment, Stuart had no idea that anyone had made any piano transcriptions of the recordings. Priscilla and Stuart soon "meet" each other during a Zoom session, and have a fine chat about Stuart's recordings of Trevor's music. They both subsequently realize that an additional melody has been overlooked by Stuart on his initial recording session with Trevor. Priscilla transcribes that additional melody (which they name "Memories"), and quickly releases a new edition of her book with the new song included, totaling nine transcriptions.

The New Jersey connection...



2020

Terry White, of central Massachusetts, attends a gathering of a group of New England mountain dulcimer players where they play a song titled "St. Kilda Lullaby." Terry loves the music and wants to learn more about St. Kilda. Her Google searches reveal both the Decca album and Priscilla's recently released book. Terry, also a pianist, purchases both.

2021 (August)

Terry takes Priscilla's book to a Vermont dulcimer festival to show to Carol Walker of northern New Jersey, a well-known dulcimer arranger, who plays through them on the piano at the ski lodge where they are staying. Carol agrees with Terry that these songs need to be shared with the dulcimer world, and begins noodling with the tunes on her dulcimer.

2021 (November)

Carol emails Priscilla to inquire about the possibility of using Priscilla's book as the foundation for a book of dulcimer arrangements. Priscilla responds immediately with great enthusiasm and suggests also contacting Stuart.

2022 (February)

A three-way Zoom session is initiated by Carol, and all three share their personal stories and talk about the new dulcimer project. Carol plays a rough draft of her first arrangement, "Dùn;" Priscilla and Stuart are both very pleased about this new outlet that will preserve Trevor's music.



2022 (April)

Stuart presents his St. Kilda program for a Zoom meeting of 200 participants organized by Carol. Included is Priscilla's role in the story, and Carol premieres three of her finished arrangements.

2022 (August)

Carol's new dulcimer book and CD, *Melodies of St. Kilda*, are released.

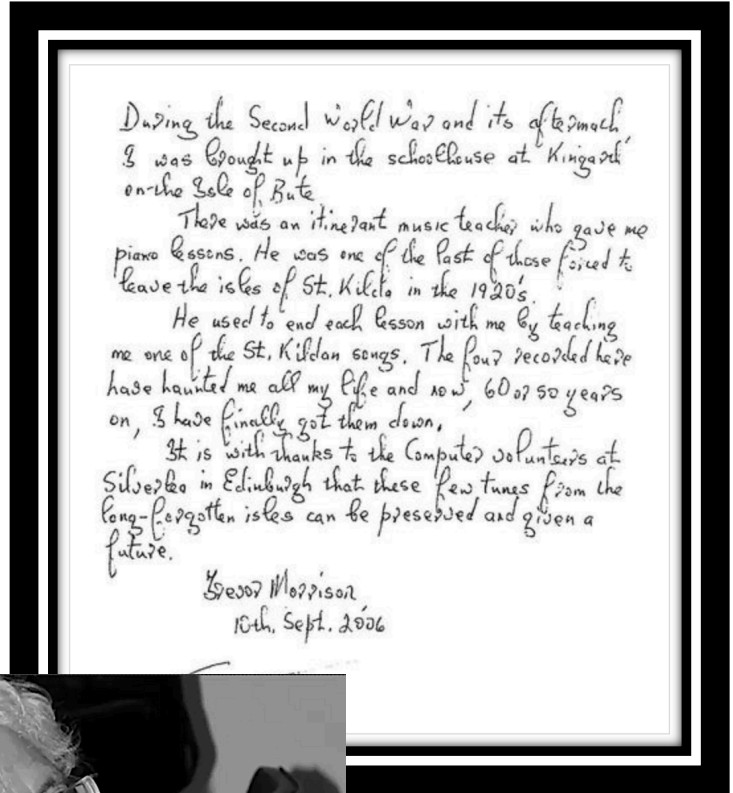
On September 6, 2006, Trevor wrote this thank you note to Stuart:

“During the Second World War and its aftermath, I was brought up in the schoolhouse at Kingarth on the Isle of Bute.

There was an itinerant music teacher who gave me piano lessons. He was one of the last of those forced to leave the isles of St. Kilda in the 1920’s.

He used to end each lesson with me by teaching me one of the St. Kildan songs. The four recorded have haunted me all my life and now, 60 or so years on, I have finally got them down.

It is with thanks to the computer volunteers at Silverlea in Edinburgh that these few tunes from the long-forgotten isles can be preserved and given a future.”



I humbly take my place in this incredible musical journey that began 73 years ago. I sincerely hope this endeavor is yet another path down which others will carry on Trevor’s legacy.

But wait! There’s more — LOTS more!!
To fill in the rest of the details of this amazing story, I hope you will take some time to visit this website set up by Stuart McKenzie: www.melodiesofstkilda.co.uk

Make a cup of tea and get cozy -- you’ll want to tarry awhile...