

# Eòlas Chanaigh - A Canna Experience

September 20<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> 2014

*A once in a lifetime chance to immerse yourself in the priceless Canna Archives...*



Ever fancied learning a new skill, either for fun or seriously, but have a holiday at the same time? If so, why not give the Gaelic Language or Gaelic Song a go for 2014? Fiona will be running her 5th Annual course of both subjects this year and this September. It will be held on the beautiful island of Canna in the Hebrides.

Designed to give you an all-round “experience of Canna”, this totally unique course will help you to find out what it is that makes Canna so special and different to other Hebridean Islands. This will be a very special inaugural course, focussing on both the Gaelic Songs and Folklore collected by American Folklorist and Photographer Margaret Fay Shaw, as well as the Gaelic language indigenous to Canna. This is a unique opportunity to have an insight into Margaret’s life, both on South Uist (where she collected the songs in the 1930’s) and on Canna itself. Margaret left a huge and completely unique legacy of songs and folklore for the world, capturing a disappearing lifestyle in both visual images and in the treasury of beautiful and haunting South Uist songs. This course gives students exclusive access to the Canna Archives and also to the immense and passionate knowledge of Canna House archivist Magda Zagarzazu, lifelong friend and companion to Margaret Fay Shaw. What was it that inspired Margaret Fay Shaw to undertake her life’s work on Canna? You will discover the importance of her work and why it is important to continue that work, not just for Gaelic but for all threatened folklore traditions in the World.

Fiona will lead students through many of the songs taken from Margaret Fay Shaw’s collection, both published songs and songs hitherto unpublished.

An intrinsic part of this course will be the opportunity to also learn Gaelic, through the revolutionary Ulpan method, delivered by well-known tutor Rhoda Meek. Gaelic was at the heart of traditional Canna life until not that long ago and learning the language in the shadow of the cliffs of Rum is an ideal way to feel part of that culture and increase understanding of that way of life.

Lessons in either Song or Language (or both) are individually tailored so if you have a particular reason for wanting to study eg for a Mod or an exam, then we can work your course around that.

This year there is also the chance to undertake a more relaxed few sessions of drama/Storytelling, based on stories of the island and environment, by dramatist Colin Irvine.

The course activities also include an exclusive tour of Canna House, a conservation tour of the island, a Gaelic medium BBQ (weather permitting). The course will conclude with a ceilidh where you can sing the songs you have learned. Please bring your talents!

The course is full board with boutique accommodation in the historic Tighard guest House, situated high above Canna House, meals included for 4 nights in the Canna Cafe, views that take your breath away and lessons in Margaret Fay Shaw's drawing room - what more could you ask for.

Now owned by the National Trust for Scotland, Canna is a small, captivating green island, close to the other Small Isles of Rum, Eigg and Muck and is reachable from Mallaig by CalMac ferries throughout the week, with an easy journey of around 3 hours. The island has an abundant richness of wildlife, birds and places of ancient, exciting archaeological interest. Do not be surprised to see a school of dolphins passing by or even a basking shark in the bay...

Places are extremely limited due to accommodation being in short supply (6 places only) so if you would like more information on how to secure your place, email at the address here. Please note that it will be necessary to share a twin room (same sex or a couple) at the guest house. Camping may also be available with food available at the café. Self-catering accommodation may also be available if you prefer and details of this can be supplied - you will need to book these directly yourself. In this case, you will therefore only pay for the course Please be aware that there is no shop on Canna and so everything you need for the duration of the course, must be brought with you, although it is possible to phone the shop in Mallaig with an order and they will put it on the next ferry for you.

### **Timetable (all activities may be altered to suit weather etc)**

**Saturday 20 Sept** Arrive morning ferry from Mallaig, 1000

Afternoon-Private tour of Canna House.

1700-1830- Song/Language Class

**Sunday 21 Sept** – Conservation and environmental tours. Free time.

1700-1830- Song/Language class

**Monday 22 Sept** – 1000-1300 Song/Language classes

1300-1530. Free time/Gaelic medium picnic lunch at Corraghan Bay, weather permitting

1530-1730 Song/Language class.

Gaelic BBQ

**Tuesday 23 Sept** - 1000-1300 Song/Language classes

1300-1530. Free time

1530-1730 Song/Language class.

Ceilidh

**Wednesday 24 Sept** - 1000 – 1230 Song/Language class

Depart Canna 1500 ferry – Arrive Mallaig 1725

**Cost - £680**