

The Shapinsay Sound



LOCAL

The newsletter for the island of Shapinsay produced by the Shapinsay Development Trust.
Registered Charity Number: S0034818; Registered Company Number: SC255127.

Contact Information : Email: SDTOffice@shapinsay.org.uk

Telephone: 01856 711733.



At the time of writing we are busy preparing for the last few days of term. The tree lights have been switched on by Erin, Charlotte and Lisa and all the children performed at the tree lighting. We hope everyone enjoyed the singing! Some of the children sang and played at the Kirk on the 17th, and we hope you enjoyed that too.

By the time you read this we will have had our Christmas Lunch and had our end of term special Assembly for Christmas. This year **P4 - 7** will be telling the Christmas story and **P1 - 3** are telling the story of Diwali. We have been learning about different festivals of lights this term (Christmas, Diwali and Hannukah) and thinking about the similarities and differences between them. We've even made and tasted different foods for each festival. The school is looking very bonny with different decorations. The Nursery children made a tree using milk bottle tops and we have made bunting from old Christmas cards.

From January to March Anita Angier will only be in our school for 2 days a week as she will be working with all primary schools in Orkney to develop the teaching of Languages across the authority. Anita has already done a lot of work with regard to Languages teaching in Shapinsay, and we would like to wish her all the best for the next term as she works across schools. This will also help to further our own School improvement target of improving language teaching further.

Leanne Bews and the sports committee have been continuing to work on our target of reaching the Gold Award with Sports Scotland and are now collecting all the evidence we will need when we are assessed. Emma and Anita are part of a small group improving Science teaching in Orkney, and we have been attending training to disseminate to staff in other schools.

Next term the **P4 - 7** children will be learning about World War Two. If anyone has memories from this time, or anything else that they think might help us with the learning please get in touch with the school. **P1 - 3** will be learning about Castles and Dragons, tying in with Balfour Castle and David Balfour as part of the learning. The Nursery children will be learning about traditional stories and fairytales.

We will all be working on our pantomime to be performed in March - **Dragon Days!** - so please watch out for more information about this in next months Shapinsay Sound. We hope as many of you as possible will come to see it.

Finally, a happy and prosperous 2018 from all at the school!



SHAPINSAY
DEVELOPMENT
TRUST

The Shapinsay Sound

January 2018

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Chair 1

Shapinsay
Community
Council 2

RSABI

Garden Notes
from Old School 3

Garden notes
Part 2 4

Christmas Party

Shapinsay Wildlife
Matters 5

Shapinsay Speaks
Project 6

A Passion for
Painting

Orkney Native
Wildlife project 7

Shapinsay School 8

From the Chair

by Steven Bews



Another year and another Christmas have passed all too quickly, so as we welcome in 2018 I would like to wish everyone a happy new. It is going to get off to a busy start for Shapinsay Development Trust.

We are holding a public meeting on the 16th of this month to share progress on the **BIGHIT** Hydrogen project, which is now finally moving on to the construction phase. This will be a chance to see how the project has developed since the AGM and what the next phase of the project will entail.

Representatives from a selection of our BIGHIT partner organisations will be attending to show how Shapinsay's project links to other hydrogen projects within Orkney.

Following this there will be another presentation on the findings of the Housing Needs Survey, which was carried out last summer. With the survey results and a selection of potential housing sites identified, there is now the basis we need in order to have an informed discussion. This will be an opportunity for you, the community, to share your views and engage in a constructive manner with the findings of the survey.

Representatives from OIC and Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust will be on hand to help inform the discussion, and give advice on how any potential housing project could be progressed.

This is a major project for the island and could potentially see the provision of housing tailored to Shapinsay's needs.

2018 will see Shapinsay on the map as a place where innovative new energy technologies are being installed. Also now with the potential for a Community owned housing project too, Shapinsay is set to stand out as a community securing its future.

In order to ensure that any potential project best meets the needs of Shapinsay residents, not only now but in the future, I would encourage you to attend and be part of this decision making process.

SHAPINSAY TRANSPORT

Please note.

With effect from 23rd December 2017 there will no longer be a weekend car service. The bookings phone will be manned for 2 hours on a Saturday and Sunday from **10am -12noon**

Shapinsay Community Council

Removal of Scrap Cars Scheme

A limited funding package has become available for the removal of scrap cars from Shapinsay.

Scrap cars will be collected and delivered to Kirkwall, **free** of charge to the customer.

You will be responsible for making necessary arrangements to have the car lifted on the lorry and make any submissions to DVLA.

If you have a scrap car that you wish to dispose of, or require further information, please contact the Interim Clerk, either by phone or email, as detailed below:-

Shapinsay Community Council
Per Mrs C Fereday Eshete
4 Millbank
Shapinsay
KW17 2DU

e-mail: shapinsayclerk@gmail.com or phone **711704**

Applications should be submitted by **Monday, 22 January 2018.**

RSABI



RSABI
Supporting People
in Scottish Agriculture

Help for Heating

As we head into the colder months remember that RSABI is here to help people who are working or have worked in farming, crofting and growing. Call us today on 0300 111 4166 if you are struggling with utility costs and let RSABI help make your home a wee bit warmer this winter.

OSCR
Scottish Charity Regulator
www.oscr.org.uk
Registered Charity
SC009828

RSABI is a registered charity (SC009828) and a company limited by guarantee (Registered in Scotland No. 268622); Registered Office: Rural Centre, West Mains, Ingleston, Newbridge, EH28 8NZ.

Orkney Native Wildlife

Orkney Native Wildlife Project



Come along to find out more about the project and tell us how
 you would like to be involved

**Thursday 25th Jan The Boathouse,
 Shapinsay**

1-6.30pm
Kids activity day and drop-in

8 – 9pm
Public Talk

See the Orkney Native Wildlife Project Facebook page for more details and for additional events across the other isles

**Funding raised by
 The National Lottery**
 and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund




Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba
 All of nature for all of Scotland
 Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

 **giving
 nature
 a home**
Scotland

Shapinsay Speaks project progressing well



Pictured are just some of the folks who have been helping with the 'Shapinsay Speaks' oral history project in 2017 by letting us record their memories of island life. Topics covered so far have included cheese and butter making, life and work on the farm, sporting success, running a shop in days gone by, social events, hurricanes, snowy winters, school days and stories of boats and adventures at sea.

Kenny Meason who won funding for the project at the Your Island Your Choice public vote event earlier this year says "I find the Shapinsay Speaks programme a very rewarding experience. It's not about the great and the good but it is about islanders telling their own stories, in their own way in their own time. The most mundane work or experiences are brought alive by their telling.

This has been an immensely enriching experience for all. If you have a tale to tell no matter how tall or short then please get in touch". The material gathered is being used for a Heritage Lottery funded web portal for the island.

Anyone involved or interested in the project is invited to attend a free session with oral history expert Professor Donna Heddle - Director of The Institute for Northern Studies - on Friday January the 5th at the Boathouse between 10.30am and 12.30 lunchtime.

A Passion for Painting



Many of you will have seen Nina Anderson out and about on Shapinsay during the summer months giving peoples' plants and shrubs some TLC as part of her gardening business. She is also a dab hand at painting and decorating but when not busy earning a living with either of these activities Nina is never happier than with an artist's brush in hand in her small studio at Lingro at the north end of the island.

"I was always interested in art at school - my Dad was a draughtsman and very artistic - I used to love looking at the colours he used" says Nina who really got serious about painting in her thirties. "I went to college to do art for a year then had my daughter but started painting again when she went to school and I had more time. When I came to Orkney 10 years ago I found it a very inspiring place - the landscape, the light and the colours and I studied art as a mature student at Orkney College".

Nina has sold numerous paintings over the years and specialises mainly in landscapes in oil, acrylics or watercolours which have been displayed in many open art exhibition venues including the Waterfront Gallery in Stromness. "Art is such a joyful thing to do - it's exciting because you never know what's going to happen - you might want to add more colour or change some detail. I feel very alive when I'm working on a painting it feels great - I'm never daunted by it. You completely forget the time and that you've put the tea on and it burns!" "You get good and bad days and sometimes the equivalent of writer's block. Occasionally the painting doesn't work at all and you have to scrub it and start again but you learn from it and when you have another go at it, it could turn out to be the one people like the most. "I've learnt a lot over the years, partly from making mistakes and partly from looking at other peoples' work and I am always keen to progress. I would love to be able to earn my main income from art and am very interested in art as therapy but it's not something that most people can make a living from. Nina used to work in Home Care on the island but it's her gardening which is the main focus now in the summer when her artwork has to take a back seat.

Nina's artwork has been on show this winter at the Old Library and For Art's Sake in Kirkwall as well as at the Pier Arts Centre in Stromness.

If anyone on the island would like to try a beginner's group acrylic painting session with Nina at the Boathouse then let us know and we will be happy to arrange it. Contact us on 711733 or email cao@shapinsay.org.uk

Garden Notes from Old School



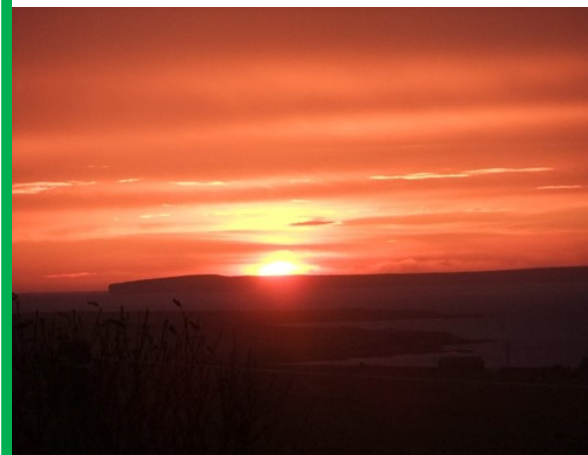
As I write this, memories of the recent storm, the not so sweet Caroline, are still very much to the fore. I watched with trepidation as the new greenhouse took a real battering but it stood firm. Luckily there was not too much damage in the garden; a few old branches were torn from the larger willows and leaves on the smaller escallonias are bruised and blackened but they will recover.

One of the main issues with high winds and wet ground is that of shrubs and trees rocking loose; they move back and forth, round and round until they are sitting in a hole which just fills with water. Any that are found in this state need to have the soil heeled in again firmly around the base so that the roots are in contact with the soil. In very wet parts I have even just filled the hole with grit then heeled in the soil around it. A reminder also that shrubs such as buddleja and elder need to be reduced in height to prevent any further wind damage, then pruned again in spring to refine their shape.

I keep looking at the borders and wondering if I should tidy them up a bit but then I notice the number of birds that take refuge among the dead flower stalks and decide to leave things as they are until early spring. I like to put feed out for the birds at this time of year to give them a bit of extra energy when the days are colder and shorter and they struggle to find enough food. They will repay me during the better weather when they help to keep the number of insect pests under control.

It's easy to feel despondent at this time of year with the wind, the wet and the dark nights but there are challenges to face wherever we try to create a] garden (if anyone knows of an area that has perfect soil, where the sun always shines but there is still enough rain, and where there are no pests and] diseases, please let me know!).

In previous gardens snow and ice have presented problems at this time of year. Snow may act as a blanket for herbaceous plants but the weight of snow is enough to buckle the frame of a polytunnel, break branches of mature trees and bend conifers into strange shapes from which they never really recover. After heavy snow, my first task was to take a soft broom and brush the snow from the top of polytunnel Mk 2 then from the branches of the evergreens to reduce the amount of damage



In winter, light has a different quality; sunrises can be spectacular and sunny days are treasured. I have a Mahonia called Winter Sun which is planted in sheltered semi-shade of the old greenhouse. Hopefully it will flower in March, a yellow flower with a heavenly scent which certainly lifts the spirits when there's not much else in flower.

Garden Notes Part 2



My two favourite seed lists have arrived from the Cottage Garden Society and the Hardy Plant Society. These are all seeds donated by members. Often the resulting plants are not an exact copy of their parents so there's always the chance that something exciting will appear there's just one problem. I am allowed to choose a maximum of thirty-two packets of seed which sounds reasonable you might think until I tell you that there are a total of 3,160 to choose from.

As a 'seedaholic' you can see my problem. I start with a list of 'desirables' which of course is far too many. This is reduced to a new list of 'really would likes' and finally to a list of 'absolutely must haves'.

There are many seeds listed that I have never heard of so I have to do a bit of 'Googleing' to discover what they are; many would be totally unsuitable for the Orkney climate but there are always a few that sound perfect and are worth a gamble – nothing ventured, nothing gained!

As the end of another year draws to a close I recall a childhood memory of the church bells ringing out the old year and ringing in the new. In gardening terms, let's forget all the things that have gone wrong and the plants that didn't do what they were supposed to do.

We gardeners are invariably 'glass half full' sort of people so there's always next year when the weather will be perfect and we'll have bigger crops and better flowers than ever before. Wishing everyone a very bountiful, fruitful and floriferous 2018.

If you have any garden tips that you would like to share or any special plants that you would like to tell others about please let me know and I will include them next month.

Karen Evans, Old School, Shapinsay
karen@evanssmallholder.plus.com

Christmas Party



The Children's' Christmas party was a great success and all the youngsters really enjoyed themselves.

Thanks to SDT for funding the lights, the Community Council for funding the party and to all the helpers on the day.

Shapinsay Wildlife Matters

by Paul Hollinrake

Robins

Robins are depicted everywhere at Christmas time. As Xmas tree ornaments, on cards, on embarrassingly garish jumpers and on calendars etc. Why is this?

Evidently back in the 1800s our postie men wore red jackets in reverence to the colour that was very important in the British flag and considered a Royal colour. And of course our posties here on Shapinsay deliver the Royal Mail in a red van collected from red post boxes. The much loved robins that frequent our gardens resembled the posties, so they become known as Robins.

In bye gone days before the internet, email, WhatsApp and mobile phones, people eagerly awaited delivery of Xmas cards from the Robins, and of course this still happens to this day, but posties are no longer known as Robins, they are Andy and Mervyn off course!!



Artists creating popular Xmas cards soon cottoned on to the idea of robins delivering Xmas cards and drew them with letters in their beaks.

You may have heard of the Christmas legend when a robin rested upon Jesus' shoulder when he was on the cross and sang to relieve his suffering. Blood from Jesus' crown of thorns stained the little bird's chest, since then, all robins were red breasted.

However, something that is quite bizarre is the fact that robin's breasts are actually orange, not red! Have a look next time you see one. Apparently the reason for this misnomer is that the English language had no word for orange until the 16th Century. Before that anything orange was called red!

When Mary gave birth to baby Jesus in the stable a wee while ago, her fire was dying out when a small brown bird flew in singing and flapping its wings. This revitalized the fire and the embers glowed brightly again reigniting the fire. The fire lit up the bird's breast in a red glow and Mary decreed that the red breast was a sign of the bird's kind heart and that the bird and all its descendants would wear a red breast proudly for evermore.

The RSPB Annual Garden Big Bird Watch found that the robin was the 7th most common bird in British gardens in 2017.

In Orkney the robin is an uncommon breeding resident and winter visitor, which can be very common on passage in spring and especially autumn. For example on North Ronaldsay over 100 birds are often found in a day in October.