

# The Shapinsay Sound



LOCAL

The newsletter for the island of Shapinsay produced by the Shapinsay Development Trust.  
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We are in full "panto rehearsal" mode at the school at the moment. Costumes are arriving, scenery is being planned, words are being learned and songs are being sung. Please come along and join us on **Thursday 15th March** at 1.30 and 6.30pm. There will be raffles and refreshments at both performances.

Part of our School Improvement Plan this year focuses on Science. In Nursery the youngest children have been exploring different materials with their senses, exploring gloop and making potions. The **P1 - 3** class have been looking at how materials can change. They observed how water can change to ice or evaporate, how bread changes when it is made into toast and experimented to find out whether big or small pieces of chocolate melt quickest. The **P4 - 7** class have been learning about the structure and function of the eye, learned about inheritance in animals and used a data logger to measure the amount of light that passed through different materials in order to decide which material would make the best black out blind.



The Nursery children have been continuing with their learning about fairytales. Rapunzel and the Three Billy Goats Gruff have inspired some creative play.

**P1 - 3** have been continuing their project on dragons and castles and would like to thank everybody who has donated bottle tops. We have made one dragon so far but would like to make more for the panto. They have also made dragon eggs and done some imaginative writing based on dragons and castles.

**P4 - 7** have been continuing their work on World War 2, learning about rationing, the Blitz and evacuees. They have been doing diary writing and newspaper reports based on their learning. The school has been loaned an air raid siren, World War 2 bell and a fuel ration book. If anyone else has any artefacts or stories relating to World War Two

we would love to hear them.

We are starting to think about fundraising for our residential trips in May. The Parent Council are hopefully running an event on **Saturday 24th March** in the evening and the children will be running a table top sale on **Sunday 25th March** from 12.30 - 3.30. If anyone would like to donate things for the children to sell please get in touch with the school, or drop them by the school from Monday 19th March. If you would like to have your own table please get in touch with the school.

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## From the Chair

by Steven Bews



March is here and hopefully the last throws of winter will play out soon to make way for some more spring like weather.

February has seen the two big projects which SDT is involved in move to their respective next phases. With a public meeting earlier in February we received updates on the next steps to be taken on the two projects.

The BIGHIT project is now moving into the construction phase and we should be seeing the OIC works at the school come to completion and the work at the SDT Whirly site start.

On the housing project we received the presentation on the results of the housing needs survey which was circulated last summer. With the information from the survey and the feedback from the community we can now

take the second step and commission site surveys to be carried out on the available sites which have been put forward.

Once these surveys have been completed we will be in a position to hold an informed consultation with the community again before planning permission is sought.

With both projects now progressing we should start to be thinking about how they can develop in the future. Future uses for Hydrogen being produced and used on Shapinsay...lets see what can be done.



Work in Progress



## Shapinsay School Part 2

### Building works at the School / Community Centre

You will have noticed that there is a lot of building work going on at the school and community centre at the moment. This is for the new hydrogen boiler and for the re-roofing and insulation of the building. The contractors have set up a fenced area at the front of the building and in the car park to store their equipment. There will be scaffolding going up in due course.

Please can everyone be aware of safety around the site at the moment. The fenced compound is locked and the scaffolding will also be out of bounds. In order to make pedestrian access to the community end of the building easier, we would ask that cars park at the front of the building so that there are fewer vehicles needing to use the same entrance as pedestrians. There is limited parking at the community door for disabled access if needed but access will be needed to the back of the building at all times for deliveries and contractor vehicles.

We hope that the work will cause as little disruption as possible, but there will inevitably be some things we will need to work around. The work is due to last until at least October, but we will have an improved facility in the end.

## Elwick Bookwrights

At our last meeting, local author, Alison Miller of Orphir, came to do a workshop on Writing in Dialect. (Alison's novel *Demo* was published by Penguin in 2006.)

She opened with a quote from the Russian Jewish linguist, Max Weinreich: "A language is a dialect with an army and navy." The group discussed the merits and pitfalls of writing in dialects other than Standard English before doing a writing exercise where members attempted to use their own childhood dialects.

Some members found that the dialects of their youth could not easily be recaptured but will continue to work at this because, as American novelist Kurt Vonnegut wrote, "varieties of speech are beautiful, just as the varieties of butterflies are beautiful." An outcome of the session was the decision to organise an event to look at Shapinsay place names and their correct pronunciation.

We will meet twice during March. On 3 March we'll be looking at Sound Poetry. And on 17 March there will be a Poetry Workshop, jointly funded by Elwick Bookwrights and Creative Scotland's Live Literature, which is managed by the Scottish Book Trust.

The Live Literature scheme subsidises up to 1,200 writer events around the country each year. The renowned Stromness author and poet, Pam Beasant, (her poetry collection *Running with a Snow Leopard* was published in 2008) will lead the workshop, which will be followed by lunch. (Note that attendees should please bring contributions of food for the lunch.)

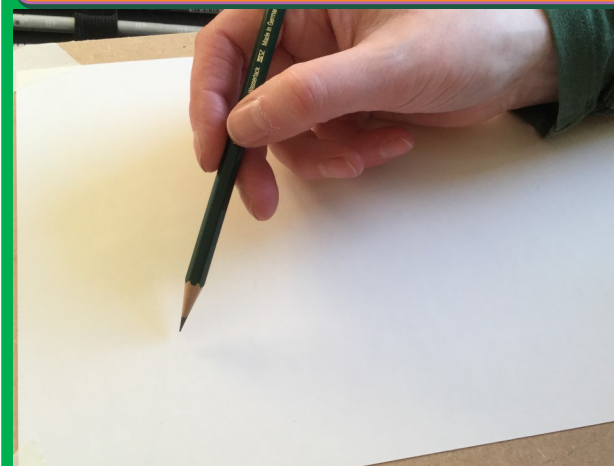
The Elwick Bookwrights meet at 10.15 on two Saturday mornings each month in the Boathouse. Visitors and new members are welcome to come along.

Kate Fereday Eshete, Secretary

**Photo Caption:** Alison Miller (second from left) at the Elwick Bookwrights



## Shapinsay Graphite Group



### New group drawing a lot of interest!

*How about pencilling in your diary the new Shapinsay Graphite Group at the Boathouse every Tuesday from 10am until 1pm?*

The free to attend group was set up by island resident Sandy MacDonald who believes art is for everyone and that anyone can have a go whether they want to just scribble, doodle or create a more elaborate work of art.

Young children are welcome so long as they're supervised by an accompanying adult and there are also sessions once a month on a Saturday morning for those who can't make the

weekday events.

One of the regulars is Helen Jones who hasn't done any drawing since she was 12 years old who says "it's impossible to come here and not go away encouraged". Many people are nervous of putting pencil to paper and are intimidated by seeing all that blank space. Some folks, says Sandy, just don't feel they are good enough to do anything so never start and this is exactly the aim of this group to give folks the support of people who aren't experts but who are happy to learn and share their skills and ideas together and have fun socialising as they draw maybe for the first time or maybe in years.

Another participant Jenny Hall remembers in her 20's not being able to get started when presented with a blank sheet of paper and a friend helped her overcome the barrier by challenging her to draw something - anything - on 10 pieces of paper against the clock in half an hour. Her pal then took the used paper screwed all the pieces up and threw them away - "that says Jenny was the most liberating thing ever - it was like being given permission to draw and she was then able to take the plunge and loves sketching to this day.

The group is informal and is facilitated by Sandy or whoever else is available to welcome people in on the day. But why pencil rather than colour or the medium of paint? "to make it accessible" says Sandy "just about everyone's got a pencil lying around - it doesn't even have to be a special pencil". Just add paper and you too could be part of this regular new activity!

## Computer help at hand



Orkney PC is offering to run some sessions at the Boathouse on Shapinsay in April for folks who want help using their computers or laptops whether as a beginner or to expand their IT knowledge.

They can also arrange general information and question and answer sessions as well as One to One tuition or group tutorials on topics such as how to use Skype and Facebook.

They can also help people with any queries about Wi-Fi, Wi-Fi Extenders and CCTV etc. Another option is for folks on Shapinsay to have computer help from a distance via Team Viewer remote access.

To register your interest in any of the above options and to find out more including likely costs or to suggest additional ideas please

contact **Davie Campbell** at Orkney PC on **01856 878488** or email [cao@shapinsay.org.uk](mailto:cao@shapinsay.org.uk)

**Please state if daytime or evening would be preferable in order for you to attend.**



## Kirk News

This month we've got a number of events coming up. First of all, on the 6<sup>th</sup> March at 7 pm we'll have a Vision Evening. It will be facilitated by our mentor and facilitator on the Path of Renewal Richard Lloyd. As we've entered our third and final year on Path of Renewal, we'll begin looking at the future and how we want it to look. Please do come along if you're interested in the present and/or future of the Shapinsay kirk.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> March we'll have a Souper Sunday. It's an idea developed by the HIV Programme of the World Mission Council of the Church of Scotland. It will be an elder-led worship service followed by a lunch of soup and bread – which will be provided (no need to bring anything!). If you're coming, please let Caroline know though to help with catering.

Souper Sunday has two purposes – to raise awareness of HIV and Aids and also to fundraise for the HIV Programme. You can read more about it here: [http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve/world\\_mission/hiv\\_programme/souper\\_sunday](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve/world_mission/hiv_programme/souper_sunday).

Last but not least we'd like to draw your attention to the fact that we've got a slot in the Blue Door! This is coming up in September and we'll give you more details nearer the time. For now we'd like to ask you to save whatever goods you might be considering giving to charity for September.

Blue Door take just about anything: books, pictures, crafts, baking, jumpers, decorations, lights, wrapping paper, gifts, bric-a-brac, clothing, toys and much more! Your generous support will be much appreciated! Thank you in advance!

Julia

Contact me at: Rev Julia Meason, 874789, [JMeason@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:JMeason@churchofscotland.org.uk)

## What's in a name?



**Want to know a bit more about where you live?  
Not sure what places are called or how to pronounce the names?  
Interested in understanding the history of our island place names?**

If you answered yes to any of the above questions you might be interested in a series of free workshops coming up at the Boathouse over the next few weeks. Over three sessions with former Orkney Museum curator and local historian Sheila Garson we'll look at island place names; where they come from, how they are pronounced, what resources are available to further explore their meaning and history and how this all fits into the wider history of the island.

**Session 1** will provide a general introduction and background with subsequent sessions focusing on areas of interest identified by the participants. The sessions will feed into the 'Your Island Your Choice' Shapinsay Speaks oral history project and will also be featured on a Heritage Lottery funded website about local people's memories.

There are only 12 places on each workshop so with space limited you will need to reserve your place in advance. The full list of dates is **Saturday March the 10<sup>th</sup>, Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup> and Saturday April 28<sup>th</sup>** – all between **10.30am and 12.30 lunchtime**. Email [cao@shapinsay.org.uk](mailto:cao@shapinsay.org.uk) or phone **711755** to book.

## Garden Notes from Old School

There have been some very spring-like days recently and indeed there are definitely signs of spring in the garden but we need to remember that during the next month these are likely to be equally interspersed with wintry days. Grey fluffy catkins are already showing on the willows and as soon as they open fully, they'll be a valuable source of pollen and nectar for any bees venturing out on a sunny day.

The Lenten roses, *Helleborus orientalis*, are also beginning to open and these too are popular with the bees. There are many varieties of hellebore; some have large double flowers or several layers of petals but it's those with single flowers that allow the bees easy access to food. As soon as the flowers open I'll cut away all last year's leaves and add some garden compost around each plant as a mulch.

Incidentally, I have heard that the Swannay Brewery is giving away bags of spent hops used in the brewing process; these would make an excellent soil conditioner and are also good for mulching as long as they don't touch the new growth.



During any fine days in March I will continue to tidy the borders. Dead leaves of *Iris sibirica* which have acted as a protective layer over the soil during the harshest weather can now be gently pulled away from the main clump allowing light and air to get to the surrounding area and the emerging shoots of its neighbours, the globe flower, *Trollius Cheddar*.

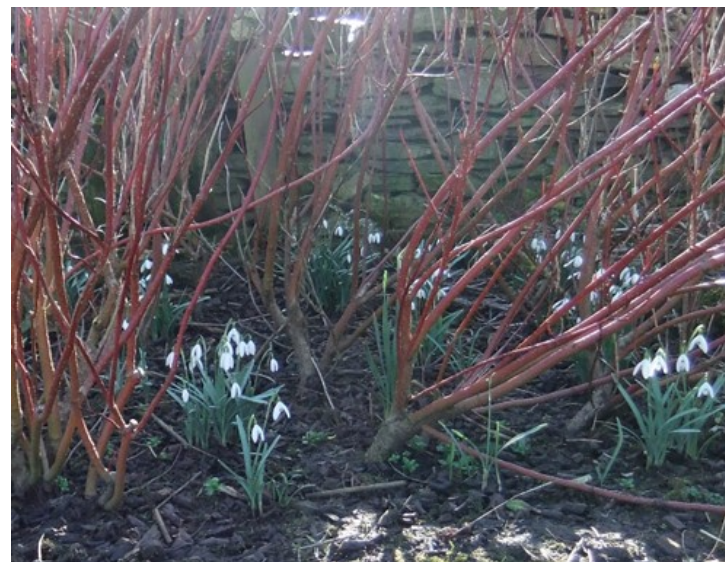
The snowdrops are looking at their best just now but over time the garden has changed and my original planting idea no longer works. I want to be able to see the snowdrops from the kitchen window, their pure white flowers standing out against the bright red stems of the dogwood but the plant in front has become too large, obscuring my view.

Gardens are always changing and evolving; sometimes a rogue plant can enhance a grouping but at other times, as with this one, it's a case of moving the offending plant to an area where it is more suited. Last year, I cut about a third of the dogwood stems down to about 6ins above the ground which prompted new growth from the base and it is these new stems which are the brightest colour.

This year I will do the same, choosing again about a third of the oldest stems. In this way, the shrub is kept to a reasonable size and because it is constantly being rejuvenated, it always looks good at the duller time of year. I noticed that birds or maybe mice had dug up some of the snowdrop bulbs and scattered them around on the ground. They had no roots but had sprouted leaves so I potted them up and hopefully, they will develop some proper root growth and can then be planted out.



## Garden Notes Part 2



Last summer I planted a few herbs just inside the door of the greenhouse. Whilst the weather was warm and the doors to the greenhouse open they flourished but now they are having to cope with the sharp contrast between some warmer days when the humidity inside is quite high and then colder nights when the atmosphere is still quite damp. These herbs, lavender, thyme, rosemary and sage, are all native to the Mediterranean and therefore enjoy warm, dry, sunny conditions; they really don't like being damp although they can withstand a certain amount of cold if they are kept on the dry side.

My solution is to replant them in clay pots so that I can control the amount of moisture they receive at the roots and on milder days the pots can stand outside in the sun, allowing a good circulation of air and hopefully reducing the possibility of mildew.

Windowsill plants such as geraniums are beginning to respond to longer daylight hours and starting to put on new growth. Watering can gradually be increased, then as growth speeds up, prune the new shoots to create a nice balanced shape.

Foraging is great fun and the Collins gem edition of Richard Mabey's book 'Food for Free' is a handy and enlightening guide to edible wild plants. Many of the plants listed can be found in Orkney but generally we don't have access to the hedgerow type fruits so whenever we head south in autumn, I'm always on the lookout for hedgerow goodies.

Last year we came across some mature blackthorn trees laden with sloes. We spent an hour or so picking several bags full then brought them home to go in the freezer which mimics the effect of frosty, wintry conditions and softens the skins. I have tried making sloe gin from dried sloes but it's just not the same. We now have some bottles of the proper stuff hidden away in a dark place, maturing nicely ready for next Christmas. Without ready access to fresh sloes, raspberry gin or vodka is easy to make using frozen fruit. Two bottles of gin/vodka will make three bottles in total; fill each of three washed and sterilised empty wine bottles (green or brown are best) to about a third full with the defrosted raspberries, add ten tablespoons of castor sugar to each bottle then top up with gin/vodka. Gently shake the bottles every day until the sugar is dissolved then store in a cool dark place for at least three months, longer if possible. There's something very satisfying about opening a store cupboard in the middle of winter and finding shelves full of various preserves made from nature's harvest.

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](mailto:karen@evanssmallholder.plus.com)

## Orkney Climbing Club

by Marie Dunnett

### Youth Climbing Series – North 2018.

**THANK YOU** to the Shapinsay Development Trust and the Shapinsay Community Council for supporting Sean to enter the Inverness, Kinlochleven and Aberdeen rounds of the Youth Climbing Series.



Sean finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the Aberdeen and Kinlochleven events and 6<sup>th</sup> at Inverness. The competition was extremely strong, climbing tough routes set from 6a to 7C. Sean had to complete 3 top rope climbs and 3 boulder problems.

Sean finished 5<sup>th</sup> overall, unfortunately only the top 4 climbers in his group qualified for Scotland. Sean enjoyed the competition and is looking forward to next year!



While in Kinlochleven Sean enjoyed ice climbing.