

The Shapinsay Sound



LOCAL

The newsletter for the island of Shapinsay produced by the Shapinsay Development Trust.
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The Nursery children have been having great fun playing outside in the front area and the middle courtyard. Ian has been very busy building a mud kitchen which is great fun, especially when making dandelion soup. The Nursery classroom is also having a bit of a makeover with lots of new furniture.

P1 – 3 have been doing lots with Miss Drever who is with us in school at the moment. They have planted many things in the polytunnel as part of their topic about plants.

They have also been learning about St Magnus in Drama.

P4 – 7 are learning about Japan and have been doing origami, trying on costumes and finding out about Japanese culture. They have also been learning some Japanese words. Many thanks to **Emily, Mike & Saki** for helping us with this. They have also been doing some printing in Art, learning about animals in French and using the story of St Magnus as the stimulus in Philosophy.

The whole school have been preparing for the Picnic, so please come along and watch on the **17th June**. We've also been preparing for the Science Ceilidh on **3rd June**. Mrs Bews will also be starting a "mini movers" club for Nursery to P2 children.

Last month we all went to Sandgarth to Bag the Bruck. Thanks to everyone who helped us with this. This month we plan on doing a pilgrimage walk from the old kirk in Shapinsay to the kirk, thinking about the story of St Magnus along the way. We hope to do this on the **8th June**, and folk will be very welcome to come and join us so please keep an eye out for further information.

The **P7** children will start their transition to secondary school, and we also have residential trips to Lagganlia and Hoy.



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Shapinsay Renewables Ltd.

June 2017

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Good News

by Adrian Bird

Well winter was very the much the story of April and Whirly has benefited by producing record breaking figures again. We have never produced 280352 kw's in April before.

Whirly produced 2530475 KW in 2016-2017, again this is a new record for us up from 2453610 KW in 2015-2016. That's around 80,000KW extra generated over the year.

So why is this increasing and breaking new records in energy production?

The amount of curtailment has been reducing over the last few years. The installation of a new cable from Orkney to the mainland will see an end to curtailment over the next few years.

Availability to generate power, Whirly was available 99.65% of the time with maintenance time of 0.34% meant Whirly was only not available to generate power 0.01%.

To some degree luck plays a part to this, but the main reason is having turbine operators resolving issues quickly when they arise.

It's simple logic - no turbine working, no income.

It's great to have a strong start to the year but I'm hoping that summer will start soon.



‘Shapinsay Speaks’ project underway

by Lynne



An exciting project to capture the oral history of our island on tape has just got underway. The ‘Shapinsay Speaks’ initiative headed up by Kenny Meason and facilitated by Shapinsay Development Trust won funding at the ‘Your Island Your Choice’ event earlier this year.

Votes were gathered from members of the community towards 5 possible projects and at the count on the night the oral history project was given the go-ahead. Two other Shapinsay projects, a regular youth drop-in for the over 12’s and a Trim Trail for the Playpark, also received grants as a result of the public vote and are moving forwards with their plans.

‘Pitching’ to the public about what the projects hoped to achieve was an important part of this participatory budgeting pilot. When

it was his turn, Kenny passionately made a case for the importance of gathering peoples’ memories of Shapinsay’s past before they are lost forever.

A team of volunteers from the community are now collecting material from folks who want to talk about Shapinsay in by-gone days. So how does it feel now that the project is finally underway? “I’m delighted that the material is starting to be gathered in”, says Kenny “and it’s as rewarding for the folks asking the questions as it is for those taking part. It’s lovely to hear these island memories being shared”.

Amongst the first to be interviewed is Jim Hepburn of Kirkton. Jim was born at Linton and at 88 years of age is an elder statesman of both Shapinsay and within the wider agricultural community of Orkney. As well as being involved with farming all his life he’s also served on 13 committees within Shapinsay and is a former Community Council Chairman and District councillor so has many memories of different aspects of Shapinsay’s past including island improvements which benefit us today and which he helped to facilitate.

Speaking of the oral history project Jim says “it’s an excellent idea because once us older folks are gone the opportunity will be missed”. When it comes to participating in the recordings he encourages people to take part saying “there’s nothing difficult about it if you’re interested in doing it”. One of Jim’s first recordings was a true story about a fishing trip involving his Grandfather James Hepburn and two friends (pictured) whose adventurous winter’s day fishing trip left them stranded on Auskerry for 2 days!



There are so many potential topics to cover, the list is endless and if you’re interested we’d love to hear from you. Maybe you were involved in the island’s egg industry, boat building, fishing, CB Radio, farming, cottage industries, crafting or dairy production. Or could you tell us about your memories of music and dance or films shown on the island, holiday events, food, superstitions, childhood games, funeral traditions or fine historic examples of community spirit. If so please ring the Boathouse and let us know on 711733 or contact Kenny Meason on 711275 or email Lynne Collinson cao@shapinsay.org.uk

Everyone’s contribution is valuable whether on just one topic or on many! Participants can choose someone they know to ask the questions if they would like to - or one of our volunteers. SDT will provide the recorder and some simple training. The collected digital material will be archived and made available for the public to listen to and enjoy.

Garden Notes Part 2



This is the case with all herbaceous plants that need support; it’s never successful if you have to try to prop the plant up once it has already become too tall and floppy. Hanging baskets and tubs have also been hardening off and will be ready to put into their final positions in the first week of June providing we don’t get a sudden cold snap.

In the veg garden, courgettes have been planted out but will be protected with a cloche if it gets windy as the leaves get damaged and the stems can break. All members of the cabbage family, which includes swedes, need to be protected either with fleece or fine netting to stop the cabbage white butterflies getting to them; once you see them flying around it’s usually too late!

I’m experimenting with a new system of growing broad beans this year. In the past each individual plant has been staked but I’m trying a shorter version of the system traditionally used for runner beans with 5ft canes tied at the top, a cane running along the length and another cane woven in and out nearer the base. My theory is that this will be more stable than individual canes but only time will tell!

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

A chance to get involved in the battle against fuel poverty

FUEL Poverty in Orkney is the worst in Scotland and isles – like Shapinsay – are amongst the most affected by it.

Over the past 15 months the Tackling Household Affordable Warmth (THAW) Group in Kirkwall’s Victoria Street has been at the forefront of the drive to overturn that damning statistic by enabling energy efficiency works, worth over £500,000 to be progressed in over 400 Orkney households.

Now, with the assistance of grants from businesses, benefactors and community organisations on the isles and the Orkney Mainland, the group is trying to formulate a bid that could bring in an additional £340,000 work over the forthcoming year.

THAW will hold its 2nd AGM in Kirkwall Town Hall on June 15th at 7pm when they will explain their plans for the year ahead and be pleased to hear the views of those in the North Isles who are interested in fuel poverty as well as those who have benefitted from the work undertaken so far.

The guest speaker at the event will be Di Alexander – the man appointed by Scottish Ministers as the independent chair of the Scottish Rural Fuel Poverty Task Force who also chairs the Highlands and Islands Housing Associations Affordable Warmth Group.

THAW Chairman Robert Leslie said: “Di Alexander has been championing the case to treat areas such as Orkney differently when it comes to energy efficiency programmes aiming at bringing affordable warmth to folk, as the issues we face are not the same as those in urban areas of the Central Belt. His message – backed by many working to tackle fuel poverty in the Highlands and Islands – is starting to be listened to. I would encourage folk to come and hear it for themselves.”

Garden Notes from Old School

Gardening is a continual learning process especially somewhere like Orkney where the conditions that we have to cope with are far more extreme than in many other areas. Understanding what will grow where takes time and sometimes a plant will grow well for a couple of years but then it starts to struggle and we know then that something is not right.

The small pale pink spring pea flower, *Lathyrus vernus Alborosea*, planted last year is not looking at all happy; it seems that the soil is far too wet for it during the winter so I need to either move it to a drier area or I could try lifting the plant and mixing in a quantity of gravel to improve the drainage. Conversely, the Geum Bell Bank is struggling because although the ground is wet enough during the winter, it drains very quickly when the drier weather arrives, just as the poor thing is trying to flower. Geums are excellent plants for spring flowering and there are some good new varieties such as the Cocktail series or Mai Tai but they do need soil that doesn't dry out.



At the beginning of the year I realised that the huge, old daisy bush in the corner, which is such a spectacle every summer, had a big area in the centre that was dying. The only solution was to cut out the whole section, right back to the main trunk and hope that this would be enough to save it. I was then left with what appeared to be two separate shrubs with a huge gap in the middle! However, after initial thoughts of how awful it looked I realised that treating it as two separate shrubs is exactly what I need to do and I have a ready-made, sheltered space just waiting for something new to be planted; possibly a dark-leaved elder for real contrast or maybe a variegated holly? This episode then prompted me to create a similar effect by selectively pruning a large established group of escallonias so that I now have more sheltered spots to plant new shrubs.

The fuchsias have also been given a good pruning. I think we have a bit of a love/hate relationship with fuchsias; they can be a nuisance, seeding everywhere and sending out suckers but if they are pruned regularly to keep them thick I think they are hard to beat as a windbreak hedge.

Last year I sowed some annuals in the border to fill gaps between some new plants. I hadn't realised at the time that *Euphorbia oblongata* is actually a tender perennial rather than an annual and it has survived the winter and is shooting out again. It is such a lovely acid green colour and looks great with dark blue and purple flowers such as salvias.

Dahlias which were over-wintered in pots in the greenhouse have been sitting outside in a sheltered spot for a while now and are just about ready to plant out. It's a good idea to put stakes in place straight away so that the plant grows up and hides the support naturally.

Kirk News

June will start with a bang at Kirkwall East.

Plant Sale on Saturday the 3rd is always a joyful event with lots of people visiting – a good opportunity to catch up! It also means a lot of effort for many for which we're very grateful. Do come along to support it in any way you can – it's an important fundraiser for the kirk.

The day after, on the 4th June, we're celebrating many things – it's Pentecost Sunday first of all when we celebrate God being present with us through His Spirit. As it's our first Sunday in June, we'll have communion in which we share fellowship with one another. To top it off we will be welcoming Kenny Harcus to the church as we witness his baptism that Sunday.

It's my first adult baptism and I'm looking forward to it immensely. It will be a joyous occasion for the whole church as well as for Kenny and his family and friends present with him that day. Already in advance welcome, Kenny!

The following weekend is important for the Shapinsay folks – we will receive Peedie Kirk members on their annual visit. It's always a brilliant time together where we share worship, lunch and friendship together. We will then visit them in August on our reciprocal visit.

It's set to be a busy but good month ahead.

With every blessing and looking forward to seeing you soon,

Julia

Shapinsay Picnic

The Shapinsay Picnic takes place on Saturday 17th June at 1pm in the hall and field. The event is open to all, and there will be a chance to come and see what some of the events are about on 11th June at 3pm when we check the equipment (just come along to the hall and field).

Included with the Shapinsay Sound are envelopes for donations and they can be dropped back in to the shop or the school – many thanks in advance! If you would like your envelope collected please let one of the committee know (names in last month's Shapinsay Sound).



For those wishing to take part in the island tug of war, please see notices in the shop and on the boat showing where the boundary for the 2 teams is, and who to contact if you'd like to be on the team.

In the evening there is a dance starting at 8pm. Entry for adults is £5, under 16s £2 and under 5s free. There will also be a raffle for £1 a strip in the afternoon and the evening. We hope to have a raffle box for donations of prizes in the shop and would welcome all contributions.

We hope to put together a display of photos from the Picnic together, so if anyone takes any good photos on the day that they would be willing to share please speak to Leanne Bews who is co-ordinating the display.

See you all on the 17th (with continued crossed fingers for good weather!)



Shapinsay Ceilidh

SHAPINSAY COMMUNITY CEILIDH + SUPPER

SATURDAY 3 JUNE
7.30PM SHAPINSAY
COMMUNITY HALL
£5 TICKETS (£2 UNDER 18S)

**PART OF THE SHAPINSAY
MUSICAL MEMORIES PROJECT
EXPLORING MUSICAL
HERITAGE FROM SHAPINSAY**

**PERFORMANCES
FROM SHAPINSAY SCHOOL
PUPILS AT 8PM**

**RAFFLE TO RAISE FUNDS FOR
COMMUNITY HANDBELLS**

**LOCAL MUSICAL
PERFORMANCES AND PHOTO
ARCHIVES OF MUSIC AND
DANCE ON THE ISLAND**



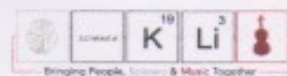
CONTACT HELEN LE-MAR
07709796374

SCIENCECEILIDH.COM/ORKNEY



PHOTO CREDIT: CATHERINE MORGAN

**A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE ARTS-SCIENCE
EDUCATION PROJECT SCIENCE CEILIDH,
SHAPINSAY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION AND
SHAPINSAY DEVELOPMENT TRUST. KINDLY FUNDED
BY THE WELLCOME TRUST**



Shapinsay Wildlife Matters

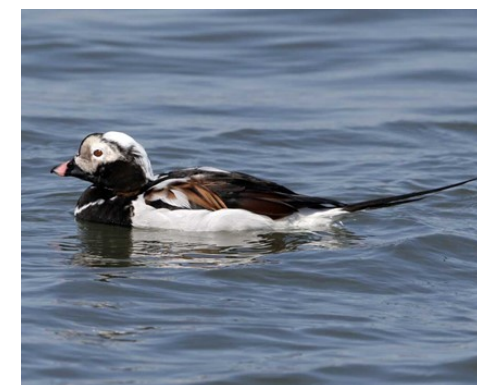
by Paul Hollinrake

Long-tailed ducks

Shapinsay is a special place for Long-tailed ducks. They are known as a sea duck as they spend most of the winter at sea. They dive very deep, reputedly down to an incredible depth of 60 metres, where they find their principle food of shellfish. It is common to see flocks just off shore in the winter months around the island. If they are feeding they will be down underwater far more than they are on the surface.

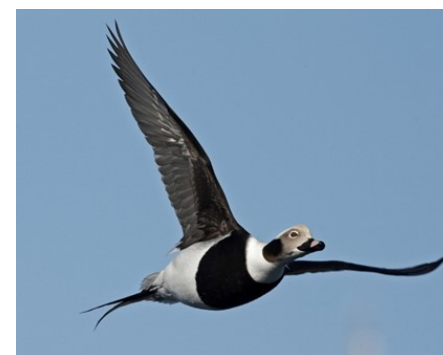


Male in winter

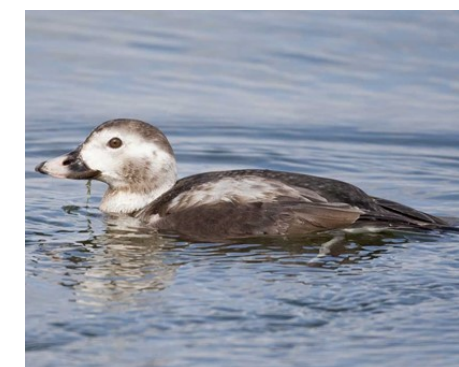


Male in summer

Their Orkney name is "Calloo" after the call they make. The sound of a flock calling Calloo together can be very noisy, often accompanied by the males chasing the females in courtship. Long-tailed ducks are unique amongst ducks in sporting their most spectacular plumage in winter and going through several moult stages. Most male ducks are at their finest at the start of the breeding season, and moult into a drab eclipse plumage shortly after, when they lose both body feathers and flight feathers. Then in autumn just their body feathers moult back into their finery once again. Long-tailed ducks moult their body feathers throughout the summer, exhibiting various chocolate brown phases of colour, but never show a drab eclipse like phase.



Male in flight



Female in winter

We mostly see birds in their stunning winter plumage. In late spring May/June time, many show the start of their summer finery. Females are drabber all year round, looking paler in winter and darker in summer. These birds do not breed in Orkney. So in Spring they gather in huge post migration flocks, before heading north to their Arctic breeding grounds. There are four key sites on Shapinsay where these gatherings take place. Laird Water and Vasa Loch are freshwater lochs where they congregate in their hundreds, regularly attracting 300 to 400 birds. This is quite a sight and sound and easy to witness. In addition they congregate on the sea in Veantrow Bay and off the Galt peninsula, where I once estimated over 2000 birds. Kirkwall Bay and the sea just south of Thieves Holm are good places to see these lovely ducks, if you take a look from the deck of the ferry. The Peedie Sea in Kirkwall is another excellent place to see them up close.