

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.



Another busy month has passed at the school. By the time you read this the residential trips to Hoy and Lagganlia will have happened – a full report of these will come in the August edition of the Shapinsay Sound. We've had the Picnic – you can read the full report elsewhere in this edition. **P7s** have been on visits to KGS and had a great time. The preschool children have had a visit to P1 – 3, and the P3 children had a great time in the **P4 – 7** classroom on their transition visit.



Learning has been continuing with lots of growing going on by the younger children, and we've enjoyed tasting some of the things that we've grown. Lots of outside learning has been taking place all around the school.

We all went on a pilgrimage walk as part of our learning about St Magnus, and the children told the story along the way. Thanks to everyone who came along with us and who provided refreshments at the Kirk. The older children have been continuing with their learning

about Japan – ask them for some Japanese phrases, they're quite impressive.

We have a Sports Committee in place, and we are working on our Sports Award Scotland. So far we have already achieved silver and now we're going for gold. Leanne Bews has started a mini movers club for P2s and under, and it's been lovely to welcome the children who aren't even in Nursery yet.

We're having our end of year assembly on **Friday 30th June at 2pm**, so if this reaches you before the 30th please do come along and join us – we'd love to see you.

You can always see what we're up to on the school website at www.shapinsayschool.org – try the latest news or class blogs for the most up to date information.



Published by the Shapinsay Development Trust. Disclaimer: The content and opinions expressed in Shapinsay Sound are those of individual authors and their represented groups. These views are not necessarily shared by the publisher

SHAPINSAY
DEVELOPMENT
TRUST

The Shapinsay Sound

From the Chair

by Sheila Garson

July 2017

INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE

From the Chair 1

Shapinsay business
is tasty success 2

Putting Shapinsay
on Tourism map 3

Shapinsay Picnic

Blide Trust
Activity days on
Shapinsay 4

New boost for
Shapinsay's Oral
History project

Shapinsay Wildlife 5

Garden Notes 6

RNLI 7

Shapinsay Cubs
and Scouts

Shapinsay Healthy
Living Centre

Shapinsay School 8

It's hard to believe that we are at the half way point in the year. I'm just home from the Picnic, a real island institution, enjoyed by competitors and spectators; young and old; local and visitor.

You may wonder why the island sports is called the Picnic, but it has been for as long as I can remember and I'm sure for many, many years before. If the weather is good, tea - an important part of the event - is served outside so it might come from this. Whatever the reason it's a great event and great to see it going strong, thanks to a dedicated committee and many willing helpers.

This annual celebration came shortly after some good news which you may have heard on Radio Orkney or seen in the Orcadian; Orkney Islands Council has agreed to give the Trust the opportunity to buy the Schoolhouse, which has been empty for many years and also the piece of land below Helliar View.

This is a very exciting step in our aspiration to provide some kind of supported accommodation on the island. Of course we still need to secure funding to purchase these two sites so there is a lot of work to do over the next months, but it is really heartening that the local authority have supported our community in this way.

Feeding into this is a housing needs survey, which will be distributed to all the households on the island early in July. This is a piece of work being undertaken on a number of the islands and the information gathered will help shape the housing provision on the islands into the future.

It is anticipated that a representative from the organisation conducting the survey will visit Shapinsay during the first week of July to answer any questions you may have. We will publicise the date, venue and time of this opportunity as soon as we know the details.

I would urge you to complete and return the survey as it will provide vital information to help identify what you, the community, feel is needed here on Shapinsay and this will feed into how we develop the two sites.



Shapinsay business is tasty success

by Lynne Collinson



An appetising business which Shapinsay boasts is the very popular Orkney Isles Preserves. This productive enterprise based in a converted bothy on the family farm amidst stunning views, is run by Glynis Leslie, who has a passion for producing fine quality jams, marmalades and chutneys using traditional recipes handed down through the generations.

"I just love doing it" says Glynis, "I enjoy all aspects of it - I love planning the flavours and also the labels. As well as being good to eat I feel the product should look special. I use views and iconic buildings of Orkney so that it is an attractive gift".

The business launched in 1986 with just three products but soon outgrew the family kitchen and moved into the former bothy in 2001. In this year Glynis also took over Nelson's Chutneys.

Bob Nelson produced chutneys with the surplus tomatoes he grew and handed the business, along with his recipes to Glynis.



Using electricity from their own wind turbine, fondly known as 'Tereza' they now produce over 4 tonnes of preserves with over 30 different varieties to choose from such as red chilli jam and smoked garlic relish. Where possible the ingredients are sourced locally including Shapinsay rhubarb and beetroot and Birsay tomatoes.

New for 2017 they are working with the Orkney Gin Company to produce Gin flavoured Orange and Lemon Marmalade and Rhubarb and Strawberry jam flavoured with the Rhubarb Gin. Also new is Orkney Beer Chutney with Scapa Special Beer.

The stock is distributed by Wilsons Wholesale throughout the islands and includes catering sized packs for cafes and hotels. Outlets include the Craft Shop at the Heritage Centre and Thomas Sinclair in Shapinsay as well as their biggest customer, Judith Glue, in Kirkwall and Inverness. They don't supply any of the supermarkets, preferring to see their produce stocked in local shops. "People have to go into local shops to buy it and that seems right as it was the local shops which supported us in the early days", says Glynis.

"It's not what I planned to do with my life" says Glynis, who studied French and German in Aberdeen "but I'm very happy how things have turned out. When the

children were small it was something I could do from home as well as the farm work. I could be making chutney and have to change quickly from white overalls to a boiler suit and stand in a gate to move stock".

Summer 2015 was their busiest period ever, so does the demand of meeting so many orders become stressful? "I don't feel pressurised" is the answer, "we are well organised and try to turn our orders round quickly and we also make sure people are stocked up in advance if we're going away".

There are no plans for any major expansion of the business as its running efficiently at a level they can deal with. As for Shapinsay as a base? "I love this Island - it's my home, it's peaceful and it's got its own identity" says Glynis for whom the icing on the cake of moving production into the old bothy, was finding some vintage jam jars in a cupboard when they were clearing out during the refurbishment "so it's meant to be a jam factory".

"My granny would think it's hilarious - people actually buying rhubarb jam when it's just growing all over the island - but it's a different lifestyle now - people haven't so much time to make things but still want that homemade taste - there was a gap in the market for this kind of project."



RNLI



Shapinsay Lifeboat Guild Fete

Around Shapinsay Yacht Race

Saturday 26th August 3pm until late

Fancy Dress Floats and Individuals - theme "The Sea"

Also this year the Yacht Club hope to have a Digby/Catamaran Race from Kirkwall to Shapinsay

Any groups who would like to have a stall to raise funds for their own clubs are welcome

- > Live Music
- > Bar
- > Quoits
- > More details in the next newsletter

Shapinsay Cubs and Scouts

Shapinsay Cubs and Scouts (and Dillan the dog!) had a camp in the garden of Howanbank on Saturday 10th June. The 8 children worked in pairs to put up their own tents before making fires (with no matches or lighters!) to cook their own dinner.

The children completed a cryptic trail round the village and Balfour Castle before returning to the camp for another campfire and marshmallows.



In the morning the children again made their own food over the fire before the end of the camp. The weather was good for us, and we all had a great (if exhausting!) time.

Well done to all the children who worked really well together, and thanks to the adults who made the camp possible.



Shapinsay Healthy Living Centre

School Holiday Opening Times

Mondays	7—9pm
Tuesdays	9.30—11am
Thursdays	7—9pm
Fridays	9.30—11am
Sundays	10—11.30am

The buddy system will be in operation ONLY when there is a keyholder in the building. Please arrange this with the keyholder.

Fatburn Extreme and Tone & Trim times to be confirmed.

Please note that the gym will be closed from 7th – 20th August due to fitness instructor holidays.

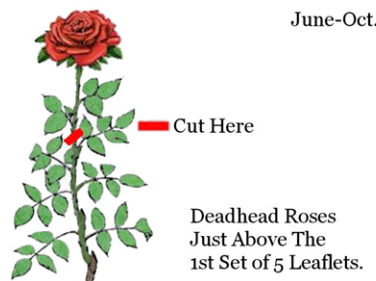
Garden Notes from Old School

There is always a tinge of sadness as the longest day passes but the truth is that there are still plenty of plants that have yet to come into their own. Most tasks in the garden now are small and routine. If the ground is dry, hoeing is best to keep weeds at bay; most of these are annuals such as chickweed and groundsel and if chopped off just above soil level they will die. Do this before the plant has a chance to flower, leave them on the surface to wilt then add them to the compost heap. Nettle tops too will add valuable nutrients but never put them in with their roots. Check beans and peas to make sure they are still well supported and tied in if necessary; a strong wind at this time of year will batter the whole lot to the ground and it's just about impossible to get them all back up again! There's still time to sow a few salad leaves such as lettuce, rocket, sorrel and bull's beet.



A few weeks ago I was given a young plant of Achocha 'Fat Baby': I had never heard of this before but was told it was recommended by James Wong! Apparently, it can be grown outside and used in salads like cucumber when the fruits are young or like a green pepper when mature. The leaves looked pretty fragile to me so I potted it up in the greenhouse. It produces lots of side shoots with tendrils and is trained along a horizontal bar then up a string to the next level where it was last seen heading for the roof vents! I'll let you know if I get any fruit from it!

Dead-heading is a really worthwhile task as it significantly prolongs the period that plants will continue to flower. This is essential with summer bedding plants as they will die off once allowed to set seed. Many roses benefit from this treatment except those with ornamental hips in autumn such as the rugosas, the dog roses and the yellow rose 'Canary Bird' which is flowering beautifully this year and will produce dark maroon hips later.



Dead-heading is a really worthwhile task as it significantly prolongs the period that plants will continue to flower. This is essential with summer bedding plants as they will die off once allowed to set seed. Many roses benefit from this treatment except those with ornamental hips in autumn such as the rugosas, the dog roses and the yellow rose 'Canary Bird' which is flowering beautifully this year and will produce dark maroon hips later.



Lupins will also produce more flowers if the main spike is cut off after flowering. I am growing one of the Westcountry lupins called 'Masterpiece' which is such a rich colour and looks lovely next to something lime green such as alchemilla. I know that alchemilla mollis can seed around but it's such a useful contrast to darker colours. If you are ruthless and cut the flowers off as soon as they start to fade, not only will you get a second flush of smaller flowers but you will also vastly reduce its capacity to self-seed.



Oriental poppies, those with the big blowsy blooms, will have mostly finished flowering now and this is another plant where it pays to be ruthless. If you can bear it, cut all the dead flowers and the leaves right back; it will look horrible initially, but before long it will produce lots of fresh new growth and you may even get a few extra flowers. This can also be done with some of the hardy geraniums if they are looking tired.

You may have heard of the 'Chelsea Chop' and although the Chelsea Flower Show is now a distant memory, this technique is still worth trying in a modified way. The idea is that at the end of May, around the time of Chelsea, the height of certain clumps of border perennials is reduced by about a third. This has the effect of not only causing the stem to branch and therefore produce more flowers but also to delay the time of flowering. This can be done now with later flowering plants such as Heleniums, Michaelmas daisies or Rudbeckia; select a few flower spikes within the clump and cut off the top third. Just as the first flowers are starting to die off, the next flush will be ready to start and the show will continue.

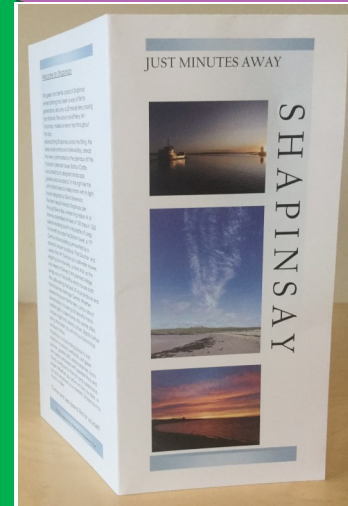
Gardeners know that there are always jobs to do and never enough time to do them but don't let this get in the way of enjoying what's there. I agree totally with Monty Don when he says "...sometimes you have to stop and let the garden come to you as it is, to be relished with all its flaws and failings as well as its stunning beauty".

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

Putting Shapinsay on the Tourism Map



Shapinsay has a brand new leaflet to promote our island as a tourist destination! Members of the community got together to write, design, and choose donated pictures for the leaflet then successfully applied for SWAP grant funding from Shapinsay Development Trust for it to be printed.

It includes an insert advertising local businesses and organisations on the island to attract and inform visitors.

A large number of helpers got together at the Boathouse to fold the leaflets before they were distributed to tourist information and other outlets in Orkney by island volunteers.



A member of staff at the tourist information centre in Kirkwall told us they are having to re-fill the Shapinsay leaflet holder many times as visitors from cruise liners in particular, look for a nearby island to pop out to and explore!



Shapinsay Picnic

Saturday 17th June saw the annual Picnic, and what a fantastic day it was! The weather held out, there was a huge turnout of folk and we all had a great time!

The day started with the usual sandwich making, and thanks to all the people who came along to help with it and who provided the baking. Events started at 1pm and we had lots of competitors from Shapinsay and further afield for all the events. The children did really well, even completing the 400m as well this year. The adult events were brilliantly supported and there was some fierce competition. Tim Ross (Orkney's marathon runner) provided some stiff challenge in the mile race!

Tea was, as ever, wonderful and Tim Ross then presented the prizes to the children. Thanks to Tim, and also to Paula from Tesco who brought over water and fruit for us. The tug of war was won this year by the North team (despite my best efforts pulling on the South side). After a brief rest it was back again for the dance, and the Shapinsay music group provided excellent music for us all. The adult and under 16 prizes were presented and everyone even had enough energy left for some dancing.

Thanks to everyone who came along and made it such a fantastic day. Thanks must also go to the Picnic Committee, as without them the Picnic just couldn't happen. If you are interested in helping next year or coming onto the committee please let Sue Brown or Emma Clements know.

We would like to put together a photo montage of the day so if anyone has any photos they'd be willing to share please could they send them to Leanne Bews or the school. Thanks!



children winners from L to R – Erin Boyd, Leilah Muir, Tim Ross, Matthew Meason and Gavin Rendall
Adult and Under 16 winners – Darren Muir, Thomas Leslie, Fiona Diamond and Ann Groat



Blide Trust Activity Days on Shapinsay!



The Blide Trust are offering some free activity days based at the Boathouse to which all are welcome. In their first visit last month they offered a needle felting workshop for beginners and they are following this up with a free **3-D** needle felting session at the Boathouse on **Friday July 14th** at which folks can have a go at making felted owls.

There will be a free lunch at 12 noon until 12.45pm during which local people are invited to look at some ideas for plans and designs for a community gardening plot which Blide have offered to get going for us. If you're interested in being involved you can meet Blide's gardening team over lunch and tell them what you'd like them to help us achieve - whether growing herbs, vegetables, flowers or a mixture of things. They are willing to get things going and provide some support visits but it's up to local people to take it forward in the way they want to. So if you're interested drop in and have a chat with the team.

In the afternoon the needle felting continues plus a relaxing free 20 minute session of hand/head massage is on offer with aromatherapy practitioner Carol Shearer. To book an appointment or find out more about the garden project or felting contact Lynne Collinson cao@shapinsay.org.uk or Tel: 711733

New boost for Shapinsay's oral history project!

Shapinsay Development Trust has been awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Stories, Stones and Bones Grant to make available to the public material being gathered through the oral history project that's underway on the island.

Senior members of the community are busy recording their recollections with a team of volunteer interviewers and now thanks to a £5,100 HLF grant, we will be able to archive and share these precious memories of the island's past through a new MASH (Memories about Shapinsay) web portal. The information will also be used to produce learning materials for local school children. The project is part of Scotland's Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology.

The funding application was prompted by local peoples' concerns that valuable oral accounts of the island's rich local heritage were not being preserved and shared for others to enjoy. However, thanks to HLF funding, this has now been made possible.

SDT Community Action officer Lynne Collinson said "I'm thrilled that we have received this funding for something which many islanders feel so passionately about. People are excited that their eye witness accounts of life and traditions on the island from the past 80 years or so will be made available to others."

If you would like to share your own memories of Shapinsay's past or be part of the volunteer interview team please contact Lynne Collinson cao@shapinsay.org.uk or Tel: 711733

Meanwhile Shapinsay memories were also the focus of a visit by Helen Le-Mar and Lewis Hou recently and the Science Ceilidh Band. With the help of archive photos from the Heritage Centre local folks had fun reminiscing about the island's musical past in the run up to a community ceilidh event.



Shapinsay Wildlife Matters

by Paul Hollinrake



Common Twayblade Orchids

There are three species of orchid found on Shapinsay in the countryside. These are the purple spiked northern marsh orchids found in abundance along our roadside verges and the paler pink heath spotted orchids found more commonly in areas of heather or boggy ground.

The most unusual and uncommon orchid found here is the Twayblade, known as the Common Twayblade or *Neottia ovata*. It is so named because of its two leaves at the base. It is often overlooked as it is just green and not that impressive to look at unless you look closely.

From the base grows a tall spike bearing the rather special yellow/green flowers. Once the flower buds open they look like little people, complete with head, arms, body and even legs! I kid you not! To see this you need to get down close to examine the flowers, and it always brings a smile to my face when I see them again!

The orchid family is arguably the largest flowering plant family on earth with about 30,000 species. It is also one of the oldest, developing about 84 million years ago. While orchids look very exotic, they are actually very primitive.

The pollen is a fine dust that is concentrated in packets known as pollinia. The pollen cannot float freely through the air so is entirely dependent on a pollinator such as an insect. So orchids have modified their flowers in all sorts of weird and wonderful ways to trick a wide variety of pollinators into transporting their pollen from one flower to another.

I was delighted recently to find two Twayblade plants on the flower rich steep banks at the Mill Dam RSPB reserve. They have never been recorded there before.

These banks have what are known as calcareous flushes, that is lime rich wetter areas, which Twayblade favour. Grazing by buffalo and ponies throughout the year, helps to keep these areas open and not choked by grasses, so that flowers can flourish.

The only other place I know that they grow are along the roadside verges close up to the fence of the west side road, where there are many plants growing in clusters. If you know of any other areas where they grow on Shapinsay I would love to see them.

