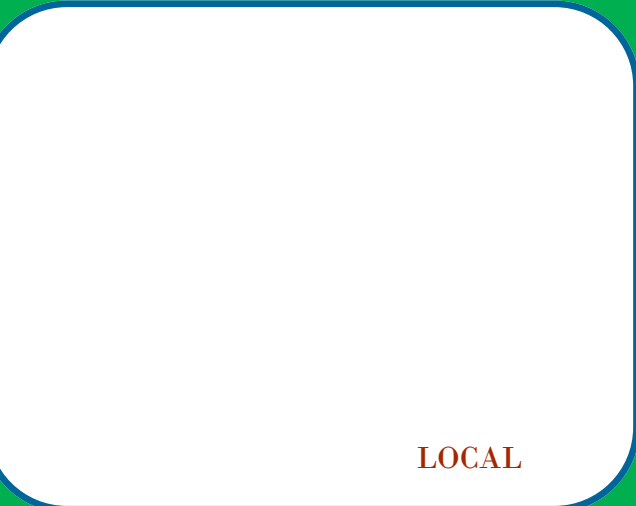


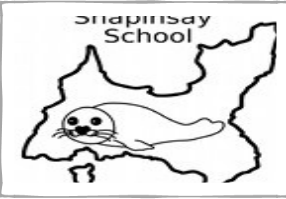
# The Shapinsay Sound



LOCAL

The newsletter for the island of Shapinsay produced by the Shapinsay Development Trust.  
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We enjoyed the nice weather that we had for a few days and found every possible excuse to go and work outside! The guinea pigs have also been enjoying spending more time outside. The children have all had great fun playing in the courtyard garden, with the children all working together. Children from P1 – P7 worked together to create model habitats which showed animals and plants (to tie in with the topics currently being covered in the two classes) and to show a food chain and how the animals and plants were adapted for their habitat. The children once again showed their great creativity with this task and worked really well together. Nursery children have been spending some whole mornings outside which has been great. They have been growing lots of seeds and making grass snakes with real grass! P4 – 7 have made some fantastic plants in Art, made with tissue paper, PVA and wire.



The P7s have been doing lots of trips recently as part of their transition work. They have visited KGS, joined in with P7s at the Hope School to get to know them before going to Lagganlia in June and have also been to the climbing wall with P7s from other schools. In June they will be taking part in transition sports with P7s from other schools, will be visiting KGS for two days and will also be going to Lagganlia.



P4 – 6 children will be going to Hoy for 2 nights while the P7s are away, so the school will be very quiet for a few days! P1 – 3 children have been on a visit to Northvet and to Petmania in Kirkwall and have been to the Bird Hide in Shapinsay (the older class went as well). Gemma Leslie came in to talk to the children about her work at Northvet and she checked the guinea pigs while she was here too. Mark Evans came in with Ellie from the council to speak about animals too – many thanks to everyone who has been in to help us, we really do appreciate all your help.

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SHAPINSAY  
DEVELOPMENT  
TRUST

# The Shapinsay Sound

## From the Chair

by Sheila Garson

June 2016

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## BIG HIT

Following on from the announcement last month that the BIG HIT project has secured EU funding, it's great to be able to report that the Kick Off Meeting for the project took place in Orkney on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of May. This saw representatives from all the partners throughout Europe meeting face to face for the first time. Not only did this provided an opportunity to discuss the finer points of the project, but it also gave our partners a chance to visit the key sites.

Here in Shapinsay we hosted a well-attended meeting on the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> to look at the BIG HIT project in more detail. It was good to have a number of our partners on hand to provide information and answer questions, including Kris Hyde from ITM Power and Mark Hull from Community Energy Scotland. Jan Falconer from OIC was also present to begin consulting on the proposal to site hydrogen-powered boilers at the Community School. Then on the afternoon of the 25<sup>th</sup> a number partners visited the island to help them understand the transport routes and see the proposed hydrogen locations.

The discussions and visits over the two days has really cemented the relationship between all the partners as well as enthusing and energizing us all for the hard work ahead in delivering this innovative project.

**BIG HIT** will potentially solve our curtailment problem and result in a significant increase in income for the Trust. We plan to hold a further public meeting soon to look at how we might use this income for the benefit of the island. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns about **BIG HIT** please get in touch. You are welcome to drop into the Boathouse or contact us by phone or email.





# The Weeping Window

by Lynne Collinson

## Shapinsay folk proud to contribute to Poppies presentation

**With all the media attention it cannot have escaped anyone's notice by now that St Magnus Cathedral is playing host to a glorious Weeping Window of cascading poppies to mark the centenary of the Battle of Jutland. Shapinsay Development Trust's Chair Sheila Garson who is also Orkney Museum's Curator writes about her 'behind the scenes' role in preparations for this very special event:-**

There was great excitement within the museum service when we heard the poppies were coming to Orkney and even more when museum staff with object handling experience were invited to help set up the display. I was fortunate to spend two days helping with the poppy installation.

My first day brought gale force winds so our small group worked in a shed under the supervision of the 14-18 NOW staff who were undertaking the installation. Our job was to populate large metal frames with poppies. These frames were then added to the display pouring from the Cathedral window.



Each of the 4,000 poppies in the installation is supported by two neoprene washers below and two above and, to ensure a tight fit, these have to be forced over the metal rod "stems". The protective gloves and goggles we all had to wear made this job even more difficult, but we soon mastered the technique although we all found our thumbs soon ached!

**Amongst up to 70 volunteer Poppy Hosts greeting visitors to the display are 2 Shapinsay ladies..... *Being a Poppy Host is an honour*" – writes Jan Buchannan**

Poppies! Predominately red flowers, more readily known for being a symbol of remembrance for those lost at war. As a Poppy guardian or host, at the Cathedral, my role is to welcome and speak to people that come to see the poppies, I have leaflets to hand out and hopefully sufficient training to answer a myriad of questions!



I have welcomed many school children - one little boy had a list of questions! Not to mention a group of aged bikers from Bath and visitors from around the world, especially Australians who read about the Weeping Window display in their local newspaper! And of course many locals. It's an honour to represent Orkney as an ambassador and guardian of the poppies. I'd also like to say a big 'thankyou' to Voluntary Action Orkney who have been very supportive to us as hosts. They gave us our training which gave us the confidence to play our part and they have visited the poppy hosts daily to offer encouragement.

# Poem

by HL Davis

## INTO THE BOX

Into the box go  
Twisted thoughts,  
Revenge most sweet:  
My darker self.

No more to hear  
The drum of words,  
The battle fought:  
My darker self.

Promises snapped  
Like broken twigs  
Kindling hate:  
My darker self.

Widowed heart,  
Now Rest in Peace.  
The box is closed:  
Back on the shelf.

## Shapinsay School

## Part 2

The children will be learning about World War One for 2 weeks at the end of May / beginning of June. We hope to learn some songs, read and write poetry, make some large models, do some cooking, try some drama as well as finding out more about World War 1 itself.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> June P1 – 7 will be going over to Kirkwall and we are getting a tour of one of the Navy ships before going to see the Weeping Window poppies at the cathedral.

As it's the end of the session, we are reviewing our year at school, and thinking about our improvement targets for next year. Parents and members of the community are welcome to come into school from 2pm – 3pm on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June to hear about what we've been working on this session and to help us think about things we could improve in the future (this will be a session for adults, not with the children this time). Please come along if you would like to - all are welcome.

## Kirk News

As you might remember from previous issues of the Shapinsay Sound, the Shapinsay kirk is on a pilot project of the Church of Scotland called Path of Renewal. The core group has met a number of times and we came up with a few things we'd like to try to start with. We had our first event already – on the 24<sup>th</sup> April we held a Bag the Bruck session. That Sunday afternoon we met with willing volunteers at the harbour and had a couple of hours of tidying up the beach. Because there were 17 of us, it went pretty quickly and we finished not far from Elwick Bay!

Thank you to all those who did turn up and gave us a hand on the day. It was a great experience working together to make our island a cleaner place.

The next thing on our agenda is something we've never done before – we're going to have our own table at the Shapinsay show. There's going to be some goodies to give out, a quiz, some information about who we are and what we do and a bunch of us to have a chat with! We're hoping to see as many of you there as possible. We're also hoping for good weather!! See you there if not before!

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



# SWAP

The Shapinsay Way Ahead Programme (SWAP) is open to all members of our community and is designed to support individuals and groups based on the following eight themes:

- **Education and Learning**
- **Culture, Heritage and Environment**
- **Recreation, Community Facilities and Local Services**
- **Enterprising Community**
- **Young People**
- **Housing**
- **Elderly Care and Support**
- **Transport**

Please call 711733 if you'd like to discuss making an application. Help in preparing an application is always available. Please think ahead though as the current rules do not support retrospective applications.

Shapinsay Development Trust are pleased to announce the following awards which have recently been approved:

**Shapinsay School** - P4-P6 Hoy Trip - £120

**Shapinsay School** - P7 Lagannlia Trip - £200

**Shapinsay Youth Club** - Football & Athletics - £242.76

**Shapinsay School** - Equipment for new outdoor learning area - £2839.95

**Shapinsay Parent Council** - Support for printing costs of new island phone directory including large print edition - £284.10

**Shapinsay Cushions** (Shapinsay Satellite Image Sewing Project) - support for ongoing room rental, materials and equipment - £250

All of these applications received the full sum requested

## The Weeping Window Part 2



***"I was delighted to volunteer"*** – writes fellow Poppy Host Gillian Foster

My experience as a poppy host on duty at the cathedral has been a positive one. I am interested in historical buildings such as the Cathedral, enjoy art displays and getting involved in community events so could not let the opportunity to volunteer pass me by.

I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting and talking to visitors and locals interested in the display. Offering leaflets to visitors is a good way to start a conversation and answering any questions.

The cathedral Custodians are on hand for queries along with Colin the stonemason. I was able to direct visitors to the museum for further information on the battle of Jutland and encouraged them to visit the exhibition. I am also mindful of the fact that some visitors are happy to just sit and enjoy the surroundings or take time out to reflect.

he model of the ceramic unpainted poppy is popular with the school children and those with impaired vision as it can be touched. I do however worry I might drop it while showing it to visitors or that it might blow away!

The Weeping Window in my opinion is a very beautiful and poignant work of art viewed close up or from a distance which serves as a reminder to all of us of the sacrifices made by others.

So I would encourage you to make the effort to visit the display for yourself before the 12<sup>th</sup> of June when it will continue on its tour to the black watch museum in Perth.





## Garden Notes from Old School



I know we've not reached the longest day yet and the Flower Show seems a long time away, but it's time to start preparations. Pot plants should be nicely balanced and have plenty of blooms so do any last shaping now of geraniums and pelargoniums and pinch out the growing tips of fuchsias to encourage a rounded shape and lots of buds. Start feeding weekly and look out for whitefly and aphids which are likely to be problematic this year due to the mild winter.

Containers and hanging baskets can also be planted up now so that they have time to establish and really fill out. I usually mix a water retaining gel into the compost at planting time to help prevent the compost drying out. Terracotta pots look lovely when they're weathered but they do dry out easily; if this happens, the only way to wet the compost in the centre of the pot is to stand it in water right up to the rim and let it soak really well. If you have pots which are permanently planted, chances are they'll

have Vine Weevil in them. The outward signs of this are notches eaten out of the side of the leaves by the adult weevils but the real damage is happening in the soil where the white grubs eat the roots of the plant. Try Nemasys Vine Weevil Killer which can be watered directly into the pots; it's not a poison, but contains nematodes which attack only the weevil grubs. I have read predictions that this is going to be a bumper year for slugs, again due to the wet and mild winter. I was recently reading a copy of Gardeners World magazine from May 1996 in which Alan Titchmarsh was bemoaning the fact that we don't seem to have any eccentrics or 'characters' in the gardening world anymore. He mentioned E A Bowles, an amateur gardener who had a big influence in the gardening world in the early 1900s and who is remembered through plants such as Pulmonaria Bowles Red, Viola Bowles Black and Erysimum Bowles Mauve. He was intrigued by plants that through some quirk of nature, did odd things, such as the very twisted Corkscrew Hazel, a Plantain that produces extra leaves instead of flowers and a pygmy Elder. In his private garden at Myddelton House in Enfield he dedicated a corner for these oddities which he called the Lunatic Asylum. Anyway, to get back to the problem of slugs, apparently he used to go around spearing them with a hatpin so bear that in mind as a control measure next time you're parading around your estate wearing your hat!

I'm growing sunflowers again this year but it won't be in an attempt to win a prize for the tallest! Varieties that are listed as 5ft tall such as Velvet Queen or Valentine can have their growing tip pinched out when they're about a foot tall which encourages them to branch. The end result is a plant about 3ft tall that has loads of flowers. They still need staking because they are big, top-heavy plants but it's worth the effort as the slightly smaller flowers they produce are a perfect size for a vase.

In the veg garden I've planted out summer cabbages, kale and cauliflowers. If you didn't sow these earlier it's probably best to buy young plants now but there's still time to sow lettuce/salad leaves, carrots, beetroot, parsnips, swede and winter cabbage. Last month I wrote about using flowers in the veg garden; the converse of this is to sneak some veg into the flower garden to fill the odd gap; you could try French beans, courgettes, ruby chard, purple kale and red lettuce, all of which are ornamental in their own right.

Plant of the month is Papaver orientalis, the large, blousy oriental poppy; Bob Brown of Cotswold Garden Flowers apparently once described the variety 'Raspberry Queen' as being like Barbara Cartland leaning slightly with running mascara. Given decent drainage these are very easy to grow and put on a fantastic display in early summer. They come in all shades of red, orange, pink and white, usually with black blotches at the base of each petal. Cut each flower stalk at the base when the flower fades then when flowering is finished, all the leaves can be cut right down. This can leave a messy gap until new foliage comes back later in the year so grow them next to something like catmint which will spread over and hide the gap.

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)



## Shapinsay Wildlife Matters

by Paul Hollinrake

**SNIFE** I expect many of you have stood outside on a calm spring evening and heard a weird rising woohooohooohooowhooohooa sound way up above you. It can feel rather unworldly, weird and unnerving if you don't know what it is and where it is. It will most likely be a displaying snipe. The males complete a winnowing flight, rising slowly in a wide circle to then perform a series of power dives, where wind passes over specially modified tail feathers held out at right angles from its body, producing a remarkable throbbing sound known as "drumming".

This drumming sound has been likened to the bleating of a goat, and in Scotland they are known as heather bleaters. In Orkney snipe are known as Horse Gowks, a Gouk being a leg-pull, trick or joke, presumably on account of their drumming sound being also likened to a horse whinnying and it's obviously not a horse.

Snipe are hard to pick out, but well worth following the sound and trying to find one. The idea is that the male impresses a female snipe so much with his drumming that she comes up to meet him and he pursues her, often holding his wings up in a shallow V angle whilst doing a victory roll, turning completely upside down.

The female snipe lays her eggs often amongst heather or tussocky grasses and she does all the incubating, whilst the male continues to defend his territory by drumming over the nest site. He will also sit on a post and proclaim ownership of his area by making "tick tocking" sounds with his voice, often called "chipping". The eggs hatch after about three weeks.

The brood of maybe 4 chicks is divided equally between both parents, to look after separately. They feed them small insects and worms using their bills until they are independent after another three weeks or so. Snipe have extraordinary long bills for their size. They sense

prey items on the surface by sight but prey under the ground is located using touch-sensitive sensory pits at the tip of their flexible bill. They feed a lot at night, often spending much of the day resting

Snipe are persistent breeders, so if one or two nests get trampled or predated, they will try again and again until they succeed, and may be found nesting right through into July.

Snipe are cryptically coloured. This means they are difficult to detect against the background making them superbly camouflaged. I've often seen a snipe flying but then just melt away from view as soon as it lands. Both males and females look alike, but the female may have a slightly larger bill. The bill can be used to joust other birds as a means of defending its territory. Snipe are shy birds keeping themselves concealed close to the ground and only flush up and fly off in characteristic zig zag flight when approached very closely, uttering a sharp scape scape sound.



Thanks to well camouflaged snipe photo by Alan Leitch and the other two by Gerry Cannon