

Weel Bressa, Whit News?

We have much to be thankful for here in Bressay. This issue celebrates some of the efforts our community has made to help those affected by the war in Ukraine. We also celebrate our new woodland, in itself a symbol of hope for the future. info@bressay.org / www.bressay.org / 820706

Bressay Development update

Bressay Community Woodland. Volunteers planted 1000 trees during two weekends in early March. The planting days were so successful that we had no trees left for the final Sunday! A mixture of Birch, Willow, Rowan, Common Alder are included and have all been staked with tubes to offer some shelter from the wind. We wish to say thank you to everyone who helped get our woodland planted. The next part of the project will be the re-building of a stone crub near the loch. Work will start in June.

Staffing at Speldiburn. BDL has been awarded three-year funding package from Highlands & Islands Enterprise for a full time Development Officer. The new post will focus on the Speldiburn re-design (mentioned below), investigating options to increase housing and to assist the community in the transition to net zero. This summer Ali will be assisted in the cafe by Aleshia Riise, with Andrew Lowe and Joanie Mason working Saturdays and during the School holidays.

Volunteer opportunities. We would love to hear from anyone who might be interested in helping in the Good As New Shop. The shop is open for two hours during lunchtimes to coincide with the cafe. It's a friendly and sociable job and wholly staffed and maintained by volunteers. If you'd be interested in a regular or occasional shift please call along the shop.

Speldiburn re-design. We are delighted with the draft plans produced so far by Malcolmsons Architects. See page 2 for details.

Bressay Lighthouse. BDL submitted an expression of interest to the Shetland Amenity Trust in March. We believe that there is considerable potential for development and wish to ensure that changes will bring benefit to our community. However, we would be equally keen to support a good proposal from other parties. SAT are still considering submissions.



Clockwise from top right. We had a beautiful day and a great turnout for our 1st woodland planting session; Moira Smith and Claire Davenport get stuck in; Dani Manson and Mariette Lowe showing off their excellent tree planting skills; Afra Skene and Maisie - the youngest visitor of the day; Lesley Roberts plants a tree in the sunshine; Patty, Ozzy and Pip Mason with a tree, stake and guard used on the site.

What's on

Right now - **Tatties available in the Mail Shop for this year's tattie in a bucket competition!**

Every Friday - **Under 5s playgroup at Speldiburn Nursery**

Saturday 13th August - **MS Society Shetland fundraiser for local support. Bressay Hall 7pm - 10pm**

Sunday 4th September - **Bressay Garden Show**

Speldiburn re-design ideas taking shape

Malcolmson Architects have been working with BDL to re-imagine Speldiburn in line with the needs and aspirations of BDL, our tenants and user groups. We are keen to retain the best elements of the school while making the most of the site and buildings. The design is still evolving but we have settled on a new floor plan which offers the best from what is a rather tricky building to alter to any large extent. Our plans involve a new build which will sit on the site of the external toilet block, increased studio/start up space and more flexible multi use rooms. Some of the initial drawings can be viewed at Speldiburn and online at www.bressay.org. We will hold an open day in the summer to allow folk to view the proposed designs and offer comments and suggestions which will help us agree the final plans before we look for funding and contractors to allow us to progress this exciting new project.



Plant sale success

Bressay's annual plant sale raised a record £1,311.30 on Sunday 15th May for the Red Cross Ukrainian Refugee Crisis Appeal. In just two hours the event, held in conjunction with the famous Bressay Sunday Teas, raised more than twice last year's total – from the sale of plants, seedlings and cuttings. There was also the special treat of ice creams from the new ice cream venture Miss Sprinkles!



Top; Charles Christie-Henry and John Bateson at the plant sale. Bottom; Lynette Smith providing icecream to some very happy bairns - Astrid and Freya Paton, Magnus and Ella Tulloch.

Bressay crafters create beautiful items to support the people of Ukraine

Rozanne Perdu and Fiona Gray have captured the spirit of the Bressay community by donating the proceeds of their new work to the Ukraine recovery fund, the DEC appeal. In total they have raised £1110 (as at April 30th). BDL caught up with them to ask about their process as artists.



When did you start drawing, Rozanne? And what does making art mean to you?

I have always enjoyed doing arts and crafts for as long as I can remember, especially more so since our children have now grown up and I have time to try different art. To me art means the pleasure I get from creating something and standing back and thinking, "I did that". As well as the therapeutic value. Art is a great way to switch off from all the stresses of life and completely focus on what I am making through drawing, painting or cutting shapes out on my fretsaw. I love that I can create art that is very special, personal and meaningful for an individual whether that be on stone, paper, wood or slate.

We have been great admirers of your detailed work, in particular, on rocks. Can you tell us why you like to paint on rock and what are the advantages?

I love the feel and look of our beautiful natural stones. They are so smooth to paint on and each one very unique for its purpose. I love the idea of boats painted on stone as this reflects the sea and surroundings. I have painted stones for a variety of different requests- gardens, memorial gardens, grave sides, gifts, decorations, all which are very personal to the individual. The feedback is very inspiring and encouraging. I have had requests for painted stone and slate which has been

posted to America, New Zealand, Germany, France, England, Scotland, Ireland and throughout Shetland, all from our peerie island Bressay. Also, I have recently started using pastel pencils and I'm really pleased with the outcome so far and hope to be working with this more.

You have painted several rocks recently to raise money for the DEC Appeal for Ukraine. Can you tell us where we can commission you and if there are any more available?

If you would like any artwork completed, I can be contacted through my Facebook business page, "Rozanne's Crafts" or on Facebook messenger using my name, Rozanne Perdu. I also have some crafts for sale in Speldiburn and the Bressay Heritage Centre. At Christmas time you can find some of my crafts in The Bressay shop. I've recently painted stones to raise money for the Red Cross DEC Ukraine Appeal with 100% of the sales going towards this much needed cause. And we've reached up to £770 in total so far. Thank you kindly to all the folks who have bought a stone.



Fiona Gray, who has been weaving for nearly 25 years counsels any would-be makers to pursue their own interests first and let everything else fall into place. Here's what she had to say to BDL:

How long have you been weaving and where did your initial interest in woven textiles come from?

25 years ago, I watched a lady spin fleece and was completely fascinated by the process. The gentle sound of the wheel and the ease with which the spinner made thread never left me. 5 years later I bought my first spinning wheel and created some terrible uneven yarn, which is apparently a desirable creative art yarn. I was soon hooked on spinning, refining my process and gathering too many skeins of yarn to be considered sensible. I knitted with lots of it, but realised a much better way of showing it off was to weave with it. My first weaving loom was a simple Rigid Heddle Loom 16" wide. With this I could make scarves, shawls and fabric to chop up and sew. It was extremely portable and it travelled with me wherever I went. My second loom was a knitters loom - a 27" version of the Rigid Heddle Loom. I began to explore with more varied colours and textures and made some pretty unusual creations which I mostly gave away or kept as samples. I've always been influenced by nature, colour and the mood of my immediate environment. There is nothing more pleasing than having scores of colours surrounding me as I make a wall hanging tapestry or testing colours in a weaving pattern. It's like painting with wool. My Rigid Heddle Looms were immediately replaced by 8 shaft table looms when I stopped my travels. Of course the process of getting the warp on the loom ready to weave was much more complex, but the results were certainly worth the frustration.



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Where does your inspiration for your woven pieces come from and how do you turn your ideas into textiles?

Shetland's skies, coastlines, seas and beautiful landscape are my source of colour inspiration. My favourite medium for weaving is wool, though I tend not to use this for neckwear. The colours of wool available from local sources are perfectly blended to represent the real colours of Shetland and I use these exclusively in creating fabric for cutting, for tapestry, small rugs and wall hangings. Once I've completed a weave, I challenge myself to try to make something new and different. Thus far, these have been handbags, tote bags, cosmetic bags, clocks and backgrounds for cards.

I love learning and took many online classes during lockdown. Some were for fun and some have really pushed my boundaries of possibilities. One such course introduced me to the fibre Tencel. Tencel is made from the pulp of Eucalyptus trees, is sustainable and is super soft. It is my chosen neckwear fibre as it is comfortable and elegant to wear.

Do you have any advice for any crafters trying to set up their own small business?

I belong to two online Guilds, one specifically for weavers and I'm also a member of the Shetland Guild of Weavers, Spinners, Dyers and Knitters. During Shetland Wool Week 2018, when helping with Chris's Garth's Croft Tour lunches, I was asked by one of the participants if I would write an article for her magazine! I was rather stunned, but thrilled to appear over two pages in the British Fibre Art magazine later that year.



I am self taught in all my fibre exploits. I love the freedom this offers me and can push myself to new learning when I'm ready. The Shetland Textile Museum annual competition last year was entitled "The Beach". While Bonnie the black lab was enjoying a swim at Mail beach, I spotted a lone starfish in the sand. This became the focus of a wall tapestry I entered into that competition, winning second equal prize. This year, my entry of a tapestry woven clock to the Shetland Guild competition "Inspired by Michaelswood" won the weaving shield. I was thrilled recently to have been successful in the Shetland Arts and Crafts Quality Assurance process. I am now part of the Shetland Craft Trail, which I hope will increase footfall to Speldiburn. Mine is a tiny business, grown from a hobby. My weaving products are unique and although I might make two or three different items from one weave, no two pieces will be the same. I believe that much of my inspiration comes from not working under pressure, as my mind is clear to create. I do not undertake commissions, as such pieces can take a long time to start and finish. I have an Etsy Shop and an Isle20 shop, both online and Alison kindly sells for me in the Mail Shop. Recently, I've been weaving and sewing cosmetic bags for a fund raiser for Ukraine. I've sent £205 to the DEC funds so far and hope that by selling a further 5 bags, I'll be sending a further £100. These

donations are gift aided which makes a potential total to £412.25. Sunflower Fabric Bags are currently for sale in Mail Shop and Speldiburn. Thank you for supporting this cause. I love what I do, and hope that you do too

Bressay History Group Update

Bressay Heritage Centre is open again for the summer season - Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 10am - 4pm. Our new exhibitions include; The Shetland coo and the important role she played in island life. The Brenda, her story, before and during her time as Bressay's ferry. Bressay Lighthouse; memories, art and photos collected as part of the recent Gathering Strings project by Aert Workshops. We will open further days if more staff or volunteers can be found. Let us know if you can help. We would also welcome any information regarding the Cordiner Bros fishing station in Bressay and the boat the Fisher Lassie.



SPELDIBURN CAFE

OPEN 11.00 - 3.00 • TUESDAY - FRIDAY

SATURDAY PARKRUN BREAKFASTS 9.30 - 11.00 CAFE OPEN 11.30 - 3.00

NEW EXHIBITION BY JOYCE DAVIS

Closed June 14th 15th 16th

Broadcaster visits Garth Croft

Chris Dyer welcomed Kate Humble, broadcaster and author, from BBC Springwatch to Garth's Croft this month along with clients visiting Bressay through Shetland Nature to discuss crofting, heritage and native breeds.



New Green Heating For The Hall

Bressay Hall Committee aim to upgrade the Hall heating to an air source system. We've sought advice and quotes from local suppliers and liaised with SSE for a new electric meter. We have also submitted an application to the Shetland Community Benefit Fund, through Bressay Community Council, to install the system. A separate application will be made for solar panels which we hope will complement the air source system and together provide reduced CO2 emissions and more convenient heating.

Bressay Sports Club News

Bressay Sports Club held a successful Sunday teas on the 17th of April, raising £496.47. The organisers would like to thank the Community for supporting the day by coming along, donating raffles, and helping out in the Hall and kitchen. The money is going towards improvements at the park, including a new sit-on mower which has been ordered. The club are in the first stages of discussion regarding a new fire station with facilities for the park showers / toilets and storage for our equipment / community garden. Thanks also to the community for filling in the questionnaire about further use of the Sports Park.

Gathering Strings - Lookout Art Sessions

This spring, Aimee Labourn has been working on a project called Gathering Strings, ***an intergenerational art and history project which aims to bring together participants' stories with artwork made by local children.***

Aimee invited people to share their experiences of life on Bressay and how it has changed in the last century, with the lighthouse as the starting theme. This included informal conversations as well as evenings with the History Group, sharing photographs and memories.

The lighthouse has watched over the entrance to Bressay Sound for over 150 years. But this steadfast landmark has undergone many changes too. Developments in safety, communications and technology altered not only the equipment used when the site was operational, but the lives of keepers and their families who called the 'Bressa Light' home. From participants, stories were told of endurance, wild weather, separation from family, and the fog horn's distinctive sound and vibrations. But warm memories were also shared of great freedom, keepers' enjoyment and pride in their work, and how lighthouse families were valued on island, their presence bringing new skills and new energy to Bressay.

After fascinating conversations with participants where many stories and themes emerged, Aimee allowed this process of 'gathering string' to shape art workshops with local children, both in Bressay and in Lerwick. "In our Lookout drawing afternoons, the children were drawing from pictures and sounds, and exploring watercolour, wax crayon, pastel and collage to creatively engage with history." As well as being enjoyable for those involved, Aimee hoped these sessions would lead the children to relate to the past in new ways, and imaginatively explore wider themes about island life - how it has changed and continues to change, which is something that connects us all.

These sessions were lots of fun and the work made was wonderfully colourful, imaginative and perceptive. The children drew keepers at their work, families in their lighthouse homes as well as lovely landscapes which had real sense of weather, environment, sound, and imaginative viewpoint. Visitors to the Bressay Heritage Centre will be able to see a display of our young artists' pictures over the summer, accompanied by memories and photos of the lighthouse collected during the project.

Aimee's art practice focuses on drawing, and she recently started an art workshop enterprise called Aert. Through Aert, Aimee hopes to continue ways of working with others begun during Gatherings Strings, and explore drawing as a process to record, imagine and communicate in ways which are felt as well as re-told.

Aimee would like to thank all those who've kindly taken part in this project so far, and to the History Group for display space at the Heritage Centre and such enjoyable evening gatherings. "I look forward to sharing our young artists' work with visitors!"

This project is in association with Shetland Arts and is part of Culture Collective, a Scotland-wide programme supported by Creative Scotland. To find out more about the project, please visit www.aert.co.uk/projects.



Patty and Mariette's watercolour & wax crayon pictures, work by Lee Smith, Pip Mason, Mariette Lowe and Patty Mason, Lee, Mariette and Patty busy creating art at one of the Lookout sessions at Speldiburn.