



Illumination 8: Burra Isle, Easthouse Croft House, Duncanslate, West Burra and the Aald Haa, Houss, East Burra

Our eighth illumination forms an unusual pair in our series of illuminations that celebrate the art of light throughout Shetland this winter 2009 - 2010. While these sites were not included in our original selection of ten sites, we are very happy to have been able to illuminate them.

We were especially pleased to welcome two guest lighting designers, Martin Lupton and Sharon Stammers, who travelled to Shetland to work with us. Martin is based in Birmingham and Sharon in London. Their collaborative work is largely focussed on Guerrilla Lighting (www.guerrillalighting.net), although they also work together in other ways, including films about lighting in cities worldwide. Sharon works for the Professional Lighting Designers Association and Martin is the organisation's President.

Easthouse and the **Aald Haa** lie directly opposite each other across the South Voe. Sharon and Martin have designed the illumination to enable the buildings to "speak" to each other. They have programmed a morse code translation in light of James Sinclair's poem in Shetland Dialect, *Under Northern Skies*, which he has written in response to Mirrie Dancers. You can download a copy from our website.

A single light in the window of each building pulses with two of the four verses of the poem. The receiving building illuminates in the colour inspired by that verse. The idea harks back to Sharon's childhood, when she and a friend, Julie, flashed their torches to each other's windows to say hello. Sharon's light is at the Haa, and Julie's shines from the old croft house, Easthouse. The colours for the illumination are inspired by James's poem and the colours of the seasons in Shetland.

This site was one of our original thirty-two short-listed sites, and we always thought it would make a very interesting illumination. It refers to the historical relationship between the Laird and the tenant crofter while highlighting the resourcefulness of Shetlanders today. Easthouse is owned by the Burra History Group, a group of volunteers who have established a lively centre. The group was established in the 1990s and over the years has organised exhibitions, talks and events. They raised funding to purchase and restore the house which featured in the first BBC 2 series of *Restoration*.

The two buildings have fascinating histories and reflect changes in the Shetlanders' way of life. The Aald Haa was originally the Laird's house, home to the Sinclair family and then the Scotts. One of the Sinclair daughters married a Scott. In the 1800s the rooms were rented out. George and Helen Inkster married there, and the last baby born there was John William Smith in 1900. The Ward family was the first to live in Easthouse; they were originally from Setter near Hamnavoe. The Eunsons were the next family, and their direct descendants still live in Burra and throughout Shetland.

We would very much like to thank everyone who has helped us with the project so far, particularly in this area, for without their enthusiasm and commitment, it would not be possible to have reached this important moment in the project.

We would particularly like to thank the Burra History Group, especially Adalene Fullerton, who chairs the Group, for her help in enabling us to illuminate Easthouse at such short notice. Likewise those at Shetland Islands Council who worked quickly to help us gain permission to illuminate the Aald Haa. We are grateful to the immediate neighbours to each site for their agreement, too, for we appreciate they will be living with the work for two weeks.

The light installations this winter are the result of a summer of 'Light Labs' involving members of the public from all over Shetland, from three years to ninety years old, who have worked with artists Nayan Kulkarni and Roxane Permar to create 'colour light scores' for the various sites, using video cameras and specialised software. The project was commissioned by Shetland Arts, and the resulting videos, along with the equipment used, will eventually move to Mareel, the new cinema, music and education venue currently under construction in Lerwick.

We would especially like to say a huge thank you and congratulations to those of you who have made films that are now part of the illuminations. Contributions are from participants in the Light Lab this summer at the Bridge End Outdoor Centre, pupils from the S4 Physics class at Scalloway Junior High School, P6 and P7 pupils from Tingwall Primary School, students from Shetland College on both the BA Contemporary Textiles and National Certificate courses. Everyone has made films that you can see translated into the dynamic colour light scores for this illumination. We have several hundred films altogether, so some of yours may have accidentally "slipped through the net". Please let us know if all your films are not included.

Members of the community from Burra, Trondra and the Central Mainland were also involved in the selection of the sites that were finally chosen to be illuminated. We looked at thirty three sites before short-listing four. It was extremely difficult to make the short-list and the final selection. We considered the aesthetics and meaning of each site, as well as their visibility. In the end we had to think about practical design issues as well as those linked to safety and technical considerations.

Lighting for **Easthouse and the Aald Haa** will be visible every evening from 5 pm to 11.00 pm until 22nd February after which we'll dismantle them and take them to our last two sites.

There will be a party to celebrate these illuminations at Easthouse, Saturday 13th February, 7 - 9 pm. Everyone is welcome.

For further information email info@mirriedancers.com

www.mirriedancers.com





PROGRAMME OF FILM CONTRIBUTIONS

AALD HAA, HOUSS, EAST BURRA

MONDAYS

Dorothy Sales, Emma Gray, Ewan Hynd, Kristi Cumming, Scott Summers, Susan Timmins

TUESDAYS

Bethan Gray, Davy Inkster, Evie Craigie, Eleanor Hynd, Rosemary Blain, Tom Learmonth

WEDNESDAYS

Eva Cumming, Ewan Hynd, Eleanor Hynd, Konrad Craigie, Nayan Kulkarni, Rosemary Blain, Susan Timmins

THURSDAYS

Davy Inkster, Ewan Hynd, Joy Saloschin, Rebecca Gray, Rona Learmonth, Susan Timmins

FRIDAYS

Eleanor Hynd, Freya Inkster, Jenny Irvine, Kristi Cumming, Konrad Craigie, Karen Eunson

SATURDAYS

Ewan Hynd, Gillian Finnie, Kate Blain, Kristi Cumming, Mark Burgess, Rosemary Blain

SUNDAYS

Emma Gray, Ewan Hynd, Freya Inkster, Jake Finnie, Janine Gray, MM, Roxane Permar

EASTHOUSE CROFT HOUSE, DUNCANSCLATE, WEST BURRA

Mondays

Andrew Coutts, Callum Anderson, Elizabeth Bundy, Janice Morrison, John Williamson, Monica Potheary

Tuesdays

Cameron Garrick, Chloe Sinclair, Emilia Delnicka, Jessica Bee, Joseph Morgan, Lee Devine, Logan Jamieson, Rachel Bradley, Roxane Permar, Scott Robertson, Sophie Williamson

Wednesdays

Craig Watt, Elizabeth Bundy, Ella Gordon, Hilary Seatter, Jennifer Tait, Reagan Mouat, Thomas Clark, Tamsin Jack

Thursdays

Bobby Scott, Christian Gath, Coleen Wood, Jessica Bee, Janice Morrison, Jack Tait, Monica Potheary, Ruairi Macleod

Fridays

Callum Anderson, Hilary Seatter, Jessica Bee, Monica Potheary, Rachel Bradley,

Saturdays

Amy Gair, Amy Irvine, Janice Morrison, Megan Leask, Ryan Kirk, Reagan Mouat, Sophie Williamson, Tara Thomson, Wendy Shaw

Sundays

Connor Uren, Emilia Delnicka, Hedda Shannon, Jonny Sandison, Katie McIntyre, Monica Potheary, Nicola Irvine, Neil Sutherland, Ryan Williamson