



Wemyss Bay Village News



170th Edition
November 2003

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6 year old Injured in Road Accident

For months there have been warnings that someone was likely to be injured or killed by a car around the school. Unfortunately at lunchtime on Friday 10th October, just as the school was about to break up for the October week, 6 year old Kelly was knocked down as she crossed Lomond Road. Cars were parked along both sides of the road outside the school, as parents waited to collect their children, greatly reducing visibility for both drivers and young children. Kelly was not able to see over the waiting cars and the driver of the vehicle involved could not see her. As a result of the impact Kelly injured her right ankle which is now in a plaster cast and concerns remain about whether she has sustained any significant damage to the growth-plates. She will continue to be monitored for at least six months and may require ongoing treatment. Mum, Yvonne, explained that the family do not hold the driver responsible in any way as there was no way he could have prevented the accident. She went on to say, "We are very grateful that the driver involved was paying particular attention and was driving slowly to take into account the obstruction caused by parked cars and the number of children around at the time. If the driver had not been so alert the situation could have been much worse. We hope that other parents learn a lesson from this and reconsider where they park their cars to prevent any future tragedies".

The Community Association echoes these sentiments and sends Kelly their best wishes for a speedy recovery. There is a car-park at the community centre, why not use it? Or better still, instead of using the car for a five minute journey, walk with your child to school. **FOR GOODNESS SAKE, START PARKING SENSIBLY BEFORE ANOTHER CHILD IS INJURED OR KILLED!**

Remember, Remember.....

If you intend celebrating Guy Fawkes Night this year, remember the fireworks code. Fireworks should only be handled by a responsible adult. Keep all fireworks in a secure container until you are about to light them. Never return to a lit firework. Never point or throw a firework at anyone. Remember to wear gloves – even sparklers can cause a nasty burn. Keep children well away from the area where you will be lighting fireworks, and keep all your pets indoors. Let's make sure that everyone in Wemyss Bay can enjoy Bonfire night in safety.

John's Train

Following the tragic death of John McCallum in June 2001 pupils at Wemyss Bay Primary School decided they wanted to remember John in some sort of special way. Initially they decided that they would like a car in the school grounds to play on but, after two unsatisfactory models, the supplier was changed and it was decided to have a train instead. Along with the PTA, pupils have worked hard to raise the money required and their efforts have paid off, with a super train now in the school grounds. John's dad's company donated the second carriage but most of the cash was raised by the pupils. A plaque has been sited and a small opening ceremony took place at the end of October. The train is known by all the children as "John's Train" and is a lovely memorial to a very popular wee boy.

Remembrance Sunday

Since the "war to end wars" there have been many conflicts all over the world in which British civilians and members of the armed forces have given their lives. A Remembrance Service will be held in Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church on Sunday 9th November at 10.45am. Following the service uniformed organisations will march to the War Memorial at the station where wreaths will be laid.

Country People's Association

The club meets on alternate Wednesdays at 2.30pm in The Heywood Hotel, Shore Road, Skelmorlie. The programme for November is as follows:

Wednesday 12th Nov: Bill Hunter – "History of the Sugar Industry in Scotland"

Wednesday 26th Nov: John Steele – "Secrets of HMS Dasher"

All members, old and new, and visitors will be made most welcome. The subscription is £9 per annum and £1 for visitors. For more details contact the secretary, Ann Haig Tel: 522316

Christmas Lights

Inverclyde Council has backed down on its insistence to bring Christmas to Wemyss Bay in November. Local Councillor, Eric Forbes, who opposed the initial plans all along, received a number of concerned calls from local residents and, along with other colleagues, planned to oppose the move at the full council meeting – although the decision to change the date was eventually taken prior to this meeting. . The switch-on of the lights will now take place on Friday 5th December at 7.00pm. Santa will be visiting, all the way from Lapland, although Rudolph is not going to be there as he, along with the other reindeer, is in training for his busiest night of the year. Join members of the Community Association and get yourself into the Christmas spirit with carol singers, festive music, mince pies and mulled wine in the Community Centre.

Greenlight for Recycling

Are you one of the small number of people who regularly put your newspapers out for collection by Greenlight, or do you see the bags and think “I really should do that”? Recycling is a way of preserving our natural resources, not to mention reducing the pressure on landfill waste sites, and what could be easier than a regular doorstep collection? Collection agents Greenlight, who work in partnership with Inverclyde Council, collect in Wemyss Bay every second Monday. Put your recycling out early and remember that, in addition to paper and magazines, they also collect plastic drinks bottles and milk cartons, tins and drinks cans, used plastic bags and old clothes (although if they are in good condition hand them in to a charity shop). Greenlight will collect on Monday 3rd and 17th November, while next month collections will take place on 1st and 15th of December.

Rhodi-Bashing!!

Volunteer rhodi-bashers are needed to help with the clearance programme in the Woods. Although pretty when in bloom, rhododendron ponticum is a non-native invasive species which spreads rapidly and takes over from native flora. Did you know that there are no insects or small mammals which rely directly on rhododendron for food? If the creatures at the lower end of the food-chain die out in the wood eventually we will see a reduction in the birds and larger mammals which rely on them. Removal of rhododendron will allow more light into the wood and encourage the re-establishment of our valuable native flora. If you are interested in getting involved contact Eila Tel: 529375 for more details.

WEA Dates

The Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay branch of the W.E.A. meets every Wednesday from 9.45 – 11.45am in the reading room of Skelmorlie Community Centre. The programme for the next few weeks is as follows:

5th Nov Norman Little – “New England-North-eastern Seaboard USA”
12th Nov Julian Hill – “Volcanoes of the Canary Islands”
19th Nov Isabel Howat – “Spain’s Genetic Nightmare”
26th Nov Roger Watts – “Vienna – City of the Hapsburgs”
3rd Dec Sherry & Shortbread Social

Everyone is welcome to come along to any of the meetings. There is no joining or annual fee and the entrance cost is a very reasonable £1.80 (£1.50 for concessions). For further information please call Jenny McGee Tel: 521090

Gala Appeal 2004

The Community Association is already thinking about next year’s Gala. After the success of this year’s event it has been decided to hold another Gala Weekend from Friday 18th – Sunday 20th June. Obviously this takes a tremendous amount of organising and once again Ann-Marie has agreed to co-ordinate everything. She does however need as many volunteers as possible to help out. **Can You Help?** Would you be interested in becoming involved in the Gala Committee and help to plan the attractions for next year? Even if you are not interested in attending meetings, volunteers will be required on the Friday afternoon and Saturday morning to set up tents, stalls etc. and throughout the weekend a rota of volunteers are required to cover the beer-tent, stalls, cleaning squads and general duties. If you think that you can help in any way contact Ann-Marie Tel: 522998

Attic Players

Having been one of the first amateur drama clubs to offer on-line booking, the Attic Players are once again leading the way. They have created an electronic mailing list for their future productions and events, which will give information about shows and priority on ticket sales. To join the mailing list, log on to their website at www.attic-players.co.uk and follow the links to the mailing list, or alternatively e-mail: info@attic-players.co.uk.

New Fireworks Laws

Again this year we have heard fireworks being set off from the middle of October. The Department of Trade and Industry has been granted powers to enforce noise levels and from next year, a limit of 120 decibels will be imposed on fireworks on sale to the public and they will only be available through licensed shopkeepers. Animal welfare groups welcome the move, which will cut down on the distress fireworks cause pets and lower the risk of an animal being injured. It is becoming more common for fireworks to be set off throughout the year to celebrate birthdays and other special occasions – if you intend doing this please have the courtesy to let your neighbours (especially those with pets) know, in order for them to make appropriate arrangements for their animals.

A78 Cloch Road Junction

Work is at last underway to improve this notorious stretch of road. Over the last few years there have been numerous accidents here involving both visitors to the area and local people alike. The construction of a roundabout should simplify the junction and significantly reduce the risk to road users. Work will last for around 34 weeks so expect delays until the middle of next year, but try and keep in mind that it will be worth it in the end! The one downside so far is that, despite representations from Ardgowan Riding Centre, there are no plans to introduce a “Pegasus crossing” to ensure the safety of horses and riders when crossing this busy stretch of the A78.

Bulb Appeal

It's not too late to make a donation to the Woodland Associations Bulb Appeal. Cheques, made payable to Wemyss Bay Community Woodland Association can be left in a sealed envelope in the Village News folder in Spar, or sent to Eila Roberts, 14 Brueacre Drive, Wemyss Bay. Please include your name and address so that your receipt can be issued. If you have unwanted bulbs please contact Eila Tel: 529375 to arrange to have them uplifted.

Community Centre

Do you run a club or organization? Looking for a venue for your meetings? On-going lets for the Community Centre are still available for Saturday mornings and Sunday evenings at a very reasonable rate. In addition the centre is available, outwith the regular lets, for one-off lets. If you are having a party or special event, why not think about holding it locally? For further details, or to make a booking, contact Kirsty Tel: 520738

Monkey Puzzle or Maple?

Many people think that the rather dead looking Monkey Puzzle tree at the end of Castle Wemyss Drive was planted by Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia. This is not the case. As part of the recent research carried out by the Woodland Association to trace the details of the woods and terraced garden area, members have been searching through the archives of the Inverclyde Estate held at the Mitchell Library in Glasgow. They recently found a number of newspaper articles relating to Haile Selassie's stay at Castle Wemyss. On June 21, 1936 the “Sunday Mail” reported, “the Emperor took part in another...ceremony on the beautiful lawn adjacent to the castle entrance. There His Majesty planted a maple tree in commemoration of his visit to Wemyss Bay.”

Unfortunately the housing developers cut down the maple tree during construction work. It is likely that they are also responsible for the damage to the Monkey Puzzle tree, which was part of the ornamental planting at the castle, by undermining its roots during construction of the road.

If you are interested in helping with the historical research, or with any of the other work of the Woodland Association please contact Eila Tel: 529375

Village News Adverts

Are you interested in placing an ad in the Village News? A standard 1/8 page advert costs £12, with a double (either vertically or horizontally) costing £24. Half page ads are available for £45; while a full page will set you back £90. Considering that we deliver to almost 1300 homes, have copies available at several local shops, and display on the Community Centre notice-board we believe that this is very

good value. If you need to discuss the layout, format, or anything else about your advert, contact Ken Tel: 529375

Flu Jabs

Flu can kill and it's that time of year again. If you are over 65, or if you have asthma, heart trouble, diabetes, kidney disease or some other chronic medical problem, make an appointment to see Laura at the surgery. It will only take a few minutes, it doesn't hurt and it could save your life!

Surgery Parking

Have you ever needed a doctor in a hurry? How would you feel if you couldn't get parked? Parking at the surgery is only for the use of staff and patients. There are times when the car-park is full but there are only one or two patients in the surgery at the time. This is selfish and inconsiderate and could prevent someone who is ill or disabled getting to the doctor easily. This is a particular problem at the start and end of the school day when parents are collecting children or when the car-park at the shops is full. Please use the car-park at the community centre – a few extra minutes walk will not harm you, but it could harm those who are unable to park because of you!

New Youth Clubs

The new format, including an additional club, for young people in Wemyss Bay is now up and running with three separate clubs meeting in the Community Centre. There are now groups for:

- P4 – P7
- 1st and 2nd years
- 14 – 19yrs

With an additional club now open, there is an urgent need for more adult volunteers to become involved. If you can spare a couple of hours a week on a regular basis and are interested in helping to provide a range of activities for young people, you could be just the person for the job. If you would like to volunteer, or for more information about any of the clubs contact Liz Tel: 520205

Share Your News

If you have any news relating to Wemyss Bay, don't keep it to yourself! To publish it on the Wemyss Bay web site go to <http://wemyssbay.net/addnews/>. Don't forget to let the Village News know too. Remember also to log on to the live chat night every Wednesday at 10pm.

Eric Forbes, Councillor for Inverkip and Wemyss Bay

Schools Proposals - these proposals will be presented to a special meeting of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee on Thursday 30th October and then there will be a 2 month consultation period when views will be sought. A public meeting will be arranged and the date, time and venue will be published.

Christmas Lights - at the recent full Council Meeting it was decided that the switch on would not be changed and it would be the same arrangements as last year. The reason was for technical reasons although as you are aware I was going to argue against it being moved forward. **FRI 5th DECEMBER** is the actual date and arrangements will be notified nearer the time.

Fly Tipping - It has been brought to my attention that there is a great deal of illegal dumping taking place on the entrance road to the Power Station. I was down the other day and there are a large number of black bags full of household rubbish lying on the verge and in amongst the trees. This is not a good advert for the area and I would ask those responsible, if they are from the Wemyss Bay area, to refrain from doing this. I have to say I don't know from where the responsible or irresponsible people come, but it would be nice if it was stopped.

Eric can be contacted at Inverclyde Council Tel: 717171 or by E-mail: eric.forbes@inverclyde.gov.uk

Ardgowan Football Development

Following discussions with Inverclyde Council we have managed to get a lined Football Pitch on the grass area behind the Community Centre. The Council has agreed to cut and line this area and, although AFD will use it on a Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday, it is for use by the kids in the village at all other times. We would appreciate if Dog Owners could avoid this area.

Membership: We now have over 110 kids, mainly from Wemyss Bay, but also Inverkip, Skelmorlie, Gourrock, Greenock & Largs, attending our Sunday Coaching Sessions. Most sessions are full but we have some places in the Primary 6/7 Session and anyone interested in joining this group should contact Iain Buchan on 521846.

Ardgowan Thistle Football Club We have selected 24 kids, aged from 8 - 11, from Ardgowan Football Development to join ATFC. From October, two squads of 12 will train on a Wednesday night and will receive specialist coaching from the five SFA qualified coaches as well as participating in 7-a-side tournaments in the UK and possibly abroad.

Adult Training Sessions We realize that there are plenty of 'mature' footballers out there so we have started a Training Session on Thursday nights from 6:30 - 8:00pm. This is a mixture of fitness training (nothing too heavy!), and a game of football and is held on the grass pitch under our floodlights. We already have a group of about 16, of all shapes & sizes, and anyone interested should contact Tom on 520179 or come along on a Thursday.

Developments In partnership with the Community Association, we have hired a Metal Storage Container which will go some way to alleviate the problem of storage space in the Community Centre and should allow greater use of the back room.

For More Information log on to our website: www.ardgowanfd.co.uk

Dog Fouling

Wherever you go in Wemyss Bay you will find that just about every grassy area is covered in dogs' dirt. Many dog owners are responsible and pick up after their pets but a small minority of irresponsible people do not and give every owner a bad name. Children play in these areas and apart from the mess if they get covered and tramp it in to their homes, there is also a significant risk to their health. Many serious illnesses can be contracted in this way. Dog owners will say that there are not enough special waste bins and this may well be true. However as the owner of three dogs, it is not a great inconvenience to take the bags back to your own bin. In his column, Duncan McNeil MSP explains about the new law which has come into force to combat this problem. Come on – keep Wemyss Bay Clean!

Gala Day Balloon Race

Well done Dario Zavaroni, who was the winner in the Gala Day Balloon Race. Dario's balloon was the furthest travelled and made it all the way to Perth. He wins a £25 gift voucher.

Toc H

Toc H meets every Monday evening at 7.30pm in Skelmorlie Community Centre Their popular calendar should be available by the middle of this month and can be purchased at Wemyss Bay Pharmacy, Macleod's Newsagents and the Station Bar. Hurry and get yours before they sell out.

Have You Seen Sam?

Sam is a 2½ year-old small, sleek-haired, black cat with four white paws and a white chest. He belongs to the McMeechan family of Mountstuart Drive. His young owner is desperate for his safe return and his sister Suki is pining for him. If you have seen Sam, please help reunite him with his family. If you sight him. Tel: 07939 158414.

Scottish Parliamentary Round-up by Duncan McNeil MSP

- Anti-Social Behaviour Laws

Politicians who oppose the Scottish Executive's tough action on antisocial behaviour are letting their communities down. As part of my submission to the consultation on the forthcoming bill I had a study carried out in Greenock and Inverclyde. 93% of people asked said that it is very important for the Executive to bring forward new antisocial behaviour laws. Only 7% did not want tagging extended to under-16s. When asked if parents should take more responsibility for their children, 86% agreed strongly, 14% agreed, none disagreed and not a single person did not know, I have asked the Minister for Communities to examine closely what people with first hand experience of antisocial behaviour are saying.

-Surgery Calendar

Personal consultations are held at the Parliamentary Office, 20 Union Street, Greenock from 10am on the first and third Friday of every month. Call the office to arrange an appointment Tel: 791820

- Don't Fall Foul of New Dog Mess Act

Along with pies which are good for your heart, cars that can fly over traffic jams and radios which filter out homemade adverts for cut-price flooring retailers, dogs which are able to clean up after themselves are one of the inventions which can't come too soon.

Until science advances that far, however, it remains up to owners to make sure the rest of us don't have our local environments ruined by the mess their four legged friends leave behind.

And, from Wednesday 22nd October, any owner who is reluctant to accept that responsibility will need deep pockets. Because, thanks to the new Dog Fouling Act, the police and the council can now issue an on the spot £40 fine to anyone who fails to bag and bin their dog's mess.

- Station Crossing Gets a Closer Look

Transport Minister, Nicol Stephen, has informed me that, following representations on behalf of a number of local residents, further investigations into building a pedestrian crossing on the A78 at Wemyss Bay Station and the Ferry Terminal are to be undertaken.

Amey Highways will make a recommendation based on whether they can identify a suitable location and their consultations with interested parties. If such consultations produce a suitable outcome, I am advised that construction could begin in the spring.

The Minister has undertaken to advise me of the outcome and I will be keeping a close eye on developments.

Duncan can be contacted at The Parliamentary Office, 20 Union Street, Greenock PA15 8JL, by E-mail: duncan.mcneil.msp@scottish.parliament.uk or via his website: www.duncanmcneil.com

Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Cubs

Our local Cub Scouts have been very busy collecting empty bottles for charity. They managed to raise £500, which they have donated to the Children's Hospice Association Scotland. They have already started a new collection, but have yet to decide which charity will benefit next. Well done boys – keep up the good work.

Graduation

Congratulations to Susan McIntosh who recently graduated from the University of Strathclyde with a BA (Upper Second Class Honours) in Psychology and Law. Susan is a former pupil of Wemyss Bay Primary and Greenock High Schools.

Spate of Break-Ins

Following the fifth in a series of break-ins over the past couple of months, Pearson's Filling Station has been forced to install new security grills. Pearson's is the only filling station between Largs and Greenock and provides an essential service to local drivers. If you know anything about these latest incidents, please contact the police.

Kid's Stuff

Did you know that Saint Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland and that we celebrate St Andrew's Day on 30th November? This wordsearch is all about Saint Andrew and Guy Fawkes Night. See how many words you can find.

J	S	E	K	W	A	F	Y	U	G
F	P	O	X	W	E	R	D	N	A
I	A	R	S	F	U	N	D	U	S
R	R	P	E	T	N	I	A	S	R
E	K	F	A	B	I	Q	C	T	E
W	L	H	N	T	M	L	P	E	G
O	E	F	D	E	R	E	D	K	N
R	R	T	O	Y	N	O	V	C	A
K	S	S	E	R	I	F	N	O	B
S	C	O	T	L	A	N	D	R	N

ANDREW
BANGERS
BONFIRES
FIREWORKS
FUN
GUY FAWKES
NOVEMBER
PATRON
ROCKETS
SAINT
SCOTLAND
SPARKLERS

That's all for this month. The closing date for adverts and information for the December edition is 20th November. You can place your articles in the Village News folder behind the counter in Spar, send it to Eila Roberts, 14 Brueacre Drive, Wemyss Bay, Tel: 529375 or e-mail: eilaroberts@care4free.net.