

Wemyss Bay Village News

176th Edition

May 2004

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Dog Fouling in Wemyss Bay - the problem persists!!

Despite the best efforts of the council i.e. new dog litter bins, notices on many lamp-posts etc we are still being persecuted by uncaring dog owners.

One can hardly blame the dogs as, to the best of my knowledge, they are unable to read the many notices but there are still a minority of owners who let their dogs roam either ahead or behind them and do not pay attention to what their dogs are up to.

As a dog-owner myself I accept it is not a pleasant task but it is one that has to be borne for the good of other people and particularly children. Having recently had friends and their children for the weekend we were horrified to discover that, within ten minutes of being here, one of the children was covered in the filthy muck. What picture does this present of our village?

Walking about the village it would seem that the problem is most prevalent at the end of Lomond Road where the layout of lanes and paths means that there are not so many people around to comment when the dogs go about their business. Is it therefore a case of - "well if no-one saw my dog, I might as well leave it?"

All I can say in conclusion is please spare a thought for the next person who comes along and cannot even walk from their car to the house without stepping in a "landmine"!!

The above article was sent in by a concerned Wemyss Bay resident and, as dog owners, we heartily agree with everything said. The only way things will improve is if we all contact the council to complain whenever we see an owner letting their dog foul and then walking away. It is the responsibility of the council to deal with offenders but it is up to all of us to identify the guilty parties.

71st Scout Group Annual Jumble Sale Saturday 5th June

The local Scouts' Annual Jumble Sale will be held on Saturday 5th June in the Scout Hut in Skelmorlie. As they have done in previous years the group carry out door-to-door collections on Fri 21st, Thurs 27th and Fri 28th May and again on Thurs 3rd and Friday 4th June between 7.00pm and 9pm. If you have items for collection please contact Elizabeth Canning **521555**, Maggie Heron **520807** or Lynn Wilson **520687**. Due to safety regulations they are unable to collect gas appliances, microwave ovens or fridges/freezers.

This is an ideal opportunity to have a spring clearout of all those things which you have been keeping because they "might come in useful" but have never got round to actually using!

The Scout Group would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in anticipation of their continued support for this event.

Ardgowan Football Development

Now that the Easter holidays are over and the youth programme is up and running again AFD are starting up training for dads and other adults every Thursday from 29th April. Training takes place on the grass behind the Community Centre from 6.30pm. This was started up last August and took place during the light nights. It would to see all those who took part last year and any interested newcomers come along for a "not too strenuous" football training sessions. Come on, improve your skills and don't let the kids show you up!

Community Association

The next meeting of the Community Association will take place on Wednesday 5th May at 7.30pm in the Rogues Room at the Inverkip Hotel. In addition to other business, final preparations will be made for this year's Gala Weekend. Anyone interested in getting involved is very welcome to attend.

Gala Weekend Friday 18th – Sunday 20th June

It is only 6 weeks now to this year's Gala Weekend. Who can forget the fabulous weekend we had last year, and Gala Co-ordinator Ann Marie (Tel: 522998) has been working flat out since before Christmas to ensure that this year's event is even better!

The programme of events starts on Friday evening with a Ceilidh in the main marquee. Dance the night away to popular band "The Midgies". If you haven't been to a ceilidh before don't worry, the band tells you what to do and you will soon be stripping the willow or doing the dashing white sergeant with the best of them. Tickets, priced £5.00 for adults, £3.50 for children with under-5's getting in free, include a buffet supper. Tickets will be available from the middle of this month and can be purchased through any of the centre user groups, in Spar or from Wemyss Bay pharmacy. There are a limited number of tickets, so make sure that you get yours early – they sell out fast! The events on Saturday start at 12 noon when this year's Gala Queen, accompanied by her attendants, will officially open the Gala. There will be a variety of stalls run by local organisations including the Brownies, Mums & Tots and Woodland Association. Once again the youth clubs will be running the tuck shop and the burger stall – last year all the burgers were sold by 1.30pm so, although Liz has ordered even more for this year, you will still have to be quick. In addition to burgers they will also be serving baked potatoes with chilli so if you are looking for a slightly lower fat option this is for you. Ardgowan Football Development will be repeating their popular pie and Bovril stand. The Community Centre will be given over to the Guides tearoom – always a popular attraction with all the lovely home-baking.

Gala Day would not be complete without all the rides for the young and young at heart. This year they will be even bigger and better than before. There will still be the Bouncy Castle, Children's Carousel and the Giant Bouncy Slide for the younger visitors. In addition there will be some aimed at older children, teenagers and adults. Try out your skill and see how long you can last on the Rodeo Bull. Laser Quest is back again this year at popular request and for the first time there is the Bungee Runner – who can make it the furthest along the inflatable run before the bungee rope wins and you slide all the way back to the beginning? Is Dad better than the kids, where does mum come in? This could develop into a competition for the whole family and is sure to provide loads of laughs.

On Saturday night entertainment continues in the main marquee with music and a karaoke special. There is no charge for this and everyone is welcome to come along and have a go. There will be prizes for the best singers and of course a booby prize for the worst. A lot of people think that they would never take part in something like this but it is great fun and after a couple of visits to the beer-tent your inhibitions will slip away and you will be belting out your favourite songs. This year once again, the beer-tent will be providing a wide range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. Spirits, wine, canned and bottled drinks will appear side by side with a range of beers from Houston Brewery. These were so popular last year at the Ceilidh that an extra delivery had to be made on the Saturday morning and "Helga's Big Jugs" was soon sold out!

The Gala depends on the work of a small group of volunteers for its success. In order to have a fantastic weekend this year help is still needed. Are you artistic? Perhaps you could help out with the face-painting. The Bouncy Castle requires a minimum of two supervisors at all times – can you help out here? Or do you fancy pouring pints – bar staff are required throughout the weekend. Ideally, with enough volunteers, everyone would only have to cover an hour or two and could then have the rest of the time to enjoy themselves at the stalls and rides. If you are able to help out over the weekend, even for a couple of hours please contact Ann Marie (Tel: 522998) as soon as possible in order that she can work out the rotas.

Each year, the Community Association has to gamble on the success of the Gala. Even if there is a poor turnout the marquees, bands, rides, beer etc. still have to be paid for. Over the years there have been many generous sponsors who help fund specific items or donate prizes to the raffles. Sponsors are still required for this year's event – would your business be prepared to help or can you provide a raffle prize? Contact Ann Marie if you can help.

With luck the weather will be favourable although we are unlikely to have such a glorious day as last year but we can always hope. Come along with the family and make a day of it – you are promised a fabulous time and the opportunity to meet many of the other residents of Wemyss Bay.

Dance the Night Away!

The 71st Scout Group Pre-Jumble Dance will take place on Saturday 15th May in Skelmorlie Community Centre from 7.30pm till late. Dance the night away with "Gordy" and enjoy the quick fun quiz, raffle and finger buffet. Tickets, priced £4.50, are available by contacting **520807, 521091 or 520687**.

Family Traced

In the December edition of the Village News we told you about American writer Phil Penningroth's search for the descendents of soldiers rescued by his grandfather, Louis, during World War 1. One of the soldiers was a Mr Hyndman of Wemyss Bay.

Following the article we were contacted by Jean Harris, a grand-daughter of Mr Hyndman, who was a gardener on the Castle Wemyss estate until the early 1920s. Jean recently visited Wemyss Bay, along with her mother and Mr Penningroth, to see the woods and terraced garden area where her grandfather once worked. They were also taken, by members of the Woodland Association to the Castle flagpole, the memorial plaque to John Burns, 1st Lord Inverclyde and the lodge houses.

RNLI Antiques Roadshow

The recent antiques roadshow held by the RNLI in Seamill Hydro was a great success with several Wemyss Bay residents have an enjoyable and informative day out, while some even had a very pleasant surprise at the valuations placed by experts on their treasures. The event raised £3300 for the RNLI Lifeboats of the Clyde Appeal which aims to raise £1.3million to fund a new all-weather lifeboat to be stationed at Troon. Colin Millar, Coxswain of Troon lifeboat explains, "In the choppy waters of the Clyde, the new boat will reach casualties quicker. It is faster, has the latest technology on board and, in simple terms, it can mean the difference between a life saved and a life lost." The lifeboat (to be named Jim Moffat after a significant donation from a local Ayrshire trust) will be on station this spring, but the RNLI still needs to raise much needed cash to pay for the gap in spending between the amount required and the £1.1million raised so far. It costs the charity £107million to run the lifesaving service, generated from voluntary contributions. The boats are mostly crewed by volunteers who last year rescued 7,365 people from dangerous waters around our coasts. Lifeboats have been saving lives on the Clyde since 1861 and to date have rescued over 5500 people from the estuary waters.

The RNLI currently need new members to join their Inverkip, Wemyss Bay and Skelmorlie branch and help with local fundraising events. As the branch is relatively small this does not constitute a huge commitment – perhaps 4 or 5 events throughout the year. They are however still looking to elect a branch chairman and any volunteers will be welcome! If you are interested in getting involved at any level contact the secretary Linda Latimer **Tel: 521088 Mobile: 07970 708980** or you can email linda.latimer@talk21.com

The next fundraising event on the calendar is the house to house collection in May. The organisation will be dropping recruitment flyers through doors as well as collecting cash donations. If you can help locally in any way contact Linda.

Go a mile for Cancer Relief

This year's Macmillan Miles Challenge will take place during the week of 23-30 May. Stretch yourself to cover a mile in whatever way you choose and get sponsored for it. It can be as simple as you like – organise a walk with family and friends, or if you normally drive to work, you can always walk, run or cycle instead.

If you are not a sporty person, why not create a mile of coins or eat a mile of spaghetti? Let your imagination run riot and help Macmillan Cancer Relief raise money for their vital cancer care services.

Last year almost 30,000 people were sponsored to walk, hop and line dance a mile, with some even knitting a mile long scarf or laying a mile of buttons. Over £600,000 was raised in 2003 in thousands of Macmillan Miles Challenge events across the UK. Taking part in the 2004 Macmillan Miles Challenge is simple. Call the hot-line on **0845 602 1490** or log on to **www.macmillan.org/miles** to find out more. With your support cancer care can be made miles better.

Councillor Eric Forbes

Eric would like to remind everyone that, if you have a problem or query which you think he may be able to help with, he can be contacted at the Municipal Buildings **Tel: 717171 Fax: 01475 712976 or e-mail: Eric.Forbes@inverclyde.gov.uk** Out with office hours he can be contacted at **home: 520012** or on his **mobile: 07747 006725**.

Eric believes that rather than waiting several weeks for a surgery, it is better for his constituents if he is available at the end of a telephone at any time. Thereafter, if necessary, he can arrange a suitable follow-up meeting.

Duncan McNeil MSP

Paws to Give your Thoughts on Animal Welfare Reforms

They say we are a nation of animal lovers. And if the letters and emails in my in-tray are anything to go by, Greenock and Inverclyde certainly has more than its fair share. I regularly receive representations from constituents arguing that the law needs to better protect pets and livestock from cruel or neglectful treatment. And they're right. Some animal welfare legislation is almost a century old and in serious need of an update.

The Scottish Executive, therefore, has unveiled broad proposals to modernise, strengthen and improve the law relating to animals in the care of humans. These proposals could see, for the first time ever, convictions for keepers who provide inadequate care which may lead to suffering. The Executive is, however, open to suggestions about how exactly this objective is met. And that's where you come in. If you feel strongly on these issues, now is the time to make your views known. If you want anyone owning, managing or keeping animals – including pets – to have a legal duty to properly care for them, let the lawmakers know. The same goes if you want a ban on keeping or training animals for fighting or baiting; or on the uneven shoeing of horses to alter their stance; or on the docking of dogs' tails.

Your views are also sought on whether we should give local authorities statutory powers to remove neglected animals which are suffering, or which are at risk of suffering, to a place of safety. This is a golden opportunity for those of you who are passionate about the issue of animal welfare to see some of the measures for which you have campaigned long and hard finally on the statute books. My advice, as your MSP, is to take it.

Anyone wishing to contribute to the new legislation can contact my local office or log on to:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations/rural/anwl-00.asp>

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

Unwelcome Wildlife

Residents of Leapmoor Drive have reported recent sightings of a mink in the area. Mink, which were originally from America, are an unwelcome alien to Britain. They became established after escaping from fur farms over the past few decades. When fur became politically incorrect and the demand dropped, many unscrupulous farmers released animals deliberately rather than have to continue to pay for their upkeep. Invariably associated with water, they have voracious appetites and feed on water birds, fish and small waterside mammals. Where there are large concentrations of mink, many native species of birds are at risk of decline, due to these vicious predators. If you come across mink, it would be better not to feed them, but in any event you should **never** attempt to handle these wild animals as they can be extremely vicious and give a very nasty bite.

Community Council

Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council meet on the first Thursday of every month at 7.30pm in the Rogues Room of the Inverkip Hotel. If you have any issues which you would like raised, or if you are just interested in observing the meeting, you are very welcome to go along. You may remember that following the reorganisation of Community Councils by Inverclyde Council, no-one from Wemyss Bay stood for election and therefore all the councillors are from Inverkip. If you have an issue but are not able to attend in person or, if you are interested in going along in an informal but regular basis Tel: **01475 520489**

What would you like to see in the Village News?

Since taking over editing the Village News last September we have listened to a number of suggestions and tried to include them where possible. We are very aware however that many people may be sitting at home with great ideas about how to improve things. If you have any suggestions please contact me and I will do my best to implement them. Perhaps you would like to contribute to the newsletter on a regular basis – if so get in touch and we can chat about how you can contribute. Contact Eila - Tel: **529375**, e-mail: eilaroberts@care4free.net, or leave your suggestions in the Village News folder behind the counter in Spar.

Plant Sale

Our local branch of Cancer Research UK are once again organising a plant sale this year. The sale will take place in Skelmorlie Scout Hall on Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th May. If you have not been along before, the sale gives you the opportunity to purchase a huge variety of summer bedding plants along with some shrubs. There are available exactly as you would buy them from a garden centre but you have the satisfaction of knowing that you are supporting a very worthwhile cause.

Community Association Seeks Treasurer

The present treasurer, Finlay McFee, having served in that capacity since December 2000, has indicated that he intends to retire at the forthcoming June AGM.

The Community Association wants to start the process of identifying possible candidate replacements between now and then.

The books are now kept on modern software, Intuit's Quickbooks Standard Edition, which includes invoicing capabilities and a fully integrated sales ledger within a full function accounting package.

Responsibilities include banking receipts around twice per month ten months per year, producing monthly and quarterly invoices for WB News adverts and community centre lets, paying all the Centre's bills, and reporting on the Association's ongoing financial position at the monthly committee meetings.

There are fifty or so monthly advertising invoices, plus a dozen or so quarterly lets invoices, as well as a few monthly regular lets.

The Treasurer also prepares the annual set of accounts for independent review in accordance with the rules applicable to Scottish Charities.

The role would suit anyone with a bookkeeping/accountancy background who has several days per month available to keep the ball rolling.

Finlay has made clear his willingness to continue as mentor to the new incumbent if desired. A basic process manual will be available by the start of the new season, 1st September 2004.

If you are interested in more information as to what's involved, please contact Finlay McFee, tel. 522934 or by e-mail: finlay@mcfee.scotnet.co.uk

David Cairns MP

The job of MP gives you a marvellous insight into people, simply because you get to meet so many different kinds of people in the course of your work. One of the greatest things that has struck me in the Constituency is the huge number of people of all ages who give up their free time to do voluntary work and to help others. We all know of the difficult economic conditions in this area but it pleases me that we still have a sense of community here.

Over the Easter holiday the House of Commons was in recess for two weeks, which gave me the opportunity to get around the constituency and visit the many community groups and voluntary organisations that do so much to improve the lives of people in Greenock and Inverclyde.

Some of the projects that I have visited recently have really been inspirational. For example, the Branchton Community Centre which runs adult learning classes and activities for children.

The Bow Farm Community Support Group helping to support the elderly in our community or those with special needs so that they can stay in their homes rather than having to go into care.

You may have seen me in the Greenock Telegraph visiting the Larkfield Family Centre and presenting awards to volunteers who had clocked up over 100 hours of service providing help and support to local families. Or the Larkfield Community Safety Group. Local residents participating and working with the police, really committed to improving their neighbourhood - making Larkfield a safer community in which to live.

The Money Helpline, which provides help for people who have got into debt. Originally started as a voluntary project in the 1980s it was so successful that it was taken under the umbrella of the local council.

These are just a few of the many community organisations in Greenock and Inverclyde with literally hundreds of volunteers. Where would we be without them?

David Cairns holds surgeries on the first and third Friday of the month from 10am – 12noon at his Parliamentary Office, 20 Union Street, Greenock Tel: 791820. Alternatively you can phone the office for details of his next surgery in Wemyss Bay.

Campbell Martin MSP

Campbell Martin, SNP list Member of the Scottish Parliament will be holding a surgery on Monday 10th May from 9.00 – 10.00am in the Community Centre. If you have any issues which you would like to raise, you are welcome to attend.

Recycling

This month Greenlight will be carrying out their doorstep collections on Mondays 3rd, 17th and 31st May. They still collect, even if it is a bank holiday, so don't forget to put out your old newspapers & magazines, plastic bottles & milk cartons, food & drinks cans, rags and carrier bags. Recycling couldn't be easier – come on and do your bit for the environment.

Woodland Association

The Woodland Association is continuing its programme of rhodi-bashing. As more of the wood is cleared of rhododendron it is encouraging to see so many young plants coming through where previously they had no chance of survival. Young beech, birch, ash, rowan and sycamore are prevalent while a few yews are also trying hard to become established. New volunteers are welcome to join the regular rhodi-bashers with the next few sessions taking place on Sat 1st & Sun 2nd, Sat 15th & Sun 16th and Sat 29th & Sun 30th May. Work starts at 10.00am and continues until 3.00pm with breaks for coffee and lunch. Even if you are only available for a few hours this would help out. The group meets at either the main entrance to the wood at Ardgowan Road or at the Ardgowan Road end of Cliff Terrace Road. Look out for the signs directing you to that day's area of work. Gloves, tools and refreshments are provided.

Did you know that nettles are one of the most valuable plants in a healthy woodland? The nettle supports over 40 species of insect including some of our most colourful butterflies. Often nettle patches are infested by aphids which provide an early food source for ladybirds while blue tits, coal tits and other small woodland birds also enjoy this plentiful source of food. In addition to butterflies nettles also provide a valuable food source for the larvae of many moths such as the Burnished Brass, The Spectacle and the Beautiful Golden Y. Not as showy as their cousins the butterflies, moths can be just as beautiful and often more fascinating. Nettles are good for you: the young shoots can be used in soups and stews in place of spinach, nettle soup and tea are delicious and there is even a nettle cheese. To tie in with Be Nice to Nettles Week and National Moth Night the Woodland Association intends holding a moth and nettle night towards the end of May. The date has yet to be confirmed so look out for posters giving the final details which will appear around the village. We will start off a little before dusk with a look at the uses of nettles today – how to make cloth, the medicinal uses and a couple of easy quizzes. You will also have the opportunity to taste nettle soup. Once dusk approaches we will take a walk into the woods, with an expert guide, to see what moths can be found here in Wemyss Bay. In order to improve our chances of finding a variety of moths we will be putting up moth feeding stations – did you know that they love a mixture of red wine, water and sugar? Bring the family and come along to this unusual event but don't forget to bring a torch and wear sensible shoes or wellies.

On Saturday 5th June from 10.00am – 12 noon the Association is holding a Wombling morning to tie in with National Volunteers Week. The aim is to collect all the rubbish which is spoils everyone's enjoyment of the woodland. Gloves, including children's ones, and litter-pickers will be provided and there will be a small prize for every child taking part. Please note that all children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Finally the Woodland Association desperately needs to raise some funds to cover the ongoing running costs. In addition to having a stall at the Gala Day where there will be a variety of pocket money toys, either made of wood or having a wildlife connection, they are also launching a "Nature's Nursery Rhyme Quiz". Quiz sheets cost 50pence and all you have to do is fill in the blanks to find nursery rhymes which all include animals, birds, insects or flowers. You can get your quiz sheet from any member of the committee or at the gala day. This is not just a quiz for kids, adults will spend hours puzzling away to find the answers – go on, surprise yourself and see how many nursery rhymes you remember!

Lost Fishing Rod

Following the Ardgowan FD Race Night in February a fishing-rod was lost in the area of the Community Centre car-park. Anyone with any information is asked to contact Mark 529370.

PTA Car Boot Sale

Wemyss Bay PTA are holding a car boot sale in the carpark and playground of WB Primary on Saturday 15th May from 11am – 1pm. There will also be tea & coffee, home-baking, hot dogs and a tuck shop. Pitches are available for £5 each and can be booked by calling Sharon Fulton on **521552**.

Share your News

If you have news relating to Wemyss Bay, don't keep it to yourself! Go to <http://wemyssbay.net> and click on **news** to publish it on the Wemyss Bay web site. Don't forget to let the Village News know too.

Finally

That's all for this month. The closing date for any articles or adverts for the May edition of the Village News is the 20th April. This is an absolute deadline and cannot be extended under any circumstances! People have regularly been sending in articles one or two days after the official closing date and up till now we have accommodated them but it creates problems for us and the printer. If you would like a reminder let us know and we will add you to the e-mail list. If you have anything which you would like included please send it to Eila Roberts, 14 Brueacre Drive, Wemyss Bay PA18 6HA Tel: 529375

E-mail: eilaroberts@care4free.net or place it in the Village News folder, which is kept behind the counter in Spar.

Please note that we do our best to ensure that adverts are neither misleading or offensive, however the appearance of an advertisement in the Village News does not imply that either the editors or the Community Association endorse the advertiser or their products / services.

Kids' Stuff

This is the time of year when lots of birds have built their nests, laid their eggs and are now busy raising their chicks. If you find a bird's nest it is really important that you do not touch it or go too near as the adults may not come back and the babies would then die. If we are careful near nests then there will always be lots of birds around for us to enjoy. This month's wordsearch contains the names of some of the birds which we can see around Wemyss Bay. How many can you find?

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

BLACKBIRD
CHAFFINCH
COAL TIT
CROW
CUCKOO
MAGPIE
OWL
ROBIN
SISKIN
SPARROW
SWIFT
THRUSH
WAGTAIL
WOODPECKER
WOODPIGEON
WREN

WORDFINDER

P	T	R
D	O	E
T	E	S

Every word must contain the letter in the middle of the grid. Each letter can only be Used once. See how many words you can find containing at least 4 letters. You are not allowed plurals, proper names or hyphenated words. There is at least one 9-letter word.

20 - at least you're trying
40 - clever clogs

30 - keep going
50 - genius!!