

Wemyss Bay Village News

177th Edition

June 2004

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THE FINAL PLEA – WEMYSS BAY GALA WEEKEND 2004

HELP! HELP! HELP! It's the countdown to Wemyss Bay's Gala Weekend 2004.

With less than three weeks to go, we are in desperate need of bodies to help out at our annual Gala Weekend. Despite our desperate pleas to the community, so far only a handful of willing local's have offered their services. Why not try your hand at face painting (manual and paints supplied!) or pulling a few pints behind the bar in our beer tent (no experience necessary and we'll even throw in a free drink or two!!!!).

Last year's event was such a great success, we hope to have an even better one this year. Included in the weekend will be our family Ceilidh on Friday 18 June 7.30pm – 11.30pm with live music from the Midgies and a buffet supper. Tickets are on sale priced at £5 for adults and £3 for children aged 5 – 12 (under 5's are free) and can be purchased from all user group leaders, Spar and the local Pharmacy.

Saturday's event will kick off at 12 noon with the crowning of the Gala Queen plus attendants. From there the day will be compared by Stewart 'in constant demand' MacPherson with a variety of rides and stalls for young and old. This year sees the return of the popular Laser Quest inflatable ride; test your strength on the Bungee Runner, or see how long you can hold out on the Rodeo Bull. These are but a few of the day's many attractions and activities.

Of course there will be the ever-popular beer tent where you will be entertained throughout the day with displays from the local dance troupe, Judo Team and Drama Club.

You will also have the opportunity to display your talents at the Karaoke competition on the Saturday night with prizes for both the best and worse performances.

On Sunday from 11.30am – 4.00pm Ardgowan Football Development will be holding an Open Day. The event will be opened by one of Morton's players (at the moment we are being kept in suspense about which player will be doing the honours!). You will have the opportunity to watch some of the training sessions before the children will be presented with medals and certificates for their achievements this year. Finally there will be two 7-a-side games between First Touch (Greenock) and Ardgowan Thistle Football Club. Refreshments will be available throughout the day.

Yet again we cannot stress that without the help of the local community these events are extremely difficult to run. If you can spare a few hours of your time or would like to donate a prize for the raffle please call Ann Marie on **522998**.

Here's to a great weekend!

Gala Queen

This year's Gala Queen is Nicole of P7 Wemyss Bay Primary School. She will be attended by classmates Louise and Eilidh. The girls will arrive at the Gala to be greeted by local councillor Eric Forbes, who will be performing the opening ceremony. They will proceed around the gala, visiting the many stalls and attractions, prior to releasing all the balloons for the balloon race at 3.00pm.

Transport to take the Gala Queen and her attendants along to the Gala is at this moment being kept secret to give the girls, and everyone else, a pleasant surprise on the day.

Having a Party?

If you are thinking of having a party, why not consider holding it at the community centre. Although it is pretty busy, party bookings are still available outwith the regular lets. Even better, why not theme your party? When placing your booking just say if you would like a Bouncy Castle Party or would like local DJs Disco Divas to provide your entertainment. A 2-hour Bouncy Castle Party costs £52, while a 2-hour Disco booking only costs £50. To make a booking or for more information contact Kirsty Tel: **520738**. Remember that, if you are having food at your party, the centre's kitchen was completely refurbished last year and is available for your use.

Mobile Phone Mast

Following a planning application by to site a mobile phone mast within the grounds of the BT exchange in Forbes Place the Community Council were asked to comment. The planning applicants are only required by law to notify anyone with a boundary of less than 4m from the proposed site and therefore very few residents had been notified directly. Instead Wemyss Bay residents were made aware of the issue by a notice from the Community Council placed in Spar and by a petition launched by concerned villagers.

The May meeting of the Community Council was therefore very well attended, with additional seating being brought in to accommodate those present and eventually with standing room only. Councillor Forbes was in attendance and explained that the mast would require full planning permission, however his position as convener of the Planning Committee prevented him from expressing his personal opinion as, to do so, would indicate that he had already come to a decision prior to the committee meeting and he would then be unable to take part in the decision making regarding the application. He was however able to advise that a petition is legally classed as one objection and in order for objections to be considered individually they must all be sent as separate, individual letters. He also explained that the Planning Committee are bound by national legislation which does not permit them to refuse planning permission on the grounds of health concerns – to do so would mean that, in the very likely event of an appeal by the applicant, the previous decision would be overturned on a point of law and they would automatically be granted permission.

Discussion then centred on the mast itself and the possible grounds of objection to it. The mast will take the form of a 15m high monopole with three separate antennae. The proposed site in Forbes Place is in the middle of a residential area, next to an old church where services are conducted on a daily basis. It is also close to the village primary school and immediately adjacent to the church hall which is used by a wide variety of community organisations including Mums and Tots. The impact of such a mast on the devaluation of neighbouring properties is also not classed as a valid planning objection, however people raised the issue of the mast towering over the adjacent properties and impacting on their views of the surrounding

area. Further discussions raised the issues of the possibility of interference with house alarms, interference with television signals and additional traffic on an already very busy road both during the construction and, afterwards, during the long-term operating and maintenance of this sort of structure.

Concerns regarding long term health risks predominated the meeting and, although they are not grounds on their own for turning down an application, the meeting agreed that they should be raised along with other objections nonetheless. Local GP, Dr Chan, said, "Research is still going on into the long term effects of continual low-level radiation and therefore it is impossible to say that there is no risk." He went on to explain that his concern is that this sort of installation may lead to an increase in childhood leukaemia and cancers in the future.

It was agreed at the meeting that while people did not want to stop the progress of mobile technology they do want to see it sited in a more appropriate place away from residential developments.

At the time of writing the period for objections to this application is over. The Planning Committee will consider it at a future meeting, possibly on the 7th July although this date can be clarified by contacting the Planning Department at Inverclyde Council nearer the time. Planning Committee meetings are open to anyone to attend, although members of the public are not permitted to speak at these meetings and would be removed from the Council chambers should they interrupt proceedings.

Ardgowan Football Development

As part of this year's Gala Weekend AFD will be holding an Open Day on Sunday 20th June. The day will "kick-off" at 11.30am when over 120 children will parade out into the park where the day will be officially opened by a Morton player. They will then demonstrate their skills to their parents and friends, before being presented with their certificates and medals for the 2003/4 season. The presentation will be carried out by the same Morton player, however at the moment we are being kept in suspense as to his identity. Food and refreshments will be available and then two teams from First Touch (Greenock) will play both Ardgowan Thistle Football Club teams in 7-a-side games on the park. Ardgowan Football Development would like to thank all who have helped and sponsored the club over the past year. In particular thanks are extended to all parent helpers and wives for their support and time given – without them such a successful development programme would be impossible.

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 Regeneration of Inverclyde

Greenock and Inverclyde have many advantages – some fantastic scenery, friendly people who look out for each other, a sense of community and a thriving voluntary sector. But we all know that this part of the world has a challenge on its hands when it comes to our economic base.

We have a larger than average number of people who are long term sick and unable to work, partly a consequence of our former industry of shipbuilding, plus the local economy is very dependent on the electronics industry which certainly fluctuates according to world market conditions. As a consequence we have had a constant stream of pretty gloomy economic news over the last few years.

There is no doubt that Inverclyde needs regenerating. But where will that spur come from? Well, I think there are several positive indicators.

For Greenock, I think the redevelopment of the riverfront would go some way to regenerating the town. At the end of last year I had a meeting with a property development company who were keen to show me their ambitious plans for new housing and leisure developments overlooking the water. They had also been credited with the redevelopment of Manchester's huge Trafford Centre shopping complex and an award winning marina development called Salford Quays. We know that Inverclyde has a problem with depopulation; people are moving out of the area. I believe this kind of development will help to bring about that upward spiral of new investment - new buildings, new jobs, which will make people want to stay here and new people to move here. In fact, if you look at similar areas around the country that are seeking to regenerate themselves, it is often the waterfront that is the spur to the whole area - Docklands in East London, the Albert Dock in Liverpool are two examples.

With that in mind, myself and local MSP Duncan McNeil will shortly be visiting Leith in Edinburgh to see for ourselves how a previously rundown area has now been transformed. And hopefully the long running saga of the redevelopment of Gourrock station will see a new run of prosperity for this seaside town.

Village News Roving Reporters

During this year's Gala Weekend expect to see a team of roving reporters from Wemyss Bay Primary. They will be approaching people to see what they think of this year's event and what their favourite attractions are. There will be no Village News in July, as many of our volunteer distributors will be on holiday, but you can read the children's write up in the August edition. Please take a few minutes to answer their questions if you are approached.

We hope to include a regular article, compiled by a school news team in future editions of the Village News

Woodland Association

Unfortunately the planned Moth Night, which we mentioned in the last Village News has had to be cancelled. The usual guide was unavailable and was unable to suggest anyone else with sufficient expertise on moths to conduct a guided walk. Although disappointing, it is hoped to reschedule for later on the year. Plans are underway for a number of other guided walks including a Treasure Hunt and Mini-Beast Safari and details will appear in the Village News nearer the time.

On Saturday 5th June, the Woodland Association are holding a "Wombling Morning" from 10.00am – 12 noon. The aim is to clear as much of the litter which is spoiling everyone's enjoyment of the wood as possible. Gloves (including children's) bags and litter-pickers will be provided and there will be a small prize for every child taking part. Please note that children MUST be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Rhodi-bashing is continuing on a fortnightly basis and additional volunteers are always needed. Even if you are only available for an hour or so every second or third weekend that would still help and you are very welcome to come along. All tools, gloves etc are provided. Contact Eila for more details on 529375 or look out for posters. The Association is aware that the amount of rhododendron which has been cut and stacked is beginning to look unsightly. Arrangements are in hand to have all this material chipped as soon as possible.

During the fortnightly work session our volunteers are regularly removing sack loads of rubbish. Certainly some of it is wind-blown, dropped by people having an illicit drink, or sweet, crisp and cigarette packs. People are quick to blame young people but adults are responsible for the majority of the rubbish we remove. The bulk of the rubbish accumulates as a result of fly-tipping. During our last weekend we removed enough rubbish to fill a one-ton builder's sack! Oil cans, laminate flooring, polystyrene, carpet, and assorted other household rubbish was removed from one small area alone. Elsewhere in the wood builder's rubble, including sacks of aggregate and concrete, doors, work surfaces and kitchen units have still to be removed. People are using cars to get to the wood with this rubbish, surely it is not difficult to take it to municipal collection points at Kirn Drive, Pottery Street or Haylie Brae? This is an example of the ignorance, lack of consideration and downright stupidity of people who show no consideration or respect for the safety and enjoyment of other people using the wood. Many people also dump garden waste – this is no better. Plastic sacks, plant pots and other containers take decades to decompose and pollute the surrounding area, while even the dumping of purely organic material causes problems. By getting rid of garden or house plants in the wood you risk introducing species or varieties not native to Scottish woodlands – these can spread and take over, squeezing out our native plants. Fly-tipping of any material is illegal with offenders being dealt with by the courts or with fixed penalty fines. If you see anyone fly-tipping in the wood, or anywhere else in Wemyss Bay, help keep our local area safe for everyone to enjoy by contacting the new National Fly-tipping Stop Line immediately on 08452 30 40 90.

Some of you may already have purchased a fund-raising "Nature's Nursery Rhyme Quiz" sheet (if not you can get yours from any committee member or at the Gala Day). We have to apologise as the quiz contains one error –

No. 23 B _____ F _____ should read (5,2,1,7). Any forms which are returned with this question incorrect or blank will still be included in the draw. There are no other mistakes, so if you are struggling with one or two answers don't use this as an excuse!

The Association are taking part in the Gala with a suitably natural theme. They are selling a wide variety of pocket-money toys which are either made of wood or have an animal theme. In addition there will be a Jungle Treasure Hunt and you will still be able to get your quiz sheets. Please pay a visit to the stall and support the work of the Association.

The next committee meeting of the Woodland Association will be held on Wednesday 16th June at 7.30pm in the Inverkip Hotel. Anyone, interested in finding out more about the work of the Association, is welcome to come along, or you can contact Eila for more information on 529375 e-mail: eilaroberts@care4free.net

Community Association Annual General Meeting

The Community Association Annual General Meeting will be held in Wemyss Bay Community Centre at 7.45pm on Wednesday 23rd June. The Association is responsible for running the Community Centre, organising lets, production of the Village News, running the Gala Weekend and the Christmas Light Switch-On, among other things. Perhaps you are interested in becoming more involved, or maybe you just want to have your say on how things should be done. For whatever reason, if you are interested in your local community, please come along. **Your views are important to us.**

Councillor Eric Forbes

Proposed Mobile Phone Mast

As probably the most up to date topic is the mobile phone mast, the following comments are relevant.

National Planning and Policy Guidelines do not permit Local Planning Authorities to take into consideration the question of health issues in coming to their decision. The only grounds available for consideration to the members of the Committee are "siting" and "design." The health issue is very personal and passionate but is really a no go area. The Planning Officers are preparing a report with their recommendations and this will come before the Committee to make a decision."

Quad bikes

I have had complaints about youngsters and in some cases very young people driving quad bikes around the area of the Community Centre and village streets. This is an illegal practice. It is also a dangerous one not only for the pedestrians who are subjected to speeding machines but also to the riders who expose themselves to accident. Parents have to take responsibility as well for this behaviour and make sure that no one is exposed to danger. The police are aware of these goings on.

Leven Road Trees

A report is being prepared for submission to the Procurator Fiscal for his consideration. Also a notice is being prepared and will be served on the owners of the land to comply with the conditions of the Tree Preservation Orders i.e. to replace the trees which have been felled.

Wemyss Bay Railway Station

A few weeks ago some concern was expressed about the state of the station. I contacted SPTA and Network Rail and they both informed me that they had no immediate or indeed future plans to carry out maintenance. However Councillor Alistair Watson, Chairman of SPTA, paid a call to the station to have a look prior to any celebrations of the station's 100th anniversary and he was quite disgusted at the state of the place and is going to actively seek some action being taken to tidy it up.

Pedestrian Crossing at Pier

The latest news is that a PUFFIN crossing (Pedestrian User Friendly Intelligent Crossing) will be installed at the pier. The crossing and all associated works will be implemented by August 2004.

South Lodge

It appears that a planning application is coming forward to convert this building to flats.

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

Guides

The next couple of months will see girls from Wemyss Bay Guides involved in a wide variety of events. 24 local girls will be going along to Guide camp at South Newton later this month, where they will have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities including archery and tree-climbing. Also this month the District Barbecue will take place at Lunderston Bay where Rainbows, Brownies and Guides from across Inverclyde will meet for a fun-filled evening. In July four girls from Wemyss Bay will attend "Airwaves", an International Guide Camp to be held at Dalry in Ayrshire. This provides the opportunity of meeting and learning from other members of world-wide Girl-guiding movement.

Last month two local teams entered the Guide 5-a-side football tournament which was held in Paisley. The Guides also took part in a walk along the cycle path from Johnstone to Lochwinnoch, stopping to take part in a variety of activities along the way. The walk was organised to raise funds for the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and was attended by over 250 girls.

Finally a plea for help. The recent appeal for helpers for the Brownies was very successful but now the Guides are also short of leaders. There is a strict rule regarding the ratio of girls to leaders. Wemyss Bay Guides now have a waiting list of girls desperate to join, but until they are successful in attracting additional guiders they cannot take on more girls. Do you have a couple of hours to spare on a Tuesday evening. Even if you are not available every week, they will look at a rota system with other volunteers. To find out more about what is involved contact Alison Battley on **521970**.

Bible Club

The Bible Club are holding a summer party on Monday 21st June before stopping for the summer holidays. For more information, contact Stephen Renton on **01505 355994**.

Better Sports Facilities for Wemyss Bay?

Ardgowan Football Development and Wemyss Bay Community Association are jointly staging a meeting on Sunday 13th June at 3.00pm in the Community Centre to try and bring together other community groups who would like to be involved in fighting for better sports facilities in the area.

Current facilities within the village are far from adequate. As many people are aware the playing field behind the community centre turns into a mud bath after a couple of heavy showers, while the school blaze pitch also frequently becomes flooded. Indeed AFD have had to cancel many training sessions due to inclement weather and the resultant flooding.

Both AFD and the Community Association have already had discussions about how things could be improved. There is a need for facilities, not just for football, but also for basketball, tennis, hockey, bowls or any other outdoor sport. The ideal option would seem to be some sort of all-weather surface behind the community centre to accommodate the needs of the community as a whole.

If you are involved in a group, or would like to set one up, but have no place to go, and would like to join forces to put forward an application to the authorities for improved facilities, then please come along to the meeting. As with any attempt to win over the authorities, it is vital to show a high level of community support.

Obviously any serious attempt to improve things will depend heavily on the finances available. It is unrealistic to expect that Inverclyde Council will be able to come up with the funds required, although we would hope for a contribution. We have already started investigating the availability of other funding sources. AFD's constitution is set up in such a way that they are able to encourage and bring on sports other than football, while the Community Association's constitution is to pursue activities for the benefit of the community of Wemyss Bay. The more organisations there are involved in fighting for improved facilities, the greater our voice and the higher the chance of success.

Support your local community – come along to the meeting and get involved!

School News

Last month was an exceptionally busy time for pupils at Wemyss Bay Primary School. P6 and 7 spent a week visiting Winmarlee Hall for their summer trip and everyone had a great but very tiring time. Paul and Greg, both in P6, took part in the Konex Challenge, a project for Junior Engineers for Britain which was held in the Nautical College in Glasgow. As part of the school Enterprise Scheme every class has a different topic and the projects for P1 involved a Teddy Bears tea-party, attended by 68 parents, and a Sponsored Walk. The children walked 1 mile to raise money for the Macmillan Mile Challenge. The annual Sports Day also took place in May with all the children participating in a variety of races and activities. Special thanks go to our local ice-cream man, John Harkins, who once again this year provided free ice-cream for every child.

This month the calendar is just as busy with a wide variety of events taking place prior to the summer holidays. On 2nd June the whole school will be involved in "Kick for Click", a fundraiser for children suffering from cancer and leukaemia. Money will be raised through donations from each child taking part. Later that week on Friday 4th June the school will be hosting a Health Fair, when a number of visiting speakers will be talking about and demonstrating healthy eating, exercise and other health related matters. There will be lots of activities for the children to get involved with and learn through having fun. On Monday the 7th teachers and parent helpers will be running a Maths Fair for the entire school and introducing a whole new range of resources to make maths fun. Induction days for Greenock High School take place on 8th and 9th of June with Gourock High School following on the 10th and 11th. Wemyss Bay Primary's very own Induction Days for incoming P1 children will be held on the 9th and 11th of the month.

Former school janitor, Mr Steele, has donated a football trophy and Martin Mulholland has been organising a tournament. On Thursday 17th June teams from Moorfoot, Inverkip and Gourock Primary Schools will be visiting Wemyss Bay to take part in a number of friendly competitions and games.

Finally this year's summer assembly will be held at 1.30pm on Thursday 24th June in the school. All parents are warmly invited to attend.

Community Association

The next meeting of the Community Association will take place on Wednesday 2nd June 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.

Brownies

Wemyss Bay Brownies have been enjoying regular visits recently from the Skelmorlie Pack. With new leaders at Skelmorlie a buddy-up system has been established to provide support for the Skelmorlie guiders from their more experienced Wemyss Bay neighbours.

The Brownie packs from both villages have been working on their World Issues badge which encourages them to look at international issues in a different way. They have been looking at the clothes women in other countries wear and the issues which affect them, the use of water, agencies and organisations like Amnesty International, UNICEF and the Worldwide Fund for Nature. The Brownies were delighted to discover that the Wemyss Bay Pack own a piece of the Central American rainforest, although were somewhat disappointed to find out that ownership of all the birds and animals which live there is not included!

At the time of writing, Ruth is in hospital and all the Brownies and Guiders send her very warm wishes for a speedy recovery. Following articles in previous editions of the Village News, the Brownies have two new guiders who look set to continue, and even seem to be enjoying themselves! They are currently going through the registration process.

Under the new Brownie programme there are three specific areas of work – the girl, the girl in the community and the girl in the wider world. The third topic is being addressed by the World Issues badge. As part of their work on the community involvement they recently visited Wemyss Bay Beach and it was surprising to find out that many girls had not been there before. Both before and after the summer holidays they will be making several return trips to find out more about the beach, what it comprises of, what lives there, what it was previously used for. They will also be finding out more about Wemyss Bay both past and present.

In June the Brownies will be taking part in the Gala Day with a Bottle Stall, Jewellery Stall and Spin-a-Game. Please make sure that you visit the stalls and give as much support as you can.

To end this session, Wemyss Bay Brownies will be joining with other Brownie packs and Guide Companies throughout Inverclyde to enjoy a District Barbecue at Lunderston Bay. Have a great time girls and don't forget the midge repellent!

It Was a Tough Job but Someone Had To Do It

As many of you know the beer tent was one of the biggest attractions of last year's Gala. The last Community Association committee meeting was discussing what beers we should order this year when, selflessly, Finlay and Ken volunteered to go on a fact-finding exercise! The trip to the Houston Brewing Company in Renfrewshire was a great success. The company is at the vanguard of the revolution in Scottish Brewing, carving out a reputation for producing world class award-winning traditional ales. Last year "Helga's Big Jugs" proved to be a favourite and yes, the blousy blonde is back for a second appearance this year! She will be accompanied by "St. Peter's Well". This light, refreshing ale has a rich golden colour, fruity flavour and full hop aroma. "Barochan", a new-comer to the Gala, is smooth and ruby coloured with a touch of roasted barley, rounded with a lingering maltiness and a clean finish which should prove popular with heavy drinkers. But there's more! For the first time we are having a special Wemyss Bay Gala Beer, a unique blend of Houston Brewery's stout with a beautiful mellow wheat beer. It slips down very easily and really has to be tasted. We are looking for a name for this beer to reflect both the village and the Gala. Suggestions (not too rude please) to Eila on 529375 or e-mail: eilaroberts@care4free.net Just in case you are wondering, Finlay and Ken went out of their way to sample most of the beers available, although Helga doesn't emerge from the brewery until June, and they still walked out to the car afterwards!

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 will carry out door-to-door collections 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.

Scottish Parliament Report – Duncan McNeil MSP

Many of you, I am sure, will remember, back in the good old days, Wemyss Bay at the Glasgow Fair and the massed hordes pouring off the trains and sweeping along that magnificent wooden concourse, as they made their way through the station, down to the ferry and thence "doon the watter".

Sadly, as I mentioned in my *Telegraph* column the other week, to say that the station's Edwardian grandeur has since faded is putting it mildly.

The toilets, as those of you who use it regularly know, are a disgrace; the paint is cracked and peeling; and plants are growing out the walls – despite the money we invested in refurbishments.

I have, therefore, recently met with representatives of Strathclyde Passenger Transport and Caledonian MacBrayne, who are also concerned at this disrepair, to discuss the way forward.

Wemyss Bay offers visitors from across the west of Scotland the chance to see first class scenery, get a taste of island life and sample some local hospitality – without a 250-odd mile car journey up North.

Staying with transport, it has been confirmed that the pedestrian crossing (no less than a new-style PUFFIN crossing, I am informed) at the monument in the village centre is going ahead. While most will welcome this move, I know that issues relating to parking at the shops remain. These will only be addressed by speaking to and working with all the various bodies about the problems in the pier and station area. Work on this, as they say, goes on....

Skelmorlie Gala Day – Saturday 26th June

After an absence of seven years the Skelmorlie Gala Day is back with a record number of stalls and attractions including an international five-a-side football tournament featuring many of the nationalities currently employed at the IBM call centre. Events will start at 1.00pm and be based around Skelmorlie Community Centre. There will be a procession by the Gala Queen, displays by the Fire Brigade and Police, music from the Salvation Army Band and a variety of Stalls. The kids will enjoy the Bouncy Castle, Pony Rides, Face Painting and Races while adults can take part in the Tug of War, Wellie Tossing and Knobbly Knees Competition. Refreshments, including burgers and seafood will be available and don't forget about the beer tent. Organisers are still looking for sponsors. If you wish to make a donation or put up goods for auction on the day contact Bill Mutter, 36 Annetyard Drive, Skelmorlie Tel: **521441**. All proceeds will be distributed among Skelmorlie Village organisations.

Community Council

The next meeting of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council will take place on Thursday 3rd June 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 on an informal but regular basis Tel: **01475 520489**.

Cancer Research Plant Sale

The annual Cancer Research UK Plant Sale which was held in Skelmorlie Scout Hall was once again a resounding success. There was a very extensive choice of bedding plants, perennials, shrubs, and heathers. In addition there was a fine choice of beautiful hanging baskets, ready to take home and provide an immediate colourful display.

Over the course of the two days there was a fantastic turnout of local people, some keen gardeners but many others just wishing to give their support to a very worthwhile local charity. Organisers were delighted at the turnout and would like to thank everyone who attended for their generous support. By the time the sale closed on the Sunday evening almost all the plants were sold out. The magnificent sum of around £1000 was raised, although some money has still to come in. The money raised will help with the ongoing work of the charity.

As usual the volunteers did a sterling job over the weekend and they should all be congratulated on their hard work.

Recycling

This month Greenlight will be carrying out their doorstep collections on Mondays 14th and 28th June. In July they will be collecting on the 12th and the 26th of the month. 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.

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.

Thank You

Anna (primary 4) would like to thank everyone for their lovely presents and gifts of money received for her recent 9th Birthday. Thanks also to everyone who came along and enjoyed her Disco Party in the Community Centre.

“Save our Skelmorlie” Campaign

The latest in a series of meetings of concerned Skelmorlie residents took place recently in Skelmorlie Community Centre. Concerns centre on the proposed developments along Shore Road which will see the Heywood Hotel and Chasely House (Beechwood Nursery) being demolished to make way for more flats. There are fears that, in addition to changing the nature of the village and the appearance of the shore front, the additional cars, on an already very busy road, will increase the risk of accidents to pedestrians and other road users.

Plans for the Heywood Hotel site are for 16 flats over 4 floors with over 30 car-parking spaces. The new building, although generally following the existing foot-print of the hotel, will be slightly larger resulting in it being closer to adjacent properties.

Proposals for Chasely House, which includes Beechwood Nursery, will see the current buildings being demolished in favour of 36 flats starting at 4 storeys and being tiered back from the road ending in a 5 storey building. There will be 72 car-parking spaces. With no established building line along Shore Road plans for the new development suggest that construction will be significantly closer to the existing pavement, while the new building as a whole will dwarf the neighbouring Strathclyde House. Neither of these developments are aimed at bringing families into the village and, with a declining birth rate, campaigners are also concerned about the long-term future of Skelmorlie Primary School. The flats are likely to appeal to commuters and, in the main, to retired people and the meeting also raised concerns about the effects of an increase in the numbers of elderly people on an already stretched local GP service.

The committee decisions, ratified at the meeting, include continued opposition to current developments and campaigning to prevent any future developments. They also intend lobbying local North Ayrshire councillors, MSPs & MPs and seeking meetings with the relevant officials of North Ayrshire Council.

If you would like to find out more about the campaign then look out for notices of future meetings in the local press and posters in shops and businesses in the local area

PTA

Wemyss Bay Primary School PTA held another very successful Car Boot Sale last month. By the time that the sale opened, there was already a massive turnout waiting to get started. With almost 40 cars there was plenty to choose from and purchasers lost no time in getting down to the serious business of haggling. Members of the PTA were kept busy with stalls for tea, coffee & home-baking, hot dogs and a tuck-shop. At the end of the day when everything was counted they were delighted to find that £580 had been raised. Thanks to everyone who helped make this event a success.

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

Finally

That's all for this month. We will be taking a break in July as many of our distributors will be on holiday and therefore the next edition will appear in August. The closing date for any articles or adverts for the August edition of the Village News is the 20th July. 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.

Kids Stuff

This month's wordsearch is all about the gala. Try and find all the words which tell you what is going on and then come along and try out all the different rides.

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

BALLOONS
BOVRIL
BOUNCY CASTLE
BUNGEE RUNNER
BURGERS
CANDYFLOSS
CEILIDH
FACEPAINTS
KARAOKE
LASER QUEST
PIE
QUEEN
RODEO BULL
SLIDE
STALL
TOYS
TREASURE HUNT

WORDFINDER

L	C	U
O	S	R
S	A	E

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. There is at least one 9-letter word.

20 - at least you're trying

30 - keep going

40 - clever clogs

50 - genius!!