

Wemyss Bay Village News

194th Edition

January 2006

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Happy New Year!!

The Community Association would like to wish all residents of Wemyss Bay a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. We hope that you all enjoyed the festive season, that Santa was good to you, and that the need for Aspirin has passed!

Christmas Lights Switch-On

Did all your Christmas wishes come true? Members of the Community Association were wishing that the centre had expanding walls as everyone piled into the building after the lights switch-on last month.

For the first time there was a mini Christmas market outside the centre with some of the community organisations running stalls under decorated gazebos and lit by fairy-lights. Santa's grotto was also outside and looked beautiful with all its Christmas decorations.

Santa was extremely busy and distributed over 200 gifts to the hordes of excited children, while the adults managed to work their way through almost 150 mince pies, 300 pieces of shortbread and 75 litres of mulled wine!! Although it was a bit of a squeeze to fit everyone in at times, we hope you all had a good time. Thank you to everyone who came along and made the night so successful.

We know that some people think that the council put much more effort into things this year, so we thought it important to clarify who did what. Inverclyde Council provided the Christmas tree and lights outside the school and were responsible for actually switching the lights on. In addition they provided tea, coffee and some of the mince pies for the adults and some of the juice and crisps for the kids inside the community centre. All the decorations inside the community centre were provided by the Community Association, with volunteers starting at 9.00am that morning to decorate the hall. The mulled wine, which was served by local volunteers, extra mince pies, shortbread and additional juice and crisps for the children were provided by the Association. Finally all the presents which Santa handed out were funded by the Community Association. Special thanks must be given to Kirsty Donnelly, chairperson of the Community Association, and her willing (!) band of volunteers for all their efforts in insuring that this was the best Lights Switch-On yet.

Bulb and Wildflower Appeal

The Woodland Association has planted over 5000 bulbs throughout Wemyss Bay Wood but, in order to help reintroduce native species this is a drop in the ocean. Again this year we are looking for your help. We are working in an area of almost 18 acres so we need a lot of bulbs and wildflowers. If you are buying bulbs for your garden why not add an extra pack or two for the woods? We are specifically looking for Native British Bluebells, Snowdrops and Wood Anemones. We have already had several hundred daffodil bulbs donated and at present do not need anymore of these.

In addition we are looking for a variety of wildflowers including Bugle, Primroses, Ragged Robin, Devil's Bit Scabious and Kidney Vetch. As it is against the law to dig up wildflowers these will all have to be purchased from specialist suppliers. We can buy these in bulk to reduce costs (we can also buy bulbs in this way). As an example 50 Wood Anemones will cost us £14 while 50 primroses will cost £28.50 and the same number of scabious £37.

If you would like to make a donation towards the cost of the bulbs and wildflowers please make a cheque payable to Wemyss Bay Community Woodland Association and leave it in a sealed envelope, with your name and address in the Village News folder in Spar, or send it to Eila Roberts, 14 Brueacre Drive, Wemyss Bay. You will be very welcome to come along and help plant the bulbs.

If you have bulbs to donate please contact Eila Tel: 529375 to arrange uplift. Again, if you would like to, you can help with the planting.

Help us to make sure that we have a very broad selection of native wildflowers in the Woods – in this way we can encourage a large variety of insects, birds and animals, so that they too can enjoy our local greenspace.

Girlguiding Wemyss Bay

Wasn't it lovely the night they switched on the village Christmas tree! The rain stayed away and the people came. The mulled wine was good, the lights came on, Santa was there, the stalls looked lovely and there was a wonderful community spirit. Girlguiding made £360 at our stall, so thank you to all the people who bought raffle tickets, bought crafts from the stall, donated items, and to those who always are there when we need them to help us in some way – Muriel, Kirsty, Val.

The main raffle winners were:-

- Christmas Hamper – young Scott McIntosh (his Mummy's best boy right now)
- Italian Hamper – Ann Reynolds (Guide Granny)
- Hand-made Stocking – Kirsty Donnelly
- Hand-made Stocking – Callum Sutherland
- Biscuits/Wine/Advent Calendar – Melissa Murdoch (granddaughter of Ann)
- Other winners were Ross Boag, Michael Mooney, Jillian McNee, Karen Rankin, Mark Anderson, Denise Anderson and Lorraine Smith

If you have an accident in Wemyss Bay in the future you are in good hands as all of the Guides have passed their First Aid badge and our thanks go to Denise Anderson for her expertise and help.

The Guides finished off this year by going skating at George Square, and rumour has it that several of them also partook of a certain chocolate and marshmallow fountain, and then by joining other District Guides for a Christmas Disco.

The Brownies had an end of year Promise celebration, which included parents joining us for mince pies and carols.

The Rainbows had lots of fun and went home eagerly to await a visit from that very special person.

Our thanks also go to the management committee of the community centre for so generously sponsoring the Brownies country dancing dresses. I am sure the girls will as usual be a credit to the community, but this time will look even better. They'll be dancing in the Inverclyde music festival, and their dresses will be white with a sash of the new Girlguiding tartan. Thank you Alison, for all your work.

So, hey ho, into 2006 when we will be doing lots more exciting things with the girls. However as always we put out a plea for help. Can you spare just 12 hours in 2006 to help Girlguiding. Come on, you'll enjoy it. Surprise yourself.

Gala 2006

Yes, it is almost the time of year again when we start appealing for help for the Gala. We work on the principle that if we shout long enough and loud enough eventually enough people will come forward to allow the weekend to go off smoothly. This year it is even more important to get help early.

For the last few years the Gala weekends have run smoothly thanks, in no small part, to the organisational skills of Ann Marie Cockburn. Now at college full time and with two young boys, Ann Marie has decided that it is time that she got to enjoy the Gala with her family. Although she will not be too far away with a word of advice, we really need to get organised early in order that other people can take on the many tasks which Ann Marie previously coped with.

A victim of its own success, the Gala has expanded to cover a whole weekend every June. Do you have spectacular organisational skills? Would you like to co-ordinate the Gala? Alternatively, can you help out over the course of the weekend? It is important to start thinking about what you can do to help. If more people would even give an hour or two over the course of the weekend things would run smoothly (and some of the Community Association Committee might get some sleep!). If you are able to help, please speak to any member of the Community Association.

Country People's Club

The January / February meetings of the above club to be held at 2.30pm in The Chart Room, Kip Marina, Inverkip are as follows:

Wed 11th Jan: Mr Norman Hollywood on the subject of "Observations of a Frequent Traveller"

Wed 25th Jan: Mr Joe McGinty on the subject of "Burns – A Man For All Seasons"

Wed 8th Feb: Miss Lesley Smith on the subject of "A World Cruise – Part 2"

All members, old and new, and visitors will be made most welcome. The subscription is £9 per annum and £1 for visitors. Further details may be obtained from the Secretary, Ann Haig on 522316.

David Cairns MP - 2006: INVERCLYDE'S YEAR FOR CHANGE

2006 is a key year for Inverclyde. There are a number of changes taking place this year, and I believe that if we embrace these initiatives and take them forward, we will bring about massive improvements to Inverclyde.

As I have said in previous articles, I am certain that the regeneration of the Waterfront in vital to unlocking our potential and we have a once in a lifetime opportunity to bring about huge change in Inverclyde. But this will not be easy and it requires careful planning, which is why I want to see an Urban Regeneration Company set up. These public private partnerships have proved successful in other parts of the country and can access millions of pounds worth of investment and transform entire areas of Inverclyde.

What we need are good quality well planned developments from Port Glasgow right down to Gourock. Smart new housing along our waterfront will help to ease the pressure of house building in Wemyss Bay, and the leisure and business facilities built into these developments will benefit everyone.

But it is not just our Riverfront which is changing. We can already see changes taking place in our local schools and, while I welcome the extra money that the Scottish Executive is putting into education, I have some real concerns about how Inverclyde Council is responding to the challenges. Unless we listen to what parents in Wemyss Bay want for their children, we will never be able to provide adequate primary and secondary schooling for our young villagers.

Council tenants too are facing change this autumn when they will be asked to vote on transferring to Riverclyde Homes, a not for profit housing organisation. And although there is very little council housing in Wemyss Bay, I realize that many of you will have relatives and friends who are Inverclyde Council tenants. This is an exciting opportunity for them, and by transferring to community ownership they will unlock millions of pounds of investment to upgrade their existing houses and build new ones. New improved housing will transform the local landscape in some of our most deprived areas and help with the overall regeneration of Inverclyde.

2006 is a year of opportunity and, if we grasp that opportunity, our whole community will benefit.

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, Fax: 791821, or alternatively you can phone the office for details of his next surgery in Wemyss Bay. These details, along with other information, appear on his website: www.davidcairns.com

Duncan McNeil MSP

Well that's that over for another year.

The turkey's eaten, the decorations are down and you're trying your best to stick to your New Year's Resolutions – if only as a means of paying off your credit card bills.

And, thrown to the back of drawers, cupboards, or (if you've got absolutely no shame) the small ads, are the gifts in which you've already lost interest.

What, though, if it's not musical socks or an ironing board cover with which you're bored? What if it's a pet?

Despite all the warnings and information campaigns, some people still hastily ask for –and give – pets as presents. And, when the novelty wears off, they're just as quick to try and offload them.

While we might profess to be a nation of animal lovers, this sort of selfish attitude underlines the need to have robust animal protection legislation in place. In 2006, therefore, the Scottish Parliament will be pressing ahead with the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Bill.

A piece of legislation which people from Wemyss Bay concerned about animal welfare helped to shape at the consultation stage, the Bill will bring animal welfare legislation into the 21st century.

It will consolidate, modernise and strengthen the law and provide proportionate and enforceable sanctions against animal cruelty and neglect. A duty of care on animal keepers is also set to be introduced, as is a general prohibition on mutilations and stronger laws against animal fighting. And, to allow animals to be taken to a place of safety before they start to suffer, inspectors will have increased powers of entry.

Pets are not just fashion accessories or toys, there for us to lift and lay as we please. And we are responsible for more than just avoiding being cruel to them. We have, as this Bill will enshrine in law, a duty to care for our animals too.

Duncan can be contacted at the Parliamentary Office, 20 Union Street, Greenock PA15 8JL, Tel: 01475 791820, Fax: 01475 791821, by Textphone for the hearing impaired: 01475 791824, by E-mail: duncan.mcneil.msp@scottish.parliament.uk or via his website: www.duncanmcneil.com

Interested in Advertising?

1500 copies of the Village News are produced each month. Over 1200 homes in the village receive a hand-delivered copy and the remainder are placed in the doctor's surgery and local shops. In addition copies of the adverts are displayed in the Community Centre for one month.

<u>Advert Size</u>	<u>Dimensions</u>	<u>Price</u>
1/8th page (standard)	64mm x 45mm	£12/issue
1/4 page	128mm x 45mm <u>or</u> 64mm x 90mm	£24/issue
1/2 page	128mm x 90mm	£45/issue
Full page	180mm x 128mm	£90/issue

(Dimensions are approximate, width x height)

If you would like to discuss taking out an advert in the Village News, either as a one-off or on a regular basis, why not contact Ken at ela@wemyssbay.plus.com or phone: **529375**. Ken can advise and help with the lay out of your advert and any artwork.

Toddlers Group

The Toddlers Group meets every Monday and Wednesday from 9.30 – 11.30am at St Joseph's and St Patrick's Church Hall (behind the church). There is loads of fun for the toddlers, with biscuits and juice, and coffee and tea for the parents and carers. New members are always welcome so why not come along and join in.

Planning Application

A planning application to build four houses at the top of Leven Road has yet to be decided. Developers had been granted permission to build four one-and-a-half storey homes by Inverclyde Council's planning committee. The plans however have been put on hold after the matter was referred to the full council at last month's planning meeting. The issue will now be resolved at the next full council meeting on 23 February.

Quiz Night

Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church will be holding a Quiz night on 13th January in the Church Hall. In the past these evenings have proved to be very popular and great fun and this one promises to be just as good, so mark the date in your diaries. Tickets, price £5, will include a light supper and a glass of wine. All proceeds are for Church funds.

What do our MSPs Cost Us?

Full details of MSPs expenses have been revealed for voters' inspection for the first time. Here is a list of what our representatives in the Scottish Parliament cost:

Frances Curran	(SSP, West of Scotland)	£27,638
Ross Finnie	(Lib Dem West of Scotland)	£27,358
Trish Godman	(Labour, West Renfrewshire)	£28,357
Annabel Goldie	(Conservative, West of Scotland)	£24,177
Campbell Martin	(SNP, West of Scotland)	£25,701
Stewart Maxwell	(SNP, West of Scotland)	£24,974
Bruce McFee	(SNP, West of Scotland)	£34,767
Duncan McNeil	(Labour, Greenock and Inverclyde)	£28,524
Murray Tosh	(Conservative, West of Scotland)	£33,418

This amounts to a total tax bill to the taxpayer of £254,904. Are they worth it? You decide at the next election!

Having a Party?

If you are thinking of having a party, why not hold 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 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 your booking or for more information contact **Kirsty** on **520738**. Remember that if you are having food at your party, the centre's kitchen was refurbished last year and is available for your use.

Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church

The Festive Season is behind us. The prospects now may be less inviting than those of our Christmas and New Year celebrations. We put so much energy into preparing for the Festive Season that there appears to be little to look forward to in dark day of January except reset and relief, perhaps. If we live only for the life's celebrations then the prospects will indeed be dull and lifeless.

In January, the Church celebrates the Epiphany, a festival that has been merged with Christmas. The coming of the Wise Men to Bethlehem is really a New Year celebration that looks to the future. These curious figures are sometimes described as astrologers, men who believed that great events could be predicted in studying the stars; their study was a bit more sophisticated than can be found in the columns of the popular press.

The Bible story tells that after they had seen the Christ Child, the Wise Men "returned home another way". They did so to avoid King Herod who was threatening death to the innocents; but could it not have been that a change had come over them that had made them refocus their attitude to life?

We have all experienced Christmas in our different ways. Has the coming of Christ made a lasting impact on you?

CHURCH DIARY for January 2006

Every SUNDAY at 11.00am
Morning Worship, Sunday School and Crèche
Every MONDAY at 3.15-4.45pm
Out of the Ark – for Parents and early years school children
in Skelmorlie Community Centre
Every MONDAY at 7.30pm
Bible Study with a guest speaker once a month
Every WEDNESDAY at 7.30pm
Scottish Country Dancing
Every THURSDAY at 1.15-2.45pm
Noah's Ark – for Parents and Toddlers
THURSDAYS (fortnightly) at 7.30pm
Men's Fellowship
Thursday 12 January: St John's Katalonji, Allister McGregor
Every FRIDAY at 12.15-1.30pm
Friday Lunches (from 13 January)
Every SATURDAY at 1.30-4.30pm
Junior Badminton in Skelmorlie Community Centre

Woodland Association AGM – What Next?

With work on the first phase of the main wood completed, the Association is already considering what should be included in the second phase. It is likely that the parking / service bay which had to be shelved in phase 1 will be included along with a short family cycle path. Other possibilities are also being considered at this time and will be discussed at the Association's AGM which will be held at 7.30pm in the Community Centre on Sunday 22nd January. If you have any questions or comments about the work of the Association please come along to the AGM. There will be an opportunity to ask questions, and proposals for the next phase will be discussed. Don't worry, you will not be roped into serving on the committee unless you really would like to – we have a number of people willing to continue, although fresh faces and new ideas would be very welcome. If you are unable to come along but have any comments contact **Eila** on **529375** or E-mail: **eila@wemyssbay.plus.com**

What Would You Like To See In The Village News?

Since taking over editing the Village News two years ago 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: **eila@wemyssbay.plus.com** or leave your suggestions in the Village News folder behind the counter in Spar.

Woodland Association

Work is continuing to clear rhododendron in the terraced garden area and over the last three months there has been a huge difference to the area as a result of the work of the volunteers. Already many native species are starting to regenerate and this is bound to continue in the coming months. Plants and trees which previously struggled for light and space now have a chance to flourish.

Weekends start again with a vengeance on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th January when we would welcome volunteers, old and new, to join us to work off the excesses of Christmas. We are continuing to work in the area approaching the terraced gardens so enter through the gate in the wall on Ardgowan Road, opposite the end of Castle Wemyss Drive. We work from 9.30am – 3pm and provide all the necessary gloves, safety glasses and tools. In addition we stop for coffee/tea and biscuits in the morning and provide soup and hot sausage rolls at lunchtime. Children are welcome to come along (we do have gloves to fit) however they must be accompanied at all times by a responsible adult. If you are able to come along to any of the work days please let Eila know on 529375 in order that she can cater for the correct numbers

Auction

Interested in selling good quality small furniture or other goods with half the profits going to the church? Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church are holding an auction on Friday 10th February at Skelmorlie Community Centre. We hope to bring more information in the February edition.

Waste collection

Your blue and brown recycling bins should be collected, on your normal collection day, during the weeks beginning 5th & 19th December and 2nd & 16th January. This means that your residual black bin should be emptied, on your normal collection day, during the weeks beginning 12th & 26th December and 9th & 23rd January.

Greenlight

It is our understanding that the Greenlight doorstep collection of recyclables to residents of flats and tenements is to stop. You should have received notification directly of the last collection day. Even without a doorstep collection you can still get involved in recycling. There is a bottle bank at the Community Centre. At Londis at Inverkip, along with many of the supermarkets, there are bottle, paper and clothes banks. Please try to continue to recycle and do your bit for the environment.

Things you may have Missed

- A Californian man has been fined for driving in a high-occupancy vehicle lane after a vigilant cop noticed that his "passenger" had no legs. Kevin Morgan's passenger seat contained a kick-boxing dummy wearing a football shirt and baseball cap.
- Malibu residents have been left dumbfounded in the wake of new emergency preparedness brochures. "Never go to the beach to watch for, or surf, a tsunami wave," the guide says.

- Reindeer, turkeys and pink hippos have been washing up on the Sussex coastline. The animals are part of a £100,000 shipment of toys that got washed off a cargo ship in rough seas.
- George W Bush has given the Japanese Prime Minister a Segway Human Transporter. Bush's ability to fall off the self-balancing scooters is infamous.
- A railway spokesman, explaining why a German train was stopped for a stuffed toy on the line, said the driver had mistaken it for a man in a tuxedo. "We are at a loss to explain the presence of this very large penguin," he said.
- A Chinese company is suing authorities for preventing it from trading. Beijing Lunar Village Aeronautics Science and Technology has been banned from selling land on the moon. The company had already sold 49 acres.
- A Turkish man is being threatened with losing his driving licence after setting off a Swiss speed camera four times in less than two minutes. He kept driving past the camera to work out who was flashing lights at him!

Community Association

The next meeting of the Community Association will take place on Sunday, 8th January, 2006 at 7.30pm in the Inverkip Hotel.

Councillor Eric Forbes

Welcome to 2006. I hope everyone enjoyed a happy, restful and pleasant Festive Season. It will be a year of many challenges but also of future successes.

On a local basis we have to look forward to the refurbishment of the Primary School and I know for a fact, as I have been a party to some of them, that serious talks have taken place with the Head Teacher, staff, parents and the School Board. There are concerns but I am confident that they will be addressed in the appropriate manner taking all views into account. It is not an easy exercise, but necessary, to give our schoolchildren a modern fit for purpose environment and to address the issues that have been neglected in the past. The question of the best place for nursery provision is being properly debated and discussed. The Officers will continue to have dialogue and paramount are the children, their welfare and educational needs during the transformation. No final decisions have been taken. Thanks for everyone's perseverance.

On the question of the Council's Schools Business Plan which is obviously of interest to some parents in Wemyss Bay: We are still awaiting (at the time of going to press) a decision from the Education Minister after in one part of the plan (Primary Schools) there is a period of 2 years and in the Secondary part a time of 10 months. This means that timescales have to be re-visited and extra finance has to be sought as prices increase. However this has not prevented us from moving ahead with our refurbishment and new build on the schools under prudential borrowing. We can see the difference this is making and will make in the future to our schools' environment and how it is the right course of action after years of inattention and neglect of our school estate.

In relation to our new build Secondary School at Ravenscraig Pitches which is also of interest to some Wemyss Bay parents: A presentation took place in Greenock High School where the architect explained the new design, the concept behind it and then answered questions from the audience of about 100 people. What is on the table after many hours of consultation is a modern, efficient, fit for purpose, 21st century school. Thanks go to the designers, Officers, staff, parents and School Board members who took part in the consultations.

Inverclyde will be a better place with the Waterfront regeneration programme and hopefully we will hear very soon from the Communities Minister that we have gained Urban Regeneration Company status (we had not heard at time of going to press). This is down to a lot of hard work by our Officers and the desire of the Council in partnership with Renfrewshire Enterprise to bring this to fruition timeously and open up a funding stream of millions of pounds. An excellent opportunity for the whole of Inverclyde.

Back to a village issue; you may have noticed that the 30mph speed restriction has been moved further eastwards and hopefully this will assist in eradicating accidents on this stretch of the road. We cannot legislate for bad driving and I would ask drivers to always drive according to the prevailing road conditions.

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** Out with office hours I can be contacted at home: **520012 or on my mobile: 07747 006725**. I believe that rather than waiting several weeks for a surgery, it is better for my constituents if I am available at the end of a telephone at any time. Thereafter, if necessary, I can arrange a suitable follow-up meeting

And Now For the Small Print.....

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 and / or their products / services.

Finally

The closing date for submission of articles and adverts for the February edition of the Village News is the 20th January at 6.00 pm... Send your information to **Eila Roberts, 14 Brueacre Drive, Wemyss Bay Tel: 529375** E-mail: **eila@wemyssbay.plus.com** or drop it into the Village News folder in Spar. Adverts should be sent to Ken at the same address. If you wish to discuss an article for inclusion or if you have any questions about advertising please feel free to phone us on **529375**.

Record Breaking Paper Chain

In an effort to get into the Guinness Book of Records, P7 at Wemyss Bay Primary School have been making a very long paper chain. As part of their enterprise project the busy pupils have sold over 8,400 strips of paper and so far their chain has reached a massive 200 metres. In the few weeks up until Christmas the class has involved the entire school and so far has raised over £400. All the money raised will go to Oxfam's Unwrapped Christmas Appeal and will be used to buy donkeys, goats and a beehive in Africa and other under-developed countries.

Oxfam Unwrapped is a Christmas Appeal aimed at raising awareness of the human suffering in Africa and other third world countries and is also campaigning for an end to poverty. For only £24 you can buy a goat, which immediately provides fertiliser for crops, 12 pints of milk a week and eventually meat. When your goat produces its first female kid this is passed on to another family and ensuring that the help goes on. Donkeys are vital in many remote locations where it may be many miles to the nearest water hole – a donation of £50 can provide a donkey. Toilets, taps, training for teachers and midwives, fishing nets,

tools for a farmer, beehives, essential medicines for a village and many more essential items are available by logging on to Oxfam Unwrapped or by popping in to your nearest Oxfam store. Instead of popping sweets into someone's stocking this year why not follow the example set by the pupils of Wemyss Bay Primary School - £6 will provide 100 school dinners. Surely the Christmas message is about hope and by supporting Oxfam Unwrapped this year you can bring hope to some of the world's poorest people. Let the children of Wemyss Bay show the rest of us the way.

Kid's Stuff

On Hogmanay, the Bells at midnight signal the start of the New Year and a time to make resolutions about what we are going to do better. This month's wordsearch is about the year: the number of months and their names, the number of weeks. It is also about Robert Burns, our national poet, who is celebrated all over the world on 25th of January with Burns Suppers, when people eat haggis, neeps and tatties and sing or recite some of Burns' poems and songs. See how many words you can find this month.

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

APRIL
 AUGUST
 BELLS
 BURNS
 DAY
 DECEMBER
 FEBRUARY
 FIFTY-TWO
 HAGGIS
 HOGMANAY
 JANUARY
 JULY
 JUNE
 MARCH
 MAY
 MONTH
 NATIONAL
 NEEPS
 NEW YEAR
 NOVEMBER
 OCTOBER
 POET
 RESOLUTIONS
 ROBERT
 SEPTEMBER
 TATTIES
 TWELVE
 WEEK

WORDFINDER

Try and find as many words as possible using the letters below. Each letter can only be used once and every word must contain the letter in the middle square. No plurals, names or hyphenated words are allowed. There is at least one 9-letter word.

R	M	A
B	E	S
D	C	L

20 words – at least you're trying!

40 words – shows promise

30 words – good

50+ words – brain-box!!

SUDOKU

6				5	8		9	
5		9	2				8	7
	3				7	2		
	2		5		4	3		8
4				2			6	9
3		1	8				4	
		4	7				3	6
7	5				6	8		
	9		1	3				5

Sudoku is straightforward once you get the hang of it and relies on logic to solve it. Place a number from 1-9 in each empty square so that each row, each column and each 3x3 block contains the numbers 1-9. (This means that no number can appear twice in any row, column or 3x3 block.) Good Luck