Wemyss Bay Village News

216th Edition February 2008

Email: villagenews@wemyssbay.net
Community Centre Tel: 521955 http://wemyssbay.net/

To All Residents of Wemyss Bay and The Surrounding Areas

We would like to make all residents in the area aware that Inverclyde Council have cancelled its plans to facilitate Wemyss Bay with an all weather sports surface in the new school build.

The original plan was to have an all weather synthetic surface within the new school campus which would have helped greatly the Wemyss Bay School and Community Centre sports and activity clubs.

We have now been told that this will not happen.

Again Our VILLAGE has missed out on a facility that would have enhanced the village and helped OUR KIDS and adults to build a stronger community link with the many events it could have staged on this surface.

Wemyss Bay has had very little funding over the years. Yes we appreciate we are receiving a new extension to the school, council officials will try and say we are gaining this for the community but this school needed to be extended for the amount of people who have moved into the area over the years. If it had not been extended another new school would need to have been built to accommodate the ever increasing population of the surrounding area.

It has now been almost 19 years since the Community Centre was built. With it being the most utilised centre in Inverclyde it has outgrown its usefulness to help the community of Wemyss Bay.

The hall is now too small to hold reasonable functions for the population of the area and storage to hold any new apparatus is at its capacity. In fact our community funds were required to purchase storage for the Ardgowan football equipment (160 kids every week ran by dedicated local volunteers).

The Community Association try their best to accommodate new and interesting activities within and around the Centre but this is being severely hampered by the poor drainage surrounding the Community Centre and school grounds.

There are various sports activities within the centre and school, these are being jeopardised due to the lack of facilities that can be supported by the hall and the surrounding grounds.

The all weather surface would have been an ideal facility and many events could have been staged there.

We think it is time for the residents of this area to start speaking up for the lack of money being ploughed into this area.

You just have to look around the Community Centre and look at the lack of facilities for our kids to play in (would you let your kid play in this environment)

- The swing park sits in the middle of a BOG.
- The blaes park has been halved in size and the goals are falling down as well as the FLOODING.
- The grass area behind the Community Centre is like Loch Thom at the moment.
- Paths leading to the Community Centre are being submerged in water.

Despite the efforts of the Community Association and School Representatives, Community Groups and resident's of the area speaking to Inverclyde officials at various meetings, over the last few years, we seem to be going round in circles with no outcome in sight.

We are constantly hearing in the news that money has been used to help less well off areas. If we the residents do not do something soon then we could be one of those areas in the near future.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!! We would like to form a steering group with as many people from the area to represent the many various aspects of this community.

We are holding a meeting in the Wemyss Bay Community Centre at 7pm on Sunday the 17th of February.

If you can help or would like to have a say in your village's future for our children then please, please come along.

Thanks & Regards

Wemyss Bay Community Association/Wemyss Bay School Parent Council.

Community Association

We are the group that bring you your Village News, Gala and Christmas Light Switch On and oversee the running of the Community Centre. Our next meeting will be Monday 18th February at 7.30pm in the Rogues Room (upstairs) in the Inverkip Hotel. As you are aware at the Christmas Light Switch On we had charity donation buckets. These donations are not used to fund the evening but go directly to a chosen charity. Last year the charity we chose was Oxfam and we were able to buy various things which included planting 50 trees and buying a goat for a local village. This year we have chosen to sponsor a slightly more personal charity, Wemyss Bay Primary school are now linked with a school in Malawi called Malire Primary. The school is looking to exchange ideas with the children of Wemyss Bay Primary and get to know more about their lives and culture. Primary 7 have been writing letters telling them about their lives in our community here in Wemyss Bay. They thought it would be a lovely idea for would be for the community and the school to work together to see how we could help our new found friends in Malawi.

Any articles, information or queries should be directed to villagenews@wemyssbay.net or placed in the village news folder in the Spar. The closing date for the March edition will be Friday 22nd February at 6pm.

Inverclyde Downs Syndrome Group

We are a new support group in the Inverclyde Area and would like to take this opportunity to thank the Wemyss Bay Community Association for the free let that they gave us which enabled us to hold our first fundraising evening. It was a great success. Thank you.

The Country Club

We are a non-political and non denominational club which was founded over 20 years ago for all in the Wemyss Bay and district aged 50 years and over. The Club meet alternate Wednesday afternoons at 2.30pm in the Function Room at The Chartroom Kip Marina Inverkip. We have speakers who cover many varied subjects and our afternoons are always rounded off with a welcome cuppa and time for a chat. The annual subscription is £10 with visitors paying £1 per meeting. Contact Ann Craig on 522316 for details

This month's speakers are:

Wednesday 13th - Mr Douglas Rae (or other) "The Golden Casket Group"

Wednesday 27th - Miss Heather Cameron " A visit to Malawi".

Don't throw it out – 'Freecycle' it !!

The Freecycle Network™ is made up of 4,224 groups with 4,367,000 members across the globe. It's an entirely non-profit movement of people who are giving (& getting) stuff for free in their own towns. It's all about re-use and keeping good stuff out of landfills. Each local group is moderated by a local volunteer. Membership is free. To sign up, simply go to www.freecycle.org and find your community by clicking on "Browse Groups" in the search box. I have just recently joined myself and our local group is 'Greenock'.

The principle is very simple. If you have an item that you longer wish to use, why not think about Freecyle before you take it to the dump. The sort of items you could consider offering via Freecycle are those you think could be used by someone else (not broken items that deserve to be dumped!). The very first item I offered was a 28" Widescreen TV (in good working order), it was about 6 years old. I no longer required it as I bought a new TV recently. Within 2 hours of placing it on our Greenock group Freecycle page – I had two requests by e-mail for it. A gentleman from Largs called to my house by arrangement next day and picked up the TV to take it to a pensioner living in Paisley who had no TV. Other useful items I have seen offered there are furniture (beds, sofas, tables, chairs'), children's clothes and electrical goods (pc monitors).

No money changes hands – you simply offer things you no longer require.

Once you join the group you can elect to receive e-mails detailing all new Offers posted, where you might spot something you would like that someone else is wanting to pass on. You can also post Wanted messages if there are items you seek (doing so in moderation as the key to success is in offering items!). All the details you need to join and to get the most out of the group are available through www.freecycle.org

Thank you to a Wemyss Bay Villager for this information.

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HELLO - FROM WEMYSS BAY ON THE HILL!

We're back and we are still on the hill, things are great and there's lots going on from Primary 1 to Primary 7.

Stories written by Primary 7 pupils - Sophie McQueen, Niamh McLaren, Thomas Innes
Primary 5 pupils - Madeleine Coxshott, Katrina Gregory
Primary 3 pupils - Amy McCroray, Aimee McFayden.

Maths Week

The Pupil Council organised a Maths Week for the whole school from Monday the 29th October to Friday the 2nd November. Each class put together activities e.g. P6 - maths trail, P7- problem solving activities. During the week every pupil made a badge, associated with maths, to wear at assembly. Pupil's badges included rockets, maths shapes, fireworks and pumpkins. They were all really colourful. Every class produced a piece of art work to display in the hall, e.g. primary 2 made some lovely firework scenes, primary 7 made snowflakes and primary 4 painted exploding fireworks. Primary 3 organised the competition, which was a cauldron filled with items associated with Halloween, the pupils had to guess how many things were in it. Katy McAskill in primary 2 had the closest guess with 209 items. Primary 5 designed and made their own board games which other classes will be able to play.

Everyone enjoyed Maths week and the display in the Assembly Hall was really bright and colourful.

Primary 7 Fun Day

On Wednesday 14th November Primary 7 organised a Fun Day for the whole school to take part in. All the primary 7's chose partners and made games with a space theme. It took lots of hard work to make the games. The games included Space Catch, Planet Search, Sith Bowling, Football Dribble and lots more. All together there were 12 games. Every pair had to make a poster to advertise their game and what you have to do for it. Each class was timetabled to play the games. During the day the classes all came and played the games, all of which were ten pence each. After all the classes had played the games, Primary 6 took charge of them to allow Primary 7's to have a go at their own and other people's games. When the day was over, all the pairs chose winners from P1-P3 & then, P4-P7. I'm sure everyone had a great time and enjoyed playing all the games. We raised a total of £245.91.

Christmas Cracker

On Friday 16th November the whole school had their annual fundraiser, a Christmas Cracker. The parents were invited along for the morning to take part in some of the things that were there, for example, raffle, craft stall, book fair, tombola, guess my name and lots more. When the parents were there the Primary 7's and staff took charge of the stalls and serving tea, coffee and biscuits. There was also a cake stall and bottle stall, they were both really popular. Some children were allowed out of their class to go with their parents. In the afternoon the rest of the school got to go round the various competitions and games. The Christmas Cracker was a great success and the total amount raised, after expenses, was £822.63. The Book Fair raised £766.40 to be used to buy books for the school. Primary 6 organised a Tiny Teachers competition, teachers brought baby photographs in and we had to guess who was who, and collected mobile phones for Children in Need. They raised a total of £207.54.

Everyone enjoyed all the activities of the two days and were very pleased at the total amount of money we raised for school funds.

Benchball Final

On Wednesday the 5th December eight pupils from Primary 5 took part in the Benchball Finals at Greenock Sports Centre. The team comprised of Euan Benjamin, Madeleine Coxshott, Greg Gourley, Katrina Gregory, Emma McQueen, Saskia Mulholland, Craig Thomson and Graeme Wilson.

The final was contested between seven schools, Ardgowan, Glenburn, King's Oak, St. Francis, St. Michael's, Sacred Heart and Wemyss Bay. We played seven games, one of which was a warm - up. Of the seven games we won three, drew two and lost one. Each game lasted seven and a half minutes. Players had to stay alert, constantly look for space and were always on the move.

King's Oak won and we finished in third place, two points behind. Although we didn't win, we all enjoyed the experience and came back to school tired but very happy, especially as this was the first time the school had reached the finals.

Puppet Workshop

Recently the P2 and P3 pupils took part in puppet workshops. People from the Puppet Association in Edinburgh worked with the children to create their own puppets. The puppets were made using withy canes and cloth for the head and bamboo sticks to hold them. The children decorated their puppets with paint and cloth, to create a character for the Myths and Legends Festival which was held in November at Custom House Quay.

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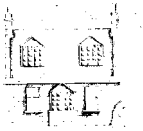

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Baboushka

On Thursday the 13th of December Primary 3 performed a play to the whole school called Baboushka. The primary 3's made some scenery using paint and card. It included trees and houses. They all made cards with a Baboushka doll shape on it for the teachers. The director of the play was Miss Brown and the music was played by Mrs Edwards. Some of the songs were Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, Wise Men Seeking Jesus, Follow That Star and Giving. Baboushka is a Russian legend about an old woman looking for baby Jesus. She was too late to see him in Bethlehem so she spent the rest of her life looking for him. Baboushka also gave gifts to children to replace the gifts she would have given to Jesus. The main characters were the three wise men played by Andrew Wilson, Joshua Watson and Fraser McDonald, the star played by Priya Das and Baboushka played by Amy McCroray.

All the primary 3's enjoyed making the scenery and props and performing the play. Everyone enjoyed watching the play and the teachers were delighted to receive their cards from Baboushka.

Christmas Activities

We have had a very busy week this week with all the Christmas parties, Nativity and the Christmas Assembly. All the classes had a party, P6 and P7 had their party on Tuesday, P4 and P5's party was on Wednesday and P1, 2 and 3 had their parties on Thursday with P1 having a special visitor, Santa. The P1, 2 and 3 put on a Nativity play for the Christmas Assembly called Are We Nearly There Yet? The main characters were Mary, who was played by Erica Horn (P1) and Joseph, who was played by Joshua Rasmussen also in P1. The Christmas Assembly was on Thursday 20th of December and involved the Nativity, singing and the violinists. All the staff and pupils of Wemyss Bay Primary wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

A New Year

Back at school after the Christmas Holidays and Primaries 6 & 7 are busy preparing for their European Travel Fair, of which there will be a report next week.

Mrs Edwards is also very busy working with percussion bands, choirs, soloists and action songs with the Early Stages for the Inverclyde Music Festival at the end of January.

Although we are just back at school all the classes are busy working hard, both in class, and at various projects.

Staff and pupils at Wemyss Bay Primary would like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year.

P6 and 7 Travel Fair

On Friday 11th January 2008 Primary 6 and Primary 7 took part in a Travel Fair. Before hand each pupil in Primaries 6 and 7 had chosen a European country to learn about as their project which they did as homework from October to December 14th.

During the week we all made posters or flags of our country to display in the hall behind our stalls and on the day of the travel fair the pupils were asked to dress as a travel agent and bring in some food and items to do with their country.

In the morning the teachers and pupils of Primaries 1 to 5 came and looked at all the projects and items and asked us lots of questions. In the afternoon the parents and grandparents came in and looked at everyone's project and asked questions about their country. It was very busy as there were at least seventy visitors in the afternoon.

The most popular countries were Scotland, Italy and Spain. Some of the other countries were Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Romania.

By the end of the day we were all tired but everyone had had a good time and had enjoyed themselves, especially the Primary 6 and Primary 7.

Pupils of the Week

Week beginning 5th Nov: Pr1 Cameron Smith, Pr2 Daniel Weston, Pr3 Ayley Pyper, Pr4 Craig Horn, Pr5 Saskia Mulholland, Pr6 Holly Little, Pr7 Craig Forsyth.

Week beginning 12th Nov: Pr1 Jack Noble, Pr2 Dani Glover, Pr3 Adam Hardie, Pr4 Diana MacKinnon, Pr5 Craig Thomson, Pr6 Kieran Jenkins, Pr7 Nicole Molloy.

Week beginning 19th Nov: Pr1 Sophie Elliot, Pr2 Jaye Gourley, Pr3 Mackenzie Smith, Pr4 Ailie Edgar, Pr5 Caragh Morrison, Pr6 Mhairi Black, Pr7 Jamie Roberts.

Week beginning 26th Nov: Pr1 Cameron Smith, Pr2 Rebecca McConnackie, Pr3 Olivia Cassidy, Pr4 Callum Rush, Pr5 Euan McFarlane, Pr6 Katie Donnelly, Pr7 Sophie Leighton.

Week beginning 3rd Dec: Pr1 Mia Kelly, Pr2 Heather McArthur, Pr3 Greg Scotland, Pr4 Frazer Smith, Pr5 Adam Noble, Pr6 Eilidh Black, Pr7 Thomas Innes.

Week beginning 10th Dec: Pr1 Harry Scotland, Pr2 Harry Brown, Pr3 Cara Murdoch, Pr4 Sarah Hulme, Pr5 Chloe Campbell, Pr6 Craig MacLean, Pr7 Mark Anderson.

Next month: Festival reports

Compiled by Sophie McDougall, Primary 4 and Amy Donnelly, Primary 3

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Ardgowan Football Development – John Reid

AFD Race Night & £1,000 Raffle

The Annual AFD Race Night will take place on Saturday 23rd February 2008 in the Wemyss Bay Community Centre. Our Annual £1,000 Raffle will be drawn at the Race Night. All of the prizes in our raffle are worth at least £50, with the majority worth well over £100, and a top pize of £1,000 cash so anyone wishing to buy or sell tickets should speak to one of the Coaches.

ATFC Under 12's

The ATFC Under 12 Team will take part in the Copa Marbella Foot ball Tournament in April and the boys will be involved in a range of fundraising activities over the next few months. Anyone interested in supporting this trip through sponsorship should speak to Martin Thomson, John Reid, Tom McClurg, John Rush or Graham Todd

The Team would like to thank Bongio's Fast Food and Parkean Holiday Park for sponsoring their new strips.

Facilities

Despite recent Council announcements regarding new sports facilities for Inverclyde, villagers will no doubt be aware that there is a severe lack of sports & leisure facilities in Wemyss Bay & Inverkip.

The re-development of Wemyss Bay Primary, albeit welcome, has led to a further reduction in the already limited facilities available to clubs like AFD. Despite an astroturf being included in the original plans for the new school we will now see an 11 A Side red blaes pitch replaced by a 7 A Side red blaes pitch. Not only does the red blaes flood easily, we had to cancel three of our four January sessions, it is not fit for purpose as the SYFA do not allow matches on blaes!

We intend to run a campaign, hopefully with your support, to highlight the lack of facilities available in this area and a meeting has been arranged.

Woodland Association

Hello Everyone

The Woodland Association will hold its Annual General Meeting on Sunday 3rd February at 7.30pm in Wemyss Bay Community Centre. I would urge you to make every effort to attend this meeting as the future of the association is at stake and will be discussed.

We desperately need to fill the post of treasurer. Without a treasurer we are in breach of charity regulations and would have to consider de-registering in addition, under our own constitution, we require a treasurer. Failure to find one within the next few weeks will result in the association being wound up. We also need to appoint a further active committee member.

We are still carrying out work in the woodland on a regular basis however we only have half a dozen regular volunteers now. Considering the number of people active within the association it is amazing what has been achieved however if the membership, and community at large, wish any further maintenance and management of the woodland, including general rubbish clearance, then it is time to put some effort in. The regular volunteers are growing increasingly frustrated that we receive complaints if something is out of place but virtually no help to maintain the wood. Without increased involvement, work sessions will cease.

We understand that not everyone is physically able to help with the work sessions, while for others committee work does not suit. There is however something which each and every member could do. We would urge you again, if you wish the association to continue, and if you are interested in maintaining the woodland, to come along to the AGM.

I hope to see you there. Regards Eila

Please contact Eila on 529375 or email: eila@wemyssbay.plus.com

And Now For the Small Print . . .

While we are happy to print anonymous articles we must have a note of the persons name and contact details. 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.

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Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church – Rev Bill Armstrong

On the last Sunday of this month, and after almost twenty-nine years as minister in Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay, I will conduct my last service before heading off into retirement. Much as I will be sorry to leave this lovely community and the many delightful people I have been privileged to meet on the journey of faith, the time has come for me to receive my pension and take a back seat – at least for a time.

Retirement marks the end of a long and fulfilling period in my life. I came as a probationer minister, with little experience, but I found an understanding and supportive congregation; and that feeling of mutual support has continued throughout my years here.

I have also enjoyed the support of my family. When Laura and I arrived here we had three children under school age; now we are grandparents. Though Laura has also reached the age when she is at liberty to retire, she has decided to continue her work at the surgery for the time being.

It will be a wrench for us to leave as it may well for others to see us go, but it was inevitable that the time would come for us to make way for others.

Our departure signals the end of a fulfilling period; it also signals a new beginning. Others will come to continue the work we enjoyed and the people we appreciated. The transition may be a bit painful but as surely as we found acceptance here our successors will find a similar welcome.

God bless,

W Armstrong

CHURCH DIARY

Sunday Worship – every Sunday, 11.00am.
Sunday Club for youngsters – every Sunday, 11.00am
Prayers for the Sick – last Sunday of every month, 10.15am
Bible Study – every Monday, 7.30pm
Ballroom Dancing – every Tuesday, 7.00pm
Country Dancing – every Wednesday, 7.30pm
Men's Fellowship – fortnightly on Thursdays, 7.30pm
Friday Lunches – every Friday, 12.15-1.30pm

1st Wemyss Bay Guides

The Guides finished off last year with an enjoyable Carol Concert with all their family and friends. A big thank you to all those who attended.

This session has started and the girls have been busy making decorations and preparing their party pieces for Girlguiding Wemyss Bay's annual Burns Supper/ceilidh. This year looks set to be even better than previous with our very own District Commissioner coming to pipe in the haggis!

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate one of our guides, Nynke Mullholland, who has been selected to run with the Scottish team later this month! All the girls are wishing you the best of luck and we know you will be fantastic.

The guides would like to say a huge well done, to all the Brownies who were dancing at the Inverclyde and Renfrewshire festival, many of them have been there, done it and felt all the nerves as well!

We still have a few spaces left at Guides, so anyone who is looking for some more information please do not hesitate to contact Alison Carmichael on 01475 520697, girlguidingwemyssbay@yahoo.co.uk

Youth Club

The p4 – p7 youth club meets every Thursday during term time from 7.00 – 8.30pm in the Community Centre. There are a variety of activities on offer including football, rounders, basketball, table-tennis, board games, music, computer games and arts & craft activities.

There is a 50p entrance charge and a tuck shop is available during the course of the evening selling a range of drinks, crisps and sweets.

Leaders are vetted through the Disclosure Scotland scheme and first aid cover is also provided. If your child is interested in joining or for more information contact Liz on 520205 or Eila on 529375.

Wemyss Bay Brownies Country Dancing Team

The Brownies once again danced in the Rob Roy Cup at the Inverclyde Festival and did us very proud. The whole team would like to say a big thank you to Alison Carmichael who spent many hours coaching them. Thanks Alison and her mum.

Duncan McNeil MSP

Giving Old Money New Life

Despite all the talk of "credit crunches" and bad debts in the American sub-prime mortgage market, the big banks still seem to being doing very nicely indeed.

But, no matter how tidy their profits or eye-watering their executives' bonuses, they never seem to tire of finding new ways to make even more – as those of you who have contacted me for information on reclaiming the hefty bank charges they've had imposed for going a few pounds overdrawn know only too well.

One pile of money the banks certainly do not need is all the unclaimed cash which has lain untouched for years in the accounts of bank customers who have died or cannot be traced.

Estimates vary, but Scotland's share of these funds could be around £40 million. The Holyrood and Westminster parliaments, therefore, have joined forces to unlock this money and reinvest it in the community. Thanks to a vote in the Scottish Parliament last month, a Bill currently going through at Westminster will now also give Scottish Ministers powers to set out how these funds should be spent.

But don't worry that, if you don't look at your bank book for a few weeks, the government's going to come along and empty your account. This will only apply to accounts on which there has been no activity for over 15 years. And, even if the rightful owner of a dormant account does come forward at a later date, they can still get their money back from a special "reclaim fund".

We must, of course, make sure Ministers spend this windfall on initiatives which will really enhance communities like ours and don't squander it on pet projects at the other end of the country. But that's an argument for another day. For now, we should be happy that, for a pleasant change, a bit of co-operation between politicians has produced a very sensible solution.

For more information on claiming back bank charges, see my website: www.duncanmcneil.com or contact Money Matters Inverclyde on (01475) 715965.

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

Adult Association

The following classes are on offer from January - March 2008:

Monday Art Group 7-9PM in the Wemyss Bay Nursery Block

Pilates 6.30-7.30 PM in the Inverkip Primary School

Guitar Group 7.30-8.30PM in the Inverkip Primary School

Tuesday Sewing Group 7.30-9.30PM in the Wemyss Bay Nursery Block

Yoga 7.40-9.15PM in the Inverkip Primary School

Wednesday Salsa Dancing 6.30-8PM in the Inverkip Primary School

Yoga 7.40-9.15PM in the Inverkip Primary School

For more information please phone Morag Wilson on 521626.

71st Ayrshire Scout Group & THE BAY Explorer Unit - Iain Carmichael

Cubs: Both Packs are already working hard on Activity badges, The Tiger Pack are introducing the Cubs to the use of a map and compass and the Eagles have been completing their Road Safety badge,

February holds a visit to the local Coastguard Station for the Eagles along with the first Pack Holiday weekend of the year at Auchengillen Scout Camp site.

Explorers: This month the Unit have been planning their activities for the coming session, where they hope to participate in more district and area joint activities along with completing their Duke Of Edinburgh and Scouting Award schemes.

Group: On Friday the 25th January the Group held it's Burns supper where the boys feasted on the a few of the national delicacies of shortbread, Haggis and toasted the Bard in "Irn Bru"

New members and Leaders / Helpers: at present we have spaces in most sections of the group, if you or your children are interested please contact us.

If you wish any further information about the group or any particular section please contact Iain Carmichael on 01475 520697 or one of the section leaders.

David Cairns MP

2012 Olympics will inspire our young athletes

Listening to the media it's sometimes tempting to think that all our young people are turning into couch potatoes, spending all their time flicking through endless TV channels or sitting with their noses glued to computer screens updating their Facebook pages. Nothing could be further from the truth. From going round local schools, organisations and voluntary groups, I know that sport is thriving amongst the next generation of young Inverclyder's. Something many parents in Wemyss Bay are only too well aware of, as they spend every spare evening ferrying their sons and daughters between football, swimming and gymnastics clubs to name but a few.

This was why I was so pleased when London won the 2012 Olympic bid and Glasgow won the 2014 Commonwealth Games. These Games will be an inspiration to young athletes from Lands End to John O'Groats, via Wemyss Bay and all points in between. Having the Games so close to home will give all our local sports clubs, and their many enthusiastic members, something to aspire to. The home nation traditionally does well in the Olympic Games and who's to say that a young boy or girl training with their local club in the Wemyss Bay Community Centre won't go on and win that gold medal for Britain. The next Kelly Holmes has to come from somewhere and there is no reason at all why it can't be Inverclyde. We already have a great Para-Olympic champion in Margaret McEleny, who has a clutch of gold medal for swimming, and her courage and determination are an inspiration to all local athletes.

The harbingers of doom claim that Scotland will gain nothing from the Olympic Games and it will just result in us losing millions of pounds in Lottery Funding. It's not a view I share. The Olympics and Para-Olympics will give us a once in a lifetime chance to showcase the whole of the UK on the world stage. We already know that football games will be played at Hampden; thousands of athletes will need training facilities in the run up to the games, and there is no reason why Scotland can't be a venue for those training camps; and the Games will also generate massive business opportunities. Ones that Scotland can benefit from. Inverclyde companies can tender for contracts in everything from printing programmes to putting new windows in stadiums, and our tourist organisation Visit Scotland is already working hard on plans to persuade foreign visitors to finish off their visit to the Games with a trip north of the border.

When all is said and done, the Olympic and Commonwealth Games are not about just money. They are about inspiring our Scottish athletes to be all they can be. They are about giving sport in Britain a platform it can build and expand on and, most importantly of all, they are about inspiring the next generation of young athletes.

We can't all be winners, whether it is in sport or in politics. But if the Games encourage young people in Wemyss Bay to go out and join clubs and take exercise, then they will have done their job.

Contact Details:
David Cairns MP
20 Union Street
Greenock
PA 16 8JL
Tel: 791820Fax 791821
Email: cairnsd@parliament.uk

Bible Club and Youth Group (SBM)

The Youth Group enjoyed a trip to Lazer Planet in Clydebank during the Christmas holidays. A couple of energetic games saw Andrew McHardie and Kirsty Maclean once again emerge as top boy and top girl with the highest scores - well done! Both clubs also had their Christmas parties in December with lots of fun, games and food! If you would like to come to either of our groups, you will be made very welcome. Bible Club is from 6.15pm to 7.30pm and all children in Primary School are welcome, from P1 to P7. Activities include games, songs, competitions, Bible stories and other activities. Youth Group is from 7.45pm to 9.30pm and is for young people in P7 and high school, with similar activities suitable for that age, including games and a tuck shop. Please note that both clubs will be off on Monday, 11th February for the school holiday weekend. The clubs are run by Strathclyde Bible Ministries (SBM) and there are no fees for either club. If you require further information, you can contact Stephen Renton on 01505 355994.

Stuart McMillan MSP

Happy New Year and I hope 2008 is a prosperous year for you.

Now that the festive season is over and new years resolutions are being broken at an alarming rate, (I tend not to have any resolutions for that precise reason), we are settling back into the normal work life regime that takes us through the year. It can be challenging and with the dark nights it can be easy to just get in the house and hibernate until the next morning. However I would urge you spare a thought for either neighbours or relatives who are elderly or infirm who may require some assistance but who may not want to ask. Give them a call or knock on their door to see if you can help.

In last months article I highlighted the Pleural Plaques problem and that the Cabinet secretary was looking at the matter closely. A few days after sending my article to this publication the Cabinet Secretary announced that the Scottish Government will be legislating on this issue. To say that I was delighted is an understatement. However my joy is nothing compared to the men and women who are suffering this terrible disease. I congratulate the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Kenny MacAskill on this decision but also the men and women who have been campaigning for this decision.

I was recently contacted by a member of the Wemyss Bay community who highlighted the issue regarding the lack of facilities in the village, particularly regarding sporting facilities. I have taken the matter up with Inverclyde Council and will report back to the constituent. (The individual concerned was happy for this matter to be highlighted in this edition of the newsletter).

Prior to Christmas Nicola Sturgeon (Cabinet Secretary for Health) announced that any parking charges at hospitals should be capped at £3 a day. Furthermore these charges should only be introduced on a hospital by hospital basis after the health board have proven that they are needed. This is a step in the right direction but I do not think the IRH should have charges imposed. I have written to the health board asking about any traffic investigations they have undertaken including dates, times, numbers of vehicles and estimated income at £3 a day that the health board would receive. I will let you know the result of this correspondence.

Surgeries: Saturday 8th March 2008 - 09.00 - 09.45, Saturday 10th May 2008 - 09.00 - 09.45

Parliamentary Office, 14 William Street, Paisley, PA1 2LZ Tel.: 0141 889 9519

E:Mail: Stuart.McMillan.MSP@Scottish.Parliament.uk Website: http://www.stuart-mcmillan.net/

85th Renfrew & Inverclyde 1st Wemyss Bay

The Beavers and the Cubs had a great end to a fabulous year. We had a trip to the Arts Guild Panto, a District Beaver and Cub Party with Santa arriving, and finally our own group party in the church hall.

We held a fundraiser with Sawney Bean's Diner, which was well attended, and on behalf of all the 85th, I would like to thank the Community Centre's Committee for generously giving us the hall for free on the night.

We have already started back and 10 Beavers, 3 Cubs, 5 Leaders and 5 of our Explorer Scouts have already been to Everton Scout Camp for the night. The kids thoroughly enjoyed themselves and can't wait till the next one. They all received their first hike and night away badge. Quite an accomplishment for all of them, as the weather was not great that weekend.

The diary of events, look something like this for the next couple of months: another night away at Everton, for both Beavers and Cubs, probably in March, a group camp with both Inverkip and Wemyss Bay in May, which will amount to about 140 kids. This will be a two night event for the Cubs, but only one night for the Beavers. There is also a Beaver and Cub day, which will be held in June, again at Everton. I will let everyone know the dates nearer the time.

Unfortunately we have no spaces for Beavers, but we do have a waiting list. Some of our Beavers will be going to Cubs this year, so hopefully your name won't be on the list for to long.

We do have plenty of spaces for Cubs, so if you are aged between 8 and 10 years, for both boys and girls, and have nothing to do between 7:30 and 8:30pm on a Thursday night, come along to the Church Hall and join in our games and badge work.

It is also our intention to start a Scout group in Wemyss Bay, so if there are any former scouts, who would be willing to lend a hand, or if you know of anyone who would be interested in coming along to lend a hand, please call me. There are kids who would like to join scouts, but unfortunately we have no leaders.

On the 22nd February, the 1st Wemyss Bay Beaver Colony will be 1 year old. We have gone from having 13 Beavers and 1 Leader on our first night, to 31 Beavers and 3 Leaders almost a year later. A big thank has to go to parents for supporting us throughout this year and for the next year to come.

Please feel free to call me on 888751, with any questions or queries you may have.

Liz Roders, Beaver Leader, 85th Renfrew & Inverclyde.

Hire of Furniture

The Community Association can rent out furniture from the community Centre at a very reasonable cost.

If you need to hire furniture, a table and eight chairs cost £10. In addition, it is necessary to leave a £50 deposit which is returnable when the furniture is returned to the centre in good condition. If you are interested in this service, please contact Kirsty on 520738.

Calling all budding Floral Artists – Gala 2008

As part of plans for our Bigger and Better Gala this year it has been decided to have a flower arranging competition. The very talented team at Studio Flowers in Gourock will be judging the event on the day. The challenge is to produce a summer themed table arrangement for a summer dinner party. You can be as creative as you like and your design can include items such as candles etc. So get planning! Anyone interested should contact Bobbie at 529512 to register for the contest and find out more

Gardening Tip

Aerate and scarify lawns in dry weather
Clear dead tops of hardy herbaceous in not already done
Top dress establishes borders with fertiliser
Fork over any clear borders in dry days and expose for weathering
Plan spring planting of flowers from seed
Towards end of month sow first of hardy annuals under glass

Waste collection

Your black bin will be collected on Tuesdays 5th,19th February. Your blue and brown bins will be emptied on Tuesdays 12th, 26th February.

Inverkip & Wemyss Bay Community Council

Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council meet on the first Thursday of each month in the Rogues Room at the Inverkip Hotel at 7.30pm. You are welcome to attend any of the meetings or alternatively find out what is going on by logging on to: www.inverkip-wemyssbaycc.co.uk

What's on In the Community Centre?

For more information on any of these groups you need to get in touch directly with the relevant organisation.

Monday	6.15 – 7.30pm	Bible Club (P1 – P7)
	7.45 – 9.30pm	Senior Bible Club
Tuesday	9.30 – 11.30am	Tiny Tots
Wednesday	7.30 – 9.00pm	Judo
Thursday	9.30 – 11.30am	Tiny Tots
	7.00 – 9.00pm	Youth Club (P4 – P7)
Friday	6.30 – 8.00pm	Judo
Saturday	10.00 – 12.00pm	Graffiti Dance
	2.00 – 3.00pm	Karate
Sunday	10.30 – 11.30am	Sunday School
	12.00 – 4.00pm	Ardgowan Football Development

For information regarding Rainbows, Brownies and Guides please contact us at girlguidingwemyssbay@yahoo.co.uk. In addition to these activities the centre is used by the Nursery on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings and every weekday afternoon. Although all the children are now based in the portacabin, they are taken to the centre for their gym and music sessions and any other activities which require space to run around.

Saturday and Sunday afternoons after the Karate and Football are largely reserved for parties – sorry we are unable to fit them in between lets mid-week due to the time required at the end to tidy up or take the bouncy castle down. It is possible however to shoe-horn a few more lets into the calendar in the spaces between or after the current regular lets. If you are interested in booking the centre for a one-off or regular let contact Kirsty on 520738.

Who is St.Valentine?

The most popular candidate for St.Valentine was a 3rd century Roman priest who performed secret marriage's against direct orders from Emperor Claudius 2nd who believed single soldiers more likely to join his army. Legend has it that while in prison Valentine sent a friend (the jailer's daughter) a note signed "From Your Valentine" before he was executed on February 14th in 270 AD. That phrase is still used today.

Valentines cards

Early Valentines were made by hand, using coloured paper, watercolours and coloured inks. These valentine styles, some still made today, included;

Pinprick valentines, made by pricking tiny holes in paper with a pin to resemble the look of lace,

Cut-out valentines, lace-look cards made by folding paper several times and cutting out a lace design with small sharp scissors,

Acrostic valentines, which had verses in which the first letters in the lines spelled out the beloved's name,

Rebus Valentines verses in which small pictures took the place of some of the words (for example an 'eye' instead of 'I')

Cards decorated with black and white pictures painted by factory workers began to be created in the early 1800's. By the end of the century, valentines were being made entirely by machine. Sociologists believe that printed cards began to take the place of letters, particularly in Britain, because they were an easy way for people to express their feelings in a time when direct expression of emotions was not fashionable.

The Heart

It's not difficult to figure out the connection between the heart and Valentine's Day. The heart, after all, was thought in ancient times to be the source of all emotions. It later came to be associated only with the emotion of love. (We know that the heart is, basically, the pump that keeps blood flowing through our bodies).

It's not clear when the Valentine heart shape became the symbol for the heart (we all know the heart isn't really shaped like that!) Some scholars believe that the heart symbol as we use it to signify romance or love came from early attempts by people to draw an organ they'd never seen.

X – The Kiss.

How about the "X" sign representing the kiss? This tradition started with the medieval practice of allowing those who could not write to sign documents with an "X". This was done before witnesses, and the signer placed a kiss upon the "X" to show sincerity. This is how the kiss became to be synonymous with the letter "X", and how the "X" came to be commonly used at the end of letters as kiss symbols.

Chocolate Dipped Peppermints

These peppermint creams would make a great Valentine gift or a nice treat any time of the year.

Makes 24, takes 30 minutes plus 1 hour to chill in the fridge.

Equipment; mixing bowl, balloon whisk, sieve, wooden spoon, chopping board, teaspoon, baking tray lined with non-stick paper, fork, small saucepan, heatproof bowl and an adult to help.

What you need:

1 egg white, 350g white icing sugar plus extra for shaping, 3 drops peppermint essence, 2 drops green food colouring, 125g dark chocolate broken into pieces

Whisk the egg white until frothy

Sieve in the icing sugar and mix in well

Add the peppermint essence and the colouring and mix well

Sprinkle icing sugar onto your hands

Roll teaspoon-sized amounts of the mixture into small balls and place on the baking tray

Flatten each ball with a fork to form flat discs

Place in the fridge for 1 hour until firm

Put some water, about 5cm deep, into the saucepan to simmer

Place the chocolate pieces into the heatproof bowl

Place the bowl on the pan of simmering water

When the chocolate has melted, remove from the heat and stir until smooth

Allow to cool a little

Dip each sweet into the chocolate until half covered

Place sweets on the non-stick paper to set

Keep in a cool place or fridge until needed

Arrange your peppermint creams in a decorated box or tin lined with coloured tissue paper and your gift is ready for giving.

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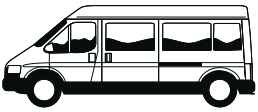

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