

Wemyss Bay Village News

232nd Edition

September 2009

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

Wemyss Bay Community Association

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month in the Inverkip Hotel. If you are interested in finding out what is going on in the village or the upcoming events we are organising please come along. We are a friendly group who make all our visitors most welcome.

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 October edition will be Friday 18th September at 6.00pm.

New Youth Club for S1 and S2

Youth Club leaders have been approached to start up a club catering for slightly older children. In order to do this we would need additional adult leaders. The club would run on Thursday evenings from 8.15 until 9.30pm. If you are available to help, please contact Eila on 529375. Provided that volunteers come forward we would propose starting after the October break.

Wemyss Bay Primary School - Janitor Retires

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the parents' grandparents and children of Wemyss Bay Primary School for all cards and gifts received on the occasion of my recent retirement and to the staff for the fabulous night they organised for me.

I will miss you all but look forward to still taking care of the school garden.

Jim Glass

Wemyss Bay Community Association would like to thank Jim for all his hard work in assisting us in our events especially the Gala Weekend.

Wemyss Bay Primary and Nursery Parent/Teacher Association

Our AGM was held on Monday 24th August at 7pm. We had great turn out with several new faces in attendance. There were changes made to our Committee. Donna Galvin stepped down from Chair and Lorraine McCallum was nominated for this position. Kirsty Donnelly stepped down as Vice Chair and Lynn McConnachie was nominated for this position. Treasurer remains Pauline Jackson and Secretary remains Jill Pearson.

Our first event is a Family Bingo Night. This will take place in the school on Friday 25th September 7-9pm. This event has been very successful previously with a great turnout of parents and children. Watch the school newsletter for tickets and further information.

Our next meeting is Monday 21 September 7pm in the school. Everyone welcome!

Jill Pearson – Secretary

School playground painting - volunteers required

Thanks to IBM's Community Programme the school has been provided with a supply of paint and volunteers who started the work off on some wonderful games for the children in the playground. The PTA would like to call for parents to volunteer in helping to progress the painting work across into the older children's playground also. You don't need to be excellent at art - simply able to paint in between the lines! Saturday 12th of September from 9am onwards (weather permitting) we will have a painting morning - all volunteers welcome, even if you can only come for an hour it could make all the difference. Thank you.

Stuart McMillan MSP

Inverkip Power Station:

Village News readers will be aware I recently undertook a consultation to ask residents in the villages of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay about their views on the Inverkip Power Station proposals, which will see the development of 780 properties on the site. My office has been receiving the results from residents and I can tell you that I have already received almost 500 responses. The vast majority of the respondents are concerned about what the proposals will do for the road infrastructure. I would urge residents who have received the consultation but have not yet responded to complete the survey and return it to my office using the details attached in the letter. It's important that all residents make their feelings known about this proposal as the outcome will have a significant affect on residents in Wemyss Bay who use the road network. Once I have all the information collated I will present the findings to those who will take the decision. I hope Village News readers will return the survey and make their views known.

Small Ships:

The ASTO Small Ships race was launched last Saturday in Greenock. The event will see ships race from Greenock to Belfast and included in the race will be Ocean Youth Trust Scotland which now has its permanent offices in Greenock. I was pleased to be able to go down to Custom House and the Esplanade on Tuesday and see some of the ships sail off for the contest. It was a wonderful sight and I wish everyone the very best, although, in my role as an Ambassador for Ocean Youth Trust Scotland a part of me hopes they are victorious.

Stuart McMillan MSP, (SNP) has to date welcomed the number of responses he has received so far to his consultation about the Inverkip Power Station proposals. Mr McMillan has written to every resident in the villages of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay to ask their opinions about Scottish Power's proposals to develop 780 properties on the old power station site. At the time of writing Mr McMillan's office has received almost 500 responses from residents.

Mr McMillan said;

"I am delighted with the response rate I have received so far from the residents of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay.

"It's clear that residents are concerned about the impact 780 new properties would have on the local road infrastructure.

The A78 is already a heavily congested road, especially at rush hour, and the scale of this new development will only further stretch the capacity on this network.

"I would urge those residents who have not already responded to the consultation to complete the survey and return it to my office. This information is vital as it will give the decision makers a clear understanding of local resident's views about the power station proposals."

www.stuart-mcmillan.net

Thank you

Hugh Whyte and family would like to thank all neighbours and friends for the nice cards and support after the death of his wife Dian.

Wemyss Bay Village News

If you have any problems with the distribution of the news please contact hazelwalk@tiscali.co.uk

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Remember your food waste collection will be collected every Tuesday.

Wemyss Bay Bible Club and Youth Group

Bible Club and Youth Group will be starting again on Monday, 14th September, 2009. If your child would like to come, we meet on Monday evenings in Wemyss Bay Community Centre. Bible Club is from 6.15pm to 7.30pm and is for children in P1 to P6. Activities include competitions, songs, games, 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. The clubs are run by Strathclyde Bible Ministries and there are no fees for either club. If you would like further information, please contact Stephen Renton on 01505 355994.

Duncan McNeil

The people who have settled in Wemyss Bay and Inverkip over the years will be in no doubt why these villages are such desirable places to live.

But when a proposal is put forward that could see the village population grow by 50 per cent through just one development, it is understandable people will have very real concerns and reservations about the potential impact it could have.

So the planned transformation of Inverkip Power Station into Brueacre Village it seems is the only topic of debate in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay.

Of course, we all want to attract people to our area to help us grow the population, broaden our tax base and sustain public services.

But that should not be at the expense of swamping the community.

I have already received considerable representations about the inadequacy of existing infrastructure and services, such as transport links, schooling, recreation space and roads.

So I will be making it clear to Scottish Power that there are very real concerns among my constituents if this plan goes ahead.

If we are to walk the line between growing our villages and over-development, we need to ensure the needs of the community are put before the needs of developer.

If you agree with these sentiments, you may wish to consider co-signing a letter to Scottish Power that I have posted on www.duncanmcneil.com.

After all, if over-development is allowed to happen, then we lose the very thing that attracts people to Inverkip and Wemyss Bay in the first place.

www.duncanmcneil.com

2nd Wemyss Bay Brownies

The Brownies have now started back to a very exciting year in Brownies because Girlguiding is now 100 years old!

Last session went out with a bang. We had a super evening down at the beach, threw stones in the water, lit a campfire, cooked S'Mores, had a singsong and some Brownies made their Promise, and just to finish it all the sun shone as hard as it could. Nothing too organised but the children (and the BIG children really enjoyed themselves.

We have lots of wonderful things happening this year. To start we will have our big centenary launch, some Brownies are going to the Scottish training centre at Netherurd for an outdoor activities weekend and we are having a service in Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church, as well as doing all the usual "Brownie" things. That's only for September!

If every month works out like this by the end of the centenary the Guiders will probably all feel at least 101!

Looking forward to it.

Ruth (07947 866664), Marilyn (520615), Amy and Linzi.



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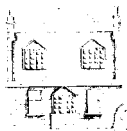
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Power Station Development

So outline planning permission has now been granted for development of the Power Station into "Brueacre Village" - a self contained mixed use village containing up to 750 homes, businesses, leisure and retail facilities. Apparently, according to development consultants Turley associates this has been done in consultation with and agreement of local residents. Certainly there was an opportunity last year to visit a display at the community centre; however there wasn't a particularly large turnout. Anyone visiting was asked to state a preference for one of a number of proposals; however the status quo or minimal work to remove the current buildings were not options.

Especially, given the current economic climate, do we really need this many additional homes being built in the area? Anyone trying to sell a property at present is more than aware of the difficulties. With 750 homes, it is reasonable to assume that anywhere between 1000 and 1500 additional cars will be accessing the main A78 at the Brueacre junction. There are already significant hold-ups during rush hour periods and undoubtedly we will see an increase in the number of road traffic accidents, particularly at the north junction into Inverkip. Both Inverkip and Wemyss Bay primaries have recently been refurbished and extended but even so, will they be able to cope with the additional intake that such a development will bring? Over the last few years there have been significant building developments in Inverkip, Wemyss Bay and Skelmorlie, with a massive increase in population but our local GPs practice has not been allocated additional resources. Certainly the population increase may provoke the NHS into approving a third full time GP but there is no guarantee that this will happen. Wemyss Bay, and to a lesser extent, Inverkip still to a large extent retain a village atmosphere and sense of community. If there is no preservation of boundary greenspaces between the existing villages and any new development then the villages will merge into one and will, undoubtedly lose their atmosphere, identity and community spirit.

Once detailed planning permission is sought, we will be better able to see exactly what the developers have in mind. Look out for information about where and when plans will be made available in the Greenock Telegraph - unless your home borders the power station land, there is no requirement to inform you directly. Detailed planning permission is discussed and decided on at a full council meeting and, although you have the right to attend the meeting you are not permitted to speak - a position which our newly elected councillor will also be in. In order to take part in any debate and to vote on decisions councillors must be impartial and come to a decision at the council meeting, after considering all the evidence on both sides of any argument.

Placed by a Wemyss Bay Resident – name and address supplied.

P4 - P7 Youth Club

The P4 – P7 Youth Club will resume on the Thursday 10th September. The club meets in the Community Centre during term time from 7.00 - 8.15pm. Entrance costs 75p and is open to any child in primaries 4 - 7. There are a variety of activities on offer including football, dodge-ball, rounders, basketball, table-tennis, pool, badminton, board games, and music. We have two Nintendo Wii consoles and assorted games. In addition, fairly regularly, we do a variety of arts and crafts including ceramic painting, scratch art, mug painting and glass art. 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.

We have a desperate need for additional adult leaders – if you are willing to become involved please contact Eila at the number above. Until such time as we recruit additional leaders, parents will be requested to put their names forward for a rota to help out – this will entail about 2 nights per year.



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Wemyss Bay Station

As everyone can see, work has started on the exterior of Wemyss Bay Station buildings, at last, and not a moment too soon. They have been a sad sight for a long time. The Friends of the Station are waiting patiently to have the repairs done to the interior of their premises, but the outside work is being given priority, while weather conditions are good. The middle of our three rooms has no working overhead light, which is a real hindrance. However, feeling frustrated, we decided to put on an exhibition recently for the benefit of our supporters, as a taste of things to come - Railway Paintings by Dugald Cameron. Despite clashing with the bursting of the water main on the A78, which cut off Largs and Upper Skelmorlie, we had a good attendance from Friends and visitors, and were especially glad to be joined by some of our members from Bute.

Our secondhand bookshop continues to attract customers and donations, and is proving to be a good source of contact between ourselves and the public. We are very grateful to all those who have donated books and CDs, and given us so much encouragement and support. The plant containers on the concourse have been getting lots of compliments, and are much appreciated.

Our next event will be the launch of our book on the story of Wemyss Bay Station. This has been produced for us by Jim MacIntosh, and will include many photos from the National Archive collection, taken in 1904 when the present station was being built. Meantime, we are asking all interested photographers to send us their photos of the station. We shall put them on display and ask Friends and visitors to vote for their favourite. Four of those getting most votes will be used as images for postcards to be sold at our shop. The closing date for submission of photos is August 22. We shall announce the date of the display later - notices at the Station Bookshop and elsewhere.

Ross Finnie MSP

The expansion of Wemyss Bay has always been a somewhat fraught affair. It started around 1973 with one of the last acts of the old Renfrew County being to grant outline planning permission for some 2,000 houses to be built at both Wemyss Bay and Inverkip. No thought was given to the need for the infrastructure to support such an expansion like roads and schools. I remember this well because, in 1977, I became Planning Convener of Inverclyde Council and the administration went all the way to the House of Lords in an attempt to restrict the scale of the development. We lost and the rest, as they say, is history.

It is because of that history that I have made clear from the outset that the same mistakes cannot and must not be repeated in relation to Scottish Power's application to create a new 800 home village at Brueacre. This time we have to start with the infrastructure first. The assessment of the A78 has to take account of not only additional traffic that might be generated by the development but also the existing volume of traffic accessing and egressing the junction at Wemyss Bay, at the power station and at Inverkip.

The current local plans for schooling etc were drawn up on the possibility of a 400 house development so the new proposal raises serious issues. It would be good to get rid of the power station but this time lessons have to be learnt from the past and what goes in its place must be very carefully evaluated and planned.

Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council

The Community Council will meet on Thursday 3rd September in the Rogues Room at the Inverkip Hotel at 7.30pm.

Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council have lodged an objection to the outline planning permission being sought by Scottish Power for a development of up to 780 houses on the Power Station site.

The grounds for objection were:

1. The inability of the A78 to cope with such a potential huge increase in traffic.
2. Inverclyde Council appears to believe that granting permission for large housing developments in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay will attract people into Inverclyde. In fact rather than attract incomers what is happening is that there is a westwards movement of the population within Inverclyde that will lead to further depopulation of Port Glasgow and east Greenock.
3. 780 houses would be gross over-development.

Lynne Chambers, Secretary IWBC

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DIRECT DEBIT RIP OFF BY ENERGY COMPANIES

Gas and electricity companies are always encouraging people to pay by direct debit, so you would think that you get a good deal. But that's not always the case according to research by OFGEM, the energy regulator.

They found that customers paying by direct debit are often treated unfairly. Monthly payments are based on your energy bill for the previous year. However, if at the end of the financial year you have paid too much for your gas or electricity, you don't always get the extra cash back. Some companies offset the money against your next year's bill, and not everyone wants to do this.

It is unfair of energy companies to use the additional money paid by their customers as interest-free loans. 40% of people pay their gas and electricity bills by Direct Debit and they shouldn't lose out because of it. These big companies make huge profits and they mustn't be allowed to rip people off.

I've written to Kevan Brannan MP, the Minister for Consumer Affairs, asking for the rules on Direct Debit payments to be changed. Direct Debit customers deserve a better deal and energy companies should stop using ordinary families as a source of free money.

Power companies always urge people to pay by direct debit because it is easier for them. To then turn round and hang onto customers' spare cash just beggars belief.

Times are tough for families and it is unacceptable for some of the biggest names in the business to behave like this.

Contact Details:

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

The Country Club

Advance notice is given that the opening meeting of the above Club will be held on Wednesday 7th October at 2.30pm when the speaker will be Mr Tom Macdougall on the subject of "Special Relations between Britain and America-How Special?"

This is a non-political and non denominational Club which was founded over 20 years ago for all in Wemyss Bay and district aged 50years and over and is held on alternate Wednesday afternoons in the attractive setting of the Function Room at The Chartoom, Kip Marina, Inverkip.

Speakers have been arranged covering many varied subjects and the afternoons are always rounded off with a welcome "cuppa" and time for a chat! Two social events are also held during the session and a Summer Outing.

The annual subscription is £10 with visitors paying £1 per meeting.

We are keen to increase our Membership and extend an invitation to all who have some time to spare to come along and join us. You will be made most welcome.

Further particulars may be obtained from the Secretary Mrs Ann Haig on 522316

LOCAL SCOUT GROUP CONTINUES TO CELEBRATE 70TH ANNIVERSARY IN STYLE WITH BBQ & BARN DANCE

One of oldest Scout groups in the area continues to celebrate its 70th anniversary year with a series of special events. Last weekend saw the group stage a spectacular barbeque and barn dance at Skelmorlie Mains Farm, kindly hosted by local farmer Norman Stirrat and his wife Jocelyn.

Even the adverse weather couldn't dampen the spirits of more than 100 group members, leaders, parents, friends of the group and former scouts who turned out to make the event a unique part of the group's celebrations. The evening featured Scottish dancing, live entertainment, and games for the children and a tasty barbeque served up by the group leaders.

The 71st Ayrshire Scout Group was originally founded in 1939 and has grown considerably over the years. It now offers Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorer sections for more than 100 boys and girls from the villages of Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay.

Group Cub Leader Alistair "AKELA" Wyllie highlighted the valuable contribution the group has made to the lives of boys – and now girls – since 1939. He said: "Being part of the 71st has allowed generations of cubs and scouts from Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay to forge new friendships, gain confidence, challenge themselves, help other people and broaden their view of the world. Reaching our 70th anniversary is a major milestone and I hope we may go on for another 70 years."

Other events planned for the anniversary celebrations include a weekend camp at Knock Castle during September and a group show in early 2010.

Woodland Association

Bat Walks

What is the most common British bat? What size is it, what does it weigh and what does it eat? How do you use a bat detector? You can find out the answer to these and any other questions you may have by joining Wemyss Bay Woodland Association on one of its Autumn Bat Walks. The walks will take place on Saturday 12th and Saturday 19th September and will leave the Community Centre car-park at 8pm.

Spaces are strictly limited and therefore booking is essential. To reserve a space contact Eila Roberts on 529375. As previous walks have been fully booked, please get in touch early.

The walks take place around Wemyss Bay and through the local woodland therefore sensible shoes and a torch are essential. The walks last for a maximum of two hours and finish after dark, so make sure that you wear warm clothing. There is a charge of £1 per head which helps towards the costs of the equipment.

Edible and Medicinal Plants

There are many plants growing wild around Wemyss Bay which can provide tasty additions to our meals or can be used in herbal remedies. Join the Woodland Association on Saturday 26th September when it is running a guided walk on the topic of Edible and Medicinal Plants. The walk will leave from the Community Centre car-park at 10am and will cost £1 per person. Children are welcome provided they are accompanied by a responsible adult however you should bear in mind that it may not be appropriate for young children as they may then mis-identify plants.

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.

With respect to articles, we reserve the right to edit as we see fit to prevent offence and / or inaccuracies. We also reserve the right to ask local groups / individuals to respond to any articles received.

Anonymous Articles

While we are happy to print articles and withhold the sender's name, if requested, we must have a note of the person's name and contact details before we can print anything. This is to protect us, should someone later complain about an article.



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KIDS PUZZLES

SUDOKU

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

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.

SUDOKU

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

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 October edition will be Friday 18th September at 6pm.

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