

EILEAN EISDEAL NEWSLETTER No.24 - NOVEMBER 2003

To all Easdale islanders, members and friends

Hall

The hall has been opened for five months now and has seen an incredible variety of use. From the wide ranging Arts Programme events, through Easdale Paradiso's film shows, Drumming Workshops and Mellon's big Four-0 to Wendy's Papua New Guinea Slide Show, New Age Kurling, Dance Classes and First Responders Courses, these walls could tell a few stories!

Many thanks to the army of hall stewards, who open the hall five days a week to show visitors round and facilitate a drop in centre for a coffee and a chat for islanders. It's heart warming to see the hall being used and appreciated like this and to see so many people becoming involved. Thanks also to the many other volunteers who have helped in so many hidden ways - your efforts are appreciated. Ongoing help is needed for organising events and all your contributions are most welcome.

An entertainments' licence was granted to the hall in October and Lynn Noble passed the Servwise course and is now the licensee. Many thanks to Lynn for taking this on.

Now that the winter season is settling upon us it's quite likely that the way the hall is used will find a new pattern. We are keen to encourage more use of the hall, and to remove any potential barriers (although we do still need to pay the bills !) If you fancy a quick game of table tennis, but don't want to hire the hall for a full "session" then we can accommodate that too. Contact Geoff for details. Many thanks to Sue Whyatt for the championship standard table-tennis table, to the Residents' Association for the video recorder and to Wee and Elaine McChesney for those excellent film nights and childrens' film club, put on by Easdale Paradiso. (And to the lovely mystery usherette, who looks remarkably like Bert !)

New Director

Denise Whyatt has been co-opted to fill the vacancy caused by Brenda leaving. She will help Phil with some of the secretarial tasks and is a most welcome addition to the team.

Piano

A Technics piano has been purchased with the funds raised by The Waterboys concert. It is in the hall and is available for everyone in the community to use as well as for visiting bands (a piano isn't the easiest instrument to bring across on the ferry!) Many thanks again to The Waterboys for their generosity, and for one of the most memorable Easdale nights yet. Thanks also to Colin Blakey for his help in facilitating the event. Hopefully we can persuade The Waterboys to come back and try the piano out for us – watch this space!!

Stone Skimming

The Stone Skimming was once more a success, despite the weather, and £446 was raised on the day for Trust funds. Many thanks to the organising committee and all the volunteers who helped make it run so smoothly and to all the sponsors of the event.

Harbour

The harbour is the biggest Trust project both in terms of funding required and workload, and the one most crucial to the future viability of our community. In recognition of this and to ensure continuity and best use of skills and experience, a Harbour Steering Group has been set up. The remit of this group

is to forward the harbour project within the parameters set out by the Trust Directors. The Steering Group consists of Sandra Melville, Mike MacKenzie, Fiona Blakey and John Merrilees.

As you are aware, we are currently seeking funding for interim improvements and have just heard that we have secured £9,600 from Forward Scotland. This can be match-funded, so equates to £19,200. We have also submitted an application for a further £60,000 which looks promising - fingers crossed! We hope to be in a position to carry out work in spring 2004 which will consist of dredging, pontoon provision, access to and leveling of Rush'n Gush and emergency consolidation of the crumbling corner.

Plans are also underway to buy the harbour area which will be a major step towards securing the larger funds required for the longer term project. There will be a public consultation meeting regarding the harbour project in the near future. We will keep you posted.

Trading Company

The Trading Company was incorporated in October and exists to raise funds for the Trust. This is the recognised way which charities use to satisfy the requirements of the Inland Revenue regarding the distinction between fund-raising and trading. Directors of the Trading Company will be appointed by Trust directors, and all profits of the company will be donated to the Trust to further community projects. Iain McDougall has kindly agreed to be a director of the company, which is called "The Easdale Island Trading Company Ltd." along with Annabel. Iain is also secretary. The Trading Company hopes to work alongside local businesses to their mutual advantage.

Meeting with Island Businesses

We are holding a meeting with the "business community" on Saturday 15th November at 3.30pm, in the hall. This is to identify the needs of local businesses. Anyone running a business on or from the island, is self-employed, or considering any type of business venture is welcome to attend. If you are interested, but can't make the meeting, please contact Sandra for a questionnaire.

AGM

This year's Trust AGM will be held on 30 December 03. There will be some vacancies for new directors; details and nomination forms will be sent out to members shortly. A reminder: Only members of the Trust are eligible to vote and to attend the AGM. If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2003, there is still time to do so – please contact the Trust secretary