

EILEAN EISDEAL UPDATE NUMBER 22 - MAY 2003

To all Easdale islanders, members and friends

Hall

Things are hotting up as the opening weekend draws near! Final touches are being put in place as we speak, and on the 24th of May, the hall will be officially opened by young Fearghas McNally (the youngest boy) and Margaret Knox (most senior lady) in our community.

This marks the culmination of almost six years work by the directors of the Eilean Eisdeal Trust, past and present, aided by so many willing volunteers along the way, who have contributed in a variety of differing but valuable ways. It marks a new phase in the history of the island and a platform from which we can aspire further.

A big thank you to everyone who turned out for the community involvement weekend at the beginning of May and got stuck in with paintbrushes, rollers, hammers and nails. A good time was had by all and the quality and quantity of work covered was fantastic.

Geoff Heslop has been appointed to the post of hall manager and took up his position on the 1st of May. Geoff has a wealth of experience in the world of arts and entertainment. We welcome his input and hope you will all support him as he settles in to this new role.

Thank you also to Fiona Blakey, who has co-ordinated the Arts and Entertainments Programme for the last five years and built up a reputation that we can expand even further, especially now that we have a superb venue to offer.

Events organised so far in the forthcoming programme:

May 31st : Rapture Theatre " Boston Marriage"

June 19th : Traverse Theatre "Outlying Islands"

July 23rd - " Mr. Boom " Children's entertainment - 3pm.

Multi-Media Projector

We are pleased to say that The Community Fund have granted an application to purchase a multi-media projector for the hall. In our original consultation with islanders, 70% said they would like to use the hall for "Talks & Lectures" and 64 % for "Adult Education." This equipment will not only facilitate this, but open up the hall as a venue for film shows and conferences.

Island Photo

Most of you are probably be in this! Colin McPherson took a photo of all the islanders we could muster on Easter Sunday. It will be on view as part of his Exhibition entitled " A Hall New Meaning" at the opening weekend.

CADISPA Visit

On 1st March around 50 delegates attending a conference in Oban, held by CADISPA, visited our hall to see for themselves what communities can achieve when they work together. CADISPA (Conservation And Development In Sparsely Populated Areas) is based at Strathclyde University and the director, Geoff Fagan, has followed the Trust's progress with interest over the last few years and offered us useful advice and support, particularly when we were at the funding application stage for the hall. The delegates were extremely impressed by our hall and the presentation put on for them. They left the island charged up with enthusiasm, having experienced Easdale hospitality and sampled our community spirit. (They also purchased some of the bottled variety !) Most of all, they will forever remember Lynn's scones...

Harbour

We have had a meeting with Argyll & The islands Enterprise who have said that they are willing to help, not only with some of the short-term improvements, suggested by our members, but as a catalyst towards getting funding for the larger scheme, which is excellent news. We hope to implement some of the interim improvements to the harbour before this winter and are progressing plans towards funding for the larger scheme.

Recycling and Sewage Treatment.

Further research and a field trip by two of our directors has moved this along to the point where we will soon be looking at funding opportunities. A waste recycling and reduction facility would solve a lot of the current problems and we will keep you informed of progress.

The St. Columba Voyage 2003

The curragh 'Colmcille' will be making a voyage with a crew of thirteen monks - rowing and sailing from Ireland to Iona - and stopping at various places on the way. They are staying in various village halls on the way and have asked if they can stay in ours on 14th or 15th June depending on weather and tides. Easdale Primary School will be taking part in an art and poetry competition related to this living history event.

Sandra Melville

Chair