

SEILEACHAN

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Vol. 15 No. 4

www.seil.oban.ws

August 11

EDITORIAL

One of the things that really gets up my nose (there are others), is the communication that comes through the post, either addressed personally or just to the householder. On the front page of the letter is an offer of unprecedented munificence which is only available for a very limited period. All I will have to do to avail myself of this largesse is to give them the acceptance OK, and they will do the rest. If all this seems too good to be true, there are little asterisks and numbers put against all the extravagant claims. On perusing the document further and turning to the back page, this is entirely blank, but for about twelve lines of type at the foot, of a type size that even the Telephone directory would be ashamed to use. A careful studying of this legalese –if you happen to have a magnifying glass handy, will immediately start to indicate all sorts of caveats which might just make the offer not quite as appealing as it appears on page one. And if you are in any doubt about some of the extravagant claims, there is the proviso “Conditions apply”.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS COMMUNITY TIDAL ENERGY

Seumas gave a brief synopsis of the presentation given to Community Councillors last week by Simon Forrest of Nova Innovations Ltd. The proposed location is Cuan Sound, with a suggestion that Luing, Seil, and Easdale are involved and that a feasibility study could be shared by all. The company, with a background in engineering and community management take their lead from the community and start small scale. Eventually the community owns the installations and benefits from the income. Simon Forrest is waiting for feedback from our community and is willing to present to a more open meeting. The consensus was that we should seriously consider benefiting from our assets.

ROADS

Charles Struthers reported that the surface dressing has been completed and that road markings and signs will be done soon. Knotweed—the chemical Tordon is considered to be fairly successful but the whole crop must be treated and it is a 5 year programme. Advice was given by Cllr. Duncan MacIntyre who also indicated that Knotweed is widespread in Argyll & Bute. He also informed us that there are serious concerns about Kilninver Bridge with major repair costs likely.

There was agreement that the moving of the wall of the new build at Balvicar has improved both movement on the road and safety.

Attention has been drawn to the Balvicar road footpath problem .

PLANNING

Although it is outwith our Community area there was some discussion about the planning application to move the fish farm in Seil Sound to Port Na Morachd. Various concerns were voiced about the possible detrimental effects on the environment, wildlife, scenery, and tourism.

Mike Shaw reminded us that a balanced view should consider the employment opportunities involved and that any objections must be specifically relevant to this project and how it might affect our community. Seumas assured those present that points made at the meeting would be considered when the CC put their submission together.

The decision to refuse planning permission for the Easdale Island turbine has been appealed by the applicant

CLACHAN WIND FARM UPDATE

SNH are finalising their 2 month study to prove/disprove the presence of sea eagles in the proposed site locality.

A planning application could be made by late August.

BUS 418 SERVICE

After our submission about their proposed cuts to our 418 service we have received a reply from Douglas Blades, Public Transport Officer for Argyll & Bute, and an acknowledgement from our MP Alan Reid. We did not receive any reply from our MSP's Mike Russell and Mike MacKenzie.

Discussions are ongoing with West Coast Motors. Cllr. MacIntyre informed us that the £46,000 subsidy paid to WCM for the last 5 years has of necessity been cut to £20,000. However due to the increase in passengers he thinks our 418 service should be sustainable for the bus company. Dialogue should continue with all concerned about routes, possible re-routing, drivers, synchronised timetables, etc.

NEW SECRETARY

Regrettably, Jane Nichols intends moving from Seil—therefore we are looking for a replacement secretary—volunteers gladly accepted.

ELECTION

There is a vacancy for a Community Councillor—nominations to be submitted by August 18th.

NEXT PUBLIC MEETING

Easdale Island Hall on September 27th
7.30—9pm All Welcome Ferry 7.15

STINGING NETTLES

Since nettles are common plants, produce unattractive flowers and have the capability of inflicting an uncomfortable rash, it is not surprising we tend to avoid or ignore them. Actually they have several features that make them interesting and deserving of our attention. To begin with, how do they manage to inject their venom? Each sting is made of one very large stiff cell, supported on a cushion of smaller cells (which provide flexibility), making a hair that is specialised for delivering a small dose of irritating chemicals under the skin. The end of the hair has a minute rounded tip, but this breaks off at the slightest touch leaving a sharp end like the point of a syringe needle. The silica strengthening makes it capable of puncturing the skin, and allows the cell contents containing the toxins to penetrate the wound.

Where man is concerned stinging nettles have been put to so many uses it is difficult to do more than just outline some of them. The phloem fibres from nettles can be extracted to make textiles and are prepared in a similar way to flax. There are numerous claims for the medicinal properties of the nettle both in ancient folk remedies and modern investigations for drug treatments. Yellow dyes can be made from the roots and green dyes from the leaves. Nettles can also be eaten; the leaves have a high protein content and are rich in certain minerals and vitamins. Cooking destroys the toxic substances and the leaves are supposed to taste similar to spinach. Cordials too can be made from the nettle. In the garden, nettles can be useful in composting because of their mineral content and because they act as accelerators. Nettles have a prominent place in our literature, folklore and customs.

Stinging nettles are important ecologically, helping to maintain the biodiversity. They are a component of the diet of several moths, the exclusive food plant for the caterpillars of the peacock and the small tortoiseshell butterflies. They are useful as indicator species since they are likely to occur where ground has been disturbed and is rich in nitrogen and phosphorus. Richard Wesley - SNHG

So—what to do with all those nettles that are certainly prolific, hereabouts. How about “Steamed Nettles” - courtesy of Else Mellor.

Ingredients for four— *2lb (900g) young nettles*
2oz. (50g) unsalted butter
Sea Salt
Freshly ground black pepper

Wearing rubber gloves wash the nettles and discard the stalks. Put the leaves into a steamer or wire colander and place this in a pan above boiling water, Cover the pan with a tight fitting lid and steam the nettles for about 10 minutes, or until tender.

Melt the butter gently in a saucepan. Add the cooked nettles and toss them until they are coated with butter. Season with salt and pepper. Serve with lamb, chicken, fish and meat stews.

THE SWRI

Just a load of old baking, right? WRONG!

Here on Seil the SWRI is a vibrant group of about 25 lively, intelligent, interested and interesting women (yes we are honestly). We meet in the hall at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month from September to May. The upcoming programme includes speakers on the work of the Mountain Rescue, The Children's Panel, Kilmartin Museum, The University of the Third Age, and running a highland estate, as well as demonstrations on crafts, a Christmas dinner and summer outing—ask anyone about the last one—it was a classic. There really is something for everyone—and yes, some of us are very good at baking too! So why not join us—or at least come along to one of our meetings and see what we are all about. Visitors (including men) are always very welcome. Next year's programme will be going on the noticeboard at the shop very soon with all contact details, or you could email or phone me, the secretary. Julie Ferris, FerrisJEF@aol.com 300090

HALL LOTTERY WINNERS

JULY		AUGUST	
£50	John MacFarlane	£50	Rollover
£10	Nancy Gardner	£10	Roger Barrett
£10	Iain Galloway	£10	Vivien Metcalfe
£10	Ray Norris	£10	Barbara Smith

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION (SCOTLAND) EASDALE BRANCH—SUMMER SALE

This year's Summer Sale will take place in the Seil Island Hall on the afternoon of Saturday 27th August from 2.30 to 4.30pm.

There will be the usual stalls which will include book stall, home baking, bottle stall, produce, and bric-a-brac. There will be a raffle and teas will be served.

If you would like to help in any way, please contact Jim Watson (300307) or Stuart Reid (300311).

We are also looking for items for sale, especially books, bric-a-brac, home baking and produce. We are happy to collect these from you or you can bring them to the sale from 9am on the day.

Further details will be advertised on noticeboards later.

NORTH ARGYLL VOLUNTEER CAR SCHEME

Hard to believe but the Car Scheme has been going for over eight years! The good news is that we have lots of passengers (but more are very welcome), and a good number of volunteer drivers (again more are very welcome). The not quite so good news is that in the light of Council cutbacks, revised charges from 1st September this year will be: 30p per mile but with a minimum charge of £1 per journey, and a maximum of £7.50 eg for a return journey from Seil to Oban. We're sorry to have to make these changes but doing so will make the Scheme stronger in the long term.

SEIL ART GROUP

Will be resuming for the winter season on Thursday 6th October at 2pm in the Seil Island Hall. New members (with talent or none) are very welcome. Just contact Mary Blackstock (300347) or Maura Rae (300379).