

éilean eisdéal

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Newsletter No. 40 July 2008

Firstly, my apologies for taking so long to put this newsletter out. I have no excuses and will try to do better in future!

Museum

Most of you will have heard the news that the museum came into our ownership at the beginning of March this year, after two long (and too long!) funding application processes. We would like to thank Chris Nicholson for his patience and his faith in us that we would come up trumps in the end. The museum would be nothing without the dedication and hard work which Jean Adams invested in it over many years and we wish her and Bert well and hope yet to see them back on Easdale sometime soon. The Museum Committee (Iain McDougall, Margaret Lyall and Anni Donaldson) are responsible for the running of the museum, which employs Lynn Noble and Elaine McChesney. We are grateful to them for all their efforts and also to the volunteers (notably May McGillivray, Iain McDougall, Annabel Gregory, Lynn Mackenzie and Margaret Lyall) for their invaluable support. Although the season has been slow to start visitor numbers are encouraging and we have been fortunate in being able to welcome more American visitors, thanks to SIHT

Hall

Unbelievably the end of May marked the 5th Anniversary of the re-opening of the hall. This, together with the fact that we had successfully purchased the museum seemed like a good reason to celebrate and around 100 people turned out on a beautiful summer's evening recently and did just that!

As you may remember, the contactors for the hall project went into liquidation shortly after the hall was completed and before the defects could be addressed. This resulted in a complex legal situation whereby we were unable to spend any of the retention monies earmarked for addressing outstanding building defects. This situation has been ongoing since the hall opened and sadly has resulted in damage being done to this fabulous building by the leaking foyer roof and water ingress to the main hall. As a result the retention money will not now be sufficient to address all the defects and the situation will become critical unless we can put a halt to the deterioration. We have been in constant communication with our solicitors regarding this matter and they have recently advised us that the retention money can now be used. Unfortunately, due to the damage that has been occurred as a result of our being unable to act, this will not cover the cost of everything that needs to be done so we must carefully prioritise how it should best be spent. Obviously we shall take professional advice regarding this before proceeding.

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Arts & Entertainments Programme/Events

A big thank you must go to Wee for the wonderful Arts and Entertainments programme he has put together. We have enjoyed a fantastic range of entertainment so far this year which featured rock music, blues, jazz, Latin American and traditional Scottish music in addition to a children's puppet show, a craft fair and film shows. We look forward to The Regatta Dance on 9th August, Mull Theatre (28th August), Lucy Johnstone's art exhibition, Kaela Rowan, The Pre-skim Dance and the Day of the Dead Party with Caroline England. Full details can be found on The Easdale Island Hall Website: <http://www.easdale.org/hall/events.php>

Thanks also to the rest of the hall committee (Lynn, Annabel, Voirrey and Jess) for the work they do behind the scenes to ensure that these events run smoothly.

Puffer Bar

We are delighted to see the (refurbished!) Puffer Bar/Tearoom/Restaurant re-open last month after being closed for almost a year. This is a crucial amenity not only for the tourist based economy of the island, but also for the social well-being of our community. We would like to take this opportunity in wishing Keren and Mike Cafferty every success with their new business venture.

Harbour

We are planning to hold a public meeting at the end of August (exact date to be confirmed) to seek views on pontoon/berthing arrangements as these need to be reviewed due to the increasing demand for space.

Regatta

This year's Regatta will be on Saturday 9th August. Anyone wishing a sponsored swim form please let Sandra know, and if you haven't already started building your raft for the raft race – it's not too late!

STAG Report

We understand that this long overdue report is currently with the Council and shall be released into the public domain in the near future. It will be interesting to see the recommendations of the report and how access to the island will be improved as a result of these.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Many thanks to all those who have paid their fees for this year, and here is a wee reminder to those who have yet to do so. Your membership fees go a long way in assisting us in our work on behalf of the community and helping to implement improvements for us all now and in the future. Your continuing support of Eilean Eisdeal is very much appreciated.

Directors

The current directors are:

Sandra Melville (Chairman)

Jess Hill (Secretary)

Jan Fraser (Treasurer)

Iain McDougall

Keren Cafferty