

## What's On

Felting Fankle for all ages. Phone Suzann on 01463 861259 to book a place for felt making on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February at 18:30

## Abriachan Library

The second Sunday of the month from 11.00 am or by arrangement - phone 861278. We have a good selection of fiction and non-fiction for all ages and interests.

Associated with the library is the Abriachan Book Group. We meet on a Friday evening every 5 or 6 weeks. This is a great opportunity to read books you may never have considered reading and then to join in a friendly and lively discussion - phone 861278 for details.

## Scottish Country Dancing

Every Wednesday evening from 7.30 pm.

## Fire Wood

Firewood is now available at £40.00 per cubic metre and a delivery charge of £5.00 for residents in Abriachan. For deliveries outwith the Abriachan area a delivery charge will be based on mileage.

To order a load phone 861315



Abriachan Forest Trust is a company limited by guarantee. Company registered in Scotland No. 171271; Recognised Scottish Charity No. SCO25690AFT. Entrust Reg. No. 3330084. Registered Office: Tyeantore, Abriachan Inverness IV3 8LD



## Bliadhna mhath ùr

We wish all our members and friends a very happy and healthy 2009.

### Membership Fees

As you may remember it was agreed at the A.G.M. for the membership fee to be increased this year. All members and friends will be sent a new form along with a gift aid form so that they can update their standing orders. We would urge all members and friends who do not pay by this method to consider setting up a standing order as it saves us a lot of administrative work and we believe it is of benefit to our members and friends who will no longer have to think when their subs are due. Remember you can cancel a standing order at any time and there is no charge. We will also be asking people if they would prefer to receive the newsletter by e-mail.

The monthly meetings of A.F.T are held on the 3rd Friday of

the month in the village hall. The meetings are open to all members and if you have any good ideas or indeed concerns please come along and discuss them with us.

### Those were the days!

Twenty years ago members of the Abriachan community were able to have a bonspeil on Loch Laide.



**And they all survived despite the foolish risk they took!**

## ENERGY

With issues such as climate change, carbon footprints the credit crunch and the increasing costs of energy dominating the media it seems a good time to consider how our community can reduce our energy costs and even generate some of our own energy. In Abriachan we are fortunate in having different options for our energy needs.

### Wind

You may recall that AFT installed an anemometer at Rivoulich – wind speed data collected from the anemometer indicates that a wind turbine could provide a steady income for the community.

### Wood

Recently, wood has become the fuel of choice with many people buying wood burning stoves and wood boilers. Would it be a sensible proposition to install a wood boiler in the village hall? Should the AFT expand the firewood business or should we think of other ways of utilising the wood in our forests?

### Hydro

Although we do not always appreciate this very precious resource, Scotland is very well off for water and hydro power has always contributed significantly to our energy requirements. Abriachan once had a hydro generator on the Allt Killianan which had been built just after World War 2 to power greenhouses. Steve

Watson from Community Energy Scotland had a look at the installation which has fallen into disrepair and in his assessment it could be replaced with a generator which could produce enough energy to provide an income stream to fund a community project.

Community Energy Scotland has an excellent website full of information and case studies on renewables:

[www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk](http://www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk)

You can contact Steve Watson by e-mail [steve.watson@communityenergyscotland.org.uk](mailto:steve.watson@communityenergyscotland.org.uk)

These are just some of the possibilities for you to think about and there is the option to develop all three of these renewable energy sources. Community Energy Scotland will fund feasibility studies, consultancy and visits to established community energy installations as well as the setting up of a community organisation to manage and run the project. Within the next few months there is going to be a community information day in the village hall which will be a joint venture organised by all the community organisations in Abriachan. There will be representatives from Community Energy Scotland, Changeworks, Sustainability Officer, Highland Council, Highland Wellbeing Alliance and the Fire Brigade. This will give everyone the opportunity to explore all these options and to talk to the experts.

## Produce Show

The Abriachan Produce Show is scheduled for Saturday 26th September at 3.00pm. There will be categories for fruit and vegetables, preserves, baking, handcrafts and various sections for children. Now is the time to start planning - the competition is strong!

### Bees and Gardening

Bees are dying in worryingly large numbers, and no one knows for certain why. Last year, in the UK



alone, one in three hives was lost. It's a global problem that concerns us all; bees pollinate over a third of the food we eat. **The cause of the hive losses is uncertain, however there are many theories including:**

- pests (such as varroa mites), viruses, bacteria and fungi
- pesticides such as neonicotinoids, which are picked up by bees as they pollinate sprayed crops
- genetic narrowing of the species through breeding of bees that are more docile and produce good honey yields, but are more susceptible to pests and disease

- lack of nutrition and loss of habitats – related to urban sprawl and farming methods
- bad weather, including spells of particularly wet weather or sudden cold spells

### How can we help bees?

#### ■ plant bee-friendly flowers

Comfrey, Common poppy, Corn chamomile, Corn marigold, Corncockle, Cornflower, Deadnettle, Devil's bit scabious, Field Woundwort, Foxglove, Goldenrod, Greater knapweed, Lungwort, Spiked speedwell, Teasel, Thistle, Viper's bugloss

- allow a patch of grass to grow long and densely plant an area of your flowerbed to provide

bees with shelter from the rain or a sudden drop in temperature

- provide water for bees to drink – this can be as simple as a shallow edged dish of water with pebbles in it to help bees climb in and out

- reduce the use of pesticides

### Inverness-shire Beekeepers' Association

are running an introductory course on beekeeping on **Saturday 14th March** at the Scottish School of Forestry in Balloch. To book a place or for further information contact Elizabeth Reynard on 01463 225887 or Annelise MacDougall on 01463 793030