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Merry Christmas to all our readers and advertisers

Motorhomes face big hike in new summer ferry fares

by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Return sailing for largest vehicles to cost £100-plus

Motorhomes face big price rises under the annual fares review which has been announced for CalMac ferries.

Following complaints from islands, including Arran, that there are just too many motorhomes during the height of the summer season, Transport Scotland has agreed to adjust the road equivalent tariff (RET) formula applied to the vehicles.

As a result, all but the smallest of motorhomes will see price rises of up to £36.40 on the Ardrossan to Brodick route, meaning the largest vehicles will cost more than £100 for a return trip.

The summer 2022 timetable, which was published last Friday, saw a 2.1 per cent increase on all fares, a plus one per cent on cars and derived fares, and a plus one multiplier for motorhomes and caravans. It means passenger fares on

the Arran route go up 20p and the cost of a return car journey goes up by £1.10.

However, the cost of an eight-metre motorhome goes up from £49.70 to £85.50 and a 10m-plus vehicle from £66.20 to £102.60. Motorhomes under six metres will continue to pay the same price as a car fare.

The new fares come into effect when the summer timetable starts on March 25.

Fares on the Lochranza to Claonaig route go up 20p for passengers and 70p for cars.

The leap in prices for motorhome drivers will, undoubtedly, be frowned upon by motorhome, campervan and caravan users, who are still reeling from the announcement made earlier this year that they will no longer be accommodated in standby queues.

The decision was made after discussions with Transport

Scotland and stakeholder groups to prioritise customers with no alternative accommodation and to help optimise the use of the limited deck space that remains once all booked customers and their vehicles are loaded onto a vessel.

The islands have been hit by a huge influx of motorhomes, given the cheaper fares and growing popularity of the vehicles, which is set to increase further as staycations become more popular.

Among the criticisms labelled at motorhomes is that they are 'white ghosts' as they come to the island fully loaded with food and equipment and make no contribution to the economy.

Vehicles using laybys and car parks without paying and failing to dispose of their

Continued on page 2.



Double celebration for Arianna

Young Arianna McCabe loved meeting Santa in Brodick Hall last weekend when she told him she had a double celebration on Christmas Day (tomorrow) as it is also her sixth birthday. See more Santa photos on page 3. 01_B52santafont01

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Motorhomes will be subject to big price increases next year.

Motorhomes face big hike in new summer ferry fares

Continued from page 1.

waste properly and driving in the middle of Arran's narrow roads are other complaints, but these are aimed at a minority.

The decision to alter the RET formula for motorhomes follows talks with various ferry committees, including the Arran Ferry Committee and the CalMac Community Board.

A ferry committee spokesman said: 'We are pleased that the voice of the community has been recognised.'

'The summer 2022 timetable will now allow ferry users to

book passage on all bookable routes with the exception of Mallaig-Armadale, Mallaig-Small Isles and Mallaig-Lochboisdale routes.

'These will become available on Monday January 17, 2022, to take into account CalMac's new vessel, MV Utne, which is due to come into service imminently.'

It was announced earlier that school minibuses under eight metres in length will be given 50 per cent discount on coach fares when taking primary and secondary pupils to and from extra-curricular activities.

Mercy mission restores essential lifeline supplies

A special cargo-only sailing by CalMac last week brought vital fuel supplies to Arran and allowed refuse to be removed following disruption to both services owing to ferry cancellations, writes Colin Smeeton.

On Thursday, aboard MV Caledonian Isles on the 12.30pm sailing from Ardrossan was a single fuel tanker which brought petrol to the island, and an empty North Ayrshire Council (NAC) refuse lorry.

As reported in last week's Banner, disruption to early morning sailings saw NAC refuse lorries being unable to collect waste from Arran, resulting in the Brodick



The petrol fuel tanker arrives to replenish Arran's petrol supply. 01_B52cargo02



An empty NAC refuse lorry arrives on Arran to remove some of the backlog of waste building up at the Brodick depot. 01_B52cargo03

Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) having to close its doors owing to capacity issues.

Fuel supplies too, affected by the cancellation of the Lochranza ferry which was redeployed to Largs, needed to be brought in with one petrol supplier estimating Arran had approximately three days of petrol left.

Owing to legal requirements of transporting petrol – not diesel – the emergency sailing did not have any other vehicles onboard or passengers.

It is believed that CalMac used the 12.30pm sailing as this was the least busy

sailing of the day and it would have least impact on passengers and vehicles wanting to make the crossing.

The contingency solution was agreed after discussions with NAC, CalMac and relevant people on Arran, including the Arran Ferry Committee.

It is understood the cancellation of the scheduled service to passengers was the best option as crew working-time regulations prevented an extra sailing.

The Brodick HWRC reopened on Saturday and regular scheduled sailings resumed at Lochranza with the resumption of the ferry service on

Monday.

The regular transportation of petrol on the Lochranza route was resumed on Tuesday with an additional petrol supply run scheduled for 10.15am from Tarbert to Lochranza and a second delivery in the afternoon which delayed the usual 12.15pm sailing by one hour.

The Brodick HWRC will again be closed over the festive season from 3pm on Friday December 24, until Tuesday December 28.

It will also close on Friday December 31, at 3pm, and remain closed until Tuesday January 4, 2022.

Rail users to be hit by 'reckless' fare increase

Users of the rail services on the mainland will face a 3.8 per cent increase in rail fares next month in a nationwide price rise which has been described as 'reckless' by a West Scotland MSP.

Neil Bibby MSP described the increase as 'brutal' and 'reckless'. It has also raised his ire as the increases will be introduced in Scotland in January, while in England they will only come into effect in March.

The Labour MSP said: 'It is wildly reckless to hit passengers with this rip-off rise while a cost of living crisis and a climate crisis rages on.'

'North Ayrshire passengers will be forced to cough up extra months before the rest of the UK because of the SNP government's decision to plough ahead with this in January. We should be freezing rail fares not slapping passengers with the biggest hike in a decade.'

'ScotRail is due to come into public hands in a matter of months. If the SNP government is happy to let fares spiral and routes be decimated, then its takeover will mean little

Labour
MSP Neil
Bibby.



more than a fresh coat of paint.'

Graeme Dey MSP, Minister for Transport, said: 'For over a decade the Scottish Government has kept fare increases down by ensuring they are in line with RPI, or even lower in the case of off-peak fares.'

'Scottish rail fares remain, on average, 20 per cent lower than across the rest of Great Britain.'

'We know that any increase is unwelcome for passengers, however, the changes we are implementing this year are essential to our wider recovery plans.'

The fare increases will come into effect on Monday January 24.

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Ruby McArthur with Santa and Fairy Sheila.
01_B52santa04



Cara McCormack tells Santa what she wants for Christmas. 01_B52santa02



Theo and Faith Ferguson with their presents from Santa. 01_B52santa03



Oscar Smeeton holds the present he got from Santa. 01_B52santa01

Santa stops by to hear Christmas young ones' wishes

There may have been no traditional Christmas party for children in Brodick this year but that did not stop Santa stopping

by to find out their Christmas wishes in a Covid-friendly fashion. With the growing threat of the Omicron variant, organisers

took the decision to cancel the party for a second year. Meeting children one at a time, or with their brothers and sisters, Santa

spent Sunday afternoon hearing their requests and handing out presents, assisted by his fairy friend. Parents bought raffle

tickets in support, while adhering to the one-way system. Santa will be meeting children again in Shiskine this afternoon (Friday).

Bleak start as new rules are set to wreck the New Year

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Arran was bracing itself for three weeks of tight restrictions again after enjoying the Christmas weekend.

From Monday the message from First Minister Nicola Sturgeon is 'stay at home'. She is hoping that families gathering for Christmas do not spark a spike in the rapidly-spreading Omicron variant of the pandemic.

Already Arran has recorded its highest ever number of confirmed Covid cases, which stand at 19, according to the most recent official figures.

While it has not been disclosed if Omicron is present on

Arran, with the variant now firmly established in Scotland as the dominant strain in nearly 63 per cent of cases, it seems extremely likely it has reached these shores.

Across Scotland Covid cases have increased by more than 50 per cent in the past week with a 161 per cent jump in those aged 20 to 24.

Hospitality hoping for bumper New Year trade also face a Hogmanay hangover with question marks over just what can go ahead.

Although the main new restrictions are for larger events, the return of table service and one-metre distancing indoors for pubs and restaurants will be a blow.

The limit of three households

in a group is also reintroduced. Ahead of the new restrictions businesses on Arran were trying to figure out the best way forward ahead of their introduction on Monday.

There was also concern that the restrictions could be extended beyond the initial three weeks. Planned New Year events were also being reviewed.

There is fresh financial help worth £275m from the Scottish government which draws on additional funding announced by the UK Treasury at the weekend.

But, even though that's on top of an initial £100m earmarked by Holyrood ministers last week, it is unlikely to be nearly enough to offset the economic

damage restrictions will cause.

Arran schools stopped for their holidays on Wednesday and there has been talk about whether they should reopen as planned in January but Ms Sturgeon said this week that reopening schools as normal after the holidays was 'a priority'.

Updated guidance has been published for schools, and colleges and universities are assessing measures for the new term, she said, with some

returning to online learning for the start of the new term.

However, the First Minister has said Christmas celebrations over the weekend should go ahead as planned, but on Arran these were thrown into further doubt by storms forecast for the coming days.

On Christmas Day (Saturday) winds gusting up to 40mph are forecast, with the same on Sunday, leaving it uncertain if the single Boxing Day ferry will sail, unless the weather

improves. Nationally the new rules mean football matches, and other events where there would have been large crowds, will have to be held behind closed doors.

Indoor events, such as concerts, will be limited to 200 people if they are seated, or 100 for standing, which has led to the cancellation of some shows and pantos.

However, the new restrictions do not apply to weddings or funerals.

Hospital visit ban relaxed

Visiting is being allowed again at hospitals in NHS Ayrshire and Arran after health chiefs were forced into a U-turn.

The announcement last week that visiting in all hospitals had once again been suspended was raised at First Minister's Questions by Arran MSP Kenneth Gibson who asked: 'What steps is the First Minister taking to ensure patients in Ayrshire will be able to receive visitors this Christmas?'

Ms Sturgeon replied: 'Scottish government officials have been assured by NHS Ayrshire and Arran that the decision will be urgently reviewed and that the board is very mindful of the need to ensure that no-one is isolated in hospital over Christmas.'

A statement quickly followed from health bosses saying that, after a review, they were able to reduce restrictions on visiting.

Jenny Wilson, interim

nurse director, said: 'We are delighted to be able to reintroduce designated visiting, especially at a time of year when family is particularly important.'

'I do not underestimate the impact that the recent restrictions have had on our patients and their loved ones. 'And so I ask that everyone follows the guidance to make each visit as safe as possible, and to help us avoid any further restrictions being necessary.'

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Fun and fundraising at Shiskine



The convoy sets off from Balmichael to return to its starting point at Blackwaterfoot. 01_B52tractor13

Words and photos
by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



The Shiskine Christmas tractor rally not only proved to be a fun day in the fog last Saturday but raised lots of money for a deserving cause.

The rally was organised by Janis Murchie and Colin Bell of The Greannan in Blackwaterfoot, who held the fundraiser for their friends Tess and Darren Thompson, the latter originally from Shiskine, and also to spread some festive

cheer. Their young daughter Etta has developed a debilitating condition called pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome, also known as PANS/PANDAS.

But there is hope that recovery is possible with treatment, which unfortunately, requires a team of consultants, treatments and tests, all of which are incredibly expensive. Now, thanks to the generous donations from family, friends, and the Shiskine Tractor Rally, £20,300 has so far been raised which will contribute to some of the costs of young Etta's treatment.

As usual, participants decorated their

tractors for the event and many dressed as Santa or Christmas elves, or other festive characters, as they made their way from the Kinloch Hotel car park through Torbeg, Rodden, Shiskine, Balmichael, back through Shiskine (via a different route) and Kilpatrick, before returning to Blackwaterfoot.

Funds from the entry fee and from a collection held on the day all contributed to the fundraiser which is still open online at www.gofundme.com/f/help-save-etta if anyone wishes to contribute to this worthwhile cause.



Organiser Janis Murchie with one of the fundraisers who collected donations from spectators. 01_B52tractor02



Last year's rally organiser, Gordon Kinniburgh, brought along his Arran Cheese Shop tractor and trailer. 01_B52tractor04



Spectators mingle with the tractor drivers who are preparing their vehicles. 01_B52tractor07



All of the tractors lined up in the Kinloch Hotel parking lot. 01_B52tractor08

A decorated tractor makes its way over the Blackwaterfoot bridge. 01_B52tractor09



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Tractor rally

New man at the helm of Ferguson Marine



Santa, also known as Wallace Currie, with his tractor laden with presents.

01_B52tractor05



David Henderson and his daughter Lisa join the rally in their tractor.

01_B52tractor03



Tractors emerge through the thick fog on the Rodden Road.

01_B52tractor11



A tiny Santa is affixed to a toy tractor which joined the rally on the back of a large lorry.

01_B52tractor06



Spectators line the route to wave and cheer at the tractors' drivers.

01_B52tractor10



Tractors stop for a quick break at Balmichael in dense fog.

01_B52tractor12



Arran Cheese Shop's Santa, also known as Euan Kinniburgh, prepares himself for a trip around Shiskine.

01_B52tractor01

Ferguson Marine turnaround director Tim Hair, who was brought in to change the fortunes of the struggling shipyard, is leaving following the appointment of a new chief executive officer.

Mr Hair, who joined the nationalised company building Arran's new ferry MV Glen Sannox and its sister ship in August 2019, will be replaced by David Tydeman, who will take over the helm at Port Glasgow shipyard in February next year.

He has worked for several decades in the marine, shipbuilding and offshore industries.

Ferguson board chairman Alistair Mackenzie said: 'David will be responsible for continuing to roll out the ongoing turnaround plan, deliver the dual fuel ferries' project, win new vessel orders and drive sustainable growth and expansion.

'He has a unique blend



New Ferguson Marine chief executive David Tydeman.

of shipbuilding, capital project and business change knowledge and experience at an executive level, which we believe is vital to securing a sustainable future for the shipyard.

'He also brings strong leadership skills and a proven track record of managing complex situations.

'The board and wider team at Ferguson Marine extend our thanks to Tim Hair for

his leadership, expertise and commitment over the past two years.

'It has been challenging, not least because of a global pandemic, but he has implemented a series of important changes, systems and controls and built an experienced and skilled team to strengthen the business and establish a solid footing for growth.'

Mr Tydeman's appointment will see him return to shipbuilding on the Clyde.

He started his career as a Lloyds Register surveyor at a Govan shipyard after graduating as a naval architect at Southampton University in 1976.

Between 2008 and 2018, he was group chief executive at luxury yacht builder Oyster Yachts before spending 18 months as chairman at another yacht company. He has since been providing consultancy services for several luxury yacht construction projects.

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LETTERS

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New fares are fair

The decision to impose a big rise in fares to motorhomes using CalMac ferries is a controversial one. However, we believe that, taking a balanced view, that common sense has prevailed.

It always seemed an anomaly that since the introduction of RET fares a small motorhome paid no more than a car on the Ardrossan to Brodick route, with a large vehicle - taking up more than three car spaces - paying just double the car price.

Previous problems with the large numbers of motorhomes visiting Scottish islands have really been exacerbated during the lockdown with more and more people buying motorhomes to have vacations at home. The motorhome market is huge and is growing year on year. Just look at huge showrooms on the mainland, and with the continuing pandemic it looks like this is one sector which is not facing any slow-down soon.

But communities have rightly expressed their concerns that some places are struggling to cope with the sheer volume of vehicles. So it seems sensible to Transport Scotland to at least recognise that and if the new price fares deter a few then that may be beneficial all round to everyone.

These big motorhomes are not cheap and it seems only right that they should pay a fair going rate if they want to visit Scotland's islands.

Thought for the week

"The angel said, "Mary will have a son, and you will name him Jesus - because he will save his people from their sins". **Matt 1: 21**

Christmas shout-outs

Sir,
After the success of our Christmas messages from friends and businesses around the island last year, we thought we should do it again and we hope you will join in.

We would love to broadcast your shout-out to your clubs and organisations, friends and clients around the world.

Arransound now has more than a thousand listeners a week with fans from Canada to Hong Kong, Lewis to London and of course all over Europe. Why not let your contacts know you are thinking of them?

You can either simply record something on your phone or laptop and send it to arransound.com or use the button on the website to record your shout-out and it will come directly to us.

We look forward to hearing from you and, in the meantime, everyone at arransound wants to thank you for all your support during our first year of live broadcasting, we really do appreciate it. Have a wonderful, happy and healthy Christmas from all of us at your local community radio, arransound.com.

Yours,
Mhairi-Aileen Smeir,
Chair, arransound.com

Return to Westminster

Below is a copy of letter addressed to the Secretary of State for Scotland, of which the Arran Banner also received a copy.

Dear Secretary of State for Scotland, I understand that the Scotland Office and the Scottish Government are discussing who is to do what following the UK's exit from the EU.

The administration here is wholly responsible and, to use its phrase, is in control of the necessary financial 'leavers', to provide ferry services to Scottish islands through its bodies Transport Scotland, Caledonian Marine Assets Ltd, and

David MacBrayne Ltd and its subsidiaries.

It is also rumoured to be building new ferries through its nationalised yard Ferguson Marine (Port Glasgow) Ltd.

But since 2007 it has shown neither interest nor competence in these matters. It is clear that many of those seeking to travel, provide services or transport goods to and from the Isle of Arran are not uncritical of the performance of the UK (I'm sorry if this comes as a shock to you).

But if it took responsibility for Scottish ferries from the Scottish Government, we may be able to stop filing our CalMac timetables under fiction.

Yours,
Nigel Armstrong,
Whiting Bay.

Political theatre

Sir,

We should not be misled as to the intent of Kenneth Gibson MSP's question to the First Minister recently regarding berthing fees at Ardrossan in the light of fendering problems, as reported in the Arran Banner of Friday December 10.

This was a minor act of political theatre which allowed Mr Gibson to make the now-obligatory criticism of Tory policy, in this case privatisation of ports, and to allow Nicola Sturgeon to espouse the Scottish government's record on infrastructure issues and to commend the government's future plans for investment.

In reality the relationship between CalMac/CMAL and Peel Ports is (or should be) governed by a commercial contract, which should have clauses which describe remedial actions to be taken in the event of non-performance (or one would hope so).

If CalMac is not making recourse to these remedial actions in regard to the fendering issues then Transport Scotland should be asking why not.

To bring it up in parliament is like a child clypping to mum about a playground squabble.

Yours,
Doug Graham,
Whiting Bay.

Putting Christ into Christmas

Arran Churches Together Christmas message 2021 by Peter Wilkinson

We are all waiting. Waiting for an end to the pandemic; waiting to get away on holiday; waiting for that elusive lottery win, or the even more elusive new ferry!

These waits, and wants, are full of uncertainties and the threat of disappointment. They are qualified by ifs and buts. And even when the wait is over, the want fulfilled, satisfaction is not guaranteed.

Pandemics may end but other illnesses threaten. Weather and travel delays can ruin holidays - and ferry services.

The pursuit and accumulation of material things rarely brings true happiness.

Usually our wants depend on human beings. We rely on scientists, entrepreneurs, politicians and others to provide solutions, create markets and make decisions.

Most of all we rely on ourselves to make the right life choices and choose the right path - and we all know how that can go. Human beings have human frailties.

Christians, especially at this time of year, are waiting for something different: the coming of the Christ child who will bring us salvation and eternal life. The One who brings forgiveness, redemption and hope into our frail, human lives.

It is the same wait every year, but there's a difference. The wait ended, the promise was fulfilled 2,000 years ago. No ifs, no buts. No uncertainty or disappointment. No need to fear human weakness. Christianity is about faith - belief in a divine intervention and presence that guarantees salvation. All we have to do is say 'Yes' and follow the Christ child. Say 'Yes' and put Christ into Christmas.

If you can find some time for Jesus this Christmas, why not come to one of the many church services on Arran? - you will find details in the Banner's Church Notice section. A Happy, Holy and Peaceful Christmas from Arran Churches Together. Bless, O Lord, this Isle of Arran, part of your wonderful Creation. The wait is over.

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However, we realise that mistakes happen from time to time. If you think we have made a significant mistake and you wish to discuss this with us, please let us know as soon as possible by any of the three methods: emailing editor@arranbanner.co.uk; telephoning the chief reporter on 01770 302142 or write to the Group Editor at Wyvex Media, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin estate, Oban, PA34 4HB. We will try to resolve your issue in a timeous, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO, which will investigate the matter, by emailing: inquiries@ipso.co.uk.

The Editor welcomes letters for publication on this page. The Editor reserves the right to shorten, amend or to refuse to print them. Names and addresses MUST be supplied to indicate good faith, although these details can be withheld from publication. Telephone numbers, if available, should also be included. Anonymous letters will not be considered. Please write to: Letters, The Arran Banner, Brodick, Isle of Arran, KA27 8AJ. Fax: (01770) 302021. Email editor@arranbanner.co.uk Emailed letters can only be considered if they have a name, full address and phone number.

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Bernie's illuminations still lighting up young faces



Santa riding a polar bear in the garden. 01_B52Bernie02

Planning decisions made in quick time

North Ayrshire Council's planning team continues to set the standards for local authorities across Scotland.

A report prepared by Scotland's chief planner Dr Fiona Simpson shows North Ayrshire is delivering on key planning decisions far quicker than most.

Every year, all 32 Scottish local authorities are asked to produce a Planning Performance Framework (PPF) monitoring themselves against key performance indicators.

The PPF showed that North Ayrshire Council's planning team has an average timescale for determining householder applications of 5.1 weeks - faster than the Scottish average and well within the statutory timescale of eight weeks.

Timescales for non-householder applications is 5.9 weeks while major planning applications are dealt with in 11.1 weeks on average - both

far lower than the Scottish average.

Councillor Tom Marshall, chair of the council's planning committee, said: 'Our planning team deserves a huge amount of credit for continuing to deliver such a fantastic time. Like all local authorities, we have had to adapt and make changes during the pandemic but it's clear that this has not prevented us from being extremely efficient and, importantly, playing a key part in helping the local housing sector.'

'The fact we are well above the Scottish average in making key decisions is testament to the hard work of the team and the processes we have in place that help us reach these decisions so quickly.'

North Ayrshire's Planning team achieved the top level in every level relevant to it (13). This is the second year in a row it has achieved this.

Even after more than three decades, a million smiles and thousands of pounds raised for charity, Bernie Jackson's lights in Whiting Bay are still attracting families and spreading festive cheer each year.

The 32-year-old tradition remains as popular as ever and the wonder that can be seen in children's eyes and the smiling faces are what continues to motivate Bernie to keep decorating his house every Christmas.

Bernie is 79 years old and admits it is not easy maintaining the tradition, especially some of the more athletic tasks, such as climbing ladders to affix lights to the side of the building. Thankfully Bernie's son Michael has been enlisted to do the ladder work and even his granddaughter, Abbie Jackson, has been involved. She has created a JustGiving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/abbie-jackson-1> which collects donations from those who appreciate the annual illuminations.

Over the years Bernie has had a small donation box and any funds collected he has donated to worthwhile causes; this year it is Alzheimer's Research UK.

Helping to attract dozens of visitors every evening, and filling every available inch of his garden, are fun festive decorations, some more than 28 years old and others purchased just this year, which Bernie lays out over a few days in the run-up to Christmas.

One family who visit every year - often multiple times - told the Banner: 'Christmas does not feel like Christmas until we have been to see Bernie's lights.'

'We live close by so we pop over every few days.'

'The kids love the flashing lights and the inflatable decorations and we usually take a Christmas photo here each year.'

Bernie's lights can be seen at Montrose Terrace in Whiting Bay.

They are switched on after dusk and usually stay on until around 9pm every evening.

Club draw winner

The winner of the Brodick Improvements Committee 200 Club draw for December was Barbara Gilmore from Brodick, who wins the £50 monthly prize.



Bernie Jackson outside his lavishly-decorated Whiting Bay home. 01_B52Bernie01

M.B.S. Building and Timber Supplies 

Festive Opening Hours

25th, 26th, 27th closed

28th 9am-12pm

29th 8am-5pm

30th 8am-5pm

31st 9am - 12pm

1st, 2nd, 3rd closed

4th 9am-12pm

Merry Christmas & a Happy Newyear to all of our customers!

The Old Pier, Whiting Bay
Isle of Arran KA27 8QW

01770700202
mbsbuild@yahoo.co.uk

Review of the year

There can be no doubt 2021 has been a challenging year for everyone on Arran. Still, despite the challenges, Arran residents have once again taken on life's obstacles with stoicism, courage and an indomitable spirit and achieved remarkable things.

And it is with this same resolve, we can all look forward to a prosperous, happy and healthy 2022.

In part one of our customary look at the year in review, we highlight some of the human stories that made the headlines from January to June this year.

January to
June 2021



JANUARY: Mrs Lindsay Todd is surrounded by her class at Corrie Primary School as she is given a rousing send-off on her retiral from teaching. 01_B53corrie02



JANUARY: Health services on Arran began their mass vaccination programme at the high school with hundreds of people receiving their first dose of the vaccine. Health worker Siobhan McGinlay is pictured getting the vaccine from Ailsa Weir.



MARCH: Poppy and Flora Murdoch, left, plant an apple tree in Lochranza as part of the Arran Pioneer Project's Lochranza orchard.



FEBRUARY: Brodick Primary School's primary one to three pupils, above, looked delighted to be heading back into class after a long lockdown. 01_B09school10

FEBRUARY: Winners of the annual Corrie's Capers competition were announced after dozens of entries were received from all over Scotland. Eva Curley, aged seven, from Corriegills, right, is pictured with her drawing of Corrie at Glen Rosa which was highly commended by the judge.



MARCH: Emerging Arran artist Jane Greenstreet was to have her work featured in a prestigious exhibition which was to be hosted online this year.



APRIL: Thirty firefighters from Arran and the mainland battled a blaze in Glen Cloy which took more than four hours to extinguish. The firefighters are pictured after the blaze was brought under control. 01_B17fire04



MAY: Above: Walk leaders Jo Totty, centre, and Franny Schlicke, far left, take a well-earned rest at the top of Windmill Hill during a 17km guided walk during the Arran Mountain Festival.

01_B21mountain01



JUNE: Arran GP Dr Liz Guthrie, left, has been appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of Ayrshire and Arran.

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MAY: Louie Ross answered all 1,000 questions correctly in a national Sumdog competition. Louie was one of only six pupils who achieved this out of 25,500 entries.



APRIL: The Reverend Elizabeth Watson, right, after her retiral presentation with reader Sharon Macleod, left, and long-serving Kirk Session member Gill Gregory. 01_B14minister01



JUNE: Lockdown leavers - the Arran High School sixth year pupils who celebrated their last day at school with a barbecue and an afternoon of fun.

Arran Brie beats Blue to be named best Scottish cheese

Arran Brie has been named the best Scottish cheese at this year's World Cheese Awards, writes Hugh Boag.

A truly global cheese event, the awards bring together cheesemakers, retailers, buyers, consumers and food commentators worldwide to judge nearly 4,000 cheeses from more than 40 countries.

The awards this year were held last month in Oviedo, Spain, as part of the Asturias Paraiso Natural Internacional Cheese Festival.

Originally due to take place in 2020, the event was rescheduled to ensure that it took place in the truly international spirit that it has engendered for over 30 years.

Arran Brie, produced at Bellevue Creamery for the Island Cheese Company Ltd, picked up a gold award before being named the best Scottish

'It proves what we have always known – that it is a great cheese'

cheese, while Arran Blue picked up a bronze award.

It was a turning of the tables as Arran Blue has twice previously been named Scottish cheese of the year, with Arran Brie having previously picked up a gold and silver award.

It means the creamery has picked up the top award in three out of the last four years, and only because the contest was not held last year.

Bellevue manager Calum Chaplin told the Banner: 'We are absolutely delighted that Arran Brie has been recognised as the best Scottish cheese at these prestigious



awards, it proves what we have always known – that it is a great cheese.

'I am sincerely grateful to the

Cheesemaker Calum Chaplin.

Christmas orders and has more than doubled output from its Blackwaterfoot production facility.

'We have upscaled as much as we can and are looking forward to another busy year in 2022,' he added.

However, as a result of leaving the EU, all cheeses from the UK now have to be accompanied by the mound of paper work and be signed off by a vet.

As a result Island Cheese boss Gordon Kinniburgh had to take his cheeses to a vet in Mauchline for his stamp of approval, before posting the cheeses to London, where they were collected and taken to Spain.

VISITUS
www.arranbanner.co.uk

Book launch in Edinburgh

Arran artist Tim Pomeroy 'very reluctantly' cancelled his planned book launch last weekend at the Ormisdale Pavilion in Brodick which will be rescheduled for sometime in January.

However, before the new restrictions were brought in, Tim was able to hold a second book launch at the Fine Art Society gallery in Edinburgh where he was staging a solo exhibition of his sculptures.

The new 112-page coffee-table book is an illustrated biography of Tim and his artworks.

It spans the years 1979-present day and highlights some of Tim's major artistic achievements.

The illustrated biography, which costs £30, is available from Tim directly or phone 07592 744047 or it can now be purchased via his website.



LITTLE  ROCK
MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYBODY

Wee Deli is open and stocked full of Christmas goodies, gifts, excellent stocking fillers, fine wines, Champagne, prosecco, liquors for any last minute gifts.

Café is open for breakfast, lunch, cakes, shakes, hot chocolates, tea and coffee

Christmas Eve - open - 9am - 2.30pm

Christmas Day & Boxing Day - closed

27th - 31st - open - 9am - 4.30pm kitchen closing @ 4pm

1st Jan 2022 - closed

2nd - 5th January - open - 9am - 4.30pm kitchen closing @ 4pm

Closing 6th for a wee break, reopening on the 29th January

Thank you for your continued support



SALE

IN STORE AND ONLINE

arranactive.co.uk

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

From all of us here at Arran Active we wish you an amazing holiday season; thank you for all the support over the last year and here's to a fantastic 2022!

Arran Active

Mon-Sat: 09:30-17:00 | Sun: 10:00-17:00 | Closed Xmas Day, Boxing Day & NY Day
01770 302113

Winter visitors gather amid seasonal Arran surprises

Bird notes

by Jim Cassels

NOVEMBER

November had less than half the rainfall of October.

Both months were mild, but November had the first named storm of the winter.

In comparison to last November, while temperatures were similar, this November had almost half the amount of rain as last November.

The November highlight was the first confirmed record of Siberian chiffchaff on Arran. This bird was trapped, ringed, photographed, identified and released by licensed bird ringers on Saturday November 13 in a garden in Sliderry, as featured in a recent Banner article.

Not surprisingly in November, winter visitors were to the fore. These included two brambling in Sliderry on 1st; 22 twite at Machriewaterfoot on 4th; a snow bunting on Beinn a' Chliabhain on 7th; five yellowhammer in Sliderry on 13th; a number of flocks of redwing including 60 in Shannochie on 15th and, after a dearth of fieldfare records in October, a number of flocks, including 300 in Lochranza on 21st.

Other records of wintering birds included: a juvenile merlin at Drumadoon Point on 2nd; 120 golden plover at Machriewaterfoot on 4th; five rook in Auchenhew, also on 4th; 12 turnstone at Sandbraes



A spectacular shot of a black-headed gull fishing. Photograph: Arthur Duncan.



Treecreeper, one of the many species of bird reported in gardens in November. Photograph: Howard Sargeant.

on 7th; 21 snipe and nine woodcock in Sliderry on 10th; 105 curlew on Corrie cravie shore on 20th; 12 lapwing at Port na Feannaiche on 28th and one jack snipe in Sliderry, also on 28th.

Reports of wintering wildfowl included: two wigeon at Clauchlands on 9th; two goldeneye at Kingscross Point, also on 9th; 70 pink-footed geese flying over Sliderry on 13th; one whooper swan on Mossend Pond on 14th; 220 greylag geese in the Shiskine Valley on 15th; 35 teal on Corrie cravie shore on 20th

and one brent goose on Silver Sands on 21st.

Gardens provide safe refuge during the winter months, with many people providing food and water for their feathered friends.

Here is a small selection from the many reports from gardens round the island in November: a male blackcap in Whiting Bay on 8th; four long-tailed tit in Lamlash on 17th; a goldcrest in Pirnmill on 20th; four great tit in Shannochie on 21st; a treecreeper in Whiting Bay, also on 21st; eight coal tit in Margnaheglish on 29th and eight coal tit and two great spotted woodpecker in Lagg, also on 29th.

There were two November records of birds usually associated with warmer months of the year – a wheatear at Drumadoon Point on 2nd and a swallow at Sliderry on 5th.

Finally, here is a further selection of highlights from what has been another exceptional month for bird-watching on Arran: a little egret by Fisherman's Walk on 3rd; 12 black-headed gull at Sandbraes, also on 3rd; a white-tailed eagle over the entrance to Glen Catacol on 7th; three bullfinch in Corrie cravie quarry on 15th; a kingfisher flying under the footbridge by the museum



Siberian chiffchaff, a monthly highlight and the first Arran record. Photograph: Rachel Dobson.

on 19th; three golden eagle including one sub-adult over the distillery in Lochranza, also on 19th; five great northern diver off Drumadoon Point on 21st; around 200 jackdaw coming in to roost in trees in Machrie on 22nd; five returning shelduck in Pirnmill, also on 22nd, and four calling water rail in Corrie cravie on 23rd.

Last, but by no means least, was the appearance of three red kite flying west from the heights between Lamlash and Whiting Bay. The previous month there had been a report of six red kite together in the Shiskine Valley. Both are



Golden plover, one of the many winter visitors. Photograph: Val Gall.

remarkable records. Red kite records on Arran are usually of single birds.

Enjoy your birding and keep safe.

Please send any bird notes with 'what, when, where' to me at Kilpatrick Kennels, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot, KA27 8EY, or email me at

jim@arranbirding.co.uk. I look forward to hearing from you. For more information on birding on Arran, purchase the Arran Bird Report 2020 and the Arran Bird Report, the first 40 years.

Plus visit the website <http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/index.html>



Goldeneye, one of the wintering wildfowl on Arran. Photograph: Brian Couper.

THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday December 22, 2001



Residents and helpers at Montrose House were delighted when Santa arrived at their Christmas party. 01_B52ABTYA02



Post Bus drivers John MacLure and Sandy McQueen wear Post Office issued Santa hats as they get into the festive spirit. 01_B52ABTYA05



David Cable has been appointed to the job share post of unit manager at Montrose House. He is pictured with Hilary Bridge, the current manager, with whom he will share the workload. 01_B52ABTYA01



CONTACT US
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TELEPHONE
01770 302142

Left: Santa and his helpers join Princess Jade Davidson, Heather Queen Hollie Adamson and Princess Lindsay Thompson at the Christmas lights parade in Lamlash. 01_B52ABTYA04



Staff perform a spot of angel arranging during the Brodick Playgroup's Christmas play. 01_B52ABTYA03



Posties sort through the mail for their rounds at the sorting station after receiving almost 18,000 items of post in a single day during the run-up to Christmas. 01_B52ABTYA06

What's on

in association with Isle of Arran Brewery

www.arranbrewery.co.uk

TOURS AND TASTINGS BY APPOINTMENT



Every Day

Arran Brewery, Shop Open – Monday to Saturday
10am – 4.30pm, Sunday, 12noon - 4pm
Brodick Castle & Gardens Brodick,
Open daily, 10am – 5pm (last entry 4.30pm)
Brodick Mini Golf, Open seven days,
10am - 5pm-ish, ALL weather
Lamlash Putting Green, Open daily, 10am - 4pm
Lamlash Tennis Courts, Open All hours
Trout Fly Fishing, Loch Garbad, bank fishing
Whiting Bay Bowling Club,
Open to book call 01770 700636

Saturday 25th December

Merry Christmas

Sunday 26th December

Boxing Day Bash,
Blackwaterfoot Bowling Club, 1.30pm
What's Happening On Arran,
<http://www.arranmedia.co.uk>, 4pm
Alcoholics Anonymous Zoom Meeting,
go to alcoholicsanonymous.org.uk, 7pm

Tuesday 28th December

Healthy Outdoor Team, Brodick Castle, 10am – 1pm
Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting,
Brodick Church Hall, 2pm
Rink Games, Blackwaterfoot Bowling Club, 1.30pm
K.A. Leisure, Lamlash, 6pm – 10pm
Pop Music Quiz, suits all ages,
Ormidale Hotel, Brodick, 9pm

Wednesday 29th December

Hydrofit, Auchrannie Resort, 10.30am – 11.15am
Eco Savvy Community Shop,
Whiting Bay, 10.30am – 1.30pm

Archives and Genealogy services, Arran Heritage
Museum, 10.30am -12.30pm & 1.30pm to 3.30pm.
Arran Pace Makers please check Facebook @arran-
pacemakers, Venue varies, 5.30pm
K.A. Leisure, Lamlash, 6pm – 10pm
Rock and Pop Bingo, Ormidale Hotel, Brodick, 9pm

Thursday 30th December

Eco Savvy Community Shop,
Whiting Bay, 10.30am – 4.30pm
Arran Cancer Support Group, Banner Lodge
(left of Heather Lodge), Brodick, 2pm
K.A. Leisure, Lamlash, 6pm – 10pm
Senior Hockey (12+),
Ormidale Astro Pitch, 7pm – 8.30pm
Quiz – General Knowledge,
Ormidale Hotel, Brodick, 9pm

Friday 31st December

Eco Savvy Community Shop,
Whiting Bay, 10.30am – 4.30pm
K.A. Leisure, Lamlash, 6pm – 10pm
Alcoholics Anonymous Zoom Meeting,
go to alcoholicsanonymous.org.uk, 7pm
Live Music Crofters' Bar and Bistro, from 9pm
DJ Omnibeat, The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm

Saturday 1st January 2022

Happy New Year!

Hamish heads the bucket list



Hamish Bannatyne being presented with The Bucket, at the friendly match between Shiskine and Lochranza Golf clubs, by Lochranza captain Donald Logan and John Miles of Shiskine.

ARRAN BANNER GOLF

Lochranza Golf Club

Saturday December 18, The Bucket. The annual friendly competition between Shiskine and Lochranza golf clubs was played last weekend with Shiskine convincingly coming out the winners. Leading individual score went to Hamish Bannatyne with a magnificent 28 points.

Lamlash Golf Club

Sunday December 12, Glenburn Cup: 1 Graeme Andrew 70-11=59, 2 Alan Campbell 77-14=63. Best scratch, Graeme Andrew 70. Magic twos, Lee Dutton @4th, G Andrew @5th. Thursday December 16, Yellow Medal: 1 Jim Young 78-19=59 BIH, 2 Alan Smith 77-18=59 BIH, 3 Stuart McLaren 71-12=59. Magic twos, Jim Young @4th, Billy O'Connor @16th, Lee Dutton @17th. Sunday December 19, Glenburn Cup: 1 Robbie McGunnigle 66-9=57, 2 Graeme Andrew 72-11=61, 3 Andy Smith 84-19=65. Magic twos, Iain Murchie @16th, Graeme Andrew @13th, Rob Niven @4th. Best scratch, Robbie McGunnigle 66.

Fixtures: Sunday December 26, Boxing Day Bottle, noon draw. Thursday December 30, Yellow Medal, 11am draw. Sunday January 2, Course Backwards, 10.30am start.

Whiting Bay Golf Club

Sunday December 19, three club challenge. For a bit of pre-festive fun members played a yellow tees Stableford with each player

Boxing Day bowling

At the last meeting of Blackwaterfoot Bowling Club members agreed to host their traditional Boxing Day match.

The rink game will go ahead on Sunday, with all government precautions in place, starting at 1.30pm.

restricted to three clubs only. If that wasn't challenge enough, the weather convener added thick fog so that only on the short par threes were the greens visible from 30 yards out. Much guesswork, a few precautionary shouts of 'fore' and happily, no injuries. A total of 14 played and the choice of clubs to use was quite varied with most ensuring they had at least packed a putter. David Morrison, one of the few to use a driver, came out top with 38 points. Result: 1 David Morrison 10, 38pts, 2 Cameron Bruce 28, 35pts, 3 Nicol Auld 5, 33pts. Magic twos David Morrison @11th, Nicol Auld @13th, Dave Hackett @4th.

Fixtures: Sunday December 26, Boxing Day sweep. Wednesday December 29, yellow tees Stableford.

Machrie Bay Golf Club

Fixtures: Tuesday December 28, two club competition - one must be a putter, tee off noon. Tuesday January 4, Winter Cup, tee off noon. Saturday January 8, Lochranza Hotel Cup, tee off noon.

Corrie Golf Club

Monday December 20, Monday Cup: 1 R I MacMillan 73-18=55 BIH, 2 Len Hartley 71-16=55, 3 Graeme Andrew 67-10=57. Magic twos Len Hartley @8th, Raymond Burke @16th, Allan Napier @1st. Best scratch G Andrew 67.

Fixtures: Monday December 27, Monday Cup, ballot at noon.

Race called off

The New Year's Day Handicap Race due to be held on Sunday January 2 by the Arran Runners has been postponed.

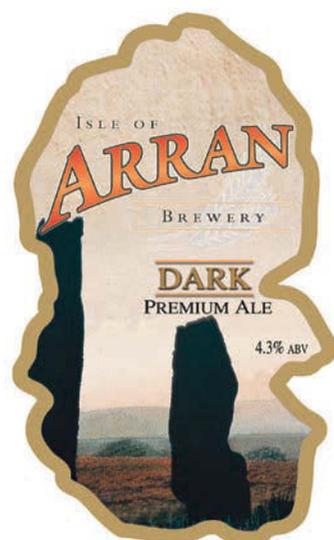
Organisers said with government advice and Omicron levels rising, they decided to cancel it.

Arran Dark

The Isle of Arran Brewery's Dark Premium Beer is the brewery's second most awarded beer.

A malty brown beer in the style of a 'Scottish Heavy' with ripe fruit flavours and a deep finish.

The beer is available throughout the island in bottles, including at the brewery shop at Cladach, Brodick



RECRUITMENT

ARRAN ECO SAVVY IS RECRUITING

Green Islands Project Manager

CONTRACT Fixed Term to 30th June 2022
 FULL TIME 40 hrs per week
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For the job description visit:
<http://arranecosavvy.org.uk/>

apply by e mailing your CV
 and covering letter to:
trustees.ecosavvy@gmail.com
 or by post to Helen Ross "in confidence"
 Eco Savvy Shop, Shore Rd
 Whiting Bay, Isle of Arran KA27 8PR

Applications Closing Date: 3 January 2022




Blackwaterfoot Garage currently have the following vacancies:

Class 4 MOT tester
 Light vehicle mechanic

All enquiries to Colin Cameron
 Blackwaterfoot Garage, Blackwaterfoot, Isle of Arran, KA27 8ES
blackwaterfoot@btconnect.com



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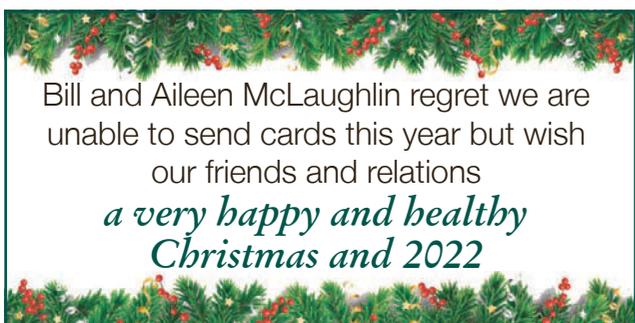
enquiries@directtaxis.net - Return bookings and other prices on request.

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VINYL RECORDS - Good and accurate prices paid for well looked after records
 No classical or easy listening. All other genres considered.
 Free valuations and brokerage. Contact Jamie on 07983624634 or 01770600969

PERSONALS



Bill and Aileen McLaughlin regret we are unable to send cards this year but wish our friends and relations
a very happy and healthy Christmas and 2022

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CHURCH NOTICES

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Parishes of North Arran, Broddick, Corrie, Lochranza, Pirnmill and Shiskine

*Independent but
working together*

There will be a streamed service fortnightly, this can be found on the three Church websites. Keeping with new guideline, please take a lateral flow test before coming to a Church Service.

Friday 24th December Christmas Eve

Shiskine Church 11.30pm evening service

Broddick Church 6pm evening service

Saturday 25th December CHRISTMAS DAY

Lochranza Church Family Christmas Service at 11am

Sunday 26th December

Lochranza & Pirnmill Churches-
Service at Lochranza Church 10.15am Morning worship
Shiskine Church 12noon.
Morning worship.
Broddick Church 10.30am.
Morning worship.
Corrie Church 12noon.
Morning worship
The Food Bank continues from Broddick Church

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Whiting Bay and Kildonan Church of Scotland

Charity Number: SC014005

Friday 24th December

Christmas Eve

Watchnight Service at 11.40pm.

Saturday 25th December

CHRISTMAS DAY

Service at 10am

A short Family Service at 10am and children can bring gifts.

Sunday 26th December

Worship will be conducted at 10.30 am.

Under new Church of Scotland guidelines, you are encouraged, please, to take a lateral flow test before coming to worship.

Track and Trace also required.
ALL WELCOME.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Kilmory linked with Lamlash

*"A faith to proclaim ~
a fellowship to share"*

Scottish Charity SC015072

Friday 24th December

Christmas Eve

Lamlash at 6.30pm

Kilmory at 9.30pm

Saturday 25th December

CHRISTMAS DAY Service

Lamlash 10.30am

Sunday 26th December

Boxing Day; Lessons & Carols in both churches

Kilmory at 10 am

Lamlash Church at 11.30 am

To comply with 'Trace and Protect' regulations, name and contact details will be asked for,

on entering

We are also reminded of the Scottish Government advice to take a Lateral Flow Test on the day we intend to come to church, to attend if negative.

All welcome

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

(Part of the Worldwide Anglican Church)

St Margaret's, Whiting Bay.

25th December

Christmas Day

Sung Eucharist - 10 am
Revd Adrian Fallows

Sunday 26th December
1st Sunday of Christmas

Holy Communion at 11am
Richard Trewby

EVERYONE IS WELCOME
Coffee after service

We follow strict SEC guidelines

ARRAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Minister - Rev. Vince Jennings
Tel: 01770 600222

www.arranbaptistchurch.org.uk

Sunday 26th December

Services will be held in the Ormidale Sports Pavilion, Broddick at 11 am.

All welcome but current Covid restrictions are in place.

Sermons will be on our webpage following the Sunday.

ARRAN FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (CONTINUING)

Sunday 26th December

Morning Service at 11am

Free Church Building, Alma Road, Broddick

All welcome

ARRAN FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Sunday 26th December

Morning service at 11 am

Shiskine Free Church

All welcome

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

CHRISTMAS MASSES AT HOLY CROSS

Friday 24th December

Christmas Eve

The First Mass of Christmas at 9pm

Saturday 25th December

CHRISTMAS DAY

Christmas Morning Mass at 11am

Sunday 26th December

- Morning Mass at 11am

(please note there is no Saturday Vigil Mass this weekend)

Saturday 1st January

Mass 11am - booking not required

Booking for mass is essential.

Please note new booking contacts: email: cjenks@btinternet.com or telephone 01770 870245 to check availability and confirm your place.

Please be aware we are still maintaining social distancing and capacity remains restricted.

In accordance with Scottish Government requirements face coverings must be worn in church and NHS test and protect details will be kept.

BLESS O LORD

*THIS ISLE OF ARRAN
ST ROCH PATRON OF THE
SICK PRAY FOR US*

*OUR LADY OF THE ISLES
PRAY FOR US*

ST COLUMBA PRAY FOR US

Sporting review of the year

May



Members of the Arran Junior Hockey Club celebrate receiving funding to renew the astro turf pitch at the Ormidale Park. 01_B22astro turf01

JANUARY TO JUNE 2021

continued from page 16.

May

See next week's
Banner for part 2



Broddick Golf Club's 2021 champions, Ann May and Ewan McKinnon, flanked by runners-up, Susan Butchard and Bruce Jenkins.

May



Blackwaterfoot bowlers make a welcome return to matches after an extended break.

June



Spirits ran high at the maiden voyage of Moonshine, the latest skiff built by Rory Cowan for the Arran Coastal Rowing Club.



Sporting review of the year

A look back at some of the sporting events and achievements which took place earlier this year.

JANUARY TO JUNE 2021

January



Sailing enthusiasts on Arran enjoyed watching Lamlash sailor Neil Hunter compete in the Prada Cup yacht race in New Zealand. Neil Hunter, right, is pictured with skipper and principal Sir Ben Ainslie of Ineos Team UK.

March



Keith Burnet who spent his childhood messing about on boats on Arran has competed in the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge which saw him and his teammates, James, Richard and Josh, row more than 3,000 miles unaided across the Atlantic Ocean.

February



The Arran Belles, a ladies' cycling and socialising group on Arran, have contributed 2,692 miles to the Doddie Active Inter District Challenge which has helped to raise more than one million pounds for the My Name's Doddie Foundation. Pictured are some of the Belles.

April

A feat of a lifetime, Dave Black completes a 56-mile run around Arran, aged 56.

**MORE ON
PAGE 15**



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