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Arran's Weekly Newspaper **SATURDAY, 25 FEBRUARY, 2012** No 1847 57p



Dramatic Ryder Cup win for Kilpatrick

There was a dramatic end to Shiskine Golf Club's Ryder Cup competition on Sunday when bottom placed Kilpatrick won all their games to scoop the 2012 prize. At the start of play in the morning John Salton's team were languishing at the bottom of the table but they somehow managed to thrash Torbeg to end up at the top. The Kilpatrick team members were George McKechnie, Colin Rutterford, David Henderson, captain John Salton, Jimmy Morrison, Neil Henderson, Mike Hesp and Dougie Bell.
Photo by H Bannatyne.

Animal park could be Arran's new attraction

An exciting visitor attraction could soon be opening its doors on Arran, and it may well bring some unusual new residents to the island.

A couple from Edinburgh, Gordon and Kathleen Graham, plan to buy Auchareoch Farm in Kilmory and open an Animal Visitor Centre that will include some rather exotic creatures.

Auchareoch is situated up a four-mile track, northeast of the Southend village.

Attractions at the visitor centre are still dependent on planning permissions but the couple plan to keep zebras, meerkats and wallabies as well as pigmy goats, pigs, donkeys, chickens, ducks, rabbits and the rarest sheep in Britain, Boreray.

'We are currently going through the formal planning stages in this process and we're hoping for a positive outcome,' explained Gordon. The Animal Park will be funded by ourselves with some private investment and will be run as a business.'

Other attractions on the farm will include an indoor café, sheltered kids play area with a rural theme and a large outdoor kids' fort and additional outdoor play areas.

This will all be joined by changing daily activities and demonstrations that could include sheepdog trials, fly fishing casting, sports days and animal talks.

Kathleen was head keeper of hoofed mammals at Edinburgh Zoo and worked there for 14 years.

'A fun day out can also be an interesting learning experience,' said Kathleen. 'We want to offer our visitors as much as possible on value for money basis.'

She added: 'We hope that this attraction will be welcomed and supported by the community as we are delighted to hopefully bring this type of attraction to the island as it will be unique from any other business currently or previously on Arran.'

Southbank Farm Park at Bennan was a major attraction for

15 years but owners Geoff and Sally Brookes chose to close when stricter health and safety rules made the running of it increasingly difficult.

Margaret Parker, headteacher of Kilmory Primary School was one of many to write letters of support for the venture.

She wrote: 'I believe that this will give an added dimension to the education we can provide for our pupils on Arran – as well as from other places.'

'It is much more than just about visiting animals but about conservation, biodiversity and enterprise; all of which are high on our priorities in educating children for the future.'

Another letter of support came from VisitArran's Claire Richardson, who wrote: 'Your plans indeed sound of great benefit to the island...Such an attraction would in VisitArran's eyes be very popular not only with visitors but also residents and the local schools and community groups.'

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Police files

Drink driving

A 42-year-old man from Brodick was caught drink driving near Brodick Primary School last Friday and was also found to have no valid MOT for his car.

Meanwhile on Sunday a 50-year-old Bolton man was caught drink driving on Market Road, Brodick.

Assault

A man residing in Lamlash appeared at Hamilton Sheriff Court on Monday after he was arrested in connection with a mainland assault.

Drugs

On Sunday night a 31-year-old Lamlash man was arrested after being found to be in possession of drugs near to Benlister Terrace.

And on Monday an 18-year-old Brodick man was arrested at the ferry terminal when caught carrying controlled substances.

Breach of the peace

On Thursday 16 February a 54-year-old woman from Whiting Bay was reported for breach of the peace after an incident in Torbeg.

Speeding

A 53-year-old Greenock woman was issued with a fixed penalty after being caught by police speeding in Corrie on Monday.

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Nicola takes up her post at Lochranza

Last weeks Banner featured the departure on retirement of Lochranza's Postmistress, Christine Cameron.

This week we introduce the new Postmistress, Nicola Greig, Christine's daughter, a relationship which accounts for the particularly seamless transfer of responsibility.

Experience

Nicola was born and raised on Arran. After finishing her education she left the island and broadened her experience of life in the real world.

However, the lure of Arran drew her back. She embarked upon a period of rigorous

training under her mother and Post Office Counters.

In January she won the appointment of Postmistress to Blackwaterfoot. Nicola states that, with the help of her staff, she intends to continue providing the current services to Lochranza on Tuesday and Friday mornings and to Kildonan on Mondays and Thursdays.

Nicola is no stranger to Lochranza having deputised there for her mother on occasion. She is warmly welcome in Lochranza and residents look forward to a long and happy relationship with her. TC



Nicola Greig, new postmistress for Lochranza, Blackwaterfoot and Kildonan. b08loc01



Machrie Moor road closure sign. 01_b08road01

Machrie Moor road closure

The Machrie Moor road is to close for five days next week so that emergency repair work can be carried out on culverts.

The road will be closed from 9am on Monday 27 February.

Traffic will be diverted via the B880 to Blackwaterfoot along the coastal road and vice versa.

North Ayrshire Council said that for the safety of staff and road users, the closure will be put in place for the whole five days.

Residents along the length of the road will be able to access their homes.

Weight Watchers on Arran

For the first time on Arran, Weight Watchers meetings are taking place on the island.

The meetings are run by Dawn McKinnon of Shiskine, who has herself lost 29lbs through the Weight Watchers programme and knows all the ups and down people can have on a weight loss journey. Meetings are now taking place on Tuesdays at 7pm in St Molios Church, Shiskine and on Fridays at 6.30pm in Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick.

For this Friday only, the meeting will start at 5.30pm due to the Drama Festival. You will be warmly welcomed, it is easy to join, and you will find lots of support.

For more information about the Weight Watchers programme visit www.weight-watcher.co.uk

Epic journey to Dunoon before reaching top spot

The Arran rugby team may be top of the league this week but it was no easy journey to get to that spot – literally.

In a mammoth expedition that involved four ferry journeys; it cost the team more than £200 to get to their game against Cowal on Saturday.

With gale force winds forecast for the entire day, the team left here at 8.20am on the MV Isle of Arran, which was bound for Wemyss Bay.

After contacting Dodds Coaches, two hours later they boarded the team bus and made their way to Western Ferries in Gourock to catch the boat to Dunoon.

The team quickly realised that it would be better to have the bus with them to make the return journey to wherever the Arran ferry was docked easier.

A team spokesman said: 'It was a long day – and probably the longest journey any rugby team had to make on Saturday – but it worked a treat and when the ferry left Wemyss Bay in the evening all our lads were on it and everyone got home safely.'

Community Council to discuss ferries

Arran Community Council will meet on Tuesday 28 February at 7.30pm in the Ormidale Pavilion in Brodick.

There will be a report back from the Ferries Review public meeting held in Brodick Hall on Wednesday and further discussion on our ferry service.

All Arran folk are welcome to attend and make a contribution through the chair.

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New fencing is 'superb' at Red Quarry Road

Since the report about Red Quarry Road in last week's Banner, workmen seem to have been very busy repairing fencing and making safe the eight foot sheer drops at the bottom of several gardens.

The damage had been done by storm force winds on 29 December, and the residents were fed up with waiting seven weeks for the landlord to effect repairs.

The morning after The Banner visited the £4.2million 24-house development in Corrie, Jean Miller of number 13 rang to say that workmen were putting up temporary fencing.

She said: 'We were all out to see what they were doing at last. I felt a bit guilty at contacting the Banner, but something had to be done.'

This Tuesday she added: 'There are loads of workmen working on the fencing and we have a drill going in the playpark digging out the old posts.'

'There is no sign of the roof tiles as yet, and the gardens are in a mess but at least I will be able to let my pup Hew into the garden soon and also neighbours can let their children into the gardens to play.'

Later she added: 'I can't believe the new fencing; it's absolutely superb.'

Kenneth Gibson MSP said: 'All roof repairs should be completed by the end of this week and the fencing repairs soon after.'

'Calamity Isles' returns to Arran after pier collision

'a dent in the hull' - CalMac

The damaged MV Caledonian Isles that hit a harbour wall last Tuesday has spent a week in Greenock for repairs and returned to service on Wednesday evening.

Cruelly dubbed the 'Calamity Isles' by local residents, the 95-metre, 5,000 tonne ship hit the Winton pier in Ardrossan causing 'a dent in the hull' according to a CalMac spokesman.

A total of 227 people were stuck on the passenger ferry for an hour after the incident.

Fran Hadden, who was on board at the time of the collision, said: 'The north west wind was blowing straight in through the breakwater and wind speed was averaging 27 mph but a huge gust slammed the ship into Winton pier, having come straight in without turning.'

'It was a huge jolt and crash, people fell over and plates smashed.'

She added: 'It was disconcerting because we travel that route regularly and nothing

ever untoward happens.

'Thoughts of recent disasters were in my mind! Next time the ship is storm bound people shouldn't complain but be glad they are at least safe although it is infuriating.'

After the collision it took more than 24 hours for the relief vessel MV Isle of Arran to come in to service.

One very angry passenger had travelled on the 4.40pm sailing on Tuesday night simply to return her grandson to Ardrossan.

She had planned to return on the 6pm sailing but spent two nights on the mainland instead.

She told The Banner: 'Around 7.30pm on Wednesday evening we looked at the AIS Liverpool website and saw that the MV Isle of Arran was approaching Ardrossan. 'Later still I was furious to see that the ship was now sailing to Brodick!'

Since then passengers were told that this was a freight

only sailing, but no explanation has yet been given as to why.

The female passenger added: 'It was now over 24 hours since the collision...Why, when people had been inconvenienced in the way they had, would you send over a ship carrying only freight and not take the passengers who, in some cases needed to and in most cases wanted to get home.'

'I understand that freight is important but so are people, the island residents for whom this is a lifeline service and the tourists upon whom the island economy depends.'

Questions have once again arisen about the feasibility of Ardrossan as a port.

Passenger Jane McCartney wrote on the Arran Banner Facebook page: 'It's not the weather that's the problem; Ardrossan is a totally inadequate port and nobody seems to be doing anything about that, this is not good for the island.'

Ian to be on duty at the Olympics in London

Arran will have a representative at the 2012 Olympic Games in July.

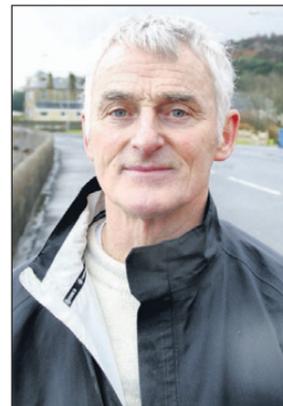
Sixty-five-year-old Ian Burke has just been appointed as one of the referees for the weightlifting competition to be held at the ExCeL Exhibition Centre in London's docklands.

Ian is originally from Whiting Bay and now lives in Bishopton with his wife, but comes back to Arran each Sunday to help look after his 88-year-old mother in Montrose Terrace.

He said: 'I'll have to arrange some respite care for Mother while I'm away at the Olympics. I didn't really expect to get selected.'

'The 50 weightlifting officials will come from all over the world, with only myself and maybe another three from Britain.'

Ian has had a long and successful career as a weightlifter and has featured many times in the Banner. He has won five Scottish championships at light heavyweight from the 1970s to the early 1990s.



Ian Burke in Whiting Bay on Tuesday. 01_b08ian01

Ian said: 'I called it a day at 45 although I still train regularly. I've now got dodgy knees and elbows and my wife tells me it was all self-inflicted!'

Ian refereed at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 1986 and in April 2001 he passed the International Weightlifting Federation examination qualifying him to referee up to and including Olympic Games standard.

'I'm really looking forward to the Games and meeting up with top weightlifters in the East End of London,' added Ian.

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Islanders hear about future health plans

'The frequency of on-call for Arran GPs was bringing the service to crisis point.'

Around 40 people at a public meeting in Brodick Hall on Wednesday 8 February heard about the plans for future health care provision on the island.

Jean Hendry, Health Care Manager, told the audience that they were looking for a safe, sustainable and affordable health care model.

Local GP Greg Hamill highlighted the difficulty of trying to get GPs to come to work on the island. He said: 'The frequency of on-call for Arran GPs was bringing the service to crisis point.'

'Within three to six months NHS24 will be the single point of contact out of hours instead of Arran War Memorial Hospital. If you need advice about healthcare you

will phone NHS24. Before implementation there will be extensive staff training - we have to tell NHS24 how to deal with a person who phones from Arran. In many cases you will still be seen by a GP, but it may be a nurse.'

Dr Crawford McGuffie added: 'In about one third of the cases the caller only needs advice or pharmacy or dental issues.'

In response to a question from Tony Wall, Dr Hamill indicated that when two of the current nine Arran GPs retire they may not be directly replaced. He said: 'It won't be very different, but I suspect it may be slightly less.'

But he pointed out that in an urban area like Kilmarnock a population of 5,500 like Ar-

ran would be serviced by just three or four doctors.

'However, the doctors on Arran do much more than just a GP practice; they service the hospital and provide A & E cover as well,' he added.

Dr Hamill told the meeting that the Shiskine practice would be merging with the other island practices in April and pointed out that an integrated computer system for all patients plus the ability to cope better with staff shortages or sickness would be a benefit for islanders.

Dr David Price, chair of the Arran Public Reference Group formed in November 2010, stressed after the meeting that they were still seeking input from the community as a whole.



Sheila Gilmore led the Bookbug events in Arran Library which were aimed at the island's primary one pupils.

Free books for all Arran's primary ones

Every child in their first year of school on Arran received a free book last week as part of a campaign to encourage a lifelong love of reading.

The Scottish Book Trust has distributed the books through its Bookbug gifting programme, with 60,000 copies of What The Ladybird Heard, by Children's Laureate Julia Donaldson, sent to classrooms throughout Scotland.

The book gifting event took place at Arran Library last Wednesday.

All 34 pupils in primary one on Arran

have been visiting the library and take part in activity sessions and storytelling that culminated in them receiving a copy of the book.

Julia Donaldson was named patron of the campaign last year.

She said: 'Showing children how much fun and excitement books can bring has always been a subject close to my heart.'

'I hope that my patronage will highlight the excellent work being done by the Bookbug programme to encourage parents and children to discover the joy of sharing books.'

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Ornamental mystery in need of solving

A Blackwaterfoot couple is desperately seeking the owner of a beautiful glass ornament after it was discovered in the back of their car last Friday afternoon.

Vic Iutz and his wife made their usual trip to the Brodick Co-op store and drove their car out of their locked garage and parked at the Co-op at about 2pm.

After spending about half an hour in the shop they returned to their car to find a black box in the back of the car with a beautiful glass ornament inside.

'We have absolutely no idea where it has come from,' said Mr Iutz. 'It definitely was not there when we left the house.'

'We can only assume that it was left in our car for someone else and they have mistaken our car for another.'

If anyone knows who this glass ornament may belong to please call 860749.

Rotarians aim to stamp out polio

The Arran Rotary Club would like to thank the residents and visitors who have contributed in excess of £3,500 towards the international Rotary End Polio campaign.

Arran Rotarian David Gray said: 'This is a very generous response to an ongoing campaign.'

Rotary clubs throughout the world have raised over 200 million dollars to fight for the eradication of polio.

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Horror shop rehearsals cease

Arran Music and Drama Club have announced this week that rehearsals for their summer show have stopped, due to a lack of interest.

The club had been rehearsing since late last year for their production of the 'Little Shop of Horrors', which was to be on stage in Brodick between June 4 and 9 this year.

A spokesman for the club said: 'It was decided at a recent meeting of members, to discontinue rehearsals for 'Little Shop of Horrors'.

'For a number of good, personal reasons the club have been unable to get enough people to cast it.

'The Club is not folding, and we will have our AGM on September 20.'

The Gilbert and Sullivan Society was founded on the island in 1976 and in 1996 they changed their name to the Arran Music and Drama Club.

Every year since then they have put on an annual production in Brodick Village Hall.

Arran branch of the Royal British Legion

The next meeting of the Arran branch of the Royal British Legion will take place in the McLaren Hotel, Brodick at 2pm on Thursday 1 March. All are welcome.

The proposed trip around Arran for that day has been cancelled as it was superseded by our trip to Erskine Hospital on Thursday 23 February.

School benefit to raise funds

Whiting Bay Primary School is holding a charity benefit on Thursday 1 March to raise vital funds for the school.

The evening will begin at 7pm in the Eden Lodge Hotel and will feature performances by the Jazz Café, Cordon Bleu and various other artists as well as a buffet and raffle.

Lost and found

A light blue Canon Powershot camera was lost somewhere near Lochranza between last Sunday 12 February and Monday 13 February.

If found please call 07709576764.

Got a story for **The Arran Banner**? Call our reporters on **01770 302142**

Tory candidate launches Arran campaign

David Tate has been selected by the local Conservative Party to stand for the Ardrossan and Arran ward in the May Local Government elections.

Hailing from Ardrossan, David, a family man, launched his campaign on the Arran Ferry as it travelled from Wemyss Bay to Brodick last Saturday, 18 February.

He said that he was pleased to have seen the efficient way the diversion to Wemyss Bay was handled by the ship and had experienced, at first hand, one of the issues of living on an island, dependent on a good and reliable ferry service.

David is an active member

of his community and is familiar with the red tape and problems of running a small business through his family painting and decorating firm. His wife, May, was a primary school teacher in Saltcoats and they both attend Saltcoats Baptist Church.

David attended the Arran Conservative Branch AGM in Brodick Library in the afternoon where he was welcomed by Colin Siddle of Lochranza and other local Conservative Party members. He also had the chance to talk to some future constituents in local shops.

David said: 'I have decided to do something about the locality we live in rather than



David Tate, centre, Conservative Party candidate, with Richard Wilkinson, right, chairman of North Ayrshire and Arran Conservative and Unionist Association, and Arran party chairman Colin Siddle, left. b08con01

stand back and wait for someone else to do it.

'As a new candidate, I am keen to hear from people about their concerns and can be contacted on 01294 463131. I am particularly interested in housing where, through my work, I see the length of time it can take for

council house repairs, the potential for waste of time and money and the quality of work done.

'I also want to hear from local residents about other issues such as roads, employment, tourism and, of course, the ferry.

'I will be back on the island

within two weeks with Alex Johnstone MSP, the Scottish Conservative Party spokesman on Transport.'

David Tate can be contacted by writing to him at Conservative Office, 52 Princes Street, Ardrossan KA22 8DF or email office@cncons.scotzone.com

Ferry hits pier at Oban in strong winds

A ferry with 177 people on board hit the pier in Oban in 70mph winds on Saturday.

The Caledonian MacBrayne vessel, MV Isle of Mull, had its bow damaged when the crash happened at about 14:16.

It is the second time in less than a week that a ferry has been involved in a collision after Arran's ship the MV Caledonian Isles hit Winton Pier in Ardrossan on Tuesday evening.

A CalMac spokesman said: 'The MV Isles of Mull came into contact with the pier in Oban as a result of being struck by a 60 knots (70 mph) gust of wind on her approach.

'Her bow visor and the gangway were both damaged as a result. No-one was injured.

'A detailed assessment of the damage will be carried out and once complete we will be able to establish how long repairs are likely to take.'

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Round the Rurals

Kildonan SWRI

Kildonan WRI met on Wednesday 15 February when they were treated to a cookery demonstration by one of their own members, Angela Irvine.

Angela prepared and cooked a main dish of fillet of pork stuffed with apricots, mixed berries and pine nuts, served with a mushroom and cream sauce.

This was followed by lemon and chocolate souffles.

Angela answered questions as she was preparing the food and when cooked we all enjoyed sampling these appetising dishes. She was warmly thanked by all present.

Business was then dealt with, followed by a welcome cup of tea and eats prepared by Mamie.

The competition for four heart-shaped cookies was won by Cate Templeton, second Rosemary Bickerton.

The next meeting is our AGM on Tuesday 20 March at 7.30 pm.

Competition is best photograph of Kildonan taken by members themselves. There will also be a buffet. All members are reminded to bring along either a sweet or savoury dish.

Corrie and Sannox WRI

Corrie and Sannox WRI held their February meeting at Corrie Golf Club when Jim Cassels gave a fascinating talk on 'Birds Of Arran'.

The talk was extremely interesting and we will be looking at birds with even more interest from now on.

We were told about the more common birds and the rare visiting ones. We then had refreshments (delicious as usual) and the winner of the competition for a bird ornament was Isla Blair; second was Elma Stevenson.

The previous meeting was held at Elma Stevenson's, when she taught everyone how to paint on material. The next meeting will be the AGM on Thursday 8 March.



Arran Junior Hockey Club in Auchrannie Sports hall. b08hok01

Junior hockey on Arran is going strong

Arran Junior Hockey Club is still going strong 10 years after it was started.

The club draws about 20 children to the coaching sessions run by Martin Kemp and is looking for new members aged eight to 14 years old. They hope to participate in a mixed friendly under-14 tournament on Sunday 27 May in Peffer-

mill. Beginners are especially welcome to come along to try it out as sticks can be borrowed.

Move Outdoors

The practices are currently held in the Auchrannie Sports Hall on Tuesdays from 6pm to 7pm, and will move outdoors to the Ormidale all-weather pitch after the Easter holidays.

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Fairtrade fortnight - 'Take a Step, Make a Swap'

It is that time again from 27 Feb to 11 March: the Fairtrade fortnight 2012.

The Fairtrade Foundation theme this year is: 'Take a Step, Make a Swap'.

This means, when you go down the aisle in whatever shop you are in to select your purchases, you are encouraged to see if there is an alter-

native, a Fairtrade product.

As usual, Arran Fairtrade is holding an event and the community is invited to participate.

For the fifth time, Arran Fairtrade will hold an all day event at the main Cop in Brodick on Saturday 3 March, where you can find out more about Fairtrade, in

particular switching to Fairtrade products. There will also be a chance to win a Fairtrade hamper including a box of wine and chocolates, and also a Fairtrade Cake. During the fortnight the classes in the Arran Primary schools and younger classes of Arran High the children will hear about what Fairtrade means for both producers and customers and then will have a chance to write a short poem associated with what they have learned.

These poems that will be on display at the event on 3 March.

Shiskine Scouts will be helping on the day, as part of their Global Challenge badge,

since the Fairtrade Movement is a way of 'Helping Others' and aids World Conservation by focussing on Sustainable Production. A Fairtrade fashion show is planned for the Easter holidays.

This year's Arran Fairtrade AGM and Cheese and Wine Social will be on Thursday 22 March at 7.30pm in the Ormidale pavilion.

Jan McGregor will show pictures of her 'Meet the People' trip to Peru in 2010.



A Fairtrade tea poster made by Arran primary pupils. b08fair01

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Primary children prepare for all-island choir concert

Nearly 140 of Arran's primary school children having been taking part in an epic singing project that will culminate in a concert later next month.

Since January this year Arran school children from primary four to primary seven have been practicing hard with local voice and piano instructor Lorna Buchanan.

Fully funded by North Ayrshire Council through the Creative

Scotland Youth Music Initiative, the children will perform to family and friends in Brodick Church Hall on Thursday 15 March at 7pm.

Lorna Buchanan has been conducting a series of workshops in all seven primary schools teaching pupils a series of songs which when put together form 'Resurrection Rock', a short musical telling the Easter story.

All schools will get together for a rehearsal earlier on in the day, and perform as one large choir in the evening.

The music is mostly fun although thought provoking and moving at times but above all the children love singing the songs and are looking forward to getting together to perform together. Further details will be circulated through schools nearer the time.



Voice and piano instructor Lorna Buchanan has led the singing project.



Pupils at Shiskine Primary School rehearsing last Friday.

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THE ARRAN BANNER

Too cool to be Tory?

Politics is a murky business – shout to the rooftops about your beliefs and be branded an extremist; stay silent and secretive and you are called indifferent!

As Scotland slowly moves towards the 2014 independence referendum it's suddenly become cool to be in to politics.

On Facebook and Twitter young people are mouthing off about the tyranny of English rule and quoting the words of Mel Gibson in *Braveheart* – which by the way offers a totally unrealistic depiction of Scotland's history with its neighbour.

(Don't even get me started on the Robert the Bruce storyline.)

No wonder Alex Salmond is desperate to get 16 and 17 year olds to vote!

Very few people have openly criticised the Scottish Government but those who do hold the opposite view are labelled rightwing and old-fashioned.

The local branch of the Conservative and Unionist Party met on Arran last Saturday to introduce their candidate for the upcoming council elections in May.

There were about 12 people there and no one under the age of 60.

There was perhaps a time in the mid-1990s when few people in Britain would admit to being a Conservative with a big 'C'.

Are young people too cool to be Tory?

Is there actually any mainstream politician in the UK today who embraces little 'c' conservatism?

I don't mean what is properly called economic liberalism – support for free markets and a small government.

I mean the older political position that is essentially opposition to social and political change, accompanied sometimes by the celebration of a past golden age that must be preserved or regained.

Tory Prime Minister David Cameron has actively promoted a referendum for Scots on independence.

In fact he wanted to hold it this year but it was the SNP who demanded we wait two years.

The Conservative Government at Westminster has clearly stated that the will of the people is final – if we vote yes than we can separate from England.

Is it perhaps that conservatism is seen as insufficiently optimistic in a society so accustomed to change?

Whatever happens in 2014 perhaps the future has to become a lot scarier before we, as a nation, can take conservatism and its values seriously again.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

'God is a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.' (Nehemiah 9:17)

press policy

WE AT *The Arran Banner* do our utmost to make sure that all our reports are fair, accurate and balanced, but we accept that, on occasion, mistakes can occur in the hectic process of producing a local newspaper.

It is the policy of The Oban Times Group to correct any errors in print. If you find an error of fact on our pages please write to The Editor, *The Arran Banner*, Brodick, Arran giving your day-time telephone number where possible.

This statement of policy will appear on this page every week along with any corrections or clarifications.

The Arran Banner adheres to the Press Complaints' Commission's Code of Conduct. The views expressed in *The Arran Banner* are not necessarily those of the The Oban Times Group.

your letters

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 200 words in length for publication on this page. The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on e-mails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not be printed. Please write or fax to: Letters Page, The Arran Banner, Brodick, Isle of Arran. E-mail editor@arranbanner.co.uk

Letters to the Editor



Incensed at tree planting

Sir,
The recent feasibility study into the development of a multi-user path between Brodick and Corrie determined that the only practicable option maintaining a level route suitable for users of all ages and abilities would run through National Trust for Scotland land at Brodick Castle adjacent to the A841.

The NTS has been involved for many years in discussions relating to the proposed path.

As the parents of one of the cyclists killed along the Brodick to Corrie Road, we were incensed to see young trees had been planted in the area of NTS land at Cladach through which the preferred route would pass, and only metres from where our son was fatally injured.

This previously unmanaged area of land was recently cleared of all vegetation due to the presence of *Phytophthora Ramorum*.

We wrote to Sir Kenneth Calman, Chairman of the NTS, asking him to clarify the position of the Trust in relation to the proposed multi-user path running through the land in question.

It was clear from Sir Kenneth's response that the NTS has no intention of allowing this to happen.

The dangers on the Brodick to Corrie Road will be further increased with the introduction of the Road Equivalent Tariff which is predicted to swell journey numbers by at least 31 percent.

As Brodick Castle will benefit from the rise in visitor numbers, it is inconceivable that the NTS would consider a short strip of land to be more important than the safety of vulnerable road users.

Yours,
**Alan and Joyce Beasley
Alpine
Corrie**

Thanks to thoughtful drivers

Sir,
Now that we are coming in to the lighter mornings can I, as an early morning dog-walker,

take this opportunity to thank those thoughtful drivers who have taken the trouble to dip their lights when driving towards walkers?

I would also like to say a big thank you to those drivers who have slowed down, or even avoided, the huge puddles on the road as they pass pedestrians.

It has been uncomfortable enough walking week after week in wet waterproofs but it is a hundred times worse when some passing car, van or lorry throws the water up on your face and down your neck.

The thoughtfulness of some drivers has been much appreciated by more than myself, I am sure.

Yours,
**Helen Knight
Glen Road
Brodick**

Mismanagement and lack of concern

Below is a letter sent to Gary Robertson, general manager of Caledonian MacBrayne.

Dear Mr Robertson,
I have just returned home after a journey in which I spent 43 hours taking my five-year-old grandson from my home in Lamlash to his dad who was waiting for him on the pier at Ardrossan and returning home again.

I experienced the worst mismanagement and lack of concern for customers that I have ever seen.

We left Brodick on the 16.40 sailing on Tuesday 14 February.

Since my husband did not intend to disembark and I was only going to hand my grandson, Steven over to my son, we travelled without essential medication or a mobile phone.

Fortunately I never travel without a handbag so did have money and a debit card.

After one night on the mainland we were forced once again on Wednesday night to return to my son's house. At around 7.30pm on Wednesday evening we looked at the AIS Liverpool website and saw that the MV Isle of Arran was approaching Ardrossan.

Later still I was furious to

see that the ship was now sailing to Brodick!

I have now been told that it was a freight-only sailing and was only crewed up for freight, but why?

It was now over 24 hours since the collision. I would like to know whether any passengers were carried on the crossing and, if so, how many passengers you are licensed to carry on a freight only sailing.

Why, when people had been inconvenienced in the way they had, did you decide to send over a ship carrying only freight and not take the passengers who, in some cases needed to and in all cases wanted to get home? Especially as a lot of those passengers either had no cars (like us) or would have been happy to travel without their cars, simply to allow them to get home sooner so there would have been no issue with all of the space on the car deck being taken up with freight.

I understand that freight is important but so are people, the island residents for whom this is a lifeline service and the tourists upon whom the island's economy depends.

Until now I have always supported CalMac and understand perfectly that sailings have to be cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.

The staff and crew at Brodick are excellent as are those members of the crew whom you meet on the ferry.

The male crew at the desk in Ardrossan were good but the women were abrupt to the point of rudeness.

For me one of the most frustrating parts of the whole thing was the lack of information given and the total disregard and lack of care of passengers.

Your own staff, both on and off the ferry, were giving out false information because they didn't know what was happening.

There might have been an excuse for confusion on Tuesday evening but none at all for Wednesday's chaos.

Yours,
**Jean Barclay
Craigard
Lamlash**

Candidate welcomed

Sir,
At the AGM of the Arran branch of the Conservative and Unionist Association on Saturday 18 February we were delighted to welcome Richard Wilkinson, North Ayrshire Association chairman, and David Tate, Conservative candidate for the local Council election on 3 May.

Discussions ranged from organisation of our next Conservative social gathering to the subject of RET and how it would affect island businesses. A public meeting on this important topic will take place on Friday 2 March, details of which will be published in the Banner.

The committee of the Arran branch was re-elected, and the secretary, Margaret Godfrey, can be contacted on 860234.

Yours,
**Margaret Godfrey
Creg ny Baa
Shiskine**

Man of many trades

Sir,
With regard to my 'CV' in last week's Banner I was wondering if Mr Driver was trying to lose me votes by saying that I used to be a newspaper editor – have you any idea how unpopular these people are Howard?

To avoid any revolt by Arran High School staff, the description of me as a school-teacher should be clarified.

The headmaster merely asked me to help out with a bit of supply teaching when the school was extremely short of staff due to injury, illness and pregnancy (none of which could be blamed on the headmaster).

Yours,
**Marc A Head
Prospective Councillor
Whiting Bay**

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First Responders in running for Community Group award

Last week we featured Margo Wheeler's nomination as Citizen of the Year in the 2012 Provost's Civic Pride Awards. And this week it is the turn of the 15 volunteers of North Arran First Responders.

In each of the five Awards categories there are three short-listed nominations. Out of these 15 nominations, two of them are for Arran folk.

In the Community Group category, North Arran First Responders are especially worthy of their nomination and short-listing.

Provost Pat McPhee said: 'North Arran First Responders is a voluntary group which gives medical assistance to people who have taken ill or collapsed.

'Their main aim is to save lives and assist the ambulance service. The group formed as it could take an ambulance between 30 and 40 minutes to reach the north of the island

from its base in Lamash.

'An early response can often mean the difference between life and death.'

The group was formed on 9 June 2003 and since then they have been continuously available, 24 hours a day. Fiona Laing of Pirmill co-ordinates just who is on call and there are always two people available at a moments notice, each with identical medical kit.

First Raised

The idea for this group was first raised by former Community Councillor Terry Crawley at a council meeting in March 1995.

Terry told the Banner: 'What did it for me was when a friend in the village had a heart attack and died just minutes before the ambulance arrived.

'There is no saying that if medical help had been on

hand he would have survived, but we are so far from the ambulance station that it perhaps needed local self-help.

'There was no criticism of the medical services, but this was a gap that needed filling.'

After eight years, a lot of planning, and a lot of training North Arran First Responders were up and running. Among the founder members were Norman and Andrea Bond, Susan Logan and Terry.

Last week Fiona Laing assembled 10 of the current volunteers for a photo at Lochranza Field Centre.

She said: 'I co-ordinate just who is on call and it relies on everybody buying into it. There are always two of us available night and day and we are on our way to 100,000 hours continuous service.

'There are other similar groups in Scotland, but very few of them manage 24 hour duty. Our patch is from Whitefarland to Balarie, but over the years we have responded to medical emergencies in every Arran village. We all go through a process of training with the Scottish Ambulance Service and have training days every month.'

Other First Responders missing from the photo are John and Julie Graham, John Adam, Carol Anderson and Mark Harwood.

The group has nominated Ray Evans and Fiona Laing to attend the awards ceremony in Seamill Hydro on Friday 23 March.

Make sure to cut out the voting form on this page and send it to Cunninghame House by Friday 16 March or vote online on the NAC website.



North Arran First Responders; from left, back, Chris Traill, Richard Wright, Ray Evans, Liz Evans. Centre, Nigel Wells, front, Gemma Blythe and young Rosie, Kathryn Mawson, Fiona Laing, Anita Ford and Stuart Blake. 02_b08civ01

the provost's civic pride awards 2012

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PRYDE - The Playz

North Arran First Responders

Ardrossan Youth Association

North Ayrshire Citizen of the Year
sponsored by Marley Contract Services

Margo Wheeler

Jean Gilbert

Sally Rodgers

North Ayrshire Young Citizen of the Year
sponsored by Cunninghame Housing Association

Amylee Brown

Nairn McDonald

Aisling Finnigan

Voting Slip
Please vote for your favourite in each category by ticking the box:

North Ayrshire Arts & Culture Award
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West Kilbride Community Initiative

Largs Players

James Miller

North Ayrshire Sports Award
sponsored by KA Leisure

North Ayrshire Table Tennis Club

Aaron Horn

Irvine Bay Gymnastics Club

All votes must be received by 12 noon on 16th March 2012

Please send this slip to:
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The idea behind the 'Green Gym' is to allow people to take part in exercise in an outdoor setting to improve your fitness.

Come and join Arran's first Green Gym

The National Trust for Scotland is working in partnership with British Trust for Conservation Volunteers Scotland to bring islanders the first 'Green Gym' and is inviting you to come along and join in the fun.

The launch and first session will be on March 6 at 10am in the NTS Ranger Centre, Brodick Country Park.

So, what is a Green Gym?

It's about healthy people and healthy places; it's about taking part in exercise in an outdoor setting so improving your fitness, learning new skills, reducing stress, and meeting new people whilst working together to improve your local green spaces.

Who can come along? Anyone and everyone who wants to do a bit of exercise without plodding on a treadmill!

Everyone is welcome to the Arran Green Gym from all over the island, of all ages and from all walks of life, and you don't need to have any previous experience.

Anyone over 16 years, of any fitness can take part; it's free and it's fun.

The Arran Green Gym will meet weekly around Brodick Country Park, every Tuesday for three hours, from 10am to 1pm.

There is a programme of activities that will give you an idea of what you'd be doing during that session.

A session will typically involve a gentle warm-up, a period of work (there is a range of activities from gentle tasks to more challenging ones), a tea-break, more work, then a gentle warm-down.

What should you bring? Yourself! Wear old outdoor clothes that you don't mind getting a bit mucky, and suitable outdoor shoes like Wellingtons, sturdy boots or strong shoes.

The National Trust will provide the work gloves, tools, materials, and tea break refreshments.

BTCV is the UK's largest practical conservation charity, enabling people from the local community to take practical action to improve their local environment.

The NTS has the conservation and management of its properties and Scotland's natural and cultural heritage as its core activity.

Volunteering opportunities within the NTS give people the chance to learn new skills, to work in beautiful gardens and stunning countryside, to meet new people, get some fresh air and exercise, and become actively involved in conservation.

If you would like more information and to see the programme of activities, please contact Jo Totty at the NTS Ranger Centre, Brodick Country Park 302462, mornings only or jtotty@nts.org.uk

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We have teamed up with Auchrannie Resort to give readers the chance to win a two night stay, bed and breakfast, for a family of four at the Spa Resort.

To enter, simply collect token one we are printing this week and token two next week.

Full entry details in next week's Arran Banner, Friday, March 2.

Terms and conditions: The prize package consists of Bed & Breakfast in the Spa Resort for a family of four (up to two adults and two children). The prize package can be used anytime during 2012, excluding school and public holidays. The prize is as stated. No cash alternative. The Editor's decision is final. Photocopied entries will not be accepted. The winner may be asked to take part in publicity and may appear in a Wyvex Media publication and website. This competition is not open to Wyvex Media and associated company employees and their families. This competition is open to readers of other Wyvex Media publications. Full terms and conditions online at www.obantimes.co.uk.

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THE ARRAN
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Booking lines open for 2012 Mountain Festival

Booking lines are now open for the sixth Arran Mountain Festival which will take place this year in May.

And organisers are advising people to book early to avoid disappointment as spaces are filling fast!

There are a number of exciting new routes on the programme for 2012, which include 'An Binnein, North Goatfell and Goatfell' and the 'Glen Sannox Horseshoe Epic'. There will also be new themed walks such as 'Geology Through the Glens' and 'Gaelic in the Mountains'.

Popular routes of previous years, which include the scramble over the Witch's Step and the Castles (Ceum na Caillich and Caisteal Abhail), the traverse of the A'Chir ridge and the Three Beinn's Horseshoe, will remain in the programme.

If you have a private ambi-

tion to tackle some of these beautiful, local mountain routes but feel daunted about doing so on your own, the Mountain Festival is a great opportunity to fulfil your dream.

This year's Arran Mountain Festival will take place over four days from May 18 to 21 and is open to all, from novice hillwalkers to experienced mountain climbers.

Programme

The Festival programme is organised and delivered by a group of volunteers from the island.

All walks leaders are experienced and qualified so you will be in safe hands.

To relax after a day spent out on the hills, the events programme includes a social gathering on May 18, a series of talks on outdoor adventure on May 19 and a pub quiz on May 20.

For full details of these evening events, to see the walks programme (and what last year's participants had to say), or to make a booking, go to www.arranmountain-festival.co.uk

You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

For any further information and sponsorship opportunities please contact Jo on 303753.

The Arran Mountain Festival continues to aspire to its original aim of bringing business to the island economy in quieter times for tourism.

It also aims to share the special and relatively unknown qualities of Arran's soaring and dramatic mountain landscapes.

This year's Festival has been generously supported by North Ayrshire Council, and by many small businesses and individuals from across the island.



This year's Arran Mountain Festival will take place over four days from May 18 to 21 and is open to all, from novice hillwalkers to experienced mountain climbers.

World Day of Prayer 2012

The World Day of Prayer this year is on Friday 2 March.

At this time Christian people throughout the world will be joining in a service with the title 'Let Justice Prevail' which has been written by Christian women of Malaysia.

Continues

Each year the first service of the day is held on the island of Tuvalu in the Pacific Ocean, close to the international dateline and continues for a period of 36 hours until that same date concludes in

Alaska just to the other side of the dateline.

In Scotland, many Churches and other Christian Groups will be hosting the service. Here on the island the service is organised by Arran Churches Together and, apart from some small adaptations to suit local circumstances, the services held around Scotland in rural, town or city churches as well as cathedrals, will be just the same as the one held earlier on Tuvalu.

Migration of people from throughout Asia has made

Malaysia a land of many ethnic groups who intermingle and integrate into local communities.

Refugees

It is also home to many temporary refugees fleeing war torn or troubled countries. Accordingly, the theme of the service this year is appropriately 'Let Justice Prevail'.

This year's service, to which all are cordially invited, is being held at 2.30pm on Friday 2 March, in St Margaret's Episcopal Church, Whiting Bay.



SEA VIEW LIFE COACHING

Let's be honest, sometimes we all need a bit of guidance when it comes to which direction to take in life. Friends are good listeners and family can give advice however the guidance of a life coach can be invaluable in helping you to overcome what's holding you back or to push you to achieve your goals.

A life coach doesn't give advice, just allows people to find their own answers. Here on Arran having space around us invokes a calming impact on our way of thinking and looking at things, creating space in our head for clearer thinking.

Coaching brings to the mind's surface things you might not have been able to see by yourself and gives clarity to those of us looking for answers.

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<p>Friday 24th February Darts competition & raffle 8.30-11pm Public bar, all welcome</p> <p>Friday 24th February 6 Nations Rugby Live on the BIG screen Ireland V Italy 1.30pm England V Wales 3pm</p>	<p>Saturday 25th February 6 Nations Rugby Live on the BIG screen Ireland V Italy 1.30pm England V Wales 3pm</p>
<p>Sunday 26th February 6 Nations Rugby Live on the BIG screen Scotland V France 3pm</p>	<p>Tuesday 13th March Darts competition & raffle 8.30-11pm in the public bar, all welcome</p>
<p>Saturday 17th March Girl's night out - Calling all the ladies 2 course dinner plus "Gipsy teapot" £19.50 Book a table: 860 444 Food, fun & frolics!</p>	<p>Sunday 18th March Mothers Day Lunch 2 courses £15 3 courses £18 Low calorie option available! Book a table: 860 444</p>

Oscars party postponed from Saturday 25th February - details to follow

Love is in the air for Kinloch Hotel

Love was certainly in the air last weekend for the Kinloch Hotel in Blackwaterfoot. Over 8,000 brides to be and their wedding entourage crowded into the Glasgow SECC for the Scottish wedding show, all eager to visit the 300 plus stands catering to their every whim.

Two days and a small mountain of tablet later and the Kinloch is to date, 18 weddings, 11 girlie breaks and two gentlemen's 'golf' weekends to the fore. Robbie Crawford, owner and manager of the hotel said that the event had exceeded his expectations in terms of popularity and offer uptake and was delighted with the response the hotel and the Island had received.

Wedding Package

The Kinloch Hotel were there marketing their all inclusive wedding package, which covered all aspects of the big day from reception hire, food and wine, to flow-

ers, transportation and even a traditional Scottish piper.

The aim of the weekend was to dispel peoples' illusions that Arran would be too remote a venue option to consider and to focus on the islands' accessibility, affordability and above all its beauty.

The Kinloch proved to be a very popular stop off point at the exhibition with a quarter of those visiting the show entering to win a two-night girlie weekend break at the hotel's sea view apartments.

The fairer sex jostled over the opportunity for a two-night getaway for up to six guests, with complimentary ferry tickets, mini bus transfers, glass of champagne on arrival plus bed and breakfast accommodation and 'tipsy tea party.'

Goodie bags containing the hotels own home made tablet and other island made gifts were greatly sought after.



Some of the Arran girls' team. b08spt01

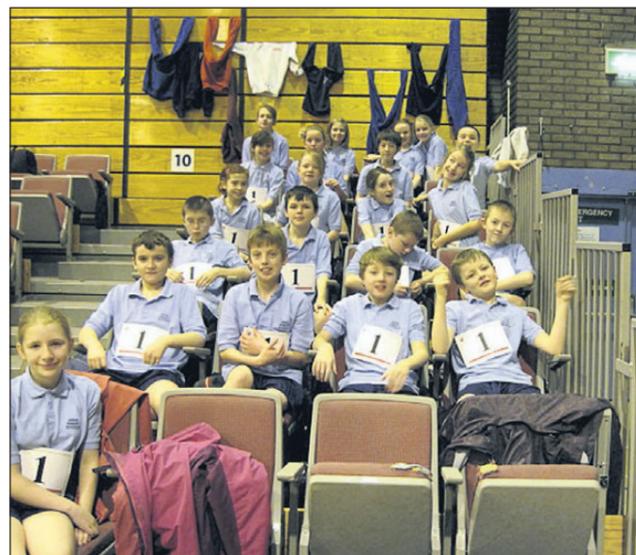
Magnificent Magnum sports for island youngsters

Twenty-one children, 10 boys and 11 girls, from all seven Arran primary schools made the trip to the Magnum centre on Thursday 9 February to take part in the North Ayrshire primary schools indoor athletic finals.

The children had qualified for this final via heats that were carried out earlier in the year.

In attendance were Cameron Logan, Matthew MacDonald, Oisean Gold, Ben Innes, Lyle Robertson, Cailean Robertson, Jaden Lemay-Simpson, Harvey Anderson, Innis Thorborn and David Copperwheat for the boys.

For the girls there was Megan McNicol, Abbie McK-



Arran primary pupils waiting for their turn at the Magnum sports. b08spt02

elvie, Kristie Kerr, Courtney Drummond, Lucy Crawford, Ellie Ewing, Joley Allison, Louise Shankland, Alison Proven, Emily Armitage and Lizanne Dixon.

Teams competed in a number of track and field events. Despite almost no formal coaching the children of Arran put on a magnificent performance.

The team finished fifth overall against teams who were clearly coached to a very high standard.

All the children thoroughly enjoyed the day and behaved in an exemplary fashion, testimony to the hard work offered by the teachers and volunteers who worked with the children through the heats and into the finals.

Marie Curie seeks nurses for Arran

Marie Curie Nursing Service is looking to recruit both bank registered nurses and health care assistants on Arran in order to provide nursing care and support for patients and families in their own homes.

Margaret Lambie, clinical lead nurse for Marie Curie Nursing Service in the South West of Scotland said: 'We are striving to help more people than ever before to be cared for in the comfort of their own home.'

'Sadly there is a high instance of cancer on the Isle of Arran and we want our nurses to work alongside other cancer support services on the island to help people when they need it most.'

If you are interested in finding out more please phone Margaret on 0141 531 1341 or email margaret.lambie@mariecurie.org.uk

Bridge results

Brodick Bridge Club

The results of the tournament on Thursday 16 February were as follows: N/S

1 Liz Paul and Helen Boyd +3090, 2 John and Jan Beattie +1770, 3 Jean Barclay and Morag Gardner +1140.

E/W 1 Trisha Martin and Douglas Hamilton +530, 2 Brenda Livingstone and Jean Murchie +500, 3 Linda Trickett and Pat Adamson +30.

Lamlash Bridge Club

The results from the tournament on Monday 20 February were as follows: N/S 1 J McLure and A McKelvie +2590, 2 H Boyd and J Murchie +510, 3 T martin and D Cant +470.

E/W 1 J and M Dick +1890, 2 V and M Iutz +970, 3 R and P Thompson +850.



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Last week Archie was sitting on the roadside in Corrie. First correct out of many answers were Louise of Macclesfield, Alison of Gleneagles, Lorna of Ayrshire, Morag from Shiskine and Meriel from Yorkshire. This week he sitting in a puddle at the entrance to a field, but do you know where that field is?



If you think you know then post your answer on the website www.arranbanner.co.uk
Or email us at: editor@arranbanner.co.uk

Busy year for Arran Riding Club

The diary is filling up and hopefully the weather will be on our side

Last year was a busy year for the Arran Riding Club and 2012 looks to be even more action packed.

As February comes to a close and the nights get lighter, we begin to dust off our riding gear and cajole our horses out of their winter breaks in preparation for the year ahead.

The club's diary looks to be filling up fast with our fingers crossed that the weather is on our side.

Our first club activity will see us head to Ingliston Country Club in Bishopton on Saturday 10 March to watch the professional show-jumpers in action along with a spot of lunch and stable tour.

For more information please visit our website or contact Janis on 860 200.

With this visit likely to re-spark our enthusiasm for the sport, there is little time before our first training weekend will be upon us.

Numerous training sessions have been planned with the hope that we can provide a wide array of expertise for our members to learn from.

The visiting instructors whom we have confirmed dates with so far include: Aileen Craig, Yvonne McFarlane, Doreen Mathie and Fiona Flynn.

Our first training day is with Aileen Craig on March 24 - keep an eye on the website

for training dates and sign-up contacts.

All that hard work and training will be put to the test during our annual shows.

The Junior Show (June 17) is open to all our members aged 14 or below where they will be challenged with a handy pony and jumping course and then can let off some steam in the gymkhana games.

To encourage young riders to participate we offer a junior show membership at £5 for the day per pony and rider combination.

Our showing show (July 8) and Glenkiln event (August 12) will see horses and riders put through their formal paces with the jumping derby (July 22) providing fast and furious show-jumping entertainment (including the old favourite - 'chase-me-charlie').

Published

Once confirmed, the show particulars will all be published on our website along with the results.

The junior committee members of 2011 successfully organised a fun gymkhana day and raised £100 for Leukaemia Research.

It is their plan to hold another of these fundraiser events this summer where you can expect some exceptional fancy dress costumes accompanied by the entertainment value from seeing them whizz back and forth during the games.

After an action packed season of riding activities, the Club marks the end of its year with the Dinner Dance.

This event has grown in popularity over its first couple of years where it has now secured a firm place in the diary.

We are aiming to hold our Dinner Dance at the beginning of November where the club prizes will be awarded.

If you feel like getting involved in the club and its forthcoming activities then why not join now by contacting Sue on 850 201.

Memberships are now due for renewal with prices remaining the same as last year: £20 - per individual or £40



The 2011 Jumping Derby Winners from left to right, Dawn MacAlister and Molly (Reserve Senior Champion), Eilidh Kerr and Altimeo (Senior Champion), Eilidh McNeil and Fionn Star (Junior Champion) and Hannah Bone and Lily (Reserve Junior Champion).

- per family.

Our membership also provides you with British Riding Club membership.

This includes a free quarterly magazine and offers all its members a 10 per cent discount at www.naf-equine.eu/uk/ on NAF products.

To find out more about Arran Riding Club and its activities or to get in touch, please visit the website at: www.arranridingclub.com.

In the meantime, take care whilst out riding, especially on the roads.

And remember... Be safe, Be seen - Wear hi-vis.



Showing champion Jayne Faulkner and Erray Rose and Reserve Showing Champion Lauren MacAlister and Joseppi at the 2011 Showing Show.



Taylor Smith and 'Fine and Dandy' jumping during the Aileen Craig weekend in March last year.





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Red-breasted Merganser

Arran is a site of national importance for this handsome sawbill diving duck.

The name 'sawbill' refers to the fact that the bill has tooth like lamellae along the cutting edges of its bill, enabling better grip of its main prey, fish.

The Red-breasted Merganser is a widespread and a relatively common breeding species, found all year round on the coast.

In winter the resident birds are joined by immigrants, including birds from Iceland and Fennoscandia.

Mergansers in all plumages are characterised by a somewhat smart casual look.

The shaggy crest and up-swept bill add to their eccentrically untidy appearance. Female and immature birds are known as red-heads.

The Red-breasted Mergansers' courtship display on a calm sea is a joy to behold, particularly when a group of males vie with each other showing off their charms of movement, voice and plumage before a single female.

Bird Notes by Jim Cassels

The male begins by stretching his long neck so that the white ring is broadened and the metallic green head with its crest and narrow red bill become very prominent.

At once the bill is opened and the male bobs in such a way that the breast and lower part of the neck are immersed while the tail and posterior part of the bird swing up. All the motions are quickly and stiffly executed and suggest a formal but ungraceful courtesy. The dominant male will usually try to position himself directly in front of the female but there is much jockeying for position.

This display starts in the late winter and the proportion of birds paired increases to a peak in late April when they enter their breeding grounds.

Mergansers breed late so that their young can exploit the seasonal abundance of tiny shoaling fish available in mid-to late summer.

Merganser males start to

body moult in May and leave for the moulting areas as the females start incubation.

The seven to twelve ducklings hatch in June and July and leave the nest scrape within a couple of days.

Females look after the young and amalgamation of broods is not unusual. There is a high loss among the young. Large gulls are major predators.

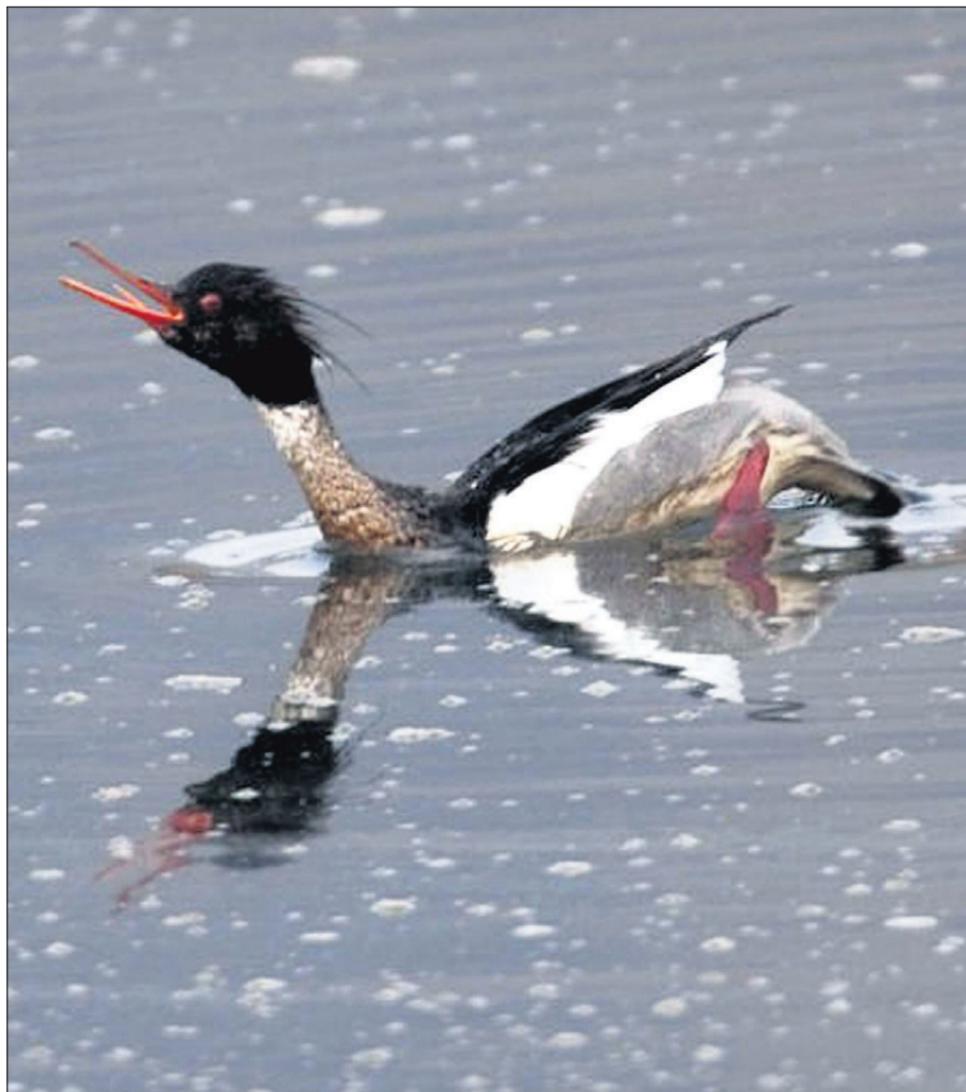
Surviving ducklings fledge in August.

Adult mergansers moult their flight feathers in August and September, congregating in open areas of shallow waters like Machrie Bay where there is an abundance of small shoaling fish and shrimp and some security during their four weeks of flightlessness.

After the moult the birds are in breeding plumage again ready for the next round of displays.

Enjoy your birding.

Please send any bird notes with 'what, when, where' to me at Kilpatrick Kennels,



Arran is a site of national importance for this handsome sawbill diving duck.

Photo by Bob McMillan

Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot, KA27 8EY, or e mail me at james.cassels@virgin.net . I

look forward to hearing from you. For more information and visit this website www.arranbanner.co.uk on birding on Arran purchase

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Jeremy Godwin's 20 years of letter writing explained

For more than 20 years, the name Jeremy Godwin has appeared periodically on the letters page of The Arran Banner.

His address on Drovers Lane in Penrith is known to hundreds of people throughout Britain because he regularly corresponds with local newspapers about their local issues.

His name can be seen as far north as The Shetland Times and many people are fascinated by who he actually is.

Who is this man that has an opinion on every local issue and an answer for every local problem?

Twenty years ago in The Banner, some concerns were raised that this 'Jeremy Godwin' was not a real person but simply the pen name of someone living on Arran.

So in 1992 this feature about the man himself was published.

As Jeremy still continues to write to The Banner – a letter appeared just two weeks ago – we felt the time had come to refresh the island's memory as to who he actually is.

What follows is the interview with Jeremy Godwin from 20 years ago.

Jeremy is real enough.

The living room in his Penrith home is stacked with papers and magazines, shelved with books and personal notebooks rising high and three deep.

There is no television, although he does listen to the radio a lot.

'I write everything down that interests me,' he said. 'It may be useful one day.'

His newspaper letter writing began partly through holiday visits.

'Once I've visited a place I like to keep in touch,' he said. 'Otherwise you are like a beetle skimming the surface of the water.'

'The easiest way to keep in touch is to take the local newspaper.'

About 14 of these are taken every week, six by post, as well as a number of periodicals and magazines.

'When one visits a place and gets to know the area and its people, one may have a few ideas to put forward, or sup-

port or oppose a local development,' he explained.

Sometimes his letters bring an irate response.

'Those are the interesting ones but unfortunately they are usually anonymous,' he said.

'Occasionally I float an idea – I toss a pebble in to see what rises.'

'I can stick my neck out where local people may be reluctant to do so.'

Jeremy was born in Derby but has lived in Cumbria for many years and claims Cumbrian ancestry in his family background.

He got his love of writing from his grandfather who was editor of his own paper.

'As he couldn't get people to work for him he wrote it himself, using a number of pen names,' Jeremy explained.

Jeremy does not write professionally, although his work as an archivist in the County Records Office gives him access to a mass of fascinating material.

He had translated into English the Latin account of a diary kept by a young Orkney

lad hundreds of years ago.

He also makes regular contributions to the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, as well as magazines and periodicals.

He is currently involved in putting in readable order and indexing the work of Rev Thomas Machell, a former rector of Kirby Thore.

Jeremy talks with great fluency and humour.

Tales of long ago and far away rapidly unfold.

Names, facts and figures intermingle with human dramas of long ago.

At the moment Jeremy is unable to predict from one day to the next state of his health.

A bout of flu has left him with the little known disease ME, which affects the nervous system and causes a number of disabling symptoms, but he is still involved in many church activities in Penrith.

And of course he has 14 local newspapers to read and write to each week, including the Banner.

Whats on

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Saturday 25 February

Over 21s Disco
Karate
Family Games
Fun in the Pool
Arran Dancers (4yrs & up)
Teddy Bears Picnic
Kids Family Quiz
Rugby - Arran v Lanark
One Act Drama Festival

Ormidale Hotel, 10pm
Auchrannie Games Hall, 11.30am - 12.30pm
Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm - 4pm
Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm - 5pm
Arran high School, 10am
Playbarn Auchrannie, 2pm - 3pm
Playbarn, Auchrannie, 5pm - 6pm
Ormidale Park, 2pm
High School, 7.30pm

Sunday 26 February

Alcoholics Anonymous
Family Games
Fun in the Pool
Teddy Bears Picnic
Live Music
Ladies Open Pool

Church Hall, Brodict 4.30pm
Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm - 4pm
Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm - 5pm
Playbarn, Auchrannie, 2pm - 3pm
Ormidale, 8.30pm
Bar Eden, 3pm

Monday 27 February

Over 50s Badminton
Badminton
Weight Wise
Ladies Netball
Citizens Advice
Breathe Walk Class
Table Tennis
Hatha Yoga
Activity Time
Come Dance With Me - LeRoc Modern Jive
Scottish Country Dancing for Beginners and Improvers
Yoga
Arran Junior Football
Circuit Training
Quiz
Lamlash Bridge Club
Citizens Advice

Lochranza Village Hall 2pm-4pm
Lochranza Hall 6.30pm
Hospital Bungalow 5pm-5.30pm
High School Sports Hall - seniors 7.30pm-9pm
Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict 10am-2pm
Kinneil, Lamlash 5.15pm
Corrie Hall, 6.30pm
Arran high School, 6pm - 7.30pm
Whiting Bay Hall 7.30pm
Corrie Hall, 2pm-4pm
High School, 6pm
Ormidale Park, 6pm-7pm
Auchrannie Spa Gym, 6pm-7pm
The Shurig at Bar Eden, 8.30pm
Lamlash Golf Clubhouse, 7pm
Ormidale Pavilion, 9.30am - 1.30pm

Tuesday 28 February

Lochranza Swimming Club
Army Cadets
Pop Quiz
Alcoholics Anonymous
Youth Club
Rotary Club
Junior Hockey Club - 8yrs up
Melody Movement, Ballet Class-2 ½ yrs up
Dudes & Divas Funky Dance Class- 2 ½ yrs up
Youth Club
Scottish Country Dancing
Winter Bowls
Zumba Fitness Class

Kinloch 11am- 12pm
Auchrannie Road, 7.30pm-9.30pm
Ormidale Hotel, 9pm
Brodict Church Hall - 2pm
Kildonan Hall - 7pm
Glencloy Suite, Auchrannie 7.15pm
Auchrannie Sports Hall, 6pm-7pm
Auchrannie Dance Studio, 2pm
Auchrannie Dance Studio 2pm
Brodict Hall, 6.30pm - 8pm
Brodict Church Hall, 7.30pm
Auchrannie Sports Hall, 7pm-9pm
Arran High School, 6.30-7.30pm

Rowan Singers
Weight Watchers
Community Council

Lamlash Church Hall, 7.30pm
St Molios, Church Hall, 7pm
Ormidale Pavilion, 7.30pm

Wednesday 29 February

Hockey
Tae Kwondo
Alcoholics Anonymous
Arran Brass Rehearsal
Senior Badminton
Museum Archives & Genealogy Service
Yogalates
Aquafizz
Music Mayhem Class Parents and little ones
Kids Games
Circuit Training
Dog Training
AYF Film Making Club

Auchrannie Hall, 7pm-8pm games hall
KA Leisure Kids, 6.30pm-7.30pm Adults 7.30pm- 8.30pm
Lamlash church Hall 7.30pm - 9.30pm
Whiting Bay Hall 7.15pm
High School Games Hall 8pm - 9pm
10.30am -12.30pm & 1.30pm - 3.30pm
9.30am - 10.30am Auchrannie studio
Auchrannie Hotel Pool, 9.45am - 10.30am
Auchrannie dance studio 10.45am
The Playbarn Auchrannie 5pm - 6pm
Auchrannie Spa Games Hall 6pm - 7pm
Whiting Bay Hall 1pm
Brodict Church Hall, 4.30pm-6.30pm

Thursday 1 March

General Knowledge Quiz
Lochranza Craft Club
Youth Club
Coffee Morning
General Knowledge Quiz
Brodict Embroidery Club
Brodict Bridge Club
Winter Bowls
Zumba Fitness Club
The Wee Blether
Cabaret

Ormidale Hotel 9pm
Hall 2pm
Youth cabin, Lamlash 7-9pm
St Molios Church 10.30am - 12pm
Kinloch Bar 9pm
Brodict Library 7.30pm - 9.30pm
Brodict Golf Club 7pm
Auchrannie Sports Hall 7pm - 9pm
Arran High School, 6.30-7.30pm
Whiting Bay Hall, 12 - 1.30pm
Eden Lodge, 7pm

Friday 2 March

Arran Ceilidh group
Senior Badminton
Quiz
Aqua Fizz
Yogalates
Arran Youth Foundations
Kids Party Games
Weight Watchers
Quiz Night
World Day of Prayer

Lamlash Church Hall, 8pm - 10pm
Auchrannie Sports Hall 2pm
Whiting Bay Golf Club 8pm
Auchrannie Hotel Pool 9.45am - 10.30am
Auchrannie Studio 10am - 11am
Church Hall, Brodict, 7pm - 9pm
The Playbarn, Auchrannie 5 - 6pm
Ormidale Pavilion, 6.30pm
Catacol Bay, 9pm
St. Margaret's Church, 2.30pm

Saturday 3 March

Over 21s Disco
Karate
Family Games
Fun in the Pool
Arran Dancers (4yrs & up)
Teddy Bears Picnic
Kids Family Quiz
Fair Trade Day

Ormidale Hotel, 10pm
Auchrannie Games Hall, 11.30am - 12.30pm
Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm - 4pm
Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm - 5pm
Arran High School 10am
Playbarn Auchrannie 2pm - 3pm
Playbarn, Auchrannie 5pm - 6pm
Brodict Co-op

Sunday 4 March

Alcoholics Anonymous
Family Games
Fun in the Pool
Teddy Bears Picnic

Church Hall, Brodict 4.30pm
Auchrannie Games Hall 3pm - 4pm
Auchrannie Spa Pool 4pm - 5pm
Playbarn, Auchrannie 2pm - 3pm

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Public Notices

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Applications listed below together with the plans and other documents may be examined at Corporate Services, Cunninghame House, Irvine*, between 9am-4.45pm weekdays (4.30pm Fridays) or at www.eplanning.north-ayrshire.gov.uk *and at The Council Offices, Lamlash

Written representations may be made to the Solicitor to the Council (Corporate Services) at the above address or emailed to eplanning@north-ayrshire.gov.uk by 16.03.12. Any representations received will be open to public view.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1)

Format: Application no; Address; Proposed Development
12/00066/PP; Auchareoch Farm, Shannochie, Brodick, Isle of Arran; Formation of farm based education and animal visitor centre with associated facilities.

CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982 TAXI FARE REVIEW

Notice is hereby given that North Ayrshire Council, having consulted with taxi operators licensed by the authority, propose to make amendments to fares for taxis operating within the jurisdiction of North Ayrshire Council. This proposal will become effective from **Monday 28 May 2012**.

There is no change to the previous fare scale, except that where a journey involves more than 4 passengers, the normal metered fare is increased by 50% (instead of a flat increase of 50p per person).

Any person wishing to lodge representation in respect of these proposals should do so in writing to Ian MacKay, Solicitor to the Council, North Ayrshire Council, Licensing Office, Town House, 66 High Street, Irvine KA12 0AZ, by no later than **Monday 26 March 2012**.

Tariff 1:

For a distance not exceeding 3/4 of a mile (or waiting time not exceeding 10mins) £2.50
Each additional 1/15 of a mile (or additional waiting time of 25 seconds) 10p

Tariff 2:

For hires beginning or ending on Good Friday, Easter Monday, beginning or ending between 1900hrs and 12 midnight on the 24 and 31 December, 26 December after 0700hrs and 2 January after 0700hrs, all day on Sundays and on any other day between 12 midnight and 0700hrs or from a journey from the zone in which the taxi is licensed to a point within another zone of North Ayrshire between 0700hrs and 12 midnight

For a distance not exceeding 3/4 of a mile (or waiting time not exceeding 10mins) £2.80
Each additional 1/16 of a mile (or additional waiting time of 20 seconds) 10p

Tariff 3:

For hires from the zone in which the taxi is licensed to a point within another zone of North Ayrshire between 12 midnight and 0700hrs;

For a distance not exceeding 3/4 of a mile (or waiting time not exceeding 10mins) £3.00 each additional 1/18 of a mile (or additional waiting time of 20 seconds) 10p

Tariff 4:

For hires beginning or ending on 25 December to 0700hrs on 26 December and on 1 January to 0700hrs on 2 January. Normal Fare Plus 100% (No other charges apply)

Additional Charges

Soiling Charge £30

Journeys in vehicles carrying more than 4 passengers: Metered Fare plus 50%.

The above fares apply to journeys within North Ayrshire. Fares for journeys out with the area should be agreed with the licence holder. No separate fee shall be charged to, or payable by each passenger under any circumstances. In respect of any journeys between zones, which incur additional charges, under Tariff 2 or Tariff 3, the driver must intimate this to the passengers before the commencement of the journey. Luggage shall be carried FREE provided it is of a size which can reasonably be accommodated in the car.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL - GRASS CUTTING SCHEME

The Council's Grass Cutting Scheme which is limited to grass and hedge cutting will recommence on Monday 2 April 2012.

The scheme covers cutting grass of an area no bigger than 150 square metres and hedges where they border a path. No weeding or planting is provided for. Due to the limited number of gardens to be included on the scheme, applications will be accepted on a "first come first served basis."

To be eligible the applicants must permanently reside at the property and meet the following eligibility criteria:

Be Aged 75 and over.

Or

Aged 65 and over and in receipt of Attendance Allowance (higher rate) or free personal care.

Or

Aged under 65 and in receipt of Disability Living Allowance high rate (Mobility) or highest rate (Care).

To apply to the scheme contact the Council by telephone from Wednesday 15 February on 0845 603 0594.

An assessment of eligibility will be made during the telephone application process and payment for the scheme will be taken. The charge for the scheme is £50 plus vat at 20% (£60).

Applications will close on 31 March 2012.

Elma Murray
Chief Executive
Cunninghame House
IRVINE KA12 8EE



MACHRIE BAY GOLF CLUB AGM

**Thursday March 15th
7.30pm**

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CHURCH NOTICES**SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

(in full communion with the Church of England)
St Margaret's, Whiting Bay.

Sunday, 26th February
Holy Communion, 11.00 am.
Mrs Janis Gallagher.
Coffee after service.

Wednesday, 29th February
Ash Wednesday,
Holy Communion, 12.15 pm.
ALL WELCOME

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

North Arran, Brodick,
Corrie, Lochranza,
Pirmill and Shiskine.
Independent but working together

Minister: Rev Angus Adamson
Parish Assistant
Mrs Jean Hunter
Worship will be conducted in the above churches at the following times to which all are invited.

Families, young people and children welcome.
Sunday 26th February
Brodick Church, 10.30am
Corrie Church, 12noon,
Lochranza/Pirmill
10.15am at Pirmill
Shiskine Church 12noon
A service of worship will also be held in Montrose house at 1.30pm

HOLY CROSS

CATHOLIC CHURCH
Morning Mass, 11am

WHITING BAY AND KILDONAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

(Charity Number SCO14005)
Sunday 26th February
Worship will be conducted by the minister, Rev Elizabeth Watson, at 10.30am.
Tea and Coffee will be served in the Transept after the service
All welcome.

ARRAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday 26th February
Ormidale Sports Pavilion,
Brodick
11am Morning worship
Tea/Coffee after the service
Home Fellowship Group meets on Wednesday at 7.30pm.
For details telephone 860 232
Everyone very welcome.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Kilmory linked with Lamlash
"A faith to proclaim ~ a fellowship to share"
Sunday 26th February
Rev. Gillean Maclean
Kilmory 10am
Lamlash 11.30am
In both churches:
All welcome, including families; children's area
Scottish Charity SC015072

BANNER ANNOUNCEMENTS**ARRAN FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**

Sunday 26th February
Shiskine 11am
Mr Murdoch Campbell
Brodick 7pm
All welcome

ARRAN FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

(continuing)
Sunday 26th February
Morning Service 11am
Trust Housing Lounge, Glen Estate, Brodick
Evening Service 6.30pm
5 Glen Road Brodick
Prayer Meeting
Wednesday 29th February
at 7pm
5 Glen Road, Brodick
All welcome

RELIGIONS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS QUAKERS

Meeting for Worship on
Sunday 26th February
at 11am
Creag-Ghrianach, Lochranza.
Enquires to Betty 830651
All are Welcome

DEATHS

GIBSON - Peacefully at Ayrshire Central hospital on 20th February 2012, Bette Gibson, aged 86 years, beloved wife of the late Alex and a dear mum and gran of all the family. For funeral arrangements contact Paul Stevenson Funeral Directors 01294 607001.

MOCHRIE - ALLAN JOHN (ARCHITECT)

On 17 February 2012 after a long and full life. Known for numerous buildings and conversions across the Isle of Arran.

Funeral at Lamlash Parish Church on the 24th February at 11.30am followed by burial in Sannox cemetery. Former lecturer in architecture, Founder of Cambria AFC, Beloved husband to Anne, father to Jan, Liz and Neil, Grandfather and Great Grandfather. The family extends their thanks to good friends, the Lamlash medical practise and the social care services who gave invaluable support in recent years.

ENGAGEMENT**KELLY / JUDGE**

Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Alasdair Kelly, son of Alan and Susan Kelly, Whiting Bay and Leanne Judge, daughter of Sandra Judge, Whiting Bay and Sam Judge, Glasgow.

BANNER ANNOUNCEMENTS**IN MEMORY****MICHAEL LINDSAY**

26/02/2007

ALWAYS IN MY HEART MOTHER X

PERSONAL

HAPPY 50TH BIRTHDAY
ON 28TH FEB
LOTS OF LOVE
FROM ALL OF US XX



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Shiskine Milk Delivery "Thank you"

We would like to thank sincerely all our customers for their support over the years of the milk delivery and also for the wonderful gift of a weekends curling at Northwest Castle, Stranraer-we had a fantastic time (though the ice did take a bit of a beating!!!)

Many thanks again

Colin, Laura & Wallace

GOLDEN WEDDING

Congratulations to Mum and Dad on your Golden Wedding Anniversary on Sunday 26th February. With lots of love from Billy, Linzi, Grant and Kirsty, Archie, Fiona, Beth, Anna, Erin and Maya x PS Well done Mum!

**Brodick Golf Club**

Winter Cup, Wednesday 17 February, 17 well wrapped-up older persons turned out on what looked like a dreich overcast day. However many returned to the clubhouse complaining of the heat.

Scores were in the main very poor, probably due a combination of dehydration and a lack of skill.

There were only two golfers with the talent to get a two, stand up Charlie O'Neil and Don (the Wan) Rudge. According to my records this is Don's only two of this season's Winter cup. However, if my record keeping is as good as my prize giving then I'm probably wrong. As again I managed to screw up by awarding a two to Harry Davidson. Only problem was that he got that one two weeks ago and not this week. Reminds me of a story concerning my favourite watering hole and ice cream.

Charlie (I never moan) O'Neil shot to the lead in the best five scores with a superb 60, Don (the Wan) Rudge trudged to a 63 and Hamish (the Pocket Rocket) McArthur complete with an expensively coiffured thatch continued his fine run of form following on from a runaway win at the Monday Corrie Golf Club competition with a 64 beating the afore mentioned Harry Davidson on Best Inward Half.

1 C O'Neil 60, 2 Don Rudge 63, 3 H McArthur 64 BIH. Twos, C O'Neil, D Rudge League Table best five results: 1 C O'Neil 310, 2 J Green 314, 3 equal Eric Thompson and

Dougie Robertson 315.

Sunday 19 February, Clochendichter. The Knowe team having topped the table since the first round went into the last day with a 7 point advantage.

However the Street and the Village should take heart from recent events at Shiskine where the team and the foot of the table staged a remarkable performance on the final round to come out on top of the table to win the prodigious Ryder Cup.

Special mention this week to one winner and one loser. Kenny McMillan showed his allegiance to his beloved football team by turning out in his favourite jersey probably for the last time before having to exchange it for a replacement bearing the name of the new sponsors - HM Revenue and Customs.

An impressive display of finding the fairway whether they are broad or narrow saw him narrowly defeat Don Rudge.

Meanwhile Campbell Russell who was in his own words annihilated by Jimmy Armit took the defeat in good spirit.

It gave him more time to enjoy a few Shiraz before his (and many others') day was somewhat spoiled by the Stewards poor choice of sport television viewing.

Two relative newcomers to the Clochendichter, Ross Butchard and Alan Hart, enjoyed valuable wins.

Deciding matches take place on Sunday 18 March when Alma take on the Street and Village are up against the Knowe Results: Street v Village G Sillars bt J McKean, A Hart bt S Sillars, R Butchard bt J Beattie, F Sillars bt A Raeburn, C Russell lost to J Armit, J Hartley lost to B Armit, B Walker lost to I MacMillan, N Hume lost to A Hume. Knowe v Alma K McMillan bt D Rudge, R McCrae bt B Smith, I MacDonald bt H Tait, D Hendry bt Gus Robertson, D Robertson lost to L Hartley, T Raeside lost to B McGunnigle, Gordon Robertson halved G McNicol, G Hendry halved D McKinnie.

League table: Knowe 36, Street 29, Village 28, Alma 19.

Whiting Bay Golf Club

Results: Sunday 19 February. The third in the winter series with Lamlash was played in fine conditions, attracting 22 players, and finishing with three wins for the home side and three wins for Lamlash.

This leaves Lamlash three games ahead with the final fixture still to come at Lamlash in March.

In the individual Stableford, the winner was John Simmons with 36 points, 2nd was Dan Bremner at 35 points, 3rd Graeme Crichton on 34 points (bih) and 4th John Pennycott also with 34 points.

There were magic twos by John Simmons and two from Malcolm Pennycott.

Fixtures: Sunday 26 February, Gents sweep from the yellow tees.

Corrie Golf Club

Saturday 18 February, no game as course was under water.

Monday 20 February, no game again due to the same reason.

Fixtures: Saturday 25 February, Winter Cup 8.30am and 12noon. Monday 27 February, Monday Cup at 12noon. Both games will be weather permitting.

Shiskine Golf Club

Sunday 19 February, Dramatic finish to the Ryder Cup...Kilpatrick were at the bottom of the table prior to play, but somehow thrashed Torbeg and ended up on top.

Congratulations to John Salton and his team. Final league table: Kilpatrick 30, Blackwaterfoot 25, Shiskine 25 and Torbeg 20.

Arran Golfers Association

Winter league/Duncan Trophy 2011/2012. Final round at Brodick Golf Club on Sunday 4 March. Draw: Brodick v Lamlash at 10am, Whiting Bay v Shiskine at 10.50am and Machrie v Corrie at 11.40am.

Machrie Bay Golf Club

Tuesday 14 February, Winter Cup. 1 Brian Sherwood 72, 2 Campbell Laing 74 BIH, 3 David Price 74 BIH. Scratch Brian Sherwood 76.

Fixtures: Tuesday 28 February, Winter Cup, tee-off 12noon. Saturday 3 March, Lochranza Hotel Cup, tee-off 12noon.

Lamlash and Whiting Bay Ladies

Sunday 19 February saw the commencement of a new inter-club friendly competition between the ladies of Lamlash and Whiting Bay Golf Clubs, called the Whitlam Ladies Invitational.

The game on Sunday was the first of four, which will be played as team stableford events, with a cumulative total over the four matches.

All ladies from both clubs are warmly invited to take part in what promise to be very enjoyable occasions.

The next match is on Sunday 18 March at Whiting Bay at 11am; feel free to come along!

Meanwhile, the first game was a tightly fought match, with hosts Lamlash narrowly beating Whiting Bay with an average stableford total of 25.6 to 25.2 (over 15 holes).

The individual winner was Viv Parks, who played excellently to achieve a great score of 32, closely followed by Jo Hastings with a total of 31.

Lamlash Golf Club

Sunday 19 February, result of match with Whiting Bay - Whiting Bay 3 Lamlash 3. Overall Result Lamlash 9.5 Whiting Bay 6.5. Final Game will be Lamlash v Whiting Bay at Lamlash on Sunday 18 March.

Fixtures: Sunday 26 February, winter stableford 9.30am and 12noon starts. Thursday 1 March, 15-Hole Medal.

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Island rugby team top the league after 'nail biter' in Dunoon

Cowal 5 Arran 7

The Isle of Arran's rugby team are rejoicing this week after a narrow victory on Saturday took them to the top of their league.

A 7-5 victory over Cowal RFC in Dunoon gives Arran 44 points and allowed them to leapfrog previous leaders Lanark into first place.

In near blizzard conditions, Arran spent 90 percent of the 80 minutes camped in the Cowal 22 and yet had only seven points to show for it.

Why? The reason was not hard to find.

The team had travelled with their usual pack which performed well but were woefully short of the normal back division - Ben Tattersfield was detained on the mainland, Lachlan Jones had flu, Frazer Barr was south of the border and Jack Barbour's ankle was still not up to it.

The result was that Danny Head moved from wing forward to fullback, Euan Evans from full back to number 10, Charlie Boal generously made the trip from Stirling to help at outside centre and in spite of their efforts, the backs just didn't gel and there was none of the team's normal penetration.

The half back link in particular just didn't function efficiently and Euan spent the afternoon either taking the ball above his head or, alterna-

tively, on the half volley. The gale force wind must bear at least some of the blame and yet it was a half-back - Iain Keen who opened the scoring for Arran in the first half.

Euan Evans converted his try so it wasn't all bad!

However Cowal scored an unconverted try before half time and, as Arran had been playing with the wind in the first half, things didn't look good.

Presence Felt

The second half against the wind found the forwards making their presence felt and tying up a very good Cowal pack in its own half, however, breakaways are always likely in these circumstances and that is exactly what happened resulting in Cowal being awarded a penalty on the Arran 22 with the wind and

with one minute to go.

A spokesman for the club said: 'We hardly dared to look, collective breaths were held but the Gods were with us and the kick was badly missed!'

The result is that Arran lead the league by one point over Lanark who have a game in hand.

Arran play them at home next week in what will be a very important match.

The team spokesman added: 'Let's hope every one of our first choice players makes himself available. No excuses, we need you!'

'To all potential supporters, we need you too. Please come along and support your team.'

Man of the match was Gregor Adamson for his untiring tackling.



The winners and semi-finalists of the MacKenzie mixed doubles darts competition photographed at 3am on Sunday morning. 01_b08dar01

Darts triumph once again for Niall

The 24th annual Donald MacKenzie Memorial mixed doubles darts competition was won by Niall McMaster and his partner for the second year running on Saturday night.

Held in Kilmory Hall, the tournament saw around 40 men and women competing for the top spot.

Niall was drawn with partner Lynn MacKenzie and the pair stormed through to the final where they beat Kirsty Nicholson and Dennis Smith 3-1.

After playing with one other partner and being knocked out, Kirsty was eventually paired with Dennis and the two went all the way to the final.

Early Hours

The event went on until the early hours of Sunday morning with the final only being

played after 2am.

Organiser Margaret MacKenzie thanked everyone for taking part and said she hoped 'a good night had been had by all'.

A significant amount of money was raised for the Kildonan and Kilmory Senior Citizens.

Drift Inn go five points clear

With only three games to go until the end of the pool season, The Drift Inn are now five points clear at the top of the table.

But the biggest upset on Thursday night came from Catacol after they beat PT1934 7-3 and ended the Kilmory team's 10 gallon

run. Captain Eddie Picken said he was going to make his speech 10 minutes long in revenge for the gallon defeat!

Results for Thursday 16 February:

Drift Inn 6 Mac's Bar 4, PT1934 3 Catacol 7, Bar Eden 5 Whiting Bay Golf Club 5, PHT 4 Kildonan 6.

The Arran Ladies Open competition will be held in the Bar Eden this Sunday 26 February from 2.30pm.

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Drift	11	7	4	0	18
WBGC	11	5	3	3	13
PT1934	11	4	4	3	12
Catacol	11	4	4	4	12
Bar Eden	11	3	3	5	9
Kildonan	11	3	3	5	9
PHT	10	1	5	4	7
Mac's	10	2	2	6	6

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