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Another splash
Lamlash get in on the act



Soul choir
Raising cash for charity



It's all yours
Employees now own Auchrannie

Arran's citizens advice service closes its doors

Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk

A vital independent advice service on Arran has ceased with immediate effect.

The North Ayrshire Citizens Advice Service (NACAS), which was held every Monday morning at the Ormidale Pavilion, will no longer operate. The closure is due to changes in the way in which public advice services are being funded across North Ayrshire.

The Arran outreach service was part of Citizens Advice Scotland – the country's largest independent advice network providing consumer advice and free and confidential information on benefits, housing, debt and money issues and work related problems.

However, last year North Ayrshire councillors decided to significantly change the way in which public advice services were provided by promoting the the council's own Money Matters service, and to put a range of other advice services out

to competitive tender. It had been hoped the service would be retained until the end of the current NACAS contract in April, but it has already been withdrawn.

At a recent meeting of the council cabinet, Arran Councillor Timothy Billings said: 'The result for Arran is that there will no longer be an island-based advice service. Therefore, people who find travel to the mainland difficult will no longer have access to one-to-one advice services. I have been advised that many of the advice issues are not suitable for phone conversations.

And he asked: 'How will the council ensure that the people of Arran continue to have access to a comprehensive one-to-one advice service, without having to travel to the mainland or rely on phone services?'

In a written response council officials stated: 'Following the decision to ensure greater transparency, clarity and probi-

ty around the specification of advice services in North Ayrshire notice on the current arrangement with NACAS was issued on Monday October 23, while work began on the tender process.

'This notice confirmed that the termination date would be Monday April 30, and that, in line with the extant Service Level Agreement, current levels of service provision would be maintained until that time.

'NACAS have advised of their intention to withdraw outreach services from Monday January 1, 2018, with clients being directed to the digital and telephone-based services offered by NACAS. They have also confirmed that specialist debt advice will cease in January 2018 with NACAS looking to wind down the money advice caseload towards Saturday March 31, 2018.'

A spokeswoman from

Continued on page 3

Double delight as first lambs arrive



Heralding the start of the new year, Arran's first lambs have arrived with the birth of these blue faced Leicester twins who were born just two days after Christmas. Rather new to the world herself, four-month-old Sophie joined her parents Genevieve and Niall McMaster in welcoming the newborn to Springfield Farm at West Bannan where the arrival of the lambs is almost a month ahead of the usual lambing season which starts during February. Photograph: Colin Smeeton 01_B02lamb01

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Distribution strategy error sees profits fall

Arran Brewery has admitted it got its distribution strategy wrong as losses widened at the craft beer producer last year.

The brewer reported a trading loss of £108,162 despite turnover growing by 45 per cent to nearly £1.4 million, although its most recent accounting period was extended by three months. That meant the sales increase recorded by the brewery was 36 per cent. The company had made a loss of £69,077 before tax in its previous financial year.

While its most recent accounts showed a big increase in revenue, managing director Gerald Michaluk said the brewer has had to take urgent action to improve its distribution arrangements and curb bad debts.

Mr Michaluk said: 'We had to write off bad debts of some

£52,462 and increased distribution costs of £58,975 over what we would have expected based upon the volume of business volume increase.

'Clearly, we have got our distribution strategy wrong and need to address this urgently. Other bad debts related to trade customers going into administration and poor risk assessment and lack of trade account credit limits being set as we had moved to a new accounting package.

'To correct the situation, we transferred our brewery manager into a logistics role. She is currently completing a part-time MSc in production and logistics management via Liverpool University.

'We are addressing the credit control issue by ensuring credit is only given where necessary

to win the business, and personal as well as company guarantees are provided or the balance sheet justifies the risk. The brewery's balance sheet remains strong despite the loss.

'I anticipate a similar scale drop in sales volume in 2017 as we pull back from accounts where we cannot make a decent margin from or the distribution cost are too high to get the beer to. What this has shown us is there is demand for our products throughout the UK but we need to crack getting it there at a sensible price so we, as well as our customers, can make a sensible profit.'

Managing director
Gerald Michaluk.



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Another splash in Lamlash



Brodick wasn't the only place to see in the new year with a splash as these pictures show. A small group of hardy swimmers also took to the water for a New Year's Day dook off the Lamlash Pier.

Despite there being no official dook organised for Lamlash, as there is with the Douglas Dook in Brodick, as featured in last week's *Banner*, the brave swimmers joined thousands across the UK for a traditional dook to herald the new year.

Photos by PhotoGnick Arran



Holistic therapy centre proposed for Brodick

Planning permission is being sought for a new holistic therapy centre in the grounds of The Douglas Hotel in Brodick.

Retired Arran GP Dr Malcolm Kerr and his partner Ms Susan Knox want permission to change the use of Heather Lodge from a dwelling into a therapy centre.

The plans show it would have three therapy rooms,

an atrium reception and a rest room.

The application is under consideration by North Ayrshire Council planning officials and has the backing of the hotel.

A supporting submission to planners states: 'The Douglas Hotel management would like to express our enthusiasm for the proposed development at Heather Lodge.

'We feel that the proposed usage is of huge benefit to our guests, and to Arran's residents, and to have this right on our doorstep offers a unique year-round marketing opportunity for everyone.

'Health and well-being is a huge market and it could potentially bring visitors from all over the world to experience treatments in such an idyllic setting – so



Heather Lodge is the site of the proposed holistic therapy centre. 01_B02heather01

Citizens advice service closes its doors

Continued from page 1

NACAS said: 'It's no secret that NACAS relies heavily on grants and donations to finance the organisation but we are also operating in a highly competitive environment with ongoing pressures on public funding and restrictions placed on many grants. In line with our current, as well as future, planning we are continuing to diversify our funding streams to secure new and sustainable sources of income.

'That being said, in order to future proof the organisation, the board of directors have reluctantly

decided to cease outreach services from January 2018.'

Nina Smith, NACAS CEO added: 'Continuation of NACAS without disrupting front line services, is untenable. As a charity, we provide exceptional value for money but we can't run at a loss and so are restructuring to ensure we remain sustainable.'

Of particular importance to Arran residents it was also noted at the council meeting that tenders submitted for providing advice services would be evaluated taking into account which potential pro-

viders would offer outreach services.

People on Arran requiring advice services can make use of the new-look website at www.nacasadvice.org.uk or the Better Off North Ayrshire Programme which offers face-to-face services through its hub in the Michael Lynch Centre in Ardrossan with travel expenses paid for Arran residents.

The Better Off North Ayrshire website also offers information, advice and support with completing benefits' applications, as well as an 'entitled to' calculator and job search tool.

for our business this offers an excellent opportunity.

'Heather Lodge sits with-

in the grounds of the hotel, and so to see the building

loved again can only add to

our guests' impression of the hotel and of the island in general.'

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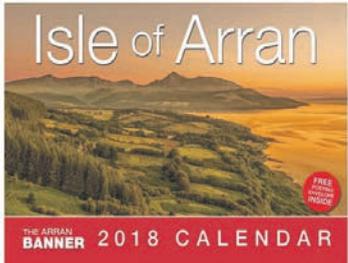
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Mountain rescue team stages night navigation exercise

The Arran Mountain Rescue Team completed its first training exercise of the new year with a night navigation exercise in the snow-covered mountains.

Selecting the Caisteal Abhail and Witches Step area for the exercise, the team members split into two groups with one group beginning their first navigation leg up towards Suidhe Fhearghas and the other group heading for Sail an Im.

Each team member got to practice their navigation skills, taking it in turns for each leg while taking into account pacing, timing and choosing a safe route through the snow.

A spokeswoman for the rescue team said: 'We



Arran Mountain Rescue Team members navigate up the mountain with the mainland lights visible behind them.

were extremely lucky to have some amazing winter weather conditions with

clear skies and very little wind – a great night to be out.'

□ Pictures: Kirstie Smith, Corinna Goeckeritz, Ewan McKinnon, Dr David Hogg.



Team members use modern technology as well as maps and compass for navigating.



Group members discuss strategy in freezing conditions.



Snow and steep climbs provided members with challenging conditions.



Team members and rescue dog make their way into the night in total darkness.

Soul choir breathes life into defibrillator project

A concert next weekend by the Arran Soul Choir will give another boost to the island's defibrillator project.

Through its fundraising efforts, the choir has raised enough money to fund the Arran Defib Project for six months and hope the concert next Saturday will raise enough to fund the project for a year.

After their very successful inaugural concert last June – where the choir performed a range of contemporary and classic numbers to a full house – a luxury raffle was held using prizes contributed by businesses across the island, raising the sum of £420. This was further matched with an additional £400 by Arran High School's community project Chit Chat Café which ran between 2013 and 2016, co-ordinated

by choir member Christine Macleod, bringing the fundraising total to £820.

Choir administrator Caroyln Lambert and David Lambert, co-musical director were delighted to present the cheque to Fiona Laing of the Arran Defib Project at one of their recent Thursday evening rehearsals.

Fiona said: 'I'd like to thank the Arran Soul Choir and Arran High School for their tremendous donations to the project. They have gone almost half way to the annual running costs of the project, it is heartening to see it being so well supported by the Arran community.'

The next concert being performed by the choir on Saturday January 20, will continue to raise funds for the defibrillator project



David Lambert, co-musical director of the Arran Soul Choir, presents Fiona Laing of the Arran Defib Project with a cheque from the choir's fundraising efforts.

which has supplied and fitted emergency defibrillators in most of the village halls and community areas around Arran.

James O'Neil, the choir's co-musical director said: 'If we can contribute to the majority of the annual cost of this worthwhile organisation, and these devices help to save just one person's life, then we have more than fulfilled our goal.'

The second Arran Soul Choir performance called Soul Strong will take place on Saturday January 20 at 7.30pm in the community theatre, Lamlash.

Machrie Moor road closed

The Machrie Moor road will be closed for five days due to Forestry Commission works.

The road will be closed from 9am on Monday January 15 until 5pm on Friday January 19 between Machrie Golf Links and Machrie Cottage. North Ayrshire Council roads bosses say local access will be maintained where practical and have apologised for any delays. In a second closure the main C147 will be closed between West Bennan and East Bennan on Sunday February 18 to facilitate the replacement of a telegraph pole to restore BT customer service.

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Arran business survey wants your views

The views of the Arran business community are being sought in a new survey for 2018 aimed at building up a detailed picture of economic activity on the island.

North Ayrshire Council and the Arran Economic Group are seeking their opinions on a range of subjects, including employment numbers, turnover figures and offering the potential to report any barriers preventing them from trading effectively on the island.

Opinion is being sought via an extensive business survey utilising Survey Monkey. The survey is being collated by Arranshand BDS Ltd and they will contact every island business by email from Monday January 15. Please watch out for the email and fill out the survey. If you don't see an email, contact Lauren Johnstone on 01770 302676 to ensure that your views are included.

Arran Economic Group chairman and local businessman Tom Tracey said:



Tom Tracey.

'Being able to build up a detailed picture of economic activity on the island is very difficult from nationally available economic data. The comparison of this year's survey results with the information gathered last year will enable us to accurately measure and articulate the opportunity to support the business community on Arran.'

Mr Tracey encouraged all Arran businesses, regardless of their size, to participate in the survey. 'Only by participating fully in this survey will it allow us to build a clear, quantifiable case for further business community support on Arran,' he added.

Joy as Auchrannie er

Auchrannie has become the first hotel resort in Scotland to become an employee-owned business, with 160 members of staff becoming owners.

The decision to become employee-owned, as first reported in the *Banner* 14 months ago, has been made to preserve the independent ethos of the business and to protect it for community use.

An Employee Ownership Trust has been formed and holds 100 per cent of the shares on behalf of the employees. The deal, which has just been finalised, was

structured in order to make it affordable to the business without affecting its ability to reward the team and reinvest for the future.

The concept is not a new one, having been pioneered by the John Lewis department store back in 1929. However, it has become increasingly popular as a way of motivating staff who are likely to be more productive and loyal as co-owners of the company. There are also a number of tax advantages.

Commenting on the decision, co-founder and managing director Linda Johnston said: 'We first started

looking at employee ownership in 2015 and the first formal meetings were held in early 2016. Many exit options were considered over the years but none protected the ethos of the company, the existing team or the community use of Auchrannie's facilities for future generations like employee ownership did.

Embraced

'The team have been involved in the process from an early stage and were given the opportunity to input throughout. They have very much embraced the concept of employee ownership and

are extremely excited about it. They are delighted that Auchrannie's legacy will be protected and that they have the chance to play an active part in, and benefit from, Auchrannie's future success.

'They also realise that what each of them does will affect the future success of the business and that this is directly linked to their own success, so they have already become more engaged in making the business better and understand the power and influence each and every one of them now has on their own future.

'There is no "them and



Auchrannie management, board members and ex-shareholders.

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us" now – we're all in this together.'

Linda and the rest of the Auchrannie management team will remain in place and the day to day operation of the business will not change.

Auchrannie's transition to employee ownership was supported by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Co-operative Development Scotland, with the process managed by Co-ownership Solutions LLP and legal services by Burness Paull LLP.

Linda added: 'The transition has been pretty smooth despite the fact that Auchrannie is a complex business. We have been well supported by HIE, CDS, Co-ownership Solutions and Burness Paull. The help we received was invaluable in enabling us to put together the team to lead us through the whole process

seamlessly. Although there have been a number of hurdles to jump over, there have been no real lows.'

By transferring their shares to an Employee Ownership Trust, the ex-shareholders have also protected Auchrannie's contribution to the island. It is very much part of the community and provides essential wet weather facilities, other amenities and support to the island's residents and its visitors.

Change

Sarah Deas, director at Co-operative Development Scotland, the arm of Scotland's enterprise agencies which promotes employee ownership, said: 'Being on an island, a change to the ownership of a resort like Auchrannie could seriously affect the economy of the whole island. The change to employee ownership means that the team at Auchrannie

and the community of Arran can relax knowing that it will always remain an independent, locally-run organisation with community values at heart.'

Linda concluded: 'Employee ownership will give the whole Auchrannie team a stake in the continued growth of the business. All of us will work together to build a more efficient, sustainable and profitable business. We are all excited to continue on our journey in which we strive to lead the way in Scottish tourism and create amazing experiences for our guests and an awesome place to work for our team.'

The Auchrannie has grown enormously since it was set up and now has an annual turnover of £6.7 million and comprises two four-star hotels, 30 five-star self-catering lodges, two leisure clubs, three individually



Auchrannie management and staff celebrate being an employee-owned business.

branded restaurants, a children's Playbarn, an ASPA spa and Arran Adventure Outdoor Company. It was established by Iain and Linda Johnston in 1988, with

Linda heading up the company as managing director and board chair since 2010. Iain passed away in 2015. The latest figures show that there are 92 employee-

owned companies operating in Scotland, with approximately 7,000 employee-owners generating a combined turnover of around £930 million.

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Editorial

A lack of advice

The Citizens Advice Bureau has been an important service to the people of Scotland for many years. And while its outreach service may have only visited Arran once a week, its immediate closure will be felt by the many residents who made use of its services.

Not just for employment issues and tribunals as some knew it for, the service also offered a wide range of advice and assistance ranging from financial, housing and consumer issues to help with tax credits and benefits. In what must surely be a devastating blow for some of Arran's most vulnerable residents, they will now need to travel to the mainland if they require these services.

Thankfully, North Ayrshire Citizens Advice, which was previously funded by the council, will continue to offer advice online or over the telephone if you are familiar with computers and comfortable enough to discuss your concerns over the telephone, but this is of little consolation to those that prefer old fashioned face-to-face interactions.

NACAS is a registered charity and cannot be entirely blamed for the cessation of services, but neither can the council who are having to seek more value for their money. However, once again, it is those who are most in need who will be hit hardest by the decision.

Thought for the week

'Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken.'
Psalm 55:22

Scotland's tourism industry is 'gazing over a cliff'

In my view

Scotland's booming tourism industry is 'gazing over a cliff' as the impact of Brexit and rising food and drink prices threaten businesses, a leading tourism expert has warned.

Professor John Lennon, director of the Moffat Centre for travel and tourism business development, at Glasgow Caledonian University, believes hoteliers and food and beverage operators will be put at risk as 'staycationers' are squeezed by low wage growth and rising inflation.

The Moffat Centre is the UK's largest university-based consultancy and research centre for tourism and travel market research and business development.

It works with almost 1,000 organisations across Scotland and holds the most comprehensive and up-to-date data on Scottish visitor attractions.

Writing in *The Conversation*, which uses information and research backed by academics, Professor Lennon said: 'Despite the unsettled backdrop of Brexit and an increasingly insecure world, Scottish tourism is performing incredibly well against its competitors.'

'Tourism in Scotland and indeed across the UK has also made gains from the big decline in the value of sterling against major currencies.'

'The UK is far more affordable to many tourists from key international markets than it was before the Brexit vote.'

'Yet despite all these positives, my strong impression



Professor John Lennon.

is that the Scottish industry is gazing over a cliff.

'Scotland, like the UK as a whole, is a net importer of foods. Hoteliers and food and beverage operators are going to have to move their prices up because their margins are going to be attacked.'

'Talk to anyone in the hospitality world at the moment and they will tell you about food price inflation already well in excess of the 4-5 per cent reported. The time has to be coming when tourists will find the pound in their pocket going less far.'

'Many international visitors will be able to take the

price hike. Many domestic tourists will not because they are being squeezed in two ways: low wage growth and gathering inflation at the same time.'

'What does this mean? As we move through January, February, March, expect to see more liquidations in the tourism industry; more businesses going to the wall, particularly the highly leveraged ones.'

Writing as part of an overview of tourism in 2018, Professor Lennon also highlights the Scottish industry, which generates £1.4 billion a year and employs 219,000 people, is dependent on EU nationals.

He added: 'Another issue is labour: Scottish tourism and hospitality relies on a supply of migrant workers, and the country is already bleeding EU nationals. The availability of labour working in the sector is becoming acute and will continue into 2018.'

'Productivity is going to become more and more of an issue and it will do the country's reputation no good if the quality of service dips.'

There are also calls for closer co-operation between Glasgow and Edinburgh to help rural areas benefit from increased visitor numbers.

Professor Lennon said: 'Detractors may talk about over-tourism, but Edinburgh isn't full 100 per cent of the year yet: hotel occupancy was 83 per cent in 2017, only three points up on five years ago.'

'Glasgow occupancy is not far behind, but the two cities could arguably work better to spread the benefits of tourism across the central belt, to try and get more tourists out of the cities and into rural areas.'

'Rover rail tickets allowing unlimited rail travel between Edinburgh and Glasgow would be a good idea, as would cooperation on accommodation supply and transport during the Festival and Hogmanay.'

'There is also an argument for spinning these out to places like the borders, which hasn't enjoyed the same type of success.'

Letters to the Editor will be back next week

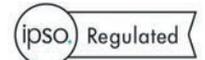
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- Cod Croquettes** Hot and sour sauce
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Art show is inspired by an Arran garden



The oil painting *Fatsia Japonica*, one of the works which will be on display.

The full extent of Arran artist Josephine Broekhuizen's abilities will be on display at a solo exhibition next month entitled *Seeing Things Grow – new paintings, drawings and prints inspired by a garden*.

An accomplished painter Josephine has exhibited in London, Edinburgh and throughout Scotland. She regularly exhibits at the Compass Gallery in Glasgow where her work will be the subject of a full exhibition starting on Saturday February 3 for three weeks.

Josephine is both an artist and a gardener at her home outside Lamlash that she shares with artist husband Tim Pomeroy. She

grows exotic succulents, strongly sculptural and patterned, which appear regularly in her beautiful paintings. Her garden provides sustenance, inspiration and materials for her canvases.

The link between her garden tools and her paintbrush are a harmonious factor in her work and shows that the connection between cultivating and paintings is a long, intimate and symbiotic one.

Naturally influenced by her location overlooking the Holy Isle, with its array of wildlife, plant life, woodlands and coastlines, her work, while so much more than a study of flowers, shows inspiration from the garden with bold sculptural shapes, dynamic internal movements and delicate colour relationships that fall into place like a jigsaw of composition.

Born in Holland, she originally studied as a vet and is the granddaughter of the Dutch painter Jacob Maris. Trained at the Academy for Visual Arts in Rotterdam (1977-81), then at Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen (1982-84), her work still retains the core essen-



Josephine at work in her White Rock studio.

tial visual elements learned back in Holland.

A spokeswoman for the gallery said: 'These paintings are much more than just flower studies. They exude depth in which a notion of timelessness and poetry exist; they are as colourful as they are thoughtful and evoke meditation and inquiry. They are at one moment studies in planting and at another, an essay on reflection. They are affirmative statements of belonging.'

'There is more present in these paintings than meets the eye. Elements of her work are strongly design-based; deconstructed still-lives and other stands of her

work are intense observations of branches of wood developed into smoky abstracts.

'A regular exhibitor in the Compass Gallery, we have represented her at London Contemporary Art Fair several years. However, we have only ever shown her charming paintings a few at a time. This forthcoming solo exhibition offers the opportunity to see the full breadth and aspect of her work.'

The exhibition will be opened by Josephine on Saturday February 3, from noon to 3pm at the Compass Gallery, 178 West Regent Street, Glasgow G2 4RL.

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Corrie Film Club presents ...

A Quiet Passion (UK 2016, Cert PG, 126 minutes)
Corrie Film Club's January selection is a thoughtful and often surprisingly funny biography of the poet Emily Dickinson.

Directed by Terence Davies, well known for his quiet approach to film-making, this is a rich, visually stunning portrait of a unique woman from girlhood to later years when her work was only recognised properly.

Appropriately, one of the themes of the film is gender and it poses interesting questions which are very relevant today. A film worth seeing.

See this film in Corrie and Sannox village hall on Sunday at 8pm. All welcome. Entry by small donation to hall funds. Bring a bottle to spread New Year cheer if you wish.

Lochranza and Catacol draw winners

The winners of the Lochranza and Catacol 200 Club Christmas draw were: first prize Laura Storey, second prize Bob Seaton, third prize Jenny Baboolal.

Arran Historical Society meeting

The next meeting of the Arran Historical Society will include a light lunch, the AGM and then a short film of Arran life around the time of the Second World War.

The events will take place at the Brodick Golf Club on Monday January 15, at 1.30pm. Anyone interested is most welcome to go along to the annual meeting. The light lunch is £5 per person and membership to the society is only £10 per year, including tea after the varied and interesting talks that are held once a month.

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Surprises in store with piano men Duo B!z'art

Duo B!z'art – two pianists playing the same piano – will be visiting Arran for an unusual concert in the community theatre at Arran High School.

On Saturday January 27, André Roe and Geoffrey Baptiste, who are both from Belgium, will make a welcome appearance on the island. They specialise in what is unusual and unconventional in music – hence their name – which is intended to suggest the word bizarre.

As well as playing in the duo, André works with the Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra, the Liège Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal Opera Orchestra of Wallonia. He

teaches at the Ettelbruck Music Conservatory in Luxembourg.

Geoffrey also works with many leading instrumentalists as well as with the Limburg Symphony Orchestra and the Liège Symphony Orchestra.

What will be slightly bizarre about their Arran concert is not so much the music they will be playing, most of it familiar and popular classical pieces, but the way they will be playing it: 20 fingers belonging to two musicians sharing the same 88 piano keys.

Their programme scheduled for Arran is subtitled: *An imaginary and poetic journey of a dreaming child*, and indeed it should



André Roe and Geoffrey Baptiste of Duo B!z'art will provide an unusual performance when visiting Arran later this month.

be particularly suitable for children who, as with all Music Arran concerts, will be admitted free, together with an accompanying adult.

The programme evokes a story, and a short narrative to accompany the music will be printed in the programme for the evening. The pieces that illustrate the tale are by Brahms, Percy Grainger, Grieg, Edward MacDowell, Fauré and Tchaikovsky. The concert starts at 7.30pm, and tickets will be available on the door, but can also be bought in advance, online from Arran Events at www.arranevents.com, or from the Inspirations of Arran shop in Brodick.

Music festival entries are open

Entries are open for the 89th Isle of Arran Music Festival, which will take place this year in Whiting Bay village hall from March 21 to 23.

Many parents, and indeed grandparents, have enjoyed the yesteryear postings on the festival Facebook page, which was set up during the summer. They will have brought back memories of rehearsing, competing and – for some – winning, but taking part and making new friends was equally important.

The syllabus and entry form for the 89th festival are now complete, and are available to uplift from various

shops around the island including: Bay News and Bay Kitchen & Stores in Whiting Bay, the Book & Card Centre and The Byre at Brodick and the Harbour Shop in Blackwaterfoot.

It is also available to download and print out from the festival Facebook page. Copies have also been emailed to the island schools.

Classes include vocal and instrumental (piano, woodwind, brass, fiddle, strings, pipes, drums), verse speaking and Scottish country dancing. There are classes for soloists, pairs, choirs and groups.

There are classes for all age ranges from nursery age children through to secondary school age youngsters, and for all abilities from elementary through to advanced level ... not forgetting the adult section. Please feel free to enter and exercise your talents.

Entries for the festival will close on Wednesday February 7, and the programme for 2018 will be issued around the end of February.

A spokeswoman for the organisers said: 'Whether the festival tradition has been part of your upbringing, or you are not so familiar with this annual event, we do hope that you will encourage your child or children to enter both as individuals and/or as part of a group, in as many sections as they would like.'

'There is a class for non-competitive entries where a participant may perform a piece of their choice – song, poem, instrument, either solo, duet or as part of a group without having to feel the pressure of competition and being judged.'

'We look forward to welcoming you to the Arran Music Festival in 2018.'

Isle of Arran Music Festival



Important new information on Government support for Central Heating Systems:

UPDATE NOV 2017

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FACT 2

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FACT 3

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Arran master distiller's guide to Burns Night

With Christmas a distant memory and spring a long way off, the end of January isn't a traditionally cheerful time unless you follow Scottish tradition and throw a party to rival Hogmanay on the 25th.

Burns Night is a celebration of the great Robert Burns, national hero and Scotland's most beloved poet, and a great excuse to shake off the winter blues.

James McTaggart, master distiller at Isle of Arran Distillers, which produces the world's only official Robert Burns malt, is well versed in how to throw a brilliant Burns Night celebration. Here he shares his

top choice of whiskies to accompany the festivities.

He says: 'Burns Night wouldn't be complete without whisky and no table is set without a good selection of drams. The evening is traditionally a very structured affair. There are set times for welcome addresses, toasts, food and entertainment. This gives hosts the opportunity to choose a different whisky to complement each part of the evening.'

'I don't doubt that there are distilleries across the world making great whisky, but I firmly believe that Scotch whisky is the best. And while I am incredibly

proud of what we do here at Arran, I'm not too proud to recognise a good dram when I taste it! Whisky is very much a community within Scotland and there are a few distilleries that I am very fond of.'

A toast to the Bard

The traditional toast to friends, food and family, the Selkirk Grace is a cornerstone of Burns Night. The man himself was born just across the water from Arran, in Alloway so a dram from a Glasgow distillery would be most fitting. Why not Auchentoshan which lies on the outskirts of the city?



James McTaggart raises a toast to the Bard.

The Auchentoshan 3 Wood (£47.55) is matured initially in bourbon casks before being finished in Oloroso then Pedro Ximénez casks for an extra layer of rich, sweet fruitiness. Notes of raisin, orange and blackberry will certainly whet the appetite.

Pipe in the haggis

There's no escaping haggis as the centre piece of a Burns Night feast. Rich with spices and the warming flavours of onions, stock and meat, it takes a whisky with a bold palate to pair with a haggis.

I spent the first 30 years of my whisky career at Bownmore, so I can confidently suggest their 15 Year Old Single Malt (£58.55). Delicious dark chocolate, sundried fruits and a tell-tale wisp of Islay smoke give way to cedar wood and rich treacle toffee. With a robust and complex finish, it's the perfect accompaniment for a Burns Night supper.

A Toast to the Lassies and Reply to the Toast to the Lassies

One of the most popular parts of the evening is

probably the famous Toast to the Lassies and Reply to the Toast to the Lassies. Usually incorporating quotes from Burns, these are comical monologues, light hearted and positive – with the odd sharp observation.

Kilchoman Distillery's Machir Bay (£45.95) is a vatting of whisky matured in first-fill bourbon casks for around six years, married and then finished in oloroso sherry butts before bottling. This single malt is full of character and will match well with the tone of this part of the evening!

And to finish...

No Burns Night is complete without a rousing rendition of Auld Land Syne in a final salute to the Bard. At Arran, we produce the only whisky en-

dorsed by the World Robert Burns Federation – The Robert Burns Single Malt (£31.99) and it's the perfect choice for raising a birthday toast to Scotland's most beloved poet. This is a sweet and creamy malt with flavours of honey and toffee-glazed pecans. Easy to drink, full of fresh citrus notes, its mellow character makes it ideal for cocktails, enjoyed by itself over ice or with a drop of water.



The Robert Burns single malt.

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What's on

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Everyday

Trout fly fishing
 Brodick Castle
 Soap making and candle dipping Arran Aromatics
 Arran Brewery

Saturday 13th January

Flow yoga
 Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Army Cadets
 Blackwaterfoot bowls
 Family games
 Fun in the pool
 Burns Supper
 Live music – Arran Dawn
 Over-21s disco

Sunday 14th January

Live music – Fatman and the Angel
 Family games
 Fun in the pool
 AA meeting

Monday 15th January

Morning fitness
 Citizens' Advice
 Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Over-50s badminton
 Adult tennis
 Arran Junior Football Club
 Circuit training
 Lamlash Aerobix
 Badminton
 Badminton
 Arran Bridge Club
 Tae Kwon-do

Tuesday 16th January

Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Healthy Outdoors
 Alcoholics Anonymous
 Blackwaterfoot Bowls
 Bridge class (beginners/improvers)
 Metafit Class
 Flow yoga,
 Pilates
 Lamlash Junior Drama Club
 Auchrannie winter bowls
 Youth club
 Fiona's FitSteps
 Scottish country dancing
 Live music – Shenanigans
 Pop quiz

Wednesday 17th January

Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Yoga
 Hydrofit

Loch Garbad, bank fishing
 Garden only open 9am-dusk
 Brodick, 10am - 4pm
 Open Mon - Thursday 11.30am - 4.30pm
 Friday & Saturday, 10am - 4.30pm, Sun - Closed

Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick, 9am
 9.30am - 11am
 9.30am - noon
 Auchrannie Road 11am - 1pm
 Bowling Club, 1.30pm
 Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm-4pm
 Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm-5pm
 Lochranza and Catacol Village Hall, 7pm
 Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodick, 7.30pm
 Ormidale Hotel, 10pm

Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodick, 2pm
 Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm-4pm
 Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm-5pm
 Brodick Church Hall, 5pm - 6.30pm

Auchrannie Gym, 9.30am - 10.30am
 Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick, 9.30am - 1.30pm
 9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
 9am - 2pm and 4pm - 6pm
 Lochranza Village Hall, 2pm-4pm
 Shiskine Golf & Tennis Club from 5.30pm
 Ormidale Park, 6pm-7.30pm
 Auchrannie Gym, 6pm-7pm
 Arran High School Dance Studio, 6.30pm
 Lochranza Hall, 6.30pm
 Auchrannie Sports Hall, 7pm-9pm
 Lamlash Golf Clubhouse, 7.15pm
 Brodick Church Hall, Adults and over 10s, 7.00pm - 8.30pm

9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
 9am - 2pm and 4pm - 6pm
 NTS Ranger Centre, 10am - 1pm
 Brodick Church Hall, 2pm
 Bowling Club, 1.30pm
 Brodick Golf Club, 2.30pm - 4.30pm
 Arran High School, 6pm
 Corrie Hall, 6pm
 Kilmory Hall, 6pm - 7pm
 Arran High School, 6.30pm - 9pm
 Brodick, 7pm
 Kildonan Hall, 7pm
 Arran High School, 7pm
 Brodick Church Hall, 7.30pm
 Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodick, 7.30pm
 Ormidale Hotel, 9pm

9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
 9am - 2pm and 4pm - 5pm
 Auchrannie Studio, 9.30am - 10.30am
 Auchrannie Hotel Leisure, 9.45am - 10.45am

Coffee morning
 Arran Elderly Forum
 Chair yoga
 Arran Heritage Museum archives and genealogy service
 Knittery and Natterry
 Zumba Gold
 Just Jhoom (Bollywood dance fitness)
 RUNclub - mixed ability
 Flow yoga
 Tae Kwon-do
 Yoga-Arran
 Mixed hockey
 Burger and quiz night
 Alcoholics Anonymous
 Lamlash SWI
 Family friendly pub quiz
 Rock and pop bingo

Thursday 18th January

Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Morning fitness
 Chair yoga
 Whiting Bay Thursday Club
 Quilt Arran
 Adult tennis
 10th Ayrshire Shiskine Cub Scouts and Beavers
 Arran ladies's netball
 Ladies' hockey
 Arran Soul Choir
 Arran Bridge Club
 Brodick Embroidery Group
 General knowledge quiz

Friday 19th January

Arran Vets
 Arran Vets
 Yoga
 Hydrofit
 Smart Recovery meeting
 Lochranza children's badminton
 AA meeting
 Arran Youth Foundations
 Tae Kwon-do
 Live music – Cams Campbell
 Lochranza adults' badminton

Saturday 20th January

Flow yoga
 Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Army Cadets
 Eco Savvy Shiskine & Blackwaterfoot hub launch
 Eco Savvy music workshop
 Blackwaterfoot bowls
 Family games
 Fun in the pool
 Soul Proud, Arran Soul Choir
 Live music – Tim Pomeroy
 Over-21s disco

Lamlash Church Hall, 10.15am - 12 noon
 Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick, 10.30am for 11am
 St Molios Hall, Shiskine, 11am
 10.30am-12.30pm and 1.30pm-3.30pm
 Kilmory Hall, 2pm - 4pm
 Brodick Hall, 4pm - 5pm
 Brodick Hall, 5.50pm-6.50pm
 Dunfion, Brodick, 5.30pm
 Shiskine Hall, 6pm
 Arran High School, Kids-6.30-7.30pm, Adults, 7.30pm-8.30pm
 Kinneil, Lamlash, 7pm - 8.30pm
 Auchrannie Sports Hall, 7.30pm-9pm
 Felicity's @ Eden Lodge, from 7.30pm
 Lamlash Church Hall, 7.30pm
 Lamlash Firestation, 7.30pm
 The PHT, 8.30pm
 Ormidale Hotel, 9.30pm

9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
 9am - 2pm and 4pm - 6pm
 Auchrannie Gym 9.30am - 10.30am
 Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick, 10.30am
 Lesser Hall, Whiting Bay, 2pm
 Lamlash Fire Station, 2pm - 4.30pm
 Shiskine Golf & Tennis Club from 5.30pm
 Shiskine Hall, 6pm - 7.30pm
 Arran High School, 6 - 7pm
 Ormidale Pavilion, 6.30pm - 8.00pm
 Arran High School, Lamlash, 7pm - 8.30pm
 Brodick Golf Clubhouse, 7.15pm
 Brodick Library, 7.30pm - 9.30pm
 Ormidale Hotel, 9pm

Surgery 9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
 Reception 9am - 2pm and 4pm - 6pm
 Auchrannie Spa Leisure, 9.30am - 10.30am
 Auchrannie Hotel Leisure, 9.45am - 10.45am
 Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick, 1.30pm - 3pm
 Lochranza Hall, 6-8pm
 Whiting Bay Hall, 7pm
 Church Hall, Brodick 7pm-9pm
 Arran High School, Lamlash, adults, 7pm - 9pm
 Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodick, 7.30pm
 Lochranza Hall, 8pm

Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick, 9am
 9.30am - 11am
 9.30am - noon
 Auchrannie Road 11am - 1pm
 Shiskine Hall, 11am - 3pm
 Whiting bay Village hall, 11am - 3pm
 Bowling Club, 1.30pm
 Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm-4pm
 Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm-5pm
 Lamlash Community Theatre, 7pm
 Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodick, 7.30pm
 Ormidale Hotel, 10pm

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Wintering wildfowl to the fore

The weather in December could best be described as changeable. There were mild periods with heavy rain, and cold, bright, dry spells. There were days with snow on the hills and occasionally on lower ground and the year ended by the island being swept

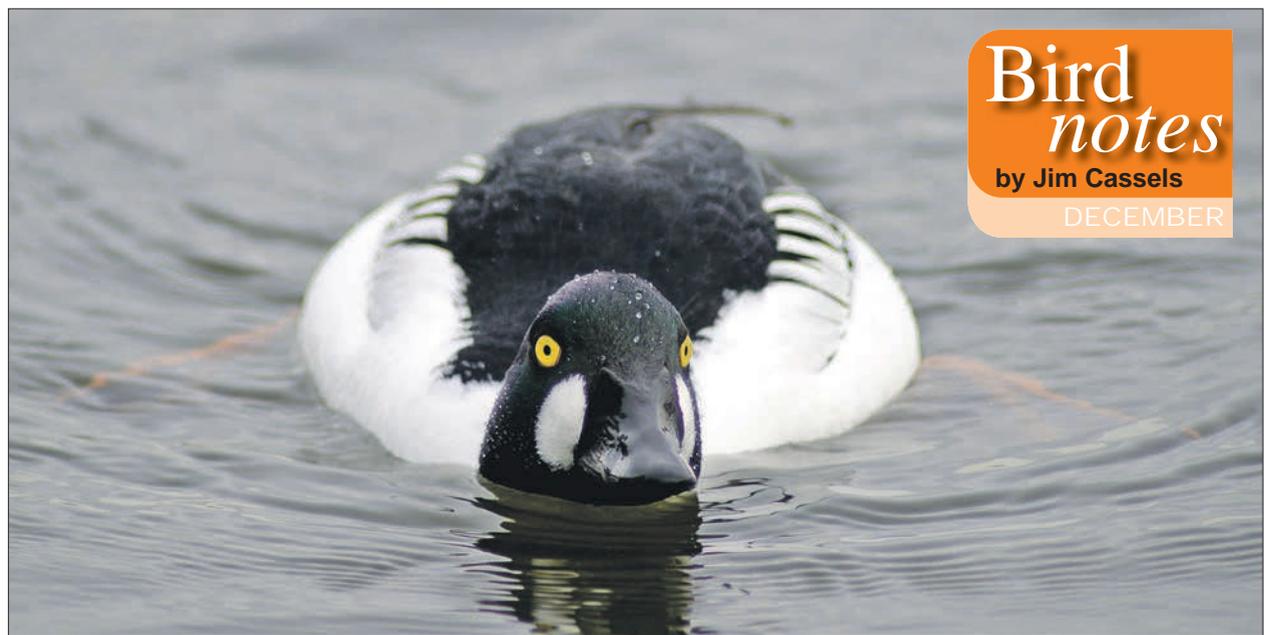
by a storm force Atlantic front.

Following on from the report of two juvenile white-tailed eagles on the west coast in November, which was the first report of this rare vagrant to Arran this year, an adult bird was reported in Clauchan Glen



An adult white-tailed eagle pictured in Clauchan Glen being mobbed by buzzards and raven.

Photograph: Clive and Sonia Harding.



Bird notes
by Jim Cassels
DECEMBER

Goldeneye, one of many species of wintering wildfowl on Arran in December. Photograph: Brian Couper.

on 2nd December. The observer's attention was drawn to a commotion with three buzzards and a raven calling and wheeling around a white-tailed eagle perched at the top of a broken-off lone pine. The mobbing by the smaller birds drove the eagle off. It dwarfed the other species

and gave great views of its short white tail and broad long wings as it flew south.

Other visitors in December included: seven purple sandpiper in Silver Sands on 1st, seven rook in Slidery on 9th, a brambling also in Slidery on 12th, 12 yellowhammer also in Slidery on 15th, a female blackcap in Cordon on 19th and 120 fieldfare with 45 redwing on Corriecravie Moor on 23rd. In addition there was a report of a chiffchaff in Slidery on 2nd. This regular summer visitor has been increasingly reported over-wintering in more southern parts of the UK.

Wintering wildfowl were to the fore including: 200 greylag goose in the Shiskine Valley on 10th, 42 wigeon in Machrie Bay on 12th, eight pink-footed goose in Hazelburn on 20th, two white-fronted goose flying over Corriecravie Moor on 24th, five goldeneye at Clauchlands

on 28th, 50 teal in South Carlo on 29th and a whooper swan by Mossend Pond on 31st.

Groups of wintering birds included: 100 jackdaw in the Shiskine Valley on 3rd, 11 wren roosting in a reed bed in Kildonan on 9th, 22 lapwing in Kilpatrick on 11th, 120 skylark in Slidery on 15th, 28 snipe in Hazelburn on 19th, six great northern diver off Blackwaterfoot on 21st, 1,000 gull mainly common gull and herring gull in Hazelburn on 29th and 500 woodpigeon by Mossend Pond on 30th.

Other interesting records this month included: two black-throated diver off Cosyden on 12th, a kingfisher by Fisherman's Walk also on 12th, a woodcock by the entrance to Cnoc na Dail on 16th, a pair of goosander in Catacol Bay on 20th, a little grebe in Loch Ranza on 30th, a moorhen in Mossend Pond on 31st and a dipper at the mouth of the Glenashdalewater also on 31st.

Gardens provide a safe refuge for some birds in winter. Among the more unusual records received were: 10 long-tailed tit in Lamlash on 15th, a treecreeper in Invercloy on 18th, two common crossbill in Slidery on 19th, four goldcrest in Shannochie on 21st, a great spotted woodpecker in the Lak-in on 28th, a Lesser redpoll in Cordon on 29th and five siskin in Torbeg on 30th.

Finally, here is a date for your diary: the weekend of Saturday January 27 to Monday January 29. That weekend stock up your bird feeders, spend one hour of your weekend watching your garden birds, and note down the highest number you see of each bird species.

This is the weekend of the Big Garden Birdwatch. Last year nearly half a million people throughout the UK and more than 30 on Arran took part in this valuable exercise. For more information and the free starter pack, visit the RSPB website at www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch/. If you do decide to take part, please share your records with me.

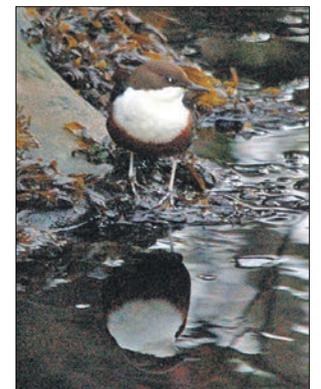
Enjoy your birding.

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Treecreeper, one of the more unusual birds seen in gardens this December.

Photograph: Brian Couper



Dipper, one to look out for at the mouth of our burns during the winter.

Photograph: Arthur Duncan.

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THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday January 10, 1998

Prodigal dog

A four-day search for a missing Cavalier King Charles spaniel ended in joy.

When three-year-old Bonzo disappeared on Kildonan beach, while they were walking their three spaniels, owners Jean and Jim Bentley feared the worst. He could have been trapped in a hole or even washed out to sea.

They scoured the area with son Christopher but to no avail. Many friends, some with dogs of their own, also searched the beach and cliffs in both directions and notices were posted in shops and bars around the southend.

But just when hope seemed forlorn, four days after going missing, Bonzo was found trapped in a bramble bush where he had lain quietly waiting for his rescuers.

Jean said: 'We must have walked past him several times, but this time Jim saw his two eyes shining in the bush.' He was more than pleased to see his owners and none the worse for his experience.

Salmon stocking

Arran Angling Association has completed its 1997 restocking programme. Some 4,000 salmon parr between 3in and 7in long were gently tipped into the Sliderry Water on Wednesday morning by Fishery Board bailiff Bob Scott.

Freshwater fishing has suffered in recent years from low water and poor fish numbers. In an effort to improve the situation, Bob told the *Banner*, the association had restocked the Iorsa, Machrie and Sliderry Waters with around 15,000 baby fish in the past year.

These tiddlers have all been reared at the hatchery at Dougarie and, amazingly, this whole batch of 4,000 came from one hen salmon mother.

Normally only about four per cent of salmon born in the wild actually survive to return as adult fish.

By carefully rearing the fish to this size, the association is hoping to double that figure.



Bailiff Bob Scott restocks Sliderry Water with baby salmon. 01_b02twe04



Lavinia Gibbs of Dougarie Estate conducted the official re-opening of the Pirnmill village shop and is seen here wishing new owner Mike Patterson the best of luck with the venture. 01_B02twe02



Jean Bentley is delighted Bonzo (centre) is back home with sister Suki and mother Polly. 01_B02twe01



January gales last Saturday lash the harbour and car park at Blackwaterfoot. 01_B02twe03



This angry mute swan is one of a family of swans who visit Brian and Brenda Wilson at the Royal Hotel in Whiting Bay every day looking for food. 01_b02twe05

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Parties to this agreement are the Publisher, Wyvex Media Limited Limited on the one part and the Advertiser on the other part. The Publisher publishes newspapers, magazines, books and provides advertising space therein or provides for the delivery of advertising materials to the public within these publications.

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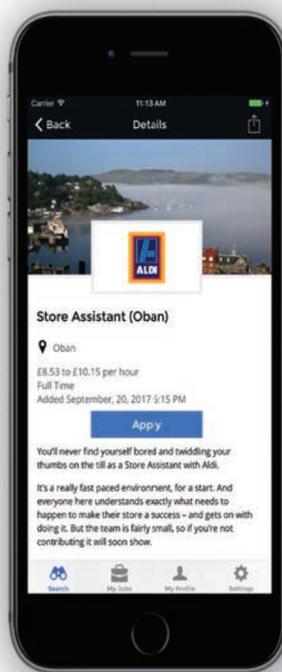
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Brodick Golf Club - Green Keeper

Brodick Golf Club are seeking applications for the position of Green Keeper.

Good rates of pay and conditions.

Applications to : secretary@brodickgolfclub.com
or in writing to - The Secretary, Brodick Golf Club,
Brodick, Isle of Arran, KA27 8DL



Brodick Golf Club

Clubhouse Manager and Steward

Brodick Golf Club invite Applications for the post of Clubhouse Manager and Steward.

The successful applicant will be responsible for running the Clubhouse and Bar. Experience in the licensed trade would be an advantage but not essential as full training will be given.

Franchise Caterer

Brodick Golf Club are also looking for applications for the position of Franchise Caterer.

This is an opportunity to run your own business. Applicants should be suitably qualified and have experience in the catering trade.

The positions of steward and caterer could be considered as a joint application.

Applications should be emailed to :
secretary@brodickgolfclub.com
or in writing to - The Secretary, Brodick Golf Club,
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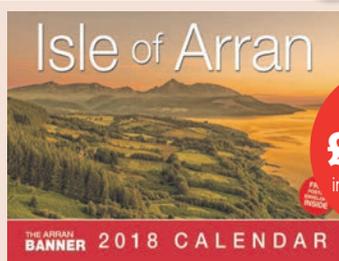


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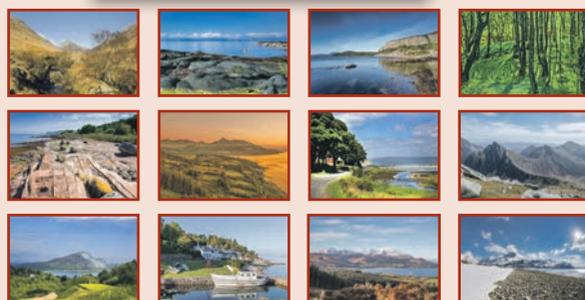
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Public Notices

EDUCATION AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT CHILDREN ENTITLED TO START P1 - SESSION 2018/2019

Children who attain the age of 5 years between 1 March 2018 and 28 February 2019 should be registered for education during the week commencing Monday 15 January 2018.

As times vary from school to school, parents are asked to check registration arrangements with the appropriate catchment primary school for the area in which they live. The child's birth certificate and proof of address should be produced at the time of registration.

Information on Registration can be found on the Council's web site: www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk (Education and Learning pages).

If you wish your child to attend a school out with your catchment area you must register at your catchment school then submit a placing request. This can be done online by accessing www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk (Education and Learning pages).

Placing request assistance can also be obtained by telephoning 01294 310000.

Registration at your catchment area school does not guarantee entry to that school.

JOHN BUTCHER

Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment)

EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE REGISTRATION WEEK

Parents are advised that registration for the early learning and childcare intake in August 2018 takes place from 29 January 2018 - Friday 2 February 2018.

Children with dates of birth between 1 March 2014 and 28 February 2016 can be registered with Local Authority Early Years establishments or Partner Providers of early learning and childcare in North Ayrshire during this time.

Parents wishing to register their child for early learning and childcare should apply directly to the class/centre of their choice. A list of all Local Authority and Partner establishments can be found on the North Ayrshire Council website, www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk (Education and Learning pages).

The child's birth certificate should be produced at the time of registration. It is not always possible to place all children in the early year's class/centre of their choice. You will be asked to state your second and third choice of establishment.

Please note:

- There are no 'catchment areas' for early years class/centres and parents can choose to send their child to the most suitable class/centre, if a place is available.

- Attending an early years class within a primary school does not influence whether your child will be able to transfer to that school in Primary 1.

Please note that North Ayrshire Council operates an Admissions Policy which clearly describes priorities.

Further information on North Ayrshire Council's Admissions Policy and Early Years places can be found on the North Ayrshire website, www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk

Elma Murray
Chief Executive
Cunninghame House
IRVINE KA12 8EE



Arran Historical Society AGM

The AGM will be held on

Monday 15th January at 1.30pm
in Brodick Golf Clubhouse

A light lunch of soup and sandwiches, tea and coffee will be served before the formalities.

Following the meeting Ed O'Donnolly will present a short film of Life on Arran after World War II.

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CHURCH NOTICES

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Parishes of North Arran, Brodick, Corrie, Lochranza, Pirnmill 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.

Sunday 14th January
Pirnmill, and Lochranza Churches Together
10.15am Morning Worship at Pirnmill Church
Shiskine Church, 12 noon Morning Worship.
Brodick Church, 10.30am Morning Worship.
Corrie Church - 11.30am, Prayer meeting, 12noon, Morning Worship.
There will also be a Service of Worship in Montrose House at 1.30pm.

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

(Part of the Worldwide Anglican Church)
St Margaret's, Whiting Bay.
Sunday 14th January
Holy Communion 11am.
Rev Canon Simon Mackenzie
Priest-in-Charge.
Coffee after service.
ALL WELCOME

ARRAN FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

(continuing)
Sunday 14th January
Morning Service 11am
Trust Housing Lounge, Glen Estate, Brodick
Evening Service 6.30pm
5 Glen Road, Brodick
All welcome

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Kilmory linked with Lamlash "A faith to proclaim ~ a fellowship to share"
Sunday 14th January
Rev Lily McKinnon
Kilmory - 10 am
Lamlash - 11.30 am.
All welcome, including families; children's area
Scottish Charity SC015072

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Whiting Bay and Kildonan Church of Scotland, Charity Number: SC014005
Sunday 14th January
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 most welcome.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, QUAKERS

Sunday meeting in Brodick Hall at 11am
Telephone 700346 and 302246
Come and join us

ARRAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Minister: Rev Vince Jennings
Sunday 14th January
Service 11am
Ormidale Pavilion
Tea and coffee after the service
Wednesday at 7.30pm Home fellowship group for bible study and prayer.
Telephone 600222
Everyone warmly invited

ARRAN FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Shiskine 11am (church on road between Blackwaterfoot and Machrie)
Brodick 6pm
Rev Benjamin Van Rensburg

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Sunday 14th January
Sunday Mass 11am

BIRTH

PARK: Freyja Moon Park born New Year's day to proud parents Kirsty and Grant.

DEATHS

CRAIG: Daniel – Peacefully at Arran War Memorial Hospital on Sunday, 31st December 2017, sadly missed by all the family. Funeral took place on Thursday, 11th January 2018.

HEAD: Mrs Elizabeth Head, mother to Marc and Denise, grandmother, great-grandmother and sister, died peacefully at Cooridoon nursing home on the evening of Thursday, 4th January. The family would like to say a massive thanks to the staff of Cooridoon for their kindness and care over the past years and in particularly the last few weeks. Although they might describe it as 'just doing their job' their efforts went much beyond that.

Arran Ladies face Dumfries

Arran Ladies hockey team will resume their league season today (Saturday) with a home match against Dumfries Ladies 2s at the Ormidale astro turf.

Having enjoyed their festive break, and survived their Christmas party, the ladies will be taking on Dumfries Ladies 2s who are currently five points behind then in the West District Women's Hockey League. Arran Ladies who are currently sitting in third place and are sitting level on points with GHK Ladies 3s.

Pass back will be at 2.30pm



Bowlers from across Arran gather for the annual Boxing Day bowling at Shiskine.

Boxing Day bowls gathering

Bowlers who attend the Shiskine Bowling Club on Boxing Day have established a tradition that has now become an annual event.

This year, 10 bowlers gathered for

rink games at the club and, although the weather was chilly, they managed to complete 15 ends before the light and cold sent them indoors for light refreshments.

Almost all the island clubs were represented among the players attending, all enjoying the experience and inviting others to join them next year.



Arran Golfers' Association

Sunday January 7, Winter League/Duncan Trophy round three at Shiskine Golf and Tennis Club. Many thanks to the greens staff for the excellent condition of the course. Also, a big thanks to the catering staff for providing very tasty soup and sandwiches.

It was a cold and crisp day at Shiskine; the ground was firm, yet the course was playable. The bounces were unpredictable, but really it was a smashing winter's day to be out on the links.

First match out was the local derby and a late call-off on the Shiskine team was a blow. A friendly game and the spoils were shared.

Next game out was the top of the table clash between Lamlash and Whiting Bay. A close match with Lamlash just edging it by 2.5 to 1.5. Last match out was Brodick vs Corrie, and Brodick won this by 3 to 1.

So the table after three rounds is: Lamlash 6pts, Whiting Bay 4pts, Brodick 4pts, Shiskine 3pts, Machrie Bay 1pts, Corrie 0pts.

A very happy new year to all Arran golfers.

Fixture: Sunday February 4, Winter League/Duncan Trophy at Machrie Bay Golf Club.

Whiting Bay Golf Club
Sunday January 7, AGA Winter League, v Lamlash GC at Shiskine.

Having lost in the first two pairings out, a battling half and a win in the final two was not enough to avoid going down by 2 and 1/2 to 1 and 1/2 to a strong Lamlash team that now sits undefeated at the top of the league table.

WBGC sits in second place and faces the home club in the next round at Machrie Bay GC on Sunday February 4.

Fixtures: Sunday 14th January – Winter Cup

round four. One draw at 10am. Cards for any games played out with the draw to be in by 3pm.

Machrie Bay Golf Club
Tuesday January 2, Winter Cup. 1 B Sherwood 78-14=64, 2 P Betley 81-10=71, 3 J Pennycott 85-13=72.

Fixture: Tuesday January 16, Lochranza Hotel Cup.

Lamlash Golf Club
Sunday January 7, AGA Winter League. Lamlash v Whiting Bay at Shiskine. Lamlash won 2 1/2: 1 1/2. Well done to Lamlash, now top of the League.

Fixtures: Sunday January 14, Glenburn Cup at 9.30 and noon.

Thursday January 18,

yellow medal at 11am.

Brodick Golf Club
Sunday January 7, Stableford Sweep, 5 played, NQ. Bob McCrae 8, 34pts, David Hendry 14, 32pts, Stuart Brodie 16, 25pts.

Fixture: Sunday January 14, Brandon Qualifier and Winter Cup at 9am and noon.

Corrie Golf Club
Saturday January 6, sweep. Only five brave souls turned up with the 'money machine' Alan Smith winning by a distance from Donald Logan.

Fixtures: Saturday January 13, sweep, ballots at 9am and 12.30pm. Monday January 15, Monday Cup, ballot at noon.



Gator Kerr and Alice Anderson won the D S Bannatyne Shield in the mixed foursomes format competition held at Shiskine.

Arran jockey will give punters a run for their money

Continued from page 20

The journey to success has not been an easy one though. A typical day starts at 5.30am riding for her boss or one of a few trainers who she rides for, including Henry Candy, Mark Usher, John Berry and Phil MacEntee, before heading to the race course. It could be Lingfield or Kempton to Wolverhampton or Newcastle, sometimes riding at two courses in one day and three or four races a day. There are also frequent evening meetings so Nicola often ends up not getting home until 11pm or later. Her agent Phil Shea books her rides and decides which horse she will ride if there is more than one option in the same race.

However, the Arran connection is never far away and Nicola has met a good number of people who know the island, one in par-

ticular being Lady Jean's god-daughter.

Her career highlights to date include a group two winner with Krytos, trained by John Berry at Doncaster on St Leger Day, a trip to Belgium representing team GB in the European Apprentice Jockey Series and being nominated for female jockey of the year, which was won by Josie Gordon, one of Nicola's inspirations.

She finished runner-up in The Silk Series for female jockeys last year and is also leading the apprentice all-weather championship which concludes in April.

Her goals this year include becoming apprentice champion and riding out her claim. Nicola's family on Arran enjoy watching her career on Sky's *At the Races* and other racing programmes.

She had a flying visit home at Christmas. Mum Susie said: 'She is always on the go. She only managed home for two days and that was the first time she had been back since last Christmas, but we are very proud of her.'



Nicola rides Krytos into the winners' enclosure at Doncaster on St Leger Day.

Talk to us

Send your news and photographs to editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Nicola Currie on Krytos, which gave her a group two win.



In full flow, Nicola in action on Pearl Specter.

SPORT



INSIDE THIS WEEK:
Happy shield winners
at Shiskine Golf Club

Nicola is odds on for horse racing glory

A young Arran jockey is making a name for herself in the tough world of horse racing.

Nicola Currie may be just 24, but she has been on the horse racing circuit for more than four years and has racked up more than 250 races in that time, including a string of wins. Add being nominated for female jockey of the year and representing Team GB in the European Apprentice Series, and it is clear to see Nicola is going places in 2018.

Nicola was born and brought up on Arran and attended Shiskine Primary and Arran High schools.

She has always had a love of horses and, at 16, she followed her dream by go-

ing to Outridge College in Edinburgh to study horse management.

Her first job in racing was with Lucinda Russell and Peter Scudamore, trainers for One for Arthur who won the Grand National last year. Initially wanting to be a jump jockey, it was Peter who convinced her to get a flat licence, as she was too light for jumping, and her first competitive race was for them at Hamilton Racecourse.

While visiting Lambourn, Berkshire, where, next to Newmarket, is the hub of racing, Nicola realised that she needed to be based there if she was going to forge a successful career. Now in her third year at Lambourn, having worked

for numerous trainers and including a short stint back home where she was contemplating her future in the industry – having taken part in only the bare minimum of races – Nicola returned to horse racing with a vengeance.

Now an apprentice jockey in former jump jockey Richard Hughes yard, her career has taken off. To date, she has had 263 races with 57 placed and 21 winners. An apprentice gets a 7lb claim which is gradually reduced as the number of winners increase, to lose the claim and become professional 100 winners must be achieved. Nicola recently rode her 20th winner and so reduced her claim to 5lb.

Continued on page 19



Nicola rides Killim at Brighton.

Nicola Currie
Apprentice Jockey
Richard Hughes Racing

Wins: 2
Prize Money: £19,384

#SilkSeries #WSW2017

The Silk Series **bet365**

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A poster featuring Nicola for The Silk Series for female jockeys in which she finished runner-up.

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