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PAGES 16 & 17

Sale talks to start at Brodick Golf Club

Hugh Boag

editor@arranbanner.co.uk

Members of Brodick Golf Club have voted to start talks with a consortium interested in buying the club.

In a packed clubhouse on Monday night members voted nearly four to one to proceed to further investigate the possibility of selling the golf course and the buildings of the 120-year-old club.

As previously reported in the *Banner* an offer to buy has been made by club professional John Wilson. He told the meeting he had a consortium of German businessmen ready to invest substantially in the club, without detailing any figures.

However, Mr Wilson, who has been at Brodick for nine months, was met by opposition from the members when he refused to disclose who his backers were or anything

about their financial background repeating only several times that they were 'ultra high net worth individuals', who are people with assets of £20 million or more.

A total of 84 members packed the clubhouse for the meeting and at the outset Mr Wilson said the 'huge turnout' showed how much they cared about the club. He said that under the purchase a new company would be formed to run the clubhouse and the golf course but he said for the members who paid their £386 annual membership there would be no discernible difference for them as they would operate as 'a club within a club'.

However, what he said they would see was improvements to the golf course and clubhouse facilities and a change in the number of visitors. 'Obviously

Continued on page two

The good, the Sinbad and the ugly



It's panto time on Arran and audiences packed the community theatre last week to watch performances on *Sinbad's Desert Adventure*. Here we see Mark Nelson as Sinbad with a host of the backing cast. Full report and pictures starts on page 11.

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Brodick Golf Club sale talks start

Continued from page 1
 ously we see potential in the facilities here,' Mr Wilson said.

But despite repeated attempts by the audience he would still not be drawn on who the backers were saying it was 'not relevant' at this stage. But some members accused Mr Wilson of treating them like 'idiots' and asking how they could vote on a proposal that was little more than heresy.

However, one member suggested that without considering what was proposed they would be 'voting against the best thing that could have happened to this club or the worst.'

It was also argued by members that they were

only the custodians of the club, which was first formed in 1897, for future generations but this was countered by the views that without investment the golf course was going to continue 'disappearing into the sea'.

And Russell Duncan produced membership figures to show its ageing membership. Of the 256 members just 58 are under 50, 90 are aged between 50 and 60 and 108 are over 70 years of age. 'That is not sustainable and without new membership the club will close in 20 years. It is much the same across all Scottish golf clubs and there's no doubt that many of those who fail to take action will

not exist in 10 or 20 years' time.'

Mr Wilson said he believed his proposals would be good for Arran, good for Brodick, and good for the club and its members, but there remained opposition with one lady suggesting: 'I don't believe in fairytales. It sounds a bit too good to be true and I would like to know who we are dealing with.'

Club captain and meeting chairman Lindsay Keir said: 'It is up to the potential buyers to produce a contract and that will have no cost to Brodick Golf Club. I don't think this vote is binding us to anything.'

Asked why the club didn't open itself up to other of-



John Wilson at Brodick Golf Club which he hopes to buy. 01_B51brodick01

fers. Alastair Dobson insisted: 'We are not for sale at the moment. There has been a potential offer and it is a no brainer in my opinion that we should consider it.'

A vote was then taken

with 55 supporting the proposal to proceed with negotiations and 15 rejecting it. Not all those attending were eligible to vote.

Afterward Mr Keir said: 'I am pleased the club is going forward with the pro-

posals and we are to listen to what the offer will be.'

Mr Wilson added: 'I am pleased with the outcome of the meeting and will now discuss it with the consortium to take the proposals forward in the new year.'



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Biggest budget deficit in North Ayrshire history

North Ayrshire Labour has slammed the SNP government's budget as one that will 'rip the heart out of communities'.

They claim last week's draft budget leaves a budget blackhole of around £17m in North Ayrshire Council's finances for 2018/19 – the biggest single year deficit in the local authorities history.

Labour had previously revealed that the Scottish government directly controls 83 per cent of the council's budget. The only tax power available to councillors is to raise the Council Tax but the SNP Government have again announced a cap on increases of three per cent. A three per cent increase in Council Tax would only raise £1.7m in North Ayrshire - a 10th of the council's financial blackhole.

Speaking after the draft budget was published, Labour leader Joe Cullinane said: 'This SNP budget leaves North Ayrshire Council facing the biggest deficit in its history.'

'It leaves our local ser-

vices on life support. £73m has been cut from the council's budget since 2010 and we now face a huge deficit next year of £17m. After years of austerity there is no fat left in local government, these cuts will cut straight to the bone.'

'This SNP budget will quite literally rip the heart out of communities across Scotland with everything from libraries to community centres, schools to elderly care and anti-poverty initiatives all under threat.'

However, the SNP council group has welcomed the budget and say that under current SNP Government proposals, North Ayrshire Council's funding settlement will again see a slight increase this year, to £267,887 million.

North Ayrshire SNP finance spokeswoman Councillor Christina Larsen commented: 'I am pleased to once again see a slight increase in the proposed funding settlement for North Ayrshire Council. The finance secretary managed to avoid making cuts despite having to deal with

more than £200 million to Scotland's block grant, as announced by the Tories only last month.'

'Apart from this funding settlement, North Ayrshire Council will of course also continue to be allocated its share of a variety of central resources throughout the year, such as the new £179 million of the Scottish Attainment Fund for 2018-19, including £120 million in Pupil Equity Funding to be spent across Scotland at the discretion of headteachers on closing the attainment gap.'

'Other resources will include a share of the £243 million in 2018-19 to work further towards increasing fully funded early learning and childcare to 1,140 hours from 2020.'

'On top of that, the Labour administration has powers at its disposal to raise another £1.863 million if it opts to increase Council Tax by three per cent, giving North Ayrshire Council an overall real-terms increase in the funds at their disposal to support local services.'

Landslide road due to reopen

Specialist contractors have been on site since Thursday and once the boulder has been made safe the road will be reopened

Council roads chiefs were hoping to have the main road south of Whiting Bay reopen today (Saturday) after a landslide last weekend.

The landslide was caused by the collapse of a rock face at Largybeg, known locally as The Gherry, which partially spilled on to the road smashing trees on the way. However, the majority of the boulder fall was halted by the substantial concrete wall which was built some years ago for just such protection.

However, concern over a dangerously hanging boulder meant the road between Whiting Bay and Dippin Head has been shut all week leading to a lengthy diversion for drivers and disrupting school bus routes and deliveries to the south end.

Roads chiefs immediately applied for a 21-day temporary road closure order leading to fears, sparked by social media, that the road could remain closed over

Christmas and New Year.

However, North Ayrshire Council officials say the order was simply a statutory notice which was required to be in place following an emergency road closure.

A council roads official said: 'On visiting the site it was evident that material was still falling from the rock face and there was a particular concern for a large boulder at the top of the rock face that was showing signs of movement. The boulder is of significant size and should this come down it would land on the road. The decision was taken to close the road immediately in the interests of public safety.'

Specialist contractors have been on site since Thursday and once the boulder has been made safe the road will be reopened.

As the official explained: 'The works required to scale the rock face and remove the boulder are of a specialist nature and a con-



The road closed at the landslide at Largybeg. 01_B51landslide01

tractor experienced in this type of work has been engaged to attend and remove the boulder. They will contain the rock with rock netting and tension cables and once secured will break the rock into manageable pieces in-situ. It is therefore hoped to have the road reopened on Saturday.'

Drivers had been warned not to attempt to access this route under any circumstances until it has been reopened.

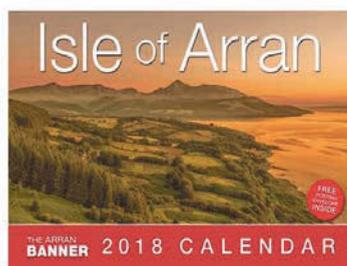
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Santa spreads fe



Darci Bunyan of Brodick receives an early present from Santa who said he would be visiting her on Christmas Day. 01_B51santa03

Santa, having made some headway with his elves in creating and wrapping Christmas gifts, has been spotted touring Arran villages ahead of the big day.

At the Isle Be Wild play park at Brodick Castle and Country Park, National Trust for Scotland staff created an all-natural grotto where Santa met excited children. Festive mince pies and treats were available at the cafe where children lined up to meet Santa after enjoying an adventurous afternoon in the play park.

At Corrie and Sannox village hall children were treated to a ball pit and bouncy castle along with gingerbread men decorating and a host of activities provided by organisers Shona Catriona Dunsmuir and Marie-Louise Craig, who also had lots of tasty treats and snacks for the children.

In the corner of the well deco-



Children remain momentarily motionless while playing the frozen statue game in Brodick hall. 01_B51santa12



Euan and Katie Fleming were delighted to meet Santa with mum Lindsay Baughan. 01_B51santa04



Peter Mochan receives a present from Santa at the Corrie community Christmas party. 01_B51santa07



After the children had finished, National Trust for Scotland staff took the opportunity to tell Santa what they wanted for Christmas. 01_B51santa06



Brodick children form two rings while playing pass the parcel. 01_B51santa11

festive cheer across Arran

rated hall, children had to make their way through a cardboard forest complete with hanging snow particles to enter the snowy cavern of Santa's grotto where Santa listened to children's requests and gave them each a gift. Adults were also well catered for with delicious nibbles and treats from Red's Vintage Tea Parties and the Chai Caddy.

Large sack

At the children's party in Brodick hall Santa arrived with a large sack of Christmas presents.

After an afternoon of fun games, ranging from pass the parcel to frozen statues with much creative dancing, children enjoyed a healthy lunch mixed with some tasty treats and snacks. Parents and grandparents watched over the children as they took part in activities suitable for all ages and accompanied by music from the DJ.



Young Noah MacLean enjoys his festive snacks and treats in Brodick with his grandmother. 01_B51santa14



Logan Young joins six-month-old Alfaigh Lambie on Santa's knee at Corrie while Allaigh Lambie sets to work on her cupcake. 01_B51santa08



Jenson Roberts makes sure that Santa will be visiting his house on Christmas day. 01_B51santa09



Brodick children tuck into snacks and lunch after an afternoon filled with fun and games. 01_B51santa13



Young Louis along with his sister Darci and brother Corey tell Santa what's on their Christmas list. 01_B51santa05

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Market report from Stirling

United Auctions had forward 224 cows and 9,960 store lambs at their sale in Stirling on Friday December 15.

The prices were: store cattle - Glenkiln (AAX Blk) £655, 242p; Clauchlands (AAX Hfrs) £955, 208p; Glenkiln (AAX Hfrs) £620, 222p; Clauchlands (LimX Hfrs) £840, 230p.

Cows - Clauchlands (B&W) £745, 132p; Birchburn (SimX) £1030, 149p; Craigraineach (LimX) £925, 134p.

Store lambs - Bridge (TexX) £61; Kirkpatrick (TexX) £57.50; Bellevue (TexX) £56; Dougarie (Chev) £47; Shedock (Mule) £51.50; Bellevue & Springfield (Mule) £49; Glenkiln (Cross) £57.50; Springfield (Ewes) £62; Dougarie (Tups) £59.

Prime lambs - Moor (TexX) £98. Cast ewes - Craighdu (TexX) £128.

Arran schools set to be smoke-free zones

NORTH Ayrshire Council has underlined its commitment to the wellbeing and health of young people by adopting smoke-free zones at schools.

As well as the zones at the school grounds, including the front gates, all play-parks will be a no-go area for smokers at Arran High School and the island's seven primary schools.

The council's proposals will start from the return of schools in the new year, with every school on board and supportive of the initiative.

One of the council's key priorities is 'helping all people stay safe, healthy and active' and this latest

pledge supports this.

And the North Ayrshire community planning partnership – of which the council is a key partner – recently signed up to the ASH Scotland 'Charter for a Tobacco-free Generation' as part of their social impact pledges. This charter has six key principles that focus on reducing the impact of smoking in children – with smoke-free grounds considered an absolute priority.

Signs will be erected across the parks and schools which will act as deterrents to people thinking about lighting up.

As well as the young people, the council also



Arran High School to be a smoke-free zone. 01_B48school01

hopes to have smoke-free zones across their whole estate by March next year. The council is also working closely with the NHS Fresh Air-shire Smoking Cessation programme and will use this as an opportunity to offer support

to staff who wish to quit smoking

Council leader Joe Cullinane said: 'We are absolutely delighted to have made this commitment and statement.

'The health issues are well documented and a real problem here in North Ayrshire. There are other issues associated with poor health but smoking is right at the top of the list.

'As well as creating a safe and secure environment for our young people, it is

about sending out the right message to them.

'We are trying to create a healthier North Ayrshire and the young people are absolute key to this. We're delighted that our schools are right behind this and fully supportive of this initiative. We are also looking at our whole estate and hope we can finalise this shortly.'

These plans support the Scottish government's aim of having a tobacco-free generation by 2034.

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Festive fun for Whiting Bay pupils

WHITING Bay primary pupils have been busy in the run up to Christmas with a host of festive events leading up to the big day.

Putting their acting and

singing skills on display, pupils impressed parents and grandparents with their production of The Snow Queen in the village hall. Singing once again for an audience, pupils then raised

£283.64 at the Christmas coffee afternoon organised by the house captains, while enthusiastic pupils entertained the residents of Cooriedoon Nursing Home with their carol singing.



Organised by the house captains, the Christmas coffee afternoon proved to be a huge success.



Pupils impress the audience with their production of The Snow Queen.

Blue is best as Arran creamery celebrates success at world's

The Bellevue Creamery is celebrating winning a hefty slice of awards, including the best cheese in Scotland, at the World Cheese Awards - the largest cheese competition in the world dedicated to celebrating excellence across the globe.

The Arran cheese makers won four awards for locally-made soft cheeses Bellevue brie and camembert - and the best Scottish cheese and gold awards for their Bellevue blue, after competing against 3,000 other cheeses from across six continents.

The cheeses were judged by 230 cheese makers, ex-

perts, retailers and cheese buyers who selected those worthy of a bronze, silver or gold award based on the rind, body and the colour, texture, consistency and most importantly, the taste.

Arran blue was the highest rated with a gold award, as well as being named the best Scottish cheese, while the brie took silver and the camembert earned a noteworthy bronze.

The Bellevue Cheese Company located near Blackwaterfoot is part of the Arran Cheese Shop family and has previously won a silver medal award for its camembert and a

gold award for its Arran blue, which is a pasteurised semi-soft blue cheese similar to the French Bleu de Auvergn.

Making the achievement of winning the best cheese in Scotland even more remarkable is that the Bellevue company is a small batch artisan producer which, when competing against the largest cheese producers, came out on top.

When asked about the recipe for his cheese being ranked among the best Scotland has to offer, Bellevue dairy manager Calum Chaplin said: 'We are delighted to have won these awards for our cheeses. The success of our cheese not only lies with the skills of the cheese makers, who know when to adjust the formulas for the seasons and changing conditions, but it is also owing to the quality of our Arran milk and the unpolluted environment in which our milk and cheese is produced. For a relatively small producer winning the best Scottish cheese accolade and against such strong competition, we are extremely pleased and proud.'



Arran Cheese Shop's Gordon Kinniburgh and Bellevue Creamery's dairy manager Calum Chaplin along with cheese technician William McNally with their winning cheeses and awards. 01_B50cheese01



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Editorial

Christmas on Arran

It is said to be the most wonderful time of the year and on Arran such a sentiment could not be more true.

The range and variety of Christmas activities is quite remarkable.

The time and the trouble volunteers across the island take to organise children's parties, raising money to host them throughout the year, has to be applauded. And where do they find all these santas?

Then there are the Arran Singers, the Arran Brass Band, the Soul Choir to name but a few who give up their valuable time, week in, week out, to be ready to entertain at this time of year. While the panto too just gets everyone in the holiday mood.

Christmas on Arran starts with Santa's Sparkle and the Lamplash community really stepped up to the plate this year to make it happen. But throughout December all the villages have played their part with fayres, concerts, parties and events, not just for children, but to bring everyone in their communities together for the common good.

So, all that is left for us is to wish all our readers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thought for the week

And Mary said: 'My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me - holy is his name. (Luke 1:48)

Making Christmas

Sir,
I am writing on behalf of the parents of Pirnmill primary school. The highlight of the year for me was their Christmas show: Lights, Camel, Action. Clearly a lot of time, effort and enthusiasm had gone in by all the staff and, of course, the children and we would like them to know how much we appreciate all the blood, sweat and tears that must go in to such a production - a script that was written for 26 parts, not just 13!

The school was very well supported by members of the community from Pirnmill, Catacol and Lochranza and even further afield and for that everyone is very grateful, it made for a very full hall. A big thank you must go to all who contributed to the raffle and to the local businesses. The distillery always supports the school when asked for a donation and this year a very generous donation was made by the Co-op towards raffle prizes and refreshments. This helped raise much-needed funds for the school.

I would like to conclude by just saying thank you to everyone who turned up on

the night to watch and to lend a hand but most of all to the children for making our Christmas!

Yours,
**Kirsty Innes
Lochranza**

Passenger-only service

Sir,
It is good to see that the ferry committee has come up with the idea of a second ferry to operate year round from Lochranza.

But, in true form, it is missing the key point. What is required is a second ferry which privileges foot over vehicle passengers and which can be relied upon in almost all weather conditions so that important appointments can be kept. The new terminal is not suitable for foot passengers, since it asks too much of the encumbered and handicapped in terms of effort and travel distance.

As I have suggested before in your columns, what is really required is a dedicated passenger-only ferry operating from Brodick. An expanded Lochranza to Tarbert service would require foot passengers to be dependent upon buses for the long journey to Glasgow and even car driv-

ers would be faced with a daunting drive in winter in bad weather.

The means to provide a passenger-friendly service already exists at Brodick: the old pier is still in fair condition and would be entirely suitable for a smaller ship of a size similar to the Hebridean Isles. Such a ship could easily slip into any number of ports along the mainland and be largely immune to the bad weather which defeats the Caledonian Isles and doubtless will similarly affect the new Glen Sannox at Ardrossan.

Existing walking distances are short and on a level and the existing not very old terminal could continue to function as at present.

That would be a true lifeline service.

Yours,
**Ian Ferguson
Lamplash**

Historic ship help

Sir,
As you may know, MV Balmoral is the last seagoing passenger ship of her type and is a regular visitor in summer to the ports and piers around the UK. As with any older vessel, she takes a great deal of money to maintain and operate and the charity that owns her has been forced to issue an appeal for funds to keep our 68-year-old lady in operation.

The ship is maintained in Bristol by volunteers, and owned by a charity but is well known and much-loved by her many followers all round the UK - over two million people have sailed on her since 1949 when she was launched, she has been a Royal Yacht and was National Historic Ships 'flagship' in 2016. She is called: 'The small ship with the big heart' and famous for her friend-

ly crew and happy on board atmosphere.

We have a difficult task ahead with alterations resulting from changes to legislation and general maintenance to do, after a particularly poor summer season with low revenue and atrocious weather.

More information, news and updates and a donation page is available at www.heritageteamers.co.uk/balmoral/. Any help to preserve this historic ship, that would allow future generations to continue to enjoy its unique heritage, would be greatly appreciated.

Yours,
**Ross Floyd
MV Balmoral Fund Ltd**

Kidney Care

Sir,
I wanted to appeal to your readers to ask them to hold on to their used stamps this Christmas and donate them to Kidney Care UK to help us raise much-needed funds for kidney patients.

Every Christmas more than one billion cards are sent in the UK and for every 1kg of used stamps donated we can raise as much as £20 to help people with chronic kidney disease. There are 64,000 people being treated for kidney failure in the UK right now and 541 people are currently waiting for a transplant in Scotland.

Your support will help us to provide practical, financial and emotional support for kidney patients and their families; we believe no-one should face kidney disease alone, and especially not at Christmas.

You can read and download our step by step guide to collecting and donating used stamps at www.kidneycareuk.org.

Yours,
**Ewen Maclean
Kidney Care UK**

How to contact us

Arran Banner,
Brodick,
Isle of Arran,
KA27 8AJ
Phone: 01770 302142
News editor
Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk

Reporter
Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk

Advertising
Cecilia Paul
advert@arranbanner.co.uk

Head office
Wyx Media,
Lochavullin Industrial Estate,
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Emailed letters can only be considered if they have a name, full address and phone number.



Pirnmill primary pupils during their performance of Lights, Camel, Action.

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Changes to festive bin collections

North Ayrshire Council is reminding Arran residents to check their bin collection arrangements over the festive period.

That's because the Christmas and New Year bank holidays will bring changes to some waste and recycling collection services across North Ayrshire.

This year, Christmas Day falls on a Monday, while Tuesday is Boxing Day and the following Monday is New Year's Day and Tuesday January 2 are bank holidays, meaning there will be no waste collection service on those days.

The council has therefore issued a revised timetable for over the festive period

which will be two days later than normal. If your bin is normally collected on a Monday, there will be a Wednesday collection for the next two weeks. Similarly Tuesday collections will be on a Thursday and Wednesday collections on a Friday.

Residents are also being asked to present their bins by 7am on their collection day, so that the council's waste teams can work as efficiently as possible.

All households affected by the temporary changes will see their waste and recycling collections return to normal from Monday January 8.

Councillor Jim Montgomerie, cabinet member for place, said: 'We have done our best to keep disruption to the festive period waste collections to a minimum. 'We strongly advise all our residents whose collections would normally take place on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, to make a note of the changes and have their bins out for collection by 7am on their revised collection date. 'Households usually generate more waste over the festive period than usual and so we would also encourage residents to help us by making use of our household waste recycling centres.'

Arran's household waste recycling centre can be found at Market Road, Brodick. The centre will be closed on Monday December 25, Tuesday December 26, Monday January 1, and Tuesday January 2.



The Brodick coup is shut for four days over the festive holidays. 01_B51bin01

recycling centre can be found at Market Road, Brodick. The centre will be closed on Monday December 25, Tuesday December 26, Monday January 1, and Tuesday January 2.

The sites can be used to dispose of a range of recyclable materials and non-recyclable waste. Residents can also dispose of their real Christmas trees at the site.

GP surgeries closed for holidays

A National health campaign is reminding people to be prepared for GP surgery closures over the festive holidays.

The NHS Scotland Be Health-Wise this Winter campaign advises people to be aware that GP surgeries on Arran will be closed for four days at Christmas, reopening on Wednesday January 27, and again for four days at New Year.

If you are unlucky enough to get a cough, cold or flu, buying over the counter medicine, staying at home and keeping warm will make you feel much better. Of course, if your symptoms worsen, you should seek a routine doctor's appointment or contact NHS 24. General advice and information on how to stay healthy this winter can be found at www.nhsinform.scot or contact NHS inform on 0800 22 44 88.

SEASON'S GREETINGS from Waste Resources

Over the festive period collection days for your blue and grey bins will change.

Normal Collection Day	Festive Collection Day
Monday 25 December 2017	Wednesday 27 December 2017
Tuesday 26 December 2017	Thursday 28 December 2017
Wednesday 27 December 2017	Friday 29 December 2017
Monday 1 January 2018	Wednesday 3 January 2018
Tuesday 2 January 2018	Thursday 4 January 2018
Wednesday 3 January 2018	Friday 5 January 2018

The Household Waste Recycling Centre will be closed on **Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 December 2017** and **Monday 1 January 2018** and **Tuesday 2 January 2018**

Right Stuff
Cardboard
Paper and cards
Plastic bottles/trays
Aluminium cans
Glass bottles/jars

Wrong Stuff
Polystyrene
Electrical items
Black bin bags
Nappies
Textiles

Top tips for recycling in your blue bin



Please put your bin out for 7am on the morning of your collection



Arran Singers' concert brings Christmas warmth

The Arran Singers hosted their very successful annual Christmas Concert which raised £700 towards the Arran Churches Together fuel fund which goes towards helping the needy with heating costs during winter.

This year's Christmas concert by the Arran Singers in Whiting Bay hall provided the audience with a fine variety of enjoyable music, from both choir and guests, and, if audience reaction is a reflection of the music making, then it was a very successful concert indeed.

The choir is fortunate to be able to call on a number of members to introduce the programme, and

this year, Fiona Henderson proved to be both an informative and witty compere.

This being an event near Christmas, much of the music, from both choir and guest groups, was seasonal, with a fine mixture of sacred and secular, traditional and modern, solo, groups and full choir, as well as some audience participation.

Four new carols featured in the choir's contribution, all written by finalists in the 2015 BBC Carol Competition, including new settings of Sir Christemas and What Child Is This? All these new carols were really attractive, and the choir performed really well in some



Conductor Diana Hamilton presents Father Noel Colford with a cheque for the fuel fund as the Arran Singers look on.

quite demanding music. The choir were also able to take the audience on a trip down memory lane with a

clever compilation of children's favourites, and also swing a little through a Harry Warren medley.

Soloists from the choir also made telling contributions to the afternoon's enjoyment. We were treated to a lovely rendering of O Holy Night in a two-part arrangement beautifully sung by Sarah Thomson and Susan Dobson, while John Cruickshank gave a fine performance of This Nearly was Mine from South Pacific.

We are fortunate in Arran to have so much good music-making from a con-

siderable variety of groups within our relatively small community, as well as some very fine young musical talent. Two of the smaller groups were performing with distinction at the concert. The ladies' group Vivace gave us some exquisite three-part singing in two traditional carol arrangements, Coventry Carol and Away in a Manger, but also upped the tempo in Winter Wonderland and Rudolph, the Red-nosed Reindeer. Ain't Misbehavin', the mixed-voice group, gave us idiomatic and slick renderings of

two standards in the first half – You Make Me Feel So Young and Dream a Little Dream of Me, and two Christmas favourites in the second half.

Alison Provan gave a delightful performance of Gossec's popular Tambourin on the flute, her second appearance with the choir, and also played the important flute obbligato in Mike Silk's fine new setting of What Child Is This. The second young performer was the singer Nastassja Alberti, a young lady with a truly lovely voice, who sang The Christmas Song and Jerome Kern's Can't Help Lovin' That Man which was rightly acclaimed by the audience.

All credit to the Arran Singers and their soloists, under their conductor, Diana Hamilton, ably accompanied by Douglas Hamilton, and also to Vivace, Ain't Misbehavin', and all the soloists, for providing such an enjoyable afternoon's music, and also to the audience who attended, even in the bleak midwinter, and who joined in for some of the singing. Well done.

Diana Hamilton

Co-op carollers raise charity cash

Shoppers at the Brodick Co-op were treated to Christmas carols at the checkout on Saturday, accompanied by music from the Co-op's own Carol Harwood.

During the morning members of various Arran churches joined together



Carol Harwood provided the music for carollers and guests to sing Christmas carols. 01_B51coop02

er with shoppers to sing a number of favourite traditional Christmas songs, while raising money for charity. After lunch they were joined by members of the Arran Singers, replacing the usual music in the store with their uplifting and festive singing.



The Arran Singers perform a host of Christmas carols during an afternoon performance at the Brodick Co-op. 01_B51coop03

Important new information on Government support for Central Heating Systems: UPDATE NOV 2017

FACT 1
If you have electric storage heaters, an oil, electric or LPG boiler the Government will pay you up to £11680* to change over to an air source heat pump system which is more efficient, can be less costly to run and is kinder to the environment.

FACT 2
The Scheme and The Renewable Heat Incentive is available to home owners, landlords and businesses.

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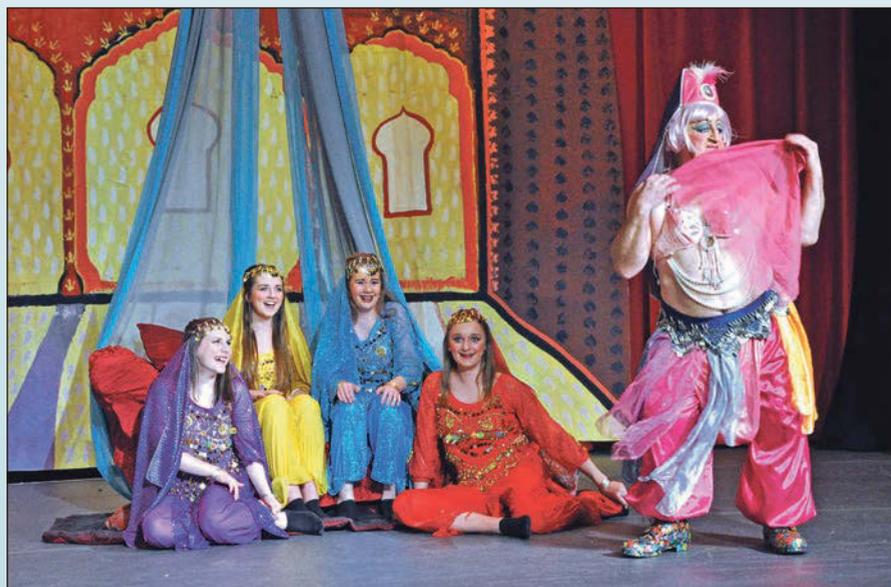
Sinbad panto serves up a special treat



The entire cast of Sinbad's Desert Adventure receive a resounding round of applause after the show. 01_B51panto01



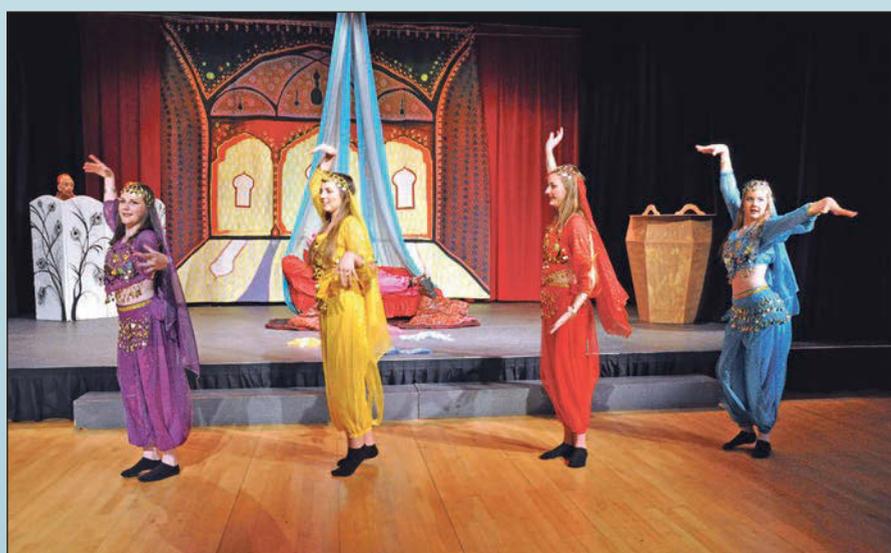
Genghis is frustrated with the stupidity of his bumbling henchmen. 01_B51panto07



Allan Little playing the Queen had his harem and the audience in stitches. 01_B51panto04



The pantomime moves into the audience where members are in fits of laughter. 01_B51panto12



The richly dressed harem ladies impress with their dancing skills. 01_B51panto05



Jill McKillop and Sheila Gilmore playing the roles of bumbling henchmen devising a wicked plot. 01_B51panto09



Genghis and the Queen look on in disgust at a travelling camel rider. 01_B51panto03

OFFERS & competitions

To enter, send separate entries (in the same envelope) with your name, address, telephone number and email address to Scottish Field Competitions, Fettes Park, 496 Ferry Road, Edinburgh EH5 2DL or enter at www.scottishfield.co.uk. Closing date, unless otherwise stated, is 31 January 2018. Winners drawn from all competitions also enter a prize draw to win a bottle of Berry Bros. & Rudd Islay Reserve whisky.

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Entrants must be 18 or over. Employees of Scottish Field, the competition promoters, and their direct families are ineligible to enter. No purchase necessary. The winner will be first correct entry drawn after closing date. No cash alternative is available. The winner will be informed by telephone. Promoter reserves the right to request post publicity. Indicate if you do not wish to receive further information from promoter. Usual Scottish Field rules apply. Information will be shared with promoters and sponsors.

Pantomime p perfection, o

Words and pictures by
Colin Smeeton

The Lamlash Drama Club and friends excelled themselves with their production of Sinbad's Desert Adventure which will go down in the annals of panto history on Arran as one of their most popular shows, oh yes it will!

The two-hour performance, held over three days in the community theatre last week, had all of the ingredients of a good panto – a princess, played by Nickey Summer and an evil antagonist, Genghis, accurately portrayed by David Simkin.

The good guy and hero of the tale, Mark Nelson playing as Sinbad the love interest of Fatima the Princess, doing a good job of being the antithesis of Genghis, who scared and delighted the audience at the same time.

Adding to the heady mix of richly decorated sets and over the top acting, the audience were provided with ample opportunity to join in the fun with a barrage of 'he's behind you' and a particular favourite in this production, 'genie!' which saw the audience, young and old, giving their full co-operation in assisting Princess Fatima in trying to summon the magic genie.

Allan Little, who played the Princesses' mother, wearing a costume that the audience is unlikely to forget in a hurry, succeeded brilliantly in drawing the audience who warmed to him and shouted their support, especially when he had a handful of sweets which he, ever so gently, passed onto the panto crowd.

Providing additional humour and fun sing-alongs, evil henchmen Sheila Gilmore and Jill McKillop engaged the audience



The magic genie played by Andy McNamara has another hard landing after appearing in a puff of smoke and lightning. 01_B51panto08



Sinbad breaks into song about



Genghis played by David Simkin received a volley of boos as the bad guy in the production. 01_B51panto02

LIVE MUSIC!

SATURDAY 23RD, 9PM
MATT JOHNSTON
VOICE LIKE ED SHEERAN

CHRISTMAS EVE, 4PM
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BOXING DAY, 4PM
TIM POMEROY
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Xmas Pub Quiz
Wednesday 27th, 8.30pm

Friday - 9pm - DISCO

The PIERHEAD TAVERN, LAMLASH
www.thepht.co.uk 01770 600418

Performance h yes it was!

with a particular brand of humour, incorporating many Arran organisations and people into the thread, tying the various scenes together nicely.

Setting the pace of the action, especially when running out among the audience and stirring the youth into a frenzy, the duo expertly read the audience and injected just the right amount of humour when it was required.

Nickey Summer, playing the Princess Fatima, was well cast as the butter-would-not-melt character that the audience loved and supported, her singing abilities on par with her convincing acting abilities. Sinbad played by Mark Nelson provided the show with a male hero who stirred the audience into a frenzy and performed various singing engagements with his princess and a few solo ventures.

Along with the harem dancing girls - who impressed with their Middle Eastern dancing prowess - the bumbling genie played by Andy McNamara, ensured that the acts were rich, vibrant, amusing and captivating.

As the audience were taken through various plot twists and turns the hard work of the stage scenery designers and costume designers and the actors themselves, became very evident with viewers being realistically whisked away from a star trek scene to a dungeon scene - complete with adorable dancing skeletons - without losing the story's narrative.

All in all, the panto provided a hearty dose of good-natured humour in a visually spectacular setting with expert performances and gave great opportunity for audience involvement.



Actor Allan Little prepares to distribute sweets to the younger audience members with characteristic good humour. 01_B51panto13



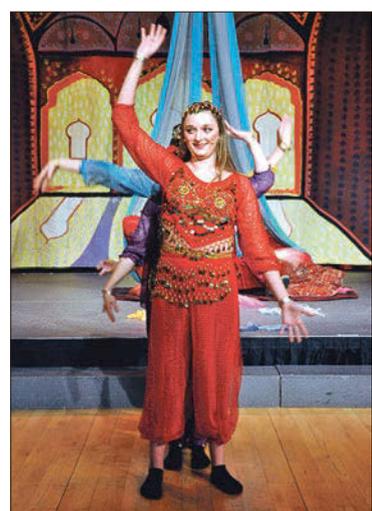
Genghis and the Queen share a joke and amorous glances as they discover their love for one another. 01_B51panto14



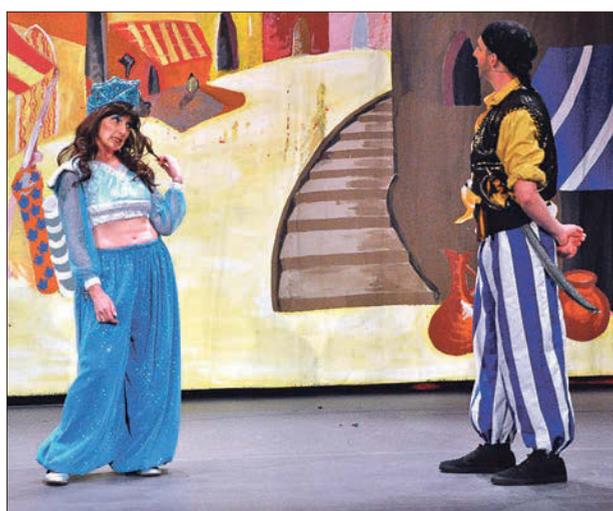
He's behind you, evil henchmen are oblivious to a mummy sneaking up behind them. 01_B51panto15



his love of Fatima the Princess. 01_B51panto11



Megan McNicol and the harem ladies perform their harem dance. 01_B51panto06



Princess Fatima, well portrayed by Nickey Summer, meets Sinbad the Sailor, her love interest, after summoning him from across the desert. 01_B51panto16

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What's on

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Brodict Castle
Soap making and candle dipping Arran Aromatics
Arran Brewery

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Brodict, 10am - 4pm

Open Mon - Thursday 11.30am - 4.30pm
Friday & Saturday, 10am - 4.30pm, Sun - Closed

Saturday 23rd December

Flow Yoga
Arran Vets, surgery
Arran Vets, reception
Yuletide Fayre with live music
Army Cadets
Blackwaterfoot bowls
Family games
Fun in the pool
The Ghosts of Christmas Past By Marty Ross
Live music - Matt Johnston
Over 21s disco

Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 9am
9.30am - 11am
9.30am - noon

Arran Active 10am-4pm
Auchrannie Road 11am - 1 pm
Bowling Club, 1.30pm
Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm-4pm
Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm-5pm
Whiting Bay Lesser Hall, 7.30pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm
Ormidale Hotel, 10pm

Sunday 24th December

Family games
Fun in the pool
AA meeting
Live Music - Olivia barker sings

Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm-4pm
Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm-5pm
Brodict Church Hall, 5pm - 6.30pm
PHT, Lamlash, 4pm

Monday 25th December

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!



Tuesday 26th December

Arran Vets, surgery
Arran Vets, reception
Healthy Outdoors
Alcoholics Anonymous
Blackwaterfoot Bowl
Tim Pomeroy performs
Pop quiz

Closed
Closed
NTS Ranger Centre, 10am - 1pm
Brodict Church Hall, 2pm
Rinks games, weather permitting, 1.30pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 4pm
Ormidale Hotel, 9pm

Wednesday 27th December

Arran Vets, surgery
Arran Vets, reception
Yoga
Hydrofit
Chair Yoga
Arran Heritage Museum archives and genealogy service
Knittery and Natterly
Zumba Gold
Just Jhoom (Bollywood dance fitness)
Flow Yoga
Tae Kwondo
Yoga-Arran
Mixed hockey
Burger and quiz night
Tae Kwondo
Alcoholics Anonymous
Live Music - Batman and the Angel
The Big Christmas Quiz
Rock an Pop Bingo

9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
9am - 2pm and 4pm - 5pm
Auchrannie Studio, 9.30am-10.30am
Auchrannie Hotel Leisure, 9.45am - 10.45am
St Molios Hall, Shiskine, 11am
Kilmory Hall, 2pm - 4pm
Brodict Hall, 4pm - 5pm
Brodict Hall, 5.50pm-6.50pm
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
Arran High School Kids-6.30-7.30pm, Adults, 7.30pm-8.30pm
Lamlash Church Hall, 7.30pm
Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 8.30pm
Ormidale Hotel, 9.30pm

Thursday 28th December

Arran Vets, surgery
Arran Vets, reception
Morning fitness,
Chair Yoga
Music Matters
Quilt Arran
Adult Tennis
10th Ayrshire Shiskine Cub Scouts and Beavers
Ladies' Hockey
Arran High School
General knowledge quiz

9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
9am - 2pm and 4pm - 6pm
Auchrannie Gym 9.30 - 10.30am
Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 10.30am
Lamlash Church Hall, 2pm
Lamlash Fire Station, 2pm - 4.30pm
Shiskine Golf & Tennis Club from 5.30pm
Shiskine Hall, 6pm - 7.30pm
Ormidale Pavilion, 6.30pm - 8.00pm
Arran Soul Choir, Lamlash, 7pm - 8.30pm
Ormidale Hotel, 9pm

Friday 29th December

Arran Vets, Surgery
Arran Vets, Reception
Yoga
Hydrofit
Coffee Morning for charities
Smart Recovery Meeting
Lochranza Children's Badminton
AA meeting
Arran Youth Foundations
Tae Kwondo
Live Music - the Buchaneers
Lochranza Adults' Badminton
Quiz
Christmas Party Disco - All Welcome

9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
9am - 2pm and 4pm - 6pm
Auchrannie Spa Leisure, 9.30am - 10.30am
Auchrannie Hotel Leisure, 9.45am - 10.45am
Corrie and Sannox Hall, 10.30am
Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 1.30pm - 3pm
Lochranza Hall, 6-8pm
Whiting Bay Hall, 7pm
Church Hall, Brodict 7pm-9pm
Arran High School, Lamlash, adults, 7pm - 8.30pm
Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm
Lochranza Hall, 8pm
Whiting Bay Golf Club, 8pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm

Saturday 30th December

Flow Yoga
Arran Vets, surgery
Arran Vets, reception
Army Cadets
Blackwaterfoot bowls
Family games
Fun in the pool
Live Music - Arran Dawn
Live music - Kwak Band
Over 21s disco

Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 9am
9.30am - 11am
9.30am - noon
Auchrannie Road 11am - 1 pm
Bowling Club, 1.30pm
Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm-4pm
Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm-5pm
Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm
Ormidale Hotel, 10pm

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Merry Christmas

Did you know?

- Having robins on Christmas cards started as a joke 150 years ago when postmen wore red tunics and were named after them.
 - The abbreviation 'Xmas' isn't irreligious. The letter X is a Greek abbreviation for Christ.
 - Christmas trees usually grow for about 15 years before they're sold.
 - The music video for Last Christmas was the last time George Michael was filmed without a beard.
 - Singer Brenda Lee recorded the original version of 'Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree' when she was only 13 years old.
 - Tinsel was once made of real silver.
 - There are three towns in the US that are named Santa Claus. One in Georgia, one in Arizona and one in Indiana.
 - Christmas pudding was originally a soup made with raisins and wine.
 - One of the reasons we leave milk and a snack for Santa is because Dutch kids would leave food and drink for St Nicholas on his feast day.
 - Santa used to wear blue, green and white - his red suit came from a 1930s' Coca Cola advert.
 - Rudolph was almost named Rollo or Reginald.
 - Mistletoe is a parasitic plant that latches on to trees and feeds off them. Its use as a symbol of romance is a tradition dating back to ancient Norse mythology.
 - Telling scary ghost stories is an old Christmas Eve tradition that has largely died out over the past century.
 - Some zoos accept donated Christmas trees as food for their animals.
 - A large part of Sweden's population has watched Donald Duck cartoons every Christmas Eve since 1960.
 - During the Christmas of 1914, a truce was held between German and British troops. They decorated their shelters, exchanged gifts across no man's land and played a game of football.
 - An artificial Christmas tree would have to be reused for more than 20 years to be 'greener' than buying a fresh-cut tree annually.
 - The people of Oslo, Norway donate the Trafalgar Square Christmas tree every year in gratitude to the people of London for their assistance during WWII.
 - All the gifts in the Twelve Days of Christmas would equal 364 gifts.
 - US President Teddy Roosevelt, an environmentalist, banned Christmas trees from the White House in 1901.
 - In Poland at Christmas, spiders or spider webs are common tree decorations. Spiders are seen as signs of goodness and prosperity at Christmas.
 - The area of Christmas gift wrap used in the UK every year would cover the island of Guernsey.
 - The Santa Claus Foundation of Greenland voted Nelson Mandela its first Santa Claus of the year in 1995.
 - The first Christmas was celebrated on December 25, AD 336 in Rome.
 - Artificial Christmas trees have outsold real ones since 1991.
 - The Canadian province of Nova Scotia leads the world in exporting lobster, wild blueberries, and Christmas trees.
 - Roast turkey did not appear consistently on royal Christmas Day menus until 1851 when it replaced roast swan.
 - Electric Christmas lights were first used in 1854.
 - Santa's reindeer are called Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner and Blitzen.
 - France gifted the Americans the Statue of Liberty which stands in New York.
- Disclaimer: While the Arran Banner has hoovered through the internet for most of these facts, the paper accepts no responsibility for any distress caused if these facts turn out to be fiction.*



Festive chuckles



- Q. What type of motorbike does Santa ride?
A. Holly Davidson.
- Q. What did the sea say to Santa?
A. Nothing, it just waved.
- Q. Where does Santa go when he's ill?
A. The elf centre.
- Q. Why are Christmas trees so bad at sewing?
A. They always drop their needles.
- Q. What's worse than Rudolph with a runny nose?
A. Frosty the Snowman with a hot flush!
- Q. What did Santa ask Rudolph?
A. Is it going to rain dear?!
- Q. Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?
A. A mince spy!
- Q. What is the best Christmas present to receive?
A. A broken drum, you just can't beat it.
- Q. Which athlete is warmest during winter?
A. A long jumper.
- Q. Which football team did the baby Jesus support?
A. Manger-ster United!
- Q. How will Christmas be different after Brexit?
A. There will be no Brussels.
- Q. What do you call an elf that sings?
A. A wrapper.
- Q. What do snowmen wear on their heads?
A. Ice caps.
- Q. What's red and white, red and white, red and white?
A. Santa Claus rolling down the hill.
- Q. What did the Christmas tree say to the bobble?
A. 'Aren't you tired of just hanging around?'
- Q. What do you call Santa when he stops moving?
A. Santa Pause.
- Q. What kind of ball doesn't bounce?
A. A snowball.
- Q. Why did Santa get a parking ticket?
A. He left his sleigh in a snow parking zone.
- Q. What does Tarzan sing at Christmas?
A. Jungle bells.
- Q. What did one snowman say to the other?
A. Do you smell carrots?



Glenisle
HOTEL | BISTRO

New Year Tasting Menu

£55 Per Person

Jerusalem Artichoke and Apple Soup (V)
Crispy sage and truffle oil

Ballotine of Rabbit
Mushroom duxelle, spinach puree, game jus emulsion and haggis crumb

Hallibut Fillet with a Parsley Crumb
Truffled celeriac puree, wild mushrooms and jus gras

Duck Two Ways (G)
Roasted breast, confit leg meat and potato croquette, butternut squash puree, fondant sweet potato and sar anise jus

Dark Chocolate Torte with Amaretto Crumb
Poached pear in red wine and creme fraiche ice cream

Selection of Arran Cheese (G)
With Arran Oaties and textures of chutney

(V) - Vegetarian (G) - Gluten Free (D) - Dairy Free
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PETROL & DIESEL SALES
 Closed Saturday 23rd Dec – Monday 8th Jan 2018

LAMLASH GARAGE
 Closed Saturday 23rd Dec – Monday 8th Jan 2018



Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

to all our friends and partners from everyone at VisitArran and the Arran Trust.



Arran Vets



Arran Vets would like to wish all our clients and patients a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Thank you for all your support in 2017 and thanks to everyone on Arran who helped with the new surgery. We will be closed for the bank holidays on the 25th and 26th Dec and the 1st and 2nd of Jan but available as usual for out of hours emergencies on 302511.

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Joe and Neil wish all of their customers A very Merry Christmas and a Happy Healthy New Year

Your business throughout the year is much appreciated

C.M WEIR & SONS

Machrie Garage

Would like to wish all their customers a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year

John Robertson & Sons

wish all their customers and suppliers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

STAGS PAVILION

Val and Rino would like to wish all our customer old and new a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Telephone: 830600

ECO SAVVY SHOP NOTICE

The Eco Savvy Shop in Whiting Bay is now closed for the festive period. Many thanks for all your support in 2017 and we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year.

The shop will reopen in late January after a reorganisation. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

Thanks again from all at Arran Eco Savvy.

Greetings from Arran's businesses



County Carpets (Arran) Ltd
 Merry Christmas and best wishes for 2018 from all at County Carpets

www.countycarpetsarran.co.uk
 Tel: 01770 700480 Fax: 01770 700455
 Email: admin@countycarpetsarran.co.uk
 Whiting Bay Open 6 Days, 9.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

to all my relatives, friends and neighbours from Donald Stewart, Corriecravie, Isle of Arran

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

Betty Lennox would like to wish all friends and family and staff at Cooriedoon Nursing Home a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year

BARKS & BUBBLES

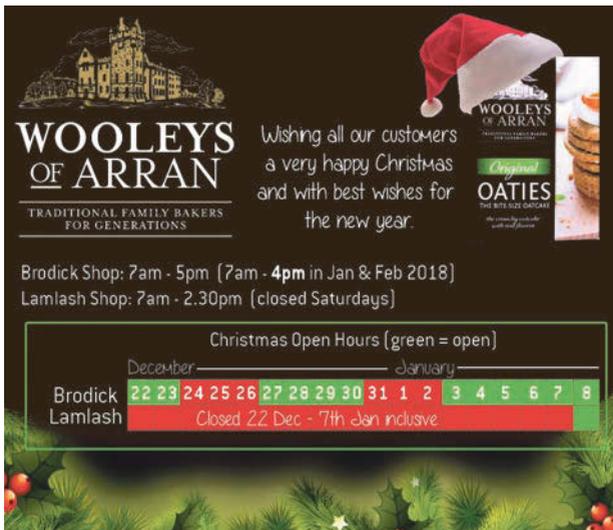


Jennifer would like to wish all her canine customers and their family's a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.



ARMITAGE

We wish all our customers a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year
 Best wishes from all at Armitage



WOOLEYS OF ARRAN
 TRADITIONAL FAMILY BAKERS FOR GENERATIONS

Wishing all our customers a very happy Christmas and with best wishes for the new year.

Brodick Shop: 7am - 5pm (7am - 4pm in Jan & Feb 2018)
 Lamfash Shop: 7am - 2.30pm (closed Saturdays)

	Christmas Open Hours (green = open)																	
	December							January										
Brodick	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Lamfash	Closed 22 Dec - 7th Jan inclusive																	



Glenisle HOTEL BISTRO

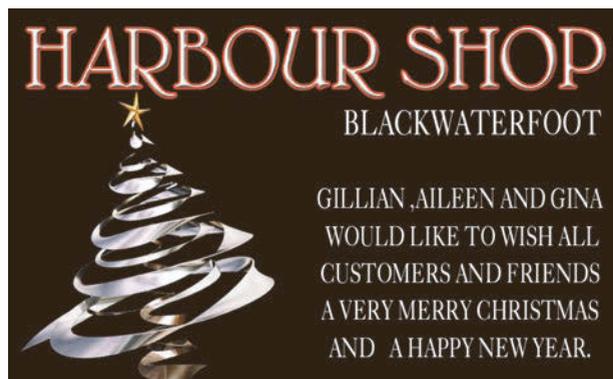
Good friends are hard to find
 harder to forget
 and impossible to leave

The Glenisle Hotel would like to wish all our customers a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

OPEN EVERYDAY DURING THE FESTIVE PERIOD



Gator and the team at **William Kerr & Sons** would like to wish all their clients a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
 Tel 860208



HARBOUR SHOP
 BLACKWATERFOOT

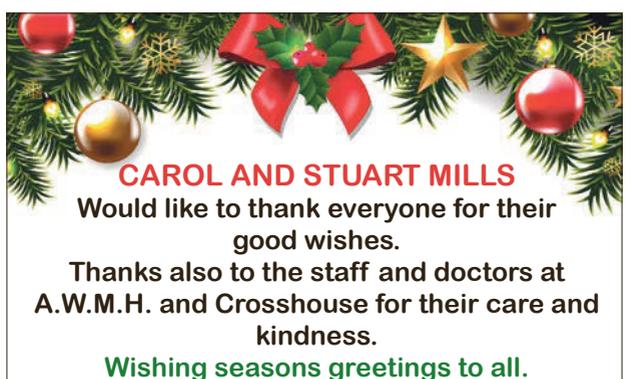
GILLIAN, AILEEN AND GINA WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL CUSTOMERS AND FRIENDS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.



The Coffee Pot

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year everyone.
 From all at the Coffee Pot.

Golf Course Rd, Whiting Bay • Tel: 700393



CAROL AND STUART MILLS
 Would like to thank everyone for their good wishes.
 Thanks also to the staff and doctors at A.W.M.H. and Crosshouse for their care and kindness.
 Wishing seasons greetings to all.

Alec is Christmas card contest winner



Shaila Campbell took second place with her colourful and detailed drawing.



Alec Fraser with his winning entry used as the library's Christmas card.

Young Alec Fraser of Whiting Bay is the winner of the

Arran Library Christmas art competition which saw his card design being used as the Brodick library's Christmas card.

The competition, open to all primary school pupils on Arran, received a bumper entry with 51 pictures



Artwork entries are on display in the Arran Library.

being submitted. Judges had a difficult time selecting their favourites, owing to the high standard of entries submitted, but eventually the top three were chosen along with a favourite poster design.

The winners are as follows: first - Alec Fraser,

Whiting Bay; second - Shaila Campbell, Lamlash; third - Zach Thorborn-Eaddy, Corrie; poster - Jack H. Lamlash.

Library staff congratulated all of the winners on their excellent artwork and thanked everyone who took part.



Zach Thorborn-Eaddy took third place with his mistletoe, snowman and tree themed drawing.

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Looking for solutions to loneliness

The Arran Medical Group has joined up with Our Voice, a collaborative framework of organisations and government departments looking for solutions to tackle loneliness and isolation.

The multi-phased engagement process whose aims are to connect people to their community has already started with feedback forms being made available at various locations around the island. Interested participants can fill in a feedback form offering their ideas and solutions which once collated will provide the basis for workshops, which is phase two, discussing the topic and looking at ways of implementing

action to find solutions to loneliness and social isolation.

Using all of the input from the questionnaires and the workshops, a plan of action can then be formulated and passed on to decision makers such as the locality planning group, the integration joint board or locally based organisations offering social and health care services.

If you are interested in taking part in the initiative, forms can be obtained and returned to the post office, GP practice, library or citizens advice office or by contacting info@ourvoice.scot or by telephone 0131 623 4503.

Good season for common crossbill

In November this year I received a number of reports of common crossbill from a range of forested areas mainly in the south of the island including Clauchan Glen, Corriecravie, Dippen, Machrie and Whiting Bay.

The largest group was 37 in Machrie Forest on November 19. This was in marked contrast to the previous two Novembers when in total only one common crossbill record was received. Common crossbill are an irruptive species and may be more numerous and widespread in some years, reflecting the availability of their food. They are also a species that is easily overlooked.

Common crossbill is a chunky looking finch. Adult males tend to be red

or orange in colour, and females green or yellow, but there is much variation. The common crossbill is quite common on Arran, particularly in areas of man-made pine forests. As its name suggests, the tips of the bill cross, enabling the birds to extract seeds from pine cones, their principal food. They are most often encountered in noisy family groups or larger flocks, usually flying close to tree-top height.

Common crossbills feed acrobatically, fluttering from cone to cone and at times hanging upside down. It is always exciting to watch a flock of common crossbills.

The crimson or brick-red males may sing and chatter as they move through the treetops. When lost to view,

all you will hear are cones tumbling from branch to branch as seed cases spiral to the forest floor.

Common crossbills range across much of Europe and northern Asia, as far south as the North African Barbary Coast. Periodically, the UK population is boosted by 'invasions' of birds from northern Europe, when the pine cones have failed there.

Common crossbills have one of the most protracted breeding seasons of any British bird. It can begin as early as January and, in parts of their range, they have been recorded breeding in every month of the year.

The availability of cones is the main stimulus for breeding. Up to four greenish-white, lightly-blotched



A common crossbill. Photo from Dennis Morrison

eggs are laid, and incubated solely by the female. After 13 days, the eggs hatch and both parents take part in feeding duties. Young have been known to leave nests before mid-January. Thus on occasions, eggs must have been laid a week before Christmas. End-of-year nesting may well in-

clude young breeding in the same year in which they were born.

Look out for these noisy, colourful finches in Arran's forests.

Enjoy your birding

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

KA27 8EY, or email me at jim@arranbirding.co.uk I look forward to hearing from you.

For more information on birding on Arran purchase the Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012 as well as the Arran Bird Report 2016 and visit this website www.arranbirding.co.uk

Arran duo on CalMac community board

Arran has two representatives on the new independent community board set up to provide an insight into the issues affecting island and rural communities for ferry operator Caledonian MacBrayne.

Community council chairman Bill Calderwood and VisitArran chief executive Sheila Gilmore are the island representatives

who attended the first meeting of the board last month when it was agreed how it will operate in the future.

Board chairman Angus Campbell said: 'The first meeting was very positive with a lively discussion about the purpose of the board and a universal commitment to make sure it was as effective as possible. The board is keen that minutes will be published online once approved so the communities represented are kept fully up to date on the topics under discussion.'

'In addition, the geographical area covered by the CalMac network has been split up and ascribed to different members of the board so everywhere is represented by at least one person on the board. A map with pictures of board members is being prepared so communities know who to contact.'

Mr Campbell said the terms of reference had been

formally agreed and dates for meetings in 2018, starting with the next one on January 19, have also been confirmed.

He added: 'Everyone is keen to begin the process of sharing information about the challenges and opportunities in their own areas and we hope to start identifying areas of work priority as they come back from our communities for the January meeting.'

Brian Fulton, CalMac's director of community and stakeholder engagement, said: 'We are delighted that the board has reached its first milestone and look forward to working with Angus and the board on areas of mutual interest. We have always envisaged the board operating entirely separately from CalMac and now the first meeting has taken place we will continue to provide support as required and will now step back and let it stand on its own two feet.'

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THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday December 27, 1997



Christmas Special

As is to be expected at this time of year, Arran's residents, both young and old, enjoyed attending Christmas parties across the island. From primary schools to care homes and village halls, Santa has been welcomed at all of them, especially by the children who, on their best behaviour, cluster around him.

The *Arran Banner* has visited many of these parties over the last few days and captured pictures of some of the festive celebrations from around the island.

Santa is surrounded by a sea of smiling faces at the Whiting Bay Christmas party in the village hall.

01_B50twe04



Primary one pupils from Lamlash cluster around Santa. 01_B50twe01



Annie Auld, Molly Thomson, Alex McLintock and Hugh Kerr were delighted to receive a visit from Santa when he visited Cooriedoon Nursing Home on Christmas day. 01_B50twe03



Broddick pupils eagerly await Santa's call to go up and collect their gift. 01_B50twe02



A collection of happy Kilmory children sit under the tree with Santa. 01_B50twe05

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Public Notices

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS FOR ISLE OF ARRAN

Over the festive period collection days for your blue and grey bins will change.

Normal Collection Day	Festive Collection Day
Monday 25 December 2017	Wednesday 27 December 2017
Tuesday 26 December 2017	Thursday 28 December 2017
Wednesday 27 December 2017	Friday 29 December 2017
Monday 1 January 2018	Wednesday 3 January 2018
Tuesday 2 January 2018	Thursday 4 January 2018
Wednesday 3 January 2018	Friday 5 January 2018

Please put your bin out for 7am on the morning of your collection.
The actual time of collection may vary during the festive period. If adverse weather affects your area we will return to uplift your bin when possible.
The last special uplift collection for 2017 will be on Friday 22 December 2017. Special uplift bookings for the new year will start on 8 January 2018.
Large flat packed cardboard can be placed next to your blue bin on the day of collection over the festive period.
Real Christmas trees should be placed next to your grey bin on your normal collection day, from week beginning 8 January 2018 and 22 January 2018.
The Household Waste Recycling Centre will be closed on Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 December 2017 and Monday 1 January 2018 and Tuesday 2 January 2018.
The telephone number for North Ayrshire Council Waste Collection Service over the festive period is 01770 600338/01294 310000 or visit our website www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk

THE NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL (B880 THE STRING, GLENSHURIG, ISLE OF ARRAN) (TEMPORARY CLOSURE) ORDER 2018

STATEMENT OF REASONS
It is considered necessary to make the above Order due to Carriageway improvement works.

EXTENT AND DURATION
B880 The String, bridge near Glenshurig westwards for approximately 800m.
From 8.30am until 4.30pm each day, on Saturday 13 January 2018 and Sunday 14 January 2018 and then again on Saturday 20 January and Sunday 21 January 2018. Weekend working only.
Diversion: A841 Brodick, Lamash, Whiting Bay, Dippin, Kilmory, Sliderry, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot and vice versa.
Access to Emergency Services will be maintained throughout the closure.
Diversion route will be sign posted.

Elma Murray
Chief Executive
Cunninghame House
IRVINE KA12 8EE

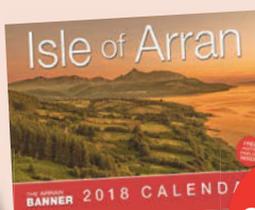


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Oban Times West Highland	Price £7.95 Quantity	£8.50	£
Scottish Clans	Price £7.95 Quantity	£8.50	£
Total			£

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CHURCH NOTICES

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Parishes of North Arran, Brodick, Corrie, Lochranza, Pirnmill and Shiskine
Minister:
Rev Angus Adamson
Parish Assistant:
Mrs Jean Hunter

Worship will be conducted in the churches at the following times to which all are invited.

Sunday 24th December
Pirnmill, and Lochranza Churches Together - 10.15am, Morning Worship at Pirnmill Church
Shiskine Church - 12noon, Family Service.

11.30pm Christmas Eve Watchnight service.
Brodick Church - 10.30am, Morning worship.
11.30pm Christmas Eve Watchnight service.
Corrie Church - 11.30am, Prayer meeting. 12noon, Morning Worship.
9.30pm Christmas Eve service
There will also be a Service of Worship in Montrose House at 1.30pm.

Monday 25th December
Christmas Day
Lochranza Church 11am.
Christmas Day service

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

(Part of the Worldwide Anglican Church) St Margaret's, Whiting Bay.
Sunday 24th December 6.00pm. "Midnight" Mass.
Rev Adrian Fallows.
Monday, 25th December 10.00 am.
Christmas Eucharist.
Rev Adrian Fallows.
Coffee after services.
ALL WELCOME

ARRAN FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
(continuing)

Sunday 24th December
Morning Service 11am
Trust Housing Lounge, Glen Estate, Brodick
Evening Service 6.30pm
5 Glen Road, Brodick
All Welcome

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Sunday 24th December
Sunday Mass, 11am
First Mass of Christmas, 9pm
Monday 25th December
Christmas morning Mass, 11am

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Kilmory linked with Lamlash
"A faith to proclaim ~ a fellowship to share"
Sunday 24th December
Rev Lily McKinnon
Kilmory - 10 am,
Lamlash - 11.30 am.

Kilmory: Christmas Eve Service 10pm
Lamlash: Christmas Eve Service 11.30pm

No Christmas Day Service in either church
All welcome, including families; children's area
Scottish Charity SC015072

WHITING BAY AND KILDONAN

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
(Charity Number: SC014005)

Sunday 24th December
Worship for the fourth Sunday of Advent 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.
N.B. There will be no service at 11.30pm on Christmas Eve.

Monday 25th December
There will be a short family service conducted by the minister at 10am this Christmas morning to which all children are invited to bring a gift from Santa to show.

Offering will go to The Glasgow City Mission.

ARRAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Minister: Rev Vince Jennings
Sunday 24th December
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

Sunday 24th December
Shiskine 11am (church on road between Blackwaterfoot and Machrie)
Brodick 6pm
Rev Benjamin Van Rensburg

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, QUAKERS

Quakes meet every Sunday at 11am
For meeting venue ring - 830622 or 820223



The rugged hills of Arran. NO_B51festival01

Booking is now open for mountain festival

Booking lines for Arran's 2018 Mountain Festival are open and would-be participants have been warned not to delay as walk spaces have flown off the shelves in previous years.

If you want to get out and explore Arran's fantastic mountains in the safe hands of experienced guides, you need to be ready to get booking now.

The well-established Arran Mountain Festival is an exciting four-day event with a huge variety of guided walks and scrambles being offered throughout Arran's stunning hills and mountains. From a geology walk on Arran's only volcano to airy scrambles on towering granite ridges, this is Scottish hill walking at its best! Check out the programme as there is a mix of 'old favourites', and new walks to inspire the imagination. And there is also a wide mix of evening activities: the Arranach ceilidh, a social gathering, an exhibition, and inspiring speakers.

It is a community-run event, organised by a committee of volunteers and made possible by dedicated volunteer walk leaders donating their time and expertise.

For the full programme of walks and events, and to book please check out www.arranmountainfestival.co.uk. Keep in touch with the festival via [facebook.com/ArranMountainFestival](https://www.facebook.com/ArranMountainFestival).

The festival is Scotland's premier hill walking festival, which epitomises 'small groups: great walks: huge fun'.

MEMORIAM

COOPER - NANCY

In memory of Nancy Cooper,
died 17th December 2007

Forever in our thoughts

Andy, Bryan, Toni, Liam and Sean

CRAIG - KENNY

In memory of Kenny Craig died
27th December 2009

*Always and forever in our hearts
and thoughts.*

Andy, Bryan, Toni, Liam and Sean

In proud and loving memory
Bruce Vaughan Mitchell-Luker

22nd January 1972 -18th December 1992

Killed while serving with the
Royal Highland Fusiliers in Belize

Still missed
From all the family



Machrie Bay Golf Club

Tuesday December 5, Winter Cup. 1 W Kelso 73-9=64, 2 B Sherwood 82-14=68, BIH, 3 R Woods 85-17=68.

Tuesday December 12, Winter Cup. 1 B Sherwood 81-14=67, 2 R Betley 108-28=80, 3 A MacDonald 93-12=81.

Fixture: Wednesday December 27, Christmas fun competition at noon. One club and a putter, nine holes only, open to all members. Tuesday January 2, no competition. Saturday January 6, Lochranza Hotel Cup.

A Merry Christmas to all our members and wish for a bit less rain next year.

Lamlash Golf Club

Fixtures: Sunday December 24, Medal, 9.30am and 12.30pm. Tuesday December 26, Boxing Day bottle

(Stableford), 11am. Thursday December 28, Yellow Medal, 11am.

From all of us at the golf club we would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Corrie Golf Club

Monday December 18, Monday Cup, 1 Lenny Hartley 61, 2 Alan Smith 63 BIH, 3 John McGovern 63.

Fixture: Next round Monday January 8, ballot noon.

Whiting Bay Golf Club

Sunday December 24, Christmas Eve Sweep, 10.30am draw. Tuesday December 26, Boxing Day Sweep, 10.30am draw.

Brodick Golf Club

Fixture: Sunday December 24, Brandon Qualifier and Winter Cup - hopefully third time lucky. Start times 9am and noon.

Talk to us

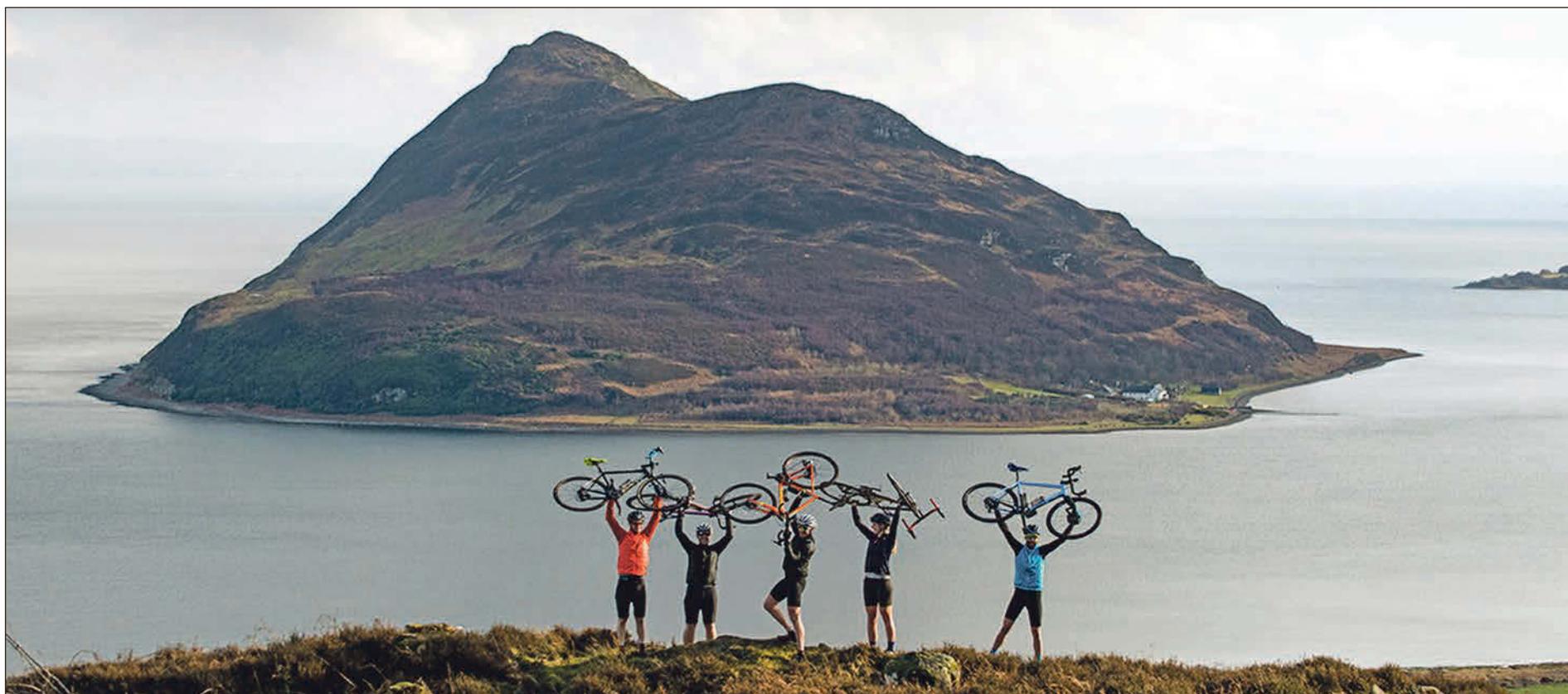
Send your news and photographs to
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SPORT



INSIDE THIS WEEK:

Booking is now open for mountain festival



Grinduro cyclists enjoy the views over Holy Isle with their bikes held high. Photo by Sam Needham

Grinduro cyclists are to make a welcome return



Piper Andrew Earle pipes the cyclists off at the start of a race last year. Photo by PhotoGnick Arran

The date has been set and preparations are well underway for Grinduro to return to Scotland with its second cycling festival on Arran.

The Grinduro event, a well-established celebration of all things cycling, which also takes place in Sierra Nevada, California is returning to Arran in 2018 after its successful inaugural event last year.

Describing itself as more than just a bike race, Grinduro is as well known for

its festival atmosphere with live music, good food and a plethora of art and cycling orientated displays, as it is for spectacular riding conditions in scenic surroundings.

Taking place on the weekend of Saturday July 14, Grinduro will feature four timed events and various routes through forest roads and mountain tracks, most with expansive scenic views over rugged coastline.

Establishing a Grinduro

village where cyclists can camp, eat their meals and use as a base, the majority of non-cycling events will take place in Lam-lash with cycling itself taking place across the island and taking in many of the island's sights and castles and points of interest.

The meticulously organised event last year not only left cyclists taking part with a deep sense of accomplishment and enjoyment but also left residents commenting that their towns

and villages had been respected and part of the occasion rather than being taken over by it.

Registration for the 2018 event opens on January 2 with the number of entrants capped at 400. The cycling events are open to the entrants only, however, many of the exhibitions and displays can be visited by the public. Further details of confirmed events and artists and organisations taking part will be made available nearer to the time.

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