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Striking for climate change



A climate strike on Arran attracted more than 30 people who braved the weather to make their voices heard in Lamlash last week. Full story page two. 01_B08strike01

Dramatic return of marine life in Lamlash Bay revival

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Marine life has returned at dramatic levels in the Lamlash Bay No Take Zone since it has been closed to fishing, a new study from the University of York has found. Numbers of some species

have increased by nearly 400 per cent since the community-backed No Take Zone (NTZ) project was established off the coast of Arran nearly 12 years ago. The NTZ now sits within a 280 sq km Marine Protected Area (MPA), which has shown even more pronounced biodiver-

sity recovery after just three and half years of protection.

The Lamlash Bay NTZ was established by the Scottish government in 2008, after years of campaigning by community group the Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST), which had witnessed the dramatic

decline of fish stocks around Arran due to decades of overfishing.

Authors of the study, led by marine scientists at the University of York in partnership with COAST, say the project has kick-started a national movement to protect UK coastal waters

from overfishing and loss of biodiversity.

The study reveals there are nearly four times more king scallops in the NTZ since research began in 2010, and legal-sized lobster numbers are also four times higher in the NTZ than adjacent areas. There is additional evidence

of species 'spill-over' into surrounding areas and the study indicates increasing habitat complexity within the NTZ.

Initial analysis of dive surveys comparing the MPA pre and post-fisheries management, suggests a dramatic recovery with densities of

Continued on page two



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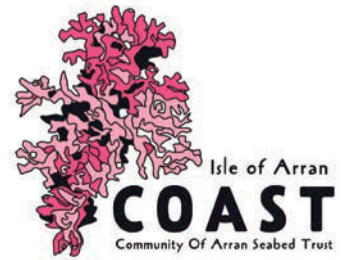
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Arran plays its part in global climate strikes



by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk

Schoolchildren, parents and concerned adults from Arran joined thousands of people from around the world taking part in a global climate strike demanding action on the climate emergency.

Coinciding with Valentine's Day, and as an expression of love for the planet, representatives from each of Arran's schools - making up the Eco Savvy Schools' Committee - joined the crowd to express their concern for the environment.

Supported by Arran Eco Savvy and held at the

Community of Arran Seabed Trust's (COAST) Octopus Centre in Lamlash, more than 30 people joined the strike to show their solidarity with others from across the world.

Climate strikes are becoming more frequent, gaining a huge amount of traction since Greta Thunberg's school strike outside the Swedish Parliament in August 2018, and in September last year a global strike was supported by an estimated four million people from 170 countries at just under 7,000 events across the globe.

The Valentine's Day strikes saw campaigners in nearly every large city and town in the UK - as well as smaller venues such as on Arran - demanding urgent climate action be taken. Strikes in Glasgow, throughout the town centre, and in Parliament Square in London, were par-

ticularly well-attended with thousands of people massing with placards, marching and listening to environmental speakers.

Ruth McLaren, Eco Savvy project co-ordinator and climate literacy trainer, said: 'With the huge climate strike movement happening around the globe, Arran Eco Savvy and COAST felt there was a need for Arran voices to be included.

Pleased

'We were really pleased some of the young people from Arran High School came along as the climate strikes started as a grassroots youth movement and we are very aware climate change issues are going to hugely and disproportionately affect younger generations.

'It was great also to have a chance to meet with the schools' Eco Committee,



The Arran Eco Savvy Schools' Committee, with a representative from each school on Arran, make a poster explaining why they are striking. 01_B08strike02

representing each of Arran's primary schools. We were so impressed with the knowledge and passion shown by all the young people that came today.

'The environment is something that many young

people in particular are concerned about. The strikes are a means for them to be empowered and to stand with people across Scotland and the rest of the world to fight for action and for their voices to be heard.'



Pupils attending the strike get an update from outreach officer Jenny Stark on what animals are currently being accommodated in the COAST live tank. 01_B08strike03

Marine revival in Lamlash Bay

Continued from page one
nking scallops over six-fold higher than in baseline studies. These surveys, the study reports, show the seabed is recovering following damage caused by fishing with trawls and dredges, with the growth of structurally complex 'nursery habitats' and key 'blue carbon habitats' showing particular recovery, which in turn supports the recovery of commercially important fish species.

Arran MSP Kenneth Gibson, who was instrumental in the designation of the Lamlash Bay NTZ and the South Arran MPA, said: 'I am absolutely delighted the No Take Zone has been such an outstanding success. The community on Arran should be very proud of their achievements over the last decade to promote marine conservation. This study proves the potential of effective marine management and I will be pressing the Scottish Government to seriously consider the creation of more NTZs as part of their marine management plans.'

But while scientific surveys show the zone has helped to boost biodiversity and marine life, the study argues that, of more importance, is the influence the Lamlash Bay project and COAST have

had on marine protection nationally and internationally.

'Arran's conservation success has been recognised internationally and is inspiring greater involvement of communities around the UK and further afield,' said Dr Bryce Stewart from York's Department of Environment and Geography. 'Evidence from Lamlash Bay has sup-



Researcher Éilís Crimmins holds the largest Arran lobster recorded - a 141mm male in the NTZ. Photograph: COAST

ported the development of strong protection for marine protected areas, at times seeing off lobbyist efforts to weaken management. Communities around the UK have looked at the story unfolding in Lamlash Bay and - like COAST - have decided to take the destiny of their coastal waters into their own hands.'

COAST had a pivotal role,

working with Fauna and Flora International, in helping set up the Coastal Communities Network. To date this network has assisted another 15 community groups around the coast of Scotland to improve the protection of their own waters.

The work on Arran has been recognised with a series of environmental awards, it has influenced national marine protection policy and has highlighted the importance of community involvement in marine protection projects.

'Our success has also been underpinned by 10 years of science,' explained Howard Wood, co-founder of COAST. 'With the help of researchers at the University of York, we have clear evidence marine biodiversity in the protected area is improving. We have a solid scientific platform, which allows other coastal communities alongside the Scottish and UK Government to confidently move forward with marine reserve designation and management.'

Howard added: 'COAST's message is that any environment can benefit from better protection and every community has the right to a better environment.'

'If that is embraced, we truly will see a seachange in the health of our seas.'



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Willie's dramatic ferry footage goes global



Caledonian MacBrayne

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Dramatic footage of the MV Caledonian Isles trying to berth at Ardrossan last week during Storm Dennis has gone global.

A video taken by haulage driver Willie Campbell and posted on social media was first picked up by BBC Scotland and then by news outlets around the world - from the USA to Australia and Hungary.

Master Colin Bain and the crew of ferry have been praised for their skill as they struggled to berth as they lurched from side to side in stormy harbour waters in high winds last Friday.

After seeing the footage, CalMac managing director Robbie Drummond tweeted: 'All credit to the skill of our masters and one to consider for those pressing CalMac to

take more risk. Safety of our passengers and crew is always our top priority.'

Haulage driver Willie Campbell, 49, who shot the footage, later boarded the ferry and described his journey home to Arran as a 'wee bit choppy'.

Mr Campbell who works for Murchie Sand & Gravel Ltd said he was used to rough weather as he regularly drives company trucks to and from the mainland, but speculated that some would-be visitors might have had second thoughts.

'Worst I've ever seen'

Mr Campbell took the video last Friday from the cab of his lorry while waiting to take the 12.30pm ferry home. He said the conditions were 'personally the worst I've seen it'.

He posted it on social media when he got home to show his Facebook friends and was amazed at how quickly it was shared before being told the

BBC were interested. 'The next thing I was talking to a reporter at BBC Scotland about it,' he told the Banner.

But being one of the last babies born in Shiskine, where he still lives with wife Alison, and having travelled on the ferries all his life, he said he was more accustomed to such sailing conditions. He said the video showed why masters sometimes decide not to sail, even though conditions look far less severe at the Arran end of the journey.

'You kinda think is the captain just going to say it's not going to sail and I'll be stuck? I was quite glad when we managed to load up and get going - especially on a Friday night. You like to get home,' Willie told the BBC.

One ferry expert said the boat had been pitching in such a dramatic fashion as the stabilisers fins which keep the ferry steady at sea have to be retracted before berthing.



A still from the dramatic footage Willie took of the ferry berthing.



Willie Campbell in his cab. 01_B08ferry02

Your best photos wanted

How would you like to see your favourite photographs of Arran feature in a widely distributed tourist magazine.

Here at the Banner, we are putting together this year's ever popular Holiday Arran guide for 2020 and we're giving readers the chance to submit photographs of Arran they would like considered for inclusion.

They can be of the great outdoors, wildlife, sport, favourite places or anything you think tourists, returning or new, would like to see.

All photographs used will be credited to the photographer and should be sent to editor@arranbanner.co.uk by Monday March 2.



The front cover of last year's Holiday Arran.

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Dennis proves a menac



The putting green and Co-op car park are submerged by the rising tide. 01_B08Dennis03

by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Arran took a battering from Storm Dennis last weekend with its predicted high winds and unseasonably high tides causing widespread flooding and damage across the island.

The storm, which closely followed Storm Ciara just the week before, caused severe flooding across the country and set a new record for flood warnings in England.

The high winds and high tides, along with the thawing snow from just days earlier, created a perfect storm which was then combined with heavy rainfall, which in some areas amounted to the equivalent of a month's worth of rain in just one day.

On Arran, the usual low lying areas suffered from wave over topping and due to the already saturated ground not being able to absorb any further water, flooding occurred at far higher levels than that normally seen during winter storms.

On Saturday, Rosa Burn in Brodick was in full spate and, in a sight not witnessed in over a decade, the water

flowed over the bridge at Brodick golf course's fourth tee. In a somewhat more familiar sight, Brodick golf course itself was inundated – looking more like a lake than a golf course – but surprisingly it once again recovered quickly and golfers were playing on it the next day.

At the long-stay car park behind the small Co-op, the high tide from the beach extended across the parking lot and the waves were soon lapping at the door of the public toilets located on the opposite site of the green.

A number of vehicles which were parked in the lot received flood damage as the water level steadily rose to above the door sills. The Boathouse was also completely surrounded by water and the putting green was inundated, with small waves moving across the green.

Driving along the A841 towards Corrie was especially dangerous with waves breaking over the sea wall and onto the road, bringing with it stones, seaweed and other marine debris. Further along at Sannox, near the stepping stones, the road became completely impassable owing

to the depth of the water. A similar scene unfolded in Lochranza, near the youth hostel, where the road was completely submerged and run-off from the nearby hills added to the deluge.

By Sunday the heavy rain subsided in intensity and gusting winds took over. The high water levels thankfully also subsided and Arran's coastal areas returned to normal with sea debris and isolated water puddles becoming the only reminders of the battering that Storm Dennis inflicted on Arran.

Arran enjoyed a short respite from the severe weather during the week, with only minimal ferry disruption despite being on yellow alert, but this will be short-lived as another low pressure system is forecast to move in this weekend.

Further heavy downpours and high winds are expected over the weekend and into next week, with some snow predicted over higher elevations. Owing to the high winds, ferry disruption is likely but the weather system is unlikely to be as disruptive, or as damaging as Storm Ciara or Dennis.

We will be on the Island every 2nd Thursday starting from 27th Feb. with a view to increase this to weekly.



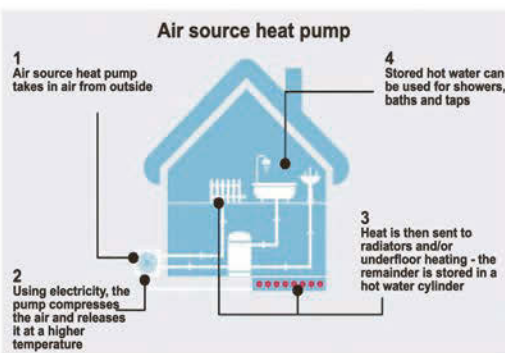
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The sea splashes over the promenade at high tide in Brodick. 01_B08Dennis04



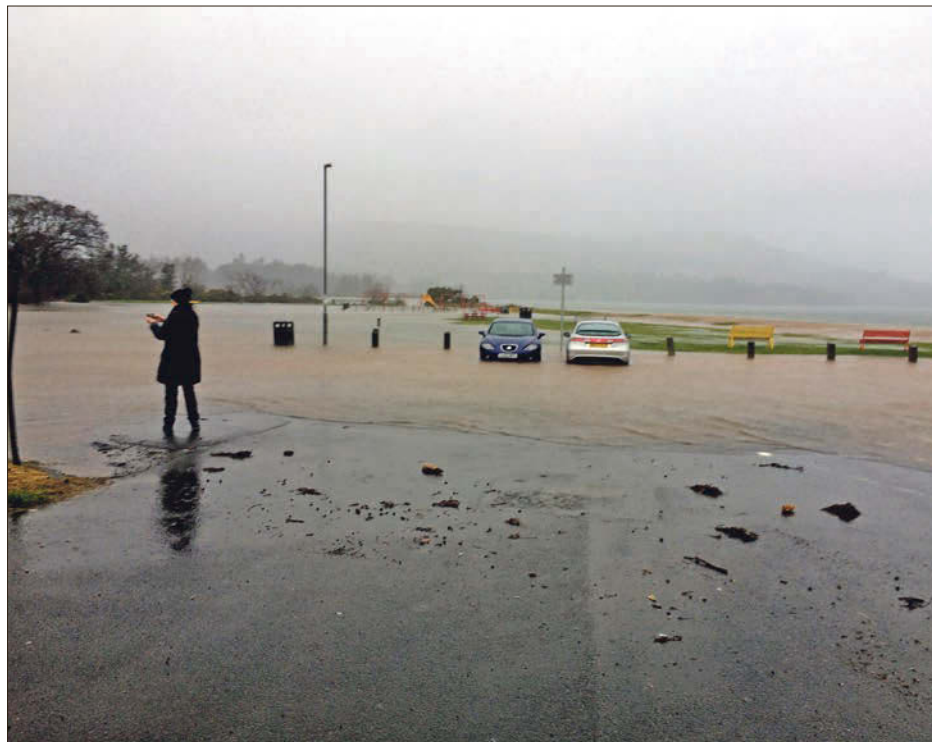
The Caledonian Isles can be seen in the distance as the sea extends all the way across the golf course. 01_B08Dennis05

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e on Arran



Two vehicles parked behind the Brodick Co-op become more submerged as the tide rises. 01_B08Dennis01



The Boathouse is completely surrounded by water and the delineation between beach and land has disappeared. 01_B08Dennis02



Parts of Sannox were submerged with the road completely impassable. Photograph: ArranWeather.

Mystery of duck derby Dennis is solved

by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk

The mysterious tale of Dennis, a bright yellow duck with the number 512 written on its breast and which was discovered on Brodick beach after Storm Dennis, has finally been solved.

Discovered by Brian Robertson the day after high tides engulfed Arran on Saturday, he originally thought that the duck, which he has since named Dennis, was an 'escapee' from either the Shiskine, Whiting Bay or the Auchrannie duck derbies, but wondered if it could not have come from much further afield.

The three known duck derbies on Arran see a number of numbered ducks being dropped into the burns at Blackwaterfoot, Brodick and Whiting Bay, and while they are usually scooped up at the finish line it is not unfathomable that one or two might have successfully avoided capture.

The duck mystery deepened further as one of the organisers of the Blackwaterfoot duck derby confirmed that Dennis was not a Shiskine duck. Sheila Gilmore said: 'That is not one of our ducks. Our ducks are specially bred racing ducks which are highly trained performance specimens. I can also tell you that it is not a duck that is used by Whiting Bay during their duck derby as we let them migrate to Whiting Bay every year for them to use.'



Brian Robertson with Dennis the duck which he found on Brodick beach after Storm Dennis. 01_B08duck01
Inset: Dennis the mystery duck has the number 512 written on its breast and is in remarkably good condition. 01_B08duck02

There was no running of the duck derby in Blackwaterfoot, which used to be part of the Shiskine Sports Day and has not been run for the last couple of years.

The last remaining option was the Auchrannie duck derby, held on Hogmanay, but that seemed an unlikely option as the ducks would have been released almost two months ago and Dennis seemed in far too good a condition for such an extended period of time.

However, following further inquiries, and an investigation by Auchrannie staff, Dennis was recognised as being one of their flock which somehow must of eluded recapture despite their best efforts.

And so concluded the mysterious tale of Dennis the duck, eliminating all

suggestion that it may have originated from somewhere along the Clyde or even further afield such as with the fabled Friendly Floatees.

The story of the Friendly Floatees is an amusing one and as with the story of Dennis, it has a happy ending. In 1992 a shipping crate containing 28,000 plastic ducks was lost at sea between Hong Kong and the United States.

For the next 20 years, and to this day, these ducks, known as the Friendly Floatees, are being washed ashore on every continent of the world.

The routes and journeys that these ducks have taken has been mapped and they are helping oceanographers understand ocean currents and scientists have also gained a better understanding of plastic pollution despite the initial concerns about plastic being dispersed in the ocean.

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Gourock linkspan repair gets go-ahead

A £2.5 million planned investment to repair and extend the life of the linkspan at Gourock ferry terminal has finally been announced this week.

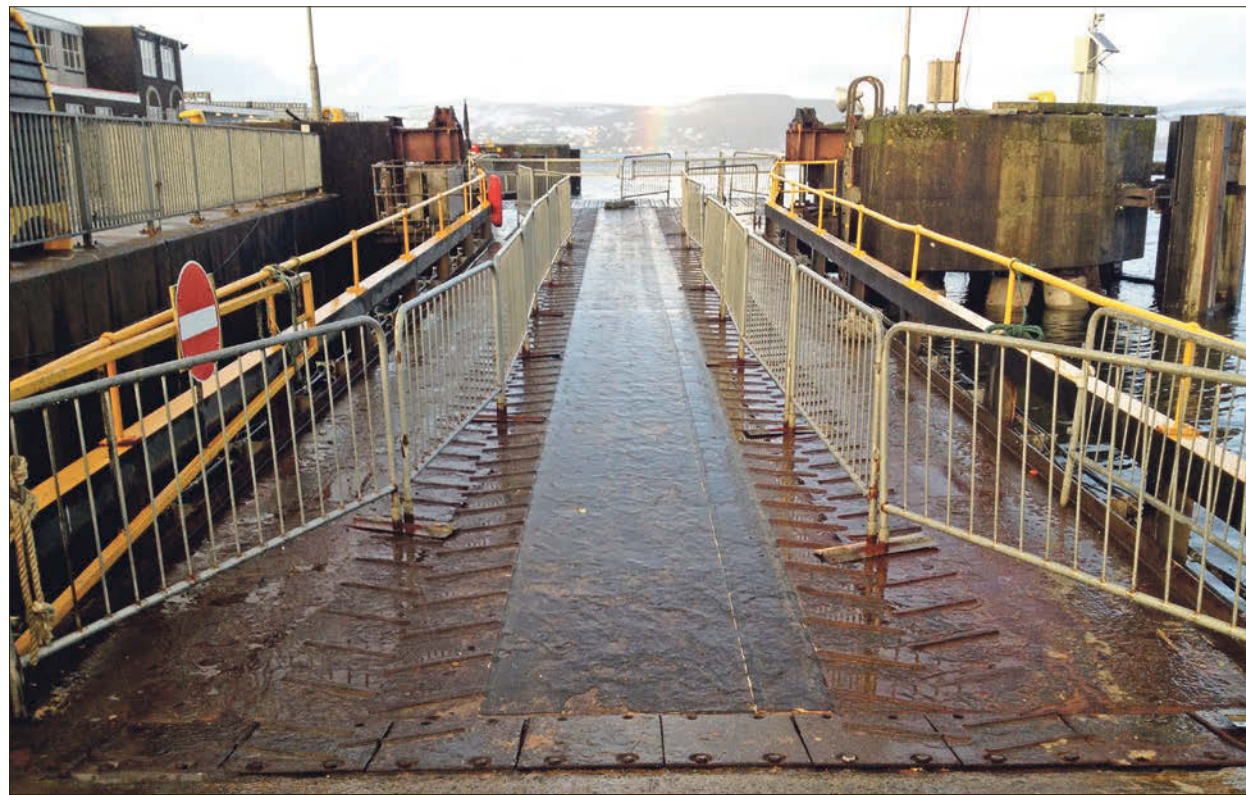
As reported in the Banner last week, the announcement, which was expected from Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL), came on Tuesday. However, while it should mean a port of refuge for the Arran sailings, the work will not be complete until the end of the year.

The linkspan, which is eight years beyond its serviceable 40-year life, has been unable to take the weight of vehicles since November 2018, resulting in Arran losing its port of refuge.

The freshly confirmed project will involve repairs to the linkspan support structures and the replacement of the steel deck which will then allow the linkspan to carry vehicles again.

Plans to appoint an engineering firm to carry out the work are now under way by CMAL and it is anticipated that the work will be complete in late 2020.

Ramsay Muirhead, director of port infrastructure and planning at CMAL, said: 'This is welcome news for ferry users. The age of the linkspan at Gourock has been causing operational issues for several months and we know



The 48-year-old linkspan at Gourock and the support structures will be repaired at a cost of £2.5 million.

it has created significant inconvenience.

'Working with a specialist consultant engineering firm, we have identified a solution that will return normal vehicle-carrying capacity. It means Gourock will be available as an alternative mainland port for vehicle services.

'This is a significant invest-

ment in life-extending measures to improve the resilience of the linkspan until a new one is built as part of the terminal redevelopment.'

CalMac's director of operations, Robert Morrison, said: 'We welcome CMAL's commitment to investing in Gourock linkspan to enable vehicles to use it again.

'It will be a welcome devel-

opment for the communities of Bute and Arran, who rely on it as an alternative mainland port.'

Despite Transport Scotland being well aware of the significant issues with the linkspan since 2017, and CMAL working on a Gourock masterplan to develop the harbour and its functionality since 2016, the linkspan was allowed to fall

into disrepair in 2018 which left Arran and Bute without a vehicular port of refuge.

The project will require temporary linkspan closure for a short period, most likely in autumn of 2020. Further details will be shared by CMAL following the appointment of an engineer to finalise the programme and carry out the works.



Richard Wilkinson.

Funeral held for Richard

The funeral service for Tory stalwart Richard Wilkinson was taking place today (Friday) at St Columba's Parish Church in Largs.

As reported in last week's Banner, Mr Wilkinson, who was 72, died on Saturday February 8 in Crosshouse Hospital after a short illness.

He was the long-time chairman of North Ayrshire and Arran Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party and Scottish conference convener.

Born in Irvine in September 1947, Richard was a Strathclyde Regional Councillor from the 1970s until it was abolished in 1996 and his constituency included Arran. He later represented Fairlie, Skelmorlie and Millport on Cunninghame District Council.

He became North Ayrshire constituency chairman in the 1980s and held the post until his death.

Richard, who lived in West Kilbride, had recently become a grandfather to Evie, his daughter Victoria's first child. He also leaves a son Miles. His wife Anne died in 2016.



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New manse for Brodick Church

A new Church of Scotland manse is to be built in Brodick. The one-and-a-half-storey house will replace the existing building in Manse Crescent which is to be demolished, if a planning application which has been lodged with North Ayrshire Council planners is approved.

The land on which it was built was donated by Lady Jean Fforde circa 1960 for the erection of Brodick manse for the occupation of clergymen associated with St Bride's Church of Scotland, also known as Brodick Church.

However, the building had a deficit of natural daylight and solar heat and over the years successive occupants found the property hard to heat despite ad hoc measures to address this problem. In later

years the building suffered from the intrusion of vermin and insects which resulted in the current minister, the Rev Angus Adamson, refusing to occupy the house.

A survey was carried out to assess potential remedial action.

Rehabilitation of the property was considered but it was decided that the best long-term solution was for a replacement house.

The proposed house occupies a similar footprint area as the existing, with similar accommodation with the addition of an office.

It will be heated by means of an air source heat pump and a closed log burning stove.

The application is currently under consideration by planners.



The Brodick Church manse which is to be demolished.
01_B08manse01

New live weekly broadcast for Arran

by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



A new weekly programme called What's Happening on Arran has started to gather a loyal following with over 3,000 people viewing the local broadcast every week.

The Facebook broadcast, shown live at 4pm each Sunday, is hosted by Graham Chappell and Heather Macleod, and is also available for viewing after the live broadcast both on Facebook and YouTube.

The informal show looks at all of the topical subjects of the week, from the headlines in the Arran Banner to the local weather and, unsurprisingly, includes ferry news, competitions and audience

interaction by means of the real-time comments section.

Guests are also featured on the show and the five episodes that have been broadcast so far have included artists, musicians, prominent characters and many well known faces.

The show has a very relaxed feel with the presenters contributing personal anecdotes, opinions and a fair amount of mirth without taking themselves too seriously or delving in local politics.

Described by a reviewer as 'up-beat, relaxed and all about Arran', the show is just under an hour long and can be found by searching for @arranlive or What's Happening on Arran on Facebook.



What's Happening on Arran is hosted by Graham Chappell and Heather Macleod.



Arran could be 'stepping stone' for Boris bridge link

The prospect of Arran being part of a bridge system connecting Scotland and Northern Ireland was being discussed again this week.

In what at another time of the year could be perceived as an April Fool, an eminent Scottish architect is seriously suggesting a chain of three floating bridges, two linking Arran to the mainland, could be used for Boris Johnson's 'vanity' £20 billion bridge.

Architect Alan Dunlop, who first proposed the bridge plan two years ago, said Glasgow could be linked directly with Ulster if Arran is used as a 'stepping stone'.

But a tunnel submerged 20 metres below the Irish Sea may still be needed to make the plan work.

Another shorter route which could be planned would see the 12 miles between Ireland's Torr Head and the Mull of Kintyre, would be a viable option.

This could lead to a small connection between Kintyre and Arran to link the two bridge routes together.

Mr Dunlop estimated that the cost of this route would be

in the region of £20 billion to £24 billion, based on a study of previous bridges, according to The Times newspaper.

The alternative, a 26-mile crossing from Portpatrick to Larne, would cost £15 billion to £20 billion.

Just after he became Tory leader the prime minister was reported to have asked government officials to look into the costs and risks. And he raised the idea when he was foreign secretary too, claiming it would shore up the union.

The bridge, made of steel and concrete, would consist of two levels - one for cars

and one for a railway. Part of it could be a tunnel too, as a way of dealing with the offshore dumpsite Beaufort's Dyke. Unexploded World War Two bombs are believed to be one of the risks of the project, which lie near the dump.

An artificial island around 2.5 miles long and 500 yards wide is likely to link the bridge to the tunnel.

Mr Dunlop, who has yet to be approached by anyone from government about the bridge, added: 'What needs to happen now is a proper feasibility study by people with the right skills.'

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LETTERS

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Leading by example

It is nice to be able to report some good news, for a change, this week.

A new study has found a four-fold increase in lobsters and scallops in Scotland's only No Take Zone in Lamlash Bay. At a time of unprecedented pressure on our seas, the project has kick-started a national movement to protect UK coastal waters from overfishing and loss of biodiversity.

The University of York study reports on the research and community support after 11 years of the Lamlash Community Marine Reserve and four years, since management was put in place, of the South Arran Marine Protected Area (MPA). Both of these conservation designations were legislated for by Arran MSP Kenneth Gibson, Richard Lochhead and Marine Scotland.

The paper reveals a remarkable recovery of lobsters, scallops, species biodiversity and blue carbon habitat storage within the whole MPA.

With all the dire news on climate change, biodiversity loss and the lead up to COP26, this is a great positive news story which we are happy to share.

Good, too, to see Arran taking a pro-active interest in the global climate strike last week.

Whatever your view of teen green warrior Greta Thunberg, and there are good reasons to be sceptical of her background, there can be no doubt that she has helped put climate change at the top of the political agenda.

Thought for the week

'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.' Matt 5: 16

Public sector procurement

Sir,

It seems to be the case that all major works procured by government, councils and civil servants are liable to what many of us see as mismanagement at best and cronyism at worst. On Arran, many of us have been focused on the ferries at present because of the abysmal service we are getting and we feel that it does not have to be like that. We watch as impotent bystanders whilst our supposed elders and betters wrestle with the obvious and elect to take the worst course of action whilst wasting precious time and money which could have been better spent elsewhere.

Think what we could have done on Arran with the funds left over from properly managing the provision of our ferry services. It seems we had a total of, say, £25m for Brodick, £35m for Ardrossan and what turns out to be something of the order of £100m for the new ferry itself to spend. The population of Arran is something just under 5,000. Why do we then need a ferry and terminal(s) capable of accommodating a total of 20 per cent of the total population of the island at any one time? Bear in mind, too, that at the terminals maybe 40 per cent of that number will not be in the terminal building, but in their vehicles.

We know that the proposed new Glen Sannox is oversized for Ardrossan harbour and frankly the way the rumours are going at the moment, it is quite likely we may never see her at all. So we may never know if she would have been able to use Ardrossan harbour effectively in heavy weather, whether the harbour is modified or not.

There is a ferry operation – Pentland Ferries – whose management seems to have addressed a similar problem rather more effectively than the local cohorts of the great and the good. Pentland Ferries began operations a few years ago in direct opposition to Northlink, a heavily subsidised,

government-backed operation, and seem by intelligent application of resources to have carved out a profitable operation. Indeed so much so that recently they have gone for a larger vessel, the MV Alfred, capable of carrying 430 passengers and 98 cars (or a mix of 54 cars and up to 12 articulated lorries.). Furthermore, the MV Alfred is significantly fuel efficient – a very real advantage with our present-day fixation on carbon footprint.

We have had some really heavy weather recently and the Caledonian Isles (crew 26/1,000 passengers/110 cars/burning lots of fuel) has been significantly disadvantaged by that. At the same time, crossing the wild Pentland Firth has been challenging to say the least – however, whilst the Northlink ferry has been laid up for weather, Pentland Ferries has continued to provide a service – albeit slightly modified – now we'd love to have some of that between Ardrossan and Brodick, I think.

So what is the cost of this apparently somewhat more resilient service. Well, the crew on the MV Alfred is a mere 13 – albeit they are based ashore and not on board thus at times of need a round the clock operation can be provided by the simple expedient of having a second crew – and even two crews of 13 would only just reach the manpower of one Caledonian Isles. The cost of this new ship was £14m. Yes that is the figure published, £14m.

So, just to recap, ask yourself, did we need £25m spent on Brodick when perhaps all we needed was a linkspan repair and refurbishment – say £1m? Ask yourself, do we need a £35m refurbishment for Ardrossan when all we really need is refurbishment of the Irish Berth linkspan and perhaps the main linkspan? Say £2m and we need a Gourrock linkspan to be working as well. Say another £1m. So that adds up to £18m for a service which would have a fighting chance of being genuinely resilient – let's add on another boat at £14m – so that we have some redundancy and extra capacity to address that need for getting on for 20 per cent of the

Arran population needing to use the ferry all at once – out or back. Two boats (to cover summer rush and maintenance) at £14m = £28m, plus four linkspans at £1m a pop – adds up to £32m. Nothing flashy and unnecessary needed to have been done – so just what could we have done for the good of the island with the remaining £128m – and don't forget the significantly lower operating costs?

Unfortunately, it's now too late but if we did just that even now then we'd have two boats – so some measure of redundancy – and availability for servicing, and £3m left over together with lower operating costs. Bet it won't happen!

Tragically, it is not just our ferry service that suffers from what many of us see as a gross waste of public money. Look at the third runway at Heathrow that hasn't been built (lots spent, not built), the tram service in Edinburgh that is yet to be completed, the HS2 railway line that has yet to be built, the Channel tunnel project (completed now) but which was first started when Queen Victoria was on the throne – etc, etc, etc.

We have to admit that our politicians, councillors and civil servants do not really seem to sparkle at these things. They are fettered by what has gone before, by their budgeting systems and they seem frightened of original thinking.

Instead they build monsters like the Brodick Terminal, bestow them with 'a prestigious award' (whilst passengers gratefully tumble down the stairs to miss their buses) and then justify their errors on the basis of the gift of that prestigious award. Doesn't really cut much ice does it?

Is it not time to wake up?

Yours,
**Rory Cowan,
Kildonan.**

Judicial inquiry

Sir,

Whilst reading last week's Arran Banner, I was initially pleased to note correspondence from Patricia

Gibson, MP, in the expectation that it might shed some light on the shambles that is the situation with the building of new ferries to the island.

I recognise of course that this is a devolved matter but then the SNP at both Westminster and Holyrood have never been slow to interfere in issues outwith their remit.

Not so. Instead Ms Gibson's letter focused on the European Union, and the falsehood that Scotland voted to remain. Not so – 62 per cent of those who voted in 2016 cast their ballot papers in favour of the United Kingdom remaining in the EU – not Scotland – as indeed distinguished members of the SNP like Alex Neil and Jim Sillars have recently pointed out.

Indeed, the SNP's support for the EU is rather odd, given that they spent less on campaigning in the 2016 vote than they did in the Westminster by-election for the Orkney and Shetland constituency.

An independent Scotland would have very little chance of being admitted to the EU – as Spain for one would certainly block any application, given its own internal situation with both the Basques and Catalonia.

Meanwhile, Jim McColl's recent evidence to the ferry inquiry was most illuminating – his criticism of the First Minister was scathing. A full judicial inquiry must surely now be held.

Yours,
**Bobby Whitacre,
Glasgow.**

Well done the Co-op

Sir,

I live here in Brodick and like most islanders depend on the Co-op for our shopping.

I did my shop this morning (Monday February 17) finding the shelves well stocked and the shop as usual in a clean tidy atmosphere. The workers were busy filling shelves and as I saw the manager approach I felt the need to stop her and offer her praise for all the good

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hard work done in the view of the situation with our ferries etc. Folks are so quick to complain, but nice to offer praise and support and was kindly taken.

I was shocked to hear that she, the manager, came into work at 4am to keep contact with the mainland warehouses and also Colin McCourt, the manager of CalMac, in the efforts to keep things flowing. The staff, some have done double shifts, not yet received extra pay, and gone out of their way to smooth things over regarding the horrible weather conditions, all over and above their call of duty.

Like myself, I am sure most of the islanders are unaware of just what great efforts go on in the background to keep up the great standard the Co-op offer us. They are the first ones to support any of our charities and often give donations, so I think it's about time 'The staff deserve all the accolades due to them.'

Have a wee word with the manager. Let's show them all we appreciate all their efforts and acknowledge our unsung heroes who 'are merely doing their job'.

Yours,
Eleanor Hamilton, Brodick.

Tracing cousins

Sir,
I am trying to trace my cousins who all, I believe, live on Arran. Their maiden surname was Green but I do not know if they are married or not. Their Christian names are Kate,

Mary and Sharron and I believe Sharron has a son named Shaun Paul.

Their father was Anthony, known as Tony and their mother was Mary. Any help in finding them would be very much appreciated. My email address is nina2141@mac.com

Yours,
**Nina Bayer,
Kilmarnock.**

Heartfelt thanks

Sir,
I would like, through the pages of the Arran Banner, to extend my warmest wishes and most heartfelt gratitude to all the people who helped me when I was stranded on Arran in January this year.

From the man who carried my elderly dog up two flights of steps on the ferry, to the ladies who offered tea and good advice at the cafe in Lamplash, the 'kindness of strangers' was so apparent. I can barely find the words to thank you all enough. Likewise my wonderful landlady, Dr Lynne McNeish.

Father Noel of the Church of the Holy Cross, who has only known me for a matter of weeks, was so kind to me, as were all of his parishioners, two of whom actually gave me a boat ticket, a tank of petrol, and cash to get home! I have rarely in my life met people so utterly lovely and truly Christian.

My late husband Iain and I discovered Arran when our son Callum was seven or eight, and we

all visited twice a year until Iain's cancer diagnosis in 2014. Perhaps some of you remember us? We had a battered pinkish Skoda and then a battered, pinkish ex-Salvation Army Transit van, which we called 'Rosie'. Our dogs Snoop and, later on, Moss, liked Glen Rosa very much.

We were given a grant by the Macmillan cancer charity to enjoy a final holiday together on Arran in May 2016 and we camped for 10 nights at Middleton's. It was by far the best holiday of my life – next to a burn with bluebells – so utterly romantic!

Unfortunately, I spent the third anniversary of his passing on January 7 this year, mostly alone, sitting in my battered old Ford Fiesta crying! But I did make it home thanks to all of you.

With love and best wishes.
Yours,
**Anne Brian-McPherson,
Newbury.**

New ferry

Sir,
The Alfred is a catamaran style ferry operating in the Pentland Firth between Caithness and Orkney. Her journey takes about an hour. She takes 400 passengers and 98 cars. It cost £14 million and was built in Vietnam from whence it sailed to Caithness, and has been operating there successfully in most weathers. Yes, £14m is a lot of money but you could get a dozen of them for the estimated cost of the two rusting

hulks we are waiting for. They would require fewer crew and use less fuel and at least three of them could sail between Brodick and the mainland, every day. The Pentland Firth is not known for its calmness.

Yours,
**John Cruickshank,
Whiting Bay.**

Ferry reliability

Sir,
Recent BBC video of Caledonian Isles entering Ardrrossan Harbour in bad weather illustrates the lack of stability and 'top-heaviness' of our current style of ferry.

The video clip also shows both the limits of the ferry design (metronome motion), and the unsuitability of Ardrrossan Harbour without proper breakwater protection.

Vessel stability and manoeuvrability is much improved with the Catamaran design adopted by Pentland Ferries. That design has proved its weather capabilities in the Pentland Firth, incidentally at a fraction of the cost.

Yours,
**Robert Kerr,
Lochranza.**

HAVE YOUR SAY
email us at editor@arranbanner.co.uk

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Mine hosts Maisy Townsend, Graeme McKinnon and Laura McKinnon.

Fun for all at elderly forum winter lunch

The Arran Elderly Forum had a great time at the Brodick Bar last Wednesday at their winter lunch.

Everyone was met with a very warm welcome from proprietor Graeme McKinnon and his staff Maisy Townsend and Laura McKinnon. Nearly 40 people enjoyed the company of old friends, many of whom cannot get to the regular meetings.

Drinks were served and all the food looked enticing, but where was the salmon? Many people had ordered it. After a short hiatus it appeared, fresh and tasty, just as it should be. We all enjoyed a delicious meal but only then did we find out that the precious fish had been brought over from Ardrossan that morning on a rare crossing by the Caledonian Isles, much to Graeme's relief. The whole

event was a great success, lots of smiles, chatter and laughter.

The elderly forum works hard all the year promoting the welfare of older people on the island and it was nice to have an informal get together. New members are always welcome on the third Wednesday of every month at 10.45am at the Ormidale Pavilion.

Words and photographs by Mairi S Christie



Guests eagerly anticipate the arrival of the food.



All smiles at the winter lunch.

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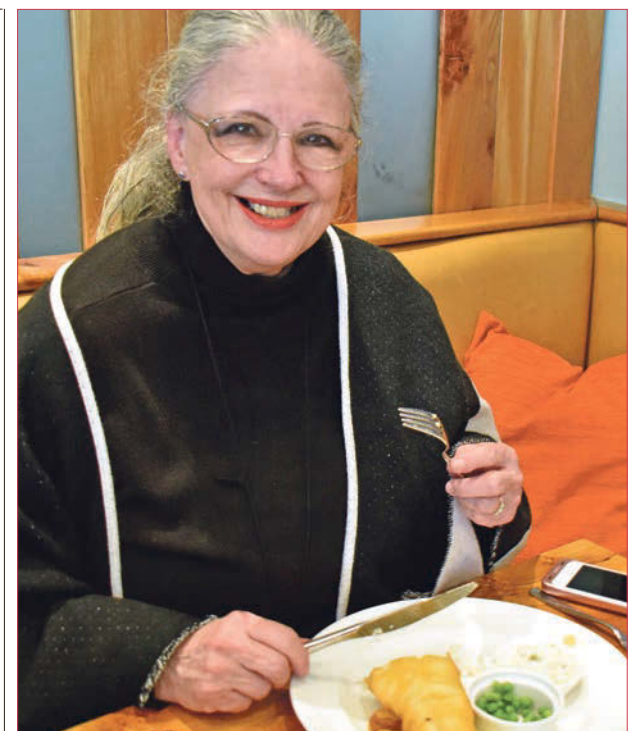
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The food is lovely as one guest discovers.



Chairman David Napier and George Christie in conversation.



Making friends at the social event.



Having fun at the lunch.

Fèis Arainn organisers help spread the Gaelic message



More than 60 pupils and 12 tutors took part in last year's Fèis Arainn which culminated in a concert featuring the lively fèis song.

Even though Fèis Arainn seems a long way off, as it takes place at the end of July, organisers are already hard at work with two events over the next two weeks for potential participants as well as for members of the public who have an interest in learning Gaelic.

On both Monday February 24, and the following day, two fèis tutors will be visiting all the primary schools to inform the children about all the fun learning to be had and encourage the children to participate in the fèis week in the summer.

Then, on Saturday March 7, fèis organisers are hosting a Gaelic learners' fun day at the Ormidale Pavilion in Brodick, between 11am and 1pm and another one later in the day between 2pm and 4pm.

This event is for anyone who is interested

in learning some spoken Gaelic. During the two-hour session, attendees will primarily be finding out about the language and phrases used at the fèis but expanding that into some simple conversational Gaelic that anyone can use.

Anyone with an interest in Fèis Arainn is also invited to attend their AGM which takes place on Sunday March 1, at 2pm at the Ormidale Pavilion in Brodick.

Fèis Arainn returns this year for a week of fun, instrumental tuition, singing, drama and art starting on Tuesday July 28 to Friday July 31. The online registration will go up on the website on Monday March 30. Due to the increasing costs of professional tutors, transport and accommodation there is an increase in the registration fees but the deposit system will still be in place.

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The advertisement features a large pink triangle on the left containing the text 'SHOP WITH US'. To the right, the text 'FOR ALL YOUR BUILDING MATERIALS' is displayed in white on a dark blue background. Below this, there is a photograph of various building materials including pipes, cables, and wooden planks. At the bottom, there is a small image of a white truck with 'ARRAN HAULAGE' written on it, and contact information for the company.

LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARRAN

Donations sought for charity pop-up shop

A one-day-only pop-up shop is to be held next month to raise money for the Arran cancer charity ArCaS.

It is being held on Sunday March 8 in Shiskine Hall from 2pm till 4pm and organisers are looking for donations of new and nearly new clothes and other items to sell on the day. So far, they have brand new shoes, clothes, jewellery, sunglasses, scarves, fascinators and bags.

One of the organisers, Barbara Crawford, said: 'I

have been thinking about this for a while as everyone has something in their wardrobe they may have only worn once or never had on. I wanted to raise money for ArCaS especially now they are funding a nurse and also funding a cancer support group at Heather Lodge.

'It should be a fun afternoon and we have a changing room and full-length mirrors. There will also be a clothes hamper to win, which includes brand new gloves, bag, hat, etc.'

A donation will be going to a school in Cambodia as organisers have been given a very large number of new donations for the event from someone who sponsors and supports a school there.

If you have any new clothes with tags or worn once items please could you donate them before the day. You can hand them into the ArCaS shop, the Kinloch Hotel or Shiskine school. Children's clothes or anything else that is new can also be donated.



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Provost launches recognition awards 2020



Provost Ian Clarkson launched the North Ayrshire Council Provost's Recognition Awards 2020 and is urging residents on Arran to vote for deserving candidates.

The awards are a variation on the Provost's Civic Pride Awards, which have been running for the past nine years to recognise and celebrate people and groups at the very heart of communities.

Provost Clarkson said: 'I am absolutely delighted to be launching the recognition awards. With a brand new format, the awards and ceremonies will take place in May 2020 in each of the six North Ayrshire localities - Arran, North Coast and Cumbrae, Garnock Valley, Irvine, Kilwinning and Three Towns. 'Our new approach will see the award events aligned with our locality partnerships which will see more local people being rewarded for the excellent work they carry out.'

Nominations will be open until Friday March 20 and the award category groups are: community group of the year, citizen of the year, young citizen of the year and the special achievement award.

Once the nominations are in, the locality partnerships



Provost Ian Clarkson at the launch of the new recognition awards.

will be involved in the short-listing process and it is hoped that there is a large amount of involvement to celebrate the people or groups who

make a difference to the local community.

To nominate someone who is a local shining light, community hero, outstand-

ing young citizen or special achievement star, vote now at: www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/your-community/provosts-recognition-awards.aspx

Twenty groups have been launched under U3A umbrella

In just three weeks, after their amazing launch event, the U3A movement in Arran is gaining strength at a fast pace. A total of 75 people are now fully registered members and another 20 in the process.

In all, 20 groups have already been formed and leaders are going through the process of finding venues, equipment etc and, most importantly, getting to know their members and what they want to get from each particular group in addition to the friendship, fellowship and fun that should go with all.

Monday of this week saw the start of the ballroom and Latin dancing with photography on a Thursday. Tennis has already started, as has gardening, and another five groups are due to start next week. The first groups will enjoy a wide range of subjects. In addition to those mentioned, there will be creative writing and languages (French, German and Italian).

Some people will be going on bat walks while others prefer chess, badminton, book club, philosophy, genealogy or learning the fiddle. Botanical illustration, walking for pleasure, observing wildlife or learning about archaeology, joining the lunch club - all will all be happening around Arran in the next few days and weeks. Eleven more groups require leaders and no doubt there will be many more as time goes by.

U3A, the University of the Third Age, is aimed at those who are retired or semi-retired to meet like-minded people and follow new interests or revisit old ones.

To find out about all that is on offer, be sure to come to the next monthly meeting on Tuesday February 25 in Brodick Hall at 2pm where membership cards will be available. Come and meet old friends, make new ones and chat over refreshments. New members are always welcome.



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Dr Malcolm Kerr (standing) gives his talk to the Saltire Society.

Patriot talk at Saltire Society



The Arran branch of the Saltire Society hosted an informative talk on Wednesday February 5 from local GP Dr Malcolm Kerr entitled: The Life of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun.

Known as The Patriot, Fletcher lived from 1655 to 1716. Dr Kerr outlined the chronology of Fletcher's life from his early days in East

Lothian, his education at Edinburgh and in Europe, and his involvement in the big controversies and debates of his day, through to his key role as the most prominent opponent of the Treaty of Union in 1707.

Foresight

Fletcher's remarkable foresight was recognised in a quotation from 1705: 'Scots

deserved no pity if they voluntarily surrendered their united and separate interest to the mercy of a united parliament, where the English have so vast a majority.'

The talk was followed by questions, discussion and refreshments.

The next meeting of the society will take place on Wednesday March 4 at

7.30pm in the Ormidale Pavilion in Brodick. Speaking on The Declaration of Arbroath, in keeping with the forthcoming 700th anniversary of the same, will be Alan Riach, Professor of Scottish literature at the University of Glasgow, poet, writer and former convenor of The Saltire Society. All welcome.

Latest results from Arran Bridge Club

The results of the Peggy Curry Cup played on Monday January 20 were: five tables - 1 Elaine Duncan and Jessmay Peacock, Brenda Livingstone and Pat Adamson, 2 Jan and John Beattie, Tom Kelly and Jane Davidson, 3 Dougie and Margaret Bruce, John Baraclough and Jim Peacock.

The results of the aggregate competition played on Monday January 27 were: five and a half tables, NS 1 Jan and John Beattie, 2 Janie Maclure and Anne McKelvie, 3 Jim Peacock and John Baraclough. E/W 1 Helen Thorburn and Fiona Henderson, 2 Doug Chase and Jennifer Wales, 3 Dougie and Margaret Bruce.

The results of the Boyd Trophy matchpoints competition played on Thursday January 30 were: four and a



half tables, 1 Pat Adamson and Brenda Livingstone, 2 Elaine Duncan and Douglas Hamilton, 3 Dougie and Margaret Bruce.

The results of the aggregate competition played on Monday February 3 were: six tables, N/S 1 Dougie and Margaret Bruce, 2

Brenda Livingstone and Pat Adamson, 3 Jan and John Beattie. E/W 1 Janie Maclure and Anne McKelvie, 2 Margaret MacGill and Liz McKellar, 3 Ellie Jones and Jennifer McArthur.

The results of the Adam Morrison Cup matchpoints competition played on

Thursday February 6 were: five tables, 1 Janie Maclure and Anne McKelvie, 2 John Baraclough and Jennifer Wales, 3 Jessmay Peacock and Margaret MacGill.

The results of the matchpoints competition played on Monday February 10 were: four and a half tables, 1 David and Fiona Henderson, 1 Doug Chase and Jennifer Wales, 3 Margaret MacGill and Liz McKellar.

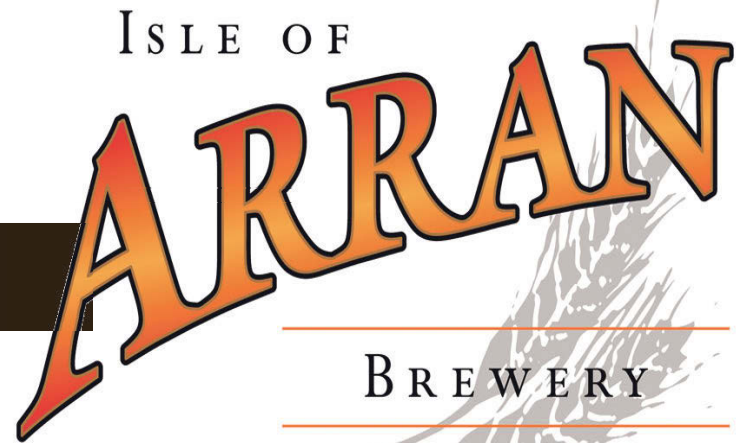
The results of the aggregate competition played on Thursday February 13 were: five and a half tables, N/S 1 John Baraclough and Jennifer Wales, 2 Jennifer Wales and Maureen Cumming, 3 Alison Bilsland and Elaine Duncan. E/W 1 Jan and John Beattie, 2 Ellie Jones and Liz McKellar, 3 Jessmay Peacock and Margaret MacGill.

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Octopus Centre
Octopus Centre – tennis
Brodict Mini Golf
Public swimming
Swimming lessons
Arran Brewery
Arran Heritage Museum

Loch Garbad, bank fishing
Lochranza, 9am - 5pm
Open 10am – 5pm
Old Pavilion, Lamlash, centre open seven days, 11am - 3pm
Old Pavilion, Lamlash, open 7 days, any time
Open seven days, 9am - 5pm-ish, ALL weather
Auchrannie Spa Pool, Brodict, 10am - 4pm (last entry 3pm) and 6pm-8pm (last entry 7pm)
Auchrannie Hotel Pool, Brodict, Monday -Thursday, 4pm – 6pm
Open Monday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday 11.30am till 4pm
Sunday, 2pm - 4pm. Closed Tuesday and Wednesday
To arrange a tour please call 01770 302353
Open Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 11am – 3.30pm

Saturday 22nd February

Flow Yoga
Q30
Rink bowls
Pop-up evening, BYOB (bookings only)
Live music – Cams Campbell
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share
Live music – The Best Bad Influence, rockabilly/rock'n'roll band
Live music – Back On It, Rob Muir
Over-21s disco

Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 9am
Auchrannie Spa Resort, 10.30am – 11.15am
Blackwaterfoot Bowls Club, Blackwaterfoot, 1.30pm
The Shore, Whiting Bay from 6pm
Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm
Lochranza & Catacol Village Hall, Lochranza, 9.15pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm
The Douglas Hotel, Brodict, 9pm
Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 10pm

Sunday 23rd February

Q30
Live music – Hingin by a Threed
Family games
Live music – The Best Bad Influence
Alcoholics Anonymous meeting
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share
Folk music session

Auchrannie Spa Resort, 10.30am – 11.15am
Crofters' Music Bar & Bistro, Brodict, 1pm
Auchrannie Games Hall, 2pm – 3pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 4pm
Brodict Church Hall, 5pm – 6.30pm
Shiskine Hall, Shiskine, 9pm
Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 9pm

Monday 24th February

Morning Fitness
Féis Arainn school visits
JogScotland mixed ability running group
Arran Punch Out
Circuit training
Junior rugby (P3-P7)
Rink games
Junior rugby (S1-S6)
Winter bridge, visitors welcome, www.arranbridgeweb
Live music – Fatman & the Angel
Tae Kwon Do, adults and over 10s

Auchrannie Spa Resort, 9.30am-10.30am
Brodict Primary, 11.00 am
Shiskine Primary, 1.00pm
Pirnmill Primary, 2.30pm
Whiting Bay, 5.30pm
Arran High School, Lamlash, 6pm
Auchrannie Spa Resort, 6pm - 7pm
Ormidale Park, Brodict, 6pm - 7pm
Brodict Bowling Club, 6.15pm
Ormidale Park, Brodict, 7pm - 8pm
Brodict Golf Club, 7pm for 7.15pm
Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm
Brodict Church Hall, 7pm - 8.30pm

Tuesday 25th February

Body Blitz (booking essential)
Féis Arainn school visits
Healthy Outdoors team
Eco Savvy energy surgeries
Chess club
Rink bowls
Alcoholics Anonymous meeting
Bridge class (beginners/improvers)
Steak night – 2 ribeye steaks and bottle of wine
Arran Pace Makers – Jog Scotland beginners' group
Hatton boxing
The 1st Shiskine Rainbows and Brownies
Arran Hockey Club – juniors (5-14yrs)
Flow Yoga
Mini Kickers 3-5yrs (preschool)
Scottish country dancing
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share
Trev's pop music quiz
Traditional music sessions

Auchrannie Spa Resort, 9.30am - 10.30am
Kilmory Primary, 9.30am
Whiting Bay Primary, 11.15am
Lamlash Primary, 1.00pm
Corrie Primary, 2.30pm
Brodict Country Park Ranger Centre, 10am - 1pm
Home Farm House, Brodict, 10am – 3pm
Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, 11am - 1pm
Blackwaterfoot Bowls Club, 1.30pm
Brodict Church Hall, 2pm
Brodict Golf Club, 2.30pm – 4.30pm
Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, from 5pm
Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 5.30pm
Auchrannie Spa Resort, 6pm - 7pm
Shiskine Hall, 5.30pm - 6.45pm
Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 6pm – 7pm
Corrie and Sannox Village Hall, Corrie, 6pm
KA Leisure, Lamlash, 6pm - 6.45pm
Brodict Church Hall, 7.30pm
Whiting Bay Eco Savvy Hub Shop, 9pm
Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 9pm
Brodict Bar, 9pm

Wednesday 26th February

Yoga
Hydrofit
Brodict Gardens volunteers
Kilmory Toddlers
Coffee morning
Chair yoga and exercise
Arran Heritage Museum
Arran Elderly Forum
Archives and Genealogy Service
Knit and Blether
Arran Pace Makers running group
Kettlercise
Flow Yoga
Tae Kwon Do
Alcoholics Anonymous meeting
Arran Farmers' Society AGM
Live music – Tim Pomeroy
Pub quiz
Rock'n'pop bingo

Arran Heritage Museum, 10.30am -12.30pm & 1.30pm – 3.30pm
Arran Heritage Museum, 10.30 for 11am
Bay Wool & Crafts, Whiting Bay 2pm – 4pm
Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 5.30pm
Auchrannie Spa Resort, 6pm - 7pm
Shiskine Hall, Shiskine, 6pm
Lamlash Church Hall, 7.30pm
Kilmory Hall, 7.30pm
Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 8.30pm
Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 9pm

Auchrannie Spa Resort, 9.30am - 10.30am
Auchrannie House Hotel, 9.30am - 10.30am
Brodict Castle and Country Park, 9.30am – 1pm
Kilmory Hall, 10am - 12 noon
Brodict Church Hall, 10.30am - 12noon
St Molios Church, Shiskine, 11am
Rosaburn, Brodict Open, 11am – 3.30pm
Ormidale Pavilion, 10.30 for 11am
Auchrannie Spa Resort, 6pm - 7pm
Shiskine Hall, Shiskine, 6pm
Lamlash Church Hall, 7.30pm
Kilmory Hall, 7.30pm
Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 8.30pm
Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 9pm

Thursday 27th February

Chair yoga and exercise
Kettlercise
Arran Heritage Museum
Chess Club
CAIM Cancer Support Group
Music Matters
Arran Youth Soul Choir
Body Blitz (booking essential)
Arran Soul Choir
Winter bridge, visitors welcome, www.arranbridgeweb
Arran Hockey Club – Seniors (12 yrs +)
Arran Drama Festival
Arran Punch Out
Brodict Embroidery Group
Open session
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share
Tommy's general knowledge quiz

Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 10.30am
Auchrannie Spa Resort, 11am – 11.45am
Rosaburn, Brodict Open, 11am – 3.30pm
Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, 11am – 1pm
Heather Lodge, Brodict, 2pm -4pm
Lamlash Church Hall, 2pm
Community Theatre, Arran High School, Lamlash, 6pm
Auchrannie Spa Resort, 6.15pm – 7.15pm
Community Theatre, Arran High School, Lamlash, 6pm
Little Rock Cafe, 7pm for 7.15pm
Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 7pm – 8.30pm
Community Theatre, Lamlash, 7pm for 7.30pm start
Arran High School, Lamlash, 7.30pm
Brodict Library, 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, 8pm
Brodict Ormidale Pavilion, 8.15pm
Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 9pm

Friday 28th February

Yoga
Hydrofit
Coffee morning
Alcoholics Anonymous meeting
Arran Drama Festival
Tae Kwon Do
Live music – The Sensational Biff Simpson
Friday night quiz
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share
Tom's open mic night

advanced kids 6.30-7.30pm, advanced juniors & adults, AHS, 7.30pm - 9pm

Auchrannie Spa Resort, 9.30am - 10.30am
Auchrannie House Hotel, 9.30am – 10.30am
Corrie and Sannox Village Hall, Corrie, 10.30am - 12noon
Whiting Bay Hall, 7pm
Community Theatre, Lamlash, 7pm for 7.30pm start
Crofters' Music Bar & Bistro, 7.30pm
Whiting Bay Golf Club, Whiting Bay, 8pm
Octopus Centre, COAST, Lamlash, 9pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm

Saturday 29th February

Flow Yoga
Lagg Distillery open day
Q30
Arran CND Group meeting - All welcome.
Rink bowls
Roots of Arran AGM
Arran Drama Festival
Live music – Damien McFly
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share
Live music – Tiderays, folk rock band
Live music – Alan Frew
Over-21s disco

Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 9am
Lagg Distillery, 10am - 4pm
Auchrannie Spa Resort, 10.30am – 11.15am
The Cafe at Arran High School, 11am
Blackwaterfoot Bowls Club, Blackwaterfoot, 1.30pm
Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 7pm
Community Theatre, Lamlash, 7pm for 7.30pm start
Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm
Lochranza & Catacol Village Hall, Lochranza, 9.15pm
The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm
The Douglas Hotel, Brodict, 9pm
Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 10pm



House sparrow is most common garden bird

Bird notes
by Jim Cassels

Top ten garden birds on Arran revealed

The last weekend in January 2020 was the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch. This was the 41st year of this event. Individuals, families

or groups not only took part in this survey of garden birds but some shared their results with me.

This year there were 22 sets

of Arran results sent to me, one less than last year. Some participants felt there were fewer birds than last year but this is not reflected in the overall figures. In fact five more species were recorded this year than last.

The following were recorded this year but not recorded in 2019: buzzard, mistle thrush, redwing, fieldfare and lesser redpoll. Comparing species that were seen in both years, the total number of birds seen in 2020 was 831 compared with 741 last year. Comparing the most numerous birds; house sparrow, blackbird, collared dove, robin and dun-



House sparrow the largest number of birds seen. Photograph: Dennis Morrison



Goldfinch replaced woodpigeon from 2019 in top 10. Photograph: Dennis Morrison



Robin seen in all except one garden. Photograph: Sue Archer

nock all showed an increase in number in 2019, while chaffinch, blue tit, coal tit and great tit did indeed show a decrease in 2020. This year in the survey, 35 species were recorded in Arran gardens.

This year robin was reported in every garden except one in the survey, while house sparrow had the largest total of birds, namely 167. Chaffinch, which in the previous four years was not only the 'top garden' bird in terms of the percentage of gardens in which it was seen, but also in these years had the largest total of birds, was still very common in 2020, being recorded in all except two gardens with the second largest total of 136.

From the collation from all the gardens, the top 10 birds this year in terms of the number of gardens in which they were seen are: robin, chaffinch, blue tit, house sparrow, blackbird, great tit, coal tit, dunnock, goldfinch and collared dove.

The first eight of these have been in the top 10 in slightly different orders for the last six years. Goldfinch and collared dove have replaced crow and woodpigeon from the top 10 of 2019.

By far the largest total of birds seen was house sparrow with 167. Chaffinch was the next most counted species with 136, goldfinch was third with 73, followed by starling on 60. For a collation of all the Arran data from the Big Garden Birdwatch for the last four years visit this webpage <http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/files/RSPBGardenBirds2020-17.pdf>

While this information is interesting, too much should not be read into these small samples. It is a fun survey to do but it only covers one week-end in the year. If you enjoyed doing it, there is a garden bird watch that you can join that encourages people to record their garden bird sightings every week of the year, the

British Trust for Ornithology Garden BirdWatch (GBW). To find out more about the BTO Garden BirdWatch visit the website <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/gbw>

Finally in Sweden there is a similar survey to the RSPB survey. The most frequent bird table visitor from the Swedish survey is great tit, with other spaces at the head of the list taken by tree sparrow, greenfinch, yellowhammer, blue tit and blackbird. (Winter Birds by Lars Jonsson published by Bloomsbury in 2017).

Enjoy your birding. Please send any bird notes with 'what, when, where' to me at Kilpatrick Kennels, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot, KA27 8EY, or e mail 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 2018 and visit this website www.arranbirding.co.uk

SCOTTISH FIELD

March issue



OUT NOW

Life in the Borders... Actor Brian Cox under the spotlight... Sleek St Andrews interiors... Wonderful world of razor clams... Delicious pork recipes... Katherine Grainger's Credo... Dog-friendly hotels...



Chaffinch very common seen in all but two gardens and the second highest number of birds seen. Photograph: Dennis Morrison



Lesser redpoll not recorded in 2019 but was reported from several gardens in 2020. Photograph: Angela Cassels



First Scottish record of a collared dove was 1957. It is now top ten of garden birds. Photograph: Tony Church

THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday February 26, 2000

Postal problem

Pirnmill, which temporarily lost its post office and shop three years ago, is again faced with a possible hiccup in the service, and, says owner Mike Paterson, it is all down to Post Office Counters.

With the current postmistress having handed her notice in, Mr Paterson found a family with three children who are very keen to come to Arran but the post office has dragged its heels in sorting things out.

Because a sub-postmaster is part shop owner and part a Post Office employee, they have to vet any new person. Despite being told last December Post Office Counters have done nothing about it.

Gift Shop demolition

Planning permission was granted this week to demolish the Gift Shop in Brodick to make way for new premises.

The new Bilslands shop will be eight metres high and have the main sales floor on the ground level with a further sales area on a raised floor behind.

On the upper floor will be a gallery and coffee bar and further sales space arranged around an open area above the ground floor.

The existing go-cart area and mini golf will remain unchanged.

Brodick to Broomielaw

Board a ferry at Brodick, sit in a comfortable reclining seat, watch the Clyde coast whizzing by at 35 knots and then step off two hours later in the centre of Glasgow. What's more you can enjoy a service that will operate four or five return trips a day and if you are a shopaholic you can hop off at the new Braehead Shopping Centre.

This is the dream that has been gestating for over a year by two men from Langbank near Greenock who are operating under the company name of Clydefast. The idea was made public on Tuesday. If it is to go ahead the ships would be different and Clydefast have been in discussions with US company Lockheed Martin. They have been developing a new hull form for the US navy which could be used.

The plan is that the vessel will leave Brodick and 32 minutes later it will arrive at Rothsay to pick up passengers, 18 minutes later she will call at Dunoon, 14 minutes will take her to Greenock, a further 28 minutes to Braehead and 11 minutes after that at the Broomielaw. Whatever the outcome of the proposal it is a very brave and exciting venture.



Four women sit on a bench waiting for a bus, a scene from the Shiskine WRI performance of *Bus Stop*, one of four plays performed at the opening night of the Arran Drama Festival. 01_B08tweY01



Sheila Gilmore receives a cheque for Arran Out of School Care from NAC councillor John Sillars. The money will assist with seven Arran projects that will help parents with after-school care for their children. 01_B08tweY03



The winter series of the Arran Nursery Sheepdog Trials came to a close last Saturday with Geoff Brookes taking the Cnoc Trophy and the Druid Cup. Pictured are Geoff with Shep on the left and his mother, Nell, on the right. 01_B08tweY05



A model of the type of vessel being considered for the Arran to Glasgow ferry service. 01_B08tweY04



From Glasgow, and a regular holidaymaker in Lochranza, police superintendent Jim Green is the new man in charge of the North Ayrshire area and holds overall responsibility for Arran. 01_B08tweY02

PUBLIC NOTICES



AGM
Monday 24th February
11am at Glencloy Suite
Auchrannie Spa


Save the Children.

ALL WELCOME

Brodick Highland Games



AGM
Monday 2nd March
8pm
Ormidale Hotel, Brodick
All Welcome



ARRAN ACCESS TRUST

AGM
Wednesday
18th March 2020
7:30
at the Ormidale Pavilion


THE NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
(MACHRIE MOOR ROAD, MACHRIE WATER BRIDGE) ISLE OF ARRAN
(TEMPORARY 18 TONNE WEIGHT RESTRICTION) ORDER 2020

The North Ayrshire Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on them by Section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended by Schedule 1 of the Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Act 1991 and of all other enabling powers, hereby makes the following Order:-

TEMPORARY 18 TONNE WEIGHT RESTRICTION

1. Machrie Moor Road, Machrie Water Bridge between B880 The String and C147 is to be restricted to weight limit of 18 tonnes for eighteen months commencing 11th February 2020.
2. No person shall drive or cause or permit to be driven any motor vehicle the weight of which whether laden or unladen exceeds the weight limit of 18 tonnes on the Machrie Water Bridge, Machrie Moor Road, Isle of Arran.
3. Nothing in Article 2 of this Order shall apply so as to prevent any person from causing any emergency service vehicle to proceed on Machrie Water Bridge if the vehicle is being used to attend an emergency.

Craig Hatton
Chief Executive
Cunninghame House
IRVINE KA12 8EE





f . e . i . s . A . r . a . i . n . n

Fèis Arainn
A.G.M.
Sunday 1st March 2020
Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick
2pm

Kings Cross
20 Hectares
for Grazing & Mowing
Offers to
T: 01770 700291
M: 07740 696362

BANNER BANNER
CLASSIFIEDS CLASSIFIEDS

RECRUITMENT



ARRAN DAIRIES
Local supplier of all products
to the Catering Trade

We are inviting applications for a part time Sales & Admin position within our team at Arran Dairies.

The Role
Working with our small team to deliver 1st class customer service, the role will include dealing with customer enquiries and orders, sales support and back office administration. Relevant training will be given, but as we are a small team, we look for versatility in our staff.

Role Requirements

- Excellent organisational and communication skills
- Ability to work under pressure and to deadlines
- Relevant IT skills
- Can do attitude

Conditions

- Company Pension Scheme
- The post will involve working Saturdays on a rota basis

Please indicate your interest by sending a CV to;
hannah@taste-of-arran.co.uk

Closing Date :- **Friday 28th February**



The Arran Team
Holiday Home Letting & Property Management Specialists
Property Management Assistant
Part Time 25.5 hrs, Temporary for 6 months
Focusing on the management of our properties, the role will include administration duties, property checking, customer service and managing bookings for our holiday lets.

The ideal candidates should have good local knowledge and the following experience:

- Ability to use initiative to work alone but also as part of a team
- Have excellent customer service experience in dealing with customers both face to face and over the phone
- Knowledge of IT programmes, mainly word, excel and email
- Ability to work under pressure and have good organisational skills
- A current driving licence and own transport are essential

Previous applicants need not apply.
For further information on the role
please contact jane@thearranteam.co.uk
or call 01770 303113.
Closing date 28 Feb 20.

CLASSIFIEDS

AMES TAPING SPECIALIST / PAINTER AND DECORATOR

Scott Robert MacKenzie
Ames Taping Specialist
Painter and Decorator

9 Murray Place
Lamlash
Isle of Arran

Tel: 01770 600856
Mob: 07514 216229



PAINTER AND DECORATOR



FULTON
decorators

LAMLASH
TEL/FAX 01770 600705
Est. 1985

- All paintwork undertaken
- Any job, large or small
- Paper hanging
- Floor sanding & sealing
- Phone Gavin Fulton for a free estimate

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good quality. Free to Uplift. Tel:
01770 700371.

14ft boat trailer with winch,
£200, 5HP Suzuki standard
shaft outboard, £200, 2 large
creels (as new), £15 each.
Please contact 07704 857341



NATIONAL TRUST for SCOTLAND

Brodick Castle is hiring for the 2020 season.

We have several full-time, seasonal roles in our catering / admissions team including a Visitor Services Supervisor position.

Please contact us at
BrodickCastle@nts.org.uk
for details on how to apply.

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:
Sunday 23rd February
Lochranza and Pirnmill Churches together, 10.15 am.
Morning Worship at Lochranza Church.
Shiskine Church, 12noon 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.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Whiting Bay and Kildonan Church of Scotland
Charity Number: SC014005
Sunday 23rd February
Worship will be conducted by the minister,
Rev Elizabeth Watson, at 10.30am.
Tea and Coffee will be served in the Transept after the service. All welcome.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Kilmory linked with Lamlash
"A faith to proclaim ~ a fellowship to share"
Sunday 23rd February
Rev Lily McKinnon
Kilmory at 10am
Lamlash at 11.30am
All welcome, including families: children's area
Scottish Charity SC015072

ARRAN FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

(continuing)
Sunday 23rd February
Morning Service at 11am
Trust Housing Lounge, Glen Estate, Brodick
Evening Service at 6.30pm
5 Glen Road, Brodick

ARRAN FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Sunday 23rd February
Morning Service at Shiskine at 11am
Evening Service, Brodick at 6pm
Service will be taken by Mr Nick Mackison

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

(Part of the Worldwide Anglican Church)
St Margaret's, Whiting Bay.
Sunday 23rd February
Sunday before Lent
Sung Eucharist - 11 am.
Revd Adrian Fallows
Coffee after service
Wednesday 26th February
Ash Wednesday
Holy Communion - 11 am.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Sunday 23rd February
Sunday Worship at 11am
'Heather Lodge', Brodick Left of the Douglas Hotel, opposite the ferry terminal.
Telephone 700346, 820223
Everyone Warmly Invited.

ARRAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Minister: Rev Vince Jennings
Sunday 23rd February
Service at 11am
Ormidale Pavilion
Tea and coffee after the service
Wednesday 12th February at 7.30pm Home fellowship group for bible study and prayer.
Everyone warmly invited.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Sunday 23rd February
Sunday Morning Mass at 11am

DEATHS

BECKITT:

Terance Richard

Peacefully at home on Tuesday, 11th February 2020 with his beloved wife Barbara, supported by an amazing team of carers, doctors and all that Arran gives - the best. Funeral service at Clyde Coast and Garnock Valley Crematorium on Friday, 6th March at 1:00pm. Transport provided from 11:05 ferry leaving Brodick and returning to Cecchinis, Ardrossan for a wake. No flowers please, donations to Cancer Research would be most welcome. Please contact Kelly, 01770700191 before Monday, 2nd March for numbers, and not the family phone number.

KIRKWOOD:

Ian (Jorden)

At Arran War Memorial Hospital. Loving and loved partner of Muriel Park.

WARBURTON:

Christopher Charles

Peacefully at Arran War Memorial Hospital on Sunday, 16th February 2020. Chris, of Sannox, aged 87 years, husband of 63 years to June. Interment at Sannox Cemetery on Tuesday, 25th February at 11:30am and thereafter to Corrie Golf Club Tea Room.

BANNER ANNOUNCEMENTS
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Inspirational talk for youngsters

Arran High School had a visit last week from Grant Downie OBE, a consultant in medical and performance solutions for elite sport and industry, when he talked to the School of Sport students and senior pupils.

His distinguished career spans over 32 years at the heart of professional football and elite sport. A former footballer



The senior School of Sport students at Arran High with Grant Downie.

with Middlesbrough, he has worked on the football coaching staff of Manchester City, Rangers, England and Scotland and a host of other sports organisations.

The School of Sport students with Grant.



It never rains on the golf course!



Before: A swan enjoys the water on the 15th tee. 01_B08BGC03



After: The same tree can be seen the following day with golfers playing on the 15th tee. Photo Terry Raeside



Lamlash Golf Club

Thursday February 13, Yellow Medal. 1 Martin Wallbank 76-12=64, 2 Andy Smith 85-16=69 BIH over Ian Bremner and Alan Smith.

Sunday February 16, Glenburn Cup. 1 Derek Harrison 86-22=63, 2 Andy Smith 83-16=67. Magic twos Alistair Crawford @16th, Andy Smith @17th.

Best scratch, Ian Bremner 78.

Fixtures: Sunday February 23, Winter Stableford, 9.30am and noon starts. Thursday

February 27, Yellow Medal, ballot at 11am.

Whiting Bay Golf Club

Sunday February 16, Winter Cup, round five. A total of eight played in the rearranged round of the Winter Cup in very windy but, thankfully, dry conditions. 1 Wolfi Kroner 14,61; 2 John Pennycott 14,66; 3 Stan Rainey 10, 67 acb. There were no magic twos and, rather

surprisingly, there were no 'no returns' either.

Fixture: Sunday February 23, Yellow Tees Stableford. One draw at 10am.

Corrie Golf Club

Fixtures: Saturday February 22, 18-hole sweep, ballot at 1.30pm or make up your own game earlier. Monday February 24, Monday Cup, ballot at noon. All subject to favourable weather!

Machrie Bay Golf Club

Tuesday February 18, Lochranza Hotel Cup. 1 Phil Betley 40pts, 2 Brian Sherwood 31pts, 3 Alistair MacDonald 29pts. Fixture: Tuesday February 25, Winter Cup, tee off noon.

Brodick Golf Club

Sunday February 23, rearranged Brandon qualifier and Winter Cup Stableford, 9am/noon.

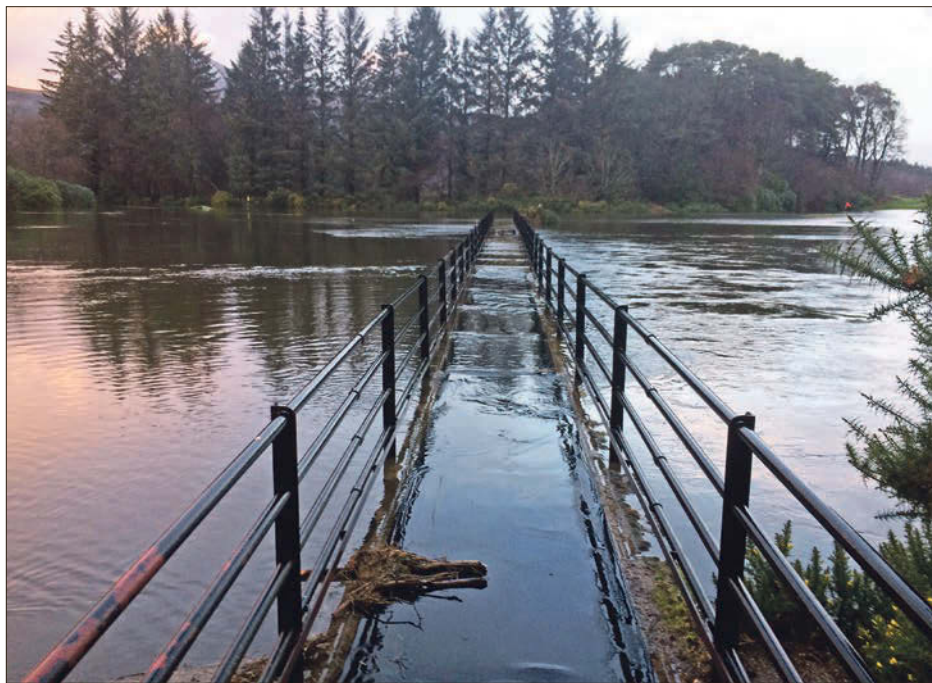
Sorry Vic

In last week's Banner report on the 40th anniversary of Blackwaterfoot Bowls Club a typographical error saw the name of the president Vic Iutz spelt incorrectly. We apologise to the longest playing member for the error.

Arran Golf Pass
AGM
Tuesday 3rd March, 7pm
Brodick Golf Club
All welcome

Inspirational talk
for youngsters

Weather hit
golf results



Before: Rosa Burn bridge has water flowing over the top of it. 01_B08BGC01



After: Golfers enjoy a round with the Rosa Burn bridge high above the water level.
Photo Terry Raeside

Storm flooding can't stop play at Brodick Golf Club

by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Brodick golf course, which was mostly under water on Saturday during Storm Dennis, has made a remarkable recovery with a small number of golfers being able to play on the course the very next day.

The 18-hole course belonging to the Brodick Golf Club, which was established in 1897, runs alongside the coast at a height just slightly higher than sea level.

As our pictures show, the majority of the holes were

completely submerged following an abnormally high tide which poured over the course and even exited out the other side near Auchrannie Road.

In addition to the tide, the Rosa Burn also brought high volumes of water to the area and flooded over the banks of the burn which make up the fourth and 15th holes of the course. There was so much water that the level rose above the Rosa Burn bridge which separates the upper half of the course from the lower half near Cladach.

The following day, Sunday,

was very windy but the water levels had subsided, leaving the bridge walkway a metre and a half above the Rosa Burn level and all but one green looking remarkably dry.

Although the course was not officially open owing to the flooding the previous day, some golfers took the opportunity to play a few holes and surprisingly managed to enjoy some time on the greens without a single bit of seaweed, marine litter or debris in sight.

Club members attributed the remarkable recovery to

the head greenkeeper Tam McNab and his team who service the drains, core the grounds and alleviated the waterlogging with verti

draining. Brodick Golf Club captain Ann May said: 'Congratulations to Tam McNab and his team who, despite struggling against

difficult conditions, keep our course looking beautiful, resilient and a pleasure to play on.'

More photographs on page 19



The sun sets over a waterlogged course near the third tee. 01_B08BGC02



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