

DONATION

voice for arran

ARRAN'S WEEKLY COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER, ESTABLISHED 2007

CHARITY STATUS - PENDING

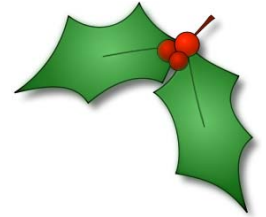
Merry Christmas & Happy New year

Issue 37 16th December 2010

online at www.voiceforarran.com

All change!

We would like to thank all those who have declared themselves to be a Friend of the Voice. Their contributions will be of tremendous help in setting up the new step forward that lies ahead, and we are most grateful to them. If you would like to be a Friend, please contribute about £20 – or less, or more. You can click on Donations in the toolbar, which will bring up the easy-to-use PayPal facility, or else send a cheque made out to Voice for Arran to Caberfeidh, Whiting Bay. It will enable us to get the new form of the Voice up and running.



From today, we start work on the first issue of the expanded *Voice for Arran Magazine*, a larger monthly production that will concentrate more on feature articles and topics that touch on Arran as part of the larger world. We will welcome contributions from anyone with something to say. If there's anything you regard as totally ridiculous, or something you are involved in that you'd like people to know about, do get in touch. We'd like to run pieces on every kind of specialised interest, from wild life to music, Rugby to knitting, hill walking to embroidery. If you've been to an interesting place and have some photos to share, we'd love to include them. Short stories and poems could well find a place, and maybe someone would like to be our TV critic and write a review of the month's best programmes (or a tear-up of the worst!) The same goes for books, concerts and films. If you want space to write a bit about your own particular business, you're very welcome, and we are happy to use a rant about whatever you find particularly outrageous (provided it's in printable language!) We're easy to contact on info@voiceforarran.com. Don't worry if your literary skills are a bit rusty – any problems in that department will melt away with expert behind-the-scenes help. **Planning all this and bringing it together will be a big job, but we hope to have the first issue of the magazine ready to go out in the last week of January.**

Rowan Singers Christmas Concert

On the coming Sunday afternoon, December 19th, the Rowan Singers will be joined by Arran Brass for their festive concert in the Lamplash Community Theatre. It starts at 2.30 and in addition to many other delights, will feature the brilliant young flautist, Kerrie Calder. Diana Hamilton conducts the choir and Douglas Hamilton will supply his ever-fluent piano accompaniment.

Jazz Café Band in Christmas week

The Jazz Café Band will be staggering out from among the mince pie crumbs and parcel wrappings to play in Whiting Bay Hall on Wednesday, January 29th. It's not their usual day, but Friday when they normally play is Hogmanay and people will be doing other things. Their particular form of trad jazz, with Biff as the blues singer to end them all, starts at 8.00pm and will end well before the witching hour, at somewhere around eleven. At only £3 it won't break the bank (even if you can find one that's not broke already), so bring your own bottle and enjoy a dance and a good time.



Vivace Singers delight Duchess Court

The singing ensemble *Vivace* brought a festive touch to the open-air market at Duchess Court last Saturday, 11th December, performing weel-kent carols a cappella – that is,

with no instrumental accompaniment. (The original Italian term meant 'in the church manner', and goes back to the unaccompanied singing of monks in the cloisters.) A collection of £89 was made for the Arran Hospice.

Pictured left to right: Juliette Walsh, Lesley Lockhart, Liz Jardine, Sarah Cook, Josephine Broekhuizen

The Valdete Trust

by Sue Davidson

We are a newly formed charity based on the Isle of Arran, but working to help young people with physical disability in Albania. The name came from our relationship with our young Albanian 'daughter' Valdete Gjonpalaj who we met in 2006 during our first visit to her strange little country. She stole our hearts and we knew we had to help her to access medical treatment not available in her own country. This was the beginning of the amazing adventure that has brought us to this point.

Valdete lived with us in Scotland for eight months and she became a much known and much loved personality on the island. Our community helped so much and £8000 was raised to pay for all her treatment, which had to be carried out in the private sector. Talking to her about her life and the problems for disabled people in Albania gave us a strong desire to help, so the vision to open a day care centre was born.

During subsequent visits to Albania, we discovered that about 75% of all primary healthcare and social services are provided by foreign charities like ourselves. We have great contacts with

doctors and physiotherapists who are willing to work with us on a volunteer basis. They are all based in Albania but are from America, Germany and Holland as well as Albanians who are desperate to help improve life in their country. Our plan is to open a centre where young people and their families can receive practical help in the provision of wheelchairs and other mobility living aids which will improve the quality of their lives and allow them to live with dignity.

A meeting place is important so that they can meet others in the same position and know that they are not alone. We will provide physiotherapy and medical treatment free of charge.

We have many ideas to help these young people to become employable e.g. basic education usually denied to disabled children, English language courses, training in independent living, computer studies and general introduction into leading a socially inclusive life. Families need teaching how to help their young people to become as independent as possible and particularly learning to have a positive outlook and not be ashamed of them. It will take time for society to change and accept these young people as valuable members of their communities and we'd love to be part of helping that change to happen. During our most recent visit, in October, it became obvious that to enable many of our prospective clients to attend a centre, they would need wheelchairs.

This Friday and Saturday we will be in our local co-op in Brodick where photographs can be seen of the people we wish to provide with wheelchairs as soon as possible. We know where to source these at a very good price and have already received a generous donation, so we are halfway to our target. We hope that donations this weekend will give us what we need.

British Airways have agreed to transport five wheelchairs free of charge and they will be taken to Albania in January. We will take photos to show our friends and supporters where their money is going and the joy that it will bring to these families. Valdete is very excited about this work and both she and her large extended family want to help as much as they can. There is much to be done but we have a good team supporting us in Arran and many good friends and supporters in Albania.

Together, I'm sure we can make a difference to many lives.

New houses in Red Quarry Road

by John Inglis



On Sunday December 12th Isle of Arran Homes opened one of its new two-bedroomed houses to view. With IOAH staff on hand and tea and coffee available, several locals, members of the village committee and Arran Community Council looked round the house and discussed its merits with staff. Extensive insulation and highly efficient heating systems make these houses much cheaper to run than equivalent houses built as little as ten years ago. With roomy dining-kitchens, plenty of built-in storage space and windows able to admit plenty of light, they should be comfortable to live in. The outside appearance is blessedly plain and free of unnecessary urban artifice. The first six houses are due to be occupied within the next few days.

Fears in the local community that twenty-four was an over-large number of houses at the site, plus uncertainty over who might eventually lived there, have lessened. The overall impression given by the development is that there is more space than expected (more than in some private developments), and the realisation that the new residents are 'weel kent' Arran folk who can make a needed contribution to the village is reassuring. Recently a large number of unnecessary lighting masts were removed at the request of locals, giving credence to the possibility that local democracy might sometimes work. Negotiations are ongoing about the possibility of a plaque reminding people of Corrie quarry's historic past. By March half of the houses should be occupied and local hopes are for children to enliven the village and boost numbers in the local school. All in all, Corrie looks for a new lease of life.

Island MSP Condemns Energy Price Rise

In response to price increases of 5.1% on electricity announced by npower at a time when profits have risen across the sector by 38% since September and we are in the grip of a cold winter, Arran's MSP Kenneth Gibson said: 'This is more bad news for islanders. npower customers may have expected this after increases from other firms, but that won't make them any less worried about paying their bills this winter.'

'With four of the Big Six suppliers having now announced price rises the focus on Ofgem's recently announced review of whether energy prices are justified will be even sharper. The UK Government, to which this matter is reserved, must take action if it is found companies are acting in collusion against the public interest. Meanwhile, consumers should check they are getting the best energy deal and if not, switch supplier. Even changing the tariff or payment method with an existing supplier can result in big savings.'

The four suppliers who have raised prices include Scottish Gas, Scottish and Southern Energy and Scottish Power. These three increased electricity by 7%, 9.4% and 8.9% respectively. Mr Gibson urges people to visit one of the price comparison websites accredited to the [Consumer Focus Confidence Code](#). He says, 'This guarantees that the site is independent and impartial, well managed with up-to-date data and helps find the best deal easily and includes information on the widest range of tariffs available.'

There are 9 Confidence Code accredited sites that have a telephone service:

BeatthatQuote.com: 0845 652 1546
Energy Helpline: 0800 074 0745
Energylinx: 0800 849 7077
Moneysupermarket.com: 0845 345 1296
Simply switch: 08000 111 395
TheEnergyShop.com: 0845 330 7247
UK Power: 0800 093 2447
Uswitch: 0800 404 7908
Which? Switch: 01992 822 867

Footnote: We at the *Voice* would like to point out that the firm called Good Energy gets its power from guaranteed 100% renewable sources – the only one that does. Claims by others to be 'green' prove unable to match this record. Users find them a lot cheaper than other companies, and very nice to deal with. Email them on customerservice@goodenergy.co.uk or phone them on 0845 601 1410.

Katy Clark 'horrified' by disabled benefit cut ...

Katy Clark MP is appalled by proposals from the Government to replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA) with a new benefit called Personal Independence Payment. Maria Miller, the Minister for Disabled People stated that 'the case load and the cost of DLA have grown to a level that is unsustainable', and the existing benefit is to be cut by 20%. All new and existing claimants are to be subjected to a medical assessment within the next two years, and residents in care homes will lose the mobility component of their benefit from October 2012.

Katy says, 'I am horrified at the Government's continuing assault on Disability Living Allowance. This benefit provides a vital lifeline for many disabled claimants ensuring that they are able to live full and active lives.' She continues, 'The Government claims that this is an opportunity to improve the support for disabled people – however, it is clear that the proposals to replace DLA are primarily driven by a desire to cut the cost. I am very concerned that the new benefit will be used as an excuse to cut payments to claimants and tighten the eligibility criteria for the benefit. I will oppose any change to the benefit which I believe will harm disabled people and leave them financially worse off.' She urges anyone concerned to make their views known to the Government.

... and by abolition of pregnancy grant

Katy Clark is equally appalled by the axing of the Health in Pregnancy Grant, which was introduced in April 2009 by the previous Labour Government to help pregnant women prepare for the birth of their babies. It gave those who were at least 25 weeks pregnant a tax-free payment of £190 to help with the costs of pregnancy. Katy said the grant was a measure 'to ensure that all mothers-to-be were best able to prepare for the birth of their child,' and deplored its cancellation, describing it as 'yet another regressive policy from this coalition Government.'

What about a Wikileaks for Arran?

We have been fascinated by the fury unleashed by the assorted high heid yins over the escape of sundry jottings between themselves that they had considered private. We on Arran know very well that gossip is an enchantingly interesting occupation, and learn early that if you don't want a particular fact known, then you shut up about it. To be even safer, you tell everyone everything – but on that basis, you must make sure there is nothing lurking around that will embarrass you if it leaks out. We've all probably learned the hard lesson that e-mail is a very leaky medium, and have found out that what started as a joke can end as a disaster.

Obviously the world's diplomats never considered this possibility, and now that all the cats are out of the bag, there's a frantic wielding of parcel tape and scolding of the careless. Too late, of course. But on a smaller scale, we still have the same obsession with secrecy and classification of information. Our own North Ayrshire Council sends out infinitely cautious dribs and drabs of information, preceded by a lengthy preamble warning of the categories of confidentiality. These run as follows:

Remember to use the Council's Information Classification:

[PUBLIC] No measures

[INTERNAL] Council employees only

[RESTRICTED] Defined distribution list

[CONFIDENTIAL] Need to know basis/sensitive data

Isn't there something slightly paranoid about this? Obviously, in

conditions of economic stress, the public has to be advised of various measures that it will probably find upsetting, but on the whole, it is a fairly passive multi-headed beast, disinclined to ranting in the streets or throwing fire extinguishers out of high windows. It was, however, collectively disappointed by the carefully stage-managed Consultation Exercise in Brodick. After far too much time spent in glazed reception of PowerPoint presentations, the actual talking bit was cut short an hour before the announced conclusion time, and the general feeling left was that we could have told them far more, had they just listened. There is no harm in genuine consultation. What does the damage is the sense that there is a trust-gap. Taken to its extreme, this produces an all-powerful leader like Stalin or Henry VIII, but we are supposed to be doing democracy now. It's a pity if we have to depend on such Robin Hood figures as Julian Assange to make it mean something. Couldn't we trust to the principles of democracy instead?

Sigh. Perhaps not. But confidentially or not, we hope they all have a nice Christmas and enter the coming year filled with love and joy.

Larch disease threat

Japanese larch trees in a forestry plantation on the Craignish peninsula in Argyll. are being felled because of Ramorum disease, caused by the pathogen Phytophthora ramorum (P. ramorum).



This pathogen was first detected in Britain in 2002, and Dr Bob McIntosh, Director of Forestry Commission Scotland, said, 'Following aerial surveys earlier this year it looked as if Scotland had remained free of ramorum disease on Japanese larch. It was therefore a real blow when infection was confirmed at this site.' He added that although the area of infected trees appears to be relatively small, it is still is of real concern, so all the trees had to be felled to try to minimise the risk of the disease spreading.....more online at www.voiceforarran.com

Further information is available on the Forestry Commission's website at www.forestry.gov.uk/pramorum

More on the Arran Clearances **Jim Henderson continues his account of the Arran families who left for Canada on the brig, Caledonia in the spring of 1829.**

Picture : Monument near Inverness Quebec erected in 1919 remembering the families who came from Arran in 1829

The 12 Sannox families on the voyage to Canada had names that will be familiar to Arran people to this day. The McKillop family dominated the list. Archibald

McKillop (schoolmaster) brought his family of 7 others, but there were more with the same surname. Donald McKillop brought 8 others, Archibald McKillop (tanner) came with 9 others. Neil McKillop (cooper) had 8 others. Then there were the Kelsos. Robert Kelso brought 6 others, Alexander Kelso brought 5, William Kelso had 4. These big family groups apart, there was John McKinnon and his family of 4, then Neil



Macmillan with 6. Margaret Macmillan, a cousin of Duncan Macmillan, was a widow and embarked on the brig with 4 other family members. Angus Brodie (mason and sawyer) brought 6 others, Dugald McKenzie brought 3 others. There were also four unmarried men, Robert Stewart, Donald Stewart (sawyer) William Hendry (carpenter) and John Cook. The eldest passenger was Neil Walker, the 80-year-old father of Mrs Brodie. The youngest was William Kelso who was born during the voyage.

The 'Caledonia' was a two masted sailing ship of some 196 tons. She had a copper lined bottom and was a proven and extremely sea worthy vessel, and had made the trip to the Americas on several occasions before. This was just as well, for within a couple of days of leaving Lamlash Bay with a total of 180 persons on board, the ship encountered a violent storm off the Irish coastline. Such was the ferocity of the storm, all the passengers on board – including experienced fishermen – were seasick. Shortly afterwards a stowaway from Paisley was found hiding aboard the vessel. The passengers took pity on his plight and raised the cost of his fare. Despite the storm, the vessel suffered no great damage and the passage was safely completed, the passengers having plenty of time to recover their sea legs. At last they came in sight of the new promised land, and what they saw met with their approval. After travelling down the St Lawrence seaway, they arrived at Quebec on Thursday 25th June. The white-washed cottages that were built by the riverside created excitement and anticipation of their new habitat – but none of them knew what lay ahead.

© 2010 Jim Henderson

Watch out for our magazine a little later in January, where Jim will be continuing his story of the Arran emigrants and what they found in their new country.

Answers to last week's crossword

Across

1 Bestseller, 6 Slip, 10 Singing, 11 Grommet, 12 Teepee, 13 Theme song, 14 Pepsi-cola, 17 Tend, 19 Fret, 20 Truncated, 23 Alchemist, 26 Cards, 27 Nothing, 28 Rambler, 29 Yarn, 30 Stereotype

Down

1 Bus stop, 2 Sandpaper, 3 Seize, 4 Lights out, 5 Eagle 7 Limbo, 8 Potage, 9 Domestic, 15 Intrepid, 16 Adulterer, 18 Naturally, 21 Deserve, 22 Barney, 24 Cater, 25 Ingot, 26 Cameo

Yellow squares reveal YULE LOG when unravelled

Our new magazine will feature one of Dave's excellent original crossword puzzles each month.

Are you getting all your benefits?

Research launched by Carers Scotland has estimated that carers in North Ayrshire are missing out on almost £2.4m of unclaimed Carers Allowance every year. The organisation has published a guide for carers outlining what rights and benefits they are entitled to, and how to claim.

Ross Finnie, MSP for the West of Scotland, says, 'It is so important that carers in North Ayrshire get all the support they need. So many people could be missing out simply because they don't know what help is available.'

The Carers Scotland guide 'Looking After Someone: A guide to carers rights and benefits' is available free to carers by calling them on 0141 445 3070 or 0808 808 7777 or looking at

www.carersscotland.org.

A copy of the report, 'Carers Missing Millions: A report into carers' unclaimed benefits' is available here: <http://www.carersuk.org/Professionals/ResearchLibrary>

Twenty years after *Antares*

by John Kinsman Marine Editor

The village of Carradale continues to remember the tragic day 20 years ago when four young lives were lost off the east side of Arran when the trawler *Antares* was pulled under by the nuclear powered submarine *Trenchant* on 22nd November 1990.



This year, Bobby Willan, who lost his brother-in-law Billy Martindale in the tragedy, decided to cycle 200miles from the Fishermen's Mission in Mallaig to the commemorative plaque on Carradale Pier in aid of the Mission Funds. Bobby has raised a fantastic £4,800 with his cycle run to add to the £1,700 raised by the annual Dugaid John Campbell pool competition. A raffle for a signed Rangers top is well under way locally for the next pool competition.

Since the sinking of the *Antares* over £20,000 has been raised in Carradale for the Fishermen's Mission

Cinnamon Stars

Ingredients

3 fresh egg whites
1 pinch of salt
250 g caster sugar
1½ tablespoons of cinnamon
½ tablespoon of kirsch or lemon juice
350 g (12 ounces) ground almonds

Preparation

Whisk egg whites and salt in a bowl until very stiff.

Add sugar, whisk until ingredients well mixed. Put 100 ml of this 'frosting' mixture aside to top the biscuits.

Add cinnamon, kirsch (or lemon juice) and almonds, knead to form a soft dough.

Roll out the dough to approx. 7 mm (0.3 inches) thick on a flat surface which you have dusted with a generous amount of caster sugar. Cut out stars or what shapes you choose with cookie cutters and place them on a baking sheet covered with baking paper.

Let them rest for about 5 to 6 hours or overnight in a dry place.

Pre-heat oven at 250 °C (480 °F). Carefully brush the cookies with the frosting set aside in step 2.

Bake for about 3 to 5 minutes in the centre of the oven.

Let cool completely before serving.

The biscuits should be moist inside. They are definitely everyone's favourites in Switzerland and Southern Germany.

Whiting Bay Golf results

Sunday 12th December

10 played on a rather white course in the 3rd round of the Winter Cup. Despite the tricky conditions there were a couple of excellent scores from Nicol and Dave. Dave Hackett (16)61, Nicol Auld (1)62 Graeme Crichton (17)67. Nicol won scratch with a super 63.

Fixtures

Sunday 19th, Friendly with Lamlash at Whiting Bay, tee offs from 10.30 - 11.00. Open to all gents.

Sunday 26th, Christmas Bottle.