

Ely Air Lines -

# Bute - It's a Beaut!

by Mike Ely and Linda Street-Ely

The Scots drank all the beer in Boston and returned to the Motherland. They certainly made an impression, that Tartan Army. If you find yourself missing them and looking for a place to visit, here's one more worth adding to the list.

The Isle of Bute, off Scotland's west coast, is only about fifteen miles long and four miles wide, but it packs thousands of years of history into that small space. People have lived there



for more than 8,000 years. Scottish kings favored it as a retreat, and for generations it has been a

vacation destination for families escaping nearby Glasgow. Today, around 6,500 people call the island home.

Most visitors arrive by ferry. One of the crossings is so short it lasts only a couple of minutes. Makes you wonder if you could swim across.

Pilots, however, have another option.

Near the island's southern end lies Baird Airstrip, a modest grass runway 1,575 feet long by

75 feet wide. Dedicated in 2010, it commemorates the centennial of Andrew Blain Baird's attempt to make the first all-Scottish heavier-than-air powered flight. Baird was born on the Isle of Bute, making the little airstrip both a gateway and a tribute to one of Scotland's early aviation dreamers.

His homemade aircraft never achieved the sustained flight he had hoped for. Depending on the account, it either managed a brief hop or failed to leave much of an impression beyond proving that determination sometimes arrives before technology does. But pioneers are not always remembered because they succeeded. Sometimes they're remembered because they dared to try. A century later, his island honored that spirit by naming an airstrip in his memory.

The runway sits only about a third of a mile from Stravanan Bay. On a clear day, you can look across the water toward the Isle of Arran and begin imagining the possibilities. For pilots, Scotland's islands almost beg to be explored one landing at a time. It would make a wonderful treasure hunt: island hopping from one grass field to the next, discovering castles, villages, and hidden coves along the way.

And Bute offers plenty to discover. There's Rothesay Castle, St. Blane's Church, a remarkable Victorian fernery, and the beautiful red sands of Scalpsie Bay, home to one of Scotland's largest seal colonies. Then history takes a more serious turn.

Along Scalpsie Bay, weathered wooden anti-glider posts still stand where they were driven into the sand during the Second World War to prevent German gliders from landing troops on the beach. A few miles away, the broad sands of Ettrick Bay became a training ground where Allied forces rehearsed for the D-Day invasion before crossing the English Channel in 1944.

It's remarkable how often aviation leads us to unexpected places. Like a quiet grass strip on a Scottish island where early aviation, medieval history, wartime preparations, and a colony of curious seals all exist within a few miles.

Not a bad place to spend a week - especially if you arrive by airplane.

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DISD DISTRICT LEADERS ATTEND KICKOFF

L-R: Roxie Asbill, Director of Teaching & Learning; Livia Callahan, Asst. Superintendent of Teaching & Learning; Travis Young, Superintendent; and Tami Pierce, Deputy Superintendent.

## DISD participates in Texas Strategic Leadership Kickoff

DAYTON - Dayton ISD district leaders recently traveled to Georgetown, Texas, to participate in the Texas Strategic Leadership (TSL) Kickoff, a statewide leadership event focused on strengthening district systems and improving student outcomes.

The kickoff brought together superintendents and key district leaders from more than 50 school districts across Texas, representing 18 of the state's 20

Education Service Center regions. Throughout the event, participants engaged in sessions grounded in the Effective District Framework, focusing on building and refining systems for performance monitoring, data-driven decision-making, and continuous improvement.

The event featured Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath as the keynote speaker, who shared insights on

effective leadership and the critical role district systems play in advancing student success.

Dayton ISD was proud to have district leaders among those in attendance, demonstrating the district's commitment to continuous improvement and ensuring every student has access to a high-quality educational experience.

For more information about Dayton ISD, visit [www.daytonisd.net](http://www.daytonisd.net).

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Bob Curry provided musical entertainment at Magnolia Place Health Care's July 4th celebration. Bob is originally from Liberty but lives in Beach City now.

## Magnolia Place HEALTH CARE, LLP

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DAYTON SENIORS ENJOY MEXICAN FOOD

On Tuesday, June 23, Dayton Senior Center, Inc., a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, sponsored a dinner at Los Compadres in Dayton to celebrate the arrival of summer. As always, the food was delicious, and the service was impeccable. The organization would like to express its appreciation to Los Compadres and their staff for their excellent hospitality and to thank Sherren Drake and Leora Boullion for arranging this dinner. The organization continues to provide free lunch for seniors over 55 on Monday and Wednesday of each week at 11 a.m. in the Senior Room of the Dayton Community Center. Bingo follows lunch.

Above (l-r): Evyonne Mabry, Gloria Pruitt, Marilyn Caughlin, and Carmen Campbell.