

Arthur the Scot could fuel tourist boom



TOURISM could get a lift from claims that the legendary King Arthur was a Scot.

Adam Ardrey, an advocate and amateur historian, has spent years researching what he says is the truth behind the ancient stories.

In 2012, Mr Ardrey published a book, *Finding Merlin*, underlining the evidence he has uncovered to indicate Arthur was in fact Arthur Mac Aedan.

He claims Iona, where Arthur Mac Aedan's family was buried, is Avalon, where King Arthur is said to lie.

The author also identifies the location of Arthur's most famous battle, the battle of Badon, as the lands of Badden that lie between Dunadd and Dunardy on the Crinan Canal.

He believes Arthur's famed magician, Merlin, was a politician who came from the Partick area of Glasgow and that

By **Rod Mills**
Chief Reporter

the stone from which Arthur drew a sword in 574 was at Dunadd, near Lochgilphead in Argyll.

Now, fresh from having released his second book, *Finding Arthur*, Mr Ardrey is hoping to persuade Argyll and Bute Council that the legend could open up a tourism goldmine.

Mr Ardrey, 58, from Bothwell, Lanarkshire, said: "I started looking into this when researching my family tree.

"Ardrey is an unusual name and I discovered that it's actually connected to the very first reference to Merlin, which had him fighting at the Battle of Ardreyd in 573.

"All of Arthur's battles were fought in Scotland. The battle where Arthur died was the Battle of Camlann, at Camelon

near Falkirk. The battlefield is now underneath the Alexander Dennis coach firm."

Helensburgh councillor Vivien Dance has asked Mr Ardrey to write a business case to see if they can take the claim further.

Councillor Dance said: "If we can latch on to something that brings people into Argyll, then why not? It's up to Adam to present the case for it."

The Scottish folklorist Stuart McHardy's book *The Quest for Arthur*, published a decade ago, suggested that Avalon was the Isle of May, in the Forth near Edinburgh.

Carmarthen in Wales earns £6million per year from a Merlin Festival inspired by its claim to be the wizard's home.

English Heritage also use Arthur to promote tourism, especially in Tintagel, Cornwall, and Glastonbury, Somerset.

As legend would have it, the young Arthur pulls the sword from the stone – but the event might have happened here in Scotland