



Oban trainee shortlisted for Lantra award

Inside: Highland Cattle Society 131st spring show and sale

Special delivery



Iain Thornber remembers postie Mary Tipping

• See page 16 & 17 for more

Royal honour



Plea for public to nominate local heroes for gong

• See page 7 for more



Library is potty about Harry

Are you 'Sirius'? Yes, it really is 25 years since the first Harry Potter book came out, writes Kathie Griffiths.

This week the quarter century was celebrated by Oban Library which hosted a Harry Potter book night with props including wands and an invisibility cloak to try out, games to play and wizardy crafts for young fans to make.

Eva Sage, nine, from Barcaldine, was just one of the youngsters who turned up to join in the fun.

The first of the Potter tales to be published was Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone. There are now seven books in all, written by JK Rowling.

More photographs, page 9.

Photograph: Kathie Griffiths.

FURY OVER BOOKER CHARGES

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Small shops are up in arms over 'unfair' delivery charges being imposed by wholesalers Booker.

Connel Village Store's Sandra Jordan has already enlisted support from local councillors and heard back from MSP Jenni Minto and Argyll and Bute Council leader Robin Currie who have pledged to take it up with Booker.

From Monday February 28, a delivery fee of £29.95 will be added to each delivery for Premier and Family Shopper retailers and £34.95 for all other retail

customers. Sandra says a minimum spend of £1,000 – before tobacco – is also being enforced, but only to shops, while hospitality businesses – from cafes to hotels – can have a minimum £100 spend and get their deliveries for no charge.

The changes will force Sandra to reduce her number of deliveries a week to just one and that will cause mayhem with changing staff shifts and with cashflow patterns.

'Booker, which are owned by Tesco, are enforcing a £1,000 minimum spend, before tobacco, and a £35 plus VAT delivery charge, but only to retail customers. If you don't spend £1,000 there is no delivery.

'Catering customers, such as hotels and cafes, no matter how small or how infrequently they order, only have a £100 minimum spend with no delivery charge.

'It is so unfair. Who supported them during two lockdowns and just now, in quiet times? I have spoken to a few small retailers and we all feel the same,' she told The Oban Times.

And she added: 'I'm just five miles down the road from Booker in Oban but am being charged exactly the same as other shops 100 miles away in the likes of Campbeltown and Strontian. It's ludicrous and it has wrecked everything I do. Why are they penalising

Continued on page 2.

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OT

Booker's new charges could mean loss of some small shops

Continued from page 1.

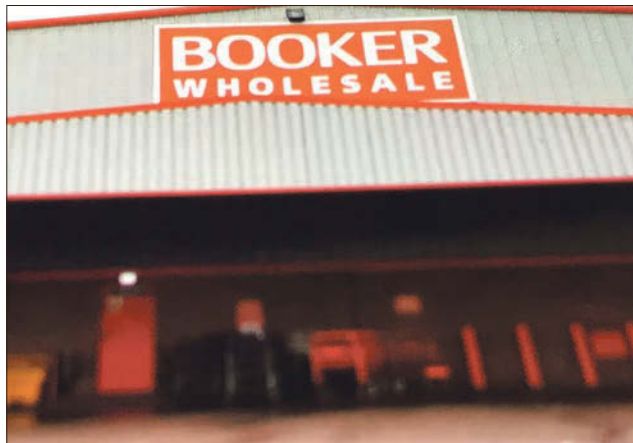
small convenience stores like us? They are squeezing us out,' she said.

Willie Dunlop, who runs Dunbeg Stores, is also furious. He said it could mean him having to lose a member of staff and having to cut opening hours to claw back the extra money that deliveries would now cost him.

'For two years, convenience stores like ours kept Bookers going through the lockdowns when all the B&Bs and other hospitality places were shut. This is the payback and thanks they give us. They are hammering us. It's pretty disgraceful. I don't think anyone is happy with it.

'We were told about the delivery charges out of the blue, just in a phone call with only four weeks' warning.

'Bookers are part of Tesco and if I wanted I could spend just £40 with Tesco and get a free delivery. It's seriously damaging to small businesses like ours.'



Booker Wholesale in Oban is introducing new charges for retailers.

Councillor Elaine Robertson said: 'This is a totally unfair burden Booker is placing on small shops. It's a directive that has come from Booker HQ with no leeway at all. This could have far-reaching consequences and may well mean the loss of our smaller shops. Our village shops offer a service much more than just being a shop. They are a com-

munity hub for many people – a place to go and meet others.'

Booker said it takes the changes very seriously and regrettably has been forced to take this difficult decision due to rising costs.

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



Dougie Graham outside the toilets at Ganavan. He called for them to be kept open all year round back in January 2021.

No-go disability toilet is embarrassing, says local businessman

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Will Ganavan's toilets stay open all year round in 2023? The answer still needs flushing out, Oban Community Council has heard.

Community councillor and snack van operator Dougie Graham has already written to the Scottish Government asking for clarification.

He told fellow community councillors at the January Zoom meeting last week: 'We should not have to be begging for facilities,' and he said people living locally should be able to get some benefit from tourist money coming into the town, using it to help fund keeping the toilets open during the off-peak season.

He also raised the additional problem that when the toilets are closed, the locked gate means there is no access to the disabled facility.

'It's embarrassing and it's

appalling,' he said. 'The only place in Britain you can't get access to a disabled toilet is Ganavan. Welcome to 2022.'

'This should not be all about money. The council has an obligation to people. I'm looking for them to stay open year through,' he said.

'We should not have to be begging for facilities...'

Oban councillor Roddy McCuish said one way of sorting the opening problem would be to relieve Argyll and Bute of the burden.

In October last year, The Oban Times reported how demands were made for Argyll and Bute Council to spend some of its leftover Covid funding on keeping the toilets open over winter.

With less than 10 days before

the toilets were due to close, a letter signed by 13 groups who regularly use the popular spot and its public conveniences was sent to council bosses.

The following month it was announced that Ganavan would be one of six council-run facilities that would be staying open when traditionally they would close until April. Crinan, Ulva, Kilchattan Bay, Glenmorag and Sandy Beach near Dunoon were the others.

But it was made clear by the council at the time that the funding to keep them open was only a one-off.

A spokesperson for Argyll and Bute Council warned: 'This is a one-off allocation from Covid funding and there is no budget beyond this current financial year from existing budget allocations.'

Oban Community Council is still waiting for a breakdown of the £91,000 that Argyll and Bute Council says it spends on toilets.

Mull and Tiree receive funding for electric buses

Two projects delivering green transport on Mull and Tiree are sharing £225,000 from the Scottish Government's Island Communities Fund.

The fund invests in 'community-led projects that support employment, community resilience and contribute to Scotland's just transition to net zero and climate resilient living on islands'.

The first tranche gave £75,600 to the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust to buy ebikes for Gigha's Active Travel Hub, £72,859 to the North West Mull Community Woodland Company to install double glazing at six homes in the Ulva Housing Refurbishment Project, and £86,000 to help Cornabus Tree Nursery on Islay manage the island's forests.

The second tranche awards £77,550 to Mull and Iona Community Trust for an electric minibus serving Mull and Ulva, and £147,323 to Tiree Community Development Trust to install an electric charge point at the island's filling station, and buy an electric community bus to 'benefit the care home, youth projects and ranger-led nature tours'.



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Scam targets Oban flat seeker

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Renters are being warned to watch out for an online scam advertising the 'perfect' Oban flat.

Retired property inspector Penelope Readman from Leicester narrowly escaped being tricked out of hundreds of pounds as an upfront deposit for the dream rental she spotted on the internet.

Ms Readman contacted The Oban Times to share her story after being told by an estate agent in the town that the scam has been targeting other prospective renters over the past few months.

Police Scotland is now investigating.

When Ms Readman found the 'perfect' town centre flat online, she got in touch with the woman supposedly renting it out and a trail of email and WhatsApp messages began.

The fake landlord, who claimed to have worked in an Oban care home for 30 years, said she was now living in

Cardiff to be closer to family and wanted someone genuine to take care of her flat while she was away. It was not about making money from it, she had claimed.

Ms Readman said: 'She also told me she had been let down

spot for Oban. It has been the gateway to many wonderful times and a place I have stayed in often.'

A viewing was arranged and Ms Readman was soon sent bank account details and a seven-page copy of the

into was not the name she expected - instead it was in the name of Patience Osamwonyi Obasohan.

When Ms Readman, who has been holidaying in Oban since she was 13, rang an estate agents in town who shared the same name as the fake solicitors on the tenancy agreement she was told it was definitely a scam and that they had received numerous queries about that address over the past few months from other prospective tenants.

'I then spent two days for many hours on the phone, cancelling trains, planes and hotels, sorting out my bank to ensure I had not compromised my account, trying to contact the police fraud team, first in England and then in Scotland.

'Looking back, of course I was stupid to believe what was being told to me, but sometimes the thought of achieving that lifelong dream takes over and seems nearly within reach. I just want other people to be aware that this sort of thing can happen. Do not ever offer

anyone money before viewing a property and thoroughly checking it out wherever advertised,' she said.

Emails and messages once Ms Readman said she would not be sending money got aggressive. 'They told me I was being childish, disrespectful and was an idiot.

'It is a very hard lesson to learn, potentially very expensive, and a severe knock to one's own confidence and belief in oneself and other people,' she said.

A Police Scotland spokesperson said: 'We received a report of a potential internet scam around 10.30am on Tuesday January 2 2022. Appropriate advice was given.'

To see that advice go to Police Scotland's keep safe section at <https://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe>.

YOURSTORY
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Plans for two new houses on Jura

Plans for two new houses at Feolin on Jura have been submitted to Argyll and Bute Council, writes Sandy Neil.

John Lithgow's proposal, on land south-east of Feolin Ferry house, near the Jura ferry slipway to Port Askaig, also involves the formation of vehicle access.

A supporting statement, written by Mr Lithgow's planning agent John Peace, said: 'The proposal is to form two houses to establish another stream of income for this estate.

'The location of this proposal is on the footprint of existing ruined croft/barn buildings.

'Once developed [the planned development] will give a stronger entrance to the estate.

'[We are] currently also applying to form an estate workshop and deer larder behind this which will be screened by these proposed houses and the existing Feolin Ferry house.'

'Looking back now, I can see how incredibly stupid this was, but it was an opportunity which would have solved a lot of problems and answered all my prayers – I have a very soft spot for Oban.'

many times by potential tenants and wanted to make sure mine was a genuine inquiry. I sent my response to assure her that I was genuine and sincere in wanting to view the flat and would happily pay the security deposit and first month's rent.

'Looking back now, I can see how incredibly stupid this was but it was an opportunity which would have solved a lot of problems and answered all my prayers - I have a very soft

Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement supposedly drawn up by a firm of solicitors.

Plane and train tickets were booked plus hotel bookings for Glasgow Airport and Oban but lucky for Ms Readman her bank's suspicions were raised and the deposit payment of £500 was stopped.

She was advised to contact the bank's fraud team who later told her the account she had been asked to pay

Council tax band	Water supply charge	Waste water collection charge	Combined charge
Band A	£147.60	£171.36	£318.96
Band B	£172.20	£199.92	£372.12
Band C	£196.80	£228.48	£425.28
Band D	£221.40	£257.04	£478.44
Band E	£270.60	£314.16	£584.76
Band F	£319.80	£371.28	£691.08
Band G	£369.00	£428.40	£797.40
Band H	£442.80	£514.08	£956.88

Scottish Water to raise domestic charges by 4.2 per cent this year

Water and waste water services to homes across Argyll are set to rise by 4.2 per cent this year.

The new annual charges, collected alongside local authority council tax, will mean an average bill increase of 31 pence per week.

Around half of households in Scotland receive financial support as they automatically have either a discount, exemption or reduction applied to their water and waste water charges.

Scottish Water serves 2.6 million households supplying 1.5 billion litres of water and removing and cleaning 1 billion litres of used and surface water daily.

Water and waste water charges, which raise almost £1 billion annually, supports service delivery, investment in ageing infrastructure and

improvements in water quality and environmental protection.

Scottish Water needs to increase investment to protect services against the impact of climate change, reduce carbon emissions and ensure customers have reliable and resilient services in future.

Douglas Millican, chief executive of Scottish Water, the fourth largest water services provider in the UK, said: 'Customers rely on our services for their daily water needs and to take away and clean the water they use. Over the last two years those services have been vital to maintaining public health during the pandemic.

'We have been recognised as leading in the water sector in the UK on customer service excellence, the quality of Scotland's drinking water remains very high, and we

are investing to protect the environment from pollution. Higher levels of investment are needed to protect services now and over the long term, particularly in meeting the challenges of more intense rainfall, flooding, and drought, and reducing carbon emissions.

'We understand there needs to be a balance between the need for higher levels of investment and the financial challenges faced by households at the present time. We have set charges at a level that takes account of those challenges while being open and clear that charges will need to increase further in future years.'

Water and waste water charges to licensed providers who supply businesses and other non-domestic customers will also rise by 4.2 per cent.

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Show us the latest plans for Dunbeg gateway, says community council

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Demands to see real plans for the Dunbeg development 'fairytale' have been made at Oban Community Council.

Questions were raised at last week's Zoom meeting, with community councillors and members of the public wanting to find out more about what is being planned for the new roundabout and gateway development off the A85 - and where it will go.

Link Housing is currently working on a masterplan but the community council meeting was told there had now been a change of location, instead of developing an area near the Halfway House filling station.

Part of the Lorn Arc initiative, the roundabout and gateway are among a number

Dunbeg development site photographed in July 2020.



of projects being funded by the council's Tax Incremental Finance Agreement (Tif) with the Scottish Government, aiming to attract investment and create employment, housing and commercial opportunities.

The roundabout and gateway development were described at

the meeting as one of Argyll and Bute's head of economic development Fergus Murray's 'fairytale'.

The community council decided to ask to see an overall plan for the area - requesting one with landmarks so that people can identify with it and read it easily.

It was also suggested during the meeting that Scottish Fire and Rescue Service should have a base out at Dunbeg because of all the new houses being built.

'You have a potential bomb out there,' warned ex-firefighter George Berry who was at the meeting.

BID4Oban chief executive Andrew Spence said it was essential that people who have moved out to Dunbeg have services and facilities.

But he added: 'Given experiences in other towns we need to be very careful about the size of any development.'

'If we were in the situation of having a large retail park or shopping centre there, it would affect the town centre.'

'We'd need to know about the size of development. You just need to look at places such as Inverness, which is surrounded by retail parks - everyone one of them is now in a state of disrepair.'

Concerns about how the development could also impact Ganavan were also raised.

Community councillor Laura Corbe said people were asking lots of questions. 'There are so many uncertainties and

unknowns,' she said, adding: 'We'd like to know what's going on.'

In May last year it was announced that more than half a million pounds would be ploughed into the creation of a special gateway and new roundabout outside Oban.

Argyll and Bute Council's policy and resources committee agreed up to £640,000 in start-up costs for the two new additions.

A Link spokesperson said: 'The feasibility stage of the project is ongoing. The plans will be updated following this and shared with the community. The current timescale for this is late spring 2022, however, representatives from Argyll and Bute Council, Link and other agencies plan to meet with the community council in March to provide an additional update.'

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Consultation on proposed school changes is extended – again

The public consultation on proposed changes to education in Argyll and Bute has been extended again, until Thursday March 31.

A consultation of pupils across the council area on the Empowering our Educators plans is to begin after the February half-term break.

A further report published by the authority has also claimed that some headteachers have said they spend 70 per cent of their week teaching.

The proposals involve school clusters being created, with an executive head overseeing each cluster. Each school would have a head of school.

Teaching unions have previously expressed fears that the plans will cut the number of head teachers in Argyll and Bute from 84 to 14. The further extension means it will now close after the next meeting of the council's community services committee, which is on Thursday March 10. It had initially been due to finish last Friday February 4 before being extended by a month.

A new frequently asked questions document stated: 'The voice of our children is our highest priority. We have been working with groups of



children and young people to create the materials that schools will use for the pupil consultation...We very much look forward to hearing the opinions of our children and young people.

'Teaching headteachers have told us they are spending up to 70 per cent of their week teaching. This means they do not have the capacity to focus on the strategic leadership of the school, developing the curriculum and learning about what works well elsewhere.'

'Although non-teaching, the heads of school will still maintain a presence in classrooms in order to drive forward quality assurance and school improvement, and to maintain close relationships with their teaching staff and learners.'

'This model is designed to give our teachers focused time to teach, and leaders focused

time to lead. This model has been developed by education-ists in Argyll and Bute. It is essential the principles of the model are as fully developed as possible to enable meaningful consultation before presenting to our stakeholders.'

'Individual school collectives have not been pre-decided. Local communities and their school will be consulted in depth before those decisions are made.'

On the possibility of heads of school being on the same level as a depute head teacher, the report added: 'On the SNCT (Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers) salary templates headteacher and depute headteachers are on the same salary grades.'

'Argyll and Bute Council determines the salary for leadership posts using the national job-sizing toolkit. Part of that calculation relates to the size of the school roll.'

'It is not unusual for a depute headteacher of a large school to be paid higher than the headteacher of a smaller school. In Argyll and Bute job-sizing is approved by the trade unions.'

The full new FAQ document can be found at empowering-oreducators.co.uk.

Oban disability and day care workers fear for their jobs

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Emails from Argyll and Bute Council's Learning Disability and Day Service bosses have left staff 'gobsmacked' and uncertain of their future.

The first email issued about the outcome of the service's re-design was sent out on Friday January 28 and followed by a second email five days later, The Oban Times was told.

The redesign would affect Oban's Lorn Resource Centre, the day centre in Lochgilphead and the Greenwood Centre in Campbeltown, as well as two others including one in Dunoon.

'The first email left staff feeling gobsmacked and uncertain about their jobs,' said the worker, who asked not to be named. 'The second email lacked even more clarity just

making that uncertainty worse. Although it was saying there would be no redundancies and that people would be deployed, people are worried there won't be enough jobs to go round.'

Meanwhile Argyll and Bute's care at home service continues to be taken with the utmost seriousness, health chiefs have said after concerns were raised over staff levels.

Kintyre and the Islands Liberal Democrat councillor Robin Currie, Argyll and Bute Council's leader, voiced his concern at a recent meeting. He had recently attended a meeting with Scotland's deputy first minister John Swinney.

However, Fiona Davies, interim chief officer of the area's health and social care partnership (HSCP), assured him that the service remained the subject of strong focus.

The discussion took place at a meeting of the HSCP's integration joint board (IJB) on Wednesday January 26.

Ms Davies said: 'The care at home service has probably been the service we have focused on most closely all through this period.

'Throughout the process, all staff members affected have been provided with regular communications and newsletter updates.'

'It is variable across Argyll and Bute. There are areas facing acute challenge and others faring much better.

'In relation to meeting our assessed need, it is something we have been watching very closely and take with the utmost seriousness.

'The need was not serious

in our judgement during this period and any gap was not best met by stopping another service in the authority.

'I was also in the meeting with the deputy first minister and we have engaged with the local resilience partnership.

'Without going into too

much detail, a lot of activity undertaken by the care at home staff cannot easily be replicated.'

Caroline Cherry, the HSCP's head of adult services, added: 'There will be concerns in relation to care at home.

It is long-standing issues in terms of recruitment and re-

tention, in terms of contracted hours and pay.

'There has been very close contact with all providers. In some areas there is very close consideration of how we manage that need on a daily basis.

'We have been fairly successful in recruiting to a mobile care at home team, which is going to help with service users and families.

'There is work to do to retain and deliver this service so that it is sustainable across Argyll and Bute. We are doing everything we can.'

A spokesman for the Argyll and Bute HSCP said: 'As part of Argyll and Bute HSCP's Transformation Programme, the HSCP commenced the review of Learning Disability Day Services in March 2021 in partnership with Human Resources and Trade Union/ staffside representatives.

'The purpose of this review is to ensure there is equity and consistency in staffing across each of our locations and ensure the future sustainability of our internal service provision.

'Throughout the process, all staff members affected have been provided with regular communications and newsletter updates.

'All affected staff members have been invited to attend one-to-one meetings with senior management to discuss any personal issues or concerns they may have. Argyll and Bute HSCP's focus continues to be retaining employment for employees affected by the review.'

Councillor Currie later told the Local Democracy Reporting Service that he was satisfied with the response he received.

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OT

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk



February is such a dreich month that I like to use it to plan ahead for all the things I have to look forward to when the weather improves and this year, for the first time in a while, there are lots of things happening.

To be honest I don't even have to wait until the weather improves. Oban Phoenix Cinema has quite a few things coming up that I'd like to see – Sing 2, Belfast, and Death on the Nile to name a few this month.

There's nothing like a nice, warm, comfy cinema to while away a few hours of total escapism. This is also the weather to indulge in tea and cake. We're very fortunate to have so many places with gorgeous home-baking in Oban. I must admit nothing cheers me up like a cuppa and a fruit scone.

If you're not a sloth like me during the winter months then maybe Atlantis Leisure is more your style, with a variety of activities to keep you moving or The Happy Wee Health Club,

WHO IS THIS?



recently opened on Lochside Street. I understand all the reasoning behind exercise improving your mood and that's great, I know it works and will try it one day, but I must admit I prefer a scone in this weather.

Focusing on things in the future though, if anyone is a member of a choir or group who love singing and would like to participate in the Oban International Sea Shanty Festival, please get in touch with me at the BID4Oban office by calling 01631 569915, or email kay@bid4oban.co.uk. It's going to be a fantastic weekend of singing and fun.

Last week's photograph was of Catriona MacFarlane, a wonderful lady who helps people through tough times.

Expressing The Earth documentary receives go ahead

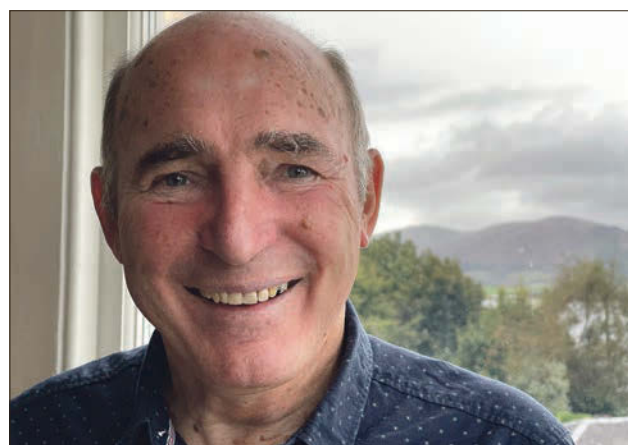
by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Earthy crowdfunders have helped raise thousands of pounds to make a feature documentary film starting out on Luig.

The island's Norman Bissell will be writing the script and co-directing the film being made by the Scottish Centre for Geopoetics.

It will tell the story of a young woman's search for the meaning of geopoetics - a growing movement inspiring artists, scientists and climate activists across the globe to creatively express the natural world.

The film called Expressing



Author Norman Bissell, who lives on Luig, will be writing the script and co-directing the film.

drama and music films, this will be her first feature-length one.

Co-director Norman said: 'Geopoetics is a big idea whose time has come. It is an international movement which places the Earth at the centre of human experience and creative expression, and this film will bring it to the attention of even more people throughout the world.'

Sponsorship from RSK delighted the Expressing The Earth's team. RSK's director of climate change and sustainability Garry Charnock said: 'Geopoetics added a completely new dimension to our Live from COP26 event in Glasgow and we are keen to build on our relationship with all the poets by sponsoring this delightful film.'

Norman has pitched the idea of the film to a leading documentary institute and also to an 'excited' film distributor who was involved in taking another powerful crowd-funded movie Nae Pasaran, a documentary about Scottish factory workers refusing to service Chile's jet fighters after the 1973 military coup, to a wide audience that included film festivals, TV viewers and cinemas.

'We're hoping for something similar to that,' said Norman.

Watch a short video by Ellen Francis about the film here <https://bit.ly/Earthshort>.

The Earth will include interviews, specially composed and performed music and incredible footage and imagery. It will also look at what geopoetics can offer the world in a time of climate and ecological crisis, said published poet, novelist and scriptwriter Norman, who is also the director of the Scottish Centre for Geopoetics.

The crowdfunded amount was doubled to £9,000 by the Scottish Centre for Geopoetics and topped with a £5,000 donation from RSK, the UK's largest privately owned technical services and environmental consultancy, which meant the project could go ahead.

The film will also follow its main character's efforts to find out about geopoetics' roots and her journey of discovery will take her to tiny Luig where the Scottish Centre for Geopoetics is based, to Glasgow, Edinburgh and the Scottish Borders, and to the home in north Brittany in France of the Scottish poet

and thinker Kenneth White, who founded the International Institute of Geopoetics.

Film-makers are also hoping for more international contributions to add to its footage, including from an American group in Ashville, North Carolina. 'It's not just going to be talking heads, there will be film footage of our natural world, of bird and other animal life on the planet. We have composers, musicians and singer-songwriters who'll be getting involved too. It's early days for the script but we'd like to make a start on the film this year, it could be 2023 before it's ready to show,' said Norman.

Ideas are still being floated, but Luig and Cullipool Bay will be in it, spots in Argyll such as the cup and ring markings in Kilmartin Glen could also be featured.

Glasgow-based film-maker Ellen Francis will be its editor and co-director of the film, which she says will be 'ground-breaking'. Although she has made several short

POLICE FILES

■ On Saturday January 29 at a pub in Oban, a 51-year-old man assaulted another patron. He was issued with a recorded police warning.

■ At 12.30am on Sunday January 30 at Creran Gardens, Oban, police carried out checks on a vehicle and allegedly established it did not have valid insurance. The 73-year-old male driver was charged with the offence. A man, aged 52, was

subsequently charged with permitting the vehicle to be driven without insurance. A report has been sent to the procurator fiscal.

■ At 10.20pm on Monday January 31 at Kebabish, George Street, Oban, it is alleged a man, 33, committed offences, including threatening or abusive behaviour; racially aggravated behaviour; two counts of assault and vandalism. He was arrested

and kept in custody to appear at Oban Sheriff Court.

■ At 10.30am on Wednesday February 2 on the A828 at North Connel, police stopped a vehicle. The driver, a 47-year-old man, was allegedly found to be driving whilst not wearing a seatbelt, driving without insurance and with incorrect registered keeper details. He was charged and a report will be sent to the procurator fiscal.



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Who deserves an honour next? Why don't you decide

by Sandy Neil
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

Local heroes recognised in the Queen's Honours Lists so far are just 'the tip the iceberg', said Argyll's Lord-Lieutenant, inviting more nominations for people who deserve a gong.

'There are a lot of unrecognised heroes in the community and I would like to encourage people to nominate them for an honour,' said Mrs Jane MacLeod, a Lochgilphead solicitor who succeeded Patrick Stewart CVO MBE as Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Argyll and Bute in 2020.

'Last year, we did quite well in the Queen's Birthday Honours, but that is the tip of the iceberg,' she said. 'We have so many people in so many walks of life in Argyll who deserve an honour, but nobody has nominated them.



Anne Paterson was presented with an OBE in January; and inset, Mrs Jane MacLeod, Lord-Lieutenant for Argyll and Bute, is calling on people to nominate someone they think deserves an honour.



'There are so many cooks in our schools, so many people who work for the local authority that keep our landscapes looking good, so many people

working on our ferries, keeping our essential services going, and we have so many worthy charities.

'Right now, the Cabinet Office are encouraging us to nominate people who went above and beyond during the pandemic.

'The Lieutenantcy does not know everybody in Argyll and Bute, the local authority does not know everybody in Argyll and Bute. It is up to you. Anybody can nominate somebody for an honour.'

Asked who qualifies for an honour, the Lord-Lieutenant replied: 'Somebody who has dedicated a huge amount of their time and lives to helping others.

'It is quite a straightforward procedure. There is an online form. It is better if there are letters of support, but it is not essential. If the online form can be submitted through me, it hopefully will help.'

Nominations are submitted to the Cabinet Office's

Honours and Appointments Secretariat, which oversees the honours system. The suitability of nominees is then established through 'merit' and 'probity and propriety' checks.

The process can take 12 to 18 months before the recommendations are passed on to the Prime Minister and, ultimately, the Queen for approval. Honours are announced twice a year - at new year and in June on the Queen's official birthday.

The most senior rank of Most Excellent Order of the British Empire are a Knighthood or Damehood, followed by Commander of the British Empire (CBE), Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE), Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE), and British Empire Medal (BEM).

In January Oban's doyenne of rugby Dee Bradbury, the

first female President of the Scottish Rugby Union, and a founder of the Oban Lorne RFC women's team, received her OBE from Scottish Rugby's patron, HRH The Princess Royal, at a ceremony in the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

Princess Anne also presented Anne Paterson, Argyll and Bute Council's former chief education officer, with an OBE for services to education over her 39-year career, starting as a teacher at Oban's Park Primary School.

Last year Keith Rutherford, postmaster at Colonsay Post Office, received a British Empire Medal, alongside Christine Campbell, a scientist at the Dunbeg-based Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS), whose contribution to its Culture Collection of Algae and Protozoa was recognised with an MBE.



Do a lateral flow test before you travel, mix with others or visit busy places.



**Living safely
this winter**



OT

Argyll Holidays sold to Cove UK's portfolio

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

One of the region's leading holiday brands has been sold to the renowned international resort operator Cove Communities.

Argyll Holidays, which owns eight holiday parks across Argyll and Bute, will be the fifth acquisition by Cove Communities under Mark Seaton as managing director of Cove UK.

The international resort operator is expanding its growing portfolio and was attracted to Argyll Holidays for its unique locations and attractive tourism and lifestyle proposition in Scotland.

Known for the natural beauty and picturesque lochside locations of its parks, Argyll Holidays has grown to become a prominent business in the Scottish tourism industry as well as a valuable contributor to the local economy.

Cove UK is intent on building on Argyll Holidays' strong reputation and commitment to serving its owners, guests and the local community for years to come, and has a pledge to source at least 20 per cent of produce locally, build local partnerships and actively engage in local community initiatives.

The company's Go Wild outdoor activities and environmental education programme is already flourishing at its other parks,



Allan Campbell (Argyll Holidays), Mark Seaton (Cove UK) and Keith Campbell (Argyll Holidays) at Loch Lomond Holiday Park.

including Seal Bay Resort (formerly Bunn Leisure) in West Sussex and Gwel an Mor in Cornwall.

Investment in owners, holidaymakers and team members is a key priority for Cove UK. It says its dedicated training centre, Cove Academy, will complement the great work of the Argyll Academy, which has been investing in the development of Argyll team members for 10+ years. The academy works with local partnerships, and local and regional skills providers to help establish effective networks for team developments.

Mark Seaton, Cove UK managing director, said: 'Argyll Holidays represents

everything that Cove looks for: stunning properties, beautiful and unique locations, and an aspirational lifestyle offering.

'Simply put, they are the best at what they do. We are delighted to add Argyll to our portfolio and will continue the exceptional work that the Campbell family has started.

'Most importantly we will grow and develop the vision of Argyll under Cove, through sustainable business practices, a commitment to environmental conservation and investment in people and the local community.'

Owned by the Campbell family who started out as sheep farmers, Argyll Holidays was established in

1967 with the development of its flagship park, Drimsynie Estate, Lochgoilhead. Since then, it has grown to a group of eight holiday parks in and around Loch Lomond and the Trossachs.

Keith Campbell, director of Argyll Holidays, said: 'We as a family have put heart and soul into developing our group of parks.

'We've invested in sustainability and kept quality at the heart of all our business practices, resulting in multiple awards, including the Scottish Family Business of the Year and thousands of satisfied holiday home-owners and holiday guests.

'Whilst we have been approached over the years by different buyers, Cove was the first company that we felt understood what we stand for and could continue what we started.

'Cove is the ideal custodian of Argyll Holidays, sharing as we do, the same missions and values, and commitment to the preservation and investment in the destinations we own.'

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Harry is potty about Harry



There was plenty of fun to be had at Oban Library last Thursday evening when youngsters joined librarians for a magical evening of Harry Potter-themed events, with the library offering the new Harry Potter book – A Magical Year – as a prize draw.

Pictured clockwise from far left: Zandra Betts gets ready to climb aboard the Hogwarts Express at platform nine and three-quarters; librarians Glynis Sloss, Kylie Yap and Jean Cunningham; looking suitably scary as Lord Voldemort is young Jack Grant; and James McCulloch with Jean Cunningham.

Photographs: Kathie Griffiths



Talking with children regularly about what they are doing and sharing online is a simple way to help keep them safe.

New campaign to help keep children safe online

The Scottish Government's Parent Club launched a new campaign on Tuesday as research reveals that more than one in 10 (12 per cent) of parents don't set any parental controls on their child's online devices.

Research shows that by the age of 12, 40 per cent of children have engaged in risky behaviours online. This includes playing with people they had never met face-to-face and doing something that they know their parents would not want them to do.

Minister for children and young people, Clare Haughey MSP said: 'There are many amazing things we can do online. However, it is really important that when you are online, you stay safe.'

'This year, Safer Internet Day will explore respect and relationships online. This is especially important in present times when so many of us are spending more time using technology for learning and socialising.'

'The campaign aims to inform parents about the risks of online harm and how to protect their children online. This goes live on 8 February alongside Safer Internet Day across a range of radio, TV and digital channels – directly reaching hundreds of thousands of

Scots. I encourage everyone in Scotland to get involved and play their part in making the internet a safer place.'

Parents and carers can help children to stay safe when online by applying the same skills and instincts they have in the physical world.

Jess McBeath, online safety consultant, explains: 'It is important that we help children to stay safe online from things like exposure to inappropriate or untrustworthy content, oversharing personal information, grooming, unauthorised spending and online bullying.'

'Talking with children regularly about what they're doing and sharing online, using parental support tools, keeping data and devices secure, and finding ways to use technology as a family that are fun, are some simple ways to help keep them safe.'

For easy ways to help protect your child online and practical advice to help you feel more confident in knowing how to keep your children safe online, visit parentclub.scot.

View the advert at <https://youtu.be/5KB5wnHEH-8>.

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OT

Oban trainee shortlisted for Lantra Scotland awards

Rural trainees Emily Underhill, 27, from Oban, 17-year-old Logan Bainbridge, from Tarbet, and The Nicholson Institute (a secondary school based at Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis) have been shortlisted for Lantra Scotland's much-anticipated Awards for Land-based and Aquaculture Skills (the ALBAS).

The winners will be announced at a prestigious gala dinner and award ceremony on Thursday March 3 at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Dunblane Hydro.

Emily is working as a freshwater fish health biologist with Scottish Sea Farms and did a modern apprenticeship in aquaculture with Shetland UHI.

She said: 'I have been privileged to have had the opportunity to collaborate over the past two and a half years with many talented people in their



field, particularly within fish health. Every one of them has influenced me in my career.'

Logan has completed a National Certificate in Gamekeeping through SRUC Elmwood Campus. He said: 'I spent a lot of time outdoors as a kid working with the local deerstalker.

'I find it very rewarding getting to see the whole pro-

cess right through from the beast being culled to bringing it home. My role as a ghillie involves carcass recovery from the hill, taking guests fly fishing and sea fishing.'

Pupils at the Nicholson Institute have created an innovative garden designed to tackle stress and mental health issues, providing a safe haven where pupils and teachers can

Emily Underhill is working as a freshwater fish health biologist with Scottish Sea Farms and did a modern apprenticeship in aquaculture with Shetland UHI.

relax. Staff, the public and local businesses donated plants and trees to enhance wellbeing and sooth the senses.

Anne Young, business manager at the school, said: 'This is a truly inspiring pupil-led project. By contributing to the development of the garden, pupils are gaining a better understanding of the mental health issues they or others may have to deal with. By including different groups of pupils each year, everyone has an input into the long-term development of the garden, which ensures an investment in the future.'

Lantra Scotland is the sector

skills council for land-based, aquaculture and environmental conservation industries and the ALBAS play a vital role in promoting rural careers, celebrating the achievements of learners, and highlighting the importance to employers of investing in skills.

Hosting the ALBAS for the evening will be farmer and stand-up comedian Jim Smith.

Industry categories at the awards cover agriculture, aquaculture, equine, environmental conservation, game and wildlife, horticulture, land-based engineering and trees and timber.

The finalists for ALBAS 2022 were chosen by an independent judging panel made up of influential figures from across the land-based and aquaculture sector, chaired by Keith Paterson of Forestry and Land Scotland.

Liz Barron-Majerik, director

of Lantra Scotland, said: 'It is a privilege to be able to name the finalists for our 2022 ALBAS, especially in this, the 20th year the awards have been running.

'The ALBAS have become well-known for highlighting the achievements of new entrants and career changers in our sector, as well as promoting skills development and effective partnership working.

'As well as congratulating the finalists, I'd also like to say well done to everyone who was nominated. They should be very proud of this recognition.

'We are also very grateful to the independent and experienced panel of industry figures who do the judging, to training providers and employers who submit the nominations, and of course to all of our generous supporters.'

Lantra's work in Scotland is supported by the Scottish Government.

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POLICE FILES

At 11pm on Saturday February 5 at an address in Longsdale Crescent, Oban, it is alleged that a woman, aged 44, acted in a threatening and abusive manner towards a man. She was arrested, charged and will appear at Oban Sheriff Court.

Between 6.30pm on Wednesday February 2 and 8.30am on Thursday February 3 smoke alarms and internet hubs were stolen from two holiday cottages in Kinlochspelve, Isle of Mull.

At 3am on Thursday February 3 at Oban High School, a wing mirror was broken off a minibus.

Between 12pm on Wednesday January 12 and midnight on Thursday February 3 at the Tigh an Truith Hotel, Clachan Seil, Isle of Seil, an industrial wheelie bin was stolen.

Between 10am on Friday January 14 and 11am on Saturday January 22 at a property in Kinlochspelve, Isle of Mull, a wheel barrow was stolen from an outhouse. Police are appealing for anyone with information on this or other incidents to contact 101.

Cabinet secretary opens new marine science lab at Dunbeg

Marine science companies in Dunstaffnage, near Oban, were joined online last Thursday (February 3) by cabinet secretary for rural affairs and islands, Mairi Gougeon, for the official opening of new laboratories and office space.

The facilities are at Malin House, pictured right, on the European Marine Science Park (EMSP) following a £2 million investment by EMSP developer, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE).

The project was prompted by companies at the park looking to expand their commercial activity. The new laboratories and offices were designed in consultation with those companies and the work was carried out by local contractor, TSL Limited.

Five companies have expanded into the new workspace; Patogen AS, Tritonia



Scientific Ltd, Ocean Ecology, Oceanium, and Shetland firm Ocean Kinetics.

Carrying out the formal opening virtually, Mairi Gougeon said: 'We are committed to developing a blue economy that is both environmentally and commercially sustainable. That is why I was delighted to open these new

facilities at this state-of-the-art marine enterprise cluster in Malin House today, which will promote entrepreneurship and showcase the many opportunities that Argyll and the Islands has to offer.

'I would like to congratulate everyone involved in this exciting initiative and I look forward to seeing the diverse

range of businesses at Malin House continue to develop in the future, supporting the local economy and creating employment opportunities.'

Morag Goodfellow, HIE's area manager for Argyll and the Islands, said: 'Argyll's rich marine resource has created and maintained significant economic opportunity for generations. We have been developing EMSP as a centre of collaboration in marine innovation and technology that taps into this natural advantage and stimulates growth in the marine science economy, not just for Argyll but across Scotland.'

'It's great to see our investment to enhance the facilities at Malin House has enabled companies to expand. As a result, we can expect new opportunities in skills development and entrepreneurship,

particularly for young people, as well as enhanced confidence in Argyll as a business location for inward investors.'

Malin House is home to 10 marine sector companies, with Scottish Association of Marine Science (SAMS) situated adjacent to the centre.

In the context of the global climate emergency, researchers at SAMS and commercial firms at the EMSP are playing a key role in safeguarding the oceans through greater understanding of the marine environment.

Together they are developing a sustainable marine economy that benefits people while safeguarding the health and productivity of the seas.

Preparatory work is also under way to develop three more buildings, one of which has already been granted planning permission.

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OT

DISTRICT NEWS

OBAN

Oban focus on proposed changes for Argyll schools

Next month's Oban Community Council will focus on proposed changes for schools in Argyll.

Oban High School headteacher Peter Bain, whose executive headship takes in Tiree School, will be invited to attend the meeting on Zoom to take questions from community councillors and the public - including parents and parent council representatives from across Oban.

A consultation, giving people a chance to have their say on the re-structuring plans that could see schools put in clusters under one executive headteacher, ends on Friday March 4.

The community council meeting will be on Monday February 28 at 7pm and a link will appear on the Oban Community Council discussion group's Facebook page.

Last month's community council meeting heard concerns from parents that they had received lots of 'conflicting answers' to their questions at designated consultation sessions.

Parents told the meeting there was a feeling they were 'not being listened to' and that answers they had been given were from a 'defensive stance.'

There was also annoyance the Gaelic medium had been 'ignored'.

Parent Ailsa Craig said she had two children in the Gaelic unit in Oban but the Gaelic medium had 'not been mentioned once' in the new structure model.

'Gaelic is part of our culture and way of life,' she said, adding: 'Argyll and Bute Council is riding roughshod over it.'

Community councillors agreed the 'sizeable topic' would be included on February's agenda and that Mr Bain and Argyll and Bute education boss Louise Connor would be invited to attend.

■ Oban's war memorial will be 100 years old in 2023 and talks are ongoing to try to get a group together to look at what work needs doing on it and whose responsibility it is.

■ Oban's housing crisis is 'writhing', community councillors heard from Councillor Elaine Robertson and others.

Flats that were built for social housing in the town are now being hired out as Airbnb which is having a major impact on getting people in to town to work in hotels, schools and other establishments.

Councillor Jim Lynch said: 'I'm hearing of people who have been given notice to quit by

landlords because they are becoming Airbnb.'

It was suggested the community council needed to take a stand on Airbnb; there are moves in some towns that Airbnbs should be capped at only being available 60 days of the year.

■ Plans for a garden centre and craft beer bar in Oban on a vacant site in Lochside Street have been given the go-ahead by council chiefs but concern was expressed at the community council meeting that steel storage containers could become the new kind of architecture in town.

■ Other plans include five new houses on Pulpit Hill.



Oban High School headteacher Peter Bain, who also has responsibility for Tiree School, will be invited to the next Oban Community Council meeting on Monday February 28 to help answer questions on Argyll's proposals for school changes.

Town quizmaster Kenneth ready to help charities

Oban-based quizmaster Kenneth McElroy is offering his services to local charities in a new series of monthly quizzes at The View in Oban.

Kenneth, who works full-time at Kilmartin Museum as the education officer, previously held a successful annual quiz in his hometown of Thurso prior to the pandemic.

A relative new arrival to Oban, Kenneth says he decided to host a monthly quiz for the next year in aid of various charities in the region to raise money for worthy causes and because he misses the buzz of a busy pub quiz.

He told The Oban Times: 'I always enjoy the craic at a quiz. I used to host a yearly quiz in my hometown in Caithness and it was always a good laugh and an opportunity for people to come together.'

'I thought in doing this I could give something back into the community, whilst having fun.'

The first quiz will be a Stupid Cupid Quiz at The View on Friday February 11 at 7.30pm, open to those aged 18 and over. There will be plenty raffle prizes on offer as well as the chance for quizzers to win £100, first place; £50, second; and a round of free drinks, third place.

The first charities to benefit from Kenny's quiz-mastering are Kilmartin Museum (SC022744) and Dunollie Castle (SC028091), two organisations in Argyll which promote, develop and care for the region's archaeology and heritage.

Kenneth says he is happy to raise funds for any charity in the community. He can be contacted by emailing kennethmcelroy1@gmail.com.

LOCH AWE/TAYNUILT

Road improvements between Loch Awe and Taynuilt

Roadworks were due to have started on the A85 near Loch Awe this week.

The £300,000 resurfacing project was scheduled to start on Monday February 7 on a 1.5km section of the road just east of Cruachan Power Station.

It is being carried out over eight days with Wednesday February 16 the expected end date although this is dependant on weather conditions.

To keep roadworkers and motorists safe, one lane will be closed and a 10mph convoy system will be in operation between 7am and 7pm.

A temporary 30mph speed limit will be in place outwith working hours.

Consultation has been carried out with emergency services and relevant stakeholders to make them aware of the plans and share information about the project in advance.

Eddie Ross, BEAR Scotland's North West Representative, said: 'This surfacing project on the A85 between Loch Awe and Taynuilt will greatly improve the surface for motorists.'

'The convoy is essential to ensure the safety of roadworkers and motorists, however, our teams will do all they can to complete the project as quickly and as safely as possible.'

'The road will be operated under a temporary 30mph speed limit when works are not taking place.'

Roadworks on the Saturday and Sunday will be avoided to help minimise disruption.

Mr Ross added: 'We thank motorists for their patience in advance and would also encourage them to plan their journeys ahead by checking

the Traffic Scotland website for up-to-date travel information.'

You can find real-time journey planning information at www.trafficscotland.org, twitter at @trafficscotland or the mobile site my.trafficscotland.org.

ARGYLL AND BUTE

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Have you considered standing for election in May this year to represent your community on Argyll and Bute Council?

Becoming a councillor is challenging but highly rewarding, offering opportunities to represent the people who live in your area as well as involvement in decisions about issues of local and national significance.

If you want to find out more about what is involved in becoming a councillor in Argyll and Bute and the election process, you can get more information on the council's dedicated Standing for Election web page.

You can download a guide to becoming an Argyll and Bute councillor as well as other resources for people considering standing for election.

The council's web page will be updated regularly with new information and you will also be able to access candidate packs and other details when the nomination process opens later this year.

Find out more at Standing for Election in Argyll and Bute (argyll-bute.gov.uk) or contact Argyll and Bute Council's Elections Team on 01546 603264.

Leanne's legacy continues to grow

The parents of a young Lewis lady who died from cystic fibrosis in 2009 aged just 21 have thanked supporters of a charity set up in their daughter's name 12 years ago, writes Mark Entwistle.

Hundreds of people and their families across Scotland who suffer from the condition have now benefited from the unique and targeted



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At random

MARTIN LAING

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Tripping the lights

I was somewhat puzzled by the recent criticism of Oban's festive lights for the celebrations just finished.

Perhaps I'm in a minority but I thought the town looked pretty good, especially given the budgetary constraints we are all dealing with.

However, I would give my wholehearted support to the initiative just launched to improve the lights for this year. The attempt to raise £20,000 for better lights comes from the offices of BID4Oban, the town's business organisation. Its chief executive, my chum Andy Spence, wants the vocal critics – and others – to rally to the cause and help to provide the funds required.

I have every confidence that if anyone can drive the initiative to a successful conclusion it will be Andy. He is passionate about Oban and deserves support. I know The Oban Times is also behind his plan.

Let's now see the doomsayers step forward and try to raise the cash needed.

Worth every penny

I must confess to being only a little surprised to find last week that the price of The Oban Times had gone up a minimal 5p to £1. Only a little because I had been expecting such an increase for a long time.

While some readers may be a bit disappointed, let me say that I think it represents splendid value and the new cover price should be viewed in context. The other local newspaper I buy every week, the Stirling Observer, costs £1.60, which is in the region of most other papers.

The Oban Times team does a fabulous job and I hope you will continue to support the local press.

Birds of a feather

I had to laugh reading the paper last week and the front-page story about the ladies from Seil who enjoy open-water swimming in our freezing quarry pools. Their collective name? The Bluetits. Brilliant!

What do you think? Send your comments to editor@obantimes.co.uk

YOURSTORY

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Harris Lodge was built as a sporting lodge in the late 1800s.

Remote renovation opportunity on Rum

The Isle of Rum Community Trust are looking for expert and non-expert volunteers to help with an eco-restoration of a tiny cottage on the south-west edge of the island, writes Mark Entwistle.

Harris Lodge is situated eight miles from the nearest inhabited house and thanks to its incredible views of Atlantic storms is now in a serious state of disrepair. Intervention is urgently required to rescue the building and to renovate it to modern standards.

Alex Mumford, manager of Rum Bunkhouse (and a director of the trust), explained: 'We have had some excellent success with recruiting expert volunteers from around the country to help with recent upgrades to our bunkhouse.

'We would now like to see what resourceful

and imaginative people might be out there looking for the experience of a lifetime helping us restore Harris Lodge.'

Built as a sporting lodge in the late 1800s, the property is a short journey using a four-wheel drive vehicle over the hill from the community-owned village of Kinloch, which currently provides the only habitable accommodation on the island. Grass-covered ridges surround the lodge with views out to the Atlantic, providing grazing for the Rum ponies, red deer, feral goats and Highland cattle that currently inhabit this corner of the island.

As Covid begins to settle, the Community Trust aims, through projects such as this one, to open up the island to new income streams and markets, aiming to diversify the

local economy, and support local businesses. Resident Alison Morris said: 'We have a population of around 46 people, including 14 young children. We need a greater diversity of employment opportunities both to attract and inspire our older children in their 20s to come back to live on the island and also to provide inspiration for the next generation of youngsters.

'Such a venue for hosting small groups and events would be an ideal boost for the island.'

The trust feels a high-quality visitor experience created at Harris Lodge would provide the community with income to help both in the running of Kinloch village and to support the development of projects such as this one.

If you think you can help to make this happen, contact harris.isleofrum@gmail.com.

support services provided by The Leanne Fund.

As the charity marks its 12th anniversary, it continues to develop the range of services provided and looks to expand into further regions of Scotland.

From its base in Stornoway, the charity now offers services across the Highlands and Islands, Moray, Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, the Northern Isles and Tayside – taking services coast to coast across Scotland and currently supporting approximately 250 individuals and their families.

The Leanne Fund was founded by the family of the late Leanne Mitchell to give real and practical help to those affected by CF. Founders

Chrisetta and Willie Mitchell said: 'We are so grateful to everyone who has contributed to the success of The Leanne Fund since it was set up in 2010.

'The legacy created in Leanne's memory has and continues to make a difference to the lives of literally hundreds of individuals and families affected by CF across Scotland over the last 12 years and we feel truly humbled by the support of everyone who has partnered with us to make this possible.' The organisation is run by a board of trustees and one employee. The fund is the only cystic fibrosis support organisation offering a unique

range of services, meeting individuals and families at their point of need.

Remaining active is an essential part of maintaining wellbeing for CF sufferers and as a result The Leanne Fund's 'Get Active' service has been inundated with applications for fitness equipment to allow people to take regular exercise in their own homes.

The fund's counselling and mindfulness service has also seen unprecedented demand as individuals and families struggled to cope with feelings of isolation and loneliness brought about by the strict shielding guidance for those affected by the illness.

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OT

LETTERS

Booker urged to rethink charges

Booker's decision to raise delivery charges for retail customers is a hammer blow to our small village shops.

We understand the company's costs will undoubtedly have risen due to the current problems with distribution and, like many suppliers, they are having to raise prices as a consequence.

But we would encourage company bosses to revisit their plan to add a delivery fee of £29.95 to each delivery for Premier and Family Shopper retailers and £34.95 for all other retail customers at the end of February.

Connel Village Store's Sandra Jordan told us catering customers, such as hotels and cafes, no matter how small or how infrequently they order, only have a £100 minimum spend, with no delivery charge.

The decision seems to be grossly unfair and, while it may be unintended, the consequences could be far reaching for small communities that rely on these shops. These businesses are an important centre of many villages and housing areas, meeting customer retail needs, but also keeping an eye out for the elderly or those in danger of becoming isolated.

While Booker needs to safeguard its business, inadvertently damaging small retailers is surely in no one's interest.

The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page.



However we reserve the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

The views expressed on our letters page are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of The Oban Times.

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Rise in ferry fares is hitting pensioners and disabled

Let's not pull any punches, the Scottish Government has sacrificed the pensioners and disabled on the islands with the increase to the ferry concession rate of approximately 160 per cent, which is to help offset the free bus concessions for the 22 years and under.

Last week SPTE (Strathclyde Partnership) said it was Transport Scotland that controls the bus fares but they seem to have forgotten they also oversee the ferry fares.

The ferry is the lifeline for many islanders. There is no other form of transport to get to hospitals, care homes, dental and optician appointments, so why penalise islanders?

SPTE is responsible for the administration of the concession fares. They in turn are responsible to Transport Scotland which is accountable to the Scottish Parliament. Where the concessionary fares have been devolved since 2017.

Both the SNP and The Greens are proudly bragging on their political broadcasts on television that they introduced free concession bus travel for those 22 year old and under ... political or what! And where is Argyll and Bute Council? Silence.

Gordon Gillespie, Rothesay.

Lack of ambition replaces our former vision and innovation

Further to Sandy Neil's piece regarding local road and tunnel infrastructure, I was struck by the lack of ambition and vision which appears to hobble many of our elected officials. In the approximate 20-year timescale that issues surrounding the integrity of the A83 Rest and be Thankful (RBT) route have emerged, no substantial permanent solution has been actioned.

The residents of Argyll are now expected to wait another 10 years for the poor man's remedy to this problem. Opportunities to dramatically improve transport links to the central belt were kicked into the long grass in favour of this lame, and supposedly expedient fix.

I write this note from the former British territory of Hong Kong, where the scale and ambition of infrastructure projects truly puts us, as its founding nation, to shame. A 55km (34m) road bridge and tunnel link spanning the Pearl River Delta was completed in substantially less time than the RBT project has even been under

YOUR PICTURES



No matter how much time passes, this view never gets old. Harry Entwistle sent us this photograph looking to Ardgour. If you have a photograph you would like to share with us, please email the jpeg

discussion. This, amongst numerous other major tunnelling, reclamation and transport projects, when measured against the comparatively modest scale of those floated for the West of Scotland, brings our low aspirational bar for similar upgrades into sharp perspective.

While not advocating for wholesale, reckless or indeed, unwanted development, the 'too difficult' box, political point scoring and continual pandering to the fashionable ideology of the moment, seems to cripple any remotely progressive development proposal.

Scotland's mastery of engineering and innovation in solving infrastructure problems used

to be one of our prime exports and envy of the world. In the face of our contemporary transport challenges, this former point of national prowess seems to have been set aside in favour of a new order based on parochialism and endless navel gazing.

Edward J Livingston, Craobh Haven, Argyll.

Taking letter as a badge of honour

Ah, Dr Martin Jaffa – fish farming's very own Exocet missile deployed with another ludicrous

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he took in May 2010, from top of the Pap of Glencoe (1MB) to editor@obantimes.co.uk

I believe this is also termed 'divide and conquer'. Shame when we have to do all that we can for our children and grandchildren in these worrying and dark times, no matter where you live or where you come from.

I think this shows how desperate the Norwegian billionaire industry has become, struggling against the tide of unfavourability due to its increasingly unsustainable and toxic presence in our seas.

In fact, there is a huge groundswell of support and community coherence against the industry, primarily from all those coastal communities whose livelihoods it affects, who sustainably live and work the seas and those who witness the atrocities happening under our noses.

Maggie Brotherston, Friends of Loch Creran, community group member of The Coastal Communities Network, Scotland.

100,000 reasons for carrying on wearing a mask

The figure of 100,000 is the estimated – and rising – number given last week on BBC Radio Scotland of children that have contracted Long Covid within the British Isles.

What is not known, however, is how long and to what future, perhaps serious, ailments these children will suffer, possibly in their later life.

Alongside being fully vaccinated, masks worn properly, close fitted – three layers of fine mesh cotton will allegedly stop 98 per cent of bugs – is the single easiest most safest personal option available to us all in the preventative battle against any future Covid variants. It will help protect yourself, your family and the family nation of Scotland to keep safe.

Please keep wearing your masks.
Stephen Jones, Oban.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



Tha seanfhacal ann a tha ag ràdh gum bheil adhaircean mòra air crodh tha fad' às! Dhòmhsa co-dhiù tha sin a' ciallachadh nach eil na tha ga aithris a rèir firinn na sgeòil agus gum bheil oidhirp ga dhèanamh luchd-èisteachd a mhealladh. Chan eil teagamh nach eil leithid seo de chleachdadh mhi-onarach a' tachairt bitheanta far am bheil eucoraich a' feuchainn ri bathar a reic nach eil da-rìribh a rèir na h-ìre, neo an luach, a thathas a' sanasachd, ach tha tomhas den aon seòrsa rud bitheanta cuideachd ann an saoghal phoilitigs far am bi geallaidhean dùrachdach gan toirt nach eil gan coileanadh.

'S cinnteach gum bi bhur taghaidhean fhèin den seòrsa gheallaidhean poilitigeach briste sin aig a' mhòr-chuid agaibhse, ach theagamh gun aontaich sibh gum bheil cuid nas miosa na chèile. Sin a' bheachd a ghabh mi a' leughadh bhriathran cheannard buidhinn a tha strì às leth dhaoine feadh Alba a tha gun dachaigh. Tha e sgith ag èisteachd ri beul-brèagha is geallaidhean, agus tha e ag ràdh gum bheil e deatamach gun tèid taighean a thogail gun dàil is urrainn dha na miltean, agus mòran chloinne nam measg sin, a tha gun dachaigh fhaotainn air mhàl.

Saoilidh mi gum bheil sinn a' cluinntinn phàrtaidhean poilitigeach de gach seòrsa ag innse dhuinn gun cuimsich iad gu sgiobalta air an dùbhlán seo ma gheibh iad comas riaghlaidh, agus tha e da-rìribh draghail san latha sam bheil sinn beò a bhith a' leughadh gun do bhàsaich còrr air dà cheud gu leth air sràidean Alba ann an 2020 ri linn dìth

àite-còmhnaidh freagarrach. Le miltean thaighean gan togail feadh na dùthcha gach bliadhna, dè idir as coireach nach eil a' bhearn chudromach seo anns a' mhargaid ga leasachadh. Far am bheil cor fheadhainn gun dachaigh air cogais an riaghaltais, gun ghuth air a bhith nan dleastanas dha, agus far am bheil smachd aige air maoin calpa agus cead-dealbhachaidh nach saoilidh tu gun gabhadh cùmhnantan cur air dòigh le buidhnean togail gun chus duilgheadais.

'S e casaid anabarrach dha-rìribh a bhiodh ann air riaghaltais, agus gu dearbh air pàrtaidhean poilitigeach gu lèir, a ràdh gum bheil iad a' cur nas lugha chuideam air dìon dhaoine a dh'fheumas cadal air a' bhlàr-a-muigh na tha iad a' toirt dha iomairtean eile. Chan iongnadh Fasgadh Alba bhith a' comharrachadh gum bheil gainnead thaigheadas sòisealta ann an Alba na shuidheachadh èiginneach, agus na thoradh air bliadhnaichean anns nach deach faisg gu leòr maoin a chur dhan raon chudromach seo.

Gun teagamh tha uallaichean agus dleastanasan air feadhainn eile cuideachd san t-suidheachadh, leithid feadhainn a tha a' leigeil àitean-fuirich air mhàl, ach cha bhi e idir gu leòr dha riaghaltais tuilleadh maille a dhèanamh fhad 's a tha sgrùdaidhean is conaltradh a' gabhail àite. Tha an èiginn seo a' tachairt an-dràsta!

Le còrr air seachd mìle gu leth pàiste gun dachaigh bhuan an ceartuair tha feum gluasad gu grad gus an suidheachadh maslach seo a cheartachadh!

witticism designed to isolate, ridicule and disempower.

Martin singles out, tracks and blogs (in school-boy fashion) anyone from the growing army of caring, concerned individuals who dare speak out or highlight the abuses of the billionaire fish farming industry. This only proves yet again we are doing something right and therefore we'll take this as a badge of honour. Thank you Martin.

However, in his latest offensive, Dr Jaffa fixates on assumptions about my partner's origins – intended no doubt to make him feel unwelcome in the local community.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Recently, I have been learning to crochet with the help of my friends at Kinlochleven Knit and Natter Group, which is held in the Parish Church every week.

The group has contributed to the making of items that will benefit others. They have produced things like baby hats (for premature babies) and consoling toys for children in difficulty. And also outdoor decorations to mark special times of the year.

We plan to continue this work, for it is not 'just' knitting! It is a practical way to show our

care and concern for others. We have found some motivation for our actions from a story found in the Bible.

There was a craft worker Tabitha (also known as Dorcas). Acts 9:36-39 implies that she had been charitable and kind.

The Apostle Peter brought her back to life after she had died. Those who loved her were amazed. He did this by the power of God and enabled her to go on to help others.

Today I would like to appeal for the 'Dorcas' spirit to continue to grow in our community.

Our Presbytery has contact with Church Mission Partners based in Zambia. We understand that they urgently require new baby clothes for one of their projects.

Can anyone else help us by providing knitted or crocheted baby clothing for those in need?

If so, please contact; Reverend Marion Kinnear, The Manse, Lochaber Road, Kinlochleven. PH50 4QW.

Reverend Marion Kinnear, Auxiliary Minister, Nether Lochaber.

Valentine's Day Menu - Delicious and on plan

Lip-smacking starters
Pile tasty Chinese-style chicken onto steamed pak choi for a finger-lickingly fantastic starter.

Heart-melting mains
Love a good steak? Then you'll fall head over heels for this chipotle-seasoned version.

Dreamy desserts
These decadent desserts are a menu must for any chocolate lover. Spoons optional...

Detailed recipes available at: slimmingworld.co.uk

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Thursday - 8am & 9.30am
Gillian 07796 040803

Campbeltown - Masonic Recreation Club
Wednesday - 9.30am, 5.30pm & 7pm
Tracey 07984 473361

Fort William - Salvation Army Hall
Thursday - 3.30pm, 5.30pm & 7pm
Friday - 9.30am & 11am
Gillian 07796 040803

Lochgilphead - Lochgilphead Baptist Church
Monday - 5.30pm & 7pm
Miriam - 07765 020776

Mary Tipping – Lochailort's

Morvern Lines

IAIN THORNER

ian.thornber@btinternet.com



There were two reasons for celebrations in the Lochailort community during 1966. Firstly, after more than a century of constant canvassing and lobbying, the Scottish Office and Inverness-shire County Council finally agreed to fund the completion of the last 12-mile section of the A861, beginning at the head of Loch Ailort and finishing at Kinicara, taking in Roshven and Glenuig on the way: secondly, their well-loved, 70-year-old postwoman had decided to get married.

The superb two-lane highway with its spectacular views across to the Arisaig Peninsula and the islands of Eigg, Muck, Rum, Canna and Skye, was opened on July 29 by the Minister of State for Scotland, George Willis MP. Mr Willis described it as the longest completely new road to be built in Scotland since the days of Thomas Telford, 150 years earlier.

Miss Mary Tipping, the postwoman for Lochailort and district for more than 20 years, wed 67-year-old road foreman Mr David Miller, Dunfermline, who helped build the very same road, which in the end was to make her redundant. They met for the first time when Mary delivered a letter to him at the camp where he lived. Their friendship blossomed and by December that year the wedding invitations went out to friends who arrived at Inverailort by boat, car, pony, bicycle and on foot. There, courtesy of Mrs Cameron-Head – the hugely popular, resident laird – Mary and David had the honour of being the first couple ever to be married in the castle's beautiful upstairs chapel.

For weeks friends had lent a hand for Lochailort's wedding of the year. Venison and mutton from the estate, wild sea trout caught in its fabled salmon river, and fruit and vegetables from the castle's Victorian walled garden was served at the reception, which took place in the 300-year-old front hall.

Mrs Cameron-Head, who was no snooty landowner, supervised preparations. She explained: 'We all love Mary and we are doing this as a community effort in the real Highland tradition. It will be our wedding gift.'

After the ceremony, which was performed by Father Iain Gillies, parish priest of Arisaig, the couple signed the register in the drawing-room,



Mary Tipping with her bicycle on the Road to the Isles near Glen Mamie, Lochailort.

Photograph: Mr J J MacDonald, Knoydart.

Inverailort Castle, owned by Mrs Cameron-Head, where Mary was married in 1966. The castle is no longer habitable. Photograph: Iain Thornber.

Mary came to Lochailort from the Glasgow area to help look after her sister's family and stayed until they grew up, living at first in a railway house at Polnish, adjacent to the West Highland line, before moving to a cottage behind Glenshian House, which had been a field hospital during the time the navy and the commandos were training in the area. Later it became a private fishing hotel run by the hospitable and popular McRae family.

Letters and parcels came and went by train from Fort William and were sorted at the Lochailort railway station by Mary who loaded as much as she was able onto the pannier of her heavy post office bicycle. Her route took her as far west as Beasdale and to Corriebuie at the east end of Loch Eilt and included Lochailort itself – a distance which meant pedalling some 25 miles daily regardless of the weather.

Mary Tipping was a local treasure and a welcome sight. Not content to put a letter into a box unannounced, she made a habit of calling at every home along the way to make sure the occupants, especially the elderly, were safe and well. Officialdom, which has ruined so much of the Highlands since the 1960s, was thrown to the wind – and rightly so in scattered rural communities where everyone looked out for each other. Mary was unofficial social worker, nurse, doctor, helper, confidant, carrier of news, and scribe whose kindness and thought for others, rich or poor, weak or sprightly, knew no bounds. Had she been alive today there is little doubt that her name would almost certainly have appeared in the Honours list.

Not long after her wedding and the completion of the new road, the postal service was reorganised and served by a Royal Mail delivery

where guests who were unable to get into the chapel were waiting. From there they were piped through the library into the panelled ballroom by 13-year-old Angus Macdonald from Glenuig.

During the evening Mary was presented with a gift which had been subscribed to by friends from as far away as Canada and America to

mark their appreciation for her efforts to deliver their mail in all weathers. As the homely rooms of Inverailort Castle, which were festooned with flowers and hung with local clan banners, echoed to the lively music of the Roshven Ceilidh Band, guests mingled to wish Mary Tipping and her husband every happiness.



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popular postie



van. Mary could not drive and had to resign. Retirement must have been welcome but at the same time she would have missed her friends and they her. A hearty farewell party soon followed at which this tribute was given.

The Lochailort Postie

*We have met here tonight to honour a friend,
Whose services to us have come to an end,
A kenspeckle figure in this part of the coast,
You know who I mean, 'Tis Mary the Post'.
For twenty long years in all sorts of weather,
Through the burns, o'er the braes, through the
bogs and the heather,
She has plodded her way, and it's her proudest
boast,
In snow, rain or storm, not a letter was lost.
Her bike with its burden no more will be seen
Tearing down the school brae like a flying
machine,
For Mary's red bike is replaced by a van,
And Mary herself, sad to say, by a man.*

*Now Mary I'm sure would be the first to concede,
That a van in her place could fulfil a long need,
But come wintry weather, the frost and the snow,*

*You can aye shove a bike where a van widnae go.
And you can't hide a van in a ditch or a hag,
With bracken to cover the Post Office bag,
And to hide it completely is harder by far,
At the back of Glenshian when the Posts' in the
bar.*

*Now time marches on, things get faster each
year,*

*And the Post Office too must get into top gear,
So Lochailort will never again see the like,
Of "Wee Mary Tippin" astride a red bike.*

*This part of the country is steeped in romance,
Right back to the days when the prince came
from France,*

*There are songs, there are stories and legends
galore,*

Now the saga of Mary will add to the score.

*Let's wish her good luck, good health and good
cheer,*

*May good fortune attend her for many a long
year*

*So, fill up your glasses, and all drink a toast,
From the 'Folk of Lochailort, to Mary the Post'.*

Mary Tipping died on the 9th of April 1968, aged 71, and her husband 22 March 1976, aged 76. They are buried at Hillend, Inverkeithing.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

We delve into The Oban Times archives to bring you faces and places from yesteryears



When we saw this trio of cuties, we could not resist. But who are they and where are they now? If you know who they are we'd love to hear from you. Email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk



This band of musicians look like they were entertaining a games crowd. Some of the members were from Lochaber Community Wind Band, who were joined by members of Dumbarton Concert Band. But what was the year? If you can name folks, even better. Let us know by emailing us at editor@obantimes.co.uk

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SUPPORT LOCAL WITH LOVE OBAN VOUCHERS



Where can you spend your Christmas Love Oban vouchers?

Many people received Love Oban gift vouchers at Christmas, but where do you spend them?

More than 80 Oban businesses accept the vouchers. From florists to a tasty treat, Oban is brimming with fantastic places to spend your vouchers.

This week we have listed just some of them.

Love Oban vouchers, also known as the Oban Pound, were set up by BID4Oban to encourage spending in local shops, restaurants and businesses.

'The highly successful initiative helps keep money in Oban,' said BID4Oban chief executive Andrew Spence. 'We have a lot of new local businesses opening in the town. Given what we have just been through, it's clear the town is extremely vibrant and people have got the confidence to invest in Oban. We are a destination town and a key hub.'

The Oban Times, in association with BID4OBAN and supported by the Scotland's Towns Partnership are helping to provide resilience for our local business community.

Why should a business accept the vouchers?

When asked, Andrew Spence from BID4Oban said 'Love Oban Vouchers support local businesses. They have generated significant sales over the last nine years and encourage customers to Shop Local, Use Local and Buy Local. The face value of the vouchers can be redeemed by the participating business and we aim to credit your account within one week. The scheme is easy to use with minimal paperwork. Any business that wants to accept them can do so by contacting Kay or Andy at the BID4Oban Office.'

Are you wanting to love Oban more?

Love Oban vouchers make ideal presents for weddings, anniversaries and birthdays or just to say thank you to someone.

They come in denominations of £10, £20 and £50 and are the perfect gift for any occasion.

As well as buying Love Oban vouchers from the BID4Oban office in Stevenson Street, you can purchase them from the following businesses.

The Sports Shop Oban, Argyll Square; Webster's of Oban Photographic Centre, George Street; Alba Artshop, Albany Street; Button Nose Boutique, Airds Crescent, and Etive Restaurant, Stevenson Street.

Alternatively, you can go online to the BID4Oban website <https://www.bid4oban.co.uk/overview-love-oban> and buy them there.

WHERE TO SPEND

CREATURE COMFORTS

Creature Comforts is your local pet shop for Oban & surrounding area. Stocking feeds & accessories for all kinds of pets & wild birds. Mail order available. 9-10 Aird's Cres, Oban, PA34 5SQ www.facebook.com/Creaturecomfortsoban



CUAN MOR

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ETIVE RESTAURANT

Food is key at Etive using the very best produce and ingredients from across Scotland. Boasting two AA Rosettes for culinary excellence along with other awards, this tasty restaurant is a must stop. 43 Stevenson St, Oban, PA34 5NA Tel: 01631 564899



FANCY THAT

A family run business specializing in gaming merchandise, Scottish gifts as well as other bespoke products.

108 George street, Oban Tel: 01631 562996



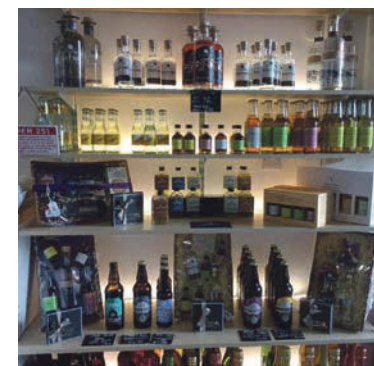
FIOR BEAUTY

A local nail salon offering a range of services. See Facebook page for details. Fior Beauty 51 Morvern Hill, Oban, PA34 4NS Tel: 07833 088376



FOOD FROM ARGYLL AT THE PIER

Food From Argyll is a co-operative organisation made up of food producers from throughout Argyll. Passionate about where they are and what they do. Railway Pier, Oban, PA34 4LW Tel: 01631 563636



GELATOBURGER

Enjoy delicious, handmade burgers made with quality ingredients and choose from a selection of mouthwatering sides. Don't forget to leave room for dessert – a host of fresh ice cream!

14 George St, Oban, PA34 5SB Tel: 01631 565828



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Fort William Mountain Festival

Back to a live, multi-venue event in 2022

The Fort William Mountain Festival 2022 programme has been announced. A superb line-up of uplifting talks, exhilarating film screenings, mountain skills workshops and exhibitions in the Outdoor Capital of the UK. Over five days in February. During the best winter walking, climbing and snowsports conditions of the year.

For the 18th outing of the Fort William Mountain Festival, organisers are delighted to announce that they will once again stage a live, multi-venue event in and around the bustling Highland town of Fort William, at the heart of The Outdoor Capital of the UK (OCUK), a location known for its adventure roots, its global provenance, stunning landscapes, peaks, glens, waterways, beaches, history and culture.

From Wednesday 16 to Sunday 20 February 2022, they have pro-

grammed a stunning line-up packed full of inspiration, education and entertainment; action and adventure. It includes presentations from world class outdoor adventurers; adrenaline filled and thought-provoking films from both the Festival's very own international film competition entries and the Banff Centre Mountain Festival World Tour; a number of award nights, including The Scottish Awards for Excellence in Mountain Culture and The Photographer of the Year Award, celebrating a range of outstanding achievements; thought provoking environmental discussions; and a collection of quality fringe events including winter mountain skills workshops, philosophy walks, and bike and running themed nights.

Visitors to and residents of Lochaber can celebrate everything that the great outdoors has to offer at the



lain taking a shortcut on the descent from the CIC hut, Ben Nevis in the background. Pic: Omega Guiding

Fort William Mountain Festival sponsored by Lochaber Chamber of Commerce (OCUK), Ellis Brigham, Patagonia, Jahama Highland Estates, Nevis Range, University Highlands and Islands-West Highland College,

John Muir Trust and many Friends and Supporters who make things happen.

Rod Pashley, Chairman of The Highland Mountain Culture Association, organisers of the Fort William Mountain Festival, said: "In 2021 we produced a stunning on-line Festival amid the challenges of Covid-19. Now, as we finalise the programme and update the website for our 2022 Festival, we're back to a live, multi-venue event, celebrating the wild landscape that surrounds us in Fort William and Lochaber; the inspiration that fuels the passion and enthusiasm behind the Mountain Festival. The mountains, glens, rivers and coastline influence our culture in many ways, whether it is the beauty of the landscape, our engagement with it or the opportunities we find in it."

"The Fort William Mountain Festival has something for everyone with a love for the outdoors. With an exciting programme of adventure and events taking place throughout the area, the festival offers a superb line-up of inspirational talks from top climbers and mountaineers, mountain bikers, mountain runners and mountain filmmakers, together with exhilarating film screenings from cutting-edge outdoor adventurers; mountain skills workshops and a festival exhibition.

"Of course, the Festival is not just for high adrenaline adventure enthusiasts. It is for everyone who appreciates the great outdoors. With the best winter walking, climbing and snowsports conditions of the year, visiting Fort William and Lochaber in February, for the Mountain Festival, is the perfect time of year to experience the stunning landscape of the area first-hand."



FORT WILLIAM MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL '22

16 - 20 FEB

18 years of celebrating world-wide adventures from the Outdoor Capital of the UK (OCUK) through a diverse and inspirational programme.

DETAILS ON OUR WEBSITE
www.mountainfestival.co.uk



#FWMF2022

The five day Fort William Mountain Festival 2022 programme includes:

The Nevis Centre Fort William

Festival Launch Night Wednesday 16 February

Meet Keith Partridge, Paul Duffley and Dave Macleod; all film-makers, as they celebrate stories behind the stories of the History of British Mountaineering film-making.

Banff Centre Mountain Film Festival World Tour Thursday 17 February

A selection of the finest mountain/outdoor/adventure films to entertain, enthral and inspire, from the Banff Centre Mountain Film Festival World Tour.

Running Night Friday 18 February

Meet Charlie Ramsay, creator of the Ramsay Round in 1978; Nicky Spink, who recently broke the Ladies Lake District 24-hour record climbing 65 peaks in 23.45 hours. From Fort William meet our very own Es Tressider and son Aaron (9) both keen climbers and runners based in Lochaber. In 2019 Es set the record for the fastest completion of Ramsay's round (subsequently broken by Finlay Wild) and ever since then Aaron had been interested in the round. In 2021 they wanted to do a long multi-day adventure locally, so set out to do Ramsay's round over three days, carrying all their stuff and camping along the way. A strong line-up including members of the Black Trail Runners, a group campaigning and encouraging more black members to trail running.

The Climbers Night Saturday 19 February

Meet some of the UK's and local climbers and mountaineers, James Mchaffie, Malcolm Bass, Simon Yearsley, Adele Pennington, Keri Wallace and Ali Rose as they share their stories celebrating the legacy, impact and inspiration of Ken Wilson, author of The Games Climbers Play, Cold Climbs, and notably Classic Rock.

The Snowsports Night Sunday 20 February

Everything snowy, powdery, exhilarating and perhaps even scary. Supported by MDV (Marker, Diablo, Volk) and Paddy Graham, freestyle skier and a major contributor to the collective group 'Legs of steel', producing awesome snowsport films. A night not to be missed.

The Exhibition Zone

The Exhibition Zone at the Nevis Centre opens daily 17.30 – 22.00 16 – 20 February before the main programme events and during intervals. There will be the usual mix of mountaineering exhibits, books and trade stands.

Highland Cinema Cameron Square, Fort William

The Wild Climate Change Adventure night Thursday 17 February – Screen 1 - 19.00-20.30

Meet James Armour, an adventurer and graduate of Climate Change (Impacts, mitigation and adaptation) from Copenhagen University, who became the first person to swim, run and cycle the Outer Hebrides in a single event in July 2021. Distances were 308km divided into a 33km Swim, 92km run, 183km cycle. His journey took over 53 hours, beginning at 03:30am at the Barra Head Lighthouse and ending at the Butt of Lewis Lighthouse around 08:30am 2 days later. James was raising funds for the Tobermory-based Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust and the work they undertake, surveying the high seas of the Minch.

Wild Swimming Friday 18 February – Screen 1 - 19.00-20.30

Meet Calum McLean sharing his passion for swimming in remote rivers and lochs. Calum is a

TV presenter, film-maker, outdoor broadcaster, outdoor swimmer, and fluent Gaelic speaker. In 2017 Calum was nominated by The Wild Swimming Brothers (The Hudson Brothers) as Wild Swimmer of the Year. In 2019 he was invited to speak at the RSGS Inspiring People series. He makes short, often comical, films on outdoor swimming, wild camping and related challenges for BBC Scotland's 'The Social. This

Bike Night Saturday 19 February – Screen 1 - 16.00-18.00

Meet members of the Adventure Syndicate, and Karen Darke. The Adventure Syndicate is a collective of extraordinary cyclists, who happen to be women, and who aim to challenge what others think they are capable of, adventurers and storytellers who promote mental and physical wellbeing through their outdoor endeavours. In 2021 they recreated an epic Scottish 500-mile cycle and youth hostelling adventure from the 1930's.

Karen Darke MBE, FRSGS is an author, global speaker, transformational Coach, mindset architect, and adventuring soul. She is also a British paralympic cyclist, paratriathlete, adventurer. At the 2016 Rio Paralympics Karen won Gold in the Women's road time trial, following her success in the 2012 London Paralympics where she won a silver medal in the Women's road time trial H1-2

The International Film Night & the Photographer of the Year Awards Saturday 19 February – Screen 1 - 19.30-22.00

Audiences are invited to relax at a night of award-winning outdoor adventure films. The winners of the 2022 competition categories will be announced: People's Choice, Best Short Film, Best Mountain Sports Film, Best Exploration and Adventure Film and the John Muir Trust Wild Places Film Prize. The 2022 Photographer of the Year Award will also be presented.

The Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture and The Scottish Youth Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture Saturday 19 February – Screen 1 - 19.00-19.30

Both recipients will receive their awards at a special ceremony. These prestigious awards recognise and celebrate lives spent in pursuit of adventure; the overcoming of personal challenges; the achievement of the highest performance and recognition in their chosen specialisms whilst inspiring others along the way. The 2022 winners will be announced in early February.

Success on 'Skye Wall' Saturday 19 February – Screen 2 – 16.00 - 18.00

Meet Bekah Drummond and Rob Mackenzie and hear about Bekah's successful attempt of Skye Wall, E7, 6B, one of the most stunning looking routes in Scotland. Bekah finally managed to time the weather and holidays right and scrape in her goal of climbing this stunning line before she turned 25.

Family Film Matinee Sunday 20 February – Screen 1 - 14.00 - 16.00

A collection of family friendly films from the International Film Competition to inspire adventurers of all ages. This is a non-ticketed event.

The Wainwright Round Sunday 20 February – Screen 1 – 19.00 – 20.30

Meet Sabrina Verjee, who, on 11 June 2021, was eventually successful in completing the tour of the Wainwrights in 5 days 23 hours 49 minutes and 12 seconds. This was the fastest time by anyone for the route, which involves 36,000 metres of ascent. There had been a number of disappointments with previous attempts but on 11 June 2021, her persistence and motivation paid off.

Environment Night- Sunday 20 February – Screen 2 – 16.00-18.00

This event will include environmentally focused films from our International Film Award submissions and a presentation and Q&A from Bike4Parks of their 2021 Eco Adventure (John o' Groats to the Scilly Isles) over land and sea! A unique journey using both road and water bikes! Their intention to promote the need for a stronger eco/environmental appreciation.

The Highland Bookshop Fort William High Street

The Philosophy of Walking Thursday 17 February - 17.00-18.30

Presented by Graeme Tiffany. Graeme is a freelance researcher, trainer, lecturer and education consult-

ant working in the UK. Graeme has a background in youth work, community education and community development. As Vice-Chair of the Federation for Detached Youth Work, Graeme represents the UK in Dynamo International, an international network of street educators. This presentation considers the link between philosophy and walking in general and introduces the practice of 'Philosophy Walks' in particular. Walking, of all outdoor activities, seems to offer a particular means to think about these experiences, but also the world beyond. People who write about walking almost always make philosophical claims. And those who write about philosophy often describe how walking helps them to clarify their thoughts.

The 'Fox of Glencoe' book night Friday 18 February - 17.00-18.30

A presentation from the Scottish Mountaineering Press, publishers of the book The Fox of Glencoe by Hamish MacInnes. The Fox of Glencoe chronicles the adventures of the legendary Hamish MacInnes and his achievements in the field of mountaineering. Throughout this rich collection of tales, Hamish's unorthodox character and pragmatic approach to risk and loss are conveyed with wry, elegant style, offering a glimpse into the mind of one of the greatest mountaineers of our time.

The Venture Trust Saturday 19 February - 17.00-18.30

Meet Sasha Doyle along with those who have experienced the work of the Venture Trust. The Venture Trust support people struggling with involvement in Scotland's criminal justice system, long term unemployment and mental health and wellbeing. The Venture Trust work with people to gain the life skills, stability and confidence needed to reach their potential. Through person-centred support in communities and experiential learning in the outdoors we challenge individuals to reflect on beliefs, attitudes and behaviours so they can unlock skills and learn new, more positive, ways of approaching situations.

The 'Vanishing Ice' book night Sunday 20 February -17.30- 18.30

The diaries of a Scottish Snow Hunter. Meet Iain Cameron, who was nine years old when snow patches first captured his imagination, and they have been inextricably bound with his life ever since. He developed his expertise through correspondence (and close friendship) with research ecologist Dr Adam Watson, and is today Britain's foremost authority on this weather phenomenon. There are few more beautiful places than Scotland's winter mountains. But even when most of the snow has melted, isolated patches can linger well into summer and beyond. In The Vanishing Ice, Iain Cameron chronicles these remarkable and little-seen relics of the Ice Age, describing how they have fascinated travellers and writers for hundreds of years, and reflecting on the impact of climate change.

Right: Ali about to tackle the crux cave pitch of Darth Vader on Ben Nevis. Pic: Omega Guiding

Three Wise Monkeys Climbing Centre Fort William

Secret Sessions Thursday 17, Friday 18, and Saturday 19 February - 17:00 to 18:00

Reserve a place to meet an interesting and inspiring person – but you won't know who it is until you meet them. Surprise yourself! Food will be provided. Book your place through the Festival website.

The Alexandra Hotel, The Parade, Fort William

The Festival Ceilidh Saturday 19 February

A non-ticketed event. From 22:00 until late, with Riska Ceilidh band. Everyone welcome. Always a good night.

The Photographer of the Year Award 2022

The Photographer of the Year competition is open to everyone. Applicants have been invited to submit one photograph with the theme 'These are my Mountains', taking us on a journey to a place that inspires. The judges are local, including photography legend and all-round mountain hero Alex Gillespie. The winning photographs will be displayed in the Exhibition Zone. The winners will receive their prizes at the International Film Award night.

FRINGE EVENT PROGRAMME

Festival organisers have put together a wide range of workshops with plenty of opportunities for both novices and experts alike to get out and about amidst the beautiful Lochaber winter landscape. Winter Mountaineering Skills, Philosophy Walks, Wild swimming, Biking, Running, Yoga, Outdoor Art.



To find out more about the Fort William Mountain Festival 2022 and to buy tickets, go to <https://mountainfestival.co.uk>.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FORT WILLIAM MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL TEAM FOR DEVELOPING A FANTASTIC PROGRAMME OF EVENTS FOR 2022!

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TICKETS: WWW.HIGHLANDCINEMA.CO.UK

Creative celebration on Tiree comes through collaboration

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

An ambitious project aiming to celebrate stories, heritage, culture and the Gaelic language on the Isle of Tiree aims to launch at the end of the month.

Tir Iseal nan Òran (Tiree: low land of song) is an island-wide creative project, taking place as part of Scotland's Year of Stories 2022.

At the heart of the project are seven stories from the island's history, tradition and mythology, which will be explored within their physical and historical contexts to inspire new creative work.

Local artists, young people, the wider Tiree community and an international audience will all be invited to take part in exploring and retelling these stories through a mixture of traditional music and song, film and photography, theatre and writing, and Gaelic and English.

This collaborative project has been developed by the Friends of the Argyll Papers, Tiree & Coll Gaelic Partnership, Tiree School and musicians, a filmmaker and heritage professionals on the island.

Dr John Holliday, chairman



of the Tiree & Coll Gaelic Partnership, welcomed the start of the project, saying: 'Tir Iseal nan Òran weaves the island's rich oral traditions and the music and song for which it is famous with the treasures of the Inveraray Castle archives.'

'It is going to be some collaboration, and I can't wait to see and hear what it produces.'

Some of the highlights to look forward to are:

■ Jack Lockhart (Screen Argyll), a filmmaker resident on Tiree, will create an ani-

mated film of James Turnbull's 18th century full-colour illustrated plan of Tiree, held as part of the Argyll Papers at Inveraray Castle.

■ Local island-born, Gaelic speaking musicians – Ian Smith (Trail West) and Angus MacPhail (Skipinnish) – will create new music and song inspired by the stories, promoting the culture and language of their island.

■ Tiree's young people will be mentored through a series of creative workshops to reflect

on the stories in their physical and historical contexts and create written responses in English and Gaelic.

■ The Tiree diaspora will be invited to create textile pieces inspired by the stories. These pieces, with the reflections of their creators, will be sewn together into a 'Tiree Tapestry'.

■ Exhibitions, workshops and presentations will contextualise the stories and introduce the original archive documents and artefacts which underpin them. These will be

The survey of Tiree drawn by James Turnbull, surveyor, in 1768/9. The original plan, measuring 2260 mm x 1539 mm, will link the Tir Iseal nan Òran stories, physically and historically. Photograph: Argyll Papers at Inveraray Castle ref.R038

delivered in person, with additional digital content available internationally.

■ A trail leaflet will feature Turnbull's illustrated plan of Tiree and the stories in their physical locations on the island, providing a sustainable resource for future visitors.

■ The new creative work – writing, tapestry, film, music and imagery – will be drawn together in a public multi-media theatre performance, delivered with Tiree School students on Thursday 16 June. The young people will participate in a dramatic interpretation of the stories which will include music and song in Gaelic and English.

■ Additional workshops and performance opportunities will be offered to local audi-

ences and visitors as part of Fèis Thriodh – a week-long festival of traditional culture – and Tiree Music Festival in July 2022.

A dedicated website www.tir-iseal.co.uk (due to launch at the end of February) will provide a platform on which to share the new writing, music, song and film created in response to the stories, enabling the wider Scottish and international audience to follow and engage with the project.

Tir Iseal nan Òran has been supported by the Year of Stories 2022 Community Stories Fund. This fund is being delivered in partnership between VisitScotland and Museums Galleries Scotland with support from National Lottery Heritage Fund thanks to National Lottery players.

It is supported by Argyll Estates, Historic Environment Support Fund, the National Lottery through Creative Scotland, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Argyll and Bute Council Supporting Communities Fund, Clan Campbell Education Foundation, Inc., CHARTS Argyll and Isles, Tiree Community Windfall Fund, Pamela Campbell Bickford, Martha McKinnon and Elizabeth Kraus.

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Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



I was planning on telling you that I have attended no less than three fantastic Celtic Connections shows since I wrote last week's column.

The truth, though, is nearer two and a half after I got thrown out of a gig in quite sensational fashion on Saturday night!

Let me explain. No sooner had the final whistle blown in the Scotland v England Calcutta Cup rugby match, than a group of us left the Park Bar and hurried along to the New Auditorium of the Royal Concert Hall. Our rush was to hear Michael McGoldrick who was starting the evening off.

We arrived in time, if slightly breathless, and even managed to order a pint each at the bar. This was our downfall.

On approaching our balcony seats, the lady asked for a look at our Covid passports and our tickets but forgot to inform us that alcohol was strictly forbidden within the venue. We had been sitting quite happily enjoying McGoldrick and his amazing band for about two full minutes when we were politely asked to leave with our drinks on account of the fact only water was permitted in the auditorium. The protestations of my pal Donnie that our drink was probably about 85 per cent water fell on deaf ears but, mercifully, we were allowed to re-enter by the time Sian took the stage. Ellen MacDonald, Eilidh Cormack,



Sian put on a first class concert on Saturday evening.

and Ceitlin LR Smith put on an absolutely stunning performance, with vocal harmony so close it really has to be heard to be believed.

The previous weekend I attended Mánran's excellent show in the Old Fruitmarket to hear some smashing tunes and some lovely Gaelic songs from Kim Carnie and Ewen Henderson. I even managed to remain in the venue for the full show this time round, which is always a bonus.

Last Friday evening, it was the turn of Allan Henderson and his Sing Me a Story concert, or Cuir Seinn ri Seanchas. 2022 is Scotland's Year of Stories and, if there is one man to be tasked with staging an evening of stories, it is Allan Henderson!

The narrative of the concert was driven by traditional storytellers such as Essie Stewart from Bonar Bridge, Angus Grant from Lochaber, and Alasdair MacLeod from

Morar – all of whom, among others, had been filmed by Allan in their own homes telling some quite remarkable tales. The stories covered all manner of Highland subjects, including meetings with faeries, clan battles, love stories, and one particular beauty from Alasdair MacLeod about a Gaelic speaker in Nova Scotia who ended up in tow with the notorious Dillinger gang in Chicago.

The music and song in the concert all related to these stories (often amazingly closely) and the audience were steered through the programme by Allan's customary humour and knowledge – including a number of anecdotes from the man himself.

Songs were sung by Maighread Stiùbhart, Ewan Robertson and Ewen Henderson, and accompanied by Ewan and Ewen, Duncan Chisholm, Sileas Sinclair and, of course, Allan on the piano.

First chance to catch The Right Bus in Oban's Phoenix Cinema

With Valentine's Day fast approaching what better way to spend your time than watching a tale of romance unfurl with your loved one at the local cinema, writes Fiona Scott.

And even better? One that was filmed right here in Oban and the beautiful West Coast.

Inspired by a novel of the same name and written by the lead actor's (Ed Ward) father – Glenn Ward – *The Right Bus* will premiere at Oban Phoenix Cinema on Friday, February 18.

When their absentee father is killed, Danny and Louisa want to show their mother Connie that things are no different without him.

A chance inheritance in Oban that includes the ownership of an island, propels her to get out of London with the children and to make the trip to Scotland.



The Right Bus cast: left, Edith Glad (Louisa), Suzanne Kendall (Connie); Ed Ward (David) and Edan Hayhurst (Danny).

for David. When Ed and his partner, Suzanne Kendall (who plays Connie), read the novel, they thought it was a soul-stirring, heart-warming story that would lend itself well to film.

The fact that it was set on the west coast of Scotland added further appeal – a beautiful and rugged backdrop befitting of the story's emotional journey.

Producing the film was a true labour of love. Ed and Suzanne pulled all their resources and contacts together, raised the money, managed the production and cast, and acted in it. They hope viewers will enjoy and be inspired by the final result.

What's on at Oban Cinema

Friday 11 February

Death On The Nile 12A	12:30/19:15
Belfast 12A	12:45
Sing 2 U	16:30
Kiangnan 1894 12A	16:45
LGBTQ+ History Month:	
Who's Gonna Love Me Now? 15	19:00

Saturday 12 February

Sing 2 U	11:45/14:15
Spider-Man: No Way Home 12A	12:00
Kiangnan 1894 12A	15:00
Death On The Nile 12A	16:45/19:45
Belfast 12A	17:00
LGBTQ+ History Month:	
Who's Gonna Love Me Now? 15	19:15

Sunday 13 February

Sing 2 U	11:45/14:15
Spider-Man: No Way Home 12A	12:00
Kiangnan 1894 12A	15:00
Death On The Nile 12A	16:45/19:45
Belfast 12A	17:00
LGBTQ+ History Month:	
Who's Gonna Love Me Now? 15	19:15

Wednesday 16 February

(screenings marked with ★ are captioned/subtitled)

Sing 2 U	11:45★/14:15
Death On The Nile 12A	12:00★/16:45★/19:45
Belfast 12A	14:45★
Spider-Man: No Way Home 12A	17:00★
Belle (English Dub) 12A	20:00

Thursday 17 February

Sing 2 U	11:45/14:15
Death On The Nile 12A	12:00/16:45/19:45
Spider-Man: No Way Home 12A	14:45
Belle (English Dub) 12A	17:45
Belfast 12A	20:30



Who's Gonna Love Me Now? (15)

Documentary
For LGBTQ+ History Month. Saar, a 39-year-old ex-Israeli army paratrooper, living in London, finds out that he is HIV positive, and embarks on a journey of reconciliation with his religious family in Israel.



Kiangnan 1894 (12A)

Animation
For Chinese New Year. Set in the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the story revolves around a teenager named A'lang, who accidentally becomes an apprentice in the Jiangnan Manufacturing Factory before becoming a top military mechanic.



Belfast (12A)

Drama
BELFAST is a poignant story of love, laughter and loss in one boy's childhood, amid the music and social tumult of the late 1960s.

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Face coverings must be worn when moving within the building. Once seated you can remove your face covering. All showtimes are subject to availability and change. Updates can be found on our Facebook page.

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MONDAY:	8am-12pm 12-3pm 5pm-7pm 7pm-8pm 8pm-9pm 9pm	Breakfast show with Stephen Lunch with Bob G Drive Times with Marcus Highland Fling with Rosemary Calum McLuckies Show David Cullen Show
TUESDAY:	8am-10am 10am-12.30pm 1pm-3pm 5pm-7pm 7pm-8pm 8pm-9pm 9pm	Breakfast Show with Stephen Ken Hunter Macky on FM Drive Times with Archie Darling Highest Praise with Stuart Chalmers Scottish Sounds with Archie Cameron Oban Pride on the Waves with Jay & Crystal
WEDNESDAY:	8am-11am 11am-1pm 1pm-3pm 4pm-7pm 7pm-9pm 9pm	Breakfast Show with Stephen Comfort Zone with Lesley Doug in the afternoon Drive Times with Campbell Country meets Rock N Roll with Len Gordon's Grooves
THURSDAY:	8am-11am 11am-2pm 3pm-7pm 7pm-9pm 9pm-10pm 10pm	Breakfast Show with Andy & Sarah Lunch Show with Steve Drive Time with Stephen Christine's Collections Ann's Ceilidh Margo Till Midnight
FRIDAY:	8am-10am 10am-1pm 1pm-4pm 4pm-6:45pm 6:45pm-7pm 7pm-8pm 8pm-10pm	Breakfast Show with Anna & Phil The Brunch Show With The One Bob G Country, Rhythm & Blues show Teeny & Tiny Show with Harry & Janet Sports View with the Dream Team Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig
SATURDAY:	8am-10am 10am-1pm 2pm-4pm 6pm-7pm 7pm-8pm 8pm-10pm	Breakfast Show with Andy Saturday Morning Live with Linda Jukebox Jamboree with Ken Mc Sports View with the Dream Team Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling Evening Show with Dave Hobbs
SUNDAY:	9am-11am 11am-2pm 3pm-5pm 7pm-9pm 9pm	Sunday Morning with Breege Sunday Brunch with Stephen Mental Musings with Mer New Country Show with Dave & Murdoch Drum & Bass with Graham.

TIDES digital festival makes welcome return

Make some noise for the news that TIDES digital music festival is back this year, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Funded by Creative Scotland and produced by Myplayer Media manager Iain Maclean, the festival project partnered between Live Argyll and Scottish heritage and arts charity CHARTS will return this spring.

Because of Covid, the event had to be rescheduled from December last year to March 2022.

Argyll musicians of all ages, genres and stages of their careers had until last week to get in touch with organisers for a chance of performing in this year's showcase.

Some performers who appeared at last March's festival, filmed at Dunoon Burgh Hall when live gigs were not possi-



Gaelic singer songwriter Mairi McGillicray played a set for the festival.

ble, went on to be offered work when lockdown lifted.

TIDES was originally set up to help meet some of the challenges musicians in the area were facing in the pandemic.

Producer Iain said: 'We helped build new audiences - 9,000 views were recorded on

Myplayer within 48hrs. It can still be enjoyed at myplayer.uk/tides.

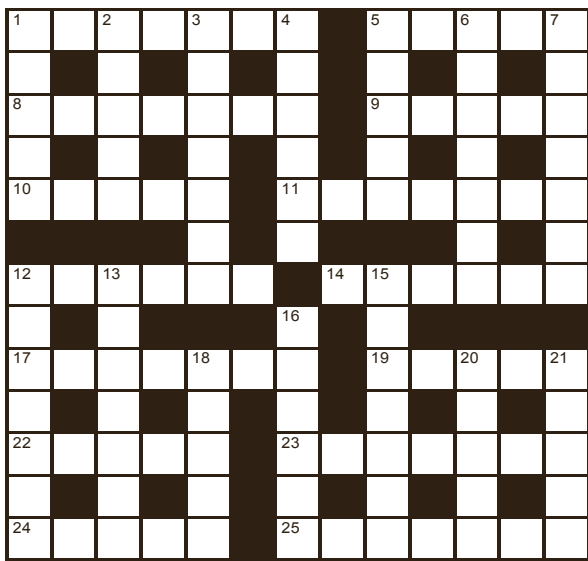
'Due to Covid, we had to reschedule our planned December 2021 festival to March 2022. We're keen to involve as many musicians as possible.'

He added there had been a good response to this year's call to musicians, saying: 'We will be filming a few live sessions in Oban near the end of February and showcasing a number of new acts on the TIDES page on myplayer.uk website. at myplayer.uk/tides

'We have some familiar faces and some new performing at the TIDES digital festival this year, including showcases from Rachel Walker and live performances from Inverhooly Ceilidh Band. We will weave together the festival at the end of February.'

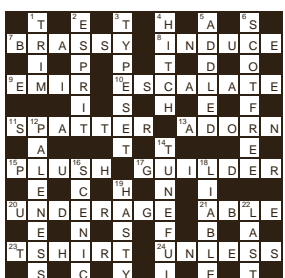
To find out more about Tides you can contact Iain Maclean, at iain@quartz-group.com.

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Rare metallic element found in gadolinite (7)
 - 5 Rope fiber (5)
 - 8 Happy (7)
 - 9 Porridge (5)
 - 10 Tire pattern (5)
 - 11 Sudden outburst (5-2)
 - 12 Unrefined (6)
 - 14 Map information (6)
 - 17 Mechanised manmade item (7)
 - 19 Surmise (5)
 - 22 Sausages or golf! (5)
 - 23 Highest point of a building (7)
 - 24 Verse (5)
 - 25 Disinfect (7)
- 5 18th letter of the Greek alphabet (5)
 - 6 Tighten grip (7)
 - 7 Frog perch (4,3)
 - 12 Embroidered work from a beginner (7)
 - 13 One who affects a London accent (7)
 - 15 Condensed account (7)
 - 16 Type of unit (6)
 - 18 Put out (5)
 - 20 Sleep on it (5)
 - 21 Indian coin (5)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



- Down**
- 1 Marina vessel (5)
 - 2 Tights shade (5)
 - 3 An unbeliever (7)
 - 4 Fielder position on one side of the wicket (3-3)

In the picture: VisitScotland reveals top images of Argyll and Isles for 2021

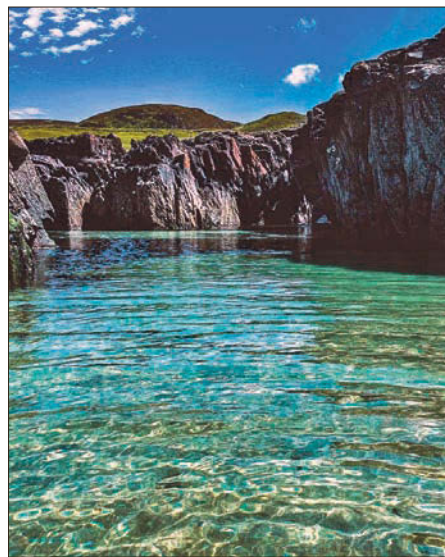
The shimmering clear blue waters of Machir Bay have been ranked as VisitScotland's most popular social media post of Argyll and Isles in 2021.

The photograph of Islay against an imposing backdrop of craggy rockface by @theglobefromglasgow was liked 68,114 times when it was shared on VisitScotland's Instagram account, making it the highest performing post of the region last year.

The mysterious and striking hexagonal columns of Fingal's Cave on Staffa was the second most popular image, with more than 57,000 Instagramers liking the photograph by @wee_dusty, showing the narrow entrance to the cave made from volcanic basalt rock.

VisitScotland launched its global marketing campaign Scotland is Calling last year, aimed specifically at overseas visitors who, research suggests, spend longer planning and researching their trips.

VisitScotland regional director David Adams McGilp said: 'The rich history and vibrancy of Argyll and Isles, and the stunning scenery and sights on offer in the wider area are a fantastic source of inspiration for photographers, and these



The photograph of Islay was liked 68,114 times when it was shared on VisitScotland's Instagram account. Photograph: theglobefromglasgow

images have captured some of the many reasons visitors are drawn to the region.

'VisitScotland's social media channels have played a significant role in the last two years in continuing to keep Scotland front of mind and offering inspiration to our global audiences. We know there is pent-up demand for travel and we want to ensure that we inspire potential visitors with what Scotland has to offer, and make it their first-choice destination when they can travel.

'By adopting a regional and geographic approach, we are showcasing the diversity Scotland has to offer, ensuring tourism brings benefits to communities across the country.'

Cathy Craig, chief executive of Argyll & Isles Tourism Co-operative (AITC), said: 'With 6,900 sq km of beautiful landscapes, over 3,700 km of stunning coastline and 23 unique inhabited islands, Argyll and the Isles earns its Scotland's Adventure Coast title.'

Emma Clark, chairperson of Explore Islay and Jura, said: 'Our team are delighted to have Machir Bay noted as one of the most instagramable spots. Our island hosts a range of the most amazing areas that suits everyone and that enables you to capture the perfect picture and create the most magical memories in the process.'

'We can't wait to share them all with you.'

Success for BBC

BBC Alba productions have been recognised at the Royal Television Society Scotland's annual awards ceremony this week, after securing nominations across the festival categories.

Eòrpa, BBC Alba's flagship European current affairs programme, secured an award in the News and Current Affairs section for its enlightening instalment examining the Highlands' involvement in the slave trade.

Produced by BBC Scotland Productions, the programme brought historical testimonies to light and helped to unveil

Haydn Trio tune up for musical tribute to Bill Leech

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

Oban Music Society are tuning up for a fitting tribute to former War and Peace Museum curator and chairman Bill Leech, with Bill's son Owen playing a major role.

The Haydn Trio of London will make their debut performance at St John's Cathedral on Sunday February 13, in Bill's memory.

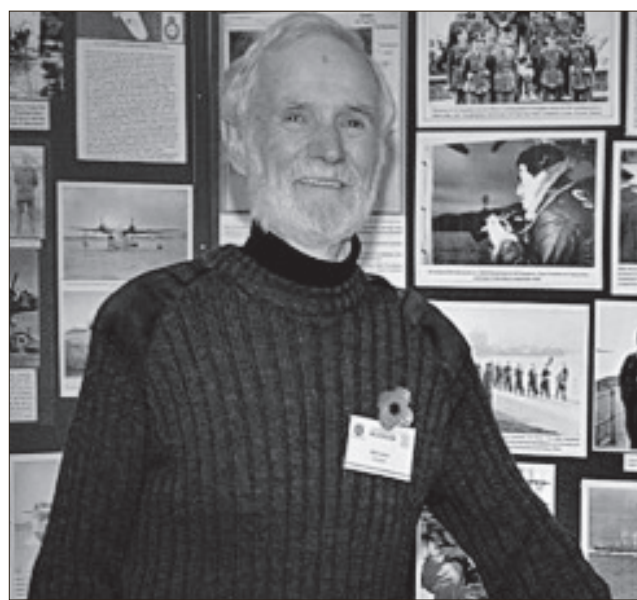
The trio comprises London-based composer Owen on piano, Eva Caballero (flute) and Marina Comas Castineira (cello).

Although the group have worked together over the years they only began to meet as a trio as the first lockdown restrictions relaxed, initially exploring some flute/cello/piano repertoire for their own enjoyment.

But as they worked more intensively on the music they decided they should seek out opportunities to perform.

A joint statement from the group said: 'We are particularly happy to be giving our first concert in Oban, which has long been home to Owen's parents.

'We are, of course, sad that Bill, Owen's father, who died last January, is not able to be with us, but he'll certainly be very much in our thoughts as we perform and listen.'



Above, Bill Leech, founder and chairman of Oban's War and Peace Museum, who died aged 82 in January 2021.

A founder member of Oban's War and Peace Museum, Bill worked tirelessly as curator for the last 11 years of his life and was still chairman of the board when he died.

Starting as a cadet and ultimately Master Mariner serving with the British India Steam Navigation Company, Bill travelled widely on cargo vessels around the world.

Son Owen is now following in his wake and has garnered international acclaim on the classical music circuit.

Oban Music Society presents The Haydn Trio of London

on Sunday February 13 at St John's Cathedral, at 3pm.

Programme:

- J.S. Bach (1685 -1750): Sonata in E major, BWV 1035
- Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979): I'll Bid My Heart Be Still for cello and piano (based on a Scottish folk song)
- Gabriel Pierné (1863-1937): Sonata da Camera
- Joseph Haydn (1732-1809): Trio in F major, Hob. XV:17
- Lili Boulanger (1893-1918): Nocturne for flute and piano
- Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959): Trio for Flute, Cello and Piano

Alba at Royal Television Society awards

some of the realities around Scotland's involvement in the Atlantic slave trade.

Eòrpa presenter, journalist and historian, Ruairidh MacIver, right, said: 'This programme was a team effort and I'm very thankful to RTS Scotland for recognising our work in this way. I'd like to thank historians, such as David Alston and Iain Mackinnon, who were so generous with their time and research. Particular thanks to Graham Campbell,



Karrie Prescott, Jack Shehata and Philomena de Lima, who helped us understand the impact and the legacy slavery still has today.'

Also recognised by the Royal Television Society was purpleTV's sports documentary Na Boireannaich a Thog (The Women Who Built Glasgow City), looking at the story behind the founding and early success of Glasgow City Football Club.

Margot McCuaig, director

at purpleTV said: 'I am utterly thrilled that The Women Who Built Glasgow City has secured this award. Whilst it's personally rewarding, it is also an important message affirming that women's stories matter.'

'Women's voices have been marginalised for too long and this documentary, telling the remarkable story of Laura Montgomery and Cas Stewart, is evidence of the central role women in sport have played, and continue to play, in Scottish culture and society. It is an absolute privilege to have amplified their voices for BBC Alba audiences.'

M'ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 10 An Gearran THURSDAY 10 Feb

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 Julie Fowlis | Ceòl aig Baile
- 19.25 SWPL – Glasgow City v Celtic
- 21.00 An Là – NEWS
- 21.30 Eòrpa – European Current Affairs NEW
- 22.00 'San Fhuil | It's in the Blood
- 23.00 Slighean Trailleachd (Slavery Routes)
- 23.55 Ceilidh na Bliadhnn' Uire 2021 - Seudan

DIHAOINE 11 An Gearran FRIDAY 11 Feb

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 An Là
- 19.25 Dàn
- 19.30 Machair
- 19.55 Fraochy Bay
- 20.00 Vets: Gach Creutair Beo
- 20.30 Fuine
- 21.00 DIY le Donnie
- 21.45 ALT
- 22.00 Man in Room 301
- 22.40 Julie Fowlis | Ceòl aig Baile
- 22.55 Dàna | Scotland's Wild Side
- 23.30 Ceolmhor @ Piping Live!

DISATHAIRNE 12 An Gearran SATURDAY 12 Feb

- 16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 17.45 An Là
- 18.00 Am B.F.G./The BFG
- 19.30 Two Go to Tolsta – Sgeulachd Syd Agus Millie
- 20.00 Vets: Gach Creutair Beo
- 20.30 Golf: Mun Cuairt Alba
- 21.00 Seirm | Celtic Connections NEW
- 22.00 Slighean Trailleachd (Slavery Routes)

- 22.55 Ceilidh na Bliadhnn' Uire 2021 - Seudan
- 23.00 Eilbheas
- 00.00 Belladrum 2019 (Highlights)

DIDÒMHNAICH 13 An Gearran SUNDAY 13 Feb

- 16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 18.15 An Là - NEWS
- 18.30 Seachd Là / News Review
- 19.30 Alleluia/Spiritual Music & Verse
- 20.00 Eòrpa – European Current Affairs NEW
- 20.30 Gàrraidhean Mòra na h-Alba
- 21.00 Sàr-Sgeòil: The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie
- 22.55 Seirm | Celtic Connections
- 22.55 FilmG: Bròn
- 23.00 Man in Room 301: Shotgun
- 23.45 ALT

DILUAIN 14 An Gearran MONDAY 14 Feb

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 Turas a' Bhradain/ The Salmon's Journey
- 19.30 SpeakGaelic
- 20.00 An Là
- 20.30 Fuine
- 21.00 Trusadh – Sean is Og/Young and Old
- 22.00 Na Trads: An Tobar
- 22.25 Opry le Daniel
- 23.15 FilmG: Sgìre le Spiorad
- 23.20 Dhan Uisge (Loch Loinne)
- 23.30 Dana | Scotland's Wild Side

DIMÀIRT 15 An Gearran TUESDAY 15 Feb

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 Dealbhan Fraoich
- 19.30 SpeakGaelic

- 20.00 An Là - NEWS
- 20.30 Gàrraidhean Mòra na h-Alba
- 21.00 Sàr-sgeòil: His Bloody Project
- 22.00 Trusadh – Sean is Og/ Young and Old
- 23.00 Machair
- 23.25 FilmG: Janni, Air Muir is Tir
- 23.30 Alleluia!

DICIADAIN 16 An Gearran WEDNESDAY 16 Feb

- 14.00 Port – Druthag Bheag Eile
- 14.20 International Friendly – Wales v Scotland
- 16.25 Dluth Bhearradh/ Wallace & Gromit in A Close Shave
- 17.00 Children's Programming
- 19.00 Turas a' Bhradain – The Salmon's Journey
- 19.30 SpeakGaelic
- 20.00 An Là - NEWS
- 20.30 Cidsin Granaidh Chalanais NEW
- 21.00 Opry le Daniel
- 22.00 Dàna | Scotland's Wild Side
- 22.30 'San Fhuil | It's in the Blood
- 23.25 FilmG: Am Bruadair
- 23.30 Na Trads: An Tobar

DIARDAOIN 17 An Gearran THURSDAY 17 Feb

- 17.00 Children's Programming
- 19.00 Dealbhan Fraoich
- 19.30 SpeakGaelic
- 20.00 An Là - NEWS
- 20.30 Eòrpa – European Current Affairs
- 21.00 Dystonia: Beatha air Fhiaradh
- 22.00 Slighean Trailleachd (Slavery Routes)
- 22.50 Ceilidh na Bliadhnn' Uire - Seudan
- 23.00 Eilbheas



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COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

THE MACMILLAN BALL

(Held in honour of Kevin Lane) Saturday 19th March 2022

Caol Community Centre

Doors open at 6.30pm

Pre-dinner drink on arrival

3-course buffet dinner from 7.30pm

Bar open until 12.45am

Grand Auction/Raffle

Dancing to: The Great Glen Swing Band & Cheezy Gee Disco (tbc)

Tickets £35 per person

(All proceeds from the evening will go to Lochaber Macmillan) For ticket or table reservations contact Jeanette Lane on 07887 870483 or lochaberball@gmail.com

Or

Chris Jones on cjones@btinternet.com

Dress Code: Men – Black Tie/Suit, Collar & Tie or Kilt/Trews

Ladies: Party Dress/Trouser Suit

All roads lead to Oban for Highland Cattle

The Highland Cattle Society's 131st annual Spring Show and Sale takes place on Sunday and Monday, February 13 and 14, at Oban Livestock Market, Upper Soroba, Oban – and with entries from all over Scotland and the North of England this premier sale will be worth visiting.

The February sale is predominately a bull sale consisting of two-year-old bulls, senior bulls, aged bulls and yearlings.

There will also be females on offer, although traditionally the sale of females is held in the autumn.

The Highlander has been synonymous with Oban for a great number of years, with the sale only moving to Perth when the market moved out of Oban, and returning once the new market was completed.

Highland Cattle are one of Britain's oldest and most distinctive native breeds, with the pedigree herd book going back to 1884.

The ability of Highland Cattle to live in the hardest

of conditions and browse through rough, otherwise unproductive, uplands makes them ideal cattle for low-input extensive farming.

Their hardiness means that Highland Cattle are often brought back to the home farm only for final production and can fit into any farming system from final production on grass or fattening in sheds.

What makes them so special is that they are utilised to make a real economic contribution to hill and upland areas.

Their browsing habits also make them the cattle of choice for many conservation projects, grazing Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), establishing hay meadows,

opening up forest floors and regenerating heather moorland.

Cattle grazed at low density in natural woods, moorlands, wetlands and lochs, coastal and upland areas are playing an important role in nature conservation management. Through their grazing and dunging Highland cattle recycle nutrients and can be integral part of the natural environment leading to a greater diversity of plant species and a more complex vegetation structure.

The Highland Cattle Society looks forward to welcoming all its members and friends, old and new to this year's Spring Show and Sale.



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131st Annual Spring
 Show & Sale
 13th & 14th
 February

Oban Livestock Centre,
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Judge: Stuart Campbell
 Chief Steward: Jimmy Laing
 Auctioneer: Raymond Kennedy
 Office: info@highlandcattlesociety.com

Held under the auspices of
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This year's judge: Stuart Campbell

'I have been attending Oban Highland Cattle Sale for more than 30 years, initially as a young boy with my father, who managed the Keilbeg Fold near Tayvallich, Argyll. I remember as a child standing round the ring imagining being the judge one day. It was a dream come true to be asked to judge The Highland Cattle Society's 131st annual Spring Show.

'I started my career in Highland Cattle when working for the Lithgow family on their Ormsary Estate near Lochgilphead. I will always be thankful to Archie McArthur and his team for opportunities and viable experience that I gained there. I really caught the bug for showing when showing in-calf heifers for Ormsary where we won many a championship at the society spring sales.

'I am currently farm manager at Cladich for Jon and Queenie Strickland. In the 10 years I have been working with them, the Cladich Fold of Highland Cattle has grown from strength to strength. My biggest showing achievement at Cladich was two years ago at the last Spring Show, taking the Craig Sellar Trophy for the overall male champion.

'This was my main aim when I first started at Cladich after speaking to the late David Fellowes who originally owned Cladich. He showed me a photograph of John of Cladich, which won the Craig Sellar Cup in 1960 and it was made even more special with the trophy returning to Cladich 60 years on.

'I have had the honour to judge Highland Cattle in many countries, including Australia, Finland and Germany, but being asked to



judge this Spring Show is a very special honour. Oban is the heart of the Highland Cattle sales and as mentioned earlier, judging here is a dream come true.

'When judging Highland Cattle, I will be looking for something eye catching when entering the ring. It is very important for this part of the world that Highlanders are very good on their legs, with good locomotion, due to the Highlander having to live and forage on the hills. I am quite traditional with the West Coast type, which have to be true to breed type and also very sweet and elegant.

'I would like to thank all exhibitors who have given their time and dedication to getting animals ready for the show. I look forward to enjoying a dram with all members on Sunday night and toasting to a prosperous sale on Monday.'

Did you know?

- Highland Cattle are one of the oldest registered breeds of cattle in the world and recognised globally.
- You do not have a herd of Highland cattle, you have a fold.
- HM Queen is not only the patron of the Highland Cattle Society; she also has a famous fold at Balmoral.
- Originally Highland cattle were black and not today's iconic red. Other colours include yellow, brindle, dun and even white.



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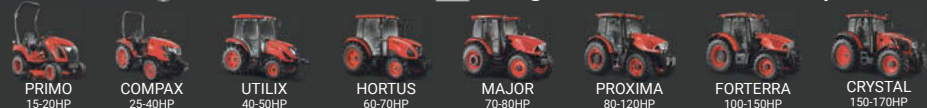
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11th February 2022, 7pm for 7.30pm start

Open Top hogg class B.Y.O.B

Exciting opportunity to farm on Ulva

In 2018, the Isle of Ulva was bought by the North West Mull Community Woodland Company (NWMWCWC) with the aim of ensuring the island's social and economic development for present and future generations.

Central to these ambitions is management of Ulva's largest resource, its land, with agriculture playing a vital role.

Since the buy-out, the community group has embarked on an ambitious project to gradually reintroduce and build up agricultural activity alongside the delivery of wider environmental benefits. Large-scale fencing has been carried out to enclose the hill, create a new hill park and replace derelict fences on the in-by. Stone dykes have been restored and a substantial bracken control programme is under way. Two years ago, a small sheep flock was joined by a newly-established herd of Highland heifers bought from four hill farms on the neighbouring Isle of Mull

and a new stock bull will be coming in a few months. An agri-environment climate scheme is in place to protect the many important habitats and species found on Ulva.

This initial work is the first step towards turning Ulva Farm into an actively farmed and vibrant livestock unit again. The next phase has now been signalled by the recent advertisement for a resident, part-time livestock manager position for the next two and a half years which the community group envisages will lead into a full tenancy.

John Addy, one of the directors of NWMWCWC, said: 'Getting farming moving again on Ulva is vital for the sustainable future of the island's community and environment, but we are the first to admit that we ourselves are not farmers. We were keen from the start to offer someone the opportunity of taking on the tenancy on Ulva and becoming a valuable member of the

island's community, but we were also conscious of how difficult it is to build up a farming business from scratch without a sizeable starting capital.

'A lot of investment and initial work is needed to bring the farm into a condition that supports sustainable, efficient and safe livestock management alongside tourism and other interests on the island. Our strategy since the buyout has been to get the farm up and running as much as possible so that we can hand something over that is workable for a new tenant.'

'We are very grateful to Iain MacKay of the neighbouring Torloisk Farm on Mull, who has kindly offered to give the new livestock manager additional work if needed to help supplement their income from the initial part-time position on Ulva. Iain is also able to offer mentoring support to help our future tenant settle into their new role and environment. Managing an island hill farm in our part of the world

requires a specialist skillset so having the offer from an experienced farmer to share their knowledge of the local farming challenges and opportunities is really appreciated.'

Iain MacKay, a hill livestock farmer all his life, has for many years been involved at policy and political level to fight the corner of new entrants and tenant farmers, and was the first chairman of the NFUS Next Generation Group, along with being a former QMS Monitor farmer for Mull. He has first-hand experience of the challenges faced by new entrant and tenant farmers.

Commenting on the Isle of Ulva project, Iain MacKay said: 'It is increasingly difficult these days for new entrants and tenant farmers to get access to land, especially land that comes with a decent tenancy which offers the longer-term security needed to grow a sustainable, profitable and resilient farming business. I had to

deal with a lot of challenges as a new entrant tenant farmer and my business was held back for many years because of that. That's why I welcome tenancy opportunities coming onto the market. I am very happy to help the revitalisation of Ulva Farm and, if needed, offer support to the incoming future tenant by sharing my knowledge and experience of hill farming and giving them additional work here at Torloisk.

'Neighbouring is an important tradition amongst hill farmers and I would like to see this type of collaboration continue for the benefit of the next generation. The industry is currently facing a lot of uncertainty and there will undoubtedly be many more challenges ahead, but for the right person this is a great opportunity.'

Interested parties are encouraged to apply via Scottish Land Matching Service, which will handle all applications and help to draw up a shortlist of suitable candidates.



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Rachel on 01631 720255



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PUBLIC NOTICES

www.highland.gov.uk



TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>;

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
22/00294/FUL	Volunteer Arms Inn, 49 High Street, Fort William, PH33 6DH	Formation of outdoor seating area (renewal of 19/00551/FUL)
22/00406/FUL	Land 800M West of Lagangarbh, Glencoe	Installation of 20m high lattice telecommunications tower and associated equipment within fenced compound

Time period for comments is 14 days from the date of this notice
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

Notice: Meeting of Creditors

Company Name: NO FUSS EVENTS LLP
Company Number: SO301288
Trading Name: No Fuss Events LLP
Registered office & Principal Trading Address: 20 Hillview Drive, Corpach, Fort William, PH33 7LS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986, that a Meeting of creditors of the above named LLP will be held virtually on 14 February 2022 at 11.15am, for further details contact Nadia Cowden email nadia.cowden@opusllp.com

Any creditor entitled to attend and vote at this meeting is entitled to do so either in person or by proxy. Completed proxy forms may be lodged at Opus Restructuring LLP 1 West Regent Street, Glasgow G2 1RW or at the Meeting. A list of the names and addresses of the LLP's creditors will be available for inspection free of charge, at Opus Restructuring LLP, address above, during the two business days immediately preceding the date of the meeting.

Mark Harper (IP number 26412) of Opus Restructuring LLP, address above and Steven John Parker (IP number 8989) of Opus Restructuring, 1 Radian Ct, Milton Keynes MK5 8PJ are qualified to act as insolvency practitioners in relation to the LLP and, during the period before the day on which the meeting is to be held, will furnish creditors free of charge with such information concerning the LLP's affairs as they may reasonably require. Further information about this case is available from Nadia Cowden contact by e-mail nadia.cowden@opusllp.com

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT

Prof John G Day & Mrs Gillian W Barton register their croft, Croft 4 Ichrachan, Glenorchy & Innishail on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland. Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by the 11th September 2022. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C8154



Source: Business Choice 1, The Newspaper Society



Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

The applications listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be viewed electronically through Argyll and Bute Council website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Having regard to Schedule 6, Part 3, s10 of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, documents are only available to inspect electronically at this time. Customers requiring assistance can contact us by e-mail: planning.hq@argyll-bute.gov.uk or tel. 01546 605518.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address
22/00003/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse with associated services	Land North West Of 13 Breadalbane Street, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
21/02653/PP	Demolition of warehouse and store and erection of steel portal frame building to accommodate storage and depot	Site 1, Baliscate Industrial Estate, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA75 6AE
22/00011/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Former Quarry Garage, Kilchrenan, Argyll And Bute
21/02726/PP	Redevelopment of existing steading to form to dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and air source heat pump	Park Steading, Cullipool, Oban, Isle Of Luing, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4TX
21/02426/PP	Use of land for the formation of 9 metre x 20 metre hard standing area and upgrading works to the existing track to facilitate a general storage area for the Mull-Coll Submarine cable works	Land Approx 100M South Of Sorisdale, Isle Of Coll, Argyll And Bute
21/02467/PP	Use of land for the temporary siting of a residential caravan for a period of up to 5 years and installation of septic tank	Croft No 7 Keils, Craighouse, Isle Of Jura, Argyll And Bute
21/02707/PP	Erection of workshop and deer larder, installation of sewage treatment plant and formation of vehicular access	Land South Of Feolin Ferryhouse, Craighouse, Isle Of Jura, Argyll And Bute
21/00827/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 17/03291/PPP (Site for the erection of dwellinghouse)	Land South Of Tigh-Na-Greine (Plot 1), Port Charlotte, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute
21/00829/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 17/03293/PPP (Site for the erection of dwellinghouse)	Land South Of Tigh-Na-Greine (Plot 3), Port Charlotte, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute
21/00828/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 17/03292/PPP (Site for the erection of dwellinghouse)	Land West Of Tigh-Na-Greine (Plot 2), Port Charlotte, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute
21/02708/PP	Erection of 2 dwellinghouses, installation of private sewage treatment system and formation of vehicular access	Land South Of Feolin Ferryhouse, Craighouse, Isle Of Jura, Argyll And Bute

Written comments can be submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> or to Argyll and Bute Council, Development Management, Kilmory Castle, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed on the Councils website. Customers are requested to use electronic communication where possible during the coronavirus pandemic as our ability to process postal mail is restricted.

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 PONTOON, CRAOBH HAVEN MARINA, LOCHGILPHEAD, ARGYLL

Notice is hereby given that Mowi Scotland Ltd has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of the deposit of a pontoon at:

Cost	£2500-£5000	
Location	Latitude	Longitude
Craobh Haven Marina,	56° 12.717' N	005° 33.267' W
Lochgilphead, Argyll	56° 12.717' N	005° 33.283' W
	56° 12.750' N	005° 33.317' W
	56° 12.750' N	005° 33.283' W
	56° 12.767' N	005° 33.267' W
	56° 12.717' N	005° 33.250' W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at <https://bit.ly/2FO5fKN>

Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made by email to:

MS.MarineLicensing@gov.scot within 28 days of the date of this notice, quoting reference: 00008888 and Mowi Scotland Ltd.

Fair Processing Notice

The Scottish Government's Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MS-LOT) determine applications for marine licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. During the consultation process any person having an interest in the outcome of the application may make representation to MS-LOT. The representation may contain personal information, for example a name or address. This representation will only be used for the purpose of determining an application and will be stored securely in the Scottish Government's official corporate record. Representations will be shared with the applicant and/or agent acting on behalf of the applicant, any people or organisations that we consult in relation to the application and, where necessary, be published online, however personal information will be removed before sharing or publishing.

A full privacy notice can be found at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Licensing/marine/PrivacyNotice>. If you are unable to access this, or you have any queries or concerns about how your personal information will be handled, contact MS-LOT at: ms.marinelicensing@gov.scot.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL (LOCHABER) (DISABLED PERSONS' PARKING PLACES) ORDER 2011 AMENDMENT ORDER 2021

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that The Highland Council on 1st February 2022 made, in terms of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Sections 32 (1) and 45(2) and part IV of Schedule 9, the above Order which will come into operation on Monday 28th February 2022.

The Order was previously advertised by Notice in the Lochaber Times on 9th December 2021 and the effect of the Order is as described in that Notice.

Copies of the made Order, together with a copy of the relevant maps can be inspected via the following link: www.highland.gov.uk/troconsultations

Any person wishing to question the validity of the Order or of any of its provisions on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, or that a requirement of that Act or of any relevant regulations made thereunder has not been complied with may, within six weeks from the date on which the Order was made, make application for the purpose to the Court of Session.

01/02/2022: Richard Porteous, Roads Operations Manager, Lochaber, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Area.

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It's no surprise that so many tourists flock to our region of the UK throughout the year as we are blessed with some of the most incredible and beautiful natural environments and wildlife in the world.

It played a huge part in my relocation to the Isle of Mull, a decision I will never regret.

With so much scientific research focused on nature engagement, it's becoming apparent why we are drawn to these environments and the benefits they can bestow upon us. This has led to the invention of green prescriptions or you may have also heard of forest bathing which originated in Japan and involves spending quiet time in the woods and becoming mindful of your surroundings.

So when we spend time in forest parks, nature reserves and coastal regions, what is happening to us on a physical and mental level?

We observe an almost immediate drop in resting heart rate and blood pressure after spending some time away from the concrete urban jungle and manmade environments. Natural environments cause a release of positive chemicals within the human body which act to calm the nervous system and can be critical when combating stress, anxiety and depression.

Many proactive GPs are now



Rob Graham, lead exercise professional, Healthy Options.

recognising that green prescriptions can have the same effect as medication designed to improve our mental health, and, of course, there are no unwanted side effects in the forest.

Green spaces are the perfect distraction for those suffering with long-term pain, and the reduction in negative stress chemicals alter our brains perception of discomfort. Our self esteem improves, not to mention our cognitive function, including attention span and memory. It is a release for our overactive minds that are bombarded with various media sources in our modern world. We have observed an increased attention span in children suffering with ADHD after a few hours in a wild places.

We sleep better after a walk in the woods and muscle tension is reduced. The activity of walking itself improves

functional capacity, muscle strength, joint function, cardiovascular fitness and weight management.

Research also shows that our immune system can be given a boost by the organic chemicals released by trees and our skeletal structure benefits from an increase in Vitamin D through increased UV light exposure.

So with all this in mind you may be asking whether Healthy Options embrace these amazing outcomes within their programme. Well, after a hiatus of around two years due to you know what, we are very proud and excited to announce the return of our Rewild Walking Programme which encourages our clients to join us for guided walks through our stunning natural environments.

These walks were always extremely popular and something very close to my own heart. They can have a huge beneficial effect on recovery times, they encourage a shift in mental outlook through engagement with others and the real world, and they remind us where we have evolved to live.

By spending so much time indoors in towns and cities we ignore our ancestral call to the wild and it is no wonder we now suffer with so many health problems created by our new manmade environment.

The weather is improving, the days are getting longer, is it not time to get yourself back into the wild? I'll see you on the path.

Bob meets up with Andy in the desert

Oban's Bob MacIntyre was pleased to finally meet Scotland captain Andy Robertson in the United Arab Emirates ahead of the recent Slync.io Dubai Desert Classic.

The Liverpool defender and the 25-year-old from Oban had exchanged messages via text and over social media but had never met in person.

The Burns Day get-together took place at the back of the practice area at the Emirates Golf Club after the pair had played in the first of two programs ahead of the start of the tournament.

Andy said: 'Golf is a hobby for me. It's something I enjoy. It's a getaway from football and gives me a chance to forget about everything that happens on the football pitch. It allows me to switch off a bit during intense periods of football.'

While it was a big thrill for Bob, a big Scotland fan, to meet the captain of the national football team, there was no disguising that Robertson shared that feeling in return. 'He's an incredible talent,'



Andy Robertson and Bob MacIntyre on the practice area at the Emirates Golf Club before the recent Dubai Desert Classic.

Photograph: Kevin Kirk

Andy said of the Oban left-hander.

'He's come through at the top level over the last couple of years and I really back him to win some top tournaments in the future.'

'We've obviously got a history of good, young Scottish golfers and he's just carrying it on. Hopefully he can win one of the big ones and I'd love him to do that.'

Bob returns to form

Continued from page 40.

had been missing in his first two tournaments this season.

Speaking to Sky Sports after his Saturday round it was obvious that Bob's confidence had returned saying: 'I felt I played great... I felt I had full control of my golf ball,' adding 'for a wee while I was trying to do things differently and it wasn't working, but this week's the week we've got back to playing golf the way we know how to play golf.'

No doubt he will be disappointed not to have scored better on Sunday, but the tournament marked a huge step back to form for the Oban left-hander.

Bob will be on familiar territory when he tees it up today (Thursday) at the Ras al Khaimah Classic, as it is played over exactly the same course as last week.

That must be a good omen for the Oban man as the last tournament that was played over the same course as the previous week was in Cyprus in 2020. The winner? A certain Robert MacIntyre.

Saints march into West of Scotland Cup quarter finals

Glynhill Moorcroft	2
Oban Saints	3
West of Scotland Cup	
5th Round	

A home tie in the quarter finals against 2016 cup winners Shortlees awaited the winners of last Saturday's West of Scotland Cup fifth round tie between Glynhill Moorcroft and Oban Saints at a wet and windy Renfrew High School.

First half goals against the strong wind from captain Craig MacEwan, Gavin Forgive and Kyle Cooper saw Saints prevail by the odd goal in five against Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division title contenders Glynhill Moorcroft to set up a mouth watering tie against old 'frenemies' Shortlees.

The wind helped Glynhill keeper Ian McLean kick the full length of the park and opposite number Graham Douglas had to be on his toes to pluck his second minute kick from hand, off the head of Thomas Griffin.

The deadlock was broken after 21 minutes from a good

move on the right involving Matty Kelly, David Beaton and Kyle Cooper. Kelly's low cross picked out Craig MacEwan in the middle who tucked the ball low past Ian McLean's left hand to give Saints the lead.

Saints doubled their advantage just three minutes later from a throw-in on the left just inside the Glynhill half. Cammy Hill gathered in Scott Maitland's throw and rolled the ball up to Craig MacEwan. The skipper turned away from his marker and raced into the box drawing Ian McLean off his line before squaring to Gavin Forgive who passed the ball into the unguarded net.

Another good Saints move on the left saw Ian McLean save well from a 25-yard Daniel MacCuish left-foot shot.

The Saints back three of Steven MacLeod, Dene Cassells and Scott Maitland were coping well with the wind assisted Glynhill attack, however a cheaply conceded free-kick 22 yards out gave Alan Sutherland an opportunity to test Graham Douglas with the dead ball. Douglas got down to his right but, despite getting a



Daniel MacCuish, watched by Scott Maitland tries to escape the attentions of Thomas Griffin and Anthony Blair.

Match report and photographs: Derek Black

hand to Sutherland's effort, couldn't prevent the ball from nestling in the bottom corner.

Saints were looking the more likely to add to the scoring and young striker Kyle Cooper did just that with a composed finish in the 41st minute. Cammy Hill sent Cooper away on the left and in behind the home defence. Keeper Ian McLean came a long way out of his box to meet Cooper but his attempt to bring down the Saints youngster failed and Cooper skipped past him and from a very acute angle passed the ball into the empty net.

Manager Willie Gemmill urged his charges to kick on in the second half and David Beaton and Kyle Cooper combined well on the right in the 51st minute to create another opportunity for Cooper which this time flew wide of target.

That proved to be Cooper's last involvement as injury forced his withdrawal in favour of Ruairidh Horne who took the right wing-back berth with David Beaton moving up front with Craig MacEwan.

Saints gaffer Willie Gemmill made what would turn out to be his final change in the

69th minute when Daniel MacCuish made way for Myles McAuley in a straight switch in central midfield.

The hosts were now upping the pressure and after defending well throughout Saints finally made the mistake which gave the home side their reward for a hard-working second half performance. Cammy Hill and Scott Maitland both scuffed attempted clearances deep in the Saints box with Marc Walker pouncing on the loose ball to tee up Ryan Officer to slam the ball home from ten yards.

Saints, however, maintained their composure at the back but less so up front where they spurned several glorious opportunities to kill the tie on the counter-attack which left them clinging on as the clock ticked into time added on for stoppages.

In the 93rd minute a scramble

Oban Saints Youth – results and fixtures

Sunday's results: Under-13s 1, Charlie Miller Academy 7. Saints goalscorer was Scott Campbell. Rossvale v Under-15s postponed. Under-16s 5, Renton 0. On target for Saints was Michael Campbell (3), Aidan MacDonald and Louis Paterson.

This Sunday's fixtures: Under-13s tbc; Southside Star v Under-15s; Busby v Under-16s.

on the edge of the Saints box saw referee Daniel McGuire, who had a good game, award a free kick to the hosts and with it one last chance to send the tie into a penalty shoot-out. Hearts were in mouths on both touchlines as Alan Sutherland placed the ball. However the Glynhill dead ball expert was unable to repeat his first half goal scoring exploits and sent his effort high and wide of target.

Mr McGuire blew for time immediately after Graham Douglas' goal kick sending Saints into the last eight of the competition

This coming Saturday Saints return to league business with a trip to Ladywell Park to face Bannockburn in the Central Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division.

The quarter final against Shortlees will take place in Oban on Saturday 19 February.

Nuria puts Mull on the map at national championships

A Mull teenager who trains mostly in a community hall stepped onto the senior national stage last weekend.

At the age of just 16, Nuria Clowes from Calgary competed in the singles, doubles and mixed doubles competitions at the Yonex Scottish National Badminton Championships in Perth.

Playing at the Bell's Sports Centre, the Tobermory High School pupil was knocked out in her opening singles match against Under-19s national champion Abbie Brooks who made it all the way to the finals where she was beaten by title defender Rachel Sugden.

Nuria and her partner Evan Kenny also made a first round exit in the mixed doubles following a tough match against Holly Newall and Michael McGuire.

In the level doubles, however, the Mull teenager and her partner Eva Tremble progressed to the second round after beating Sophie Ford and Rachel Wedlock in straight sets (21-16, 21-19) before going out to Basia Grodynska and Tony Woods.

Mum Katja accompanied the promising teenager, dad and



Sixteen-year-old Nuria won the Scottish Schools Badminton Union U18 singles in November last year.

trainer David being confined to the house after suffering a prolapsed disc in his back.

Katja said: 'It was just so exciting to be part of such a big event again and for Nuria to be playing in such a great venue amongst a very high calibre of players.'

'It was a joy to watch.'

Nuria played on the national junior event circuit for two years before Covid hit.

She was given a place on the national squad in September 2020 and has trained in Glasgow whenever possible.

Mostly, however, she has

trained on Mull in the Dervaig Community Hall alongside younger brother Malik (14) under the watchful eye of dad David who is a professional tennis coach.

Malik won a bronze medal in the doubles event at the U15 Home Nations Quadrangular last October and in November last year Nuria won the Scottish Schools Badminton Union Under-18 singles and doubles in Wishaw.

'We would have been totally lost without the hall,' said Katja.

'Without it we would have nowhere to train and nobody to practice against.'

Malik and Nuria are both in action again later this month with the former contesting the Highland Junior Championships at Fortrose this weekend and the latter contesting the National Under-19s Championship in Lanarkshire on Saturday February 19.

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Bob MacIntyre

Positive signs as Bob returns to top form

Bob MacIntyre bounced back from his sluggish start to the season with a tied 13th place last weekend at the Ras al Khaimah Championship, presented by Phoenix Capital.

Opening up with a solid 69 on Thursday, the Oban star gradually played his way into contention with subsequent rounds of 67 and 66 to leave him 14 under par and in fifth place going into Sunday's final round.

Realistically a win was a long shot, with big-hitting Dane Nicolai Højgaard six shots clear and playing exceptional golf, but with Bob going bogey-free on Saturday a charge up the leaderboard was a distinct possibility.

It was not to be however, and with the left-hander not able to take advantage of the par fives on the front nine despite turning in one under par, his title bid was abruptly ended with a double-bogey at ten and ultimately Højgaard ran out a comfortable winner.

His final round 73 might have left him well off the pace in the end, but there were huge positives to take from his performance over the four days. Not least a bogey-free 35 hole run from mid round Friday through to the back nine on Sunday saw a consistency that

Continued on page 37.

Norbert hot foots it to Finland for chilly challenge

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

An Oban chef will be escaping the heat and getting out of the kitchen next month when he attempts to break the record for running a half marathon in ice/snow in his bare feet.

Hungarian-born Norbert Floris will travel to Finland at the end of March where he aims to beat the time of one hour 36 minutes and 21 seconds set by Czech Josef Salek in 2021. He will run in the city of Oulu where the original record was set in 2007 by Wim (The Ice Man) Hoff.

Like Hoff, Norbert celebrates cold water for natural wellness and it was while he was doing this that he came up with the idea for his challenge.

He told us: 'I was already taking ice-baths as part of my daily routine and as I sat in one of these one day the idea came to me to break one of his (Hoff's) records. I've been training every day since.'

'I'm always up for challenging myself. I really believe that once someone overcomes any challenge in their life it makes them a better person and helps them better understand what is really important.'

'It's amazing what happens to your attitude when you undertake something like this - you



Oban chef Norbert Floris gets down to business in the Atlantis gym.

look at everyone else much more kindly and wake up each morning feeling much more optimistic about the coming day. Everyone should do it!

Norbert recognises there is no guarantee of success for this particular kind of challenge and added: 'There's nothing guaranteed in life so I think I should throw my everything into it and whatever I learn or discover along the way will be a success in itself.'

In between his job as a full-time chef at Coast, Norbert

is committed to a gruelling training regime which includes taking ice baths and cold showers, barefooting it around Glencoe and spending his afternoons in the gym at Atlantis.

'There are two sides to my training - and having both is essential,' he told us.

'One is the physical side, making sure my body is physically up to the challenge, and the other side is mental preparation.'

'If anyone's ever tried taking

ice baths or cold showers, you soon realise that it's mostly just a mind game against yourself. The moment you start doubting yourself, your body immediately reacts and you drop focus - that's pretty much the end of the training session soon after.'

As he steps into his last weeks of training Norbert is now looking for help to give him the best chance possible of achieving his goal.

He added: 'I've been doing everything on my own so far - but I know I need a team to support and help me.'

'I'd be so grateful to chat to anyone who is up for that. It could be something as simple as coming out for a run with me (don't worry - you don't have to do it barefoot!) or helping come up with a funding plan.'

'Manager Nick Wesley, and the whole Atlantis community have already been a huge help, particularly with giving me opportunities to help my training through the use of their facilities, but I require some funding too. Whatever is left over after paying for the trip I will donate back into Atlantis.'

As well as completing marathons and ultra-marathons over the years Norbert, who is now 33, celebrated his 30th birthday by running to Fort William and back.

Calcutta delight for Bradbury and Scotland

Oban rugby star Magnus Bradbury faced what could arguably be the toughest 20 minutes of his playing career to date on Saturday.

The back row player replaced his injured Edinburgh Rugby team-mate Jamie Ritchie in the 60th minute of Scotland's Calcutta Cup match against England at a packed BT Murrayfield Stadium.

Bradbury arrived on the field just before the visitors took a 17-10 lead through a close range penalty from England fly-half Marcus Smith.

The game took a dramatic turn however when a knock-on by hooker Luke Cowan-Dickie was deemed to be deliberate by referee Ben O'Keefe and the Scots were awarded a penalty try to level the scores.


A further penalty award to the Scots in the 72nd minute was slotted by Finn Russell to take the narrow 20-17.

The closing 10 minutes or so was a defensive test for Bradbury and his Scotland team-mates as England crept closer and closer to the home try line. But perseverance paid off and there was much celebration on the pitch when Stuart Hogg booted the ball high into the south stand to signal the end of the game and a well deserved win for Scotland.



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10	0615 1.9 1254 2.8 TH 1859 2.0	12	0251 2.9 1002 1.9 SA 1554 3.0 2130 1.7	14	0432 3.3 1125 1.5 M 1704 3.5 2304 1.3	16	0547 3.8 1224 1.2 W 1814 3.8 ○
11	0111 2.8 0739 2.0 F 1500 2.9 2015 1.9	13	0349 3.1 1050 1.7 SU 1630 3.2 2223 1.5	15	0511 3.6 1155 1.3 TU 1739 3.6 2340 1.0	17	0013 0.9 0621 3.9 TH 1253 1.0 1845 3.8

OBAN WEATHER

Thursday

Hail showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
0°C to 5°C.

Friday

Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
4°C to 6°C.

Saturday

Heavy rain and a fresh breeze
Temperatures
6°C to 8°C.

Sunday

Light rain showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
4°C to 8°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST

Ardrishaig	-5.35
Campbeltown	-5.30
Crinan	-0.47
Islay Port Ellen	2.00
Lochboisdale	+0.30
Mallaig	+0.25
Portree	+0.55
Tobermory	+0.16
Dover	+5.30


HIGH

6

LOW

4

12 MPH



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Thursday 10 February, 2022

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Summer baby for MSP Kate and husband

See Inside: The Highland Cattle Society's 131st Spring Show and Sale

Athlete's accolade



Paralympian Karen Darke wins mountain award

• See page 37 for more

Place in history



Museum gifted first known map titled Lochaber

• See page 3 for more



Kirsty's Kids' demo as new rail works start

Kirsty's Kids founders, John and Jan Bryden, left, staged a demonstration at the entrance to their charity's premises, just off the A830 trunk road near Lochailort, at the start of this week to protest over new work by Network Rail, which they say will see the charity's doors closed for five months.

The couple are still involved in a long-running dispute with Network Rail over flood damage that wrecked their premises in 2020.

For the full story turn to page 7.

Photograph: Johnpaul Peebles, Abrightside Photography.

PARENTS SLAM TEACHING 'FAILURES'

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

It may be that a 'perfect storm' of staff sickness, Covid isolation and recruitment problems can be blamed for what parents have slammed as teaching failures at Kinlochleven campus, but children are still being let down.

So said Fort William and Ardnamurchan councillor Andrew Baxter this week when asked for his view of the situation at the Kinlochleven schools site.

On Thursday night, irate members of Kinlochleven Parent Council met with education department

officials from Highland Council to vent their frustrations over what they claimed were the failures of the local authority to provide pupils with an adequate education.

The parent council told education officials they had a legal obligation to ensure children get an education and accused them of failing in that regard.

'Whilst we acknowledge Covid has presented its own problems, this is not an issue that is solely down to Covid but an ongoing problem that has not been dealt with,' said the group.

'There have been constant long-term issues with staff absences and the Highland Council has failed to address the problems, to the point that it is now

impossible to provide proper support and education for the children and staff in the school.'

The parent council also claimed some pupils have lacked teachers in key subjects such as English, science and business administration, with some youngsters not seeing an English teacher since mid-November.

It also said the morale of children at the campus is at an all-time low, while staff shortages have left people exhausted and morale has plunged to rock bottom.

'We are tired of having to repeatedly be in this situation every few years – increasingly more frequently – and we are tired of being ignored when we raise our concerns. The Highland Council has failed in their

Continued on page 3.

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Remote renovation opportunity on Rum

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

The Isle of Rum Community Trust are looking for expert and non-expert volunteers to help with an eco-restoration of a tiny cottage on the south-west edge of the island.

Harris Lodge is situated eight miles from the nearest inhabited house and thanks to its incredible views of Atlantic storms is now in a serious state of disrepair. Intervention is urgently required to rescue the building and to renovate it to modern standards.

Alex Mumford, manager of Rum Bunkhouse (and a director of the trust), explained: 'We have had some excellent success with recruiting expert volunteers from around the country to help with recent upgrades to our bunkhouse.

'We would now like to see



Harris Lodge was built as a sporting lodge in the late 1800s.

what resourceful and imaginative people might be out there looking for the experience of a lifetime helping us restore Harris Lodge.'

Built as a sporting lodge in the late 1800s, the property is a short journey using a four-wheel drive vehicle over

the hill from the community-owned village of Kinloch, which currently provides the only habitable accommodation on the island.

Grass covered ridges surround the lodge with views out to the Atlantic, providing grazing for the Rum ponies,

red deer, feral goats and Highland cattle that currently inhabit this corner of the island.

As Covid begins to settle, the Community Trust aims, through projects such as this one, to open up the island to new income streams and markets, aiming to diversify the local economy, and support local businesses.

Resident Alison Morris

said: 'We have a population of around 46 people, including 14 young children. We need a greater diversity of employment opportunities both to attract and inspire our older children in their 20s to come back to live on the island and also to provide inspiration for the next generation of youngsters. Such a venue for hosting small groups and events would be an ideal boost for the island.'

The trust feels that a high-quality visitor experience created at Harris Lodge would provide the community with income to help both in the running of Kinloch village and to support the development of projects such as this one.

If you think you can help to make this happen, contact harris.isleofrum@gmail.com for further information.



Online enrolment for early learning and childcare places

Enrolment for early learning and childcare (ELC) places will open on Monday February 14.

Highland Council is inviting parents and carers to enrol their child for the next school session starting on Tuesday August 16.

As a result of the ongoing Covid pandemic, there will be no face-to-face enrolment again this year. Enrolment for all ELC providers, including local authority ELC settings, partner settings and commissioned childminders, will take place online.

Please do not visit the school or ELC setting during enrolment week.

Children born between March 1 2018 and February 29 2020 will be entitled to a funded ELC place. For all ELC places, enrolment week will be Monday February 14 to Friday February 18.

Once you have enrolled your child online, the ELC provider will contact you to arrange induction for your child.

To enrol your child, for further information on completing the online form, the enrolment process, catchment areas, Gaelic Medium education, school transport and placing requests, visit www.highland.gov.uk/enrol.

Parents who do not have access to online enrolment should contact their preferred ELC setting during enrolment week via email or telephone to request a paper copy of the enrolment form.

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Business brekkies are back



Lochaber Chamber of Commerce CEO Frazer Coupland pictured last week with members who attended the first Business Breakfast meeting since Covid restrictions were first imposed almost two years ago. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Museum gifted Dutch cartographer's map of Lochaber dating from 1659

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

The West Highland Museum in Fort William was last week gifted a 17th-century map which was the first one printed specifically naming Lochaber.

It is actually titled in Latin 'Lochabria' and was printed in Amsterdam in 1659 by the Dutch cartographer, Jan Jansson.

The map was copied from a smaller scale map again printed in Amsterdam by Joannis Blaeu just five years earlier in 1654. Blaeu engraved his map from earlier sketches made by Timothy Pont.

Pont was a minister, as was his father, who gave him an allowance to support him through 15 years of



The map with from left, Norman Bell, museum curator/manager Vanessa Martin, Caroline Gooch, Charlotte Macnee Bell, Helen Adam and Dr Chris Robinson. Photograph: Iain Ferguson.

travelling around Scotland making sketch maps of the places, tracks, rivers, moun-

tains, and woods and coasts of the country.

Not all his maps survived

but the one covering the area around the head of Loch Linnhe, which shows

Ben Nevis drawn and Old Inverloch Castle, did. The original is preserved in the National Library in Edinburgh.

The Jansson map displays many local place names including Torlundy, Blarmachfoldach, Ardour, Achintore, Torcastle, Blarour, Tirindrish, Onich and Ballachulish.

It has original bright hand colouring and, though primitive by today's standards, shows the outline of the head of Loch Linnhe quite accurately.

The map was gifted to the West Highland Museum by the Gooch family who have had the map in the family probably from the time of Victor Hodgson, who founded the museum, 100 years ago this year.

The map, which was delivered after detailed conservation work and so will be preserved for another 360 years, is expected to be on display before Easter.

Museum director Dr Chris Robinson told us: 'After framing, the map will probably be on display in the Governors' Room in the museum, where the papers for the Massacre of Glencoe were signed and where the doomed James Stewart of the Glen, accused of involvement in the Appin Murder, was first brought after his arrest.'

'As the museum attracts more volunteers, the opening hours are increasing toward its normal routines and is now open Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm.'

'Perfect storm' at Kinlochleven campus but pupils still let down

Continued from page 1.

duty of care,' said the group. The parent council has called for replacement teachers to cover long-term absences, plus additional teachers to assess and rectify any gaps in pupils' education as a matter of urgency.

It also wants a full support system in place for the new head of campus and all staff in the school, plus an investigation into how this situation came about.

Mr Baxter raised the staffing issues at Kinlochleven at this week's Lochaber Area Committee and says he got a reassurance there will be no delay to advertising and appointing a new headteacher for Kinlochleven campus.

And he added: 'We need a fundamental re-look at how we resource and staff rural schools in the Highlands.'

'It is unacceptable that children are sat at home without teaching or provision of teaching materials. I've seen this with my own children,' he added. I realise we have a perfect storm of staff sickness, Covid isolation and recruitment issues but children are

being let down.' Asked to comment, Highland Council said staff absences are being 'robustly managed' but that the current 'very challenging situation' had been further exacerbated by a rise in Covid-related staff absences as well as supply challenges.

'The Highland Council are

'I realise we have a perfect storm of staff sickness, Covid isolation and recruitment issues, but children are being let down.'

continuing to work with local and authority wide supply teachers and a range of organisations, including West Highland College, Highland Virtual Academy and Timeplan in order to secure supply teacher cover and other forms of support, including online/virtual learning,' it added.

The council also said it had recently advertised for an additional full-time equivalent

English teaching permanent member of staff and has circulated adverts among the current authority supply list.

There has, to date, been a number of notes of interest which have been actively followed-up, it added.

On the issue of senior pupils missing out on face-to-face business management and administration and ICT lessons for the last five months, the council said support for these subjects has now been secured from West Highland College.

'Teachers in a neighbouring school are also providing interim support in these subject areas. The council is continuing to actively investigate cover for these subject areas,' it added.

On the allegation that the council has presided over a collapse in morale among exhausted staff, the council said it took this matter very seriously and would continue to work with school and partner organisations to address the local issues in order to secure staffing to support the learning and teaching of pupils, families and the Kinlochleven community.

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Kinlochleven deer cull is paused as uproar engulfs community

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

Jahama Highland Estates has confirmed that the controversial deer culling operation which began in Kinlochleven last week will remain paused for the time being.

There was anger from a number of villagers last week when a specialist marksman turned up in the early hours of Saturday January 29, and started shooting deer, which have been entering the village.

Many residents claimed they had received no prior warning and had been alarmed by the sound of gunshots close to their homes during the hours of darkness.

There has also been considerable opposition to the culling generally, for which licences were granted by NatureScot to Jahama and Kinlochleven



Community Trust (KCT). Jahama told the Lochaber Times on Monday of this week: 'The culling remains paused.'

However, NatureScot told the Lochaber Times last week that, despite advice to people to stop feeding deer in the area, the practice had continued leading to many of these wild animals losing their fear of humans.

'As a result, many residents have complained directly to us that deer are posing a danger to public safety in the village and causing significant damage to property and gardens,' NatureScot said.

'For public safety reasons, NatureScot issued licences for night and out-of-season shooting to allow these animals

A red deer stag on Jahama Highland Estates land.

to be removed by a trained marksman with detailed local knowledge, after discussion with partners including community representatives.'

Local councillor Sarah Fanet told us: 'From the information I have obtained so far, this is part of a deer management programme.'

'It is conducted by a licensed and authorised team of experts working with local governmental and national bodies. This is a complex policy area where wildlife, conservation and public safety are pertinent.'

'The residents who have raised concerns have been heard and I am grateful that the Jahama Estate and NatureScot have decided to pause deer control in Kinlochleven. I hope this will

give time for those residents to find the reassurance they have been seeking. Meanwhile, still in the interest of public safety, I urge everyone in Kinlochleven to follow the clear and unambiguous advice issued by experts and not feed the deer in the village.'

Asked if any of last week's shooting had taken place on land or roadways owned by Highland Council (HC) as landowner, the local authority said it understood the correct permissions were in place for the land owned by Jahama Estates and KCT.

The spokesperson added: 'There does not appear to have been any intention to cull deer on HC land. To our knowledge, the council was not approached to give permission. We do not have confirmation if Highland Council land has been involved.'

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Source: * www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/windows-and-doors/



Drugs tests can now be carried out at the roadside.

Photograph: Neil Hanna Photography.

Road police clamp down on drug driving

Three men were arrested in Fort William in connection with drug driving offences over the weekend.

On Friday February 4, a 27-year old man was arrested on the A82 in Fort William after providing a positive roadside test for cannabis.

A further two men were arrested on Saturday February 5. One man, aged 29, was arrested in Lochside after providing a positive roadside test for cannabis and an 18-year-old man was arrested on the A82 on Belford Road for providing a positive roadside test for cocaine and cannabis.

All three men will be subject of a report to the procurator fiscal.

Road Policing Constable Ben Cruickshank from the

Highland and Islands Road Policing Unit based in Fort William said: 'These proactive vehicle stops highlight our dedication to reducing injuries and fatalities on our roads.'

'Driving while impaired by alcohol and drugs remains a lead contributing factor in collisions.'

'We are again reminding those who continue to drive while unfit, that you will be arrested if found to be committing these offences.'

'We wish to reassure our communities that we are committed to making our roads as safe as possible.'

Anyone who has concerns about a driver being unfit, by whatever means, can contact the police anonymously on 101.

Highland class doors won't get the chop

Classroom doors in the Highland Council area will be safe from the saw according to the local authority, writes Fiona Scott.

The statement came after Scotland's education secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville suggested that chopping the bottom off classroom doors would tackle poor ventilation posing a Covid threat in schools.

'Schools where there are persistently high CO2 levels in certain rooms will be able to buy air filters, extractor fans and have the bottom chopped off classroom doors to improve air flow in an effort to reduce the spread of coronavirus,' Ms Somerville said.

Her proposal, which was aimed at tackling ventilation problems in an estimated 2,000 classrooms at a cost of £4.3 million was ridiculed at Holyrood last week.

There are 29 high schools and 203 primary schools in the Highland Council area. None of which will require any carpentry according to the local authority.

'The Highland Council has no plans to cut a section from the bottom of classroom doors in schools,' it confirmed.

'Delighted' MSP Kate confirms she is expecting her first child

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

Local constituency MSP Kate Forbes and her husband Ali MacLennan are expecting their first child together in the summer, it has been confirmed.

The MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch and her husband wed last summer in Dingwall. The new baby will be a joyful addition to the family which includes Ali's three teenage daughters - Rachael, Rebekah and Zara.

The announcement means that Ms Forbes will likely become the first serving cabinet secretary to go on maternity leave.

She will take a break from Holyrood, but has reassured constituents her constituency office and team will continue supporting local residents

throughout that period as normal.

Ms Forbes said: 'My husband Ali and I are absolutely delighted to announce that we are expecting a baby later this year.'

'All being well, we're looking forward to welcoming a new member of the family in the summer.'

'We have been incredibly grateful for the kind messages of support from family, friends, constituents and colleagues.'

'In the meantime, I have a very busy few months ahead, including the final stage of the Budget this week and supporting people through the cost of living crisis.'

'I will be taking maternity leave when the baby arrives - but I want to reassure constituents that my office will remain open, and my constituency team will continue to provide

help and support, as usual, to the residents of Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch.'

The cabinet secretary for finance and the economy added: 'I have an even deeper admiration for the thousands of women across the country who balance both work and personal responsibilities.'

'There might be particular challenges with being a politician in the public eye whilst combating the side effects of pregnancy, but it is an experience which is familiar to countless women.'

'Politics, like many workplaces, is not renowned for being a supportive environment for parents. Hopefully I can play a small part in changing that and demonstrating that it is possible to have children and a career, with the right support in place.'



Kate Forbes and her husband Ali MacLennan who are expecting their first child in the summer.

Police appeal after Fort's night of vandalism

Police in Fort William are appealing for information after officers were called to reports of vandalism on the High Street around 1.50am last Thursday.

Officers attended and found widespread damage including heavy-duty bins tipped over, broken glass, planters emptied and windows smashed.

Inquiries are ongoing into this incident and officers are checking CCTV to establish more details on those responsible to trace them as soon as possible.

Anyone with information is asked to contact 101 with reference 0282 of February 3.

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Lochaber Chamber of Commerce takes deep pride in the success of our members and local businesses, how partnerships help them to grow and develop as well as being that 'go to' business resource.

We believe that you can achieve more when you have a network of support available and your local Chamber is here to support you, be that extra team member and connect you with new domestic and international opportunities. With an events calendar that is already filling up, now is the time to get involved and join us.

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place at Highland Cinema on Thursday February 17 and we are looking



forward to meeting as many members and non-members as possible, to share the results of our efforts over the past 12+ months and demonstrate how we have supported business across many sectors across the breadth of Lochaber.

Lochaber Chamber of Commerce works for businesses in the Outdoor Capital of the UK by providing a strong network of businesses with development opportunities through international trade and access to public bodies, lobbies on your behalf by raising key issues, provides training opportunities and connects you with like-minded individuals and business across sectors, plus much, much more.

If you'd like to find out more about how you and your business can benefit from joining Lochaber Chamber, please don't hesitate to get in touch by calling 01397 705765 or emailing membership@lochaberchamber.co.uk today.

Call for botanical survey of wetlands near Mucomir

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

A detailed botanical survey of wetlands at the head of Loch Lochy needs to be included as part of any environmental assessment carried out over the potential dumping of millions of tons of spoil at nearby Mucomir as part of the construction of the proposed pumped storage scheme at Coire Glas.

So said Dr Jon Mercer, chairman of Lochaber Biodiversity Action Group (LBGA), speaking this week after examining the 96-page scoping request lodged with Highland Council planners by energy generator, SSE Renewables.

The Coire Glas project already has planning consent, but further approval would be needed if the site at Mucomir, which already has permission for quarrying activities, was



Dr Jon Mercer.

deemed suitable for the spreading of 2.6 million tons of spoil.

Details of the sort of works and equipment, including dumper trucks, excavators, conveyor belts and barges, and possibly even a rock crushing facility, have been included in the scoping request, which aims to find out what would need to be in any Environmental Impact Assessment accompanying a planning application.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was carried out by EnviroCentre Limited in September 2021 of the site proposed for use.

Biological records of bats, red squirrel, pine marten, hedgehog, brown hare and

a range of bird species were returned during the desk study. The habitats on site offer commuting and foraging habitat for bats, amphibians, otter, water vole, red squirrel, pine marten, badger, hedgehog, brown hare, reptiles, a range of bird species, wild boar, fish species and freshwater pearl mussel.

SSER received consent for the Coire Glas 1055MW Pumped Storage Hydro (PSH) project in October 2020 but as spoil storage in this location was not originally included, further planning permission was required.

SSER now wishes to proceed with an application for planning permission for this purpose at Mucomir Farm as one potential spoil management option.

Dr Mercer believes the Local Biodiversity Action Plan should be included in the consultation as he believes there would 'inevitably be some ecological damage on the site', and told the Lochaber Times it is doubtful whether mitigation measures, including final landscaping, would compensate for this. As for the nearby wetlands, they include ponds that attract a variety of wildlife, including migrating waders, with rarities such as green sandpiper visiting regularly.

The fields themselves also often attract wintering geese, which include occasional Greenland white-fronts.

Brown hare have declined in the immediate area, and this dumping of spoil could effectively kill off any residual population, probably along with any possible water voles.

Dr Mercer told us: 'The proposed Mucomir site for the dumping of spoil waste from the Coire Glas site potentially poses a threat to local biodiversity, particularly threatened wader populations.'

'The wetland areas at the head of Loch Lochy have been historically altered by the channelling of the River Lochy, but still provide an important mixture of semi-natural habitats, including ponds, bog, wet grassland, scrub and shingle banks.'

'It is to be hoped that a thorough Environmental Impact Assessment will be carried out, including a detailed botanical survey of the wetlands, before any decisions are finally made about dumping sites.'

'If work does go ahead, then the Lochaber Biodiversity Action Group hope that the land could be sensitively restored to include new wetland and wet woodland features, when landscaped.'

High school business brains make the grade in national competition

Schoolgirls from Lochaber High School have made it to the last stage in the 16-18-year age group of a contest to crown the country's most promising new business brains.

The finals of the Growing Future Assets Investment Competition, which nurtures the next generation of female investment experts, will be held next month, when a total of eight teams from across Scotland compete for the top spots. And this year the competition is tougher than ever with entries up by a record-breaking 300 per cent.

Lochaber High School's pupils will compete against teams in the same age group from: North Berwick High School (East Lothian); St Columba's High School (Gourock, Inverclyde) and Wellington School (Ayr).

During the competition youngsters must prove their ability to spot the next big investment opportunity by researching, analysing and pitching a firm they think will be a great long-term prospect.

Sharon McGonigal, Guidance PT at Lochaber High School, said: 'The work and the enthusiasm with which the pupils have approached the competition is amazing and they are a real credit to themselves and the school.'

'I also think the organisation of this event has been second to none and has allowed the pupils to get involved in something that will have a major impact on their team-working skills and their ability to work under their own initiative.'

This year more than 80 investment mentors from 28

firms, including Baillie Gifford, Stewart Investors, Walter Scott and Partners and Rathbone Investment Management, volunteered to counsel the youngsters. Experts in journalism and business have also advised them, with executive and voice coach Susan Room boosting their skills and confidence with online masterclasses, while author, broadcaster and financial journalist Iona Bain has explained how they can invest their way to a better future.

The teams have already presented their case in a research report and three-minute elevator pitch.

The eight finalists will deliver an extended pitch to judges at the beginning of March with the winners announced on Wednesday March 2.



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Lochailort charity mounts protest over compensation as latest rail work starts

Network Rail this week said work was ongoing to assess a claim for compensation from a Lochaber charity which has twice suffered extensive damage from floods in the past two years, writes Mark Entwistle.

The assurance came this week as John and Jan Bryden, founders of the Kirsty's Kids charity, together with some of their friends, mounted a protest at the entrance to their property at Lochailort.

The demonstration was timed to coincide with the expected start of the latest round of works by Network Rail on the nearby stretch of the West Highland Line.

It was in the summer of 2020 that flooding first destroyed much of the Brydens' site, including their adjoining home, which is located alongside the A830 trunk road and close to the rail line. The couple, who



John and Jan Bryden with fellow protesters at the entrance to Kirsty's Kids charity at Lochailort. Photograph: ABrighside Photography.

set up Kirsty's Kids in memory of their late daughter, could do little more than watch helplessly as gallons of water and huge boulders swept through their property, destroying a lifetime's work.

The Brydens had put their heart and souls into building the Kirsty's Kids retreat, which is used by disabled children and their families.

Just 30 feet behind the Brydens' property, the world famous West Highland Line

rail route was also undermined in several places, leaving the track hanging in mid air.

The Brydens contacted their insurers and began costly repairs with the help of volunteers, while Network Rail set about replacing 80m of railway and embankment.

The couple fully co-operated with the Network Rail contractors carrying out the repairs, allowing them access across their entrance way to a large compound created on adjacent

land. But last year the charity faced another setback when the contractors returned for further remedial work on the railway after which a mudslide hit their land and, again, they were forced to close its doors.

Volunteers from across the UK gave more than 4,000 hours of free labour, while building materials were also donated for free, all with the intention that the charity would benefit once a supposedly agreed invoice for thousands of pounds was settled with Network Rail.

However, the Brydens say they have never seen a penny.

Asked to comment, a Network Rail spokesperson told us: 'We are in regular contact with Mr and Mrs Bryden and are committed to resolving this matter. As a taxpayer-funded body, we have processes we have to follow and that work is ongoing.'

But Mr Bryden commented: 'I

thought it was very reasonable as the volunteers all had to be accommodated, fed and be able to clean themselves and clothes. And that included the materials. Clearing mud is a messy business.

'However, I have since been told that as they were volunteers and worked for free, they [Network Rail] wouldn't be paying up. We are all disgusted and can't really take much more of this.'

Mr Bryden added: 'This level of disturbance would see us forced to close our doors when we are due to welcome our next group of children in April. We'd hate to have to cancel those stays because they are so badly needed by families.'

Mum of two Sandra Bryson made the trip from Glasgow to join the Brydens in their protest. She turned to Kirsty's Kids in desperation and was amazed

at the difference it made to her daughters.

She said: 'One of my girls was bullied at school, was self-harming and totally withdrawn. One week at Kirsty's Kids made an incredible difference. Jan and John were so kind and really connected with her and her sister.'

Kate Forbes MSP said: 'I have been assisting the Brydens for almost two years in trying to resolve their dispute with Network Rail following the flooding which devastated their premises on two separate occasions.'

'This has been an immensely difficult time for the family. The case with Network Rail is a very complex matter, and I am continuing to try and make progress through ongoing discussions. The charity is a lifeline for many, so I hope we can find a satisfactory resolution.'



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Two community councils reform, but Kinlochleven fails to attract required number

Following the close of nominations on Tuesday February 1, the following two Lochaber community councils have now formed uncontested – Acharacle and also Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry.

On Skye, Staffin Community Council has reformed. However, despite a second attempt at reforming, Kinlochleven Community Council again failed to attract half the maximum membership required.

The councillors for Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry are – Christine Clephan, John Fotheringham, Jennifer Hastings, Judith James-Davies, Ian Langley, Ian Matheson and Alison Munro.

At Acharacle, the single person required for the community council to reform saw the vacancy filled by Roy Cattle.

Glenfinnan Dining Car Tearoom receives a new lease of life

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

After two years of Covid hibernation, Glenfinnan Station Museum will be reopening the popular Dining Car Tearoom for business on Friday April 1.

The new Covid world order has forced station museum proprietors Hege Hernaes and husband John Barnes, like everybody else, to look at ways of allowing visitors and staff more space to stay safe.

To that end, they have introduced a change of layout with a flexible-use saloon area, upgraded the outdoor seating, expanded the sales area to include the snowplough, and created new separate staff facilities. In the process, a number of other upgrades have been made as well.

'We feel this is a more useful use of the space that will allow socialising, exhibitions, par-



ties, meetings, etc,' the couple explained in a briefing for the community.

Taking on the lease for the actual day-to-day running of the Dining Car will be Sandra Melnikaite and Steven Smith, who will soon also be living in Glenfinnan's Station Cottage with their two young sons.

Sandra is originally from Lithuania, while Steven grew

up between Portincle and Arrochar, here on the West Coast. The couple already run the Kilted Camel boutique café and coffee shop in Fort William with Sandra's sister and they also have another property in Oban.

For many years the pair were working in the super yacht industry – Steve as a chief engineer while Sandra looked

Sandra and Steven with the station's snowplough which is being repurposed for selling locally produced ice cream.

after the interior departments.

Once they became a family, they focused on rebuilding and restoring their own classic sailing schooner in Italy, but the combined forces of Covid and Brexit made them decide to return to Scotland.

Sandra and Steven believe in fresh and local produce that involves as few food miles and as little packaging as possible. Their aim is to achieve zero level on both counts. To that end, they are keen for as many ingredients as possible to be produced within the village and surrounding area, so would love to hear from any local residents who rear livestock, or have green fingers and bakery skills. Based on

their sustainable stay-local ethos they will be specialising in high-quality picnic-style fare, warming soups, good coffee and organic ice cream.

Taking a break from preparation work to get the dining car ready for opening, Steven said it was an exciting new venture for the family.

'We're really looking forward to opening. With two wee boys who are daft about trains at the moment you can imagine the excitement levels!' he told us.

'We are also currently working to set up local sources of organic produce because our aim is to do everything in as sustainable way as possible.'

Sandra and Steven will also be looking for staff to join their eco-minded team on both a full- and part-time basis and can be contacted on 07585 914590 or by email via the museum at glenfinnanstation-museum@gmail.com.

Pupils planting for the future in the Western Isles

Children in their first year of school were busy planting trees this week as part of the Trees for Primary Schools project, writes Fiona Scott.

Five children from Shawbost Primary School on the Isle of Lewis joined youngsters from other schools to plant trees in their school grounds as part of the project organised by the Rotary Club of Stornoway and supported by Point and Sandwick Trust and the Croft Woodlands Project.

In total 120 children from five



schools on the Western Isles planted a mix of native species, all of which will add shelter,

wildlife habitat and landscape diversity to the island.

Andrew Sim, president of the

A Shawbost Primary pupil helps with the tree planting.

Photograph: Sandie Maciver.

Rotary Club of Stornoway and Robin Reid, Croft Woodland Project advisor for Lewis and Harris, joined pupils and teachers at Shawbost last week to get the new trees in the ground. Andrew said: 'It was really rewarding to get the trees planted at Shawbost and to see how much the children enjoyed digging them in. This project has been a pleasure to roll out and we plan to do the same for 2022. We hope many more local schools will take up the opportunity.' Point and

Sandwick Trust are committed partners in the project, which ties in with their own focus on the environment and their work with the Croft Woodland Project and efforts to help crofters plant trees in the Western Isles.

Organisers hope the project will continue for many years and attract more schools.

Honorary president of Point and Sandwick Trust Angus McCormack said: 'This project offers a wonderful legacy for these children to look back

with pride at the tree they planted in their first year of education.'

The project is open to any primary school in the Western Isles and offers children a valuable opportunity to find out about planting and growing trees and caring for their environment. Each child will receive a certificate of tree planting and the school will have a map of where the individual trees have been planted. All trees were sourced locally from Stark's Ark in Leurbost.

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Archived school records offer glimpse into Lochaber's past

This week our article from High Life Highland's Lochaber Archive Centre focuses on archive school records.

The 1872 Education (Scotland) Act formalised Scottish education and brought it under the authority of the state.

The Act made schooling compulsory for children aged five to 13 and saw the establishment of hundreds of new schools across the nation.

With the passing of this Act, recordkeeping within schools became standardised, where before it had been practised inconsistently.

Pupil admission registers became an essential part of school operations, as did logbooks detailing daily events and occurrences.

Because of this new approach to recording information, there survives a wealth of admission registers, logbooks, school board minutes, feu charters, and photographs, collected through the years at Scottish schools.

Categorised collectively as 'school records', these documents are among our most requested at the Lochaber Archive Centre.

They offer an invaluable insight into life within Lochaber's communities, from the establishment of schools at the tail-end of the 19th century, through two global conflicts, and into more recent history with all its cultural shifts.

Admissions registers are often used by those researching family history, as they



The youngest pupils at Fort William Higher Grade School circa 1904. Photograph: Lochaber Archive Centre; and below, Acharacle Primary School Admission Register. Photograph: Lochaber Archive Centre.

contain pupils' names, dates of birth, dates of admission and departure from the school, names of any schools previously attended, and names and occupations of parents.

In the admission register for Acharacle Primary School, dating from 1874, we see parents' names listed alongside such occupations as shoemaker, fisherman, crofter, and postmaster.

Naturally, admission registers could help one piece together the life of a relative - putting flesh on the bones of a story once missing important chapters.

School logbooks were kept by headteachers as a diary of day-to-day occurrences within the school. They typically contain notes on school attendance, academic performance, and notes regarding general upkeep of the school building.

In the days before the school run, in places with the climate and rurality of Lochaber, bad weather conditions often had a deleterious effect upon attendance.

Instances of children being absent because of snowdrifts

are the norm - so, too, is poor attendance owing to sheep shearing, lambing, or the planting or harvesting of potatoes.

Although much of this valuable information is the result of the formalisation of Scottish

Crofters take 'goose war' to minister

The population of greylag geese resident in the Hebrides has now reached 'unsustainable numbers', according to the chairman of the Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF).

Donald MacKinnon and other members of a SCF delegation met with the minister for environment, Mairi McAllan, last week to advocate on behalf of the crofters and biodiversity suffering damage caused by geese.

Speaking after the meeting, Mr MacKinnon said the agreed maximum of 4,000 birds for the Uists, which in itself is higher than crofters want, has doubled since the end of the 'adaptive management' scheme that was funded by the Scottish Government.

He added: 'NatureScot, which holds the purse strings, has stopped all funding and we can see no hope of preventing an explosion in goose numbers.'

Mr MacKinnon continued: 'We argue it is in everyone's interest to stop this catastrophe continuing. Crofting agricultural practices in the Hebrides, especially on the machair, help to nurture an ecosystem rich in biodiversity, something we must protect for all. The huge numbers of geese grazing and fouling the grass and heritage cereal crops will end crofting here. This will alter the ecosystem to the detriment of the other species. We are seeing the destruction of a world-renowned natural heritage unfolding before our eyes.'

Mr MacKinnon said government policy on goose control had three legs which were now out of balance: conservation of endangered geese; prevention of damage to agriculture and biodiversity, and the responsible use of public money.

education, there is some controversy attached to the 1872 (Scotland) Education Act.

With the passing of the Act came the end of non-English medium education, and the repression of the Gaelic language within the education system. The results of this are still felt today.

Upon its opening in 1874, the Strontian Primary School logbook tells us that with only a small number of exceptions, children in the first three classes could not understand one word of English. This would soon change.

Please note that school admission registers are not accessible to the public for 100 years after they were collected, and logbooks for 50 years.

Certain sections of books can become 'open' whilst others remained closed. For example, an admission register dating from 1919-1956 will now have open sections. This said, the majority of the archive centre's material is open.

Email: lochaber.archives@highlifehighland.com; **Web:** www.highlifehighland.com/lochaber-archive-centre; **Facebook:** Lochaber Archive Centre; **Twitter:** twitter.com/hlharchives



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Trust branches out with forestry school

Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust (KLCT) has launched two new initiatives to encourage people to take part in outdoor activities.

A successful bid to Forestry Scotland's Community Fund will help the trust establish a Forest School at the Plock.

Outdoor learning and well-being officer Judith Bullivant, a qualified Forest School leader, is excited to be launching this project after the schools' half term break in February.

She explained: 'Forest School offers child-led outdoor exploration, fun and learning

through informal activities, supported by qualified adult leaders. The activities in each session depend on the interests of the participants, but could include shelter building, natural art, fire-lighting, outdoor cooking, wildlife observation and map-making. The Plock offers fantastic opportunities for children to explore and to develop a sense of pride in and ownership of the area.'

An initial block of six Friday afternoon sessions is open to children, from Lochalsh, of primary age, with numbers limited to 12 participants. A

booking and pre-payment system will operate and places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. If the pilot is successful, Forest School sessions will continue as follows:

■ There will be small charge for attendance with a siblings' discount and assisted places available if requested.

■ Forest School is an outdoor-based provision – sessions will only be cancelled if the weather conditions are deemed too dangerous to proceed.

■ Grant funding includes a supply of waterproof clothing and footwear which will be available to borrow if needed.

Full details and booking forms are available from KLCT by emailing info@lochalsh.uk and the Plock Forest School Handbook can be accessed or downloaded from KLCT's website at www.lochalsh.uk.

KLCT has also received a grant from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund to re-start 'Branching Out' sessions at locations throughout Lochalsh. Branching Out is an initiative

developed by Scottish Forestry with advice from the Scottish Association for Mental Health and NHS Highland and recognised by the Institute for Outdoor Learning.

It offers a programme of outdoor activity, from cooking to carving, weaving to walking in small groups for adults who use mental health services. The sessions aim to increase self-confidence and improve mental, physical and social health through supported activities.

KLCT's funding will provide full training for six volunteer leaders, with topics including mental health awareness, practical bushcraft skills, outdoor first aid and outdoor food hygiene, in addition to buying equipment and waterproof clothing. On completion of the training course, KLCT plans for the new leaders to run Branching Out groups in three locations in Lochalsh.

Anyone interested in joining the Forest School or Branching Out leader teams should contact Judith at Judith.bullivant@lochalsh.uk.



Judith Bullivant.



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Loch Arkaig nestcam osprey Rannoch spotted in Senegal

A Lochaber osprey whose name went to Mars thanks to NASA has been spotted and photographed in Senegal, West Africa.

The bird, named Rannoch, fledged at Loch Arkaig Pine Forest in 2019 along with its sibling Mallie.

A live webcam has operated from the nest since 2017 with support from players of People's Postcode Lottery. Hundreds of thousands of fans around the world have watched a total of six chicks raised on the nest over the years, but this is the first sighting of one in its wintering grounds.

The bird was identified by its blue leg ring bearing the number JJ2. Senegal-based French ornithologist Jean-Marie Dupart photographed it on Sunday January 23 at the Sine-Saloum Delta national park and UNESCO World



Rannoch was photographed by Senegal-based French ornithologist Jean-Marie Dupart on January 23.

Photograph: Jean-Marie Dupart.

Heritage Site. The photographer reported his sighting to Dr Tim Mackrill of Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation who collates information on tagged British ospreys and word was sent back from there to Woodland Trust Scotland. Rannoch was named in

honour of Woodland Trust Scotland volunteer Liz Bracken who watches the nest via telescope from the other side of the loch and reports on the ospreys' activity.

'I am delighted to see Rannoch is doing well in Africa,' said Liz.

'How extraordinary to see our osprey 3,000 miles away in Senegal. You cannot be anything other than in awe of these birds and the lives they lead. This will whet everyone's appetite for the start of the 2022 breeding season.'

The Loch Arkaig nest camera

will be online again from mid-March, with ospreys expected back around the start of April.

Woodland Trust Scotland and charity Arkaig Community Forest bought the spectacular 2,500 acre site in 2016. Their aim is to restore native woodland habitats; re-connect local people with the management and stewardship of the site and use the woods to underpin sustainable rural development in the nearby communities of Achnacarry, Bunarkaig and Clunes. When NASA invited the public to submit names to fly aboard the Mars mission, it caught the eye of one of the fans of the Loch Arkaig webcam. She nominated the names of the 2019 osprey family - Louis, Aila, Mallie and Rannoch. The mission blasted off in summer 2020 and the Perseverance Rover with the

names on board reached the surface of Mars last year.

Louis and Aila raised their first chick, Lachlan, in 2017. In 2018, the nest failed after a pine marten raided the eggs. In 2019, they raised Mallie and Rannoch. In 2020, they raised Doddie, Vera and Captain with an audience of nearly 400,000 watching online.

In 2021, Aila failed to return and Louis followed a new female to another tree. Hopes are high that a new young pair, who occupied the nest for a little while last year, will return and breed this year.

Felling and extraction of 70,000 tonnes of non-native timber is under way at the forest while the ospreys are away. The mammoth effort will free remaining native trees to take back the site in one of the biggest Caledonian pinewood restorations ever attempted.

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DISTRICT NEWS



The Champion of Champions at the 69th annual Sunart Show in 2019.

Sunart Show in 70th appeal for photographic memories

To help mark its 70th anniversary show this year, the organisers of Sunart and District Agricultural Show have issued an appeal for old newspaper clippers and archive photographs from previous shows as contributions for a special calendar and show programme.

Show secretary Nikki Robertson commented on the society Facebook page: 'Pleased to say that the committee has started planning this year's show. The show will be held on Saturday, August 13, this will be our 70th show and we hope to celebrate this in various ways.'

'We are looking to produce a calendar celebrating our 70th show. In order to do this we would like to gather as many photos from previous shows and the 12 that get picked by the community will be in the calendar.'

'If you have any photos that you would like to be included please email your copy with the date of show the picture was taken.'

Photographs and newspaper cuttings can be emailed to sunartshow@yahoo.com.

Leanne's legacy continues to grow

The parents of a young Lewis lady who died from cystic fibrosis in 2009 aged just 21 have thanked supporters of a charity set up in their daughter's name 12 years ago, writes Mark Entwistle.

Hundreds of people and their families across Scotland who suffer from the condition have now benefited from the unique and targeted support services provided by The Leanne Fund.

As the charity marks its 12th anniversary, it continues to develop the range of services provided and looks to expand into further regions of Scotland.

From its base in Stornoway, the charity now offers services across the Highlands and Islands, Moray, Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, the Northern Isles and Tayside – taking services coast to coast across Scotland and currently supporting approximately 250 individuals and their families.

The Leanne Fund was founded by the family of the late Leanne Mitchell to give real and practical help to those affected by CF.

Founders Chrisetta and Willie Mitchell said: 'We are so grateful



The Leanne Fund committee pictured last June.

to everyone who has contributed to the success of The Leanne Fund since it was set up in 2010.

'The legacy created in Leanne's memory has and continues to make a difference to the lives of literally hundreds of individuals and families affected by CF across Scotland over the last 12 years and we feel truly humbled by the support of everyone who has partnered

with us to make this possible.' The organisation is run by a board of trustees and one employee. The fund is the only cystic fibrosis support organisation offering a unique range of services, meeting individuals and families at their point of need.

Remaining active is an essential part of maintaining wellbeing for CF sufferers and as a result The Leanne Fund's 'Get Active'

service has been inundated with applications for fitness equipment to allow people to take regular exercise in their own homes.

The fund's counselling and mindfulness service has also seen unprecedented demand as individuals and families struggled to cope with feelings of isolation and loneliness brought about by the strict shielding guidance for those affected by the illness.

Outward Bound Trust in line for slice of new £2m fund

The Outward Bound Trust, which has a popular centre at Loch Eil, pictured right, now has access to a further £2 million being made available to support recovery after the Covid pandemic, writes Mark Entwistle.

Outdoor education centres are facing financial challenges as a result of the pandemic and can apply this month to the new £2m fund.

Available for private sector and third sector centres, the support will help with running costs and enable staff to deliver more outdoor learning for schools.

The funding brings the Scottish Government's

support for the sector during the pandemic to £4.5m. Martin Davidson, from the Outward Bound Trust, said: 'Outdoor centres warmly welcome the additional emergency funding from the Scottish Government.'

'Whilst technically outdoor residential experiences have been able to resume since August, coronavirus continues to make the return to financial sustainability challenging.'

'The funding will help ensure that outdoor centres do not close, and that the transformative experiences they offer remain available to future generations of young people.'



Photo Essay...

Former Marine JJ Fenton's best Scottish snaps...

Exclusive interview with Gordon Ramsay...

Pastiche architecture...

Inspirational Scots...

Stunning East Lothian garden...

Artist Naomi Rae...

Scents of the forest...

Deer management...



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SCOTTISH FIELD

March

OUT NOW!

Lifeboats called to Kylerhea Narrows

Lifeboats from both Kyle and Mallaig stations were called out last week after a 10-metre vessel ran aground at Kylerhea.

The vessel was navigating north through the Kylerhea Narrows when it suffered an electrical problem and became stuck due to the turning of the tide.

Kyle lifeboat Spirit of Fred Olsen launched at 7.15am on Wednesday February 2 after receiving the call and arrived on scene first at 7.30am. A crew member was immediately put on board to assess the situation and check there was no water ingress.

Due to the rapid speed of the tide it was quickly decided to establish a tow between the Mallaig lifeboat and the casualty vessel, and the vessel was refloated at 8.15am.

Once afloat the casualty vessel managed to restart its engine and the Mallaig lifeboat proceeded to shadow them through the narrows until they came out into Loch Alsh at which time the Mallaig lifeboat returned to the station and the Kyle lifeboat took over shadowing the boat back to Kyleakin harbour where repairs could be made to the vessel.

This was the first callout of 2022 for Kyle RNLI and the first since the lifeboat came back from refit.



MSP Kate Forbes welcomes renal dialysis decision for Skye

Constituency MSP for Skye and Lochalsh Kate Forbes has welcomed a resolution from NHS Highland after it was feared that local renal dialysis provision could be moved to weekends.

After several letters and meetings the health board confirmed this week to Ms Forbes that an internal review had concluded sessions at the new hospital in Broadford on Skye would remain on weekdays.

Patients and families had voiced concerns that their treatment would be moved to a Saturday.

Ms Forbes commented: 'First and foremost I am pleased treatment will continue as before, which appears to be working well.'

'Constituents who spoke to me were very clear in what they wanted and I'm pleased that NHS Highland has listened to them.'

'It is unfortunate that there was speculation about the service being moved to the weekend, which was a cause of major concern to families with an established routine.'

'The new service from Broadford has still only been in place for less than a year, and I hope its future is much smoother now this review has concluded.'

'It is a fantastic asset for West Coast communities and I am grateful for the expertise of staff which means NHS Highland can deliver it locally on Skye.'

NHS Highland opened a new renal dialysis on



Kate Forbes was delighted the dialysis service on Skye will remain on weekdays.

Skye – serving patients in Skye, Lochalsh and south-west Ross – at the beginning of 2021.

Prior to its implementation, some patients had been travelling three days a week from their homes in the Skye and Lochalsh area to Raigmore Hospital in Inverness, which Ms Forbes previously described as 'intolerable'.

News from Plockton

Plockton and District Community Council met in Plockton Hall on Tuesday January 11.

Among the items discussed were the following:

- Election of a new chairman, vice-chairman and secretary will take place at their next meeting on Monday 14 February.
- Car park extension.
- A feasibility study is to be carried out by HC to try and help Plockton parking problems.
- Coral beach parking.
- HC are to make a car park with lined parking bays near to the beach.
- A new sign has been ordered to replace the damaged one at Strathy.
- Plans will be published on notice boards for 12 houses on the shinty pitch field.
- The council was awarded £800 from UK Cycling and hope to hold four bike events in the district to encourage bike use.
- Kishorn Port Ltd has agreed to donate towards two benches for the village.

Recent deaths in the community have included: John Macdonald (Kyle); Joan Main (Kyle); Connie McCulloch (Kyle); John MacDougall (Ardelve); Berwyn Edwards (Inverinate). Sympathy is expressed to sorrowing relatives.

GETINTOUCH

email us at editor@lochabertimes.co.uk
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Fort museum gets 100th birthday cash gift from national museums body

West Highland Museum has received a welcome £31,000 boost from Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) to refurbish the Fort William attraction's Jacobite Gallery for its 100th anniversary, and in time for this year's Return of the Stuarts exhibition.

The Return of the Stuarts exhibition at the West Highland Museum this summer will feature rare portraiture of the Royal Stuarts in exile and will open on Thursday August 18 with lectures and tours from art historian Peter Pininski and Professor Edward Corp.

This latest cash grant, from MGS's Museums Development Fund, swells the amount already

raised through the Art Happens campaign.

Lucy Casot, CEO of Museums Galleries Scotland, said: 'We are delighted to support the West Highland Museum through the Museum Development Fund. The team are taking a bold and positive step forward through the development of the Jacobite Gallery and their exciting plans for the 100th anniversary of the museum in 2022.'

'We congratulate the team on their work with local businesses to both achieve fundraising targets and engage the community in supporting the project. Through the fund we are pleased to support their efforts in creating a signifi-

cant space in the Lochaber area to highlight Scotland's history.'

Museums Galleries Scotland is the national development body for museums and galleries in Scotland and offers strategic development support to the sector.

The West Highland Museum in Fort William which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year.



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LETTERS

Between a rock and a hard place

It may be a 'perfect storm' of staff sickness, Covid isolation and recruitment problems that sees Highland Council under fire from parents who have children at Kinlochleven campus, but, as Councillor Andrew Baxter says, children are still being let down.

The last couple of years have been incredibly difficult for everyone – but particularly teaching staff and their pupils.

However, while Covid has caused a huge amount of difficulties, what is exacerbating the problem is that youngsters at Kinlochleven Campus are having to bear the brunt of ongoing difficulties with staff absences and recruitment, with the result that pupils, many in key years, do not have the teaching support they need, and the staff that are holding down the fort are overwhelmed and exhausted.

Understandably morale among children at the campus is low. We hazard a guess that teachers are probably not faring well either.

We appreciate Highland Council says it is advertising vacant positions and working with other education providers and supply teachers to cover the current gaps, but we hope that a permanent solution is found as soon as possible and there are no delays in providing the support these children so desperately need.

The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page.



However we reserve the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

The views expressed on our letters page are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of The Oban Times.

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Rise in ferry fares is hitting pensioners and disabled

Let's not pull any punches, the Scottish Government has sacrificed the pensioners and disabled on the islands with the increase to the ferry concession rate of approximately 160 per cent, which is to help offset the free bus concessions for the 22 years and under.

Last week SPTE (Strathclyde Partnership) said it was Transport Scotland that controls the bus fares but they seem to have forgotten they also oversee the ferry fares.

The ferry is the lifeline for many islanders. There is no other form of transport to get to hospitals, care homes, dental and optician appointments, so why penalise islanders?

SPTE is responsible for the administration of the concession fares. They in turn are responsible to Transport Scotland which is accountable to the Scottish Parliament. Where the concessionary fares have been devolved since 2017.

Both the SNP and The Greens are proudly bragging on their political broadcasts on television that they introduced free concession bus travel for those 22 year old and under ... political or what! And where is Argyll and Bute Council? Silence.

Gordon Gillespie, Rothesay.

Lack of ambition replaces our former vision and innovation

Further to Sandy Neil's piece regarding local road and tunnel infrastructure, I was struck by the lack of ambition and vision which appears to hobble many of our elected officials. In the approximate 20-year timescale that issues surrounding the integrity of the A83 Rest and be Thankful (RBT) route have emerged, no substantial permanent solution has been actioned.

The residents of Argyll are now expected to wait another 10 years for the poor man's remedy to this problem. Opportunities to dramatically improve transport links to the central belt were kicked into the long grass in favour of this lame, and supposedly expedient fix.

I write this note from the former British territory of Hong Kong, where the scale and ambition of infrastructure projects truly puts us, as its founding nation, to shame. A 55km (34m) road bridge and tunnel link spanning the Pearl River Delta was completed in substantially less time than the RBT project has even been under

YOUR PICTURES



No matter how much time passes, this view never gets old. Harry Entwistle sent us this photograph looking to Ardgour. If you have a photograph you would like to share with us, please email the jpeg

discussion. This, amongst numerous other major tunnelling, reclamation and transport projects, when measured against the comparatively modest scale of those floated for the West of Scotland, brings our low aspirational bar for similar upgrades into sharp perspective.

While not advocating for wholesale, reckless or indeed, unwanted development, the 'too difficult' box, political point scoring and continual pandering to the fashionable ideology of the moment, seems to cripple any remotely progressive development proposal.

Scotland's mastery of engineering and innovation in solving infrastructure problems used

to be one of our prime exports and envy of the world. In the face of our contemporary transport challenges, this former point of national prowess seems to have been set aside in favour of a new order based on parochialism and endless navel gazing.

Edward J Livingston, Craobh Haven, Argyll.

Taking letter as a badge of honour

Ah, Dr Martin Jaffa – fish farming's very own Exocet missile deployed with another ludicrous

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he took in May 2010, from top of the Pap of Glencoe (1MB) to editor@obantimes.co.uk

I believe this is also termed 'divide and conquer'. Shame when we have to do all that we can for our children and grandchildren in these worrying and dark times, no matter where you live or where you come from.

I think this shows how desperate the Norwegian billionaire industry has become, struggling against the tide of unfavourability due to its increasingly unsustainable and toxic presence in our seas.

In fact, there is a huge groundswell of support and community coherence against the industry, primarily from all those coastal communities whose livelihoods it affects, who sustainably live and work the seas and those who witness the atrocities happening under our noses.

Maggie Brotherston, Friends of Loch Creran, community group member of The Coastal Communities Network, Scotland.

100,000 reasons for carrying on wearing a mask

The figure of 100,000 is the estimated – and rising – number given last week on BBC Radio Scotland of children that have contracted Long Covid within the British Isles.

What is not known, however, is how long and to what future, perhaps serious, ailments these children will suffer, possibly in their later life.

Alongside being fully vaccinated, masks worn properly, close fitted – three layers of fine mesh cotton will allegedly stop 98 per cent of bugs – is the single easiest most safest personal option available to us all in the preventative battle against any future Covid variants. It will help protect yourself, your family and the family nation of Scotland to keep safe.

Please keep wearing your masks.

Stephen Jones, Oban.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



Tha seanfhacal ann a tha ag ràdh gum bheil adhaircean mòra air crodh tha fad' às! Dhòmhsa co-dhiù tha sin a' ciallachadh nach eil na tha ga aithris a rèir firinn na sgeòil agus gum bheil oidhirp ga dhèanamh luchd-èisteachd a mhealladh. Chan eil teagamh nach eil leithid seo de chleachdadh mhi-onarach a' tachairt bitheanta far am bheil eucoraich a' feuchainn ri bathar a reic nach eil da-riribh a rèir na h-ìre, neo an luach, a thathas a' sanasachd, ach tha tomhas den aon seòrsa rud bitheanta cuideachd ann an aon phoilitigs far am bi geallaidhean dùrachdach gan toirt nach eil gan coileanadh.

'S cinnteach gum bi bhur taghaidhean fhèin den seòrsa gheallaidhean poilitigeach briste sin aig a' mhòr-chuid agaibhse, ach theagamh gun aontaich sibh gum bheil cuid nas miosa na chèile. Sin a' bheachd a ghabh mi a' leughadh bhriathran cheannard buidhinn a tha strì às leth dhaoine feadh Alba a tha gun dachaigh. Tha e sgith ag èisteachd ri beul-brèagha is geallaidhean, agus tha e ag ràdh gum bheil e deatamach gun tèid taighean a thogail gun dàil is urrainn dha na miltean, agus mòran chloinne nam measg sin, a tha gun dachaigh fhaotainn air mhàl.

Saoilidh mi gum bheil sinn a' cluinntinn phàrtaidhean poilitigeach de gach seòrsa ag innse dhuinn gun cuimsich iad gu sgiobalta air an dùbhlán seo ma gheibh iad comas riaghlaidh, agus tha e da-riribh draghail san latha sam bheil sinn beò a bhith a' leughadh gun do bhàsaich còrr air dà cheud gu leth air sràidean Alba ann an 2020 ri linn dìth

àite-còmhnaidh freagarrach. Le miltean thaighean gan togail feadh na dùthcha gach bliadhna, dè idir as coireach nach eil a' bheàrn chudromach seo anns a' mhargaid ga leasachadh. Far am bheil cor fheadhainn gun dachaigh air cogais an riaghaltais, gun ghuth air a bhith nan dleastanas dha, agus far am bheil smachd aige air maoin calpa agus cead-dealbhachaidh nach saoilleadh tu gun gabhadh cùmhnantan cur air dòigh le buidhnean togail gun chus duilgheadais.

'S e casaid anabarrach dha-riribh a bhiodh ann air riaghaltais, agus gu dearbh air pàrtaidhean poilitigeach gu lèir, a ràdh gum bheil iad a' cur nas lugha chuideam air dìon dhaoine a dh'fheumas cadal air a' bhàr-a-muigh na tha iad a' toirt dha iomairtean eile. Chan iongnadh Fasgadh Alba bhith a' comharrachadh gum bheil gainnead thaigheadas sòisealta ann an Alba na shuidheachadh èiginneach, agus na thoradh air bliadhnaichean anns nach deach faisg gu leòr maoin a chur dhan raon chudromach seo.

Gun teagamh tha uallaichean agus dleastanasan air feadhainn eile cuideachd san t-suidheachadh, leithid feadhainn a tha a' leigeil àitean-fuirich air mhàl, ach cha bhi e idir gu leòr dha riaghaltais tuilleadh maille a dhèanamh fhad 's a tha sgrùdaidhean is conaltradh a' gabhail àite. Tha an èiginn seo a' tachairt an-dràsta!

Le còrr air seachd mìle gu leth pàiste gun dachaigh bhuan an ceartuair tha feum gluasad gu grad gus an suidheachadh maslach seo a cheartachadh!

witticism designed to isolate, ridicule and disempower.

Martin singles out, tracks and blogs (in school-boy fashion) anyone from the growing army of caring, concerned individuals who dare speak out or highlight the abuses of the billionaire fish farming industry. This only proves yet again we are doing something right and therefore we'll take this as a badge of honour. Thank you Martin.

However, in his latest offensive, Dr Jaffa fixates on assumptions about my partner's origins – intended no doubt to make him feel unwelcome in the local community.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Recently, I have been learning to crochet with the help of my friends at Kinlochleven Knit and Natter Group, which is held in the Parish Church every week.

The group has contributed to the making of items that will benefit others. They have produced things like baby hats (for premature babies) and consoling toys for children in difficulty. And also outdoor decorations to mark special times of the year.

We plan to continue this work, for it is not 'just' knitting! It is a practical way to show our

care and concern for others. We have found some motivation for our actions from a story found in the Bible.

There was a craft worker Tabitha (also known as Dorcas). Acts 9:36-39 implies that she had been charitable and kind.

The Apostle Peter brought her back to life after she had died. Those who loved her were amazed. He did this by the power of God and enabled her to go on to help others.

Today I would like to appeal for the 'Dorcas' spirit to continue to grow in our community.

Our Presbytery has contact with Church Mission Partners based in Zambia. We understand that they urgently require new baby clothes for one of their projects.

Can anyone else help us by providing knitted or crocheted baby clothing for those in need?

If so, please contact; Reverend Marion Kinnear, The Manse, Lochaber Road, Kinlochleven. PH50 4QW.

Reverend Marion Kinnear, Auxiliary Minister, Nether Lochaber.

Valentine's Day Menu - Delicious and on plan

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Love a good steak? Then you'll fall head over heels for this chipotle-seasoned version.

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Gillian 07796 040803

Fort William - Salvation Army Hall
Thursday - 3.30pm, 5.30pm & 7pm
Friday - 9.30am & 11am
Gillian 07796 040803

Campbeltown - Masonic Recreation Club
Wednesday - 9.30am, 5.30pm & 7pm
Tracey 07984 473361

Lochgilphead - Lochgilphead Baptist Church
Monday - 5.30pm & 7pm
Miriam - 07765 020776

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Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



I was planning on telling you that I have attended no less than three fantastic Celtic Connections shows since I wrote last week's column.

The truth, though, is nearer two and a half after I got thrown out of a gig in quite sensational fashion on Saturday night!

Let me explain. No sooner had the final whistle blown in the Scotland v England Calcutta Cup rugby match, than a group of us left the Park Bar and hurried along to the New Auditorium of the Royal Concert Hall. Our rush was to hear Michael McGoldrick who was starting the evening off.

We arrived in time, if slightly breathless, and even managed to order a pint each at the bar. This was our downfall.

On approaching our balcony seats, the lady asked for a look at our Covid passports and our tickets but forgot to inform us that alcohol was strictly forbidden within the venue. We had been sitting quite happily enjoying McGoldrick and his amazing band for about two full minutes when we were politely asked to leave with our drinks on account of the fact only water was permitted in the auditorium. The protestations of my pal Donnie that our drink was probably about 85 per cent water fell on deaf ears but, mercifully, we were allowed to re-enter by the time Sian took the stage. Ellen MacDonald, Eilidh Cormack,



Sian put on a first class concert on Saturday evening.

and Ceitlin LR Smith put on an absolutely stunning performance, with vocal harmony so close it really has to be heard to be believed.

The previous weekend I attended Mánran's excellent show in the Old Fruitmarket to hear some smashing tunes and some lovely Gaelic songs from Kim Carnie and Ewen Henderson. I even managed to remain in the venue for the full show this time round, which is always a bonus.

Last Friday evening, it was the turn of Allan Henderson and his Sing Me a Story concert, or Cuir Seinn ri Seanchas. 2022 is Scotland's Year of Stories and, if there is one man to be tasked with staging an evening of stories, it is Allan Henderson!

The narrative of the concert was driven by traditional storytellers such as Essie Stewart from Bonar Bridge, Angus Grant from Lochaber, and Alasdair MacLeod from

Morar – all of whom, among others, had been filmed by Allan in their own homes telling some quite remarkable tales. The stories covered all manner of Highland subjects, including meetings with faeries, clan battles, love stories, and one particular beauty from Alasdair MacLeod about a Gaelic speaker in Nova Scotia who ended up in tow with the notorious Dillinger gang in Chicago.

The music and song in the concert all related to these stories (often amazingly closely) and the audience were steered through the programme by Allan's customary humour and knowledge – including a number of anecdotes from the man himself.

Songs were sung by Maighread Stiùbhart, Ewan Robertson and Ewen Henderson, and accompanied by Ewan and Ewen, Duncan Chisholm, Sileas Sinclair and, of course, Allan on the piano.

First chance to catch The Right Bus in Oban's Phoenix Cinema

With Valentine's Day fast approaching what better way to spend your time than watching a tale of romance unfurl with your loved one at the local cinema, writes Fiona Scott.

And even better? One that was filmed right here in Oban and the beautiful West Coast.

Inspired by a novel of the same name and written by the lead actor's (Ed Ward) father – Glenn Ward – The Right Bus will premiere at Oban Phoenix Cinema on Friday, February 18.

When their absentee father is killed, Danny and Louisa want to show their mother Connie that things are no different without him.

A chance inheritance in Oban that includes the ownership of an island, propels her to get out of London with the children and to make the trip to Scotland.



The Right Bus cast: left, Edith Glad (Louisa), Suzanne Kendall (Connie); Ed Ward (David) and Edan Hayhurst (Danny).

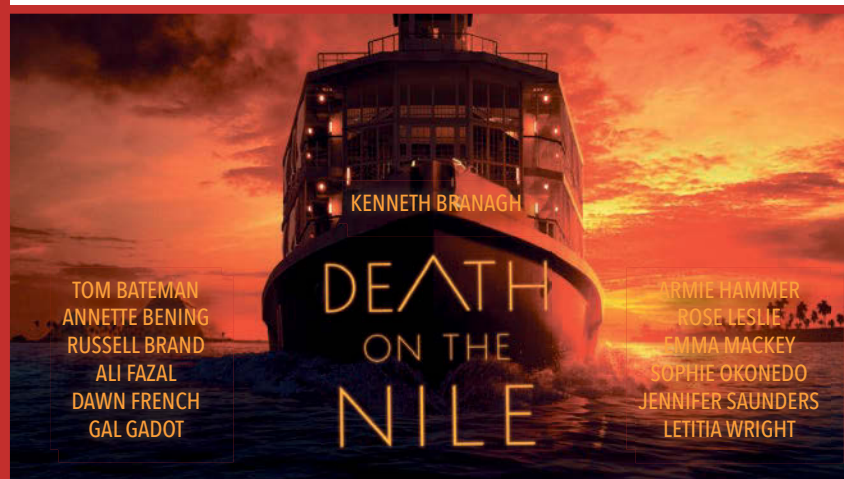
for David. When Ed and his partner, Suzanne Kendall (who plays Connie), read the novel, they thought it was a soul-stirring, heart-warming story that would lend itself well to film.

The fact that it was set on the west coast of Scotland added further appeal – a beautiful and rugged backdrop befitting of the story's emotional journey.

Producing the film was a true labour of love. Ed and Suzanne pulled all their resources and contacts together, raised the money, managed the production and cast, and acted in it. They hope viewers will enjoy and be inspired by the final result.

HIGHLAND CINEMA

FRI 11TH - THUR 17TH FEB



TOM BATEMAN
ANNETTE BENING
RUSSELL BRAND
ALI FAZAL
DAWN FRENCH
GAL GADOT

ARMIE HAMMER
ROSE LESLIE
EMMA MACKAY
SOPHIE OKONEDO
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<p>FRIDAY 11TH FEBRUARY Highlands From The Air (U) 12:45pm. Death On The Nile (12a) 1:45pm, 4:45pm + 7:45pm. Belfast (12a) 2pm. Sing 2 (U) 4:30pm. Moonfall (12a) 7:15pm.</p>	<p>JAMES ARMOUR A TALK AND VISUAL PRESENTATION THUR 17 FEB, 7PM</p>
<p>SATURDAY 12TH FEBRUARY Sing 2 (U) 10:45am, 2pm + 4:45pm. Moonfall (12a) 11am. Death On The Nile (12a) 1:30pm, 4:30pm + 7:30pm. My Son (15) 4:45pm. Belfast (12a) 7:15pm.</p>	<p>BELFAST A KENNETH BRANAGH FILM</p>
<p>SUNDAY 13TH FEBRUARY Belfast (12a) 11:45am. Death On The Nile (12a) 1:30pm, 4:45pm + 7:45pm. Sing 2 (U) 2:15pm. My Son (15) 5pm. Moonfall (12a) 7:30pm.</p>	<p>MY SON A FILM BY CHRISTIAN GABRIEL WRITTEN BY CHRISTIAN GABRIEL, LAURE HERMANN FILMED IN LOCHABER</p>
<p>MONDAY 14TH FEBRUARY - ALL SHOWN WITH SUBTITLES Highlands From The Air (U) 1pm. Belfast (12a) 1:30pm + 5:15pm. Death On The Nile (12a) 2:15pm, 4pm + 7:45pm. Royal Ballet Live: Romeo & Juliet 7:15pm.</p>	<p>TORN LAST CHANCE TO SEE!</p>
<p>TUESDAY 15TH FEBRUARY Highlands From The Air (U) 1pm. Death On The Nile (12a) 1:30pm, 4:30pm + 7:30pm. Torn (12a) 2:15pm. Moonfall (12a) 4:45pm. Belfast (12a) 7:45pm.</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY 16TH FEBRUARY Highlands From The Air (U) 1pm. Death On The Nile (12a) 1:45pm, 4:45pm + 7:45pm. My Son (15) 2:15pm. Moonfall (12a) 4:30pm. Belfast (12a) 7:30pm.</p>
<p>THURSDAY 17TH FEBRUARY Torn (12a) 12:15pm. Death On The Nile (12a) 1pm, 4pm + 7:45pm. Belfast (12a) 2:30pm. FWMF - James Armour (PG) 7pm.</p>	<p>HIGHLAND CINEMA</p>

FILM SYNOPSIS, TRAILERS, TICKETS AND TO SIGN UP FOR OUR WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER:
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Paralympian Karen Darke wins top mountain award

One of the UK's most inspirational athletes and ambitious adventurers has been named by organisers of the Fort William Mountain Festival as the 15th recipient of the Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture, sponsored by Jahama Highland Estates.

Inverness-based Karen Darke MBE, FRSGS, is an author, global speaker, transformational coach, adventure mindset coach, athlete and adventuring soul.

In addition, Karen is a gold and silver medal-winning British Paralympic hand cyclist (Rio 2016, London 2012), a European Paratriathlon Champion (2014), and international adventurer with a huge fighting spirit.

Speaking about her latest accolade, Karen said: 'Receiving the award took me by surprise but is a real honour.'

At the age of 21 Karen awoke from a coma following an accident to be told she would never walk, cycle or climb again. With unbroken spirit, will and confidence the first thing she bought after six months of recovery in a hospital bed was a race chair.

A year later she completed the Great North Run followed by the London Marathon. In 1996 she hand-biked across the Himalayas from Kazakhstan and across to Pakistan whilst still adapting to being paralysed; through the Indian Himalaya in 2005 and 2018, and across the Tibetan Plateau in 2014.

Sixteen years after her accident ended her climbing ambitions, Karen climbed the infamous El Capitan in



Karen won gold at Rio 2016 in the women's road time trial.

California's Yosemite National Park, a four-day climb that required 4,000 pull-ups.

She added: 'My soul is rarely peaceful without a mountain in its presence.'

'On becoming paralysed almost 30 years ago it seemed at first that mountains were a thing of the past.

'Thanks to the interesting technology of bikes and skis, and to great friends who have been up for some adventures, mountain landscapes have worked their way even deeper into the fabric of my being.'

She was nominated by the public and her peers as a mountain hero who celebrates achievement, accomplishment and the spirit of adventure.

Karen joins previous esteemed winners including Dave Morris, Andy Nisbet, Jimmy Marshall, Myrtle Simpson, Ian Sykes, and Dr Hamish MacInnes in the Excellence in Mountain Culture Hall of Fame.

Tom Uppington, managing

director, Alvalce British Aluminium, said: 'Karen is the worthiest winner we can imagine of this award and an outstanding addition to the list of previous recipients.'

'Her resourcefulness, strength of character and mountain expertise are extraordinary and show qualities we can all aspire to in our daily lives.'

'Alvalce Aluminium and Jahama Highland Estates are proud to play a role in the Fort William community and its place at the centre of British mountain culture.'

Karen will be speaking at the Fort William Mountain Festival as part of the Biking Night at The Highland Cinema, Fort William, on Saturday February 19.

The Fort William Mountain Festival takes place from February 16-20 in various venues in and around Fort William. For more information go to <https://mountainfestival.co.uk/>.

New online exercise class study

High Life Highland (HLH) and the University of the Highlands and Islands are looking for volunteers to take part in a study to see whether the benefits of online exercise differ from in-person classes.

As online exercise classes continue to boom from the ongoing effects of the pandemic, the university wants to assess whether the intensity people exercise online differs from face-to-face classes.

HLH head of health and wellbeing Lynn Bauermeister said: 'There can be various barriers to physical activity and HLH is keen to better understand if offering online exercise classes can help to overcome some of these barriers.'

'We started running online classes as a result of the pandemic and they remain popular, so it will be interesting to understand in more detail if or how online classes differ from face-to-face classes in terms of people's experiences from participating.'

The university is looking for men and women over 50 who currently have low to moderate levels of physical activity but do not have any medical reasons that they cannot exercise.

The study, which will involve a mix of stretching, aerobic and resistance activities, is being carried out by the University of the Highlands and Islands Division of Biomedical Sciences and Department

of Nursing and Midwifery. Dr Matthew Fraser, a postdoctoral researcher at the university, said: 'It is a really exciting study which looks to build on work we conducted last year which investigated the role of online exercise classes. It is also a great chance for members of the public to get a taster into both styles of class for free.'

Participants will be required to attend four classes in March - two online and two in-person. For more information and to take part, visit www.uhi.ac.uk/en/research-enterprise/res-themes/health/biomedical-sciences/active-health/volunteer-for-our-studies/online-vs-face-to-face-exercise-class-study/.

Friendly fixture gives young stars the chance to shine

Kinlochleven	1
South Lochaber Thistle	6
Friendly fixture	

Kinlochleven FC welcomed a South Lochaber Thistle Development side to the Kinloch Astro Dome for a midweek friendly, writes Peter Newman.

A sombre note was struck before kick off as both the teams - and a large number of the local community - came out for a minute's applause to pay their respects to Kathleen MacLean.

A fighter all her life, Kathleen passed away in the week running up to the match and, in tribute, the home side wore Rangers strips in her memory as a mark of respect.

The friendly was specifically designed to make sure that a number of local players from the football community who aren't getting regular football

were able to get some game time.

After 19 minutes, SLT Development's skipper Bradley Cameron opened the scoring. Marauding midfielder Cameron Grant drove forward before playing a cute pass inside, finding Cameron who found the bottom corner with a left footed strike from about 16 yards.

However, the home side were not down-hearted. With 30 minutes on the clock, Paul McFtridge pulled an equalising goal back from distance after some great work out wide by their own captain, Mikey MacLean.

As the half wound down, a Cameron shot was saved by David Wilson in the home side goal. However, he could only parry and the ball fell to young Kian Cameron whose rasping drive flew straight into the top corner to edge SLT 2-1 ahead at the stoppage.

The management teams used half time to encourage the players, but it was the Development side who made the next breakthrough to strengthen their advantage - Lewis Murphy getting the goal to move the Greater Glasgow Premier Division club 3-1 ahead.

The scoreline took on a new complexion at this point. Veteran utility man, Michael Rodgers was in the line-up to add heft and experience and it was his chipped free kick over the defence which showed the nous of an old head. Cameron Grant played a dinked finish over the on-rushing Wilson's head for a great finish.

It was at this juncture in the game that Kinlochleven came back into the game. First, they were awarded a penalty. Michael MacLean stepped up, only for the ball to smash off the bar and soar river-wards.

Normal service resumed



Action from the Kinlochleven v South Lochaber Thistle match.

soon after with Blair Hamilton and Cameron adding to the SLT tally.

Special mention should go to young AJay Stoddard (13 years old), who came on for Kinloch

with 20 minutes to go.

SLT Manager Alan Gray said: 'To see youngsters coming through here on both sides, and to see a game played in such good spirit and to be

invited to help pay our respects to Kathleen is very important to us, and we can only thank Matthew Prosser and everyone at Kinlochleven for all their hard work.'

Jags weather the storm to share the points

South Lochaber Thistle	3
Calderglen	3
Greater Glasgow AFL	

Despite a bad start to the calendar year which saw South Lochaber Thistle put out of two cup competitions, the first game in February sees the

Jags still undefeated in league action, writes Peter Newman.

In a topsy-turvy encounter played in finest Highland monsoon conditions, the

Kinlochleven-based outfit and their visitors had to settle for a point apiece at the conclusion.

It was the visitors who made the best of the opening exchanges, their first goal arriving from a lofted cross at a corner.

However, utility winger Sean Noble was in a commanding mood and soon had the Jags back level.

Usually a full back, Noble really was in imperious form playing further up the park. After turning his man, Noble drove in to the box for Marc McLean to take a shot.

When his effort bounced out Andrew Maclean leathered it in with help of a big deflection off the defender. Farcical it may have been, but 2-1 up was excellent news for the hosts.

Calderglen, too, proved to be made of stern stuff, however, and following a counter attack scored from a corner.

Thistle took the lead again when Noble hit a left-footed cross which the wind caught



Andrew Maclean races past his marker.

to deceive the Calderglen keeper.

The final goal in this breathless encounter saw Calderglen also using the elements to their advantage. Lofting the ball in high, it looked like the defender was going to clear it but, fooled by the wind, he misjudged the trajectory and the ball slumped into the striker's path who finished with no mistake.

Manager Alan Gray said: 'This was not a fun game to be involved with.

'The weather did not make things easy for either side and I think we have to be content with a point.

'Although we are still undefeated in the league, I believe we have a lot more to come from this side.

'There were real positives. Up top Archie Gillies was in fine form, our veteran founder and midfield powerhouse Dave Forbes was voted man of the match and Sean Noble proved he can be as much of a handful on the pitch as off it.'



Man of the match Dave Forbes gets a block in on a Calderglen opponent.

Photographs:
Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

SCOTTISH FIELD



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Scents of the forest... Deer management...

Lochaber orienteering gets back on track

Moves are afoot to put a once popular local sport back on the map, with the reformation of Lochaber Orienteering Club, writes Fiona Scott.

Working with 'Loch Eck Orienteers' (EckO) in Oban, Glencoe man Chris Vind is hoping to revive interest in this region, using the expertise of the active group to become a satellite organisation, and pioneering new routes in different areas of Lochaber.

Orienteering involves setting off from a start point with a map and special compass to follow directions along a set route to various waypoints where the participant checks in to record their arrival before setting off to find the next one on the map.

Various types of route can be set depending on the skill of participants from what would be considered relatively short walks to more complex trails and timed courses where speed

and accuracy are the aim. All usually start and end at the same point.

Speaking about the new venture, Chris said: 'It's not all about running and you certainly don't have to be an athlete to take part or enjoy it, unless that is what you want to get out of it.'

'Many courses can be enjoyed by individuals just walking or indeed as a family event, with everyone helping to follow the directions to the check-in points on the route. It can be great fun and a great time out in the open air.'

As with most things these days, logging arrival at a check point is done electronically with a 'dibber' which is inserted into a hole on the station, recording when this was done. The recording also makes sure that the participant has followed the course in the right order and, if timing is important, how long each stage has taken.

Maps are specially produced to show the routes and reference points with a key of various icons which show how to identify the specific station you are at. They are also waterproof so that they can be followed regardless of weather.

At the moment the only routes in Lochaber are around Glencoe Lochan and Kinlochleven, but with funds left over from the previous club it is hoped to research, create and print more routes in other locations. It is planned to stage the first event on Sunday April 10 at Glencoe Lochan, starting at 11am when it is also hoped to gauge just how much interest there is to restart club activities on a monthly basis.

Until then Chris is happy to hear from anyone who wants to find out more and is also offering to demonstrate just what is involved. Email him on c.vind@btinternet.com.



Chris Vind with his map and compass on one of the local routes around Glencoe Lochan.
Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba,photos.



Fort get the point at Huntly

Huntly	1
Fort William	1
Highland League	

Fort William FC achieved their second point of the season on Saturday when notching an away draw at

Fort William's new signing, midfielder Igor Sani.

Christie Park. Huntly scored first on 36 minutes when Kyle Dalling headed passed Fort keeper Mateusz Kulbacki who was named vice-captain of the Claggan Park outfit prior to the match. Kulbacki has been at the club since 2018.

The teams went in at the break with the hosts holding their 1-0 lead.


Fort levelled the game in the

71st minute with Yves Zama scoring his first goal for the club.

Off the pitch, manager Shadab Iftikhar has been adding to his playing pool with the signing of Portuguese midfielder Igor Sani. Igor has been brought in to command the centre. Previous clubs include FC Cubillas of Spain and Fut Benfica of Portugal.

This Saturday Fort are away again to Wick Academy, with a 2.30pm kick-off.

The Lochaber Times: £1



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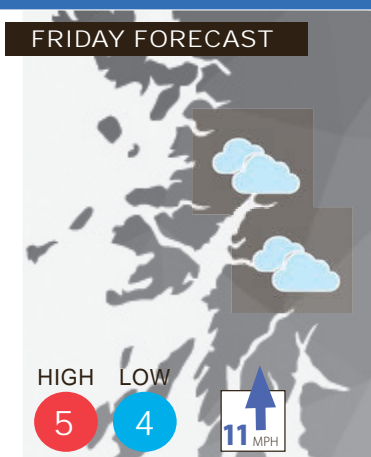
Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 10 January, 2022** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

10	0615 1.9 1254 2.8 TH 1859 2.0	12	0251 2.9 1002 1.9 SA 1554 3.0 2130 1.7	14	0432 3.3 1125 1.5 M 1704 3.5 2304 1.3	16	0547 3.8 1224 1.2 W 1814 3.8 ○
11	0111 2.8 0739 2.0 F 1500 2.9 2015 1.9	13	0349 3.1 1050 1.7 SU 1630 3.2 2223 1.5	15	0511 3.6 1155 1.3 TU 1739 3.6 2340 1.0	17	0013 0.9 0621 3.9 TH 1253 1.0 1845 3.8

FORT WILLIAM WEATHER

Thursday Hail showers and a moderate breeze Temperatures -2°C to 4°C.	Friday Light cloud and a gentle breeze Temperatures 4°C to 5°C.	Saturday Heavy rain and a moderate breeze Temperatures 6°C to 8°C.	Sunday Light rain showers and a moderate breeze Temperatures 4°C to 8°C.
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FRIDAY FORECAST



Ardrishaig	-5.35
Campbeltown	-5.30
Crinan	-0.47
Islay Port Ellen	2.00
Lochboisdale	+0.30
Mallaig	+0.25
Portree	+0.55
Tobermory	+0.16
Dover	+5.30

HIGH 5 LOW 4 11 MPH