



Race ace McPhee takes first podium of season

THIS WEEK: Glasgow Celtic Society Cup final preview

Botanist award



Seil scientist honoured for moorland work

• See page 15 for more

Full of Pride



Phill honoured as community champion.

• See page 5 for more

Baby Abigail's arrival makes Mull history

by Kathie Griffiths
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Lochbuie baby Abigail Holland has made hospital history on Mull.

A photograph of the tot, who is on record as the first baby to be born at Craignure Hospital since it was built eight years ago, is now framed and ready to go up on its walls to mark the special occasion.

Staff who helped have had another delivery since – this time of cupcakes, sent as a thank you by Abigail's family.

Abigail's debut four weeks early into the big wide world was dramatic to say the least. It involved a stormy night, paramedics negotiating 50 miles of bumpy single track road, a James Bond-style RIB dash from Oban, two medi-helicopters, a neo-natal critical care team and a Sea King coastguard rescue to Prestwick Airport.

After all of that and a week of special care miles away from Mull in Ayrshire at Crosshouse Hospital, Abigail is now back home in Lochbuie with her family - grateful mum Alison, proud dad Grant and big sisters Lucille, 7, and Jessica aged two.

Abigail was born the day



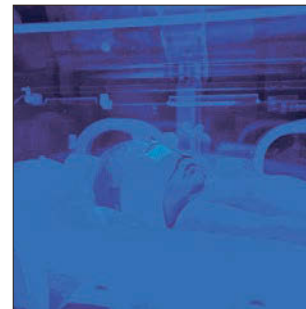
after doctors at an Oban scan agreed to induce her in a fortnight at 38 weeks because she was already so big.

But Abigail was not going to wait that long. Back home that night, Alison took herself off to bed feeling 'a bit off' and without eating only to wake in

the early hours with contractions 'coming thick and fast,' she said.

'I told Grant to ring an ambulance quick. My last two labours were fast, over in three hours from start to finish, so I knew this would be the same.

It took paramedics about 35



Baby Abigail with mum Alison Holland; Abigail had to spend a week in special care; and with proud dad, Grant.

minutes to reach them down a single-track in wild weather, chucking rail and a howling wind. With no midwife on the island, instructions from Oban came over the phone to get Alison into the ambulance and off to Craignure Hospital where a waiting helicopter

would take them to Paisley. 'Neither of the two nurses or the doctor at Craignure had ever delivered a baby before but they were brilliant. Only one of the paramedics had some experience - but that was only the basics. They were all amazing looking after me but they were like deer in headlights.

'I was on gas and air and turned to ask them to rub my back when I felt I needed to push. Three pushes and she was out. Everyone was gob-smacked. It all happened so fast,' said Alison.

Medics were worried about Abigail's breathing and plans were made for two helicopters - one each for Alison and Abigail - to get them off the island. A special neo-natal transport team (SCOTstar) was also going to be picked up and flown in but the treacherous weather forced both helicopters back.

A Coastal Connections RIB boat was launched on a mission to bring a midwife over from Oban to check mum and baby. 'It was James Bond-style,' said dad Grant who works for the NHS.

Because of the weather, a 'Plan B' was needed to lift

Continued on page 2.



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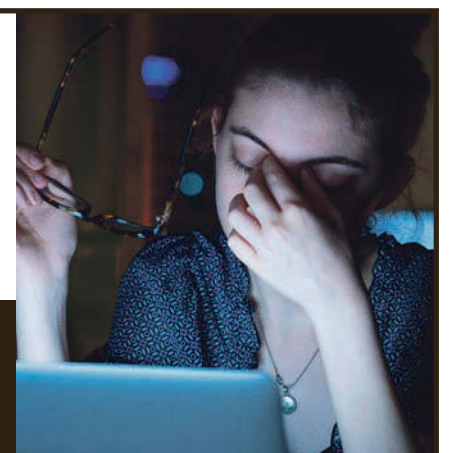
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OT

Defibrillator 500m rule revealed after tourist suffers cardiac arrest

by Kathie Griffiths
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A tourist's cardiac arrest at a fishing pond in Inverawe has flagged up the urgent need for remote areas to have more defibrillators.

It was sheer luck that when William Wallace fell ill this summer, a retired doctor with his former nurse wife and their doctor daughter were having a fishing lesson nearby.

Inverawe Fisheries manager Charlene Servant also remembered seeing a defibrillator at Taynuilt Sports Pavilion three miles away and sent colleagues to fetch it.

Mr Wallace's wife Lorraine had been reading a book in their car when she heard him shouting for help. The 69-year-old was having a major heart attack and was in a semi-conscious state as the other visiting family and their



More defibrillators are needed in rural communities so they can be accessed more quickly to save lives.

second daughter went to his aid along with fisheries staff as they waited for paramedics to arrive.

It was just as paramedics were about to take over the emergency that Mr Wallace went into cardiac arrest and

turned blue. The defibrillator was used three times to shock him back to life. Stabilised, he was airlifted to Glasgow's Jubilee Hospital where he was operated on that night and had three stents fitted to his heart.

The grateful family has since sent a bouquet and update thanking Charlene for helping save his life.

Charlene told The Oban Times: 'I could see the man was deteriorating when I remembered seeing a defibrillator at the sports pavilion in Taynuilt. I got the directors from the fisheries to go and get it. The family who'd been looking after William had set it up as the ambulance arrived.'

'As the family were handing over to the paramedics he went into cardiac arrest. It was not a peaceful scene. They used the defibrillator three times and managed to stabilise him. A bit later the helicopter landed

in the field and he was taken to the Golden Jubilee where he was operated on that evening.

'He's recovering at home now and it is a happy ending but if it had not been for the doctor family and the defibrillator there is no way he would've made it.'

Now Charlene and others in the community are talking about getting more defibrillators widely available in the area – sooner rather than later.

The need is even more urgent after it was discovered the Scottish Ambulance Service has a policy not to give details of defibrillators if they are more than 500metres away from the casualty. Charlene continued: 'I found that rule amazing. In William's case the nearest defibrillator was three miles away. I remembered it, we got it to him and it made such a difference to him. It definitely proved the point that

rural communities need more of them. In places like this, it is unlikely someone needing a defibrillator would be less than 500m from one.'

A Scottish Ambulance Service spokesperson said: 'SAS is working in line with the current guidance from the Resuscitation Council UK on the placement of AEDs and our policy has been benchmarked against a variety of other UK Ambulance Trusts which also have remote and rural areas. Research consistently highlights that an AED is most effective and provides the best chance of survival when ideally used within the first three minutes of a cardiac arrest and to extend the radius beyond the current 500m would undermine the critical need to minimise any delay. When a cardiac arrest call is received by one of our call handlers, they will advise

bystanders if there is an AED available within 500m.'

Taynuilt Community Council convener David Sloss said he is actively looking at more defibrillators for the community and seeking funding for them. The defibrillator at the village sports pavilion is the only public access one, provided by a shinty charity.

'Had we known about the 500m rule, we would've considered the need for more defibrillators in other locations before now. As it stands, if someone has a cardiac arrest at the top of our main street the call handler would not tell them one is at the sports centre as it's more than 500m away.'

'There will be other communities and other people raising funds for these essential defibrillators who are deciding the best place to put them and who know nothing about the rule. It should be made known.'



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Baby Abigail's sudden arrival makes history on Isle of Mull

Continued from page 1.

them off Mull and a Sea King helicopter was called to the rescue.

Luckily Alison was well enough to fly with Abigail who travelled in a special incubator and was flown to a neo-natal unit at Crosshouse Hospital where she was closely monitored for a week, needing four days under UV rays for jaundice.

Grant had to get the first ferry off Mull before dropping Jessica and Lucille off at their aunty's in Oban and driving to Crosshouse to be reunited with Alison and their new baby girl.

After a week, Abigail got the all clear and the family headed home.

'It was so emotional. It had been hard not being with Jessica and Lucy but we were in the right place for Abigail. I just cried when we got them all together,' said Alison.

'Abigail is going to have such fun telling people about when she was born. We are thankful for all the wonderful care we received from everyone involved – there were so many of them. We've had a photograph framed of Abigail with her birth date and weight on it so



Abigail with big sisters Jessica, 2, and seven-year-old Lucille. Lucille named her baby sister Abigail because of the storm blowing when she was born.

it can go up at the hospital to mark the occasion of her being the first baby born there,' added Alison.

First for piping hits positive note

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

Scotland's finest young bagpipers took centre stage at the inaugural Argyllshire Gathering Trust Youth Intermediate Championship held in the glorious setting of Lochnell Castle on Saturday.

To celebrate 150 years since its inauguration, the Argyllshire Gathering created the new competition to give professional solo pipers under the age of 22 across Scotland a platform to showcase their abilities on an international scale and provide a step up to the senior competitions.

The championship brought together 10 of Scotland's finest Intermediate players:

Bobby Allen, Lanarkshire; Ruairidh Brown, Dunblane; Finlay Cameron, Roybridge; Ross Conner, Campbeltown; Hamish Drennan, Drumnadrochit; Andrew Ferguson, Dollar; Luke Kennedy, Strathaven; Cameron May, Dillarburn; Anna Smart, Dunfermline; and Brodie Watson-Massey, Edinburgh.

Campbeltown's John Wilson, senior adjudicator at the SPJA and Master of Ceremonies at the championship, said: 'My father taught lots and lots of young people and he always used to say that they are the lifeblood of the art form.'

'That is very much my attitude. It is important we give the younger generation the opportunity to express



Campbeltown's Ross Connor with his medal.

Results

Piobaireachd: 1 Andrew Ferguson; 2 Ruairidh Brown; 3 Hamish Drennan.

MSR: 1 Andrew Ferguson, 2 Ross Connor; 3 Finlay Cameron.

Sponsors of the first Lochnell Youth Intermediate Championship were The Piobaireachd Society, The Royal Scottish Pipers Society, the Duncan Louis Stewart Foundation, JLS Lonsdale Charitable Trust, Foundation Scotland and Andrew Holman, Kilfinichen Estate.

MOREPHOTOS
www.obantimes.co.uk

themselves and develop. It is especially important with piping because it is a huge part of our heritage.'

Held in the Chapel at Lochnell Castle, near Benderloch, with the kind permission of the Earl of Dundonald and hosted by his son Lord Archie Cochrane, the event was declared a resounding success by everyone who took part.

Ross Connor, also from Campbeltown, took second in the March, Strathspey and Reel (MSR) section and told The Oban Times he was 'inspired by the setting'.

'It was one of the best places I have ever performed in,' he said.

'The setting was amazing and the sound inside the chapel fantastic. We have all had a really great day.'

A product of Kintyre Schools Pipe Band teaching programme, 18-year-old Ross has been piping for nine years and is now a member of the Grade

Two Islay Pipe Band. Ross has also won numerous awards around the main junior events, including winning the Duke of Argyll's Gold Medal at the Argyllshire Gathering four times. He won Intermediate MSR at the Gathering in 2019 and third prize in the MacGregor Memorial in 2020.

On a personal note, he participates in many events in the Campbeltown area to raise funds for charity and has recently become a volunteer crewman on the Campbeltown lifeboat.

The championship itself consisted of two stages: a Piobaireachd competition followed by the MSR competition. Judges for both events were Ian Duncan, Archie Maclean and Robert Wallace.

Medals were awarded for the first three winners of both competitions with the overall winner, Andrew Ferguson from Dollar, having the highest cumulative points.

Ballachulish pensioner jailed for five years over historic abuse of children

A pensioner who subjected two girls to violence and sexual abuse more than three decades ago was jailed for five years on Monday, October 4.

Colin Roberts, 76, assaulted the vulnerable children and carried out acts of indecency.

A judge told Roberts at the High Court in Edinburgh that he had treated the victims "cruelly". Judge Norman McFadyen said: 'You subjected them both to deeply unpleasant violence. Your violence appeared to have something of a casual ring to it.'

He told Roberts that worse still he had subjected one of the girls to sexual abuse from a

young age. The judge told him: 'I am satisfied that only a custodial sentence is appropriate given the grave nature of these charges.'

Roberts, of Sorcha, West Laroch, Ballachulish, had earlier denied a series of charges during a four-day trial, but was found guilty of two offences of assault and two of indecent conduct.

One child was threatened and struck from the age of four and later molested by the former rail worker who exposed himself to her.

The other girl was lifted up and thrown across a room and

against a door and had her head struck on a table. Roberts also exposed himself to her on one occasion.

Defence solicitor advocate Alan Gravelle said there was no offending by Roberts before the crimes and he had remained free of further offending following the crimes against the children. He said Roberts was 'someone of good character' with a stable life and good employment record.

Mr Gravelle said: 'The likelihood of any reoffending so far as he is concerned is low.'

Roberts was placed on the sex offenders' register indefinitely.

'Ludicrous' to close Virgin Money in 'thriving' Oban

Argyll MP Brendan O'Hara has hit out after news that Virgin Money, the brand name now used by the former Clydesdale Bank, is to close its Oban branch and 11 others in Scotland on February 1, with the loss of 55 jobs.

The firm said a trend of fewer customers using bank branches for day-to-day transactions had been accelerated by the Covid pandemic. However, Mr O'Hara called it a 'ludicrous' decision to shut a branch in a 'thriving town' due to falling visitor numbers last year during a deadly viral outbreak.

Virgin Money said it intends to find alternative roles for staff wherever possible, but some face redundancy. The closures include Portree, in Skye.

All are located less than a third of a mile away from the nearest Post Office, the firm said. However, the nearest Virgin Money branch for some customers will be lengthened considerably. For Oban customers, their nearest branches will be in Lochgilhead, Fort William and Tobermory.

Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara said he was deeply disappointed yet another bank was closing its doors in the constituency.

He added: 'Oban is a thriving town with many residents and visitors dependent on banking services. To say they will provide alternative services in Lochgilhead is far from ideal. People living in rural locations should not be disadvantaged and to expect customers to make a round trip of over 70 miles to the nearest branch is ridiculous. Their justification for closing this store based on a fall in visitor numbers of 67 per cent over the last year is ludicrous; people have not been going out because of the pandemic and banks were closed during some of that time.'

'We have seen far too many high street banks walk away from communities with no regard for the impact, particularly on rural areas where people, especially the elderly and those without their own transport, as well as many small businesses, rely on these vital services.'

An advertisement for ARAY FISH LIMITED. The top part features the company logo and the text 'Your Local Fresh Food Home Delivery Service'. Below this, a woman is shown preparing a meal, with a large brown paper bag of 'ARAY FISH' meal kits in the foreground. The bag has the text 'THE INGREDIENTS FOR A DELICIOUS MEAL'. A list of benefits is shown with green checkmarks: 'FRESH INGREDIENTS', 'SIMPLE INSTRUCTIONS', 'DELICIOUS RECIPES', and 'EXCELLENT VALUE'. At the bottom, there is a white delivery van with 'ARAY FISH' and 'LOCAL FISHBINDER & GREENGROCER' written on it, and the website 'www.arayfish.com'. Social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are also present.

OT

Could Oban rise to be a city?

by Sandy Neil
editor@obantimes.co.uk

Councillors have launched Oban's bid for city status in a competition celebrating The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 - and they want to make Argyll and Bute 'UK City of Culture' in 2029 too. We ask: could Oban, or Argyll, be a city?

Does size matter? No. St Davids in Wales is the UK's smallest city, with just 1,600 inhabitants - five times less than Oban. Dudley has twice Dundee's population with 312,000 people, but it's still only a market town. Even London isn't an official UK city, but it does contain two cities at its centre: the City of Westminster and the City of London, 'The Square Mile' business district.

Do you need a cathedral? Not any more. Oban has two cathedrals, St Columba's and St John's, but Ayr, Brechin, Dornoch, Dunblane, Dunkeld, Kirkwall, and Paisley all have cathedrals too, and they're just



City status would create opportunities for growth across the region, says Councillor Currie.

towns. Lismore has St Moluag's Cathedral, and no one calls it a city.

The definition of a UK city is simply a place granted city status by the monarch. The UK

has 69 cities: 51 in England, six in Wales, five in Northern Ireland, and seven in Scotland. When all burghs were abolished in 1975, Scotland had only four cities: Aberdeen,

Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Since 2000, city status has been awarded by competition on special occasions. Inverness came next in the millennium celebrations, followed by Stirling in 2002 to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee, and then Perth in 2012 to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Could the City of Oban be next for her Platinum Jubilee in 2022?

'Her Majesty The Queen will be the first British monarch to have reached 70 years on the throne,' said the UK government announcing the competition. 'This is a truly historic moment for the country and it is right that we celebrate it in a way that recognises the strength of community across the United Kingdom, Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories.'

'All valid entries will receive individual consideration on

their merits, before recommendations will be made by ministers to Her Majesty. The number of awards made will depend on the strength of the applications received.'

The application form asks for eight A4 pages evincing the area's 'vibrant and welcoming community', 'interesting heritage, history and traditions', royal connections, 'record of innovation', and 'sound governance and administration', plus a 10 A4 page profile, 50 photographs, and a map. The competition closes on 8 December 2021.

There's nothing to stop places declaring themselves a city - Dunfermline did it, and two other cathedral towns called their football teams Brechin City FC and Elgin City FC. So why bother?

'City status for Oban would create opportunities for growth across Argyll and Bute,' said the leader of Argyll and Bute Council, Councillor Robin Currie, announcing Oban's bid at Thursday's council meeting.

'Competing for the title, with other places across the UK, is about showcasing that this is a great place to live, work and invest. It's about attracting the people, skills and investment the area needs for long-term success. I would encourage everyone to get involved in helping Oban, and Argyll and Bute, win.'

'Today's decision includes engagement with the local community and partners, as key in shaping the final application for city status for Oban. As a first step, members of the public are welcome to indicate their support, and give any comments via our website. Let's take this opportunity to highlight how much there is to be proud of in Argyll and Bute.'

Of all towns in Argyll and Bute, Oban had 'the highest chance of success', argued a council report: 'It has a strategically important position on the west coast of the Highlands and Islands region independent of other cities. It is a key transport hub, with one of the busiest ferry ports in the UK, good road, rail, active travel and air links, and is an established gateway to a number of our island communities.'

'It is a University Town with in excess of 1,000 students, including the world renowned SAMS institute. It has a growing population, an expanding and diversifying economy, and is an important tourist hub (with its population boosted from 8.5k to 25k during peak summer periods).'

Rival bids have also been launched by Dumfries, Greenock, Livingston and Dunfermline. If at first you don't succeed, try and try again: after five attempts, Sunderland was awarded city status in 1992 to mark The Queen's Ruby Jubilee.

The UK Government has also announced a competition for UK City of Culture 2029, Councillor Currie added. 'For the first time the city of culture competition is not restricted to cities but can be entered by a place, making Argyll and Bute eligible. Council also agreed to develop a bid for Argyll and Bute as UK City of Culture 2029. This is all about bringing opportunities for growth and success to Argyll and Bute. This area is rich in culture and heritage, and is the cradle of the Gaelic language. This makes Argyll and Bute a strong candidate for UK City of Culture.'

To support Oban, visit www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/back-bid-oban-city-status-2022



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McCaig's Tower to turn blue for Mary's Meals

Oban's McCaig's Tower is to be lit in blue to mark an incredible milestone for local charity Mary's Meals.

The landmark will be illuminated on Saturday October 9 to celebrate the fact the Dalmally-based organisation is now feeding more than two million children worldwide.

The celebration is the brainchild of local volunteer John Peterson, who has supported Mary's Meals since seeing its work first-hand on a trip to Zambia in 2017.

John said: 'In Zambia, I saw for myself the difference a meal made, encouraging young

people to go to school as well as providing them with the nutrition they needed to make the most of that opportunity.'

Having seen McCaig's Tower lit in support of other charities and events, John organised a display in Mary's Meals' honour, using the charity's trademark blue.

As well as celebrating the news of Mary's Meals' new feeding total, the illumination will mark the start of celebrations for World Porridge Day on October 10. The annual event is a chance for Mary's Meals to raise awareness of the importance that a daily mug

of nutritious porridge plays in many of its projects and for fundraisers and supporters to enjoy a bowl at home.

Emma Hutton, head of grassroots engagement at Mary's Meals, said: 'The people of Argyll have been part of the story of Mary's Meals since the very beginning and it's wonderful to celebrate our two million milestone here in Oban. Thank you to everyone who has supported our work and continues to be part of the Mary's Meals family.'

For more information about Mary's Meals, visit marysmearg.org.uk

National award sees Phill and co bursting with Pride

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

Only a week after pulling together one of the greatest shows in town Phill Dexter has been flying the rainbow flag for Oban on the national stage.

The Oban Pride chairman was named 2021 Community Champion at the RBS Proud Scotland Awards at a ceremony in Edinburgh's Sheraton Grand Hotel on Saturday.

His award recognises an individual who is both dynamic and stands out in their particular field while making a significant contribution to the LGBTQ+ community.

Speaking to The Oban Times this week, Phill said: 'When they read out my name I was actually speechless and extra emotional; it was a extremely overwhelming experience which words cannot actually describe.'

Originally from Newcastle, Phill moved to the Oban area in 2010. He is currently duty manager at Oban Phoenix Cinema and front of house at No.26 by the Sea.

The 34-year-old first got involved in Oban Pride in 2018 when Amanda Scott from Waverley Care got him and a couple of others together to



Phill Dexter collects his award from David Carlyle.
Photograph: Stuart Churchill.

talk about doing some form of Pride event in Oban.

With Phill taking a lead role, a launch team started working behind the scenes forming a constituted group and Oban Pride was born.

'One of the aims of Oban Pride was and always will be to provide a safe space in Oban for LGBTQ+ people to come together, where they can be themselves, celebrate how far LGBTQ+ rights have come as well as protesting and fighting for all LGBTQ+ people throughout the world to be treated equally,' he explained.

As well as holding its annual event, Oban Pride also has regular fundraisers. Phill and Oban Pride secretary Anna

Gregory host a weekly Radio show on Oban FM - Oban Pride on the Waves - on Tuesdays from 9-11pm, while the group also hosts a monthly Friends of Dorothy Club on the first Thursday of each month from 7pm at Argyll Wellbeing Hub.

'It is important to me and the whole committee that Pride shouldn't just be for the cities and something you attend once a year but something you can take part in year round in your own community,' added Phill.

'I feel that Oban Pride has had many positive effects on the Oban area, including bringing LGBTQ+ visitors to the area knowing the town is friendly

and welcoming to everyone. It is also good for LGBT+ people living in the area to know that support is out there from a local organisation if they want or need it. The partnership working that we have with different organisations in the community is amazing and we look forward to making many more of these partnerships.'

Phill and Anna attended the awards ceremony in person and joined with their new friends and allies from Callendar-based Unify Salons which lifted the Small Business (Under 500 employees) Employer Award.

'My name may be on the award but if it wasn't for the amazing team behind Oban Pride that have put so much into the work we do then this award would never of been presented to me. This award is as much theirs as it is mine,' concluded Phill.

Five-year affordable housing plan approved

Argyll and Bute Council has approved a new housing strategy that sets out plans to build more than 1,000 affordable homes over the next five years.

The revised Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) has the potential to deliver around 343 new affordable homes in 2021/22 and more than 700 additional homes in subsequent years.

The SHIP will help achieve the aims set out in the council's Local Housing Strategy, outlining its investment priorities for affordable housing, how they will be delivered, identifying the resources required and the role partners play in the process.

The council has overall responsibility for SHIP but the plan is drafted in collaboration with partners including landlords, communities, developers, the Scottish Government and other stakeholders.

A strong focus for the new plan, which covers the five-

year period 2022/23-2026/27, has been engagement with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) to ensure that people in Argyll and Bute communities with health and social care needs have access to housing which maximises their health, wellbeing and independence.

The revised SHIP proposals will be submitted to the Scottish Government for review in October.

Council Leader Robin Currie said: 'The delivery of affordable housing in Argyll and Bute remains a priority for the council.'

'We want our communities to thrive and we want to attract new residents and businesses to the area.'

'This investment not only provides much-needed good quality homes for future generations, it also provides employment opportunities for many people in the construction industry, including new apprenticeships, which will generate additional investment in the local community.'



Oban Gaelic Choir sing with Oban Bay as a backdrop

Oban Gaelic Choir entertains

Voices of Oban Gaelic Choir filled Oban's George Street square marking the singers' first public appearance since Covid, writes Kathie Griffiths.

With lit-up Oban Bay as a backdrop, the choir entertained a gathered crowd on Thursday evening.

The event was organised by Naoko Mabon as part

of a research residency On Tidal Zones, hosted by Skye-based ATLAS Arts and CLIMAVORE.

The choir performed a number of songs all linked to the area's long relationship with the sea and coastal landscape. Sileas Sinclair was the conductor.

Naoko said: 'What an

evening, really glad that people enjoyed it and so did choir - everyone said that it was great to be able to sing again in front of people without masks!'

The choir will be travelling to Inverness for this year's Mod but there will be no competitions this time, only a showcase of performances.

A82 Tarbet to Inverarnan Scheme

Public asked for views



A new interactive web page has been published on Transport Scotland's website. This provides updated information regarding the **A82 Tarbet to Inverarnan scheme** and keeps the public informed of progress as the project develops.

The public are being urged to view the interactive web page at transport.gov.scot/projects/a82-tarbet-to-inverarnan/ which includes a questionnaire seeking views of the existing route and how it influences travel decisions.

We would also welcome your views on the proposed **A82 Tarbet to Inverarnan scheme**.

The closing date for feedback is **Friday 19 November 2021**

All of the information on the scheme itself is available at:
transport.gov.scot/projects/a82-tarbet-to-inverarnan/

OT

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

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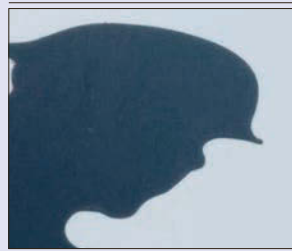


What a fantastic event Peat and Diesel put on at the Corran Halls last weekend. Despite the weather and the anxiety about the Covid passports there was a great crowd who were well looked after by the Corran Halls and event staff who were all really friendly and helpful.

Now I'm all ready for Livewire this weekend – if you're a rock fan they put on an amazing show. I've also got to fit in a couple of visits to the cinema this week – the new James Bond is a must. Booking tickets will be advisable for that, and also a film called Free Guy with Ryan Reynolds which finishes on Friday. The cinema really comes into its own as we go into autumn and winter, there's nothing nicer than losing yourself in a cosy cinema with a good film and forgetting about the rain and wind outside.

Autumn can be one of the most beautiful seasons in this area, however, and Dunollie Castle, Museum and Grounds plan on making the most of it

WHERE IS THIS?



with outdoor and Halloween activities planned for the month, have a look on the Oban What's On website for more details or follow Oban Town Diary on Facebook to keep up to date with what's happening in the area.

Don't forget if you have an event coming up to let us know the details either by submitting an event on the website or calling the BID4Oban office on 01631 569915 to let us know about it. Oban What's On is also really useful for making sure your event doesn't clash with another, which was the original idea behind the town diary.

The photograph last week was of the wee garden opposite West Coast Motors office where someone has hidden a painted stone, this week's photograph is more obvious.

£50M transport bid to transform infrastructure

by Sandy Neil
editor@obantimes.co.uk

A new transport hub in Oban, a new hybrid Jura ferry, and better roads for Dunbeg and Mull are just a few of the ambitious infrastructure projects the council could bid for from a £5B 'levelling up' fund.

The UK Government's Levelling Up Fund (UKLUF) will see local authorities compete for a share of £4.8 billion capital funding, which will support investment projects with up to £20m, and larger transport projects up to £50m.

At Thursday's full Argyll and Bute Council meeting, councillors agreed plans to further develop a range of projects across the region, with the main focus placed on regeneration and transport initiatives.

As part of their £50m Transport Bid, the council is proposing three projects. The

first, Whisky Islands, would build on the major growth which Islay and Jura have seen in their whisky industry. The scheme would involve investment in the islands' infrastructure, primarily the local road network linking both ferry terminals on Islay, and an electric bus service.

It would also entail replacement of the current Jura Ferry with a larger hybrid or electric ferry, together with road

'The fund presents a great opportunity to build further on what has already been achieved...'

improvements on Jura, complementing CMal's planned investment at Port Ellen.

The second project, Lorn Economic Growth Zone, would encompass a variety of schemes including: development of a new transport integrated hub in the town centre; transport capacity improvements within Oban; investment in road infrastructure at Dunbeg and between Salen and Tobermory on Mull; a hydrogen bus service; and,

investment in Oban Airport to help develop a potential drone hub.

The third scheme, Connected Helensburgh, would centre on improved transport connectivity for HMNB Clyde. A possible link to Glasgow Airport, together with the development of an additional rail halt at Garelochhead, is being considered. The plans also include structural improvements to Helensburgh Wooden Pier and installation of a modern berthing facility, helping to complete the investment in Helensburgh Waterfront.

For the £20m Regeneration Bid, the council has proposed an overarching theme, titled Western Seaboard – Marine Gateways, which includes Rothesay and Dunoon as well as the Ardrishaig/Lochgilphead and the Crinan Corridor. The Ardrishaig/Lochgilphead-Crinan Corridor project would include regeneration to improve marine connectivity, public realm upgrades and further development on vacant sites such as new housing and/or employment generating uses including new holiday accommodation.

For Rothesay, the main element of the project would be restoring and finding a new

purpose for the former Royal Hotel as well as public realm works, restoration of the town centre's historical features and net zero initiatives such as electric vehicle chargers, cycle parking, expanded pedestrian space and harbour side environmental improvements.

For Dunoon, the focus would be on the town's A-listed pier with a further phase of restoration and possible demolition of unused features. The aim would also be to create a new berthing facility as part of the pier's regeneration as well as improvements to the town centre/waterfront public realm and a link to the emerging Dunoon Project entrance at West Bay.

All bids will be subject to possible changes in emphasis as the feasibility works progress.

Council Leader, Robin Currie said: "The council has successfully delivered a wide range of ambitious capital projects of various sizes in recent years... The Levelling Up Fund presents a great opportunity to build further on what has already been achieved and the projects are ones that we couldn't otherwise afford to do. They have great potential to transform our communities."



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Best fest for young carers

Young carers will be taking a break next week and having fun at a special festival in Oban, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Outdoor games and cool workshops will be just some of the activities at the one-day event being organised on Tuesday October 12 by North Argyll Carers Centre.

Glencruitten woods and walled garden is the venue for the Young Carers Festival.

Carers aged 11 to 18 are invited to go along for a day of well-being, exercise and positive mind set. Activities will include pilate, willow weaving and much more, says Young Carers Services co-ordinator Agnes Ingram. The town's Wee Happy Health Club will also be there.

The idea of the festival is also to help raise awareness of young carers and the roles they have.

'We want people to know if they are struggling, they are not on their own. We are here



North Argyll Young Carers in their logo hoodies.

and we can help you,' added Agnes.

The Young Carers arm of North Argyll Care Centre supports eight to 25-year-olds, in this area it is helping more than 100.

A Young Carer is someone aged between eight and 18 who helps to care for another person, usually a family member, who has a physical or mental disability such as paralysis, blindness or autism, or an

illness like cancer, depression or dementia.

Although caring is something to be proud of it can sometimes be difficult and limit chances to go and have fun and make friends. It can be isolating so it helps to meet other young people who understand, and have adults who can provide support.

As part of the Young Carers Service there are two term-time after-school clubs being held under Covid measures and during the school holidays there are day trips and breaks away. The service can also work on a 'one to one' basis.

There is also a Young Adult Carers Group for over 18s to 25s where support can be given from housing and health to careers and education.

To find out more about the festival or how to give support, you can call Agnes on 01631 564422 or 07392 090319 and you can also email her at agnes@northargyllcarers.org.uk

Stranded walkers rescued

Oban lifeboat has rescued a group of walkers stranded on the Morvern peninsula.

The group of four spent three days at the bothy in Inninmore Bay after one of their party twisted their ankle.

The remote bothy has no road access and heavy rain over the last few days meant a river they needed to cross was now in spate. The worsening weather conditions caused the group to call for help.

The lifeboat arrived by 9.50am last Friday (October 1) and the volunteer crew launched their daughter craft to reach the shore. Two crew went ashore and transferred the walkers back to the lifeboat. Once safely onboard, they travelled a short distance west to Ardtornish bay where the walkers were reunited with their car nearby.

Ally Cerexhe, Oban Lifeboat's coxswain said: 'With the weather set to deteriorate throughout the day, the group did the right thing calling for help.'

Campervan experiment to be aired at Oban airport

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Water and waste facilities for campervans and motorhomes are to be installed at Oban Airport as an experiment.

Oban Community Council (OCC) was told the facility would be going ahead at the airport on the outskirts of town to test-run the idea from Argyll and Bute Council.

The council's head of economic growth Fergus Murray gave the news as he was answering a question raised at OCC's Zoom meeting last week on provision of camper-van facilities.

Mr Fergus had already told the meeting about a potential plan to include a park-and-ride facility out at Dunbeg to help ease traffic and parking congestion in the town.

He was asked if the park-and-ride spot would include



long-stay options for camper-vans and facilities for them out there, but said: 'The problem we have is that once we have tried to take forward other additional facilities the actual private sector people, with those kind of businesses, get a bit defensive about it. They

don't want us to go and create new facilities.

'I'm actually interested in creating facilities that allow campervans to take on water, deposit their waste in a safe manner that doesn't cause issues for anyone and get them to use the permanent facilities

If the facilities for motorhomes and campervans is a success at Oban Airport, they may be rolled out elsewhere in the region.

that are available and provided by the private sector.

'If we were doing something at the park and ride it would be like an Aire facility where they can deposit their waste and get water but probably not stay overnight.

'We are going to do that as a temporary thing at Oban Airport and will use that as a bit of an experiment to see what happens there.

'We will have to put in additional facilities that's for sure. We have done quite a few in Mull. I've tried and tried in Oban but no private businesses wanted to do it. I always thought if they had some of these facilities it would be good for business.'

New alcohol intervention clinic in Oban

Lorn and Islands Hospital in Oban now has a new out-patient clinic to help people reduce harmful alcohol use.

The clinic has been developed by Yvie Young, who is Argyll and Bute HSCP's alcohol brief intervention (ABI) practitioner, based with the Community Addiction Team in Lochgilphead.

The clinic will encourage referred patients to discuss lifestyle and behaviour changes using conversation and evidenced-based alcohol intervention techniques.

ABIs are ranked as one of the most effective interventions used to provide advice and share awareness of support services available to help.

Yvie said: 'I am pleased with the launch of the improved ABI service model. It will help to specifically target a wide range of patients, carers, family members, and health and social care staff. The service will also offer practical advice, and signpost to helpful local and national services.'

A new generation of Gaelic learning

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OT

Blended 2021 Mod has some

Welcome from Allan Campbell, President of An Comunn Gàidhealach

A very warm welcome to the 2021 Royal National Mòd in Inverness!

Since the announcement that we hoped to deliver a Mòd this year we have consistently said it would be different from the usual event. This was unavoidable due to Covid regulations and as the community lockdown meant it was not possible for competitor groups to get together for practice. But even if a competitor group were ready and willing there was no certainty that such performance would be permissible. For this reason we think it possible that fewer people will visit this year's Mòd.

I would be truly delighted if you were to prove my prophecy wrong, and for those who do come to listen at competitions and at the evening concerts, we are exceptionally proud that the sterling commitment of our team means you will



Legislatura wowed audiences at Dunoon Mod.

hear outstanding music, and you will see Gaelic honoured and promoted with respect!

This celebration of our culture, together with friend-

ship in the gathering, is An Comunn's principal aim at the Mòd. We are confident that these aspirations will be fulfilled in Inverness this year,

and that the city will benefit from hosting the Mòd again.

There are several proverbs which tell us that good often follows from evil and, as the uncertainty over what was going to be possible for us at this year's Mòd has meant that we have plans in place to enable the vast majority of Mòd events which take place in Eden Court's various halls to be streamed live on the internet. We know that Gaels and supporters worldwide will be able to eavesdrop on what will be taking place throughout the week. They will be most warmly welcome to the audience and we hope they enjoy what they hear!

I wish to acknowledge the valuable funding support which this year's Mòd has received from several organisations, particularly Bòrd na Gàidhlig, The Highland Council, Scottish Government, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Inverness Common Good Fund, Caledonian MacBrayne, SQA and Friends of the Mòd, and although thanks always seems an inadequate response to their generosity our gratitude also to the hundreds of supporters who voluntarily help us each year.

I look forward to meeting you, and I wish you all a happy and encouraging week in the capital city of the Highlands!

The full virtual programme is as follows:

Friday

7.30pm: Official opening concert at Eden Court. Kicking off the 2021 Royal National Mòd – audience and live streaming, featuring Staran, Glenfinnan Ceilidh Band with special guest Margaret Stewart.

Saturday

8.45am for 9.15am start: 3k, 5k, 10k runs.

11am: Gaelic Medium Shinty Coaching Session Primary and U14 run by Gaelic speaking coaches from Iomain Cholmille and Inverness Shinty Club.

Noon-2pm: Shinty competition with a Gaelic flavour for all Inverness youngsters.

12.30pm: Women's Shinty Mod Cup. Inverness V Alba Women.

2.30pm: The Aviemore Trophy – Men's Mod Cup. Inverness V Strathglass.

6pm, online: A compilation of some of the best performances from day one.

7.30pm, Empire Theatre: A

celebration of the vibrant and thriving musical heritage of the Highland. An all-star line up of guest musicians such as Duncan Chisholm, Mairearad Green, James Duncan Mackenzie and the amazing Ar Cànan's Ar Cèol House Band – sharing the stage with some of the Highland's most incredible up and coming young musical talents.

8-10pm, Botanic House: Join musical trio Marloch for an evening of traditional music. Gaelic song from Mod Gold Medallist Calum Alex and west coast tunes driven by Coll and Iain are at the heart of the band's music, bringing a range of tradition and contemporary material.

Sunday

2.30pm for 3pm: Mòd church service from The Old High Church, Inverness. As this event will be broadcast live on Radio nan Gàidheal, we ask the public to arrive at 2.30pm for a 3pm service.

Monday

10am-12pm, Mini Feis: P1-7. Children attending Gaelic medium glasses can come along to Bun Sgoil Ghaidhlig Inbhir Nis, Inverness for some fun, free sessions of music, crafts and games.

10am online: 0-5 years. Read and play games with Linda.

2pm, Eden Court: A selection of children's competitions, live at Eden Court.

4-6pm, Under Canvas tent, Eden Court: Live music each day at Under Canvas.

5pm, online: In this lecture, Ruairidh (Roddy) Maclean looks at place names in and around the Highland capital which connect us to water – shoreline, river, loch, spring and bog. Ruairidh draws upon places that appear in his recently published book 'Place Names of Inverness and Surrounding Area'.

7pm, Online: A compilation of some of the best performances across the junior category.

7.30pm, Online: Gaelic song sessions.

Tuesday

10am online: 0-5 years. Read and play games with Linda.

10am-12.30pm and 1-4.30pm, Maclean Room, Eden Court: Forming teams to create boardgames from scratch.

10am-noon, Mini Feis: P1-7. Children attending Gaelic medium glasses can come along to Bun Sgoil Ghaidhlig Inbhir Nis, Inverness for some fun, free sessions of music, crafts

and games.

11am, One Tough Theatre, Eden Court: A selection of children's competitions.

11.30am-1pm, Cathedral Church of St Andrew's Hall: A day of fun, Gaelic activities for pre-school-aged children, including stories, games and art.

4-6pm, Under Canvas tent, Eden Court: Live music each day at Under Canvas.

6pm, Online: A compilation of some of the best performances across the junior category.

6.30-9pm, Family Ceilidh, Inverness: Free, fun, family ceilidh at Fairways, with local group Cala.

7pm, Empire Theatre, Eden Court: A newly commissioned work inspired by coastal happenings and stories from around the Moray Firth.

Composed and performed by Lauren MacColl, considered one of Scotland's most expressive fiddle players, the show will also feature a selection of traditional material with coastal connections. Lauren is joined by Mairearad Green, Anna Massie and Rachel Newton, with visuals by filmmaker Zoe Paterson MacInnes, with songs from Arthur Cormack and Emma MacLeod.

Wednesday

10am-noon, Mini Feis: P1-7. Children attending Gaelic medium glasses can come along to Bun Sgoil Ghaidhlig Inbhir Nis, Inverness for some fun, free sessions of music, crafts and games.

10am, One Touch Theatre: The qualifying round for the Silver Pendant.

11am, Empire Theatre, Eden Court: The qualifying rounds for the An Comunn Gàidhealach Gold Medal.

11.30am-1pm, Cathedral Church of St Andrew's Hall: A Gaelic song workshop celebrating the work of Mairi Mhor nan Oran, led by Gaelic singer, Fiona Mackenzie.

1pm, online: showcase of this year's literary prize-winners, along with an introduction to the newly crowned An Comunn Gàidhealach Bard.

1.30pm, Maclean Room, Eden Court: Sandy NicDhomhnaill Jones, Bard a' Chomuinn Gàidhealach 2019-21 will read poems and perform songs from her new collection, The Seventh Wave. She will be in conversation with President Allan Campbell.

2pm, Empire Theatre: Live final of Silver Pendant competition.

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2.30-3.30pm, starting outside of Cathedral Church of St Andrew: Following on from the Òrain Mhàiri Mhòr Gaelic song workshop, participants will have the option to take a walk to visit the graveyard where Màiri Mhòr is buried.

5.30-7pm, Maclean Room, Eden Court: A special literary event featuring two of Gaeldom's most prominent writers, Alasdair C Whyte and Angus Peter Campbell. Event is followed by Q&A.

6pm, Online: A compilation of some of the best performances across the clarsach, dancing and senior categories.

7pm, One Touch Theatre: An evening of new Gaelic drama, with performances from community groups Buidheann Dràma Chille Mhòire, Sgioba Dràma Uibhist and Buidheann Dràma Coimhearsnachd from Inverness.

7.30pm, Empire Theatre: Live final of the An Comunn Gaidhealach Gold Medal Competition.

9pm, Online: Experience

our online celebration of 90 years of friendship between The Clàrsach Society and the Royal National Mòd. Accompanied by some of Scotland's finest performers, the BBC's Joy Dunlop takes us from the 1930s to the present day, showcasing players from a new generation of talented, young clàrsairean.

Thursday

10-10.40am, Culloden Woods: Gaelic Bookbug session for 0-5 years.

11am: Qualifying rounds for the Traditional Gold Medal competitions.

2pm, Empire Theatre: Gaelic choirs are packed with musical talent and with no choir competitions this year there is an opportunity to hear choirs' favourite choice of songs.

4-6pm, Under Canvas tent, Eden Court: Live music each day at Under Canvas.

6pm, Online: A compilation of some of the best performances across the senior categories.

7.30pm, Empire Theatre: Live

final of the Traditional Gold Medal competitions.

9.30pm, Botanic House: Join musical trio Marloch for an evening of traditional music. Gaelic song from Mod Gold Medallist Calum Alex and west coast tunes driven by Coll and Iain are at the heart of the band's music, bringing a range of tradition and contemporary material.

Friday

From noon, MacLean Room, Eden Court: A live selection of adults' competitions.

1.30-3pm, Family Picnic: Gaelic family picnic to say farewell to a fun-filled Mòd week. Bring your own lunch.

2pm, Empire Theatre: Day two of the Gaelic choirs showcase.

4-6pm, Under Canvas tent, Eden Court: Live music each day at Under Canvas.

5pm, Online: In this lecture, Ruairidh (Roddy) Maclean looks at place names in and around the Highland capital which connect us to water –

shoreline, river, loch, spring and bog. Ruairidh draws upon places that appear in his recently published book 'Place Names of Inverness and Surrounding Area'. Lecture in English.

6pm, Online: A compilation of some of the best performances across the senior categories.

7.30pm, Empire Theatre: A special night with two of Gaeldom's favourite bands, Sian and New Tradition.

Saturday

10.30am, Northern Meeting Park: A massed choir performance when the Mod banner will officially be handed over to Perth Mod 2022 as they take over the reins for next year's event.

8-10pm, Botanic House: Highland music and craic at it's very finest with Gary Innes & Ewen Henderson of Mànran, featuring some very special guests.

9pm, Online: Gaelic song.

For all the details, visit www.ancomunn.co.uk



A flashback to an Oban Mod, but who are the gent and lady pictured and can you tell us what year? Email is at editor@obantimes.co.uk

ADVERTORIAL

AC/DC tribute band promises high voltage Oban concert



Podge Blacksmith and Simon Davies perform as AC/DC's Brian and Angus.

The UK's leading tribute to Scottish and Australian rockers AC/DC will return to the Corran Halls in Oban on Saturday October 9 for a night of what promises to be 'high voltage' rock and roll.

AC/DC are one of the world's biggest rock bands. Formed by Glasgow-born brothers Angus and Malcolm Young in 1973, AC/DC went onto record some of the most recognisable rock anthems of all time, including Highway to Hell, Back in Black, You

Shook Me All Night Long and many more.

Live/Wire have toured their tribute show for more than 20 years and promise not to just play all the hits but also a sprinkling of songs selected especially for the more aficionado fans as well as a couple of numbers from AC/DC's new album PRW/UP.

They bring with them a tour bus full of guitars, a wall of Marshall amps and pyrotechnic cannons that will fire to bring the show to a

climatic close.

Podge Blacksmith, who performs with the band as lead singer Brian Johnson, said: 'We are really looking forward to our second visit to the beautiful town of Oban. We had an amazing reception from the hundreds who came to see us at the Corran Halls in 2019. We had reports they heard you sing along as far away as Glasgow! So get your rock heads on and join us for a celebration of all things AC/DC.'

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OT

Ganavan barrier plan paused for rethink

A barrier to stop motorhomers overnighting at Ganavan has been put on hold, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Argyll and Bute Council has the money to put the barrier in place but more feedback is needed first.

Councillor Elaine Robertson told members of Oban Community Council she had asked council officers to pause the plan and they had agreed.

The proposal has been sent out to council members and is now being circulated to community council members, too, to get their views. Friends of Ganavan are also being asked for their say.

Oban Community Council convener Marri Malloy said at last week's meeting: 'I don't know why we need a barrier. It's not going to do anything. It's just a waste of money.'

'That's why I asked for it to be paused so we can put the proposal out to the community council and Friends of Ganavan because they will be affected out there,'

said Councillor Robertson. Mrs Malloy added: 'I know what we wanted but it's not what we're getting. There's no purpose to it. The barrier is going to be open all day and closed at a certain time. What's going to stop them staying there overnight? Nothing.'

'I have concerns about it. It does require further discussion,' said Councillor Robertson who told the meeting the money for the barrier was there, so it can go ahead.

'It's best to go and look at it,' she added.

The barrier idea stemmed from trouble at Ganavan when motorhomes and campervans illegally parked overnight. Some of those campers also dumped litter and human waste, prompting calls on Argyll and Bute Council to take action and put a stop to it.

Councillor Kieron Green told the meeting the idea was that council officers would make sure there were no campervans in the car park when the barrier was shut for the night.

Hola, Seil! Spanish town wants to twin with island

A community in Northern Spain wants to twin with Seil.

The idea will be put to islanders to see if they want to go ahead with the unofficial twinning.

Trabada town in Galicia comes under the Celtic belt of nations due to its culture and history and has a number of similarities to Seil – including a heritage centre it has just opened. It also has bagpipes.

Seil and Easdale Community Councillor Zim Knight said at the latest meeting on Zoom that information about the possible arrangement would go on social media so islanders can have a say.

Concerns continue on Easdale over ferry cover when paramedics and ambulances are needed because some of the ferry workers do not live on the island.

There has also been calls to re-open the ferry shed on



the island now that winter is arriving, but Covid is still a concern. The shed is unique in that waiting passengers and ferry staff share the same space. If the two on-duty ferry workers caught Covid then half of the service's staff would be impacted. The community council is looking into the issue and will report back.

Talks over the land sale at heritage village Ellenabeich are ongoing between the community council and the landowning family and their agent.

There could be a move to transfer the land to the community council but there are certain areas such as the quarries and the sea wall that need repairs and could be risky to take on. Clarification

of ownership on some parcels of the land sale also still need to be carried out. Funding and grant sources to back any purchase are being looked at.

Historic Environment Scotland and Argyll and Bute Council are involved.

'It's still much work in progress but we do seem to be making progress,' said Mr Knight.

Covid booster jabs on the islands should be imminent and over-65s summoned to Seil Hall for their flu jabs this month are being asked to turn up at their allotted times. If that is not possible people should still go along to the hall when they are able. They should not ring the GP surgery to try and rearrange a time.

Volunteers are needed to help

Islanders are to be asked if they are in favour of the unofficial twinning.

repair benches at Ellenabeich. The seating needs concrete to shore up their bases and helpers are also being sought to fix and paint a deteriorating bus shelter on the island.

Good news is that repairs are being carried out on the island's road. The latest repairs were on Kilninver hill where a stretch of the route has been resurfaced. People are being urged to keep reporting road faults to Argyll and Bute Council.

Knotweed continues to be a worry for Seil as does the issue of broken signs, rusty abandoned trailers in the seafront council-owned car park at Ellenabeich and lack of a bin there.

The next community council meeting will be on Tuesday November 23. A Zoom link, unless the meeting is scheduled for Easdale Hall, will go up on the community council's Facebook page.

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LORN HEALTHY OPTIONS

Quick recovery when good habits break down

No matter who you are and how highly motivated you are to stay active and healthy it's inevitable that at some point life will throw you a curve ball and get in the way.

Family responsibilities, work commitments, sickness or one of life's other emergencies can prevent us sticking to our hard won routine. Perfection is not realistic or possible.

One way and perhaps the best way to tackle these setbacks is never miss twice. Missing once happens but do your utmost not to allow two in a row.

If you miss your morning walk, make sure everything is in place to get back on track tomorrow. If you have a pizza and a few beers for dinner, make sure tomorrow's

breakfast is a healthy option. You can't be perfect, but you can avoid a second lapse. Remember a great way to track your progress is to mark down the days you carry out your desired behaviour on a calendar and form a chain of visual cues that point to your progress. Once one chain finishes, make sure the next one starts as soon as possible. The first lapse is not the one that ruins you. Allowing a second, third and fourth can easily lead to a spiral of repeated mistakes and the forming of a new bad habit. The breaking of your good habit matters little if the reclaiming of it is fast.

We also shouldn't stress if for some reason we can't carry out our habits to the same level every day. Try to avoid the 'all or nothing' approach to behaviour change as showing up on challenging days and completing an under-par session is extremely valuable.

Obviously, I'm not suggesting that you train through significant pain or a bad infection/virus, but many miss their activity sessions on a day when they are not quite feeling their normal levels of enthusiasm or energy for the task at hand. Don't put up a zero if it can be avoided. A short session may not improve your performance, but it re-affirms your new identity as someone who doesn't miss planned activity sessions.

Lost days will hurt you more than successful ones help you. It doesn't matter how slowly we move forward, as long as our direction of travel is towards our destination.

For the full message go to the free resource section on the lornhealthyoptions.co.uk website.

Rob Graham, Lead Exercise Professional, Healthy Options.

Inspirational Liz launches incredible journey video

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

On September 18 2018, Liz Mason went for a walk from her home that would change her life forever.

As she crossed the Railway Pier in Oban she was struck on her right side by a lorry, which she didn't see coming and didn't have time to react to.

She sustained fractures to her skull, eye socket, multiple ribs and femur and was unrecognisable to the responding CalMac staff even though she had walked the same route for 30 years.

Before her accident Liz worked as a chef in the former Caledonian Hotel (now The Perle), Julie's cafe and prepped school meals at St Columba's Primary School.

Liz received emergency treatment at the scene before being transferred to The Lorn



Liz Mason launches her new video today, Thursday.

and Islands Hospital and subsequently airlifted to The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Glasgow where she would require more than 24 hours of surgery.

After a long period of rehabilitation she had two further falls at home as a result of her initial injuries and both resulted in further head trauma. At this point she was warned her skull could not take any more impact and Liz was referred to Lorn Healthy Options to reduce her

risk of further falls and to improve her balance and walking so she could once again enjoy the activities of daily life.

At this point Liz was very unsteady on her feet and required assistance from her husband Mark when they left their home. Unsurprisingly her mental health had also taken a significant dip through a lack of self-confidence and fear of further injury. Liz told The Oban Times: 'Before my referral to

Healthy Options I was in a very dark place.'

Over an extended time due to lockdown the charitable group worked with Liz through a combination of guided gym sessions, tailored home exercises and its educational programme. Specialist input from Healthy Options' team of exercise professionals has resulted in some incredible improvements to Liz's physical and mental health.

Such was the strength of her new found confidence that Liz decided to fundraise for Healthy Options by going on another walk.

In February 2021 she challenged herself to walk 10,000 steps every day during the month regardless of weather conditions and the response from the community was phenomenal. To date Liz has raised more than £2,000 for Healthy Options but she's not done yet

and has worked with the charity to produce a short video documenting her incredible journey. The video will be launched today, Thursday October 7, with the hope of generating further awareness of the work Healthy Options does.

It also highlights the need for ongoing donations and fundraising to ensure the future survival of the charity whose work has never been more critical after a long period of general health deterioration due to the pandemic.

'After what I went through after the accident, my referral to Healthy Options is the best thing that could have ever happened to get me back on my feet. They have done me a world of good and I couldn't do enough to show my gratitude,' she said. It's been a good journey this one.'

Visit www.lornhealthyoptions.co.uk to see Liz's video.

CalMac spends £9M on second-hand ferry for Mull

After a 'long and challenging search' a second-hand ferry from Norway has been bought for £9 million to run on the Oban to Craignure route, bringing benefits to Skye and the Western Isles, the owner of CalMac's ferry fleet has announced, writes Sandy Neil.

The MV Utne, a roll-on roll-off passenger and cargo ship built in 2014, is due to start service early next year. The 50m long vessel will accommodate 195 passengers and 34 cars. The purchase comes after a summer of cancellations and disruption across the network due to breakdowns with the ageing ferry fleet.

'Communities in Skye and the Western Isles will also benefit as a result of the cascade of vessels on the network,' CMAL said.

MV Utne is being bought from Norled, the Norwegian shipping firm that operates 45 car ferries, for an undisclosed sum. However, CMAL estimates the total cost, including modifications, will be £9m.

Big Issue seller given 300 hours for frightening Fort sisters

A 61-year-old Big Issue seller has been banned for two years from contacting two teenage sisters whom he frightened with unwanted approaches over an eight-month period.

Sheriff Margaret Neilson also ordered Robert Bloomfield of Campbell Court, Fort William, to perform the maximum 300 hours of unpaid work after hearing he had a previous conviction for stalking a woman several years ago.

Bloomfield had previously admitted one charge of stalking and another of causing fear and alarm with sentence being deferred at Inverness Sheriff Court for a background report.

The two siblings were aged 18 and 12 years at the time.

Defence solicitor advocate Mike Chapman told the court: 'Given his previous conviction and his age, he ought to have known his behaviour was unacceptable. He did not intend to cause harm or distress but accepts the victims would have felt scared.'

'He has not reoffended in the two years since these matters. If he is jailed, he will lose his home and his livelihood,' Mr Chapman, who urged the



Sheriff to impose a community based disposal, added.

Sheriff Neilson agreed to a non-custodial sentence but warned Bloomfield he would be jailed if he breached the order in any way.

At an earlier hearing, fiscal deputy Martina Eastwood told the Sheriff that Bloomfield first met the older girl on a bus in Fort William and engaged her in conversation, asking her several questions including her name.

Ms Eastwood said the girl replied just to be polite.

But then she saw him in the days after that initial encounter and near her home mostly sitting in a camper van.

'This made her feel uneasy,' Ms Eastwood continued.

On one occasion, Ms

Eastwood added, his window was open and he stretched out his arm to stop her from walking past.

'This behaviour carried on for at least a month and eventually she had had enough and began taking the longer route to work to avoid him.'

Ms Eastwood told the court that the girl met him again in High Street and then again in September when he was once more at the end of her street.

When he mentioned that he tried to access her work, the girl was frightened, told her boyfriend and moved in with him, the court heard.

Ms Eastwood said Bloomfield then twice approached the girl's sister as she walked home from a park.

The first was in 2019 and the second occasion was on the same day as Bloomfield's work comment. The sisters' told their parents about previous events and the police were informed.

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OT

POLICE FILES

■ A 21-year-old man was issued with an ASBO notice after allegedly revving a car engine about 2.30am on Tuesday September 14 to the annoyance of local residents at The Square, Bowmore.

■ About 8pm on Saturday September 25, two children were allegedly abusive to one another on Main Street, Bowmore. As a result two boys, one 12 and one 13, have been referred for Youth Intervention processes.

■ About 2pm on Friday September 24, on Main Street, Bowmore, a red Peugeot 3008 parked near the Co-op store was reversed into by a grey car, causing damage. The grey car left without stopping.

■ Between 9.20am and 9.55am on Friday September 24, a 60-year-old man allegedly stole a bottle of vodka and clothing from Tesco, Oban. The man received a Recorded Police Warning.

■ Between 2.30pm and 3.30pm on Tuesday September 28 on Dalriach Road, Oban, an unattended parked car was allegedly struck by a moving vehicle.

■ At 8.30am on Tuesday Sep-

tember 28 on Sinclair Drive, Oban, a man was allegedly assaulted by another man by being punched repeatedly.

■ At 11.40pm on Tuesday September 28 in an Oban bar, a man aged 44 was arrested and charged after allegedly assaulting another man and striking him on the forehead with a glass.

■ About 3.35 pm on Wednesday September 29 at a building site in Crossapol, Isle of Tiree a Stihl saw is allegedly stolen.

■ On Friday October 1 at Scott Terrace, Dalmally, a 31-year-old man driving a quad bike was stopped for allegedly driving on a public road without a driving licence and having no insurance. A report is to be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ Between noon on Wednesday September 29 and 4pm on Thursday September 30 at Combie Court, Oban, a bicycle was allegedly stolen.

■ **Anyone with any information to any of the above can contact Oban police on 101 or call anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.**

Lottery players serve up cash boost for Mary's Meals

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Players of People's Postcode Lottery have raised £425,000 for Mary's Meals, boosting the charity's work to transform the lives of hungry children in Africa.

The latest funding awarded to the charity will ensure 10,961 hungry children receive a life-changing meal every day for a whole school year.

Mary's Meals provides one good meal every school day for children living in some of the world's poorest countries. The promise of these meals attracts impoverished children to the classroom, where they can gain an education to help them escape poverty in later life.

Since 2015, players of People's Postcode Lottery have raised more than £2.7 million for Mary's Meals.



Daniel Adams, executive director of Mary's Meals, celebrates the £425,000 funding with Callum Aitken, international development advisor at People's Postcode Lottery.

As schools around the world closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic last year, Mary's Meals successfully adapted and provided food to cook at home instead. With some schools now able to open again, the charity is continuing to safely reach the children who rely on its nutritious meals, whether in the classroom or at home.

Zambia is just one such country where Mary's Meals is making a big difference thanks to player support.

Every morning before school, 14-year-old Olivia gets up early and goes to work on the family farm. When she gets back from the field, she helps with the household chores before an hour-long walk to Kawambe Primary School.

Her first meal of the day is a steaming hot mug of Mary's Meals porridge.

The most recent funding will allow Mary's Meals to reach children in Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Zambia, Madagascar, Uganda, Ethiopia and South Sudan.

Daniel Adams who is the executive director of Mary's Meals, said: 'We are hugely grateful to players of People's Postcode Lottery for their incredible generosity which is helping Mary's Meals to keep our promise to the children that we serve and allowing us to reach even more children with a precious meal.

'The nourishing food we provide can be a lifeline and for many children may be all they eat that day. With local communities cooking and serving the meals, children from some of the poorest countries in the world are attracted into the classroom, giving them the opportunity to learn towards a brighter future.'

The funding raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery will also allow Mary's Meals to focus on recruiting more volunteers and promote new and existing campaigns.

Council reaffirms pledge to tackle climate change

Argyll and Bute Council has once again signalled its commitment to supporting the global drive to tackle the climate change emergency.

At Thursday's full council meeting, members approved a motion renewing the pledge, originally made by councillors in September 2019, to play its part in the worldwide effort to address global warming.

The motion referred to the publication of the recent United Nations Climate Change Report which outlined

the scale of the threat, warning that the situation is now a 'Code Red for Humanity'.

It also highlighted just some of the actions the council has been taking in recent years to ensure Argyll and Bute further improves its current positive position and low carbon emissions levels.

Council Leader Robin Currie said: 'While we are fortunate in having one of the lowest carbon footprints anywhere in the UK, we also recognise that there is no

room for complacency on this critical subject.

'We are committed to helping the drive to tackle the impacts of climate change at local, regional and national levels wherever possible.

'This is a key priority for the council and, building on the actions we are already taking through the Decarbonisation Plan, we will work with our communities and our partners to explore all possible options to tackle the threat which climate change presents.'

Argyll police to help cope with COP26

Local police officers from Argyll and across rural Scotland will be deployed to Glasgow to aid security at November's UN climate change summit, when disruption and protests are expected.

Held at the Scottish Exhibition Campus (SEC) in Glasgow from October 31 to November 12, COP26, the United Nations 26th Conference of the Parties will involve one of the largest policing operations ever undertaken in the United Kingdom.

Approximately 10,000 officers will be deployed each day during the two-week conference.

A police Scotland spokesperson said: 'A number of local policing officers from Oban, Lorn and the Isles will be committed to supporting the policing operation. While the conference is being held in Glasgow, the impact of COP26 will not be limited to the city. We expect to see possible protest activity, associated events and delegates staying in other areas in Scotland.

'Our response to incidents and day-to-day demand will not be compromised by the policing of COP26. We still have a responsibility to police other events that will be ongoing at that time.

'While the policing of an event of this size puts incredible demand on our resources, the strength of our national service ensures our communities will receive the same very high standards of service during this fortnight. We will be here if you need us.'

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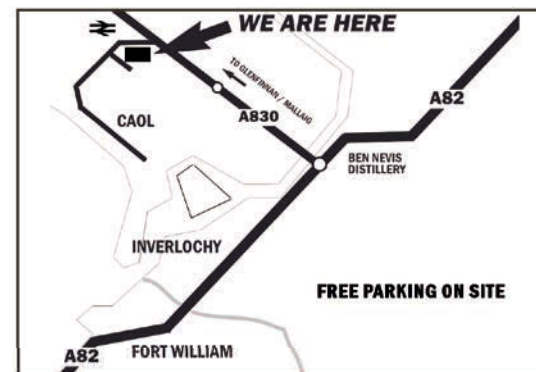
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OT

LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

Oban city bid – what's your thoughts on the matter?

When most of us think of cities, we think of large, sprawling urban areas with busy shopping centres and traffic gridlock.

We don't think of an average-size town or village, although perhaps, now, we should given that Argyll and Bute Council has launched a bid for Oban to become a city.

Council leader Robin Currie believes 'city status for Oban would create opportunities for growth across Argyll and Bute. It's about attracting the people, skills and investment the area needs for long-term success'.

But what do you think?

We'd love to hear from you on the matter – you can contact us via our Facebook page, or write us a letter and send it to editor@obantimes.co.uk

There is no doubt Oban is a popular tourist destination and that this is a fantastic part of the world to live, work and bring up a family, but we struggle with a shortage of housing and an inadequate roads network, so perhaps city status could deliver the investment we desperately need to support the hoped-for growth to our fantastic town.

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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More 'city' details required

The idea of Oban bidding for city status, The Oban Times September 30, doesn't thrill me, especially were that status to lead to a change in the town's character.

The report tells us how the criteria set by government are matched, but we learn nothing about what benefits will be derived.

There might be more support if these benefits included: resurrecting the bypass that would alleviate traffic jams in the town centre; solving the issue of parking, especially during the tourist season; catering for the increased number of camper vans and providing affordable, modest-size accommodation for those employed by the hospitality sector, restaurants and shops.

If, however, the benefits (sic) lead to increasing suburbanisation, traffic congestion and unserved restaurants, shops and hotels, the townscape will lose its attractiveness for visitors and residents. City status might be won but the future will be bleak.

So let's hear more detail about the 'benefits' from those advocating the idea so that the pros and cons can be weighed up.

Professor Emeritus Ian Reid,
Ardconnel Road, Oban.

Wonderful west coast thanks

We were touring your wonderful West Coast recently in our small company van.

We bought the van in December last year with 12 months MOT as part of the package – or so we thought.

Our first base was Tarbert, from where we toured some of your fabulous islands for a few nights, one of which was Islay.

The night before, there had been an incident on the island so two young police officers were assigned to go to the island to cover for the one officer that is based there.

The officers allocated were in a police car that had an automatic number plate recognition device fitted that flagged up that we had no MOT.

They politely pulled us over and gave us a ticket but kindly allowed us to get back to the mainland to sort it out. When we got back to Tarbert we rang and arranged for an MOT to be done the following day at our second base, Oban.

We arrived early evening on Monday September 13 and went to the Tartan Tavern. As we were making our way back around at 8.50pm I received a call informing me that my husband's mum had passed away. I stopped

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk

'S e facal blàth, a th' ann an "tèarainteachd", facal a tha a' gealltainn saoghal a tha daoine ciallach uile ag iarraidh, far am bheil dìon agus sàbhailteachd àbhaisteach dha daoine. Tha an seòrsa tèarainteachd sin na amas aig a' mhòr-chuid de dhùthchannan sìobhalta an t-saoghail agus tha e air bilean mhiltean luchd-poilitigs agus luchd-naidheachd gach latha. Ach feumar aideachadh gur e amas a tha seo a tha doirbh a choileanadh, agus fiù 's nas duilghe buileach a ghleidheadh, agus tha meud nam feachdan dìon is poileas a th' aig dùthchannan fa leth na dhearbhadh air ìre na spàirne a dh'fheumte gus cuimse a chumail air! Ma thachras gun trèig ball sam bith de na feachdan dìon sin an dleastanas, tha na feachdan gu h-iomlan a' call tomhas de chreideas an t-sluaigh agus tha saothair mhòr a dhith gus an earbsa eatarra ath-stèidheachadh. Sin an seòrsa suidheachaidh a th' air nochdadh dha feachd Phoileas a' Mhet ann an Lunnainn, is brùidealachd oillteil Wayne Couzens air san fhàgail fo ghlais airson a' chòrr de bheatha!

Gun teagamh sam bith, aig deireadh cùise, tha uallach an t-suidheachaidh an urra ri Coimiseanair a' Mhet, Cressida Dick, ach ciamar nach biodh truas rithe neo ri neach sam bith na suidheachadh, a bhiodh a' feuchainn ri leisgeul iarraidh ma choinneamh cron cho aingidh bho fhear den fheachd dìon aice fhèin. Ach sin mar a tha dleastanas daonnan an urra ri ceannardan bhuidheannan, agus tuitidh uireasbhaidh sam bith a ghabh àite

in the street to tell him and he was obviously shattered and shaken.

As I consoled him, a lovely young couple pulled up and asked if we were okay and if they could help or if we needed taking to hospital? We assured them that we were okay and thanked them. Afterwards we were so grateful for their kindness and would love to pass on our thanks.

We now needed to get back to Derby as soon as possible to be with family but still had no MOT.

We waited until the morning, then my husband went to Halfords where he explained the situation. But he discovered there had been

gun fhiosta dhaibh ann an taghadh neach-obrach, neo anns an sgrùdadh ro-làimh air comasan agus freagarrachd an neach sin, air guaillean a' cheannaird. Ge b' e dè cho staoin neo easbhaidheach a shaoilte a bha briathran a' Choimiseanair, dè eile b' urrainn dhith a ràdh ach gun robh i "cho duilich!" Theagamh gun robh urram agus modh dha cuimhne Sarah Everard agus a teaghlach anns na beagan fhaclan simplidh sin, air nach gabhadh bàrr cur le aithris mòran na b' fhaide. A dh'aindeoin fianais eachdraidh air ìre borbachd a' chinne-daonna, tha e doirbh cothachadh ris nuair a nochdas e mar seo, agus gu sònraichte bho oifigeir poileas pòsta le teaghlach! Chuir Couzens Sarah am bruid an dèidh a mealladh le cairt-ùghdarrais poileas, mun do dh'èignich is a mhurt e i, is a chuir e a corp na theine.

Gabhaidh cuid a th' ann an cumhachd agus aig am bheil dleastanas, fàsadh bho chronachadh le bhith fàgail coire air leithid Cressida Dick airson a' chunnairt sam bheil boireannaich air sràidean bhailtean na dùthcha, ach aig ceann cùise tha a' chionta ann an da-rìribh oirnn uile nach eil a' gabhail uallach gus burraidheachd de sheòrsa sam bith fhoillseachadh ach an tèid a pheanasachadh agus a cheannachadh. Ach, na biomaid air ar mealladh a thaobh ìre na dùbhlain, bha neart riamh "a' dol thar ceart", agus ged a dh'fhàgas sin strì fhada romhainn feumar a dèanamh is a buinnig ma tha sinn gu bhith airidh air cliù sìobhaltaich a ghabhail oirnn fhìn!

some confusion and our MOT booking had been down for the previous day. Despite this, the kind mechanic took my husband's number and said he didn't have any slots until later in the day but he would try to help. He then called at 9.30am to tell us he had done our van.

We left as soon as possible and made the seven-hour trip home.

We are so grateful for the kindness we were shown in Oban and would like to say thank you and apologise to anyone inconvenienced by Halfords helping us out.

We can't wait to return to finish our tour and once again the spectacular scenery.

Nina Myers, by email.

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DISTRICT NEWS

Church crops for Hope Kitchen



Ardchattan Parish Church folk collected donations for Oban's Hope Kitchen.

Ardchattan Parish Church organised an outdoor collection point for Oban's Hope Kitchen before their harvest festival service at Benderloch's St Modan's Church on Sunday September 26.

A variety of tinned and other long-life foods were donated, along with fresh fruit and vegetables for the kitchen's delicious soups.

The organisers thank everyone who donated and the proprietors of Ledaig Leisure for kind permission to use their shelter on the garage forecourt.

Platinum jubilee plans take root

Celebrating HM The Queen's 70 years on the throne could turn out to be fruitful for Oban.

National organisers of next year's Platinum Jubilee are encouraging a Canopy of Trees as the overall project across Britain, wishing to see more planted throughout the land.

How people go about it is left to each area, Oban Community Council heard at its last Zoom meeting.

Now the community council has set up a sub-committee to look at ideas and seek out possible land.

A grassy area above the town's former maternity hospital and land along the road by Lorn and Islands Hospital were mentioned.

Community council convener Marri Malloy was puzzled at the point of tree planting when so many trees were being cut down all over Oban at the moment but fellow community councillor Duncan Martin pointed out, when looking at old photos of the town, it could be seen there were more trees nowadays than before because people used to cut them down for fuel.

OBAN

Council member Laura Corbe suggested planting fruit trees would be good because they only grow to a certain size, last a long time and do provide food for people.

Mr Martin also suggested 'gorilla gardening' as another idea where vegetables and salad are grown and people can 'harvest them to their heart's content'.

Mrs Malloy said: 'I think it's a nice idea' and Mr Martin said such a project could be an extra strand to Keep Oban Beautiful's work.

Mrs Malloy tasked the new sub-group to 'suss out' what land could be made available and report back.

Oban Community Council meetings are to continue on Zoom for now.

The new Rockfield Centre is not planning to open on Mondays - the usual meeting day for the monthly meetings. Oban High School is now being looked at as an alternative.

SEIL



Dr James Fenton with the Ronnie Rose award 2021.

Ronnie Rose Award for open hill and moor campaigner

Seil botanist Dr James Fenton has been honoured by the Scottish Gamekeepers Association for his unstinting advocacy in support of Scotland's moorlands.

Dr Fenton was awarded the Ronnie Rose Award 2021 at the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust's Game Fair in Perth.

He received the award for lasting contributions to conservation and education, an award named after the late wildlife manager, author and one of the developers of the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park - Ronnie Rose.

Dr Fenton was the National Trust for Scotland's first ecologist and has worked in the UK, Antarctica and the Falkland Islands. He also wrote the Scottish Gamekeepers Association's (SGA) paper A Future for Moorland in Scotland in 2015 and remains committed to moorland preservation, opposing ill-judged forestry expansion which results in biodiversity loss, said a SGA spokesperson after the awards.

Scottish moorlands are globally rare habitats recognised by international directives.

Dr Fenton said: 'I am very pleased to receive the Ronnie Rose trophy for my long-term campaign on behalf of the traditional Highland landscape of open hill and moor. Myself and the Scottish Gamekeepers Association believe this landscape is currently undervalued and disappearing fast owing to the current vogue for tree planting.'

At random

MARTIN LAING

editor@obantimes.co.uk



A step too far

I love Oban and the surrounding area, including the isles. It is a brilliant place to live and work, or to visit.

However, I found myself dismayed to read about the impending attempt to bid for city status next year to mark the Queen's platinum jubilee. Why am I dismayed? Simply because I don't see the point. Oban is a fabulous seaside town; the economic hub of this part of Argyll; the seafood capital of Scotland; gateway to the isles; a magnet for tourists from across the world; even a university town now and far more besides. Yet there is no escaping the fact it is a smallish town in the west Highlands. How would city status change any of that? I suspect it may even make people snigger derogatively.

I have strong connections with Stirling, which was awarded city status years ago. There was, for me at least, much more renown to be gained from being the Royal Burgh that it was previously. I think the change to become a city cost Stirling's ratepayers dearly as almost every road sign in the town - and I use that word deliberately - was changed to say City of Stirling under the street name. Otherwise, I have seen little evidence of any benefit. And locals in Stirling still talk about going into town; no one who lives there refers to it as a city.

Oban will be better off staying as it is.

Great sports

I am delighted to see so much sport being reported each week once again, after the hiatus we have had forced upon us by you know what.

Oban Saints returned to winning ways the week before last and Oban Lorne RFC have been back in action with players at all age levels competing again. The shinty scene is in full flow once more and many other sports are back on track. It fair cheers me up to see this activity.

What do you think?

Send your comments to editor@obantimes.co.uk

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Wood you 'be-leaf' it: Argyll grows the UK's tallest tree – almost

As autumn appears, leaf colours will begin to change and Scotland's woodlands will put on a stunning seasonal show.

From September 28 until December 1, the Scottish Tree Festival is celebrating the importance of these giants of nature to our lives and our landscape.

Ardkinglas Woodland Garden near Loch Fyne will be one of the locations where visitors can explore some of the finest tree collections, and enjoy the spectacle as the canopy changes from green to gold and scarlet.

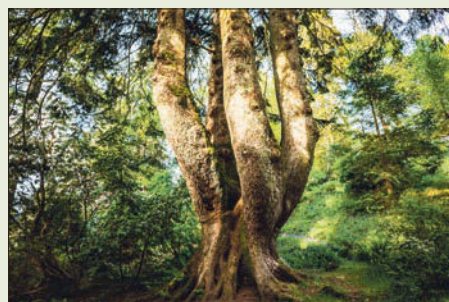
Ardkinglas is home to a number of Champion Trees, the tallest or broadest of their species in Britain. Its favourable growing conditions lead to the exceptional size and longevity exhibited by many of the coniferous species introduced to this area of the garden via the 19th century plant-hunters, according to the estate's website.

The gardens' Grand Fir (*Abies grandis*) was once the tallest tree in Britain for a number of years, but has now been overtaken.

'The tree was planted as a sapling 135 years ago, around 1875,' the estate says: 'Other events around that time include the Battle of the Little Big Horn in Montana, Alexander Graham Bell demonstrating his telephone to Queen Victoria, and Tchaikovsky completing the music for Swan Lake. It regained the title when it was climbed in 2010 and measured at 64.28m, but has recently lost it again. Currently a Douglas Fir in Reelig Glen Wood west of Inverness holds the crown, and is the tallest tree found in Northern Europe. Measured in November, it is agreed to be 66.4m tall, which is 217 feet and 10 inches.'

Dozens of gardens and estates are taking part in the festival including Armadale Castle on Skye. The 40-acre garden surrounding Armadale Castle is recognised for its exotic and historic collection of trees.

This year the south Skye garden is playing a new role, fitting for the 21st century, by helping to support the conservation of endangered tree species around the world.



One of Ardinglas' monumental trees: a European Silver Fir (*Abies alba*).

Through a new collaboration with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Armadale's gardens will be linked with the International Conifer Conservation Programme (ICCP) as a satellite garden for threatened plant material. Armadale will become part of a network of 'safe sites' where endangered tree species are able to flourish.

'Conifers are of major importance worldwide, and over 34 per cent of all conifer species are threatened,' Armadale's website said.

'This living collection of endangered species will contribute to the ICCP's vital research about endangered species, and potentially be used for conifer restoration programmes.'

'Armadale Castle is set to receive over 100 young conifers this year, and several dozen shrubs, all of which are under threat of extinction.'

Joanna Macpherson, director of Discover Scottish Gardens, said: 'Against the backdrop of COP26 taking place in Glasgow, trees have never been more important and Scotland not only has a unique legacy of historic trees, but through careful conservation and replanting, this country's tree cover is increasing once again. The festival allows us to celebrate the place of trees in our lives and to enjoy their beauty.'

A full list of events is available from discover.scottishgardens.org



Islay estate joins Scotland's best managed land

Two estates in Islay and Crianlarich have won an international award that aims to make Scotland's wildlife the best managed in Europe.

Ardtalla Estate on Islay, and Glenfalloch Estate near Crianlarich, were among 15 in Scotland to receive Wildlife Estates Scotland accreditation, which, every five years, recognises estates' ongoing work in wildlife management and conservation.

The 15 winners were presented with their awards by HRH The Princess Royal and Dr Mike Cantlay OBE, chairman of Scotland's nature agency NatureScot, at the GWCT Scottish Game Fair at Scone Palace near Perth.

Wildlife Estates Scotland (WES), which builds information on species and land use to improve Scotland's biodiversity, is based on the EU Wildlife Estates initiative. The European scheme, implemented in 19 countries, aims 'to protect, preserve and improve the environment for present and future generations'.

Wildlife Estates Scotland, which has just celebrated its tenth anniversary, vowed to continue

beyond the UK's exit from the EU and has an ambitious plan to lead the Continent.

Scotland is second in the league table of Wildlife Estates accredited land on 1.25 million acres, with Spain ahead on approximately 1.6 million acres. WES aims to double the accredited land to 2.5 million acres by 2023.

Dee Ward, chairman of Wildlife Estates Scotland, said it was vital the landowners' role as guardians of the environment was encouraged and promoted. Scotland has a biodiversity intactness index rating of just 56 per cent - the best rated nation in the UK, but still far behind Canada on 89 per cent and Germany on 67 per cent. It is estimated Scotland is home to 90,000 animal, plant and microbe species.

'The twin threats of climate change and biodiversity loss are very present in Scotland. Landholdings are already undertaking vital conservation work that goes above and beyond what many would expect but we should always be looking to do more. Environmental work often comes at significant financial cost to businesses

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WES Accreditation Award presented to Glenfalloch Estate. From left: Dee Ward of Scottish Land and Estates, David Lowes, managing partner of Glenfalloch Estate, and Dr Mike Cantlay of NatureScot.

Seil volunteers' mission to tackle alien plant invader

Volunteers on Seil are on a mission to eradicate an alien invader from the island, writes Kathie Griffiths

Common-type *Rhododendron ponticum*, a non-native invasive species, is on the rampage across Scotland causing serious loss of plants and animals over large parts of the country and an ambitious project is underway on Seil to rid the island of it.

Seil Biodiversity Community Interest Company (CIC) has tasked itself with the job and its volunteers, armed with pruning saws and mattocks, have already been hard at work at a number of locations including Kilbrandon Church.

The group carried out a survey over last winter to identify hot spots where seed dispersal is leading to the escape of plants into surrounding countryside - the church was one of them.

Volunteers cleared thickets of the shrub and grubbed out roots to help prevent regrowth throughout the church grounds and the group will monitor the site over the next two to three years, removing any new shoots and seedlings that appear. It can cost huge sums of money to control once it has become established; up until now the group has been self-funded but members are hoping now they have had a successful start they will be able to attract financial support to keep up their work. 'We are hoping that people will take responsibility for dealing with it on their land but we are here to offer help and advice,' said Ron Robinson from Seil Biodiversity CIC. 'We mapped out areas where *Rhododendron ponticum* is and we've got a pretty good hold of it. The church seemed to be the epi-centre which is why we started there.'

Any funding will help the group continue to protect the island's bio-diversity.

'What we have on our island is the Atlantic hazelwoods that stretch from Ballachuan down the spine of Seil. There are patches of them and they have many very special lichens and fungi that make up a large proportion of the UK numbers so we need to protect them,' added Ron.

Anyone interested in contacting Seil Biodiversity Community Interest Company can contact Ron and Lisa Robinson on 01852 300573.



Seil Biodiversity Community Interest Company embarked upon an ambitious project to eradicate *Rhododendron ponticum* from the island



Volunteers on Seil gets hands-on removing *Rhododendron ponticum* from Kilbrandon Church grounds.

Land's bid to... in Europe

but land managers see their role as custodians of their local habitat and want to help a rich array of wildlife to flourish. These farms and estates are undertaking exceptionally important work that benefits biodiversity and the environment, and it is only right that their efforts are publicly recognised through Wildlife Estates Scotland. We seek a broad range of information, including species data and conservation projects, which helps to provide significant insight on what is working well and where our conservation efforts need to be targeted.'

Dr Mike Cantlay OBE, chairman of NatureScot, said: 'By attaining WES accreditation, these estates have reached a gold standard in their long-term commitment to helping Scotland's nature thrive. Initiatives like WES, which gather the knowledge and expertise of people who work Scotland's countryside, are a crucially important way to increase the resilience of Scotland's land, as we work together to tackle the twin biodiversity and climate change crises.'

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BUSINESS NEWS

Skills training gap in Oban

Oban has a skills gap stopping some people getting work, the town's community council has heard.

Staff shortages across the town came up for discussion at last week's community council (CC) meeting.

Members heard the shortages stretched from social care to the hospitality trade and there was hardly a restaurant or business that had enough staff.

Councillor Kieron Green said the town needed more people to come over from Europe to meet an increasing demand for workers.

Numbers of Oban people out of work who could take on those jobs were questioned.

CC convener Marri Malloy said she did not think there were many people from the town looking for work.

Councillor Jim Lynch said a lot of people out of work during the pandemic were now going back into the labour market but going to different jobs to get extra wages.

He also said there was a number of people in the town not meeting the standards employers need.

Mrs Malloy said: 'Beach cleaning and litter picking, you don't need training for that.'

Councillor Lynch said there was a skills gap that needed training.



Staff shortages in Oban came up at a recent meeting of the town's community council.

Food ambassadors offer up a recipe for recovery

The Highlands and Islands have gained their own regional food ambassadors, in a new programme placing food and drink at the heart of the recovery of Scotland's tourism.

Each of the 25 ambassadors, appointed by Scotland Food and Drink, will represent a different part of Scotland's diverse food landscape, and 'play a key part in raising Scotland's profile as a global food tourism destination', the trade body said.

'The ambassadors will provide a much-needed boost to their regions during what has been an acutely challenging time for Scotland's food and drink and tourism sectors, and bring producers, suppliers and hospitality businesses much closer together to grow local economies.

'Bringing Scotland's destinations and food and drink to life through storytelling will be central to the role of the ambassadors in the lead up to Scotland's Year of Stories themed year for 2022.

'Each of them will be shining a light on our regions as food destinations of choice, with their own unique provenance, people and stories which in turn create the quality, authentic food and destination experience which today's visitors are looking for.'

Argyll and the Isles will be represented by Emma Clark, director for Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative, who owns and runs Glenegedale House on Islay with her husband Graeme.

Ayrshire and Arran is covered by Aisla Currie, who farms at Bellevue Farm with her husband and sons on Arran, while Sam Faircliff, managing director of Cairngorms Brewery in Aviemore, stands for the Highlands.

The Outer Hebrides ambassador is chef Chris Loye, who opened a restaurant with his partner Nicola on Harris this year called Flavour, and Stirling and Forth Valley is represented by Sarah Heward, founder and co-owner of The Real Food Café in Tyndrum.



Sarah Heward, founder and co-owner of The Real Food Café in Tyndrum, has been appointed as one of Scotland Food & Drink's 25 Regional Tourism Ambassadors.

delighted to have been selected to represent Stirling and Forth Valley.

'I am really looking forward to helping promote Scotland's food and drink tourism scene to a global audience.'

Rural Affairs Secretary Mairi Gougeon MSP said: 'The 25 ambassadors, who all work in and share a passion for the industry, puts every region in Scotland on the map, showcasing to visitors and tourists alike the exceptional and varied food tourism experiences available across the country.'

'Their work and expertise, against the backdrop of major challenges to the sector from Brexit and the pandemic, will raise Scotland's profile as a food tourism destination and help rebuild our food, hospitality and tourism industry.'

Fiona Richmond, head of regional food at Scotland Food and Drink, added: 'From chefs and caterers, producers and independent retailers to agritourism operators, food writers, whisky experts and more, the Regional Food Tourism Ambassadors will champion every region across Scotland.'

'Over the next two years they will be the face of food tourism, working with their local communities and regional food groups and using their voice to promote Scotland as a destination for fantastic food tourism experiences and we look forward to seeing what we can achieve together.'

In 2005 Sarah gave up her job as managing director of wine bar and merchants, Corney and Barrow in the City of London, and quit the rat-race to pursue her dream of opening her own business.

She opened The Real Food Café, transforming a derelict Little Chef into an award-winning roadside diner.

Famous for its fish and chips and home baking, the café serves more than 250,000 customers per year.

She currently chairs the Tyndrum Infrastructure Group, whose goal is to improve rural infrastructure in Tyndrum and beyond.

Sarah said: 'With more than 200 applicants for the 25 ambassador places, I am absolutely

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Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands Mairi Gougeon, centre, with, left to right, project co-ordinator LANTRA Scotland Annabel Brown, SDS Skills planning manager for the rural economy Katie Fox and WeeCOOK chef/owner Hayley Wilkes.

New guide highlights skills support for rural businesses

Help for Scotland's rural businesses to recruit and grow the skills they need is in the spotlight thanks to a new guide.

The Rural Employers' Toolkit offers practical guidance on training, apprenticeships and placement support for rural businesses across all sectors of the economy.

The toolkit was launched by Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs Mairi Gougeon on a visit to The WeeCOOK Kitchen in Angus, a business that invested in apprenticeships as part of its growth strategy.

Ms Gougeon said: 'Rural businesses across Scotland have shown great resilience in recent times and they will play a central role in driving economic recovery. Adapting skills to deal with emerging challenges and grasping new opportunities is a fundamental part of that and this guide will help businesses of all sizes identify the steps they can take to grow and thrive.'

The toolkit was developed by Lantra Scotland which offers training, qualifications and skills in the land-based, aquaculture and environmental sector. Lantra Scotland's project co-ordinator Annabel Brown said: 'The rural economy depends upon a diverse range of industries such as energy, forestry, manufacturing, tourism, food and drink and health and social care. As a result, an extremely broad range of skills is needed, and this toolkit will enable businesses to identify the steps they need to take and the support they can call on to find the right talent and grow.'

Oban solicitor Billie wins prestigious rising star of the year award

Oban solicitor Billie Smith has been crowned winner of the Rising Star of the Year category at the prestigious Scottish Legal Awards.

Billie joined MacPhee and Partners, solicitors and estate agents in Oban, Fort William and Tiree, as a trainee solicitor, and has gone from strength to strength since qualifying in 2017.

She now specialises in family and private client law and is highly respected by clients and colleagues. Billie has also recently taken up an additional role, with Argyll College UHI, as a lecturer on the Legal Studies course for senior school pupils of Oban High School and relishes the prospect of inspiring the next generation of Argyll solicitors.

On receiving the award at the ceremony in Glasgow on Thursday September 23, Billie said: 'Such a respected panel of judges selecting me as the winner of this award has cemented for me that I'm on the right path in my professional career. It is also recognition of the hard work of our team as all that I have achieved over this difficult year is largely thanks to the contributions of dedicated secretarial staff, reliable colleagues and supportive superiors.'

'Of course, nothing could be achieved without my clients placing their trust in me, so being able to provide them with the independently-assessed assurance that they're in good hands is wonderful.'

Claire MacAlpin, partner, said: 'We are delighted Billie's efforts, particularly over the last year, have been recognised. The award is thoroughly deserved. The rising star category contained some of the best young solicitors in Scotland and Billie's win is a fantastic achievement. Everything we do is a team effort and we intend to celebrate this accolade, as a team, as we also mark 25 years of MacPhee & Partners.'



Rising Star of the Year Billie Smith with host of the Scottish Legal Awards' presentation night comedian and TV presenter Des Clarke. Photograph: Gerardo Jaconelli.



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Love Oban vouchers

People thinking of buying a present for a family member, friend or loved one are being asked to buy a Love Oban Gift Voucher.

The Love Oban voucher was set up by BID4Oban in 2013 to encourage spending in local shops, restaurants and businesses. Since its inception, it has generated over £100,000.

With Christmas coming up and celebrations from retirements to birthdays and weddings, nearly 90 businesses in Oban now accept the vouchers, reaffirming its name 'the Oban Pound'.

As well as being a help to those unsure what to buy someone, the highly successful initiative helps keep money in Oban and spent with local independents, said BID4Oban chief executive Andy Spence.

Buying a Love Oban voucher ensures the money spent stays within the local economy to support businesses, jobs and local people, he said.

The initiative has proved popular with local people who want to see the town succeed and also people from outside the area.

Visitors also purchase the

vouchers online on behalf of those planning breaks in Oban or who are moving to the town to take up employment, said Andy.

He said: 'When you spend local, that £1 then regenerates and goes into supporting someone at another local business and is spent in the town.'

'Not just local but every single business is important in Oban as it provides employment for local people and they also spend in the town.'

In December 2020, BID4Oban in their efforts to encourage everyone to think 'local first', approached The Senior Pupil Leadership Team at Oban High to create a video and help us all to see just how important it is to shop locally and how your money circulates round the town. This can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Xm1JSHDFvc

Andy said supporting Oban at this time is vital as retailers recover from the pandemic.

The process of buying the vouchers took just a couple of minutes and each comes with a handy guide to where they can be spent.

Andy added: 'We have a lot of

new local businesses opening in the town and given what we have just been through, it's clear the town is extremely vibrant and people have got the confidence in Oban to invest. We are a destination town and a key hub.'

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

The Sports Shop Oban, Argyll Square; Websters of Oban Photographic Centre, George Street; Oban Phoenix Cinema, 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 and purchase them in denominations of £10, £20 and £50, but in as high a value as necessary.

<https://www.bid4oban.co.uk/overview-love-oban->



Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk





We talked to a couple of retailers in the town about the voucher's success...

Button Nose

Jackie Kerr from Button Nose Gift Boutique, 12 Airds Crescent, Oban, PA34 5SQ.

It is a gift shop for everyone, locals and tourists. Stocking gift ideas for any occasion and clothing for babies and children up to 3 years of age. It's a great shop if you just want to browse, and pass a bit of time. With beautifully scented candles and homeware ideas we can't fail to please.

We also stock a large range of jewellery, handbags, purses, scarves, powder design socks, wax melts, bath bombs and much, much more. All purchases over £10 will be beautifully gift wrapped free of charge if required and complemented by great customer service.

Our success in Stevenson Street allowed us to move to a much larger premises last October in the great location of Airds crescent, very close to George Street.

We have been offering and accepting Love Oban vouchers for quite some time and think they definitely allow us to offer our customers added value, selling them definitely brings people to us and they can spend them at any participating business in the town, a win win. Love Oban have been a huge support to us over the last 5 years so we were delighted when we were able to participate in the Voucher scheme.



The Sports Shop

Billy Thompson from The Sports Shop, 3 Macgregor Court, Oban, PA34 4DJ

We celebrated our 10th anniversary back in April this year and when we opened from scratch, we said we wanted to be a proper sports shop and cover as many sports as possible, with clothing footwear and equipment, especially those played in town.

We feel we have managed to do that and will continue to do so, as much as we can, in an ever-changing and sometimes very difficult retail environment.

Myself, Jonathan and Malcolm have always been involved in sport, whether playing, coaching, volunteering or just simply supporting and we hope that locals see us a community minded shop and we do our best to support as many local charities and events as we can.

Shopping local is the one message we would like to get across more to the community and Bid4Oban's love Oban vouchers are a very practical way for people to show that support to local businesses and we have seen a steady increase in sales and receipts from the vouchers since they started. All we ask is for people to consider trying us first before their keyboards.

We have also started to diversify this year, more than ever, partly due to demand, but also to replace lost income from, for example, football replica sales due to teams like Scotland, Rangers and Celtic doing exclusive deals with certain large retailers and also due to brands like Nike who no longer want to deal with smaller retailers and have denied us access to their brand.

We will continue to evolve and do our best to serve the local community and we are looking forward towards another ten years.



LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Young Gaels hit all the right notes with Gaelic song bank

More than 100 old Gaelic songs, researched and recorded by young Gaelic singers over the last seven years, are now available to hear in a new free online resource.

'Fuaran' is a heritage initiative established by Gaelic arts organisation Fèisean nan Gàidheal to encourage a new generation of Gaelic speakers and singers to actively engage in the research and collection of Gaelic songs in their area.

More than 54 young people aged 16 to 25 years have taken part in research, training and song workshops, led by a host of leading Gaelic song and research experts. Last year, another 18 young Gaels joined Fuaran and 12 have now recorded some of the songs they collected from communities across Scotland.

The project participants first met, online, in May 2020, taking part in online workshops led by Gaelic song researcher Jo MacDonald, director of Tobar an Dualchais, Floraidh Forrest, and Gaelic singer and song researcher Gilbert MacMillan, whilst also receiving one-to-one support via video call from Gaelic singers Christine Primrose and Margaret MacLeod.

Earlier this year, the singers were recorded in various locations including Lews Castle in Stornoway, The Stables in Cromarty and The National Piping Centre and Pollokshields Burgh Halls in Glasgow.

The latest songs to be added to the Fuaran resource include a new setting of a poem by Lewis bard, Murdo MacFarlane, two Gaelic psalms, and a satire to Patrick Sellar. All recordings in the resource are accompanied by translations, background information and videos of the recording process.

The songs were researched and recorded this year by participants from all over the country, from the Isle of Lewis to Glasgow, and include; Alice MacMillan, Point, Isle of Lewis; Calum Ross, Aberdeen; Donald and Peigi Barker, Black Isle; Eòin Cumming, Gairloch; Evie Waddell, Stirling; Fergus Munro, Fort William; Finlay MacLennan, Kirkhill; Peigi MacVicar, Isle of Skye; Rona Macleod, Bonar Bridge; Rory Cormack, Conon Bridge, and Sophie Macdonald, Glasgow.

Researching songs of religion, Fergus Munro said: 'We have a wealth of spiritual songs in Gaelic and I found two real-



A project which aims to inspire young Gaelic speakers to engage with the wealth of Gaelic culture in their communities, has resulted in a free online resource of over 100 Gaelic songs, sung by young Gaelic singers from across Scotland, with the latest songs having been researched

ly good examples which shine a light on the kind of faith that people held in Lochaber 150 years ago, and the important work that folklorist Father Allan MacDonald undertook in the Highland and his creative skills. I'm really happy that these songs are being given new life through Fuaran.'

Brother and sister duo, Donald and Peigi Barker, looked at the songs of siblings, Margaret and Donnie Macleod of Na h-Òganaich fame. They came across a poem, Gille Gu Geingealadh, by the great Gaelic Lewis bard Murdo

MacFarlane, a close friend of the Na h-Òganaich siblings. When they couldn't trace a melody for the song they put their musical talents to use and composed a brand new melody to set the poem to which Margaret gave her every blessing.

They added: 'Taking part in Fuaran allowed us to develop our Gaelic language and research skills.'

'We got help with the different aspects throughout the process; our conversations with Mairead na h-Òganaich were so helpful and we learnt

lots of new skills which we will be able to implement in future projects.'

Fèisean nan Gàidheal development officer and project co-ordinator, Karen Oakley said: 'It's with great delight that we can showcase the youngsters' songs online.'

'When the Fuaran participants first sang some of them for a live online concert as part of Blas Festival, it was very heart-warming to read the comments of audience members watching at home.'

'Many wrote of the songs reminding them fondly of

particular times or places and people in their lives.'

'It shows how powerful and uplifting projects like this are to, not just the participants, but those with a keen interest in our Gaelic songs and culture.'

'The songs feature on the newly developed Fuaran website that allows users to search for songs pertaining to a particular area of Scotland. We hope that it will be a great resource for people wanting to discover more about the people, places and stories and songs in their area and across Scotland.'



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Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



In 2011, when I first moved to Glasgow, I spent many a weekend walking past the Kelvingrove Bandstand.

This had a lot to do with its situation on the Kelvin Way. It sits pretty much half way between Glasgow University - where I was studying - and the three hostelrys I mention often in this column - namely the Park Bar, the Islay Inn, and the Snaffle Bit.

Finnieston was in transition towards the myriad of bars and restaurants we see today, so the path between a late night at the university library and last orders on Argyle Street was a well trodden one for many students.

When I was at uni, the bandstand had been derelict since 1999. I always felt, however, despite the disrepair and vandalism, that it was easy to imagine how stunning it must have looked when it was built back in 1924. Countless times, I would peer over the fence down into the amphitheatre and wish that someone would invest and return it to its former glory.

Step forward Glasgow Building Preservation Trust, Glasgow City Council, and Glasgow Life who negotiated a redevelopment plan and reopened the bandstand in time for the Commonwealth Games in 2014.

Since then, this incredible venue with a capacity of more



than 2,000 has seen some of the biggest artists in the world perform on its stage: Sir Tom Jones, Brian Wilson from the Beach Boys, and Van Morrison to name just a few. On Friday evening, I'll have the pleasure of performing there with Tide Lines - supported by two fellow Highlanders in the wonderful Tamzene and the brilliant Keir Gibson.

I can hear you ask how on earth an outdoor, uncovered gig will work in Scotland in October. It's a valid point. This concert was originally scheduled for the summer of 2020 and initially postponed until the summer of 2021. Ongoing restrictions meant it was ultimately pushed back until October, so it will be a huge relief to get onstage and finally play the show. The temperature potentially being slightly cooler will be balanced by the positive that (unlike a summer show) this

will be dark from the beginning which should benefit the lighting show and general atmosphere. And who's to say this weekend won't be the beginning of an Indian summer? This is Scotland, after all, and you can't predict the weather at any time of year!

One thing you can predict, though, is that Friday will be a big night in Glasgow come rain or come shine. Not only on account of our gig but also because, a couple of miles further East, Peat and Diesel are playing in the Barrowlands. Between their audience and ours, that's more than 4,000 fans of Highland music descending on Glasgow. What can possibly go wrong?

Well, on the subject of weather, as Ricky Fulton said in an old Scotch and Wry episode: When the gael from the North meet the showers from the West, there's going to be one helluva party!

St Conan's Christmas Tree Festival returns

Organisers of St Conan's Christmas Tree Festival are twinkling with good news.

The popular event at the historic kirk in Lochawe is back this year from Thursday December 2 to Sunday December 5.

'After an imposed year off, the Christmas Tree Festival is returning,' said Friends of St Conan's Kirk.

To help keep everyone safe, the festival will run for an extra day and be open for extra hours at the weekend. Masks will have to be worn and plans are being put in place to work out the layout and flow of visitors.

Individuals, families, businesses, organisations and groups can all take part and enter a tree.

The rules include the trees



The popular Christmas Tree Festival at St Conan's Kirk is returning this year.

should be at least 4 feet, can be real or made of anything, must be lit by battery lights and can be any theme as long as it is suitable for children to see.

Visitors to the festival will

be asked to make a donation towards the Kirk's restoration and will be invited to vote for their favourite tree.

Interested in taking part? Email emmackay@btinternet.com by October 15.

What's on at Oban Cinema



Friday 8 October

The Addams Family 2 U	14:15/15:45
Conni and the Cat U	14:15
No Time To Die 12A	16:30/20:15
Limbo 12A	18:00
True Calling PG	20:30

Saturday 9 & Sunday 10 October

Conni and the Cat U	12:00/14:45
The Addams Family 2 U	12:30/13:45/16:30
No Time To Die 12A	16:15/20:00
True Calling PG	19:00

Wednesday 13 & Thursday 14 October

Conni and the Cat U	12:00/14:45
The Addams Family 2 U	12:30/13:45/16:30
No Time To Die 12A	16:15/20:00
True Calling PG	19:00

Conni and the Cat (U) Family / Animation

Conni's adorable but mischievous cat, Mau, follows her on a kindergarten trip, causing mayhem, confusion and laughs. The children keep busy trying to hide Mau from the teachers while tracking down a thief and saving a raccoon in an ancient castle.

True Calling (PG)

Drama
True Calling is a contemporary tale of a successful young government minister who is faced with a moral and spiritual crisis as he heads into a national election. On the eve of a critical pre-election television debate that he is due to participate in, Josh Joseph, who is earmarked for continued ministerial success, decides, on impulse, to take a significant political risk. He disrupts his hectic electioneering schedule to leave London and drive to the north of England, in order to visit a female childhood friend, Maddy, whom he has not seen for 17 years. He has discovered that she is getting married on the day of the election and is sufficiently troubled by this news to feel the need to intervene in her decision. This inexplicably irrational action threatens his political career and leads to unsettling encounters with love, longing and regrets which will, inevitably, lead to profound changes in his personal and political life.

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.

obanphoenix.com 01631 562905

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MONDAY: 8am-12pm Breakfast show with Stephen
 12-3pm Lunch with Bob G
 5pm-7pm Drive Times with Marcus
 7pm-8pm Highland Fling with Rosemary
 8pm-9pm Calum McLuckies Show
 9pm David Cullen Show

TUESDAY: 8am-10am Breakfast Show with Stephen
 10am-12.30pm Ken Hunter
 1pm-3pm Macky on FM
 3pm-5pm Mediation with Heartfelt Change
 5pm-7pm Drive Times with Archie Darling
 7pm-8pm Highest Praise with Stuart Chalmers
 8pm-9pm Scottish Sounds with Archie Cameron
 9pm Oban Pride on the Waves with Jay & Crystal

WEDNESDAY: 8am-11am Breakfast Show with Stephen
 11am-1pm Comfort Zone with Lesley
 1pm-3pm Doug in the afternoon
 4pm-7pm Drive Times with Campbell
 7pm-9pm Country meets Rock N Roll with Len Gordon's Grooves
 9pm Breakfast Show with Andy & Sarah

THURSDAY: 11am-2pm Lunch Show with Steve
 2pm-3pm Mediation with Heartfelt Change
 3pm-7pm Drive Time with Stephen
 7pm-9pm Christine's Collections
 9pm-10pm Ann's Ceilidh
 10pm Margo Till Midnight

FRIDAY: 8am-10am Breakfast Show with Anna & Phil
 10am-1pm The Brunch Show With The One
 4pm-6.45pm Teeney & Tiny Show with Harry & Janet
 6.45pm-7pm Sports View with the Dream Team
 7pm-8pm Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig
 8pm-10pm Evening Show with Peter Rainnie
 10pm Breakfast Show with Stephen

SATURDAY: 10am-1pm Saturday Morning Live with Linda
 2pm-4pm Jukebox Jamboree with Ken Mc
 6pm-7pm Sports View with the Dream Team
 7pm-8pm Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling
 8pm-10pm Evening Show with Dave Hobbs
 9am-11am Sunday Morning with Breege
 11am-2pm Sunday Brunch with Stephen
 7pm-9pm New Country Show with Dave & Murdoch
 9pm Drum & Bass with Graham.



Doug Allan has worked BBC programmes such as Planet Earth and the Blue Planet.

Wildlife photographer Doug Allan talks climate change

BBC wildlife photographer Doug Allan brings his show It's A Wrap to Oban's Corran Halls on November 11, sharing the extraordinary challenges of filming from the top of Mount Everest to the bottom of the Arctic Ocean. Part retrospective, the show is also Doug's perspective on climate change and its impacts on the world's wild places. What change of emphasis and direction should we now be incorporating in wildlife films? "There are big days when animals behave spectacularly right in front of your lens," Doug said.

'And other quieter times when a deeper understanding reveals itself, a new insight into the environment and what's alive there. I'll be talking about these moments of truth and how they're the biggest privilege of a wildlife camer-

aperson. I've always balanced optimism with reality but the latest world climate report lays bare the need for radical, urgent action. There are solutions and I want to talk about them. They're all challenging, some are scary and depend on us making deep changes to how we live. The planet's at a crossroads and we're at the wheel.'

Dunfermline-born Doug began diving with Scotland's last pearl hunter Bill Abernathy, before becoming a research diver for the British Antarctic Survey, and a cameraman of BBC wildlife programmes such as Planet Earth and The Blue Planet, winning eight Emmys and five BAFTAs over his 35 year career.

Tickets for the event are available by visiting tickets.ents24.com/event/tickets/eventid/2110765

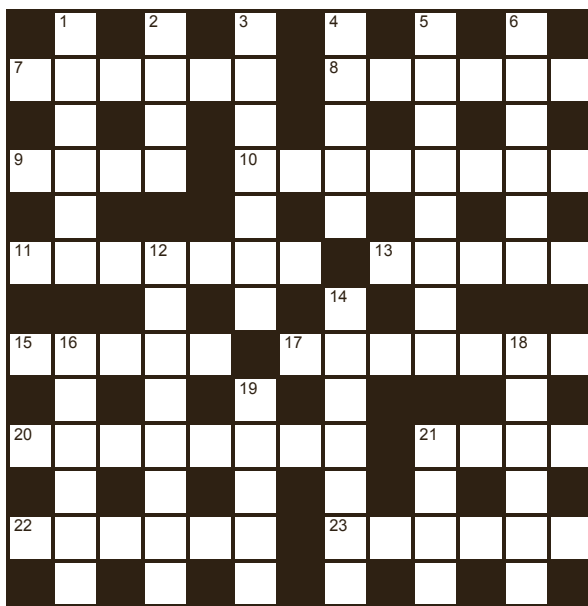
Bond fans get treatment at



James Bond would approve of this 007-worthy look.

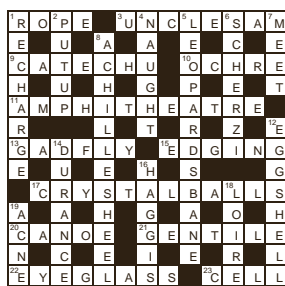


CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Give time and energy to (6)
 - 8 Farm cry (3-3)
 - 9 Link (4)
 - 10 Countrified (8)
 - 11 Person of rank (7)
 - 13 Film (5)
 - 15 Scrumptious (5)
 - 17 Something done against the crown (7)
 - 20 Go against the current (8)
 - 21 Replica (4)
 - 22 Building level (6)
 - 23 First-born (6)
- Down**
- 1 Irritate at the club... (3,3)
 - 2 ...then hit with one of these! (4)
 - 3 Puzzle (7)
 - 4 Period (5)
 - 5 Milk pudding (8)
 - 6 Give up (6)
 - 12 Young (8)
 - 14 Bugle (7)
 - 16 Snobbish (6)
 - 18 Fight (6)
 - 19 Shade of green (5)
 - 21 Secret message (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



Bòrd na Gàidhlig awards £600k to Gaelic projects

Bòrd na Gàidhlig has awarded almost £600,000 to 50 Gaelic projects as part of the Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund (GLAIF).

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is one of a number of Western Isles organisations to benefit from funding for a range of projects, including an award of £20,000 to offer Gaelic classes to its apprentices.

The Comhairle has also received £2,300 to support eSgoil deliver an online programme of activities for children to enhance their Gaelic language skills and £11,250 for up to 15 Gaelic-speaking students to undertake a summer placement in a job using Gaelic.

Among the other groups which have received funding are Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, which has received funding for four separate projects including a pilot, in partnership with schools in the Highlands and Western Isles, where pupils will interview different gen-

erations to preserve heritage in partnership with Tobar an Dualchais.

Highlands and Islands Airport Limited has also been awarded funds to develop and deliver a vocabulary resource for customer-facing staff.

Perth & Kinross Council's work in developing the Gaelic language has been recognised with awards for three projects over the next year. It will deliver outdoor events and learning sessions as part of Our Gaelic Landscape, deliver music workshops in schools and communities in the lead up to the Royal National Mòd in 2022 and continue to deliver adult learning sessions thanks to funding from the Bòrd.

Glasgow City Council will benefit from £25,000 towards the hiring of a GME Family Learning Officer. City of Edinburgh Council will also hire an Early Years GME Development Officer following a £32,000 award.

Get the red carpet at Oban's cinema



Phoenix Cinema staff get ready for opening night of *Time To Die* - the new 007 movie.



Bond fans dressed up in 007-style to celebrate the new James Bond movie *Time To Die* coming to Oban's Phoenix Cinema.

Photographer Kevin McGarry rolled out the red carpet for them as they

arrived for Thursday night's screening.

As well as the usual box office treats of popcorn and chocolates, Bond's favourite martinis were also on offer.

All photographs: Kevin McGarry.



A great night was had by everyone who dressed up for their special Bond night out at Oban's Phoenix Cinema.

M'ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 7 An Dàmhair THURSDAY 7 An Dàmhair

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 An Lot/The Croft
19.30 Trusadh-Sgeulachdan a' Ghlasaidh/Life in Lockdown
20.00 An Là – NEWS
20.30 Garraidhean Mòra na h-Alba
21.00 Julie Fowlis/Ceol aig Baile
22.00 Seòid a' Chidsin/The Kitchen Coves S6 Ep3
22.30 Na Deachdairan/Dictators-Benito Mussolini
23.20 Binneas/Bàrd Mhealboist
23.30 Dana/Scotland's Wild Side/Lewis

DIHAOINE 8 An Dàmhair FRIDAY 8 An Dàmhair

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 An Là – NEWS
19.25 Dan
19.30 Machair
19.55 Binneas-Na Trads-Ross Ainslie
20.00 Prosaig
20.30 An Taigh-Fuine/The Bakery
21.00 Elena Baltacha
22.20 The Valhalla Murders
23.05 Cuirim/Celtic:Duncan Chisholm

DISATHAIRNE 9 An Dàmhair SATURDAY 9 An Dàmhair

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
17.45 An Là
18.00 Run-dòmhair Cheanannais/The Secret of Kells
19.15 An Bobha-The Last Blacksmith
19.35 Binneas-Na Trads
19.55 Celtic Connections

20.00 Prosaig
20.30 Leugh Mi/Book Show
21.00 ALT S1 Ep1
22.00 Nathan Ca
23.25 Slighean Trailleachd/Slavery Routes
00.20 Belladrum 2017 Highlights

DIDÒMHNAICH 10 An Dàmhair SUNDAY 10 An Dàmhair

16.00 SWPL 2021/22 Hibernian v Rangers
18.05 An Là
18.20 Seachd Là
19.05 BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician 2022 Semi Final
21.00 Lipoedema-Sgeulachd Lorna/Lipoedema-Lorna's Story
22.40 Bannan S2 Ep5
22.40 Bannan S3 Ep1
23.10 The Valhalla Murders

DILUAIN 11 An Dàmhair MONDAY 11 An Dàmhair

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Fuine-Baking
19.30 Slighe Chladach Fìobha/Fife Coastal Path
20.00 An Là – NEWS
20.30 An Tigh-Fuine/The Bakery
21.00 Trusadh – Afro Gaidheil
22.00 Bannan /S3 Ep2
22.30 Sar Sgeoil/The Cone Gatherers
23.30 Seòid a' Chidsin/The Kitchen Coves S6 Ep2

DIMÀIRT 12 An t-Dàmhair TUESDAY 12 An Dàmhair

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 An Lot/The Croft
19.30 Trusadh:Sgeulachdan an Glasaidh/Life in Lockdown

20.00 An Là – NEWS
20.30 Golf: Mun Cuairt Alba
21.00 Ceol is Cradh
22.00 Trusadh-Afro Gaidheil
23.00 Cuirim aig Celtic/Binneas- Bard Mhealboist
23.05 Machair
23.30 Alleluia

DI CIADAIN 13 An Dàmhair WEDNESDAY 13 An Dàmhair

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Fuine-Baking
19.30 Slighe Chladach Fìobha/Fife Coastal Path
20.00 An Là – NEWS
20.30 Leugh Mi/Book Show
21.00 Sar-Sgeoil/Macbeth
21.55 Bannan S3 Ep3
22.30 Dana/Scotland's Wild Side
23.00 Julie Fowlis:Ceol aig Baile

DIARDAOIN 14 An Dàmhair THURSDAY 14 An Dàmhair

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 An Lot/The Croft
19.30 Trusadh-Sgeulachdan a Ghlasaidh/Life in Lockdown
20.00 An Là – NEWS
20.30 Garraidhean Mòra na h-Alba
21.00 Julie Fowlis-Ceol aig Baile
22.00 Seòid a' Chidsin-The Kitchen Coves S6 Ep3
22.30 Na Deachdairan/Dictators – Benito Mussolini
23.20 Binneas-Bard Mhealboist
23.30 Dana-Scotland's Wild Side



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Around the markets

United auctions, Dalmally, Friday September 24: sold 7506 ewe lambs, gimmers and warranted ewes at its annual sale of Blackface breeding sheep. 1359 ewe lambs averaged £75.32 (+£18.88) selling to £225 from W G Walker, Crammie. 1778 gimmers averaged £114.55 (-£4.42), selling to £1100 from J Jackson & Son, Pole Farm selling to T. Nelson, Glengorm. 4369 ewes averaged £82.44 (+£8.74) and sold to £400 from D Murray, Lurgan.

For the second year running, only blackface breeding sheep was catalogued at this sale. Dalmally Market is now recognised as one of the principal centres for obtaining quality bred blackface breeding sheep, attracting consignors and buyers from near and far. The market was buzzing from start to finish with the last consignors of the day fully obtaining the values which prevailed throughout the day.

LEADING LOTS & PRICES
EWE LAMBS - £225, Crammie; £125, Lurgan; £122, Low Tirfergus; £120, Crammie; £120, Low Tirfergus; £118, £100, Saulmore; £96, Dunlossit Estate; £92, Benlawers; £91, Lurignish; £90, Tayvallich Estates; £90, Lurgan;

£88, Saulmore; £87, Crammie; £86, Tullochcan; £86, Acharonich; £85, Saulmore; £85, Crammie; £84, Saulmore; £84, Bragleenmore; £84, Burnbank; £82, Rhugarbh; £82, Largie; £80, Burnbank; £80, Floors; £80, Barachander; £80, Dunlossit Estate.

GIMMERS - £1100, Pole Farm; £500, £280, Achnamara; £250, Arnicle; £240, Achnamara; £240, £210, £200, £170, Lephinchapel; £170, Achnamara; £170, Laigh Balernock; £165, Achnamara; £160, Pole Farm; £160, Achnamara; £152, Saulmore; £150, Balliemeanoch; £145, Saulmore; £142, Littleport; £142, Pole Farm; £140, Littleport. **BF EWES - £400, Lurgan; £360, Crammie; £250, Arnicle; £250, Pole Farm;** £180, Tay & Torridon Estates; £150, Balliemeanoch; £145, Arnicle; £138, £135, £132, £128, Saulmore; £125, Lurignish; £125, Tay & Torridon Estates; £122, £120, Saulmore; £120, Balliemeanoch; £118, Saulmore; £112, Garraron; £110, £108, Saulmore; £100, Tullochcan; £100, Duncroisk; £100, Garraron; £100, Balliemeanoch; £100, Lurgan; £98, Duncroisk; £98, Saulmore; £98, Dunans; £96, Saulmore; £95, Innisaig;

£92, Ronachan; £92, Bragleenmore; £90, Roromore; £90, Auchreoch; £90, Littleport; £90, Corrylorn. **SWALE EWES - £98, £95, £90, Barachander.**

United Auctions, Oban, Tuesday September 28, sold: 1543 sheep of all classes. Lambs averaged £58.24 (+£7.20).

An excellent trade prevailed at Oban for all sections of the sale. Despite lambs consisting of second & third draw lots, consignors were receiving values comparable to earlier lambs sold. Consignors were returning home in a jubilant mood.

LAMBS - SUFFx - £83.00, Lusraganbeag; £83.00, Frackersaig; £81.00, Salum Tiree; £77.00, Strongorm. **TEXx - £92.00, Park;** £87.00, Poltalloch. **CHEV - £86.00,** Brandon; £85.00, Strongorm; £84.00, Daltote; £80.00, Strongorm; £78.00, Ensay; £78.00, Strongorm; £77.00, Daltote; £73.00, Frackersaig. **CROSS - £75.00,** Glenfeochan Estate; £73.00, Bragleenmore; £69.00, Kilbride; £67.00, Arranton Place; £66.00, Daltote. **MULE - £95.00,** Brandon; £73.00, Poltalloch. **BF - £74.00,** Achnahard; £69.00, Laggan; £59.00, Poltalloch; £59.00, Achnahard;

£58.00, Gallanach; £57.00, Ensay. **GIMMERS - LLEYNx - £100,** Kilpatrick Croft. **BF - £74, Kengharair.** **EWES - SUFFx - £74.00, Park;** £72.00, Annat; £64.00, Bailuacraich. **TEXx - £76.00,** Saulmore; £74.00, Park; £72.00, Lagganulva. **CHEV - £80.00,** Park; £75.00, Bailuacraich; £71.00, Brandon; £66.50, Balisclate Croft; £66.00, Antuim. **CROSS - £68.50,** Achnacree Beag; £66.00, Caddleton; £61.00, Saulmore. **MULE - £77.00,** Salum; £72.50, Frackersaig; £65.00, Salum. **BF - £57.00,** Glenfeochan; £56.00, Achnahard; £54.00, Ensay.

Dingwall and Highland Marts Limited, Lochmaddy, September 27 sold: 2,108 store sheep of all classes. Lambs (1,313) sold to £200 per head for a pen of mules from Backhill, Berneray. Ewes (691) sold to £130 (twice) per head for a pen of Blackfaces from 7 Claddach, Carinish. Gimmers (46) sold to £180 per head for a pen of blackfaces from 7 Claddach. Feeding Sheep (58) sold to £120 gross for a Suffolk ram from 8 Clachan Sands, Lochmaddy. Centre Record broken in Lochmaddy. A lovely pen of mule ewe lambs from D MacLean, Failte had the

ringside talking when they fetched £200 a head to stay on the island for breeding. There was a great show of sheep forwards again with a full ringside with lots of locals after ewe lambs, gimmers and good correct ewes. Other leading prices per head Store lambs: Mule - Backhill, £120; Chev - 4 Hacklett, Creagorry, £92 & £76, (twice), 13 Knockintorran, Paiblesgarry, £81.50, £76 & £75, 8 Borve, Berneray, £81 & £78, 8 Torlum, Benbecula, £80.50, 3 Claddach, Kirkibost, £78.50, 17 Knockintorran, Bayhead, £78 10 Rushgarry, Berneray, £77, 4 Tigharry, Lochmaddy, £76, 17 Borve, Berneray, £76, 2/3 Clachan sands, Lochmaddy, £76, 6 Borve, Berneray, £76 & £75.50, Borve view, 18 Liniolate, £75.50, Trumisgarry, Lochmaddy, £75, 10 Hougharry, Lochmaddy, £75, 24 Claddach, Baleshare, £75; BF - 18 Locheport, £84 & £72, 1 Howbeg, Lochboisdale, £80 & £78, 6 Borve, £74 & £72 4 Hacklett, £74, 291 Kilpheder, Lochboisdale, £72, 21 Locheport, Lochmaddy, £72; TexX - 4 Hacklett, £82 & £78, Seaview, Knockline, £80 & £77.50, Crois Moirag, Clachan, £77.50; Crosses - 24 Balemore, Bayhead, £82, 6 Borve, £77.50, 19 Illeray, Clachan,

£77.50 & £77, Crois Moirag, £75.50, 25 Balemore, Bayhead, £74.50; Suffx - 1 Sollas, North Uist, £79, Trumisgarry, £78.50, 18 Borve, £78, 9 Malaglate, Lochmaddy, £77.50, 7 Sollas, Lochmaddy, £77.50, 3 Claddach, Kirkibost, £76.50, 8 Clachan sands, £76.50, 20 Rushgarry, Berneray, £75, 2/3 Clachan sands, £75. Ewes: Chev - 3 Middlequarter, Sollas, £100 & £80, 23 Liniolate, £98, 1 Balranald, Lochmaddy, £88 & £86, 4 Tigharry, £86 & £81, Bagh na Craoibhe, Lochmaddy, £86, 20 Balemore, £84, £82 & £76 Hillview, 4 Claddach Kyles, £82, Templeside, Carinish, £81, 4 Hacklett, £80, 3 Claddach, £80 & £76, 22 & 10 Balemore, Bayhead, £78 & £77, 2 Newton, Lochmaddy, £75; Suffx - 15 Liniolate, £90, 4 Ahmore, Sollas, £84, 3 Claddach, £80; Crosses - Crois Moirag, £87, 4 Knockline, £87 & £85. Gimmers: BF - 7 Claddach, £160, 291 Kilpheder, £120, £115 & £105, 8 Newton ferry, Lochmaddy, £110; Chev - 1 Balranald, £102, 17 Knockintorran, £102 (twice). Feeding sheep: Chev ram - 6 Borve, £100; X ram - 20 Rushgarry, £100; Chev wdr - 7 Claddach, £94; X wdr - 86 Bualdubh, Eochar, £82, 20 Rushgarry, £80

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The system is easy to move and erect where required and can be easily modified to suit your requirements

MAIN FEATURES:

- Made from high-tensile steel
- All hurdles are 8 railed x 970mm high
- All hot-dipped galvanised finish
- 3000mm (3m) long
- Includes all joining pins/stakes

OPTION 1

20-foot race, 100-foot holding pen £1950 + VAT
Comes with a 100-foot holding pen and 20-foot race, 2 x 2-foot swing gates and all joining pins/stakes included. Our system will safely hold 150 fully grown sheep (approx)

PARTS LIST:

- 14 x 3m (8 railed) sheep hurdles
- 12 x joining pins/stakes
- 2 x 2-foot swing gates



OPTION 2

16 foot sheeted race, 2 way shedding gate, galvanised gate, race joiner. 100 foot of penning, will comfortably hold 200-250 fully grown sheep, £2,450 + VAT.

I can sell 10' wide x 5' high available in packs of 10.

ALL EQUIPMENT FULL GRANT APPROVED



MOBILE CATTLE SYSTEM

FROM £2195 + VAT
Crush Gate optional extra £599.00 + VAT.

As standard, our Mobile Cattle System comes with a 60 foot holding pen and 20 foot race, 1 sliding gate and all joining pins/stakes included. Our system will safely hold 45 full grown cattle (approx.)

The system is easy to move and erect where required and can be easily modified to suit your requirements. Also ideal for TB testing and the cattle sliding gate gives full control of the livestock from outside the race and stops the race from spreading out.

MAIN FEATURES:

- Made from high-tensile steel
- All hurdles are 6 railed x 1.75m high
- A funnel is incorporated into the race-way
- All hot-dipped galvanised finish
- 3000mm (3m) long
- 20-foot race
- 60-foot holding pen. Includes all joining pins/stakes
- Total 200-feet of penning

PARTS LIST:

- 10 x 3m (6 railed) cattle hurdles
- 12 x joining pins/stakes
- 1 x sliding gate

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Beatson's Building Supplies Mull Rally

Two years is long enough. Mull Rally is back. The summer's done, the island's wearing its most beautiful autumn colours and the atmosphere is very, very much building.

For the first time in the event's history of more than half a century, the best rally drivers in Britain have all begun to descend on the Hebridean island. Mull Rally 2021 will be a round of the British Rally Championship, offering the mouthwatering prospect of the BRC's big guns taking on the local heroes.

Leading the defense of island honour is winner last time out: Paul MacKinnon. Paul's Ford Fiesta Rally2 MkII wears the number ones – but he knows he's got his work cut out in the pursuit of a fourth win come Tobermory in the early hours of Sunday morning.

Paul said: "What a class entry we've got. It's going to be

great to see some of these names over here on Mull. For me, I'm going to enjoy myself. I have to be realistic and remember that I've not driven a rally since 2019 and to then throw myself into the mix of semi and professional drivers is a big ask."

Talking about the CA1 Sport car he's never driven before, he added: "It's going to be an interesting one. This is the first time I've driven a left-hand drive car on the event. I was going to try and do the Donegal Harvest Rally [in Ireland] as a bit of a warm-up, but there just hasn't been the time.

"It's my work which allows me to do the rally, so the work absolutely has to come first. Look, I'm just delighted to see the event back. Last year was a long one without the rally, so having folk back and over here again is fantastic. I'm just going to enjoy myself and do what I can."

Paul's fellow islander John MacCrone is in another Fiesta Rally2. The last time he used a four-wheel drive Ford he won the event in 2016. He starts at three, with fellow former winner Daniel Harper's stunning – and hugely popular – Mini JCW WRC one car ahead of him.

Then comes the BRC force. Matt Edwards is seeded at four with current series leader Osian Pryce directly behind him. Both Welshmen land on the island armed with a Volkswagen Polo GTI R5. The first time the German-built machine has competed on Mull Rally.

Like their cars, both drivers are making their debut on the island's all asphalt event.

And both are focusing very much on the season-long championship challenge. Edwards is the defending title holder chasing a third straight crown while Pryce is looking for his first silverware.



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best for the 2021 Rally

brings the best of British to the island

Matt said: "I've never been to the island, so, as you can imagine I've spent a fair while watching YouTube videos in the last few weeks! From what I can see, on paper, Mull's an event that should suit me quite well. It's twisty, narrow roads in the dark - that's the sort of thing I enjoy. "I think we're very well aware that there are some quick locals and if the conditions are a bit more compromised then they're going to have an advantage. If it stays dry, I think it should be about equal. What those guys have in terms of local knowledge, we could balance out with seat time in the cars."

Osian is at something of a loss to explain why this is his first time on the island.

"I was talking to John [MacCrone] about that last week," said Osian, "and I just don't know why I haven't been before. I suppose Mull's always at a similar time to Rally GB and that's always taken the focus before."

"I can't wait though. I'm really looking forward to it - saying that, it does look like a tricky one. We'll be driving the roads as much as we can, but you have to be careful that you don't try to memorise them. You have to focus on the notes. The minute you think you've got it in your head, there will be a corner waiting for you."

"Obviously it's even more tricky in the dark, where it's pretty easy to get disorientated and you absolutely can't switch off for a second. A good recce is vital for this one. But, let's face it, we're not going to be as familiar as the locals. For me, it's got to be about the championship."

It's just as interesting in the scrap for the Junior British Rally Championship with Eamonn Kelly, Will Creighton and Finlay Retson all firing up their Fiesta Rally4s to take

aim at another big points haul. There will, however, be a fleet of locals looking to keep them off the top of the class podium.

The sell-out entry of 150 crews is packed with quality from top to bottom.

Among the highlights to look out for will be the flying MkII Escorts of David Bogie, James MacGillivray and Eddie O'Donnell Jr. Jonathan Mounsey switches from a Mitsubishi Lancer to a Ford Fiesta Rally2, while Tristan Pye's back with his Subaru and fans of the fabulous 2005-specification Ford Focus RS WRC will be pleased to see Hugh Hunter starting from #14.

Kyle White (Peugeot 208 R2) leads the charge for class B honours while John Cressey's Mini Cooper S is another making a more than welcome return in his pursuit of class A success.

This year's event includes 148 competitive miles across 17 stages split into three legs. Starting out of Tobermory at 1930 on Friday October 8, the crews go straight into the first of five stages before arriving into an overnight halt at Salen shortly after midnight.

An 1130 restart from Garmony is the precursor to eight more stages through Saturday afternoon, before a five-hour break and a final four-test loop ending with the classic run up Glen Aros and over the Lochs to a finish outside Tobermory just before two o'clock on Sunday morning.

The last word to the last winner, Paul MacKinnon.

"Let's face it," said Paul, "just getting an entry on the Mull Rally is a great result! I hope everybody comes up and has a good time in a hurry."

Mull Rally itinerary:

Friday October 8

Ceremonial Start, Tobermory 1930
SS1 Mishnish Lochs 1 6.77 miles 1938
SS2 Hill Road/Loch Tuath 14.51 miles 1959
Service Craignure 2119
SS3 Loch Kinloch 1 4.63 miles 2240
SS4 Knock 1 4.79 miles 2304
SS5 Glen Aros/Calgary Bay 19.92 miles 2343
Salen Hotel 0033

Saturday October 9

SS6 Loch Kinloch 2 4.63 miles 1206
SS7 Knock 2 4.79 miles 1229
Service Tobermory 1318
SS8 Mishnish Lochs 2 6.77 miles 1341
SS9 Penmore 1 6.42 miles 1358
SS10 Ensay/Hill Road 1 7.86 miles 1412
Service Tobermory 1520
SS11 Mishnish Lochs 3 6.77 miles 1543
SS12 Penmore 2 6.42 miles 1600
SS13 Ensay/Hill Road 2 7.86 miles 1614
Salen Hotel 1651
SS14 Calgary Bay/Loch Tuath 21.89 miles 2208
SS15 Ben More 4.59 miles 2244
SS16 Scridain 4.31 miles 2308
Service Craignure 0007
SS17 Glen Aros/Achnadriish 15.30 miles 0122
Tobermory Finish 0141



Paul MacKinnon was in stunning form with co-driver Paul Beaton at the 2019 Mull Rally.

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Start date beginning December 2021. Applications closing mid October.

For an application and information pack please write or email, in confidence, to:

The Chair of Trustees
North Argyll Eventide Home Association Ltd
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email: naehltd@gmail.com

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APPORTIONMENT OF COMMON GRAZINGS
Paul Anthony McCallum is applying for an apportionment of the North Glendale South Uist Common Grazings extending to 49.96 ha for the purpose of Cultivation and maintenance of the Croft including purposeful use.
Written comments from any shareholder or owner of the said common grazings (which may be made public to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NW info@crofting.scot by 02/11/2021.

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD APPLICATION TO CREATE A NEW CROFT
T A MacVicar of Uig, Eckford House, Benmore, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8QU, is applying to create a new croft. Case No 109014.
Comments can be made to the Crofting Commission within 28 days of the date of this newspaper and a copy will be forwarded to the applicant.
Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW - info@crofting.gov.scot

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT
Argyll Land Ltd has registered the croft known as Lower Cragabus, Kildalton & Oa, 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 7th July 2022.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.r.o.s.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7938.

Proposed apportionment of a Common Grazing
Angus John Campbell is applying for an apportionment of part of the North Glendale Common Grazing extending to 140.6ha for the purpose of stock management, cultivation maintenance of the croft including purposeful use.
Written comments from any shareholder or owner of the said common grazings (Which maybe made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW - info@crofting.gov.scot by 04/11/2021.

Oban Times
PUBLIC NOTICES
Oban Times
PUBLIC NOTICES

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
21/01723/PP	Erection of 3 dwellinghouses	Plots 1-3 Tynribbie Place, Tynribbie, Appin, Argyll And Bute
21/01790/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and agricultural shed including installation of septic tank, air source heat pump and formation of new access road	Land South East Of Caravans, 13 Kiel Crofts, Benderloch, Oban, Argyll And Bute
21/01425/PP	Rehabilitation of building to form shop and flat	Duart, Isle Of Iona, Argyll And Bute, PA76 6SJ
21/01835/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 18/01691/PP (Erection of dwellinghouse and installation of septic tank)	Land South West Of Colliveneach, Fasnacloch, Appin, Argyll And Bute
21/01574/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of access (amended house design relative to planning permission 17/02854/PP)	Plot A1 Land South West Of Craignis, Balinoe, Isle Of Tiree, Argyll And Bute
21/01647/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of biodisc treatment system and air source heat pump	Garden Ground Of Asknish Cottage, Arduaine, Oban, Argyll And Bute
21/01625/PP	Renovation and erection of extensions to former croft house, demolition of 2 barns and refurbishment of third barn to form garage,workshop, laundry room and office.	Balure, Isle Of Lismore, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 5UL
21/01475/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and installation of two septic tanks	Plot 7 Port An Truan, Port Ellen, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute
21/01648/PP	Erection of telecommunications equipment compound with 20 metre high lattice tower, formation of access and associated works	Land West Of Coulererach, Bruichladdich, Isle Of Islay, 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 Et Bute visit us at: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
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www.highland.gov.uk
The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

**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
21/03955/FUL	Kinlochleven Public Toilets Lochaber Road, Kinlochleven	Change layout of car park amendment to 19/05572/FUL
21/04180/PIP	Land To East Of Torcastle Croft Banavie, Fort William	Erection of House
21/04196/FUL	The Oaks, Perth Place, Upper Achintore, Fort William, PH33 6UL	Installation of holiday letting pod and jacuzzi
21/04483/FUL	Land 50M South Of Tiree, Gairloch, Spean Bridge	Erection of house and self-contained residential unit
21/04484/FUL	Land 40M South Of Rowanbank Steading, Morvern Crescent Lochaline	Erection of 3 houses
21/04491/FUL	Courdale, Station Road, Spean Bridge PH34 4EP	Siting of holiday letting pod
21/04511/LBC	Inverleven, Garbhein Road Kinlochleven PH50 4SE	Installation of replacement windows
21/04536/FUL	2 Airds Crossing, High Street Fort William, PH33 6EU	Sub-division of mixed use shop into 2 units (A and B).
21/04583/FUL	Ben Nevis Manor, Camaghael Fort William, PH33 7NF	Erection of a holiday letting unit
21/04593/FUL	Lochuisge, Kingairloch, Ardgour, Fort William PH33 7AE	Demolition of House and Erection of replacement house
21/04443/FUL	Lyn Leven Guest House, West Laroch, Ballachulish PH49 4JP	Change of use from Guest House to 3 self catering units
21/04551/FUL	Stores Flat, Loan Fern Ballachulish PH49 4JB	Alterations & Extension to form HMO property
21/04574/FUL	Land 25M West Of Lois Mhoire Tigh A Phuirt, Ballachulish	Erection of house

Time period for comments is 14 days from the date of this notice except for 21/04511/LBC – time period is 21 days
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
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Revealing Gaelic voices at Kilmartin Museum

Work has begun at Kilmartin Museum with Gaelic tradition-bearer Adhamh Ó Broin to weave Gaelic language and culture into the exhibitions being developed as part of the museum's ongoing redevelopment.

'Gaelic Voices' is a project that aims to interpret Kilmartin Museum's collections and stories in ways that bring the Gaelic perspective to life for visitors.

Funding from Bord na Gàidhlig's communities fund Taic Freumhan Coimhearsnachd has enabled the museum to work with a Gaelic specialist Adhamh Ó Broin, and with the local Gaelic Medium Education unit, to develop Gaelic content relevant to the local area.

Adhamh Ó Broin has spent years researching Central Argyll's Gaelic dialect and holds a unique archive of voice recordings featuring native speakers. Based in Glasgow, he is a sought-after advisor to the film and television industry, most famously on international hit drama Outlander.

Adhamh recently met with the Kilmartin Museum team and together they visited ancient sites such as Dunadd Fort, where he shared his en-



Adhamh Ó Broin at Dunadd.

thusiasm for Kilmartin Glen. 'Gaelic has been spoken in this area for the best part of two millennia,' he said, 'and was the common language in the kingdom of Dál Riata from its establishment.

'Kilmartin Museum's redevelopment offers an amazing opportunity to highlight Gaelic language and culture in Mid Argyll and to reveal

the rich tapestry of local traditions and folklore which is woven into the landscape and natural world.'

Kilmartin Museum's director and curator Dr Sharon Webb MBE said: 'When we reopen in 2023, our new exhibitions will feature Gaelic music, song and poetry as well as the written word and traditions, ensuring that all

users of Gaelic, whether native speakers or learners, benefit from opportunities to use the language in a museum context.

'It has been fascinating working with Adhamh to reveal the rich stories, perspectives and 'voices' which we will represent throughout the exhibition, linking local history and prehistory with Gaelic culture.'

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

A huge and striking artwork in the form of a wooden boat built and displayed in Tighnabruaich was given excellent coverage in the Oban Times of September 23.

Let's hope, pray and act David's Ark doesn't become as famous as Noah's. David did have help.

Let's hope enough of us respond decisively, including councils, parliaments, governments and individuals that we can avoid great floods or, at least, adapt seriously enough to minimise the destruction.

In the Bible story, God promised not to send another flood to destroy the world. The rainbow as a sign of hope has been used in all sorts of ways since.

There are flood stories in many different traditions. There have been disastrous floods often over the centuries. Science now shows us both

how much humanity is causing this and that there are many constructive ways to improve the situation. Many of these ways can also help with other immediate crises.

For example, better insulation cuts fuel use and therefore household bills. Lowering pollution reduces health problems. There are all kinds of employment opportunities.

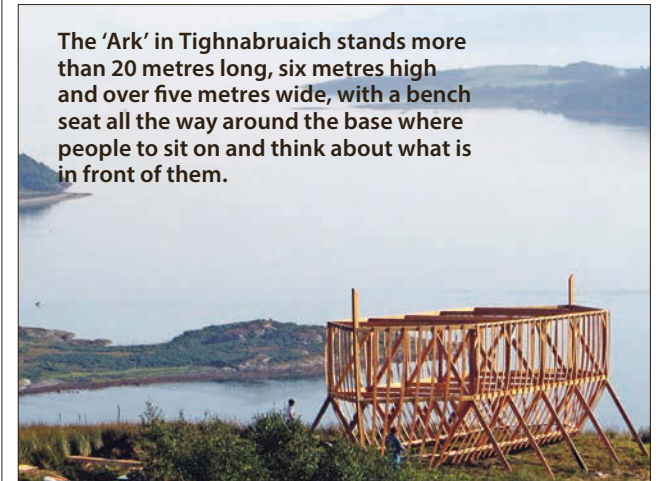
If we've learned anything from the last couple of years it is surely that we ignore warning signs at our peril.

But it's not all doom and gloom. I'm reminded of the quote: 'What if it's all a hoax and we make the world so much better for nothing?'

Climate change is real but in responding appropriately there is plenty of hope for solutions to other problems too. Remember the arks and don't forget the rainbows.

The Reverend Liz Gibson.

The 'Ark' in Tighnabruaich stands more than 20 metres long, six metres high and over five metres wide, with a bench seat all the way around the base where people to sit on and think about what is in front of them.



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GLASGOW CELTIC SOCIETY

Oban Camanachd and Kyles Athletic meet in the 116th Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup Final at Taynuilt Sports Field this Saturday, October 9.

This year will be the fourth consecutive year the two teams have contested the final, with Kyles winning in 2017 and Oban winning in 2018 and 2019, the competition being suspended in 2020 due to the covid-19 pandemic.

The tournament is open to all south senior sides playing in shinty's top three tiers and Glasgow Cowal were inaugural winners in 1879.

Holder Oban Camanachd have lifted the famous trophy 20 times and manager Stephen Sloss is hoping a win on Saturday will pick his team up following what he admits has been a 'difficult season' for the club.

He said: 'All the covid related issues have resulted in a lack of momentum due to game cancellations and the league structure we are in is a lower standard than we normally play.'

'On a positive note, however, it did give us the opportunity to field some of our younger players and give them a taste of senior shinty.'

'To get to a final this season has been difficult but it gives us the opportunity to salvage a disappointing campaign and bring home some silverware.'

The Glasgow Celtic Society Cup is the oldest trophy in shinty and Sloss believes that

if his team can retain it for the third year in a row and win it for the 21st time it would be a massive achievement.

Camanachd won their way through to the final with wins over Ballachulish (10-0), Inveraray (4-0) and Lovat (3-0).

Sloss added: 'The final is always a close and testing game with a lot of international players on both sides.'

'We have a good blend of experience and youth within the squad but players like Daniel Cameron, Daniel Sloss and Garry Lord, to name a few, will be key to our success.'

'Our captain for the final is Keith Macmillan who will retire at the end of this season.'

Keith's determination on and off the park inspires the rest of the squad and it will help us perform to a high level in the final. Also, our previous season top goal scorer Andrew Maccuish has returned to the squad and after scoring the winner in the previous final he strengthens our forward line greatly.'

Camanachd's opponents on Saturday are Kyles Athletic who have lifted the famous trophy a record 34 times.

Leading his team into battle will be manager Robert Baxter who is looking for a win in his first term in charge.

Robert said: 'Everyone at Kyles is really looking forward to Saturday's final and can't wait to take on Oban Camanachd again.'



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THE GLASGOW
CELTIC SOCIETY

 **Scottish
Sea Farms**

**The Scottish Sea Farms
Celtic Society Cup Final**
Shinty's Oldest Competition

Oban Camanachd v Kyles Athletic
Saturday 9th October 2021 Taynuilt Sports Field
2pm throw-up



CELTIC SOCIETY CUP FINAL 2021



'We have already beat them this season and I'm sure they will be going all out not to let that happen again but Kyles are equally determined not to let them win three Celtic Cup Finals in a row.'

'It has not been easy for any team over the last season. It has been difficult getting any continuity and that affects everyone but a cup final is different and we will be up for it.'

With two broken legs and a broken thumb on an ever-growing injury list, Robert is also opting for a mix of youth and experience in his squad, with international player Roddy MacDonald donning the captains armband.

Eighteen-year-old Murdo Macrae will play in his first senior final and will play alongside the experienced Callum Miller.

'Kyles and Camanachd are the top two teams in the league and we have the greatest respect for one another,' added Robert.

'It should be an evenly matched game which both players and supporters will enjoy. We look forward to seeing everyone on Saturday.'

Ian Kennedy is the match referee, taking charge of his first senior final.

He will receive the Jack Asher Memorial Whistle which has been presented since 2016.

The Donald J MacNiven Memorial Medal will be awarded to the man of the match.

With the final fast approaching, Glasgow Celtic Society president Donald Fletcher said: 'The final between Kyles Athletic and Oban Camanachd offers the prospect of a good game between two evenly-matched teams.'

'The society is fortunate and indebted to the Taynuilt sports field committee for all its preparatory work getting the pitch ready for a cup final.'

'Scottish Sea Farms are again sponsoring our competition and their involvement and support is greatly appreciated.'

The Glasgow Celtic Society will again honour the winning team from 50 years ago.

In 1971, Glasgow Mid Argyll beat Inveraray 8-4, after extra time, in the final and members of that Glasgow side will be guests on Saturday, along with members of the Kyles Athletic team which beat Strachur 3-1 in the 1970 final.

Throw-up is at 2pm. Prior to the main event, young shinty stars of the future will contest the South of Scotland Under-14 Cup Final.

Sponsors Scottish Sea Farms are providing free shinty balls to the first 250 people through the gates.

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Free shinty ball
for first 200 spectators through the gates

Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup Final
Saturday 9 October, Taynuilt sports field
Kyles Athletic v Oban Camanachd, 2pm throw-up



Proud to support shinty's oldest tournament

OT

SHINTY ROUND-UP

Skye Camanachd won the Alvanche British Aluminium Balliemore Cup and Kinlochshiel reached the cottages.com MacTavish Cup Final following the shinty action on Saturday October 2.

Alvanche British Aluminium Balliemore Cup Final
Skye Camanachd 3 Beaully 1

Skye Camanachd lifted the Alvanche British Aluminium Balliemore Cup for the third time following their 3-1 victory over Beaully at a wet An Aird, Fort William.

A good-sized crowd gathered for what was widely tipped to be a close encounter and, ahead of throw-up, the players were introduced to Jane MacDonald from sponsors Alvanche, Camanachd Association Chieftain John MacKenzie, president Steven MacKenzie and director John Finlayson.

The final was played at a good pace from the outset with Beaully forcing a couple of early corners whilst, at the other end, MacKay Murray saved to foil Ross Gordon.

Beaully took the lead on nine minutes with a goal from David MacLean's set-piece on the left. MacLean sent the ball across the face of the goal where Ross Forbes ran to the right, losing his marker, and his sweet strike went by Skye keeper Ryan Morrison's left knee at his post.

Skye switched John Gillies to buckshee back, picking up Euan McCormick, with William MacKinnon going to full back to mark David MacLean. Ross Gordon's shot from nothing forced a good MacKay Murray save at the expense of a corner as Skye responded to going behind.

Skye suffered a blow after 13 minutes when veteran Somhairle MacDonald had to limp off with a hamstring problem. He was replaced by the islanders' Under 17 skipper Taylor Matheson.

Skye drew level on 16 minutes. John Gillies sent the ball forward to Ross Gordon who took a touch before launching the ball down the Skye left. Angus Renwick looked to clear but James Pringle nipped in to win possession and cut in on goal before tucking the ball low by the keeper from point-blank range to make it 1-1.

Beaully's had to make an enforced change with David MacLean replaced by Jack MacDonald.

This was an action-packed phase in the final with Skye taking the lead on 19 minutes. John Gillies cleared the ball down the Skye right. Beaully's Colin MacDonald looked to

clear but was closed down by Jordan Murchison and the ball broke to Ross Gordon who quickly found James Pringle who sent a glorious 25-yard drive into the roof of the net.

Beaully re-introduced David MacLean for Jack MacDonald with seven first half minutes remaining, whilst Sam Macphee took over from Iain MacLellan in the islanders' midfield three minutes later.

Robbie Brindle went close to a leveller with his backhand strike going wide of Ryan's Morrison's left post and with the final moving into first half stoppage time, Beaully forced a corner which was taken by Conor Ross but, not for the first time in the final, Skye defended well to take a 2-1 lead into the break.

Skye took Iain MacLellan back on for Sam Macphee on 64 minutes, with Taylor Matheson sending a crisp strike just over the bar following a flowing Skye move moments after.

Jack MacDonald, back on for Beaully, sent a shot high and wide as the rain came down once more.

Sam Macphee re-appeared, this time for Ally 'Cleodi' MacLeod, as both sides continued to make use of the rolling substitutes.

With the rain now teeming down again, Taylor Matheson turned and fired wide of the keeper's left post as the final moved into the closing stages.

Skye were enjoying a good spell and clinched victory with a couple of minutes remaining. James Pringle's corner from the right went out to the far side where Taylor Matheson touched a clever ball inside, picking out Sam Macphee's run. And his superb shot on the run went low into the corner of the goal, beating the keeper on his right side to make it 3-1.

Beaully's Sean Stewart and Skye's Jamie Gillies made late appearances from the bench.

Ross Gordon hit the side-netting following a stoppage time corner with what was the last chance of the game but it didn't matter as Skye took the Balliemore Cup across the bridge for the third time.

Skye manager Kenny MacLeod said: 'I thought the team were excellent to a man. We absorbed a lot of pressure but defensively we are a good side and we are at our best when we stretch teams and we won the game on the break.

'This could definitely be a springboard for the boys. They could go on and defend the Balliemore next year and get into the Premier League and



The victorious Skye Camanachd team in the pouring rain at the end of the game.

Photograph: Neil Paterson.



Skye captain Jordan Murchison lifts the Balliemore Cup. Photograph: Neil Paterson. More photographs at www.obantimes.co.uk

then be in the mix for major honours.'

cottages.com MacTavish Cup - Semi Final
Caberfeidh 1 Kinlochshiel 2

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup winners Kinlochshiel reached the cottages.com MacTavish Cup Final, defeating Caberfeidh 2-1 at Castle Leod.

Caberfeidh's Connor MacGregor was suspended whilst Kinlochshiel were missing Conor Cormack and Jordan Fraser. Ali Nixon, who has been troubled by a hamstring problem, was an unused substitute.

Kinlochshiel's John MacRae played the match at half forward and capitalised on a poor clearance out of the home defence on 28 minutes, hitting a 20-yard shot on the angle into the net.

John MacRae got his and Kinlochshiel's second four minutes into the second half. The goal came following a corner which Blair Morrison tried to clear. MacRae stole in, taking a touch before finishing with a half swing.

Kinlochshiel lost Duncan Matheson and Duncan 'WD' MacRae through injury for the final quarter of the match and Caberfeidh put the west coasters under a lot of pressure towards the end of the contest.

Kevin Bartlett pulled a goal

back with three minutes remaining but it wasn't enough so Kinlochshiel are through to the cottages.com MacTavish Cup Final – a trophy they have never won – where they will play Fort William or Kingussie with their semi-final scheduled for An Aird this Saturday.

Mowi Senior League A
Kilmallie 3 Lochaber 2

Kilmallie had to work hard to finally see off Lochaber 3-2 in their 3pm throw-up at Canal Parks.

Kilmallie boss Martin Stewart kept faith with the side which won on Skye the previous week. Shane Gillies, Lewis Birrell, Andrew Mcalister and Craig MacIsaac all returned to take a place on a strong bench, with defender Stephen Mcalister coming in for Under 14 player Shaun O'Rua the only change. This allowed Michael Rodger to play up front and that switch made immediate dividends when Rodger slotted the ball home to open the scoring on seven minutes.

Ben Delaney found space to level on 15 minutes, before a good finish from Conor Sweeny put Lochaber in front on 56 minutes.

There was a flashpoint on 64 minutes as Stuart Callison went through on goal with Barry MacDonald challenging. Referee Willie MacDonald blew for a Kilmallie free-hit but the players had late swings at each other and were both sent off, with Lochaber keeper Callum MacDonald booked.

With the sides now playing 11 versus 11, there was more space and Michael Rodger took advantage to make it 2-2 on 71 minutes.

Then, with six minutes remaining, Daniel Stewart's ball forward found Michael Rodger around the penalty spot and he passed the ball home to complete his hat-trick and win the game.

The sides also contested the BSW Cup, meaning Kilmallie skipper Robbie MacFadyen lifted a trophy for the second successive Saturday having taken the Thomas Ferguson

Memorial Cup in Portree the previous Saturday.

Kilmallie boss Martin Stewart said: 'It was a fair battle, a good clean game and a really good local derby. It got very wet during the last 30 minutes which made it difficult for the players.'

'Michael [Rodger] made a great contribution. He almost makes the game stand still as he always seems to have so much time on the ball. His goals were all expertly taken. He more or less passed the ball into the net each time.'

Mowi Senior League B
Strathglass 0 Kingussie 7

Kingussie were too strong for Strathglass, winning 7-0 in their noon throw-up at Cannich.

Strathglass were without suspended skipper Josh Fraser as well as Innes Hood, Ruairidh Strachan, Neil Hope and Scott Douglas.

Savio Genini returned for Kingussie but they were without Calum Grant, Fraser Munro and Ryan Borthwick, whilst Lee Bain was with the second team. Keeper Rory MacGregor was a late-call off, so Dylan Borthwick replaced him in goals although Liam Borthwick took over after half an hour.

A turn and shot from Roddy Young on three minutes got Kingussie off to a great start whilst James Falconer burst forward from wing centre to add a second five minutes later, netting following a Barrie Dallas corner.

Savio Genini sent a backhand strike high into the net to add a third on 10 minutes, whilst Ruairidh Anderson ran onto James Hutchison's ball forward to make it 4-0 on 17 minutes.

Roddy Young got his second a couple of minutes after the re-start, scoring at the back post, whilst Barrie Dallas on 68 minutes and Dylan Borthwick on 82 minutes rounded off the win.

Strathdearn Cup – semi-final
Lovat 2 Kingussie 0

The Lovat seconds are through to the Strathdearn Cup Final,

scoring twice in the second half to beat the Kingussie seconds 2-0 at Balgate.

Lovat hit the front on 62 minutes. Iain Nicolson collected a goal hit in the half forward position and played the ball wide to Jamie Matheson who ran out before cutting the ball back across goal finding Fraser Gallacher at the back post who tapped the ball past keeper Craig Dawson.

Iain Nicolson clinched the final spot with a couple of minutes remaining. A good defensive clearance found Jamie Matheson on the left. Iain Nicolson ran in behind the defence, allowing Matheson to play a ball over the top. Nicolson took the ball down and took a touch to the right, past the keeper who was rushing off his line and found the net from a tight angle.

Lovat now face their Newtonmore counterparts in the final this Saturday. The final venue was decided by the toss of a coin with Lovat winning home advantage.

Mowi North League C
Inverness 8 Lewis Camanachd 0

The Inverness colts were 8-0 winners against Lewis Camanachd in their 12.30pm throw-up at the Bught Park.

Steven Bellshaw scored on 24 and 42 minutes, either side of Ruairidh Hughes' 34 minute strike which saw the hosts 3-0 ahead at the break.

Steven Bellshaw completed his hat-trick a minute into the second half and added his fourth a couple of minutes later. Skye MacIntosh made it 6-0 on the hour, with Euan Campbell adding two more on 68 and 85 minutes to make the final score 8-0.

Mowi South League A
Col Glen 2 Bute 0

Col Glen scored a goal in each half to beat Bute 2-0 at Glendaruel.

Andrew MacVicar got the opener on 25 minutes with Christopher Blair adding a second on 65 minutes.

The sides also competed for this year's Carmichael Cup.

The Sports Shop's charity scramble

The Sports Shop, Oban, is inviting would-be golfers to take part in a three-man charity scramble on Sunday October 17 at Glencruitten Golf Club.

Entry is £15 per team with all proceeds raised from the entry and a raffle going to the Argyll Wellbeing Hub.

The winners will each receive a pair of Adidas golf shoes and a £50 voucher for the shop. Prizes for second and third and closest to the hole at 18th with second shot will also be handed out. The grand raffle features prizes donated by The Sports Shop, Coastal Connections and Cafe Shore, among many others.

Billy Thomson from The Sports Shop said: 'We are excited about hosting this fundraiser and will consider making it an annual event. Many thanks to everyone who has donated prizes and the golf club itself.'

Call The Sports Shop on 01631 562050 or email their sportsshop-oban@btconnect.com to enter.

Seil golfers do the anniversary waltz

Isle of Seil Golf Club held its 25th anniversary celebration competition followed by the club's prizegiving on September 25.

Teams of two or three players took part in a Stableford waltz one-two-three best scoring sequence.

A share of the spoils went to two teams, both with 35 points: George Hannah, Denise MacMahon and Ian Galloway; and Donnie Campbell and Dawn Singleton.

A delicious celebration cake was made by Fiona Cruickshanks and cut by Isobelle Smith, who also delivered an appreciation speech mentioning all the past and current members who had enabled the club to flourish.

She said it was particularly pleasing to have old and new members taking part in club activities and appearing on the prize list.

Prizewinners 2020/21:
Curly Cup - Mark



McDougall; Salmon Centre Trophy - Dawn Singleton; Isle of Seil Sports Club Singles - Pat Mill; Graham Hunt Trophy - Mark McDougall; 18 Hole Stableford - Stevie Raebitt; Highland Arts Burns Crystal Trophy - Dawn

Singleton; Campbell Cunningham Doubles - John Taylor and Gordon MaColl; Two clubs and putter nine holes - Scott Cooper; Winter Stableford - Bill Clark; Monthly Mini Medal - Ian Galloway; Two clubs and

a putter 18 holes - Mark McDougall; The Captain's Prize - Dawn Singleton; Summer League Nine Holes - Gordon McKenzie; Boatyard Trophy - Mark McDougall; Ne'rdy Stableford - Graham Scott.

Winners of the Anniversary Waltz competition, from left, Denise MacMahon, Ian Galloway, Donnie Campbell, Dawn Singleton, Pat Mill, club captain, and George Hannah.



Lochnell Leopards.

Action packed day for young soccer stars

It was a welcome return to action for more than 400 young footballers from across Argyll and Lochaber when Lochnell Football Club held its fifth football festival at North Connel at the weekend.

Postponed from last year, the popular event attracted 54 teams across six primary school age groups, with fun fours and five-a-sides for younger children in the morning followed by keenly contested seven-a-side matches for older players in the afternoon.

After a day of non-stop action, each player richly deserved their commemorative medal, provided by Anderson Banks Solicitors and Estate Agents, sponsors of the festival for the second year.

Lochnell Football Club greatly appreciates the continued support of the local firm and also thanked all visiting teams, coaches, parents and referees for making the day such a resounding success.



Oban Saints Rovers.



Action from the Lochnell Football Festival.



Lochnell FC 2011's.

For more football festival photographs visit www.obantimes.co.uk

Oban Saints book place in cup third round draw

Oban Saints	5
Port Glasgow	2
SAFA Challenge Cup second round	

Oban Saints booked their place in the Scottish Amateur Cup third round draw with a 5 - 2 victory over Port Glasgow at a rain-soaked Glencruitten last Saturday.

Goals from Gavin Forgive, Craig MacEwan and Ross Maitland added to a brace from Fraser MacFarlane sealed the win against the Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division outfit which, for long spells, was not nearly as comfortable as the final scoreline would suggest.

The Saints opener had a slice of good fortune about it, but

was nonetheless a composed finish from Fraser MacFarlane. Stephen Kangley looked favourite to cut out Donald Campbell's raking 22nd minute cross field pass intended for MacFarlane but the Port Glasgow keeper slipped on the greasy Glencruitten turf leaving him stranded 22 yards from his goal-line. MacFarlane capitalised fully on his good fortune, immediately getting the ball under control and steering it unerringly into the unguarded net.

Saints were left appealing in vain for an offside decision that didn't come when Bradley Anderson raced onto a David McClure pass to slot past Graham Douglas for a 32 minute equaliser. It took Saints just two minutes to regain the lead

when Gavin Forgive's well timed run was picked out by Ross Maitland with the young midfielder slotting a good finish under the advancing Port Glasgow keeper.

The second half was just 90 seconds old when the visitors levelled for the second time. John McGachy pounced on a stray pass midway inside the Saints' half and raced away on the left. McGachy's tempting ball along the six-yard line was turned in by Paul Millar on the stretch who got there just ahead of Cammy Hill.

A rampaging run up the left in the 54th minute took Cammy Hill all the way into the Port Glasgow box with the big left fullback retaining composure to pick out the supporting run of Fraser MacFarlane

who completed his brace with aplomb.

Cammy Hill did well again on the left to force a 72nd minute corner kick which Ross Maitland sent into the six-yard box. Stephen Kangley's attempted punched clearance landed kindly at the feet of Craig MacEwan who prodded the ball goalward and through the legs of James O'Shea on the goal-line.

As the clock ticked into the last of the four minutes added by Mr Trainer, Ross Maitland burst through the inside right channel onto a Craig MacEwan lay off. The Saints evergreen rounded Stephen Kangley and held off the challenge of James O'Shea before lifting the ball into the unguarded net to round off the scoring.

This Saturday, October 9, Saints are back on league duty when they welcome Wishaw High School Former Pupils to Glencruitten.

Youth results and fixtures

Scottish Cup second round: U13s lost 0-9 to Gleniffer. U15s drew 2-2 with Cambuslang Colts before winning 4-2 on penalties. Scorers for Saints in regulation time were Rhys Millar and Kai McKechnie. U16s won 7-0 v Hillwood. Scoring for Saints were Cody McCulloch, Louis Paterson, 3, and Michael Campbell, 3.

It's back to league games this Sunday: U13s v Palace Park; U15s v Helensburgh; Renton v U16s; U17s - no game.

RUGBY ROUND-UP

With the Oban Lorne 1st XV match cancelled due to their opposition team's pitch being waterlogged and the ladies having a weekend off, it was left to the stars of the future to provide some rugby action last weekend.

The Under 16s took on Strathaven at home and took a quick lead with a break away try from Thomas Jackson in the first minute.

Oban always looked the stronger team and tries in quick succession from Callan Taylor, captain Finlay Brown and another for Jackson underlined that point.

Just as Strathaven looked to put pressure on the Oban 22, a loose ball

was pounced on and quick hands led to James Campbell breaking and running the length of the field for try number five.

This was followed by another two tries by Jackson as Oban played fast and wide rugby with the forward pack giving the backs a good platform to play off. The game was ended at halftime following a try from fly half Josh Lane with Oban winning 50-0.

The second half was played as a development game with Oban and Strathaven mixing up teams and playing together.

A big thanks to Billy Thompson for stepping up at short notice to referee

the game. Man of the match for Oban was inside centre Murray MacDonald. Next game is away to Loch Lomond on October 24.

The Girls Under 14's travelled to Cartha Queen's Park for a regional girls event where they played Biggar, East Kilbride and Cartha.

The girls were undefeated in all matches and were especially delighted with the win over Biggar who they lost to in the first series event. This time around, the Oban girls showed great improvement and defeated the Biggar girls 7 tries to 5.

This is all down to the hard work of the players at training and at the Oban

High School School of Rugby. New players are always welcome. Girl train on Wednesdays after school at Oban High School. After the October break, the girls will be back in action at the next regional event.

The Under 14s game was called off due to Covid in the opposition's squad.

This weekend the men's 1st XV take on Cumnock at Glencruitten, 3pm kick off, while the ladies travel to play Glasgow Uni. The Minis will be travelling to Fort William for the third and final Dalriada tournament on Saturday, kicking off at noon. Walter Spears is hoping for good numbers again following a very good turnout for their own round.



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*You must be 18 or over to attend the event.

Bob's late season woes continue

Robert MacIntyre's late season troubles continued at the weekend with another missed cut, this time on home soil at the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship in St Andrews.

The unique format of the competition meant players played Carnoustie, Kingsbarns and the Old Course on the first three days before hopefully making the cut to play the final round on Sunday.

It started promisingly for Bob at Carnoustie on Thursday where he shot a fine three under par total of 69 at arguably the toughest of the three courses. However, any hopes of getting into contention disappeared at Kingsbarns on Thursday with an ugly 77 including a triple bogey eight at his third hole.

The Oban star deserves huge credit for battling hard to make the cut on Saturday at the home of golf and at one point, mid-way through his back nine, was only one birdie away from making it. A late bogey, however, derailed his charge and he finished with a 70 to leave him two shots adrift.

Next up for Bob is the Estrella Damm Andalucia Masters on October 14.



Bob MacIntyre on the third tee of the Old Course St Andrews during the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship.

Photograph: Kevin McGlynn.



Oban Lorne RFC Under 16s were in action at home to Strathaven at the weekend. Find out how they, and other club teams got on, on page 43. Photograph: Stephen Lawson.

Ladies and gents: your Oban 2021 champions

BOWLING

It's all over bar the shouting at Oban Bowling Club with the last of this year's championship finals decided.

There was a reduced schedule this year as a result of Covid but the ties were hotly contested as always as members battled to get their names on the trophies.

Husband and wife Neil and Anne MacDougall both found themselves in the winning zone with the former picking up his second championship victory and the latter taking her fourth. The happy couple will now have the chance to represent the club at next year's regional finals with a place at the National Championships in Ayr up for grabs.

Nominated Pairs winners will also receive the same opportunity.



Anne and Neil MacDougall, foreground, took the 2021 Ladies and Gents Singles Championships respectively.

Closing day this year will be on Saturday October 16 when a President v Vice President match will be played. The club's annual general meeting will take place on Saturday December 4.

2021 championship results:

Gents Champion - Neil MacDougall; MacBrayne Trophy - Neil MacDougall; Centenary Cup - David Reid; Nominated Pairs - Neil MacDougall and Alec Carmichael; Balloted Pairs - Donald MacLean and Roddie MacLeod. Ladies Champion - Anne MacDougall; Ardshiel Trophy - Anne Stewart; Nominated Pairs - Elizabeth MacGillivray and Helen MacLean; Balloted Pairs - Helen MacLean and Sandra Grieve.

First podium of the season for ace McPhee

Moto3 race ace John McPhee took his first podium of the season with third place in a double-red-flag Grand Prix of the Americas.

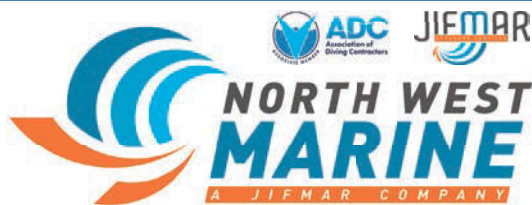
Following a difficult qualifier the previous day, John started in tenth position taking a place on the fourth row of the grid on the Austin circuit.

Settling into his rhythm in the first part of the race, John quickly started making progress and set the fastest lap as he moved into third position before the first red flag. With that being the declared result, John took 16 World Championship points and his first podium of the season.

Commenting on the race John said: 'We worked hard for that and my team and I deserved the champagne today. I'm so happy to be back on the box, I felt like we had the pace to battle for the win but we'll certainly take the podium and look forward to Misano next.'

Next up for John is the Emilia Romagna GP at the Misano World Circuit in Marco Simoncelli, Italy, on October 22-24.

More sport on pages 38 and 39.



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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 7 October, 2021** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

7	0009 0.6 0602 4.0 TH 1210 0.4 1814 4.3	9	0117 0.6 0707 4.0 SA 1331 0.4 1924 4.1	11	0240 1.0 0829 3.6 M 1508 1.0 2048 3.4	13	0440 1.5 1041 3.1 W 1723 1.6 2336 2.7
8	0042 0.5 0633 4.1 F 1249 0.3 1848 4.3	10	0156 0.7 0746 3.9 SU 1417 0.7 2004 3.8	12	0333 1.2 0922 3.3 TU 1609 1.3 2143 3.0	14	0602 1.7 1316 3.1 TH 1855 1.7

OBAN WEATHER

Thursday

Heavy rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 13°C to 17°C.

Friday

Light rain and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 12°C to 16°C.

Saturday

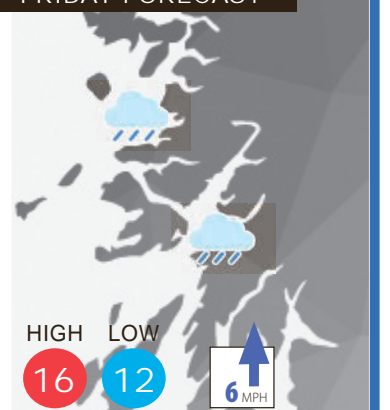
Light cloud and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 10°C to 15°C.

Sunday

Light cloud and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 11°C to 14°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST

Ardishaig	-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 16 LOW 12

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& OBAN TIMES

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95p



Ben goes on personal pilgrimage in Hebrides

THIS WEEK: Movie star's birthday wishes for Fort cinema

LIVING THE GOODE LIFE

Former Inverlochy resident Alice marks her birthday with seventh card from the Queen.

● FULL STORY PAGE 7

Photograph: Iain Ferguson

Nevis Range reveals £4m expansion plan

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Up to 50 new full and part-time jobs are expected to be created by a £4million project to transform the Nevis Range mountain resort outside Fort William, with Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) this week announcing £800,000 in funding for the project.

Work began this month at Nevis Range on a 22-bedroom hotel, 24-berth bunkhouse, bar and restaurant, bike shop, children's activity centre, childcare centre and a covered courtyard with event space.

The plan is to construct these developments in as low carbon a way as possible and include such elements as a high degree of insulation, low energy lighting and solar panels for power.

A statement issued by HIE on Tuesday confirmed the new developments are expected to create up to 50 additional full and part-time jobs.

The creation of a hotel and bunkhouse is said to be in direct response to customer surveys carried out by Nevis Range where demand for accommodation was clear. The new accommodation building and courtyard will connect with the existing base station.

Of HIE's investment, £500,000 will be used to help

● Turn to page 2 for more

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Charity's change of fortunes

Since its formation eight years ago, Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry charity trustees struggled to find funds to appoint a community development officer to oversee projects.

Following the demise of the area's community council in 2019, the charity has experienced a radical change in its fortunes.

New trustees, an expanding membership, secure funding and recognition for the work in supporting the community through the pandemic has led to two years funding from HIE and SSE Stronelairg Windfarm Community Fund to appoint a part-time community development officer. The successful applicant will initially consult with communities to draw up a community action plan so funds are spent on community sustainability and on the priorities identified by the community.

The officer will then manage the plan, be available to the groups looking to access funds and report back to the trustees.

New centre makes it easier for residents to support refugees

Making a donation to the Lochaber Supports Refugees group has never been easier thanks to the opening of new premises in Fort William's High Street, writes Iain Ferguson.

The local group has been active for many years, collecting clothes, footwear and other items as diverse as camping equipment at ITS storage base at Camaghael from where they were sorted ready to be sent to those in need in other parts of the world.

All of this is now being undertaken at what most people will recognise as the former Wynne's the Butcher shop at Aird's Crossing. This will be open for donations twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays between 11am and 1pm.

As a result of recent conflicts, the need for adult male cloth-



ing in particular is increasing, with shirts, trousers, socks, underwear, thick and warm hoodies, all much in demand and being put to good use. Women's clothing, too, will be very welcome.

Donations should be clean and in good condition so they can be quickly sorted by volunteers, ready for immediate use by those who need them. They also put together complete 'family' boxes with adult and children's clothing.

Clothing is both sent abroad and given to refugees arriving in this country, who will almost certainly have left their homes with almost nothing and will need assistance as they face an uncertain future. So with winter coming, a par-

ticular emphasis, as Highland dwellers will know from their own experience, will be on staying warm.

Being part of the 'Highlands Support Refugees' charity is also an advantage when aid is needed abroad as, with increasing costs and paperwork, co-operation is vital so that a number of charities can pool transport resources to make sure delivery of the clothing can reach the places it is needed.

In addition to individual

Lochaber Supports Refugees co-ordinator Sandra Smith, right, and volunteers in the new shop on Fort William High Street.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

donations, many businesses, including large retail chains, hand over new clothes which are extra to their requirements.

Likewise, the refugee charity will donate items they are unable to use to shops run by other charities so that nothing goes to waste.

Co-ordinator Sandra Smith the Lochaber Times: 'The new shop is absolutely fantastic in that it is visible and in a convenient location for both donations and our volunteers. The rent is also much lower which means less of a drain on our finances.'

'It is a great space and I would like to thank everyone who helped turn the building from an empty shell into a working area, with places for sorting and storage.'

Nevis Range reveals £4m plan for hotel and bunkhouse

Continued from page 1.

towards Nevis Range's continuing journey to net zero.

The net zero tourism investment is part of a £3.95m pledge to Scottish tourism in March 2021 and is one of 10 areas of priority within the Scottish Government's £25m commitment to deliver the Tourism Taskforce recommendations and national programme for tourism recovery.

This project is the latest in a series by Nevis Range over the last few years which includes snow-making equipment, campervan facilities and the recently opened Blue Doon bike track.

Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross area manager for HIE Alastair Nicolson called it an 'incredibly exciting project for the area', with dozens of new jobs set to be created and the new facilities able to accommodate visitors wishing to extend their stay.

'We have worked closely with Nevis Range for a number of years now and initiatives like this are incredibly important in the transition to a net zero economy,' Mr Nicolson added.

'The value of tourism to the Lochaber area cannot be overstated and we are delighted to support this latest project which will serve to enhance the area's appeal as one of the UK's top adventure tourism destinations.'

Net zero

Nevis Range managing director Chris O'Brien added that achieving net zero and climate change were at the top of resort's agenda as it continued to develop.

'EV charge points, hydro power and a locally-sourced produce strategy are just the beginning for us,' he said.

'We are currently engaged in a carbon footprint analysis study that will help us roadmap the best way for us

to achieve net zero status. This project is possible due to the support of HIE.'

'I'm delighted that both parties share a vision for the creation of quality, sustainable adventure tourism experiences right here in the outdoor capital of the UK.'

Councillor Andrew Baxter, Fort William and Ardnamurchan, who chairs Lochaber Area Committee, said the announcement was 'great news' for Fort William and the wider Lochaber area.

'The council gave its backing for a master plan for Nevis Forest back in 2015 which included this hotel and associated works,' Mr Baxter told the Lochaber Times this week.

'I am delighted to see such a big investment coming to our area, meaning this can now go ahead.'

'It will add greatly to the visitor offer that already exists in Lochaber.'



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No new school on horizon for Blar Mhor youngsters

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Concerns have been expressed about the impact on pupil rolls at primary schools close to the new housing being built on the Blar Mhor at Fort William after it emerged there is no new school planned for the area for at least the next five years.

In what is the largest affordable housing scheme to be built in the Highlands since the 1980s, the housing on the site forms the first phase of the strategic Blar Mor development that includes a replacement for the Belford Hospital and a STEM centre for West Highland College.

The housing element of the project is due to be completed by May of next year and comprises 117 new affordable homes of various sizes and

tenures to help meet the demand within the area.

But at last week's meeting of Kilmallie Community Council, which includes the Blar Mhor area, members were worried about the impact so many new families would have on the nearest primaries at Banavie and Caol.

Community council chairman John Hutchison has in the last two months written twice to the chief executive officer for education and learning at Highland Council, as well as to officials in the estates department and the chief executive of the local authority, but has not had a reply.

'But I am going to continue to press for a response from officials because it's just not right that we don't hear anything. I'll keep doing that because we've got so many houses coming there with no

school apart from what's on the opposite side of the main road,' he added.

Highland Council member Allan Henderson, Caol and Mallaig, said any additional pressures on school rolls could see an extension to buildings accommodated on the Caol campus which had

'There are five schools in the first part [of the capital programme] and another five to come on board but that doesn't include the Blar Mhor...'

been designed with this in mind, adding: 'But there is certainly nothing in the capital programme - there are five schools going forward in the first part of the programme, costing upwards of in the region of £60m and another five to come on board but that certainly doesn't include the

Blar Mhor at that stage, so it could be a long way down the line,' he added.

Community council secretary Russell Leaper said the last information he had was that schools at Caol and Banavie were at 90 per cent capacity and if that was correct then the new houses

would mean there would be a shortage of pupil places. Councillor Ben Thompson, Caol and Mallaig, told the meeting that the last time the Lochaber High associated schools group rolls were reported to councillors was three years ago or four years ago when they were at 90 per cent capacity. I think the two new Caol classrooms went on after that. We are due to have an update and the Lochaber one should be next year,' said Councillor Thompson adding that the projection for these local schools was nowhere yet near the more than 100 per cent being projected for schools in the east Inverness area catchment due to new housing.

'But we do need to get an answer. And I'm deeply disappointed, John, that you've not had a response. I think that's pretty unacceptable really,' added Councillor Thompson.

Mr Hutchison replied: 'Even if the answer was that there were no plans whatsoever because the rolls don't look like it for the next 10 years, that's at least an answer. But we should be getting some kind of answer.'

Asked by the Lochaber Times if she was concerned over the potential impact on school rolls, constituency MSP Kate Forbes said: 'Looking at the current roll figures on paper, it would certainly appear that there isn't a huge amount of spare capacity in the present primary school buildings.

'If there is to be considerable house building in Fort William over the coming years, as we expect and hope, then capacity is a legitimate concern to be raising.

'I would hope this matter is on Highland Council's agenda and they will be giving it careful consideration.'

Trainspotting star Ewan sends best wishes for cinema birthday

He may be one of the most recognisable movie stars in the world but Scotland's Ewan McGregor still found time to record a special video message to help mark the recent first anniversary of the Highland Cinema in Fort William, writes Mark Entwistle.

The Star Wars actor was asked by cinema owner Angus MacDonald if he would record a video message to be played at the cinema ahead of a showing of Trainspotting - which had been picked as the anniversary night film and which stars McGregor, who hails originally from Crieff in Perthshire.

Mr MacDonald explained to the Lochaber Times: 'I met Ewan and his two daughters two years ago on the island of Muck. He was very interested in the opening of the Highland Cinema. Due to Covid, he couldn't be at the opening but we kept in touch.

'He loves Lochaber and comes here frequently. Hamish [responsible for Highland Cinema marketing and IT] was keen to show Trainspotting for our first anniversary.

'He suggested we ask him for a video clip.



Film star Ewan McGregor, photographed here with a friend's child while on holiday on Muck, recorded a special video introduction for a showing of his hit movie Trainspotting at the Highland Cinema recently.

'He immediately replied yes and two and a half thousand people have now seen that clip.'

In the video message, McGregor tells the audience: 'Congratulations Highland Cinema on your first birthday. I always thought it was a brilliant idea to have a cinema in Fort William.

'It's not the easiest thing to open anything in the last couple of years so congratulations on doing that and well done, and hello to everyone who is there tonight on this 25th an-

niversary of Trainspotting. I wish I could be there to watch it with you. I would really, really like that, but I can't get over there at the moment for all different kinds of reasons, but I hope you have a brilliant night.

'I send you all my best wishes and enjoy the film.'

Highland Cinema finance manager Elaine Brayshaw attended the Trainspotting showing and said there was a fantastic response in the room, with a round of applause after Ewan's video introduction.

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Man sentenced for frightening sisters

A 61-year-old Big Issue seller has been banned for two years from contacting two teenage sisters whom he frightened with unwanted approaches over an eight-month period.

Sheriff Margaret Neilson also ordered Robert Bloomfield of Campbell Court, Fort William, to perform the maximum 300 hours of unpaid work after hearing he had a previous conviction for stalking a woman several years ago.

Bloomfield had previously admitted one charge of stalking and another of causing fear and alarm with sentence being deferred at Inverness Sheriff Court for a background report.

The two siblings were aged 18 and 12 years at the time.

Defence solicitor advocate Mike Chapman told the court: 'Given his previous conviction and his age, he ought to have known his behaviour was unacceptable. He did not intend to cause harm or distress but accepts the victims would have

felt scared. 'He has not reoffended in the two years since these matters. If he is jailed, he will lose his home and his livelihood,' Mr Chapman, who urged the Sheriff to impose a community based disposal, added.

Sheriff Neilson agreed to a non-custodial sentence but warned Bloomfield he would be jailed if he breached the order in any way.

At an earlier hearing, fiscal depute Martina Eastwood told the Sheriff that Bloomfield first met the older girl on a bus in Fort William and engaged her in conversation, asking her several questions including her name.

Ms Eastwood said the girl replied just to be polite.

But then she saw him in the days after that initial encounter and near her home mostly sitting in a camper van.

'This made her feel uneasy,' Ms Eastwood continued.

On one occasion, Ms

Eastwood added, his window was open and he stretched out his arm to stop her from walking past.

'This behaviour carried on for at least a month and eventually she had had enough and began taking the longer route to work to avoid him.'

Ms Eastwood told the court that the girl met him again in High Street and then again in September when he was once more at the end of her street.

When he mentioned that he tried to access her work, the girl was frightened, told her boyfriend and moved in with him, the court heard.

Ms Eastwood said Bloomfield then twice approached the girl's sister as she walked home from a park.

The first was in 2019 and the second occasion was on the same day as Bloomfield's work comment. The sisters' told their parents about previous events and the police were informed.



Isobel MacPhee hands over her £300 donation to Julie Bradbury of Highlands and Islands Blood Bikes. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Home-baker raises £300 for Blood Bikes

Money raised by the sale of hand-knitted crafts and home-baking from outside a woman's home near the Caledonian Canal has boosted the coffers of the Highlands and Islands Blood Bikes charity.

Throughout the summer, Isobel MacPhee set up a table near the Caledonian Canal to sell her hand-knitted crafts and home-baking to passers-by in aid of the Highlands and Islands Blood Bikes charity.

The charity provides a vital, free service to the NHS by transporting important and urgent samples between hospitals and specialist laboratories which are vital in getting the right treatment for patients.

They use mainly motorcycles, provided by Blood Bikes, to

suitably qualified volunteers who willingly give their time, when needed, to make sure the samples are delivered as quickly as possible.

One bike is located at Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team's base in Fort William, with others at key points across the area they cover, all of which have to be bought and maintained by the charity.

Being in constant demand, the bikes can require new tyres every six months, regular servicing and when the mileage gets high, to be replaced.

Isobel met up with Blood Bikes volunteers last Saturday outside Morrisons in Fort William, where they set up a display to raise awareness of their work and hopefully attract donations.

Isobel started their day well by handing them £300, which she raised at her table.

Julie Bradbury of Highlands and Islands Blood Bikes said: 'We are delighted to receive this donation from Isobel and thank her for all her efforts. She did a great job not only raising money, but in letting people know of our existence and what we do. Many thanks to her for working so hard on our behalf and raising such a great amount. Thanks also to the manager of Morrisons for allowing us to set up our stall outside the store.'

Blood Bikes are always on the lookout for new volunteers and more information can be found by calling 08432 897577 or by email info@haibloodbikes.co.uk



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CalMac buys second-hand ferry for fleet

A second-hand ferry from Norway has been bought for £9 million to run on the Oban-Craignure route, the owner of CalMac's ferry fleet has announced.

The MV Utne, a roll-off passenger and cargo ship built in 2014, is due to start service early next year, Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) said on Monday. The 50m long vessel will accommodate 195 passengers and 34 cars.

The purchase comes after a summer of cancellations and disruption across the CalMac ferry network due to breakdowns with the ageing ferry fleet. 'Communities in Skye and the Western Isles will also benefit as a result of the cascade of vessels elsewhere on the network,' CMAL said.

MV Utne is being bought from Norled, a Norwegian shipping company that operates 45 car ferries, for an undisclosed sum. However, CMAL estimates the total cost, including modifications, will be £9m - a tenth the price of the new ferries MV Glen Sannox and Hull 802, which are more than four years late, with costs doubling in total to more than £200m. Kevin Hobbs, chief executive of CMAL, said: 'We are glad to bring this much-needed second-hand tonnage to the fleet to provide the operator, CalMac, with some resilience.'

'MV Utne has been operating successfully, with a fully compliant passenger certificate from the Norwegian Maritime Board. The vessel has operated for five years in Norwegian waters and that offers us confi-

dence in its compliance, safety and operability.'

Robbie Drummond, managing director of CalMac, said: 'The addition of the MV Utne to the CalMac fleet is extremely welcome and will bring much-needed resilience to the network. We will continue to work closely with Transport Scotland and CMAL to determine how best MV Utne can support our delivery of lifeline services.'

The MV Utne will transfer to CMAL around the end of October, before undergoing modification work to allow it to enter service on the Oban-Craignure route.

The works are expected to be completed by early 2022, with CalMac staff then undergoing on-board training and familiarisation.

Ardgour woods receive national recognition

The ancient woodlands of Camusnagaul and Achaphubuil have been worked since before the Middle Ages, but much has changed since the days when people could be fined sixpence for the so-called crime of just collecting firewood to keep their crofts warm.

Now these 67 hectares are a remaining fragment of only 1.4 per cent of ancient woodlands still surviving in the UK.

But today they boast an extraordinarily rich and complex ecosystem, primarily of oak, ash and birch trees with extensive niche habitats of mosses, lichens, fungi and bryophytes and are home to a myriad of wildlife.

They have also provided a much-valued sanctuary for the local community, particularly during the Covid lockdowns, and have now received national recognition in this year's Scotland's Finest Woods Awards.

Treslaig and Achaphubuil Woodland Trust looks after the woods at Camusnagaul and Achaphubuil which won second place and picked up a much-coveted Highly Commended plaque in the small community woodland group category.

Scotland's Finest Woods Awards winners - nicknamed Scotland's 'Tree Oscars' - were announced recently at the first online awards ceremony.

The woodlands at Camusnagaul and Achaphubuil, which are

shown on Roy's map of 1750, were bought from Forestry Commission Scotland after the organisation announced in 1995 that it planned to dispose of land in Achaphubuil which it had bought in 1961.

After a great deal of work, with support from influential Highland politicians, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) - now NatureScot - 'sponsored' the purchase of the woodlands by a group of local crofters from the townships of Treslaig and Achaphubuil - a national first for SNH as well as for a crofting community.

But after 20 years of use, a path through the woods had become eroded and boggy, so a plan was drawn up by three of the crofters - Michael Foxley, Ewen Morrison and Tony Boyd, with assistance from Angus Campbell - which involved repairing the existing path and building two additional looped links totalling 1km.

Ardgour Community Council was fully supportive, providing a grant and making the application to the Ardgour, Glensanda Trust.

Follow news of the award, Ardgour Community Council chairperson Sam Thomson told the Lochaber Times: 'During the Covid-19 lockdown, I am not sure how we would've coped without the woodland and crofter's walks.'

'It was our daily escape from being cooped up inside and I truly believe that the fresh air, trekking, woodland smells,



Delighted at the recognition for the woodlands are, from left, Michael Foxley, Ewen Morrison and Tony Boyd. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

noises and sights really aided our physical and mental health and wellbeing. Every day you see and hear something different. My children and I love the history, nature and wildlife of the walks and hope to visit for many more years.'

Between December 2020 and March 2021, work has been carried out on the path, using local machinery and drivers.

The work, costing £8,000, was difficult and slow, to minimise any damage to the woodland and habitats, prior to birds nesting. Now open, this woodland path network is used by local people, as well as many visitors.

It means there is now a series of paths built, accessible for the communities in the parish of Ardgour, within Ardnamurchan and Morvern,

as well as for visitors coming to Lochaber. It is also on the long-distance cycle route from Lochgilphead to Inverness.

The awards scheme's

executive director Angela Douglas said the judges had given a Highly Commended award to Camusnagaul and Achaphubuil woods after being highly impressed by the way the woodland natural heritage had been secured and had evolved with little in the way of professional forestry input.

'The natural regeneration was extraordinary and exemplary in how to sustain a native woodland,' she added. 'It is unusual for crofters to manage a woodland such as this for community benefit but this was a most impressive example.'

Mr Foxley told the Lochaber Times this week: 'It shows what a committed and determined group of local crofters can do, working with the community, to safeguard an ancient woodland, ensure its future and allow the public to enjoy it.'

Woman rescued after night on mountain

A woman was rescued and flown to hospital last Wednesday after spending a night on a mountainside in the Mamores.

The woman, who had been walking alone, was found near Binnein Beag, a 943 metre high munro, after police were alerted late in the afternoon.

Temperatures had plunged below five degrees celsius overnight, with wind and rain showers. Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team, which could reach the location quickest despite it being on Lochaber Mountain Rescue's patch, set out to help on foot and the woman was airlifted by helicopter to a hospital in Inverness. A Police Scotland spokesperson said: 'Around 5pm on Wednesday September 30, police were made aware of concern for a woman near Binnein Beag and the Water of Nevis. Officers assisted the mountain rescue team in tracing the woman, who was taken to Raigmore Hospital in Inverness for treatment.'

The condition of the woman is not known.

Ballachulish pensioner jailed for five years over historic abuse of children

A pensioner who subjected two girls to violence and sexual abuse more than three decades ago was jailed for five years on Monday October 4.

Colin Roberts, 76, assaulted the vulnerable children and carried out acts of indecency.

A judge told Roberts at the High Court in Edinburgh that he had treated the victims 'cruelly'. Judge Norman McFadyen said: 'You subjected them both to deeply unpleasant violence. Your violence appeared to have something of a casual ring to it.'

He told Roberts that worse still he had subjected one of the girls to sexual abuse from a

young age. The judge told him: 'I am satisfied that only a custodial sentence is appropriate given the grave nature of these charges.'

Roberts, of Sorcha, West Laroch, Ballachulish, had earlier denied a series of charges during a four-day trial, but was found guilty of two offences of assault and two of indecent conduct.

One child was threatened and struck from the age of four and later molested by the former rail worker who exposed himself to her.

The other girl was lifted up and thrown across a room and

against a door and had her head struck on a table. Roberts also exposed himself to her on one occasion.

Defence solicitor advocate Alan Gravelle said there was no offending by Roberts before the crimes and he had remained free of further offending following the crimes against the children. He said Roberts was 'someone of good character' with a stable life and good employment record.

Mr Gravelle said: 'The likelihood of any reoffending so far as he is concerned is low.'

Roberts was placed on the sex offenders' register indefinitely.

A82 Taret to Inverarnan Scheme

Public asked for views



A new interactive web page has been published on Transport Scotland's website. This provides updated information regarding the **A82 Taret to Inverarnan scheme** and keeps the public informed of progress as the project develops.

The public are being urged to view the interactive web page at transport.gov.scot/projects/a82-taret-to-inverarnan/ which includes a questionnaire seeking views of the existing route and how it influences travel decisions.

We would also welcome your views on the proposed **A82 Taret to Inverarnan scheme**.

The closing date for feedback is **Friday 19 November 2021**

All of the information on the scheme itself is available at: transport.gov.scot/projects/a82-taret-to-inverarnan/

LT

£52k cocaine habit leads Fort William man to jail

A supervisor of criminals doing unpaid community work turned to drug running after he developed a cocaine habit and ran up £52,000 in debts.

On Wednesday last week, at Inverness Sheriff Court, 52-year-old Dean Kennedy, who oversaw community payback orders for the Criminal Justice Social Work Department in Fort William, was jailed for 10 months.

He admitted being concerned in the supply of £12,000-worth of cocaine on April 24 this year when his BMW was stopped by police in Victoria Road, Fort William.

The father-of-three later told police he had been paid to take a package from Glasgow to the Lochaber town but refused to divulge who he was working for or who the recipient was to be, Sheriff Sara Matheson was told.

The court heard that police



on patrol at midnight were concerned by his driving as his car sped through the town and made a couple of turns without

indicating. When Kennedy was stopped, he was asked if there were drugs in the car and he replied: 'I hope not. Maybe a

wee bit of cannabis I take now and again.'

Fiscal depute Robert Weir said police searched the vehicle and a package containing 125 grams of the Class A narcotic, with a street value of more than £12,000, was recovered.

Kennedy then told the officers: 'I am in a world of s**t. I just do it for the money.'

Defence solicitor Stephen Kennedy said his client, who

Inverness Sheriff Court heard Dean Kennedy had run up a £52,000 debt as a result of his cocaine habit.

previously had sentence deferred for a background report compiled by his colleagues, was certain to lose his job.

'He did not know what was in the package or its value but he knew it was an illegal substance.

'He did it to fund his own habit and because he was in debt to the tune of £52,000. That was his prime motivation,' said Mr Kennedy.

'He admitted to the author of the report that it was the third time he had done it. He is ashamed of his behaviour.'

Mr Kennedy said the drug habit started when he did his first drug run.

'It is not a long-standing issue,' he added.

Sheriff Matheson told Kennedy: 'You can't get away from the fact that those concerned in the supply of class A drugs will face a term of imprisonment.'



Sunday, October 10 - Loch Cluanie A39, Chraileag (1,120m, Munro) - the creel. Stob Coire na Craileag (1,008m, Munro Top). Mullach Fraoch-choire (1102m, Munro) - summit of the heathery corrie.

These two Munros lie along an eight-kilometre long high-level ridge that runs S to N between Loch Cluanie and Glen Affric and offer splendid views of a huge area of highland wilderness.

They are the two highest points along Glen Shiel.

■ A shorter walk with less ascent is achieved by omitting the Munro Top and the second Munro. 15km, 1180m ascent

■ 12km, 966m ascent
For more detail of the route please visit www.nevishillwalking.club or our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/NevisHillWalkingClub/>

Please note walks may change at short notice due to conditions on the day and Covid restrictions. If you want to know more about the club, participate in walks or are interested in becoming a member, contact us at enquiries@nevishillwalking.club



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Helping members navigate the new normal working life

As furlough is now at an end, and restrictions lifted across the majority of workplaces, many of those who had been working from home will be making the transition back to the office, at least for some of their working week.

Is it a case of going back to 'business as usual'? Not for many businesses. The pandemic and the sudden changes in working practice that happened overnight have accelerated what was often predicted as a major change to working flexibly, whether in terms of time, location or both.

A lot of employment issues are now bubbling to the surface as we return to our normal workplaces in ever greater numbers.

That's why Lochaber Chamber of Commerce is hosting a member event with employment law specialists



from Harper Macleod's Inverness office - Employment Law in the Covid world.

They'll look at the employment law impacts of COVID 19 as businesses look to deal with the legal aspects of working in a post COVID 19 world.

Members are encouraged to join us on Tuesday October 26 to look at key issues including:

- Workplace testing
- Vaccination status - what can you ask/what can you require?

■ No jab/no job - What rules can an employer put in place?

■ What are the likely patterns in working and their various issues

- Back to the office
- Home/hybrid working
- How to deal effectively with a flexible working request

You can find details about all upcoming events and how to join Lochaber Chamber of Commerce at www.lochaberchamber.co.uk or call us on 01397 705765 for more information and details.

Coffee mornings in aid of cancer charity

Macmillan Coffee mornings were held in both Strontian and Acharacle on Saturday.

The Strontian event proved so popular that the original venue, event organiser Janice MacKinnon's house, had to be changed to the Strontian Hotel to accommodate the large number of people offering to bake cakes and to come along and eat them.

More than £950 was raised from tombola and cake sales. Janice said she was amazed at the total raised.

'A huge thank you to everyone who baked, donated and came along to Strontian Hotel on Saturday morning, as well as to Debbie, Jody and Michelle for the use of the hotel restaurant and to all who helped on the day,' she added.

'For a small village to raise so much money for this cause shows just how important the MacMillan nurses have been to so many families, including my own, and how much they are appreciated.'

'I wasn't sure people would

want to come along to a coffee morning at the current time so it was great to see so much support. 'Thank you everyone for your amazing generosity.'

Mary Lamont, organiser of the coffee morning in Acharacle Community Centre which also had a groaning table of baking on offer along with a table of tombola prizes said the event had raised £465 on the day with donations still coming in.

She said: 'It was lovely to see members of our community come out and support this worthy cause and to see the community centre back in full use and buzzing with laughter and chat.'

'We had a full tombola table which caused lots of excitement, thanks to the very generous folk that donated to it. A delicious table of home-baking enjoyed with the tea or coffee on offer. Many thanks to the wonderful bakers and finally a huge thank you to the gang of helpers, without whom this would not have been possible.'

Alice gets seventh birthday card from HM The Queen

The autumn of 1915 saw British forces use poison gas for the first time in the First World War; explorer Ernest Shackleton and his expedition party became stranded after the Antarctic ice pack crushed their ship Endurance; and Albert Einstein presented part of his theory of general relativity to the Prussian Academy of Sciences.

It was also in September of that year that a baby girl was born in Poolewe in Wester Ross.

Christened Alice, she would eventually move to Lochaber in the 1930s with her husband, Bill, where the couple brought up four children in Inverlochty.

During the Second World War she worked in the casting shop at the British Aluminium smelter and went on to have numerous jobs over the years, including KK's grocery store, becoming well

known and highly regarded in the local community.

Now, more than a century later, Alice Goode has opened the seventh special birthday card she has received from HM The Queen with this latest one celebrating her 106th birthday.

A resident of Inverness House Care Home, family and staff laid on a special treat for Alice last Thursday - September 30 - with cards, presents and an illuminated birthday cake made up of a tower of cup cakes and a specially-made tiara with the numbers 106 on top.

The card from the monarch wished Alice a happy and enjoyable birthday, which, being the seventh such card she has received from Her Majesty, will be added to her growing royal birthday card collection. Opening the card, Alice held it aloft and joked: 'She looks just like me, but doesn't have my tiara!'



Alice with her birthday card from HM The Queen. Photograph by Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

She went on to open many more cards and presents commenting: 'There's no room for these by my bedside, but I will be putting the Queen's card there.'

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LT

Fort thriller writer launches new series

Supporter Highland Bookshop to host event

Bestselling author JD Kirk – better known in Lochaber as Barry Hutchison – is to appear at the Highland Bookshop in Fort William next week to launch the first book in his brand new crime thriller series.

Northwind is the first spin-off from the million-selling DCI Logan series, and follows disgraced former Detective Superintendent Bob Hoon when a search for an old army friend's missing daughter takes him from the Highlands to the mean streets of London.

The book is published on October 12, but those attending the launch event the day previously will be able to get their hands on an early signed copy, as well as hear Barry talk



about his crime fiction novels, and the inspiration behind them.

As JD Kirk, Fort William native Barry recently appeared at the Bloody Scotland Festival in Stirling.

And last month it was announced that his DCI Logan novel *An Isolated Incident* had been shortlisted for the

Crime writer JD Kirk - better known as Fort William's Barry Hutchison.

prestigious Kindle Storyteller Prize. But Barry is in no danger of forgetting his roots.

'The Highland Bookshop has always been my biggest supporter,' said Barry. 'It's a great shop, run by a fantastic bunch of people, and I'm very excited to be launching my new series there.'

The event takes place at 7pm on Monday, October 11.

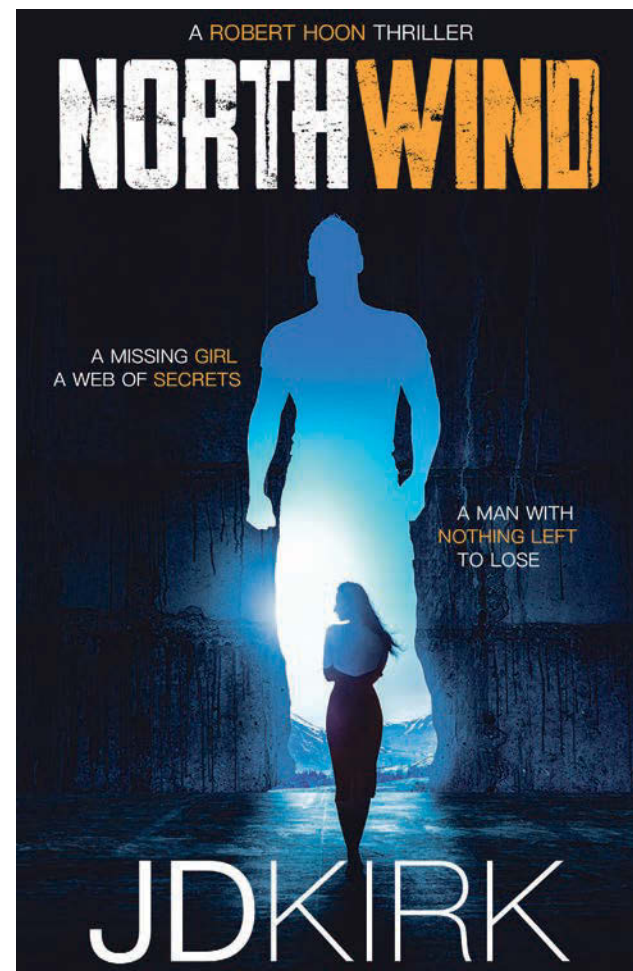
Tickets are £5, which includes a £2 discount that can be redeemed against the cost of the book, and can be purchased in store, or online at <https://www.highlandbookshop.com/events/>

This week JD Kirk was shortlisted among four other authors, including Nairn-based writer Mary Kingswood, for this year's £20,000 Kindle Storyteller Award.

With their books, *An Isolated Incident* and *Stranger at the Villa* by Mary Kingswood, they are now in the running for the literary award that celebrates independent publishing and recognises newly published work across all genres.

As well as the £20,000 cash prize, the winning author will be awarded a golden Kindle and dedicated marketing support on Amazon.co.uk.

A panel of judges, including broadcaster and author Clare Balding, will select the winner, who will be announced in October during a ceremony hosted by the celebrity judge



The cover of the new thriller by Fort William author JD Kirk.

herself. Ms Balding said: 'It's clear we have felt the need to get creative over the last year and escape our everyday lives by putting pen to paper and creating a new world.'

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MSP calls for final views on short-term let crackdown

Skye's constituency MSP has urged islanders to voice 'facts' not 'unfounded fears' in a Holyrood consultation on licensing Airbnb-style lets, before it closes at the end of the month.

The legislation was drawn up following concerns from residents in popular tourist destinations such as Skye and Edinburgh that the rapid growth of short-term holiday lets was pushing up rent levels for other properties.

Research in 2019 found holiday lets accounted for nearly 20 per cent of all homes on Skye.

The proposed laws would let councils establish designated areas where planning permission is needed before properties can be rented out.

Now MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch Kate Forbes is encouraging interested parties to participate in the Scottish Parliament's Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee's online consultation, which has a deadline of October 29 2021.

Ms Forbes said: 'Having been contacted by scores of constituents about the matter, I am well-aware of the strength of feeling on both sides of the short-term lets debate.'

'Whilst it is a complex and multi-faceted problem with no easy answers, I hope that the debate centres around facts rather [than] unfounded fears.'

'If we are serious about tackling the West

Highland housing crisis, then I believe that this needs to be a much broader discussion than previously.'

'I would encourage everyone with an interest to take the time to fully read the proposals and make their voice heard.'

'The Scottish Government has been clear that a very basic health and safety scheme will be established, as is the case for nearly every other business and sector in Scotland.'

'This will likely be the last opportunity for the various stakeholder groups – be it tourism accommodation providers or those who can't find a place to stay in their home area – to comment and help shape the final proposal.'

Though the planning control area section of Scottish Government legislation passed earlier this year, following concerns from the tourism industry the licensing part of the proposals were deferred to allow further discussion.

The committee has said it expects the plans to be considered in the parliament later this year.



CONTACTUS

email us at fort@obantimes.co.uk
telephone 01397 703003

Landmark agreement links three St Kilda trail projects

A St Kilda Trail (Slighe Hiort) linking North Uist, Harris and Uig in Lewis has been formally endorsed by representatives of three projects.

A Memorandum of Understanding, which defines areas of collaboration, was signed when they met at Seallam in Northton last week.

Slighe Hiort is part of the Outer Hebrides Destination Development programme, which is proposed to receive funding of up to £8m from the UK and Scottish Governments as part of the Islands Growth Deal – a 10-year investment programme jointly funded by the UK and Scottish governments, the three island councils and their partners from the public, academic and business sectors.

Each of the St Kilda projects, which have benefited from financial and developmental assistance from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, will interpret different aspects of St Kilda's natural and cultural heritage.

The clifftop location of Ionad Hiort



in Uig evokes remoteness and isolation while still being accessible to visitors.

It will be principally a Gaelic centre, reflecting the language of St Kilda, and will provide extensive digital and archival interpretation both internally and externally with interpretation incorporated into pathways and upgraded wartime buildings.

Iain Buchanan, chairman of Ionad Hiort, said: 'Although we've had our MOU [memorandum of understanding] in draft format for a number of years, it is always reassuring to see signatures on such documents and I very much hope the Hiort groups can work collaboratively for many years to come.'

Then there is Sealladh Hiort - the

The concept design for the new visitor centre by award-winning Norwegian architect Reiulf Ramstad.

St Kilda Viewpoint Centre in North Uist - which is closest to the St Kilda archipelago and has the best direct views of the islands on clear days.

The proposed centre has been located and designed to maximise the potential of this view and digital technology will be used to enhance it.

Whilst keeping St Kilda as its core theme, other displays and interpretations in the viewpoint centre will differentiate this from the other Slighe Hiort projects by also focusing on other outlying Hebridean islands which have had similar cultural and natural histories to St Kilda, several of which will be visible from the centre, and also St Kilda's modern role in defence and maritime matters.

Alasdair MacEachen, chairman of Sealladh Hiort, said: 'Members of the Uist St Kilda Centre project,

Sealladh Hiort, are delighted to reach this stage and to sign off our agreed collaboration with both Lewis and Harris projects, as we jointly move forward with our plans to promote the various aspects of the story of St Kilda, the place and its people.'

Lastly, the Harris project, Seallam Hiort na Hearadh, will have its base at the world-renowned genealogical centre in Northton.

Bill Lawson, who founded Seallam with his late wife Chris, said: 'Chris and myself spent a lifetime creating a resource on St Kilda and other islands. My main interest now is in preserving that for the future.'

The project will use digital technology to create interactive experiences to show who the people of St Kilda were, how they lived and what became of them. The MoU commits to, 'raise the profile of St Kilda and its cultural and natural history, through co-ordination of the activities of its member groups for the benefit of the whole Western Isles'.

ADVERTORIAL

AC/DC tribute band promises high voltage Oban concert



Podge Blacksmith and Simon Davies perform as AC/DC's Brian and Angus.

The UK's leading tribute to Scottish and Australian rockers AC/DC will return to the Corran Halls in Oban on Saturday October 9 for a night of what promises to be 'high voltage' rock and roll.

AC/DC are one of the world's biggest rock bands. Formed by Glasgow-born brothers Angus and Malcolm Young in 1973, AC/DC went onto record some of the most recognisable rock anthems of all time, including Highway to Hell, Back in Black, You Shook Me All Night Long and

many more.

Live/Wire have toured their tribute show for more than 20 years and promise not to just play all the hits but also a sprinkling of songs selected especially for the more aficionado fans as well as a couple of numbers from AC/DC's new album PRW/UP.

They bring with them a tour bus full of guitars, a wall of Marshall amps and pyrotechnic cannons that will fire to bring the show to a climatic close.

Podge Blacksmith, who

performs with the band as lead singer Brian Johnson, said: 'We are really looking forward to our second visit to the beautiful town of Oban. We had an amazing reception from the hundreds who came to see us at the Corran Halls in 2019. We had reports they heard you sing along as far away as Glasgow! So get your rock heads on and join us for a celebration of all things AC/DC.'

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LT

Virgin Money 'turning its back' on Skye clients

Plans to shutter the Portree branch of Virgin Money have been condemned by Skye MP Ian Blackford.

He has accused the bank of 'turning its back' on more than 1,100 Skye customers.

Ross, Skye and Lochaber MP Mr Blackford, said the banking institution was 'turning its back on generations of customers.'

In a furious exchange with senior management of the bank, the SNP Westminster leader demanded a reconsideration of the decision which will see existing customers facing a five-hour return journey to the nearest Virgin Money branch in Fort William.

Virgin Money UK plc - which merged with the former Clydesdale Bank in 2019 - has announced that the 12 Scottish branches will close on February 1, with the loss of 55 jobs. The closure of the Portree

branch will lead to the loss of two jobs and impact 1,147 customers - both business and personal - and will potentially leave the Somerled Square premises in the centre of the village standing empty for 13 years until the bank's lease expires in 2034.

The MP, who himself lives on Skye, has written to Virgin Money UK CEO David Duffy to formally seek a reconsideration of the closure plans.

He has also sought answers regarding the future of the building which holds a prime position in the main square in Portree.

'I am absolutely furious about this. And so are the residents of Skye,' Mr Blackford told the meeting.

'I can't believe what I am hearing. This discussion has demonstrated that you do not realise the effect of this matter on customers.



MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber Ian Blackford says he is 'furious' about the decision to close the Portree branch.

in Portree can travel instead to Fort William?

'Your own press release states that 51 percent of customers in Portree are digitally active. This means that almost half are not.

'You are walking away from people who have had a relationship with the bank, as the Clydesdale Bank, for generations and supported it through difficult times. Have you no shame?'

He added: 'This action demonstrates that you have turned your back on the people of Skye. You need to understand the strength of feeling about this.'

Mr Blackford asked for a written assurance that every customer - particularly those assessed as being vulnerable in some way - will be provided with a seamless transfer to an alternative bank should they wish to take up this option.

He says he received a '100 per cent commitment' from Virgin Group customer experience director Fergus Murphy that this would be the case.

Highlands and Islands Conservative MSP Jamie Halcro Johnston said he was also extremely disappointed to hear of Virgin Money's plans

to close a number of its UK branches, including those in Portree and Oban.

'This closure will mean that Virgin Money's Portree customers will be left without a branch within reasonable distance and will be forced to either move bank or travel to Fort William, over 100 miles and nearly three hours drive away,' Mr Halcro Johnston said.

Debbie Hutchings, trade union Unite industrial officer, called the proposed closure of 12 Virgin Money branches across Scotland 'shameful' and 'bizarre' as the group has just about completed the rebranding exercise of the former Clydesdale branches.

She added: 'Island communities from Portree to rural towns such as Wick are going to be left behind by Virgin Money.'

'The Virgin Money Group claims the principal reason for the closures is down to its digital banking drive.

'However, what happens to the people in our island and Highland communities where internet reception is notoriously poor not to mention the difficulties which many people have in using mobile app technology.

'We are calling on politicians in the areas affected to work with us to save these branches, and Unite will be raising this as a matter of urgency with the Scottish Government.'



Lochaber councillor Ben Thompson.

Design for new Skye schools underway

The Highland Council is taking forward the design of three new primary schools at Broadford and Dunvegan on Skye, along with one at Beauly.

The new school at Broadford was included in phase two of the Scottish Government's Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) which was announced in December 2020.

Education chairman Councillor John Finlayson said: 'This is further good news for the pupils, parents and communities of Broadford, Dunvegan and Beauly and, like all key stakeholders in these areas, I look forward to monitoring the good progress being made with these important projects.'

Funding for the new schools at Beauly and Dunvegan was approved by the council at its meeting earlier this month.

The new schools will see the replacement of buildings that are among the poorest in Highland in terms of condition and suitability.

Housing and property chairman Councillor Ben Thompson, Caol and Mallaig Ward, said: 'The Highland Council has one of the largest school estates in Scotland with more than 200 schools throughout the region and is continually working to make improvements to our education environments.'

'I am delighted to note the progress at Beauly, Broadford and Dunvegan primary schools.'

A masterplan has been prepared for the Dunvegan campus that includes the development of adjacent land for housing and a site for a new community sports pitch.

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Councillor Charlie Nicolson calls it a day

Long-standing elected member Councillor Charlie Nicolson is stepping down from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar for personal reasons.

At a full council meeting last week, comhairle convener Councillor Norman Macdonald told members: 'Charlie studied at Knock Primary from 1960 to 1962 and The Nicolson Institute from 1969 to 1974 before heading to Aberdeen College to complete a Diploma in Youth and Community.'

'He also completed a course through Northern College, based at Lews Castle College, in Guidance and Counselling.'

'Charlie worked as an officer for the comhairle in the community, learning and develop-

ment department from 1979 in various roles, including full service co-ordinator for the New Community Schools Project [Lewis and Harris].'

'He came onto the comhairle as a member for the Steòrnabhagh a Deas Ward in 2007 and has served the community diligently, working with many different organisations including Lewis and Harris Youth Clubs Association, Youth Safety Initiative, the YM and Bridge Centre and The Stornoway Trust to name but a few. He has also been a member of the Pension Board and the Joint Police Board. On behalf of the whole comhairle, I would like to wish Charlie all the very best for the future.'

Sacred island travel as Ben goes on personal pilgrimage

Award winning broadcaster Ben Fogle has been filming in the Hebrides as part of a new series which starts this week on BBC Scotland and BBC One.

In Scotland's Sacred Islands the adventurer embarks on a personal pilgrimage, travelling across some of Scotland's islands, meeting the people whose spirituality connects them deeply to where they live.

Over four episodes, Ben explores the beating heart of community and spirituality from Tiree to Taransay, Iona to Harris, South Uist to the Shetlands Isles and, along the way, discovers what makes each island unique.

'Castaway changed me in so many ways. I was not the star of Castaway, the island of Taransay was, the Outer Hebrides was, Scotland was,' reflects Ben. 'I'm still fascinated by Scotland's islands. The remoteness, the peace, the wonder - I even named my daughter Iona after one.'

'I'm lucky to have been to a lot of



Tiree crofter Rhoda Meek meets up with adventurer Ben Fogle. (C) Tern TV - Photographer: Alan Peebles.

places but to me these islands are the most beautiful on Earth. This is where my roots really are, where I feel spiritually at home.

'This is my dream series.'

In this first episode, Ben travels across the Inner Hebrides visiting Tiree, Coll, the Treshnish Isles and Iona.

Following the ancient 'Hebridean Sea Highways', Ben discovers evocative connections to sixth century



Christian missionaries.

On Tiree - the most westerly island of the Inner Hebrides - Ben explores 130-year-old temple ruins.

Although remoteness and Viking raids have obscured their history, an undeniable spiritual 'presence' remains.

Ben also meets Rhoda Meek, who runs her family's 200-year-old croft

whilst balancing farming life with her day job in IT.

At Tiree's Hynish Harbour, Ben speaks to teacher Ishbel Campbell, member of Tiree's Baptist Church whose father was a minister on the island.

Later, on the Isle of Coll, Julie Clarke tells Ben why she left her life in Glasgow to escape a difficult upbringing,

Ben Fogle meets up with Tiree teacher Ishbel Campbell. (C) Tern TV - Photographer: Alan Peebles.

ing, transitioning to a woman in the process.

As Julie reveals, the island of Coll and its people gave her confidence and support when she needed it most.

A highlight of Ben's journey this week is a visit to Iona, the island after which he named his daughter.

With Community Warden Catriona Robertson, Ben learns more about the history of the Celtic Saint and his legacy, which inspired her faith.

Ben ends this week's Sacred Islands pilgrimage with an overnight stay in a shepherd's hut on Iona, spending time alone in contemplation.

Scotland's Sacred Islands with Ben Fogle debuted on the BBC Scotland channel on Tuesday October 5, and is followed on BBC One on Sunday October 10. The four-part series is a Tern TV production.

New vaccination centre for Lewis and Harris

A dedicated centre has been established within Western Isles Hospital to support all vaccinations in Lewis and Harris.

The new centre, in the former University of Stirling Nursing Campus, features three dedicated rooms comprising waiting areas and six clinic 'lanes'.

As well as continuing to offer all Covid-19 vaccinations, it is also providing a venue for the influenza vaccination to eligible groups.

In addition, it is also planned that the centre will offer a wider range of immunisations in the near future.

Catherine MacIver, NHS Western Isles vaccination clinic lead, said: 'We are delighted with our new dedicated site, which enables us to vaccinate up to 50 individuals per hour.'

'Presently the centre is operating seven days a week offering a variety of vaccinations, and we would encourage anyone who has an appointment to please attend on time.'

'If for any reason you are unable to make your booked appointment, please telephone us so we can reallocate your appointment to someone else.'

Skye ward boundary proposals rejected

A decision not to reduce the number of Skye councillors from four to three has been welcomed.

The Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Housing and Planning Committee recommended last week that the proposals by Boundaries Scotland to change the electoral wards in Highland be rejected.

The chairman of Highland Council's Skye and Raasay Area Committee has spoken of his relief that the voices of communities have been heard.

Committee chairman Councillor John Gordon said: 'The people of the Highlands have been represented and listened to and I am very grateful to the committee for rejecting the proposals from Boundaries Scotland. What was being put forward was going to have a huge detrimental impact to the Highlands and would be very unfair.'

Fellow councillor for the the Eilean a' Cheo ward John Finlayson added: 'I am delighted common sense has prevailed and this is positive news for Skye and Raasay and indeed the west coast, at a time when more and more the voice of rural areas needs represent-



Councillor John Gordon.

ed as part of the democratic process.

'As I have always maintained, how can you take a councillor away from Skye and Raasay when the whole Boundaries Scotland review was underpinned by the Islands Act.'

'While we may not yet get democratic representation that is similar to the Western Isles and the other island authorities, this news is to be welcomed and the decision taken is largely due to the representation made by the council, local members, community councils and individuals across Skye and Raasay and the rest of rural Highland.'

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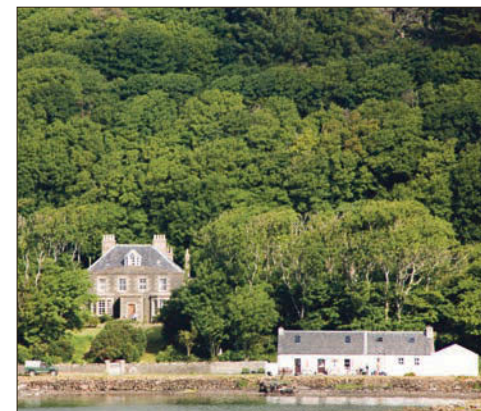
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LT



Isle of Canna from the sea. Photograph: NTS



Canna House from the sea. Photograph: NTS

New partnership to forge closer bonds on Canna

A new partnership for Canna has just been launched by the island's owners, National Trust for Scotland, with the aim of forging closer ties between it and islanders.

The Canna Partnership aims to use the skills and

experience of both to develop a positive future for Canna.

A formal agreement between the two will see islanders become more deeply involved in the formal operational and strategic management of the island.

They will work with the trust to employ staff, develop island properties, deliver better services for visitors and look after Canna's unique cultural and natural heritage.

Geraldine MacKinnon, chairperson of the Isle

of Canna Community Development Trust, said the move was a real step forward for the island.

She added: 'The National Trust for Scotland has owned Canna since 1981 and, as a community, we have benefited from its ownership.'

'However, the time has come to work even more closely together to build a thriving and sustainable community here.'

'We all work and have very busy lives, but have found time to come together as a community to open and run a community shop, develop our own award-winning renewable energy system for the island and install and manage community moorings.'

'We are currently raising money to build three new houses on the island to help grow our population and looking at plans for new tourism accommodation and community and visitor facilities.'

'We may be small in number, but we are very resourceful and resilient and we will be bringing that, together with our passion for this beautiful place, to the partnership.'

Phil Long, chief executive of the National Trust for Scotland, said the trust had been proud custodians of Canna since it was gifted to them by the renowned Gaelic scholar John Lorne Campbell and his wife, Margaret Fay Shaw in 1981.

'As well as the island, they also gifted to the trust an exceptionally important archive of Gaelic song, stories and poetry, a vital part of Scotland's heritage.'

'Campbell's legacy was clear in that the island was gifted to the trust to ensure the



John Lorne Campbell and his wife, Margaret Fay Shaw outside their home on Canna. Photograph: NTS

'The people who live on Canna are central ... and we could not fulfill our obligations to John Lorne Campbell without them'

preservation of the unique Hebridean way of life and culture of Canna,' explained Mr Long.

'In our 40 years of ownership, we have invested significantly to protect this legacy and ensure the special natural and cultural heritage of Canna is preserved for

future generations.

'The people who live on Canna are central to that legacy and we could not fulfill our obligations to John Lorne Campbell without them.'

'The partnership will ensure we can harness the trust's long experience of caring for such special places to the community's drive and passion to build a successful future for the island.'

'Our joint work on housing development and improving the visitor experience are examples of where we can work better together.'

'Like the community, we are ambitious for Canna and excited to see how the Partnership can develop.'



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LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HBOmission of school plan
seems short-sighted

It seems unbelievable, not to mention short-sighted, that planning permission was granted for new housing being built on the Blar Mhor but there was no new school planned for the next five years.

Given that it is the largest affordable housing scheme to be built in the Highlands since the 1980s – 117 new homes of various sizes and tenures to help meet the demand within the area – and that currently the nearest schools are pretty much fit to burst, it seems nonsensical that a school was not factored into the planning or the capital plan.

Despite the chairman of Kilmallie Community Council having written to Highland Council on the matter in the last two months, the council has been quiet on the subject.

It seems a fair question to be asking on an important matter. There may well be a reasonable answer, but it is not better to plan now, than find we have no places for youngsters at current schools in the next few years and no capacity to expand.

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.

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More 'city' details required

The idea of Oban bidding for city status, The Oban Times September 30, doesn't thrill me, especially were that status to lead to a change in the town's character.

The report tells us how the criteria set by government are matched, but we learn nothing about what benefits will be derived.

There might be more support if these benefits included: resurrecting the bypass that would alleviate traffic jams in the town centre; solving the issue of parking, especially during the tourist season; catering for the increased number of camper vans and providing affordable, modest-size accommodation for those employed by the hospitality sector, restaurants and shops.

If, however, the benefits (sic) lead to increasing suburbanisation, traffic congestion and unserved restaurants, shops and hotels, the townscape will lose its attractiveness for visitors and residents. City status might be won but the future will be bleak.

So let's hear more detail about the 'benefits' from those advocating the idea so that the pros and cons can be weighed up.

**Professor Emeritus Ian Reid,
Ardconnel Road, Oban.**

Wonderful west coast thanks

We were touring your wonderful West Coast recently in our small company van.

We bought the van in December last year with 12 months MOT as part of the package – or so we thought.

Our first base was Tarbert, from where we toured some of your fabulous islands for a few nights, one of which was Islay.

The night before, there had been an incident on the island so two young police officers were assigned to go to the island to cover for the one officer that is based there.

The officers allocated were in a police car that had an automatic number plate recognition device fitted that flagged up that we had no MOT.

They politely pulled us over and gave us a ticket but kindly allowed us to get back to the mainland to sort it out. When we got back to Tarbert we rang and arranged for an MOT to be done the following day at our second base, Oban.

We arrived early evening on Monday September 13 and went to the Tartan Tavern. As we were making our way back around at 8.50pm I received a call informing me that my husband's mum had passed away. I stopped

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk

'S e facal blàth, a th' ann an "tèarainteachd", facal a tha a' gealltainn saoghal a tha daoine ciallach uile ag iarraidh, far am bheil dìon agus sàbhailteachd àbhaisteach dha daoine. Tha an seòrsa tèarainteachd sin na amas aig a' mhòr-chuid de dhùthchannan sìobhalta an t-saoghail agus tha e air bilean mhiltean luchd-poilitigs agus luchd-naidheachd gach latha. Ach feumar aideachadh gur e amas a tha seo a tha doirbh a choileanadh, agus fiù 's nas duilghe buileach a ghlèidheadh, agus tha meud nam feachdan dìon is poileas a th' aig dùthchannan fa leth na dhearbhadh air ìre na spàirne a dh'fheumte gus cuimse a chumail air! Ma thachras gun trèig ball sam bith de na feachdan dìon sin an dleastanas, tha na feachdan gu h-iomlan a' call tomhas de chreideas an t-sluaigh agus tha saothair mhòr a dhith gus an earbsa eatarra ath-stèidheachadh. Sin an seòrsa suidheachaidh a th' air nochdadh dha feachd Phoileas a' Mhet ann an Lunnainn, is brùidealachd oillteil Wayne Couzens air sin fhàgail fo ghlais airson a' chòrr de bheatha!

Gun teagamh sam bith, aig deireadh cùise, tha uallach an t-suidheachaidh an urra ri Coimiseanair a' Mhet, Cressida Dick, ach ciamar nach biodh truas rithe neo ri neach sam bith na suidheachadh, a bhiodh a' feuchainn ri leisgeul iarraidh ma choinneamh cron cho aingidh bho fhear den fheachd dìon aice fhèin. Ach sin mar a tha dleastanas daonnan an urra ri ceannardan bhuidheannan, agus tuitidh uireasbhaidh sam bith a ghabh àite

in the street to tell him and he was obviously shattered and shaken.

As I consoled him, a lovely young couple pulled up and asked if we were okay and if they could help or if we needed taking to hospital? We assured them that we were okay and thanked them. Afterwards we were so grateful for their kindness and would love to pass on our thanks.

We now needed to get back to Derby as soon as possible to be with family but still had no MOT.

We waited until the morning, then my husband went to Halfords where he explained the situation. But he discovered there had been

gun fhiosta dhaibh ann an taghadh neach-obrach, neo anns an sgrùdadh ro-làimh air comasan agus freagarrachd an neach sin, air guaillean a' cheannaird. Ge b' e dè cho staoin neo easbhaidheach a shaoilte a bha briathran a' Choimiseanair, dè eile b' urrainn dhith a ràdh ach gun robh i "cho duilich!" Theagamh gun robh urram agus modh dha cuimhne Sarah Everard agus a teaghlach anns na beagan fhaclan simplidh sin, air nach gabhadh bàrr cur le aithris mòran na b' fhaide. A dh'aindeoin fianais eachdraidh air ìre borbachd a' chinne-daonna, tha e doirbh cothachadh ris nuair a nochdas e mar seo, agus gu sònraichte bho oifigeir poileas pòsta le teaghlach! Chuir Couzens Sarah am bruid an dèidh a mealladh le cairt-ùghdarrais poileas, mun do dh'èignich is a mhurt e i, is a chuir e a corp na theine.

Gabhaidh cuid a th' ann an cumhachd agus aig am bheil dleastanas, fàsgadh bho chronachadh le bhith fàgail coire air leithid Cressida Dick airson a' chunnairt sam bheil boireannaich air sràidean bhailtean na dùthcha, ach aig ceann cùise tha a' chionta ann an da-rìribh oirnn uile nach eil a' gabhail uallach gus burraidheachd de sheòrsa sam bith fhoillseachadh ach an tèid a pheanasachadh agus a cheannachadh. Ach, na biomaid air ar mealladh a thaobh ìre na dùbhlain, bha neart riamh "a' dol thar ceart", agus ged a dh'fhàgas sin strì fhada romhainn feumar a dèanamh is a buinnig ma tha sinn gu bhith airidh air cliù sìobhaltaich a ghabhail oirnn fhìn!

some confusion and our MOT booking had been down for the previous day. Despite this, the kind mechanic took my husband's number and said he didn't have any slots until later in the day but he would try to help. He then called at 9.30am to tell us he had done our van.

We left as soon as possible and made the seven-hour trip home.

We are so grateful for the kindness we were shown in Oban and would like to say thank you and apologise to anyone inconvenienced by Halfords helping us out.

We can't wait to return to finish our tour and once again the spectacular scenery.

Nina Myers, by email.

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DISTRICT NEWS

PLOCKTON

Blythswood fund-raiser

Johanna Maclean, 7 Ceann An Uib, Plockton, plants flowers and vegetables and sells them annually in aid of Blythswood, and this year she raised over £900.

Drama club

Plockton amateur dramatic society held its AGM in Plockton Hall on September 22. The following office-bearers were appointed - Chairperson Lynn Bruce; Secretary Lizzie Bird from Stromeferry; Treasurer Gill Coe; Junior Drama Sarah Bruce. The club has started rehearsing a play and a pantomime.

Hall

Plockton Hall has resumed its activities after a break due to the pandemic:

Monday, Art Class and Yoga.

Tuesday, Table Tennis.

Wednesday, Junior Drama and playgroup.

Thursday, Drama.

Saturday, Table Tennis.

Community council

Plockton and District Community Council (CC) established a participation process with the Highland Council (HC) in December, 2020. Participation allows a community body to talk with public authorities about local issues and services.

The CC request was based on community concerns over traffic management and parking in Plockton and speed limits in Duirinish.

The HC accepted this request and discussions were held with all the relevant Highland Council roads officers culminating on a visit to the village by Shane Manning, principal officer for traffic management and control.

Mr Manning and his team have produced a document with suggestions and proposals,

principally on parking in Plockton, for community consideration.

The CC has advertised this document and look forward to getting comments from the community before producing feedback to HC.

Secretary Charlie M MacRae, appointed secretary/treasurer on October 3, 1961, has now done the secretary job for 60 years. He gave up the treasurer post in 2014 after 53 years.

FORT WILLIAM

Language centre comes to Fort for Gaelic session

Due to the rising enthusiasm for Gaelic Networked Communities in Scotland, the Moray Language Centre will be holding an information session in Fort William on Saturday, November 6 starting 10.30am and finishing at 1pm.

It is being held at the Nevis Centre, An Aird, Fort William PH33 6AN, at which time a warm welcome awaits all those interested in Gaelic and its future.

The full session will cover the following five topics: Learning Gaelic by way of Super Fast methods; All about Gaelic Lifestyle Centres; The family at home with Gaelic; Gaelic Networked Communities and what exactly are they?; and a guest speaker who is a grandmother and is helping to raise her grandchildren to be Gaelic speakers.

Another important topic on the agenda will be an in-depth explanation and discussion on Gaelic Lifestyle Centres, with particular emphasis on their importance to Gaelic Networked Communities.

Anyone thinking about going along to the

Bikers turn out in tribute for popular Lundavra school lollipop lady



Jamie Manson of Manson and MacBeath Funeral Directors leads the funeral cortege towards Lundavra Primary School in Fort William, last Thursday, where staff and pupils turned out and clapped for former lollipop lady, Tatjana Ludborža as the hearse went by. The hearse was followed by line of volunteer motorcyclists who responded to an appeal to attend as a final tribute, as Tatjana loved everything to do with motorcycles.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

session does not need to be a fluent Gaelic speaker or have no Gaelic or even somewhere in between, but should just come along and see what is on offer.

More information about the session can be had by contacting Finlay Macleod at finlaymlc@btinternet.com or telephone (01542-836322), who will be pleased to discuss any aspect.

Rapid Covid community testing available

Rapid Covid-19 community testing for people without symptoms is available all this week in Fort William until 1pm tomorrow (Friday).

The Highland Council and NHS Highland are delivering community testing to help people become confident in using the Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test kits.

Covid-19 mobile clinics are being deployed in communities throughout the Highland region,

with staff and volunteers who can assist in administering the test.

The deployment to Fort William is not due to any particular outbreak.

The mobile testing unit 'Testalot' will be available for drop-in LFD testing for anyone without symptoms at:

Middle Street car park, in Fort William's Middle Street, today (Thursday) from 9am-4pm and tomorrow (Friday) from 9am-1pm. No appointment is necessary to receive an LFD test.

Dr Tim Allison, Director of Public Health with NHS Highland, said: 'Testing for those without symptoms, asymptomatic testing, will help us to identify those who are positive but do not have symptoms.'

'We can then advise them to self-isolate and therefore prevent spread. Anyone that tests positive with an LFD needs to get a confirmatory PCR test. More testing helps to show us how the virus is spread and will help us reduce risk.'

Caol coffee morning raises over £350 for cancer charity



Staff and volunteers at Caol Community Centre, pictured, staged a successful MacMillan Coffee morning, with home baking and a raffle. Several pupils from Primary 7 at Caol School were also on hand to help by recording details for Covid Track and Trace as well as serving food to the people who came along to support it. Overall the event raised £356.35.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



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Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



In 2011, when I first moved to Glasgow, I spent many a weekend walking past the Kelvingrove Bandstand.

This had a lot to do with its situation on the Kelvin Way. It sits pretty much half way between Glasgow University - where I was studying - and the three hostleries I mention often in this column - namely the Park Bar, the Islay Inn, and the Snaffle Bit.

Finnieston was in transition towards the myriad of bars and restaurants we see today, so the path between a late night at the university library and last orders on Argyle Street was a well trodden one for many students.

When I was at uni, the bandstand had been derelict since 1999. I always felt, however, despite the disrepair and vandalism, that it was easy to imagine how stunning it must have looked when it was built back in 1924. Countless times, I would peer over the fence down into the amphitheatre and wish that someone would invest and return it to its former glory.

Step forward Glasgow Building Preservation Trust, Glasgow City Council, and Glasgow Life who negotiated a redevelopment plan and reopened the bandstand in time for the Commonwealth Games in 2014.

Since then, this incredible venue with a capacity of more



than 2,000 has seen some of the biggest artists in the world perform on its stage: Sir Tom Jones, Brian Wilson from the Beach Boys, and Van Morrison to name just a few. On Friday evening, I'll have the pleasure of performing there with Tide Lines - supported by two fellow Highlanders in the wonderful Tamzene and the brilliant Keir Gibson.

I can hear you ask how on earth an outdoor, uncovered gig will work in Scotland in October. It's a valid point. This concert was originally scheduled for the summer of 2020 and initially postponed until the summer of 2021. Ongoing restrictions meant it was ultimately pushed back until October, so it will be a huge relief to get onstage and finally play the show. The temperature potentially being slightly cooler will be balanced by the positive that (unlike a summer show) this

will be dark from the beginning which should benefit the lighting show and general atmosphere. And who's to say this weekend won't be the beginning of an Indian summer? This is Scotland, after all, and you can't predict the weather at any time of year!

One thing you can predict, though, is that Friday will be a big night in Glasgow come rain or come shine. Not only on account of our gig but also because, a couple of miles further East, Peat and Diesel are playing in the Barrowlands. Between their audience and ours, that's more than 4,000 fans of Highland music descending on Glasgow. What can possibly go wrong?

Well, on the subject of weather, as Ricky Fulton said in an old Scotch and Wry episode: When the gael from the North meet the showers from the West, there's going to be one helluva party!

St Conan's Christmas Tree Festival returns

Organisers of St Conan's Christmas Tree Festival are twinkling with good news.

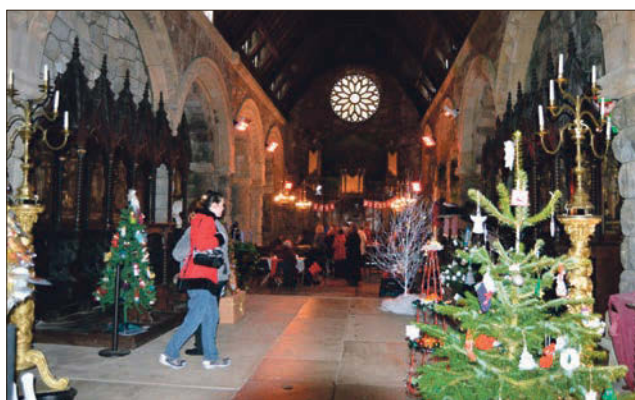
The popular event at the historic kirk in Lochawe is back this year from Thursday December 2 to Sunday December 5.

'After an imposed year off, the Christmas Tree Festival is returning,' said Friends of St Conan's Kirk.

To help keep everyone safe, the festival will run for an extra day and be open for extra hours at the weekend. Masks will have to be worn and plans are being put in place to work out the layout and flow of visitors.

Individuals, families, businesses, organisations and groups can all take part and enter a tree.

The rules include the trees



The popular Christmas Tree Festival at St Conan's Kirk is returning this year.

should be at least 4 feet, can be real or made of anything, must be lit by battery lights and can be any theme as long as it is suitable for children to see.

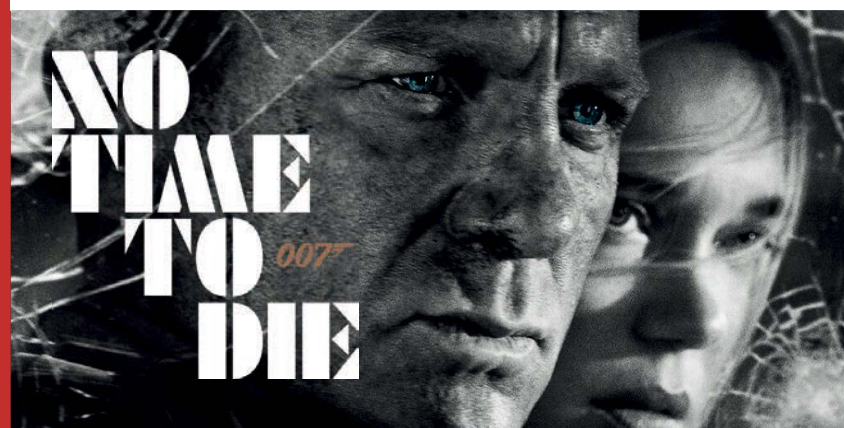
Visitors to the festival will

be asked to make a donation towards the Kirk's restoration and will be invited to vote for their favourite tree.

Interested in taking part? Email emmackay@btinternet.com by October 15.

HIGHLAND CINEMA

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FRIDAY 8TH OCTOBER

The Addams Family 2 (PG) 10:15am + 1pm.
 Around The World In 80 Days (PG) 10:45am. No Time To Die (12a) 12:30pm, 4pm, 4:30pm + 7:30pm. Highlands From The Air (U) 3:15pm.
 The Many Saints Of Newark (15) 8pm.

SATURDAY 9TH OCTOBER

The Addams Family 2 (PG) 10:15am + 1pm. Around The World In 80 Days (PG) 10:45am. No Time To Die (12a) 12:30pm, 4pm, 4:30pm + 7:30pm. Highlands From The Air (U) 3:15pm. The Alpinist (12a) 8pm.

SUNDAY 10TH OCTOBER

The Addams Family 2 (PG) 10:15am + 1pm.
 Around The World In 80 Days (PG) 10:45am. No Time To Die (12a) 12:30pm, 4pm, 4:30pm + 7:30pm. Highlands From The Air (U) 3:15pm.
 Iorram (Boat Song) (PG) 8pm.

MONDAY 11TH OCTOBER

Around The World In 80 Days (PG) 10:20am. The Addams Family 2 (PG) Bairns At The Box Office: 11am + 1:30pm. No Time To Die (12a) 12:30pm, 4pm, 4:30pm + 7:30pm. The Alpinist (12a) 8:15pm.

TUESDAY 12TH OCTOBER

The Addams Family 2 (PG) 12:30pm + 3pm. Around The World In 80 Days (PG) 10:45am. No Time To Die (12a) 1pm, 4:30pm + 7pm.
 Highlands From The Air (U) 5:30pm. Scream (18) 8pm.

WEDNESDAY 13TH OCTOBER

The Addams Family 2 (PG) 10:15am + 1pm. Around The World In 80 Days (PG) 10:45am. No Time To Die (12a) 12:30pm, 4pm, 4:30pm + 7:30pm.
 Highlands From The Air (U) 3:15pm. Dracula On Holiday (12a) 8pm.

THURSDAY 14TH OCTOBER

The Addams Family 2 (PG) 10:15am + 12pm. Highlands From The Air (U) 10:45am. No Time To Die (12a) 12:30pm, 4pm, 4:45pm + 7:30pm.
 The V&A Presents Alice: Curiouser & Curiouser (U) 2:30pm.
 The Alpinist (12a) 8:15pm.

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LT

SHINTY ROUND-UP

Skye Camanachd won the Alvanche British Aluminium Balliemore Cup and Kinlochshiel reached the cottages.com MacTavish Cup Final following the shinty action on Saturday October 2.

Alvanche British Aluminium Balliemore Cup Final
Skye Camanachd 3 Beaully 1

Skye Camanachd lifted the Alvanche British Aluminium Balliemore Cup for the third time following their 3-1 victory over Beaully at a wet An Aird, Fort William.



Skye captain Jordan Murchison lifts the Balliemore Cup. Photograph: Neil Paterson. **More photographs at www.obantimes.co.uk**

A good-sized crowd gathered for what was widely tipped to be a close encounter and, ahead of throw-up, the players were introduced to Jane MacDonald from sponsors Alvanche, Camanachd Association Chieftain John MacKenzie, president Steven MacKenzie and director John Finlayson.

The final was played at a good pace from the outset with Beaully forcing a couple of early corners whilst, at the other end, MacKay Murray saved to foil Ross Gordon.

Beaully took the lead on nine minutes with a goal from David MacLean's set-piece on the left. MacLean sent the ball across the face of the goal where Ross Forbes ran to the right, losing his marker, and his sweet strike went by Skye keeper Ryan Morrison's left knee at his post.

Skye switched John Gillies to buckshee back, picking up Euan McCormick, with William MacKinnon going to full back to mark David MacLean. Ross Gordon's shot from nothing forced a good MacKay Murray save at the expense of a corner as Skye responded to going behind.

Skye suffered a blow after 13 minutes when veteran Somhairle MacDonald had to limp off with a hamstring problem. He was replaced by the islanders' Under 17 skipper Taylor Matheson.

Skye drew level on 16 minutes. John Gillies sent the ball forward to Ross Gordon who took a touch before launching the ball down the Skye left. Angus Renwick looked to clear but James Pringle nipped in to win possession and cut in on goal before tucking the ball low by the keeper from point-blank range to make it 1-1.

Beaully's had to make an enforced change with David MacLean replaced by Jack MacDonald.

This was an action-packed phase in the final with Skye taking the lead on 19 minutes. John Gillies cleared the ball down the Skye right. Beaully's Colin MacDonald looked to

Beaully's Sean Stewart and Skye's Jamie Gillies made late appearances from the bench.

Skye manager Kenny MacLeod said: 'I thought the team were excellent. We absorbed a lot of pressure but defensively we are a good side and we are at our best when we stretch teams and we won the game on the break.'

'This could definitely be a springboard for the boys. They could go on and defend the Balliemore next year and get into the Premier League and then be in the mix for major honours.'

cottages.com MacTavish Cup - Semi Final
Caberfeidh 1 Kinlochshiel 2

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup winners Kinlochshiel reached the cottages.com MacTavish Cup Final, defeating Caberfeidh 2-1 at Castle Leod.

Caberfeidh's Connor MacGregor was suspended whilst Kinlochshiel were missing Conor Cormack and Jordan Fraser. Ali Nixon, who has been troubled by a hamstring problem, was an unused substitute. Kinlochshiel's John MacRae played the match at half forward and capitalised on a poor clearance out of the home defence on 28 minutes, hitting a 20-yard shot on the angle into the net.

John MacRae got his and Kinlochshiel's second four minutes into the second half. The goal came following a corner which Blair Morrison tried to clear. MacRae stole in, taking a touch before finishing with a half swing.

Kinlochshiel lost Duncan Matheson and Duncan 'WD' MacRae through injury for the final quarter of the match and Caberfeidh put the west coasters under a lot of pressure towards the end of the contest.

Kevin Bartlett pulled a goal back with three minutes remaining but it wasn't enough so Kinlochshiel are through to the cottages.com MacTavish Cup Final - a trophy they have never won - where they will



Lochaber's early scorer Ben Delaney takes a shot at the Kilmallie goal. As well as being a league match, the tie doubled as the BSW Cup Final. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos **More photographs at www.lochabertimes.co.uk**



The victorious Kilmallie side with the BSW Cup.

play Fort William or Kingussie with their semi-final scheduled for An Aird this Saturday.

Mowi Senior League A
Kilmallie 3 Lochaber 2

Kilmallie had to work hard to finally see off Lochaber 3-2 in their 3pm throw-up at Canal Parks.

Kilmallie boss Martin Stewart kept faith with the side which won on Skye the previous week. Shane Gillies, Lewis Birrell, Andrew McAlister and Craig MacIsaac all returned to take a place on a strong bench, with defender Stephen McAlister coming in for Under 14 player Shaun O'Rua the only change. This allowed Michael Rodger to play up front and that switch made immediate dividends when Rodger slotted the ball home to open the scoring on seven minutes.

Ben Delaney found space to level on 15 minutes, before a good finish from Conor Sweeny put Lochaber in front on 56 minutes.

There was a flashpoint on 64 minutes as Stuart Callison went through on goal with Barry MacDonald challenging. Referee Willie MacDonald blew for a Kilmallie free-hit but the players had late swings at each other and were both sent off, with Lochaber keeper Callum MacDonald booked.

With the sides now playing 11 versus 11, there was more space and Michael Rodger took advantage to make it 2-2 on 71 minutes.

Then, with six minutes remaining, Daniel Stewart's ball forward found Michael Rodger around the penalty spot and he passed the ball home to complete his hat-trick and win the game.

The sides also contested the BSW Cup, meaning Kilmallie skipper Robbie MacFadyen lifted a trophy for the second successive Saturday having taken the Thomas Ferguson memorial Cup in Portree the previous Saturday.

Kilmallie boss Martin Stewart said: 'It was a really good local derby. Michael [Rodger] made a great contribution. He almost makes the game stand still as he always seems to have so much time on the ball. His goals were all expertly taken.'

Mowi Senior League B
Strathglass 0 Kingussie 7

Kingussie were too strong for Strathglass, winning 7-0 in their noon throw-up at Cannich.

Strathglass were without suspended skipper Josh Fraser as well as Innes Hood, Ruairidh Strachan, Neil Hope and Scott Douglas.

Savio Genini returned for Kingussie but they were without Calum Grant, Fraser Munro and Ryan Borthwick, whilst Lee Bain was with the second team. Keeper Rory MacGregor was a late-call off, so Dylan Borthwick replaced him in goals although Liam Borthwick took over after half an hour. A turn and shot from Roddy Young on three minutes got Kingussie off to a great start whilst James Falconer burst forward from wing centre to add a second five minutes later, netting following a Barrie Dallas corner. Savio Genini sent a backhand strike high into the net to add a third on 10 minutes, whilst Ruairidh Anderson ran onto James Hutchison's ball forward to make it 4-0 on 17 minutes.

Roddy Young got his second a couple of minutes after the re-start, scoring at the back post, whilst Barrie Dallas on 68 minutes and Dylan Borthwick on 82 minutes rounded off the win.

Strathdearn Cup - semi-final
Lovat 2 Kingussie 0

The Lovat seconds are through to the Strathdearn Cup Final, scoring twice in the second half to beat the Kingussie seconds 2-0 at Balgait.

Lovat hit the front on 62 minutes. Iain Nicolson collected a goal hit in the half forward position and played the ball wide to Jamie Matheson who ran out before cutting the ball back across goal finding Fraser Gallacher at the back post who tapped the ball past keeper Craig Dawson. Iain Nicolson clinched the final spot with a couple of minutes remaining. A good defensive clearance found Jamie Matheson on the left. Iain Nicolson ran in behind the defence, allowing Matheson to play a ball over the top. Nicolson took the ball down and took a touch to the right, past the keeper who was rushing off his line and found the net from a tight angle.

Lovat now face their Newtonmore counterparts in the final this Saturday. The final venue was decided by the toss of a coin with Lovat winning home advantage.

Mowi North League C
Inverness 8 Lewis Camanachd 0

The Inverness colts were 8-0 winners against Lewis Camanachd in their 12.30pm throw-up at the Bught Park.

Steven Bellshaw scored on 24 and 42 minutes, either side of Ruaraidh Hughes' 34 minute strike which saw the hosts 3-0 ahead at the break. Steven Bellshaw completed his hat-trick a minute into the second half and added his fourth a couple of minutes later. Skye MacIntosh made it 6-0 on the hour, with Euan Campbell adding two more on 68 and 85 minutes.

Mowi South League A
Col Glen 2 Bute 0

Col Glen scored a goal in each half to beat Bute 2-0 at Glendaruel.

Andrew MacVicar got the opener on 25 minutes with Christopher Blair adding a second on 65 minutes. The sides also competed for this year's Carmichael Cup.

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Under 18s feel the pressure

The weekend saw another great spectator turnout for the Lochaber U18 fixture against Waysiders Drumpellier RFC.

Lochaber felt strong coming into the game after their 32-5 away win against Annan the previous weekend.

Within the opening stages, it was evident Wayside Drumpellier were a strong, well-drilled team and they used their larger pack to dominate the first half and score the first three tries which they were unable to convert.

Lochaber soaked up most of the pressure and came into their own in the latter stages of the first half when a good piece of play resulted in front row player Josh Mackay driving over for his team's first try. Fergus MacIntyre converted to close the gap to 15-7 at the break.

Lochaber showed great spirit and dominated lengthy spells of the second half but struggled to convert their opportunities into points.

Waysiders did manage to capitalise from a penalty kick and added three points to their total leaving a final winning score of 18-7 to Waysiders Drumpellier.

Lochaber U18's continue to show improvements to aspects of their play and will take lessons learned from this game into training. They play Carrick this weekend.



Alan Hamilton brings down a Moffat player. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

Lochaber set the pace for Moffat demolition

Lochaber were back at Banavie on Saturday where they played host to Moffat.

The hosts set the tone from the kick off and were soon on the scoresheet when Alan Hamilton gathered the lineout ball to set up a rolling maul.

Rory MacKay broke away to get within 5m of the line but was tackled and from the resulting ruck Conor Taylor picked up the ball, swatted aside the first tackler and went straight through two defenders to score with Ryan Davies converting.

Their second try came from a shortened lineout just outside Moffat's 22. A great run from Christopher Simpson made good ground before some quick offloads allowed Alasdair Davidson to score in the corner. Davies converted from out wide to make it 14-0.

Edward Murray John scored

the third when stretching through from a tackle and Lochaber had the bonus point wrapped up before half time when, from the restart, MacDonald gathered the ball before popping it to Simpson who hit the line at pace. He bowled over the first defender then beat two more on the outside before passing the ball back inside to MacDonald who sent Findlay Ireland flying up to finish off the move and score.

Rain started coming down in the second half but that didn't stop Ireland getting his second try of the game. Murray John made a break in the midfield beating two defenders before offloading to Ireland who outpaced two more defenders to score in the corner. A deft kick to the corner from Davies was gathered by Ireland who flicked the ball inside to Christopher

Simpson who drove for the line to score try number six. Lochaber's final try of the match came when Callum Boyd was given the ball from the back of a scrum and threw a dummy before beating seven defenders. MacKay was the quickest to react for the pass and went on a 40 metre run to score in the corner. Final score Lochaber 41, Moffat 0.

Lochaber have a bye this Saturday before returning to action when they travel to Lanark on October 16. Lanark were the victors last time the sides met and Lochaber will be looking to put that right and have a strong squad to travel with.

Right: Alasdair Davidson gets to grips with a Moffat player. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.



Lochaber Rugby Club announces new committee

Banavie-based Lochaber Rugby Club held its annual general meeting (AGM) last Thursday, September 30, bringing members face-to-face to discuss the last 12 months of activity on and off the pitch.

It was an engaging meeting with new directors, committee members and other role holders voted into their positions by a spirited group of members that heard the impact of challenges faced by the Covid-19 pandemic and the opportunities taken by the club to ensure the clubhouse, health and safety matters and plans for the future of rugby were addressed

and put into place. Highlights of the last 12 months included the re-wiring and safety testing of the clubhouse, improved bar and payment systems and the introduction of a ladies team and U18 squad development.

The club has benefited from early success on the field with their U18s squad winning home and away plus the senior team showing commitment at home and bagging a big win away from home against Clydesdale RFC, winning 68-5.

A big thank you went to long-standing club stalwarts Donald Young, former president and most recently club

secretary, and Gary Hendrie, director of senior rugby, who have stepped down from their positions in the club, their roles being filled by Lorraine Revitt and former club captain Iain MacFarlane.

Charlie Donaldson was re-elected club president and is looking forward to growing the momentum as the 2021/22 rugby season continues.

Charlie said: 'We are getting back to some kind of normality and everyone has to be thanked for their steadfastness and patience throughout this last year. Thanks go to all of last year's committee for all of the work that has

gone on behind the scenes, mostly unseen, and I can assure all members a huge amount has happened and will continue to be worked in as we move forward.

'Financially we have survived well, even although we have had no income for about 18 months, thanks to support and key funding awards.

'As the president, and as a club, we are excited for the forthcoming season and look forward to welcoming new and existing members to the club along with past and present teammates, to enjoy our hospitality and grow Lochaber Rugby Club together.'

The new core club committee and directors are as follows: President - Charlie Donaldson; Secretary - Lorraine Revitt; Treasurer - Donnie MacDonald; Director of Senior Rugby - Iain MacFarlane; Director of Youth Rugby - Stevie McAleer; Club Captain - Callum MacDonald; Vice Captain - Callum Boyd; Fixture Secretary - William Stewart; Social, Press and Marketing - Mark Gibbings; Sponsorship - Dale Monk; Grant Administrator - Kenny Rigg; Membership Secretary - Pauline Donaldson, and Director and Coach - Stewart Sandison.



Extra time cup controversy as Jags boot opponents out

South Lochaber Thistle (SLT) overcame their own personal Waterloo to make it through to the third round of the Scottish Amateur FA Cup for the first time in their history in controversial circumstances against Glasgow Wellington FC.

Due to Covid, all fixtures in the competition this year go straight to penalties in the event of tied scores at full time.

Here, and despite the SLT secretary showing the rules to the official, the referee opted for extra time. While this allowed skipper Martin Munro to bag a brace and put the tie out of contention, there is a possibility the club have not heard the last of this game.

Things had begun well for the hosts, as their reshuffled line-up played exciting and expan-

'It's sad the referee's decision to play extra time is going to dominate the conversation'

sive football. Unfortunately, enough of these chances were spurned to make the supporters question whether the Jags were playing in wellingtons rather than against them.

Eventually, the Glaswegians failed to deal with a lofted ball forward from the ever reliable John Ferguson from a free kick and towering midfielder Andrew Maclean fired home.

The game stayed this way until almost the last kick of

the game when Wellington's Jordan Devine levelled.

The referee's controversial decision followed which saw Thistle finally set Munro free to seal the victory.

Manager Alan Gray said: 'I'm very proud of the boys. Prior to this season, we've struggled in the competition but here the lads were excellent. They've been playing with a smile on their face all season and it is paying dividends. We made enough chances to win three games and it's sad the referee's decision to play extra time is going to dominate the conversation. We're looking forward to the draw for the next round and hoping to go as far as we can. We thank all of the supporters for coming down today and cheering us on.'



Above: Goal scorer Andrew MacLean outpaces a Wellington opponent. Right: Double scorer Martin Munro under attack from Glasgow Wellington players. Photographs:

Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.



Fort FC get first point on the board

Fort William Football Club have plenty positives to take away from a week which included a management reshuffle and two testing matches.

On Wednesday September 6, Fort William faced Nairn County and picked up their first point of the season with a 3-3 draw.

Goals from Rory and Ben Williamson for Nairn County along with former Fort captain John Treasurer put the hosts in the lead at half-time with a Robbie Foster free kick

keeping the Fort in contention at 3-1.

The second half belonged to Fort William with trialist Scott Graham grabbing a goal on his debut then Robbie Foster with his second from the penalty spot.

A point on the board and a strong second half performance from Fort William gave the team a much-needed boost before the long journey north to face Wick Academy three days later.

Line up vs Nairn: Hunter,

goalkeeper; Nyembwe; Fangas; Caulker; White; Owusu-Barnieh; Foster; Brew; Graham, trialist; Kalbah and Tshibikubula.

Onto Saturday and it was Harmsworth Park that hosted the league action.

Fort William came out the blocks looking to attack Wick and their high tempo paid off when Marios Avraam scored after 16 minutes with a well-taken finish.

Wick began to come into the match, working the ball

well in possession and took their chance when Andrew Hardwick scored on the 33rd minute to make the half-time score 1-1.

Wick took the lead half way through the second half when Jack Halliday scored what was described by many as 'a screamer' from 20 yards.

Up until this point, there hadn't been much to separate the teams and Fort didn't have much time to process the goal before they were further behind when Davie Allan stuck a

header in the back of the net on the 73rd minute. Fort William did chase to try pull the home side back but the match finished 3-1 to Wick Academy.

Line up vs Wick Academy: Hunter, goalkeeper; Nyembwe; Fangas; Caulker; White; Owusu-Barnieh; Foster; Brew; Avraam, Macdonald 76'; Kalbah, Evans 61', and Tshibikubula.

This week Fort William face Strathspey and Buckie Thistle on Wednesday and Saturday respectively.

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The Lochaber Times: 95p

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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 7 October, 2021** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

7	0009 0.6	9	0117 0.6	11	0240 1.0	13	0440 1.5
	0602 4.0		0707 4.0		0829 3.6		1041 3.1
TH	1210 0.4	SA	1331 0.4	M	1508 1.0	W	1723 1.6
	1814 4.3		1924 4.1		2048 3.4	⌋	2336 2.7
8	0042 0.5	10	0156 0.7	12	0333 1.2	14	0602 1.7
	0633 4.1		0746 3.9		0922 3.3		1316 3.1
F	1249 0.3	SU	1417 0.7	TU	1609 1.3	TH	1855 1.7
	1848 4.3		2004 3.8		2143 3.0		

FORT WILLIAM WEATHER

Thursday	Heavy rain and a moderate breeze Temperatures 14°C to 17°C.	Friday	Light rain and a gentle breeze Temperatures 12°C to 17°C.	Saturday	Light cloud and a gentle breeze Temperatures 10°C to 15°C.	Sunday	Light cloud and a gentle breeze Temperatures 11°C to 14°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

