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LOOK AT OBAN



Ladbrokes Oban manager Mary McKay handing over a cheque for £500 to Calum MacIntyre, one of the volunteers at Shopmobility Oban.

Oban Shopmobility receives welcome boost from Ladbrokes

OBAN'S Shopmobility has been boosted by a donation of £500 by bookmakers Ladbrokes.

The service which provides disabled people access to the shops and facilities of Oban, was delighted with the donation, which comes as part of Ladbrokes' 'In The Community Charitable Trust' (LICCT) which was set up in 2003.

The trust was established to work with a wide range of charities and good causes, helping raise funds and tailoring initiatives to meet the demands of local communities.

LICCT has donated more

than £6,500 to causes within the local area in the last eighteen months.

The staff at Ladbrokes' Oban Branch, have raised more than £2,600 during 2005 through fund-raising within the shop itself.

This money was raised by carrying out things like the Christmas raffle, sweepstakes and sponsored silences. Even a staff curry night contributed more than £450 to the trust.

Ladbrokes' Oban shop manager Mary McKay was pleased to hand over the cheque to such an important service.

She said: 'I'm delighted

that we can donate some of the money to such a worthy local cause as this. We are extremely thankful to all our staff and customers for their continued support for the LICCT.'

It's a welcome influx of money for Shopmobility, which has been operating now for around seven years. The service, which is situated on the South Pier, was mainly run by volunteers, until Anne Mossman was hired as co-ordinator a year ago.

The service caters for locals as well as visitors to the area, and is vital, especially in the summer months for

disabled tourists who wish to see and shop in Oban.

Elaine Robertson, a member of the Disability Forum which helped establish Shopmobility was delighted with the donation.

She said: 'We are extremely grateful for this support which enables us to continue to supply a service to locals and people from afar.'

'Funding is an ongoing concern so this kind of support is vital.'

She also praised other contributors, volunteers and people who put so much work into making Shopmobility a success.

ALZHEIMER Scotland is looking for volunteers from Oban to staff its Dementia Helpline, which provides people with information and support about dementia.

They are looking for people who are good listeners, can give good accurate information, have a personal or professional interest in dementia and who have the time to spare.

Volunteers are wanted during the day, in the evenings and overnight or at weekends. Helpers can work anywhere in Scotland, or at the National Office in Edinburgh.

With calls coming from all over Scotland, volunteers can

help make a difference both locally, and to those further afield.

There are places available on Alzheimers Scotland's four-day training course, which takes place in Edinburgh over two weeks. These are Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 February, and Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 March.

Maruska Greenwood, helpline manager, said: 'The freephone Dementia Helpline provides direct access to information and emotional support, 24 hours a day, 365 days. The helpline is for people with dementia, their carers, relatives and friends, and for professionals in the dementia field.'

Term time holidays cause havoc with school statistics

HOLIDAYS during term time are causing havoc with attendance figures at Oban High School.

The head teacher is calling on parents to book their holidays with an eye on their children's education rather than bargain prices and their own working life.

The national performance figures for schools published just before Christmas gave Oban a poor result with the highest figure for Argyll and Bute but the figure gives a false reading, Mrs Linda Kirkwood said.

The Scottish average percentage of unauthorised absences of all first to fifth year pupils stands at 1.9 per cent for 2005 while Argyll and Bute's average unauthorised absence of pupils is relatively low at 0.7 per cent. Figures for Oban high reveal 2.1 per cent of all pupils away from school without good reason during the past year.

The unauthorised absence figures show Dunoon Grammar had 0.1 per cent, Campbeltown Grammar had 0.2 per cent, Islay High

School had 0.3 per cent, Tarbert Academy and Tobermory High both had 0.4 per cent, Tiree High had 0.7, and Rothesay Academy and Lochgilphead High School had 1.3 and 1.6 respectively.

'Changes in how these figures were categorised are rather misleading,' said Mrs Kirkwood.

This figure is for all unauthorised absence from school; not just truancy.

'Oban high has a very low level of truancy, of 0.5 per cent,' she said.

The Oban figure is increased by families deciding to take their holidays outwith school holidays.

Mrs Kirkwood said that children should only be taken out of school during term time if someone in the family is really ill or there has been something traumatic like a death; these would be classes as authorised absences.

The main reason for the term-time holidays is that so many parents work within the tourism trade and so parents cannot take family holidays during what is the

busiest times for them. This is especially the case with smaller, family-owned tourism-based businesses of which there are a high number in the Oban High School catchment area.

'Historically this has happened a lot in the Oban area because of the involvement in the tourism trade,' said Mrs Kirkwood.

Mrs Kirkwood, 'all our spare [holiday] days are taken at the October break to make it two weeks.'

Mrs Kirkwood is now writing to all parents calling on them to ensure that holidays are not taken during term time.

'We are also beginning to see parents going after cheaper prices in January and February on long haul holidays,' said Mrs Kirkwood.

This trend is doing as much damage to children's education as it does to the school's standing in the league tables, the head teacher believes.

There is a direct correlation between attendance at school and attainment at school,' said Mrs Kirkwood.

A TWENTY-four-year-old man broke into a caravan in Dalintart Drive, Oban, and stole electrical goods, clothing and a bracelet - but returned them all the following morning.

Robert MacKenzie, Dunonald, Lorn Terrace, Miller Road, Oban, had forced open a window at the back of the caravan, causing £40-worth of damage, before making off with a video player, hi-fi system, bracelet and quantity of clothing. Procurator Fiscal Clifford Most told Oban Sheriff Court.

Mr Most said suspicion had fallen on MacKenzie but the goods, worth £380, had been fully recovered.

Defence agent David MacNeill said MacKenzie had been emotionally unbalanced at the time of the incident and on the night in question had been drinking.

He had gone the short distance to a house, where the

mother of his child lived, had gone round the back of the house to where the caravan was, gone in and grabbed what he could. The caravan was at the time, being rented out. 'He went straight back the following morning and returned all of it,' said Mr MacNeill.

MacKenzie who admitted stealing the goods on September 24 last year, was fined £300 by Sheriff Douglas Small on Monday.

Sheriff Small also ordered him to pay £40 compensation to the occupants of the caravan.

Man who stole goods returns them next morning

The entire scheme is expected to run until September next year with the majority of work on Sundays and in the evenings.

'Avrshire and Glasgow-Kilmarnock services will be affected so West Highland passengers connecting with these routes for their journeys should take this into consideration,' a spokeswoman for Network Rail said.

Rail journeys could be delayed as work starts

NETWORK rail is advising passengers on the West Highland line that their onward journeys could be hit by major works starting in the Glasgow area this week.

Preparations are now under way to replace overhead line equipment in Glasgow and Paisley along a six-mile stretch from Cook Street to Paisley. Other work will also take place in Gourock and Wemyss Bay.

Twining links to be strengthened

EFFORTS are to be made to improve the twining links between Oban and its twin town in Ireland's County Wexford.

Although Oban was officially linked with Gorey in May 1997, there has been only sporadic contact between the two towns.

These have included councillors, North Argyll Youth Forum, Oban Pipe Band and Oban Lorne Rugby Club visiting Gorey and County Wexford to Oban's council offices.

This stated that the twining partnership was to 'cultivate and intensify human, cultural, educational and commercial relations between our respective towns and thereby provide a firm foundation for all time for our understanding

and friendship'. Argyll and Bute Council, which carried out the formal twinning with Gorey Town Council, is now to take matters in hand to improve and develop the links.

Already the tourist office in Oban has been asked to send literature relating to Oban, Lorn and the Isles area to the council office in Gorey to distribute and tourism material is to be sent from Gorey and County Wexford to Oban's council offices.

The possibility of creating a link between Oban High School and its counterpart in Gorey is being explored, particularly in relation to shinty-hurling and sports liaison officers have been asked to look at other sporting links.

Other aspects of developing the link have been suggested such as marketing areas of mutual interest, like St Columba or Iona, or culturally through music, drama and language.

Councillors on Oban,

Lorn and the Isles Area Committee have already been asked to Gorey to attend the St Patrick's Day celebrations in March and it is hoped that, if they accept, further links can be discussed at the time.

Lismore ferry to the rescue

FOUR divers aboard the speedboat Sunbird got an unlikely lift back to Oban on a Caledonian MacBrayne ferry when their boat's engine failed in the Firth of Lorne.

The Sunbird was on its way to the dive site at Breda in Ardnamurchan Bay, off Ledaig, when she broke down between Ganavan and its destination on Tuesday, December 27.

The coastguard was notified of the engine failure at 4.21pm. But only 11 minutes later the coastguard was notified the Caledonian MacBrayne vessel MV Eigg, which runs between Oban and Lismore, had put in place a tow to bring the speedboat back to shore.

The speedboat was safely towed into Oban's south pier slipway with all passengers safe and well.

A spokesperson for Clyde Coastguard said: 'It is possible the cause of engine failure was contaminated fuel.'

'The MV Eigg was in direct contact with the speedboat soon after it had broken down.'

Rock garden club on the edge

DESPITE the efforts of the long-standing committee of Lorn Rock Garden and Hardy Plant Club, and the steady attendance of members through the season, the future of the club is, sadly, under threat.

Unless more people are willing to come forward to help run the club there is a danger it will have to fold.

A committee member said: 'If local gardeners tell us what they want from their club we will try to meet their requirements.'

Meconopsis and primulas will be the subject of the first talk of the season to be organised by the club.

Scheduled for Tuesday January 17 in the Cathedral Hall, Oban at 7.30pm, this will be given by expert Newman Burberry of Drumavie Gardens, who is representative of the high calibre of speakers from around Scotland and abroad hosted by this organisation.

Over the past 40 years the depth and breadth of the topics covered has proved an inspiration to gardeners throughout the area.

GAEIC MEDIUM EDUCATION 'SCHOOL OPEN AFTERNOON'

Parents interested in finding out more about Gaelic Medium Education are invited to come along to an open afternoon at St Columba's Primary School, Oban, Friday 20 January 2006 at 2 p.m.

Promoted by Comann Nam Parant an t-Oban agus Latharna



BUSINESS START-UP WORKSHOP

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This workshop is FREE

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To book a place or for further information contact Karen or Ishbel at Smart Successful Solutions Ltd 01866 833500

Argyll and the Islands Enterprise, The Enterprise Centre, Kilmory Industrial Estate, Lochgilphead PA31 8SH www.hie.co.uk/aie



A donation of £200 to the RNLI from Scottish Power, Cruachan Power Station, was presented to Ewan McCuish by Bob Wales, Station Manager of Cruachan Power Station. The donation will be used by Oban Lifeboat Station to help pay for crew training.

Man who stole goods returns them next morning

The mother of his child lived, had gone round the back of the house to where the caravan was, gone in and grabbed what he could. The caravan was at the time, being rented out. 'He went straight back the following morning and returned all of it,' said Mr MacNeill.

MacKenzie who admitted stealing the goods on September 24 last year, was fined £300 by Sheriff Douglas Small on Monday.

Sheriff Small also ordered him to pay £40 compensation to the occupants of the caravan.

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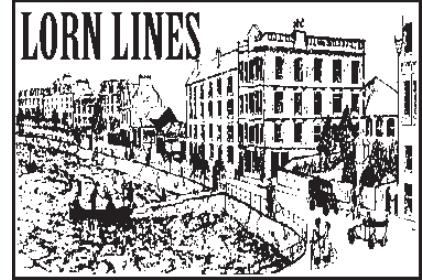
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You can email your Lorn news to lornlines@obantimes.co.uk

THERE was more than entertainment to be enjoyed at a memorable ceilidh held in Taynuilt Village Hall in November, organised by the local branch of An Comunn Gaidhealach.

The event was the annual 'Baked Potato Night' Ceilidh which found the audience tucking in to baked potatoes with a variety of delicious fillings including cheese, coleslaw, chicken, haggis and egg mayonnaise as well as tea, coffee, mince pies and shortbread.

Introduced by fear-antighe Donald Harrison, a first class programme included pipers Angus MacColl and Angus junior, the Isla Sinclair Dancers - Lorna MacLean, Claire Jordan, Laura Munro, Lorna Macdonald, Karen MacKenzie, Nicola MacFadyen and Jackie Watt - and Lorn Junior Fiddlers joined by talented young accordionist Scott Sinclair, Connell.

There was fine singing from Joy Dunlop, Connell, Helen Pearson, Oban, and Fiona Dunn, who is on the staff at Sabhal Mor Ostaig College on Skye, and Paddy and Libby Shaw, Taynuilt, played for set dances.

Votes of thanks were proposed by the society treasurer Duncan Campbell.

The first meeting of the New Year will take place on January 20 when John Marshall, Fife, will present a talk on the potato famine in West Scotland.

People are mainly well aware of the Irish potato famine but generally less knowledgeable on its social impact in the West of Scotland.

As usual the meeting will take place in Glencruitten Church Centre at 7.30pm. Non-members are always welcome.

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FOR LARGE numbers of children throughout Lorn, Christmas arrived early thanks to Oban and Lorn Lions Club.

The club saw to it that Santa - Bill Coutts, Alastair Ferguson and John Lloyd - held court in his grotto in Oban's Royal Hotel on two successive Saturdays in December where he dispensed presents to the huge number of youngsters eager to meet him and tell him of their hopes for Christmas morning.

The costs were more than covered by generous public donations amounting to £1,066, leaving a surplus which will later be directed to local charities.

Expected in January is a visit from a group from the West Kirby Lions Club, based near Liverpool. They plan to spend a week in Oban during which one of the highlights will be a challenge haggis race in Oban's Royal Hotel.

It will be their first visit to the town and their Oban counterparts hope to ensure it will be a memorable one.

The Oban club will celebrate the anniversary of its founding 20 years ago at a special Charter Night Dinner to be held in the Royal Hotel in March.

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THE ANNUAL Christmas raffle of Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease (ABCD) was drawn on air in December, courtesy of Oban FM, when 10 trustees and colleagues crowded into Alan MacKechnie's studio.

The top prize of £300 - again donated by Stuart Gunn, originally from Dalmally and a long-time supporter of the ABCD Trust - was won by young Alistair MacFarlane of Kelso, Roxburgh.

Stuart also donated a 'consolation' prize of £50 this year, which was drawn after all the other prizes had been allocated.

In total, more than 30 prizes were donated by a huge cross-section of the area's businesses as well as friends of the trust, making this one of the most popular raffles in the district.

To date, the total raised by the raffle is £1,300.

After the draw Julie Didcock and Peter MacMillan presented a cheque for £352.50 to the trust, the proceeds of a sponsored swim which the pair undertook on behalf of this cause.

The trust promotes a range of activities dedicated to the care of patients suffering from all forms of heart disease and encourages the public generally to adopt healthy lifestyles.

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MEETING for the last time in 2005, members of Lorn Archaeological and Historical Society were riveted during a talk on

Fisherman fell asleep on watch and grounded vessel

A FISHERMAN who fell asleep on his watch causing a £250,000 scallop dredger to ground on a reef and sink had his sentence deferred at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

Neil Ronald McLean, aged 29, of 2 Jubilee Terrace, Tobermory, admitted falling asleep in the wheelhouse of the *FV Aquila* while his cousin, the part owner and skipper of the vessel, was sleeping below deck and another crew member was making breakfast.

The boat struck a reef to the north of the island of Muck at 10am on April 3 last year.

Despite the attempts of several other fishing boats to tow the vessel off the rocks, and only 10 minutes after a lifeboat had taken the three crew off the boat, it sank.

Procurator Fiscal Clifford Most said: 'The automatic pilot was on and the accused had put his feet up on the console in the wheelhouse and had fallen asleep. He didn't wake up until he was thrown from the seat as the boat grounded. When interviewed he accepted that as a consequence of personal matters he didn't get much sleep the previous night and was fatigued.'

Defence agent Duncan Durbin told the court that McLean had been working on the boat 'off and on' for the last three years and his latest spell as a crew member was six weeks before the incident. He said: 'On a three-day trip they catch as much sleep as they can. He had returned home, hadn't gone out the previous evening and otherwise

had an uneventful evening. He remembers changing course on one occasion and would have been required to change course again. Between the first and second change of course he fell asleep. He was asleep for half an hour before the vessel ran aground. He has felt extreme remorse and guilt. It is a small fishing community in Tobermory and he is still coming to terms with it. He has been living in personal agony for the last seven months.'

Sheriff Douglas Small told McLean, who is unemployed: 'I can't fine you as you have no means to pay a fine so I will defer sentence for reports into your background.'

McLean will return to court on February 1 2006 for sentencing.

Drug driver fined and banned

A MAN who was stopped by police after driving a Land Rover in an erratic fashion later proved to have a quantity of diazepam and methadone in his bloodstream.

Oban Sheriff Court heard on Monday that Jason Gregory, aged 34, had seemed dozy, unable to understand what police were saying to him and was unsteady on his feet after the Land Rover he was driving was pulled over in Soror Road, Oban.

Gregory, whose address at the time of the incident was 66 Sinclair Drive, Oban, denied driving while unfit through drink and drugs on Soror Road on April 28 last year.

PC Kenneth McKechnie, of Strathclyde Police Oban's Road Policing Unit, said he and his colleague PC Stephen McAleer had tried to caution and charge Gregory in the forecourt of the Shell filling station but decided that, because there was no smell of alcohol from Gregory, they should take him to the station for a blood test.

PC McKechnie said Gregory did not seem to understand what was being said to him in the forecourt but agreed to give a blood sample around an hour later. He said no roadside or other breath test had been given.

University of Glasgow professor of Forensic Toxicology John Oliver, now retired, told the court that he had found diazepam, plus traces of three other forms of diazepam as a result of the drug being broken down in the body, as well as methadone in Gregory's blood sample.

He said that it was more than what he would consider was prescribed for 'therapeutic' purposes and that the effects of such a drug were drowsiness and muscle weakness but the level of this depended on the tolerance of the person taking the drug.

Gregory admitted he was on the methadone programme and had taken methadone that morning but he also said he had just been prescribed diazepam and had taken two the night before to help him get to sleep. He said he had been having problems with the gear stick in the 1971 Land Rover, owned by his then employer.

Gregory, who is originally from England, said he had difficulty in understanding what the policeman was saying to him, claimed he was given a breath test which he passed and then was taken to the police station for a blood test. He didn't think he was being arrested because he didn't think he had done anything wrong. He disagreed that he was unfit to drive.

Sheriff Douglas Small found Gregory guilty, fined him £350 and disqualified him from driving for a year.

Dating channel meeting ends in assault

A MULL man who met a woman on a television dating channel and then invited her to come and stay with him admitted assaulting her after she refused to leave his home.

Oban Sheriff Court heard on Monday that the woman, Tina Benger of Mansfield, had met Colin Burnett of Bendoran Boatyard, Bunessan, on the dating channel and the pair had continued to correspond by telephone for four or five weeks.

Miss Benger had then agreed to travel to Mull to stay with Burnett, the court heard, but during the course of this visit there had been an argument.

'The accused wanted her to leave,' said Procurator Fiscal Clifford Most, 'and seized her by the hair and pulled her through the house.'

She had called the police after being injured by the assault, including having a bruised and swollen face, a bleeding gum and two teeth loosened.

Defence agent David MacNeill said the relationship had not worked out and according to his client Miss Benger had hit him and been throwing things around his house.

'The accused asked her to go from his house and she refused to leave. He accepts that he assaulted her by pulling her by the hair.'

Burnett, aged 42, a self-employed fisherman, admitted assaulting Miss Benger to his injury on July 28 at his home and was fined £400 by Sheriff Douglas Small, who said he accepted there had been degree of provocation.

Oban man bailed after knife assault

AN OBAN man was given bail after appearing in private at Oban Sheriff Court last week charged with assaulting a man with a knife.

Walter MacIntyre, aged 62, of 20 Glencruitten Drive, Oban, is charged with assaulting Robert Cruikshanks, c/o Strathclyde Police, Oban, on December 30 at Achnalarig Farm, Glencruitten, Oban, by striking him on the neck with a knife.

Man admits possessing ecstasy

TWENTY-one-year-old Thomas Johnstone, c/o 71 Highbank Park, Lochgilphead, has been fined £200 after admitting possessing ecstasy.

Oban Sheriff Court heard on Monday that Johnstone had been at a party and had changed clothes after having a drink spilled on him and two ecstasy tablets had been in a pocket of the clothes lent to him.

He accepted, when found with them in his possession on June 6 in George Street, Oban, that he knew they were ecstasy and were in his possession but that he was not going to use them himself.

Defence agent Robert Dundas said the accused would not have used them because he was a diver in the fishing industry and was regularly tested for drugs.



The Rev Andy Campbell and his wife Fiona said goodbye to the congregation of Kilmore and Oban Church of Scotland. They are pictured at the weekend with associate minister the Rev Liz Gibson, left, church session clerk Ken MacColl and newly ordained church elders, from left, Cynthia MacKeown, Carl Ravn, Stuart Philip, Win Philip and Marion Kirkham. t02and03

Oban minister Reverend Andy Campbell leads last town worship after 26 years

AFTER 26 years as a Church of Scotland minister in Oban, the Rev Andy Campbell led worship for the last time in the town on Sunday.

But he did not leave on a quiet note as he ordained five new church elders and baptised four children.

The minister for Kilmore and Oban first came to the town in November 1979 and was inducted as minister of St Columba's Argyll Square Church, now the tourist office. Since then, a union of churches in the town has made the Rev Campbell a well-known face. He is moving to a new job which will see him travel all over the country as part of a small team of specialists.

The Rev Campbell explained: 'My new job is based in Perth but I will be encouraging congregations across Scotland to work in a more

modern way. It's a new post. I will be carrying out research into best practise of church work and passing on ideas to churches large and small.'

The Rev Campbell has achieved many things in his 26 years in Oban; one of which is overseeing the fund-raising and building of the Glencruitten Church of Scotland Centre.

He has also been chaplain for hospitals in the town, Park and Rockfield primary schools and Oban High School. At the end of term school Christmas services, the Rev Campbell was given a guitar by pupils and parents of Rockfield Primary School and was presented with an inscribed quach by Oban High School.

And the congregation he has served for more

than a quarter of a century have planned a farewell presentation for the Rev Campbell before he starts his new job at the end of the month. Ken MacColl, Session Clerk of Kilmore and Oban Church of Scotland, said: 'We in Oban have been enormously enriched with the presence of Andy and his wife Fiona over 26 years. We wish Andy well in his new job within the church and wish them all of God's blessings in their move.'

'I am sure we will not lose touch with them.'

The Rev Campbell says although he starts his new job at the end of this month he will be travelling between Oban and Perth for a few weeks to come.

Until a replacement is found for the Rev Campbell, the Rev Jeff McCormick will lead the congregation as interim moderator.

Property developer's Oban appeal dismissed

A PROPERTY developer has lost an appeal to build full-time residential flats in a courtyard at the back of the Argyll Hotel in Oban.

The hotel, which has been closed for several years, was bought by Thomas Rothschild's Food Converters Ltd, a company based in Wiltshire.

The company has lodged a number of planning applications relating to the derelict hotel and the buildings at the rear in Charles Street and Argyll Mews, one of which was for three flats, demolishing former staff housing for the hotel in the process.

Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee of Argyll and Bute Council approved the application but with the condition that the flats not be used for full-time occupants and for not more than three months at a time.

Mr Rothschild appealed to the Scottish Executive against this condition but his appeal has been dismissed.

Principal Reporter at the Inquiry Reporter Unit T P W Brian said having considered all the arguments he felt removal of the condition would be contrary to the council's policies and there was no

other justification for allowing it.

Food Converters argued that the proposed flats would be better than the run-down building already there, that there were already residential flats above some of the commercial premises in the area and there would be the use of a communal garden.

There would be parking at the North Pier; there would be no right of access apart from pedestrians to the courtyard once building was complete.

It also said that while not objecting, environmental health had commented the flats would be more sensitive, than existing residential flats, to local noise.

The reporter said in his written response: 'The site is in a 'backland' situation and is hemmed in by existing buildings on all sides.'

'The outlook from the flats would be very restricted because of the presence of the surrounding buildings up to four storeys high in close proximity.'

'I find that the yard would not provide a satisfactory residential environment for a block of flats for permanent occupation and that the parking and servicing arrangements would be inadequate.'

Helicopter company flies to Sandra's rescue



Pilot Graham Martlew welcomes Sandra Ross and Neil Angus aboard his helicopter. t02bat01

A HELICOPTER tour company has flown in to save an Oban woman's holiday after Citylink refused to carry her mobile scooter battery on their buses.

Sandra Ross, who suffers from osteo arthritis of the spine, needs the scooter as she cannot walk long distances.

Last week *The Oban Times* reported Sandra's holiday plans had been dealt a blow when Citylink refused to carry her scooter battery as the company said there was a risk of battery acid spilling.

But after seeing the story, Arran Heli Tours contacted Sandra to offer its services and on Saturday pilot Graham Martlew flew her and her partner, Neil Angus, from Oban Airport to Glasgow in 35 minutes where she joined her flight to France.

Arran Heli Tours managing director Neil

Currie said: 'We were distressed to hear of Ms Ross' plight and are only too pleased to assist in this special case. When we saw the headline in *The Oban Times* "Sandra can fly

around the world, but can't take the bus to Glasgow" it seemed obvious to us that the answer was to fly from Oban direct to Glasgow Airport.'

Sandra said: 'I am

'Whilst we believe that the

Chance to join Queen for 80th birthday lunch

IN HONOUR of The Queen's 80th birthday next year, Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh will host a reception and luncheon at Buckingham Palace on Wednesday April 19, for people who will be celebrating their 80th birthday on April 21 2006.

All those living in Argyll and Bute, who were born on April 21 1926 and would like a chance of lunching with The Queen, should, in the first instance, write to the Lieutenant Clerk George Seaton, Bank of Scotland Buildings, Station

The Oban Times HOTLINE
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Fort William to host film premiere to raise funds for hydrotherapy pool

FORT William is to host a film premiere for a new movie to raise funds for Lochaber's new hydrotherapy pool.

The movie, titled *Here's Tae Lochaber* is narrated by Magnus Magnusson and includes appearances by national stars of the Scottish music scene and Lochaber musicians.

As well as contributions from Donnie Munro, Ally Bain and Phil Cunningham the Kilmallie Singers, Lochaber Schools Pipe Band and the senior pipe band are

also featured. There are also a host of local musicians performing under the watchful eye of Ingrid Henderson.

The premiere will be held in March this year in the town's Studio Theatre.

It is being organised by Scottish musician Billy MacIsaac, who was responsible for the CD, *Here's Tae Us*, which made £20,000 for Lochaber Hydrotherapy in 2004.

Billy has also written a new song, simply titled *Loch-*

aber, which he hopes will be taken on as an anthem for Lochaber. The song features Strathclyde Police Band and a 50-piece choir and is written in the style of Paul McCartney's *Mull of Kintyre*.

Billy said: 'I was approached by a film production company when the CD came out in 2004 and they offered to do a short DVD for the charity taking some tracks from the CD and story-boarding them.'

'I managed to persuade them to extend it a little bit.'

Billy became involved in the fundraising for the hydrotherapy pool in Fort William when he learned that his friend George McLeod would benefit from using the pool as he suffers from rheumatoid arthritis.

The charity's board is due to meet today (Thursday) to discuss the awarding of the contract to build the pool.

Work is due to start in the next few weeks on the pool which is being built on land at the King George V Park, Fort William.

Highland holiday dates announced

HIGHLAND Council has announced its local public holidays and school holidays for the coming year.

Public holidays in the Highlands will be February 13, March 27, May 1, October 9, November 27 and December 25 (Christmas Day). All dates are Mondays.

Pupils across Highland returned to school on Monday (January 9).

Schools will break for Easter on Friday, March 31 and return on Tuesday, April 18 before breaking for the summer holidays on Friday, June 30.

The first day back after the summer break will be Tuesday, August 15 with Monday and Tuesday, 6 and 7 November, 2006 allocated as area closures for Skye, Lochalsh and Lochaber.

School will also be on holiday from Friday, October 6 to Monday, October 23 for the October break and closing again on December 21 for the Christmas break returning on Monday, January 8, 2007.

A82 roadworks return to Fort

TRAFFIC congestion returned to Fort William this week as resurfacing work resumed on the A82 in the town.

A spokesperson for BEAR Scotland said the roadworks, which began on Monday, January 9 would continue for the next three weeks.

The roadworks involve resurfacing and lighting works.

Motorists are asked to heed advisory signs as well as observe temporary diversions and speed limits.

Extra time for journeys should also be allowed during the period.

Anger as Kennedy resigns

LIBERAL Democrats in Lochaber have reacted with anger and disgust at the way Charles Kennedy MP has been forced to resign as leader of the party last week.

But Mr Kennedy himself told *The Oban Times* this week that he was grateful for the messages of support he had received from Lochaber and was looking forward to spending more time in his constituency.

Just 48 hours after admitting he had a problem with alcohol Mr Kennedy chose to resign on Saturday, January 7 after intense pressure from leading members of his shadow cabinet.

Personal friend, Liberal Democrat councillor and local GP Michael Foxley said: 'I think that what happened is very sad. I am very sorry for Charles Kennedy and his family.'

Courageous

'It is a very courageous step to admit you have a problem to immediate family, let alone to 50 million people. I feel very angry about events in last few days.'

Charles Kennedy is a very good Highland MP and has been a very good leader of the Liberal Democrats. He was the major politician of consequence who opposed the Iraq war which was not only completely illegal but made the situation far worse than it was before. I think that regardless of party politics he got a lot of credit for his stance on that.

If he admitted that he had



Charles Kennedy, MP.

an alcohol problem and was dealing with it then he should have been given every support in that situation. And if it was felt necessary to have a leadership contest he should have taken part in that along with others.

'People are making an issue of him denying treatment for alcohol, but speaking as a GP, everybody that has alcohol problems denies it and when they do admit it in most businesses and certainly in the public sector they are given every possible support to ensure they overcome that problem.'

Break

Mr Kennedy added that he was also looking forward to having the break that he did not get over the Christmas and New Year period.

Local Liberal Democrat party member Russ Morgan said: 'Everybody is a bit disgusted by the whole thing.'

'Apart from feeling very sad and angry I feel it sends an extremely bad message out to people that are wondering if they should admit to problems if that is the consequences.'

'It's a major issue in Lochaber and Scotland and I think the consequences of what's happened here are damaging for a lot of other people in the same situation.'

Mr Kennedy said: 'There

have been overwhelming messages of support from the Highlands and that has been a great source of support and strength.'

I look back on my six years as party leader with a great deal of satisfaction in terms of what I have been able to achieve.'

'We have one million more voters and the highest level of MPs for over 80 years and I was the only UK party leader who spoke out against the war in Iraq.'

'But I have, after all these years in Parliament, become the MP for Lochaber, and in many ways, now that I am relieved of the duties of the UK leadership, we are now planning our lives on the basis that we have much more time in Lochaber. That is something I am looking forward to very much.'

Break

Mr Kennedy added that he was also looking forward to having the break that he did not get over the Christmas and New Year period.

Local Liberal Democrat party member Russ Morgan said: 'Everybody is a bit disgusted by the whole thing.'

'If it had to be dealt with it should have been in-house and discreet. The Liberal party will be much poorer without him.'

'I don't think he is the sort of fellow to disappear. I can guarantee that once the dust has settled he'll be back.'

'There are too many people disgusted with what happened and how he got boxed in.'



Craig Paul with Nell Hardie and fellow winners Sam Coombs and James Hopson.

Lochaber hero is young sailor of the year

YOUNG Lochaber sailor Craig Paul has become the first Scot to win the Royal Yachting Association's young sailor of the year award.

Seventeen-year-old Craig, along with fellow

sailors Sam Coombs from Clevedon and James Hopson from Wrexham, won the award for an amazing act of bravery, saving a young girl from

certain death. Sailing at the Scottish 29er championships on Loch Lomond in September the three boys rescued Lochgilphead sailor Nell Hardie after her boat capsized.

Nell was sailing with Craig when the boat capsize,

trapping her underneath with a wire round her neck. During the incident the boys kept their

heads, remained calm and managed to bring Nell safely to shore and resuscitate her before she was taken to hospital. The awards were presented by Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, at the London Boat Show on Saturday, January 7 after a ceremony at the media marine awards in Old Billingsgate in London.

Waterfront plan slammed

A LOCHABER councillor has slammed a plan to build housing and shops on land reclaimed from the sea in Fort William.

Kilmallie and Invergarry councillor Bill Clark says that storm driven floods on the west coast will become more and more frequent and instead Highland Council should concentrate on flood prevention to safeguard homes already in existence.

Highland Council plans to reclaim land from the sea for development along Fort William's waterfront but Mr

Clark says that the Caol and Corpach areas have waterfronts and locations much easier to develop.

He said: 'The council has already spent a great deal of money purchasing the area to be reclaimed from the sea and for a waterfront report that they turned down.'

'It is all very well acquiring money from various sources, however, there is no excuse for choosing a location that will greatly increase the cost to make it safe while more accessible locations exist.'

'As a councillor it is my job to attract development to my ward. It is also in everyone's interests to ensure that locations will not only benefit a small section of the community but the whole community in a more accessible locations at a cost that will be more acceptable.'

'I am not against the proposal, only its location. Instead of concentrating on reclaiming land from the sea and infilling this massive hole to provide a site, all the effort should go into

safeguarding the Caol waterfront and ensuring that a flood prevention wall is erected to safeguard homes already in existence.'

Mr Clark added that a recent report from the conservation charity, World Wide Fund for Nature, has said that environmental changes will lead to more storms on the west coast.

He added: 'If we are going to face the recent type of flooding we had in Lochaber along with snow melt, we will certainly be in deep water.'

Gaelic medium parents fight on

A PARENTS' GROUP at a Gaelic unit in Lochaber threatened with closure are being urged to write to the Scottish Executive.

A newsletter released by the group this month states: 'We were assured at the recent meeting in Mallaig High School by Bruce Robertson, director of education for Highland Council, that budgets would not be taken into consideration on the future of Lady Lovat, but it is quite apparent our local council is using this as a scapegoat to put its case forward.'

Motorists warned to slow down

LOCHABER motorists were being instructed to slow down this week after new speed restrictions on the roads around Lochaber High School came into effect.

From Monday part-time 20mph speed limits on the Corpach Moss road (Northern Loop-Camaghael) were introduced.

Northern Constabulary, Highland Council, the Crown Office and the Procurator Fiscal Service (Highlands and Islands) have said 'robust enforcement action' will be taken to ensure the speed limits are adhered to.

This includes both around the high school and at the various primary schools in Lochaber.

The speed limit applies on school days, Monday to Friday from 8.25am to 8.55am, 12.53pm to 1.50pm and 3.35pm to 3.50pm.

Part-time speed restrictions are already in place at Ardgour, Arisaig, Fort William RC, Inverlochy, Lady Lovat and Lochaline primary schools.



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The focus of the international aquaculture community will shift to Scotland next year for the annual Aquaculture Today conference, in association with Fish Farmer Magazine.

Aquaculture Today 2006 will address the key issues affecting the aquaculture industry at large. Leading figures from the industry will take part in a useful and varied programme comprising formal presentations and discussion sessions on a range of important issues affecting sustainable aquaculture development:

- Aquaculture Markets
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- Species Development

The conference will be held from the 28th to 30th March in the magnificent 5 star Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa. This graciously appointed hotel has opulent function and exhibition space, first-class facilities, parking and easy access to Edinburgh's many attractions.

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Rural Housing Service appoints new development officer to Tiree post

THE RURAL Housing Service has announced the appointment of a development worker to expand its work with rural communities on the Argyll islands.

Clare Jones, who is based on Tiree, will fill the new role which is designed to support the island communities of Argyll by developing new housing solutions, help to increase affordable housing opportunities, and to enable community participation in housing and regeneration initiatives.

The Rural Housing Service, a charity which provides support, information and advice to rural communities on housing issues, has already worked with communities on some of the Argyll islands, including Iona, Gigha, Tiree and Colonsay, and has helped develop the Argyll and Bute Care and Repair Service.

Newly appointed Clare will carry out a variety of roles such as undertaking housing needs surveys and feasibility studies, providing advice and information on housing

options including promoting Rural Home Ownership Grants and Rural Empty Homes Grants, finding funding and land for community housing projects, and supporting communities to work in partnership with housing agencies to achieve solutions to island housing needs.

The post, which is part-time, is funded by a grant from the Nationwide Foundation.

'This appointment marks an important expansion of the

support the Rural Housing Service provides to rural communities, doubling our development staff,' said Raymond Young, convenor of the Rural Housing Service.

'Affordable housing is a crucial issue for the communities on Mull, Tiree, Iona, Colonsay and the other Argyll islands, and this post will help increase affordable housing in these communities.'

Clare Jones can be contacted at clare@ruralhousingscotland.org or on 07748 184225.



Trad Music awards host Mary Ann Kennedy watches on as Mark and Linda Morpurgo collect the workshop's award at Edinburgh's Queen's Hall.

Lochgoilhead recruits morris dancers to take on Goliath

A TROUPE of morris dancers from Essex are just one of the reasons behind an Argyll fiddlers' group's success in the Trad Music Awards.

In a result on a par with David felling Goliath, the Lochgoilhead Fiddle Workshop won the Community Project of the Year Award in Edinburgh in December.

Unexpected because Lochgoilhead, which only has a population of around 250 people, was up against stiff competition in the shape of the Glasgow Fiddle Workshop, the Inverness Traditional Music Project and Celtic Connections.

Three years ago

The Lochgoilhead Fiddle Workshop was only set up three years ago through Linda Morpurgo, who was convener of the Glasgow Fiddle Workshop before moving to the area.

Now, not only are 80 Argyll primary school pupils taught the fiddle each week

but the workshop puts on concerts up and down the west coast all year featuring top musicians from all over the UK and North America.

Workshop committee member Mark Morpurgo told *The Oban Times* that the award success came as a big surprise given the sheer number of people who could have voted for the other nominees.

Proud

He said: 'When we started out there were a few doubtful Thomases' who said nobody was going to be interested in a small village. But we have had 60 to 70 per cent of the village in some way involved through attending workshops or going to concerts. That is something I have been very proud of.'

'One lady said to me that her son had been sitting watching television two or three hours each night but now he spends his time

playing the fiddle. To me that's what this workshop is all about.'

The workshop held its first concert in Lochgoilhead Village Hall in November 2002 and there was an air of trepidation after only nine tickets had been sold by 6pm but 90 people eventually turned up and everything has snowballed from then.

Mark said his perceptions of traditional music had been seeing the likes of Harry Lauder and Andy Stewart perform on television at Hogmanay but he didn't like either of them. 'Then I moved here and I found it was a really exciting and vibrant scene,' he said. 'We don't do exams and are not trying to see people become grade five fiddlers. We are against forcing children to play musical instruments.'

He said: 'I had one old gent who came up to me in Lochgoilhead before the awards, who had never been to any of our concerts or workshops and didn't like traditional music but said sense that they ended up winning.'

Tuition

Through the Youth Music Initiative, Argyll and Bute Council sub-contract fiddle tuition in Strachur, Tighnabruaich, Glendaruel and Loch Goil schools to the workshop.

The workshop is particularly keen to foster links with other community groups in Argyll in order to attract more musicians to the area. Mark said: 'Most traditional musicians are keen to tour but often the costs of travel and accommodation put them off. What we try to do is put on mini-local tours which are to everyone's benefit.' A tour last year took in Islay, Mull, Skye, Plockton and Caerlaverock and Donald Black, Malcolm Jones, Jamie Laval and the Emily Smith Band are just some of the artists who have appeared at workshop concerts.

More than 1,000 children in schools up and down the west coast have had a taste of traditional music through the workshop and Mark Morpurgo says seeing youngsters take to the stage is what Lochgoilhead Fiddle Workshop is all about. 'The very first time they get on stage that brings a real lump to my throat,' he said.



Lochgoilhead Fiddle Workshop tutors Amy Geddes and Anna Wendy Stevenson play at the awards celebration concert at the village hall after with James Ross and Simon Bradley.

The Little Red Robin comes to Taynuilt Primary



Taynuilt Primary School held its annual Christmas concert which featured a super performance by primaries one to three of the nativity *The Little Red Robin*. Also starring were the pupils in primaries four to seven who presented a melody of Christmas songs from around the world and showed off their instrumental skills.

Mary's Meals' feasts on funds of £500,000

DALMALLY-based charity Scottish International Relief (SIR) has now received funding of almost £500,000 to help develop its highly successful Mary's Meals programme in Malawi.

The Scottish Executive has now stated it will support the charity with £240,000 after initially deviating SIR funding last year.

Funding match

And millionaire entrepreneur and philanthropist Sir Tom Farmer, who spoke out against the original rejection, has announced that he will match the executive's funding pledge which now means SIR can provide meals for an extra 20,000 African children.

The Mary's Meals programme already helps

40,000 Malawian children with their health and education by providing a free school meal every day.

Ruth Black from SIR was delighted by the news of the funding.

'Sir Tom Farmer is somebody that we have known for sometime and has always been supportive,' she said. 'He had told us he would offer us some funding.'

'Sir Tom Farmer is somebody that we have known for sometime and has always been supportive,' she said. 'He had told us he would offer us some funding.'

The first instalment from the Scottish Executive is already being put to use in the

region of Malawi where the Mary's Meal programme is already well established.

Mrs Black said that the money would allow SIR to build on their work and, along with the experience gained over the last three years, hopefully allow Mary's Meal to be expanded to southern Malawi.

'We've seen the results of Mary's Meals in terms of increased school enrolment, especially for girls,' said the charity worker.

'There are less absences because children are healthier and can come to school.'

'We recently had a lovely report from a school where some of the children have gained secondary school places. This was a first for

that school, and the headmaster is sure it is because of the effect of Mary's Meals.'

Last summer, First Minister Jack McConnell praised the scheme after he visited Malawi and saw SIR's work first hand, and has used SIR as an example of the positive impact of Scots aid work. But in October of 2005 SIR was denied money from the Scottish Executive's £3 million International Development Fund to expand Mary's Meals.

In October a spokesperson for the First Minister stated that as far as Jack McConnell was concerned it was not a question of 'if' SIR would receive funding, but a question of 'when'.

I love it, I love it not



A KNOCK on the door disturbs your tea, but you are not annoyed as the pleasant man at the door tells you that he is pre-authorised to advance you £50,000 that you are free to spend on anything your heart desires, starting right now!

Just imagine how much enjoyment you could have from £50,000! Tempting though this very kind offer is, few of us would jump to accept it without finding out just a little bit more about it. It would be useful for in-

stance to enquire about the repayments, because 'only' £4,999 a month for 10 years suddenly makes the whole offer seem much less kind and rather less attractive.

Yet many people get themselves into all sorts of trouble by using a decision making strategy just like the: 'How much fun could I have with £50,000? I'll take it!'

Suppose you are striving to achieve or maintain an appropriate body composition but there you are face to face with an extra large slice of your favourite gateaux. If the limit of your deciding strategy is to imagine how you would feel in half an hour. If the answer is 'racked with guilt' or 'bloated and nauseous' then maybe your decision will be less of a foregone conclusion.

Decisions that are driven purely by the attraction of instant gratification are always high risk; decision making that includes a consideration of the longer term

consequences at least give you a fighting chance of exercising some wisdom.

What constitutes 'long term' depends on the situation, half an hour might be about right with the gateaux but a month for the first payment to be due would be only the start of the negative consequences of the £50,000.

Similarly what constitutes 'instant gratification' will also vary. It could be the instant pleasure of the gateaux or it could be short term relief from unpleasantness. An alcoholic who is going through the drying out process is not usually having a lot of fun and they know that they only have to have a drink and the un-



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Good progress for Kilchattan Primary

A PRIMARY school on the Isle of Colonsay has been reported as making good progress towards meeting the main points for action contained in the HMIE inspection report of October 2003?

A follow-up inspection by Argyll and Bute education authority found that Kilchattan Primary School has made good progress in increasing the pace of learning and level of challenge in some lessons, and in working with the education authority to review the support provided to the school for learning support and staff development.

It was also discovered that the head teacher had also made very good progress in developing more systematic arrangements for setting and reviewing targets for each pupil's progress over time, while the school had implemented a revised programme for technology to improve standards of attainment.

Argyll and Bute spokesperson on education Councillor Dick Walsh said: 'This report clearly shows the level of commitment of staff, pupils and parents to improving the learning environment at Kilchattan Primary School.'

LEISURE TIMES



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THE PRODUCERS 12A

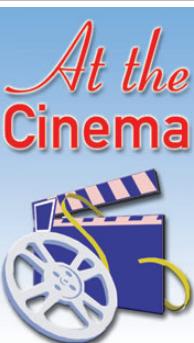
6.30 DAILY from FRIDAY (Excluding Sunday)
1.00 SATURDAY and SUNDAY MATINEES
MARCH OF THE PENGUINS U

8.15 DAILY from FRIDAY (Excluding Sunday)
2.45 SATURDAY and SUNDAY MATINEES
NEW ROMANTIC COMEDY PREMIERE
JUST FRIENDS 12A

STUDIO CINEMA 01397 705095
CAMERON SQUARE - FORT WILLIAM

7.30 DAILY from FRIDAY (Excluding Sunday)
2.30 SATURDAY and SUNDAY MATINEES
THE NICHTIEST MOVIE OF THEM ALL
KING KONG 12A

7.45 DAILY from FRIDAY (Excluding Sunday)
2.45 SATURDAY and SUNDAY MATINEES
NEW ROMANTIC COMEDY PREMIERE
JUST FRIENDS 12A



Movie Listings from Friday 13th January 2006

THE PRODUCERS

12A Certificate - 134 Minutes

OBAN HIGHLAND THEATRE

7.30 Daily (Except Sunday) From Friday

2.00 Saturday and Sunday Matinees

Mel Brooks record-breaking musical success **THE PRODUCERS**, stars Nathan Lane, Matthew Broderick, Uma Thurman and Will Ferrell. Revolving around a 'has-been' theatrical producer, and a scheming accountant, our mismatch couple plan a get-rich-quick scheme to embezzle a fortune - by producing a sure-fire Broadway musical flop!

To achieve their objective, they discovered the ultimate bad play, which turned out to be "Springtime for Hitler", which looked likely to be the ultimate stage disaster of all time. Their scheming came to naught however when the production was hailed by critics as a great toast-of-the-town hit!

Uma Thurman stars as Ulla, a Swedish secretary and would-be showgirl whilst, in the role of Franz Liebkind (the neo-Nazi playwright), Will Ferrell proves his outstanding spot-on comedy talents. Directed by Susan Stroman (Tony Award winner of the original Broadway Production) this is a big screen comedy musical that must not be missed.

MARCH OF THE PENGUINS

U Certificate - 80 Minutes

OBAN HIGHLAND THEATRE

6.30 Daily (except Sunday) From Friday

2.30 Matinees on Saturday and Sunday

Director PETER JACKSON (who gave us 'Lord of the Rings') brings a sweeping cinematic vision of KING KONG to the large screen, with his dramatic story of the gigantic apemaster. We follow the adventures of a group of explorers and documentary film makers who travel to the strange Skull Island, to investigate the island's legends.

After they land, they discover KING KONG living in a massive jungle where prehistoric creatures have been protected and hidden for millions of years.

KONG proves to be wild and beyond control and only one solitary woman (Naomi Watts) manages to hold his attention long enough for him to be subdued by the explorers. Co-starring Jack Black and Adrien Brody, the escapades of the 25 feet tall apelike monster proves to be compelling viewing, from the wilds of Skull Island across seas to New York, where the mightiest of shackles are used to hold him in capacity.

N.B. Children under the age of twelve are only admitted when accompanied by an adult aged eighteen or over because of the frightening elements, moderate violence and the frequent peril portrayed in this mightiest movie adventure of all time.

January can be a tough month financially and there could be one bill or renewal that drops unexpectedly through the letterbox which requires a reaction, just when you could have done without it. But, the closeness of Venus and Mercury suggests you can produce some ingenious solutions from your magical top hat. The Sun will also help to recharge your batteries. For more, please call me...

TAURUS

(Apr 21 - May 21)

09111 767273

You are likely to have shown a real zest for opening up your world to wider horizons. Yet someone may wish that you were continuing to embrace the status quo. With the move of the Sun this week, they may face a challenge, perhaps because they don't want you to realise your world better because of how it can affect them. Are you ready for this? Can you reach agreement? For more, please call me...

GEMINI

(May 22 - June 21)

09111 767274

January can be a tough month financially and there could be one bill or renewal that drops unexpectedly through the letterbox which requires a reaction, just when you could have done without it. But, the closeness of Venus and Mercury suggests you can produce some ingenious solutions from your magical top hat. The Sun will also help to recharge your batteries. For more, please call me...

CANCER

(June 22 - July 22)

09111 767275

Some important conversations are in the works. If you are single, the chances are that a mysterious newcomer could soon be entering your orbit. Attached? It may be time for a heart to heart. Greater clarity can come from this, but you can't expect everyone to be on board, it will not be obliging. It won't help a bit to thrice the term. Mutual respect should be your aim. For more, please call me...

LEO

(July 23 - Aug 22)

09111 767276

There may be those dreary everyday tasks to attend to but a "can do" attitude on your part, can enthuse those you interface with. And yet if there has been a lack of enthusiasm on your part, then you do this would be an excellent week to seek out some positive solutions. A healing massage or reflexology session can help soothe. Yet not a week to be too open, watch people's sincerity. For more, please call me...

VIRGO

(Aug 24 - Sep 23)

09111 767277

You could be more cheerful than most in what can be a bleak part of the year. Involving yourself in interest hobbies or pursuits which will away the winter nights could be just the ticket. If you can't bring your mind to do this, then it may need to get in touch with someone, perhaps a friend, who has drifted off the radar somewhat. For more, please call me...

LIBRA

(Sept 24 - Oct 23)

09111 767278

Beautifying your home, or even playing host can continue to brightly feature. And yet a worldly concern may need careful stewardship. A change at work for example, could rock your emotional foundations. If you are in a bind, then it may be time for a change of emphasis, one that will see you feeling more outgoing and gregarious for some while. Faraway places can take on more appeal too. For more, please call me...

SCORPIO

(Oct 24 - Nov 22)

09111 767279

You could show a remarkable ability to get your head around all sorts of mental challenges. Ideal for tackling that latest software, or upgrading your PC. Then again if puzzles and quizzes are your thing, you can easily fit in with these. This can also help you to get into some important documents and activities that may tempt to take short cuts. This could cost time and money. For more, please call me...

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 23 - Dec 21)

09111 767280

However much you know it is logical to try and pull in your reins as far as expenditure is concerned, those sales can continue to be highly tempting. Rashness in this regard, could however cause pain in the longer term. By the end of the month you could be in a position and activities can start to absorb you and how so. The pace of life can really heat up and the excitement can mount. For more, please call me...

CAPRICORN

(Dec 22 - Jan 20)

09111 767281

You continue to bring a real panache to bear as you enjoy dazzling individualistic form. However, those who are more suited to toeing the party line, may find it is time to let go of your new found confidence. A clash is possible for precisely this reason. Yet if you have become a little bit caught-up in your plans, this would be an ideal juncture to reach out and reconnect. For more, please call me...

AQUARIUS

(Jan 21 - Feb 19)

09111 767282

The Sun passes into your sign, Aquarius this week and this really is a moment to savor. Not only will you start to feel less apart from others, your vitality can improve. Yet there could be something going on quickly that could be a reminder to you to give your greatest cause for celebration. This could relate to a discreet attraction to someone new. It could soon become much more. For more, please call me...

PISCES

(Feb 20 - Mar 20)

09111 767283

One friendships continues to go from strength to strength and can be having a major impact on your future plans. But managing this week is going to be important this week and there could be other associations that need some TLC to stop a sense of drift creeping in. If you have an interest in alternative medicine, traditional religion or spirituality, these can grow in appeal. For more, please call me...

Morgan Freeman of ritual and romance, that will be recalled years after all the major movie blockbusters are long forgotten.

JUST FRIENDS

UK Premiere - 12A Certificate - 94 Minutes

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8.15 Daily (Except Sunday) From Friday

7.45 Saturday and Sunday Matinees

Matinees 2.45 Saturday and Sunday

Matinees 2.45 Saturday

LEISURE TIMES

American and Russian twist to Ballet West's *Romeo and Juliet*

BALLET West's latest production will see the UK debut from an American ballet dancer and a performance from a Russian ballet dancer who learned his steps for the show in only four days.

Romeo and Juliet, which is based on William Shakespeare's classic play, will star Todd Fox, from the Florida Keys, as Benvolio, and Oleg Kojanov, from Moscow, as Paris.

With the production requiring a lot of male parts, both dancers were carefully selected by artistic adviser Ken Burke to join dancers from Ballet West.

"Both Todd and Oleg are very talented dancers and were known to me - they came very highly recommended," said Ken. "I thought they would bring a different dimension to the

performance."

For Todd, the two-month tour with Ballet West will mark his first performances in UK in his 16-year professional ballet career.

For the last six years, Todd has run two businesses back in the States - a management company for guest ballet dancers and an internet-based broadcasting agency for dance companies all over the world - and takes on short-term dancing contract with ballet companies during his holidays.

The American dancer has performed all over the world, including dancing in a show for former US president Bill Clinton.

"Years ago, when Bill Clinton was in office and on a campaign to preserve historical landmarks, I performed for him in a theatre in Massachusetts," said

Todd.

"Although it was an honour to help preserve a national landmark, the whole event wasn't as great as it sounds - we were stripped of our social security numbers and background checks were run on us, and we weren't allowed to leave a designated area for eight hours until it was time to perform!"

On arrival in Scotland, Todd was more than impressed with the Ballet West.

"There's a disciplined structure within the school and everything runs smoothly, which I appreciate," he said.

"Ken is very professional

and Gillian Barton is just a fantastic person. There is more of a family atmosphere here than I've experienced in other ballet companies."

Oleg arrived in Scotland on Monday (January 9) - four days before the opening night of *Romeo and Juliet*.

But the fact that he has so little time until the performance does not daunt the ballet dancer, who has been training since he was nine and spent eight years studying at the prestigious Stanslovskoski Ballet School in Moscow.

Oleg has previously performed in Perth and other parts of the UK with Ballet

Rosse Company from Swansea. Oleg is also familiar with *Romeo and Juliet*, having previously played the parts of Paris, Mercutio and Romeo in performances in his home of Russia.

Although having performed in Scotland before, Oleg finds Ballet West different to the other ballet companies he has performed with.

"Ballet West has students, and acts as a company - there are a lot of young people," he said.

"Most ballet companies I have worked with are not mixed with a school."

After the *Romeo and Juliet* tour, Todd will spend

nine weeks in Sydney, Australia performing in Warner Brothers' ballet production of *Casablanca*, followed by two weeks in the ballet *La Bayadre* in Peru at the end of the summer. Oleg plans to join Ballet Rosse, continue performing, and teach ballet.

A third guest dancer, Russian Mischa Botting, will also be appearing in the Ballet West show. He was due to arrive in Oban yesterday (Wednesday), and join Todd, Oleg and the other Ballet West dancers in practices.

Romeo and Juliet will be shown in Oban's Corran Halls on Thursday January 12 and Friday 13, and will be shown across Scotland over the next two months.



Isla Donald as the Hoity Toity Angel will get to perform with the other cast members as Dalmally Primary School puts on its nativity play a month late. t02dal01

Dalmally show must go on

DALMALLY Primary School has chosen January 19 to hold its nativity play after a sickness bug infected more than half the pupils over Christmas and forced

teachers to cancel the original date.

The play, called *The Hoity-Toity Angel*, was originally scheduled for December 21 but it was cancelled after 25 of the 49 pupils caught the bug and were absent from school.

In his 21 years as at Dalmally Primary School, headteacher George Kay said he had never had so many pupils off at once.

As a result the play, consisting primaries one to four will go ahead next Thursday - a month after most schools performed their nativity play.

Mr Kay said: "We couldn't have the play on December 21 because more than half the school was off with a winter bug."

"They were calling it a winter vomiting bug!"

"But the kids put so much time and effort into learning their songs and words."

"It would have been a shame for them not to have performed and let their parents see it."

The children are currently cramming in some last minute rehearsal time in an effort to remember the words and lyrics at the start of December!

Kilmore

'Games' dance

KILMORE residents enjoyed a buffet dinner dance last Saturday as a reward for the community's hard work in organising one of the most popular Highland Games in Argyll.

The Kilmore and Kilbride Games Committee have run the annual dance for a few years and it is going from strength to strength as this year was the busiest so far.

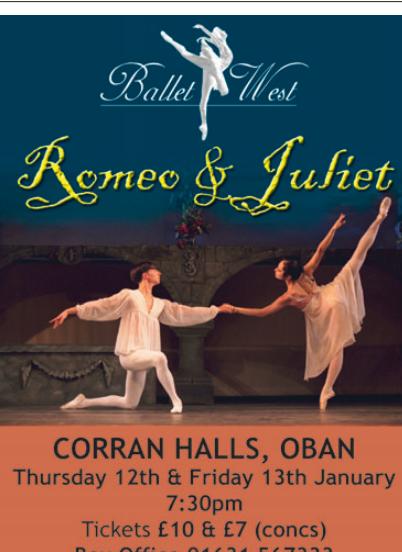
Such is the popularity of the family ceilidh night, it attracted folk from every section of the community from primary school pupils to pensioners.

Games committee treasurer Margaret Farmer said: "Last year we shifted the dance from March to January and it was a tremendous success but this year has been even better."

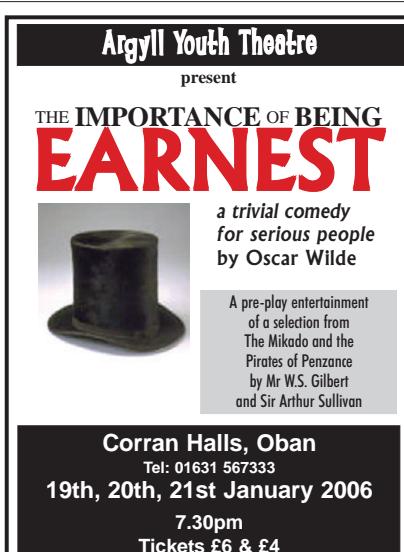
Ladies Night Flashdancers Saturday 28th January Doors Open 7.30pm Tickets £10 Book Now Contact Amanda: 01631 569 407 Mob: 07744 012796 Oban's Premier Function Venue



Oleg Kojanov (left) and Todd Fox practice with swords for the Ballet West's production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Also pictured are David Horn and Jonathon Barton of Ballet West. t02bal01



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Tel: 01631 567333
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7.30pm
Tickets £6 & £4



Celebrate the Birth of Scotland's National Bard in Style at the Oban FM Burns Supper at The Argyllshire Gathering Halls Friday 20 January 7.00pm for 7.30pm Enjoy a delicious 6 course meal for your traditional Burns Supper with Special Guest Speakers including: Oban Born Highland & Island MSP Maureen MacMillan - The Land we Live In Jamie McGrigor MSP - Immortal Memory John Farquhar Munro MSP - Toast to the Lasses Dr Mac Armstrong - Reply to the Land we Live In Chief Inspector Ciorsstan Shearer - Reply to Toast to the Lasses Chairman Neil Horne plus talented entertainers Tickets Now Available: £25.00 from Oban FM Radio 132 George Street, Oban (behind Hydro Board Shop) Tel: 01631 570057 Oban's Premier Function Venue

Oban FM celebrates Burns' birthday with style

OBAN FM, moves to a new venue for its annual commemoration of Scotland's National Bard this year when it takes over the refurbished Argyllshire Gathering Halls a week tomorrow (Friday).

Under the chairmanship of Neil Horne, the top table, includes two well known ladies as this is a Burns' celebration open to all. The 'Land We Live In' is to be proposed by Oban-born MSP: Maureen MacMillan, a Labour List MSP for the Highlands and Islands while Tory List MSP: Jamie McGrigor, his party's spokesman on Culture, honours Burns' 'Immortal Memory' and John Farquhar Munro, a Lib-Dem MSP for the Highlands and Islands, pays tribute to 'The Lassies'. The replies will be given Chief Inspector Ciorsstan Shearer and Dr Mac Armstrong.

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Tickets at £25 are available from Oban FM at 01631 570057.

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Get Ready and commit to your new year resolution 2006!

It's time again to ponder the wonder of another year gone by and to prepare for a fresh start of a New Year. What better time than now to revamp your life with a few New Year resolutions to shape you up.

It's hard not to get the resolution urge on New Year's Eve. There's that sense of renewal, of rebirth, and the guilty

awareness that you ate your own weight in chocolate during the holidays. Sure, last year's resolution didn't make it past the fifth of January, but hey, this year's going to be different, right? Along with a little help from the companies on this page you can pick a resolution that you can accomplish.

Give up that smok-

ing habit, stop drinking, lose weight, exercise more, get healthier, get out of debt, save money, get a job, improve your career, get more education, find somebody to love, organise yourself, volunteer to help other people, read more, laugh more! Surprise yourself and succeed in your new goal for 2006.

Susanne Lin Jenson offers Tai Chi classes in the day and evening at Glencruitten Church Centre and is suitable for all ages and enables you to develop a healthy body as well as an alert mind.

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Gaelic IN OUR COMMUNITY

In 2005 Highland Council celebrated 20 years of delivering Gaelic Medium education to Highland communities by hosting a national conference in Inverness 'An Ath Cheum'.

The conference reviewed the development of Gaelic Medium education since its introduction in 1985 and looked ahead to the 20 years.

In 1985 a Gaelic Medium class started in Central School, Inverness. By August 2005 there were 19 schools across the Highlands delivering Gaelic Medium primary education to nearly 1,000 pupils. This represents nearly half of the provision across

Scotland for Gaelic education in primary schools. The Highland Council in May 2005 launched the first local authority Gaelic Language and Culture Plan in Scotland. A copy of this can be found on the council website at www.highland.gov.uk.

Following the passing of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act in 2005, Bord na Gaidhlig is in the process of developing a National Plan for Gaelic. There is increasing interest in the Gaelic language reflected in the increasing number of parents who are enrolling their children in Gaelic Medium classes and in the number of adults learning the language.

Within the Lochaber area there are now over 150 pupils following Gaelic Medium education. There is currently Gaelic Medium education provision in Fort William (93 pupils), Lady Lovat in Morar (37 pupils) and in Achuarach 23 pupils. Plans are being progressed to introduce Gaelic Medium education in South Lochaber, based in Kinlochleven Primary school from August 2006.

The numbers in each area have grown steadily in recent years and include provision from nursery through to primary seven.

Recent research indicates that pupils studying Gaelic medium achieve the same or higher standards compared to other pupils in assessments in English and Mathematics. Gaelic education as well as enabling learners to acquire the native language of Scotland enables them to become bi-lingual. This opens further learning opportunities to pupils. Pupils who have studied two languages are found in general to be able to transfer these skills to learn other languages.

The council also offers assistance to parents to learn the Gaelic language. Community education staff have a role in each community where Gaelic Medium education is provided to establish Gaelic language classes or to work with other partner organisations to ensure there are opportunities for parents to learn the language.

Further information on Gaelic education and Gaelic learning opportunities is available on the Highland Council website: www.highland.gov.uk. Which details information on Gaelic education across the Highlands including Skye & Lochalsh, Wester Ross, Easter Ross and the city of Inverness.

AS ONE of Scotland's leading providers of Gaelic medium education, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig offers a wide variety of courses suitable for all abilities, circumstances and needs.

Whether you are a complete beginner, fluent in Gaelic or whether you need to be based at home or can attend the college, there is a course to suit you.

The college offers Gaelic

The development of Gaelic education is a priority for Argyll and Bute Council. The authority currently makes provision for Gaelic medium pre-school, primary and secondary education and is the lead authority for the Gaelic Learners in the Primary School initiative.

Gaelic medium (GM) provision is currently available in Salen primary school on Mull, Bowmore primary on Islay, Tiree primary department, St.Columba's primary in Oban, Sandbank primary in Dunoon and Strath of Appin by Oban. Associated pre-school/playgroup provision is available to support these GM primary schools.

GM pupils can continue their Gàidhlig studies in their associated secondary schools. Access to a range of secondary subjects through the medium of Gaelic is limited and dependent on availability of suitably qualified Gaelic speaking teachers. Islay High school currently offers Geography and History through Gaelic. Tobermory High school is also involved in the GM Geography On-line project.

The authority is currently preparing for the transfer of the first GM pupils from Sandbank primary to Dunoon Grammar school in August 2007.

Argyll and Bute Council actively promotes GM provision in the media, press and at social and information events.

The shortage of Gaelic teachers is an on-going issue for a rural authority like Argyll and Bute and the council has employed a range of strategies to address these difficulties, one such is the training of graduates, see the article on this subject also on this page for more information.

While the number of pupils in Gaelic medium education has increased so has the numbers who learn Gaelic as a second language. The Gaelic Learners in the Primary School (GLPS) initiative has ensured that more than 890 pupils are learning Gaelic as a second language in schools across the council area.

GLPS involves training non-Gaelic speaking teachers to a level of linguistic proficiency commensurate with teaching Gaelic to learners in primary schools. The national GLPS trainer is an employee of Argyll and Bute. Building on the success of GLPS, the authority has established a partnership with Aberdeene University to develop a CPD pathway to enable GLPS trained teachers to acquire a qualification that would permit them to teach five-to-14-year-old Gaelic learners.

Graduates in Oban, Lorn and Mull will have a unique opportunity to train as primary teachers from August this year.

Argyll and Bute Council in partnership with the University of Strathclyde and the University of the Highlands & Islands Millennium Institute (UHIMI) will offer potential students access to the post graduate diploma in primary education (PGDE) in the Oban area.

The students at UHIMI have regular links with fellow students in Lewis Castle College in Stornoway using video conferencing facilities. This provides a real but virtual classroom on Europe's Western Atlantic seaboard. The students are all guaranteed school placements in their local area while undertaking their PGDE studies. This exciting partnership is ensuring that island and rural communities will continue to provide a first class education for future generations of children.

On successful completion of the PGDE course, the newly qualified teachers can look forward to probationer placements in local schools and a high quality induction support programme in their first year of teaching.

An open meeting is to be held on Saturday February 25 2006 at 11am in the Royal Hotel, Oban to provide information on the PGDE course planned for Oban and Lorn and Mull. The council is keen to attract as many Gaelic and English speaking graduates as possible to this meeting.

Bord na Gàidhlig is committed to strengthening Gaelic as a family and community language and in the past year has assisted over 100 community projects throughout Scotland.

These include a programme of Gaelic events and activities organised by Comann nam Pàrant Oban; a series of Gaelic medium workshops and classes in Islay to encourage children to use Gaelic outside school; the establishment of a full-time Gaelic nursery in Lochaber; total immersion Gaelic courses for adults; and the publication of a Gaelic books catalogue.

The Bòrd is also delighted to support the Lorne Gaelic Partnership and the development of their new website, which will be a valuable community resource for Gaelic speakers and all those interested in the language in the Argyll area.

For further information on Bord na Gàidhlig visit www.bord-na-gaidhlig.org.uk



working to create an improved primary Gaelic Resources Library.

The group also provides an enjoyable social focus for families, and hosts an annual fundraising ceilidh and BBQ.

For further information, contact Ewen MacPherson at the local Comann nam Pàrant (an t-Oban) group on 01631 565119.

Since its formation in Oban in 1891 and the staging of the first ever Royal National Mod in Oban in 1892, An Comunn Gaidhealach has been heavily involved in the promotion and development of Gaelic language and culture in Argyll.

An Comunn Gaidhealach has actively encouraged the teaching, learning and use of the Gaelic language and the study and cultivation of Gaelic literature, history, music and art. A membership organisation with over 2000 members, An Comunn has branches throughout the UK and welcomes all those with an interest in the language and culture of the Gael.

In 2004 Joy Dunlop, a Gaelic language and culture graduate from Connell, has been employed as a Gaelic development officer for the Argyll area and since then has been working with many different groups to enhance existing activity and develop new ways of strengthening and promoting the language. Joy has worked with many people of different ages and abilities in a range of situations from education to the Gaelic Arts. With the Royal National Mod 2006 set to take place in Dunoon from 13-21 October she is especially busy working with the local committee and local groups and school in preparation for what is the premier Gaelic festival.

If you are interested in becoming a member of An Comunn Gaidhealach or would like more information about the work it undertakes, please visit our website on www.ancomunn.co.uk. For further information on Mod 2006 visit www.the-mod.co.uk. You can also contact Joy Dunlop at the following address:



Sabhal Mòr Ostaig

Scotland's Gaelic College furthers its commitment to Gaelic language and culture with the introduction of the:
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Tha Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal is Bhòid a cumail taic ri fòghlam Gàidhlig aig gach ìre air feadh na sgìre.

Argyll and Bute Council supports Gaelic education at all levels across the council area.



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Would you like your child to speak Gaelic?

Gaelic medium education is an effective and enjoyable way for young children to learn Gaelic. It is currently available at primary school level in these areas of Lochaber: Fort William; Achuarach; Morar/Mallaig/Arisaig.

Plans are also being progressed to establish Gaelic Medium education in South Lochaber, based in Kinlochleven Primary School from August 2006.

If you are interested and would like further information on Gaelic Education provision Highland wide as well as Lochaber please contact schools direct or for general information contact Donnie MacDonald on 01463 702809 or at donnie.macdonald@highland.gov.uk.

Comann nam Pàrant

GAELIC MEDIUM EDUCATION 'SCHOOL OPEN AFTERNOON'

Parents interested in finding out more about Gaelic Medium Education are invited to come along to an open afternoon at St Columba's Primary School, Oban, Friday 20 January 2006 at 2 p.m.

Promoted by Comann Nam Pàrant an t-Oban agus Latharna



An cuala sibh seo?

THA E coimhead coltach gu bheil gniomachas a bha uairgein air leith beita anns na h-eileanan dol a dh'ath-beothachadh ann an Leòdhas.

Tha dùil gu fosal Companaidh Feamainn Innse Gall factaraidh ùr ann an Aranais faisg air Steòrnabhagh as t-earrach sa tighinn. Tha iad an dòchas còrr air dusan tonna de dh'fheamainn fluch ullachadh gach là. Bheiridh sinn dhaibh mu dhà thonna gu leth den stuth tiomar as urrainnean a reic.

Théid a reic fo bhratach organach airson a chur fu gu feum mar thodhar, mar bhiadh airson beathaichean agus airson rud ris an canar 'alginate', stuth a bhios a nochdadh ann am iomadh rud, mar siabann. 'S e dà fhireannach à sgire nan Loch, Calum MacRath is Martainn MacLeod, a tha air culainn an iomaire.

Thuit Mgr MacLeod, 30: 'Bidh sinn a' coimhead airson nas urrainn dhnuinn da dhaoine fhaighinn airson gearradh. Ma thèid cùisean gu math 's dòcha gum faigh sinn air obair a thoir dha grunn dhaoine.'

B'abhaist gniombachas an fheamainn a bhith air leth beita anns na h-eileanan, le dà fhactaraidh ann an Uibhist fhléin.

Ach, lagach an iarras agus bha e na bu shaoire dha compaidean feamainn fhaighinn bho thall-thairis, a' ciallachadh nach eil cùs idir air a bhith dol air adhart san sgire san fhichead bliadhna a dh'fhàilbhan.

IT APPEARS that an industry which was once extremely prevalent in the islands will be resurrected in Lewis.

The Hebridean Seaweed Company hopes to open a new factory in Arnish, on the outskirts of Stornoway, in the spring. They are looking to process over 12 tonnes of wet seaweed a day. That will give them two and a half tonnes of the dried product which can be sold. It will be marketed under an organic label and used as fertiliser, animal feed and as alginate, which is used in a range of products, including soap.

The venture is the brainchild of Calum MacRae and Martin MacLeod from the district of Lochs.

Mr MacLeod, 30, said: 'We will be looking at getting as many cutters as we can. If everything goes according to plan we could be looking at employing quite a lot of people.'

The seaweed industry was once a staple diet of the Western Isles economy, particularly in the Uists where two factories were once in operation. However, a downturn in demand, coupled with competition from overseas, meant there has been little activity in the islands in the last 20 years.

Paidhleat dol a dhèanamh cobhair air Bush

CHUR PRiomhaire na Stàitean Aonaichte, Seòras W Bush, fios gu paidhleat stèidhcheann ann an Steòrnabhagh agus e ag iarradh air a thighean a thrèanadh criùth a heileacoptair aige.

Tha an captein Tim Noble dol a a Los Angeles aig deireadh na mìos gus innse dha na paidhleatan Ameireaganach ciamar a sgèitheas iad a Merlin EH101. 'S e heileacoptair ùr a tha seo a chaidh a cheannachd airson Priomhaire Bush a thoirt air feadhna diuthchha, agus cha robh aich aon duine san t-saoghal air a bhòid fios a chur airson trèanadh - an captein Noble. Chan eil aich dhà no thriù dhaoine aig a bheil fior eòlas air an EH101 agus 's e Noble aon duine a tha ag obair gu coimearsaile aig a bheil an teisteanas ceart airson trèanadh a thoirt seachad. Ag innse cho math's a tha a Merlin EH101, thuit: "S i an tè as feàrr dha seòrsa san t-saoghal. 'S urrainn earbas a bhith iad innte agus chan eil a leithid ann airson cumail a' dol nuair a thèid a milleadh. Tha i cuideachd mòr gu leò airson leigeal dhan Phriomhaire subhail ann an cofhartach agus airson dhà no thriù dhaoine a bhith còmhla ris.'

AMERICAN president George W Bush has called for the assistance of a Stornoway-based pilot as he wants him to train his crew.

Captain Tim Noble will head to Los Angeles at the end of this month to train American pilots on flying the Merlin EH101. This is a new helicopter which was bought to ferry President Bush across the country, and there was only one man in the world with the requisite qualifications for overseeing the training - Captain Noble. He is among only a handful of people to have substantial experience on the EH101 and is the only qualified training examiner working in the commercial sector.

Ex�olling the virtues of the new helicopter, he said: 'It's the best of its type in the world. Its reliability and ability to survive damage is unsurpassed. It's also large enough to allow the president to travel in comfort and have an entourage with him.'

Around the Rurals

TEN LADIES attended the December meeting of the Morar branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute (SWRI) in Lady Lovat School.

After business was discussed and correspondence read out, Cathy Stewart, after a lot of preparation, showed the ladies how to sew a Christmas tree.

Competitions for the evening were: Book mark, Christmas theme - 1 Cathy Stewart; 2 June Foxwell; 3 Eileen MacPhie; 4 Mary Ferguson. Almond and orange cake - 1 Cathy Stewart; 2 Eileen MacPhie; 3 Heather Simpson; 4 Mary Ferguson and Christine Haynes.

The raffle was won by Linda MacLean.

Hostesses were Eileen MacPhie and Heather Simpson. Winner of last month's proverb competition was Dorothy Simpson, not Heather Simpson.

The Morar SWRI annual dinner is to be held on January 14 but the venue has yet to be decided.

Tiree

TIREE SWRI celebrated its December meeting with a dinner at the Lodge Hotel on the island with 24 members and friends attending.

Everyone there enjoyed fine food and good company. The committee had devised games, as had one of the hotel staff, and Margaret Gorman was the lucky winner of a bottle of wine donated by the staff.

The evening ended with a selection of favourite carols. Competitions: Decorated jar to hold a tea light - 1 Wilma MacFadyen; 2 Caroline MacLean; 3 Annie MacKinnon. Tree decoration, any craft - 1 Annie MacKinnon; 2 Caroline MacLean; 3 Wilma MacFadyen.

Kilchrenan

THE KILCHRENAN branch of the SWRI had a very entertaining evening at the Kilchrenan Inn where they enjoyed a delicious Christmas dinner followed by a Christmas song from Kim Soep and carol singing by 'Kilchrenan Rural Choir'.

Glencoe

Your correspondent is Ros MacDonald: 01855 811490

Whist drive

A WHIST drive in aid of senior citizens was held in Glencoe before Christmas. Ladies prizewinners were: 1 Flora MacInnes; 2 Davina Plank; travelling prize and consolation prize, Sheila Duff. Gents prizewinners were: 1 Ian Blake; 2 Isobel McKay, playing as a gent; Travelling prize, George Lawrie; consolation prize, Sandra MacMillan.

Community council

AT A RECENT meeting of Glencoe and Glenetive Community Council, new office bearers were elected. Returning officer the Reverend Peter Rice supervised proceedings and was thanked for his input.

Caroline Walker was elected as chairman, David Smith as vice chairman, Kathleen Cuthbertson as secretary and Anne Melso as treasurer.

David Doogan, William McCubbin and Caroline Walker form the planning sub committee, while Alastair MacDonald, Jeanette Johnstone, Caroline Walker, Kathleen Cuthbertson, George Grant and David Smith now make up the environmental sub committee. Also present on the night were Mr and Mrs Donald Stewart and Mr Albert Rodger.

Minutes from the previous meeting passed as correct included the following items:

Planning: Planning officials visited the building owned by Bob Anderson opposite Glencoe Visitor



Oban Rotary Club says it with flowers

Saying it with flowers, members of Oban Rotary Club pictured during their annual bulb-planting mission, this time in the grounds of Oban's Lorn and Islands District General Hospital. The Rotarians much appreciated the help they received from the local employment team.

Centre and this will be monitored for the foreseeable future.

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency has also been contacted regarding the river in this area.

Skip: The skip which was previously located at the car park has been replaced by a bin lorry. This is to be investigated further.

Forestry lochan: Forest Enterprise is to be contacted regarding season tickets for juniors to fish the lochan.

On behalf of Glencoe Heritage Trust, Alastair MacDonald suggested that local people could fish for

three days per week on Loch Achtriachtan providing contact is first made with him for a permit, and likewise children could fish for free if accompanied by an adult.

Orbital route: A feasibility study in to the proposed orbital route was raised solely by the community company.

Village parking: Traffic within the village is still proving to be hazardous with some people driving at excessive speeds.

Bill McCubbin noted that the village used to have two small franchises, now there

is one large store and a larger volume of traffic.

With traffic increasing over the years it is felt that the yellow lines haven't been helpful.

Upper Carnoch traffic: Albert Rodgers raised his ongoing concerns about the volume of traffic using the Upper Carnoch road.

He advised those present that he had contacted the council in 1976 regarding the provision of three parking areas to alleviate the same problem. Contact will be made with Jim Tolmie of The Highland Council traffic department

on the issue. A suggestion was made that the new signpost to the Massacre Monument may also be adding to the problem.

Alistair MacDonald suggested that blocking or removing the sign and leaving the details on the information lectern might be an option.

Another suggestion was that a residents only sign be placed at the Bridge of Coe.

Mr and Mrs Stewart had a question on how community council members were elected and this was duly explained to them.

A stunning fireworks display lit up the night sky to accompany the bonfire.

The event was organised by Ballachulish Art Society chairman Brian Dickey who paid tribute to the hall committee and the many others in the community who helped to ensure the success of the event.

Fireworks display

IT WAS agreed that £50

would be donated to

Ballachulish Community Council for the fireworks display.

Kinlochleven

Your correspondent is Judith Brickwood: 01855 831955

Lantern walk

A LARGE crowd of residents and visitors walked through Ballachulish on New Year's Eve, carrying huge lanterns, to see out the old year and bring in the new.

Traditionally, this is a quiet time of year for competitive pipers and is usually a useful time to recharge the batteries and think of tunes to be learned for the contests later in the year. Whether you are involved in the competitive side or not, enjoy your piping in 2006.

Hugh MacCallum.

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Hugh MacCallum.

This series of

competitions is open to adult pipers who do not compete in open solo piping competitions where prize money is offered.

Apparently, members are graded in a similar way to their CPA counterparts, and

it is interesting that some of the tunes played then are not often heard nowadays and included War or Peace, Menzies Salute and The Prince's Salute.

So, if you happen to be in Falkirk town centre, take five minutes to visit the site of this famous competition and give the immortal heroes a visit as well. The tombs are in the churchyard adjacent to the pedestrian shopping area right in centre of town near the steeples.

US teaching workshop

ARGYLL pipers Willie McCallum and Stuart Liddell are off to Kansas City, USA, for a weekend teaching workshop.

They will also be judging a Silver Medal piobaireachd competition in which I hear there are 40 competitors.

Looks like you are in for a long session lads, so don't forget the white hanky!

Competition deadline

THE DEADLINE for eligibility to compete in the Gold and Silver Medals and the A and B light music events at The Argyllshire Gathering and The Northern Meeting is fast approaching, so if you are intending to compete in either of these main solo

the two defibrillators which were bought for the villages of Dalavich, Inverinan and Kilchrenan.

At the beginning of the new year, the community council's defibrillator and CPR Volunteers Group will be running refresher courses. The group is also hoping for more volunteers to come forward to take part in CPR training. Notices will be on the village boards soon announcing dates for training.

West Highland Housing Association

AT A RECENT community council meeting, Gregor Cameron from West Highland Housing Association addressed the meeting and explained that his company would like to build two affordable houses in Dalavich.

These houses would be environmentally friendly in that they would have biomass heating like the 80 in Islay.

Kilchrenan Inn

CHRISTINE and Neil, the new owners of the Kilchrenan Inn, put the merry into Christmas for locals and visitors alike.

Outside the inn, the Christmas lights were very welcoming; inside, the inn was even better when Gregor Lowry and William Cameron made an appearance with accordion and guitar, much to the delight of customers.

Scalpay

Your correspondent is D Morrison: 01859 540217

Fishing

STRONG winds halted progress in recent fishing trips.

This also deterred creeling or angling from sheltered shore areas. There has been a repetition of this kind of weather but whatever the results of the fishing trip catches, I am sure they will be well marketed.

Mink rumours

A SCALPAY lady has taken over rearing a few hens, even though sightings of mink have been rumoured.

Mink have caused havoc before and this is very discouraging news.

Chiropodist

A CHIROPODIST was at Scalpay surgery prior to the festive period.

Thanks go to the NHS for arranging the visit for those needing treatment.

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Love Scotland . . . Love Scottish Field



Angus MacKay.

TIREE SWRI celebrated its December meeting with a dinner at the Lodge Hotel on the island with 24 members and friends attending.

Everyone there enjoyed fine food and good company. The committee had devised games, as had one of the hotel staff, and Margaret Gorman was the lucky winner of a bottle of wine donated by the staff.

The evening ended with a selection of favourite carols. Competitions: Decorated jar to hold a tea light - 1 Wilma MacFadyen; 2 Caroline MacLean; 3 Annie MacKinnon. Tree decoration, any craft - 1 Annie MacKinnon; 2 Caroline MacLean; 3

press policy

WE AT *The Oban Times* do our utmost to make sure that all our reports are fair, accurate and balanced, but we accept that, on occasion, mistakes can occur in the hectic process of producing the biggest local newspaper in the West Highlands.

It is the policy of The Oban Times Group to correct any errors in print. If you find an error of fact on our pages please write to The Editor, *The Oban Times*, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 5PY giving your day-time telephone number where possible. This statement of policy will appear on this page every week along with any corrections or clarifications.

The Oban Times adheres to the Press Complaints' Commission's Code of Conduct.

The views expressed in *The Oban Times* are not necessarily those of this newspaper.

Correction

WE WOULD like to point out that Lismore's Dorane Willis died on New Year's Eve, not Christmas Eve as was reported in last week's edition. We apologise for any upset inadvertently caused.

GLASGOW LETTER**All roads lead to Glasgow**

CELTIC Connections, Glasgow's International Traditional Music Festival, started on Wednesday January 11 and will run until Sunday January 29.

Now in its 13th year, the festival, which was started to provide entertainment during the cold, dark month of January, attracts huge crowds to its varied venues. Tickets can be booked online at www.celticconnections.com or by telephone on 0141 353 8000.

Copies of the full programme are available at the Concert Hall.

As well as evening concerts, the festival provides free concerts for school children, workshops and talks and from 5pm each evening Danny Kyles' open stage in the Concert Hall, with free admission, showcases up-and-coming musical talent.

Over the years I have attended many concerts featuring artistes from home and abroad and have seldom been disappointed. I can't give details of the whole programme but will instead list the concerts featuring artistes from our cultural background.

Thursday January 12: 7.30pm, Concert Hall, Seumas Begley and Jim Murray will have as special guests Blas - Fiona MacKenzie, Mary Smith, Anna Murray and Alyth McCormack. 8pm, Piping Centre, Master and Apprentice, Maeve MacKinnon with Mairi MacInnes and Darren MacLean with Arthur Cormack.

Friday January 13: 8pm, Concert Hall, Strathclyde Suite, Dochas.

Saturday January 14: 2pm, Concert Hall, Strathclyde Suite, The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland. Musical Ark in a variety of venues with pairs of artistes performing and travelling between each.

Monday January 16: 8pm, Concert Hall, Strathclyde Suite, Fred Morrison.

Tuesday January 17: 8pm, Piping Centre, Master and Apprentice, Gary Innes with Donald Shaw and Johnnie Scoular on both Saturday and Sunday.

Campbell and Johnnie will be in the Islay Inn on Friday.

Neil Murray, telephone 0141 954 8105, or email neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk.

Pub scene

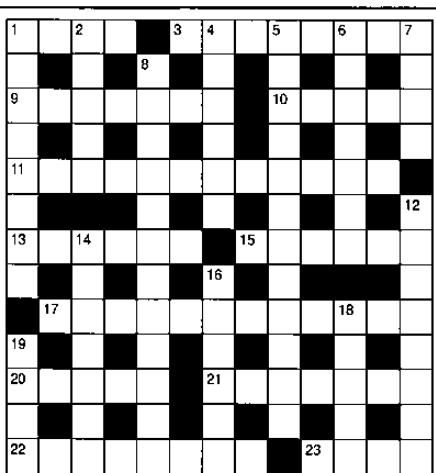
MUSIC this weekend in the Park Bar will be provided by Gary Innes on Friday and Campbell Brown and Johnnie Scoular on both Saturday and Sunday.

Campbell and Johnnie will be in the Islay Inn on Friday.

Neil Murray, telephone 0141 954 8105, or email neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk.

The Oban Times**GENERAL KNOWLEDGE DOUBLE CROSSWORD No. 415**

- ACROSS**
- Member of an ancient people of N. Scotland (4)
 - Yuri, Soviet president 1983-84 (8)
 - art is sculpture that moves or has moving parts (7)
 - Nikolai, Russian author of *The Government Inspector* (5)
 - Giovanni, Italian astronomer who discovered the canals of Mars (11)
 - Long-legged rodent with hooflike claws of the genus *Dasyprocta* (6)
 - Miklos, 1976 Olympic Javelin champion (6)
 - 1975 novel by Joseph Wambaugh (3,9)
 - Mr. Stevenson, Democratic candidate for the U.S. presidency in 1952 and 1956 (5)
 - Walled enclosure in Moscow containing the former Imperial Palace (7)
 - Charles, inventor of vulcanized rubber (8)
 - In billiards, white ball with a mark on it to distinguish it from the plain ball (4)

**SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK**

- ACROSS:** 6 Verison; 7 Samoa; 9 Stein; 10 Woosnam; 12 Mike Gatting; 14 Yevushenko; 18 Cadmium; 19 Orion; 21 Cutty; 22 Western.
Down: 1 Yeats; 2 Bikini; 3 Now; 4 Bassett; 5 Cocaine; 8 Voyager; 11 Celsius; 13 Pegasus; 15 Tomato; 16 Karate; 17 Court; 20 Yen.
QUICK - Across: 6 Beseech; 7 Carry; 9 Tepid; 10 Extract; 12 Recollected; 14 Responsible; 16 Respect; 19 Right; 21 Tired; 22 Emperor.
Down: 1 Jewel; 2 Decide; 3 Act; 4 Fabric; 5 Cricket; 8 Explain; 11 Connect; 13 Revere; 15 Puppet; 16 Loiter; 17 Throb; 20 Imp.
- QUICK CLUES ACROSS**
- Wire-guard (4)
 - Summing (8)
 - Tender (7)
 - Punctuation mark (5)
 - Instability (12)
 - Unfold (6)
 - Seller (6)
 - Subjection (12)
 - Fat (5)
 - Merciful (7)
 - Given the right (8)
 - Bargain (4)
- QUICK CLUES DOWN**
- Caught (7)
 - Lustre (5)
 - Mock (6)
 - Awkward (12)
 - Badly treated (3-4)
 - Not any (4)
 - Bubbling (12)
 - Eastern (8)
 - Rich (7)
 - Graing (6)
 - Brown's daughter (5)
 - Drill (4)

- DOWN**
- Republic in S. Asia whose capital is Islamabad (8)
 - Tropical marine mollusc whose shell is used as a trumpet (5)
 - River in Germany which flows to the Rhine at Mannheim (6)
 - 1930 novel by Hugh Walpole (5,7)
 - Jean Baptiste, French sculptor whose works include *Venus, Love and Friendship* (7)
 - Small rodent of the genus *Microtus* with a short tail (4)
 - Resort in S.E. New Jersey on Absecon Beach (5,4)
 - Tree such as *Castanea sativa* which produces flowers in long catkins (8)
 - Shakespeare play featuring Iago (7)
 - River upon which Moscow stands (6)
 - Lowest deck in a vessel with four or more decks (5)
 - Alexander, secretary of state to U.S. president Reagan 1981-82 (4)

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**Fancy dress football, Kinlochleven, 1937**

Mrs Cheryl E Lawrie of Lochaber Road, Kinlochleven, sent us this week's photograph of a fancy dress football match on May 12 1937 at a celebration at Island Park, Kinlochleven, to mark the coronation of their majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. Most of the participants, including Cheryl's father Donald Neil Campbell, have now passed on but it would have been a happy time for them before going on to serve their country in World War 2. We would like readers to send in 'Flashback' photographs. Please send prints to *The Oban Times*, 'Flashback' Photo, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Prints must be accompanied by a caption, name and address, stamped addressed envelope and telephone number. Each month a photo will win £10. □ The winner of our £10 flashback photograph prize for December was Mrs M Harris of Taynuilt for her photograph of the Taynuilt Scottish Women's Rural Institute jubilee party in the Taynuilt Hotel in December 1969.

Letters to the Editor

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Gentleman of shinty

Sir,

It was marvellous to see so many people enjoying themselves over Hogmanay, but it is sad to see many, young and old, overindulging, particularly in their consumption of alcohol.

If we as a nation are to progress to the 22nd century intact it will only be as a reaction against degradation and immortality that brought down the empire of the Caesars.

Betty Petrie, Pulpit Hill, Oban.

streets. I had to pull my poor wee hound away on many occasions as his curiosity got the better of him.

Pinch me please, but is this not 21st century Britain? For a moment I thought I was witness to the aftermath of some Roman orgy from the pages of Robert Graves or the recent television presentation.

As a boy in Fort Augustus I well remember a match where Fort William played Inverness with Willie as referee and his dad as goal judge. The late Tom MacKenzie of Inverness was a spectator.

A gentleman who loved the game, you always knew that if he was referee a good game ensued.

I last saw Willie at the Eilan, Newtonmore, in August 1989 at the Jock McIntosh veterans' tournament. I played as a guest for the Strathclyde Police Team and Willie refereed one of the matches.

He will be sadly missed by the shinty community and I feel privileged to have known him.

Tom Aitchison, ex Fort Augustus, Fort William and Inverness, now of Sheffield.

Language learning

Sir,

I agree with Finlay M Macleod, *The Oban Times* January 5, that adults learn languages quicker, but not for the reasons he puts forward.

Children learn as part of a curriculum with no immediate use for their knowledge, whereas most adults learning language have one or other project in mind. This gives them incentive to learn without any obvious immediate advantage. I would like to see Gaelic used conversationally by children outside school lessons. They have their own language already and it might encourage teachers to brush up on their Gaelic. In Elsinore where I was living the children would quite often greet each other in English. Phonetics on shop signs and notices might also be an idea.

George Doyle, Easdale Island.

Your letters

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 200 words in length for publication on this page. The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on e-mails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not be printed. Please write or fax to: Letters Page, *The Oban Times*, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 5PY. Fax (01631) 568001. E-mail editor@obantimes.co.uk

A VIEW FROM THE TOWER

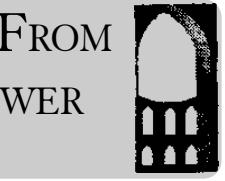
By McCaig

A week of long knives

WHO would have thought it?

The Liberal Democrats have turned out to be the most vicious of assassins when their image has always been one of tolerance and consideration for everyone, especially those facing difficult problems.

Certain MPs who owe their presence in the House of Commons to Charles Kennedy's dynamic leadership sounded like a bag of ferrets in a sack



battling for the survival of the fittest and therefore a chance to seize the leadership.

Indeed, it seems the arrival of David Cameron as the Tory leader has been the catalyst for this volcanic eruption of bile. It says little for their assuredness of the right of their policies that a few dynamic speeches by a young man with no experience of leading a major political party, far less hold one of the major offices of state, should force this horrific attack on the leader of a party that has the largest number of seats that it has had for the past 80 years and undo all the work that has been put in to achieving such success because 'a new kid appears on the block'.

I have known Charles Kennedy for almost 20 years and have never known him to appear in public drunk. Back-bench Liberal Democrat MPs tell me they have never seen Charles suffering from an over-indulgence of alcohol in the House of Commons or in their constituencies.

Yes, he did enjoy a good dram on social occasions when all of us were doing the same thing. I suppose I have known of the rumours about Charles' alleged drink problem for years without any proof of such being proffered.

Now, he has admitted that he has had an alcohol problem for some time, but has cured it. I suspect that the alleged drinking sessions that grew ever larger and more frequent since the end of last year have been the excuse rather than the reason for forcing him to resign as leader of his party.

I will grant that Charles himself did handle the situation none too well. He knew, as did every one of his potential assassins, that if it went to a ballot of party members he would win hands down as shoals of messages of support reached him daily. Had he used this overt support and neither admitted or denied any alcohol problem he could still be Liberal Democrat Leader.

As for all those who wouldn't have served under him, what were they to do if he achieved the overwhelming support of the members? If they sulked in their tents and refused to serve, there were others who could have replaced

him.

Balderash & Piffle

IT NEVER ceases to amaze me that as our vernacular speech is so slovenly when it comes to grammar and pronunciation that books like Lynn Truss' 'Eats, Shoots and Leaves' attract so much attention and sales that delight book sellers and publishers alike.

Now, Alan Games has gone even further as he has written *Balderash & Piffle* and got a series of programmes on television about words and their origins to swell sales.

McCaig

Those Were The Days

The Oban Times

Friday January 10, 1986

**20 Years Ago**

The Oban Times

Friday January 10, 1986

Highland Regional Council's health and safety officer.

But other work, including new electrical wiring, a new heating system, emergency lighting and alarms, and alterations for the part used as a classroom will cost an additional £107,000.

Eight rooms are used as classrooms for Portree High School nearby while the other part accommodates officials of the community education service, carers service, special measures unit and the regional development officer and the primary schools bilingual project.

The 50-year-old Elgin hostel was a home-away-for-home for boys from the Inverness-shire areas of the Western Isles, Skye and Raasay until local government re-organisation in the mid-1970s.

Essential work costing £12,000 to meet the minimal fire safety standards is being undertaken over many months after adverse reports from the fire authority and the

He declined to give any details but stressed there is no danger to anyone within the building.

He said most public

buildings as old as the former hostel contained asbestos which was harmless unless disturbed.

Oil slick reaches harbour

STORNOWAY Pier and Harbour Commission officials spent Tuesday afternoon investigating a large oil slick which entered the harbour area, blackening everything in sight.

Harbourmaster Angus Mackenzie said it was the worst they had ever seen and appeared to be crude oil from a large tanker.

The thick, tarry substance was clearly seen between piers number one and two but the slick stretched all the way out to Goat Islands and the Creed River.

A Hydro Board spokesman said it was insured against such damage but they needed claims to be made in writing.

The damaged appliances included TV sets, videos, a washing machine, a deep freeze and a teamster.

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Argyll College's nursery opening soon

A TOTAL of 32 new childcare places will be created with the forthcoming opening of a purpose-built nursery at Argyll College UHI near Oban.

The facility at Dunstaffnage Learning Centre will have places for 16 three-to-four-year olds, 10 two-to-three-year olds and six babies, with seven dedicated full-time staff employed.

The new nursery section manager for care, Rena MacDonald, said: 'The aim of the new nursery is three-fold; it will enable people interested in pursuing higher and further education to overcome the current difficulties of accessing childcare provision in the Oban area; it will allow Argyll College UHI to provide an in-house nursery where the practical elements of childcare courses can be undertaken; and of course, it will also provide employment for already trained local nursery staff.'

Director of Argyll College UHI Michael Breslin said: 'This project has taken a great deal of effort to get to this stage and the college is realising a long held aim of having a nursery facility on our Dunstaffnage campus.'

'I would like to thank our professional advisors for maintaining their involvement with the project, especially Stewart Meikle who advised us on funding; Burnet Bell, architects; Malcolm Michie, surveyors; and The Argyll Partnership, project managers.'

Students at Argyll College UHI are now able to progress from the introductory Towards a Career in Childcare course right through to the BA (Hons) Child and Youth Studies degree and it is anticipated that the new nursery will add considerable value to the student experience.

Funding for the nursery project was secured from European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll and Islands Enterprise (AIE), the Big Lottery Fund, Surestart, Jobcentre Plus and Community Economic Development (CED).

The nursery will be equipped and furnished early this year with the opening planned for the spring.

Increase in passenger movements

AIRPORTS operated by Highlands and Islands Airports Limited (HIAL) have recorded year on year growth, according to recent passenger figures.

In November 2005, a total of 90,036 passengers used the 10 HIAL-operated airports, which resulted in a 17 per cent increase on November 2004's total of 76,915. The eight-month running total for the airports now stands at 808,605, and passenger figures are up by 11 per cent on the same period of 2004/2005.

The fastest growing airport, Tiree, saw a 24 per cent increase from the same eight months in 2004-2005. Benbecula was also one of the fastest growing airports with a 10 per cent increase.

Passenger figures for Barra airport showed a 5.8 per cent increase but the biggest monthly increase between November 2004 and November 2005 of 30.1 per cent. Campbeltown saw a 1.7 per cent increase across the eight months, and Islay a 0.2 per cent increase in passengers.

Inglis Lyon, HIAL's managing director, said: 'We still have much work to do in terms of strengthening and enhancing the region's scheduled air network. Many routes serving the Highlands and Islands still carry relatively low numbers of passengers and we will continue to work with the airlines and other stakeholders to ensure that they develop and are sustainable in the long term.'



MacLeod's Apprentice of the Year Ryan Sharp receives his award from director Kenny MacLeod.

Apprentice Ryan proves he's sharp

MACLEOD Construction has announced the winner of its Apprentice of the Year award for 2005.

Ryan Sharp of Campbeltown received the award and a £50 cheque last week from Kenny MacLeod, director of the Lochgilphead-based firm.

Ryan, who is in the second year of his bricklaying apprenticeship with MacLeod Construction, is currently attending Clydebank College. He has received excellent reports from the college and has also proven himself on site.

His college report states that: 'Ryan is possibly the most skilful apprentice in the class.'

After receiving the award, Ryan said: 'I

was very proud to receive the award. I enjoy college and putting in the work, and I'm very grateful to MacLeod Construction for giving me the opportunity to gain the necessary qualifications to become a full-time tradesman.'

Lochgilphead's Robbie MacTavish and Andrew Gartner have recently completed their four-year apprenticeships, as has Wayne Clark of Oban. All are now in full-time employment with MacLeod Construction.

The company employs 20 apprentices and trainees throughout Argyll. MacLeod Construction hires apprentices in roughcasting, plumbing, joinery, bricklaying and administration.

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Mull association set up to cover all fishing interests

FISHERMEN and fish farmers on Mull and Iona now have a new association after an inaugural meeting last week.

It aims to represent the views of all aquaculture interests and fishing and the well-attended meeting formally formed and constituted the association.

Mull and Iona Community Trust helped the fishermen and fish farmers to set up the inaugural meeting and James Hilder from the trust chaired the inaugural meeting.

A number of issues important to the industry were highlighted, including the

possibility of the area being in a marine and coastal national park and what the implications of this would be for members of the newly-formed association and Mull residents in general.

Scottish Natural Heritage was represented at the meeting and able to answer questions from the floor with a short report given on the recent SNH seminar on marine parks.

Also highlighted was the emergence of Inshore Fisheries Groups, which are to be set up round the coast of Scotland, the Sound of Mull Initiative and a regulating order all of which the association's members believe could have an impact on their industries.

The association heard the content of letters to be sent in its name to SNH and Scottish environment minister Ross Finnie, with some small adjustments approved from the floor.

The association also intends to copy all its correspondence to George Lyon MSP for Argyll and Bute.

At the same time it was stressed that there was a tight timescale for submissions to the SNH as recommendations on the marine park must be with Ross Finnie by March.

Members were told that individual views could be made through the SNH website or in letters addressed directly to SNH.

The new association hopes it will be inclusive and have the backing of as many full-time residents of Mull and Iona as possible.

Committee members were chosen to cover different parts of the islands and the different occupations it represents.

Committee: Robert Douglas, Nick Turnbull, Douglas Wilson, Paul Gallagher, Steve Barlow, Alistair Mackie, Geoff Kidd, Douglas Reid.

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Georgetown Limousins to 130p per kilo at Dingwall prime sale

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 58 cattle (14 bullocks and 44 heifers) at its weekly prime sale at Dingwall.

Bullocks sold to a top of 130p per kilo, £819 per head, for a Limousin from A and F Grant, Georgetown, Ballindalloch to John M Munro Ltd., Dingwall.

Heifers sold to a top of 126p for Limousins from Messrs Bridgend Farm to Fraser Brothers, Dingwall and from D Hannan, Dunvourne, to Woodhead Brothers, Turriff, and to £756 per head for a Charolais cross from Georgetown also to Woodhead Brothers.

The company also sold 666 prime sheep with lambs selling to a top of £51.50 per head, 114.4p per kilo for Texel crosses from Conon Brae Farms to Fraser Brothers.

Ewes sold to £41 for Texel crosses from Conon Brae Farms.

Dunmaglass Charolais to £838 at Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 61 cattle (39 bullocks and 22 heifers) at its weekly prime sale last week.

Bullocks sold to a top of 133p per kilo for a Limousin from A Moore (Drummond) Ltd., to John M Munro Ltd., Dingwall, and to £838 per head for a Charolais cross from Dunmaglass Estate Partnership to Woodhead Brothers, Turriff.

Heifers sold to a top of 130p per kilo for a Limousin from E W Fettes, Braes of Enzie, to Fraser Brothers, and to £781 per head for a Charolais cross from C Fraser and Son, Shantulich, to John M Munro Ltd.

The 478 prime sheep sold to a top of £49 per head, 108.9p per kilo for Beltex crosses from Conon Brae Farms to Fraser Brothers.

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Andy Ferrier and Maggie beside one of the Minke whales. Picture - Jane Hanlon

Minke whales washed up on Islay beach

TWO MINKE whales have been found dead on the beach by Jane Hanlon and boyfriend Andy Ferrier.

Although the whale is a newborn calf which still had its umbilical cord attached.

The other, an 18-foot female but is thought to be too small to be the mother of the calf as females do not

become sexually mature until they are at least 22 feet long. However, staff at the Scottish Agricultural College said it would be an extraordinary coincidence if the two whales washed up together were not related.

It is also believed the small size of the calf may have contributed to its death. The average size of an adult Minke whale is 25 to 30 feet (nearly eight metres) and can weigh up to seven-and-a-half tonnes. The largest Minke whale recorded was 35 feet long and weighed nine-and-a-half tonnes.

A newborn calf will weigh around 1,000 lbs and is nine feet in length.

Minke whales have a life expectancy of around 20 years and it is thought there is a world population of 800,000 at the moment. They are very noisy making sounds up to 150 decibels, as loud as a jet taking off.

Skye Sheep success prompts organisers to focus on beef

FOLLOWING on the success of the Skye Sheep event held last October at Dunvegan, the Scottish Crofting Foundation (SCF) is joining with the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) to present an open day for livestock producers, this time focussing on the beef sector.

The event, which is made possible by support from the European Social Fund through the Highlands and Islands Partnership Programme, aims to demon-

strate best practice in store cattle production in the crofting areas.

The day's programme will include sessions on wintering and feeding options, breeding replacement stock,

selection of terminal sires, production for the market place, cattle health issues and estimated breeding values.

SCF Skye and Lochalsh area chairman John Laing said: 'The sheep event we ran in conjunction with the SAC in October was very

popular and demonstrated a real enthusiasm for looking at what we are doing and trying to enhance our livestock production.'

'In this area, we produce very highly regarded store cattle and this event is about maximising the returns to croft and farm businesses perhaps by making small adjustments to breeding or feeding regimes, perhaps by keeping up-to-date with developing technology or market desires.'

'Everyone is welcome to attend what should be a very useful day.'

Siobhan Macdonald from SAC said: 'There are many ideas, old and new, that can either cut costs, improve output or make life easier, and even all three at once.'

'SkyeBeef not only provides good speakers and useful information but it brings everyone together.'

'Farmers at similar events have commented that being able to discuss what's affecting your business and finding out what can be done to improve matters is a great way to give you the inspiration and confidence to change.'

SkyeBeef will take place on Saturday March 4 at Saasig, Sleat courtesy of Donald John MacInnes.

To assist with arrangements crofters and farmers are invited to register in advance.

Registration for the event can be done by contacting Donald Murdie on 01851 612484 or by e-mailing Donald@crofting.org.

Pigeons could carry main bird 'flu threat'

FERAL pigeons could carry the main threat to the UK's poultry population if bird 'flu arrives in this country.'

According to the British Pest Control Association (BPCA), if avian 'flu breaks out in the UK it is likely to be spread by commensal feral birds such as feral pigeons, rather than by domestic poultry as appears to be the case with confirmed outbreaks elsewhere.'

This view is based on the fact that most of the chicken production in the UK is by intensive farming, with little risk of exposure to wild birds.

If avian flu is introduced it is likely to be to the feral pigeon population via migrating wild fowl. This could then spread from bird to bird in close-living urban flocks of feral pigeons. It is well known already that feral pigeons spread a variety of potentially fatal diseases, including 'flu like diseases such as ornithosis.'

The avian influenza virus can be spread through ingestion or inhalation and, as with other pigeon transmitted diseases, can remain viable in droppings for prolonged periods.

Pigeon infestation in and around buildings leads to accumulations of droppings within areas such as roof voids and light wells that could harbour these diseases. The removal of such potentially harmful droppings should be carried out by specialists who are able to remove them safely. To help minimize the risk of an outbreak spreading, proofing systems can be installed to reduce or eliminate infestations.

Local authorities are already using legislation to enforce clearance of areas where significant populations of pigeons are found where the public has little choice but to pass through, such as under railway bridges, the entrances to shopping centres, car parks and stations.

Argyll agri-forum to deliver message via manager

A PARTNERSHIP formed between 11 different organisations to drive agriculture forward in Argyll and Bute has announced its intention to recruit its first full-time employee, who may be based at Campbeltown.

Argyll and Bute Agriculture Forum is pressing forward with its bid to help local farmers and crofters remain competitive at a time of significant change in the industry by recruiting a development manager to deliver the Argyll and the Islands Agricultural Strategy.

The Forum is made-up of 11 organisations and includes Argyll and Bute Council; Argyll and the Islands Enterprise (AIE); the National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS); Scottish Crofting Foundation (SCF); the Crofters Commission; Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH); the Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD); Scottish Agricultural College (SAC); Forestry Commission Scotland; Argyll and the Islands Rural Business Ring and the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group.

The recruitment move follows the publication by the forum of the strategy and action plan for the future of farming and crofting, developed by the Scottish Agricultural College in close co-operation with people active in the industry in all parts of the area.

Funding
Forum chairman Angus MacFadyen said: 'Fewer farmers will eventually mean fewer people in agriculture unless we can get a better return for our product.'

'We need to re-focus our industry to provide the products and services that are in demand in the 21st century market.'

'That's why we need a strategy and a development manager to implement it.'

As well as helping farmers find ways to add value to their product and investigate new sources of income, the strategy includes measures to assist them find the information and advice they need to reduce costs and make the best use of

farmers and crofters in Argyll and Bute.

'Our priority since publication of the strategy has been to recruit a manager with experience in agricultural or rural development to take forward the actions identified.'

'We are pleased to have put together a funding package in a very short time and can begin the process of filling the post.'

Argyll and Bute Agriculture Forum was set up to raise awareness of agricultural issues in the area.

Recognising the particular difficulties of remoteness for island and some mainland communities in Argyll and Bute the strategy has a longer term objective of ensuring that the infrastructure of the area is improved in a way that benefits the agricultural industry.

Campbeltown

SAC's Campbeltown based senior agricultural consultant, Alan Minshaw said: 'SAC is committed to supporting agriculture and rural development in Argyll. Basing the rural development manager in our office will help us provide this support and the person in post will benefit from the back up of SAC's resources.'

Funding for the new post will come from Argyll and Bute Council, NFUS, SNH, Forestry Commission Scotland, SEERAD, AIE and the European WHELK Leader+ Programme.

The post will be based in the SAC Campbeltown office, although more flexible working arrangements may be possible for a suitable applicant elsewhere in Argyll.

Nature Times



The distinctive colour and patterning of the woodcock's wing feathers form part of its remarkable camouflage

THERE have been some wonderfully clear, frosty nights recently - good for stargazing, but hard for wildlife which has to survive freezing temperatures. For birds, feathers play a key role in their ability to survive the cold, providing a highly efficient insulating layer.

Feathers are truly remarkable structures, which come in many forms and serve many functions. The flight and body feathers have a central shaft or quill supporting the vane, which is made up from numerous branching fibres. These fibres zip together rather like Velcro to give the feather its rigidity. Beneath the outer body covering is a layer of 'down' feathers. These mostly lack a shaft and their fibres are not locked together, so creating a fluffy layer which is so important for reducing heat loss.

The woodcock has a very distinctive appearance, with a long beak, plump body and very short tail. The plumage is finely patterned in brown, black and white, with dark bands across the top of the head. The latter is a useful distinguishing feature from the snipe.

Highland Darter

One of Mull's young sea eagles has found its way to Ireland. Picture - Iain Erskine

A late developer and not fledging until August last summer, some time after the other eight young eagles on Mull, the intrepid eagle explorer was still staying close to his parents up until December 4, when it's thought severe winter weather may have aided his overseas trip to Northern Ireland.

He was spotted by locals in Altnahinch on the Antrim Plateau, County Antrim, who saw his wing tag and noted it down.

Valiant's festive vacation shows that it is often third time lucky in nature, after his parents lost their chicks and eggs in two earlier nesting attempts due to heavy rain - a tragedy captured in the Gordon Buchanan BBC Natural World film 'Eagle Island' based on Mull, shown in 2005.

A distant sighting in recent days on the Isle of Mull suggests that Valiant may now have returned to Scotland. So what of his next adventure?

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Scotland's Mull officer, Dave Sexton, said: 'Valiant was a bit of a late developer but he certainly went for it

over the Christmas break. Although he was a long way from home, wandering is what young sea eagles do best and I'm sure that he would have found plenty of food, sustenance and shelter in his new temporary location, as well as new sights and sounds on his holiday jaunt.'

'If he has returned to Scotland he would probably have come back via Kintyre, Islay and Jura so if anyone has seen him en route, or any other wing tagged sea eagle, please let the RSPB know.'

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email lochaberlines@obantimes.co.uk

IT'S OLD New Year's Day today but members of Lochaber Burns Club, which has been honouring the Bard for 110 years, will be keeping their powder dry for their annual supper in the Alexandra Hotel on Friday January 27 at 7.30pm for 8pm.

President Philip Nolan and his committee have, after protracted negotiations and arm-twisting blackmail, produced a strong line-up of local speakers. Proposing 'The Immortal Memory' is Sandy Henry and toasting 'The Land We Live In' will be Graham Brooks. Father Roddy Johnston and John MacLennan provide the 'Toast To The Lassies' and a suitable reply.

An unbroken link with the formative years of the club will be maintained when retired chemist Sandy MacFarlane takes his seat for his 44th supper. As you will read, 100 years ago Sandy's grandfather, Peter, was made twice vice president of Lochaber Burns Club.

Tickets, priced £20, are on sale at the hotel and members and friends are advised to pick up their briefs without delay as the supper is once again heading for a sell-out.

□□□

THERE were, without doubt, many pints sunk last Saturday evening in the rugby club to mark the 60th birthday of club stalwart, taxi driver and raconteur Ron Cameron.

However, there wouldn't have been a yard-of-ale quaffed thanks to Ron's helpful intervention at the Boxing Day post-match celebrations. It had taken Charlie Donaldson 10 minutes to set up the yard-of-ale competition because of interventions and interjections from the boisterous young men. As he gained control and a hush descended, Ron pushed a chair forward and insisted that competitor number one should stand thereon. Unfortunately he smashed the yard of glass, the only one in the clubhouse, bringing the frivolities to a premature end.

On the grounds of confidentiality, a spokesman for Belford Hospital refused to confirm how many rugby players had been brought in with splinters in their tongues after the clubhouse floor became awash with beer. A further bit of bad luck for the club came last Friday as members were ready to set off for Shetland to fulfil a league fixture. At the last minute a prop, who hails from Arisaig, had to pull out and according to the rules they could not play without this important cog in the scrum. We profess to know little about the oval game but we do know there is no shortage of props in Arisaig and a call to Arisaig Marine could have had the lads sailing to Shetland.

□□□

WE HAVE often thought that Tresraig crofters have got money to burn - and now we have the proof.

Charlie was up in Inverness for a shopping spree and treated himself to a new piece-bag for work. Back home, he emptied his old bag and threw it on the fire. As the flames roared up the chimney, Dorothy entered the room and remarked on the heat coming from the fire. 'Aye, it's my old bag,' said Charlie. Dorothy took a closer look. 'Did you check the side pocket, Charlie?' she ventured. There was just time for Charlie to see his wallet, cash, credit cards and driving licence go up in smoke.

□□□

DURING the Christmas holidays, a young local boy was treated to football training at Glasgow Rangers' training complex at Murray Park.

Unfortunately the event was cancelled because of frost but former Rangers and Scotland legend John Greig, who might have been good enough to get a game with Argyll Rovers, went out of his way to make up for the disappointment. Looking at the youngster's brother he asked: 'Why did you not want to train with us?' The brave nine-year-old said: 'I'm a Celtic supporter!'

After threatening him with a playful cuff, the Ibrox PR man said, with an obvious reference to their current league position: 'Don't worry son, you're not alone. I think half our first team are Celtic supporters.'

□□□

WE RECENTLY took a cheap shot at shinty referees' inability to cover every blade of grass when writing about Joe Taylor's proposal for a minimum and maximum length of grass on a shinty pitch.

To prove that the men in black do not hold a grudge and have a sense of humour, top referee Donald Fraser has been in touch with a couple of refereeing stories.

John Henderson was officiating at a match in Foyers with his loyal goal judges Duffy Flannigan and Bobby MacLeod who collectively were known as 'The Three Musketeers'. In an amazing turnaround the home team, Boleskine, won by seven goals to six after being five goals down at half-time. As John walked into the bar of the Foyers Hotel for a post match refreshment he remarked to his colleagues: 'Well that was a game of two halves.'

Quick as a flash Duffy said: 'Aye and mine's a Bells,' before Bobby quipped: 'And make mine a Grouse.'

Donald was driving the late, great Willie Batchen to a shinty match and swapping refereeing tales. Willie reckoned Ballachulish was a tough assignment and recalled being hit on the head by a handbag at the end of a fierce match. 'It would have been sore,' ventured Donald. 'It was,' said Willie, 'she had a half bottle in it.'

Lochaber Past Times - from the archives of The Oban Times

100 years ago

A SUCCESSFUL application to the town council from the Rev G M MacLean was made asking for authority to make one fresh connection with the water main to supply power for driving an organ engine for the Duncansburgh Parish Church.

Colin Young, Gordon Villa, Fort William, won several first prizes at the Greenock Canine Society's Show with his Scottish and West Highland Terriers. It is gratifying to observe that although Mr Young has sent to America his winning dogs 'Quiraing' and 'Coruisk' - two of the best Scotties seen for a long time - his kennels are as strong as they have ever been.

On New Year's Day at Bracara a shinty match took place between Bracara and Morar. Shortly after the game, witnessed by a large crowd, had started Lord Lovat and Father MacCrae arrived at the ground and took part in the game. The successful side, captained by Neil Gillies, was much indebted to Lord Lovat's skillfulness for their victory.

Lochaber Burns Club met on Monday evening and appointed Mr C Livingston and Mr P MacFarlane as president and vice president respectively.

It was decided to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Burns by dining together within the Caledonian Hotel on the 25th inst. when the Rev H MacKenzie will propose the toast of 'The Immortal Memory'.

40 years ago

IT WAS announced that for the first time the Scottish Six Days Trial would end in Fort William on the Saturday.

In past years, riders left Fort William on the Saturday morning for a finish in Edinburgh. The trial is still scheduled to start in the capital.

It may have been the start of the year but tourism was high on the agenda. Mr J U MacInnes, tourist organiser, was off to the 'Scotland for Holidays' exhibition in Birmingham to sell Fort William and Lochaber to the English.

Transport group wins top national award

HITRANS, the strategic transport partnership for the Highlands and Islands, has won the award for Scottish Regional Transport Partnership of 2005.

The award, presented at the Scottish Transport awards dinner in Edinburgh last week, recognised the partnership's 'public transport initiative', a programme of improvements to the public transport infrastructure in the region.

Since 2003 HITRANS has spent £10.5 million on a programme of work with four strategic themes; access, information, protection and connection.

Access

Highland Council says that although the Highlands and Islands had fallen behind the rest of Scotland in respect of accessible public transport, over the past three years HITRANS had spent £2.5 million on 45 low floor buses improving access for the elderly and disabled at bus stops, ferry terminals and railway stations.

A council spokesman said: 'Good information is crucial to attract people from cars to public transport.'

'HITRANS has spent £750,000 on wayside information at bus stops and electronic signs for advanced roadside ferry information.'

'Electronic information panels at bus stops telling passengers how long before the bus arrives are to be provided in Inverness city centre and Campbeltown. The latter is the first in Scotland to test real-time information on a long-distance, low frequency coach route.'

Safety

'Personal safety is vital to raise confidence in public transport. HITRANS has spent £350,000 on CCTV and better lighting at bus and rail stations and has assisted operators with on-board security cameras.'

Most funding from HITRANS, £6.9 million, has been devoted to improving infrastructure, including 300 bus shelters on the main bus corridors and terminals and modernising transport interchanges in some of the main regional centres; Dunoon, Fort William, Stromness, Stornoway, Kirkwall, Lochmaddy, Portree, Aviemore and Leverburgh.

Funding has helped to fund the 'Invernet' rail commuter service extension from Inverness to Lairg and the Inverness airport bus route.

Award

Councillor Charlie King, chairman of HITRANS, said: 'I am delighted that our work over the past three years has been recognised



Members of HITRANS pictured with the award for Scottish Regional Transport Partnership of 2005.

by this award. Our intention

is to keep up the good work

in the future.'

The newly-established Highlands and Islands Regional Transport Partnership, which is to replace HITRANS, recently met for the first time.

It is to operate in a shadow capacity until April 1 this year when it will be made a statutory body.

It will formally take over

from HITRANS, which has

operated for the last five years as a voluntary association of local authorities, local development agencies and public transport companies to co-ordinate and plan transport throughout the Highlands and Islands.

Transport

The regional transport partnership comprises representatives from Highland, Moray, Orkney, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Argyll and Bute councils.

The partnership may appoint, with the approval of Scottish ministers, up to three other members drawn from organisations with community or transport interests.

The partnership's initial task is to submit a regional transport strategy for its area by March 31 2007

which will form the basis of future expenditure on transport.

Charlie King added: 'I am

pleased that the new partnership will take over from HITRANS with much of the expertise and information built up in the last five years transferred to it.'

Enthusiasm

'HITRANS is widely recognised as a model for partnerships and the fact we are the first new partnership to meet demonstrates the enthusiasm of the councils to continue to work together.'

Appin hotel sold for over \$400,000

THE STEWART Hotel in Appin now has new owners after being sold for over £400,000.

Alan and Jo Hogg from the south of England plan to develop and improve the hotel which is well established in the traditional, private and small coaching market.

Set in its own four-acre grounds, the hotel includes a lounge bar, dining room and 26 bedrooms.

The Stewart Hotel has many of the features sought by independent buyers,' said Adam Lansdown, of selling agents Colliers Robert Barry.

'We had reason to believe

it would sell quickly.

Arisaig water to flow by April

SCOTTISH Water has said it 'did not want to raise false hopes' when it told community councillors that it couldn't provide water for a proposed housing development of 20 homes near Arisaig Marina.

Lochaber Housing Association is in the process of buying land above the marina with the intention of building the houses which are urgently needed in the area.

The water company told Arisaig and District Community Council last September the Mallaig water treatment works, which opened in 2001, was operating at full capacity.

Scottish Water then claimed it could be up to nine years before water could be provided for the houses because of budget constraints. But after community and political pressure the company says it is now in a position to carry out a programme of work by redirecting water leaking from the pipeline.

The initial survey work has been completed and we expect the remedial work to start in the coming weeks with a view to having it complete by April. The work will be worth approximately £30,000.'

Isles MP seeks Euro funding assurances

SCOTTISH Nationalist MP Angus MacNeil has written to Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown seeking assurances that the government will meet a European funding shortfall in Scotland, and in particular in his constituency, Na h-Eileanan an Iar (Western Isles).

Mr MacNeil states in a letter to Mr Brown: 'We are able to see clearly from the European Commission proposals what Scotland should be eligible for, though I am concerned that EU funding for Scotland may fall victim to unintended consequences of the lowering of the UK abatement.'

Mr MacNeil argues that the Scottish Executive assumes that the final budget deal agreed by the UK government is 25 per cent less than the European Commission's proposed budget total of 1,025 billion euros.

He added: 'Thus the allocation for Scotland over seven years could mean: £532.5 million for Scotland as a whole, £177.5 million less than the commission pro-

posal; £157.5m for Highlands and Islands, £52m less; £375m for Lowland Scotland, £125 less - a total loss to Scotland of £354.5m from the commission's original proposal.'

Mr MacNeil said: 'Given that the Scottish Executive has regularly claimed to have received assurances from the Treasury that UK resources would make good any losses occasioned by the UK negotiating stance in the European Council negotiations, it is vital that the Treasury will be making good the shortfall, and that this funding will be in addition to the Scottish block.'

'As a Member of Parliament for the Highlands and Islands this is of particular importance to my constituents considering the importance of regional development funding to island communities.'

The fund gives money to talented young Scots in any art form who have outstanding ability but limited resources. Angus was nominated for the scheme by Mhairi Hall, his lecturer at the Benbecula campus of Lewis Castle College where he studied an HNC in Music Performance.

Angus said his new pipes offer a better sound and complemented other instruments very well. He has won prizes at both the Northern Meeting and the MacGregor Memorial

Competition. More than £1 million has already been awarded to youngsters through the scheme.

Extra £1 million for 2007 Highland Year of Culture

AN EXTRA £1 million has been added to funds for the Highland Year of Culture in 2007 which will now kick off on the Old New Year.

EventScotland will provide the funds to support the specific events aimed at bringing people from all over the world.

It made the decision after the company behind Edinburgh's Hogmanay celebrations, Unique Events, assessed the potential for international events to raise the profile of the year-long programme.

Among the events occurring within the year will be the Royal National



Sleat piper Angus Nicolson.

Argyll projects given share of EU funding

THREE Argyll projects have received a share of more than £6 million of European funds to develop construction skills training,

to provide training to improve employability and to provide a new building for a rural theatre group.

More than 65 projects in the area are due to receive a mixture of European Regional Development Funding, European Social Funding, and European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Funding. Among these are three Argyll projects; Argyll Construction Training Centre, Mull Theatre, and Argyll and Bute Service Sector and Social

touring productions, received £200,000 of European funding. It will be spent on new, larger premises on a woodland site 10 miles outside Tobermory, which will include rehearsal rooms, scenery workshops, storage areas, and office accommodation for fund raising, marketing and administration.

Argyll and Bute Service Sector and Social Economy Capacity Building Programme - which provides

training and work experience in administration, call centres, community work and care to increase participants' employability - has been granted £60,837.

Highland schools closed

TWO PRIMARY schools in Lochaber were closed for several days this week for different reasons.

Inverie Primary School was closed because of a power cut in the school after an electricity cable was reported as broken.

A burst boiler meant that Lochcarron Primary School was closed on Tuesday, January 10. The school is due to re-open tomorrow (Friday).

Mod in Lochaber, the 100th Camanachd Cup Final and the World Championship Highland Games.

The year will officially begin on January 12 2007, the date on which the Old New Year was celebrated as it marked the end of the year before the change to the Gregorian calendar in the 18th century.

Alison Magee, chairman of Highland 2007, said: 'This added support from EventScotland as part of the commitment from the Scottish Executive will give the Highland 2007 team when attracting events to the event

area. The Old New Year is still significant for many people in the Highlands giving special meaning to

the choice of January 12 for the launch of this exciting year. I am particularly pleased that the opening event for Highland 2007 will be the first to benefit from this fund.'

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TIGH NA CREIGE, GLENMORE ROAD, PULPIT HILL, OBAN
Well maintained detached bungalow in a private cul-de-sac location within the popular Pulpit Hill area of Oban. The nicely presented accommodation comprises: Vestibule, entrance hallway, living room, kitchen, bathroom and 3 bedrooms. Easily maintained gardens to the side and rear. Double glazed. Separate garage. Offers over £150,000

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Well maintained semi-detached property enjoying lovely westerly views across the Lynn of Lorn with glimpses of the mountains of Mull beyond the neighbouring properties. The accommodation on two floors comprises: Ground floor: Entrance hallway, living room with dining area, kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. First floor: Two bedrooms, box room, shower room. Large floored attic space with Velux window, light and power. Driveway. Established gardens. Fully double glazed. LPG central heating. Offers over £120,000

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TOYOTA F3R CONCEPT: LIVING ROOM ON WHEELS

Toyota has introduced living-room like space and style to the motoring world with its latest concept vehicle, the funky F3R.

The surprising F3R, which makes its debut at the North American International Auto-mobile Show in Detroit today, is a creative, sporty extension of a concept all but forgotten in today's automotive world – that of the minivan.

The project was a joint undertaking of Calty Design Research Inc., Toyota's California design studio, and the company's California-based Advanced Product Strategy group.

"Younger people are hanging out in their cars. When they do that, the car becomes an entertainment area. The F3R expands on that concept. It's a sophisticated extension of the home," said the car's designer.

To create that extension, the design team came up with three very modern looking sets of seats. Each is unique, composed of modern, metal-edged bottoms and asymmetrical backs whose symmetry is completed by semi-integrated headrests. They can provide roomy, comfortable seating for eight adult passengers.

Up front, the driver's seat reclines and swivels, and the passenger seat reclines to form a comfortable bench. In the middle, the seats split and fold to form, with the rear-most or third row, an avant-garde sofa built around the sort of conversation area you might find in a designer living room.

This is surrounded by a casual, wrap-around backrest formed by the continuous, flowing curve of the instrument panel, doors and rear seatback panels. These are accented by fibre-optic lighting panels in the seat sides, and in the F3R's side door, that can be lit to provide illumination during lounge chat sessions.

But there's more to do here than just chat.

That's because the F3R is equipped with two track-mounted flat-panel video screens. These allow the vehicle's occupants to enjoy movies or games whenever they want, and to do so in complete comfort, with control supplied by an audio/video/lighting remote unit that docks in the F3R's dash.

The F3R's design emphasises environmentally sensitive materials, in keeping with the theme of environmental sensitivity suggested by the Hybrid Synergy Drive badging. These materials include floor panels made from Ecoresin, a specially formulated resin that can be recycled; and a skin-friendly simulated leather seating material called Mythos that, unlike most plastics, does not produce the harmful chemical dioxin when it is burned.

The starting point for the F3R's exterior shape, meanwhile, featured a van that conveyed maximum volume, with a tall, wedged body shape that incorporated wide, dynamic shoulders, with its sporty 22-inch wheels and wide performance tyres planted at the extreme boundaries of all four corners.

Toyota wanted anything but a minivan. What they got was a sporty new vehicle that defies an easy label; with a dramatic, iconic shape that is as distinctive as that of the Toyota Prius and an interior that is more adaptable and more family friendly than anything previously seen.



with intelligent drama, but with exactly the fresh take on three rows of seating, and on the usable space that vans so effectively provide, that Toyota was looking for.

Toyota wanted anything but a minivan. What they got was a sporty new vehicle that defies an easy label; with a dramatic, iconic shape that is as distinctive as that of the Toyota Prius and an interior that is more adaptable and more family friendly than anything previously seen.

The result is that the F3R looks like a stylish performance vehicle, but with a feeling inside that is very airy and light.

The F3R is a concept vehicle filled not only

SUBARU LAUNCHES 'DISCREET' IMPREZA STI

Subaru has chosen the 'Autosport International Show' to unveil a new, 'discreet' high-performance Impreza for those wishing to combine blistering performance with restrained exterior styling.

Called appropriately, Impreza WRX STI spec.D (for discreet), the new car can be seen on Subaru Stand 734 at the show – open from 12-15 January at Birmingham's NEC.

Based on the latest facelifted '06 MY

Impreza and featuring a new 281 PS 2.5 litre turbocharged 'boxer' engine coupled with symmetrical all-wheel drive, the new model will be available from March priced at £28,495 on-the-road.

Its unique features include a smaller rear boot spoiler, removal of the rear window roof vane, silver instead of gold 17 ins alloy wheels, black leather interior,

black instead of blue carpet, extra sound-deadening, front projector foglamps and 'Prodrive' lower front grille.

Only available in Crystal Grey metallic, the new Impreza WRX STI spec.D also boasts luxury equipment comprising a 'SmartNav'

satellite navigation system with 'Touch Screen' plus free 12 months' 'TrackStar' and 'SmartNav' membership and one month's 'SafeSpeed' subscription.

Also standard is an upgraded 200 watt audio system featuring a Pioneer DEH-P70BT high-quality unit with CD and MP3 compatibility, integrated 'Bluetooth' hands-free kit plus RDS and 'iPod' adaptor.

With its new, low centre-of-gravity 281 PS horizontally-opposed engine, the latest STI has a 158.4 mph top speed and 0-60 mph

time of 5 seconds. The revised symmetrical all-wheel drive system has both front and rear limited-slip differentials plus yaw-rate sensors for even greater road-holding and interactive handling.

A new, improved version of the Driver's Control Centre Differential (DCCD), allows the driver to control the vehicle dynamics more precisely.

Other STI features include a six-speed gearbox – now with a slicker shift – and a switch to spray the intercooler with water to retain power during high temperature/altitude driving. Drivers can also preset a warning buzzer and light to guard against over-revving the engine.

Managing Director of Subaru (UK) Limited, Peter Kinnaird – the man behind the spec.D project – said:

"This car is a steel fist in a velvet glove, offering all the thrills of the regular Impreza STI but not shouting about its abilities."



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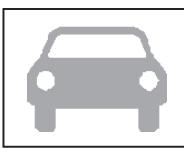
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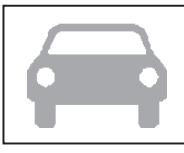
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01631 730323

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01880 760271 (evenings only)

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01631 730381

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07786

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£700 o.n.o.

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1999 T reg 3 door hatch, just been lowered and 17in alloys put on last week, one years MOT. Very good condition, only group 4 insurance. Any inspection welcome

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07845 921562

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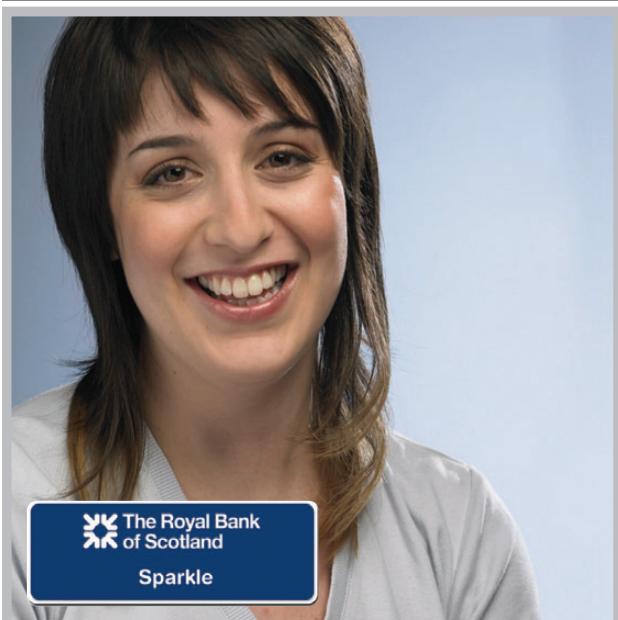
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SAC is a Scottish organisation dedicated to innovation and the transfer of knowledge to the land based industries. Our 900 staff provide consultancy, research, education & training services to rural businesses and communities via a nation-wide network of around 40 business units.

**ARGYLL AREA AGRICULTURAL STRATEGY
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

CS/FBS/270/05

SAC on behalf of the Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum in partnership with local development organisations, NFU Scotland and with funding from WHELK Leader+ wishes to appoint a Development Manager to take forward the actions of the recently launched Argyll Agricultural Strategy. This is a unique opportunity for an appropriately qualified person to help shape the future of agricultural development across the Argyll area.

This position aims to develop and facilitate specific actions from the Strategy in close liaison with agricultural and associated rural businesses. This post is for 18 months in the first instance. The successful applicant must be able to demonstrate excellent communication and liaison skills along with an ability to quickly develop links across the agricultural and rural sectors of the Argyll economy. They must also show an understanding of current development issues relating to farming and crofting and how these relate to wider rural development processes across Argyll. The successful candidate needs to be able to work with minimal supervision and be capable of establishing strong working relationships with local organisations working in the rural economy of Argyll. A full clean UK driving licence is required.

This post will be based in the Campbeltown office of SAC. More flexible working arrangements could be considered for suitable applicants from other parts of Argyll.

The salary will be in the region of £23,725 per annum. A secondment from relevant organisations will be considered.

Application packs are available from Human Resources, Scottish Agricultural College, West Mains Road, Edinburgh EH9 3JG. Tel: (0131) 535 4323, HumanResources@sac.ac.uk or our website <http://www.sac.ac.uk>. Closing date: 27th January 2006. Please quote the reference.



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Shanks Waste Management Limited (part of the Shanks Group plc), currently has the following vacancy:

**Foreman – Argyll and Bute
Competitive Salary & Benefits**

The responsibility of this role is to ensure the following are carried out efficiently and effectively:

- Conducting safety inspections
- Enforce company standards
- Ensure correct resources are available to carry out the job
- Understand customer needs
- Operate to all legislative requirements
- Supervise staff responsible to post holder

Candidates must be able to work on own initiative both individually and as part of a team. Must be friendly, helpful and able to work with the public. COTC in landfill, HGV and / or CITB would be an advantage. A clean driving licence is also required.

If you are interested in the above vacancy please apply in writing quoting reference number 312N and enclosing a CV to Susan Purchase, HR Administrator, Shanks, Pontyfelin Industrial Estate, New Road, Panteg, Pontypool, Torfaen, NP4 0SH

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07767 395 377

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(01631) 562168

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Day/night rotation
£5.85 per hour to £6.21 per hour
plus Staff Pension Scheme

For application forms please contact the manager
Morag A. Telfer

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Small yard specialising in dressage is looking for a

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experienced in providing basic day-to-day stable
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You should be self motivated and able to work
unsupervised.

Monday to Friday, 15 hours per week.

For more details, please call Caroline Champion, Proprietor

Telephone **01852 200311** or **07768 962432**



FULL TIME INDUSTRIAL MAINTENANCE ELECTRICIAN

This position involves all routine maintenance/repairs associated with electrical aspects of running a ski area and tourist attraction. A knowledge of 3 phase motor controls, electrical distribution and the ability to work at heights in all weather conditions is essential. This would suit a keen skier/snowboarder or mountaineer.

Rate of pay £16,000 - £18,000 pa.

Please apply in writing to Nevis Range, Tirlony, Fort William PH33 6SW
Closing date January 21, 2006.

INVERARAY CASTLE

INVERARAY, ARGYLL

House Manager/ess

Inveraray Castle, home to the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, is open to the public between April and October each year and attracts visitors from all over the world.

A new role has been created in order to develop both the visitor and events business, as well as supervise the private and public quarters of this important Historic House.

Reporting to the Factor, the role will encompass a number of disciplines ranging from an appreciation of fine works of art, promotion and development of tourism, as well as a responsibility for the domestic management of the house.

The successful candidate will work to the highest standards and possess a significant level of self-motivation to achieve the best results. Accommodation will be provided.

Those who may be suitable will receive a full Job Description.

HANDYMAN/CARETAKER-SECURITY

The successful candidate will ideally have some previous experience of a similar role, be committed to the smooth running of the Castle and take pride in their work and surroundings.

Reporting to the House Manager, a high standard of service and maintenance, including the daily responsibility for security, will be paramount, along with a loyalty to the family. Accommodation is provided and will be live-in. Full driving licence essential, non-smoker/no young children.

DOMESTIC HELP

Reporting to the House Manager, cleaning/ironing and occasional other duties will be required on a daily basis. A willingness and ability to relate to others is essential, along with loyalty and the high standards expected of such a position. Accommodation will be provided. Non-smoker preferred.

Couples will be considered in respect of the Handyman and Domestic Help.

Please send handwritten letter, enclosing CV, to:-

A Montgomery BSc, MRICS
Factor, Argyll Estates Office
Cherry Park, Inveraray
Argyll PA32 8XE.
www.inveraray-castle.com



TELESALES OPERATOR

- PART TIME-

This position has been created as a result of continuing expansion.

Part-Time position 0930 till 1430, Monday-Friday (occasional Saturday morning).

Applicants must be able to demonstrate the following:-

Be Friendly, Presentable, Hardworking,

Work as part of a Team, Conscientious,

Reliable, IT literate (or keen to learn),

Numerate, Customer Aware,

-Immediate Start Available-

for an application form please contact-

John Forteith
Forteith Foodservice
Glengallain Road, Oban, Argyll. PA34 4HG
Tel: (01631) 569 100
Fax: (01631) 570 380
enquiry@forteith.co.uk

Ben Nevis

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Temporary Catering Assistant (March - October)

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Interested? Please telephone Anne MacKenzie on (01397) 704244

We also have the following vacancy:

Gardener/Handyperson

For further details please contact Aileen Haggart on (01397) 704244.

PUBLIC NOTICES

To find out more about living and
working in argyll & bute visit us @
www.arryll-bute.gov.uk



PLANNING

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997,
RELATED LEGISLATION PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS
AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Take notice that the applications in the following schedule may be inspected during normal office hours at the location given below. Anyone wishing to make representations should do so in writing to the undersigned within 14 or 21 days of the appearance of this notice, whichever is applicable as indicated below. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF PLANS

● Ref No: 05/02501/DET

Applicant: Jean Black

Proposal: Erection of Dwelling and Letting Unit, Septic Tank

Site Address: Clachan Corrach Isle of Iona PA76 6SP

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Isle of Iona

Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

● Ref No: 05/02509/LIB

Applicant: The Royal Bank of Scotland

Proposal: Replacement of Signage

Site Address: 26 George Street Oban Argyll PA34 5SB

Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

Regulation 5 Listed Bid Consent - 21 Day

● Ref No: 05/02518/DET

Applicant: Allan Maclean

Proposal: Extension and Alteration to Existing Dwellinghouse

Site Address: Beadoun MacLean Beadoun Tobermory Isle of Mull

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Tobermory

Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

● Ref No: 06/00002/COU

Applicant: James Robertson

Proposal: Marine Shetland Farm Modification - 250 Extra Oyster Trestles

Site Address: Marine Shetland Farm North East of Winterton Farm Balvicar Oban Argyll

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Balvicar

Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

● Ref No: 06/00004/OUT

Applicant: Mr Alexander Dawson

Proposal: Erection of Dwelling House - Renewal of Outline Planning Consent 03/00061/OUT

Site Address: Land South Of Achnaearron Kilchrenan Taynuilt Argyll

Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

Section 34 Advert - 14 Days

Area Team Leader Development Control, Planning Services, Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban PA34 4AR

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT CONTRARY TO DEVELOPMENT PLAN) (SCOTLAND) DIRECTION 1996

The following planning applications have been lodged for determination with Argyll and Bute Council and are available for inspection during normal working hours at the local area office/Post Office identified below.

The proposals contained in the application are considered to be a departure or potential departure from the Development Plan for the area concerned.

Anyone wishing to make representations about any of the applications identified below should do so in writing within 21 days from the date of publication of this notice to the Area Team Leader Development Control at the address below.

Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Tenders sought for
**Environment / Arts/
Heritage**
feasibility study

ABREEF would like to investigate feasibility of a cross-discipline Primary school education project.

Expression of interest to tender are sought from individuals and organisations. Study to be completed by mid 2006. Details of project will be sent on request.
Contact Matt Lewis, GRAB Trust, A&B Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead PA31 8RT. 01546 600165

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATORS

LICENCE, Rembrand Timber Limited of Shielhill Wood, Tealing, by Dundee DD4 0PW, is applying to change an existing licence as follows: to add an operating centre to keep 2 goods vehicles at Area 7E, Plot 2, Glensheallach Business Park, Glengallow Road, Oban. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Scottish Traffic Area, J Floor, Argyle House, 3 Lady Lawson Street, Edinburgh EH3 9SE stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

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ALBA PINE quality furniture. Telephone 01852 316257 or visit showroom at Keltia, Main Street, Connel. Website: www.albpine.co.uk

• GARDEN SERVICES

TREE or HEDGE WORK Surgery, felling, removal etc. Chain saw sculpture. Also firewood supplies. Telephone 01631 770206 (Kilmore, near Oban).

• COUNSELLING & ADVICE

Argyll and Bute WOMEN'S AID
Offers information and support and refuge (if needed) to women and children (if any) who have been or are being abused by their partner/ex partner
Telephone:
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This is a confidential service

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e-mail: info@macqueenbros.com

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

THE OBAN TIMES & West Highland Times

THE REGIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE WEST HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS AND ARGYLL



The Oban Times is the best-selling weekly newspaper in the Highlands and is distributed via 1742 newsgroups every week.

Editorial Director: Joan P. Bennett Group Managing Editor: Stewart MacKenzie

News Editor: Joanne Simms Chief Reporter: Marian Miller Head Office: Oban 568000 Fax: Oban 568001 E-mail: editor@obantimes.co.uk

Branch Offices: Fort William (01397) 703003 Fax (01397) 702495 Lochgilphead (01546) 602345 Fax (01546) 602661 Campbeltown (01586) 554646 Fax (01586) 553006

BIRTHS

CHARLTON

Stuart and Rhoda (née Kennedy) are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter, Abbie Elizabeth A sister for Cameron Born on December 20, 2005, at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.



MACINNES

John and Joanne (née Howe) are delighted to announce the birth of their son Cameron John on January 6, 2006, at St John's Hospital, Livingston. Thanking all in attendance.



WALKER - Michelle and David are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Euan Alexander, born December 21, 2005. Both doing very well.

ENGAGEMENTS

BLACK - MACLEOD - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Diane, daughter of Alasdair and Kathleen Black, Oban, to Kenny, son of Kenny and Grace MacLeod, Lochgilphead.

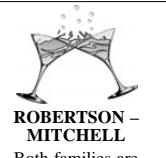


MACDONALD ARTHUR - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Sheena, only daughter of Archie and Anne, "Fasgadh", Longsdale Road, to Iain, younger son of Eamonn and Maureen, "Oronsay", Lonan Drive, Oban.



MACLENNAN HOBSON - Angus and Margaret are delighted to announce the engagement of their daughter Kirsteen to Richard on Christmas Day 2005. Congratulations.

MACPHIE - WELLS - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of John, son of Ian and Eileen MacPhie, Mallaig, to Dawn, youngest daughter of Maurice and Joyce Wells, Inverlochy.



ROBERTSON - MITCHELL

Both families are delighted to announce the engagement on Boxing Day 2005, of Scott, son of Alex and Sheila Robertson, Taynuilt, to Lynn, daughter of Hugh and Margaret Mitchell, Barrhead.

RUBY WEDDING

GAILEY - MACLEAN - At Kilinver Parish Church on January 15, 1966, by the Rev. Christopher MacKinnon, Anne to John Allan. Present address, Morleen, Kilinver.



KERMODE

John to Lilian (née Black) January 13, 1966. Present address - Tynwald, Glenburn Place, Oban.

DEATHS

BARNES - Peacefully at Lynn of Lorne Care Home, Bederlock on January 2, 2006, in his 85th year, Ken, beloved husband of the late Elsie Barnes, dear father of Jennifer, Rosemary, Jean and John much loved father-in-law and grandpa.

JACKSON - Very suddenly at the Belford Hospital, Fort William, on January 6, 2006, aged 61 years, Elizabeth (Liz), (née Bennett). Dear wife of John and much loved mother of Iain. Very sadly missed.

MACLEOD - At Perth Royal Infirmary on Sunday, January 8, 2006, Annie Neill, beloved wife of the late Rev Angus Macleod, a much loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral service in Scone Old Parish Church on Friday, January 13, at 10.30am, followed by interment in Scone Cemetery. All family and friends respectfully invited.

McKINNON - Suddenly at work on the pier, Colonsay, on December 28, 2005, Charles Walker, aged 67, dearly loved husband of May, son of the late John and Agnes McKinnon, Hillhead Farm, Arran, brother of John and Iris. Sadly missed.

MUNRO - Peacefully at Ossian Retirement Home, North Connel, on January 6, 2006, Archibald Munro aged 90 years. Funeral on Friday, January 13, 2006, at Dalmally Church at 1pm. Donations to Cancer Research through D & A Munn, Funeral Directors Oban.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BROTCHIE - The family of the late William (Bill) Brotchie wish to wholeheartedly thank everyone for the love and support shown to them during their time of great sadness and sorrow. Many thanks also for all the beautiful cards and flowers. Sincere thanks to Moss Park Nursing Home for all the love and care they gave to Bill during his years there. A sum of £297 was collected for Moss Park. Thanks also to Mike McFall and Ewen McLellan, words can not express our gratitude to you, your support and efficiency were a God send. Many, many thanks. A final thank you to the Rev A Guinness for his comforting service, to Alastair, Ian and Uncle Frank for their addresses and to all who attended St Andrews on Christmas Eve.

CAIN - Many thanks to the Duncan family, Janice for all the help she gave me looking after my beloved Eleanor. Especially the past months when Eleanor was in a lot of pain. To Rusty for running about in his car, our adopted daughter Hayley and our adopted grandchildren, Keira, Taylor and Lexie, for helping to cheer her up the last few months. Ward CA Room 1, Raigmore and Macmillan Nurses there. Medical Ward, Belford Hospital. The three Ks Macmillan nurses, Marie MacNeil and Isobel, night nurses, Craig Nevis. Special thanks to her friend and pal Dr Shirley, Dr Idris, nurses Deirdre and Nicki. To Dr Robinson for his help the weekend he was called out. To our Rector Rev A Guinness for his comforting and spiritual visits at home and hospital. Ian MacLeay for his sermon, the professional way

Mike and Ewen carried out the funeral arrangements. To family and friends who attended the service and burial, West End Hotel for catering, all the lovely flowers, cards, letters and telephone calls during her illness and after. Many thanks for the generous sum of £610 for Macmillan Nurses Fund.

Pat the butcher.

GILLIES - The family of the late Willie Gillies wish to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kindess shown following their recent sad loss. They would like to thank the staff at the Lynn of Lorne Care Home and the Taynuilt and Connell Medical Practice for all their help. Thanks also to Rev Margaret Millar for her kind words of comfort, Daphne Campbell, who played the organ and to Hamish Hoey & Sons, Funeral Directors, for their excellent service and professional guidance and to Taynuilt Hotel for their fine catering. A huge thank you to all who joined them at the church and graveside and donated the sum of £761.30 to Alzheimer Scotland Local Branch. 39 Cruachan Cottages, Taynuilt.

LAMONT - Mrs Mary W Lamont wishes to express her appreciation to all those who attended the service in the Oban Parish Church and the Funeral Service in Heilipol Church in Tiree for her dear husband Willie. Thanks to the Reverend A Campbell, Mr F MacKenzie for a Gaelic Reading, to Mr Nicholson for the music, Duncan Cameron, died December 17, 1966 and Elizabeth McLean died January 10, 1972.

Please god forgive a silent tear A constant wish that you were here Others have lost I know that's true But you were mine and I miss you so. - Darren and Angela.

CAMERON - Precious memories of our dear father, Duncan, who died January 6, 2003.

Forever in our thoughts. - Irene, Junie, Catherine Anne and family.

CAMERON

Fond memories of my mother, Margaret, who died January 10, 1991 and my father, Duncan, who died March 27, 1985. Remembered always.

- Inserted by daughter Mary and son-in-law Alister MacLachlan.

CAMPBELL

In loving memory of Chrissie Campbell who died peacefully January 12, 2004.

A loving wife, mother, gran and sister.

We hold you close within our hearts

And there you shall remain

To walk with us throughout our lives

Until we meet again

So rest in peace dear loved one

And thanks for all you've done

We pray that God has given you

The crown you've truly won

Loved and missed dearly.

- Duncan and family

CAMPBELL

In loving memory of Archie

Campbell, a dear dad and grandpa, who died December 31, 2000.

Much missed.

- Mairi, Charlie, Fiona and Calum.

CRUICKSHANK

In loving memory of Jimmie, a much loved husband, father and grandfather who passed away January 15, 1999.

Though seven long years have passed

Since you left us that winter's morn

We miss you still, but keep you

Forever in our hearts.

- Inserted by his loving wife Kate, sons Iain and Dougie and their families.

GRAHAM

In loving memory of a dear wife,

mother and grandmother who passed away on January 6, 1998.

Loved and remembered always.

- Inserted by Bill and all the family.

HAY

Cherished and loving

memories of our kind,

loving and caring son,

brother and uncle, James

Nicolson (Jimmy) who de-

parted from this life on

January 10, 1998 aged 36years.

Your love is always with us

You place no one can fill

In life we love you dearly

In death we love you still

They are not engraved in rarest gold

Or hung for all to view

They are engraved with pride

Within our hearts

Our memories of you

Forever loved and missed.

Mum, Dad, Donald,

Anthea, Iain and families.

HAY

In loving memory of Jimmy.

- Inserted by family, Glas-

gow.

THORBURN

In loving memory of my dear

husband and our dad, Bert,

who died January 12, 2003.

Always in our thoughts.

- Inserted by family, Glas-

gow.

MACDOUGALL

In loving memory of a dear

sister, Jeannie, who died

Thanks also to Rev. Mike

Rattenbury for the thoughtful and comforting service, also many thanks to McBrayne staff and crews.

MCAGGART - Mary and family of the late John McAggart who died suddenly but peacefully at home in Portree on December 25, 2005, aged 75 years. Time may hide the sadness like the smile that hides the tears.

But nothing will hide the heartache.

Despite the passing years.

- Inserted by his loving wife, Chrissie.

MACINNES

In loving memory of Iain Paul MacInnes, much loved dad and granddad.

Forever in our thoughts and prayers.

- Love Carol and Erin.

MACKAY

In loving memory of our dear mother, died January 11, 1973, our dear brother Duncan died February 12, 1985 also our dear sister Morag died December 3, 2002.

Life goes on and time goes by.

But memories of you never die.

- Inserted by Cathie, Portnahaven, Islay.

Deep in my heart your memory is kept.

To remember and cherish and never forget.

- Inserted by Ian and Jean, Tarbert, Argyll.

Memories hold you close to us.

Despite the passing years.

- Inserted by Mary and family.

Thanks to Glasgow.

Having married in Glasgow.

MacLennan, Poltalloch, Kilmartin.

Evansong 1530

St Columba, Grutine, Mull

Ecclesiastical Service for Week

of Prayer for Christian Unity

TIMES Sport



Atlantis Leisure's Julie Didcock puts Argyll and Bute MSP George Lyon through his paces at the opening of the centre's new gym i02gym10



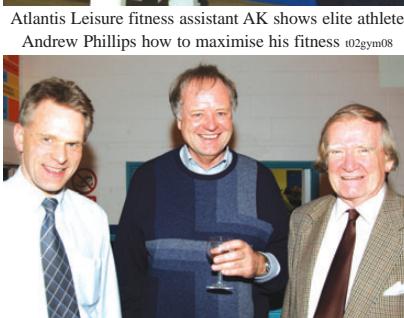
Members of the Atlantis Elite Squad Chris Hutchens and Alex Rawcliffe test the new running machines at the gym



Atlantis Leisure fitness assistant AK shows elite athlete Andrew Phillips how to maximise his fitness i02gym08



Sean O'Bryne, Chis Hutchens and Andrew Phillips make the most of the centre's cycling machines i02gym07



Atlantis director Neil Matheson, left, shows councillors Allan Macaskill and Robin Banks around the gym and dance studio i02gym02

Atlantis Leisure takes fitness to a new level

£100,000 investment in health and fitness for the future

THE arrival of a New Year brings a fresh start for most of us, and Oban's Atlantis Leisure has been no exception.

An £100,000 investment into improving and updating community facilities means that now Atlantis Leisure offers the very best in health and fitness for the future.

The Atlantis team have worked hard to provide the very best in fitness equipment and a high quality environment to make fitness training really enjoyable. The more you use it the better it gets!

Technogym, one of the market leaders in the world of fitness equipment, has been added to the existing fitness equipment to offer a

new 30-station gym with three running machines, two cross trainers, two cardio waves, three bikes and a smiths multi power.

The cardio wave is a pioneering new machine which has taken Technogym 10 years to develop. It is practically exclusive to Atlantis; only one other gym in Scotland has this latest piece of gym equipment!

The cardio wave promises to get you real results where you want them.

Technogym has been the official equipment supplier for many of the world's top sporting events such as the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, Athens 2004 Olympics and Paralympics Games, and the Turin 2006 Winter Olympics Games.

In the air-conditioned gym there is a comprehensive range of the very best cardiovascular and resistance machines as well as a separate spacious free weights area.

And if you're ever unsure about how to use the equip-

ment or need help with an exercise, there's Atlantis Leisure's fitness team on hand; a qualified friendly fitness professional will be available on the gym floor at all times.

Getting started

To start using the gym, you will need to book in for a gym induction. This is a hands-on demonstration which will be given by one of the qualified gym instructors.

Once you have learned to use the equipment and feel comfortable, the next step is to help you manage your progress and achieve your goals through an assessment and personal programme.

Getting everyone involved

As a step to help improve the health of young people, Atlantis have now opened up the gym to all individuals over 14 years of age - why not train with your kids and enjoy motivating each other and getting fit together?

With a new dance studio,

class programmes are expanding all the time to offer a range of classes for both adults and juniors. Recent additions to the junior fitness programme include tap dancing, fun dance, funky dance and jazz.

A new soft play centre will be located in the old fitness suite and will be opening at the end of January 2006.

And don't forget the swimming pool, which is now complete with poolside access to the sauna.

Getting results, staying motivated and having fun are the key to a successful exercise programme. Atlantis provides all the ingredients needed for everyone to stay on track with New Year healthy lifestyle resolutions.

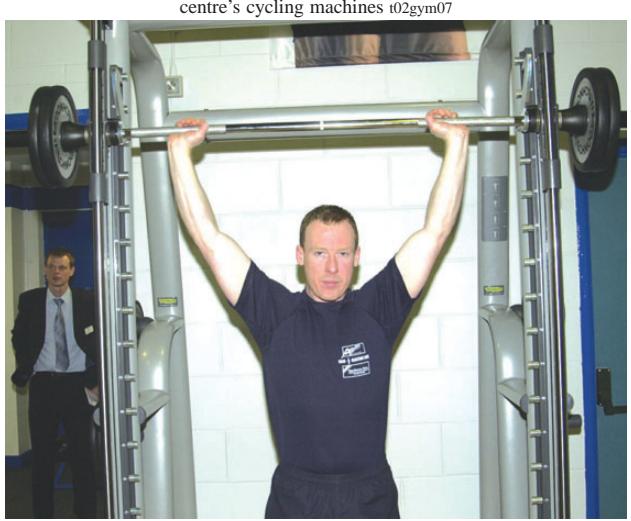
Getting a good deal more

Making leisure affordable for all has also been a goal for the sports complex that has been achieved through the discounted lifestyle membership scheme.

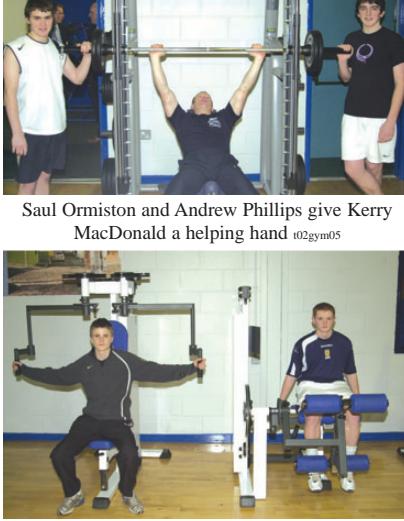
Atlantis has also united



Argyll and Bute MSP George Lyon officially cuts the ribbon to mark the opening of the new gym, watched by Atlantis Leisure chairman Roy Clunie and centre manager Nick Wesley i02gym01



Gym instructor Kerry MacDonald demonstrates the weightlifting equipment at the new gym in Atlantis Leisure i02gym04



Elite squad members David Clunie and Alex Rawcliffe i02gym06



Julie Didcock and her father Alfie MacKenzie inspect the new equipment i02gym01

NEW YEAR - NEW ATLANTIS - NEW YOU



THE New ATLANTIS GYM

30 Stations including
New TechnoGym equipment
Air Conditioning
Free Weights Area

THE New DANCE STUDIO

High Quality Environment
Beech Sprung Floor
Air Conditioning
New Music System

JUNIOR FITNESS PROGRAMME

Tap Dancing
Fundance
Funky Dance
Jazz Dance

SWIMMING POOL & SAUNA

Early Bird Sessions
Aqua-Aerobics
Extra Lane Swimming
Swimming Lessons

Coming Soon New Softplay centre for 2- 5 year olds

These are only a few of the fantastic healthy options available for all of the family at Atlantis please remember to check out our website for a full timetable of activities for 2006

Discounted Direct Debit Adult Memberships available from £13.50 to £38.00 per month
Junior Memberships from £7.00 to £19.00 per month

Atlantis Sports & Leisure Centre, Dalriach Rd, Oban Tel: 01631 566800

www.atlantis.co.uk

SPORTS DESK ☎ 01631 568000 Fax 01631 568001 e-mail sport@obantimes.co.uk website www.obantimes.co.uk

Tides

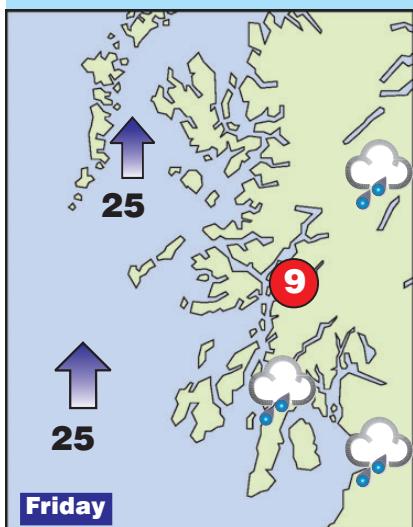
Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, April 14, 2005**
 are listed below with differences
 for major ports listed beneath.
 All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	04.12	1056
Fri	04.54	11.41
Sat	05.33	12.20
Sun	00.08	1.1
Mon	00.47	1.1
Tues	01.24	1.1
Wed	01.59	1.1
	07.53	3.9
	14.37	1.5
	20.15	3.6

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

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

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the weather

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Thursday, January 12

Will be mainly cloudy or overcast with heavy rain at times. Winds will be fresh to strong southerly.

Temperatures 5°C to 10°C.

Friday, January 13

Will be cloudy or overcast with light to moderate rain at times. Winds will be fresh to strong southerly.

Temperatures 2°C to 10°C.

Saturday and Sunday

Saturday is expected to be dry with sunny spells, while Sunday is expected to turn cloudy with rain expected by the end of the day. Winds will be moderate to fresh southerly or south-westerly on both days.

Sunday.

Temperatures 2°C to 9°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist - Moderate to rough
 Oban to Coll/Tiree - As above
 Kennacraig to Islay - As above

Lochgoilhead's Ross wins Perth Masters

LOCHGOILHEAD curler Ross Paterson, who helped the newly assembled Team Edwards to surprise victory in November's Edinburgh International event, has had further success at last weekend's Perth Masters.

Ross has again underlined his potential as a senior player, after helping the foursome beat Olympic teams from Finland, Great Britain and Italy to win the tournament.

'It was fantastic for me and my friend Sandy Gilmour (Edinburgh) to win this event,' said 21 year old Ross, who was a member of last year's World Junior Championship Scottish

Curling

bronze medal winning team.

'This our first year out of junior curling so it's good to come straight out and be competitive on the men's circuit.'

'There were a lot of established teams, which have been together a long time who were at the event, and these people are performing at a top level,' explained Ross.

Team Edwards' route to the Perth silverware was less than straightforward. Having yielded the first two games, just one further loss would have seen them exit

the tournament. But they persevered and went on to win the next six games, which included the Finnish Olympic team, and the Scottish Institute of Sport's own Team Brewster in the final.

'Tom Brewster was involved in the finals for Olympic selection so it was good to beat him, and he had beaten the British Olympic team in the match before he played us.'

'It would have been good to have had the chance to play the British Olympic team, but we did beat the Finnish Olympic team in the semi finals which was very satisfying,' said Ross.

Antrim were favouring the long ball, but they found the Saints back three of Mark MacCallum, Bertie Gemmell and Alex Grindlay in excellent form giving keeper Tim Woodcock plenty protection.

With 40 minutes on the clock Ross Maitland fired over a corner from the left and Allan MacKay was unlucky with a header that hit the bar.

However, 60 seconds later Allan did get on the scoresheet to notch his 17th goal of the season when he controlled an awkward bouncing ball at the edge of the box before turning and thumping an unstoppable

Saints made three substitutions to freshen up the team as the game wore on - Duncan Campbell replacing Dean Walker, Ross Graham coming on for Ross Maitland and young Colin Carswell replaced Scott Johnston who had sustained a nasty cut to his shin.

In an effort to get an

equalised home team pushed more men forward, but the Saints defence were coping well until the 90th minute.

Antrim were awarded a corner on the right and with nothing to lose sent giant keeper Ross Murrow into the box.

Duncan Campbell took the first one for Saints and sent the keeper the wrong way. Antrim hit the bar with their first kick taken by Robbie Scott. Willie Gemmell then had his spot kick saved by Ross Murrow. However, Douglas Prowse hit his kick high and wide to put Saints back in the driving seat.

Allan MacKay stepped up to take Saints third penalty shot. Duncan Campbell took the first one for Saints and sent the keeper the wrong way. Antrim hit the bar with their first kick taken by Robbie Scott. Willie Gemmell then had his spot kick saved by Ross Murrow. However, Douglas Prowse hit his kick high and wide to put Saints back in the driving seat.

Allan MacKay stepped up to take Saints third penalty

and calmly tucked it away. Andrew MacDonald was next up for Antrim, but he also knocked his kick, high, wide and handsome.

Mark MacCallum was next in line for Saints and he knew that if he scored his team would go through. The defender showed no sign of nerves as he drilled the ball home much to the delight of his team mates to give Saints a 3-0 penalty shoot-out win.

Saints manager Iain Jackson was delighted by the result. He said: 'It was another hard fought cup tie between two teams who don't know when to give up. It was a long trip for the lads, but in the end I think we deserved to go through.'

The Oban side would like to thank Angus MacPhee of AMP Electrical Services for sponsoring the travel costs for this game.

This Saturday Saints stay on Scottish Cup duty with a tough game against Falkirk team Gilston Park. The game will take place at Mossfield Stadium with a 1.30 pm kick-off.

Saints Under 19s drew 1-1 with top of the table St Andrew's BC last Saturday at Mossfield and the Under 17s had a good 3-2 home win over Erskine BC.

This weekend the Under 19s travel to take on Celtic BC and the Under 17s have no game.

Return of the primary league

Football

The Oban Express Primary League returns this Sunday at Oban's Atlantis Leisure.

All players taking part should be at Atlantis by 9.45am for a 10am start.

Oban lose to league leaders

OBAN played host to Marr on Saturday, knowing that they would need to be at the top of their game if they were to get anything from the league leaders.

A moment of controversy arose toward the end of the first quarter, when Oban were denied what they thought was a legitimate try.

From a quick line-out the ball went straight to Euan Wilson, who gratefully crossed the line to score.

After apparently giving the try the referee went for a long chat at the sideline with the touch judge, and just as Oban prepared to take the conversion, the team were called back for a full line-out.

Despite the set back Oban continued the pressure and were unlucky when both Robin McQueen and Greg McGill were stopped just

short of the try line.

From the next ruck, the Oban side were awarded for their continued pressure, when Andy McDougal forced his way over the line to put his side in the lead by eight points to seven.

As the game entered its final quarter Marr were awarded a penalty directly in front of the Oban sticks, and from the scrum Marr converted to take a two point lead.

A frantic last few minutes could not bring any more scoring, resulting in a Marr victory by 10-8.

Of the two sides Marr were undoubtedly the happier side at the end of the match.

However, Oban can take a lot of positives from running a very good Marr team extremely close.



Oban and Marr fight for the ball in their match on Saturday which the side from Troon won 10-8. [t02rug01](#)

Rugby

taking Oban side to simply run the ball in for a seven pointer.

A series of debateable decisions made by the match official led to the game being an ill tempered affair, with players from both teams questioning his decisions.

Although the opposition backs were tipped as the most destructive in the league, there was very little flowing rugby being played.

Oban started the match the better side and continually pressured the Marr defence, resulting in a penalty which was struck between the posts by Robert Wright.

Marr didn't waste any time in hitting back, and stole the ball from the at-



Oban Saints players celebrate their penalty shoot-out win over Ancrum on Saturday. Photo: John Peters, Jedburgh

Saints go through as Ancrum nerves crack in penalty shoot-out

Soccer World

Scottish Amateur Cup

3rd Round Replay

ANCRUM 1

OBAN SAINTS 1

(Saints won 3-0 on

penalties after extra time)

OBAN SAINTS made the long 340-mile round trip to take on Borders League side Ancrum in the Soccer World Scottish Amateur Cup 3rd round replay, and it was a very happy, but tired, Saints team that arrived back in the town at 9pm on Saturday night after a hard fought game that went into extra time and penalties.

The teams had drawn 1-1 in Oban on December 10 in a closely fought game and this match was no different. The visitors created the first chance when Allan MacKay got on the end of a Willie Gemmell long throw but his header sailed over the bar.

Two minutes later Bertie Gemmell fired over a great kick but Joe Lopez failed to hit the target. Then Dean Walker had a goal-bound effort blocked by Ancrum skipper Robbie Scott.

The big keeper then kept his team in the game with a brilliant point blank save when Ross Maitland got in a header from a Dean Walker cross in the 68th minute.

Saints made three substitutions to freshen up the team as the game wore on - Duncan Campbell replacing Dean Walker, Ross Graham coming on for Ross Maitland and young Colin Carswell replaced Scott Johnston who had sustained a nasty cut to his shin.

In an effort to get an equalised home team pushed more men forward, but the Saints defence were coping well until the 90th minute.

Antrim were awarded a corner on the right and with nothing to lose sent giant keeper Ross Murrow into the box.

This tactic seemed to unsettle the Saints rearguard and while the defence were keeping tabs on the big keeper, the ball was floated to the far post where Gary Goodfellow rose to head goalwards. The ball seemed to be going wide of the target, but unfortunately for Saints it hit off Ross Graham and rolled agonisingly into the net.

The visitors had a great chance to win the game in the second minute of added on time when Duncan Campbell was clean through, but he shot straight at the goalkeeper.

Experienced

It was a very dejected Saints team that trudged off the park at the final whistle,

Joe Lopez and Keith Millar were playing well in midfield for the visitors, both working their socks off for the cause. Joe was unlucky with a pile driver that hit the bar.

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