

### MRSA concern at Oban hospital

### Doctor becomes latest victim of Ben Nevis

### Camanachd Cup Final bound for Dunoon

### Departure of Father Roddy MacNeil

BARRA and Vatersay are strong enough in their community spirit to deal with the shock and upset felt by the departure of their priest and the revelations about his private life.

Councillor Donald Manford was speaking for his constituents when he said: 'The mark of the strength of a community is how it deals with problems.'

Father Roddy MacNeil was the parish priest at Star of the Sea Church, Castlebay, until December. He had also served at other parishes in the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles.

After a meeting with Bishop Ian Murray in December, Father Roddy was suspended and it is understood that he was to take time away from the parish and the situation would be reviewed at the end of January.

Since then allegations about his personal life have come to light in the national press alleging a relationship with his cousin.

Mr Manford said that the island communities Father Roddy served still cared for him and hoped for the best possible outcome for all involved.

'People do feel hurt and upset when things like this happen, that is inevitable,' said Mr Manford. 'You care for people who work with you in the community so it is upsetting and distressing when things go wrong.'

But he said the communities are resilient. 'We feel for the people that are hurt in this and pray for them and wish them well in the rest of their lives,' he said. 'To err is human and people here are strong enough and wise enough to understand. The issue is not the upset, for want of a better term, it is how we deal with it; that is the mark of the strength of a community.'

The post of parish priest at Star of the Sea has been filled by Father Michael Hutson who has been parish priest at St Margaret's Church, Lochgilphead, for the last two-and-a-half years.



Oban Port Manager Kenny Boyd oversees construction of the new linkspan which started on January 9. 104caal02

### Work starts on new Oban CalMac linkspan

WORK has started on the new linkspan at Oban Harbour, which is part of the major re-development of Oban Ferry Terminal.

Contractors George Leslie Limited of Barrhead, Glasgow, began construction on January 9, and hope to have the first phase, costing an estimated £1.3 million, finished by April 14.

Phase one will finish in time for the summer with phase two starting next

winter. The completion of the new linkspan is scheduled for April 2007.

Caledonian MacBrayne's head of communication and customer care Hugh Dan MacLennan said there won't be any disruption to current services.

'The construction work should in no way infringe upon current services that Caledonian MacBrayne operate.

'We will work around our services which is key to the

whole construction plan,' he explained.

Mr MacLennan also explained the benefits that the second linkspan will bring to services.

He said: 'It means boats won't have to queue in the bay and we can perhaps be more flexible and increase services

'But that will be addressed in due course.

'It also means we have a little bit of security which we haven't had in the past.

If there is a problem with one linkspan, there is always the other one to fall back on.

'We will keep local people and our customers fully informed of operations and developments as soon as they happen.'

The work is being carried out from two crane-hoisted work baskets, which allow workers and materials to be moved away from the pier face at a moment's notice when the ferry is

approaching. George Leslie Limited is the same company behind the £400,000 contract for work on Stranraer Harbour Seacat berth and work on Wemyss Bay ferry terminal for CalMac where a number of the existing piles were replaced with new tubular steel piles.

Plans for a second Oban linkspan were subject to a public local inquiry last February, which found in favour of CalMac.

### MRSA in Oban hospital

LORN and Islands District General Hospital in Oban has a number of patients with the antibiotic-resistant MRSA bacteria, according to NHS Argyll and Clyde.

The *Oban Times* understands that four patients are in isolation after the discovery that they have the bacteria and visitors are now being asked to wear gowns and gloves as well as wash their hands with a sterilising solution before visiting them.

But the health authority is playing down the outbreak of the bacteria, which it says is found commonly on the skin or in the nose of 30-40 per cent of the population.

'All hospital staff apply standard infection control precautions to all patients at all times and these standard precautions underpin routine safe practice and protect both staff and patients from infection.'

said a spokesman for NHS Argyll and Clyde.

'The hospital's control of infection team has reinforced these infection control procedures and the situation is being continually monitored on a daily basis.'

One relative of a patient in the hospital who has MRSA said the lack of information was disturbing.

The patient was moved into a ward and not initially told that the other patients in that ward also had MRSA.

'The next time we went up we had to get gownned up, use the Spiri-gel and gloves,' said the relative.

The relative said they were not told a great deal about the bacteria or what was being done to combat it or whether or not their relative was receiving medication for it.

'They said [the patient]

has got it and will still have it until the wounds heal,' said the relative. 'They have not gone into any detail about the effects or what it could do to [the patient].'

They believed that the hospital staff were concerned about it but were perhaps giving 'an air of confidence so that they didn't panic folk'.

They thought that those who were regular visitors or relatives of those patients who had MRSA should have been taken aside and had the situation fully explained to them, although they had been told it was not life-threatening.

'It is not terminal if someone is fit and healthy but no-one in there is fit and healthy,' said the relative. MRSA is shorthand for any strain of the Staphylococcus bacteria that is resistant to common antibiotics.

It is passed around by physical contact and usually it is not necessary to do anything about it in healthy people but when it is passed on to someone who is already ill, a more serious infection can occur.

When a patient is discovered to have it in a hospital, the hospital will try to stop it from being passed around other patients through careful hand-washing after being in contact with the patient.

NHS Argyll and Clyde would not say when the first case of MRSA was recorded at the hospital or confirm the number of cases presently but *The Oban Times* understands that it is not uncommon.

### 'Oban, closer than you think' on television

OBAN will feature in its own television advertising campaign this spring, thanks to the efforts of Oban and Lorn Tourism Association.

The committee succeeded in getting £17,000 Challenge funding from VisitScotland, after being turned down the first time, to make a television advertisement and run print advertisements and editorial in national press costing a total of £45,000.

The 20-second advertisement was due to be shown at a general meeting of

Oban and Lorn Tourism Association last night (Wednesday) and chairman Bill Mathews, McTavish's Kitchens, believes it is probably the first time Oban and Lorn have had a television advertisement exclusively advertising the area. Under the slogan 'Oban, closer than you think' the advertising campaign is to run from mid-March to Easter.

'The idea is to raise awareness at a time of the year when people are beginning to think about going away,' said Mr Mathews.

### Two in court on alleged sex offences

TWO MEN appeared separately at Oban Sheriff Court on Tuesday on serious charges for alleged offences of a sexual nature.

Peter Baird, aged 47, 5 West Castle Court, Castlemilk, Glasgow, appeared charged with an alleged indecent assault committed on August 18 last year.

He made no plea or declaration and was released on bail pending further investigations.

Cornelius Louw, aged 29, Flat 1, Craigard Road, Oban, appeared for an alleged serious sex offence. He also made no plea and was released on bail pending further investigations.

### Better bus service sought to new hospital

FUNDING for a better bus service to the new community hospital in Lochgilphead from Ardri-shaig is being bid for.

Argyll and Bute Council and West Coast Motors is making the application for between £25,000-£30,000 to improve the bus service to every half-hour and extend it so that it goes to the new hospital in Manse Brae.

The money is being sought from the Scottish Executive's Bus Route Development Grant scheme, set up in 2004 to improve public transport. If successful the money will be provided for two years, to help develop the service, but it will need to be commercially viable beyond the first two years or receive some support from the council.

The council has already been successful in gaining funding from the grant scheme for an improved service between Dunbeg and Oban.

### A85 crash witness appeal

POLICE are appealing for witnesses to come forward after a crash left a 19-year-old girl with severe head injuries and closed the A85 for nearly seven hours.

It took almost an hour to free the young woman from the wreckage after two cars collided on the road into Oban, west of Tainuit.

The young woman had a teenage passenger in the Peugeot she was driving, which collided with a Fiat coming in the opposite direction, carrying three adults and a small child who was unhurt; all others received minor injuries. The injured woman was taken to hospital in Oban and from there taken by helicopter to hospital in Glasgow. Anyone on that stretch of the A85 at around 8.30am on Wednesday, January 18 should contact Oban Police Station on 01631 510500 or Constable Peter MacDonald, 01369 763000. The road was closed for a forensic examination of the site.



The cast of Dalmally's Dick Turpin pantomime.

### Dalmally panto sees off 'flu

DICK Turpin galloped into Dalmally on his trusty cow and on to the stage at the village hall.

Black Bess, his gallant steed, somehow managed to get replaced by Daisy the cow, but that's panto-land for you.

For over a decade Dalmally and Lochawe Drama Club has been making sure the festive season in the village has a pantomime. The same flu bug that saw over 20 children off school and postponed the school nativity play until January also hit the panto cast but they soldiered on. Mary Johnston produced and directed and once again wardrobe mistress Jinty Burke made sure it was one of the best-dressed shows

around. Matthew Morgan starred as Dick in his first performance with the club and Andy Powell was the Parson.

Ian Livingstone and Christopher Bryce were the policemen; Chris's dad Greg is the village policeman in real life, but brother Ross evened things out along with Stephen Delebeque by playing the baddies.

Ian Craig played the Dame and his wife Kate took the role of Katie with Linda Brown as Billy Bumpkin. Andrew Bowden was Lord Loolatol and Rachel Paterson was Caroline. The village chorus were Jenny Roberts, Elizabeth Watson, Emily Black, Linda Blair, Christie McKechnie, and Annabelle Wright.

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## Island and Oban airport plans on view

AN APPLICATION for an air terminal building at Colonsay Airfield has been lodged by Argyll and Bute Council with its own planning department.

The plans can be seen at the post office on Colonsay and anyone who has any objections or who wishes to express support for the plans has 21 days in which to write to planning services.

The council has also lodged amended plans for the position of a proposed control tower at Oban Airport at North Connel and amended plans relating to the roof finish for the terminal building it proposes for the airfield on Coll.

All three airfields are part of Argyll and Bute Council's plan to establish Argyll Air Services, which would link the two islands to Oban airport with scheduled services and therefore other Argyll islands like Tiree and Islay and Campbeltown on the mainland.

In the case of the two amended applications, the Coll plans can be seen at the post office on Coll and the control tower plans at the post office in Benderloch. People have 121 days to make representations to planning services in both cases.



The west of Scotland could become the Red Squirrel's last battleground

# Is this the red squirrel's last stand?

IT HAS been embroiled in a battle for survival for decades with its larger North American cousins and is now under threat from disease.

People in the west Highlands are being encouraged to join a national survey to aid the survival of Scotland's only native species of squirrel - the red squirrel.

Leaflets have been distributed at countryside agencies and country parks throughout Scotland to encourage people to report sightings of both red and grey squirrels as part of the Scottish Squirrel Survey funded by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

The need for information on the distribution of both species is now urgent as the first evidence of squirrel pox virus was identified in a grey squirrel in the south of Scotland last year.

**Disease hosts**  
Grey squirrels act as a host to the spread of this disease which is fatal to the native red squirrels. There is now a real threat that Scotland's red squirrels could be displaced by the disease-resistant grey squirrel, as has already happened over most of the rest of the UK.

Scotland supports 121,000 or 75 per cent of the estimated total of 161,000 red squirrels in the UK.

The Grey squirrel was first introduced to Scotland in three places; Argyll in 1892 and Fife and Edinburgh around 1919. It has since spread south into the Borders and north into Perthshire.

Grey squirrels are now widespread in central and southern Scotland with isolated pockets in Aberdeen and Deeside. Their spread is likely to continue.

The main cause of decline of the red squirrel is the spread of the grey squirrel, which is native to North America. In areas of broadleaved and mixed woodland, the grey squirrel has an advantage over the red as it is able to utilise and digest acorns and large seeds more efficiently. This results in reduced breeding success for red squirrels.

## One hundred and twenty-seven priority red squirrel areas have been identified - these include large parts of Mid Argyll, Kintyre, The Isle of Mull and smaller areas of Lochaber and Ardnamurchan

In time, the grey squirrels out-compete the reds, resulting in a depletion of a local red squirrel population within about 15 years, although it can sometimes take as little as five years, depending on conditions. It also carries the deadly red squirrel pox virus.

The virus was first identified in Scotland in June 2005, where red squirrel conservation officers were quick to detect its presence in newly arrived grey squirrels venturing over the border from northern Cumbria, where disease outbreaks in red squirrels occurred last year.

To date, five grey squirrels have been shown to be carrying specific antibodies to the virus by tests done at the Moredun Research Institute at Roslin. The virus causes a pustular dermatitis in red squirrels that has the appearance of myxomatosis in rabbits.



Red Squirrel in winter

All infected red squirrels succumb to the disease within 15 days. Grey squirrel can carry the virus with no detectable symptoms, and therefore live to spread it more widely.

In the current survey, people are being urged to contribute to simple, standardised squirrel surveys to collect good quality information on the health and status of Scotland's red squirrel population.

Dr Mel Tonkin, the Scottish Squirrel Survey Co-ordinator said: 'The urgency to find out exactly where the most vulnerable populations of red squirrels are to be found, as well as where the safest populations are, cannot be over-stressed.'

'At the same time we need to know the limits of where grey squirrels have spread to because, as carriers of the deadly red squirrel pox virus and as efficient competi-

tors for scarce natural squirrel food supplies, the alien grey squirrel poses the chief threat to red squirrels.'

'We hope that by the end of 2010 we will have covered all the crucial places in Scotland and will have started to put in place measures to secure all saveable populations of red squirrels, and to prevent the further spread of grey squirrels. But we need everyone's help so please, please get involved.'

Dr Mairi Cole, species advisory officer at SNH, said: 'Scotland is the main stronghold of red squirrels in Britain but they are threatened all the time by the spread of the successful greys.'

'Together with other organisations we have already identified the main areas in Scotland where we think our efforts can help protect red squirrels, but we need more up-to-date information on where both species are living so we can better target our work to save them. Any help you can give on sightings of both species and by completing surveys would be very valuable.'

### Priority areas

The focus of the survey will be the 127 priority red squirrel woodland areas identified in a report commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage, the Forestry Commission and Mammals Trust UK and published early last year.

These include large parts of Mid Argyll, Kintyre, Mull and smaller areas in Lochaber and Ardnamurchan.

Additional surveys will target the outer reaches of the current grey squirrel range in Scotland. The leaflets which are being distributed explain how to get involved via local squirrel groups. A freepost card is also included to return records to the survey.

The Red Squirrel Conservation conference will be organised by SNH and held on February 27 at the Pollock Halls, Edinburgh. To log sightings of the red squirrel telephone the Highland Red Squirrel Group on 01349 862144 or visit the highlandred squirrel website.

## Road maintenance budget £1 million shy in Lorn and isles

OBAN, Lorn and the Isles area needs at least an extra £1 million just for maintenance, never mind upgrading, of its council-run roads network.

This figure was revealed

at a meeting in Tobermory at Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee, where councillors were discussing the area's priority projects and a report on capital being spent on rebuilding and resur-

facing roads in the area. Neil Brown, area roads and amenity services manager for the area, told the committee that Argyll and Bute Council was consistently spending above the Scottish Executive's revenue allocation for roads maintenance but it was still not enough.

Tiree and Coll councillor Ian Gillies called for the council to continue lobbying the Scottish Executive for extra funding.

'The point is that with the revenue budget we are not going to get the investment required for our roads in Argyll and Bute and, especially with the savings we are having to make, the issue of roads is going to remain.'

He said he had been at a meeting with Transport Minister Tavish Scott and

had asked if he would consider increasing the revenue expenditure to Argyll and Bute and Mr Scott had been 'quite sympathetic'.

He pointed out that the minister had had slippage in his revenue budget at the end of the last financial year and the year before which had meant councils receiving extra funding that needed to be spent quickly.

'There is not really a lot of use in money at the end of the financial year coming our way because it is not the time of year to deal with roads construction,' he added.

Leader Councillor Allan Macaskill said that the council had been given extra funding by the Scottish Executive already and spent around 12 per cent above its allocation on roads. 'But

this is governed by the funds available,' he said.

Transportation spokesman Councillor Duncan MacIntyre said that the executive was to give £35 million on April 1 to the newly formed Scottish Transport Agency to be allocated around the regional transport authorities, which he said was not sufficient between seven partnerships.

'It is recognised within the new transport agency that we have difficulties all over Scotland with servicing and improvements of roads. Argyll and Bute comes around half way down the list. We are not the worst nor are we the best.'

The committee agreed to write to the Scottish Executive and ask for more revenue funding for roads.

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The 2006 conference builds on the achievement of last year's pioneering event with speakers from the UK, Europe and beyond already lined up to participate.

The conference addresses key issues facing the fish farming sector in a useful and varied programme comprising formal presentations, discussion sessions, networking, exhibits and a special awards dinner. Delegates will hear from leading industry figures on:

- Markets
- Fish Health
- Innovation
- Species Development.

The conference will be officially opened with a keynote speech from Lord Lindsay of Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation (SSPO) on March 29.

### Fish Farmer

At the Aquaculture Today Gala Dinner, the first Fish Farmer 'Fit for the Future' award will be presented for outstanding achievement in the fish-farming sector. In addition, finalists in a new industry-backed awards scheme from the Crown Estate, which recognises innovation and best practice in salmon farming, will be announced.

Fit for the Future

## Taynuilt speed limit to be extended

A REQUEST to extend the proposed new 30mph speed limit in Taynuilt has been taken on board by the Scottish Executive.

It was announced in November last year that the two 40mph limits at either end of the A85 going through the village were to become 30mph.

Soon after Argyll and Bute Council's transportation spokesman Councillor Duncan MacIntyre received a plea from a couple living just outside the present limit.

'We live about 100m af-

ter the end of the 40mph limit sign,' wrote George and Morvern Campbell.

'We live in the newly built house opposite Airds Bay road end, on the Balindore side. Our son has to cross the main road twice a day to get on and off the high school bus. The speed some of the traffic passes our house at is horrendous.'

'The pavement from the village ends at our door; we have a Taynuilt address, post code and phone number, yet the speed is a national one,' they added.

Councillor MacIntyre

passed on the couple's concerns to the trunks roads area manager for the Scottish Executive Robert Bain.

He raised the matter with Strathclyde Police's Argyll's road policing unit, which agreed that the speed limit could be safely extended a further 200m west.

Mr Bain told Councillor MacIntyre that BEAR Scotland, which has the trunk roads maintenance contract until the end of March, had been asked to make the necessary amendments to the proposed traffic order for the new speed limits.

Councillor MacIntyre was delighted with the news and said it was proof that BEAR Scotland and the Scottish Executive were willing to listen.

## MP warns that pleasure craft tax rise could affect west coast jobs

ARGYLL and Bute MP Alan Reid has warned the government that an increase in private pleasure craft tax could lead to job cuts in Argyll and throughout the west coast.

At present, private pleasure craft owners only pay fuel duty of 4.22 pence per litre on the red diesel they are allowed to use.

However, a European directive states that they will have to pay the same fuel duty as road users, which is 47.1 pence per litre, from next year. Britain has a derogation from this directive but it is due to expire on December 31 2006. The Financial Secretary to the Treasury, John Healey MP has stated that the government may apply for an ex-

emption from the derogation, and that they will issue an initial regulatory impact assessment, on the effects of ending the derogation.

Mr Reid has welcomed this announcement but emphasised the problems that could be faced if tax does rise.

He said: 'It is inevitable that the removal of the derogation and an increase of duty and VAT to the level imposed on diesel fuel used in road vehicles would reduce participation in boating and depress the marine industries, which are an example of manufacturing success for a UK industry.'

'The loss of tourism income to the fragile communities would lead to many job losses in an area where employment is difficult to find.'

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## Councillor calls for young people to be more road safety aware

YOUNG Scottish pedestrians are twice as likely to be killed on the road compared to their European counterparts, and that has led to calls for younger people to be better educated on road safety.

Roads and Transport Safety spokesman Duncan MacIntyre emphasised the importance of road safety education at a young age.

He said: 'The death rate is pretty horrific, and we must get that number down as much as we possibly can.'

'Speed is the biggest killer, but more often than not young people are associated.'

'We are constantly trying to make kids more aware through campaigns in schools, but we really must focus on young drivers as well to try and bring down these figures.'

The Children's Traffic Club was set up to try and help all parents educate their children on road safety, and they provide free interactive material to all three to five year olds.

Carl Olivarius, Road Safety Officer for Argyll and Bute, said: 'There are still many more children in Lorn who could benefit from our free materials, and learn important road safety skills.'

'I would urge all parents to help save lives by enrolling their children in The Children's Traffic Club in Scotland and help to communicate important road safety messages to their children.'

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THE OBAN branch of An Comunn Gaidhealach welcomed the New Year in rousing fashion at its annual Tattie and Herring Supper on January 14 in McTavish's Kitchens, premises kindly made available free-of-charge by the proprietors.

An attendance of around 100 enjoyed a delicious supper prepared and served by the committee with the help of McTavish's staff.

Guests then enjoyed a first-class ceilidh presented by fear an taighe Donald MacKinnon, Oban.

Opening the programme was piper Euan Dewar, Oban, now fully recovered from last year's accident and confidently competing in the senior ranks. Accordion selections were provided by Alastair MacDonald, Connel, and fiddle selections by Maurice Duncan, Oban. Fine performances came from soloists Mod Gold Medallist Fiona MacKenzie, Dingwall, and Freddie MacKenzie, Oban, who kindly deputised for Mod Gold Medallist Paul MacCallum, Uist, who was prevented from appearing because of an outbreak of 'flu on the island. Fiona MacKenzie's daughter, Katie, a student of traditional music at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow, sang and played the clarsach, replacing Ann Marie MacLean from Campbelltown, who had also fallen victim to 'flu.

Angus Smith, Oban, winner of the silver medal at the National Mod the same year as Fiona MacKenzie, having arrived at the ceilidh as a member of the audience, was inducted to take the platform. This meant he found himself sharing a stage with Fiona for the first time since they both lifted their Mod Gold Medals.

Votes of thanks were proposed by Cameron Fletcher, Oban.

**HELD ON Friday January 13, Oban Accordion and Fiddle Club's annual dance effectively put paid to the old superstition this is a date to be avoided.**

Having enjoyed an excellent supper, a sell-out attendance packed the floor dancing to the superb music of Graeme Mitchell and his Scottish Dance Band, with Graeme from Huntly on accordion, Gordon Duiguid, Turrif, on second accordion, Brian Cruickshank, Lamfannan, on guitar, and Duncan Christie, Aberdeen, on drums.

Club vice chairman John Simpson thanked Bill Matthews and his staff at McTavish's for a delicious meal, the band, and everyone who had supported the event.

Club secretary Roddy MacLeod said: 'We could have sold twice the number of tickets which had, of course, to be limited to the number the venue could accommodate.'

ORGANISED by the pupils themselves, with the support of staff and parents, Park Primary School's Christmas Fayre raised a magnificent £1,200, a sum which will go to help fund a visit to Ardentinny Outdoor Centre by primary seven pupils.

As part of an enterprise topic, the primary seven pupils formed a company called 'Frosty's Fantastic Gifts' with everyone involved in decisions on who would be doing what and the logos, crafts and gifts to be made.

Amongst items created and sold were wind chimes, Christmas decorations, purses and Christmas cards. The school also produced tea towels adorned with self-portraits of every pupil.

These were in big demand though some are still available.

MANAGEMENT and staff at Tesco's Oban supermarket have been

celebrating bumper Christmas and New Year trade which saw customers pour into the store from a wide area.

Over the four weeks covering the festive season, overall sales rose seven per cent above the figures for the previous year. Food purchases climbed six per cent while Tesco's expanding non-food ranges saw sales rise eight per cent. The store also recorded an increase in customer numbers over the same period a year ago. Customer spending is believed to have exceeded £1m.

Store manager Iain Livingstone said: 'Our aim is always to offer our customers the widest choice and the best quality combined with the lowest prices. People come from all over the West Highlands to buy here and the numbers are constantly growing.'

The store has received a letter of congratulation from the group's chief executive Terry Leahy.

AS MUCH part of Christmas in the Oban area as Santa Claus, for years they have sent out a glittering festive season message.

When Eric and Lorna Moore realised that the brilliant display of festive lights with which they annually decorate their home at 49 Lochnell Road, Dunbeg, was attracting growing numbers of visitors, many of whom came out specially to take photographs, they decided it was a chance too good to be missed. A box inviting donations was placed beside the gate and was soon being generously supported.

In 2004 it raised £79. This past festive season saw more than £121 collected.

As usual the money has been donated to Dunbeg Primary School, of which the couple have long been staunch supporters.

Key elements in this year's display were a train, two reindeer and a waving Santa.

Lorna said: 'We enjoy doing it and are already planning for next year's display.'

SINCE Monday January 9, the Gallery in the Church of Scotland Centre at Glencruitten Road, Oban, has been open every Monday for teas and coffees between 10am and 12 noon.

The events have been proving popular.

WITH a moderate 121mms of rain recorded, December 2005 in Oban was a relatively dry month.

Just how dry can be gauged from the fact that in the same month the previous year the rainfall was measured at 242mms.

During the month there were 14 completely dry days whereas in 2004 only three occurred.

December of last year also brought sub-zero temperatures with the thermometer dropping to minus two degrees on December 28 and 29.

The highest daytime temperature recorded was on December 10 and 11 when the mercury showed 11 degrees.

The highest temperature in 2004 was 13 degrees and the lowest, minus one. The wettest day of December 2005 was the 22nd when there was rainfall of 23mms with October 9 producing the wettest day of the year at 40mms, not too bad considering the previous year saw the highest fall in one day reach more than 60mms.

The wettest month for the year was January with a total of 237mms recorded and the driest month was July when only 54mms fell. The hottest days occurred on September 4, 5 and 6 when temperatures rose to 23 degrees.

The statistics are recorded by a Dunollie Road householder who compiles the figures using equipment installed in her back garden.

## No more council cash for Argyll and Bute advice bureau

ARGYLL and Bute Council isn't budgeting on its offer of an extra £16,000 for Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) this financial year.

The troubled CAB, which is run as an independent charity and has to find its own funding independently of Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS), had asked the council for extra money to keep it going until the end of March.

The council was originally asked to come up with

£32,000 for this year and £55,000 next year with CAS saying it would give £16,000 this year and match the £55,000 next year.

The council then set up a Policy Development Group (PDG) to assess the situation and the CAB's business plan, with an option to grant up to £32,000.

Councillors heard last week that after considering a number of documents and hearing from representatives of the CAB, the PDG

had decided to recommend offering an extra £16,000 this year on certain conditions. One of these was that Citizens Advice Scotland matched the council's offer of £16,000, as well as producing a business plan for 2006-07, an agreement on services in future years and copies of monthly management accounts.

But CAS wrote to the council before last week's full council meeting asking that it consider increasing

that £16,000 to £24,000 and CAS would match that further £8,000 to reach the total of £48,000 needed.

Leader Councillor Allan Macaskill said he thought the council had been 'more than fair' with its offer of £16,000 as it had already given the CAB £60,000 this year and £231,292 in total since it started.

'I am pretty certain that some worthwhile groups in the area will be getting no funding from the council whatsoever,' he said.

'I think we should be drawing a line under this and saying enough is enough, that is the conclusion.'

He suggested that the £16,000 on offer should be taken from the council's General Fund surpluses but warned because of the equal pay negotiations currently going on the surpluses would be 'decimated'.

After discussion the council agreed to stick with the £16,000 recommended by the PDG.

A spokesman for Citizens Advice Scotland said the charity was studying the offer and its conditions and that it was hopeful negotiations could continue to allow everyone to come to an agreement.

Argyll and Bute CAB employs 16 people and has helped 5,000 people deal with a range of financial and employment problems using innovative methods to take its advice service out to the islands and remote Argyll communities.

## Police files

### Lost in the woods

TWO YOUNGSTERS taking part in an orienteering course at Sutherland's Grove, Barcaldine, were so late completing the course that worried teachers called the police.

The 11-year-olds, from Glasgow, were part of a group visiting Kilbowie Outward Bound Centre, Oban.

It was beginning to get dark when anxious teachers telephoned the police but the officers arrived at the scene at the same time as the two disoriented orienteers turned up safe and well.

### Spill fire

POLICE and firefighters were called to the pier at Scarinish, Tiree, on Friday afternoon after a small fire broke out.

It is believed an accumulation of spilled diesel had built up to such an extent that it had ignited.

### Driver ill

POLICE and paramedics went to the scene of an accident on the A82 seven miles south of the King's House Hotel early on Sunday morning.

A 999 call had alerted them to the accident and a car was found off the road. It is believed the driver had suffered a stroke.

## Mull church celebrates induction

SATURDAY is a day of celebration for the Baptist Church on Mull with the induction of its new minister, all the way from New Zealand.

The church has been without a permanent minister for more than five years. Its advertisement on the internet was spotted by a minister from New Zealand, the Rev Bill Ingley.

The congregation told him that it could not afford to pay its minister but would provide accommodation and a car and the Rev Ingley, who had been widowed two years before, decided to make a life-changing move at the age of 61.

His family are originally from the Inverness area and it was his grandparents who emigrated to New Zealand.

Rev Ingley has been at the church for a few months and the congregation has invited islanders to go along to the church at Bunnassan at 12.15pm on Saturday to join them in the celebrations as the induction of Rev Bill Ingley takes place.

## In the swim for Oban hospice

OBAN Hospice has received a generous donation of £373 from Peter MacMillan of Oban, who works at Atlantis Leisure.

Peter raised the money by taking part in a sponsored swim.

## Council house rents to go up

DESPITE the impending transfer of council housing stock to a new community housing association, Argyll and Bute Council has set the increase in rents for next year.

The average rent will go up from April 1 by an average £1.66 or 3.5 per cent, which is equivalent to the rate of inflation plus one per cent.

The increase will range from £1.46 for a one-/two-bedroom home to £1.96 for a five-bedroom home, which equates to between £43.14 a week to £57.84 a week.

Argyll and Bute Council has a duty to set the rent increases because Argyll Community Housing Association is not scheduled to take over the council housing stock until at least July.

Meanwhile the rental income still has to be used to fund staffing, property, supplies and service costs as well as repaying the housing debt, which will ultimately be wiped off by the Scottish Executive when the stock is transferred.



Sheila Clarkson with some of the puppies born after CalMac staff helped save their mother.

## Visitors thank CalMac staff for saving dog

THE PATTERN of tiny paws is resounding round a Southampton couple's home thanks to staff of Caledonian MacBrayne on Mull.

Keith and Sheila Clarkson lost one of their two dogs, Georgie, whilst visiting friends Colin and Angela Boocok, on the south side of the island.

Pregnant Georgie was on the beach when she heard the noise of the Boocok's family

geese and took off into the water. Sheila and Keith started a frantic search for Georgie as it was dark and the dog had never been swimming before.

Finally, after a long search, Georgie was spotted on a small, rocky island some distance from shore. Luckily the Boocok's stay just where the Iona ferry is berthed and Mr Boocok got in touch with ferry staff to ask if they could help rescue the dog.

Using an inflatable craft, the CalMac staff and Keith Clarkson managed to rescue the frightened dog.

Keith and Sheila, who have been visiting Mull for 20 years, thanked the CalMac staff.

He said: 'We're extremely happy with the help from the staff, who deserve great credit and praise. 'Georgie has now given birth to eight healthy puppies and we are very happy.'

# Would national park make Argyll a better place?

IF A COASTAL and marine national park is chosen for the Argyll and islands area the need to keep the economic and social development of communities would be 'paramount'.

This is the view of Argyll and Bute Council, which is one of the consultees being asked for its views by Scottish Natural Heritage

(SNH) in general terms about a coastal and marine park for the area.

Argyll and the islands is one of a number of areas being looked at by SNH on behalf of the Scottish Executive for such a park and although a decision on preferred areas has not yet been made, the possibility it could be Argyll is already causing considerable

debate. In its response to SNH, the council says that the key question as far as it is concerned is whether or not it would make Argyll and Bute a better place.

And if it accepted the principles of a national park the over-riding purpose would have to be 'promoting the sustainable economic and social

development of its local communities'. For a park to have any value, said the council, it would have to bring more value to the social and economic development of its more remote coastal communities and fragile islands.

There was concern about who would run the national park and the council argued that there would be no reason why the authority itself could not provide the framework for it.

The proper funding of a national park, in order to achieve its aims and objectives, was another worry.

The area which is proposed for the park already includes part or all of 19 Special Areas of Conservation; four Marine Special Areas of Conservation; 54 Sites of Special Scientific Interest; 14 Special Protected Areas; four National Science Areas; seven Regional Scenic Areas; four Marine Consultation Areas; and six wetland sites of international importance.

These alone could make Argyll and the islands a prime candidate for a national park, although some councillors have argued that the number of designated sites in the area

should preclude the need for a national park. One of the thorniest issues is the livelihood of fishermen if the area becomes a national park with arguments from opposite ends of the scale: those saying that it would provide better protection and sustainability of the fish stocks and others saying that it would be yet another layer of bureaucracy for an already pressured industry.

SNH has to report its preferred locations to Scottish ministers by the end of March and it is thought the formal consultation process, when anyone will be able to submit their comments, will be sometime during the second half of this year.

Wherever it is designated, the national park is not likely to be established before 2008.

## Barcaldine's energy pyramids are stars

AN INNOVATIVE piece of design for gardeners, made in Barcaldine, has been selected as the 'star buy' by a national newspaper.

The Daily Telegraph researched coldframes on sale nationwide and of the six best the GrowMate made by Backwoodsman Horticultural Products stole the show.

The design was complemented as being 'completely different from

## Stray dog warning

POLICE have issued a warning to dog owners to make sure they do not allow their pets to stray after sheep were killed this week.

Archie Livingstone, of Achnacree more Farm, North Connel, came across the results of an attack on Sunday morning. The sheep worrying incident involved Blackface in lamb ewes. Four were lost and one damaged.

'It could have been a lot worse, particularly at present,' said Mr Livingstone.

Sergeant Neil Owen at Oban Police Station said: 'Once again we would ask dog owners to ensure that their animals are under control, especially at this time of the year during the lambing season.'

He added: 'We would also like to hear from anyone who could help us investigate this incident or from anyone who has seen dogs straying.'

the rest...that uses quality materials and a clever design', the paper reported, adding that it was 'highly engineered'.

There was praise for the 'fantastic assembly instructions, with notes from existing owners, a seasonal growing guide and troubleshooting section'.

The GrowMate is manufactured by Backwoodsman and was launched onto the market 16 years ago.

It was designed by Andrew MacIntyre as an off-shoot of his interest in efficient energy use and won five design awards.

'But our timing was appalling,' said Andrew. 'We entered the thin end of the market just as a recession struck, taking out Britain's three best-known greenhouse manufacturers.'

The pyramids survived, 'by a whisker'.

The first prototypes were made in a small workshop on Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, but the business has grown so much they are now manufactured in a bespoke factory at Barcaldine by Andrew's son Tim McIntyre, assisted by Kenny Gunn who commutes from Duror.

Now that energy prices are beginning to soar Andrew thinks the pyramids' time may have arrived at last. The Henry Doubleday

Research Association has been enthusiastic about the pyramids for years and the Pershore College of Horticulture in Worcester adopted a couple of modules last year.

There are also several thousand in daily use throughout the UK and a number of them in the US and Japan.

'You can heat our biggest model using the equivalent of energy of two light bulbs,' said Andrew. 'So every time the media reports a further increase in oil and gas prices we get a few more telephone calls. It's an ill wind...'

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Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) is the new, not for profit organisation being set up to take on the ownership of the 5800 houses currently owned and managed by Argyll and Bute Council. We have just won overwhelming support for the transfer in a ballot of tenants.

The Association is now looking for interested, committed individuals to join one of four Area Committees that are currently being formed. These Committees will play a major role in improving housing throughout Argyll and will cover:

- » Oban, Lorn and the Isles
- » Mid Argyll and Kintyre
- » Helensburgh and Lomond
- » Bute and Cowal

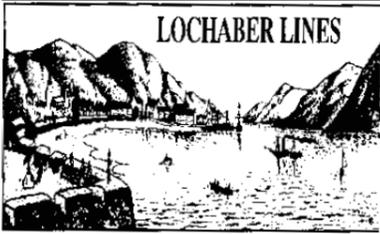
We are keen to encourage current tenants of Argyll and Bute Council, who will make-up the majority of these Area Committees, to get involved. However there will also be a number of places on each Area Committee for interested residents over the age of 18 years who are not Council tenants.

Committees will meet every 4-6 weeks - on average 10 times a year. Training will be given to help members play a full role. Committee membership is voluntary and unpaid, but expenses covering travel, subsistence and care costs are paid.

If you are interested, come along to an information session

Area	Date	Time	Location
Mid Argyll & Kintyre	Tue 31st Jan	7.30pm - 9pm	Community Centre, Lochgilphead
Mid Argyll & Kintyre	Tue 31st Jan	7.30pm - 9pm	Community Education Centre, Stewart Street, Campbelltown
Oban, Lorn and Isles	Wed 8th Feb	3pm - 4.30pm	Regent Hotel, Oban

Alternatively, if you are unable to attend and would like further information, please contact:  
Gillian McInnes, ACHA, 63 - 65 Chalmers St, Ardrishraig, PA30 8DX  
Tel: 01546 604088 or email: [gillian.mcinnis@acha.co.uk](mailto:gillian.mcinnis@acha.co.uk)



email lochaberlines@obantimes.co.uk

THE BENEFITS of the traffic jams caused by the roadworks in recent weeks is the time it gives you to think. As you sit on Nevis Bridge for 10 minutes your mind wanders to the scenario should the 19th century bridge, a wonderful piece of engineering, eventually succumb to the pressures of 21st century traffic.

The town would be cut off from the north, ambulances and fire engines may be unable to gain access and commerce would be badly affected.

Our thought process is momentarily interrupted to wave to a councillor heading for Inverness to discuss the road management problems in Achiltibuie.

The rain is pouring down and we remember the flooding in Caol last January. Haven't heard of much happening on that front we muse.

Reflect on the queue of traffic leading back to Lochaber and a mile along the A830 to Banavie swing bridge yet little traffic on A82 beyond Carrs Corner and the late Councillor Jimmy MacKay comes into our mind.

Perhaps he was right when he proposed a distributor road to Caol to link up with the A830 instead of a by-pass to Torlundy.

With some blue-sky thinking could our traffic, flood and waterfront development problems be solved by looking at Jimmy's suggestion? As the town and the surrounding villages slowly but inevitably merge, a more direct link would benefit the community.

As we start to imagine Fort William, Ontario, and its transformation to Thunder Bay on Lake Superior our daydream is again interrupted by the driver of the wood lorry at our rear. Don't recognise him but he seems to know us as he's gesticulating.

Look to the front and the traffic has moved off and in the distance the lights are again changing to red. We don't know where to put ourselves but Achiltibuie would do for the next 10 minutes.

WE WERE discussing with a teacher friend the sophistication and precociousness of some of today's young children.

You know the type, what we used to call 'spoiled brats' before political correctness. We remembered that going out for a meal meant having a picnic at Loch Arkaig but today children of very tender years feel deprived if they don't regularly visit a restaurant.

'You had better believe it,' she told us and then related the story of the wee boy on his first day in school who strode into the dining hall with his new pal and said to the dinner lady: 'A table for two, please.'

HOPEFULLY the last of the stragglers from the Burns Supper will have vacated the Alexandra Hotel when at 8pm next Thursday February 2, Lochaber Local History Society holds its monthly meeting.

February's talk by Noel Williams is entitled 'Post Glacial Earth History - Human Settlement'. He will expand the theory that where human settlement is possible depends on the rock types which cover the landscape and climate which can change over the centuries. There will be particular reference to the landscape around Lochaber. Non-members are welcome for a £2.50 admission, which includes tea, biscuits and a blather after the meeting.

CHARLIE'S Challenge 2007: The Modfather is targeting members of Lochaber Burns Club with his handy phrases this week but he does warn that it's more Polska than Tolsta at the Alex these days.

'What time is breakfast?' - 'Cuin a tha braicest ann?' 'Cun uh ha brach-kesj own' and when they eventually get home he suggests a contrite: 'I am sorry I am late.' - 'Tha mi duilich a bhith fadalach' 'Ha mee dul-ich uh vee fad-ach'.

The Mod lotto numbers last week were 2-5-17. There was no winner so the jackpot is £200 for this week's draw.

THE ROYAL National Mod 2007 committee is not taking its eyes off the ball with regard to the local Gaelic scene.

This Saturday, January 28, at 7.30pm in the Nevis Centre, Meur Lochabair, the local branch of An Comunn which is 100 years old, is holding a ceilidh/dance, with tickets priced £6. Artists are Archie MacLean, a gold medalist in 1958, who at 88 years young is reported to be singing like a linnie and was one of the stars of a good old-fashioned ceilidh in Aberfeldy last Saturday, Mairi Howieson, Clydebank, Morag Smith, Oban, and Norman MacKinnon, Glasgow and Argyll. Music will be provided by piper Calum MacColl and Lochaber Ceilidh Band.

During the evening, hosted by fear-an-tighe Murdo Morrison, Johnny MacIver, Lewis, convener of the Royal National Mod, will be presented with the chain of office of president of the Pan-Celtic Festival 2006, which takes place in Letterkenny in April.

Lochaber Past Times - from the archives of The Oban Times 100 years ago

THE FOURTH annual show of Fort William Ornithological Society, in the Town Hall, attracted many entries from Inverness and Oban.

Familiar names among local winners were Mr MacGregor, Ben View, and Messrs Downie, MacMaster and MacDougall. Willie Kilgour won first prize in the rabbit section and a special prize for best cock in show was won by Major Cameron, Mamore Cottage.

George Malcolm, Invergarry, was appointed chairman of Lochaber District Committee in succession to the late Lochiel.

A petition, numerously signed, from the ratepayers was presented before the meeting urging the necessity of widening certain parts of the road between Fort William and Ballachulish Ferry in consequence of the North British Railway Company having established a motor car service thereon and pointing out that several accidents had already occurred.

On Lismore, the Old New Year's Day festivities were celebrated as usual on Friday 12th inst. The principal event, of course, was the shinty match at Clachan. During the match, Mr Colin Stewart played, with much acceptance, selections on the bagpipes.

Our esteemed County Councillor, Mr D MacColl of Achinduin, generously provided liberal refreshments at the ground. The dance, which usually follows the shinty match, could not be held on account of the wet state of the grass.

40 years ago

THE LOCHABER economy was booming with plans placed before Inverness County Council for a clothing factory to be sited in the Youth Centre building at Glen Nevis Place.

The first boat-load of china clay for Scottish pulp and paper mills arrived at Corpach Pier. The clay from Cornwall was to be used in the finishing process of paper making.

There was good news too for many local couples residing in caravans and temporary accommodation. At a Landward Committee meeting in Inverness, it was learned that 167 Dorran houses at Caol and Corpach and more than 50 houses of Fort William Burgh's Plantation site could be released for general needs as the second phase of the paper mill's building, for which they were commissioned, would not be required until 1968-9.

The Oban Times HOTLINE IF YOU HAVE A STORY TO SHARE, CALL US ON FORT WILLIAM 01397 703003 OBAN 01631 568000 WWW.OBANTIMES.CO.UK

# Highland schools top health class

ALL 29 secondary, 184 primary and six special needs schools in the Highlands are now officially recognised as being 'Health Promoting' schools, two years ahead of the rest of Scotland.

In 2003 each school in Scotland was set the target by the Scottish Executive to become a Health Promoting School by 2007. The status is given to schools that adopt a complete approach to promoting the physical, social, spiritual, mental and emotional well-being of all pupils and staff.

Criteria The Health Promoting Schools initiative in Highland is delivered in partnership between The Highland Council and NHS Highland which have designed and developed their own criteria for achieving health promoting status.

Chairman of the council's education, culture and sport committee, Councillor Andy Anderson said: 'Every primary and secondary school in the Highlands should be proud of their fantastic achievement. 'The fact that we are

ahead of the rest of Scotland just goes to prove the commitment and hard work of staff and pupils to adopt healthier and more active lifestyles. This is just the beginning. Health Promotion is a way of life and all Highland schools now look forward to building on their great success.'

Chips Chairman of NHS Highland Gary Coultts said: 'A few years ago it was not unusual for children in Highland to have chips with every school dinner and to be able to buy sweets at the school canteen. 'It's great to see this has been turned around in such a short time. A good diet is essential for children's development and to ensure they grow into healthy adults. I applaud the work undertaken in reaching this achievement.'

Highland schools have had to prove their health promoting credentials by meeting rigorous standards under 10 different headings including nutrition, exercise and ethos.

Each school then had to produce a portfolio of evidence and undergo a review visit from a team of dedicated accreditation officers. Louise Thomas, health promoting schools manager, said: 'Even in the relatively short period of the last three years, there are clear signs that the health of young people in Highland is improving. 'As well as recognising the tremendous effort the schools have made I would particularly like to highlight the council's school catering service and Active Schools Co-ordinators who have made a very positive impact on healthy school meals and increased physical activity - all departments have contributed bringing a sense of corporate responsibility across the NHS and Highland Council.

'We aim to continue to support all pupils, parents and staff to build on their status and ultimately the health and wellbeing of each whole school community by providing support, training and sharing good practice.'



Dr Shina Young receives a cheque for £1,000 to donate to a charity of her choice from Arisaig Primary pupils at an event in the village to mark her retirement.

## Arisaig GP celebrates retirement with pupils

ARISAIG GP Dr Shina Young has celebrated her retirement by donating £1,000 to charity.

Dr Young, who has been the GP in Arisaig for the last 16 years, will stay on in the area after her retirement.

Originally from Ballachulish, Dr Young's mother was a teacher at Kilmallie. Dr Young practiced in Kinlochleven before taking up her post in Arisaig.

The local community held a celebration

for Dr Young's retirement on Saturday, January 21 at the Astley Hall in the village.

Dr Young received a cheque from Jenna MacLean for £1,000 collected by the local community for a charity of her choice.

Pupils from Arisaig Primary School also performed at a concert to mark her retirement. Dr Young will carry on her roles with the Church of Scotland in Arisaig after her retirement.

# Council makes pupil pledge for year of culture in 2007

EVERY school pupil in Highland will be given the chance to participate in a cultural activity during 2007 as part of a cultural pledge being made by Highland Council in celebrating Highland 2007.

Teachers will be working with pupil councils to identify a range of topics and potential activities which might form part of the pledge to the 31,000 Highland pupils.

It is intended that the pledge be made up of two parts. Part one will mainly be delivered through the council's own staff and include taking part in a performance or a heritage

project, such as a heritage fair; trying a new sport or improving language skills in Gaelic.

Pledges under part two will allow community school groups, a secondary school and its associated primary schools, to select from a menu of activities such as watching a performance by professional actors, dancers or musicians; trying a new generation sport, such as snowboarding or street dance.

All activities are to fit in with the six themes of Highland 2007 namely arts, environment, heritage, language, science and sport. Over £1 million in main-

stream support has been allocated from the council to the pledge.

In addition £500,000 has been allocated in cash from the Highland 2007 budget, allowing for an average of £17,500 to be allocated for every community school cluster.

Sponsorship is currently being sought to boost this figure. Councillor Andy Anderson, chairman of the education, culture and sport committee, who is a member of the Highland 2007 board of directors, said: 'The cultural pledge is one of the key legacy elements of Highland 2007.'

'During 2007, the pledges delivered will be evaluated and those deemed most successful and able to be maintained will be proposed for adoption in the longer term. 'We are seeking to offer consistency of opportunity across the Highlands but with an element of choice to enable community school groups to tailor the pledge with activities deemed especially appropriate to their area.

'Through a series of bursaries we may be able to give young people the opportunity to apply for funding to develop skills within the themes of Highland 2007.'

# Highlands to keep applying for broadband

HIGHLANDS and Islands MSP Maureen Macmillan is advising businesses in the Highlands to keep applying for broadband even though it will not be available in some areas until this summer.

Mrs Macmillan has questioned Nicol Stephen, the minister with responsibility for communications, on what steps the Scottish Executive is taking to provide solutions to the clusters of households in the Highlands that are still out of reach of broadband.

Mrs Macmillan said: 'I have had regular contact from constituents who are still unable to access broadband technology and questioned the minister, in parliament, on what solutions were being considered. In his response he pointed out that Scotland now has 99.7 per cent access to broadband with broadband delivered to 378 remote and rural telephone exchanges.

'This is no consolation, however, for those still trying to receive the technology.

'Some households still have significant problems, although improvements are being made weekly. The executive has now allocated a budget for the remaining work, so that they can invest appropriate resources to resolve the problem. I appreciate how frustrating the present situation is for those still trying to access broadband, particularly if they are involved in any type of business.

'The minister's response was encouraging and hopefully matters will improve after the new broadband strategy for the remaining areas is implemented in the summer.

'In the meantime, I would again encourage subscribers to keep applying for broadband provision, so that the clusters of subscribers still requiring the technology are apparent to BT.'

## Police files

### Car broken into at Glen Nevis

SOMETIME between 7.30am and 3.40pm on Wednesday, January 16 a black vauxhall Corsa motor vehicle was broken into while parked at the top of the car park at Glen Nevis, Fort William and two jackets, sunglasses and a Canon digital camera were stolen.

### Fuel stolen

AT SOME point this month a quantity of fuel oil was stolen from a fuel tank at Caol Industrial Estate.

### Car theft on Alma road

SOMETIME between 7.30pm on Friday, January 20 and 4pm the following afternoon an attempt was made to steal a blue Renault motor vehicle from where it was parked on Alma Road, Fort William.

### Garden light vandalised

DURING the night of Saturday, January 21 a garden light was vandalised at a house in Mallaig Road, Corpach.

Any person with knowledge of these incidents is asked to contact Fort William Police Station on 01397 702361 or the confidential line on 01397 702000.

Members of the public may also report any crime or offence or anything suspicious by telephoning Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

## New dates for music festival

FOLLOWING the death of David Maitland, the honorary secretary of the Lochaber Music Festival Association, the festival committee is determined that the festival should still go ahead.

The festival has decided to extend the deadline for entries until Friday, January 27.

Outstanding entries, with the appropriate fee, should be submitted by noon to Lochaber High School office for the attention of John Whyte.

Unfortunately entries after this date cannot be considered.

Please note an omission from the syllabus; the Margaret Adam Memorial Silver Quach will be awarded for the highest marks in the primary school group music making, classes 219 and 220.

# More police officers on the beat

POLICE in the Highlands have been warned that budgets for the next two years will be 'extremely tight' and savings of around half a million pounds will have to be made.

At a meeting in Inverness of the Northern Joint Police Board last week chief inspector Ian Latimer said that his aim over the next four years is to increase the number of police officers by 40 to give the force a compliment of 750 officers.

Mr Latimer said: 'The budget for this coming year is tight but sustainable and the signs are that in future years

the public sector settlement will still be very tight and the police board will face challenges just to stay where we are.'

Mr Latimer said that he felt confident the savings could be found without affecting operational policing.

He added: 'We have to work smarter and we consistently try to get best value and save money. I have to make fine judgements about my priorities. We can work our way through this to retain the high level of policing we have in the Highlands and islands.'



Colleagues old and new of the Fort William social security office pictured at their get together in Fort William Shinty Club.

# Old and new social security staff get together in Fort William

OVER 100 past and present social security staff in Fort William met up for a special evening at Fort William Shinty Club.

After the closure to the public of the Social Security Office in Tweeddale in November 2005 the idea of a get-together with colleagues old and new evolved.

Despite the many staff changes and in many cases complete re-location from the Fort William area, over 100 ex-colleagues were traced and invited to roll back the years one more time.

The resulting evening was well attended with much reminiscing and catching up between dances.

There were only 10 staff in Fort William when the then Ministry of Social Security transferred from premises in Union Road to a new building on High Street in 1975.

Over the following 30 years the organisation was renamed three times and with a further amalgamation with the Job Centre in 2001, the 'social' retained its name until becoming an integral part of Jobcentre Plus last year.

During this time staff numbers peaked at 45 reflecting changing business requirements.

Business is now established in the refurbished Waverley House where all enquiries concerning job search and benefits can be dealt with in a single location.

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# LOOK AT OBAN



## Good news for autistic children in Oban as new clubs and care are on their way

THE NEW year is looking bright for Oban children with autism and their parents with care services due to be up and running by the end of February.

The Scottish Society for Autism is currently working to develop new services in Oban, including a Saturday club, after-school care and holiday play schemes. It is hoped the initial services will be in

operation by the end of next month, starting with the Saturday club.

'It is an exciting new venture for both the Scottish Society for Autism and the community of Oban,' said Kerry Lyle from the Scottish Society for Autism, 'and we are looking forward to the service delivery commencing.'

Oban Parents Whose Children Have

Autism (OPCA) group commissioned the Scottish Society for Autism to help combat the lack of services for children and young people with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in the Oban area.

To the parents of children with autism, the new services will provide much needed support.

'It will be a lifeline for us,' said OPCA

member Mairi Ferguson. 'It has been a long time coming - around three years - and the parents are all very excited.'

Services such as the Saturday club are also greatly needed by the children themselves - some of them come home from school on Friday and don't get out to play over the whole weekend.

'The Scottish Society for Autism has been

excellent. When it got on board the project, things really began to move quite swiftly.'

The Saturday club will initially be held in Drummore Learning Centre, but new long-term premises will need to be found once the centre is incorporated into the new joint primary campus in Oban.

'It's really important that we find another suitable place to hold the new services in

permanently,' said Mairi. We want the services to be here for a long time - not just for a few months.'

Recently the OPCA held its first annual general meeting which was attended by professionals from health, education, and social work from Argyll and Bute as well as representatives from the Scottish Society for Autism.

## Who will give way in Argyll Square?

THE TEMPORARY give-way junction in Argyll Square, Oban, will continue into the summer months, to see how the proposal works with increased summer traffic heading for the ferry terminal.

But one Oban man who had a near miss at the junction, Ian Shaw of Gallanach Road, continues to have his misgivings about the redesign of the traffic flow around the square.

He wrote to officers at Argyll and Bute Council and spoke to councillors and hopes that other motorists will do the same to give the council a fuller picture of public opinion.

'A lot of people object but few do anything about it,' said Mr Shaw. 'After speaking to a councillor I know they would like to hear peoples' opinions.'

It was after a near-miss at

the junction that Mr Shaw wrote to Argyll and Bute Council asking Neil Brown, area manager for roads, how long the temporary arrangement would remain.

**Flow normally**

'I wanted to know when all would convert to normal again and allow traffic to flow normally and correctly,' he said.

'We now have one junction in the middle of Argyll Square which goes against all the others feeding into the square; everything else gives way from the right. I think that most local people have got the hang of it now but I think it is still confusing visitors.'

Mr Shaw was told that the temporary nature of the junction will remain for a while as the council wishes to be sure that it does not experience undue problems

as ferry traffic increases in the summer.

Mr Shaw admits he is very annoyed by the change, not just for the confusion it generates but the queues that build up in George Street.

'I am sure that people coming the other way from Soroba love it as it eases their way, but it is questionable as queues can form back onto George Street from Argyll Square,' he said.

But after writing to Mr Brown and talking to a councillor he thinks other people should get involved and make sure the council is fully aware of local opinion before any decision is made as to whether the give-way junction is made a permanent feature of Argyll Square or it reverts to the original, roundabout, system.



Back left, Dr Mac Armstrong, Neil Horne, Councillor Donald McIntosh, John Coleman, Alan Reid MP and Ted Heath; front, Maureen Macmillan MSP and Chief Inspector Ciorstan Shearer. 104brn01

## Burns Night at Argyllshire Gathering Hall

THE ARGYLLSHIRE Gathering Hall was the venue for the Oban FM Burns Supper, where the smaller of the two halls lent a more intimate atmosphere to the gathering.

At the top table were chairman Neil Horne, who welcomed everyone, said Grace and gave the Address to the Haggis before Ted Heath sang. Supper of Cock-a-leekie soup, haggis,

neeps and tatties - or roast beef for those of differing tastes - Scotch trifle, biscuits and cheese and coffee and tablet was served. With the audience well and truly replenished, everyone set back for the speeches which started with the *Immortal Memory of Robert Burns* by Highlands and Islands MSP Maureen Macmillan, followed by the reply from Mr

Horne. *The Land We Live In* was presented by Dr Mac Armstrong, with the reply by Councillor Donald McIntosh after *Kate O'Shanter* from Mrs Macmillan. A short interval was followed by the *Toast to the Lassies* by John Coleman and the reply by Chief Inspector Ciorstan Shearer. The evening was rounded off by a vote of thanks from Argyll and Bute MP Alan Reid.

## Man fined for headbutt assault

A GLASGOW man who headed butted another man in Oban's Stafford Street has been fined £400 after last week admitting the assault at Oban Sheriff Court.

Stephen Molloy, 6 Corsehill Street, had been visiting his uncle in Oban and the pair had been out in Oban on November 13 last year.

The court heard there had been an incident earlier in the evening between Molloy's uncle and the victim, John Young, c/o Oban Police Station, and another man.

**Matters**

Molloy, aged 26, had approached Mr Young and the other man, said defence agent Duncan Durbin, to 'deal with matters that had happened earlier' but things had got out of hand.

Procurator Fiscal Clifford Most said the attack, which happened around 12.15am, had been unprovoked and had left the victim with a cut lip and two broken teeth but he had refused medical attention.

Molloy, a trainee scaffolder, was also fined £100 after being found in possession of six grammes of cannabis resin.



## Open day at Gaelic medium unit

Parents and tots had a chance to visit the Gaelic medium unit at St Columba's Primary School, Oban.

The unit held a special open day on Friday. Like all of Argyll and Bute Council's Gaelic units it is a great success; the unit was created to teach 35 youngsters and the intake has grown steadily. This year 42 children are being taught through the medium of Gaelic. When the new Oban primary school campus is completed the Gaelic medium unit will switch to the Rockfield primary section. While parents talked to teachers about the benefits of an education through Gaelic, the children had plenty of fun joining in activities in the classrooms.

## Christmas card takes long way from Oban to Appin

A CARD posted in Oban in plenty of time for Christmas had a lengthy journey before it finally arrived at its destination in Appin, 24 days later.

Hugh Noble at Portnacroish got a surprise when he picked the card up off the doormat.

'The card had a first-class stamp and had been posted by a friend in Oban 24 days earlier,' he said.

The address on the envelope had been correct, but the county name Argyll and the post code had both been omitted.

'Nevertheless, I think the word 'Appin' should have been sufficient to ensure

that the card would travel the 24 miles between Oban and our home within normal delivery times.'

But the saga did not end there.

There was an official note stuck on the letter saying it had insufficient postage for airmail, followed by scrawled writing which said 'Aus' and 'UK' in two different hands.

**Australia**

'We deduce that the card had actually made the round trip of some 24,000 miles by seamount, first to Appin, New South Wales, Australia, and then back,' said Hugh.

'While this represents a

very commendable speed of transportation, it makes us dubious about the local knowledge of someone in the Post Office sorting office - or could this be yet another example of the so called greater efficiency association with centralisation?'

A spokesman for Royal Mail said that the card highlighted a problem that postal staff had to deal with all the time, that of incorrectly addressed mail.

'It is a credit to Royal Mail and a tribute to the local knowledge of our postmen and women that cards which are insufficiently or incorrectly addressed get

delivered at all. This particular case appears to be a prime example of the problems Royal Mail has to deal with on a daily basis, with cards and letters being posted without full addresses and postcodes.

'Our postmen and women deliver around 15 letters-a-week which have been incorrectly addressed and this is even higher around Christmas when mail volumes are at their peak.

'We would appeal to all customers to use the correct postcode when addressing mail, otherwise there is always a risk of letters being delayed in the system.'

## Oban man jailed for five months after ignoring bail warnings

AN OBAN man has been jailed for a total of five months after ignoring a warning from a sheriff that if he breached his bail conditions again he would be sent to prison.

Sheriff Douglas Small told Luigi Lopez, aged 37, that he had 'no sympathy for him' as he had been warned on a previous occasion that he would have no alternative but to jail him if he was in breach of bail again.

Lopez, Lynside, Soroba Road, appeared at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday where he pled guilty to assault, breach of the peace and breaching a special condition of bail, all committed while on bail from Oban Sheriff Court on July 20 last year. The court

heard Lopez had gone round to his former girlfriend's house on Saturday evening, January 21, when his bail conditions did not permit him to approach her or contact her.

Procurator Fiscal Clifford Most told the court that he had been pleasant enough at first but then complained of being tired and gone upstairs for a sleep.

**Shouted**

He had woken some time later, come down stairs and shouted to his former girlfriend about noise but it was at around 3.30am, when he again came down the stairs to complain about the noise, that the assault took place.

The court heard his former girlfriend's sister had told the accused to leave her

sister alone. He had grabbed her by the throat, pushed her against a wall and then threw her on to a settee, also by the throat.

Defence agent George Seaton told the court Lopez had been in regular contact with his former girlfriend and thought he could see her because she had given permission.

He said Lopez had woken to find a party going on downstairs with quite a few people in the house and had been concerned about other members of the household.

He said Lopez had 'perhaps over-reacted' to the situation and things had got out of hand during his second appearance down the stairs, after which the police were called. Sheriff Small told Mr Seaton: 'I

told him in unequivocal terms that if he breached his bail then I would have no alternative but to give him a custodial sentence.'

Mr Seaton said there had been a great deal of contact from Lopez's former girlfriend but perhaps he should have left the house earlier in the evening.

Sheriff Small jailed Lopez for three months for the

assault, one of which was for being in breach of bail and two months for breach of the peace, of which one month was for breaching bail, all to run at the same time.

He also jailed Lopez for two months for breaching the special bail condition to run after the first three months, making a total of five months.

## Will an Oban lollipop make it to the top this year?

WIND, rain or shine, lollipop men and ladies turn out to help Oban youngsters get to school safely.

And once again, Oban is being asked to nominate its favourite lollipop person as part of the annual search to find Scotland's Lollipop Person of the Year.

The competition, which was launched by Kwik-Fit Insurance in 2003 to mark the 50th anniversary of crossing patrollers in Scotland, has enjoyed an outstanding response with thousands of nominations

flooding in each year and is looking for even more people to get on board to offer some well deserved recognition to lollipop people and the work they do. The winner will be selected by a panel of judges from Kwik Fit Insurance and will be announced in March. Scotland's Lollipop Person of the Year will receive a specially engraved golden lollipop and £500. Nominations can be made by visiting the webpage at: www.bestlollipop.co.uk.



Melissa Aitken receives her certificate from employer Sarah Jones.

## Hard work pays off for housekeeper Melissa

FIFTEEN months of hard work for Oban woman Melissa Aitken has paid off as she has recently completed her Level 2 Housekeeping SVQ.

Melissa, of 3 Croft Avenue, was mentored by Colin Cunningham from Argyll Training, Oban, to help her achieve her Vocational Qualification.

Colin said: 'Melissa was an absolute joy to work with over the past 15 months and I wish her all the very best for the future.'

A hearty congratulations is sent to Melissa from her employers Nick and Sarah Jones from The Barriemore Hotel, Corran Esplanade, who supported her while she was working for her SVQ.

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• For further details see page 8

# Action team to tackle 'serious concerns' at Lochaber High School

AN ACTION team is to be set up to tackle 'serious concerns' at Lochaber High School, identified after an inspection.

It was also revealed that Highland Council is considering a complete refurbishment of the school buildings in the near future.

The report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education officials in September last year found key strengths in the wide range of out-of-school activities run by the teachers

and good results for pupils at Higher level. But Highland Council says some 'important weaknesses' were identified in the leadership and management of the school.

The report stated: 'The headteacher had a clear vision for the school but had not been fully successful in communicating it to staff and gaining their support.'

'Senior managers had failed to create a climate of mutual trust, respect and confidence among staff. Many staff did not have confidence in the school leadership and felt

that consultation was weak.' The report also found that there were major weaknesses in the arrangements for safeguarding the health and safety of some pupils and that 'many pupils at S1/S2 did not feel safe in the school'.

Rector Donnie Campbell said: 'We're pleased the inspection has recognised our much-improved attainment, our wide range of extra-curricular activities and the good teaching and learning.'

'This is all made possible by a hard-working, commit-

ted staff and we will all be working very hard together over the next few years to ensure that the improvements also identified by the inspectors are delivered.'

Councillor Michael Foxley, education spokesman for Lochaber Area Committee, said: 'While this independent inspection has praised several good areas of activity within the school, serious concerns have been raised about other aspects of its work. These will need to be addressed by an action team which has already begun work.'

# New dental surgery to fill the gap

A NEW dental surgery in Fort William is to fill a gap and allow health chiefs to expand services in the area.

NHS Highland has been successful in a bid to the Scottish Executive to fund five new dental surgeries in the Highlands.

Along with Fort William, which received £345,000 from the Scottish Executive and Portree which received £225,000, Grantown on Spey and Inverness will benefit by receiving some of the £30 million allocated to modernise dental surgeries across Scotland.

Alex Fraser, dental service development manager for NHS Highland, said: 'This is a very welcome announcement and great news for Highland, as it is the lack of surgery space that has been hampering the ex-

pansion of primary care dental services.

'Despite the fact that there has been a national shortage of dentists, recruitment to the service in Highland has been good and the provision of these new facilities will help us to expand and provide further training placements for the increased number of dental graduates that are going to become available from this year.'

Mr Fraser said that he hoped that the new projects would be completed by mid-2007.

Deputy health minister Lewis Macdonald, announcing the news on a visit to Elgin this week, said that his priority was to reward those dentists who were committed to the NHS and to restore the balance so that patients who want to access

NHS dental services can do so.

In August last year *The Oban Times* reported that a new NHS salaried dentist had been appointed in Fort William to take patients off the dental waiting list.

The number of people in Lochaber waiting to be registered with a dentist in July last year had risen to more than 1,500 people.

A spokesperson for NHS Highland said in August that it expected that 1,200 patients would be registered again in Fort William within 18 months to two years.

Scottish Executive figures show that more than one third of the 1,900 non-salaried dentists in Scotland have gross NHS earnings of between £100,000 and £250,000 per year.



The Mallaig Deer Shunters Motor Cycle Club at the launch of the campaign in Mallaig this week.

# Mallaig deer shunters call for safer biking

A POLICE officer, a firefighter, a paramedic, a lifeboat coxswain and a coastguard officer from Mallaig are to tour Europe to highlight the death toll of motorcyclists on Highland roads.

The group, known as the Mallaig Deer Shunters Motor Cycle Club, aptly named to remind themselves and visitors of the dangers of

the Highland deer on Highland roads, want to challenge the country to get together and support a 'Safer Biking Day' on June 18 this year.

Group member PC John Bryden said: 'We will be asking motorcyclists to attach a small red piece of cloth to their bike and if riding on June 18 to ride in dignified quiet reflection paying

their respects to those fellow motorbike riders who have lost their lives on our roads.'

The group, which is made up of 'ordinary family men' is also involved in supporting the charity, Save the Children and have launched the Great East European Challenge 2006, hoping to raise cash for the charity.

# More school speed limits in Lochaber

MOTORISTS in Lochaber are being warned that part time 20mph speed restrictions are being introduced at another school in the area for children's safety.

The new speed limits come into force this week at Spean Bridge Primary School.

This addition brings the total number of schools benefiting from part time speed limits in Lochaber to eight.

The Highland Council, Northern Constabulary and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (Highlands and Islands Area) have made it clear that if motorists are caught speeding near Highland schools where a part time 20mph limit is in place, then enforcement action will be taken by both the Police and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

Drivers travelling near Spean Bridge Primary should be aware that the 20mph part time speed limit applies on school days, Mondays to Fridays from 8.30am to 9am; 12.30pm to 1.30pm; 2.45pm to 3pm; and 3.15pm to 3.45pm.

The other schools in Lochaber with part time 20mph speed restrictions are Ardgour, Arisaig, Fort William RC, Inverlochy, Lady Lovat, and Lochaline Primaries and Lochaber High.

Lochaber hit by second quake

LOCHABER has been hit by a second earthquake in the past four weeks.

The quake, this time with a magnitude of 2.8 on the richter scale, had its epicentre 12km east of Mallaig.

The British Geological Survey received only one report for the event.

A resident in Glenfinnan reported a 'loud bang followed by a rumbling noise'.

The latest earthquake was around 27km north-west of the Fort William earthquake on December 10 last year.

# Cuillin climber airlifted

A CLIMBER with a broken leg had to spend the night in a bothy on the Isle of Skye after falling in the Coruisk area of the Cuillin Hills.

A search and rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth took the man, who is not being named, to the MacKinnon Memorial Hospital at Broadford where he received treatment for a fracture.

# Tributes for music festival founder

TRIBUTES have been paid this week to David Maitland, a key figure in Scottish musical life who devoted much of his life to furthering musical activity in Fort William and Lochaber.

Mr Maitland died last week, aged 80, and a funeral service was held at MacIntosh Memorial Church, Fort William, on Monday, January 23.

Mr Maitland grew up in Prestwick and during the war was a 'Bevin Boy' working in the mines, all the while

pursuing his musical studies. He taught music in Ayrshire before coming to Lochaber High School in 1968 as principal teacher of music. In 1974 the Lochaber Music Festival was established with his leadership. The annual eight-day festival is now a very important and successful part of Lochaber life.

Mr Maitland held the position of honorary secretary from its inception and was actively preparing for the 32nd festival in March when he died. Mr Maitland



David Maitland also performed church organist duties for over 50

years, latterly at the MacIntosh Memorial Church in Fort William.

Recently he received the prestigious Paul Harris award from the Lochaber Rotary Club for his services to music in Lochaber.

Margaret Cairns, chairperson of the Lochaber Music Festival Association, said: 'Fort William was very fortunate that David decided to remain in the area upon his retirement in 1986, and with the tireless support of his wife, Sheila, was able to give even more time and de-

vation to his voluntary activities. The festival committee, deeply appreciative of his dedication and achievements, is determined that the festival will continue to thrive in his memory. Fort William and Lochaber owe a great debt of gratitude to this much respected gentleman for his contribution to the community and particularly for the opportunities and encouragement he gave to so many young musicians and performers. He will be greatly missed.'

# Cumbrian GP killed in Ben Nevis fall

A CUMBRIAN GP, who also worked as a part-time air-ambulance doctor, was killed after falling 100ft on Ben Nevis on Monday (January 23).

Rupert Roger Bennett, aged 39, of Heskett Newmarket in Cumbria was killed when a boulder he was roped onto slipped and pulled him over into a gully in the area known as Douglas Boulder.

The incident happened at around 2pm as Mr Bennett, along with two companions,

attempted to climb a part of the mountain known as Tower Ridge.

One of the other climbers, who has not been named, had started an abseil when the large boulder he was using as an anchor point slid over the edge narrowly missing him.

Unfortunately, his two companions, who had also attached themselves to the boulder as a precaution, were pulled over with it and fell into the gully.

Members of Lochaber

Mountain Rescue Team and a Royal Navy helicopter from Prestwick attended and airlifted the men from the ridge. The helicopter took 12 rescuers up into the mountain and after locating the two fallen climbers, one was pronounced dead at the scene. The third man, James Martin of Hexham, Northumberland, suffered leg and pelvic injuries.

He was flown to Belford Hospital in Fort William where his condition was described as 'serious'.

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**Community could own Cuillins**

THE BLACK Cuillin mountain range on Skye, owned by the chiefs of the Clan MacLeod for over 800 years, could come under community ownership if a lottery fund bid by the 29th chief is accepted.

Skye and Lochalsh Enterprise, fronting a consortium including Highland Council, has submitted an application to the National Lottery for £25 million.

The money would be used to restore Dunvegan Castle, owned by John MacLeod of MacLeod, the 29th chief.

If the application is successful it could see the castle restored and the Cuillin range of mountains transferred to community ownership.

In 1999 Mr MacLeod put the mountain range up for sale for £10 million.

**Newsdesks:**  
**01631 568000**  
**01397 703003**

**Fond farewell to sisters**

TWO nuns have been given a fond farewell from a Lochaber primary school after 20 years of working in the community.

Sister Patricia Mitchell and sister Clare McHale are both leaving to take up new postings elsewhere in the United Kingdom and were given a wonderful send-off from pupils at Lochyside Primary School last week.

The school held a farewell mass and invited past-pupils at the school's special unit where Sister Patricia taught for many years.

The sisters also received a clock and a picture frame each from the staff and pupils at the school.

The new postings will see Sister Mitchell working in an inner-city area of Newcastle while Sister McHale is heading for Oxford to work with students and take part in chaplaincy work.

Before that both sisters will be heading for a well-earned three-month break in New Mexico in the United States.

The nuns will work with the local community and take part in a religious course.

Both sisters ran a youth club in the school for many years and spent a lot of time in the school doing various workshops with the children. Lochyside Primary School headteacher Violet Smith said: 'They will be sadly missed by the children in the school and by the community.'

Sister Patricia Mitchell and Sister Clare McHale with the pupils from Lochyside Primary School in Fort William and some of the gifts they received.

**Order made for Raasay ferry site**

HIGHLAND councillors are to be asked to proceed with a Harbour Order which would see a new ferry terminal and pier built on the Isle of Raasay.

Councillors on the transport, environmental and community services committee of Highland Council, which meets today (Thursday), will be asked to proceed with detailed designs for the terminal to allow work to start as quickly as possible.

The existing terminal at Suishnish is in extremely poor condition because of water corrosion.

Consulting engineers Arch Henderson hope to proceed with the design with a view to starting work at the end of the 2006-07 financial year.

The estimated cost of the new terminal at Churchton Bay is £7.5 million.

A public enquiry by the Scottish Executive found in November last year that there was no credible alternative to the Churchton Bay site.

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To reserve a space on this beautifully illustrated map contact Angela on 01397 703003

## Argyll and Bute MP highlights pending passport problems

ARGYLL and Bute MP Alan Reid is advising all his constituents who have never applied for a passport to make sure they do so before October.

After that, if they need a first passport they will face a journey all the way to a Passport Office.

### Interview

Mr Reid's call comes because the government has decided that, as from October this year, all first-time adult applicants for passports will have to attend an interview.

The government has also decided that these interviews must be held in a Passport Office, which he fears could be as far away as Glasgow or Inverness.

There will be only 69 passport offices throughout the UK.

'It goes without saying that Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Aberdeen and Dundee will get offices,' said Mr Reid, who fears that the majority of constituents will face a lengthy journey.

'The government will put first time applicants from Argyll and Bute to great time and expense to attend their interview.

'For example, an islander on Colonsay who applies for a passport during the winter months will have to spend three days travelling to and from their interview.'

Mr Reid is calling on the government to make use of post offices.

He explained: 'The government's reason for introducing these interviews is to cut the number of bogus applications, but I am sure a local sub postmaster or postmistress is much better placed to decide if an appli-

cation is bogus than a civil servant in a distant passport office.'

Mr Reid has also been calling on the government to do more to support rural post offices.

He said in the House of Commons: 'Unless the government gives a commitment soon to provide more funding, through social network payments or more services, then post offices will close.'

'They are businesses and, if the people running those businesses do not have a guarantee of long-term security, they will not continue to invest them.'

Barry Gardiner, the minister with responsibility for the Post Office, replied by saying that many rural post offices are 'an inefficiently physical structure' and 'clearly the status quo is not sustainable.'

### Closure fears

Mr Reid told *The Oban Times* after the debate: 'Following Barry Gardiner's remarks, I am worried that there will be a mass closure of rural Post Offices.'

'The government's guarantee of no avoidable closures of rural post offices runs out this March and the social network payments to rural Post Offices is only guaranteed for another two years.'

Barry Gardiner's remarks make it look as if the government doesn't care whether or not rural post offices survive.

'Giving them the job of conducting passport interviews would be one way of giving them more business and, at the same time, making it much more convenient for applicants.'

## Survey reveals significant weather changes in north west

A NEW study released by the Scottish Executive has revealed that over the past 40 years northern and western Scotland has become significantly wetter in the winter.

But the study also showed that in the same timescale

north west Scotland has become much drier.

Main findings of the study into climate change in Scotland showed that since 1961, northern and western Scotland has had an average increase of almost 60 per cent in precipitation, and

some parts of north west Scotland have become up to 45 per cent drier.

Argyll and Bute's Biodiversity officer Marina Curran-Colthart was not surprised by these results. 'Climate change has been going on for a long, long

time,' she said. 'Weather patterns have evolved and changed since records began.'

The executive's report has shown that there is likely to be even more significant changes over a short time, and that climate change needs to be slowed down.'

In all parts of Scotland, temperatures have increased every season since 1961 making this the fastest period of warming identified in the analysed record.

Daily maximum temperatures were also found to be increasing at a faster rate

than minimum temperatures, contrary to the trends seen in 1914 in Scotland when minimum temperatures increased at a faster rate.

Environment Minister Ross Finnie said that the research will help inform organisations on how they can

adapt to climate change in Scotland.

'The executive is committed to tackling the cause and effects of climate change,' he said. 'Arming Scotland with the information required to adapt to the effects of climate change is absolutely crucial.'



Cast members of Argyll Youth Theatre Group's performance of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. 0645001

## Youth drama group let down by lack of audience

YOUNGSTERS of Argyll Youth Theatre Group put on three fine performances of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* last week but were disappointed as audience numbers failed to live-up to expectations.

Director Gwyneth Neal praised her young stars for their performances on Thursday, Friday and Saturday night.

However, the talented teenagers were let down by poor audience numbers on the Thursday with only 34 people watching the performance at Oban's Corran Halls.

Mrs Neal said last Friday: 'The play was very well re-

ceived and the group did very well.'

'It is very hard to do a play which is classic theatre.'

'We're a little disappointed with the audience numbers.'

'I know plays are not as popular as musicals but it is disappointing when everyone has put in so much work

into it. It is young people from the town who have worked really hard and put on a high standard of performance.'

'The people who came to see the play really enjoyed it.'

The youth theatre group was formed in 1999 by Mrs Neal from Dunbeg and has

some of Argyll's most talented young actors and singers among its ranks.

Mrs Neal is supported in the project by her husband, Tony, who produces the music. The acting group is divided into two sections with juniors, aged eight to 11, and seniors, aged 12 to 16.

## Planning problem solved at 11th hour

A PLANNING dispute over a house at Black Crofts, North Connel, has been resolved at the eleventh hour.

Members of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee of Argyll and Bute Council heard last week that the developer and neighbours had come to a compromise over the design of the house.

The problems started when Jonathan and Liz Allen of Dunmor, Black Crofts, saw the foundations for a house being dug on the other side of their fence.

But they were horrified when they realised that it was going to be one and a half storeys and overlooking their house from the east - especially as they had never received a neighbour notification when the plans were lodged with Argyll and Bute Council. Mr Allen said their house had originally been called Ardana and although the name had changed around 20 years previously to Dunmor, the neighbour notification had been sent by the developer to The Occupier, Ardana,

and never reached them. The Ordnance Survey map used by the council also showed the house name still to be Ardana.

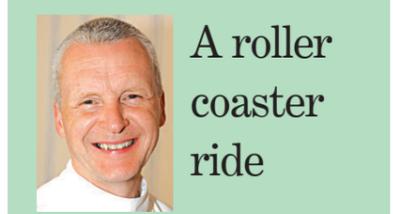
Then the Allens found that the new house had been positioned two metres closer than stated on the plans and the developer, Blackcroft Developments, was asked to stop building last autumn.

At a site meeting last week, members of the area committee heard Paul McFarridge of Blackcroft Developments say that following discussions with Mr and Mrs Allen, they had changed the design of the building.

'The revised design allows us to remove our objections,' confirmed Mr Allen, 'if the revised design is acceptable to the area committee.'

The committee heard that the western elevation was to be reduced in height and three dormer windows replaced with Velux windows.

Councillor Elaine Robertson said it was 'an excellent conclusion to something that met everybody's needs'.



## A roller coaster ride

MINUTE little structures called 'mitochondria' are the engines in our cells, and they run on high octane sugar.

The fuel supply is maintained by keeping sugar levels in our blood within certain limits, and this job is accomplished by the action of several hormones.

The extreme version of impaired blood sugar control is seen in the disease diabetes but many people appear to suffer milder problems. If blood sugar drops too low the cells that require a constant supply of fuel suffer first. Primary here are nerve cells, particularly where they are present in the highest concentrations in the brain. Low blood sugar affects mood and causes poor concentration, often earning the very descriptive label of 'brain fog'. If you have ever suffered this woolly headedness, particularly mid-morning or mid-afternoon, or after missing a meal, low blood sugar is a likely culprit. Blood sugar levels falling even lower cause exaggerations of these symptoms.

Diabetics who take too much insulin for the amount of food they eat risk going 'hypo'. In this state their behaviour mimics a belligerent drunk and several sufferers have slipped into a coma and died as people thought they were drunk and left them to 'sleep it off.'

This makes it seem that increasing blood sugar levels would be a good idea, providing us with more energy; but too high a level of blood sugar causes problems too.

High levels of blood sugar accelerate the ageing of tissues causing them to deteriorate more quickly. The most marked changes are again seen in some sufferers of diabetes, in fact many of the so called 'complica-

tions' of diabetes are actually examples of accelerated aging of tissues.

Common examples are damage to blood vessels leading to impaired circulation in the extremities, or a deterioration of vision. The better sufferers can control their blood sugar, the more they can protect themselves against this type of damage.

Many common habits place the blood sugar control mechanisms under increased strain which can lead to them performing less effectively.

A major problem is consuming foods or drinks that produce a very rapid rise in blood sugar. The control mechanisms are driven into something of a panic, trying to prevent the sugar levels from going too high. This in turn can lead to them over-doing the control, leading to sugar levels then dropping too low, resulting in foggy brains or worse.

Offending foods are anything with significant levels of sugar, or processed carbohydrates like bread, pasta or biscuits made from white flour - fruit sugar doesn't cause the same problems.

Stimulant drinks such as tea, coffee or caffeinated soft drinks cause raised blood sugar even if they don't contain sugar.

Common symptoms, occurring about one to two hours after eating, are a drop in energy, impaired mental function and a craving for foods or drinks that will raise blood sugar quickly.

Could this be the origin of tea and coffee breaks mid morning and afternoon?

Stress also raises blood sugar so when everything gets too much for you sit down and take a herbal tea break!

Andrew Pallas ND DO MRN Osteopath & Naturopath Oban Complementary Health Centre Tel: 01631 567054

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**HIGHLAND THEATRE** 01631 562444  
GEORGE STREET - OBAN

1.00 and 6.00 on SATURDAY - 1.00 SUNDAY MATINEE  
Screen 1: GREAT WEEKEND UK PREMIERE  
**ZATHURA - A Space Adventure** PG  
Friday 7.30 - Saturday 8.30 - Monday to Thursday 7.30  
3.30 SATURDAY and SUNDAY MATINEES  
Screen 1: ROMANTIC COMEDY-UK PREMIERE  
**FUN WITH DICK AND JANE** 12A  
7.00 DAILY from FRIDAY (Excluding Sunday)  
1.30 SATURDAY and SUNDAY MATINEES  
Screen 2: ROMANTIC COMEDY - UK PREMIERE  
**JUST FRIENDS** 12A  
Under-12s admitted to 12A movies when with an adult aged 18 or over

**STUDIO CINEMA** 01397 705095  
CAMERON SQUARE - FORT WILLIAM

7.30 DAILY from FRIDAY (Excluding Sunday)  
2.15 SATURDAY and SUNDAY MATINEES  
Screen 1: DRAMA AND JOY ON AN EPIC JOURNEY  
**MARCH OF THE PENGUINS** U  
7.15 DAILY from FRIDAY (Excluding Sunday)  
2.00 SATURDAY and SUNDAY MATINEES  
Screen 2: RECORD-BREAKING MUSICAL SUCCESS  
**THE PRODUCERS** 12A



**ZATHURA - A SPACE ADVENTURE**  
Screen 1 - PG Certificate  
101 Minutes  
UK PREMIERE  
WEEKEND SHOWINGS  
Oban Highland Theatre  
Three showings: 1.00 and 6.00 SATURDAY - 1.00 SUNDAY MATINEE  
After their father (Tim Robbins) leaves for work, six-year-old Danny (Jonah Bobo) and ten-year-old Walter (Josh Hutcherson), are left in the care of their older sister Lisa (Kristen Stewart). Finding an old tattered metal board game called 'Zathura', Danny tries to get his brother to play the game with him, but without success. He then decides to tackle the game on his own. Danny is in for a big surprise - he discovers this is no ordinary board game. For a start, he finds out that his spaceship marker moves by itself and, when it finally lands on a space, a card is ejected carrying an urgent message: "Meteor Shower, take evasive action"... The house is immediately pummeled from above by hot molten meteors. Looking over their heads, Danny and Walter can see through a gaping hole in the roof of their house. They discover, to their horror, that they have been propelled into deepest and darkest outer space... and they are not alone!

This is but the beginning of an exhilarating, sometimes frightening, but always totally unpredictable adventure. Danny and Walter realise, that if they do not successfully complete the game, they will end up trapped in space forever. They accidentally put their sister Lisa into a deep cryonic sleep... are chased by a malfunctioning six foot robot... rescue an astronaut (Dax Shepherd)... are besieged by lizard-like creatures called Zorgons.

Helped by the astronaut, Danny and Walter work together to overcome all the obstacles they encounter, in an attempt to finish the game

so they can go home. All their efforts may be in vain when they face their biggest challenge of all - a battle against gravitational pull into the void of the dark planet Zathura

**FUN WITH DICK AND JANE**  
Screen 1 - UK PREMIERE  
12A Certificate  
90 Minutes  
Oban Highland Theatre  
FRIDAY at 7.30  
SATURDAY at 8.30  
MONDAY to THURSDAY at 7.30  
MATINEES at 3.30 on SATURDAY and SUNDAY

In Columbia Pictures larcenous romantic comedy, Dick (Jim Carrey) is in love with Jane (Tea Leoni) and living the lover's dream. Dick's years of hard work have also paid off with promotion as Vice President of Globodyne, a worldwide Company in the consolidation of media properties. With a happy love life and his new Board appointment, what could possibly go wrong?

After only one day in his VIP position however, everything does go pear shape, when Dick's Company becomes involved in an Enron-like scandal. Dick and Jane face having to beg, borrow and steal to get everything back until, using their newfound business skills, they exact an hilarious revenge and end up teaching big business a very big lesson.

Directed by Dean Parisot and co-starring Richard Jenkins, Walter Addison, Michelle Arthur and Deena Adar, this is a Rom-Com movie with a twist, that has been rewarded by riding high in the number three position, after three successful weeks in the North American TOP-THIRTY stranded in his New Jersey home town due to bad weather. He is also trying to sign up a singer on a contract. Co-star ANNA FARIS in fine form in this super romantic comedy, providing an outstanding and over-the-top performance as a pampered, sex-mad diva. ANNA FARIS will be remembered for her part in 'SCARY MOVIE'. We also meet AMY SMART ('Road Trip') and CHRIS KLEIN ('American Pie') under the direction of ROGER KUMBLE ('Cruel Intentions').

**JUST FRIENDS**  
Screen 2 - UK PREMIERE  
- 12A Certificate - 94 Minutes  
Oban Highland Theatre  
7.30 DAILY from FRIDAY - 1.30 SATURDAY and SUNDAY MATINEES  
Directed by Roger Kumble, 'Just Friends' is an enjoyable romantic comedy with some hilarious set-

pieces and strong comic performances turned in by Amy Smart, Ryan Reynolds and Anna Faris.

**MARCH OF THE PENGUINS**  
Screen 1 - U Certificate - 80 Minutes  
Fort William Studio Cinema  
7.30 Daily (Except Sunday) from Friday  
2.15 Saturday and Sunday Matinees

**MARCH OF THE PENGUINS** was the surprise screen success of 2005 in North America. Taking the massive \$80-million at the box office, it also helped make Antarctica the latest world tourist destination! In this outstanding story directed by Luc Jacquet, we experience the adventures of thousands of emperor penguins, trekking hundreds of miles across and unforgiving ice cap, facing predators, starvation and exposure on the journey.

**MARCH OF THE PENGUINS** is a story of triumph over adversity, outstandingly and beautifully filmed, with a soaring musical score and an excellent Morgan Freeman narration. There are also many memorable moments in this large screen celebration of ritual and romance, that will be recalled years after all the major movie blockbusters are long forgotten.

**THE PRODUCERS**  
Screen 2 - 12A Certificate  
134 Minutes  
Fort William Studio Cinema  
7.15 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 sure-fire get-rich-quick scheme to embezzle a fortune - all by producing a Broadway musical flop!

To achieve their objective, they discover the ultimate bad play, which has the shock title of 'Springtime for Hitler' which looks likely to be the ultimate stage disaster of all time. Their scheming comes to naught however when the production is hailed by the 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 musical comedy that must not be missed.



Eight past presidents of Oban Rotary Club show some of the many items to be auctioned at Saturday's Rotary auction. The Oban club is fortunate to have auctioneer Donald Morrison as a member. Donald is left, holding his gavel with past presidents Roger Parry, Billy MacLean, Bill Taylor, John MacCallman, Philip White, Roy Wood, Phil Monteith and Ken Oxland.

## Rotarians ready for annual grand auction

OBAN Livestock Centre is the place to be this Saturday for bargain hunters when the Oban Rotary Club holds its annual grand auction.

Piper Garry MacEwan will play at 10am and at 10.30am sharp Brigadier John MacFarlane, president of Oban Rotary Club, will announce the start of the sale.

Donald Morrison is auctioneer and will, with his usual sharp wit and good

humour, swing into action to work rapidly through the 300 lots.

Everything has to go and every penny raised will go to local good causes.

Not only is this annual event a great fun day it has some incredible bargains and the mart cafe will be open for hot food and drinks.

Every year the Rotary Club has a large quantity of good quality furniture and household items plus a good

collection of antiques. This year the list includes an electric orthopaedic single divan bed in as-new condition; an antique clock, coal scuttle, an Olympic digital camera, a rowing machine, a commercial grade ice cream machine and an industrial washing machine and dryer, a professional Nomeq electric physiotherapy p bench, folding table tennis table and an upright piano.

Last but not least there is

a ladies' mountain bike with battery assistance.

Auction catalogues do not come any more varied than this!

All services at the auction are donated free of charge the Oban Rotary Club hopes that everyone will turn out and support this wonderful community event.

Remember everything has to be sold so you could go home with a bargain and some unexpected ones at that.

## Piping cousins entertain at Netherlorn meet

TWO COUSINS, whose mothers hail from Tiree, were the guest pipers at the January meeting of the Netherlorn Piping Society in Oban.

Guest pipers Finlay Johnston, 20, and Gavin Stewart, 19, from Glasgow, delighted a large audience at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls last Wednesday.

This was the third

monthly meeting of the society and the public has continually turned out in force to hear some fine piping.

The evening began with the society's own junior pipers, led by Angus MacColl. Local youngsters Scott Felgate, Cameron Wilkie, Niall Jordan and Keith MacRae gave solo performances before Finlay

and Gavin played to the hall. Both of the Glasgow lads have played in the area before and Finlay was second in the Silver Medal Piobearachd competition at last year's Argyllshire Gathering.

Gavin played in his first ever open competition at Taynuilt Highland Games last year where he won the Senior Piobearachd.



Above: Gavin Stewart. Below: Finlay Johnston



### Your Stars with Patrick Arundell

**ARIES** (Mar 21 - Apr 20) 09111 767 272  
The demands of your children, if you have them, or of a partner, could, potentially, come into sharp contrast with the things you would like to get on with this week. Your high hopes may not meet with their approval, or may have to be adjusted to take into account the feelings of others. Socially you could be much in demand, you may have to juggle your time to manage this. For more, please call me.

**TAURUS** (Apr 21 - May 21) 09111 767 273  
You could well make progress in the world of work but will you find yourself being a bit lonely in the process? Then again, self-doubt could undermine your efforts just at a time when you need to be full confidence - if you're to make the maximum impact. Either way, it appears some kind of sacrifice will be have to make to ensure you move forward. Maybe success isn't everything. For more, please call me.

**GEMINI** (May 22 - June 21) 09111 767 274  
Just at a time when you may really get the bit between your teeth to open up your situation to wider and more varied interests, someone who would prefer to maintain the status quo, can dig their heels in. If you are not allowed to be free it could cause considerable resentment, even frustration. Those who care about you need to trust where you are coming from. For more, please call me.

**CANCER** (June 22 - July 22) 09111 767 275  
If you and your paramour are in good shape financially, then you can unite your efforts and squeeze a little more slack out of your spending. If things are already tight, there could be a reluctance on someone's part to talk things through. If this is so, it could arouse some deep rooted resentment. Commitment is much on your mind, but you'll probably want it back in kind. For more, please call me.

**LEO** (July 23 - Aug 23) 09111 767 276  
This can be a truly significant week for competitive interests or for close relationships. Progress can certainly be made, but it is unlikely to be all on your terms. If you are able to be flexible and perceptive of others needs and viewpoints, a real breakthrough can occur. If not, perhaps one involvement will require more work, and may need to go back on the drawing board. For more, please call me.

**VIRGO** (Aug 24 - Sep 23) 09111 767 277  
Being conscientious is something that generally comes easier to Virgo's than some. And yet this week the obligations you have could place a heavy burden on you and especially psychologically. It may feel like a case of all give and no get, even if this is not quite how it actually is. Cut down on your commitments and channel what energy you do have, in a narrower way, if possible. For more, please call me.

**LIBRA** (Sept 24 - Oct 23) 09111 767 278  
This can be an awesome week for you. The New Moon in the most glamorous and invigorated part of your scope can give you a real appetite for socialising and for expressing the most creative part of your nature. New starts are possible in love in the next month and it can be the sheer wonder of your personality which draws admiration your way. You have it all! Seize the moment! For more, please call me.

**SCORPIO** (Oct 24 - Nov 22) 09111 767 279  
Both emotional and physical comfort and security shoot to the heart of your solar scope. But then you may find yourself entertaining guests, and if you do, you can lay on a truly super show and meet their every need. Contrastingly, some Scorpios could be perfectly content in their own company. It's also possible that old family memories can touchingly surface from the past. For more, please call me.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov 23 - Dec 21) 09111 767 280  
Boredom can be like an anathema. If your daily life, particularly, feels rather stilted, you can crave for extra stimuli. The internet can be a rich source of intellectual content, but you may even consider learning some new skills, perhaps at evening classes. If it's a while since you visited your local library, it may be time to get in and identify a book or subject which brings you alive. For more, please call me.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec 22 - Jan 20) 09111 767 281  
There may be a New Moon which can boost your resources - especially with the wizardry that Mercury currently gives you, but stern Saturn is watching events with a potentially judgemental eye. If you were determined to get to grips with costs this year, now the reasons to do so can become even more compelling. Enjoying the moment is one thing, a stable future is vital too. For more, please call me.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan 21 - Feb 19) 09111 767 282  
You can begin new adventures, be determined to express your unique individuality, but if this is so, make sure you have made solid plans. Events or the opposition of a demanding employer, contact or partner, may see you only flourish, if you have got all the angles firmly worked out. If however, you thrive on hard work, or challenges, you could find yourself moving into top gear. For more, please call me.

**PISCES** (Feb 20 - Mar 20) 09111 767 283  
That nagging backache, painful tooth or weary body may need checking into Take Good Care Of Yourself Central. Seriously, if you have been putting off getting to grips with your overall welfare, your health will continue to bump along the bottom. If you are in good shape, an unresolved practical issue or one to do with your employment situation, may require resolution. For more, please call me.

For your detailed forecast call your number above. Calls cost 60p per minute at all times. Visit - www.patrickarundell.com

**The Oban Times**  
What's On Guide

Saturday 28th January  
Ladies night 'Flashdancers' Doors open 7:30 pm. Tickets £10 at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls  
Rotary Club Grand Auction 10:30am, Oban Livestock Centre

Saturday 11th February  
St Valentine's Dance, Corran Halls, Oban, in aid of Sensory Garden. Tickets £10 each or 2 for £15 from Corran Halls and Urban Sumits

Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th February  
Forteth West Highlands and Islands Trade Show, Corran Halls, Oban

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**forthcoming events**

Friday 31st March at 8.00 pm. Helensburgh and District Highland Association DANCE. Band - Ian MacCallum  
Contact John Wilson Tel 01389841208

Friday 28th April at 8.00 pm. Helensburgh and District Highland Association CEILIDH/DANCE: Piper- Bruce Shearlaw Singers - Mary C McNeil Sheona Rostant & Duncan McDonald Violin-Cameron Bone Chair Person - to be advised Band - Hector McFadyen  
Contact John Wilson Tel 01389841208

Friday 26th May AGM at 7.00pm Helensburgh and District Highland Association DANCE at 8.00pm. Band - Willie Paterson. Contact John Wilson Tel 01389841208

Friday 30th June at 8.00pm Helensburgh and District Highland Association DANCE: Band - Donnie & Diane  
Contact John Wilson Tel 01389841208

Tuesday 7th February Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

Tuesday 7th March Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

Tuesday 4th April Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

Thursday 27th April - Sunday 30th April Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival

Tuesday 9th May Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

Tuesday 6th June Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

Tuesday 4th July Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

Tuesday 8th August Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

Tuesday 5th September Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

Tuesday 10th October Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

Tuesday 7th November Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

Tuesday 5th December Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital

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CORRAN HALLS, OBAN  
FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY  
February 3, 4, 5, 2006

**Friday Night**  
OPEN MEETING : 7.30 for 8 p.m.  
DANCE TO FOLLOW

**Saturday**  
CLOSED MEETING : 11.30 for noon  
PUBLIC MEETING : 7.30 for 8 p.m.  
(all welcome)  
DANCE TO FOLLOW

**Sunday**  
CLOSED MEETING : 10 for 10.30 a.m.

**OBAN AND LORN LIONS**  
**TABLE TOP SALE**  
Saturday 28th January  
10.00 - 3pm  
Royal Hotel Oban

Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club  
**Monthly Club Night**  
McTavish's Kitchens  
Thursday 2nd February at 8pm  
All players welcome  
Guest Artist: **Dochie McCallum**  
Admission £3  
Come along and enjoy the music

**St Valentines Dance**  
In aid of Oban Community Sensory Garden  
Saturday 11th February  
Corran Halls  
Tickets are available at Tourist Information Centre, Inveraray, Square Peg, Lochgilphead, Tourist Information Fort William, Urban Sumits, Alba and Tourist Information Office, Oban, and now at Corran Halls  
£10 each or 2 for £15  
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**SOROKA LEARNING CENTRE**  
Public Meeting at the Learning Centre  
**SUNDAY 29th January**  
to form the new **Community Company**  
to manage and develop the Learning Centre  
2.00-4.00pm (Official launch at 3.00pm) All welcome  
Free Buffet & Creche

**COMUNN GAIDHEALACH AN OBAIN Highland Wedding**  
Connell Village Hall  
Friday 3rd February, 2006  
7 for 7.30pm  
£12.50  
Secretary 01631 710314 or Treasurer 01631 564522  
Last day for sale of tickets - Saturday 28th January

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## Feis Lathana takes in Celtic Connections



A group of people who take part in the Fèis Lathana have visited the Celtic Connections festival currently running in Glasgow. They were able to see other youngsters from Argyll who are performing in the group Fionnar and later in the evening they saw Bagad Kemper, leaders of Brittany's pipe band scene. Also appearing with Bagad Kemper was South Uist piper Fred Morrison. Sileas Sinclair, far left, organised the trip. Sileas is the coordinator of a three-year Scottish Arts Council funded programme which involves Fèis Lathana. They were all 'wowed' by Bagad Kemper and were over the moon when some of the band asked to have their photograph taken with the Argyll children. Back row, left to right: Amanda MacMillan, Jennifer McLuckie and Claire Jordan and front row, Sileas Sinclair, Scott Sinclair and Becky Hill, with members of Bagad Kemper.

## Musicians line-up for charity concert

THERE is a feast of local talent all performing for an exceedingly good cause in Oban tomorrow night.

NA h-ùirsgean Clàrsach Ensemble will hold a concert at the Corran Halls, Oban, tomorrow (Friday) in aid of SORT-IT, the Scottish orthopaedic research trust into trauma.

Na h-ùirsgean Clàrsach Ensemble was formed in November 2003 and two years on have impressed audiences and adjudicators all along the west coast of Scotland.

In the past two years they have performed music from the movies and a traditional ceilidh to raise money for different charities.

The ensemble has had great success in competitions winning both the Lochaber and the Highlands and Islands music festivals, being placed second in the Oban provincial Mod and the Royal National Mod in 2004 and 2005. The members have been just as successful playing as soloists and duos at the same events.

The young group of harpists aged between eight and 15-years-old all go to school in Oban and the surrounding area and meet every Saturday afternoon and are directed by Toni Russell on a voluntary basis.

Tomorrow night's concert, *It doesn't need to be Scottish* sees the ensemble joined by several traditional musicians and dancers who intend to entertain with different styles of music and dance.

They include Angus Smith, Mod gold medallist; Audrey Paterson, Mod silver pendant winner; Amanda MacMillan, vocals; Billie Kirkham, flute, the Sinclair School of Dance, the Toni Russell Highland Dance School and Ann Barrows Fiddlers.

Contact  
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Leisure news

# Lee keeps them laughing at the Sunart Centre

STRONTIAN'S Sunart Centre, Arainn Shuaineirt, was the venue for a sell-out bundle of laughs on Thursday, January 19 when comedian Lee Mack stopped off as part of his nationwide tour.

The host of BBC1's *They Think It's All Over* quickly established an uproarious rapport with his Ardnarmurchan audience and held sway for 90 minutes of laughter to dispel the January blues.

Lee Mack was the latest in a long list of notable performers to visit The Sunart Centre, which plays host to a broad spectrum of the arts, including opera and classical music, theatrical productions and of course many traditional and contemporary musical acts.

Lee Mack followed a very successful visit by fellow comedian Ross Noble in August last year and there is already a full programme of concerts and other events planned for the coming year, making the centre an important stop off point for many touring artists.

The Sunart Centre is part of Ardnarmurchan High



Lee Mack in action at the Sunart Centre.

School, opened in 2003 to serve the communities of Morvern, Ardnarmurchan and Moidart.

As part of The Highland Council's New Community Schools approach the build-

ing also serves as a community centre, providing the local community with access to a wide range of recreational, sporting and learning facilities. These include an all

weather synthetic football pitch, grass shinty pitch, a gymnasium, games hall, ICT suite, Community Library, fully equipped theatre and an adult learning suite managed by Lochaber College.

All these are accessed regularly by growing numbers of locals and also by visitors who are often amazed to find such a thriving centre with state of the art facilities in this remote rural area.

The centre also hosts a very busy and active Youth Club on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, when youngsters from throughout the area are bussed in by transport funded by the Scottish Executive's Rural Community Transport Initiative.

Coupled with Ardnarmurchan Library's evening opening the building can often be as busy in the evenings as it is during the school day.

Eoghan Carmichael, manager of the centre, said: 'This is a wonderful resource for our communities who previously had little access to sporting facilities,

learning opportunities or the arts.

'Our partnership with Lochaber College has brought valuable adult learning opportunities to the area, and the centre has been the focus of a great revival of interest in sports, particularly shinty, which has recently seen the formation of Ardnarmurchan Camanachd based in the centre.

'Our revenue funding from The Highland Council and the Scottish Arts Council (lottery funded) allows us to bring top quality performers in all art forms to our theatre, and our close association with Ardnarmurchan High School and other local organisations has encouraged a tremendous resurgence in interest in traditional music and other aspects of the performing arts.'

The centre is managed jointly by Highland Council and the locally elected Arainn Shuaineirt Management Committee with independent representation from all five community councils within the catchment area of Ardnarmurchan High School.



James Stead cuts his birthday cake while looked on by care worker Malcolm Jackson, his daughter Moria Starks, grandson Gavin Stark and great granddaughter Jenna Fleming.

## Four generations mark special Arran birthday

On Saturday the village of Whiting Bay on the Isle of Arran celebrated a very special birthday when the island's oldest resident, James Stead, had his 105th birthday.

James' daughter, Moria Starks of Whiting Bay organised a special party and family-get-together in the village's Cooriedoon Care Home where James now resides.

One hundred family and friends turned out to share James' special event with four generations of the same family gathered in the dining room; James being the oldest and his three-year old great granddaughter Jenna the youngest. This visit by Jenna was the real highlight of the day for James and it really seemed to make his day.

Another big part of the day for him was receiving a card from HRH The Queen and this was pre-

sented to him by Doctor Grassie of Shiskine Medical Centre.

### Egyptians

Born in Glasgow in 1901 James was too young to serve in the First World War and to old for the Second, however this laid the way to him having a very interesting a career choice. During the early forties he was on guard duty in the Egyptian room at the British Museum looking after various mummies and tombs.

Moria had prepared an itinerary for the day to help organise the large group of merry revellers who were gathered in the lounge of Corriedoon.

They listened to the life history of James which Moria had managed to condense into a few pages of manuscript and watched as James blew out the candles on his cake and then it was on with the party.

James provided everyone with plenty of good humour

and raised a few laughs as while Moria was reading out the script about her father. James was reading through it much slower and would call out when he read something of interest to him.

Moria described her father as 'having the constitution of an ox and until the age of 65 had never visited a doctor.' To which Doctor Grassie toasted in good nature.

James re-married in 1961 to Audrey and three years later they moved to Arran. He was a key figure in the Whiting Bay Drama Club and one of the founders of the Arran Arts Society.

Following Audrey's death in 1970 James moved to Murray Estate in Lamlash and in 1983 he moved in with his daughter Moria in Whiting Bay at Kilpatrick.

He lived there until the age of 103 before moving into his current residency of Cooriedoon Care Home.

## Local charities gain from Cinderella hospital panto



Staff at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital staged their own Christmas pantomime this year and in doing so raised a tidy sum for charity. *Cinderella out of ours*, was written, produced and starred hospital staff and was staged at McTavish's Kitchen, Oban, where the use of the premises was donated for the evening. Over 250 members of staff, their family and friends turned out to cheer the pantomime players on and donated a tidy sum of money. So much so that four charities each received £320 this week. The four chosen by the staff were: Riding for the Disabled, Oban Hospice, Oban Mountain Rescue and Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease and representatives of the charities went along to the hospital to receive their cheques on Monday. 044pay01

## New owners for Port Appin's Pier House

A COUPLE from West Sussex have taken over the running of The Pierhouse Hotel and Seafood Restaurant in Port Appin.

Nicholas and Nikki Horne and their three young children have moved to the area after taking over the running of the Pierhouse last Wednesday.

Glasgow-based property agents Robert Barry were inviting offers over £825,000 for the property.

Nicholas was an event management and sports marketing executive before coming to Appin.

Prior to that he had been in the Scottish armoured regiment for six years where he spent some time on public duties at Edinburgh Castle.

Nikki, whose mother is a Swedish Finn, will have the juggling act of helping with the new business as well as looking after the children and running her own company which makes Scandinavian outdoor clothing for children.

As managing director, she is moving the

business from its base in England to Port Appin in the summer.

The couple take over from Dave and Liz Hamblin who ran the Pierhouse for eight years.

'Dave said: 'We're going to semi-retire and have a rest for six months after being in this business for 34 years.

'It has been very enjoyable to have the Pierhouse. I love the area and the locals were fantastic. They are lovely people.' The Hamblins insist they would like to stay in the area.

The new owners have not outlined any changes to the running of the hotel and restaurant but are looking for a third chef to join Rita Thomson and Ernie Jaffray.

Nikki said: 'We fell in love with Port Appin and the hotel from our first visit. 'We plan to make the Pierhouse and Port Appin our home.

'David and Liz have given us invaluable advice and we want to build on the reputation they have created.'



Richard at the Scottish International Trade Fair in Glasgow.

## Photographer's work selected for international fair

AN OBAN-based landscape photographer has had the honour of having his work highlighted at the Scottish International Trade Fair at Glasgow.

Richard Childs, proprietor of the Oban Art Gallery, John Street, was one of over 700 exhibitors at the gift and craft fair which ran until yesterday and was visited by thousands of buyers from both the home and overseas markets.

Ian Gardner of the National Trust for Scotland chose *Atlantic Edge, Lewis*, to be put forward for the Scottish Product feature

area of the show and the editor of *Gifts Today* chose another of Richard's works, *Sands of time, Eigg* for the new product gallery.

A large selection of Richard's large format images are on permanent display at the art gallery and he has also just published *Portfolio One*, a glossy 32-page collection of his work available for prints. More than a catalogue it features written descriptions of the works and how they came to be taken and is sure to be a big hit with the growing number of people now collecting Richard Childs prints.

## Free stickers for local schools makes Road Sense

SCHOOLS in Argyll and the Highlands are being offered the chance to receive free reflective stickers to help their pupils stay safe and be seen by road users this winter.

Online car hire company carrentals.co.uk has relaunched its successful Road Sense campaign this winter to help improve safety for all road users.

The campaign is set to address issues such as road safety, road bullying, dangerous driving and, in particular, the safety of female drivers.

For Road Sense 2006, carrentals.co.uk is offering free stickers to schools to help protect pupils from the dangers of dark nights and hazardous driving conditions.

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# Independent Schools

Your guide to choosing the right school for your children

ALTHOUGH important, it is often not just the academic qualities of an independent school which attracts parents to send their children there. As well as a commitment to encouraging and helping pupils to achieve the best examination results, it is the combination of this and extra-curricular activities that brings out the best in children attending independent schools. It is now widely recognised that music, art, sports and other extra-curricular activities play an important part in a child's education and many independent schools have taken this on board for a number of years. Most offer a wide range of activities and sports and pupils are encouraged to take up something and although it is recognised that not every youngster will be good at hockey or netball, perhaps they will find their niche in clay pigeon shooting or swimming. The choice and type activities in an independent school can be a factor parents might want to take into account when thinking of which school to send their children to. The schools often have their own swimming pools, squash and tennis courts, gymnasiums and all-weather pitches. Some have access to their own golf courses while others allow pupils to

bring their own horses to the school, where they are stabled along side the school's own. Children are encouraged to take part in competitive events both inter-house and at regional and national levels. One school even encourages competition in clay pigeon shooting with an eye on future Olympic and Commonwealth Games teams. One of the major advantages of independent boarding schools is the chance for pupils to get together with others in their leisure time and take part in clubs and societies. They can include art, film, fitness, chess, cadets, debating, piping, sailing and many more. These are usually available in the evenings and at weekends and children have the added advantage of support from their tutors. Some will be related to academic departments, like music or drama while others are purely recreational. The Duke of Edinburgh Award is a scheme which is often taken on board by independent schools and offers pupils a series of challenges in physical, community and skills activities and allows them to take what they have learned in other parts of their schooling and adapt them to the scheme.

Extra-curricular activities can also be the door through which parents and the wider community can glimpse what the children have been up and learned throughout the academic year outside the usual parent-teacher-pupil relationship. Drama clubs will work towards end-of-term plays, musicals, and recitals while choirs and those who play instruments will entertain at charity events and art and design exhibitions let pupils show off their talents. Independent schools do not live in isolation and pupils are encouraged to work with their local community and can raise thousands of pounds for charities at home and abroad by hosting events. Sending your child to an independent school is not something that is the preserve of the very well off with a number of independent schools have scholarships and bursaries based on financial circumstances. But there is no doubt parents turn to independent schools to look for an all-round education for their child or children. They offer a high standard of education with small classes and the kind of individual attention that gets the best out of each pupil. The schools offer a broad curriculum and an ethos of good discipline, with clearly defined values which are centred round courtesy, respect and integrity.

## DEVELOPING THE WHOLE CHILD

If you are considering boarding education as an option for your son or daughter and you value them living in a small close-knit family-style community, then Morrison's Academy in Crieff is right for you. The two boarding houses, one for girls the other for boys, are small enough for the houseparents, supported by their tutors, to be able to offer individual care and guidance. At the same time, because Morrison's has a substantial number of day pupils it can deliver, with a high degree of success, a wide choice of subjects at Intermediate Two, Higher and Advanced Higher levels. Small class sizes, a high level of pastoral support, and the dedication of staff means Morrison's Academy provides an excellent education. Over 95% of the sixth-form pupils go on to university and enter a wide range of professional and business careers thereafter. It is the School's belief that the development of academic potential is of very great, although not sole, importance and that it should be complemented by participation in the broad range of cultural, sporting and leadership activities on offer. In this way Morrison's Academy is able to educate the whole person. At Morrison's you can take part in the John Muir Award, play in the School Orchestra, learn leadership skills in the Combined Cadet Force, build a digital photography portfolio, learn to ride a horse, play chess and either

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS AT STRATHALLAN

Strathallan is already one of Scotland's leading independent boarding and day schools. The academic programme is central to life at the school, and it has maintained its position as one of the leading establishments in the country for academic achievement. The School aims to provide such a range of academic work, games and activities that there is an opportunity for everyone to excel at something. Prospective pupils are always welcome to make an appointment to look around the School and to meet key staff who would be involved in their pastoral care, the classroom and the extra-curricular programme. Please telephone 01738 812546 to make an appointment. The stated aim of Strathallan School is to provide opportunities for all to excel and the range of scholarships available reflects the school's intention to encourage those with outstanding ability in one of a number of different areas. Scholarship exams are being held in February for children aged 10, 11 or 12 and in March for pupils up to the age of 14. Strathallan is one of



Pupils from Ardvreck School at the top of Buachaille Etive Beag

## ARDVRECK PREP SCHOOL

in Crieff is just over an hour from Oban and offers academic excellence and a huge range of activities, all in the context of a proper traditional boarding school. There is no weekly- or flexi-boarding at Ardvreck and what this means is that in the evenings and at weekends nobody is 'left behind' - we are all here, keeping busy and enjoying school life to the full. The sporting curriculum is extensive, with the boys and girls playing team and/or individual sports every afternoon; while much that we do is competitive, the underlying ethos is not: it is that every pupil should be fully fit and that each should develop skills to the best of his or her ability while learning always to respect the spirit in which games should be played. Out and about, we yomp, climb, camp, canoe, kayak, travel to the West Coast (a real highlight of the year - a week on Rua Fiola) and run leadership training courses. And there is serious academic work going on too: our last ten years' record of 100% success at Common Entrance and huge range of academic scholarships won to senior schools stands as proof of that particular pudding!



Two pupils of Ardvreck School

## THE SCOTTISH COUNCIL OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

The Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS), can help parents choose the right school for their children. SCIS publishes a free directory each year that gives details of independent schools throughout Scotland including information on scholarships and bursaries, fees and contact information. The information is also available on the web at www.scis.org.uk. For further details contact SCIS at 21 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7PE. Tel: 0131 220 2106. Email: information@scis.org.uk

## STRATHALLAN OPPORTUNITIES for all TO EXCEL

AT STRATHALLAN WE AIM TO PROVIDE AN OUTSTANDING EDUCATION - ACADEMIC, SOCIAL AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR - WHICH GIVES OPPORTUNITIES for all pupils to excel, thus developing their ABILITIES TO BENEFIT THEMSELVES AND OTHERS. Strathallan is one of Scotland's leading independent boarding and day schools, for boys and girls aged 10 to 18. The school is located on a beautiful 150-acre campus just a few miles outside Perth.



Discussion time at Strathallan



A young artist at Morrison's Academy

To appreciate fully all that Strathallan has to offer, we invite you to come and have a look for yourself - and catch a glimpse of your child's future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: THE ADMISSIONS SECRETARY, STRATHALLAN SCHOOL, FORGANDENNY, PERTSHIRE PH2 9EG. TEL 01738 812546. ADMISSIONS@STRATHALLAN.CO.UK WWW.STRATHALLAN.CO.UK

Strathallan is a Scottish charity dedicated to education. Charity number SCO 08903

## KILGRASTON CONTINUES TO BUCKS THE TREND IN BOARDING SUCCESS WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF PUPILS IN MORE THAN TEN YEARS

Celebrating its Position as joint second in the Scottish League Tables

Since the arrival of its first male Principal, Michael Farmer, two years ago, Kilgraston, now the only independent boarding school for girls in Scotland, located at Bridge of Earn by Perth, has continued to buck the trend with a further 10% increase in its boarding enrolments over the past year. Going from strength to strength the school has been able to implement an exciting development plan which has included the building of a new sports pavilion, the creation of a state of the art theatre, and a contemporary and bright bistro-style new dining room as well as the refurbishment of the Learning Resource Centre, boarding facilities and Prep School. Higher A - C grades, an overall achievement that was only bettered only by Glasgow High School and equaled by Hutcheson's Grammar School. The school not only provides a sound education to all of its pupils but also encourages strengths of individuals, giving comfort, support and friendship to the girls whenever it is needed and recognises and nurtures the uniqueness of every girl. Evidence clearly shows that single sex education is more effective for girls and allows them to excel at all areas of the curriculum. Recognising that girls mature differently from boys, Kilgraston is one of the few schools in Scotland that provides an education geared specifically to the needs of girls. Appreciating that today's girls will be tomorrow's leaders, Kilgraston offers no limitations on their academic and personal ambitions, and understanding that women are expected to balance many roles during their lives, their paths to future success will require leadership, confidence, independence, integrity and an instinct to achieve, all of which are provided at Kilgraston. Academic success is

balanced by an extensive range of extra-curricula activities allowing the girls to achieve the highest standards in sport, drama and music. The school has a particularly good reputation at encouraging its girls to be creative and many of the 235 students learn a musical instrument, participate in choir and become involved in drama. Kilgraston also has a legendary reputation for art with many past pupils gaining national recognition. The school also offers an enviable range of sporting facilities including floodlit all-weather tennis courts, riding school with livery (girls are welcome to bring their own horse, or pony with them to the school) extensive playing fields and a superb sports hall and fitness room. There is also a thriving outdoor education curriculum with many girls each year achieving the Duke of Edinburgh Gold award. The school has also had a dedicated Director of Weekend and Outdoor Activities whose ensures that all of the girls are fully able benefit from a wide range of additional extra activities such as white water rafting, rock climbing, kayaking and abseiling. Kilgraston is an educational success story. This year two of its Sixth Form pupils have been offered places at Oxbridge and several others have received unconditional offers of places at other leading Universities. In recent years Kilgraston girls have progressed to study degrees in: engineering, medicine, law, veterinary science, art, geography, English, music, chemistry and many other subjects. Where else can our daughters achieve maturity and independence as well as academic success?



Art classes at Kilgraston

## developing the whole child



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**Ardvreck School**  
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Tel: 01764 653112  
www.ardvreck.org.uk

**Kilgraston School**  
Bridge of Earn, Perthshire PH2 9BQ  
Tel 01738 812257  
www.kilgraston.com

**Morrison's Academy**  
Ferntower Road, Crieff, Perthshire PH7 3AN  
Tel: 01764 653885  
www.morrisonacademy.org

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**Sìostam ùr sàbhalaidh dha iasgairean**

FHUAIR iasgairean nan Eilean Siar cothrom coimhead air sìostam ùr sàbhalaidh a thatar an dòchas a bheir lùghdachadh air an àireamh dhaoine a tha a' call ann beatha aig muir.

Bha riochdairean bho Institiut Nàiseanta Rìoghail nam Bàtaichean-teasairginn anns an h-eileanan fad na seachdain sa chaidh gus an sìostam a shealltainn dha iasgairean.

Tha dà thaobh sònraichte air: theid rabhadh a thoirt dha na seirbheisean teasairginn cho luath 's a theuteas cuideigin dhan mhuir agus tha fios gan cur thuca fad na h-ùine mu càite a bheil gach eathar.

Thatar a' sùileachadh gum bidh e gu h-àraidh math dhaibhsan a tha ag iasgach leotha pèin, oir gèir thic chan urrainn dhaibh fios a chur nuair a bhios iad ann an trioblaid.

Thuir rùnaire Comann Iasgairean nan Eilean Siar, Donnchadh MacAonghais: 'Sna 25 bliadhna a dh'fhalbh chiall 25 iasgair sna h-Eileanan Siar am beatha aig muir. Bhiodh a' chuid mhòr dhen sin, mura a bhiodh iad uile, còmhla rinn an-duigh nam biodh cothrom aca air an sìostam ùr seo.'

**FISHERMEN in the Western Isles were shown new equipment which it is hoped will drastically reduce the number of lives lost at sea.**

Representatives from the Royal National Lifeboat Institution were in the islands last week to demonstrate the system to fishermen.

It works on two main fronts: an alarm will be raised with the rescue services as soon as someone falls into the water and they are given constant updates on a boat's location.

It is expected that it will be particularly beneficial to those fishing on their own, as very often they are unable to raise an alarm when in difficulty.

Western Isles Fishermen's Association secretary Duncan McInnes said: 'In the last 25 years in the Western Isles, 25 fishermen have lost their lives.'

'Many of them, if not all, would be alive today if they had had access to this equipment.'

**Soirbheachas an taigh-spadaidh**

THA SIA mìosan gu math soirbheachail air a bhith aig taigh-spadaidh Steòrnabhaigh, a' toirt dhaibh an cothrom coimhead air adhart le beagan de mhìneachadh.

Dh'fhoillsich Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, a tha a' ruith an t-seirbheis, gu bheil iad air cead fhaighinn beathaichean mairt nas sine na 30 mìos a dh'aois a spadaidh. Chan eil fad sam bith bho chaidh aontachadh na beathaichean mairt seo a mharbhadh airson biadh, an dèidh chaidh casg a chur orra ri linn galair a' bhSe. 'S dòcha a-nis gun tig beathaichean a thoirt bho thir-mòr airson a bhith air am spadaidh air an eilean.

A thuilleadh air an seo, thairis air na sia mìosan a bha e fosgailte an-uiridh, laimhsich iad fada barrachd bheathaichean na am bliadhna rona sin. Chan eil an taigh-spadaidh fosgailte ach bhon Lùnastal chun Dùbhlachd. Thuir Coimheach MacLleoin, croitair ann an Leodhas, gum biodh an cead ùr gu sònraichte buannachd dhaibh-san aig an robh stoc tradiseanta, mar crodh Gaidhealach, a tha toirt nas fhaide ruighinn ire spadaidh. Ach, bhiodh e na naidheachd mhòr dhan a h-uile duine, dh'inns e, nam b'urrainn dhan taigh-spadaidh fuireachd fosgailte nas fhaide na sia mìosan air sgàth 's an obair a bharrachd a gheibh iad.

**THE ABATTOIR in Stornoway has had a very successful six months, giving reason to look to the future with optimism.**

Western Isles Council, which runs the service, revealed that it has been granted a licence to slaughter cattle over 30 months of age. Permission to allow cattle of such an age to be processed for food has only recently been granted, after it was banned following the BSE outbreak.

It has given rise to the possibility of animals from the mainland being brought to the island for slaughter. In addition, over the six months the centre was open last year, it handled a far greater number of animals than in the previous year. The abattoir is only open from August to December.

Kenny MacLennan, a crofter from Lewis, said the new licence would be particularly beneficial to those who have traditional stock, such as Highland cattle, which take longer to reach slaughter condition.

However, it will be welcome news for everyone, he added, if the abattoir was open for longer than six months as a result of more work.

**Ionad ùr coimhearsnachd**

CHAIHD ionad ùr coimhearsnachd fhosgladh ann an Leòdhas Dihaoine a chaidh.

Chosg Ionad Coimhearsnachd Rubha an Tiùmpain £250,000 agus thug e trì bliadhna san ullachadh. Am measg na gheibhear innte tha àite-bidhe, goireasan eadar-lìon agus gàrradh ùr tarraingeach.

Thuir a' chomhairliche ionadail, Dòmhnall Iain MacSuain: 'S e fìor ionad coimhearsnachd a tha seo. Tha goireasan ann dhan sean is òg agus tha àrainneachd càirdèal ann dhan choinhearsnachd far am faod iad coinneachadh gach là agus bruidhinn ri chèile.'

**A NEW community centre was opened last Friday in Lewis. The Tiùmpain Head Community Centre cost £250,000 and has taken three years to come to fruition.**

It incorporates a cafe, internet services and a beautiful new community garden.

Local councillor Donald John MacSween said: 'This is a community centre in the truest sense of the phrase. It contains facilities for the old and the young and represents a friendly environment for the community to meet and share their experiences on a daily basis.'



Dale Kupris was delighted at the great turnout for the Community Tops Programme on Lismore.

**Around the Rurals**

**Kilbrandon**

THE FIRST meeting of the Kilbrandon branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute (SWRI) in 2006 was held in the Small Hall, Easdale, on January 10.

Janice Baxter, president, wished all members a Happy New Year.

The guest speaker was Margaret Whitton, who demonstrated the art of sugarcraft. Margaret showed members a selection of her cakes, plaques and decorations, before making exquisite roses from fondant icing and flower paste. Although this looked simple in Margaret's expert hands, her skill and patience produce miniature works of art to be treasured long after the cakes are merely a fond memory.

The vote of thanks was given by Shona Neil.

**Strathfillan**

MRS H Lennan, president, welcomed seven members to the meeting of Strathfillan SWRI in Criannach Hall on January 10 when a members' night was enjoyed by everyone.

Mrs McLennan demonstrated pancake making and Mrs Anderson showed slides of local interest. Mrs Winton showed members how to paint a picture with two colours.

Competition: Cushion, one entry, Mrs Winton. Tea was served by the ladies.

**Tiree**

THE TIREE branch of SWRI met in the Resource Centre, Crossapol, on January 17.

Eighteen members attended the meeting which included a cookery demonstration by Mairi Brady and her daughter Lorna. Mairi very kindly stepped in at the last minute when the booked speaker had to cancel.

She showed members her method of making choux pastry plus two different chocolate sauces to top either éclairs or profiteroles.

**Torosay**

AT THE January meeting, members welcomed Mary Van Heerden to give a talk about her experiences in Zimbabwe prior to her coming to live on Mull in 2004.

She told her audience of one terrifying experience when, on her way home in her car, four men had followed her into her garden. One of them had pulled a gun to her head and held the trigger. Miraculously it failed to go off. This type of car hijacking is fairly common in the current state of unrest in the country.

Mrs Van Heerden's reaction to this horrific event was to go on radio to try to make contact with other victims of this crime. She was hijacked in May and by September she had set up a charitable trust, sponsored entirely by the private sector. The trust had three aims: public awareness; counselling and dealing with police and courts.

Most victims suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. This is an illness characterised by flashbacks, nightmares, anxiety and other conditions which can follow a traumatic experience.

It can last up to three years and requires professional counselling.

Despite receiving death threats, Mrs Van Heerden continued with this valuable work. She was named WI Woman of the Year.

**Fionnphort**

FIONNPHORT branch of the SWRI met on Wednesday January 11 to welcome the New Year and make plans for the 2006 schedule entries and community table.

An exchange of ideas took place informally round the

table whilst members engaged in a tile and glass painting session introduced by Lorna Davies.

A most relaxing and enjoyable evening's entertainment took place and a variety of works of art were produced.

Members were also pleased to introduce new member Tessa Howell to the group. Refreshments were provided by Lorna and Janet.

**Kilmore**

THE NOVEMBER meeting took place on the ninth at Kilmore Hall.

Phil Cotton, a GP and academic, spoke on Fair Trade. He was greatly influenced by his experiences working in Mozambique and has maintained an interest in supporting such communities.

Phil said that trade sanctions prevented many from creating a sustainable economy, often hampered by lack of basic facilities. He stated that there were more telephone landlines on the island of Manhattan than in the whole of sub-Saharan Africa.

Fair Trade allows people to provide for themselves rather than rely on charity. It benefits not just the seller but the entire area, enabling the building and maintenance of systems to provide clean water, health care and education, leading to further development.

The large gathering eagerly took the chance to stock up on Fair Trade goods from the wide selection which Phil brought from the Rainbow Turtle Trading Company, including cards, crafts and food.

Competition: Item made from Fair Trade chocolate - 1 Isabel Smith; 2 Rosemary Moore.

On December 12, in Kilmore Hall, the meeting took the form of a Christmas party. Many members and friends took part in the party games devised by Fiona Dickie and Anne Robertson.

**Lismore**

Your correspondent is Pauline Dowling: 01631 760 293

**Community Tops course**

CHILDREN and young adults of Lismore had four hours of exercise and fun when Dale Kupris, Active Schools Co-ordinator for Oban, Lorn, and the Isles, introduced them to the Community Tops programme.

Designed by the Youth Sports Trust and funded by SportsScotland, the course is designed to qualify adults to use the two large bags of sports equipment which Community Tops offers so that, regardless of skill, everyone has a chance to get fit and enjoy it. Dale was impressed with the turnout

and the great enthusiasm for the games.

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CONGRATULATIONS and welcome to Cait McCullagh on her appointment as Museum Development Officer for the Comman Eachdraidh Liosmor.

Your correspondent is Pauline Dowling: 01631 760 293

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Your correspondent is D Morrison: 01859 540217

**Strong wind**

AGAIN the island has been battered by a strong south-east wind; the fleet has been berthed and fishermen prevented from creeling for the day.

This is a common feature of creel fishing and the fierceness of the storms can be judged by the effect they have on creelers' earnings.

As a result of this heavy weather the fish vans have not called for a period as the fish supplies have been so scarce.

Now time, and its change, brings other means of heating and each winter more people have dismissed the peat fire.

So in times of storms that are so strong they keep the creelers at home and people by their fires it was a blessing in itself having electricity supplies here and it seems outwith the Western Isles.

Peat fires

IN FORMER days peat stacks could be seen within a short distance of most dwellings; in reserve for winter fuel.

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Peat fires



Some of those who entertained at Saturday's ceilidh at the Cruachan branch of An Comunn Gaidhealach. 0414y01

**Taynuilt ceilidh gets feet tapping**

ONCE again a large number of artistes drew in an appreciative audience to the monthly An Comunn Gaidhealach, Cruachan branch's ceilidh in Taynuilt Village Hall.

Fear an taighe was Murdo Iain MacDonald, archivist with Argyll and Bute Council.

The evening started off with four young pipers from Oban High School Pipe Band,

Neil Jordan, Keith MacRae, Donald Morrison and Scott Felgate.

Dancers from the Toni Russell school of dance entertained the audience before Royal National Mod Silver Pendant winner Nicola Pearson took to the stage.

Also singing were Gold Medal winners Angus Smith and Mairi MacArthur, while Hector McFadyen was on the accordion and Ann Barlow on the fiddle.</

# The Oban Times

& West Highland Times

## A disease of our time

AN OUTBREAK of the antibiotic-resistant bug MRSA at Lorn and the Islands District General Hospital in Oban has raised many questions, not the least of which is our understanding of what the term MRSA actually means.

According to medical sources, MRSA is a common term given to any *Staphylococcus* bacteria which proves resistant to standard use of antibiotic. As a result the bacteria rapidly spread and while not life-threatening to the fit and healthy, hospital patients do not fit into this category.

Other questions raised include how bacteria can thrive in hospital wards which should be regarded as a 'germ free' zones, and why easily accessible, understandable, information is not readily forthcoming from the NHS when incidents occur.

Our health service is based on trust, accuracy and facts, not bland politically correct statements aimed at deflecting blame.

## 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.

## Address

FURTHER to a court report in last week's edition, we have been asked to point out that Derek Darrah, whose address was given in court as 21B Combie Street, Oban, does not live at that address.

## GLASGOW LETTER

### Barra leads the way

IN THE second full week of Celtic Connections, it was the turn of Barra to feature in the Songs of Scotland series of concerts with a Gaelic input. It was a sell out and the packed audience was treated to a great night of Barra music from Roddy Campbell, Maggie MacInnes, Maeve MacKinnon and Cathy Ann MacPhee, with plenty of humour thrown in.

They did a lot of waulking and a lot of praising of MacNeil of Barra and it was clear from the outset all the artists felt privileged to be part of an evening dedicated to their homeland.

It was pleasing to see the other Gaelic islands represented in the audience but if Celtic Connections continues with this superb initiative next year, in my opinion, they should be looking for an alternative venue. The Universal Club is very narrow and if you are unfortunate enough to be seated towards the back you will not see the artists. It somehow defeats the purpose of going to a live music event, especially when instruments such as the clarsach are being played and the artist, in this case Maggie MacInnes, has to be sitting down.

However, Maggie did not sit for long as she was off to the Piping Centre the following evening for an evening with Irish singer Colum Sands, and what an enjoyable occasion it was.

The whole evening was built round the Barra/Newry seed boat connection which linked the homelands of them both. This was an example of a Celtic Connection evening when you really did not know beforehand what it would be like but you would soon learn.

Both Maggie and Colum quickly drew the audience into an intimate evening of song and stories. It was obvious they were enjoying themselves and so were the audience with a highlight being Colum's stories surrounding the celebrations of a wake in Ireland. A very sad subject but tears of laughter from the audience. Great stuff.

A bonus at Celtic Connections is that as well as the artists whose names appear in the programme others join them on stage and this is exactly what happened at the event advertised as Julie Fowles and Jenna Reid.

The Gaelic Singer of the Year and the Best Up and Coming Musician of the Year sharing a platform for the evening should surely be enough, but not so.

Jenna brought her sister Bethany and Julie had John McCusker and Iain MacDonald. Between them they had three guitarists and a double bass player, all excellent exponents of traditional music.

One only had to sit back and enjoy a feast of music, whether it was Jenna's wonderful interpretation and playing of fiddle music or Julie's beautiful renditions of Gaelic songs interspersed with amazing turns on the whistle. As an added bonus they all took to the stage at the end of the evening. Wonderful.

**Last few days**  
**Friday January 27:** Danu and Dochas, Arches, 7.30pm. Songs of Scotland, Moidart, Lochaber and Wester Ross. Charlie MacColl, Allan MacDonald, Steven MacIver and

Margaret MacLellan, Universal Folk Club, 7.45pm. Skipinnish, Piping Centre, 8pm.

**Saturday January 28:** Calum MacCrimmon, Allan MacDonald, Sarah Naylor and Angus Grant, Piping Centre, 8pm. James Grant, Carol Laula and Kieran Docherty, St Andrews in the Square, 8pm.

**Sunday January 29:** Taste of Fest, Isabel MacAskill, Tron Theatre, 4pm. Clìar and Session A9, Old Fruitmarket, at 9.30pm.

At the *Skipinnish* concert on Friday evening Angus and Andrew will be joined by Malcolm Jones, Allan Henderson, Rachel Walker, Andrew MacPherson and Duncan Nicholson. A concert not to be missed.

### Excitement elsewhere

FRIDAY January 13 was the evening of the Comunn an Taobh-an-Iar annual Highland Ball when a crowd of 200 danced the night away to Charlie Kirkpatrick's Band.

Pipers Graham Richardson and James MacLean started proceedings and with guest singer Ian Carmichael in fine voice a great night was had by all.

Like Celtic Connections, this event is now well established in the January calendar and with such high numbers attending one that obviously is looked forward to by many people.

### Family ceilidh

TO GET 2006 underway the Glasgow Skye Association held a family ceilidh and it was one with a difference.

Solo artists were teenager Kirsteen Nicolson Hunt and Kenna Campbell and the remainder of the singing for the evening involved audience participation. Throw in a quiz and a competition together with the welcome strapp and those in attendance had a great night carefully stewarded by president Seumas Campbell.

### Diary dates

**Thursday January 26:** Glasgow Sutherland Association Burns Night, Balshagray Social Club, Clydeview Lane, off Broomhill Avenue, 7.30pm.

**Friday January 27:** Helensburgh Highlanders Association, Highland Ball/Dinner, Commodore Hotel, 7.30pm. Glasgow Uist and Barra Association, ceilidh/Dance, Whitefield Road Community Hall, Ibrox, 9pm.

**Saturday January 28:** Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association, Buntata's Sgadan, Partick Burgh Hall, 8pm. Motherwell and District Highlanders Association, ceilidh/dance, Dalziel Saint Andrews Church Hall, 7.30pm.

**Monday January 30:** St Columba Church Guild, Scot's Night, 7.30pm

**Friday February 3:** Mull and Iona Annual Gathering, Partick Burgh Hall, 7.30pm.

**Saturday February 4:** Stirling branch An Comunn, ceilidh, 7.30pm.

### Pub scene

PARK Bar entertainment will be provided by the Ballochmyle Band, Gary Forrest and Deoch an Dorus on consecutive evenings while in the Ilay Inn it will be Fergie MacDonald on Friday and Hell for Leather on Saturday.

**Neil Murray, telephone 0141 954 8105. Email neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk.**



## Kinlochleven youngsters - early 1950s

Duncan Cameron of Garbhein Crescent, Kinlochleven, sent us this week's flashback photograph which shows a group of youngsters in Kinlochleven in the early 1950s. Pictured are: Valerie Budge, June MacMillan, Moira MacIntyre, Muriel Cassidy, Margaret Rankine, Agnes Jack, Andrew MacQuelkin, David Wood, Tommy Cassidy, Douglas Cassidy, Gordon Cameron, Evan Budge, Alister Reid and Cameron Budge. 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.

## Letters to the Editor

PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB  
 Telephone: 01631 568000  
 e-mail: editor@obantimes.co.uk  
 www.obantimes.co.uk  
 Fax: 01631 568001

### Keep Oban Airport flying high

Sir,  
 It was with regret that I read about the present situation at Oban Airport - twice winners of *Flyer Magazine* Airfield of the Year.

My family is privileged to have lived under the shadow of Ben Lora for generations and in recent years have slept soundly, safe in the knowledge that air traffic is being expertly guided - especially useful on busy weekends of which there have been many - to this popular location by Paul Keegan and his team.

Many in this beautiful part of Scotland had their hearts lifted when upgrade plans were announced. What a boost for the local economy. Numerous businesses benefit from visiting aircraft with passengers and crew staying in the area both short and long term. Paul and his team have built up a relationship with these people encouraging them to return again and again.

If something is not done soon all this good work will be wasted. I hope the powers that be will not let this happen and are working with Paul and his team, taking advice on how to continue to move forward with this exciting venture based on their successful formula. We must not lose this tremendous asset.

The appeal of this airfield is enjoyed by young and old alike. Residents of Ford Spence Court enjoy watching visiting aircraft from their excellent vantage point and I know of a 15-year-old in this area whose passion for flying has been fuelled by Paul Keegan's enthusiasm so much so that he starts flying lessons soon with a view to a career in aviation.

I hope that this award winning airfield continues to offer its Highland hospitality seven days a week. The successful recipe has worked so far.

**Catherine Hunter, Benderloch.**

### Non-existent Morvern

Sir,  
 Last week you reported on the likely recommendation of the Boundary Commission for Scotland that Lochaber will become two multi-member wards -

described as Fort William and Ardnarmurchan and Mallaig and Kilmallie.

You further reported that the south ward 'includes Claggan, Fort William, Ardnarmurchan and Glencoe'.

It is a well-known fact that Morvern does not exist. The Post Office says it is in Oban. The Highland Council roads department does not have a single road sign bearing the word 'Morvern'; VisitScotland has deleted it from the map of 'Oban, Mull, Iona and Ardnarmurchan' and The General Register Office for Scotland is mounting a census in Lochaber and Breadalbane fronted by a map labelling the Morvern Peninsula 'Ardnarmurchan and Lochaber' whatever that means.

Being airbrushed out of existence is not merely offensive and insulting. It entails significant social and economic disadvantages. Despite being lumped together with Ardnarmurchan by so many agencies, none of the benefits of the Initiative at the Edge cascade down to Morvern.

Being ignored by VisitScotland doesn't help attempts to develop tourism in the area. Road maintenance and repairs feature at the end of a very long list, whilst facilities for the elderly are deemed adequate when provided more than 20 miles away in Strontian.

Perhaps being deemed not to exist might extend to not being liable to pay Council Tax? Somehow I doubt it.

**Dr DAL Watt, Lochaline, Morvern.**

### Entertaining contribution from Scalpay

Sir,  
 Your Scalpay correspondent Donald Morrison included in his recent report seasonal good wishes to all readers.

I am, together with a small group of friends, an enthusiastic and regular reader of Mr Morrison's column and we would be most grateful if you would convey to Mr Morrison our very great appreciation of his contribution to your newspaper together with our good wishes for the year ahead.

We trust he will continue to entertain and instruct us through his writings for many years to come.

**Name and address supplied.**

### Whisky soap made on Skye

Sir  
 Having read *The Oban Times* this week, we would like to point out that the lady in Islay is not unique for producing whisky soap.

Our company, The Isle of Skye Soap Company, has been producing it for five years.

We even won Scottish Gift of the Year in 2003 for our soap.

Ours in made with our island's only malt whisky, malted barley and orange and is called the Original Malt Whisky Soap.

I would be much obliged if you could mention this in your paper. You have very kindly mentioned us before.

**Fiona Meiklejohn, Isle of Skye Soap Company.**

### Terrific toddlers boost funds

Sir,  
 We would like to thank all the under-fives in the Highlands who took part in the Big Toddle for Barnardo's.

These terrific toddlers helped to raise more than £1 million for Barnardo's early years work and for their local community.

Toddlers in the Highlands were sponsored to walk a half-mile. They joined youngsters from thousands of pre-schools, nurseries and toddler groups across the UK. The charity believes in helping children in their early years, as we know that a better start in life leads to a brighter future as an adult.

The Big Toddle is all about children helping children. Groups were invited to keep 25 per cent of the money they raised for a local cause, or to support their own voluntary group.

Barnardo's Big Toddle will take place again in June

### Advanced Scottish Gaelic learners

Sir,  
 There are 40,000 adults resident in Scotland who are able to read, write and understand Scottish Gaelic.

However, these people are unable to converse in Gaelic.

If you fit into the above group and are a parent, grandparent or for that matter anyone over the age of 18 years and would like to take that all important step of becoming conversationally fluent in Scottish Gaelic, CNSA would very much like to hear from you.

It can offer you super fast fluency through its tried and tested and extremely popular Total Immersion Plus (TIP) courses.

The objective is to bring 90 per cent of those from the above group to a fluency in well under 200 hours. Nothwithstanding, if one is a complete beginner, they too can achieve a fluency in 200 hours or less; much less if they are highly motivated and committed to the task.

If any of this appeals to you either as a tutor or student, please contact CNSA on 01463 225469 or 0141 226 5222 as soon as possible.

The quicker we can bring a group of people together, the quicker the course can begin.

**Finlay M Macleoid, Comhairle Nan Sgoiltean Araich, Inverness.**

### DE THA DOL?

#### Roghainn nam Ban

FHUAIR sinn teiidh ùr air an t-seachdain seo - beathach mòr uabhasach a tha 'a' toirt a-mach leth dhen rùm.

Bha sinn air chèilidh air càrdan aig àm na Nollaig agus bha iad a' sealltainn dhan Bhodach mar a chitheadh iad cus a' bharrachd de ghèam ball-coise aig na taobhan agus a bha iad a' faicinn air an t-seann teiidh. Chòrd seo uamhasach math ris a' Bhodach againne. Cha bhi e fhèin a' dol a bhith a' buntainn ach a cheannach nam paigearan gach madainn agus corra uair botal bainne no lof ma chiumhniceas e. Ach an ath turas a bha mise a' dol dhan baile thuirt e, 'Feuch, nuair a tha thu ann na bùithean, gum faigh thu fear dhe na teiidhs mhòr a tha siud dhomh.'

Rinn mise mar a dh' iarradh orm.

Agus dè leugh mi ann am paigear-naidheachd aig an deireadh-sheachdainn ach Murchadh MacLèoid a' sgrìobhadh mun dearbh teiidh agus e ag ràdh gur e na boireannaich a bha a' ceannach nan teiidhs mhòra seo. Sin, thuirt e, a bha na staitistearachd a' dearbhadh. Ged a tha na staitistearachd a' dearbhadh gu bheil na boireannaich gan ceannach, chan eil sin a' ciallachadh ach nach eil an corr roghainn aca. Chan e idir gur e sin am miann. Mar a biodh na boireannaich a' ceannach, bhiodh an dachaigh gun bhlaith gun anllan. Sin an rud a tha cearr air staitistearachd an còmhnaidh,

Much credit is due to the people behind Argyll Youth Theatre and, in this instance particularly, the producer, Gwyneth Neil for her work and dedication.

It must therefore have been really discouraging for the young people and their mentors that the performances were so very poorly supported by the public at large.

**Annie Graham, Feochan Gardens, Oban.**

### 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 an e-mail, 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

### 'The Man's the Gowd...'

YESTERDAY, for weeks before it and days after it, all round the world the life of Scotland's National Bard Robert Burns has been and will be celebrated in song and story with traditional Scottish fare, requiring haggis, neeps and tatties on the table.

Burns is unique as no other poet is remembered in such a fashion. There's no great annual commemoration on the birthday of William Shakespeare or any major European, American, Chinese or Russian bard.

Indeed, Burns Suppers are held in all these countries and Burns' words have been translated into so many languages.

A facile explanation for his continuing popularity is this totally erroneous picture of an ignorant peasant who delighted the good burghers of Edinburgh with such wonderful verse and a charm that would melt the heart of the most stonemason's wife.

Of course, he was no ignorant ploughman as some romantics would have us believe. His father was punctilious in ensuring that he and his brother were educated not only in reading, writing and arithmetic but in French, Latin and Greek, even to the extent that when he needed help on the small holding he sent his sons to school on alternate weeks so that one of them would always be at home to help him.

His writings reveal that education. Indeed, Robert Burns would never have passed the examination to enter the Excise if he was just a 'rude ploughboy'. His fame as an educated, cultured charmer spread particularly after the publication of his Kilmarnock edition. It is 210 years since he died in penury, aged 37.

Great celebrations of his birth are planned for 2009. In purely mercenary terms, the occasion will be rightly used by the Scottish Executive and VisitScotland to bring visitors from all round the world to Scotland, in particular to Ayrshire and Dumfries where he died in 1796, maybe even to Inveraray about which he has some caustic things to say.

There should also be a glorious celebration at Taynuilt where there is a family connection. Dr Anne Lorne Gillies is currently working on a television programme to explain his family connection there.

### 'And send us from thy bounteous store...'

I TAKE my hat off to those who organise Burns Suppers and those who speak at them.

As one of the former I can say there are always sleepless nights and there certainly were more this year.

But they were well worth it when we sat down in the splendid Argyllshire Gathering Hall last Friday to



enjoy a MacGregor Hotels feast and to hear a splendid tribute to the Bard from Oban-born MSP Maureen Macmillan, another to the *Land In Which We Live*, by Dr Mac Armstrong with an off-the-cuff reply by Councillor Donald (Skye) McIntosh, plus a witty and skilful *Toast to the Lassies* by local architect John Coleman, with a quite outstanding riposte from Chief Inspector Ciorstan Shearer.

These all-male Burns suppers don't know what they are missing by banning the ladies, even the waitresses from dining rooms on occasion.

And if you weary of hearing the annual rendition of *Tam O' Shanter* invite Maureen Macmillan to recite *Kate O' Shanter*. Add the singing of Ted Heath, the political skills of local MP Alan Reid in remembering to thank everyone who had participated and you have a wonderful cast for a perfect Burns Supper.

If you have never been to the annual honouring of the Bard it's time that you experienced its delights.

Just a thought for the World Burns Federation: surely on the 250th commemoration of Burns' birth it would be an appropriate occasion to invite the member clubs to open their tables to ladies of whom the poet was notoriously fond.

### Fly the Saltire

LAST week, we had a mirthless diatribe about flying the Union Flag from Chancellour of the Exchequer in his quest for the keys of No10 Downing Street.

This week, we have a pathetic bleat from the Colin Fox, leader of the Scottish Socialists, that it's time Scotland got a new national flag despite the fact that the Saltire is reckoned to be the oldest one in the world.

Had Tommy Sheridan remained the leader of the party that Mr Fox makes such a colourful effort to command one can bet he would not have wasted his breath on such a trivial matter.

Tommy's political nous would have told him that atheist, agnostic, Christian, Jew or Muslim would not be stirred in the least about the fact that the white cross on the Saltire is a Christian symbol and therefore an embarrassment to some of them. In any case, Mr Fox hasn't done his research very well as Scotland is still a Christian country with more than three-quarters of the adult population admitting a religious faith if not regular attendance at public worship.

He suggests that we should replace our current Scottish flag with some sort of 'rainbow' flag that would reflect the diversity of our population. Doesn't he know that the rainbow flag is the symbol of gay and lesbian movements?

*McCaig*

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#### Roghainn nam Ban

FHUAIR sinn teiidh ùr air an t-seachdain seo - beathach mòr uabhasach a tha 'a' toirt a-mach leth dhen rùm.

Bha sinn air chèilidh air càrdan aig àm na Nollaig agus bha iad a' sealltainn dhan Bhodach mar a chitheadh iad cus a' bharrachd de ghèam ball-coise aig na taobhan agus a bha iad a' faicinn air an t-seann teiidh. Chòrd seo uamhasach math ris a' Bhodach againne. Cha bhi e fhèin a' dol a bhith a' buntainn ach a cheannach nam paigearan gach madainn agus corra uair botal bainne no lof ma chiumhniceas e. Ach an ath turas a bha mise a' dol dhan baile thuirt e, 'Feuch, nuair a tha thu ann na bùithean, gum faigh thu fear dhe na teiidhs mhòr a tha siud dhomh.'

Rinn mise mar a dh' iarradh orm.

Agus dè leugh mi ann am paigear-naidheachd aig an deireadh-sheachdainn ach Murchadh MacLèoid a' sgrìobhadh mun dearbh teiidh agus e ag ràdh gur e na boireannaich a bha a' ceannach nan teiidhs mhòra seo. Sin, thuirt e, a bha na staitistearachd a' dearbhadh. Ged a tha na staitistearachd a' dearbhadh gu bheil na boireannaich gan ceannach, chan eil sin a' ciallachadh ach nach eil an corr roghainn aca. Chan e idir gur e sin am miann. Mar a biodh na boireannaich a' ceannach, bhiodh an dachaigh gun bhlaith gun anllan. Sin an rud a tha cearr air staitistearachd an còmhnaidh,

### Phrases

Roghainn nam Ban - Women's choice. Beathach mòr uabhasach - a huge big monster. Mar a chitheadh iad cus a' bharrachd de ghèam ball-coise aig na taobhan - how they could see much more of the football game at the sides. An ath turas a bha mise a' dol dhan baile - the next time I was going to the town. Feuch gum faigh thu fear dhe na teiidhs mhòr a tha siud dhomh - try and get me one of those big tellys. Sin a bha na staitistearachd a' dearbhadh - that is what the statistics proved. Nach eil an corr roghainn aca - that they have no other choice. Chan e idir gur e sin am miann - not that that is their wish. Ach a dh' aindheoin a' chiad bheachd a bh' agam air an teiidh ùr - 's ann a tha e 'còrdadh rium a-nis. Tha e mòran nas sgoibhala na an t-seann teiidh a bha a' bruthadh a-mach dhan rùm agus torr uèirichean na chois. Tha am fear seo a' dol air ais ris a' bhalla agus mar a bheil thu ga choimhead fadaidh tu na seithrichean a tharraing air a bheulaibh agus cha mhòr sin gur toir thu an aire dha. 'S dòcha gur e sin i coireach gu bheil na boireannaich ga cheannach.

Roghainn nam Ban - Women's choice. Beathach mòr uabhasach - a huge big monster. Mar a chitheadh iad cus a' bharrachd de ghèam ball-coise aig na taobhan - how they could see much more of the football game at the sides. An ath turas a bha mise a' dol dhan baile - the next time I was going to the town. Feuch gum faigh thu fear dhe na teiidhs mhòr a tha siud dhomh - try and get me one of those big tellys. Sin a bha na staitistearachd a' dearbhadh - that is what the statistics proved. Nach eil an corr roghainn aca - that they have no other choice. Chan e idir gur e sin am miann - not that that is their wish. Ach a dh' aindheoin a' chiad bheachd a bh' agam air an teiidh ùr - but in spite of my first impression of the telly. A bha a' bruthadh a-mach dhan rùm - that was sticking out into the room.

**Criosaidh Dick.**

# Years of dedication reap rewards as doors open on Oban Hospice

BACK in 1999 a group of people decided that Oban should mark the advent of the new Millennium with a hospice and they were amazed at how quickly and wholeheartedly the idea was taken up by the entire town.

So Oban Hospice became a properly constituted organisation with a limited company, trustees and registered as a charity with Dr Ronnie Frew as the chairman; a Friends of Oban Hospice group was established, chaired by Joan McGill, and everyone rolled their sleeves up and set to work.

In April 1999, in response to the public wish for more formal palliative care arrangements, a well-attended public meeting was held and Oban Hospice Ltd was set up as a Company Limited by Guarantee and with charitable status," said Dr Ronnie Frew. "A support group, the Friends of Oban Hospice, was established to encourage enthusiasm and raise funds. Despite the encouraging start, the last six years have been frustrating for the Oban Hospice Board and its supporters and, in particular, for the Friends who have been admirably active throughout."

#### Funding

Historically, Lorn and Islands District General Hospital had two beds in the Nelson Unit (Ward D) allocated to palliative care. When the ward closed in April 2002 these beds were not formally transferred and funding apparently ceased. Dr Frew said: "The

hospice group's initial hope was to develop, with the advice and support of the primary care team and the consultant and nursing staffs, a two to four-bedded dedicated unit, with day care, within the hospital. The annual cost of such a venture is extremely high and, in our case, prohibitively so, without considerable NHS financial support.

"Unfortunately, the frequent administrative changes in the hospital board over a number of years, its heavy financial deficit and the continuing uncertainties have, so far, prevented any such discussion from taking place.

"In addition the primary care teams appear now to be inclining to a hospice-at-home model of care."

#### Agreement

He added: "While the currently problems are being resolved, Oban Hospice Board has reached agreement with NHS Argyll and Clyde to set up and run, on one day a week, a hospice in the day hospital area of the hospital, initially to operate for a three-year period of assessment.

Dr Frew said that Karen King and Anne MacCallum, as the staff and assistant nurses respectively, have 'very much impressed the board with their motivation and initiative'. Volunteers and transport are now being organised and legal requirements are in the process of being satisfied.

"When these necessary formalities are completed the service will start. These

**THIS New Year sees the start in Oban of the hospice service which has been planned for so long and so carefully. A day hospice will begin to operate at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital and from there it is hoped the venture will continue to grow.**

arrangements are more modest than originally envisaged but after the disappointments of the last few years we are delighted finally to be in this position."

In the short space of time since the board and the Friends have been running a staggering £160,000 has been raised - that's not only a lot of soup lunches and coffee mornings.

Secretary of the trustees Raymond Shaw said how many people have given collections from funerals and donations in lieu of flowers to help swell the fund. It showed, if any more proof was needed, just how much people wanted to see a hospice in Oban.

#### Donations

"We received a lot of donations, some very generous, and a lot of people have given the offerings from family funerals, sometimes in excess of £1,000," said Mr Shaw.

All the time that the Friends were fund raising

the trustees were meeting with the NHS to discuss how and where a hospice could be established. The fund-raising and talks all took place against the backdrop of the crisis in NHS Argyll and Clyde, its money woes and subsequent decline.

#### Promises

"Because we are talking about such a lot of money NHS Argyll and Clyde has been terribly afraid to give us the go ahead. We had so many meetings and promises of meetings that didn't materialise," said Mr Shaw.

But the trustees knew how much a hospice meant to Oban, north Argyll and the islands and got dug in and wouldn't give up.

The result can be seen in 2006 when the Day Hospital at Oban is given over for one day a week as a day hospice for terminally-ill patients.

The trustees are working on the belief that mighty oaks from acorns grow; this is seen as the first step.

One day a week people can go to the hospice and receive care and support in a warm, friendly, positive and supporting place. It will give them a change of scene and give their carers a

chance to take a brief breather, or tend to other matters knowing that their loved ones are well taken care of by the dedicated staff now employed by the Oban Hospice. From this one-day-a-week start the hospice movement in Oban plans to go forward and add all the time.

"No one should underestimate the desire of the people of Oban and district to have a hospice. They want it desperately," said Mr Shaw. "My own feeling is that they want bricks and mortar."

"I know we have the concept of hospice in the home now a days but people do still like to see bricks and mortar."

The trustees have not set about applying for major grants yet but that is to come.

"We haven't really applied for grants yet," said Mr Shaw. "Without an actual hospice it is difficult to apply."

"You need to be up and running before you can really apply for grants."

At present the running costs are being met from the funds that the hospice has raised but it is expected that the NHS will support the hospice with at least 30 per cent of its running costs.

#### Expansion

"The area we have is terribly small and we hope to move to bigger premises in the hospital; the available space is very limited and we hope expansion within the hospital will be possible within a short period of time," said Mr Shaw.

In the meantime fund raising continues and the trustees and friends hope that the people of the area will continue to give their generous support to help as the hospice movement in Oban takes off.



Trustees and supporters of Oban Hospice. Back row, left to right, Ian MacIntyre; Commander Graham Hawke; Graeme Pagan; Raymond Shaw, secretary; Professor Jack Matthews; and John Boyd, treasurer. Front row, Dr Ronnie Frew, chairman; Margaret McGregor, chairwoman of the Friends; Lucy Heycock, Macmillan Nurse; Maureen Munro; Anne MacCallum, care assistant, and Joan McGill. 150h0501



Karen King and Anne MacCallum will be the faces of Oban Hospice as they run the day hospice at the hospital. 151h0503

## Karen and Anne in hospice front-line

FOR ONE day a week the day hospital at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital will become Oban Hospice.

People who are terminally ill will be able to enjoy a comfortable secure environment where they will be able to get professional advice and palliative care, counselling and a day out.

The social stimulation of a day away from their usual care routine should not be underestimated for the boost it can give to people.

Karen King is the manager of the day hospice. Karen has lived and worked in Oban for five years. She trained at Monklands Hospital, Airdrie, and is a registered nurse and

midwife with a BSc in nursing.

Karen moved to Islay in 1987 and was ward manager for the hospital there before moving to Oban for family reasons; she has been acting manager at Dunarros, Mull, and does 'bank work' at the hospital in Oban.

With her is Anne MacCallum as care assistant. Oban born and bred, Anne has worked in the NHS for 18 years and in social work, home care and the nursing 'bank'. At present they are working on the job of setting up the day hospice.

This does not involve just how to run the one day a week but rather they are laying down the policy,

procedures and adhering to all the nursing best practice. It is a big job and will form the foundations of the future hospice care in Oban.

"We also hope to be able to offer complementary therapies such as massage, aromatherapy and reflexology," said Karen.

The day hospice will be able to take a maximum of eight people to start with for a series of visits of eight to 12 weeks.

Trustees and staff have all been to different hospices around Scotland and seen their methods and best practice.

The hospice will also work in close co-operation with Macmillan Nurses, GPs and wards in the hospitals.

OBAN has drunk a lot of coffee and tea, bought gallons of soup and mountains of sandwiches not to mention dozens and dozens of cards to help its fledgling hospice.

This has all been down to the work of The Friends of Oban Hospice.

Everyone needs friends

and no sooner had the idea of a hospice been suggested than a friends group was formed.

At its core has been a small group of about a dozen stalwarts but they have always known that they could call on friends to help them in turn to raise funds. The first chairwoman

of the friends was Joan McGill and she has been succeeded by Margaret McGregor. Margaret said: "The Friends have raised £70,000 on their own which is testimony to the fact that people think there is a need for a hospice."

This has been done by donations and a constant

round of fund-raising activities such as soup lunches, coffee mornings, cream teas and the every popular Christmas cards.

"We have been pretty low-profile as well," said Christine.

But now that the hospice is to start up Margaret and her fellow friends hope that

more people will come forward and help.

"The hospice is going to take people from as far out as Kilmelford and Dalmally and we hope to get more people from the outlying areas to join as well," said Christine. "My message is this is local and we are depending on you!"

THE WOMAN behind the hospice movement is Dame Cicely Saunders OM DBE FRCP FRCS who founded St Christopher's.

She died in July 2005, in the renowned hospice she began after a lifetime devoted to ensuring that terminally ill people could die with dignity and without pain.

She was the leading figure in the campaign to establish hospices around the world.

Born in 1918, Dame Cicely entered St Anne's College, Oxford, in 1939 to read Philosophy, Politics and Economics but changed course to train as a nurse.

In 1947 she trained as a medical social worker and qualified as a doctor in 1957.

She founded St Christopher's Hospice in 1967 to provide total and active care for patients with incurable diseases. She was its medical director until 1985, its chairman until 2000.

She was the first person in nearly a century to receive an honorary doctorate of medicine, from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and in 1989 joined a handful of women to be awarded the Order of Merit.

In 2001 she was awarded the largest humanitarian award - the Conrad N Hilton Humanitarian Prize, worth £700,000 - for her life's work caring for the dying.

Strongly opposed to euthanasia, Dame Cicely believed: 'You matter because you are you, and you matter to the last moment of your life.'

**'You matter because you are you, and you matter to the last moment of your life.'**

## Powerful force waiting to be unleashed

THE OBAN Hospice has a powerful force behind it just waiting to be tapped into to help its clients.

This secret weapon just waiting to be unleashed is the number of volunteers who have already offered their services.

When the hospice idea was first suggested the organisers were overwhelmed by the response they received from people all offering their services.

Anne MacCallum, care assistant for the hospice, said: "I have pages of names, addresses

and phone numbers which were taken in 1999. 'I'm working through them but a lot of people have moved or changed number so we are asking people to get in touch again.'

To this end a volunteers' hotline has been set up.

If you would like to volunteer please call 07789941408.

So that Anne isn't spending all her time just answering the phone, this special answering service has been set up for people wanting to re-confirm their offers of help and for new

offers. 'We need helpers from all walks of life, with all skills,' said Anne.

Don't underestimate the power of a well-made cup of tea, a smiling face and a warm welcome and male volunteers are especially welcome.

And there is also a role for businesses in the area.

'It would be wonderful if businesses could take it in turns to either give us flowers to brighten the place up, or the day's refreshments - tea, coffee, snacks, that sort of thing,' said Anne. Oban Hospice needs you.



Students at Oban High School are currently at work designing a logo for the hospice. The trustees set the pupils the challenge and the winner of the competition will be announced soon. 151h0502

□ HOSPICES are regarded by some as one of the greatest social innovations of the last 100 years.

□ TODAY there are about 220 hospices in the United Kingdom and more than 8,000 in operation around the world.

□ HOSPICE care is one of the UK's outstanding success stories. From the

opening of the first modern hospice, St Christopher's, in south London in 1967, it has grown into a worldwide movement that has radically changed the way we approach death and dying.

□ HELP the Hospices, the national charity for the hospice movement, was founded in 1984 by Anne, Duchess of Norfolk.

**Volunteer hotline number 07789 941 408**

## Barcaldine Suffolks top Oban sale

CALEDONIAN Marts sold 686 store sheep and 263 head of cattle at Oban Livestock Centre when Suffolk hogs from Barcaldine Home Farm sold to £32.

Limousin bullocks from Lonbann sold to £350 and £300 with Simmentals from Frackersaig, Lismore selling to £330 and Highlanders to £200 from Pennygown, Mull.

## Blargie Texels to £32.50 at Fort William

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold all classes of store sheep and cast rams at Fort William on Friday when Texel cross wedder lambs from Blargie sold to a top of £32.50.

Mule ewe lambs from Gaskbeg fetched £35 with Texel ewes from Blargie selling to £24.

## Milton Texels lead Stirling

UNITED Auctions Stirling sold 1024 store cattle and 52 cows, also 725 store sheep, at Stirling on Wednesday.

Texel cross lambs from Milton sold to £38 and to £37.50 from Kipperoch.

Bullocks sold to 136p for Charolais from East Overton to average 112.1p per kilo, while heifers sold to 129p per kilo for Limousins from Carsloe to average 108.2p.

Cows sold to £715 for a Charolais from Strowan and to 92p per kilo for a Limousin from Glenahervie, to average 64.4p per kilo.

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## Biodiversity group meet in Oban



Argyll and Bute Biodiversity Officer Marina Curran-Colthart, left, with four members of the new Biodiversity Demonstration Project Steering Group who met for the first time on Tuesday. The group will try to work with farmers and crofters to develop and improve agri-environmental policy for Argyll. One of the group's key principles will be getting the views of local farmers and crofters. Group members, from left, are: Tom Prescott, Butterfly Conservation; Lucy Sumsion, Argyll Farming Wildlife Action Group (FWAG); Fergus Younger, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Jamie Mellor of Bamdromin Farm. Funding for the project comes from the European Regional Development, SNH, Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll and the Islands Enterprise, Scottish Power plc and Forestry Commission Scotland. The group said an action will be developed in due course. 038601

## Missing development scheme deadline could prove very expensive

TIME is running out for crofters and farmers to claim under a grant scheme aimed at developing the diverse business potential of a farm unit. The Agricultural Business Development Scheme is the main current grant scheme for crofters and farmers for improvements to holdings. The scheme provides support for agricultural developments as well as a wide range of diversification opportunities.

Grants of up to 50 per cent with a maximum grant of £40,000 are available to each IACS business.

Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) senior advisor Donald Harrison told *The Oban Times*: 'To date, Argyll and Islands farm and croft businesses have been the greatest beneficiaries of the scheme in the Highlands and Islands Enterprise area. Of a total of 1,031 approvals, 337 have been in the Argyll and the Islands Enterprise area.'

'This amounts to total grant awards of £3.8 million against total project costs of £11.1 million.'

'The scheme ends on December 31 2006 but, as the application process is very detailed, the last date for the submission of applications is July 15 2006.'

'As considerable time can be spent obtaining planning permission, building quotes etc any potential applicant has to start preparing a project immediately.'

SAC advisers have been at the forefront of plan preparation and have been involved in over 90 per cent of the submissions made.

Mr Harrison added: 'Any farmer or crofter interested in applying to the scheme should phone either the SAC Oban office, 01631 563093 or the Campbeltown office, 01586 552502 where detailed advice can be obtained on any project and Agricultural Business Development Scheme applications.'

## Partners work together to help endangered black grouse

THE FASTEST declining bird in Britain is to get a helping hand thanks to a joint initiative by Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage. Black grouse have declined rapidly across the UK and so the three organisations are working together to help land managers help black grouse in

central Scotland and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

The initiative will fund visits by ecological consultants to the managers of important black grouse areas so that they can develop positive management plans for their land.

Speaking about the management plans, Alan Bell, ecologist for Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park said: 'Like their cousins the capercaillie, black grouse have suffered a huge decline in the last few decades. We know from projects elsewhere in the UK that conservation work by land managers can turn that around.'

'This project will help land owners to make a real difference for black grouse along the east side of the National Park and beyond. It complements work already underway in the west of the National Park which is led by the Argyll and Bute Black Grouse Recovery Project.'

Simon Zisman, Conservation Officer for RSPB Scotland said: 'After the huge

co-operative survey effort, we know where black grouse still survive and how many are left.'

'This project takes the conservation effort to the next stage by identifying exactly what work needs doing and how much it will cost. It's a big step forward and we've been very encouraged by the widespread interest from land managers who want to help reverse the drastic decline of this magnificent grouse.'

Habitat losses and overgrazing have resulted in severe population declines; the black grouse is now a Red List species.

Black grouse are found mainly in areas of upland moorland and hill farms, often near forestry plantations. Positive management of these areas could include the promotion of low intensity mixed farming, a reduction in grazing intensity, the marking or removal of deer fencing, the management of the deer population, and the introduction of more sympathetic forest management.

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# Aquaculture conference set to be top UK event

THE Aquaculture Today 2006 conference takes place in Edinburgh this March and is set to be one of the most influential events of its kind held in the UK.

The 2006 event, being held at Edinburgh's five star Sheraton Hotel and Spa from March 28-30, is the second of its kind to be staged by Fish Farmer magazine.

### Hailed

Last year's pioneering conference was hailed as a significant success and planning for this year's conference is building on that achievement with speakers from across Europe and further afield already lined up to participate.

Key issues facing the fish farming sector will be aired and debated, covering topics which are crucial for the sector including markets, fish health, innovations and species development.

Scottish Executive, Norwegian Government and European Union input will ensure that the event will be as topical and as widely reported as possible against a background of an ever-changing political and economic scene for an industry, which is steadily growing in importance.

At the gala dinner complementing the event, the first Fish Farmer 'Fit for the Future' award will be presented for outstanding achievement in the fish-farming sector.

A shortlist will be picked by a special panel of judges from a broad spread of the aquaculture industry. Their judgement will be based on items published in Fish Farmer magazine over the last year.

This inaugural award coincides with the 30th Anniversary of Fish Farmer magazine, the number one

title for the latest aquaculture news. In addition, finalists in a new industry-backed awards scheme from the Crown Estate, which recognises innovation, and best practice in salmon farming will be announced.

The Crown Estate competition will boast six categories with honours for the best kept farm; best environmental contribution; best community support; and best entrepreneurial initiative, the winner of which will go through to another Crown Estate national business award scheme.

The Crown Estate is an estate valued at more than £5 billion, including substantial blocks of urban property, over 120,000 hectares (300,000 acres) of agricultural land in England, Scotland and Wales, and around half the foreshore, together with the seabed out to the 12 mile territorial limit.

Significant conference discounts are available until the end of January. For more information or to book contact Claire Anderson on 0131 312 4550 www.aquaculturetoday.co.uk



## Birdwatchers wanted throughout the west

PEOPLE throughout the west coast are being asked to join tens of thousands of people across Scotland this week to take part in the world's biggest garden bird survey.

Big Garden Birdwatch, run by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), takes place over this weekend, January 28 and 29. The survey aims to find out which birds are the most common visitors to Scottish and UK gardens in winter - and hopes are high this year for an increase in garden bird numbers.

Nearly 400,000 people across the UK took part in last year's survey, recording six million birds and surveying more than 200,000 gardens. But while the number of participants has

continued to grow, the RSPB has recorded a sharp decline in the number of birds seen in gardens, and hopes that this year's Big Birdwatch will reveal whether this trend is continuing.

To take part, simply spend one hour over the weekend of January 28 and 29, counting the birds in your garden or local park, and record the highest number of each bird species seen at any one time. The RSPB recommends looking in the morning when the birds are out feeding after a cold winter night.

Visit the RSPB website www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch where an online survey form will be available from the weekend of Big Garden Birdwatch until 20 February 2006.

## Quality in demand at Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 3586 store lambs, ewes and cast rams at its sale at Dingwall last week when quality sheep met a sound demand whilst leaner, plainer sorts were more difficult to cash.

Suffolk cross lambs from No5 Tomich sold to £40.80 as did Texel crosses from Carnoch. Cheviot lambs from Clashinglad sold to £40.50.

Ewes sold to £46 for a pen of Texel crosses from Easter Urray.

## Nature Times



Blue tit are a regular winter visitor to many gardens but look out for occasional siskin

IF YOU have a garden, and especially a bird table or 'feeding station', then winter is a fine time to observe the activities of a familiar group of species, the so called 'garden birds'. The species vary according to where you live but are likely to include blue tit, great tit, blackbird, robin, house sparrow, chaffinch, greenfinch and (on the ground) duncock.

Before our habit of gardening developed, most of these species lived in woodland - and still do today. But gardens tend to provide a combination of habitat features which suit these species well - and extra food in winter makes them even better!

Members of the tit family are agile and versatile - the blue tit and its larger cousin the great tit are both prominent visitors to bird tables and hanging feeders. Look too for the smallest member of the family, the coal tit, distinguished by having a white band running down the back of its head and buff underparts. It is more timid than the blue and great tits, and is often chased off by them.

Chaffinches and greenfinches are usually common too, but are less agile than they and they struggle to use hanging feeders. A smaller finch which readily makes use of these though is the siskin, and the next few weeks are the most likely time to see one.

The siskin is the smallest of our resident finches, not much bigger than a blue tit.

## Ronachan hosts Kintyre dog trial

SIXTEEN competitors took part in the Kintyre Sheepdog Trials Association nursery event at Ronachan when Ewan Campbell with his dog Bud eventually won by the narrowest of margins.

On a testing course, with a 400 yard uphill outrun turning into a steep downhill fetch allowed very little margin for error, the sheep were generally cooperative, it did however take the utmost concentration from man and dog to successfully complete the course.

1 Ewan Campbell Bud 77pts OBW  
2 Brian Strachan Bonny 77  
3 David Colthart Tess 67  
4 Andrew Bevis Susie 66  
5 John McLachlan Taff 61  
6 Kenny Grieve Roy 59  
Class 2  
1 Jane MacDonald Nan 61 OBW  
2 Lorne Clark Jim 61  
3 Jimmy Barr Bill 57 OBW

## Market reports

**OBAN - Caledonian Marts**  
**Sheep**  
Hoggs - Suffolk £32 Barcaldine Home Farm (Suff); £30.50 Barguilean (Char) and Ballinackilliehan (Suff); £28.50 Ballinackilliehan (X); £22.50 Ardachy (BF).  
Rams - £37 Barcaldine Home Farm (Suff); £26 Achnacreebeg (X); £25.50 Barguilean (Char); £21 Frackersaig (Tex).  
**Cattle**  
Bullock calves £350, £300 Lonbann (Lim); £330 Frackersaig (Sim); £200 Pennygown (High).  
**FORT WILLIAM - Dingwall and Highland Marts**  
**Lambs**  
Wedder lambs Texel cross - £32.50 Blargie; £25 Glenquoich; £20 Ralia Enterprises.  
Cross - £26 Blargie; £24.50 Glenfintaig Estate; £23.50 Glenquoich.  
Blackface - £24 Glen Gloy Farms Ltd; £21 Gaskbeg; £20.50 Mamore.  
Suffolk cross - £23 Blargie.

Cheviot - £20.50 Mamore; £16 Achnagart; £15.50 Satran Club.  
Mule - £20.50 Gaskbeg.  
**Ewe lambs**  
Mule - £35 Gaskbeg.  
Blackface - £20 Achnagart.  
Blackface - £17 Glen Gloy Farms Ltd.  
Cross - £16.50 Insh.  
Ewes - £24 Blargie.  
Texel - £24 Blargie.  
Blackface - £15 Insh; £13 Brae Eynort.  
Cross - £11 Satran Club.  
**Rams**  
Blue Faced Leicester - £34 Glenode Estates.  
Texel - £30 Blargie; £19 Glenquoich; £16 Ardsheal.  
Blackface - £22 Gaskbeg; £17 Blargie; £16.50 Carbstobeg Club.  
Border Leicester - £22 Finuary.  
Cheviot - £20 Kilmomvaig; £17.50 No 7 Blach; £16 Mamore and Ardornish Farms.  
Cross - £12 Achnagart.  
**Wedders**  
Blackface - £10 Kilmaleu.

**STIRLING - United Auctions**  
**Bullocks** - Auchinbrae (BBX) £740, Scotstoun Park (Char) £705, Howden (Sim) £660, Balgray (Lim) £615, Hallmyre Mains (AAX) £585, Kirkton of Beath (HF) £480  
**Price per kilo** - East Overton (Char) 136p, Wester Hall (Lim) 133p, Drumby (Her) 126p, Midfield (BDX) 123p  
**Heifers** - Fallienich (Char) £620, Milton (Char) £585, Burnhead (Lim) £570, Knowhead and Elmsleugh (Sim) £565 and £500.  
**Price per kilo** - Carsloe (Lim) 129p, East Overton (Char) 118p, Dalrask (Sim) 116p, Carsloe (BBX) 116p  
**Cows** - Strowan (Char) £715, Bogton (Lim) 585, Midfield (AA) £540, Glenahervie (Lim) £565, Fairfield (Sim) £550.  
**Sheep**  
Lambs - Milton (Tex) £38, Kipperoch (Tex) £37.50, Ardmorie (Suff) £37.20, Claylands (Suff) £36.20, Ardmorie (Chev) £35.50, Sauchrie Mains (Mule) £35.20, Kipperoch (Mule) £35, GIBBLASTON (BF) £32.50  
**Wedders**  
Cheviot - £25 Cambusmore; £23 Fendom; £22 22 Achfrish. Suffolk - £21.50 Balnafoich.  
**Rams**  
Cheviot - £220 Keodale Sheep Stock Club; £210 Balnakeil and Forest, Croick.  
Suffolk - £50 Glosa; £30.50 Heathmount and Tomsfield; £30 West Garty.  
Blackface - £45 2 Camusterrach.  
Texel - £36 Heathmount.

£39 South Balkeith and 37&55 Sangomore; £37.20 Ballone. Cross - £39 Upperton; £35 Balmacaan; £32.5 Tomich. Blackface - £37 Blackford; £27 Auchnafearn.  
Mule - £32 Gaich Farms; £31 Tulloch. Jacob - £26.50 Invercharron.  
Ewes  
Texel cross - £46 Easter Urray; £36.50 The Cloy; £30 Ankerville. Cheviot - £41.50 Grantfield; £36.50 Heathmount; £35.50 Ankerville and South Balkeith. Suffolk - £37 Invercharron. Mule - £31.50 Drumacro; £31 Moy & Ruthven Farms; £30.20 The Cloy.  
Cross - £30.50 Tomsfield; £29.20 Giebe; £26.50 17 Newmore. Half-bred - £30 Muirton Mains. Blackface - £25.50 Blackford; £22.20 Moy & Ruthven Farms; £22 Aldourie.  
**Wedders**  
Cheviot - £25 Cambusmore; £23 Fendom; £22 22 Achfrish. Suffolk - £21.50 Balnafoich.

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**RICS**

# WEST HIGHLAND PROPERTY GUIDE

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Well maintained and nicely presented semi detached dwelling house enjoying good views over the Clachan Sound and the hills beyond. The accommodation, on two floors comprises: Ground floor: Hall, through living room, kitchen, substantial conservatory, bathroom. First floor: Two bedrooms. Double glazing. Oil central heating. Easily maintained gardens laid to grass with attractive decking area to rear and a garden shed. The conservatory overlooks the garden and is perfectly positioned to enjoy the sea views.  
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The property is located at the eastern end of Loch Arkaig and enjoys spectacular views across the loch.  
Detailed Planning Consent has been granted for the conversion of the Steading to create a three-bedroom dwelling-house on a single storey.  
For Sale as a Whole - **Offers Over £125,000**  
**Closing Date: Friday 24th February 2006 - 12noon**

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**FOR SALE**  
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# The Oban Times

## MOTORING

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### WHEELCHAIR USER WINS SPECIALLY CONVERTED RENAULT KANGOO IN GOWRINGS MOBILITY 'SEIZE THE DAY' COMPETITION

Paul Smith, a wheelchair user from Coleshill near Birmingham, received a great 35th birthday present last month when his mother won a specially adapted, wheelchair accessible Renault Kangoo in Gowrings Mobility's 'Seize the Day' competition. Paul's mother, Mrs Valerie Goode from Kettering, entered Gowrings Mobility's 40th anniversary 'Seize the Day' fundraising competition purely out of charitable goodwill, but was thrilled to actually win one of the three wheelchair accessible vehicle prizes given away throughout the year. Mrs Goode commented, "I've only ever won a bottle of wine in a raffle so I'm utterly amazed! Paul lives in a residential care home so when we visit him each week, we either have to just go for a walk, or we need to plan ahead and book the

home's minibus. I always used to feel bad, as it would deprive someone else at the home. Paul loves going out - he's a very sociable person. Having our own car means we can take him out so much more, and we can also be more impulsive. Thanks to the car, his life will become more interesting. It's the best birthday gift ever!" Last month, Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson handed over the keys to the special edition Renault Kangoo in Anniversary Gold at the Frost Fair at Warwick Castle, where Gowrings Mobility had also commissioned an ice sculpture of a Renault Kangoo in keeping with the winter theme of the event. The car was kindly provided by Renault dealer group, Bridges, and converted for wheelchair access by Gowrings Mobility, offering a lowered floor

for extra headroom, an integral lightweight ramp, four-point wheelchair restraint system and diagonal belts for the wheelchair passenger. All of this will mean that Paul can now travel safely to and from his purpose-built bungalow, run by the Father Hudson's Society, in the comfort of his own wheelchair. Speaking of Renault's involvement, Ben Fletcher, Kangoo Product Manager, Renault UK commented, "Kangoo is perfectly suited to the needs of the converted vehicle market, providing many people with the freedom to travel in comfortable, safe and also stylish car. We would like to offer its congratulations to Paul and his family and we hope they continue to enjoy the mobility that their new Kangoo will provide." Backed by Paralympic athlete and gold medalist,

Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson, the 'Seize the Day' competition has been instrumental in raising awareness of adapted vehicles for wheelchair users and raising money for several deserving charities: The Disabled Drivers' Association & Disabled Drivers' Motor Club; Leonard Cheshire; MS Society and Whizz-Kidz. Linda Ling, Managing Director of Gowrings Mobility said, "Many thousands of people have entered our 'Seize the Day' competition and it has been my delight and privilege to give away Gowrings Mobility cars to three very deserving winners. Over the year of our grass-roots campaign we have been inundated with enquiries for our mobility products. This just shows how much people need information about the products that can help them improve their lifestyle and make the most of every moment."



Wheelchair user wins specially converted Renault Kangoo in Gowrings Mobility 'Seize the Day' Competition

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Peugeot, to ensure that they have made the investment and have the expertise to serve the Trade Parts market effectively and efficiently. The New Year's resolution of Peugeot's Trade Association Dealers will focus on providing the best possible service to the growing ranks of independent motor traders. Over the last three years Peugeot has invested nearly £1 million to evaluate the independent motor trade market, and understand the unique requirements of this market sector. The results from this survey showed that independent motor traders would by choice use original equipment parts, as long as they could be bought at a competitive price and delivered at a convenient time. The survey spoke to over 3000 independent motor traders and of these, 90% said that identifying the correct part first time, followed by availability and prompt delivery, were their key requirements. As Peugeot's vehicle parc ages, more 4 - 7 year old vehicles will be seen by independent motor traders, therefore providing competitively priced parts and good availability will be important for Peugeot's Trade Association Dealers to service this opportunity. Peugeot already offers excellent parts availability, and has actively suppressed price increases on "wear" parts and parts for older vehicles, which has made Peugeot's parts pricing very competitive in the market place. To ensure good availability of parts for older Peugeot models, Peugeot's Trade Association Dealers supporting the Peugeot Trade Parts Club will stock a wider range of the fastest moving parts and operate both a regular and an "emergency" delivery service.

Independent motor traders who join the Peugeot Trade Parts Club will also benefit from a Trade Club Price Guide, access to Peugeot's computer based part identification and technical systems LASER / INFOTEC, regular visits from a dedicated Peugeot parts representative and access to a dedicated parts trade club web site. The access to Peugeot's LASER system guarantees that the Peugeot dealer can identify the exact part which was fitted to the vehicle, without the independent trader having to dismantle the vehicle or pre-check parts prior to ordering. The system uses the vehicle's unique vehicle identification number (VIN) and the original vehicle manufacturing database to identify the correct component fitted to the vehicle, therefore preventing the "try this mate" approach, saving time, money and increasing workshop efficiency. The INFOTEC system provides access to "workshop" manuals, wiring diagrams and servicing / repair time schedules to assist the repairer in improving their workshop efficiency. The system is web based and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on a subscription basis for IMTs. The Trade Parts Club web site will provide a list of Peugeot's Trade Association Dealers, promotional offers, an online Trade Price Guide detailing parts pricing / application information and a contact form amongst other benefits. At launch, some 79 Trade Association Parts Dealers will be enrolled to support the Peugeot Trade Parts Club, but this number will increase to over 100 by the end of March 2006. This will provide Dealers across the UK, from Aberdeen to Plymouth, and Swansea to Ipswich.

**GUARD YOUR ASSETS THIS WINTER WITH VAUXHALL PROTECTION PACK**

Messy carpets, muddy boots, dirty doorsteps - it all adds up to a pretty typical picture of winter motoring. So anything that can help to keep your car in good condition must be worth considering, and Vauxhall has come up with a Car Protection Pack that does just that.

For just £99 fully fitted, you can treat your pride and joy to a set of velour carpet mats, a cargo liner and front mud flaps.

Made from hard wearing plastic, the cargo liners are sculptured to the floor of the boot to protect the carpet from muddy boots, dirty clothes and other wet items that can mark the carpet. Raised edges prevent water and mud escaping into the boot. Easy to wipe clean, they save time spent vacuuming the carpet and are easily installed and removed. Tailored to fit neatly into the foot wells, the velour floor mats help to protect the carpet from grit and mud off your shoes. They have a fixing system on both the driver and passenger side to keep the mats safely in place and stop slippage. The Protection Pack also includes rear passenger mats. Front mud flaps provide invaluable all-year-round protection for the doorsills and lower edges of the bodywork from stone chips, tar deposits and road grime. They are made of plastic and are contoured to fit neatly around the rear edge of the wheel arches. These Protection Packs represent a saving of more than 15 per cent on the cost of buying the items separately. They are available for most models in the Vauxhall range, including Agila, Corsa, Astra, Meriva, Zafira, Vectra and Signum. They can be supplied and fitted by all participating Vauxhall retailers in the UK.

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<b>USED CARS</b>	<b>ESTATE CARS</b>
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53 RENAULT MEGANE SCENIC PRIVILEGE 190CI GREEN 26,000 ... RDA	R RENAULT ESPACE RT DT 2.2 ..... £5950
03 CITROEN XSARA PICASSO HD120 SILVER ..... £7550	M AUDI 80 RED ..... £2250
52 DAEWOO MATIZE SILVER 17,000 ..... £3000	<b>VANS &amp; PICK-UPS</b>
51 RENAULT MEGANE 1.4 DYN SPORT H/B 24000 ..... £7750	RENAULT MASTER DIESEL
51 RENAULT CLIO PRIV AUTO 1.4 3DR 19500 SILVER ..... £5550	RENAULT KANGOO DIESEL
02 RENAULT LAGUNA 1.8 DYN SILVER 31000 ..... £6500	SI NISSAN VANETTE
01 RENAULT LAGUNA DYNAMIQUE 1.6 SILVER 45,000 ..... P.O.A.	<b>SELECTION OF LOW PRICE CARS UNDER £2000 TO CLEAR</b>
01 RENAULT MEGANE 1.6 F DJI H/B SILVER 29000 ..... £4750	
Y RENAULT CLIO GRANDE 1.2 3DR 21,000 ..... £3995	
X FIAT PUNTO 1.2 5DR GREEN 33,000 ..... £2950	
Y AUDI A3 1.6 AUTO - WHITE ..... £5250	
W VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 MERIT GREEN 19000 ..... £4150	
V FORD MONDEO 1.8 LX SILVER ..... £2550	
S HYUNDAI COUPE 2.0 RED ..... £4950	
N AUDI A4 1.8 SE ..... £2550	

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<b>HONDA</b> Helensburgh Honda 135 East Clyde Street, Helensburgh Tel. 01436 675777/www.helensburghhonda.co.uk	<b>TOYOTA</b> Helensburgh Toyota 5 John Street, Helensburgh Tel. 01436 672779 www.toyota.co.uk/helensburgh
<b>ISUZU</b> S & S Services Old Bridge Road, Heathfield, Ayr Tel. 01292 880080/880440	<b>VOLKSWAGEN</b> Hawco Caol, Fort William Tel. 01397 700900 www.hawco.volkswagen.co.uk
<b>MINI</b> Calterdon Ltd Harbour Road, Inverness Tel. 01463 236567	<b>TO PROMOTE YOUR NEW CAR DEALERSHIP PLEASE CALL: 01631 568000</b>



# Drive Times

## Cars and Commercial Vehicles

### MITSUBISHI CARISMA DI-D 1.9 TURBO DIESEL



2002 (52 Plate), Manual, 5 Door Electric Windows, Radio/CD Player, A/C, 32,000 miles, MOT Oct 06 Excellent Condition  
**£6150**  
 Telephone 01866 833342

### FORD MONDEO 2 LITRE SALOON



1999 1.6 turbo engine, 51,000 miles, Taxed and MOT, Service History, Air Con, Remote central locking, alarm / immobiliser, economical beautiful condition  
 Telephone 01546 870336  
**£1895 o.n.o.**

### HYUNDAI SONNET 1.3



1993, K reg, 3 door hatchback, manual petrol, 33,000 genuine miles, 2 lady owners, radio/CD player, New exhaust, New battery, colour - maroon, immaculate, rust free, Economic to run, tax insure  
 Telephone 01546 603579  
**£475**

### VAUXHALL VECTRA

P Reg 1997 1.6 Expression, ABS brakes, power steering, radio cassette, only 62,000 miles, MOT till Sept 06, taxed July 06, very good condition  
**£1100 o.n.o.**

Telephone day 07765 815982 eve 01631 565269

### HONDA CIVIC COUPE



(N reg), auto, silver, 99,000 miles, taxed and MOT'd, good condition  
 Telephone 01301 704339  
**£750 o.n.o.**

### VOLVO V40 2 LITRE CDI



(P335 HAS) 8 months tax 3 months MOT willing to negotiate  
 Telephone 01880 820041 07769 738902  
**£2400 o.n.o.**

### JEEP CHEROKEE



4ltr, 1995, dark blue, 6 month tax and MOT, automatic, tow bar, Dog guard, electric windows, 2-4 wheel drive  
 Telephone 01631 770283  
**£1895 o.n.o.**

### SEAT IBIZA 1.4 S



1999 T reg 3 door hatch, just been lowered and 17 in alloys put on last week, one years MOT 6 months road tax, very good condition, only group 4 insurance any inspection welcome  
**£1550**  
 Telephone 07787 793609

### VOLVO 940 SE AUTO ESTATE



'93, ABS Brakes, Sunroof, Alloys, MOT till August '06, 133,000 miles  
 Telephone 01583 441264  
**£850 o.n.o.**

### RANGE ROVER 4.0



1995, Manual, 90,000 miles, good condition, 9 months M.O.T, 2 months Tax  
 Telephone 01866 833003 07845 921562  
**£4300 o.n.o.**

### SEAT LEON CUPRA R



5 door hatchback, red 225bhp, Brembo brakes, 18" alloys, A/C, radio/CD, electric windows, only 6,900miles, excellent condition  
**£14,300 o.n.o.**  
 Telephone 01631 563072 or 07717 843791

### LANDROVER DISCOVERY 300 TDI



1996, P Reg, loads of service history, very good driver, first time starter, long mot, no tax, alloys, nice condition  
**£3750**  
 Telephone 01586 552283 or 07789 034353

### VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT 1.9 TDI



December '95, Taxed and Mot until December 2006  
 Telephone 01586 553025 07761 238450  
**£1250**

### TOYOTA PICNIC 2 LITRE M.P.V.



1999, automatic, 7 seater MPV. Electric windows, central locking and cd player. Mot and taxed for 6 months. 80,000 miles. Very Good condition.  
**offers around £3600**  
 Telephone 01852 300112

### TOYOTA LANDCRUISER VX



S Reg, 52000 miles, good condition, petrol. Call for details.  
**£12,000 o.n.o.**  
 Telephone 01631 770259

### VOLVO S80 2.4



V-reg metallic silver, 78K, tax and MOT, Excellent safety features and usual Volvo refinements. 170 bhp. New clutch, flywheel and timing belt fitted. Superb car, very good condition.  
 Telephone 01586 552042  
**£4900**

### CITREON SAXO 1.6 VTR



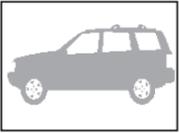
Black, X Reg 2000, 46,000 miles, 11 months MOT, 4months tax. Too many extras to list  
 Telephone 07774 000288 07788 734140  
**£3500 o.v.n.o.**

### RENAULT LAGUNA DYNAMIQUE TOURER



1800cc, 52 plate, 48,000 miles, MOT Nov 06, factory immobiliser, half leather seats, 17" Alloy wheels, excellent condition  
 Telephone 01546 602173 07799 504790  
**£5250**

### DIANATSU FOUR TRACK, 2.8 TDX



1993, K reg, alloy wheels, side steps, bull bar, mahogany dash, electric windows, tow bar, MOT June 2006, Taxed Feb 2006  
 Telephone 01397 713869 07818 441916  
**£1650 o.n.o.**

### RENAULT MEGANE COUPE 1.6 16V



X Reg, Silver, 38,000miles, 1 year MOT, 6 months tax, 2 lady owners from new, sunroof, CD player, full electric, sports seats, remote central locking, alloys, MUST BE SEEN  
 Telephone 01855 831665  
**£3500 o.n.o.**

### FIAT COUPE 20V TURBO



1998, Metallic Black, 83,000 Miles, Full Leather Interior, 220 bhp Engine. Tax Agr 2006, MOT Oct 2005. Full Service Nov 2005, plus new tyres  
 Telephone Alastair 01546 606544  
**£3400 o.n.o.**

### NISSAN X-TRAIL 2.2 TD SPORT EDITION



Reg Sept 2002, Metallic Green, FSH, 35,000 miles, 6 CD player, sunroof, air-conditioning, MOT Sept 2006  
 Telephone 01546 603868  
**£9500 o.n.o.**

### FORD MONDEO ZETEC



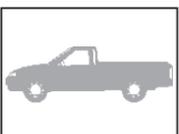
2Litre, 2001, X reg, MOT, taxed, 57k, Alloy wheels, blue, in very good condition  
 Telephone 01397 700531 07768 095975  
**£2600 o.n.o.**

### VW POLO TWIST



54 reg. 1.2 petrol, 65bhp. Silver, 5 door hatchback, PAS, ABS, A/C, radio/cassette, electric front windows, alloy wheels. 15,000 miles, recently serviced, 6 months tax.  
**£7300 o.n.o.**  
 Contact: Jon on 01880 760271 (evenings only)

### TOYOTA HYLUX 2.4 DIESEL



Ifor Williams Canopy, N Reg  
 Telephone 01546 60510211  
**£2500 +VAT**

### RENAULT MEGANE 1.6



Petrol, R reg, electric windows, sports seats, PAS, MOT June, 2006, good condition, genuine reason for sale  
 Telephone 01397 713880  
**£575 o.n.o.**

### FORD TRANSIT



S Reg (1998), long wheel base, drop side pick-up long tax and MOT power steering, 15" wheels, Very scarce vehicle, no rust, any inspection available  
 Telephone 01546 602550 07799 164311  
**£2450 - NO VAT**

### SUBARU IMPREZA SPORT SPECIAL



2001, 2 litre engine, yellow, immaculate, 19,000 miles  
 Telephone 01681 700653  
**£6500 o.n.o.**

# SELLING YOUR OLD VEHICLE?

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www.obantimes.co.uk

### LANDROVER DISCOVERY TDI

P Reg, 1996, 70 000 miles, Epsom Green, Alloy's etc, good condition.  
 Telephone 01700 811537  
**£4500 o.n.o.**

### MANITOU TELEHANDLER 1030S FORKLIFT

2004, Taxed for road use. 320 Hrs from new, One owner, Attachments available. For Details Telephone 07798 721878 (Oban)

### KUBOTO KH35 MINI DIGGER

1.5 Ton, New engine plus new rubber tracks. Spare buckets. Road trailer included.  
**£4000 o.n.o.**  
 Telephone 01838 200659

### YAMAHA FAZER 600CC

2003, Taxed October 2006, low mileage, excellent condition (with restriction kit)  
 Telephone 01546 602314  
**£4000 no offers**

### YAMAHA TTR 125 L

Off Road 4 stroke, Blue and White, 02 Would suit teenager.  
 Telephone 01852 500554 07900 484409  
**£800 o.n.o.**

### WESTERLY VULCAN 34FT. 1982 FIN KEEL

8 berths in 3 cabins and saloon. Deck saloon with internal/external wheel steering and controls. 2 suits sails, storm sail and cruising chute. New standing rigging and rotastay in 2005. 62hp 4 cylinder Volvo MD218. Superb cruising/live aboard yacht. Lying Oban. Mooring available in Oban if required  
**£42,000**  
 Telephone 01631 566466

### ELDDIS ELF 2 BERTH CARAVAN

1997 model, light weight, narrow luxury van in good condition. Easy tow and store. Specification includes blown air heating, hot/cold water, shower, fridge, oven and cassette toilet.  
 Telephone 01546 850360  
**£3750 o.n.o.**

### FOLKBOAT

worth a look  
 offers over **£2000**  
 Telephone 01937 835542 or 07775 991633

### WILLERBY GRANADA STATIC CARAVAN

UNSTED 1995, 35ft x 12ft, 6 berth, 2 bedrooms, heated throughout, excellent condition, clean, modern, comfortable, suit holiday home or self builder  
 Telephone 07718 900505  
**£6500 o.n.o.**

### WANTED

4 wheel drive Vehicle, Landrover 90 or 110, any model, high mileage no problem or any other 4 x 4 considered, immediate cash payment.  
 Telephone 07703 490572

Buyers should note where standardised silhouettes are used they do not accurately represent the vehicle being sold

# RECRUITMENT




Acas training sessions are designed for those with management, supervisory or personnel responsibilities. They provide information you need to make sure your rules and procedures are up to date. Practical solutions to practical problems are discussed.

**Employing people** - This session is a 'must' for any organisation with employees. Straightforward guidance is provided on:

- The employment contract
- The legal requirement for a written statement of terms and conditions of employment
- Handling discipline
- Handling grievances
- Recent changes in the law

**Introduction to equality** - this session outlines how equality issues affect people at work. How to develop simple policy which will underpin the standards which your business and employees should adhere to, will be explained. The session covers:

- The law on equality and discrimination
- Defining discrimination
- Harassment and victimisation
- Employer's responsibilities
- Creating a policy for your workplace

Argyll and the Islands Enterprise are holding the following Getting It Right Sessions in the Argyll area. These are half day courses that will run from 10.30am to 15.30pm.

**Employing people**  
31st January 2006 Corran Halls, Oban  
7th February 2006 Queens Hall, Dunoon  
15th February 2006 Ardshiel Hotel, Campbeltown

**Introduction to equality**  
22nd February Argyll Hotel, Lochgilhead

To book your place please contact:  
Argyll and the Islands Enterprise 01546 602281  
Or email info@aie.co.uk

**SCOTTISH FIELD MAGAZINE**  
**EDINBURGH**

**Property Advertising Sales Executive**

Dealing with all property and finance advertising elements within Scotland's premier magazine.

- Previous sales experience is essential, as is a full driving licence. We are looking for a candidate with a confident, positive attitude to work in our vibrant, friendly, open plan office.
- High basic and OTE.
- The position will be office-based.

Please send full cv showing current salary details to karen@scottishfield.co.uk or Karen Wallace, Office Manager, Special Publications, Craigmack Castle, Craigmack Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3PE.

**The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES**  
**REPORTER**

required for our Fort William office

We are looking for a qualified journalist, with a minimum of two years experience working on a weekly newspaper to join our editorial team. This is an excellent career opportunity. A driving licence is essential.

We offer in return an excellent salary and benefits package. Interested? - contact Christine MacBryde, Personnel Officer The Oban Times Ltd, P.O. Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB Tel: 01631 568000 Fax: 01631 568001 Email: personnel@obantimes.co.uk

**Commercials**

**HGV MECHANIC**  
required for commercial workshop

Ability to work on own initiative  
Excellent rate of pay

Apply to Andrew Cooper at:  
All Commercials, 7E Glengallan Road, Oban, PA34 4HG,  
Telephone 01631 565569

**St Columba Hotel, Isle of Iona**

Are you enthusiastic about working in our large garden based on organic principles? Have you got some gardening experience?

We have a full time position as a **SECOND GARDENER** free, from April to end October. Please call 01681 700 304 or write to info@stcolumba-hotel.co.uk

**TOBERMORY HOTEL**

Small, privately owned island hotel in idyllic setting looking for accomplished all rounder **CHEF** to work alongside Head Chef in 1 rosette, 25 cover restaurant.

Minimum 3-5 years' kitchen experience. Responsibilities to include daily operations, cooking, preparation and covering days off.

Will need to be hard working, enthusiastic about local produce and Scottish food. Excellent package available.

Send full C.V to **Ian Stevens, Tobermory Hotel, Main Street, Tobermory, Isle of Mull, Argyll, PA75 6NT**  
E-mail: tobhotel@tinyworld.co.uk  
Telephone: 01688 302091

**ISLE OF MULL HOTEL**  
Craignure Bay, Isle of Mull

To ensure that our guests continue to enjoy a first class experience, we are looking for customer focused team members to join the new management in the Isle of Mull Hotel.

The following key positions are available:  
• BAR STAFF • HEAD HOUSEKEEPER  
• FOOD & BEVERAGE MANAGER • GARDENER

The ideal candidates will possess excellent customer care skills, take a pride in their work and be intent on delivering genuine hospitality.

An excellent rate of pay is on offer for the right people and further training and development opportunities will be available as we move the business forward, including the establishing of a hotel leisure centre during 2006.

Please apply in writing, no later than Wednesday 8th February, clearly stating the position concerned, to:  
Raymond Hervo, General Manager, Isle of Mull Hotel Craignure, Isle of Mull PA65 6BB gm.isleofmull@crerarhotels.com

**G McNaughton & Son**  
Lochgilhead  
Experienced 360° Excavator Operator required  
driving licence essential  
Tel 01546 602389 during office hours or 01546 606538 after hours

**MACHRIHANISH GOLF CLUB**  
**CHEF/COOK**  
required  
Please apply in writing to: Club Steward, Machrihanish Golf Club, Machrihanish, Argyll, PA28 6PT

**ATAM SERVICES LTD**  
HIRE SALES REPAIRS

1 Mill Lane, Lochavullin Ind. Estate, Oban PA34 4HA  
**Required**

**Storeperson**  
Full time permanent position available. Duties include ordering, checking in deliveries, allocating goods and keeping all records up to date. Previous experience required. Full current driving licence preferred.

Please write in strictest confidence giving details of previous experience, personal details, interests and hobbies to:-  
Mrs F Cruickshanks  
Atam Services Ltd  
1 Mill Lane  
Lochavullin Industrial Estate  
Oban PA34 4HA

**ADAPTABLE, KIND PERSON TO HELP LADY ARTIST WITH MS, TARBERT AREA**

Be able to work on their own, some housework, some cooking and some personal tasks.  
About 3 hours a day  
1-2 days per week.  
please phone  
07887856514

**JOB SEARCH**

**Bricklayer/ Timber Framer**

Looking For Work

Telephone: 07799 081216

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**SEASONAL WATERWAY OPERATIVES**

**£230 per week minimum • Up to 20 weeks, May - September**  
**37 hours per week with overtime as required, variable hours**

This year's sailing season will be busier than ever, so we're planning ahead and starting our search for seasonal people to work along the Crinan Canal, one of Scotland's most beautiful tourist attractions.

Customer service is key so we're looking for cheerful, outgoing people who enjoy meeting and helping the public. As well as seeing craft through the locks, you will have responsibility for the maintenance of an area around your lock which will include painting and grass cutting. You will also advise visiting tourists and sailors about the locality.

We'll give you all the training you need to operate a lock or bridge safely and efficiently. Some DIY skills would be an advantage, as would knowledge of sailing. You must demonstrate initiative as well as the ability to work as part of a small, friendly team. You will be working on a variable rota between 8.30am to 8pm, 5 days out of 7 which includes weekends and public holidays. Your own transport is essential.



**Scotland Gas Networks**  
A Scotia Gas Networks Company

**Qualified Gas Craftsperson**

An experienced CORGI Registered Gas Engineer with current valid ACS modules in Core Gas Safety & Appliance Installation & Servicing is required at Oban.

The successful applicant will be part of a small team providing a 24/7 Emergency Repair & Maintenance service in the Oban area. Experience of Emergency & Meterwork and Gas Distribution Engineering would be an advantage. Applicants should be a good teamworker but able to work alone with minimum supervision. A clean driving licence is essential.

A basic salary of £22,660 for a 38.75 hour week plus an allowance for rostered out of hours standby cover is payable. Additional hours will be paid at the appropriate overtime rates. Access to a money purchase pension scheme will be available.

**Application forms should be obtained from and returned to:**  
Lorraine Klemm, Human Resources, Scotia Gas Networks, 55 Western Road, Reading RG1 8BU, Telephone 01189 534739 or e-mail lorraine.klemm@scotiagasnetworks.co.uk  
Closing date for applications: 6 February 2006.

**NEIL MCGOUGAN LTD**  
requires  
**JOINER**

for long term contract (mainly inside work)  
Must be reliable, conscientious and have full driving licence

Excellent rate of pay  
Tel: Dale Robertson  
(Site Agent) 01631 569419

**D.A MacDonald (Contractors) Limited**

Have the following vacancies:  
**Class 2 Driver** with tipper experience  
**Plant operator for 360° Excavator**  
Good rate of pay and working conditions  
Please contact Donald or Ian during office hours  
Tel: 01546 603583

**TACT**  
Thames and Chikera Trust

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

TACT is a national voluntary organisation promoting social inclusion for people with support needs. As part of our continuing development in Argyll and Bute we require to recruit to the following posts.

**Support Workers**

Full Time (37.5 hours per week) Part Time/Bank (hrs negotiable) Starting Salary £12,750

The successful applicants will assist service-users, participate in activities and assist in them becoming included members of their local communities. We are looking to recruit staff who:

- Are reliable, resilient and flexible
- Have skills or are willing to develop skills in supporting individuals.
- Have skills and interests they can share or are willing to learn new skills to share with the people they work alongside.
- Having an understanding or an interest in learning about the issues of "inclusion" and "disability".

TACT offer excellent training and development opportunities and guaranteed responsive skilled professional support to all employees.

For further information and an application pack please contact: Area Manager, Argyll and Bute, TACT office, Dunollie Halls, Dunollie Road, Oban, PA34 5PH. Tel - 01631 571311 (office hours)

TACT Ltd. Is an Association Registered (No 27515R) under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965 and is an equal opportunities employer welcoming applications from all sections of the community.

Closing date for all applications: Monday January 30 2006  
Enhanced Disclosure Checks will be carried out on successful applicants

**Assistant Librarian**  
Salary : £20,044 to £22,289

A unique opportunity has arisen at SAMS, for a qualified person, to manage SAMS library services, aid with its strategic development and provide professional advice to staff, postgraduates, undergraduates and members.

The successful candidate will be expected to have obtained a recognised qualification in librarianship, be familiar with library databases, Word, Excel and Groupwise. Suitable experience in library work, particularly serials management, along with experience of using library management systems (e.g., OLIB) would be a great advantage.

The post is full-time, open ended and will be based at Dunstaffnage Marine Laboratory.

Further Particulars and Application Form are available online at www.sams.ac.uk.

Alternatively, please write quoting job reference number to:  
The Personnel Officer, Job ref: D12/05.AH, The Scottish Association for Marine Sciences, Dunstaffnage Marine Laboratory, Oban, Argyll, PA37 1QA.

The closing date for applications is Friday 10th February, 2006.

SAMS has an equal opportunities policy and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community

**LOOKING FOR NEW STAFF?**

**The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES**

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**SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE**  
Health Department

**NHS SCOTLAND**

**Greater Glasgow NHS Board and Highland NHS Board: Non-Executive Member Positions**

Following the decision to dissolve the Argyll & Clyde NHS Board and transfer responsibility for the delivery of health and healthcare services to Greater Glasgow and Highland NHS Boards, Scottish Ministers wish to increase each Board's executive complement. Both boards wish to appoint three (3) Non-Executive members. An NHS Board is a board of governance, which has responsibility for issues such as health improvement, strategic planning and resource allocation. The role involves:

- assisting the Chair, Chief Executive and other Board members in tackling a wide range of demanding responsibilities, balancing national policies and local needs;
- supporting Executives in their leadership of healthcare delivery while monitoring performance;
- maintaining a focus on strategy and performance, but not being distracted by detail; and
- the capacity to Chair working groups or Committees of the Board.

Successful candidates will:

- have an interest in public service and a commitment to the NHS;
- be able to think and plan ahead and the ability to evaluate complex issues and weigh up conflicting opinions;
- have a thorough understanding of strategic planning and resource management, underpinned by strong financial skills gained in the public or private sector;
- be able to motivate and enthuse others; and
- be confident but balanced commentators, able to work constructively in a team or committee environment.

You must be able to make a firm commitment to spend around 8 hours per week on Board business, occasionally during the evenings and weekends, while also demonstrating an adequate degree of flexibility to attend at a greater frequency subject to the Board's ongoing business needs. The appointments will be for up to 4 years and may be renewed subject to satisfactory performance. These positions are not pensionable, but as well as an annual remuneration of £7,490 you will also receive reimbursement for all reasonable travel and receipted childcare or carer expenses incurred whilst undertaking Board duties. Further information about the frequency and location of Board meetings and the geographic split of the Argyll & Clyde health and health care services are provided in the application pack, which is available from the Contact Centre.

It is expected that interviews will be held during late March/April 2006 in Glasgow or Inverness.

The Scottish Executive is committed to appointing a diverse range of public appointees, reflecting the best of contemporary Scotland and to the principle of public appointments on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process. We guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability/health problem that affects the work they can do and whose application meets all the essential criteria for the appointment. For more information about Public Appointments and other vacancies visit the Scottish Executive's website at www.scotland.gov.uk/government/publicbodies/

To be considered for these appointments the application form contained within the information pack must be completed. For an information pack please see contact details below. You should provide your name, address and the vacancy you are interested in.

Public Appointments, PO Box 7332, Glasgow G51 2ZA.  
Telephone: 0870 240 1818.  
Fax: 0870 600 4111.  
E-mail: publicappointments@response-handling.com  
SMS text message: 0796 013 3181.  
Closing date for applications is Friday 3 March 2006.

You can also download information on these appointments by visiting www.show.scot.nhs.uk/nhspublicappointments/

Only completed applications received by the closing date will be considered. All correspondence will be treated in confidence.

**Working together for a healthy, caring Scotland**

# RECRUITMENT

**Every day, you can see what a difference you are making.**

What does it mean to be working for one of Scotland's largest charities? You will be helping young people to face the biggest challenges of their lives and to live as independently as possible. We'll provide you with the support and the training to deliver a service that counts and to develop a career that matters.

**OBAN ROOFTOPS** - Quarriers Rooftops offers housing support and accommodation to 11 young people, as well as an outreach housing support service. You'll be involved in promoting independent living and working with partner agencies. The project offers support between 9am and 11pm and provides an on-call service outwith these hours. You will be expected to work within a shift system and provide cover for the on-call service.

**Project Worker and Part-time Project Worker**  
**£15,965 - £22,099 (pro rata for P/T post, qual. Salary £17,273)**

With some experience and preferably a relevant qualification in this field, you will have an understanding of the needs of young homeless people. You know that helping young people is about building a relationship, establishing trust and bringing together the right supports to encourage independence. (Ref: 6338 F/T, Ref: 6339 P/T).

As part of our commitment to the safety of the people we support, we utilise a comprehensive selection process. For an application pack, visit our website at [www.quarriers.org.uk/jobs](http://www.quarriers.org.uk/jobs) or contact our Recruitment Hotline on 0870 118 7935 8am - 10pm. Closing date: 10 February 2006.



**Everyone has their own idea of the perfect home...**



**New Store Opening in Oban**

We've always been renowned as a world class DIY retailer, however now we're aiming to become equally well known as a source of inspiration for home enhancements through our exciting new home initiative. This means having a workforce who knows the values of ideas, not just the value of a pair of curtains. We aim to be there to guide our customers, advise them and ensure that whatever their idea of the perfect home, it can become a reality.

The importance of our stores and the environment they create cannot be overstated and that's why we're intent on making sure that we offer the perfect platform for you to succeed. We currently have 300 stores throughout the UK and as part of our ambitious expansion plans we are now opening a new store in Oban. In order to ensure the success of this new store we will need to fill the following positions:

**Team Leaders/Supervisors**

Your main role will be to prompt an excellent performance from your team, developing enthusiasm, product knowledge and excellent customer service level. Working closely with your line manager you'll help promote an environment that encourages sales. Your team will be expected to handle customer queries with a mix of factual advice, guidance and courtesy. Aside from driving in-store standards you'll also ensure that there is always adequate availability of stock, and that promotional activity is used to its full advantage, driving sales and margins. Overall, you will use your leadership and retailing skills to promote an environment that encourages sales. On a personal level, you will have 6-12 months supervisory experience preferably in a retail environment.

**Showroom Consultant (Kitchens, Bathrooms & Furniture)**  
**c. £15k + commission and benefits**

We are looking for a strongly sales focussed individual, who enjoys a demanding target sales environment, possesses remarkable ability to build great relationships with clients and potential clients. The successful Homebase Showroom Consultant will be great in delivering customer satisfaction through imaginative solutions and professional sale style.

If you are interested in either of the above positions, please email your CV including current salary details to Andrew Spence: [andrew.spence@homebase.co.uk](mailto:andrew.spence@homebase.co.uk) or by post to: Homebase Dumbarton, St James Retail Park, Dumbarton G82 1RB. Closing date: Friday 3rd February.

...you'll have the ideas to turn it into reality. **HOMEBASE**



The Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) Network is the Government's development agency for an area which covers more than half of Scotland. In addition to Careers Scotland and a network of 10 Local Enterprise Companies (LECs), HIE has wide-ranging responsibilities in the economic, skills, environment and social development fields and offers a wide range of job and career opportunities.

**CAREERS SCOTLAND SENIOR ADVISER STRAND 3 (FULL-TIME)**

**Argyll & the Islands, Dunoon**  
**£21,110**

**Maternity Cover**

You will work intensively with people of all ages who are experiencing particular difficulties in their career planning and development. You will assist clients to review their career planning progress and identify and implement suitable development action to maintain their career resilience. This will require work with the networks involved with the person in order to remove barriers to progress and enable them to take control of their own career development.

Applicants must be educated to degree level, or equivalent hold a recognised qualification in career guidance, have at least 3 years' relevant experience and excellent interpersonal skills, IT competence and organisational ability. Appointment is dependent upon a satisfactory Criminal Record check through Disclosure Scotland.

**SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER**

**Lochgilhead**  
**£27,535**

Based within AIE's Global Connections team, you will manage the design and delivery of significant property development and infrastructure projects both at your own hand and in partnership with a range of public and private sector organisations. Having a proven track record of complex project management and maximising value, you will also have at least 5 years experience of property and portfolio management or equivalent relevant work experience. You must possess a degree and be a professionally qualified member of RICS.

Good communication and interpersonal skills are required alongside effective influencing and negotiating skills and excellent project management. Effective performance monitoring and reporting disciplines are also required and good IT skills will be an advantage. All candidates must possess a full driving licence.

Excellent superannuation arrangements are in operation.

For further information and an application pack, quoting reference **2006-07** (for Senior Adviser) or **2006-11** (for Senior Project Manager) please contact: Audrey Cameron, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Cowan House, Inverness Retail and Business Park, Inverness IV2 7GE. Tel: 01463 244289 Fax: 01463 244455 E-mail: [recruitment@hient.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@hient.co.uk)

Closing date for receipt of all applications is Friday 10th February 2006.

## Ardfern Yacht Centre

**Office and Chandlery Shop Assistant**  
 Vacancy for a friendly and cheerful person to work in a busy Marina shop and office.

Full time or part time considered.  
 Varied hours and some weekend working.  
 Starting in the early Spring. Initially seasonal, possibly full time. May suit student

Please apply to David Wilkie,  
 Ardfern Yacht Centre Ltd,  
 Ardfern, Argyll PA31 8QN  
 Tel: 01852 500247 Fax: 01852 500624  
 Email: [david@ardfernyacht.co.uk](mailto:david@ardfernyacht.co.uk)

## Comann Eachdraidh Lios Mòr



Lismore Historical Society  
**2006 will see the opening of our Flagship Community and Visitor Centre**

Which will include  
**An Eating Area**  
**A Small Gift Shop**

If you are interested in running either of these areas please contact

Tony Perkins  
 Project Manager  
 7 Port Ramsay, Isle of Lismore  
 Tel/Fax 01631 760286



The Nàdar Trust

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund

## SMOKING CESSATION SUPPORT WORKER

Grade B or Equivalent £12,604 - £14,348 per annum (pro rata) (Under Review)  
 10 hours per week  
 Fixed term until 31 March 2008

Working within the Oban Public Health Team, you will have a good level of general education, interpersonal skills, telephone manner, coupled with an ability to organise appointment system and events. You should have experience of or an ability to work with groups and individuals in an educational context.

You will be required to undertake smoking cessation training as necessary. A driving licence is essential as is a flexible approach to work as there may be evening sessions to attend. Ref: 051a/1983.

**HIGHER CLERICAL OFFICER**  
 £12,580 - £14,602 per annum (pro rata) (Under Review)  
 20 hours per week

You will work as part of a team providing full administrative and clerical support to the Speech & Language Therapy Department, Campbeltown Hospital, liaising with other NHS Departments as appropriate.

A Standard Grade pass in English or equivalent is required and a pass in Business/Secretarial Studies or equivalent is desirable. Sound IT skills, experience of working within an office environment and excellent communication and organisational skills are essential. Ref: 051a/2043.

For an application pack, quoting appropriate reference please contact our Recruitment Team on our 24 hour answer service by calling 0141 314 0425 or email: [recruitment.line@nhs.uk](mailto:recruitment.line@nhs.uk)  
 Closing date for both posts 13th February 2006.

For a full list of current vacancies visit [www.nhs.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.scot.nhs.uk)



Argyll & Clyde

## REMBRANDT TIMBER LIMITED

As Scotland's largest Independent Timber Merchants we are proud to be opening our new Branch in Glenshellach Business Park, Oban.

We are looking for staff that are of a pleasant disposition and are willing to give that bit extra to please our Customers, for this we will provide excellent packages.

Please apply in writing to:  
 Mr G E Low  
 Rembrandt Timber Ltd  
 Area 7E  
 Glenshellach Business Park  
 Oban  
 PA34 4PP  
 Tel: 01631 566265

We require the following staff to ensure the smooth running of our Depot:

### Assistant Branch Manager

Must have experience in the Timber/Building Supply Trade and be a self motivated individual who can work on his/her own initiative.

Full product training will be given and an excellent package is available to the suitable candidate.

### Head Storeperson

Must have experience in the Timber/Building Supply Trade and have previously worked in a stores environment.

### Assistant Storeperson

Would ideally suit a younger person looking for a career in the Timber Trade.

### Lorry Driver

Must have HGV Class 2 Licence and a Hi-Ab Certificate.

## Management Opportunities

Campbeltown

Provident Personal Credit is the market leader in Home Collected Credit in the UK. We have 10,500 Self Employed Agents who serve our customer base of over 1.3 million in their own homes on a weekly basis.

As a Manager of a team of agents (between 8 and 15), you'll manage their performance along with our business in order to achieve maximum potential and ensure that targets are achieved. You'll be meeting customers in their own homes and responding to their individual needs. You'll also be available to help your agents with any problems they may have, so, naturally you'll need to be energetic, have excellent people skills and the ability to deal with a variety of different circumstances.

The Requirements

- Good Communication Skills
- Good Analytical Skills
- Good Motivational Skills
- Use of a car (excellent mileage expenses paid)
- Managerial or Financial experience would help but not essential as full training will be given

Benefits

- Salary circa £16,000 p.a. + Performance Related Bonus
- Company Pension Scheme
- Comprehensive Induction + Training & Development
- Sponsorship for Further Education
- Good Career Prospects

For an application pack, call Provident Personal Credit on 08457 753199 (9am-5pm, Mon-Fri), quoting reference 6327. Closing date for completed applications is Friday 3 February 2006.

Interviews will be held locally.

Applications are welcomed regardless of religious belief, political opinion, gender or disability.

Strictly No Agencies.

Part of Provident Financial - Home Credit Provider of the Year 2005 - 'credit today awards'



## Loch Fyne Oysters Ltd.

### ASSISTANT SHOP MANAGER

Loch Fyne Oysters Ltd is an employee owned company situated at the head of Loch Fyne; providing high quality produce worldwide for over 25 years.

We are currently looking for a person to assist the Shop Manager in all aspects of the day to day running of our shop. This will include deputising for the Shop Manager in their absence, staff training, staff rotas, stock control and merchandising of products.

Ideal candidates will have a high level of customer focus with excellent leadership skills. Experience in a similar position is preferable but not essential.

Hours are variable with weekend and evening work required.

If you are interested, please apply in writing enclosing your CV to Anne Stewart, Loch Fyne Oysters Ltd, Clachan, Cairndow, Argyll, PA26 8BL  
 Closing date 10th February 2005

## Ossians Retirement Home

North Connel, by Oban

has the following vacancies:

**Full/Part-Time Registered Nurse**  
 (day and nightshift hours available)  
 Permanent position £11.35 per hour

**Full time Chef**

Catering for 27 residents £6.50 per hour

For further information please contact

Andrea Shuttleworth 01631 710 322

Ossians is now under new ownership

## JOB SEARCH

**Couple with 2 children**  
 looking for work in the Highlands & Islands.

Preferably with accommodation. Anything considered from landscaping, building work and administration.

Tel 07747 858 351.

## HARVESTER OPERATOR

**Required**  
 Must be able to work on own initiative and to the standards required on Tihill Harvesting Sites in Argyll. Rates negotiable

Tel: Duncan Gillies 07747016900

Oban Times RECRUITMENT  
 Oban Times RECRUITMENT



**FULL TIME COMMIS CHEF**  
 Required for busy Country House Hotel, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. Brigade of 3 & 2 AA rosettes. Position is live in and offers salary depending upon experience of £10 - £12k per annum, up to 45 hr week. Quality 2 person accommodation provided housekeeping job for partner available. Apply in first instance to Sally Fox on 01967 402257 [www.kilcamb lodge.co.uk](http://www.kilcamb lodge.co.uk) Kilcamb Lodge Hotel, Stronitlan Argyll PH36 4HY

**PLUMBER REQUIRED Driving Licence Essential**  
 Apply in writing to Livingstone & McEachran 24 Kirk St Campbeltown Tel: 01586 554236

## HELPING HANDS

Requires the following

**Cleaners in Oban and Lochgilhead area**

5 evenings per week, Monday to Friday

Transport provided in Oban area

Driving licence essential

Tel Vicky for more details 01631 571252.

## Estate Maintenance Person/Stalker

Glenmoidart Estate seeks applicant for the above position,

apply with CV for details to

Patrick Millais, Blenkinsopp Hall, Haltwhistle, Northumberland, NE49 9LY, (previous applicants need not apply).



Produce Shop & Country Park Manager

An exciting opportunity has arisen, to manage a well established retail outlet and visitor attraction in Argyll. Inverawe Country Park, has a produce shop, tea-room (serving lunch), fishing, play areas, woodland/wildlife walks and smokery exhibition.

We are looking for a natural retailer who has the confidence and knowledge to lead by example. You will place emphasis on training and developing your staff to create a great place to shop, whilst managing every aspect of the commercial, financial and operational running of the Shop & Country Park.

To apply for this exciting position please send your C.V. to Mr Christopher Cox, Inverawe Smokehouses, Tainuill, Argyll. PA35 1HU.

REMEMBER DEADLINE FOR ADVERTS MONDAY 4PM

Oban Times RECRUITMENT  
 Tel: 01631 568000



**LOOKING FOR NEW STAFF?**

**The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES**

Be seen by over 50,000 readers

Tel: 01631 568000

[www.obantimes.co.uk](http://www.obantimes.co.uk)

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# RECRUITMENT

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us @ [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)

### Assistant Area Housing Manager\*

£26,379 - £28,632 Lochgilphead

Based in the attractive rural settlement of Mid Argyll, offering the opportunity to enjoy working and living in a beautiful part of the West of Scotland. You will be a dynamic and innovative housing professional responsible for managing and developing a local housing team that co-ordinates the delivery of high quality housing services across a comprehensive range of functions such as allocations, arrears control, homelessness, estate management and sheltered housing. The post also provides the opportunity to contribute to policy development and implementation to assist in shaping future housing policy. This is an excellent opportunity to develop skills and experience in managing and delivering a diverse range of housing services.

You must have 3 Higher Grades or equivalent and at least 3 years' housing management experience, preferably in a generic service delivery environment, including allocations, estate management, arrears and homelessness - a part qualified member of CIOH is desirable. Ideally, you should have experience of staff supervision, an appropriate qualification in housing or a management qualification, excellent organisational and customer care skills and a commitment to delivering a continuously improving housing service. You must have the ability to work independently. A valid driving licence is essential as this post attracts an essential car user allowance/car lease scheme option. Ref: CSH01101.

For a recruitment pack call 01586 552659.

\*Applicants should note that this is an EXCEPTED POST, i.e. a post to which the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975, as amended, applies.

Successful applicants will be subject to Disclosure Scotland vetting.

Closing date 10th February 2006.

Interviews for this post are due to take place on week beginning 20th February 2006.

The Council welcomes applications from New Deal Applicants.

### Social Work Home Carers

Acharacle, £100.64 per wk, 16 hrs per wk

Working as part of the Care at Home Team, you will be required to support people physically and emotionally in their own homes in order to assist them to achieve maximum independence. These duties will range from personal care, laundry, podiatry, shopping, meal provision and where necessary basic domestic tasks and monitoring the service user's needs during visits.

Although you will be trained, ideally you should have experience of caring for people in their own homes. In order to maintain a flexible service your work rota will include evening and weekend working, with appropriate payment.

Informal enquiries to Shona Knight, tel (01397) 703397.

Application packs are available from our website, or by telephoning (01397) 703397 quoting Ref: L/8/06.

Closing date: 10 February 2006

[www.highland.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.highland.gov.uk/jobs)

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

## GIVE SCOTLAND'S TRANSPORT A LIFT

Members of Regional Transport Partnerships.

Scotland's transport is about to go on a journey of transformation and renewal. Emerging regional transport strategies will deliver benefits to our economy, our communities, our environment, our health and our quality of life. If you're wondering what difference you can make in all this, the answer is 'a great deal'. On each of the new Regional Transport Partnerships across Scotland, local government representatives will work with non-councillor members drawn from diverse backgrounds and with differing perspectives;

They won't be paid (expenses apart), but they will have real influence. If you have constructive ideas about transport and some experience of working on big issues at strategic level, can you spare the time to help shape the future? You'd be expected to attend at least six meetings a year, for a fixed term of two years.

To find out more and apply online, please visit [www.munroconsulting.com/rtp](http://www.munroconsulting.com/rtp) or call Katy Gall at our recruitment advisers, Munro Consulting, on 0141 227 7550.

### PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

The successful candidate will have exceptional and accurate office, admin and IT skills. A proven track record, attention to detail, a patient telephone manner and a sense of humour will all be pre-requisites. You will currently be earning at least £20,000.

Apply in writing to:  
Mr Ian Cleaver MD, Highland Heritage Coach Tours Ltd, Dalmally, Argyll PA33 1AY

### WALTONS of OBAN

have a vacancy for a DELIVERY DRIVER

This is a full-time, permanent position for a driver (male or female over 25) to load our 3.5 ton vans and deliver the chilled and frozen food products we carry. There are some early starts on the runs we do around Argyll & Lochaber but the rate of pay is good and there are usually extra hours available. This is a unique opportunity to join a small and growing business. If you can look after our customers, our goods and our vans we would like to receive your application in writing to:  
Eric Walton, Kilmonivaig, Ledaig, Oban, PA37 1QS

# PUBLIC NOTICES

THE WEST HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS BEST READ PUBLIC NOTICE BOARD SEEN BY MORE THAN \*40,000 READERS EACH WEEK

(\* Source JICREG Reader per copy average from ABC ANU)

### THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

#### EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT SERVICE

#### NOTICE TO PARENTS ON SCHOOL ENROLMENT

All children who reach the age of five years on or before 15 August 2006 may begin to attend primary school in any August 2006. Parents are asked to enrol their children at the local school at 3.00pm on any day during the week beginning 30 January 2006. Parents are reminded that they should take their child's birth certificate with them.

Children who will reach the age of five years after 15 August 2006 but on or before 28 February 2007 may also be enrolled and commence in August 2006. Parents of these children should be aware that they may choose not to enrol their child until August 2007.

If you wish to send your child to a school other than your local school, you can get information on how to do this from either the school or the Area Education Office.

Where Gaelic medium education is available in a school, parents should indicate their preference when enrolling their child.

All parents are given a copy of the school brochure at the time of enrolment.

Any queries with regard to this advertisement should be addressed to your Area Education Manager/Area Education Culture & Sport Manager.

Caithness Area	Graham Nichols	(01955) 602362
Sutherland Area	Bill Coustoun	(01408) 623900
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Areas	Hector Robertson	(01463) 663800
Lochaber Area	Rosemary Bridge	(01397) 707350
Ross & Cromarty Area	John Ritchie	(01349) 863441
Skye & Lochalsh Area	Laurence Young	(01478) 613697

### Argyll & Bute Council

#### 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: 06/00044/DET  
Applicant: TSL Contractors Ltd  
Proposal: Siting of Plant for Asphalt Manufacture  
Site Address: Marine Resource Centre Barcalidine Oban Argyll  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Ledaig Section 34 Advert - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00055/DET  
Applicant: Mr + Mrs Carmichael  
Proposal: Erection of Single Storey Bedroom Extension  
Site Address: Struthan Salen Isle Of Mull PA27 6JB  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Salen Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00052/LIB  
Applicant: Henry Tarbutt  
Proposal: Replacement windows to front and rear and new light in existing front door  
Site Address: 33A Easdale Island Oban Argyll PA34 4TB  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Balvicar Regulation 5 Listed Bld Consent - 21 Day
- Ref No: 06/00078/REM  
Applicant: Philip Anthony Siddall  
Proposal: New dwelling house and garage  
Site Address: Garden Ground Of Hillcrest Breadalbane Street Tobermory Isle Of Mull  
Location of Plans: Tobermory Area Office Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00075/DET  
Applicant: Stuart Campbell  
Proposal: Erection of dwelling house  
Site Address: Baravallin Cottage Benderloch Oban Argyll PA37 10S  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Ledaig Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 05/02488/OUT  
Applicant: Dunstaffnage Estate  
Proposal: Erection of Two Dwelling Houses  
Site Address: Site Adjacent To Duriehill Grosvenor Crescent Connel Oban Argyll  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Connel Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00054/DET  
Applicant: R Atkinson, Esq  
Proposal: Erection of Dwellinghouse  
Site Address: Land East Of Aric Farm Aros Isle Of Mull  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Salen Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00057/OUT  
Applicant: Mr W Laing  
Proposal: Erection of Dwelling  
Site Address: Land West Of Burnside Connel Argyll  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Connel Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

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

### THE CROWN ESTATE

Creating value for us all

#### The Environmental Impact Assessment (Fish Farming In Marine Waters) Regulations 1999

(Re-advertisement due to closure of Easdale Post Office)

NOTICE is hereby given that -

- application has been made to The Crown Estate by Pan Fish Scotland Ltd for renewal of development consent for a finfish farming site at:
 

Reference	Location	Map Reference
REN-31 (AR3-6-6)	Ardmaddy, Seil Sound	NM 777 146 Lat: 56°16.324'N Long: 05° 35.387'W
- in addition, an application plus supporting Environmental Statement has been received to modify the same finfish farm site at:
 

Reference	Location	Map Reference
MOD-151 (AR3-6-6)	Ardmaddy, Seil Sound	NM 777 146 Lat: 56° 16.324'N Long: 05° 35.387'W
- the applications and Environmental Statement (ES) covering the renewal and modification are available for inspection during normal working hours at:
  - Argyll & Bute Council, Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban, PA34 4AR
  - Kilmelford Post Office, Kilmelford, Argyll
  - The Crown Estate, 6 Bell's Brae, Edinburgh, EH4 3BJ.

Copies of the application and Executive Summary of the ES can be obtained from The Crown Estate and copies of the ES can be purchased from Pan Fish (Scotland) Ltd, Ardinglas, Cairndow, Argyll, PA26 8BH at a price of £50 for a paper copy and no charge for a CD copy.

Written comments should be submitted within 42 days of the date of this notice to Senior Planning Officer, Argyll & Bute Council, Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban, PA34 4AR.

3. any person who wishes to make representations about the application should make them in writing within that period to the Local Authority at the address above.

Dated: 26 January 2006

### British Waterways Scotland

#### Road Closure Notification

A83 Ardrishaig Swing Bridge 10pm - 6am  
Due to essential maintenance works the above will be closed to all traffic as detailed below:-

February - Tues 7th, Wed 8th, Thurs 9th, Fri 10th  
March - Fri 10th, Sat 11th  
March - Thurs 23rd, Fri 24th  
March - Tues 28th, Wed 29th  
March - Thurs 30th, Fri 31st  
April - Tues 4th, Wed 5th, Thurs 6th, Fri 7th, Sat 8th  
April - Tues 11th, Wed 12th, Thurs 13th

Should further information be required please contact:  
Alasdair Hamilton, British Waterways  
Crinan Canal Office, Pier Square, Argyll PA30 8DZ  
Tel 07717 691 372

### The Highland Council

#### Education, Culture and Sport Service - Lochaber area

#### Lochaber Gaelic Medium Enrolments August 2006

The Highland Council Education, Culture and Sport Service operate the undermoted Gaelic Medium classes within the Lochaber Area.

Parents who have a child/children who will be five years old by the last day of February 2007 and who are interested in enrolling them in a Gaelic Medium class should do so by contacting the Head Teacher of the school concerned during the week beginning Monday, 30 January 2006. Parents are reminded that they should take their child's birth certificate with them.

Acharacle Primary School, Acharacle, Mrs J Byrne, Head Teacher, tel (01967) 431645.

Fort William RC Primary School, Fassifern Road, Fort William, Miss L MacDonald, Head Teacher, tel (01397) 702674.

Lady Lovat Primary School, Morar, Inverness-shire, Ms M Sutherland, Head Teacher, tel (01687) 462127.

#### Seirbheis Foghlaim, Cultair Agus Spòrs - Sgìre Loch Abair

#### Clàradh Airon Foghlam Tron Ghàidhlig Loch Abar Lùnastal 2006

The Seirbheis Foghlaim, Cultair agus Spòrs na Gàidhealtachd a' tabhann chlasaichean Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig anns na sgoiltean a leanas ann an Sgìre Loch Abair.

Far a bheil pàrantan le clòinn a bhios còig bliadhna ron latha mu dheireadh den Ghearran 2007 agus a tha airson an clàradh airon foghlam tron Ghàidhlig, bu chòir dhaibh sin a dhèanamh le bruidhinn ri Ceannard na Sgoile sin t-seachdain a' tòiseachadh Diluain, 30 Faoilleach 2006. Bu chòir do pàrantan teisteanas breith an leanabh a thoirt leotha.

Bunsgoil Àth Tharracail, Àth Tharracail, Bh Uas J Byrne, Ceannard, fòn (01967) 431645.

Bunsgoil Chaitigeach a' Ghearastain, Rathad Fassifern, An Gearastain, Mh L NicDhòmhnaill, Ceannard, fòn (01397) 702674.

Bunsgoil Lady Lovat, Mòrar, Mh M Sutherland, Ceannard, fòn (01687) 462127.

### Argyll & Bute Council

#### Area Team Leader Development Control, Planning Services, Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban

The following planning applications have been lodged for determination with Argyll & 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.

#### SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF PLANS

- Ref No: 05/02567/OUT  
Applicant: Barbreck Farm Partnership  
Proposal: Demolition of Various Barns and Outbuildings and Conversion and Refurbishment of Stone Built Farm Steadings to Form Four Dwellinghouses  
Site Address: Barbreck Farm Kiltchrean Taynuilt Argyll PA35 1HF  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt Section 34 Advert - 14 Days  
Potential Departure from Policies RUR1 and RUR2 of Lorn Local Plan
- Ref No: 05/02606/OUT  
Applicant: Barbreck Farm Partnership  
Proposal: Site for Erection of Four Self-Catering Lodges and Associated Parking  
Site Address: Barbreck Farm Kiltchrean Taynuilt Argyll PA35 1HF  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt Section 34 Advert - 14 Days  
Potential Departure from Policies RUR1 and RUR2 of Lorn Local Plan

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

### REMEMBER DEADLINE FOR ADVERTS MONDAY 4PM

The Oban Times

Tel: 01631 568000

### North Argyll Stroke Support Association AGM

Tuesday 28 February 2006 at 1.30pm  
Dunmur Court, Oban

### SCOTTISH CREELERS AND DIVERS

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Sandy Gordon 01546 510316  
Alan Peace 01546 602459  
gordon@ri-cruin.freereserve.co.uk alanpeace@beeb.net

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Chairman A Sinclair  
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### THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

#### Notices Under the Town and Country Planning Acts

The applications for Planning Permission listed below, and Environmental Statements where appropriate, together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be examined at the AREA PLANNING OFFICE, FULTON HOUSE, GORDON SQUARE, FT WILLIAM, PH33 6XY, between the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and at the location where listed below during normal office hours.

Written comments (whether supporting or opposing the applications) may be made to the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS MANAGER at the address below within the period listed below from the date of publication of this notice.

Applicant Name & Development Address Reference Number	Proposal Description	Location where application may be inspected & reason for Advertisement
The Church of Scotland General Trustees Acharacle Parish Church, Acharacle 06/00009/LBCL0	Re-Slating of Church Roof	Acharacle Post Office Listed Building (21 days)
Clan Cameron Charitable Trust Rear Of Clan Cameron Museum Achnacarry 06/00014/FULL0	Erection of New Building with Toilet Facilities	Achnacarry Post Office Development Affecting Setting of Listed Building (21 Days)
The Highland Small Communities Housing Trust North Of Rhubana View, Morar 05/00446/OUTL0	Erection of 2 Houses (Outline)	Mallaig Post Office Development Contrary to Development Plan (Potential Departure) (21 Days)

Area Planning and Building Standards Manager, Lochaber Dafydd Jones, Highland Council, Fulton House, Gordon Square, Ft William, PH33 6XY. Tel: (01397) 707015, Fax: (01397) 707022. E-Mail [planning.lochaber@highland.gov.uk](mailto:planning.lochaber@highland.gov.uk)

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

The following planning applications have been lodged for determination with Argyll & 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.

#### SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF PLANS

- Ref No: 05/02567/OUT  
Applicant: Barbreck Farm Partnership  
Proposal: Demolition of Various Barns and Outbuildings and Conversion and Refurbishment of Stone Built Farm Steadings to Form Four Dwellinghouses  
Site Address: Barbreck Farm Kiltchrean Taynuilt Argyll PA35 1HF  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt Section 34 Advert - 14 Days  
Potential Departure from Policies RUR1 and RUR2 of Lorn Local Plan
- Ref No: 05/02606/OUT  
Applicant: Barbreck Farm Partnership  
Proposal: Site for Erection of Four Self-Catering Lodges and Associated Parking  
Site Address: Barbreck Farm Kiltchrean Taynuilt Argyll PA35 1HF  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt Section 34 Advert - 14 Days  
Potential Departure from Policies RUR1 and RUR2 of Lorn Local Plan

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

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4 ALLOY WHEELS 16" 5 stud fittings, very sporty, very good condition, tyres £50 bargain or swap W.H.Y. Telephone 07919 133086. ROOF BARS for Fiat Brava, £30. Telephone 01631 563832. TWIN HELLA Rallye 1000 Spotlights with covers, £150, and Stainless Steel lockable spare wheel cover, adjustable 205/235x76x16, (Cherokee Indian), £150. Telephone 01586 551942.

CARPETS

NEW WILTON carpet, 13x13, Fawn with light speckle £100 o.n.o. Telephone 01546 603015.

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MAHOGANY wallclock new, with pendulum, £80 ono. Telephone 01700 811537.

COMPUTERS

APPLEMAC CLASSIC II computer complete, vgc with kit plus 2 printers (need fixing), £40. Telephone 01631 563832. COMPUTER WORK station, good condition, £15. Telephone 01631 566233 or 07881 610729. DELL 4600 DIMENSION DESKTOP, with Intel Pentium 4 Processor, 3.06 GHz, 512 MB and 80 GB hard drive, CD/DVD/RW+R, 17" flat screen, speakers with subwoofer, LCD display printer, software included Windows XP, Microsoft Office 2003. One year left on Warranty. Can be seen working, £550, (includes desk & office chair). Telephone 01880 820772 (after 6 pm).

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CONSERVATORY EQUIPMENT

CANE CONSERVATORY sofa terracotta design, excellent condition, £49.99. Telephone 01631 570767. TWO CANE conservatory chairs terracotta design, bargain £30. Telephone 01631 570767.

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EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

BODY SCULPTURE with computer functions, hardly used, £30. Telephone 01700 811537. DYNAMIX EXERCISE bike with moving arms and digital computer £49.99 o.n.o. Telephone 07717 886173. EXERCISE ROWING Machine, excellent condition, £15. Telephone 01631 566466.

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FIREWOOD - For sale Firewood, hard wood split logs, delivered North, Mid Argyll and Oban area. Loads approx. 2 tons, £80 per load. Telephone 01838 200373. 25 BAGS of chopped firewood, soft wood. Can deliver. £49.99, bargain. Telephone 07919 133 086.

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BUNK BEDS antique pine wood with mattresses, £49.99. Telephone 01631 720301. HARDWOOD dining table with 4 chairs and 2 carvers, by Merewood, seats 6, 8 when extended, vgc, £130 ono. Telephone 01631 720414. LARGE DARK WOOD wardrobe, cupboard above, £45. Telephone 01631 564527. LOUNGE WALL UNIT dark coloured, 5ft length, £120. Telephone 01866 822463. OAK TV/VIDEO corner unit. Old Style with lead light doors, £25 ono. Telephone 01852 300112. ONE DROP LEAF dining room table, £45. Telephone 01866 822463. POOL TABLE, £450. Large mahogany dining table and 10 Chippendale style chairs. Edwardian mahogany wardrobe. Scottish Art Nouveau Oak sideboard. Oak dining table, 6 Art N oak chairs. Mahogany whatnot. Green dralon 3piece 10 cushion suite. Oak gun cabinet. Victorian upholstered library chair. Oak monks seat. Pair Deco style divans, pot cupboard, wicker linen basket, armchairs. Telephone 01866 833240.

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MISCELLANEOUS

GREENHOUSE GLASS, came out of 6ft x 5ft greenhouse, ready to go. offers around £45. Telephone 07919 133086. LARGE INFLATABLE fender/mooring buoy 85cm diam, £49.99. Telephone 01631 566466. NEW INTERNATIONAL-ALIST subscription for 2006, unwanted gift, free, Telephone 01583 441352. PRISONER CELL block H DVD boxset - 12 of the best episodes including the series dramatic conclusion £30 o.n.o. Tel 07717 886173. WETSUIT BOOTS size 5½ £15 o.n.o. - Telephone 07717 886173. WOOD TURNING lathe - Drauer WTL12A 36", 3 speed complete with Chisels, Record super chuck and quantity of wood, £200. Telephone 01880 760340.

GOLF CLUBS

JUNIOR GOLF Clubs and bag, John Letters Trilogy, 5 clubs suit beginner, £20.00. Telephone 01866 822773.

GREYHOUNDS

The Retired Greyhound Trust have beautiful dogs and bitches suitable for adoption. These dogs are fully vaccinated and spayed/neutered. If you feel you could offer one of these ex-racers a home please contact Northern Division on 01470 511705 or 01463 235696. The RGT is a registered charity No 269668. A donation is required. Look forward to hearing from you.

HOME ENTERTAINMENT

GOODMANS PER-SONAL CD player with car kit £25 o.n.o Telephone 07717 886173. JVC HI-FI, has A.C.D. twin cassette decks and turn table, excellent condition, can be seen working £49.99 ono. Telephone 01880 820772, after 6pm. PANASONIC VIDEO, works fine, no faults, SP/ LP, remote control, Video plus, £15. Telephone 01631 563564. PHILIPS 14" COLOUR TV with remote control, in v.g.c., £20. Telephone 01586 551526.

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YOUR attention is drawn to the following terms and conditions which relate to the placing of advertisements in all publications owned by The Oban Times Limited. Parties to this agreement are the Publisher, The Oban Times Limited on the one part and the Advertiser on the other part. The Publisher publishes newspapers, magazines, books and provides advertising space therein or provides for the delivery of advertising materials to the public within these publications. 1. Advertising copy shall be legal, decent, honest and truthful and comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice and all other codes. 2. The Publisher does not guarantee the insertion of any particular advertisement. 3. The Publisher reserves the right to cancel or alter the advertisement by giving reasonable notice. 4. An order for an advertisement shall be deemed to be made on acceptance of the advertiser's order by the Publisher whether placed by telephone, mail, fax or in person. 5. Cancellation of display advertising must be received by the Publisher before the publishing deadline, failing which, the publisher reserves the right to invoice the customer in full for the whole cost of the advertisement. 6. The parties submit to the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts and Scots Law. In the event of any dispute or action by the Publisher to recover payment from an advertiser, it is agreed that matters will be settled in the Oban, Argyll Sheriff Court or such other Court as the Publisher may choose. 7. The Publisher shall not be liable for any loss or damage occasioned by any total or partial failure (however caused) of publication or distribution of any newspaper or edition in which any advertisement is scheduled to appear. In the event of any error, misprint or omission in the printing of an advertisement or part of an advertisement, the Publisher will either re-insert the advertisement or relevant part of the advertisement, as the case may be, or make reasonable refund or adjustment to the cost. No re-insertion, refund or adjustment will be made where the error, misprint or omission does not materially detract from the advertisement. 8. Errors must be notified to the Publisher in writing within fourteen days of publication. In no circumstances shall the total liability of the Publisher for any error, misprint or omission exceed the amount of a full refund of any price paid to the Publisher for the particular advertisement in connection with which liability arose or the cost of a further or corrective advertisement of a type and standard reasonably comparable to that in connection with which liability arose. 9. The Advertiser/Advertising Agency agrees to indemnify the Publisher in respect of all costs, damages or other charges falling upon the publication as the result of legal actions or threatened legal actions arising from the publication of the advertisement in any one or more of a series of advertisements published in accordance with copy instructions supplied to the publication in pursuance of the Advertiser/Advertising Agency order. 10. Advertis under the value of £75 must be paid on acceptance of order by the Publisher. All advertising on a credit basis must be agreed with the Publisher in advance. 11. Payment of any invoice raised by the Publisher will be due 15 days from the date of invoice or as otherwise directed on the invoice. In the event of non-payment the Publisher may charge late payment interest at a rate of 2% and this is chargeable on a daily basis from the due date until the bill is paid. In addition the Publisher may charge a late payment levy of £10 as an administration fee. In the event of late payment the Publisher reserves the right to disallow any discounts given and to raise an additional invoice for the discount which will be treated as though it has been raised with the original invoice. 12. A request to insert an advertisement assumes acceptance of our conditions.

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# BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

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Lochgilthead  
(01546) 602345  
Fax (01546) 602661  
Campbeltown  
(01586) 554646  
Fax (01586) 553006

### BIRTH



**GOODFELLOW** - Eric and Tracey (née MacKinnon) are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their son Eric Donald on January 13, 2006. Eighth grandchild for Jean and the late Donald MacKinnon, Oban, and second grandchild for Eric and Elsie Goodfellow, Langholm.

### ENGAGEMENT

**ISAAC - WILSON**  
The engagement is announced between Susie, daughter of Hamish and Jane, Benderloch Argyll, and Euan, son of Peter and Linda of Fife.

**MENICOL - DUNNEVANT** - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Ruairidh, eldest son of Dr Iain and Mrs Winnie Menicol, 'Dunvegan', Port Appin, to Rebecca, eldest daughter of Mrs Janet Dunnevant and Mr Don Dunnevant, Richmond, Virginia, USA.

### RUBY WEDDING

**CAMPBELL - MACLELLAN** - At Our Lady and St. Margarets, Kinning Park, Glasgow, on January 29, 1966, John to Katie Mary. Present address 6 Islay Road, Oban.

### GOLDEN WEDDING

**KENNEDY GILLESPIE** - Danny to May on February 1, 1956 at Dunoon. Present address, 2 Fisher Row, Inveraray.

### DEATHS

**CAMPBELL** - Peacefully at home with his family on January 21, 2006, in his 63rd year, Donald William Campbell (Uille), 10B Corran Brae, Oban, beloved father of Anthony, Iain and Donald and a devoted Jen to Aiden and Harry and a much loved brother. Fortified by rites of Holy Church. R.I.P.

**CLARK** - Very suddenly at Belford Hospital on January 21, 2006, Barbara Clark, 23 Grant Place, Fort William, beloved wife of Duncan Clark devoted mother of Jimmy, Duncan, Alasdair and Alison and much loved granny. Funeral service to be held in Duncansburgh Parish Church on Friday, January 27, at 11am, all friends respectfully invited. Family flowers only please. Donations if desired, to Belford Hospital may be given at the service.

**GRAHAM** - Peacefully at the Campbelltown Hospital, on January 18, 2006, after a short illness borne with great courage, Archie Graham, in his 75th year, 9 Ardmish, Isle of Gigha, beloved husband of the late Margaret Bannatyne, much loved father of Fiona, Elizabeth and Donald and a devoted granddad to all his grandchildren.

**MACDONALD** - In fond memory of Ronnie MacDonald (originally from Meoble), who died peacefully on January 16, 2006, aged 83 years, in Southampton General Hospital. RIP.

- Inserted by his loving wife, Jean and his sisters.

**MACKINNON** - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, Oban, on January 19, 2006, Donald (Wee Dan) beloved husband of Jean, loving father of Philip, Mary, John and Tracey and a much loved grandfather and brother. Funeral took place on Monday, January 23, 2006, at St Columba's Cathedral, Oban.

**MAITLAND** - Peacefully in the Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, Oban, on January 21, 2006, in her 71st year, Isobel Porter, 26A Mossfield Drive, Oban, dearly loved wife of the late Bert Maitland and loving mother of Ian, Tam and Fiona and a much loved nannie and great-nannie.

**THOMSON** - Peacefully at Ossians Care Home, North Connell, on January 22, 2006, in his 95th year, James Thomson, retired photographer, 44 Argyll Street, Lochgilthead, beloved husband of the late Christina and the late Florence and father of Stewart and Christine (Australia), Lorna (America) and Dorothy (Oban). Funeral in Stag Hotel, Lochgilthead on Friday, January 27, 2006 at 1pm.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**CAMERON** - The family of the late Catherine Ann Cameron (Katie Ann), would like to thank relatives, friends and neighbours for the sympathy and support extended to them in their recent sad bereavement. Grateful thanks to doctors at Tweeddale Surgery and nursing staff who cared for her during her illness at Belford Hospital and Belhaven Ward and the Highland Hospice. Special thanks to Rev D MacQuarrie and Mr John Fraser LP, for the memorial service at Fort William. Sincere thanks to Messrs John Fraser & Sons and A MacRae undertakers, for efficient handling of the funeral arrangements and the crew of M.V. Hebrides for help and guidance. Thanks to Maggie and staff at Capercaille. Finally thanks to all who paid their last respects at the church services in Fort William and Borve, Isle of Lewis and at the graveside in Barvas Cemetery, Isle of Lewis and for the donations kindly received for the Highland Hospice.

**HORNE** - The family of George wish to thank everyone for their love and kindness following their sad loss. For all the cards, flowers and telephone calls received. Thank you to Mike and Ewen for their very efficient arrangements, Rev Corbett for such a comforting service, High Street Practice, Macmillan nurses, the staff of the medical ward, Belford Hospital and the staff of Lloyds the Chemist in Caol. A special thank you to Cathy and Dianne. Thank you to all who attended the funeral and donated the sum in the region of £600 to the local Macmillan nurses and the High Street Practice.

**WATSON** - Josie Watson and all the family would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind expressions of sympathy, by visits, letters, cards, telephone calls and beautiful floral tributes, following the sad loss of Kenny, (loving son, brother and dad). Also thanks to Rev Ramsay for his comforting service and Michael McFall for efficient handling of the arrangements. Also to all who travelled far and locally to pay their last respects to Kenny.

### IN MEMORIAM

**BIRCH** - Betty Strang (née Henry) at rest January 30, 1998.  
- The loved, esteemed and revered wife of Peter.  
**BREIVOGAL** - In loving memory of my dad, Cyril, who passed away on January 27, 2005.  
Fondly remembered.  
- Christopher.  
Also loved and remembered.  
- By the MacDonald Family, Tiree.

**EDWARDS** - In loving memory of our loving Mum and Granny Mary Bell Edwards who passed away January 26, 1995, also remembering our Dad and Grandpa, Donald, who died on September 19, 1986. Loved and remembered always.

- Donnie, Anne and family.

**JACKSON** - In loving memory of John, beloved husband of the late Mae, died January 19, 2005. Dearly loved and remembered by all the family.

- Pauline, Deborah, Moira and families.

**KELLY** - In loving memory of my dear daughter and our sister, Flora Elizabeth, who died January 31, 1988. R.I.P.

Time won't heal the heartache  
Nor stop a silent tear  
Nor dim the treasured memories of one we loved so dear.

**KENNEDY** - In loving memory of my dear mother, gran and great-gran, Mary, who died January 26, 2005, and our dad and papa, Charlie, who died January 25, 1992.

Gone are the days we used to share  
Not a day goes by without thinking of you mate  
Nor will it ever be allowed to  
I miss the mischief and true friendship we shared.  
God bless and keep you safe your spirit lives on with me!  
- Lee

**LIVINGSTONE** - In loving memory of John, who died January 25, 2001. Fondly remembered.

- Helen

**MACDONALD** - In loving memory of our dearly loved daughter and sister, Ann, who died January 28, 2000, aged 34 years and remembering loved ones gone before and after.

Those we love don't go away

But walk beside us everyday

Unseen, unheard, but always near  
Still loved and missed and very dear.

- Mum, Dad, Iain and Louise, 26 Clunes Avenue, Caol.

**MACDONALD** - In loving memory of Ann, who passed away January 28, 2000.

Always in our thoughts.

- Mary, Allan and family, Banree, Onich.

**MACDONALD** - Precious memories of David Hepburn (Davie) who passed away January 26, 2001.

Miss you and love you always.

- Margaret, Elspeth, David, Roslyn and Ewan. Gentle Jesus up above please give grandpa all our love.

- Kyle and Emma.

**MACISAAC** - In loving memory of Donald beloved husband, dad and papa who did January 27, 2005.

Gone but not forgotten.  
- Anne and family, Caol, Corpach and Perth.

**MACNAUGHTON** - In loving memory of John Alex, a dear husband, father and grandpa, who died January 27, 1998, also Colin, a dear son, brother and uncle, who died December 26, 1984. Also remembering loved ones gone before.

Forever in our thoughts.

- Katie and all the family at home and away.

**MACNEILL** - Treasured memories of our dear mother, Betty, who died January 29, 1984.

Quietly today your memory we treasure  
Loving you always, forgetting you never.

- Inserted by Sheena, Christine, Johnnie and families, Islay and Bishopbriggs.

**MACPHERSON** - Robert, died January 25, 1982, much loved husband, father and grandfather.

Memories live on in our thoughts everyday  
Pictures in our hearts see you, miss you Rab.  
- Inserted by his family.

**McLEAN** - In loving memory of our dad and granddad, Danny, who passed away January 26, 2002.

Quietly thought of every day.

- Nicola, Danny, Laura, Aileen, Mikey and Erin.

**McPHEE** - In loving memory of Olive, a much loved mother, mother-in-law and granny, who died January 31, 2005.

Always in our thoughts.

- Love Margaret, Ian and Alexander xx.

**MORRISON** - Cherished memories of my dear mother, Morag, late of Claddach Baleshare, North Uist, who passed away January 25, 2000.

Loved and remembered everyday, sadly missed by all who knew her. Also loved ones gone before and since.

- Daughter Chrissie and family, Bearsden.

**PEARSON** - Treasured memories of our loving Mum and Granny Mary Bell Edwards who passed away January 24, 1996, in a road accident.

When a loved one becomes a memory  
The memory becomes a treasure.

- Uncle Davie, Auntie Helen and family.

**PILKINGTON** - In loving memory of my dearly loved and a sorely missed husband, Jim, beloved dad of Liz and granddad to Debbie and Alan and friend of Donnie, passed on January 31, 2001.

- Your loving wife May. Safe in everlasting arms.

**ROBERTSON** - In loving memory of John, died January 24, 2005. Beloved husband of Christine, much loved father of Catriona and Ian, dear father-in-law of Ogilvie and Leandra and a loving grandpa and great grandpa. Forever in our thoughts.

**WALLACE** - Allan. In loving memory of my dear husband, who died January 23, 1988.

- Mary Wallace, Inverloch.

**WILMER** - In loving memory of Bert Wilmer tragically lost at sea January 30, 2004.

Not a day goes by without thinking of you mate  
Nor will it ever be allowed to  
I miss the mischief and true friendship we shared.  
God bless and keep you safe your spirit lives on with me!  
- Lee

**ECCLESIASTICAL NOTICES**

**SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION**  
Sunday 29 January 2006  
Epiphany 4

St John's Cathedral, Oban  
Holy Communion ..... 0800  
Choral Mattins ..... 1015  
Preacher: The Revd Canon Ivan Mann  
Sunday School and Creche  
Parish Eucharist ..... 1130  
Loop System  
Large Print Hymn Books  
All welcome

Norman MacCallum, Provost  
(01631) 562323

Christ Church, Lochgilthead  
Loop System  
Holy Eucharist ..... 0900  
Holy Eucharist ..... 1100

St Columba, Gruline, Mull  
Holy Eucharist ..... 1100

St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona  
Holy Eucharist ..... 1000

**ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN**  
Campbell Street Church  
Sunday 29 January 2006  
11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.  
Phone-In 'Worship Link' available

Wednesday 1 February 2006  
7.30 p.m.  
Prayer and Bible Ministry  
Rev. Archie McPhail MA, MTh  
(01631) 567076  
All welcome

**DESTINY CHURCH**  
OBAN  
Sunday 29 January

**NEW VENUE**  
Drummore School  
Lower Soroba  
Oban  
Guest Speaker  
Bill Prentice  
11 a.m.  
Telephone:  
01631  
564283  
www.destiny-church.com

**CHARITY DONATIONS**

**Oban Hospice**  
CARING FOR THE FUTURE  
Donations always gratefully accepted  
Please contact:  
John Boyd, Treasurer  
Oban Hospice Ltd  
9 Dalriach Court  
Oban PA34 5HH

**CANCER RESEARCH UK**  
Scotland  
Fighting Cancer on all fronts ...  
CRC Scotland spends more on research than any other organisation  
Commitment of over £75 million each year  
Cancer Research UK Scotland  
Suite 1/1, Unit 4 Blair Court  
Clydebank Business Park  
Clydebank, G81 2LA

**FOR THE BLIND CHILDREN OF SCOTLAND'S ACADEMIC TUTORIAL AT THE ROYAL SCHOOL IN EDINBURGH**  
Please give your financial support by donation, deed of covenant or legacy.  
Please send to Appeals Department, Highland Arts Effort, Royal Blind Asylum School, P.O. Box 500, Gillespie Crescent, Edinburgh, EH10 4HZ

**Macmillan cancer relief**  
Working towards a time when every person in Scotland has equal and ready access to the best information, treatment and care for cancer  
Macmillan Cancer Relief  
79-81 Lauderdale Gardens  
Hyndland, Glasgow, G12 9QU  
Freephone 0800 100 6000  
In memory of Dawn Joyce

## Church NEWS

### Body, Mind and Soul

NEW YEAR'S Day saw the launch of a new development at Ardrishaig Parish Church.

The Body, Mind and Soul Challenge gives people the chance to take part in a range of physical and mental competitions whilst taking care of spiritual needs by memorising verses from the Bible.

The idea behind the scheme is for people to sign up for one or more of the 'challenges', which include badminton, squash, Sudoku, chess, Scrabble and dominoes.

They are then placed at random on a league table with others taking part in the challenge.

The list of competitors is then circulated to all participants, who contact someone above them in the league to arrange a match.

When the competitors meet, they test each other on the set memory verse and play their game. The winner moves up the league.

Social While organiser Ruth Carruthers hopes that people enjoy the competitive element of the challenge, she also hopes that the social interaction will encourage people to spend some time together and help them on a spiritual journey.

Mrs Carruthers said: 'I had this great hope that some of our elderly folk could invite a younger member to visit for a game of Scrabble, a cuppa and a chat, with both of them learning a verse of scripture at the same time.'

'Perhaps it's just that this sort of scheme gives a reason for the kind of social contact and friendship that we're often lacking in today's busy lifestyles.'

'I really hope it will be used by many folk of all ages.'

Anyone who would like to take part can contact Ruth Carruthers at Ardrishaig Manse on 01546 603269.

**Flora MacAsgail**

It was with regret the Harris community as a whole heard of the sad news of the death of Mary Flora MacAsgail.

Mary battled with illness in hope of recovery until recently when it became known that her health had deteriorated.

She was an esteemed and well-liked lady in Tarbert, Harris, where she ran a general shop.

Her husband Kenny predeceased her some years ago and we extend our condolences to relatives, friends and neighbours in Tarbert and everywhere else Mary was known.

To meet, she was a kind lady, not only in her shop, but outwith it as well. DM

### Thought for the week

## Our daily bread

EVERY morning, when I draw the curtains, there they are - a row of little birds sitting on the garden fence, chirping and chattering as if to say, 'Well, you're up then, where's the breakfast - we are hungry?'

So I put bread and scraps on the bird-table for them and watch as they lift off and swoop down in anticipation.

There is a lovely story in the Bible about birds who actually fed a man named Elijah.

He was a prophet of God and had just delivered a

warning to King Ahab of Israel that, if he did not repent of his sins and reform his land, God would send famine to that country by withholding rain.

The famine came to pass and God hid Elijah in a place where there was a supply of water (1 Kings 17, v3-6) and had food delivered to him. God's deliveries are always 'first-class' - the food was flown in by two Raven MBGs (Made By God and designed in Genesis 1:20-26) and Commanded by God (1 Kings 17 v4).

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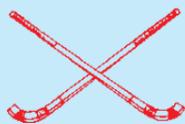
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The famine



# TIMES Sport

## Young Camanachd maintain 100 per cent record

Shinty

MacDougall Trophy South Under 17 League B Lochfyneside 0 Oban Camanachd 4  
OBAN Camanachd's Under-17 team maintained the 100 per cent record with an away win at Strachur.  
Conditions were good for the time of year for this league match played on Sunday and the teams were evenly matched over the first-half with neither able to find the net.  
Camanachd's experience paid-off in the second period with Scott MacMillan scoring four times to secure his side top spot in South League B with a 100 per cent record.  
Once the outcome of League A is decided, Oban Camanachd will meet the winners in the final of the MacDougall Trophy.

### Shinty cup draws

#### The Sir William Sutherland Cup

First Round  
Byes for Beaulieu, Edinburgh East Lothian, Lochbroom and Glenorchy

Glasgow Mid Argyll	v	Skye Camanachd
Lochaber	v	Kincraig
Oban Celtic	v	Ardnamurchan
Boleskine	v	Kinlochshiel
Strachur	v	Kingussie
Caberfeidh	v	Kyles Athletic
Inverness	v	Col - Glen
Lochcarron	v	Kilmallie
Nairnshire Camanachd	v	Lovat
Lochside Rovers	v	Fort William
Newtonmore	v	Strathglass
Glen Urquhart	v	Inveraray

The first round ties will be played on Saturday, May 13 2006

#### The MacTavish Cup

Fort William	v	Lochcarron
Inverness	v	Beaulieu
Caberfeidh	v	Lovat
Kinlochshiel	v	Glenurquhart
Kilmallie	v	Lochaber
Kingussie	v	Strathglass
Aberdeen University	v	Newtonmore
Glenargy	v	Skye Camanachd

The first round ties will be played on Saturday, April 15 2006

#### The Strathdearn Cup

Fort William	v	Inverness
Nairnshire Camanachd	v	Lochaber
Skye Camanachd	v	Beaulieu

The prelim round ties will be played on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006

Kincraig	v	Lochcarron
Newtonmore	v	Lovat
Ardnamurchan	v	Caberfeidh
Kingussie	v	Glenurquhart
Nairnshire or Lochaber	v	Kinlochshiel
Boleskine	v	Strathglass
Kilmallie	v	Skye Camanachd or Beaulieu
Fort William or Inverness	v	Lochbroom

The first round ties will be played on Saturday April 15 2006

#### The Celtic Society Cup

Glasgow Mid Argyll	v	Kilmory
--------------------	---	---------

The prelim round ties will be played on Saturday April 15 2006

Inveraray	v	GMA or Kilmory
Oban Camanachd	v	Kyles Athletic
Bute	v	Balachulish
Tayforth	v	Glenorchy

The quarter final ties will be played on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2006

#### The Bullough Cup

Game 1 Highlanders	v	London
Game 2 London	v	Highlanders

League Two

Bye: Glasgow Mid Argyll	v	Inveraray
Game 3 Edinburgh East Lothian	v	Winners of game 3
Game 4 Glasgow Mid Argyll	v	Winners of game 3

League Three

Bye: Strachur	v	Col - Glen
Game 5. Kyles Athletic	v	Strachur
Game 6. Winners of game 5	v	Strachur

League Four

Bye: Glenorchy	v	Lochside Rovers
Game 7. Oban Celtic	v	Winners of game 7
Game 8. Glenorchy	v	Winners of game 7

All league games played on Saturday June 24 and Saturday July 15

#### Semi Final Draw

Winners of league 3	v	Winners of league 1
Winners of league 2	v	Winners of league 4

The semi final ties will be played on Saturday August 19 2006

Final at Inveraray on Saturday September 23 2006

# Dunoon is surprise choice for Camanachd Cup Final

Shinty

THERE was considerable surprise following the announcement that shinty's top cup competition, the Glenmorangie Camanachd Cup, will play its prestigious final at a venue which is currently too short to meet with the sport's minimum playing surface requirements.  
The Camanachd association, shinty's governing body, has confirmed that the 2006 Camanachd Cup Final, the 99th playing of shinty's blue riband event, will be held in Dunoon.  
This is the first time that shinty's main event of the year will be played in the

Argyll town and the venue will be the Dunoon stadium, with the match due to be played on Saturday, September 16.  
Commenting on the choice of venue, Camanachd association President John MacKenzie said: 'We have been enormously impressed with the enthusiasm for the event which has been apparent in Dunoon since we started the dialogue with Argyll and Bute Council.  
'The playing circumstances and the supporting facilities at Dunoon are exceptional and we believe that taking the cup final to

the Cowal area will open up a new horizon for shinty, and introduce the game to a huge number of people who may never have thought of going to our top event.  
'Argyll and Bute Council has gone an extra two metres, if not the famous extra mile, in guaranteeing us a playing surface which is beyond our minimum requirements.  
'This is a fantastic commitment which we appreciate very much.'  
Argyll and Bute Council have agreed to enlarge the

current playing surface at Dunoon stadium by increasing the length by two metres, reconfiguring the running track.  
The arrival of the shinty final, a few weeks after the Cowal Gathering and just before the Royal National Mod to Dunoon represents a massive boost for the town.  
Councillor Dick Walsh, the Council's spokesperson on Health, said: 'Argyll and Bute Council is delighted that agreement has been reached with the

being the first ever contestants at Dunoon, will be made when discussions have been competed with the championship sponsors.  
Councillor Brian Chennell, chair of the Bute and Cowal Area Committee agreed that this event confirms Dunoon as an ideal venue for major sporting and cultural events and is sure that the extensive media promotion and accessible transport links will ensure a hugely successful event.  
John MacKenzie added: 'We are just about to begin a historic year for shinty with our first full competi-

tion season playing within new dates.  
'This is the 99th final, just one short of the magic centenary. I am sure that Dunoon will do us proud and I am sure that major shinty occasions will return here on the back of what promises to be a very exciting event.  
'It is also important to point out that what we are doing here is adding another superb facility to our list of available venues for finals.  
'There is no question of any other venue being withdrawn at the expense of Dunoon and this is a major step forward for shinty.'



Drew Ferguson, captain of Fort William's reserve team holds the MacColl Shield which they won in the annual challenge match with Kilmallie. Also pictured are coaches, Willie Anderson and Lachie MacDonald and Neil Cameron and Sean Cruickshanks.

## Fort lift MacColl Shield against 11-man Kilmallie

FORT William won the MacColl Shield for the first time in four years after a 3-2 victory over local rivals Kilmallie.  
Fort were 3-0 up after 40 minutes with goals from John Wood and Alan Knox added to an own-goal.  
Kilmallie were also reduced to 11 men after one of their players was sent off for fighting on the field.  
Fort William coach Willie Anderson said: 'We had a

weakened team going over there but it was a good game to watch and Fort William had the bulk of the game.  
'Kilmallie came back very strongly in the second half and Fort didn't take advantage of the spare man.  
'There were a lot of good young players on both sides

rattle them but their goalkeeper and defence saved them from a hiding.  
'Both teams competed and put up a great show for a good crowd who had turned up for the game.'  
Willie added that he would like to thank Kilmallie for inviting Fort William to play, the officials and the referee, Ronald Campbell, for a terrific game.

and the future of Lochaber shinty looks in good hands.  
'It's good to get a game under our belts.  
'There wasn't much between the two teams at the end of the day and it was a good advert for shinty.  
'I thought with them down to 11 men we were going to

## Association confirms new Sutherland Cup deal with Aberdeen Considine

THE CAMANACHD Association has confirmed the enhancement of a contract with law firm Aberdeen Considine, sponsor of the Sir William Sutherland Cup, the Scottish Junior Championship.

The new deal covers finals until 2007 and represents a major boost for the association and the junior championship which was instigated in 1923.  
Association chief execu-

tive, Richard Tulloch said: 'I am delighted that Aberdeen Considine who have supported this competition already for nine years, will

be with us through to and including 2007.  
'I am also pleased to confirm that the financial arrangements represent a significant boost to the association, assisting us greatly in meeting our targets and aspirations.'

one of the north-east's leading firms of solicitors, estate agents and mortgage brokers.  
Harvey Aberdien said: 'The Sutherland Cup is a prestigious occasion and is

clearly one of the highlights of the playing season.'  
Beaulieu will be the venue for the final in 2006, and the Balliemore Cup Final will be played at the same venue on the same day.

**THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT**

# WIN £1,900

**in The Oban Times**

## Spot the Shinty Ball Competition

**Last Week's shinty ball was here...**

**All you have to do**  
We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1. If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. Prizes will be shared between those submitting correct entries.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

**Easy to enter**  
Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 postal order or cheque per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to reach "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 5PY by 12noon on Tuesday

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

**Competition Rules**  
No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.  
The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.  
In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.  
The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.  
Employees of The Oban Times Limited, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

**This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are: Mrs Christine Dryden, Petemar, 4 Creag Bhan Village, Glengallan Road, Oban and Peter McCuaig, Cragfoot, Harbour Street, Tàrbart**

I enclose £1 (note) for 20 crosses (tick box)  The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules.

How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 5PY

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## Swimming certificates for Oban youths



Left - right - Chris Campbell, Ewan McMillan, and Matthew Breur who completed their Level 2 (NARS) lifeguard certificates. 04/11/01

### Swimming

THREE Oban High School students were successful in completing a National Aquatic Lifeguard Course (NARS) at the weekend, at Atlantis Leisure.

Chris Campbell, Ewan McMillan and Matthew Breur took part in the level two certificate course in association with Atlantis initiative PlaySport.

After passing the 'high quality' course, which was run by qualified instructor Rosanne Ramage, the boys are now qualified to work as pool lifeguards, and have acquired vital survival skills.

In order to take the course which cost £100, the 6th year students had to pay £50, with 'PlaySport' funding the other half of the price.

PlaySport Manager Neil Innes helped emphasise the importance of giving the boys this option.

He said: 'PlaySport want's to enhance opportunities for youngster's especially in such an important life saving course such as this, which will in no doubt give them great benefit in the long run. The course, which took place over back to back weekends helped to detail and instruct things such as first aid, CPR and scenarios that may be relevant to life-guards, in a swimming pool.

Due to the success and the fact that some applicants had to pull out at the last minute, Atlantis are planning to run another of the NARS swimming courses before the summer, in order to get as many people involved in sport as possible.

'The good thing about courses such as this one, is that not only will it get kids active it also awards impressive worthwhile certificates, which can be used by the kids in their future employment.

'We have varied ideas to introduce different courses in the future in order to develop the good work that has been initiated here.'



## Father and son success at Mull Ralloy

LAST Saturday saw Mull Car Club's inaugural Ralloy Forest Stages Rally on the island.

The race, which has a compact route with ten testing stages, provided a good days sport for competitors, and great excitement for spectators.

Roy Jarvis of Ralloy engineering was the main sponsor helping the event get off the ground, but it was amply supported by local businesses sponsoring both stages, and prizes.

Liam Wood and Kerr Beaton won the first stage in the 4wd turbo charged 660cc Daihatsu. Father and son combination Paul and Neil MacKinnon were the



Paul MacKinnon

Dougie Hall and Steve Clark were running exceedingly well, and were in fact leading until the end of SS6. Malloch Nicholl and Roy

### Rallying

Campbell were on their tale the entire time, and completed what was a good warm up before the Scottish Championship Campaign.

Eddie O'Donnell junior and Leanne MacColl set the pace from the start, and despite sustaining damage in the SS9 carried on to finish as the top 2nd car, leaving the prize giving with numerous trophies.

Keith Robathan and Duncan Brown chased all day but were unable to match the stunning pace of Eddie and Leanne, and had to make do with second place.

Car 1 which consisted of

Daniel Harper and Chris Campbell, had a steady run in their Astra, until the SS5 when they lost a lot of time changing a wheel and finished back in 14th. Gerry Kilmurray and Kevin Rae had a better run in their Astra, finishing a credible ninth.

Innes Clark and Ian Morrison won best entertainers of the day as well as third place, but the 6R4 of Reay Mackay and Robert MacDonald also entertained the crowds, and gained fast-time on the last stage.

Saturday was also the first excursion into the forest for the 'Bearcubs', which consisted of Heather MacCrone and John MacCrone, who came through unscathed.

Rob Davies with co-driver Mike Goodman ventured up from Wales and had a very enjoyable day until the final stage caught them out, and they slipped off into a big ditch.

Though keen to continue, recovery wasn't possible in time and they had to retire.

Altogether there was a high finishing rate, which organisers hope will lead to a good returning number of riders for the race next year.

Mull Car Club are extremely grateful to all competitors, marshals and officials who travelled to Mull to make this event possible.

### Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, January 26, 2006** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	03.06 3.1 08.43 1.7 15.34 3.3 21.36 1.6	
Fri	04.04 3.4 09.57 1.4 16.27 3.5 22.30 1.3	
Sat	04.52 3.7 10.58 1.1 17.12 3.7 23.17 0.9	
Sun	05.35 4.0 11.49 0.8 17.53 3.9 *****	**
Mon	00.02 0.7 06.16 4.2 12.36 0.6 18.31 3.9	
Tues	00.46 0.5 06.57 4.3 13.20 0.5 19.09 3.9	
Wed	01.30 0.4 07.37 4.3 14.03 0.6 19.47 3.8	

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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## Oban Lorne 2nd XV trounce Mid Argyll

### Rugby

OBAN Lorne 2nd's, finally managed to fulfill a home fixture when Mid Argyll travelled to Oban due to a late cancellation in their league match.

The home side was made up of a mixture of first team players, regular seconds and gave home debuts to Simon Breasley and Travis Smith.

Corrie Louw playing an unfamiliar role of stand off powered over for the first try of the game. Simon Breasley on his debut soon followed that up when he completed the second try of the match, running in from 20 metres.

The second half continued where the first left off and Robert MacQueen managed to squeeze in for an unconverted try.

Alan Beaton completed the afternoon's scoring when he converted a fine try, using his pace to breeze by the Mid Argyll players.

The away side never let their heads drop, and continued in their attempts to score. Despite their best efforts though, the game finished 24 - 0.

The match allowed for some much needed game time for Oban players, and also gave some match practice to the youngsters and debutants.

## Saints on West of Scotland cup duty this weekend

OBAN Saints hope to get back to action this Saturday after last weekend's Jimmy Marshall cup tie against Cambria was called off, due to the pitch at Glencruitten being waterlogged.

The Oban side travel to King George V Park, Renfrew, on Saturday to take on Moorcroft in the 4th round of the West of Scotland Scottish Amateur Cup.

This will be a difficult match for Saints, as Moorcroft have already beaten them 2-1 this season,

### Football

albeit in somewhat controversial circumstances. Manager Iain Jackson hopes to have a full squad to choose from, for this important game.

A win against Moorcroft would put the Oban side in the last 32 of the competition, with a home game against either Denny or Kirkintilloch Miners Welfare in the fifth round.

The Oban side are away by the following Saturday

(February 4), when they take on Falkirk side Slamannan in the fifth round of the Scottish Amateur Cup.

Last week's heavy rain played havoc with Saturday's fixtures with none of the Argyll teams managing to play.

Only one Premier League fixture went ahead with Gartoosh United defeating Gourrock Athletic at home by three goals to nil.

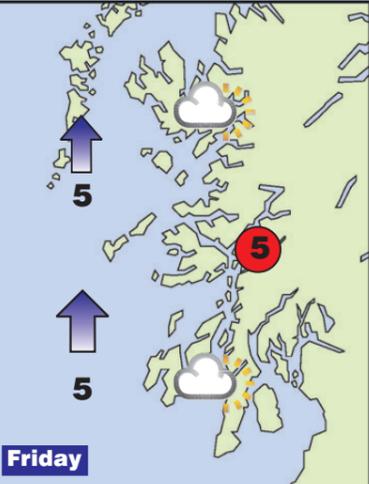
This Saturday's fixtures involving Argyll clubs are:

- West of Scotland Cup - Moorcroft v Oban Saints, Jimmy Marshall Trophy - Campbeltown Pupils v Shawlands FP, Premier Division One - Postal United v Dunoon, Premier Division Two - Centre v Campbeltown Boys, - Division 1 Lochgilphead Red Star v East Kilbride YM, - Division two - Tarbert v Millerston Thistle.

Oban Saints FC Website - [www.obansaintsafc.co.uk](http://www.obansaintsafc.co.uk)

## Markie Dan's Work League

	pld	pts
1. Atlantis Leisure	8	21
2. Fortleiths	7	21
3. Foster Yeoman	7	16
4. Oban High School	7	16
5. AM Transport	8	13
6. Burnside Joinery	7	9
7. The Oban Times	8	7
8. The Hydro Board	8	6
9. The Hotels	7	0
10. The Hospital	7	0



### the weather

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**Thursday, January 26**  
 Will be dry with sunny spells. Winds will be light south or south-easterly  
 Temperatures -1°C to 6°C.

**Friday, January 27**  
 Will be dry with sunny spells. Winds will be light south or south-easterly  
 Temperatures -2°C to 6°C.

**Saturday and Sunday**  
 Saturday and Sunday are also expected to be dry with sunny spells. Winds will be light southerly throughout on both days  
 Temperatures -3°C to 5°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States  
 Oban to Barra/South Uist - Slight  
 Oban to Coll/Tiree - As above  
 Kennacraig to Islay - As above

## Atlantis and Active Sport host first netball festival



4th/left - Back Row - Moira Ord, Netball Development Officer for Scotland, attended the netball festival to help teach children more about the sport 04/11/01

ACTIVE Schools held their first netball festival on Monday at Atlantis Leisure, with over 90 children in attendance.

Moira Ord, who is the Netball Development Officer for Scotland, was also present at the festival, in order to pass on her knowledge to kids from six primary schools in and around Oban.

The two main reasons for the festival being organised were, to help raise the sports profile and to give kids the opportunity to learn new skills.

The afternoon was split up into two sections with the early part of the morning being spent on skills, and the rest of the afternoon on putting them into practice,

### Netball

during specially organised games.

Huge support was given on the day from lots of volunteers who helped to look after different teams, and coach them through the afternoon.

Senior High School girls also made the effort to take part in the event, by encouraging the children from schools including Lochnell, Dunbeg, St Columbas, Rockfield, Ardhattan and Park.

These are the early stages in the sports development, with a plan for a league very much in the pipeline, and an inter school tournament being planned for early May.

Active Schools Coordinator Dale Kupris helped explain the reasons behind such a big push for the sport.

He explained: 'It's a target sport for a number of important reasons. It's quite inclusive because it's non contact, which allows boys and girls to take part, and it may appeal to children who don't ordinarily take part in team sports.

'I'm absolutely delighted with the turnout today from the schools for the festival. I'm also very appreciative of the input from all the volunteers, and the high school girls who made the day's activities possible.

'We want to get as many kids playing sport as possible and this is a good way in which to do that.'

## New funding programme for Oban Girls

### Sport

A NEW funding programme called 'Girls on the Move' has been set up to increase the physical activity levels of girls, and young women in Scotland.

The programme is running a pilot project in North Lorn, and has appointed Marion Smith as Co-ordinator for this area, and she will be based at Atlantis Leisure, Oban.

A budget of £50,000 has been made available by the Robertson Trust and the Scottish Executive Health Improvement budget, which is to be used over a period of three years.

The project aims to give girls and young women opportunities and choices to achieve the social, psychological and physical benefits possible, through physical activity.

The programme is also actively supported by the Scottish Sports Association, Sports Scotland, Sports Leaders UK and the Women's Sports Foundation. The programme has two strands: Leadership and Participation. All girls who are interested in getting involved in this programme are being encouraged to my Marion.

She said: 'The ultimate aim here is to get girls aged 9-18 more active and the way were doing that is to speak directly to them to gauge their ideas. We are encouraging anybody who has an idea to get in touch and we will discuss it.'

## RANGERS SCOTTISH CUP CLASH!

### 4th Round - Rangers v Hibernian

Rangers have progressed to the fourth round of the Tennent's Scottish Cup, following their 5-0 victory against Peterhead. Rangers are now set to face Hibernian in Round 4 and the vital clash takes place on Saturday 4 February at Ibrox, kick-off 12.15pm.



The Oban Times has teamed up with Rangers to offer readers a super chance to win one of three pairs of tickets to the fourth round Tennent's Cup Clash at Ibrox. For your chance to win a pair of tickets, just answer this question:

Name the new Rangers signing who recently scored a hat trick at home against Peterhead

Fill in your answer below and send to  
**The Oban Times P.O. Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB**

Answer .....

Name .....

Address .....

..... Tel:.....

All entries to be in by 12noon 31st January 2006. Winners will be notified by phone. Normal Oban Times rules apply.

Don't worry if you don't win tickets this time, tickets are now on sale, priced from £22 for adults and £12 for concessions. Please note season tickets are not valid for this game.

**TICKETS ON SALE NOW FROM: Ticket hotline 0870 600 1993**  
**Rangers Ticket Centre [www.rangers.co.uk](http://www.rangers.co.uk)** (booking fees apply)

If you haven't already registered for online ticket sales, you can now sign up immediately online, just visit the ticket section of [www.rangers.co.uk](http://www.rangers.co.uk) and click on the link to online tickets and follow the easy instructions.