

Gaelic school plan splits Skye 24 new science jobs for Dunstaffnage Fisherman's fears over marine park

Scottish Field invests in cultural heritage



SCOTTISH Field, sister publication to *The Oban Times*, attended an auction in Edinburgh of the famous Drumbuie Collection on January 28 and purchased a very special book.

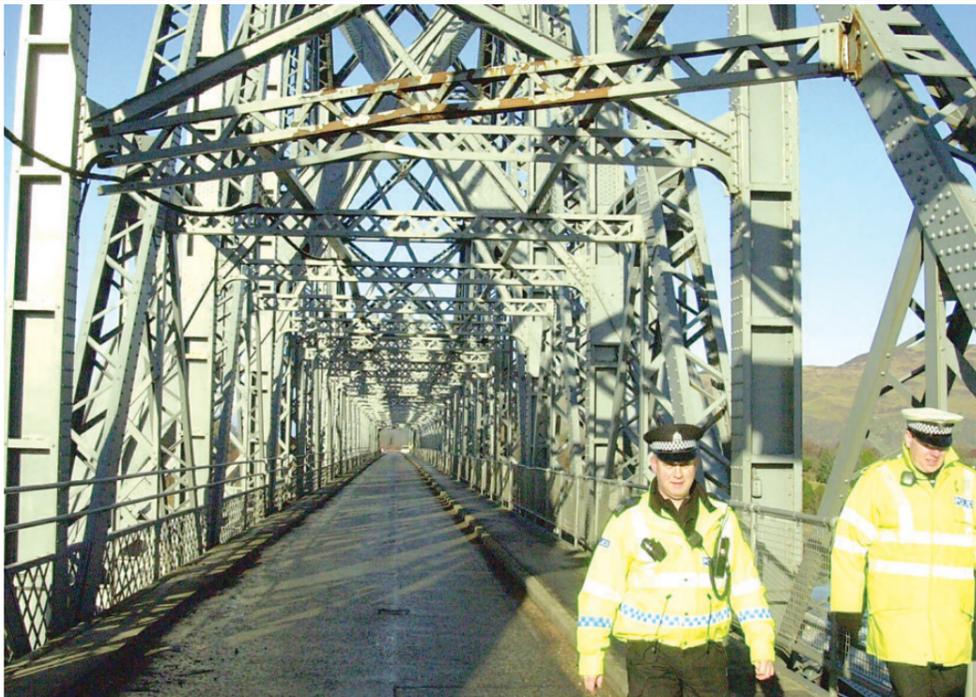
The Clans of the Scottish Highlands was described by auctioneers Lyon and Turnbull as 'the most splendid and costly of all the 19th century colour plate books devoted to the Scottish clans, with fine hand-coloured lithographs after paintings by RR McLan.

The work, dedicated to Queen Victoria, was published in 1845 to commemorate the 1745 uprising and available only by subscription.

The massive 72-page work, weighing 15 kilos and measuring 54 x 38 centimetres, illustrates in hand-coloured lithographed plates the dress, tartans and arms of the clans of the Scottish Highlands.

Archie Mackenzie, the Edinburgh-based editorial director of *Scottish Field*, said he was thrilled by the acquisition, which would enable the beautiful images to reach a wide audience through the pages of *Scottish Field* and our newspapers.

Joan Bennett, group deputy managing director said: 'It is expected that the book will eventually form part of a fascinating reference library we are hoping to create in Oban for the benefit of the public.'



Traffic using Connel Bridge came to standstill for more than six hours after the bridge sustained structural damage

Connel Bridge closed after collision

POLICE were called to Connel Bridge on Monday morning after a lorry collided with two structural supports.

It is believed the arm of a mechanical digger being transported on the back of the lorry collided with the metal supports and loosened a live electricity cable.

The driver continued on his journey and was stopped by police in Crianlarich.

The vehicle was crossing the bridge from the Connel side when the incident occurred.

Oban police were unable to cross the bridge in pursuit of the lorry and had to liaise with colleagues in both Northern and Central constabularies in order to catch up with the damaged vehicle. The A828, Oban to Fort William main road, which crosses the bridge, was closed at 11.40am for six hours and drivers were advised to detour via Tyndrum then north via Glencoe to Ballachulish.

A structural engineer from BEAR Scotland arrived at Connel around 2.30pm on Monday to check the structural safety of the bridge.

The bridge was declared safe and re-opened at 5.45pm on Monday although there were further traffic delays as the electric cables were secured.

Oban Police Station was inundated with calls on Monday with the phone ringing every few seconds.

Inspector Neil Wallace of Strathclyde Police Oban said: 'We received a report at 11.22am on Monday that the bridge had sustained substantial structural damage.'

'As a result we had to shut the bridge for safety reasons and there was what we thought was a live electricity cable which had come loose.'

Inspector Wallace confirmed a man had been charged with a number of road traffic offences.

Council needs to cut £11.5 million

MORE than £11.5 million must be cut from Argyll and Bute Council's budget for 2006-07 if it wants to keep the council tax increase at five per cent.

This would represent an average £55 increase a year, but the council will not make a decision on the council tax increase and savings for the next financial year until Thursday, February 9.

The Scottish Executive has indicated it does not want any more than a 2.5 per cent increase across Scotland.

While the executive has given the council a 5.4 per cent increase in finance, the council argues it is mostly for specific projects and does not take account of pay increases.

Cuts

Each department has had to come up with savings or increases in fees or cut back on projects that were due to go ahead.

Community services - including education, social work, care of the elderly, children and families, housing, joint care - has the biggest budget - £121 million - and has to reduce it by £7.3 million to meet the target of a five per cent rise in council tax.

But sometimes it is the smaller savings which have the biggest impact on people's lives such as putting back the start date of Jura Progressive Care service until 2007, saving £6,183.

The option of stopping the mobile library service to the rural areas of Oban and Lorn and in Helensburgh has left one Appin lady aghast. A saving of £59,016 would be made but Jane Williams, who is housebound, says it has been a lifeline to her for 25 years.

'We are in a rural area, we don't have any street-lighting, the road is never gritted, the only thing we get is the travelling library,' she said.

'It is my source of leisure,' said Miss Williams. 'I am also partially sighted and get the big print books and talking books. I can't get out of the house and only go out once a week and then have to pay someone with a car to get me.'

Other proposals include reducing the budgets for community learning, adult literacy, replacing furniture and fittings in school hostels and reductions in staff training and removing the grants for Lochgoilhead and Luining playgrounds as low numbers may lead to the units closing.

The budget for home care, elderly residential care placements, free personal residential care and children's residential placements will be frozen, except for emergencies, saving a whopping £2,580,152 from the community services budget.

Increases

Among the increases in charges proposed are an extra 10 pence for meals on wheels, to £2.50; 50 pence an hour more for home help to £9.50; residential elderly care for £363.88 per week to £406.28 and nursing care for the elderly from £427.28 to £470.05.

In operational services - roads, catering, cleaning, property, recreation and transport - to reach the five per cent would include reducing overtime and not filling two vacant posts in refuse collection, which would lead to a trial fortnightly collection in some areas.

Charges would go up for removing scrap cars and asking for a ferry out of hours will cost more - up from £38.50 to £60 up to midnight for Easdale and Luining and from £19.20 to £80 at Lismore and £53 to £60 for Jura.

Oban airport users to meet council behind closed doors

A MEETING is to take place tonight (Thursday) between Oban Airport Users Group and Argyll and Bute Council over the authority's plans for the North Connel airfield.

The meeting, which is not open to the public, has been organised by the council to update regular users of the airfield on the work to upgrade it to take scheduled services, timescales involved and arrangements for pilots seeking 'prior permission required' (PPR) landing.

The users group consists of representatives from Connel Gliding Club, Connel Microlight Club, Argyll Aero Club, Total Logistics Concepts (TLC) and Foster Yeoman.

There has been a suggestion from members of the group that a representative of the Civil Aviation Authority should also be present at the meeting in Connel Village Hall.

The airport has been unmanned since November 27 when TLC's management contract ran out and despite efforts on the part of Paul Keegan of TLC from March last year to find out what the arrangements would be the airport has been left without radio contact or a manager.

PPR landings, where pilots are solely responsible, can be arranged via the council's offices at Kilbowie in Oban but only during office hours. Since November there has been concern by users and at least one MSP over the loss of the radio service, lack of management at the airport and what the future holds.

There has been no consultation with the thousands of pilots and visitors who have landed at Oban in the last eight years over the council's plans to upgrade the airport to allow scheduled air services to run. TLC, which still has a contract to supply fuel, also claims that since it stopped managing the airport recorded landings have fallen by 70 to 75 per cent on the previous three-year average.

Despite council assurances that a manager would be in place by the end of January, a three-year contract for the post was again advertised in a national newspaper on Sunday.

Top lecturers sought for marine centre

TWENTY-four new jobs are coming to the Scottish Association of Marine Science (SAMS) UHI at Dunstaffnage, near Oban.

Thanks to a £11.4 million injection of cash to the UHI Millennium Institute, 10 posts for professors, readers and lecturers in areas including deep-sea biology, polar oceanography, marine molecular biology, geochemistry, marine technology, ecosystem modelling and marine biology are being advertised.

This will be followed by another 14 posts in the coming months to build on SAMS's research performance, capabilities and performance. SAMS UHI is to receive £5.6 million of the funding from Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Funding Council and European Regional Development Fund.

'This is a fantastic opportunity to bring some world-leading scientists to Oban and to secure the long-term success and future of SAMS UHI,' said UHI Professor Graham Shimmiel.

Professor Sir John Arbutnot, president of SAMS UHI, said: 'It establishes a new science capability and leadership in marine environmental research.'

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Passport office for Oban

OBAN could have a passport office, as new rules mean first-time adult applicants will have to attend an interview.

These moves are to cut down on fraudulent applications; last year alone three-quarters of all passport applications were in first-time applications. A spokesman for the UK Passport Service said Oban was 'an indicative location'. Possible premises and staffing are being investigated.

Alan Reid, MP for Argyll and Bute, has been campaigning to ensure that his constituents do not have extensive journeys for passports or any form of ID cards.

'An office in Oban would be a help, but people on the islands or the Kintyre and Cowal peninsulas would still face a long journey to their nearest office or be reliant on a mobile office visiting their area,' he said.



Toddy the Tobermory distillery cat is now seeking a new home.

Blind Tobermory Toddy seeks a loving home

TODDY, champion mouser and unofficial welcoming committee to visitors to Tobermory Distillery, is soon to retire and a home is needed for this famous feline.

Tourists have left the island and travelled home all over the globe with photographs of the beautiful wee cat who sat in the window of the distillery visitors' centre and greeted people as they arrived; film shows hardly ever began in the centre until Toddy had walked around the room and said hello to everyone.

Toddy managed to fit in these 'front of house' duties around her mousing patrols in the historic building.

Now Toddy is well past her retirement age. She has lost her eyesight and has been treated, and received medication for, her high blood pressure.

The distillery has asked Argyll Animal Aid to find Toddy a permanent or foster home. All her medical bills will be covered but she needs an indoor home where she will be an only cat with no little children to bother her. Apply to Argyll Animal Aid, www.smallpaws.co.uk.

First turf cut on Islay's centre

THE FIRST sod will be cut at 11am today (Thursday) on the site of the new Island Centre near Port Charlotte on the Isle of Islay.

The project, costing £850,000, was almost a non-starter as island construction companies were unable to tender because of a full work load and mainland companies were quoting more than £1million.

However, island builders Woodrow Construction came to the rescue and sealed a deal with Iomairt Chille Chomain to build the centre which will hold events, have internet access and a games room.

The centre has been designed by Islay architect David Andrew.

Much of the cost has been raised by islanders.

Money has also been given by Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll and Islands Enterprise, European Regional Development Fund, Scottish Land Fund, Highland and Island Enterprise Energy Unit, Crofting Communities Development Scheme, Big Lottery and Robertson Trust.

Much of the funding was raised by the sale of Port Charlotte Village Hall.

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Skye festival-goer had cocaine at Ballachulish Bridge police roadcheck

A GLASGOW man was jailed for eight months at Fort William Sheriff Court last week after being caught with half an ounce of cocaine at Ballachulish Bridge while travelling to the Skye Music Festival last summer.

Akhtar Ali, aged 37, of 19 Kelhead Place, Penilee, Glasgow, was stopped at a police 'anti-crime roadcheck' on June 17 last year at the Ballachulish Bridge, set up to deal with increased traffic heading for the festival.

Procurator Fiscal Alison Wylie said Ali aroused the

suspicion of police officers by jumping in and out of his car immediately after he was stopped.

Ms Wylie said: 'After he was pulled over he quickly jumped out of the car and while police were talking to him he jumped back into the car.'

'Police thought he was going to drive off and he was searched under the misuse of drugs act.'

Ali then produced a knotted polythene bag with white powder inside. The court heard that he threw the bag onto

the ground and said it was cocaine. He also told police there was about a 'quarter' of cocaine in the driver's door of his car.

Ali admitted being concerned in the supply of cocaine on the A82 Fort William to Ballachulish road on June 17 last year.

He told police he and four or five friends had 'chipped in' and bought the cocaine for about £500 and it would be used while they were 'chilling' at the festival.

Defence agent Gerald Sweeney said: 'Marriage difficulties were the catalyst for his introduction to illicit drugs. Supply was restricted to social supply with no financial gain.'

Sheriff Douglas Small said: 'Being concerned in the supply of drugs is a most serious offence. Cocaine is an extremely harmful drug in the long-term. I consider that there is only one sentence in a case involving the supply of class A drugs, and that is one of custody.'

Search for missing major

ONE OF the largest ever mountain rescue efforts seen in Lochaber was launched over the weekend to find a young army major who was described as a 'highly experienced climber'.

As *The Oban Times* went to press yesterday (Wednesday) military mountain rescue teams were still searching for Major Andrew Haigh, aged 33. The search was launched on Sunday night and involved Lochaber, Glencoe and two RAF mountain rescue teams, Lossiemouth rescue helicopter 137 and seven search and rescue dogs.

Major Haigh of the MOD's Personnel Centre in Glasgow was reported missing by his girlfriend after failing to return home on Sunday night.

He came to Fort William last Friday but left the youth hostel in Glen Nevis on Saturday morning and has not been seen since. The search has concentrated in Aonach Mor and Aonach Beag.

Glencoe centre open all week

GLENCOE Visitor Centre is to change its usual winter opening hours during the Fort William Mountain Film Festival.

The National Trust visitor centre in Glencoe will be open all week during the festival which runs from February 11-17.

Events scheduled for the week include an illustrated talk from Cameron McNeish, a 'make a film in a day' workshop for children and a question and answer session featuring Roger Wild from the Mountaineering Council of Scotland.

First fairs fun at Fort Augustus

FEIS Gleann Albainn is to run its first fairs for adults in Fort Augustus from February 10-14.

The weekend will combine a programme of tuition with informal evening sessions in local hotels.

Angus Grant of *Shooglenifty*, Duncan Chisholm of *Wolfeston* and Tony Hardie of *Old Blind Dogs* will be on hand to offer fiddlers some tips with Angus Grant senior leading a masterclass. Secretary Christine Pinkerton said: 'There is something on offer for musicians of all levels.'

Council cuts to hit Lochaber

LOCHABER councillors will today (Thursday) join colleagues across the Highlands to decide on the biggest cuts to services the council has faced in the last ten years.

The council's director of finance Alan Geddes described the budget cuts faced by the council as the most challenging in recent years, previously only seen in the early years of the council in 1996.

He also forecast that the council would face an even more difficult budget in 2007-08.

Councillors at a full

meeting of Highland Council will be asked to confirm budget cuts of more than £18 million.

The largest cut, nearly £7 million, will be made in the education budget where half a million pounds will be cut from community projects and nearly £750,000 from energy costs.

Specialists
The biggest single cut will be over £1m from the budget for visiting educational specialists such as music, art and physical education teachers who teach in primary schools.

Twenty-five million pounds will be cut from the transport, environmental and community (TEC) budget with the roads maintenance budget taking a £575,000 hit.

Housing will be cut by £1m and social work is to lose out by £1.3m.

Lochaber area convenor Councillor Olwyn Macdonald said that members would resist any calls for a rise in Council Tax.

She said: 'There will be cuts in all services across the Highlands, and also across Scotland. We can't say we're being

hit any harder than any other area, but you can only do what you can with the money you have.'

'Any increase in council tax hits hard without having to put it up even more. Obviously that would be the answer but people can't afford any more and there are council tax rises every year now.'

The budget cuts this year assume that the council tax rise will be 4.5 per cent, making the average Band D council tax £1,135 a year.

Council tax accounts for £96m of the council's £489m budget.

Police hunt masked Uist attackers

POLICE in South Uist hope to catch the masked 'punishment' attackers who left an islander with a broken arm and broken leg earlier this month, despite having no strong leads in the case.

A special four-man team of detectives from Western Isles police headquarters in Stornoway has been sent to the island to investigate the savage beating of unemployed man John Maclellan.

The 57-year-old former Caledonian MacBrayne pier hand was hit with baseball bats by two people wearing Hallowe'en masks on January 12 outside his home at Lochboisdale when he was getting off his motorcycle after visiting his girlfriend. Chief Inspector Murdo Fraser, head of island police, issued an appeal to the community for witnesses to come forward with information.

Dentist waiting list rises in Fort William

THE NUMBER of people on the waiting list to see an NHS dentist in Fort William has risen to more than 1,600, despite hopes last year that a new appointment would reduce the list.

NHS Highland blames a national shortage of dentists for the problem but still plans to recruit more NHS dentists to address the problem.

Two new dental surgeries are also to be added to the existing three NHS dental surgeries at Fort William's Community Clinic.

Alex Fraser, dental service development manager for NHS Highland, said: 'Recruitment of dentists at present is very competitive due to the national shortage.'

'However NHS Highland was successful in attracting a dentist to fill its new post

within the Fort William Community Clinic.

'This dentist, who started work in September 2005, has been employed to provide continuing care to patients as well as emergency care for unregistered patients.'

'To date a total of 200 patients from the waiting list have been offered appointments and a further 100 patients from the waiting list are to be sent letters in early February offering them an opportunity to register with the clinic. NHS Highland recognises that given that General Dental Practitioners in Fort William have not indicated that they intend to accept additional NHS patients there will be a need for it to expand its team of

employed dentists further. Therefore the new health centre is to include five fixed dental surgeries whereas at present there are only three fixed surgeries within the existing community clinic. This will allow a further expansion of the dental team and an increase in services to the local community.'

In August last year the number of people waiting to see an NHS dentist in Fort William reached 1,500.

At that time NHS Highland said that it expected 1,200 patients to be registered again in Fort William within 18 months to two years.

Last week the NHS Highland board received more than £300,000 to build new dental surgeries in Fort William.



Thomas and Milena Eccles with Buddhist monks Ajarn Surlang and Ajarn Wattana.

Lochaber couple 'Thai' the knot

A LOCHABER couple swapped the traditional Highland wedding for a Buddhist ceremony in Kinlochleven.

Thai kick-boxing trainer Thomas Eccles and his new wife Milena 'tied the knot' in a Buddhist marriage ceremony at Kinlochleven Community Centre on Saturday.

Thomas has been a professional Thai kick-boxer for the last 20 years and runs Master Therapies in Fort William. He is the only master of Thai kick-boxing in Scotland and has trained Scottish and British champions in the

martial art. The blessing was given by Buddhist monks, Ajarn Surlang and Ajarn Wattana, who are originally from Thailand but are currently staying at a Buddhist temple in Edinburgh.

Thomas said: 'It was lovely, something really special. The monks live by love and kindness and the ceremony is about energy and love and expressed a lot for me.'

'I go to the temple in Edinburgh a lot and do demonstrations for the Thai Forum in Scotland to raise cash for the temple.'

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Third man in court after Alcan protest

A THIRD peace activist, part of a group which blocked the entrance to the British Alcan factory in a demonstration over the company's activities in Iceland, appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court last week.

Steven Van Elsen, aged 22, whose address was given as Faslane Peace Camp, Helensburgh, admitted breach of the peace by chaining himself to four other protesters outside the smelter at Fort William on October 25 last year. Defence agent Hamish Melrose said Elsen believed that British Alcan factories in Iceland have a detrimental effect on the 'clean' environment there.

Sentence was deferred on Elsen until September 7 this year for him to prove he can be of good behaviour.

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Roy Bridge Primary School pupil Calum MacDonald posts the school's petition to the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh.

Pupils' plea to parliament

PUPILS at a Lochaber primary school facing closure are seeking the help of Scotland's parliament to help keep the school open.

Roy Bridge Primary School posted a 180-signature petition to the Public Petitions Committee of the Scottish Parliament this week.

The petition asks for a public-community partnership to be adopted to secure the future of endangered rural schools.

Roy Bridge residents have responded to a Highland Council consultation on the

future of the school by proposing to build a new school themselves, and lease it back to the council. The petition also seeks additional funding support for community partnerships, similar to that offered to public-private partnership initiatives.

A school statement said: 'A favourable response from the Scottish Parliament would add weight to the community proposal and would enable the Roy Bridge community to pilot a new approach to delivering public services in rural communities.'

New fire station for Fort William

FORT William is to have a new fire station at An Aird following a funding announcement by the Scottish Executive.

The executive has announced that £1.7 million will go towards upgrading accommodation and improving training facilities at Fort William.

The new station will be open to the wider community helping get across important fire prevention messages.

Highlands and Islands Fire Board Convenor, Drew MacFarlane Slack MBE, said: 'We recognised the need to improve services for Fort William and the hinterland for some time and this money will allow us to build a new fire station and training ground.'

The station will, as now, be manned by retained fire-fighters.

It will also be used by volunteer and island units for training, accommodation to address equality issues, and to provide a focus point for wider community integration.

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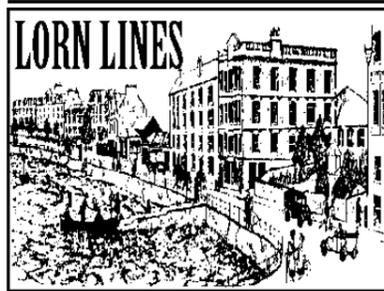
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FEATURING a programme organised as usual by Moira Dunlop, Connel, this month's ceilidh, organised by the Cruachan branch of An Comunn, added to the high reputation enjoyed by these presentations.

Introducing an excellent bill was fear an taighe Murdo Iain MacDonald, the Lochgilhead-based archivist with Argyll and Bute Council, and a visitor always welcome in Taynuilt where he spent his boyhood years.

Setting the tone for the evening were four young pipers from the recently-formed Oban High School Pipe Band, Neil Jordan, Keith MacRae, Donald Morrison and Scott Felgate who played both as a group and solo. Equally impressive were the Toni Russell Dancers, Emma Roxburgh, Lisa Marie Parkinson, Zoe Johnston, Jasmine Hoey and Carrie Robertson, with two engaging four-year-olds, Samantha Parkinson and Jessica Swan, making their own delightful contribution.

There was appreciative applause for the evening's soloists, Mod Silver Pendant winner Nicola Pearson, Oban, and Mod Gold Medalists Angus Smith, Oban, and Mairi MacArthur, Glasgow, who has a Three background. The fiddle playing of Ann Barlow, Taynuilt, set toes tapping as did accordion selections from Hector MacFadyen, Oban, who also played for ceilidh dancing.

Everyone enjoyed interval tea and home-baking and there was the usual raffle. Votes of thanks were proposed by branch chairman Paddy Shaw, Lochawe.

THE OPERATION of Shopmobility in Oban was outlined to members of Oban Rotary Club by the organisation's co-ordinator in this area Anne Mossman when she appeared as guest speaker at a recent weekly lunch of Oban Rotary Club in the Regent Hotel.

Through the scheme, anyone who is unable to walk, for whatever reason, can hire a wheelchair or motorised scooter for the day for a modest fee, a service especially appreciated by the many visitors who come to Oban by bus, with many operators unwilling to carry scooters.

As with many schemes of this nature there is continual need for fund-raising. A grant of £2,000 from the local authority helped underpin the start-up of the project in 2002 but no further support has been available from the council since.

Amongst donations received have been those from Lloyds TSB and Ladbrokes.

In her role as co-ordinator, Anne heads a team of enthusiastic volunteers. She was thanked for her talk by Rotarian Roy Rutherford, who complimented their guest on providing the town and community with such a worthwhile service.

WITH Janet Fergusson, Benderloch, teaching music to the pupils of primary seven every Monday, Park Primary School is looking forward to taking part again this year in the Oban-based Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival.

Additionally, the school intends to compete at the Oban and Lorn Drama Festival.

Pupils in primary seven are to visit the Outdoor Centre at Ardentinnny from 8 to 12.

The Impact Arts Group staged a presentation for primary one to primary three pupils on Wednesday January 18.

Burns workshops, conducted by Freddy Freeman and involving all pupils, took place on Thursday January 26.

Support at the Christmas service enabled the school to raise £100 for Quarriers Scotland.

ITS SUPPORT for young families is well known and widely recognised.

It was therefore predictable that Homestart's annual coffee morning in Oban's Regent Hotel on Saturday January 21, would draw a strong attendance. Provided and served by the Homestart volunteers, coffees, teas and a selection of delicious home-baking were much appreciated. The event raised £275, a sum which will help support the work of this organisation. The organisers said later they were very grateful to the Regent Hotel which provided the venue free-of-charge.

Homestart Lorn currently uses the services of 20 volunteers who are actively involved with young families. Area co-ordinator Aileen Binner, Benderloch, said she was hoping this number could be increased to 24.

WORK on developing a top-of-the-range all-purpose playpark in the centre of Dalmally village began on January 17, when the contractor, Donnie MacDougal, started the initial groundwork.

The official opening of the park is planned for Wednesday March 29, a ceremony to be attended by local primary school children with the support of head teacher George Kay. The celebrations will include a buffet disco in the village hall, to be run by Kenny Grey. A licensed bar will be run by the shinty club.

The projected cost of the project is £100,452. Funding so far secured amounts to £91,911 of which £9,000 was raised by Adventure Dalmally 2000, the local organisation behind the project. The venture attracted substantial donations from a range of funding bodies including BBC Children In Need, Community Economic Development, Argyll and the Isles Enterprise, and EB Scotland. Argyll and Bute Council has agreed to develop new access and street lights at its own cost.

Margaret Donald, Adventure Dalmally's inspirational chairperson, is to stand down after the official opening.

APPEARING as a soloist in Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall during a concert staged while the city hosted this month's Celtic Connections, was Joy Dunlop, Connel, An Comunn Gàidhealach's Gaelic Development Officer for Argyll and the Isles.

Joy was roundly applauded during a show presented as part of 'Showcase Scotland'.

While on stage she was interviewed by a presenter from BBC Radio Shropshire who recorded her performance as part of a live broadcast. Also appreciated during Celtic Connections were performances on clarsach and keyboard by Joy's brother Andrew.

OBAN'S Cancer Research charity shop in George Street raised £83,860 through the sale of donated items, a measurable increase on last year's takings.

There were also cash donations amounting to £2,640. The encouraging figures come at the end of a year which saw many demands on public giving, not least because of major disasters such as the devastating tsunami which hit the Far East.

Shop manager Penny Street said: 'Every year since we opened in 1988 we have seen takings rise and we are hugely grateful to the public for their support.'

Assisting Penny are 19 volunteer helpers although she would be delighted if more came forward.

MEETING in the Regent Hotel on Monday January 16, members of Oban Camera Club savoured a magical tour of Scotland's small islands, conducted by that evening's guest speaker, acclaimed photographer John MacPherson, Inverness.

Enjoyed, courtesy of Mr MacPherson's stunning slides, were visits to the Garvelochs, Scarba, Kerrera, Lismore and Raasay, a journey which included fascinating glimpses of the Corrievechan. This was followed by a digital presentation similar to one which Mr MacPherson had already given to a group of leading travel agents, underlining the power of photography to promote Scotland. He was thanked by club vice president Jim Kirkpatrick, Oban.

Fishermen fear marine national parks are 'urban' driven

FISHERMEN and fish farmers in the Mull Aquaculture and Fisheries Association (MAFA) fear that the whole concept of a coastal and marine national park is 'urban driven'.

They have told Scottish Natural Heritage that they do not want a park.

They are worried that the parks will be conceived with little or no local consultation.

'This organisation does not believe that a park management board should be making decisions for its industries and are, indeed, fearful that a park concept does not, historically, fit well with commercial development,' said Nick Turnbull on behalf of the association. The views of MAFA have recently been submitted to Scottish National Heritage and Scottish environment minister Ross Finnie regarding the concept of coastal marine national parks.

The organisation is, said Mr Turnbull, keen to emphasise that it was in the interests of all its members to be involved in sensible conservation methods

'All marine harvesting industries depend for their very

existence on being sustainable,' said Mr Turnbull, who said that MAFA wanted, where possible, to have the backing of all Mull community organisations.

The feeling amongst the fishermen and agriculturists is that it all has been ill thought out, and is being rushed through.

It has already been decided that there will be a coastal and marine national park somewhere in Scotland, which only adds to the confusion over the other new statutory regulations coming in at the same time, such as Inshore Fisheries Groups, the Marine Bill plus regulating and other orders.

Nick Turnbull said that members of MAFA were unanimous in their concerns and could see no genuine advantages in being in a park and failed to understand the necessity for such a park in their area.

Campaigners for a park in the Argyll area have always stressed they want to work alongside fishermen to create a workable park and stressed they are not against fishing or fish farms.

Mr Turnbull said: 'We are already seeing the polarisation of different organisations and the reality of conflict without vulnerable communities which did not exist before.'

'This does not just affect industry groups such as ourselves but every single individual who lives and works in a potential park area. It is hard enough to get planning permission for fish farms or even house sites but with a new layer of statutory powers in place it is likely to be even harder. This has already been proven from existing land parks.'

MAFA members feel that if a park goes ahead there is a real possibility of economic industries declining - despite what SNH says.

'Fishing and aquaculture are established major employers with a knock on effect on the whole island economy and still offer year-round employment for young people with good opportunities for further development,' said Mr Turnbull.

'It would be impossible to agree to anything which could potentially upset these sustainable industries.'



Pupils Ewan Fyfe, Kyle Renton, Kanisha Kirkhope and Morven Campbell with Owen Hutchins, development officer for Lochaber Fisheries Trust, Tom Paterson, janitor and Richard MacKenzie of Loch Awe Improvement Association.

Inveraray primary hatches a salmon plan

SCIENCE lessons have never been so fascinating or so much fun.

The children of Inveraray Primary School are one of five schools in Argyll that will be hatching wild salmon and returning the

smolts to the river. Special incubators are being put into Inveraray, Dalmally Kilcreggan, Gendaruel and Strath of Appin Primary schools; other schools in Lochaber will also be joining in.

Argyll Fisheries Trust, Loch Awe Improvement Association and Scottish Natural Heritage are all involved in the project which will show children how vital the health and cleanliness of the land and rivers and lochs

are. It will look at the environment as a whole, giving the children lessons in biology, science and environmental studies.

Between four and six weeks from incubating the salmon eggs the pupils will

have young salmon ready to release into the natural cycle.

School janitor Tom Paterson will be helping the pupils of primary four and five to look after the incubator.

Equal pay deal could cost Argyll and Bute Council £4.3 million

A TOTAL of £4.3 million is being offered to a number of female employees of Argyll and Bute Council who have been suffering from a lack of equal pay compared to their male counterparts.

All councils in Scotland have come under pressure to settle the historic gap in pay, not only between the different genders but also different jobs that should have equal status.

Argyll and Bute Council announced last week that it had come to a settlement agreement with around 1,100 employees after a local deal with the relevant

trade unions. Most of the staff involved are employed in catering, cleaning and care.

Leader Councillor Allan Macaskill said: 'Argyll and Bute Council has agreed what it considers to be generous levels of settlement and we now hope that workers will accept their individual packages to bring this equal pay grievance to an end.'

The level of award to individual employees will be determined by their job, length of service and working hours.

The maximum possible

levels of settlement are:

- Manual worker one and two: £6,643
- Manual worker three and four: £7,276
- Manual worker five plus: £8,429

The council, along with other local authorities in Scotland, has been left to fund the settlements from its own resources and in the case of Argyll and Bute it will be met from council reserves and includes responsibility for all tax and National Insurance contributions.

A series of roadshows is to be held in the area, when



Argyll and Bute Council Leader Allan Macaskill

every employee involved will have the chance to sign up on the day or take legal advice.

They will then have one week to respond to the of-

fer. Where employees agree their package, payment will be made by the end of February.

Local government employers have been struggling to meet their obligations on equal pay since the law was brought in 30 years ago but a single status agreement was signed between employers and the unions in 1999. This was designed to modernise employment relations across all occupations and was due to be implemented in April 2002 although it was recognised that it was a major undertaking by employers.

Taynuilt pipe promised

TAYNUILT has been promised a new stretch of water main in the village centre 'sooner rather than later'.

Scottish Water officials said the replacement work would be done soon in an effort to cut the number of bursts the village is suffering.

Over 30 people attended a meeting in the village hall to discuss water problems in the village, from bursts to water pressure and the impact this has on future development in Taynuilt, plus the potential fire risk from low-pressure at hydrants.

Secretary of Taynuilt Community Council John MacLellan said that by the community council's count there had been nine bursts in the last nine months alone.

The bursts were not the only problem worrying the village; as a result the water pressure was so low that showers and washing machines are cutting out and three hydrants tested in the village also had low readings.

Pamela Hamilton of Scottish Water said: 'The stretch of the main street between the hotel and up to the railway bridge, past the village shops is classed a 'hot spot' and will be replaced.'

'There is no money in the pot until April 1. Scottish Water has not yet been fully informed of money it is going to have by the executive. I should know by the end of February; it will be replaced,' Ms Hamilton said. She added that the time scale was months not years.

Fear that permission to build more homes in the village would reduce pressure even more was voiced.

Ms Hamilton said that even if planning permission had been granted, developers could not build unless they had permission to connect to the mains and this would only be given if Scottish Water was sure that the new property would not affect the supply to existing properties.

This called into question some of the planning permissions already granted in-and around Taynuilt. Argyll and Bute Council leader Allan Macaskill said that Scottish Water should be supplying comments on whether or not development could go ahead at the planning application stage and not after.

New year celebrations end in court

A MAN who decided that he had had enough of New Year in Argyll drove while over the legal alcohol limit and crashed his car in the process.

Off-shore inspection engineer Garry Donald came to the area to enjoy Hogmanay with friends but on New Year's Day decided he wasn't feeling well and set off home to Dunfermline.

Oban Sheriff Court heard last week that his car first suffered a punctured tyre just after he set off and then he lost control on the A85 Oban to Tyndrum road near Lochawe village and crashed.

Donald, 64 Douglas Drive, Dunfermline, was seen by police, who had discovered the crashed vehicle, walking along the road, covered in mud.

He accepted he had been the driver and when breathalysed was found to be one-and-a-half times over the legal alcohol limit.

He pled guilty to drink driving on January 1 2006 and was fined £350.

He was banned from driving for 18 months and ordered to complete the Drink Drivers Rehabilitation course, after which his ban would be reduced by three-and-a-half-months.

Teenage drink driver writes off father's car

A TEENAGER who crashed his father's car while on holiday on Mull had one-and-a-half times the legal alcohol limit in his breath.

Oban Sheriff Court heard last week that Colin Kemp, aged 18, had become separated from his friends during a night out in July in Tobermory and decided to drive the car back to their camp.

But he crashed the car on the A848 at Guallan Dubh and the car ended up on its roof down an embankment, although he was not injured.

When he found his friends again, they went back to the car, which was a write-off, removed the keys and called the police.

The court heard he did not recall taking or driving the car, only walking away from it after the crash.

Kemp, 10 Shaw Park Road, Selkirk, admitted drink-driving and driving on a provisional licence with no qualified driver in the car on July 29 last year.

Sheriff Douglas Small fined Kemp £350, disqualified him for 15 months and ordered him to attend the Drink Drivers Rehabilitation course, which if he completed would reduce the length of ban by three months.

He was admonished on the second charge.

St Columba's boys qualify for Scotland's national boys' choir

THREE St Columba's primary seven pupils, along with one St Columba's former pupil, have successfully qualified for a place in the National Boys Choir of Scotland.

The boys auditioned in Glasgow at the start of January and received letters last week confirming their involvement in the choir.

Angus Sinclair and Shaun Reardon have qualified to join the choir for the first time and will attend the junior choir training camp during the Easter holidays.

Malcolm Clark will be participating for the second consecutive year, while David Murphy, who has moved up to secondary school at Oban High School, will turn out for his third consecutive year.

Both David and Malcolm will also be moving from the junior choir to the ranks of the national senior boys' choir and will be involved in a busy programme of concerts throughout Scotland, plus a proposed tour of Ireland later in the year.

St Columba's Head Teacher Pauline Carson said she was very happy with the boys success.

She said: 'Myself and the other members of the St Columba's Primary Choir are delighted with the boys' success because they have been dedicated members for the past three years.'

'We are very proud that the school have a 35 per cent membership of boys in the choir.'

Mrs Carson also stated that sponsorship from any local group or businesses would be very welcome to assist in meeting the cost of the training week and transport to the various events.



Malcolm Clark, Shaun Reardon, David Murphy, and Angus Sinclair who have qualified for the National Boys' Choir of Scotland.

Trading Standards warn about prize draw scam

ARGYLL and Bute Council Trading Standards Service is warning about a prize draw scam involving mail shots.

The scam was brought to light when an Argyll and Bute resident received a letter stating that a cheque for £2,476 would be sent to them. However, to be able to receive the money the person must complete and return a claim form, plus a cheque of £14.97. The Office of Fair Trading, who monitor scams like this, said they are

aware of the company involved and it is under investigation. People should not send money in response to unsolicited offers of cash or goods say The Office of Fair Trading. It asks that anyone receiving such mail should contact them on 08457224499. A spokesperson for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'This is another money making scam aimed at people, taking advantage of the fact that some people will think this is a genuine offer.'

Sgoil Chiùil na Gàidhealtachd

The National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music

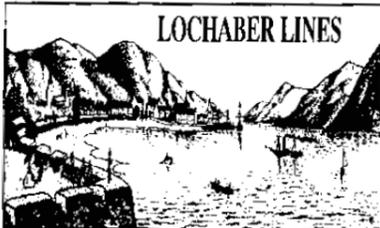
Study Traditional Music in the heart of the West Highlands in a top class facility.

Now in its sixth year, the only Centre of Excellence in Scotland exclusively devoted to traditional music invites enquiries from all secondary school age pupils resident in Scotland who already play to a high standard and would like to improve. The Centre is based in Plockton High School in Wester Ross. Instruments offered are accordion, bagpipes, fiddle, clarsach, piano, flute, whistle, guitar and both Scots and Gaelic song.

All places are fully funded by the Scottish Executive in partnership with Highland Council.

Open Weekend 24/25 February
Applications close 3 March for entry August 2006

For further information/application forms contact: Dougie Pincock (Director) or Anita Harding (Admin)
NCEM, Pupil Residence, Plockton High School, Plockton, Wester Ross, IV92 8TU
01999 544706, dougie.pincock@highland.gov.uk, anita.harding@highland.gov.uk, www.musicplockton.org



email lochaberlines@obantimes.co.uk

THE LOCHABER Burns Club supper in the Alexandra Hotel last Friday was judged by many of the 140 members present to be the best in living memory.

From the humorous welcome address from president Philip Nolan, which set the high standard of the evening, through to Hector MacLean's vote of thanks nearly seven hours later the speeches, songs and clatter never flagged.

It must have been intimidating as speakers and artists waited their turn but every turn was equal to the challenge and superlatives ran as freely as the John Barleycorn. A stirring address to the haggis by John Hutchison preceded an excellent meal, which was followed by a toast to the club by elder statesman Dave Revie, which was both sincere and humorous. Keith Campbell's recitation of *Holy Willie's Prayer* drew loud applause.

After a short interval, Graham Buchanan's foot-stamping bagpipe recital proved a perfect antidote to the large meal and the evening/morning was up and running again.

Sandy Henry displayed the correct balance of humour and gravitas, as you would expect of a man steeped in Burns, and his *Immortal Memory* was well received.

Graham Brooks had the company in tears with his tales of nocturnal angling in a toast to *The Land We Live In* which owed as much to Will Fyffe as Robbie Burns. A difficult act to follow, but Father Roddy Johnston did so with great aplomb as he toasted 'The Lassies'. John MacLennan proved to be a great foil and at a late hour he held the attention of the members with an upbeat reply.

Fantastic speeches, interspersed with music of the highest calibre from Angus Grant and Dougie Gibson and friends and songs from members, justified the sell-out notices going up a week before the supper.

Roll on next year but get your ticket orders in early to avoid disappointment.

□□□

WE HAD a strange experience when staying in a hotel on the Isle of Skye last week.

A very comfortable place with fine food but there was a touch of the 'Basil Fawley's' about our stay. The proprietor showed us to the room and pointed out the facilities. 'There's the en-suite and the kettle and the colour TV with your remote over there,' he said before leaving us to settle in.

A little while later we switched on the TV but none of the channels were working. Assuming the local TV mast was temporarily out of commission we thought it wasn't the end of the world. Later, when passing reception, the attentive hotelier asked if everything was fine. We answered in the affirmative but as we considered mentioning the telly he volunteered: 'By the way, we don't get a TV reception here.'

□□□

HERE is a wee scoop for *Lochaber Lines*, well quite a tall scoop actually.

The scene is the car park of Nevis Range where young athletes are registering for Lochaber Athletic Club's winter league race in Leanachan Forest. Once assembled, the idea is that junior and senior athletes should walk 800 metres to a fork in the forest path where the races will officially begin, the adults taking a longer route over hilly terrain, while the juniors branch off for a 15-minute race over flat ground.

So far so good until an experienced and shrewd press photographer takes over in the car park. To save himself the walk to the official start he stages a photograph of the start. 'One, two, three, go!' he shouts and snaps away as the children run off. Unfortunately the leading eleven runners believe the race has started and here up the track to the fork where they take the adult course and complete the equivalent of five junior races in one go. We should add that the youngsters were eventually marshalled around the circuit and enjoyed their run on 'the big people's' course.

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STORIES of the aftermath of the Burns supper are filtering through.

In the higher reaches of the town, a Burns stalwart is sleeping off the exertions of honouring the bard when his slumbers are disturbed by the telephone ringing. Bleary-eyed and confused, he glances at the clock which displays 7.40. His daughter's cheery 'hello' is greeted with: 'What's wrong? Why are you ringing so early on a Sunday morning? The daughter is now confused because it is 7.40pm on Saturday evening in Glasgow.

Meanwhile down in Inverlochty at the same time, a survivor of the Burns supper is also on the telephone to order a takeaway meal to stem the pangs of a whisky hunger. He falls asleep, misses the delivery and wakes up at midnight even hungrier. Yes, the best-laid plans of rice and men gang aft agley!

□□□

CHARLIE'S Challenge 2007: The Modfather suggests that if you are booking into an Isle of Skye hotel you try this: 'Do you have satellite TV? - 'Bheie telebhisean shaitale agaih?' 'Vail tel-iv-ish-uhn haj-uhl ak-iv?'

Mod lotto numbers: 1-9-12. No winner, £300 jackpot this week.

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

A LARGE and enthusiastic company met last Thursday in the Caledonian Hotel for the Lochaber Burns Club annual supper to mark the anniversary of the birth of Scotland's national bard.

Colin Livingston, the president, occupied the chair, while the duties of croupier were efficiently discharged by ex-provost MacFarlane.

Just over 22½ inches of rain fell in the 24-hour period up to 9am on Sunday. The Nevis rose to an unusual level and the water reached the houses at Achintee and Glen Nevis farms.

The Corrach correspondent used his inimitable style saying that the weather had adversely affected the turnout at the poll for the General Election: 'Wednesday of last week will be long remembered in Lochaber and the General Election of 1906 will act as an epoch from which, and to which, like great snows, great frosts and crop failures, all events will be dated - not so much for the great political upheaval, for that was little felt here, but for the great elemental upheaval which characterised the day. As a result only 60 per cent of the voters turned up to the poll at Banavie Public School.'

Mr J Dewar, Liberal, was returned to parliament to represent Inverness-shire.

40 years ago

ONE HUNDRED and ten members attended the Lochaber Burns Club annual supper in the Milton Hotel.

The Immortal Memory was proposed by Canon G K B Henderson and the toast to *The Land We Live In* was made by Mr W P Cameron. Mr A S Bremner delivered the toast to 'The Lassies', with Mr H MacLean making a reply.

Fort William Town Council failed to reach a decision on the 12-storey building proposed for the west-end of the town. The meeting was told that the top of the building would be on a level approaching that of the Highland Hotel.

Provost Henderson quipped: 'Anything we have, however high, is going to be dwarfed by the Ben.'

All-Gaelic school plan splits Skye

A PUBLIC meeting into whether the first all-Gaelic primary school in the Highlands should be established on Skye was scheduled to go ahead yesterday (Wednesday) as *The Oban Times* went to press. Highland Council agreed to a consultation last month on proposals to make Sleat Primary School completely dedicated to Gaelic education after pressure from the local Gaelic parent group Comann nam Pàrant Sleitè and Comunn na Gàidhlig.

The peninsula not only contains Scotland's Gaelic college, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, but the first Gaelic medium unit to open in Skye in Sleat in 1987.

Parents

However, if the proposals were to be implemented it would leave parents who do not want their children to receive Gaelic medium education having to send them to Broadford Primary School - a daily round trip of up to an hour.

Before the meeting Neil Robertson, a parent and spokesman for Sleat Primary School for All, which is against the school becom-

ing all-Gaelic, said: 'By tomorrow night we will be in a much better position to see where the community wants to go. There needs to be a general meeting of minds.'

Disagree

He said he had spoken to Comann nam Pàrant Sleitè chairman Murdo MacLeod for an hour-and-a-half about the situation. 'I completely understood his argument but fundamentally disagree with it. The mood is not reaction but pro-action,' said Mr Robertson, who wished to emphasise his group was not opposed to Gaelic but wanted to maintain freedom of choice.

'It should not be an 'us and them' situation but 'us and us', he added. Mr Robertson believes it is imperative a decision is reached from the community itself and added that Sleat Primary School for All enjoyed 'tremendous support' in Sleat from people of a range of ages, backgrounds and geographical origins.

Mr Robertson hopes Highland Council will have a representative at the meeting to allow it to gauge the feelings of the community. Despite the existence of a Gaelic medium unit at Sleat, Mr MacLeod believes English is still given preference in schools. Mr MacLeod, who is a lecturer at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, says there is 'nowhere you have to use Gaelic - English always works'.

There are seven primary schools in Skye and Lochalsh which have Gaelic medium units and Portree High School delivers eight subjects in Gaelic - more than any other secondary school in Scotland.

The council is already committed to establishing a dedicated Gaelic school in Inverness and last month decided to transfer Lady Lovat Primary's Gaelic medium unit to Mallaig Primary School in August because of a lack of space in the Morar school. One of its options had been to make Lady Lovat an all-Gaelic school.

The Skye meeting was due to take place in Ardsvar Village Hall.



Ali Morrison, Martin MacLeod and John MacGillivray receive their certificates at Fort William Fire Station.

Bronze awards for fire fighting Fort youngsters

THREE Lochaber youngsters received fire services certificates after completing an eight-week course at Fort William Fire Station.

Ali Morrison, Martin MacLeod and John MacGillivray wrote to the station master for permission to take part in a course that would fill the criteria for the Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze Award.

Along with the practical elements each week the youngsters spent time learning about the dangers of hoax calls and the need for community safety. All three said they found the course interesting and informative.

On the last night the youngsters sat a 50

question multiple choice test and all passed with flying colours. A presentation was arranged at the fire station with an informal talk from firefighters Peter Lees and Charlie Anderson, who led the course. The certificates were presented by station officer Donnie Munro.

The audience then enjoyed a short digital film made by the boys with the photos taken during the course.

Another course will be run in March 2006 and anyone interested in participating in the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme or becoming a volunteer can contact Sheila McCartney on 01397 700113 or 07748960984.

Police files

Parked car vandalised

A VAUXHALL Vectra parked on Park Road, Ballachulish, was vandalised sometime between Saturday January 21 and Wednesday January 25.

Porch lights damaged

AT AROUND 7pm on Wednesday January 25, porch lights were damaged at a house in Carn Dearg Road, Claggan.

ANYONE with knowledge about these incidents should contact Fort William Police Station on 01397 7022361 or the confidential line on 01397 702200 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

Schools to share headteachers

SMALLER primary schools in the Highlands are to have one headteacher in charge of two or even three schools.

Highland Council is to move to a 'cluster model' with schools with less than 146 pupils sharing headteachers.

The model has been adopted to ease the role of the class committed headteacher at smaller primary schools allowing them adequate time for leadership and management. The move was deemed necessary because of declining school rolls and difficulties recruiting primary headteachers.

Skye dinner lady banned from driving

A SCHOOL dinner lady found herself in hot water at Portree Sheriff Court this week when she was banned from driving for three years.

Sheriff Alasdair MacFadyen gave Jimima Kinsman, aged 48, of 2 Urquhart Place, Portree, a stern warning that she had narrowly escaped prison.

Kinsman failed to give a roadside breath test on November 14. Two weeks later police attended an accident and again Kinsman failed to give a proper breath test.

Defence agent John MacCall said: 'She is not working now and had a total breakdown last year. She refuses to believe she has a drink problem.'

The sheriff told Kinsman: 'You have been seriously breaking the law time after time. The public has to be protected. Your behaviour could have meant you going to Cortonvale Prison for up to 18 months.'

Kinsman was put on probation for a year and ordered to perform 220 hours' community service.

Lochaber toasts the bard



Lochaber Burns Club celebrated its annual Burns' night with a dinner at the Alexandra Hotel. *The Immortal Memory* was toasted by Sandy Hendry, Father Roddy Johnston made the *Toast to the Lassies*, with John MacLennan replying, while Hector MacLean gave the vote of thanks. Pictured is Highland Council's Lochaber area manager John Hutchison, Centre, and some of the main speakers, with the haggis.

Skye mobile phone learning on right lines

YOUNG people on Skye are hoping a new mobile phone project will put them on the right lines to obtaining qualifications.

The pilot project, based on learning by mobile phone, could set the tone for a new way to deliver learning throughout the Highlands if it takes off.

The 'm-learning' project is for 16 to 24-year-olds not in training, education or employment.

Julie Simmons, adult literacies strategy officer with Highland Council, said the advantage of m-learning is that people can learn at any time, in any place and in private.

She said: 'Everyone taking part in the project is very excited by it and I'm sure it is going to have a lasting benefit. We are delighted that Learning Connections is helping us work with young people.'

Fort William Sheriff Court

Railway worker fined for drink driving charge

A RAILWAY worker was banned from driving for 20 months and fined a total of £650 after admitting drink-driving and possession of cannabis in a Fort William car park.

Paul McGrath Dobbie, aged 22, of 13 Coll Place, Grangemouth, admitted driving with 71mcg of alcohol in 100ml of breath, driving without insurance and while only the holder of a provisional licence at Viewforth Car Park, Fort William, and possession of cannabis at Fort William Police Station, all on January 24 this year.

Prosecutor Fiscal Alison Wyllie told the court that police were stopped by a member of the public at around 8pm and told there had been an accident in the car park.

On entering the car park police officers saw Dobbie coming out of a works van.

Ms Wyllie said: 'He immediately spoke to police and it was clear that he was under the influence.'

'He also had a 'joint' sticking out from behind his right ear.'

Police later recovered more than 15 grammes of the class C drug from Dobbie.

Defence agent Hamish Melrose told the court that Dobbie was employed by Mainline, a company which renews railway tracks

around Britain, and the offence had occurred on the first of two weeks working in Fort William.

Mr Melrose said: 'He was staying in accommodation near the car park and the van had been parked up for the evening.'

'He had gone with colleagues to a bar and was making his way to a restaurant for a meal when he returned to the van. The purpose was to make this 'joint'.

'While in the van, for no reason he can think of, he decided to move it, not realising the extent of the gradient the van was parked on. The van moved back a short distance with him in the driver's seat.'

'He wasn't intending to drive anywhere.'

Sheriff Douglas Small said: 'I take into account that you have pled guilty at the earliest opportunity.'

Dobbie was banned from driving for 20 months and fined £350 for drink-driving, fined £200 for driving without insurance and £100 for possession of cannabis. He was admonished for driving with a provisional licence.

Fort man acted in racially aggravated manner

SENTENCE was deferred for nine months on a Fort William man who admitted acting in a racially aggravating manner and

assaulting his partner. Fort William Sheriff Court heard last week that there was a 'tension' between Lewin, who moved into the area with his partner a year ago, and locals in the area.

Nigel James Lewin, aged 33, of 27 Glenpace Street, Caol, admitted acting in a racially aggravated manner, disorderly conduct and breach of the peace and smashing a front door window of a house with a wheelie bin at Wallace Place, Fort William, on October 19 last year.

Wallace also admitted assaulting his partner, Donna Mackay, by headbutting her, throwing her to the ground and repeatedly striking her on the face and repeatedly kicking her on November 5 2005 at Glenpace Street and Clunes Avenue, Caol.

He also admitted assaulting his partner's brother, John Mackay, on the same day at 27 Glenpace Street by kicking him on the head.

Lewin's defence agent on the racial aggravation charges, Craig Murray, told the court: 'The event was the final straw of over a month of intimidation and threats which included windows smashed in his house and live ammunition put through his letter box.'

'On the day in question six men arrived at the door kicking it.'

'They were extremely frightened and phoned 999. Police arrived towards the tail end of the incident. He

Tributes for popular Kyle harbour master

TRIBUTES to popular Kyle of Lochalsh harbourmaster and shinty referee John MacRae have been led by Highland Council after his untimely death last week.

The Camanachd Association said it was still trying to come to terms with the loss and that their feelings were with Mr MacRae's widow and five daughters. He died on Tuesday January 24, aged 51.

Known throughout the Highlands as 'Johnny Ach', his reputation as a shinty devotee spread beyond his native area to the rest of Scotland and abroad.

The Fort William-based association's website guestbook has been inundated with messages of sympathy from clubs and individuals.

A referee who had umpired most of the game's major competitions, he was recently appointed to The Camanachd Association's Board of Directors.

Last October he refereed a top international match between Scotland and Ireland at Inverness.

The association, through its president John MacKenzie, said it had lost one of its most remarkable characters.

Mr MacKenzie said: I am absolutely stunned by John's death. He has been taken in his prime.

'It is very difficult for us all to take this in at this time and I know this loss will be felt far and wide.'

Mr MacRae, of Lochalsh Road, Kyle, leaves a widow, Alison, and five daughters: Susan, Lynn, Amy, Janet and Cathleen, as well as three grand-daughters.

Mr MacRae's own club was Kinlochshiel for which he played for 20 years. Club secretary Albert Yeates said he had been a wonderful ambassador for the club both as a player and as a committee member.

He said Mr MacRae did a huge amount for the

community and would be sadly missed. The whole community was trying to come to terms with its loss.

Mr MacRae was harbourmaster at Kyle for 15 years, taking up office in June 1990, and was recently praised for his effective co-ordinating of the *MV Blackfriars* when the tanker ran aground off Kyle last December.

At a meeting of Highland Council last week, chairman Charlie King expressed his shock at Mr MacRae's sudden death. He had been due to commend him for his work during the tanker incident.

He said: 'His response to the grounding of *MV Blackfriars* was so typical of his excellent work for the council during his 15 years as our harbourmaster for Kyle.'

'His enthusiasm was infectious and his aim was always to make Kyle bigger and better by attracting trade to the harbour.'

and stealing a digital video multiplex recorder and £10. Brown broke into Craig Nevis Surgery in Fort William causing £150 worth of damage and the High Street Surgery in Fort William stealing a quantity of medication.

He also admitted possession of cannabis at his home address.

All the offences took place on January 1 this year and the court heard that he had caused damage worth £2,500 in total.

Defence agent Hamish Melrose said: 'At the age of 43 he goes on this spree having never been in trouble before.'

'He basically woke up in the morning and decided to do this. He drove his car to these areas and didn't particularly hide what he was doing.'

'There seems to be an underlying serious drug problem here.'

Despite the fact that he was in a highly skilled profession which took him away from home for 10 weeks at a time where he was subject to drugs testing, the court heard that Brown was able to hide his drug problems from his partner.

Sheriff Douglas Small told Brown: 'I was inclined to give you a period in custody but a better way of dealing with you is deferred sentence so that you can make good the damage that you caused.'

Sheriff Small said he expected Brown to return to court on October 19 this year with receipts but 'made no promises' as to the ultimate disposal.

He was also expected to show evidence of being free

of heroin. 'You have very narrowly escaped going to prison and losing your job and your family,' the sheriff added.

Sentence deferred on drink driving

A GLASGOW man had his sentence deferred at Fort William sheriff court last week after admitting drink driving.

Craig McCulloch, aged 19, of 6 Melfort Avenue, Dumbreck, Glasgow, admitted driving with 59mcg of alcohol in 100ml of breath at Viewforth Car Park, Fort William, on August 27 last year.

Sheriff Douglas Small deferred sentence until February 9 this year for McCulloch to make a personal appearance.

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LOOK AT OBAN



Woman convicted of assault and racial abuse following George Street incident

A WOMAN accused of assaulting another woman and breaching the peace in a racially aggravated manner has been found guilty following a trial at Oban Sheriff Court.

However, Sheriff Douglas Small found that there was not enough evidence to convict Samantha MacDonald, aged 21, of the assault be-

ing racially-motivated and added that there had been considerable provocation.

The court last week heard clerical assistant Rochelle MacDougall, aged 32, describe how she had been walking down George Street with two friends around 2.30am on July 17 when they had stopped near MacDonald and a male.

'I don't know who it was but somebody said the word 'tinker'.

'There were other people about and I couldn't say who it was,' said Mrs MacDougall.

Mrs MacDougall, who is originally from New Zealand, said MacDonald got aggressive and started shouting and swearing at

the mention of the word. She said she had tried to calm MacDonald down but MacDonald had not been listening, so she walked away.

'Then I heard her say 'Oi you black b****, I haven't finished with you'. I walked back and said, 'There was no reason for you to say that I was trying to stick up for

you' and before anything else could happen she started punching me in the face,' said Mrs MacDougall.

Defence agent Alyson Wilson asked Mrs MacDougall if she was aware that the word 'tinker' was offensive.

'She wasn't listening to me. I didn't know at the

time that it was an offensive word,' said Mrs MacDougall.

She said she had not heard any other names being said and while admitting that she had punched MacDonald back, she denied striking the first blow.

She said she had been upset and hurt when MacDonald had called her

'black b****' but not angry.

On the witness stand MacDonald, Site 6, Ledaig Caravan Site, near Oban, told the court she did not know who had used the word 'tinker' but it was someone who was part of the group Mrs MacDougall was with.

She admitted she had been upset and took offence.

She did not think that Mrs MacDougall had been trying to placate her.

She did not recall calling her a 'black b****' but admitted that she had had 'a bit to drink'.

'I remember getting slapped to the face. I retaliated. I punched her.'

Sheriff Small said he was not satisfied beyond reason-

able doubt that the assault was racially aggravated.

He did find that the breach of the peace was racially aggravated and that both offences were committed while MacDonald was on bail.

He deferred sentence on MacDonald until February 7 to deal with other matters at the same time.

Charities day call for cut in red tape

ONE of Oban's most popular annual events may be lost under the pressure of red tape.

Oban and Lorn Lions Club fears its annual charities' day could be scuppered by strict new legislation over the licensing of markets and stalls selling food.

Charities' day in Oban has been running for decades; any charity large or small can hire a stall and take advantage of the crowds drawn by a large event to raise funds.

Secretary of the club John Lloyd said: 'What we are looking for is Argyll and Bute Council to cut some of the red tape.'

'For the first time the Lions have had to apply for an exemption from the requirements to hold a Market Operators Licence,' said Mr Lloyd.

'Surely it would be easier just to let us get on with it.'

But what is worrying the Lions club members even more is that they now understand that every stall which sells food, be it a small packet of tablet to a beef burger, must apply for an individual licence to sell food.

It costs the Lions club roughly £600 to stage the event, each charity is charged £20 for their stall and between 30 and 40 charities large and small join in every year.

When each adds up its taking at the end of the day, charities' day usually sees something in the region of £8,000 go into the coffers of charitable causes around Oban and Lorn.

'Last year we reckoned that at least half the stalls sold food of some kind,

from home-baking, tablet and jam upwards to crepes and beefburgers,' said Mr Lloyd.

'Now the big charities like Oban Round Table and the mountain rescue team can make £600 to £800 on the day but the smaller charities make nowhere near that amount so the cost of a licence, on top of the cost of their stall, would hit them the most.'

'This is a shame because they are the types of charities that need charities' day the most and for many it can be their main fund raiser for the year.'

This year's charities' day was scheduled to be on Saturday June 3.

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'The concerns of everyone involved are being looked into.'



Richard Meyrick, seated at the piano, with some of the young musicians who benefited from his words of wisdom. Left to right: John Lawson, Lochgilhead High; Rachal Hendry, Andrew Chapman, Adam Sturock and Billie Kirkham, all Oban high; Sarah Blair, Katie Matheson and Laura McMillan, all Lochgilhead High. (04piat01)

Piano masterclass comes to town

MUSIC pupils from Oban and Lochgilhead High Schools have had a taste of world-class tuition with the pianoMan.

Piano teacher and performer Richard Meyrick held informal workshops

and masterclasses for promising young pianists at Oban High School.

Richard's visit culminated with a concert in the evening held in Oban High School's Assembly Hall.

The internationally-ac-

claimed pianist visited Oban as part of the pianoMan project which involves him visiting over 70 carefully-selected schools and colleges throughout the UK.

The project is funded by

Man Group plc, the global provider of alternative investment products and agency brokerage.

Individual pupils performed and Richard demonstrated how they could improve their performances in

every way they possibly could, right from how to turn over a page and advice on the how to get the best out of their practising.

At the same time there were quick-fire questions to involve the entire audience.

Bail breach man warned

AN OBAN man has been ordered to be of good behaviour for nine months after admitting twice breaching a condition of bail.

Malcolm Kerr, aged 38, of 1 Cawdor Terrace, Shore Street, had previously admitted at Oban Sheriff Court the breaches which took place on August 7 and August 8 last year.

He appeared for sentencing on the two breaches after formally being found not guilty of a charge of breach of the peace when two Crown witnesses failed to appear.

Sheriff Douglas Small told Kerr that he would defer sentence for nine months but if the accused breached his bail in any way before October 10 this year he would seriously consider sending him to jail and the maximum sentence was six months.

Dare to be different - volunteer

DO YOU dare to be different? Go on, give it a go, you'll never know until you've tried.

And if you do you'll have the chance to win some great prizes and meet a member of the cast of the BBC soap, *River City*.

Lorn Voluntary Sector has invited the young and the young at heart to its *Give it a Go* event, to be held at the Argyllshire Gathering Hall, Breadalbane Street, Oban on Wednesday February 8.

The message for the day is: don't just follow the herd, dare to be different, get yourself involved and try something new in your spare time.

In doing so you'll meet plenty of new friends and really help to make a difference in the town.

Lots of local groups will have stalls at the event showing just what they get up to and how you can join in. There will also be fun workshops to join in.

Amongst the competitions to enter will be a bungee run organised by the Careers Service.

Learndirect Scotland will also be present and so will be actor Stephen Purdon, who plays 'Wee Bob' in *River City*; he will present one of the prizes.

The top prize for the afternoon will be an i-Pod.

The day runs from 10am to 3pm. If you'd like to know more, contact Aileen Binner of Home Start, 01631 566949 or Eleanor MacKinnon of the Volunteer Centre on 01631 569545.

Argyll & the Islands ENTERPRISE

Business Start-up Workshop

A three day workshop for people in Argyll and the Islands area, who are thinking of starting up in business. The course covers all aspects of business start-up including market research, profit & cashflow forecasting, tax and legal obligations.

This workshop is FREE

The Corran Halls, Oban
Tues 21 - Thurs 23rd February 2006
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To book a place or for further information contact
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Argyll & the Islands Enterprise, The Enterprise Centre,
Kilmory Industrial Estate, Lochgilhead PA31 8SH
www.hie.co.uk/aie

Dare to be Different

Lorn Voluntary Sector

Invite the Young and Young at Heart

To our "Give it a Go" Event on Wednesday February 8, 2006 in Argyllshire Gathering Hall, Breadalbane Street, Oban
10.00 - 3.30 pm

Drop in and find out
What you can do with your spare time
Try something new
Meet local voluntary groups
And Have Fun
EVERYONE WELCOME

For more information contact
Aileen 01631 566749
Eleanor 07861 653663

Win an iPod

Voluntary Group Stalls

Learndirect Scotland

Fun Workshops

It doesn't cost anything to Give it a Go!

Learning can change your life for the better, whether you want to get a job, change career, improve your skills or just learn something new for enjoyment.

You may think learning is just for school children or college students but nowadays it's open to everyone - no matter what age you are or what qualifications you have. Still not convinced? Why not go along to the Argyllshire Gathering Halls on Wednesday 8 February and see for yourself.

learndirect scotland has joined together with the Lorn Voluntary Sector Forum to host a fun-filled FREE day out for all the family from 10am-3.30pm.

At the Give it a Go! event, you can try Indian head massage and art therapy,

and find out more about healthy eating. Local learning centre Argyll Training will be offering workshops on e-learning.

Find out, too, about the wide range of services offered by the voluntary sector and how to get involved and see the benefits at first hand.

Where, when and how we learn is changing all the time. There's no need to worry if you hated school or if you don't have qualifications and have been away from learning for a long time. It doesn't matter a bit - these days you can give learning a go and join many others in the Oban area who are getting into learning and taking courses available right on their doorstep.

In the heart of the community, young mums, teenagers, retired people, unemployed people, those with a full-

time job and many more are using local learning centres to learn new skills in a huge range of subjects from French to first aid, car mechanics to catering. You can get a flavour of what's on offer FREE at the learndirect scotland Give it a Go!

Expert advisers from local learning centres, colleges and learndirect scotland will be there to advise you and help you find the course best suited to your interests. They'll let you know how, where and when you can join up. It could open up a whole new world of learning and volunteering.

If you can't make it along on the day or would like to find out more, call learndirect scotland FREE on 0808 100 1855.

How Eilidh found learning that suited her

Trying to find a way to continue learning after leaving school can be a costly experience, but 20-year-old Eilidh Macleod managed to find the ideal solution.

After leaving school at 16, Eilidh, from Oban, decided to study tourism at college in Greenock. Although she enjoyed the course, she soon found that it was expensive being a student and decided to return to Oban.

However, Eilidh did not want to give up on her education and decided to try to find courses she could do at home. Eilidh said: 'I looked in to home courses and that's when I found out about the Argyll College Learning Centre in Oban. After going along to speak to the manager there, it seemed like the ideal answer.'

Now Eilidh is studying for a Bachelor of Arts in Tourism with the help of the learndirect scotland branded learning centre.

'I do part of my studying at home and go to the learning centre two or three days a week. I take classes by video conferencing when I link up with students at Perth College,' explained Eilidh.



'I have a tutor who is based at Lochaber College and can make contact via telephone, e-mail or video conferencing. Lectures are posted on the internet and I can also make use of a chatroom to speak to other students.'

Eilidh has found the staff at the learning centre very supportive. She said: 'This method of learning is a great way to learn new skills. The staff are friendly and helpful and it's great to have the flexibility to do my degree with their support.'

Eilidh added: 'Many people don't realise how many courses are offered through learning centres, but it's really worth finding out. I'm glad I did!'

Come along to the Argyllshire Gathering Halls on Wednesday 8th February 2006 from 10am to 3.30pm

Give it a Go! **Call free on 0808 100 1855**

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Audience thrilled with Oban charity concert

OBAN was treated to a fantastic night out on Friday with *It doesn't Have to be Scottish* at the Corran Halls.

This charity concert organised by Toni Russell in aid of the Scottish Orthopaedic Research Trust Into Trauma, SORT-IT, was a show case for local talent with a superb twist.

Everyone who appeared on stage is more likely to be seen performing traditional Gaelic works at Mods, feisan and music and dance festivals.

But on Friday night there were young Highland dancers performing modern dance routines, clàrsach players performing pop songs and soap opera themes and medallists like Angus Smith and Audrey Paterson wowing the audience with songs from the shows.

The discipline and dedication of all the performers to reach the strict, high standards of adjudicators means that when they turn their hands from the traditional to the modern the results are outstanding.

Toni Russell and her ensemble Na h-ùirsgean will have to make this an annual charity event because their audience went home thrilled and wanting more.

Some of the young dancers who took part in the concert in aid of SORT-IT at the Corran Halls, Oban, on Friday Night. 10510n01

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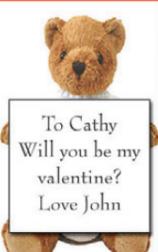
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Delight as flamenco jazz guitarist heads for Cairndow Hall

STUNNING flamenco jazz guitarist Eduardo Niebla is bringing his 'poignantly poetic and truly fabulous' (*The Scotsman*) flamenco gypsy jazz to Cairndow.

Cairndow Arts Promotions is delighted to be able to have another international star performing in Cairndow.

World-class virtuoso Spanish guitarist and composer Eduardo Niebla will appear at Cairndow Village Hall on Saturday February 11. Along with his fabulous trio they will present an evening of truly spellbinding flamenco jazz fusion. His spectacular virtuosity has taken the world by storm, with acclaimed performances in Europe and India, and this concert promises all the passion, emotional intensity and brilliance of a maestro artist of the highest order.

Jake Lenson accompanies him on guitar and Bhupinder Singh Chaggar on tabla. Expect the best.

Potent
 Since Eduardo launched his career in 1973 he has grown to become one of the world's most potent forces in flamenco jazz fusion, recording 23 CDs of his own stunning compositions and working with some of the top musicians in the fields of jazz, pop and world music including Lol Coxhill, Carles Benavent, George Michael and sitar maestro Nishat Khan.

His tours have taken him to concert halls and festivals throughout Eastern and Western Europe, the Middle East and South Africa, including a concert at the Olympic Games in Greece, the San Isidro Fiesta Madrid, the Tbilisi International Jazz Festival Georgia, Glastonbury Festival in the UK and at The Barbican and St David's Hall.

Eduardo was born in Tangiers to Analusian parents in 1955 and is the seventh son of the seventh child, regarded in mythology as a magical son.

Roots
 He has been resident in Britain since 1978, becoming a powerful force on the British music scene and influencing the trend for fusion and acoustic music across the world, whilst always remaining true to his humble roots and performing with an 'exquisite melancholy' (*The Scotsman*) and heart-rendering quality that is Eduardo Niebla.

Spellbinding
 'A display of supernatural talent and a spellbinding mixture of flamenco and modern jazz, bursting with obvious passion and verve'. (*The Spectator*).

Tickets are available on the door or by calling Cairndow Arts Promotions on 01499 600260.

The Eduardo Niebla Experience

in concert

CAIRNDOW VILLAGE HALL
SATURDAY 11 FEBRUARY
 7.30 p.m.

Tickets: Adults £6, Children (under 16) £3
 Tickets available on the door or from Cairndow Arts Promotions, telephone 01499 600260

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 2.15pm-3.15pm
 3.30pm-4.30pm

Sunday 9am-6pm

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Vauxhall has found a neat way around the problem by offering 'instant' insurance at the retailer, which allows customers to take their new pride and joy home on the same day - even at weekends.

People who buy a new or used car from Vauxhall retailers will be offered free 'instant' comprehensive motor insurance cover for seven days. They will then

be invited to take up a highly-competitive quote from Vauxhall Insurance for a full 12 months cover.

Called 'Phone-and-Go', the scheme allows customers the ability to drive away their Vauxhall on the same day as agreeing to buy the car. Once accepted, an insurance cover note is e-mailed directly to the Vauxhall retailer, allowing the newly-purchased car to be taxed and made road legal almost instantly.

The offer of a free insurance period complements Vauxhall's free insurance offer currently available on several cars in the Astra and Corsa ranges.

Andy Jones, Vauxhall's Marketing Programmes Manager commented: "We aim to provide a great range of cars and additional services that improve the overall car-buying experience for our customers. With more than 200 participating Vauxhall retailers across the UK supporting the new seven-day motor insurance offer, we are confident that it will be a big hit with our cus-

tomers and further enhance the car-buying process.

Mr Jones added: "Competitive motor insurance from Vauxhall cars but is available to owners of most makes and models. Vauxhall is able to compete with the major insurance providers on price and can offer different approaches to buying motor cover to suit each customer's buying requirement via the conventional telesales route, the internet or through the dealership channel."

Vauxhall understands the value of insurance to customers and a year's free cover is provided on selected models in the range, including the top-selling Corsa and Astra. Free insurance customers are also offered a 15 per cent discount on the premium for a household's second car.

For more information on Vauxhall Insurance, call 0870 024 0145 or log onto www.vauxhall.co.uk. A 10 per cent discount is currently available online.

SUZUKI'S SWIFT AWARDED CAR OF THE YEAR ACCOLADE

It's the car that provided the first glimpse of Suzuki's innovative new design strategy, and now the Swift has received the ringing endorsement of two particularly discerning audiences.

In the UK the highly respected Car magazine has just named the supermini its 'Car of the Year'. Meanwhile, on its home turf the Swift has picked up the 'Most Fun' category in the Japanese Car of the Year (COTY) awards and received the 'Car of the Year' accolade from the 72-strong Automotive Researchers and Journalists Conference of Japan (RJG).

Car editor Jason Barlow summed up the magazine's feelings: "In a world where small cars are getting better and better, it doesn't fall into the trap of offering gimmicks, pointless extras or overt quirkiness - it simply gets on with the job it's there to do, and it does it superbly."

These three awards are a

strong vindication of the Swift's approach to the supermini sector, delivering a seductive blend of eye-catching good looks, Japanese quality and European-inspired driving dynamics, backed up by excellent handling and outstanding fuel economy.

Nor was the Swift's victory a fluke, as Jason Barlow explains: "All-rounders often end up winning various 'car of the year' accolades due to the fact they offend the fewest judges, but in this case not a single judge came out against it as a fair choice."

"The car is stylish, roomy, good value, pretty quick and a lot of fun to drive, and this combination of attributes makes it a totally compelling package."

The five-strong Swift line-up is priced from £7,499 and comprises 1.3 GL 3-door and 5-door manual models, 1.5 GLX 5-door manual and automatic, and 1.3 DDIS diesel 5-door manual.

NEW COMMERCIAL VEHICLE ANNOUNCED - THE VOLKSWAGEN CRAFTER

Volkswagen today announces the new replacement for its highly successful LT model, the Volkswagen Crafter.

The new Crafter completes the renewal of the entire Volkswagen light commercial vehicle range. This began with the new Transporter in 2003 followed by the new Caddy which has helped total sales of Volkswagen commercial vehicles to rise from 16478 in 2002 to a forecast 23380 for 2005, a growth of 41 per cent.

Four versions of Volkswagen's fuel efficient, five cylinder TDI engine are available delivering 89 PS, 109 PS, 136 PS and 164 PS. The new unit is now

equipped with common rail fuel injection and a diesel particulate filter combining durability, low fuel consumption and low emissions with a wide choice of power outputs.

The Crafter is equipped with a 6-speed manual gearbox as standard - an automatic transmission will be optional. The generously sized braking system has considerable reserve capacity even at maximum vehicle weight. Optimised suspension gives the vehicle good cornering stability, and for additional safety, the Crafter is fitted with ESP and ABS as standard.

The ergonomically designed cabin includes a driv-

er's airbag as standard, while front passenger, curtain and side airbags are available as options. For added convenience, remote central locking and electric windows are also standard. A dash-mounted gearlever offers increased comfort, and also releases more cabin space. Continuing the space theme, provision has also been made for the storage of many items that van drivers often need to accommodate.

A choice of three wheelbases, four load compartment lengths and three roof heights enhance the versatility of the new model. The Crafter has a maximum load capacity of 17 m³ and the 5-tonne panel van can

now transport a weight of approximately 2,670 kg. There is ample width inside the vehicle for two Euro pallets to stand next to each other. This is complemented by superior load compartment access - in vehicles with the medium or long wheelbase, a sliding door reveals a loading aperture 1.3 m in width and 1.8 m in height, allowing Euro pallets to be loaded easily. An optional transport safety system can be used to restrain loads.

Sales are expected to start in the UK during September 2006 following a world public launch at the Commercial Vehicle Show in Birmingham during April 2006, to open a new chapter in the 30-year history of the LT.

With the '06' plate fast approaching, it's first come, first served on packages second-to-none.

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Model shown includes metallic paint and 'Hockenheim' alloys: £12,975.

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- *Toronto alloys
- Rain and dusk sensors
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- Auto-dimming rear-view mirror
- Curtain airbags

Model shown is Jetta SE 1.6 FSI with metallic paint: £15,960.

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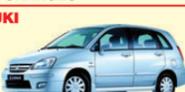
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Official fuel consumption for the Volkswagen range in mpg (litres/100km): urban 49.6 (5.7) - 13.3 (21.2); extra urban 68.9 (4.1) - 24.4 (11.6); combined 61.4 (4.6) - 19.1 (14.8). CO₂ emissions: 355 - 124g/km.

Driving Force

Helping you make the right choice

YARIS JOINS TOYOTA'S GALAXY OF FIVE-STAR MODELS

New car achieves top rating in Euro NCAP testing

Its dimensions may be compact, but the new generation Toyota Yaris has proved itself every bit as robust as its larger stablemates with a top safety rating in the latest round of Euro NCAP testing.

The Yaris, shortlisted for European Car of the Year, has been awarded a full five stars for adult passenger protection, its score of 35 points matching the previous high total for a Toyota, set by the Corolla Verso. It joins the Verso, Avensis and Prius in gaining the five-star classification.

The achievement is a just

reward for the skills Toyota's designers and engineers brought to building high safety standards into a vehicle of relatively small dimensions. The very short front overhang presented a particular challenge when it came to providing effective crash protection, but the results speak for themselves.

The Yaris's body structure was developed using Toyota's Minimal Intrusion Cabin System (MICS) technology. Front or side impact forces are dispersed through the vehicle's body, channelled away from the passenger cell and minimising the amount of cabin deformation.

Driver and passenger front

and side airbags, curtain shield airbags and the first driver's knee airbag to be offered in the segment will all be available on the new Yaris, together with a dual-stage seatbelt warning system for the driver and front seat passenger.

The Yaris is the first model Toyota has developed using its own, more stringent in-house car-to-car crash test standards. These simulate side and rear 50 per cent offset impacts with a two-tonne vehicle, with both vehicles travelling at 34mph (55km/h).

The new Toyota Yaris goes on sale in the UK on 1 January 2006. Full specifications and further details will be announced nearer to the launch date.

NEW, ULTIMATE-LUXURY RODEO LIMITED EDITION

Isuzu has launched a new, ultimate-luxury Rodeo five-seat, four-door double-cab pickup called the Denver Max LE with almost £6,000 worth of accessories for just over £2,000 extra.

Priced at £19,990 On-The-Road (excluding VAT), the Denver Max LE adds a Prodrive Performance Pack, 18 inch Prodrive alloy wheels with 255/60 Pirelli Scorpion Zero tyres, two-tone leather seats and door inserts, a Prodrive Mesh grille, a tough load-liner and an XTC hard top.

Also standard is a Bluetooth kit, SmartNav satellite navigation with touchscreen, one year's free SmartNav subscription, one year's free RAC Trackstar subscription and three months' free use of SafeSpeed.

Other Max features include a soft-type front A-bar with chrome insert, chrome side steps, rear chrome bumper and light guards and brushed steel door entry guards.

This is in addition to air-conditioning, a radio/CD-player, four electric windows, leather-wrapped steering wheel, keyless-entry and selectable 'shift-on-the-fly' 4WD or 2WD at speeds up to 60 mph.

The new manual-transmission-only LE is the result of Isuzu dealer demand. It will be restricted to a total of 100 units in either Astral Silver or Black Sapphire metallic.

Its Prodrive Performance Pack boosts the 3.0 litre turbo-diesel engine's power from 131 PS to 155 PS at the same 3,800 rpm, while torque rockets from 206.5 lb.ft to a solid 258.1 lb.ft at the same 2,000 rpm.

Apart from stronger throttle response, increased flexibility and greater refinement, the 0-60 mph acceleration time is reduced from 16.8 seconds to 12.4 seconds.

Highly-Successful Denver Max SDT Offer Extended

And in another Isuzu initiative, the highly successful Rodeo Denver Max SDT special edition is being extended throughout 2006.

Thanks to popular demand, the Denver Max SDT will now be available in both manual and automatic transmission formats and in a wider choice of colours.

RENAULT SET TO BUILD ON NEW CLIO SUCCESS WITH THE LAUNCH OF ITS FIVE DOOR VERSION

Renault launches its New Clio five door in UK showrooms from 27th January 2006

Low insurance groups announced starting from 2E for the entry-level version. Renault's New Clio has enjoyed a phenomenal launch since the three-door version arrived last October, with its combination of funky, sleek looks, large interior cabin space, high quality materials and top performance and value.

New Clio three door's talents have bowled both the public and Press over, with many top awards already under its belt including the much-coveted European Car of the Year 2006 and Best Supermini at the What Car? magazine and Test Drive magazine awards 2006. Not content with that, New Clio remains the car to beat in magazine group road tests remaining at the top of the pile against every rival car it has been tested against to date.

Five times the Va Va Voom!

Now, with the arrival of the five-door New Clio, the success looks set to continue. In UK showrooms from 27th January, New Clio five door offers the same top quality package as the three-door but with five times the Va Va Voom!

The five door offers even more practicality and ease of access to all that

space, for those who regularly carry rear seat passengers but don't require the extensive versatility and deceptively spacious interior offered by the Modus mini-MPV. A Va Va Voom sized helping of luxury and style are also assured with the top-of-the-range Privilege and Initiale, offering the ultimate in luxury in the supermini segment, and available exclusively only on the five-door version.

New Clio five-door is suitable for all budgets with prices starting from £8,995 for the entry-level Authentique 1.2 16V 75 rising to £15,050 for the luxurious Initiale with its powerful 1.5 dCi 106 engine, six speed gearbox and leather-lined interior. This is a £600 premium over the three door Clio.

A Va Va Voom sized amount of standard equipment at a great price!

New Clio five door has an impressive list of standard equipment available on each of its five trim levels. However it's core features set the benchmark offering some features such as front lateral airbags on all versions including Authentique, which were previously not available on the entry-level Clio II model helping New Clio become the eighth Renault to achieve the maximum five-stars from Euro NCAP. Customers can be reassured they are travelling in safety and

luxury in five door New Clio.

The trim levels available are the Authentique, Expression, the sporty Dynamique, Privilege and range-topping luxurious Initiale.

Just like the three-door New Clio, the five-door version leaves its rivals in the shade when it comes to price which may be a nasty surprise to them but a pleasant one for customers! Expected to be the biggest seller in petrol form is the Dynamique 1.4 16V 98 petrol engine at £10,850. This compares well to equivalent rival models such as the VW Polo Sport 1.4 100 which at £13,110 is £2,260 more or the Vauxhall Corsa SXi 1.4i 16V which at £11,400 is £550 more expensive than the Clio.

In diesel form, Renault expects its Dynamique 1.5dCi 86 with air conditioning at £12,250 to be its biggest diesel seller, and which also compares favourably to its rival's equivalent models. The Ford Fiesta Zetec Climate 1.6 Duratorq TDCi is priced at £12,295 and the VW Polo Sport 1.4 Tdi 80 which at £13,480 is £1,230 more and six hp less than the Clio!

It is not just pricing where New Clio is a class above, it also offers excellent fuel economy too, with the Dynamique 1.5 dCi 86 which offers an impressive combined

fuel consumption of 64.2 mpg and CO2 emissions of just 117 g/km.

Low insurance groups

Insurance groups start from as low as 2E for the entry-level New Clio five-door, rising to 6E for the luxurious Initiale which is packed full of standard equipment including Climate Control, parking proximity sensors, Renault Hands Free keycard (a segment first) and metallic paint. Not only does New Clio five-door offer a top quality package worthy of the European Car of the Year 2006 and impressive interior cabin space, it saves you pounds on your insurance too!

In some cases the insurance group has dropped when compared to the equivalent previous Clio II model such as the Dynamique 1.4 16V 98 which was 5E but is now lower at 4E, and the Expression 1.5 dCi 68 which was 4E but is now two groups lower on New Clio at 2E.

New Clio five-door's low insurance rating compares favourably to its rivals, with the Authentique's 2E rating being one class lower than the equivalent Ford Fiesta Studio 1.25 Duratec which is 3E. The New Clio Dynamique 1.4 16V 98 insurance rating is just 4E compared to the Fiesta Zetec 1.4 4E and the Peugeot 206 Sport 1.4 at 6E.

bigsmall (big - small), adj. the all new Yaris.



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The all new Yaris. £500 towards your deposit* until March 31st at Helensburgh Toyota. 10.2% APR TYPICAL* Arrange a test drive online at www.toyota.co.uk/helensburgh

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Driving Force

Helping you make the right choice

TAKING A TEST DRIVE March 2006 Registrations

A NEW car is a major investment and most people buy one with a view to keeping it for at least three years. If you're an average 8,000 miles a year driver, doing an average speed of 40mph, that's 600 hours behind the wheel.

It's important that the car you purchase is the right one for you. You can help avoid a bad buy if you give yourself longer to make your choice and study all the relevant facts and figures. Yet it's that all-important visit to the showroom and test drive that often makes up your mind. It needn't be intimidating. The test drive is for your benefit alone and the more you take, the more experiences you'll have to draw on.

With the new 06 registration just around the corner, follow our ten point plan and you shouldn't go far wrong.

IN THE SHOWROOM

- 1) Check the price. It may sound obvious but before you even arrive at the showroom, decide what your realistic financial limit is. You wouldn't be the first person to be seduced into putting a deposit down on a gleaming metal monster you can't really afford.
- 2) Check the doors. Don't jump straight into the driver's seat - you want to know how easy the car will be to live with, not simply to drive. Try the bonnet, doors and boot - how easy are they to operate, and how secure?
- 3) Check passenger space. If you'll often be carrying passengers, see what sort of access and room they have. Would they be comfortable on a long journey? This could depend on whether they're children or adults. What sort of state is the interior in? If a low-mileage demonstrator car looks tatty after only a few hundred miles, how will it look in a few years' time?
- 4) Check load space. What sort of load space do you need? If you'll frequently be carrying bulky or heavy loads you need to see if you can easily and safely lift them into the load area. Is the lip of the boot too high? Is the engine powerful enough to handle the sort of loads you carry?
- 5) Check the paperwork. Getting your hands on as many brochures and fact sheets about

your potential purpose is essential. All manufacturer figures such as fuel consumption, emissions, crash test performance and interior space have to be officially approved and will give you a valuable tool to compare one car against another.

AT THE WHEEL

- 6) Check the driving position. Get as comfortable as you can. Can the seat slide, tilt and rise? Can the steering wheel position be moved? Can you see all the mirrors? Is visibility through the windows acceptable? If you can't see what's going on around you or you simply cannot get comfortable, you'd might as well stop right now, as the car will never suit you.
- 7) Check the start-up. Now for the moment of truth - turn the ignition on. If you're sold on the money-saving advantages of diesel cars, bear in mind that some sound 'clattery' when starting from cold. This should soon settle down to a more normal beat quickly.
- With your foot on the clutch, gently run through the gears. The shift can be 'notchy' when a car is cold but not so stiff it's a problem. Select first and gently lift off the clutch. How smoothly does the car pull away? A 'sharp' clutch, or one which is very heavy, can be hard work - especially in traffic. Does it suit your driving style?
- 8) Check the engine. Is the engine powerful enough to pull away from traffic lights and to keep going up hills without requiring endless gearchanges? Remember that on most test drives it'll be just you and a salesman in the car. If you'll be pulling a caravan or driving with a full complement of adults, you need to estimate whether the engine can handle it.
- 9) Check the noise levels. Find a stretch of fast, open road, where it's safe and legal to speed up. If you're going to spend a lot of time cruising motorways and there is a junction nearby, ask the salesman if you can drive on one for a short stretch. How much noise is there from the engine, the tyres and the

wind? Are there any irritating rattles or buzzes from the interior? If something is mildly distracting on a short test drive, it is likely to be infuriating on a long-distance trip.

10) Check the driving experience. How well does the suspension soak up bumps and take corners? If the ride is too hard, you'll go crashing and jolting over potholes. If it's too soft you'll find the car 'wallows' over small bumps and rolls in corners, making journeys uncomfortable. An easy-to-drive car is one with controls that do what you want, with a minimum of effort. The steering should be light, but you should be able to 'feel' the road; the gears should be quick and easy, and the tyres should grip well so the car always goes where you point it.

AND FINALLY

Even if you're completely satisfied with the car's performance and are eager to sign on the dotted line, promise yourself that you'll take at least one more test drive before you commit to anything. If your second test isn't as good, it will reassure you about your original choice. If it's better, you'll have saved yourself from making a very expensive mistake.

SUBARU LAUNCHES POLICE SALES ASSAULT

Symmetrical all-wheel drive specialist, Subaru, has launched a serious assault on the police car market targeting both unmarked and high-visibility liveried use.

Already favoured by several forces, the iconic Impreza will be joined by the sporting executive Legacy and crossover Forester in a three-pronged attack.

This follows Subaru winning approval as an official supplier by the Police Information Technology Organisation.

In addition, the first decade demonstration Forester has just hit the highways complete with all the equipment required for the official police-spec 'Utility 4x4' category.

Acknowledging the importance of this initiative, Subaru has appointed specialist motor services outsourcing, Landar Ltd, to establish a Police Sales Unit.

Headed by Programme Manager, Lance Jenkins, this will provide dedicated sales and

operational support.

This unit has already received orders for a number of unmarked Imprezas and Legacys by various constabularies and Lance has now begun a charm offensive on fleet managers from more than 40 police forces throughout the UK.

He said: "The performance, agility and reliability of the Impreza is already well known by many forces but few appreciate how ideal the Forester is for rural use and as an all-terrain multi-function vehicle.

"The Legacy is also very attractive as a low-profile 'stealth' car where covert surveillance and eventual pursuit is required. It will be my job to get the Subaru on more shopping lists and to raise its profile among the constabularies."

Subaru's Police Sales unit will also offer interested forces extended vehicle loans for up to six months under a new 'try and buy' programme.

FIFTH CONSECUTIVE RECORD YEAR FOR UK LAND ROVER SALES EXPECTED

Phil Popham, managing director of Land Rover UK said yesterday that the 9,000 UK sales they expect to achieve in the new registration plate change month of September will be the second biggest sales month ever since manufacturing began in 1948. The all-time record month was March 2004 when 10,000 Land and Range Rover models were sold.

Demand for the 2006 Range Rover, new Discovery 3 and the all-new Range Rover Sport was driving demand with the new Sport already achieving 145 per cent of its sales target. The Sport will achieve nearly 6,000 UK sales this year even though it was only launched in May.

Popham said, "This year we expect our UK sales to reach 49,000 units, the fifth consecutive record year since Ford took over the company six years ago."

"The UK market remains the largest in the world but I do not expect to keep that title next year because the growth in the US market. They will see

48,000 sales this year and this should increase to 50,000 units in 2006. I do not expect to be able to match that total because of our run-out programme early next year for the current Freelander range and the new models not being introduced until later in 2006" he said.

Popham added that Land Rover sales worldwide this year would be a record total of 180,000 units.

He said, "We have addressed the issues of product quality and reliability and have recovered from the damage done by our past reputation. With the new 2006 model line up we have just introduced we are ideally placed to grow our sales worldwide and we need to grow and develop our biggest market, the US. We are also seeing significant growth in Italy, France, Germany, Spain and from emerging markets such as Russia and China."

"The UK market currently has the optimum number of 130 Land Rover dealerships with

nine sales regions. We have invested hugely in improving customer satisfaction and regaining their confidence with our dealers implementing fault fixing through service actions. The product quality is now much improved off the production line and this is fully supported with our three-year unlimited mileage vehicle warranty. We have seen a significant reduction in the number of warranty claims for our products", said Popham

Approximately half of the total UK sales are to customers who use company money to buy their vehicles with the majority of buyers being in a position to make their own decision on what vehicle they have.

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LAND ROVER GO BEYOND

The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the Freelander range are: Urban 31.0 (9.1) - 16.5 (17.2), Extra Urban 42.2 (6.7) - 29.1 (9.7) and Combined 37.2 (7.6) - 22.7 (12.4). The official CO₂ emission for the Freelander range is 298 - 205 g/km.

* £2500 less than the manufacturer's recommended retail price. Freelander diesel qualifies for £1500 (inc. VAT) Privileged Purchase Voucher plus £1000 Land Rover Financial Services deposit contribution. Deposit Contribution is only available when financing a new Freelander using Land Rover Financial Services, ALL 2RWH Freedom Finance. Offer applies to vehicles first registered in the customer's name between 1st January and 31st March 2006. Certain categories of business user may be excluded. All prices, offers and finance terms shown are correct at time of going to press and are subject to change without notice. Finance subject to status to over 18s in the UK only. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Failure to make payments on a loan may affect a customer's credit record.

Typical 13.4% APR

GRANDE PUNTO ROCKS CAPITAL

The first Fiat Grande Punto to arrive in the UK zipped around the capital city yesterday, (Wednesday 18 January), with the chart-topping Bodyrockers.

The electro rock duo sampled Fiat's all-new supermini while finding time for a speedy shopping trip at the world famous Harrods department store in Knightsbridge, where Grande Punto will take centre stage from the end of January through until March.

Two new Grande Puntos will be showcased in Harrods' Brompton Road shop windows for a two month period from the end of this month, and visitors to the store will be able to experience the car for themselves at close quarters, together with the possibility of a test drive. Grande Punto goes on sale throughout the UK on Saturday 11 February.

The Fiat Punto has been a highly successful product since the original was launched in 1993. Voted European Car of the Year in 1995, it became Europe's best selling car in 1997, and in the UK, its largest export market, some 500,000 examples are active on our roads today.

The all-new Punto has elegant lines courtesy of Italian design maestro, Giorgetto Giugiaro. It is built on a completely new platform, making it the largest and safest in its category. It boasts the widest diesel engine range in its class, and a maximum 5-star Euro NCAP safety rating.

Mainland Europe has taken to the new Italian in a big way. Over 100,000 customer orders have been received since Grande Punto first went on sale at the end of September, and it has already picked up some notable international media awards, including the Golden Steering Wheel (Germany), Auto Europa (Italy), and Best City Car (France).

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05 05 LEGACY 2.0i, four-door, garnet red, ex demo £15,495	02 52 ISUZU Trooper 3.0 TD Duty, swb, fjord blue, one owner £10,995
03 03 OUTBACK H6, red/silver, leather, climate, cruise £16,495	99 ISUZU Trooper V6 SWB, silver, high spec £5,995
03 03 OUTBACK H6, red/silver, leather, climate £16,495	97 97 ISUZU Trooper Duty, SWB, 55,000 miles, towbar £6,595
03 03 OUTBACK 2.5i SE Auto, silver, black leather, f.s.h. £17,495	93 93 ISUZU Trooper 3.1 TD SWB, one year MOT, to clear £3,995
01 X LEGACY 2.0 GL Estate, green, air conditioning £3,995	02 02 VAUXHALL Bravo 2.5 4x4 Pick-Up £5,495 + VAT
00 W OUTBACK 2.5 Manual, blue/silver, one owner, f.s.h. £6,995	97 R VAUXHALL Frontera 2.2, five-door, blue, 6,600 miles £3,995
99 T OUTBACK 2.5 Auto, blue/silver, twin sunroof £6,495	92 I MITSUBISHI Shogun 2.5 TD Auto, three-door £3,995
97 P LEGACY 2.2 GX, aqua mica, airbags, two owners, s.h. £3,995	98 S LAND ROVER Freelander XEi 1.8, five-door £6,995
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05 55 IMPREZA WRX STi, black, Pro-drive performance pack, £22,995	04 54 HONDA Civic, Type R, black, 14,500 miles, air/con £14,495
05 55 IMPREZA GX, four-door, WR blue, air/con, alloys, ABS £12,995	04 04 HONDA CRV, red, 7000 miles £12,995
04 54 IMPREZA WRX, four-door, W R blue, one owner £17,495	04 04 HONDA Civic Type S, five-door, silver £8,995
04 04 IMPREZA WRX, four-door, red, Pro-drive, rear spoiler £15,495	02 52 HONDA HRV 4WD, RED £8,495
03 03 IMPREZA GT Sport, four-door, WRB, f.s.h. £9,495	04 04 FORD Sport Ka 1.6, blue, one owner, alloys, p.a.s. £6,495
03 03 IMPREZA GX, four-door, red/blue, p.a.s., ABS, a/c £9,495	03 03 FORD Galaxy LX TDi, seven-seater, red £10,495
03 53 IMPREZA WRX, 4-door, WR blue, 16,100 miles, tractor £14,995	03 03 FORD Mondeo TDCi Ghia, five-door, silver, alloys, a/c £8,495
03 53 IMPREZA WRX SL, 5-door, WR blue, 1 owner, f.s.h. £14,495	03 03 VAUXHALL Astra 2.2 SRi, three-door, silver £6,995
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01 51 IMPREZA WRX four-door, silver £9,995	02 52 VAUXHALL Astra 1.8 SXi, 5-dr, silver, 18,000 miles, a/c £6,995
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John Spicer will be in the Oban area on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 February and can be contacted on 07831 808702

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Toyota Hilux Surf 2.4 Td Manual 1993 £5500 Just arrived in the country and on its way to us. 2.4 turbo diesel, manual gearbox, central locking, air conditioning, still to be registered. Mileage 98000Km (61000m)	Mitsubishi Pajero 2.8TD auto 4WD 1994 £6595 7 seat 4 wheel drive automatic, sun roof, alloy wheels, bull bars, spotlights, electric windows, central locking, privacy glass, taxed April 06. Mileage 116000Km (72500m)
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GLASGOW LETTER

One task too many

DO YOU ever spare a thought for adjudicators at musical competitions? Most of us will have seen them in action at Mods in different locations and generally speaking we never envy them their task. If that's the case, how would you have liked to have been one of the six judges at the BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year? Six of them to judge six musicians playing a variety of instruments, including voice, and each one of the competitors highly accomplished.

The talent of each had to be heard to be fully appreciated. As well as musicianship the judges are looking for personality and ability to give an overall performance. In the end the award went to Shona Mooney, a fiddler from the Borders, but of the six finals to date in this competition this must have been the closest yet.

The west coast was well represented in the final. Fraser Shaw from Islay played excellent selections on the bagpipes and on whistle and with a little more rapport with the audience he would surely have given the judges much deliberation.

With a little less of the chat Mod Gold medallist Darren MacLean, from Skye, would have done the same. Described by the chairman of the panel of judges as the 'Billy Connelly of Gaeldom' Darren perhaps tried too hard to be the overall entertainer instead of allowing his wonderful singing of beautiful Gaelic songs to be the main focus.

Once again this was top drawer entertainment and followed on from Donald Shaw's Harvest earlier that day. If harvest means collecting in only the best, then this is exactly what Donald did in a concert very much based on the opening of Celtic Connections two years ago. The stage in the main auditorium was full, mainly with young musicians playing all the instruments you might wish to name but with room for some of Donald's more famous music associates from Galicia, Brittany, Asturias, Ireland as well as Scotland and including his wife Karen Matheson.

From the first item when Emma MacInnes from North Uist, now a pupil at the Traditional Music School in Plockton, sang an accompanied Gaelic song this was a concert to be remembered and was certainly one of my highlights of the month-long festival.

During this final week of the festival there were many concerts with a west coast input. The Songs of Scotland series proved to be very popular with those of a laid back disposition being disappointed when they discovered all tickets had been sold. While I managed to attend many concerts, choices had to be made and fortunately I was not disappointed. A concert featuring Fred Morrison and last year's Young Traditional Musician of the Year as part of the Master and Apprentice series certainly lived up to its potential and one could only marvel at the skills of both and wonder how it is possible to move one's finger at such speed never mind moving them in the correct direction. At many concerts I have been to featuring Fred they often joke about him having 12 fingers and it certainly looks as if that is the case.

Last week I stated that the *Skipinnish* concert was one not to be missed and so it turned out. A sell-out audience was

treated to the best of west coast music played by west coast musicians. Angus and Andrew, from Tiree and Lochaber respectively, were joined by Alan Henderson and Duncan Nicholson, both from Mallaig, and Malcolm Jones, Andrew MacPherson and Rachel Walker, all from Skye. You can't get much more west coast than that!

I was sick with jealousy as each of the musicians showed their expertise on a variety of instruments and I can't even play one! Mind you, one tends to forget the years of hard work which have gone in to reaching this level.

With the instrumental items interspersed with the beautiful singing of Rachel, the audience certainly got its money's worth and everyone delivered with complete modesty as the banter flew back and forth across the stage.

With six members in the band and all of the varied instruments perhaps the most surprising item was saved for one of the encores when each marched on to the stage playing the bagpipes.

What was that I said about being with jealousy? This was indeed a great night's entertainment and one that filled you with pride in your cultural background.

Annual gathering

THE ANNUAL gathering of Glasgow Mull and Iona Association will be held this Friday in Partick Burgh Hall at 7.30pm.

The artists will be compere and accordionist Charlie Kirkpatrick, piper Calum MacDougall, singers Mary MacMillan, Janet Campbell, Duncan MacDonald, Seumas Campbell and Largs Gaelic Choir Folk Group with accompanist Kathryn Black.

High school dinner

THE ANNUAL dinner dance of the Oban High School FP Association will take place on Saturday March 11 in the Swallow Hotel, Paisley Road West.

Ian Cleaver, hotelier and businessman, will be the speaker.

For tickets contact Ann Byres 0141 943 0281 or Isobel Ross 0141 563 9729.

Diary dates

Friday February 3: Glasgow Mull and Iona Association, annual gathering, Partick Burgh Hall, 7.30pm.

Saturday February 4: Stirling branch of An Comunn, ceilidh, Lesser Albert Hall, Dumbarton Road, Stirling, 7.30pm.

Thursday February 9: Gaelic Service, Partick Downvale Church, Downhill Street, Partick, 7.30pm.

Friday February 10: Clydebank Highlanders Association, ceilidh, Lesser Town Hall, Clydebank, 7.30pm. Perth Gaelic Society, lecture/ceilidh, St Matthew's Church Hall, Tay Street, Perth, 7.30pm.

Saturday February 11: Glasgow Argyll Association, buffet dance, Hillhead Sports Club. Tickets from M Ross 0141 956 5765 or C Douglas 0141 637 4665. Paisley Highlanders Association, Burn's Ceilidh, 7.30pm, Elderslie Village Hall, Glenpatrick Road, Elderslie.

Pub scene

MUSIC in the Islay Inn will be provided by Deoch an Dorus on Friday, Donald MacRae and Lex Keith on Saturday and John Carmichael on Sunday. In the Park Bar it will be Gary Forrest on Friday and Gary Innes on Saturday and Sunday.

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



Dunbeg school tug-o-war fun - 1975

Alex Cameron of Lorn Road, Dunbeg, sent us this week's flashback photograph which shows Dunbeg children having fun with a tug-o-war at Dunbeg Primary School about 1975. Included in the photograph are Fay MacDonald, Peter Fletcher, Craig MacCuish and John MacDonald. We would like readers to send in 'Flashback' photographs. Please send prints to *The Oban Times*, 'Flashback' Photo, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Prints must be accompanied by a caption, name and address, stamped addressed envelope and telephone number. Each month a photo will win £10. The winner of our £10 prize for January was Alasdair MacCuish of Islay Road, Oban, for his photograph of Oban's St Columba's Scouts on a visit to Dublin in 1945.

Letters to the Editor

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Don't axe mobile library

Sir, I understand Argyll and Bute Council is holding a meeting to discuss the withdrawal of the mobile library.

I wonder if officiating officers have any conception of the importance of this service to elderly or disabled people living in a rural area. There are parts of Appin which have virtually no council services. We have the refuse collection and the mobile library for which we pay the same Council Tax as people who have street lights, mains drainage and mains water.

The library calls once a month and is a most welcome visitor. The librarian knows his readers so well that he is capable, on occasions, of choosing books which he knows they would like to read.

We have just enjoyed having a new and larger library van which has been much appreciated.

People in this solitary situation often take three or four books to see them through till the next visit. If the council decides to take away this one contact it will cut off even further this section of rural community.

I understand the reason for making this change is a question of funding.

Imagine the fury some have felt on learning that the same council is proposing to supply every school child with a yellow light-reflecting strip to wear on

their clothing so they can be seen in the dark. It is thought that parents might possibly be able to provide these, as the children are only the school's responsibility during school hours.

Joan Loro, Appin.

No money spent in Appin

Sir, I heard today from the driver of the mobile library that it is probably not going to run after March to save Argyll and Bute Council money.

I find this utterly miserable. I know I chose to live in the remote Appin area, and really love doing so, but feel we get very little council money spent on us.

Since a car accident in 1985 which left me disabled, the road in front of my house is looked after less, the drains are only cleared every two or three years and the vegetation at the side of the road is only cut once a year.

Also, the road is never gritted.

The mobile library is the only thing I have and I need it. I don't have a car because my eye sight is bad.

No public transport comes near my house and I rely on the big print books and talking books to help me pass the time each day.

I know that many people in the Appin area who at present also use the library are as upset as I am.

I just wonder why I pay any Council Tax for all the use I get out of it.

Miss G J Williams, Appin.

Oban airport improvement

Sir, With reference to the letter in *The Oban Times* of Thursday January 19 from Paul Keegan, I have already replied directly to Mr Keegan on the matters which he raises.

Mr Keegan knows that three of the extra jobs to which he refers are for fire cover which is a prerequisite if Oban airport is to gain the appropriate Civil Aviation Authority licensing to allow the operation of scheduled flights.

The whole project, which involves the islands of Coll and Colonsay, as well as the airfield at North Connel, will incorporate extensive upgrading which will lead directly to the improvement of services both for existing and future users of the scheduled flight services.

The incident occurred at Mr and Mrs John Wagstaff's Red Bay Cottage, Kintira, an excellent restaurant, and the geese are owned by John and his wife. It was John who called the Caledonian MacBrayne team out so without John's help our Georgie would have been lost at sea.

One again our thanks go to John and his wife and the Caledonian MacBrayne team.

Keith and Sheila Clarkson.

One hour ID card pledge

Sir, I have been pointing out to the government for a long time that people in Argyll and Bute will have to travel a long distance to get to ID card enrolment centres, so I was pleased when Lord Bassam of Brighton, a Lord in Waiting and a member of the government said in the House of Lords that 'the government envisages that a person will have to travel no more than one hour to

Scotland. Perhaps a quick spray with grass seed would help consolidate the ground?'

All we need to do now is teach the driving public how to stay on the carriageway.

John Hay, Taynuilt.

Thanks for saving dog

Sir, It was very good of you to write about and publish a wonderful photograph of my wife and our dogs in *The Oban Times* of Thursday January 26 but I must correct one or two points.

The incident occurred at Mr and Mrs John Wagstaff's Red Bay Cottage, Kintira, an excellent restaurant, and the geese are owned by John and his wife. It was John who called the Caledonian MacBrayne team out so without John's help our Georgie would have been lost at sea.

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get to an enrolment centre'.

However, I am still concerned that the government does not appreciate that some of my constituents can only travel a short distance from their homes in one hour because of the slow speed of ferries, the state of many single track roads and the lack of public transport.

The Passport Agency has said it is considering opening a part-time office in Oban to interview first-time passport applicants and process ID card applications. An office in Oban would be a help, but people on the islands or the Kintyre and Cowal peninsulas would still face a long journey to their nearest office or be reliant on a mobile office visiting their area.

Alan Reid, MP for Argyll and Bute.

Fèisean book appeal

Sir, As part of Fèisean nan Gaidheal's 25th anniversary celebrations this year, the organisation is planning to publish a book featuring the story of the fèis movement in Scotland.

The story of the fèisean will be told through the people who have been involved in local fèisean since the first fèis took place on Barra in 1981.

We would like to make a final call for anyone who has been involved in a fèis over the years - such as a tutor, a participant or a member of the community - to get in touch. Please contact us on 01478 613355 or email chris@feisean.org before the end of February.

We look forward to hearing from you.
Chris De Plano, researcher.

A VIEW FROM THE TOWER

By McCAIG



Will this really be local government?

EVER since the Scottish Executive announced that local government elections in 2007 would mark a watershed in the development of our bottom tier of government as there would be a new system of appointing councillors and that they would be paid there has been the sort of buzz around that followed the report by the late Lord Wheatley in 1974.

What followed was the abolition of town and county councils, the creation of massive regions, such as Strathclyde, and suggested allowances that were supposed to be commensurate to the amount of work and time necessary to do the job properly.

This reform will happen in May next year and has proved already to be so complicated that it is going to take a major public education exercise to ensure that voters begin to comprehend how and for whom to vote.

Last week I listened to Argyll and Bute Tory Councillor Gary Mulvaney outline to his party members in Oban and Lorn how the single-transferable-voting system will work and how there will be big wards with three or four councillors for them. I thought I knew how the system would work; now I am confused and this is not the fault of Councillor Mulvaney.

Speaking afterwards to those whose guest I was, there seemed to be a degree of disbelief that there would be a bigger turnout in 2007 than there has been for the first-past-the-post system and I cannot but agree with them.

The system is absurdly complicated and leaves sparsely populated rural areas unrepresented when attached to a town with a reasonable population.

Local government on the cheap

AS TO the second part of the promise: reasonable remuneration for councillors that was to attract a whole new section of the community to offer themselves for election.

Never has there been a worse case of short-changing.

I know of several people who have been contemplating standing but who have told me that they certainly cannot afford to do so with their family and financial commitments on what is being proposed.

The most unfortunate feature, however, is that the press has chosen to highlight a large increase in cash terms over the present expenses system and got it grossly wrong as what is payable now and what is on offer are not compatible.

One national newspaper says that the average income of an Argyll and Bute Councillor from 2007 onwards will be £18,278 as opposed to £12,545 currently.

This is absolute nonsense as the Scottish Local Authority Remuneration Committee says in its report that 62 per cent of councillors will be on the basic proposed wage of £15,452 before tax.

In other words, councillors who are the ultimate arbiter on vital matters that affect the daily lives of all of us will receive about a sixth of what the officials who service their local authority will take home.

For all the pious words of First Minister Jack McConnell about a new era for local government the reality is that the very people whom he wanted to improve the calibre of local government cannot afford to take up his challenge as they are to be paid little more than a final year apprentice plumber.

There are another two factions who should be considered: those councillors who are not seeking re-election and will receive severance pay of roughly £1,000 for each year of service with a ceiling of £30,000. I don't begrudge them that as there are no pension provisions for them as there is in the proposed new system. But I do find those who think that councillors should still turn out five days a week for nothing either ignoramuses or anarchists.

Have cash handy!

SO MANY financial experts tell us that in the future we will have a cashless society that we tend to believe them and don't always remember to stick a cash card in the hole-in-the-wall to arm ourselves with a modicum of real money.

Yes, it is still needed, indeed, essential for such things as buying a newspaper, paying a bus fare or spending the proverbial 'penny' - try waving a debit card at the door of a public loo!

I was forcibly reminded of this flaw in the card system when having lunch in an Oban hotel a fortnight ago and having the usual argument as to who was going to pay for it. The lady in the company insisted, produced a fistful of cards - gold, of course - and handed one to the waiter. Minutes later, he returned to announce that his machine wouldn't accept it.

Another was proffered with the same result and a third likewise. In the end, the three of us had enough cash on us to avoid an afternoon washing dishes but the hotel had to admit eventually that there was something wrong with its computer.

However, I have since learned that a TSB Lloyds business customer down south found himself in the same predicament, phoned his bank which dispatched a manager to settle the debt as the client's card was out-of-date and hadn't been replaced timeously!

Never has there been a worse case of short-changing.

One national newspaper says that the average income of an Argyll and Bute Councillor from 2007 onwards will be £18,278 as opposed to £12,545 currently.

McCaig

ISLAY LETTER

Burns at Ballygrant

BALLYGRANT'S annual tribute to our national bard is always an enjoyable evening and the latest of these, the 18th to date, was no exception.

Organised by the village hall committee, it drew a capacity crowd from all parts of the island.

Everyone was welcomed by chairman Mairead MacKechie, the Keils-born resident Gaelic tutor at Ionad Chalum Chille Ile, and she kept up the pace and everyone in seemly order.

The 'Great Chieftain' was carried to pride of place by Gretta MacLellan, led by Bonhaven schoolboy piper Sandy MacLellan. The address to the haggis was given with gusto by Heather

Dewar from Heather Houses and, following the Selkirk Grace offered by Neil MacLean, the company did justice to the homely fare and some even indulged in second helpings.

The premier toast to the Immortal Memory was proposed by Gibson Campbell who described the bard as 'a great character' and also referred to the poet's none too happy visit to Inveraray.

I highlighted the many virtues and the occasional failings of the lassies and this brought a humorous and forgiving response from Linda Currie.

A selection of Burns' songs were ably sung by Janey Torrance and Robert Baker and the evening concluded with vigorous dancing to the strains of

Donnie and Diane, the Perth-based musicians who are celebrating their 22nd year on the Scottish dance music scene.

A similar tribute was held in Port Ellen on Saturday by the Feis Ile committee. Details in the next Islay Letter.

Fort visit

THE ISLAND'S archaeological group begins its New Year programme with a visit to the Iron Age Fort at Dun Nosebridge on Sunday February 5.

An introductory talk on the fort and its history will be given by group member and retired farmer Donald Bell, formerly of Knocklearach.

Everyone should meet at the old schoolhouse at Mulindry at 1.30pm and sensible footwear is strongly recommended.

Feis Oigridh

TRADITIONAL music classes, part of the Feis Oigridh programme, are to be held at the Gaelic Centre, Gartnatra, on Thursday and Friday February 23 and 24.

Tuition will be given in Gaelic singing as well as fiddle, whistle, guitar and chanter and bagpipes.

The event will culminate with a tutor's ceilidh where the students will strut their stuff.

Anyone willing to help with supervision during the tuition periods should contact the Gaelic College.

Well done

WELL done to Lynne MacDougall who has graduated from Edinburgh's Napier University with a BSC (Honours) in Marine and Freshwater Biology.

The eldest daughter of Florence and Robert MacDougall, Bowmore, she is currently studying for a post graduate degree in education at Strathclyde University.

Bon voyage and happy days in the land of the long white cloud to the Dyball family from Bowmore who are now living in New Zealand. Their family and many friends wish them every success down under. **Hugh Smith, 4 Flora Street, Bowmore, Isle of Islay, PA43 7JX.**

DE THA DOL?

Slàinte

AIG DEIREADH na seachdain chaidh mi a choinhead air banacharaid anns an ospadal.

Tha bliadhna no dhà bho nach robh mi ann an ospadal roimhe seo. Ràinig mi mus robh an uàrd, anns an robh mo bhanacharaid a' faighinn aire, fosgailte agus shuidh mi air fear dhe na seithichean aig taobh a-muigh na uàrd. Leugh mi na sanasan a bh' air a' bhalla mum choinneamh agus chuir iad uabhas orm.

Nam meas bha fear ag ràdh, 'Thàinig mac a choinhead air a mhàthair. Thàinig e le gaol is le gràdh is le galair. Feuch nach dèan thusa mar an ceudna. Suath do làmhnan leis a' chuingidh a th' air a chuir mu do choinneamh agus a-rithist mus fàg thu an t-ospadal.'

Rinn mi mar a dh' iarradh orm. Ach nuair a sheas mi aig taobh na leapadh far an robh mo bhanacharaid na sineadh bha caran de dh' eagal orm beireachdainn air làimh oirre air eagal is gun dèanainn cron orra.

As dèidh dhomh tadhal air an ospadal thadhail mi a choinhead air an nighean againn agus na h-oghaichean agus a-rithist bha mi a' faireachdainn caran frionasach. Mus do bhoin mi dhaibh, chaidh mi dhan taigh-bheag agus nigh mi mo làmhnan gu faiceallach. Cha b' urrainn dhomh gun a bhith a' smaoineachadh, leis na bheil air a

bhith a' faighinn a' ghalair MRSA am bu chòir dhuinn a bhith a' tadhal air ospadail idir? Dè feum a bhith a' tighinn le gaol agus furtachd ma tha sinn a' tighinn le tinneas a' bharrachd? No bheil ear a' cur na coire far am bu chòir?

Phrases

RÀINIG mi mus robh an uàrd fosgailte - I arrived before the ward was open. Anns an robh mo bhanacharaid a' faighinn aire - where my friend was being cared for. Agus chuir iad uabhas orm - and they terrified me. Thàinig e le gaol is gràdh is galair - he came with love and affection and an infection. Feuch nach dèan thusa mar an ceudna - make sure that you don't do likewise. Suath do làmhnan leis a' chuingidh a th' air a chuir mu do choinneamh agus a-rithist mus fàg thu an t-ospadal' - I rubbed my hands with the disinfectant provided. Air eagal is gun dèanainn cron orra - in case I harmed her. A-rithist bha mi a' faireachdainn caran frionasach - again I felt rather concerned. Leis na bheil air a bhith a' faighinn a' ghalair MRSA - because of the number being infected with MRSA. Am bu chòir dhuinn a bhith a' tadhal air ospadail idir - should we be visiting hospitals at all? Dè feum a bhith a' tighinn le gaol agus furtachd? - what's the point of bringing love and comfort? No a bheil ear a' cur na coire far am bu chòir - or is the blame being put where it should be? **Criosaidh Dick.**

Rabbit dumper still unknown

THE CULPRIT who dumped seven domestic rabbits in North Connel, on the old road to the Royal Observer Corps building, has still not been tracked down.

But Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals officer John McAvoy is hot on the trail. Following an appeal in *The Oban Times* of January 19, he has received information that similar if not the same animals may have been left on the other side of North Connel, along the Bonawe road.

Two of the seven domestic rabbits did not survive their ordeal but the other five are doing well, being looked after by a volunteer before being moved to an SSPCA welfare centre for re-homing.

The three white and two black and white rabbits were left on the night of Friday January 13 or early on the following morning and because they are domestic, were unable to fend for themselves.

'They are likely to die because they don't know what predators are and don't have muscle power or know-how to escape,' said Mr McAvoy.

Anyone who may have more information on who may have left them can call Mr McAvoy on 07733 007252.

Crinan Canal bridge to close

THE SWING bridge over the Crinan Canal on the A83 will have to be closed to carry out essential maintenance.

British Waterways Scotland has worked out a schedule of work which it believes will cause the minimum of disruption to motorists.

The swing bridge over the Crinan Canal is being refurbished by British Waterways between now and mid April, which will lead to interruptions to the traffic flow at various times of the day and night.

British Waterways has pledged to make every effort to keep disruption to a minimum, but it says that the bridge will have to be closed to vehicles overnight on 20 occasions in February, March and April between 10pm and 6am.

During these times, a short diversion will be put in place around the village for light vehicles, with emergency services able to gain access over the bridge should the need arise.

The bridge will be closed overnight on: February 7, 8, 9, 10; March 10, 11, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31; April 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13.

National parks meeting in Fort William

THE NEVIS Partnership and the Outdoor Capital of the UK have come together to host an evening of discussion about the role, purpose and background of national parks within Scotland.

The discussion, part of the Fort William Film Festival, will take place on Sunday, February 12, 2006.

Scottish Natural Heritage is inviting regions of Scotland to become involved in the process of becoming the next marine national park, the evening will provide the audience with an opportunity to learn more about the process behind the concept of national parks in Scotland and how they differ from other models used in other parts of the world.

The evening brings together three experts all of whom have experience of the national parks that are already in place in Scotland; Rory McLellan, senior lecturer in tourism at Strathclyde University, Dr Robert Aitken, board member Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, Murray Ferguson, head of visitor services and recreation, Cairngorm National Park.

Barcaldine community still chases the new hall dream

BARCALDINE Community Association is a step away from becoming a charitable organisation limited by guarantee, which will allow the community to pursue the dream of having its own community hall.

Meantime, the enthusiastic band of volunteers behind the association are not resting on their laurels while waiting for the necessary paperwork to be approved by the Inland Revenue.

Chairman Peter Jameson said the existing management team had already been in discussions with the Forestry Commission and local landowners about a suitable site for a hall and gathering information about prices for leasing and/or buying land.

The team has also been looking at possible grant-aid trusts, with a view to applying for grants to help fund the building of a hall, and has not been slow in starting its

own fund-raising. A bonfire night at Irene and Fred Sim's Dalrannoch Farm raised £692, while a quiz night at the Oban Sea Life and Marine Sanctuary raised another couple of hundred pounds.

A ceilidh is planned for February 11 and another quiz night is on the cards in the near future.

The association is also in the process of applying to WHELK - West Highland European Leader Kist which grants up to 45 per cent of costs - for LEADER+ funding to carry out a feasibility study on the actual building itself.

This will then have to go out to tender for a consultant to carry out.

'We are always in the hands of other people' said Mr Jameson, 'and know full well it is going to be a slow process but we have had some excellent help.'

Also on the agenda is a website and a news-sheet to keep members of the community up-to-date on progress and events.

'We have an excellent team and everyone is enthusiastic.'

'Obviously we have to keep morale up as it is going to be tough, especially as far as our own fund-raising is concerned,' added Mr Jameson.

Fifty-eight per cent of the community voted to go ahead with an association to try and find a site for and build a new community hall at an open meeting last year.

The old Barcaldine hall, built originally as accommodation for Forestry Commission workers constructing the houses at Achanrear and then handed over to the community, is beyond habitable use and has not been used for a long time.

Call for new Oban stadium

OBAN Councillor Robin Banks is calling for a new stadium to be built at Mossfield Park in the town.

He made the request during a discussion on Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee's strategic priorities for the area.

Each Argyll and Bute Council area committee has a 'wish list' of five major projects that the members want to see achieved and each councillor also has a list of projects that he or she sees as a priority within their wards.

Two of the major projects have been dropped from the area's top priorities as they are under way - the relocation of Oban Library and the replacement of Rockfield Primary School.

The area's five priorities are now the Oban Action Plan, which includes Oban harbour and a development road; Oban Airport; the A848 Salen-Tobermory road on Mull; rationalisation of council office accommodation in the area; and infrastructure improvements to the area.

As well as controlling on-

street parking on Pulpit and Oban hills, road surface improvements, moving Combie Street pedestrian traffic lights to the end of Glencruitten Road and restoring Dungallan Park wall, Councillor Robin Banks asked for a new stadium to be included in the list for Oban Central.

'The existing park stadium is in a poor condition,' he argued.

Other projects within the area's different wards include support to local organisations to help levelling in outside funding in Awe; shelters on the Esplanade in Oban North; a community centre and sports pitch at Soroba in Oban South; a community centre for Dunbeg in Ardconnel-Kilmore; the Oban - Fort William cycleway in North Lorn; the development of Fionnphort harbour in Mull; and roads improvements in the Tiree and Coll ward.

Councillor Allan Macaskill said that the list of priorities had to be costed and a timescale given following advice from the Audit Commission.



Rotarian Donald Morrison, auctioneer and Jenny Livingstone of North Connel with a polar bear rug donated for sale. 0550601

Oban rotarians host another successful charity auction

OBAN Rotary Club has once again provided bargains galore and raised cash for local good causes with its annual charity auction.

More than 100 people registered to bid for the 300 lots on offer at Oban Livestock Centre last Saturday.

Auctioneer Donald Morrison, who is a member of Oban Rotary Club, kept the bidding moving along briskly with Oban Livestock Centre donating the use of its sale ring for the day.

There were plenty of bargains to be had for under a fiver while items like an industrial washing ma-

chine and a dryer each raised £110. Despite a chilly day, a commercial ice cream maker fetched £75 and a good selection of clocks and cameras also brought in good sums.

Oban Rotary Club uplifts, stores and sells items of donated furniture throughout the year and

the total from the combined ventures this year came to £5,800. The Rotary Club gives money to good causes both at home and overseas; the money from the Oban auction and furniture sales has been earmarked to be given to various charities within the Oban area.

Mull improved mail plan misses the boat

A ROYAL Mail plan to improve the postal service to Mull seems to have backfired after mail missed the morning ferry three times out of six over the last week.

The delivery van leaving Glasgow in the morning is arriving in Oban at 7.45am, an hour later than before.

The delay is because Glasgow staff are sorting the mail in Glasgow instead of leaving it to be sorted in Oban.

As a result of the later arrival, Oban's sorting office is rushing to get the mail on to the Mull ferry which leaves at 8am most days of the week.

The Oban Times understands the postman at Craignure cannot wait at

Craignure for the next ferry sailing as he has other deliveries.

So the mail lies in Oban's sorting office until the next day's first sailing.

But Royal Mail claims the post was not connecting with the Mull ferry under the previous system.

A spokeswoman for Royal Mail said: 'New delivery times have been introduced to improve quality of service as it was failing to connect in time to get the mail to Mull. There have been some teething problems this week.'

'We have failed to meet the Mull ferry three out of six times because of the new ways of working but we are now on schedule and

will not have any more delays unless there are problems with traffic or severe weather.'

'The mail arrives in Oban at 7.45am. The mail is already sorted and bagged for Mull so it is ready to go straight on the ferry.'

'This does not affect the mail for Oban and outlying areas as there are earlier despatches to Oban.'

'If there is mail for Oban on the 7.45am delivery, there is still time to sort as the postmen do not go out until 8.30am.'

The spokeswoman added Royal Mail would review this system when Caledonian MacBrayne's summer timetable comes into play.

Islay singing school to be repeated

A SINGING course held last year on the Isle of Islay proved to be so successful, the venture is to be repeated this summer.

Buoyed by the success of last year's inaugural singing course, the Small Song singing school is to be repeated from July 22-29.

It will take place in a recently-converted barn of outstanding acoustic merit at Small Farm on the north-west coast of the island.

The venture is administered by Philip Maxwell and this year's course has vacancies for 15 singers.

Auditions will be held in London on March 11 and in Glasgow on March 18 and rehearsals will take place on June 24 and 25.

The musical director is Mary Hill, the chief coach and opera co-ordinator at the Royal Academy of Music and the vocal coaches are Irish opera singer Pascale Allen and his Glasgow-born wife Sheila McGrow, a former member of Scottish Opera.

The course will include tuition in the Alexander Technique taught by Jackie Coote and Briar Maxwell, the administrator's wife.

The intensive course involves morning and evening workshops and has a high level and quality of individual attention.

All will culminate with an end of course concert in the local Gaelic college which drew a capacity crowd last year and greatly impressed visitors and locals alike.



Plana feusgain na Hearadh

Chaidh planaichean fhoillseachadh gus tuathanas feusgain a chruthachadh anns na Hearadh - agus 's dòcha gum faighear air factaraidh èisg Scalpaigh a chleachdadh air a shon.

Dh'fhuiling eaconamaidh na Hearadh droch bhuille an-uiridh nuair a sgur Marine Harvest a giullachd bradain ann an factaraidh Scalpaigh, le còrr air 50 duine a' call an obair.

Ach, tha moladh ùr nam feusgain air beagan de dhòchais a thoirt dhan sluagh ionadail gum faigh an eaconamaidh togail, rud air a bheil fìor fheum.

'S e a' chompanaidh Navital a tha air cùlaibh na planaichean agus tha iad dòchas teicneòlas ùr a chur an-sàs airson an toirt gu buil.

Thuir stiùiriche a' chompanaidh, Pieter Van Ysseldijk, gu bheil iad an-dràsta ann an comhraidhean le iasgairean airson na beachdan aca air an sgeama fhaighinn. Dhinnis e gum biodh iad cuideachd a' coimhead ri crùbagan is muasgan-caola a ghuillachd.

Thuir e gun robh iad an dòchas obair a thoirt dha grunn dhaoinne, ach nach tachradh cùs airson mu thrì bliadhna eile.

Plans have been unveiled for the establishment of a mussel farm in Harris - and the Scalpay fish factory may be utilised.

The economy of Harris suffered a bad blow last year when Marine Harvest stopped salmon processing in Scalpay, with job losses of over 50.

However, the new mussel proposal has given a glimmer of hope to the local population that the economy will experience a much-needed boost.

The company behind the project is called Navital and it hopes to use new technology to bring it to life. Director Pieter Van Ysseldijk said they are currently in talks with fishermen to ascertain their views on the plan.

He added they would also look to produce crabs and prawns. He said they hoped to employ a number of people, but it would be around three years before significant activity would take place.

Finnie a' faighinn càineadh

Tha ball-pàrlamaid nan Eilean Siar, Alasdair Moireasdan, air Riaghaltas na h-Alba a chàineadh airson 's cho fada is tha iad a' toirt airgead a thoirt seachad do chroitearan Uibhist.

Chaidh iarrtas sònraichte chun Riaghaltas ag iarraidh orra na croitearan a chuideachadh seach gun deach uimhir de mhilleadh a dhèanamh ann an stoirmean an-uiridh.

Ach, ged a tha bliadhna a-nis air a' dhol seachad bho thachair an stoirmean, chan eil croitearan fhathast air call a chluinntinn.

'Chaidh mòran milleadh a dhèanamh air croitearan bho chionn bliadhna, gu h-àraidh ann an Uibhist, agus tha fios am gu bheil e air a bhith gu math duilich dhaibh a chur ceart,' thuir Mgr Moireasdan.

'Tha mi a-nis a' foighneachd dha ministear an leasachaidh dhùthchail, Ross Finnie, airson fiosrachadh mionaideach air dè an freagairt a tha aca airson a milleadh 's an call a bha seo.'

Western Isles MSP Alasdair Morrison has criticised the Scottish Executive for the length of time taken to give financial assistance to Uist crofters.

The executive was urged to recognise the special case of crofters after the damage suffered in last year's storms. However, although a year has now passed, crofters have still to hear word from the executive.

'The damage caused to crofts a year ago, particularly in Uist, was substantial and I know that many crofters have struggled to repair the damage,' said Mr Morrison.

'I am now asking the rural development minister, Ross Finnie, for details of his department's response to that loss and damage.'

Bhideo ball-coise Nis

Tha sgioba ball-coise ann an ceann-a-tuath Leòdhais air bhideo is DVD ullachadh mar chiumhneachain air cho math 's a bha iad bho bhliadhnaichan.

Bhuannaich sgioba Nis Cùpa Aimeatarach na Gàidhealtachd ceithir tursan - rud nach eil sgioba eileanach eile sam bith air a dhèanamh. Dhà-irribh chan eil ach aon sgioba air dhèanamh nas fheàrr na Nis ann an eachdraidh na farpais. 'S iadsan Pentland à Gallainn, a bhuannaich e còig tursan. Bhatar gu sònraichte air fhaicinn luachmhor gun bhuannaich Nis a' chupa ann an 1984 oir b'e sin a' chaidh bliadhna a b'urrainn do sgiobaidhean eileanach pàirt a ghabhail ann.

Chaidh a bhideo dhèanamh ann an co-bhoinn le Comunn Eachdraidh Nis agus gheibhear e aig cosgais £12.

A football team from north Lewis has produced a video and DVD to celebrate their glory days in past years.

Ness won the Highland Amateur Cup four times - something which no other island side has managed.

Indeed, only one team have surpassed the efforts of Ness in the history of the competition. They are Pentland from Caithness, which have won it five times.

It was seen as being especially poignant that Ness won the trophy in 1984 as that was the first year island sides were allowed to compete.

The video was produced in collaboration with the Ness Historical Society and can be purchased for £12.

Gigha to host first island race

MARCH 18 will be a day for putting your best foot forward on Gigha when the island holds its first fundraising race.

The event is being held to raise money for the Achamore Gardens restoration fund.

Jane Rennie, chairwoman of the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust, said: 'This is a fantastic way of involving everyone of all abilities, having a fun day out and at the same time raising money for Achamore Gardens.'

The 11.2 mile race up and down the island is being held on Saturday March 18.

It can be walked, cycled or run, with all registration fees and sponsorship going to the gardens.

The race coincides with the fourth anniversary of the community buyout of the island and a ceilidh will be held in the evening to celebrate.

Ms Rennie added: 'The race will be a good starter race for those training for more serious events and it has already attracted entrants from off the island.'

All entrants will receive a goody-bag and race t-shirt, while medals will be awarded for first, second and third places in each of the three categories.

The person who raises the most sponsorship money will be rewarded with dinner, bed and breakfast for two in the Gigha Hotel.

The trust is bidding to undertake major works in Achamore Gardens.

Eye to Eye with John Wallace



Wavefront Analysis ... the latest technological breakthrough

It has been several years since I last became excited about a new lens technology. There have been improvements of existing products but nothing that could be called a quantum leap forward.

Last month a colleague brought me a new instrument to experiment with. This machine analyses the 'higher order' aberrations of the human eye and, in a world first, custom designs spectacle lenses specifically to correct these distortions of your visual system.

If you wear glasses for distance vision you probably have noticed your night vision is not as pin sharp as in daylight. Street lights tend to be oblong or sometimes star shaped, rather than round, sources of light. That's the most obvious effect of 'higher order' aberrations.

American FDA approved research has shown this new technology can significantly improve the reaction time of drivers. Drivers' reactions to visual stimuli were almost half a second faster when wearing spectacles fitted with these new lenses. That is equivalent to seeing things three car lengths further ahead when driving at 50mph. Just think how much safer you would be, and feel, especially when driving at night.

Not only has this technology been used for custom designed spectacle lens correction but it has now been used to design contact lenses as well. I have been wearing the new Definition(tm) monthly disposable lenses for several weeks now. Night driving has become enjoyable again! As a contact lens wearer glare from car headlights is a major problem. With these new aberration controlled lenses glare from car headlights is dramatically reduced and I am able to see further at night.

This new technology is still in its infancy. The range of spectacle lenses and contact lenses currently available is still limited. But, for those of us whose vision correction falls within the available lens parameters, this is indeed a quantum leap forward in clarity of vision.

**John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP
John Wallace Optometrists & Podiatrists
11/12 Argyll Square, Oban
Tel: 0845 230 3937 (EYES)**



Acclaimed Argyll artist Gillian Goodheir, centre, shows an example of her work to Clare Howard and Ann Sorley at Oban's Glenclruitten Church Hall. Gillian held a demonstration and question and answer session about her techniques which was attended by around 60 members and non-members of Oban Arts Society. 033art01

Farm Assured stock in demand at Lochboisdale

UNITED Auctions held their annual January Sale at Lochboisdale Auction Mart when 147 head of all classes cattle were sold and 102 sheep.

All classes of stock met with a sound trade, comparing very favourably with current mainland values, although stock from Farm Assured holding's proved short of buyers requirements and sold at enhanced rates.

Continental types were much easier sold to the ring-side of mainland buyers than native breeds.

Breeding stock also met with a keen enquiry.

Balliefurth Limousin to 141.9p per kilo at Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 369 store cattle (247 bullocks and 122 heifers) at its fortnightly sale.

All classes continued to sell at the keen rates of the first sale.

The 102 bullocks up to 450kg sold to a top of 141.9p per kilo for 377kg Limousins from A 1 Macleannan, Balliefurth, to average 125.8p per kilo, and to £570 per head for Simmental crosses from Burton and Fraser Farms, Dunain Mains.

The 145 bullocks 451kg and over sold to a top of 128.6p for 455kg Simmental crosses from Burton and Fraser Farms, to average 115.4p, and to a top of £695 per head for a Charolais cross from ES Ross, Balloan, to an overall sale average of 118.8p per kilo.

The 98 heifers up to 450kg sold to a top of 147.4p per kilo for a 285kg Charolais cross from Messrs Anderson, 2 Broynach, Thurso East, to average 109.7p, and to £500 per head for Aberdeen Angus crosses from T and D Dallas, Castletown while the 24 heifers 451kg and over sold to a top of 115p per kilo, £575 per head for a 500kg Charolais cross from D and M Campbell, Lingland, to average 105.1p, and also to £575 per head for a Blonde Aquitaine cross from R Bain and Sons, Lower Gledfield, to an overall sale average of 108.3p per kilo.

The company also sold 22 over-30-month cattle selling to a top of 71.1p per kilo or £540 per head for a Charolais cross cow from Druid Temple Farm to average 48.50 per kilo.

Crofters Commission to support rural housing project in Western Isles

AT A MEETING in Inverness the Crofters Commission Board agreed to contribute towards funding to employ a Rural Housing Support Worker in the Western Isles.

The main funders being Western Isles Council, Western Isles Enterprise and Communities Scotland.

The Support Worker will carry out a three year pilot project with Iomairt aig an Oir (Iaao) communities in the Western Isles to create a Strategic Housing Plan for each community.

The Support Worker will act as a channel for communication between communities and agencies.

An update on the Crofting Counties Agricultural Grants

Scheme (CCAGS) showed expenditure for the first nine months of the year has been over £2million, an increase of nearly £7,000 on the same period last year. The Western Isles is the only area showing a reduction in spending.

The Board were advised the Crofting Community Development Scheme (CCDS) has already exceeded its target of 35 approved plans for the year. The first nine months of the year has seen 44 plans being approved.

Since its inception in 2000, 172 community plans have been approved involving almost 11,000 people.

The Scheme is due to end in December 2006 and will close to new applications in October 2006.

Current applicants will be contacted directly to advise them of the timescales involved in the closing phase. The Board highlighted that feedback from communities praised the Scheme particularly as the application was very straightforward. The Board will press for a similar Scheme to get continued funding after December 2006.

Due to ever increasing interest in the Highlands and Islands Croft Entrant Scheme (HICES) another Project Officer has been appointed in the Western Island.

Joan Ferguson will deal with cases in Uist and Barra, with John Smith focusing on Lewis and Harris.

Overall 33 applications have been approved since April

2005, 17 transferred the croft to non-family members with the remainder being to family members. There are currently 25 cases pending. The target for the year is 55 young people gaining entry to crofting.

Work on the Absentee Initiative continues and since 1st April 2005 has resolved a total of 117 cases of absenteeism. 44 crofts were released to new entrants, 25 to existing crofters and 48 absentees returned to live on their crofts.

There were also a number of complex regulatory cases considered at the meeting.

All Board papers can be accessed via the Commission website: www.crofterscommission.org.uk



Top prize for farmers who help declining farmland bird

A TOP PRIZE of £1000 is on offer to Scotland's most 'lapwing friendly' farmer, thanks to a competition recently launched by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

Supported by Jordan's Cereals, the competition hopes to help the lapwing - one of the UK's farmland birds that has experienced huge declines - by encouraging farmers to make simple changes to the land, offering a home to the charismatic black and white 'wading' birds.

With a decline of over a third in Scotland's breeding lapwing population since 1994, RSPB Scotland has undertaken several studies to determine the characteristics of farmland that may improve breeding numbers of lapwings, and will begin a further study this year with the help of a new Lapwing Project Officer based in the Scottish Borders.

In 2005, Scotland's top lapwing-friendly farm was Townhead Farm, near Stirling, which held an amazing 66 breeding pairs - the most of any farm surveyed in the country. With other birds such as snipe, curlew and redshank also making a home in the damp field corners, the farm was among the top UK farms for breeding waders.

Since the 1940s lapwing declines have been driven by large-scale changes to farming, with a sharp and sustained decline in the mid-1980s, with lapwing populations lost in many parts of England and Wales.

With agricultural intensification and specialisation along with a switch to autumn sowing, much arable land has become unsuitable for nesting by lapwings - especially in the key month of April because the crop often grows too high.

The vital 'mosaic' of habitat where grass and spring tillage fields are close together has declined significantly in recent years, and the loss of this prime habitat has undoubtedly led to the decline in lapwing numbers.

The RSPB believes it is possible to reverse the fortunes of lapwings with sympathetic farming methods including the creation of a mosaic of spring sown crops and grassland, managing grazing pressure and maintaining damp areas on unimproved grassland.

Crucially, agri-environment schemes such as the Rural Stewardship scheme (RSS) provide grants to help land-owners manage their land to help lapwings.

For more information on the Operation Lapwing competition - which closes on the March 17, or the RSPB Volunteer and Farmer Alliance project, providing free and confidential advice to farmers, contact Bob Dawson on 0141 331 0993.

Growing for a local market

CROFTERS and farmers through the west coast who feel their market may lie locally are being invited to take part in an information days in their local areas.

Highlands and Islands Local Food Network (HILFN) are to host a series of short training events for farmers, crofters and others looking at how they can supply the growing market for fresh local produce.

Half-day sessions run in conjunction with Scottish Agricultural College, these events will use practical examples from the local area to look at the demand, produce and practicalities of supplying fresh local food.

There will also be an opportunity to visit a nearby site that is selling their produce direct to local consumers, and find out about training

and business support available to those thinking of producing locally.

The first takes place at Lochgilhead on Tuesday, March 7 when Jo Hunt and Calina MacDonald of HILFN will be joined by Katie Ritchie of Barbreck Farm, Ardfern, Audrey Martin, Argyll and Bute Council, a representative from Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum and a representative from Argyll & Islands Enterprise.

Similar events are also being held at Oban Livestock Centre on Wednesday, March 8 and also at Lochaber Rural Centre, on Thursday, March 9.

For further information or to book a place please contact Calina MacDonald on 01478 640276 or email calina@hilocalfood.net

New grant for farm appraisals

MANY farmers and crofters will by now have received the first instalment of their Single Farm Payment. In many cases this will be less than was expected.

The Single Farm Payment System has heralded a new dimension to Scottish farming with EU subsidy payments decoupled from livestock numbers and hence production criteria.

As the Single Farm Payment is not related to stock numbers then increases that have been instituted in the past may not be relevant today.

The Scottish Executive Environmental and Rural Affairs Department have recently introduced the Whole Farm Review. This scheme allows farmers and crofters to have a very detailed analysis of their businesses. The Review identifies options for the future taking into account the new Single Farm Payment. It also identifies alternative income opportunities and funding sources.

A grant of 80 per cent is payable towards the preparation of a Whole Farm Review, up to a maximum cost of £1,500. Thereafter there is 100 per cent funding for further options.

For the first time advisers have to be accredited in order to prepare the reviews.

All five Scottish Agricultural College's Argyll advisers are accredited.

They are Donald Harrison, Allan Minshaw, Charles Sidgwick and Niall Campbell.

The accreditation process is carried out by LANTRA on behalf of Scottish Executive Environmental and Rural Affairs Department.

Science adds to marine park debate

WHAT can science add to the national marine park debate?

At a time when heated debate is taking place on whether or not Argyll and the islands needs, or, in some cases, wants, a marine and coastal national park, the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BA) has thrown this question into the arena.

Five speakers will be

talking about the question at a debate to be held on Monday, February 6, in Oban's Corran Halls.

The speakers will include Dr Maeve Kelly and Dr David Schoeman from the Scottish Association of Marine Science (SAMS), Dr Margaret Carlisle from Aberdeen Institute for Coastal Science and Management and speakers from Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park

and the Department of Aquaculture at Stirling University.

As well as members of the public being welcome to take part, representatives from a number of organisations including Malgail and North West Fishing Association, the Hebridean marine National Park Partnership and the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust have been invited.

Market reports

LOCHBOISDALE - United Auctions

Bullocks
Aberdeen Angus X: £410 299
Kilpheder £400 (2) 301
Kilpheder £370 319 Kilpheder.
Shorthorn X: £375 458 North Lochboisdale
Limousin X: £465 11 Ormiclate £430 5 Dunganichy (2) and 6 Peninerne £415 Cnoc An Torr £405 368 South Boisdale and 11 Ormiclate £400 and £395 11 Ormiclate £380 368 South Boisdale £375 14 West Gerinish, 11 Ormiclate and Kellys Place
Shorthorn X: £390 358 North Lochboisdale £345 6 Peninerne
Simmental X: £450 3 Milton £360 91 Bualadubb
Bulls
£355 11 Ormiclate.
Heifers
Belgian Blue X: £365 301 Kilpheder
Limousin X: £405 277 Daliburgh £390 336 North Boisdale £385 Cnoc An Torr £380 3 Askernish and 344 North Boisdale £370 Cnoc An Torr £365 3 Milton £355 (2) 11 Ormiclate £350 14 West Gerinish £345 325 North Boisdale £315 244 North Boisdale £300 291 Daliburgh.
Simmental X: £325 91 Bualadubb £310 3 Milton.
Breeding cattle
In-calf heifers: £700 277 Daliburgh
In-calf cows: £740 277 Daliburgh.

Prices per kilo

Bullocks
Aberdeen Angus X: 122p 88 Upper Borve, Barra 117p 299 Kilpheder 115p 88 Upper Borve.
Shorthorn X: 114p 458 North Lochboisdale
Limousin X: 134p and 131p 11 Ormiclate 130p (2) 5 Dunganichy 129p 11 Ormiclate 127p and 126p Kellys Place 125p 6 Peninerne 123p 11 Ormiclate and 6 Peninerne 121p 11 Ormiclate 119p Cnoc An Torr 116p 14 West Gerinish.
Shorthorn X: 123p 6 Peninerne
Simmental X: 122p 3 Milton 121p (2) 3 Bunavullin, Eriskay 114p 91 Bualadubb.
Bulls
122p 11 Ormiclate

Heifers

Aberdeen Angus X: 92p 356 North Boisdale
Belgian Blue X: 104p 301 Kilpheder
Limousin X: 121p and 115p 344 North Boisdale 112p Cnoc An Torr 107p 3 Milton and 5 Dunganichy (2) 106p 325 North Boisdale, 11 Ormiclate and Cnoc An Torr 103p 11 Ormiclate, 277 Daliburgh and 336 North Boisdale 102p 5 Dunganichy (2), 14 West Gerinish and 11 Ormiclate 101p and 100p 14 West Gerinish.
Saler X: 100p 9 Ormiclate
Shorthorn X: 104p 117 Craighton, Barra.
Simmental X: 107p (2) and 104p (2) 91 Bualadubb 100p 393 Garrynamonie, 3 Milton, 91 Bualadubb (3).

DINGWALL - Dingwall and Highland Marts

Bullocks
251 - 300kg - £405, 139.7p Dunmaglass (Lim); £400, 137.9p Thurso East (BBX).
301kg - 350kg - £430, 134p Thurso East (BBX); £420 Tomeluch (Lim), 127.5p Polly Estates (Lim); £420, 127.3p Assynt Mains (Lim).
351 - 400kg - £540, 138.1p Balliefurth (Lim); £515, 133.8p Towerhill (Chx); £440 Assynt Mains (Lim), 120.1p Gaskbeg (AAx).
401 - 450kg - £560, 136.6p Cloy 132.3p Balliefurth (Lim).
451 - 500kg - £605 Lingland (Ch), 126.1p Druid Temple (Sms); £600 Druid Temple (Lim) and Dunain Mains (Sms), 124.7p Dunain Mains; £590 Raicastle (Sms), 123.7p Cloy (Chx).
501 - 550kg - £640, 116.4p Raicastle (Lim); £635, 123.3p Druid Temple (Sms); £620, 117.9p Hilton (Chx).
551 - 600kg - £660, 118.7p Druid Temple (Sms); £650, 114.8p Lingland (Ch); £650, 113.3p Balloan (Sms).
601 - 650kg - £680, 107.1p Gaskbeg (Sh); 106.9p Balloan (Chx).
Heifers
251 - 300kg - £420, 116.9p

Thurso East (Chx); £315, 106.8p Tomeluch (Lim); £270, 95.7p Polly Estates (Lim).

301 - 350kg - £430, 124.6p Newton of Ferintosh (Lim); £355, 113.4p Thurso East (BBX); £340 Laggan of Clachaig (AAx) and Dunmaglass Estate (Lim), 106.3p Dunmaglass Estate (Lim).
351 - 400kg - £430, 113.2p Towerhill (Lim); £425, 109.8p Cloy (Chx); £405, 108.9p Castletown (AAx).
401 - 450kg - £490 Raicastle (AAx), 116.5p Laggan of Clachaig (AAx); £490, 113.4p Towerhill (Sms); £485 Lower Gledfield (BAx), 111.6p Castletown (AAx).
451 - 500kg - £575 Lingland (Chx), 109p Milton of Culloden (Lim); £545 Milton of Culloden (Lim), 107p Lower Gledfield (BAx); £535 Lower Gledfield (BAx), 103p Bruiach Mills (Lim).
501 - 550kg - £550, 101.9p Corriemoney (Lim); £545, 105.8p Milton of Culloden (Lim); £540, 107.4p Raicastle (Sms).
551 - 600kg - 103.6p Lower Gledfield (BAx).
Cows - £518, 67.3p Lairgandour (Sms); £448 Corrachie (Fr), 66.1p Druid Temple (BSh); £442 Druid Temple (Lim), 62.9p Polly Estates (Heb). Bulls - £515 Tullochgorm (Ch).

STIRLING - United Auctions

Lambs
Muirside (Tex) £57, Kinloch (Tex) £54.20, Harviemailing (Tex) £53, Ancaster (Tex) £52, Head of Balglass (Tex) £51, Dunruchan (SuffX) £50, Bents (SuffX) £49.50, Penston and Peattishill & Leechouses (SuffX) £49.20, Invermilton and Easter Buckleyie (SuffX) £49, Hattoknowe and Kinloch (Mule) £45.80, Milton (Mule) £45.20, Dunruchan & Easter Buckleyie (Mule) & Dunruchan (BF) £45, East Camps (Mule) £44.50, Leechouses (Mule) £44, Ancaster (BF) £42.80.
Lambs per kilo: Head of Balglass (Tex) 121.4p, Cairnboig (Tex) 120.5p, Harviemailing (Tex) 120.5p, Harviemailing (Tex) 120.4p, West Meikle

Muirside Texels to £57 at Stirling

UNITED Auctions had forward 2902 prime sheep including 2011 lambs (avg 109.2p/kg) and 891 ewes and rams at Stirling on Thursday.

Lambs sold to 121.4p per kilo for Texels from Balglass to average at 109.20 per kilo and to a top of £57 for Texels from Muirside.

Blackface lambs from Uigle sold to 115.3p per kilo. Ewes sold to £49.50 for Texels from Glenhead.

First sale of the year at Lochmaddy

DINGWALL and Highland Marts held its first sale of the year of store cattle at Lochmaddy, North Uist.

A mixed show of quality kinds sold well.

Bullocks sold to £490 for a 405 kilo Limousin from R MacLean, 22 and 10 Balemore and to 140.3p per kilo for a 310 kilo Limousin from A MacKay, 13 Balemore to average 118p.

Heifers fetched to £570 and 121.3p per kilo for a 470 kilo Shorthorn from I MacDonald, 1 Stilligarry to average 100.6p.

Lorn Belgian Blue leads Stirling

UNITED Auctions had forward 426 store cattle and 75 cast cows and 569 store and feeding sheep at Stirling on Wednesday.

Bullocks sold to 150p per kilo for a Belgian Blue cross off Lorn to average 114.9p per kilo.

Heifers sold to 128p per kilo for a Belgian Blue cross off Mid Shawton to average 103.9p

Cast cows sold to £805 for a Simmental cross off Preston and 100p per kilo for a Limousin off Westhall to average at 80.1p per kilo.

Strachan leads fourth Kintyre trial

KINTYRE Sheepdog Trials Association held their fourth nursery trial at Ronachan on Sunday, January 22.

Results
1 Brian Strachan with Cap 82pts
2 Alex McCuish with Sweep 76
3 Brian Strachan with Bonny 76
4 Kenny Grieve with Roy 74
5 John McLachlan with Taff 71
6 Mike McNally with Moss 67
Class 2
1 John Casey with Jock 82pts
2 Jane McDonald with Nan 79pts
3 Lorne Clark with Jim 69 pts

The fifth and final Nursery Trial will be held at Skipness on Saturday 11th February

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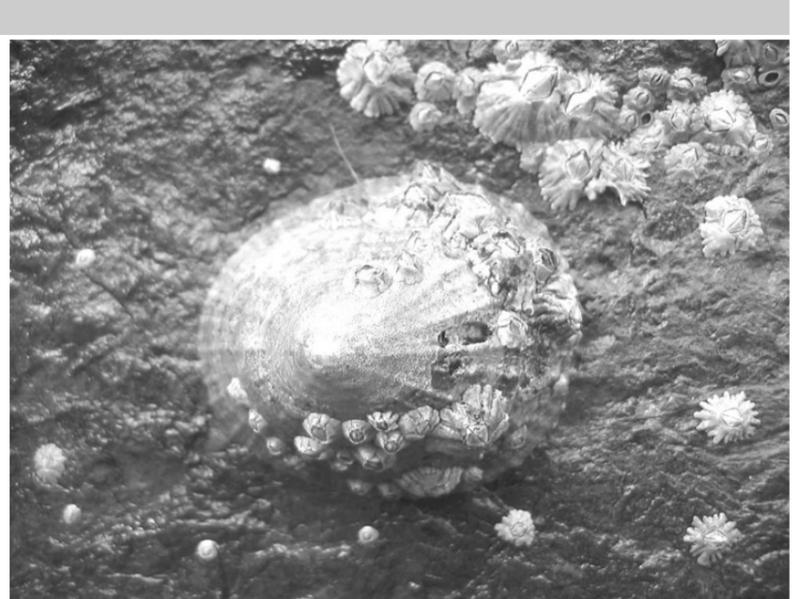
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Nature Times

ALTHOUGH limpets are abundant on rocks and boulders all round our coast, they do not attract much attention - yet under each conical shell lives a creature as fascinating as any you will find on the shore.

Biologically speaking the limpet is a type of snail, which has 'unwound' its shell to form a shallow cone. Pulled down onto the rock using muscles attached to its sucker-like foot, this gives it robust protection against pounding waves, drying sun and wind, and some, but not all, predators. The limpet is sensitive to vibrations or touch, and quickly clamps down when danger threatens. But limpets make good feeding, and ingenious shorebirds such as gulls and oystercatchers manage to flick them off or break into the shell.

The common limpet feeds on seaweeds, lichens and bacteria, which it scrapes off rock surfaces with its velcro-like tongue, known as a radula - a long ribbon covered in tiny hooks. It leaves a characteristic striped pattern as it moves systematically along. Limpets are most active when the tide is in, but they also feed when the tide is out if it is dark, or damp weather. It is said that you can actually hear limpets feeding when the tide is out, though I have yet to be convinced! Limpets keep the rocks



The common limpet is an everyday creature of fascinating habits!

clear of large seaweeds, providing habitat for barnacles - which may also settle on the limpet's back.

If you turn a limpet upside down you will notice a groove between the foot and the shell. Within this groove is a ring of gills which absorb oxygen from the water, and when the tide is out water is retained under the shell for respiration. In order to do this the shell must be a tight fit to the rock; each limpet has a special

place to which it returns after feeding expeditions. On soft rocks the shell fits a pit or ring, worn by the grinding action of the shell; on harder rocks the shell grows to fit the rock surface.

Limpets are breeding at the moment - around January and February male and female animals release their reproductive cells into the sea for fertilisation, a seemingly haphazard but successful process. Tiny swimming larvae develop before

settling onto rocks and growing a shell. Unlike land snails and slugs, limpets are not hermaphrodite, but curiously many seem to change from male to female as they get older.

As well as seabirds and some strong-jawed fish, man has a long history of exploiting limpets for food. Large dumps or middens of seashells, especially limpets, have been found at various Mesolithic sites around the Hebrides, indi-

cating that they were an important part of the diet of coastal people several thousand years ago. More recently the limpet, or bairneach in Gaelic, has been commonly eaten or used for bait on the west coast, although it has a reputation for being tough. I'm assured it's just a matter of cooking them correctly, after soaking in fresh water and removing the tentacles - but do take care where you collect them.
Highland Darter

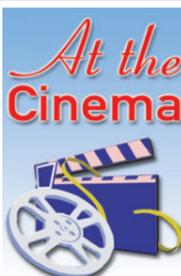
LEISURE TIMES

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Burns Club of Oban 2006 Burns Supper, back row, left to right: Torquill Telfer, Neil Sinclair, Adam McCracken, Maurice Duncan, Iain Crichton and Larry Forgive. Front row: Ted Heath, Jamie McGrigor MSP, Roy Wood, president, Gordon Jackson QC MSP and George Marcinkiewicz.



BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 15 Certificate - 134 Minutes Oban Highland Theatre From Friday 10th February

ZATHURA - A SPACE ADVENTURE PG Certificate - 101 Minutes UK Premiere Oban Highland Theatre 6.00 FRIDAY - 1.00 and 6.00 SATURDAY - 1.00 SUNDAY - 6.00 MONDAY to THURSDAY

FUN WITH DICK AND JANE 12A Certificate - 90 Minutes Fort William Studio Cinema 7.15 FRIDAY - 2.00 AND 7.15 SATURDAY - 2.00 SUNDAY - 7.15 MONDAY to THURSDAY

MARCH OF THE PENGUINS U Certificate - 80 Minutes Fort William Studio Cinema 7.30 FRIDAY - 2.15 and 7.30 SATURDAY - 2.15 SUNDAY - 7.30 MONDAY to THURSDAY

THE LITTLE POLAR BEAR 2: 'The Mysterious Island' U Certificate - 81 Minutes UK Premiere from Friday 10 February Oban Highland Theatre 6.00 FRIDAY - 1.00 and 6.00 SATURDAY - 1.00 SUNDAY - 6.00 MONDAY to THURSDAY

Danny and Walter 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...

In the movie, they accidentally put their sister Lisa into a deep cryonic sleep... are chased by a malfunctioning six foot robot... rescue an astronaut (played by Dax Shepherd) and are besieged by lizard-like creatures called Zorgons.

Helped by the astronaut, Danny and Walter work together to overcome all the obstacles encountered, in an attempt to finish the game and get back home. All their efforts may be in vain when they face their biggest challenge of all - a battle against the gravitational pull into the void of the dark planet 'Zathura'.

In this second animated film, based on the Hans de Beer books, 'The Little Polar Bear Lars' is transported to the wild and remote Galapagos Islands, to save a prehistoric fish monster from explorers, and from the path of an erupting volcano.

In Columbia Pictures larcenous romantic comedy, Dick (Jim Carrey) is in love with Jane (Tea Leoni) and living the love'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.

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'.

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.

Slimming a world of support a world of difference. We're always there for you xx. WEDNESDAY 15th FEBRUARY OBAN MASONIC HALL, ALBANY STREET at 6.30 pm. Tel: Lesley 01880 820604 or 07900 026512

Burns Club of Oban annual supper. A 58-YEAR-old tradition was upheld on Friday when the Burns Club of Oban held its annual Burns Supper. But it was a first for David and Janet Collings who now manage the Swallow Regent Hotel, who said they were pleased to welcome the club.

COMMUNITY Noticeboard. In association with CGL PRINTING & OFFICE SUPPLIES. At the heart of the community for 21 years.

Mid Argyll Car Club Autocross 2006. To compete this season, contact Goldie for details ASAP on 01546 602743 after 7pm.

OBAN ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS CONVENTION. CORRAN HALLS, OBAN FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY February 3, 4, 5, 2006

Inveraray & District Accordion & Fiddle Club. Swallow Argyll Hotel, Inveraray. Wednesday 8th February at 8.00pm

Entry Forms for 23rd Highlands & Islands Music & Dance Festival OBAN 27 - 30 April 2006. Available from 'Oban Music' www.obanfestival.org

APPIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY. Members' Research on Work and Leisure in Appin. Saturday 11th February 2006 Port Appin Hall at 7.30pm

JAZZ CONCERT. Craignish Village Hall Friday 3rd February at 7.30pm. Ian Millar - Tenor Sax, Dominic Spencer - Piano

Highland Wedding Show. SUNDAY 19th February 2006 Corran Halls, Oban 11.00am - 5.00pm

AUCTION SALE. Crianlarich Hall Friday 10th February at 6pm. Viewing from 5pm. Furniture, bric-a-brac etc. 50/50 can be arranged

St Valentines Dance. Saturday 11th February Corran Halls, Oban. Featuring: BARD FOR LIFE (Ceilidh) and HEATHEN

SAMMY HORNER In Concert. Friday 3rd February 7.30pm. Oban High School Hall. Donation event

Congregational Church. Blow the diet! Coffee Morning Saturday 4th Feb 10-12 noon. Delicious homebaking. Proceeds to church funds

FORT WILLIAM ACCORDION & FIDDLE CLUB Musical Evening. Tuesday 7 February, 2006 at 8pm

Public Discussion Event. WHAT CAN SCIENCE ADD TO THE NATIONAL MARINE PARK DEBATE. Organised by the B.A. (The British Association for the Advancement of Science) and funded by the Scottish Executive

Advertise in the Community Notice Board for just £11.85 (plus VAT). This section is available to charitable organisations with a charity number.

Highland Wedding Show. SUNDAY 19th February 2006 Corran Halls, Oban 11.00am - 5.00pm. Planning a Wedding in the beautiful West Highlands of Scotland!

The Oban Times & West Highland Times What's On Guide. Saturday 11th February St Valentine's Dance, Corran Halls, Oban, in aid of Sensory Garden. Tickets £10 each or 2 for £15

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

HIGHLAND THEATRE. 01631 562444. GEORGE STREET - OBAN. 6.00 on FRIDAY - 1.00 and 6.00 on SATURDAY 1.00 on SUNDAY - 6.00 MONDAY to THURSDAY ZATHURA - A Space Adventure PG

Your Stars with Patrick Arundell. ARIES: Someone influential may be quietly impressed with you, but it can be from this weekend that they nudge the levers of power to help you move forwards.

TAURUS: The quarter Moon, in your sign, provides a significant backdrop for the whole of this weeks events. The suggestion is that however much you want to take the higher moral ground, or be the one giving the orders, progress will be made best through maintaining diplomacy.

GEMINI: If you've been patiently, or not so patiently, waiting for the resolution of a long running financing or property saga, be assured that things are set to ebb in your direction. It's true that you may have to make some smart tactical moves, but you can, and you can also fall back on legal recourse - if necessary.

CANCER: One involvement or business alliance can reach a telling juncture. It can now prosper, put down even deeper roots, or it could end. If it is the latter, take solace from the fact that if you can let go in as dignified a way as possible, this will have its own compensations. None of us can make any person want to commit to us, no more than it can be demanded in return.

LEO: On the relationship front, it could feel uncomfortable, if it seems that there is more than two of you in the tie. Unwelcome interference is possible, so you may want to keep a low profile from the known suspects who may show this tendency in the past. At work, or professionally however, it's going to be necessary to tow the party line. But being flexible can win you praise. For more, please call me..

VIRGO: You can often be fairly cautious in your utterances and if so don't be tempted to change a lifetime's habit. In a trice you could agree to something, that the minute it comes from you, you could regret. Instead, use your humour skillfully to extricate yourself from any tight spots. You rarely let people down on the things that really matter, so why be tempted to promise more? For more, please call me..

LIBRA: Your ruler, Venus, ends a long excursion backwards this week, but however flighty and flirtatious recent events have been, socially or romantically, finding sincerity can be at the core of your needs. The difference now is that you can be more relaxed about this, not be quite so preoccupied. And you can have a stunning impact this week. Don't underestimate just how much. For more, please call me..

SCORPIO: Warmer links are possible with the people in your world who are truly important. When you can co-sed and envelop yourself with this kind of security, the inevitable knocks that life throws up can more easily be cast aside. Yet someone around you may need your help. This person may be struggling, perhaps with a relationship concern. They may come to appreciate your wisdom. For more, please call me..

SAGITTARIUS: Been battling to balance the books in 2006? The portents look bright this week, when you can finally slow down spending and start to appreciate any gains or economies you've achieved. This isn't to say you won't indulge yourself with a treat or two, but you may demand a more practical dimension from purchases. New, more cerebral interests can help win away the winter nights. For more, please call me..

CAPRICORN: Part of the problem this year, has been that you may have had more options than you have had the time or inclination to pursue. Romantically particularly, more than one candidate may have been making eyes. Now the time has come to get more practical. This comes naturally to you, but if your focus has become hazy, orientate towards the person you would feel most comfortable with. For more, please call me..

AQUARIUS: Doubts may have been spinning around your mind in January and especially as far as your love life has been concerned. These may not fade altogether, but the fact is you have a wonderful chance to demonstrate the full array of your talents and maybe it'll be someone new to you who will have the most dynamic influence before February comes to a close. An active person, especially could inspire. For more, please call me..

PISCES: A friend you have drifted apart from could be in touch, and this can please hugely. Then again, warmer links can come from getting together with those who have a real appreciation for your kind of interests, be it poetry, music, the arts, walking in the country, or a jolly good chin wag in the pub. Threaded through this can be an increasing fascination with the healing arts. For more, please call me..

RECRUITMENT

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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

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

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

We are an Equal Opportunities Employer. A 'no smoking' policy is operated.

Airport Development Manager (Oban, Coll and Colonsay)
 Up to £40,998 (3 Year Fixed Term Contract)
 35 hours per week (Unscheduled out of hours working may be required from time to time)
 Based at Oban Airport, North Connel, Argyll. You will be required to reside within a 20 minute commuting distance from North Connel.

This new temporary post is being created as a part of the project to create licensed airfields at North Connel (to be known as Oban Airport) and on the islands of Coll and Colonsay, and to introduce new scheduled air services to these islands and Tiree. You will be responsible in the first instance for the safe and efficient operation of all aviation matters at the existing unlicensed airfield at North Connel (approx. 4000 light aircraft movements per annum at present). You will also be a leading member of the team consisting of in-house staff and external consultants taking forward applications to the Civil Aviation Authority to achieve licensed status for the redeveloped airfield at North Connel (Oban Airport) as well as the airfields at Coll and Colonsay. Eventually responsible for employing a staff of around 13 to 15 who will be based over the three airfields, you will be required to effectively liaise and negotiate with external agencies such as CAA and all of the emergency services. In addition, you will subsequently develop tender documentation and administer a tendering exercise leading to the possible appointment of a management contractor. Lastly, you will develop and implement, maintain and review as necessary the Aerodrome Manual and Emergency Orders in respect of the three airfields. You will lead in the monitoring of the success of the project and actively look towards opportunities to increase the usage of air services and the airports as part of the Council's policy to increase economic opportunities and enhance social inclusion in the area.

You should demonstrate extensive aviation experience in all aspects of regulatory and operational areas of aerodrome management and have been involved in the development of licensed airports elsewhere. Educated to degree level and with experience in running an airport subject to commercial activities and CAA licensing requirements, you will be able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the CAA's regulatory requirements in relation to the granting of an aerodrome license and the subsequent maintenance of the license conditions. You will be competent in matters relating to CAA document CAP 700, you must also have experience of budgetary management, the ability to address issues of financial planning and reporting, good negotiating, interpersonal and communication skills, and excellent computer literacy. The development and preparation of routine maintenance schedules in relation to the terminal buildings and aerodrome facilities will fall within your remit whilst you should have experience of dealing with external contractors. For further information contact Mike Moffat on 01546 604652. Ref: DST05001.

Employability Manager
 £30,288 - £32,631
 Campbeltown
 Enthusiastic and committed, you will lead a team which delivers JC+ contracts across Argyll and Bute. You should be educated to degree level and/or have equivalent experience in a similar environment. Partnership working, external funding and management skills are essential as is a valid driving licence as this post attracts an essential car user allowance. Ref: DSE01066.
 For a recruitment pack for the above two posts call 01546 604225.

Ferry Operative*
 £204.66 per week
 7 days Week On/Week Off
 Port Appin - Lismore
 You will be a key part of a team responsible for operating the 'Lifeline' Ferry Service between Port Appin and the Island of Lismore. Duties will include preparing the vessel for duty, operating with others a timetable ferry service and an emergency standby callout service, general maintenance of the vessel, collecting fares and issuing of tickets.
 You will have knowledge of the legislation and regulations pertaining to the operation of a small passenger carrying ferry vessel with preferably experience in similar circumstances. The ability to deal with the public in a polite, courteous and firm manner is essential. You must be trustworthy with a flexible approach to maintaining the provision of the service. Ref: OSR00529.
 * 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.
 For a recruitment pack call 01546 604620.
 Closing date for all posts 17th February 2006.

The Council welcomes applications from New Deal Applicants.

Customer Manager
 UK and Ireland, based in Campbeltown, Argyll

Vestas Celtic Wind Technology Ltd have a customer base of over 60 clients, ranging from private developers owning a single wind turbine or small wind farm to the large utility-owned wind turbine 'power plants'.

We have a vacancy for a Customer Manager who is capable of delivering a professional and focussed customer service to our clients, both large and small. The successful candidate will be working with an identified portfolio of customers, dealing with both daily and strategic issues.

As a Customer Manager, you will be the single point of contact and will work consistently and reliably to meet customer expectations and resolve any issues they may have.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

- To manage and maintain a portfolio of Vestas clients
- Compilation of monthly operation reports to clients
- Daily client contact via telephone and email
- Attendance of customer meetings.

PROFILE:
 Candidates must demonstrate that they understand the key importance of customer loyalty and retention to the future success of our organisation, are proactive, flexible and creative, and can continually seek new ways of delivering improved customer service.

- Experience in a customer focussed environment is desirable
- Technical aptitude or a technical background would be an advantage
- First-class written and verbal communication skills.

The position will involve travelling in UK, Ireland and Denmark, however other overseas travel should be expected on occasion.

Application Deadline - 17/02/06
Job Start: To be agreed

Current CV and covering letter should be sent to:
 Manager of Customer Management
 Miss R Brooks
 Vestas - Celtic Wind Technology Ltd/
 Service Department
 P.O. Box 9263
 Campbeltown,
 Argyll,
 PA28 6WA.
 Tel: 01586 555123
 or Email: rkb@vestas.com

Vestas
 Vestas - Celtic Wind Technology Ltd/Service Department
 P.O. Box 9263 · Campbeltown, Argyll, Scotland, PA28 6WA

Atlantis LEISURE

Atlantis Sports and Leisure Centre
 "Join a winning team"

Due to expansion and increased demand we are looking for new staff we have vacancies for

Gym Instructors, Receptionists, Fitness Instructors and Leisure Attendants

Qualification Requirements
 Leisure Attendants - Pool Lifeguard Qualification
 Gym Instructors - Gym Instructor Level 2
 Reception - Customer service experience
 Fitness Instructors - Exercise to Music or Body Training Systems

Additional benefits - Free use of facilities and pension scheme
 If you are interested in finding out more about the great job opportunities at Atlantis Leisure please contact

Nick Wesley on 01631 566800 extension 205
 for more information visit www.atlantisleisure.co.uk

Where's the best place to develop your sales career?

Newey & Eyre. That's where!

Talk about being where it's at. Ross Electrical is the Scottish arm of Newey & Eyre, one of the UK's biggest professional electrical distributors. With a network of over 170 branches we currently service over 60,000 customers with the widest stock profile of any distributor in the marketplace.

INTERNAL SALES PERSON
 Fort William £attractive + bonus

Creating the 'buzz' in our branches, this role is not for the faint of heart - if you have relevant experience and can add that extra spark, you'll be highly rewarded.

Interested? Please send a CV to, Alastair Ferguson, Business Manager, Ross Electrical, Unit 20 Ben Nevis Industrial Estate, Claggan, Invernesshire PH33 6PR. Tel: 01397 705794 or email: alastair.ferguson2@hagemeyer.co.uk
 Closing date: 17th February 2006

Newey & Eyre
 that's where!
www.neweyandeyre.co.uk

West Coast Motors
 bringing people together since 1923

PCV Mechanic & Depot Shunter / Cleaner
 Oban, Argyll

A full time vacancy has arisen within our Oban depot for a time served mechanic to maintain our fleet of buses and coaches. Preference will be given to applicants with prior PCV or heavy vehicle maintenance experience. Specific vehicle and regulatory training will be provided.

Salary package includes pension and life cover.

We also have a vacancy for a full time shunter-cleaner. Duties include fuelling and washing of vehicles within our yard and day to day cleaning of depot facilities.

For further details please apply in writing to:
The Depot Manager, West Coast Motors,
 Glengallan Road, Oban, PA34 4HH
www.westcoastmotors.co.uk
 Email: enquiries@westcoastmotors.co.uk

PLUMBER REQUIRED
 Driving Licence Essential

Apply in writing to
 Livingstone & McEachran
 24 Kirk St
 Campbeltown
 Tel: 01586 554236

Mechanic required
 to carry out maintenance on vehicles

Applicant must be able to work on their own initiative

Please phone:
01546 602389
 or **01546 606538**
 after 5pm

Cleaner required
 for holiday cottage in the Lochgair area.

Variable hours, rate £8/hr.

For more details contact
01577 850363

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

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, Taynult, Argyll. PA35 1HU.

Oban Times RECRUITMENT

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

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund

The Nàdair Trust

KILMELFORD YACHT HAVEN
 Kilmelford, by Oban, PA34 4XD

ENGINEER REQUIRED

familiar with small diesel engines and prepared to work on boat systems.

Attractive rate of pay depending on age and experience.

Apply by
Telephone: 01852 200248

contact 4

CAMPBELTOWN VACANCIES

Outbound Sales Advisors
 Starting Salary: £5.50 per hour + Bonus, rising to £6.50 + Bonus
 Shifts Available: Full time and Job Share

Inbound Customer Service
 Starting Salary: £5.50 per hour
 Shifts Available: Full time and Job Share

Key Responsibilities

- To meet/exceed company work standards and targets, promoting and selling client services
- To initiate and answer customer contacts in a polite and courteous manner
- To operate contact centre systems competently, keeping customers' accounts and own records updated in a timely fashion.

Candidate Profile

- Energy, drive and enthusiasm with a polite and courteous manner
- Sales and Customer Service experience, whether in a contact centre or other environment
- Quality focussed with clear and concise spoken, written and PC skills

To apply for either of these positions ideally you must

- Work to a high level of accuracy and show attention to detail
- Possess finely tuned interpersonal and communication skills
- Have a proven sales record (advantageous but not essential)
- Be flexible and adaptable
- Be highly motivated.

If you are interested in either of the above positions contact **Fiona Paterson** at **Contact4, Kintyre House, Snipefield, Drumore, Campbeltown PA28 6SY** or email fiona.paterson@contact4.com. Alternatively call **01631 787 4444** for more information

Education, Culture and Sport

Learning Support Auxiliary (2 posts)
Lochaber High School, £6,530 - £9,191, 27.5 hrs per wk

You should have experience of working with children particularly those with learning, behavioural or communication difficulties. Payment is on the basis of 39 weeks per year including payment for annual leave which must be taken during school holidays.

Informal enquiries to Mr D Campbell, tel (01397) 702512, email: Donnie.campbell@highland.gov.uk Ref: L/10/06

Part-time Early Years Auxiliary
Inverloch Primary School, £3,562 - £5,259, 15 hrs per wk

You will work in partnership with the Nursery staff to create an effective team, and will be fully involved in all activities associated with a nursery class. Payment is on the basis of 39 weeks per year including payment for annual leave, which must be taken during school holidays.

Informal enquiries to Mrs A Burns, tel (01397) 702620. Ref: L/13/06

Minibus Escort
Fort William Area, £118.27 per week, 20 hrs per wk

You will be responsible for ensuring the comfort, security and safety of pupils with special educational needs whilst being transported to and from school or other authorised destinations. Payment is on the basis of 38 weeks per year, including payment for annual leave which must be taken during school holidays. (Weekly hours: Mon-Fri, 8am to 10am, 2.30pm to 4.30pm).

Informal enquiries to Ian Jackson, tel (01397) 707353. Ref: L/12/06

Re-advertisements

The two posts below may be undertaken by two people or by the same person:

Road Crossing Patroller
Banavie Primary School, £78.62 per wk, 13.75 hrs per wk

You will be required to assist school children and adults across the road in the morning, mid-day and afternoon. Days of work are Monday to Friday, 8.30am - 9.00am, 12.15pm - 1.15pm and 2.30pm - 3.30pm (plus 15 minutes per day to operate flashing lights) during school term time. Protective clothing is provided and must be worn. Payment is on the basis of 38 weeks per year including payment for annual leave which must be taken during school holidays.

Janitor
Banavie Primary School, £47.17 per wk, 7.5 hrs per wk

Your duties and responsibilities will include playground supervision, school premises security, lighting and heating, ground maintenance, portage and handyperson duties, carrying out checks and inspections relating to school maintenance. Uniform and protective clothing will be provided and must be worn. Payment is on the basis of 52 weeks per year and annual leave must be taken during school holidays.

Informal enquiries to John or Marjory, tel (01397) 707365. Ref: L/11/06

Cleaning Operative
Ardgour Primary School, £52.54 per week, 9.5 hrs per wk

You will undertake general cleaning duties within the school after closing time. You should be enthusiastic and motivated. Your duties will include cleaning designated areas to ensure a clean and hygienic condition, maintaining and deep cleaning all hard and soft floors and other duties required by your Supervisor. Payment is based on 40 weeks per year and our annualised pay system includes payment for annual leave and public holidays.

Informal enquiries to John or Marjory, tel (01397) 707365. Ref: L/15/06

Application packs are available from our website or by telephoning, quoting relevant reference:
 Ref: L/10/06, L/13/06, L/12/06, L/11/06 - tel (01349) 868640 (24 hours)
 Ref: L/15/06 - tel (01397) 707365
 Closing date: 17 February 2006

The Highland Council
 Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd
 SERVING THE HIGHLAND COMMUNITY

www.highland.gov.uk/jobs

Oban Times RECRUITMENT

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.

John MacAlister (Oban) Ltd

Book-Keeper

Minimum of 12 hours per week
 The applicant must have previous book-keeping experience and have knowledge of using Sage.
 Duties include all aspects of book-keeping, administration and any other duties as required. Salary reflects upon experience.

Please apply in writing to:-
John MacAlister (Oban) Ltd, 6 South Pier, Oban, Argyll PA34 4LS

The NÀDAIR Trust
 NATURE & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARGYLL ISLANDS

There will be a vacancy for a full time **Project Officer** based in Oban, to provide project and administration support for our continuing programme of heritage projects in the Argyll Atlantic Islands. The appointment is likely to be for a period of 2 years, but may be longer. Applicants should have excellent administration, communication, organisational and reporting skills along with experience of partnership working, and a familiarity with the Argyll Islands and their rich cultural and natural heritage.

Starting salary circa £17,000
 This appointment is dependent on confirmation of funding

For an information pack please phone 01631 570075, or email nadair@nadair.org.uk.

Closing date for applications 17th February 2006.

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund

RECRUITMENT

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

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, Craigcrook Castle, Craigcrook Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3PE.

Scottish Sea Farms Freshwater Engineer

Scottish Sea Farms Ltd has a vacancy for a Freshwater Engineer to cover our Hatchery and Cage facilities on the Isle of Mull and Morvern area.
 The preferred candidate should possess the following attributes:
 • Four-six years' experience in an electro-mechanical environment
 • Hold a recognised certificate of competence or apprenticeship
 • Working knowledge of pumps, valves, hydraulics, electrical systems and installations
 • Experience in small fabrication using steel, stainless steel and fibre glass
 • Competent in PVC pipework installation, modification and repair
 • Structured approach to problem identification and solving
 • Team player and strong communicator
 • Demonstrate confidence within a team and especially in front of customers
 In addition to the above, the candidate should demonstrate a continuous drive to enhance efficiency in all processes whilst supporting the Freshwater Production team to maintain high quality stock production, through flexibility and efficient planning and scheduling.
 If you would like to play a part in the development of this dynamic local industry then please apply in writing, enclosing your CV to:
 Claire Robertson
 Scottish Sea Farms Ltd
 Laurel House
 Laurelhill Business Park
 Stirling FK7 9JQ
 A competitive remuneration package will be offered, including company vehicle.
 Closing Date: Friday 3rd March 2006

Distillery Guest House and Glenlochry Guest House
 Fort William
JOB VACANCIES
 Full time receptionist/waitress 40/50hrs per week
 Part time receptionist Housemaids Laundry assistant
 Excellent rate of pay
Tel: 01397 700103 or 01397 702909

TRAIN TO BE A COUPLE COUNSELLOR
 Argyll Couple Counselling are seeking volunteers to join our National Training Programme starting in September.
 Applicants should have some existing counselling-skills training
 For more information & an application pack please contact
Carol Collis on 01852 300514

Market Research Interviewers
 Earn **£56.50-£61.75** for a 6 hour working day.
 • Other benefits: travel allowance and holiday pay.
 • Flexible work: min. 2 and up to 5 days per week.
 • No previous experience: full training given.
 • No selling: asking people's opinions in their homes.
 If you enjoy working on your own, can work after 1.30pm or at weekends, have your own transport and land phone line, and want to find out more, phone us now for a "Random Panel" information pack quoting your postcode and code no: S142M11
020 8433 4490
 the operations centre

Ossiens 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
 Ossiens is now under new ownership

PUBLIC NOTICES

Visit Scotland
Business Relationship Manager
LINDA HALL
 will be holding the first of her regular, monthly surgeries at the following locations:
7 February
 1330 hours - 1430 hours
 The Woollen Mill in **Spean Bridge**
 1530 hours - 1630 hours
 The Tourist Information Centre in **Fort William**
8 February
 1030 hours - 1130 hours
 The Tourist Information Centre in **Mallaig**
 1430 hours - 1530 hours
 The Tourist Information Centre in **Kilchoan**
9 February
 1000 hours - 1100 hours
 The Tourist Information Centre in **Strontian**
 1330 hours - 1430 hours
 The Tourist Information Centre in **Ballachulish**
 All tourism businesses welcome
In case of bad weather, please call 01997 423014

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
Mr E Paine West Of Old Pines Spean Bridge 06/00026/OUTLO	Erection of Two Houses	Spean Bridge Post Office Development Contrary to Development Plan (Potential) (21 Days)
Mr A Cameron No 11 Corriebeg Kinlochiel Fort William 06/00022/FULLO	Erection of House and Formation of Driveway	Kinlochiel Post Office Development Contrary to Development Plan (Potential) (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

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
Statutory Review of Local Government Electoral Arrangements Argyll and Bute Council Area
Notice is hereby given today, 26 January 2006, that the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland has submitted the report to the Scottish Ministers recommending the division of Argyll and Bute Council area into 11 wards for the election of Councillors.
 A copy of the Commission's report and illustrative maps showing the ward boundaries may be inspected during normal office hours at the offices of Argyll and Bute Council from 26 January 2006 as follows:
 Council Headquarters, Kilmory Castle, Lochgilphead;
 and also at the following locations:
 Scotcourt House, Helensburgh;
 Jamieson Street, Bowmore, Isle of Islay;
 Dell Road, Completown;
 Breadalbane Street, Tobermory, Isle of Mull;
 Dalriada House, Lochneil Street, Lochgilphead;
 22 Hill Street, Dunoon;
 Eaglesham House, Mountpleasant Road, Rothesay, Isle of Bute;
 Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban; and
 The Business Centre, Crossapool, Isle of Tiree.

A copy of this notice, the Commission's report and illustrative maps are available for viewing, or downloading free of charge on the Commission's web site at www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk.
 It should be noted that under the provisions of section 17(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the Scottish Ministers may not make an Order giving effect to the proposals contained in the Commission's report, either as submitted to them or with modifications, until after the expiry of 6 weeks from 26 January 2006, that being the date arranged for the formal submission of the report.
R Smith
 Secretary
 Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
 3 Drumsheugh Gardens
 Edinburgh
 EH3 7QJ

KILCAMB LODGE HOTEL
FULL TIME COMMIS CHEF
 Required for busy Country House Hotel, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. Brigade of 3 & 2 AA setters. 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.kilcambloodge.co.uk
 Kilcamb Lodge Hotel, Strontian, Argyll PH36 4HY

marineharvest
Farm Technician Smolt Unit - Lochailort
 An interesting and varied role exists for a Farm Technician at the Company's Smolt Unit at Lochailort. The post would be offered on a full-time, permanent basis, working a 40 hour week.
 This freshwater role is focused upon care of eggs prior to hatching and also effective fish husbandry of the fry and parr prior to their transportation to freshwater farms. Whilst it would be beneficial for applicants to possess experience in freshwater operations, it is not essential as full training and support would be provided.
 Beyond the nature of the role, the post holder would be expected to undertake over-time as required in order to accommodate the business needs of the Unit and, for the same reason, be willing to include themselves in the staff rota for 24 hour alarm cover.
 If you would like to be considered for this role, please apply in writing to: Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Advisor, Marine Harvest, Business Resource Centre, Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 7PT. The closing date for the receipt of applications is 17th February 2006.

The Oban Times require a **COPY TYPIST OBAN** Monday and Tuesday 9am till 5pm
 Excellent keyboard skills, spelling and grammar essential
 Email your C.V. to personnel@obantimes.co.uk or fax: 01631 568001

Argyll & Bute Council
AREA COMMITTEE MEETING
A meeting of the Area Committee for Oban, Lorn and the Isles will be held in **The Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban, on Wednesday, February 8, 2006**
 Members of the public are welcome to attend
 Any enquiries should be directed to **Kenneth Macdonald, Area Corporate Services Manager,** telephone **01631 567930**

COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949 APPLICATION FOR SINGLE MOORING AT PORT APPIN
 Notice is hereby given that Mr Mackerchar has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Executive, under section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by the section 36 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988, to carry out single mooring at the above location in the positions:

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Mooring	56 33.37 N	05 24.89 W

 Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Ledaig Post Office, Benderloch.
 Objections relating to safety of navigation, in respect of the application should be made to: Ports and Harbours Branch, The Scottish Executive, Transport Division 4, Area 2F North, Mailpoint 2B, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ within 28 days of the date of this notice quoting reference: 2SPC/2/5/240
 Mr Mackerchar
 Lorne View
 Ardconnel Road
 Oban
 PA34 5DW

COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949 APPLICATION FOR REPAIRS TO ROCK ARMOURS AT BETWEEN DUIRNISH AND KYLE OF LOCHALSH
 Notice is hereby given that Network Rail has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Executive, under Section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by the Section 36 of The Merchant Shipping Act 1988, to carry out repairs to rock armours at the above location in the positions:

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Start	57 18.80 N	05 43.15 W
End	57 17.20 N	05 43.30 W

 Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Kyle of Lochalsh Library, Main Street, Kyle of Lochalsh, Skye and Lochalsh, IV40 8BY (open Tuesdays 1300-1500, 1800-2000 and Fridays 1000-1400, 1600-1800).
 Objections relating to safety of navigation, in respect of the application, should be made to Ports and Harbours Branch, The Scottish Executive, Transport Division 4, Area 2F (North), Mailpoint 2B, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ, within 28 days of the date of this notice, quoting reference 2SPC/1/6/44.
 Ms Nicol
 Network Rail (MP&I - Civils)
 Floor 2 North Wing
 Buchanan House
 58 Port Dundas Road
 Glasgow
 G4 0LQ
 Kyle of Lochalsh Library,
 Main Street,
 Kyle of Lochalsh,
 Skye & Lochalsh,
 IV40 8BY
 (Open Tuesdays 1300-1500, 1800-2000 and Fridays 1000-1400, 1600-1800).

DUNBARTONSHIRE AND ARGYLL AND BUTE VALUATION JOINT BOARD
ABSTRACT OF ACCOUNTS 2004/05
Regulation (62) Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 1985
 Notice is hereby given that copies of the certified Abstract of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2005 together with the Auditor's Report thereon have been deposited in the offices of the Treasurer, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton. It may be inspected free of charge from 9.15 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays. Any person who is unable to attend at the times stated should make a written application to the Treasurer and alternative arrangements will be made.
 Copies of the Abstract of Accounts can be purchased at a cost of £10 per copy.
 David Connell,
 Treasurer,
 Council Offices,
 Garshake Road,
 DUMBARTON, G82 3PU

ARGYLL AND BUTE AND DUNBARTONSHIRES' CRIMINAL JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP
ABSTRACT OF ACCOUNTS 2004/05
Regulation (62) Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 1985
 Notice is hereby given that copies of the certified Abstract of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2005 together with the Auditor's Report thereon have been deposited in the offices of the Treasurer, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton. It may be inspected free of charge from 9.15 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays. Any person who is unable to attend at the times stated should make a written application to the Treasurer and alternative arrangements will be made.
 Copies of the Abstract of Accounts can be purchased at a cost of £10 per copy.
 David Connell,
 Treasurer,
 Council Offices,
 Garshake Road,
 DUMBARTON, G82 3PU

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 The Oban Times
 Tel: 01631 568000

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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: 06/00094/DET
 Applicant: Oban Yachts And Marine Services Ltd
 Proposal: Erection of Tension Canopy
 Site Address: The Boatyard Kerrera Oban Argyll PA34 4SX
 Location of Plans: Oban Area Office
 Section 34 and Article 9 Advert 14 Days
 ● Ref No: 05/02077/DET
 Applicant: Angus Wilkie, Production Manager
 Proposal: Extension to Storage Shed
 Site Address: Land East Of Arduaine,lochmefford Arduaine Oban Argyll
 Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Kilmelford
 Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
 ● Ref No: 05/02424/OUT
 Applicant: Matthew Reade
 Proposal: Site for Erection of Dwelling House
 Site Address: Calgary Farmhouse Hotel Calgary Tobermory Isle Of Mull PA75 6QQ
 Location of Plans: Tobermory Area Office
 Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
 ● Ref No: 06/00106/REM
 Applicant: Mr Stuart MacQuarrelle
 Proposal: Proposed Dwelling House
 Site Address: Berandhu Croft Fort Appin Argyll
 Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Ledaig
 Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
 ● Ref No: 05/02552/OUT
 Applicant: Tony Cressey
 Proposal: Erection of Dwellinghouse
 Site Address: Garden Ground Of Craig Villa Dalmally Argyll PA33 1AX
 Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Dalmally
 Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
 ● Ref No: 06/00111/DET
 Applicant: M.I.C.T.
 Proposal: Erection of Temporary Recycling Shed and Portacabin
 Site Address: Land North Of Dalriada Craignure Isle Of Mull PA65 6AY
 Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Craignure
 Section 34 and Article 9 Advert 14 Days
 ● Ref No: 06/00105/DET
 Applicant: Mr + Mrs A Campbell
 Proposal: Site for Dwelling House
 Site Address: Plot 3 Former Filling Station Lochawe Dalmally Argyll
 Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt
 Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
 ● Ref No: 06/00089/DET
 Applicant: Lindon Property (Scotland) Ltd
 Proposal: Erection of Four Dwelling Houses (semi-detached)
 Site Address: Harris Villa Longsdale Road Oban Argyll PA34 5JU
 Location of Plans: Oban Area Office
 Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
 ● Ref No: 06/00133/DET
 Applicant: Margaret Nicolson
 Proposal: Erection of Garage
 Site Address: 98 Dalintart Drive Oban Argyll PA34 4EE
 Location of Plans: Oban Area Office
 Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
 ● Ref No: 05/02550/DET
 Applicant: Alexander And Dolina McDonald
 Proposal: Erection of Dwellinghouse
 Site Address: Barristoun House Kenovay Scarinish Isle Of Tiree PA77 6UJ
 Location of Plans: Tiree Area Office
 Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
Area Team Leader Development Control, Planning Services, Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban

OPERATIONAL SERVICES
(VARIOUS ROADS TOBERMORY HILL AREA, ISLE OF MULL) (20MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2006
 On Monday 30th January 2006, Argyll and Bute Council made the above named Order in terms of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended.
 The Order, which comes into operation on Monday 20th March 2006, introduces mandatory 20mph Speed Limits on various roads within the Tobermory hill area, in Tobermory, Isle of Mull as part of a road safety initiative.
 A copy of the Order and Plans are available for inspection during normal working hours Monday to Friday inclusive at the following offices;
 (i) Argyll and Bute Council Offices, Breadalbane Street, Tobermory, Isle of Mull;
 (ii) Roads and Amenity Services, Kilbowie House, Oban;
 (iii) Argyll and Bute Council Offices, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll.
 Any person, who wishes to question the validity of the Order or any provision contained in it on the grounds that it is not within the powers conferred by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, or on the grounds that any requirement of that Act or any instrument made under it has not been complied with in relation to the Order may, within six weeks from 3rd February 2006, apply to the Court of Session for this purpose.
(ROUTE B882, TOBERMORY, ISLE OF MULL) (30MPH SPEED LIMIT) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006
 On Monday 30th January 2006, Argyll and Bute Council made the above named Order in terms of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended.
 The Order, which comes into operation on Monday 20th March 2006, varies an existing Order to reduce the length of the 30mph on part of the B882 in Tobermory, Isle of Mull as a direct result of the introduction of a new 20mph speed limit.
 A copy of the Order is available for inspection during normal working hours Monday to Friday inclusive at the following offices;
 (i) Argyll and Bute Council Offices, Breadalbane Street, Tobermory, Isle of Mull;
 (ii) Roads and Amenity Services, Kilbowie House, Oban;
 (iii) Argyll and Bute Council Offices, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll.
 Any person, who wishes to question the validity of the Order or any provision contained in it on the grounds that it is not within the powers conferred by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, or on the grounds that any requirement of that Act or any instrument made under it has not been complied with in relation to the Order may, within six weeks from 3rd February 2006, apply to the Court of Session for this purpose.
Andrew R Law, Director of Operational Services, Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8RD.

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Argyll & Bute COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES: EDUCATION
IS YOUR CHILD ELIGIBLE FOR FREE PRE SCHOOL EDUCATION PROVISION?
 Pre School Education from August 2006 will be available for:-
 * Four year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2002 and 28th February 2003
 AND
 * Three year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2003 and 29th February 2004
 Parents of eligible children should register at their preferred pre school education provider during week commencing 6th February 2006 during the normal operational hours of the unit.
 A list of current pre school education providers is displayed at the following locations:
 All Primary Schools
 Health Visitors/Dr's Surgeries
 All Council Offices
 Libraries
 Playgroups & Daycare Centres
 Information leaflets will be available from pre school education providers at the time of registration and parents can obtain further guidance from the Pre School Education Helpline, Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon PA23 8AJ (Telephone 01369 708503/708560).

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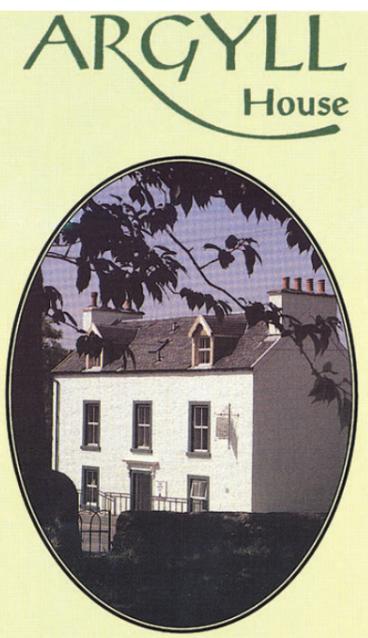
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WEST HIGHLAND PROPERTY GUIDE

The largest weekly property pages, covering Argyll, West Highlands & Islands. Selling your property? Make sure your advertisement is here in *The Oban Times* - it works! (Seen by more than 40,000* readers each week.) *Source: JICREG Reader per copy average from ABC audit.

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RICS

Four properties developed from former inn



ARGYLL House

MULL'S popularity with visitors is legendary - and not surprisingly, for this is an island with a myriad of attractions. High on the list come breathtaking scenery, an astonishing range of wildlife including golden eagles, wonderful opportunities for outdoor pursuits - amongst them walking, cycling, sailing, golfing, fishing and pony trekking and some of the most charming villages to be found anywhere.

Famous Tobermory, the island's capital, is universally famous, drawing huge numbers of visitors every year as well as regiments of day-trippers who travel on the regular ferry service between Oban and Craignure.

Salen, which lies halfway between Tobermory and Craignure, is around 10 miles from each. From Salen all parts of the island are within relatively easy reach.

Given such a scenario, the appearance on the market of Argyll House offers an exciting business opportunity certain to stimulate widespread interest.

A former wayside inn, built in 1803, this fascinating property combines superb self-catering accommodation with a popular tearoom restaurant seating 24.

High standard The comprehensive conversion and upgrading work required to bring Argyll House up to its present high standard was undertaken around 1994. Most windows are double-glazed.

Occupying a prominent position at the hub of the village, it incorporates four properties to suit all budgets and catering for two to four people. Situated to the rear of the main building are the byre and the bothy, both of which are fully

self-contained. The byre provides a lounge/dining/kitchen area with one double bedroom and shower room on the first floor.

The bothy offers a lounge with separate kitchen/diner on the ground floor whilst upstairs are one double bedroom, one twin bedroom and a shower room. Outside there is a laundry/drying/utility room.

Designed for two people, studios one and two are on the first floor of the main house and comprise a kitchen/dining area and lounge/bedroom. There is also a separate shower. All units are equipped with a full-

sized electric cooker, fridge, microwave, remote control colour TV and a range of electrical items.

All crockery, cutlery, bedding and towels are provided.

Unrestricted parking is available both to the front and rear of Argyll House.

Conducting the sale of the property is the Oban office of estate agents Alexander Dawson, who are inviting offers in excess of £280,000. They are already reporting strong interest.

A certified statement of the trading performance of the business will be made available to bona fide applicants on request.

Argyll House . . . all four units fully equipped

Chartered Surveyors, Land & Estate Agents
MacKINNON ESTATES

2 CAMERON BRAE, KENTALLEN, APPIN, ARGYLL
Offers over **£295,000**
Glasgow 93 miles, Oban 28 miles, Fort William 17 miles
Stunning, five bedroom architect designed executive villa with enhanced specification and superior finishes enjoying expansive views across Loch Linnhe to the hills of Ardgour. The beautifully presented accommodation comprises: Ground floor: Porch, hallway, cloakroom with WC, living room, conservatory/dining room, kitchen/diner, utility room and two bedrooms. First floor: Three bedrooms including master with en-suite shower room and a family bathroom. Under floor heating on ground floor, oil fired radiators on the first floor. Driveway, open plan garden to the front and enclosed rear garden. Integral garage.

7 MCCALLS TERRACE, SOROBA ROAD, OBAN, ARGYLL
Offers Over **£115,000**
Modern two bedroom semi detached property situated at the head of an attractive block paved cul-de-sac convenient for the town centre and enjoying views of the hills at Glenshellach and Soroba. The well appointed accommodation comprises: Vestibule, living room, kitchen, cloakroom with WC, two double bedrooms and attractive tiled bathroom. Night Storage heating. Double Glazed. Garden laid to grass to front and rear. Parking available to front.

51 ROCKFIELD ROAD, TOBERMORY, ISLE OF MULL
Offers over **£100,000**
This well presented ground floor flat is situated in a block of four flats and has its own private entrance and gardens to the front and rear. It is in a good residential area and enjoys a sunny aspect over the surrounding hills. Offering good family accommodation comprising: Vestibule, hallway, living room, kitchen with utility area and room for a dining table, three bedrooms and bathroom. Night storage heating.

2 Gibraltar Street, Oban, Argyll PA34 4AY
Telephone: +44 (0) 1631 566 122
Facsimile: +44 (0) 1631 564 764
E-mail: enquiries@dmkstates.co.uk www.dmkstates.co.uk

Alexander DAWSON

TRAMWAY COTTAGES, ELLENABEICH
For Sale: A modern, traditionally styled **Mid-Terrace Cottage** in a courtyard setting in the picturesque conservation village of Ellenabeich. Well appointed accommodation equally well suited as a permanent home or for holiday letting. Double glazing, electric heating. Comprising Vestibule, Hall, Living Room/Kitchen, Bathroom, 2 Bedrooms. Neat, low maintenance garden. Parking. Contents available by negotiation. **Offers over £100,000**

DRIMVARGIE TERRACE, OBAN
For Sale: A compact easily managed **Modern Ground Floor Flat** in a quiet location conveniently situated within easy reach of the town and amenities. Double glazing, electric heating, private off-street parking. The attractively presented accommodation comprises Hall, Living room, Kitchen, newly refitted Bathroom, Bedroom, External Store. **Offers over £69,000.**

FALLS VIEW, NORTH CONNELL
For Sale: Desirable main-door **Ground Floor Apartment** in prestigious location on the north side of Loch Etive overlooking the Falls of Lora. The apartment is one in a modern purpose-built block of four and provides a Hall with Storage, Lounge, Diningroom with open plan fitted Kitchen, Bathroom, 2 Bedrooms (1 with En-Suite Shower-room). Quality finishes, low-tariff electric heating and double glazing. Fitted carpets, curtains, light fittings and full range of 'white' goods included. Attractive communal garden, drying area, private parking. **Offers over £140,000.**

1 GEORGE STREET, OBAN, ARGYLL PA34 5RU
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Anything within 15-miles of Oban considered
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4 Glasdrum Road, Fort William
consists large sitting room, bathroom, shower room, utility room, kitchen/dinette, panoramic view, landscape garden.
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Diesel Estate Mot'd until August 06
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Also damp or damaged considered
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(X) reg 2000, Black, full body kit, 17" alloys, 1yr MOT, taxed 6 months, 46,000 miles
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£4000 o.n.o

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Red, 1997 mot'd until end Jun and taxed until end April
Telephone **01631 562696 (after 6 p.m.)**
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K REG 92
6 Months tax/mot
Good condition (lots of new components)
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CARPETS NEW WILTON carpet, 13x13. Fawn with light speckle £100 o.n.o. Telephone 01546 603015.2

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MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS (cont.)

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS (cont.)

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS (cont.)

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS (cont.)

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WOOD TURNING LATHE (cont.)

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PERSONALS ANNIE AND STEVIE Would like to thank everyone who came to their Birthday Bash at the Argyllshire Gathering on 21st January. Many thanks for all the cards and generous gifts, which were very much appreciated. A great big thank you to the family (not forgetting Hal) for all the arrangements and special thanks to Rosie who prepared the splendid buffet which everyone raved about (as usual) "Dodgy Ground" provided super toe-tapping music. Simply the best MoranTaing. David and Liz Hamblin.

PERSONALS (cont.)

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BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

THE OBAN TIMES & West Highland Times THE REGIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE WEST HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS AND ARGYLL

MACDONALD - Peacefully at The Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, Oban on Friday, January 27, 2006 in her 89th year, Margie dearly loved aunt. Sadly missed by all her family.

MACKENZIE - Peacefully in Raigmore Hospital, Inverness on January 29, 2006. May Elizabeth MacKenzie, of Caberfeidh, Church Terrace, Newtonmore, much loved wife of John, dear mother to Michael and Duncan, a loving granny to Tamsyn, Holly and Lewis and a dear sister of Elsie. Funeral service at St Bride's Church on Thursday, February 2, at 2pm and thereafter to Banchoir Cemetery. All friends respectfully invited. Family flowers only please but donations if desired for Ward 1 and Haemotology, Raigmore.

MACKINTOSH - Christine and family wish to thank everyone for their exceptional kindness for all the cards, flowers and telephone calls following the sad loss of Sandy. Also grateful thanks to Mike and Ewen for their helpful arrangements and to Rev Corbett for his comforting service. Thanks to all who attended the funeral and donated so generously to the sum of £600 for Kidney Kids Scotland. Our sincere thanks to all.

MAITLAND - Sheila, Caroline and David wish to thank everyone for all the kind expressions of sympathy, floral tributes and help in any way following their recent sudden and sad loss of David C B. Special thanks to Rev A Ramsay for his tribute and comforting service at MacIntosh Memorial Church and at the crematorium. Thanks to doctors A Massie and J Douglas, ambulance and Belford Hospital staff, to Mike McFall and Theresa for all their caring funeral arrangements and for all generous donations to CHS.

SCOTT - Very suddenly at Belford Hospital on January 20, 2006. Mary-Jane, Craighard, Kilchoan, eldest daughter of the late Donald and Mary MacPhail, much loved mother of Ann and the late Cameron and sister of Alasdair. Intermment took place at Kilchoan on January 25, 2006.

SMITH - Robert, peacefully after a long illness at Carrickstone Nursing Home, Cumbernauld on January 26, 2006. Bobby, (former chef with Caledonian MacBrayne) beloved brother of Charles and a dear uncle of the family. The funeral service took place at Daldoyle Crematorium, Glasgow, on Wednesday, February 1, 2006.

WOOD - Peacefully on Wednesday, January 25, 2006. Agnes MacArthur Wood, in her 90th year, (Retired Member of the Diplomatic Service) eldest daughter of the late Douglas and Mary Wood and loving sister of Beatrice and the late Margaret Blanford. The funeral service will be held in Inveraray Parish Church on Thursday, February 2, 2006 at 1 p.m. and thereafter to Glenshira Cemetery, to which all are respectfully invited.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS - CAMPBELL - Donald, Iain, Anthony and the extended family of the late Donald William (Uille), R.I.P., would like to thank all the relatives, friends and neighbours for the support shown to them on their recent sad loss. Special thanks to staff of Ward C, Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, and Macmillan Nurses, Anne and Lucy for their unfailing attention and support. Also thanks to Dr Shaw and Dr Parsons for medical attention at home. To Hamish Hoey & Sons for the funeral arrangements. To Father MacKay for words of comfort and special thanks to Father Friel who celebrated the Requiem Mass; also to Mary Catherine, who sang so beautifully. Finally, thanks to all who paid their last respects at the church and graveside, for floral tributes, cards and donations to Cancer Research which came to the sum of £464.94. May God bless you all.

BIRTH MACHELSON - At Royal Alexandra Infirmary, Paisley on January 20, 2006, to Ewan and Dawn (nee Shirraw), a daughter Lily. First granddaughter to Edna and Dougie Shirraw, Glasgow and second granddaughter to Dot and Donnie, Strontian. All doing well.

ENGAGEMENT BATTY - KERR - Both families are pleased to announce the engagement of Alice, youngest daughter of Bob and Margaret, Oban, to Lawrie Andrew, son of Lawrence and Sandra, Glasgow.

CONNOLLY - OASTLER - The engagement is announced between Richard, son of John and Beth Connolly, Duror of Appin, Argyll and Emily, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Oastler, Spilbourne, East Sussex.

MARRIAGE HAMILTON - STEPHEN - It is with greatest pleasure that Dr and Mrs J. Bryson Hamilton, Dunoon, announce the engagement of their younger daughter, Kathleen Anne to Stuart Joseph, third son of Mr and Mrs Les Stephen, Airdrie.

MARRIAGE DUNN - MACKAY - On the island of Rothesay, in the presence of their immediate family, Aulay and Mary celebrated their union of marriage on Saturday, January 14 at 3 p.m. A deed well Dunn!

DEATHS CLARK - Suddenly at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, Oban, on January 25, 2006, in her 89th year, Marjory Clark, 6 Achaleven Cottages, Connel, beloved wife of the late Ewan, loving mother of Duncan and the late Eric, mother-in-law of Jean and devoted Nan of Ewan, Yvonne and Neil. The funeral took place on Tuesday, January 31, at St Oran's Church, Connel.

DEATHS MACALISTER - Angus, peacefully in the Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, Oban, on January 26, 2006 in his 89th year, Angus MacAlister, Gulgum Cottages, Isle of Gigha, beloved husband of the late Charlotte, dear father to John and Archie, father-in-law to Joan and Lorna and a devoted granddad. Funeral was held on Saturday, January 28, 2006 on the Island of Gigha.

DEATHS MACKINNON - Neil Kennedy of Balevullin, Isle of Tiree, died suddenly at home at the age of 63, on January 14, 2006. Beloved husband of Flora and caring father to Jeanette, Colin, Duncan and Carol, brother to Donald and Effie and the late Hugh and loving grandpa to Michael, Caitlen, Cameron and Ferguson.

DEATHS PETERSON - John (Iain) Robert Campbell Peterson, died peacefully at home on Wednesday, January 25, 2006, beloved husband of Sheilils (McVicar) loving father of Judith, Andrew, Gordon and Duncan, father-in-law and Seanair of nine lovely grandchildren.

DEATHS SCOTT - In loving memory of my dear wife, Ella Lennox, mother, granny, mother-in-law to be, died February 4, 2001. Her memory to me is treasured. Loved always, sadly missed by all.

DEATHS MACDONALD - In loving memory of my dear wife, Ella Lennox, mother, granny, mother-in-law to be, died February 4, 2001. Her memory to me is treasured. Loved always, sadly missed by all.

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Church NEWS

Thought for the week Who brought the light to birth careth for me

BUNESSAN Church received two great presents for Christmas. A beautifully carved oak Celtic Risen Cross by a local master craftsman reminding us that love is stronger than death and secondly, two beautiful chandeliers each with 18 individual candle bulbs.

centre, just before further surgery and starting school. There he threw himself into everything with enthusiasm, especially football and swimming. Later he joined the Church Holiday club and afterwards insisted on joining to Sunday School. That meant bringing parents and grandparents back into the fellowship of the Church, which he loved.

ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN Campbell Street Church Sunday 5 February 2006 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

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Moderator visits Scottish Parliament

THE MODERATOR of the General Assembly, the Right Reverend David Lacy, is spending three days this week on his annual visit to the Scottish Parliament.

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Oban and Lorn Lions are top of the tables

Oban and Lorn Lions Club held a table-top sale at the Royal Hotel on Saturday to help boost funds. Books and videos were the most popular items for sale and there was a steady flow of shoppers; items went as far afield as the Borders, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

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Obituary

ROSE MacIntyre THE PASSING OF Rosie MacIntyre of Gott and Scarinish was deeply felt by her family and friends. Rosie had been brought up in The Lodge, Kirkcubbin, then owned by her parents Calum and Annie were caretakers.

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SPORTS DESK ☎ 01631 568000 Fax 01631 568001 e-mail sport@obantimes.co.uk website www.obantimes.co.uk

Lochaber one, two, three in Leanachan race



The runners get off their marks in the Leanachan race at the weekend.

Lochgilphead Red Star net seven against East Kilbride

Football

SAFL Division One
Lochgilphead Red Star 7
East Kilbride 1

LOCHGILPHEAD Red Star played host to East Kilbride on Saturday January 28, aiming to win their first game of the New Year.

By the club's own standards, this season has been poor, the side having been knocked out of both the Scottish Cup and West of Scotland Cup. A comfortable win on Saturday may be the catalyst the side requires to kick-start its season.

The home side were without Ged Rae, but welcomed back Craig Campbell and Eanie Phillips. They started the match brightly and created a number of early chances through Neil Russell and Craig Houston, but the back four of Moore, Craig Campbell, Thomas and Ian Houston had to be alert to the threat of counter-attacks.

Red Star opened the scoring after five minutes, when Moore's long ball into the box well met by Craig Houston. He slipped a pass through for Davy Campbell, whose first time shot curled inside the left hand post.

The goal settled Red Star, who began to play some of their best football of the season. The Argyll side kept the momentum going with soem good passages of play between defence and midfield, but weren't getting the breaks in front of goal.

Red Star, sponsored by L and A Mackay and the Stag Hotel, added their second goal after 21 minutes. Good play on the left hand side by Craig Houston saw his cross met by Luke Naisby, who headed past the visiting keeper.

The third goal arrived only five minutes later, following good build-up play on the right hand side. Naisby swung a good ball across to Davy Campbell, who headed the ball back to Broderick. His screaming left foot shot flew into the top right corner of the net.

With half time looming, Craig Houston added a fourth goal for Red Star. Moore and Russell combined well, the latter slipping the ball to Houston on the edge of the box. His turn and shot were perfect, leaving the keeper helpless.

East Kilbride started the second half in a more positive manner than they had the first, pushing Red Star back and keeping goalkeeper Calache on his toes. In contrast, Red Star were showing signs of overplaying the ball. The visitors pulled a goal back, Red Star caught upfield, the visiting number 10 drilling his shot beyond Calache.

Red Star manager Michael Todd made a change shortly afterwards, replacing MacPherson with Phillips. The home side settled down after the East Kilbride goal, and grabbed their fifth goal shortly afterwards.

Broderick scored his second of the day after Campbell and Naisby combined to send Houston down the right. His cut-back was met by Broderick, who tapped the ball home from six yards.

Red Star made two further substitutions, Morrison replacing Naisby and McNeil coming on for Russell. The home side's passing moves contributed to their sixth goal in the 75th minute. Angus Morrison pushed down the right flank, beating his marker and sending a great ball into the box for Davy Campbell, who finished well from 10 yards.

The scoring was completed by Craig Houston in the 81st minute, who was sent clear by Moore and curled a shot in off the right post.

Red Star have no match this weekend, as they only have four matches remaining this season. The club thanks Lorraine Campbell, Kirsten MacDonald and Anne Houston for their help at last week's coffee morning, which raised £250 for club funds.

MORE THAN 110 runners aged from five years-old and upwards competed in the Lochaber Athletic Club's winter league race at Leanachan.

In sunny conditions home runner John Hepburn was the race winner in a time of 33 minutes, eight minutes.

Fifty seconds behind was Peter Kennedy and Neil Arnott in third place completed a Lochaber one, two, three.

Continuing her impressive form this season, Oban's Nicola Meekin was first lady home in a time of 39 minutes, 41 seconds.

Athletics

Ken Whyte in overall 19th place was first veteran aged over 50 home in a time of 39 minutes, 44 seconds. First under-17 runner home and 14th overall was Wei Adams in 38 minutes, 23 seconds.

Mallaig runner Ross Douglas was the under 15 boys' winner with Cara MacKay the girls victor.

In the under 13 girls race Glencoe's Helen Nelson did particularly well coming third against the top two Claire Kennedy and Kirsten Moynihan who both beat

the previous course record.

The league competition for the under 13s saw Iain Foggo put in an excellent performance to win and he narrowly missed out on Wei Adams' course record from 2003 by only one second.

A tremendous performance by Sean Munro in the under 11 boys' race saw him set a course record for his age group and a course record time.

This Sunday the senior Caol 10k race starts at Claggan Park at 11am. The Vitrified Fort race will be the next and final junior winter race on February 26.

Lochaber club to join north cricket league

A NEW cricket club for Lochaber players is keeping its fingers crossed that it will be formally accepted into the North of Scotland Cricket League this Sunday.

Fort William Cricket Club was formed last September from the ashes of Lochaber Cricket Club and after the drama of the Ashes series gripped Lochaber as well as the rest of the UK.

Club chairman Derek Spencer told *The Oban Times* this week that he went up to the BA Club in Fort William after the Ashes. He had seen cricket played there before by the Lochaber Cricket Club which disbanded around two years ago after some players moved away from the area.

He said: 'The more I was speaking to people the more I realised there was real ex-

Cricket

citement and interest about playing cricket.

'I then took it upon myself put up around 100 posters around the town asking if people were interested in becoming players, members or umpires. The response was absolutely phenomenal.'

The club was officially formed and despite the Fort William title is very much a Lochaber club with its 60 members from all over the area including Glencoe, Glenfannan, Roy Bridge and Fort William.

The club played three friendly matches on Sunday at the Nevis Centre against the Northern Counties of Inverness and Derek said the club were very grateful to their opponents for making the effort to come and play.

Fort William Cricket Club has received £4,980 from the National Lottery's Awards for All Scheme to pay for kit for their junior players and for a portable wicket which can be laid on football pitches.

North of Scotland Cricket Association (NoSCA) holds its AGM on Sunday and will decide whether to admit Fort William to the league.

However Derek said it was very much in the balance whether the club would have its application approved. He said: 'They are going to decide if they will welcome us into the league. The fact we have a lot of members, are very enthusiastic and have a number of young players should be in our favour.'

'We want join our local league and are hopeful of a positive decision.'

Shinty match raises cash for breast cancer care



David MacLean and Charles Taylor of Lodge Lochiel 1200 presented a cheque for £620 to the Breast Cancer Care Unit at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness.

The cash was raised on January 2 after an inter-lodge shinty match between Lodge Lochiel 1200 and Fort William 434.

The cheque was received by Evelyn McDonald, Fiona Jones and Melaine Rose from the care unit.

Lochaber's victory is family affair

A VETERAN prop and his two sons made it a family affair at the weekend as they all lined up for Lochaber and helped them to a hard fought away victory.

Iain Smith and sons Luke and Dominic who both have experience playing rugby league completed the family triumvirate against Blairgowrie.

The Division Five Caledonia B clash saw Lochaber defend a slender two-point lead for most of the match.

Making his senior rugby debut was young winger Blair MacCraill who performed well but it was the home side who registered the first points converting a penalty in front of the posts.

However Lochaber showed character to turn the screw and spent much of the first half in the Blairgowrie half.

Rugby

Their forwards were dominating the line-outs and mauls with MacFarlane, MacDonald, Rivetts and Whitaker all coming close to driving over the try line.

It was Lochaber scrum-half Ross Wallace who put the visitors in front when he took a quick tap penalty and squeezed his way through a gap to score.

If Lochaber had turned their first half pressure into points on the board then they could have finished their opponents off but the home team came right back into the match in the second half.

The Blairgowrie winger seemed to fancy his chances against young Dominic Smith but some last gasp defending by Wallace and

MacPherson ensured he was bundled into touch every time.

Blairgowrie had three or four opportunities to take the lead but some robust Lochaber defending kept them out with the final 10 minutes of the match played out in the middle of the pitch as they closed out the game.

The Lochaber squad against Blairgowrie: A MacDonald, J Milne, I Smith, A Rivetts, D MacFarlane, C McPherson, S Whitaker, I MacFarlane, R Wallace, K Turnbull, D Harvey, L Smith, B Knowles, D Smith, T Baxter, B MacCraill, N MacKinnon.

☐ This Saturday Lochaber are at home to Aberdeen Wanderers.

Awards boost for Lochaber athletics



LOCHABER Athletic Club has been able to purchase new athletics equipment for indoor and outdoor use with a £2,000 grant from the Lottery Awards For All.

At least 40 young athletes between the ages of eight and 16 are taking advantage of the equipment twice weekly, which helps to keep variation in their training.

Recent club success has seen Claire Kennedy, Kirsten Moynihan and Cara Mackay running for the north of Scotland under-13 and under-15 teams at the Great Edinburgh X-Country where they came back with bronze medals.

Tarbert sting the Jags

SAFL Division Two
Tarbert AFC 3
Millerston Thistle 1

TARBERT maintained their perfect home record with a hard-fought victory on Saturday January 28 over Millerston Thistle at Cil Andris.

Tarbert welcomed player-manager Alex Johnstone back into the side, following the injury he sustained in December. It was an impressive return to action, Johnstone heading Tarbert's equaliser from a well-taken corner from Mike Connor.

Connor and Prentice had chances to open the scoring early on, but it was Thistle who took the lead against the run of play.

A ball played over the de-

fence looked suspiciously offside, but referee McInnes waved play on, allowing Thistle's striker to fire low past Blair.

Following Johnstone's equaliser, James Prentice maintained his good scoring record with a powerful drive into the net after Thistle failed to clear a cross.

Dougie Guy came close to adding a third before half-time, but he shot over the crossbar after a good run.

Harris and Ian Johnson were causing havoc for the visitors during the first half, moving into good positions, but Tarbert became increasingly frustrated as the football turned scrappy in the second half.

Failure to kill the match off with a third goal made

the second half a nervous one for Tarbert, whose passing and shooting could have been better. They were nearly made to pay for this when a clearance was blocked, but Millerston's shot flew wide.

The Dookers' nerves were finally calmed when substitute David Ronald's free kick was headed on by Prentice, a visiting defender turning the ball into the net for an own goal.

Tarbert AFC would like to thank R Hyslop and Son, Tarbert butcher, for sponsoring Saturday's match ball.

Tomorrow (Saturday February 4) Tarbert are at home to Eaglesham 'B' on league duty. Kick-off at Cil Andris is at 2pm.

Highland children join Scottish sprinter

Athletics

SIXTY children from across the Highlands joined Olympic athlete Ian Mackie at an Inclusive Athletics Day in Inverness.

The event, sponsored by Communities Scotland, involved youngsters from all walks of life with a variety of abilities.

They will each take part in four workshops which will cover sprinting, hurdles, jumping and throwing.

Ian, who has represented Scotland at senior level since 1994, offered his expert advice by coaching in the sprinting section.

Additional training was provided by Highland sports development officer, Charlie Forbes and Nigel Heathering from Scottish Athletics.

Communities Scotland area director for the Highlands and Islands, David Nicol, said: 'Events like this show children no matter what their abilities or fitness levels are they can become involved in sport.'

'Some of the youngsters here may never have taken part in athletics before. Communities Scotland is delighted to support this project which encourages children to lead a more active lifestyle.'

Extra date for Ben challenge

Athletics

AN EXTRA date has been added for the Ben Nevis Challenge which is in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care.

The challenge sees participants climb Ben Nevis to raise funds for the charity's home nursing service in the Highlands. There are more than 80 Marie Curie nurses in the area and it costs £20 per hour to have a nurse in a patient's home.

Sunday June 4 is the additional date, to find out more contact Elma MacKay on 01463 238328.

Top of the table clash in indoor league

Football

A TOP of the table clash saw an exciting game watched by over 50 spectators this week in the Ali Young Indoor Soccer League.

Lochaber Bar went two goals up before Ben Leisure pegged them back but Lochaber finished by winning the game 4-2 to go top of the league.

Over the night exactly 100 players took part in what is proving to be an eventful competition.

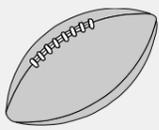
Lochaber Bar now lead the league one point ahead of Ben Nevis with Scotrail third on 22 points.

With the league split only four games away there is room available for one more team to join the second division.

Contact the Nevis Centre, Fort William for more details.

Results: Sunday, January 29: BT 1-2 Russells Rovers; Ballachulish 4-3 Morrisons; Ben Nevis Leisure 2-4 Lochaber Bar; Caley Boys 3-4 Torlundy Rovers; Five Alive 7-3 Celtic; Scatter a Halfs 5-2 Mean Machine; Scotrail 4-2 Lochaber Leisure.

Fixtures, Sunday, February 5: Celtic v Scotrail, Lochaber Bar v Caley Boys, Lochaber Leisure v Ballachulish, Mean Machine v Five Alive, Morrisons v Ben Nevis Leisure, Russells Rovers v Scatter a Halfs, Torlundy Rovers v BT.



TIMES Sport

Oban cyclists succeed in 24-hour race

THE FIRST running of the 24 hour mountain bike race the 'Strathpuffer 24', through the forests above Contin and Strathpeffer took place recently.

The most competitive category was the male quads which drew 54 teams, and was won by 'Woo-Ha Ram-it' which comprised of three Oban men and one man from Plockton.

Alex Johnson, Tom Smith and Michael Bossard, all

Cycling

from Oban, along with Alex Glasgow, from Plockton, all took turns during the race, and soon built up a clear lead over the pursuing teams, eventually completing the course and winning by three clear laps.

A total of 101 teams tackled the gruelling 11 kilometre course which was billed as 'the toughest mountain bike challenge in Britain'.

The course included over 1,000 feet of climbing per lap, with a fiercely technical single track, and sections ankle deep in energy sapping mud.

The win was not the first for the Woo-Ha Ram-it squad as they were successful last summer in Britain's two major 24 hour races.

In the 'Saab-Soloman Mountain Mayhem' they

were closely beaten into second place by 'Fat Tread' from Aviemore. They followed that by winning the Kona Sleepless in the Saddle event in September.

Tom Smith of Oban said a little bit of luck helped play its part in their Strathpuffer win.

He said: 'We were lucky enough to have no mechanical disasters, and not a single puncture, which can make or break a race.'



Team members who will take on the Hebridean Challenge, (left to right) Saul Ormiston, John Ormiston, (Gym Employees Andy McAulay, Robin Morton.), Martin Hadlington, Eilidh Ormiston and Duncan MacEachen outside the premises of their sponsors 'The Beach'.

Local team take on Hebridean Challenge

LOCAL outdoor enthusiasts are gearing up for a tough challenge this summer, by entering a team in the Hebridean Challenge.

Three members of the Ormiston family joined by two friends, have been lucky enough, to gain entry into this years prestigious event.

The challenge is set over five consecutive days, and will run the length of the Outer Hebrides involving sea kayaking, open water

Outdoor Sport

swimming, mountain biking, road cycling and cross country running.

Saul Ormiston, is the teams principle swimmer, his dad John will undertake most of the sea kayaking and John's wife Eilidh, will be the teams principle mountain biker.

They will be joined in their attempts by Martin Hadlington who will assist in swimming, and Duncan

MacEachen who will take on most of the running and mountain biking.

Because of the way the race is structured, all members of the team will undertake most of the activities at some stage, therefore they must be competent in all areas.

The team of five have been sponsored by Robin Morton, who is the proprietor of Oban gym The

Beach, and Robin has fully assessed each person's fitness and has designed a specialised training programme to help each person train effectively over the next six months leading up to the challenge.

The team will also benefit from the use of the gym equipment in order to be fully prepared for this gruelling event. Putting themselves through this incred-

ibly tough task will give the team the opportunity to raise money for charity.

Their chosen charities are Badaguish Outdoor Centre, an outdoor activity centre for youths with special needs, Oban Hospice and the Maggie's Centres, which are support centres for the families of cancer patients. Anyone wishing to make a contribution should make contact with

info@beaverintimber.co.uk or The Beach.



The Woo-Ha Ram-it team consisting of three Oban cyclists which won the first ever 'Strathpuffer 24' race recently.

Argyll athletes qualify for Scottish finals in Dundee

A GROUP of 39 young athletes representing Argyll, travelled to the Playdrome in Clydebank last Sunday, to compete in the West of Scotland Regional Final of Sports Hall Athletics.

After more than three hours of intense competition, all four Argyll teams were not only successful in qualifying for the Scottish Final on February 25 in Dundee, but also completed a clean sweep winning outright in each team contest.

The contest was one of three similar regional events promoted by Scottish Athletics, and sponsored by Norwich Union.

The Argyll squad consisted of two boys teams and two girls teams in the under-13 and under-15 age groups, backed up by a large travelling support of parents and coaches.

The under-13 girls were convincing winners scoring 734 points with South Lanarkshire, Inverclyde and Glasgow filling the last three places.

Team captain Eilidh Campbell from Lochgilphead set a great example to the team by winning the four lap race in 49.3 seconds and placing third in the standing long jump with 2.02metres.

Eilidh combined with Eilidh Elkin from Minard, to win the eight lap Paarlaf

Athletics

relay. Eilidh Elkin also contributed to the points total with second places in the six lap time trial in 1min 19.9secs and the speed bounce completing 74 jumps.

Ruth Semple from Southend gained valuable points with second in the four lap race and second in the vertical jump reaching up to 50cm.

Other individual winners in a great victory were Rebecca Gallier from Pennyghael on Mull, who won the high jump clearing 1.33metres. Laura Fyfe from Inveraray in the shot putt with 7.56metres and Kayleigh Tennant from Oban, who won the speed bounce completing 80 jumps in 30seconds.

Two Kintyre girls, Nicole Anderson from Campbeltown and Nicola Paterson from Carradale also excelled.

Nicole was second in the standing triple jump with 5.98metres, and Nicola was third in the high jump with 1.25metres.

Lisa MacKenzie from Oban and three Mull girls Katriona MacLean and twins Georgina and Katrina Durie also contributed to this massive win, with valuable individual and relay points. The under-15 girls

also dominated, winning overall with 684 points. Lucy MacNulty from Dalmally was top individual with 142 points.

Lucy won the four lap in 48.9secs and was second in the shot putt throwing 7.65metres.

Christie Roxburgh from Achnamara won the shot putt with an 8.14metres throw and placed third in the standing long jump with 2.23metres.

The other individual winners for Argyll were Oban girls Zoe Fleming, who won the two lap race in 22.8seconds, and Jade MacEwan who won the speed bounce completing 83 jumps in 30seconds.

The Argyll girls won both relays starting with Lucy MacNulty and Erin Elkin from Minard in the eight lap paarlaf.

The 4 x 2lap relay team of Christie Roxburgh, Zoe Fleming, Holly Crawford from Lochgilphead and Heather Lochgar from Campbeltown had to work hard to finish ahead of South Lanarkshire.

The Argyll under-15 boys team started their challenge in fine style scoring 644 points to win ahead of the others.

Sam Jespersion from Oban was top individual

with 142 points. Sam won the speed bounce scoring 81 and was second in the four lap race in 44.6 seconds.

The four lap was won by Jonathon Roched from Connel in 43.7 seconds and Jonathon also placed second in the standing triple jump, with an 7.56metres effort.

John Kennedy from Lochgilphead easily won the shot putt throwing 11.90metres and was third in the triple jump with 7.49metres.

John Lamont from Camp-

beltown made his debut at this level by throwing 10.55metres for third place in the shot putt. Mull boys Jamie Cowe and David Beckett and Aiden MacLaren from Oban also added valuable points towards the Argyll total.

The under 13 boys ensured their place at the Scottish Final with the most emphatic win, finishing over 200 points ahead of the 2nd place district.

Captain Iain MacDowell, despite recovering from illness, led the team to a comfortable victory.

Works league make changes

Football

A NUMBER of changes have been made to the Works League.

The amount of players per squad has been increased to 14 players but the rule of four outside players remains the same. It was also decided that players from teams that have dropped from the league can't turn out for another team. And all fixtures on February 12 have been postponed until further notice.

Markie Dans Works League

	pld	pts
1. Forteiths	8	24
2. Atlantis	9	21
3. Foster Yeoman	8	19
4. OHS	8	19
5. AM Transport	9	13
6. The Oban Times	9	10
7. Burnside Joiners	8	9
8. The Hydro Board	9	6
9. The Hotels	8	3
10. The Hospital	8	0

New strips donated to football development team



S1 pupils from Lochgilphead High School model the new strip alongside David Renwick, Raymond Flanagan and Roddy Morrison all from Mid Argyll Round Table, with Football Development Officer for Argyll and Bute, Dylan Kerr (far right).

ARGYLL and Bute football development team have been presented with a new strips courtesy of Mid Argyll Round Table. The strip was handed over by Raymond Flanagan, Chair of Mid Argyll Round Table, at Lochgilphead High

Football

School recently. The squad of S1 pupils, selected from all of the secondary schools in Argyll and Bute, played against Inverclyde at Port Glasgow in November. Football Development Of-

ficer, Dylan Kerr said: 'I'm very pleased that the Round Table were able to sponsor the strip.'

This will hopefully encourage more youngsters to want to wear it, by becoming involved with the squad in the future.'

Round Four of Wheelers league

Cycling

THE WEST Highland Wheelers Winter League visited Lochaline on January 22 for round four of the series which is sponsored by Off Beat Bikes.

Starting and finishing at the pier, this race saw the first riders from Mull in the Series, thanks to the Sunday ferry sailings.

Tom Smith, fresh from last week's exertions at Strathpeffer, came in first and now leads the overall series.

The ever improving Graham Neagle fought all the way to finish a close second. Colleen Foggo consolidated her position at the top of the table in finishing as first lady with Marian Austin in second place.

Vernon Rogers continued his steady progress up the field, and four of the Leisurely Ladies surprised the event officials with a magnificent sprint finish from

Jewson victory in Keyline Cup



Soroba Jewson after their recent victory in the Keyline Cup which was played at Atlantis Leisure. Jewson beat Soroba Keyline in the final by a 3-1 score-line.

the sand mine.

Nearly 40 riders enjoyed a varied course set by Jake Willis around Finuary Forest. Highlights included the township at Aoinceadh Mor, Loch Arianas and the Alines bridge. The riders then retired to the cafe on the pier for post match analysis.

Thanks were made to the Sunart Oakwoods Initiative, Angus Robertson on the Estate, the Sandmine, Jake and Isobel Willis and Jean from the cafe for looking after the riders.

The next event is at Invergarry on February 5, where John Thompson will set the test for the Wheelers.

Badminton's Jamie launches new sport's awards in Islay

Sport

A NEW Health and Sports Award Scheme was launched at Port Ellen Primary School, Islay on Monday January 23.

The awards have been developed by Active Schools and the Islay Healthy Living Centre. They are one of ways in which Argyll and Bute Council is promoting the benefits of sport, physical activity and health to young people.

The awards are progres-

sive from bronze through to gold, and are designed for primary school pupils which have both a practical and theory element. The award scheme will run in Islay primary schools and if successful will be rolled out across Argyll and Bute.

As part of the official launch, badminton internationalist Jamie Neill visited the island for the day. Jamie

is an ambassador of the Sporting Champions Scheme, that is part of sportscotland's Active Schools Programme.

Sporting Champions uses sports stars and emerging talent to inspire and motivate young people to become and remain involved in sport. Jamie said: 'I was delighted to come to Islay to speak to the pupils, and give the children some badminton tips.'



Eilidh Munro, who left the Isle of Ulva and went to train as a groom, recently came third in the Kuster British Equestrian Federation groom of the year.

Eilidh performs well in national competition

Equestrian

A FORMER Mull Pony Club member has just been highly placed in a national equestrian competition.

After Pony Club success, Eilidh Munro left the Isle of Ulva and went to train as a groom. She now runs a hunting and carriage driving yard in Fife.

Eilidh was recently nominated for the Kuster British

20 years' experience, which helps to further highlight how successful she has been.

The daughter of Iain and Rhoda, who still live on Ulva, Eilidh also travels with the family who own the yard to compete in carriage driving events, and she also takes part in the British championships, at Windsor.

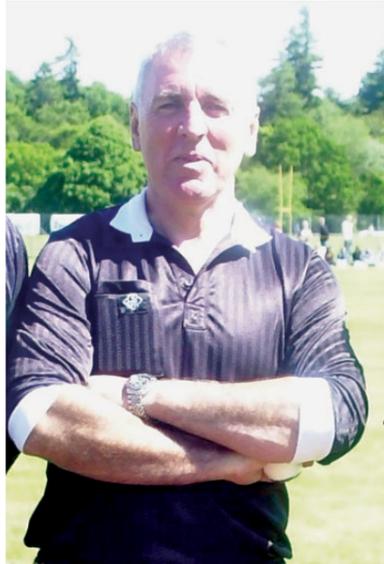
First and second places went to people with over



TIMES Sport

Johnny 'Ach'

John MacRae - Harbour master at Kyle, and Referees Director of the Camanachd Association
Born: February 4, 1955; Achmore, near Kyle of Lochalsh.
Died: Wednesday, January 25, Kyle of Lochalsh, 2006



'A legend has fallen but will not be forgotten' is but one of the many outpourings of bewilderment, grief and genuine sadness which has appeared, as an unprecedented torrent of appreciation on the shinty.com website since the indescribable loss sustained with the sudden and untimely death of John 'Ach' MacRae.

The embodiment of Highland grace, wit and charm, the charismatic MacRae was more than a legend.

As the pivotal figure marshalling seagoing activities through the historic waters of the Kyle of Lochalsh, he displayed at once the strength, agility and athleticism of the Celtic warrior Cu Chulainn and the determination, passion and loyalty of King Haakon's marauding troops.

The same man was the gentlest and kindest of figures; a man whose sense of community and empathy with the environment which shaped him and the culture which drove him made him stand out in a crowd. A man whose talents as a bon viveur have marked him out as one of Celtic sport's Special Ones, from his roots in Achmore (the centre of his Universe) to the green swards of Ireland. John's contribution to his community, through activities with the Kyle lifeboat, the Eilean Ban Trust and the local Community Council, to name but three will forever leave his mark on the area and its activities.

However, it is through his contribution to shinty that many will most fondly remember him.

A former North Player of the Year (the list of players he headed that year making his achievement all the more outstanding), distinguished in his 20 year play-

extolling the virtues of his own contribution to the event or match in which he was participating or officiating. He could get away with it where others could not. He allegedly attached his own persona to a well-known shinty tale in his home area. Once summoned to the office of the headmaster in Plockton to be admonished for breaking a school window while playing shinty at the interval, MacRae claimed he was the proudest teenager on the west coast to be hailed by the dominie, the great Sorley Maclean, for the prodigious nature of his hitting and the quality of his play. This was, one suspects, no apocryphal tale. In truth the 'villain' of the piece was not the legend Johnnie became. But it could have been.

Few have wielded the caman with the energy and panache of this MacRae. Even fewer have lived life to the extent he did, and contributed so much. His passing does not diminish his contribution, but the unfulfilled potential leaves us all the poorer. None of us are irreplaceable, but at this point in time, John's removal from our midst is as stunning as it is seemingly unjust. What he might have done will remain forever in our minds, but what will not be lost is the lasting legacy which will not be realised today or tomorrow.

His contribution to the west coast and its fishermen were legendary. He had worked at the Naval Base in Kyle before carving out his career notably in the management of Kyle Harbour for over 15 years and his gift of retrieving apparently lost causes was unique.

That he died days short of his 51st birthday as he helped prepare celebrate the first 50 years of his beloved Kinlochshiel is one of the great, but now unimportant ironies of this tragedy.

The tributes to John MacRae will be endless, his memorial the lasting loss we have all sustained and his funeral at St Duthac's, Dornie, on Tuesday one of the biggest ever seen in the area.

Our communities can ill do without his like.

His immediate family of Alison and their five daughters and the three grandchildren, and his two brothers Crisdean and Neil, know not why he has been taken. We are all the poorer for his passing. We are all privileged to have known him, worked with him, played with and against him and above all shared so many happy times. One cannot imagine the apparently unbearable loss this family and community has sustained, but we all share it to a degree that we must live with. Treasuring all the great memories of Johnnie Ach will help us all cope.

HDM

Lochcarron aim for settled team in new Premier season

Shinty

LOCHCARRON are looking forward to the start of the new shinty season in March but will be going into this season's Premier division with no new faces.

Manager Fraser Mackenzie is looking to his existing squad of players to provide a more settled team.

Last season Lochcarron finished sixth in the Premier division with 11 points from 14 league games.

'The main problem last year was that due to call offs the team kept changing from week to week and we never had much of a chance to play a settled side for more than two weeks at a time,' Fraser told *The Oban Times*.

'We were without Michael Cooper, Chris Coyle, Lewis Patience and Michael Macmillan for long periods during the season but we now hope to have them all back for the entire season apart from Chris Coyle who has retired.'

Fraser continued: 'We

added former Kinlochshiel defender Ross Matheson to the squad towards the end of the season and he has proved to be a great addition and Alistair Mackenzie has returned as part of the management set-up with assistant Alan Mackenzie.'

In the build-up to the new season, Lochcarron have arranged friendly games with Skye and Beaulie, and hope to confirm a game against Caberfeidh.

Following last week's cup draws, the Lochcarron manager is left wondering what he has to do to avoid Fort William.

'The MacTavish Cup has drawn us against Fort William again for the ninth time in three years in all cup competitions, but we are looking forward to the challenge and the possibility of meeting Kinlochshiel in the semi-final if all goes well for us both.'

'The challenge match against Kinlochshiel in the summer will now become an annual event for the Tommy Ross Cup.'

'It proved a great success last year - although the result never went our way.' Meanwhile, Lochcarron's second team has been granted permission by the Camanachd Association to drop into North Division Three after losing many of its players to new sides

Lochbroom and Nairnshire.

'This will allow Lochcarron to blood more youth under the new second team management of Andrew Slaughter and Gordie Mackay,' said Fraser.

Last season saw three Lochcarron players in the senior Scotland squad and there is optimism that there could be more this season with players such as Peter Mackenzie, John MacLennan and Darren

Coyle among contenders.

Fraser Mackenzie took time to highlight the encouragement given to himself, and many other players and managers, by Johnny 'Ach' MacRae.

'I will always be in his debt for the assistance he gave me when I was trying to start up the Queens Own Highlanders shinty team,' said Fraser.

'He was always looking to help and encourage for the good of the game. The game and everyone in it will miss Johnny Ach.'



Lochcarron player/manager Fraser Mackenzie, centre, wonders what he has to do to avoid Fort William in cup competitions as the clubs are drawn together in this season's MacTavish Cup for the ninth cup competition in three years

Scottish Cup tickets winners



Laura Campbell and Ann-Maree Campbell of *The Oban Times* drew the three lucky winners from a huge postbag of entries all aiming to win tickets for the Scottish Cup tie between Glasgow Rangers and Hibernian at Ibrox Stadium, Glasgow this Saturday with a 12.15pm kick off. The first pair of tickets went to Douglas Smith of 2 Nerabus Cottages, Port Charlotte, Isle of Islay. The second name out of the hat to win another pair of tickets was Nigel Campbell of 10 Maple Avenue, Dumbarton, while the third pair of tickets went to Roberta Sneddon, 24 Coteachan Hill, Mallaig. For all those who were unsuccessful, tickets are available from the Rangers Ticket Centre www.rangers.co.uk. If you have not already registered for online ticket sales, you can sign up immediately online, just visit the ticket section of www.rangers.co.uk and click on the link to online tickets and follow the easy instructions.

Swimming gets a £670,000 boost from sportscotland

Swimming

SWIMMING in Scotland received a sportscotland cash boost of £670,000 on Monday, which is planned to help all levels across Scotland.

Sports Minister Patricia Ferguson and Julia Bracewell, Chair, Sportscotland joined forces at the National Swimming Academy in Stirling to announce funding to help the governing body bring home the message that 'everyone can swim'.

Accepting the annual funding investment on behalf of the governing body was Scottish Swimming chief executive officer Ashley Howard.

The investment is targeted to key areas of the sport's corporate plan, including

Curling

Drimsynie Ice Rink Monday League

	P	W	L	D	Pts
JACL	7	6	1	0	12
Fyne Team	7	4	2	1	9
Oban	6	3	1	2	8
Upper Cowal	7	3	3	1	7
Team Clunty	7	2	4	1	5
Dunoon Ladies	7	1	4	2	4
Mike the Knife	7	1	5	1	3

Tuesday League

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Sandbank	8	7	1	0	14
Bennore Kiln	8	6	2	0	12
Drimsynie Office	8	6	2	0	12
Tighnabraich	8	5	3	0	10
Drimsynie Const	8	3	4	1	7
Lochgool	8	2	5	1	5
Dunoon Argyll 1	8	2	6	0	4
Dunoon Ladies	8	0	8	0	0

Dominoes

Isle of Skye Whisky Oban Domino League

	P	W	L	Pts
Tartan	5	4	1	8
Aulays	5	3	2	6
Lochavullin	5	3	2	6
Woodside	5	3	2	6
Coasters	5	2	3	4
Balmoral	5	0	5	0

Thursday League

	P	W	L	D	Pts
Big Deal	8	6	2	0	12
Cot House	8	5	3	0	10
Tighnabraich	8	4	3	1	9
Glen Orchy	8	4	3	1	9
Cairndow	8	4	4	0	8
Arrochar	8	3	4	1	7
Dunoon Argyll2	8	1	4	3	5
Inveraray	8	1	5	2	4

May Mackenzie

THIS week the shinty world was saddened by the death of May Mackenzie, wife of Camanachd Association President John Mackenzie.

May died late on Sunday night in Raigmore Hospital where her long, brave fight against cancer came to an end.

May MacKenzie was a great supporter of shinty but above all she was a great supporter of her husband in everything he did. Her cheery smile and welcoming way was always freely and genuinely given whenever and where-ever you met her.

May's funeral takes place today (Thursday) in Newtonmore. All in shinty will join *The Oban Times* in offering their heartfelt condolences to John, Mike and Duncan, and all the family at this sad time.

Students victorious in hurling challenge

Shinty/hurling

SCOTTISH University shinty came to the fore at Bridge of Earn at the weekend when they won the weekend's games by an aggregate score of 40 points to 11 over their Irish counterparts.

On a perfect day for sport at Kilgraston School playing fields the Scottish ladies side racked up a 31 point to three win over an inexperienced Irish camogie side who competed well but could not match the Scottish side.

The Scottish defence was rarely troubled as the midfield and attack dominated proceedings scoring 10 goals in total.

The men's game started at a brisk pace with some hefty tackles and referee George Hay did well to control the game as it threatened to boil over.

The Scots students found the hurlers hard work, with the majority of the 'Irish' team coming from Dundee University who won the British Universities Hurling Championship in November and who also compete in the University Shinty League.

Their experience led to a lot of pressure on the Scottish players by sticking close and hustling for possession.

The points came from two single points over the bar and a two pointer from a free for Scotland in the first half.

In the second period a two pointer and a goal gave Scotland nine points before the Irish rallied and fired in eight points during the last 15 minute to set up a tense finale - with the Scottish team missing two clear attempts to put the game out of reach.

Players observed a minutes silence in memory of John 'Ach' MacRae, who has refereed a lot of the Scottish players over the years.

WIN THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT
WIN £1,950

in The Oban Times
'Spot the Shinty Ball'
Competition

Last Week's shinty ball was here...



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are: R Scobie, 16 Mamore Road, Kinlochleven and Mrs S Howieson, 22 Ross Place, Fort William

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.



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.

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Archers who competed at the Oban and Lorn Archers Open Portsmouth Competition at Atlantis Leisure last Sunday. 050601

Oban archers come out on top in annual shoot

OBAN and Lorn Archers held their annual open Portsmouth shoot last Sunday at Atlantis Leisure, and it was well attended with 72 entries from all over Scotland. The shoot is fairly informal and attracts novices and juniors many of whom were

shooting in their first competition. This year had 15 juniors attending with several adult novices and the vast majority had an extremely enjoyable day shooting.

Archery

The level of shooting was very high and extremely close in some categories. The recurve bow team event saw the local archers come out on top, winning *The Oban Times Quich*, with

an aggregate score for four archers of 2,157 from a maximum of 2,400. A raffle was held to cover the costs of the competition and over 35 local businesses contributed which resulted in the competition being incredibly successful.

Saints march on in cup

West of Scotland Cup 4th Round MOORCROFT 0 OBAN SAINTS 2

SAINTS travelled to King George V Park, Renfrew, to take on Moorcroft in the 4th round of the Colville Park West of Scotland Cup and the Oban side returned home with a hard-fought 2-0 win under their belts which puts them into the last 32 of the competition which started with well over 300 teams.

The Oban side had to make one change to the squad that scored nine goals against Gilston Park, with Darin Bryars, out of action for a number of weeks with a back injury, coming in for Duncan Campbell who was unavailable.

The visitors had a great chance to take the lead as early as the fourth minute when Ross Maitland sent Dean Walker through with a defence splitting pass, but Moorcroft keeper Ian Tyrrell made a good diving save low down to his right.

The game settled down after a rather hectic start with both teams knocking the ball about confidently in midfield and Moorcroft created a shooting chance for Chris Anderson but his effort was off target.

The Saints rearguard of Mark MacCallum, Bertie Gemmell and Alex

Football

Grindlay, were giving the opposing forwards very little opportunity to trouble keeper Tim Woodcock, although Brian Goudie had a free header in the box but it sailed over the bar.

Saints, after a good start, were finding it difficult to keep any sustained pressure on the Moorcroft defence which was well marshalled by the classy Ross Nicholl. The game reached the half time break with the scoreline blank.

The visitors came out with all guns blazing at the start of the second half thanks to some spirited play from the midfield of Willie Gemmell, Keith Millar, Ross Maitland Joe Lopez and Scott Johnston. Scott set up Allan MacKay when he cut the ball back into his path and the Saints striker came close with a fine effort.

Two minutes later Willie Gemmell was sent clear on the right, but his cross into the box was too hard for Allan MacKay who just failed to reach the ball with a desperate lunge.

Moorcroft came back into the game and Saints have keeper Tim Woodcock to thank for a tremendous save up at the postage stamp corner to deny the home side.

The Oban lads had a great chance in the 62nd minute, but Joe Lopez knocked the

ball past the post from six yards when it looked easier to score.

Willie Gemmell had another good break down the right and elected to shoot when a square ball across the box might have been the better option.



Ross Maitland

The game was flowing from end to end as both teams tried to break the deadlock, but again the defences were generally on top although Saints were inclined to give away silly free kicks in dangerous areas and on another day that might have proved costly.

With 15 minutes remaining Saints manager Iain Jackson made a vital substitution taking off mid-fielder Scott Johnston replacing him with striker Darin Bryars and the

wee man was only on the park for a couple of minutes when his pace took him clear. He said: 'Moorcroft are a good side and we knew we would have to play well to win, which we did, and we fully deserved to go through to the fifth round.'

This Saturday Saints face a tough match when they travel to take on Slamannan in the fifth round of the Soccer World Scottish Amateur Cup. Slamannan are presently lying in second place in the Stirling and District First Division, so the Oban side know they will have to be at their best if they are to progress in this competition. The kick-off is at 2pm with referee John Hannan from Harthill in charge.

Saints Under 19s had an impressive 8-2 away win over Glenbrae Colts and the Under 17s drew 1-1 with West Park United at Glencruitten.

Saturday's results - Premier Division - Greenock HSP 2, St Patrick's FP 1; Pollok 3; Kilmarnock 3; West of Scotland Cup - Moorcroft 0, Oban Saints 2; Jimmy Marshall Trophy - Campbelltown Pupils 8, Shawlands FP 2; Premier Division One - Postal United 3, Dunoon 3; Premier Division Two - Centre 5, Campbelltown Boys 2; Division One - Lochgilphead Red Star 7, East Kilbride YM 1; Division Two - Tarbert 3, Millerstone Thistle 1.

Tides

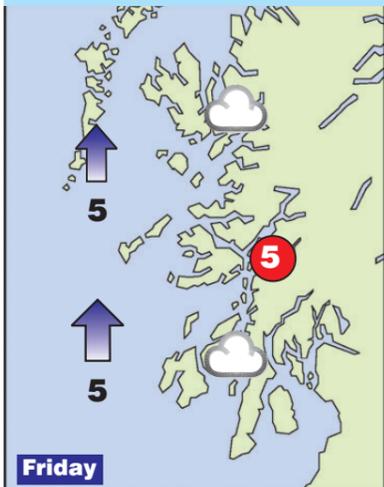
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday, February 2, 2006 are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	02.13 0.4 08.18 4.1 14.44 0.7 20.25 3.7	
Fri	02.58 0.6 08.59 3.9 15.27 0.9 21.04 3.5	
Sat	03.44 0.8 09.43 3.6 16.12 1.2 21.45 3.2	
Sun	04.34 1.1 10.33 3.3 17.03 1.5 22.34 3.0	
Mon	05.33 1.5 11.45 3.0 18.04 1.7 23.53 2.8	
Tues	06.47 1.7 **** ** 13.51 2.8 19.16 1.8	
Wed	01.51 2.8 08.44 1.8 15.41 2.9 20.42 1.8	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

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

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the weather

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Thursday, February 2
 Will be dry but rather cloudy. Slight drizzle may occur later in the day. Winds will be light south or south easterly
 Temperatures -1°C to 6°C.

Friday, February 3
 Will be dry but cloudy. Winds will be light south or south easterly
 Temperatures -2°C to 6°C.

Saturday and Sunday
 Saturday and Sunday are 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 Leisure joins this year's Swimathon

ATLANTIS Leisure have announced that they will be taking part in Swimathon 2006, from March 23 to March 26.

The pool is one of 500 nationwide that will host 25,000 swimmers and help to raise two million pounds for the NCH children's charity.

That will help the charity to further its work transforming the lives of vulnerable children.

Kirsteen Connelly, learn to swim coordinator for Atlantis Leisure said: 'We are absolutely thrilled to be

Swimming

holding Swimathon 2006 at our pool and encourage everyone in the local community to get involved.

'Whether your aiming to break a record, fulfil a personal challenge, or bringing the family down for a fun day out, by signing up for one of our Swimathon 2006 sessions, you can help us raise funds for NCH, whilst getting fit and having fun at the same time.'

There are more than 140,000 children and their families who are supported

every year through NCH, involving nearly 500 projects across the UK. Around 80% of all money raised will go directly to NCH, and the additional 20% will be distributed by The Swimathon Foundation.

This provides funding for smaller, local charities, and other non profit organisations.

You can sign up for Swimathon's twentieth anniversary swim by calling 0845 36 700 36 or pick up an entry form from Atlantis Leisure.

Tournament to remember Portsonachan pair

THE annual memorial indoor bowling tournament in Portsonachan will be played on Friday, March 17.

The Jim Gibson and Ewan MacGillivray Memorial Trophy always attracts a number of bowlers from all

Indoor Bowls

over Argyll and beyond. The tournament is also a time for Portsonachan to remember Jim Gibson, who was a keen bowler, and his grandson, Ewan, who both

tragically drowned on Loch Awe in 2002.

The tournament will be held in Portsonachan Village Hall.

Money raised on the night will go towards a local charity.

Interest in cricket surpasses expectation

OBAN Cricket Club which is actively working as part of the PlaySport initiative at Atlantis Leisure, has revealed it is overwhelmed with the steady level of attendance by children at the club.

An average of 20 children have been attending every Saturday and club Secretary Ronnie Kelly is absolutely delighted with the interest the sport is receiving from young children.

'We really can't believe how well it's going and it has become really popular with the children,' said Ronnie. 'We now hope to build on this by forming a junior

Cricket

team to compete in the summer and we already have a fixture arranged with Crieff juniors.

Oban Cricket Club senior team will begin its preparation for the 2006 season by starting indoor practice from Sunday February 19 at Atlantis Leisure.

The club is sending out a clear invitation to anyone to come along and have a go with no playing experience required.

The club is looking to try and recruit high school players and hopes to run a 'come and try' session at the

school in the future.

A full season of fixtures has been arranged for 2006 and Oban will again have fixtures against local rivals Mid Argyll and Cairndow, as well as teams such as Arran, Rothesay and Crieff.

Fort William have also recently formed a cricket team and they will travel to Oban to fulfil a fixture in June.

Oban Cricket Club would also like to extend the offer of sponsorship, in particular to help in the purchase of shirts for the junior side. Anyone interested should contact Ronnie Kelly on 01631 563974.



Some of the children who have been regularly attending Oban Cricket Club at Atlantis Leisure on Saturday. 050601



Badminton's Argyll Cup was held at the Mid Argyll Badminton Club last weekend. Oban took home the 'A' trophy which was accepted by Denise Robertson (left). Grant McKellar, captain of the Dunoon team, collected the 'C' trophy on behalf of his side.

Lochmaddy's Beth to start six nations

Rugby

BETH Macleod from Lochmaddy will start at number seven for the Womens Scottish national rugby side in their first match of the six nations.

The match is against France at Murrayfield straight after the men's match on Sunday February 5.

Beth was recently in action for Scotland but they unfortunately lost out to the USA by 13-6 at Galashiels on January 21.

Coach Gil Stevenson is looking forward to the next test against France. Stevenson said: 'France are very tough opposition so that should be a highly entertaining match. The last time we played them at Murrayfield we scored three tries early on but the French came back and narrowly beat us.'

Loch Gail win Province Curling Championship

Curling

THE ANNUAL Argyll Province Curling Championship was contested at the Drimsnyne Curling Rink between four qualifying clubs.

After 80 ends of competitive curling the result came down to the last stone of the last end.

Loch Gail Curling Club was the eventual winner followed by Benmore Kilmun, Tighnabruich and Strachur curling clubs.

A two hour introduction to curling course is available at until the middle of March information can be obtained by calling 01301 703 247.



Oban Lorne players compete with Loch Lomond for the ball in their disappointing home defeat at the weekend. 050602

Disappointing home defeat for Oban Lorne

Rugby

OBAN Lorne welcomed back two club stalwarts and former captains in Shaun Sinclair and Davy Laurie for this BT National 5 West A league match, at home to Loch Lomond.

There was also a first team debut for Simon Breasley, and a welcome return for lock forward Chris Benson from injury.

Despite having home advantage, Oban continued their dismal run of form in 2006 losing to a team placed immediately below them. Oban's only real encouragement came in the first five minutes when Andy McDougal finished of a well worked try which would be the last score

quickly slipping away from Oban, the team conspired to make things even more difficult, by continually fouling and infringing the rules. Both backs and forwards gave away silly penalties and free kicks, which Lomond were only too happy to convert into points.

Lomond number ten Mathieson scored a drop goal, shortly after which the away side scored a second try, and in the last minute of the game a long range drop goal ended the contest. This was a very disappointing outing for the Oban side who will quickly find themselves slipping into the relegation zone if their results don't improve quickly.

Oban pool league table

Pool	pld	pts
1. Markie Dans	9	16
2. Loch B	9	16
3. Cellar A	9	14
4. Claredon Hotel	9	12
5. Cellar B	9	10
6. Loch A	9	8
7. J&D A	9	8
8. J&D B	9	8
9. Bowling A	9	6
10. Woodside	9	-4
11. Bowling B	9	-4

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