

An Comunn in cash crisis

Digger clears road after crash

A LARGE digger helped police open Soroba Road, Oban, on Tuesday, an hour after a crash between a bus and a lorry.

The Forthright Foodservice lorry and a bus heading south to Ardrishaig collided at the junction leading to St Columba's Primary School.

The lorry driver was taken by ambulance to nearby Lorn and Islands District General Hospital with minor injuries.

The bus driver was not injured and as *The Oban Times* went to press, police were unsure of the number of passengers on the bus at the time.

The accident happened at around 9.20am. The road was closed because the Forthright lorry blocked both carriage-ways but was re-opened thanks to a digger from a nearby construction site.

The bus reversed away but the seven-tonne Forthright lorry was dragged off the road by the huge digger.

School awards

THE FIRST education awards ceremony run by Argyll and Bute Council has been held.

Among the winners were Dalintober Primary School, Campbeltown, which picked up the Healthy Life award.

Ardchonnell Primary School, Dalmally, won the Switched On category and Inveraray Primary School were joint winners with Toward primary in the Every-one Counts category.

Innellen Primary School, near Dunoon took the Art Smart award and Rothesay Academy won the What's New category.

However, it was St Mun's Primary School, Dunoon that won the Outstanding Achievement Award, presented by Director of Community Services Douglas Hendry.

The school also won the Working Together category.

Liberals split over leader

ALAN Reid MP and George Lyon MSP have revealed who they are backing in the race for the Liberal Democrat leadership.

Mr Reid is backing Sir Menzies Campbell, the party's current deputy leader, while Mr Lyon is backing Chris Huhne. Mr Reid said that he was giving his support to Sir Menzies because he has the experience required for the job and because he handled the Iraq War well in his role as the party's foreign affairs spokesman. Mr Lyon said that he felt Mr Huhne had the 'energy and drive' required to take the party forward.

Barcaldine's 100 moorings project should bring leisure jobs

CONSTRUCTION has begun on a large development at the Marine Resource Centre (MRC) in Barcaldine including 100 moorings for year-round yacht storage.

The project, costing around £230,000, will also include the development of an existing building to provide an office and toilet and shower blocks and should create new jobs around the marina.

The Scottish Executive gave the go-ahead last December for the project although consideration was given to

Loch Creran's status as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) owing to a serpulent reef within the loch.

MRC already houses a number of marine-related businesses where boat repair and other boatyard activities are carried out.

MRC chief executive Martin Waterhouse said: 'The decision to construct 100 moorings at MRC has given the site and the businesses here a welcome lift.'

'Not only will it result in a new and interesting devel-

opment but will also result in new jobs and business opportunities. Other related marine businesses are likely to be attracted to the site and I can foresee a thriving leisure industry operating in tandem with the existing industrial developments at MRC.'

'There will be at least one MRC job created but this project could prompt businesses like a yacht valeting service or boat hires.'

The plan also includes a service pontoon for loading

and unloading yachts and an enlarged parking area with the marina screened off to the area west of the project.

Mr Waterhouse said he felt a number of marinas and mooring associations were fully booked and had extensive waiting lists for moorings. He said he hoped the project, to be completed by spring, would help MRC to become the most important commercial development campus for marine resources in the west Highlands, operating in tandem with the leisure industry.



Ronnie MacKillop, coxswain of Oban lifeboat which launched 61 times last year making it the busiest single lifeboat in Scotland. 08181002

Oban lifeboat becomes the busiest in Scotland

OBAN lifeboat was the busiest single lifeboat in Scotland last year, launching 61 times and rescuing 72 people.

Last year was the busiest on record for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution in Scotland and the Oban lifeboat figure represents an increase of 24 call-outs from 2004. Coxswain Ronnie MacKillop said: 'Our volunteer crews undertook a variety of roles, from helping to deliver a baby, assisting a coaster which had lost power and rescuing sailors from their sinking yacht. It is very difficult to say why there has been an increase in rescues as there are a lot of factors involved. However, we believe the upward trend over the last decade is in part due to the increasing number of people using the sea for recreation. This is why we have been promoting safety to the growing number of sailors, motor-boaters and beach-goers.'

Mr MacKillop paid tribute to the volunteer crew for their commitment, without which he said the life-saving role of the RNLI would be impossible. He also thanked the local community for its continued support.

The stations at Campbeltown and Islay recorded increases of 21 and 19 call-outs from 2004. Torrobert's call-outs dropped from 33 to 24. Arran and Lochinver's call-outs more than doubled, from 10 to 21 and 8 to 17 respectively.

Science park planning stalls

Oban musicians in Russia

Ambulance crews struggle to cope

PLANS are being discussed on how to revamp the ambulance service in the Oban area as crews currently struggle to cope with being the busiest rural ambulance station in Scotland.

The ever-increasing number of journeys taking patients to and from Glasgow is tying up vehicles and staff to such an extent that the Scottish Ambulance Service is looking at developing a dedicated patient transfer service.

'Stretched' A consultant at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital has said that the ambulance service in Oban is 'stretched' at the moment.

Dr Allan Henderson, consultant physician, was chairing a meeting of the Oban Lorn and Isles Locality Health Forum and told members of his concerns.

'The ambulance service

here is very stretched with only two emergency ambulances in Oban. It is borderline compliance with European working hours.'

The ambulance station has eight accident and emergency ambulance staff plus two relief staff. They provide round-the-clock cover using a system of two shifts by two of four staff on 12-hour shifts; one shift carried out on call at home.

The crews work seven days on, seven days off.

At present there is a nationwide review of the Scottish Ambulance Service and this has shown what the ambulance crews and medical profession in the area have known for a long time: that Oban is the busiest rural ambulance station in Scotland.

Dr Henderson added: 'If the town does continue to grow as planned it is [the ambulance service] some-

thing that has to be addressed.'

Forum member Kenny MacIntyre added: 'I understand there is going to be an increase in the ambulance service here by 2008.'

Demand 'Demand has stayed more or less the same for accident and emergency 999 services,' said a spokesman for the Scottish Ambulance Service.

'But it is quite fair to say that vehicles are more often having to travel for hospital transfers.'

'With more patients being taken to the Glasgow area for treatment, ambulances are frequently tied up on the runs for hours.'

He added: 'We recognise this and that is why we have been putting together proposals since the end of 2005 at the request of the health authority for an inter-hospital transfer service. It

would in fact be dedicated with its own fleet of vehicles to undertake inter-hospital transfers for the area. It is currently being considered by the health department.'

As well as concerns about the work load for the ambulance service there has also been a move in the town to get a new home for the ambulance station which is situated some distance from the hospital it serves.

The Rev Andy Campbell in his capacity as unofficial chaplain to the station has been calling for larger, more suitable accommodation or the crews.

He said the station houses up to as many as nine ambulance crew at a time, who are expected to use one 16 ft by 12 ft room as their rest-room, report writing room, cooking and dining area.

More trains, more choice

TRAVELLERS between Oban and Glasgow could soon have a choice of more times to travel, if ambitious plans comes to fruition.

At present there are three trains a day in each direction and likewise three buses; all travelling at more or less the same time.

The plan is to spread them out and offer people more choice of times to travel.

Argyll and Bute Council's transportation spokesman, Councillor Duncan MacIntyre said this week that it was hoped to build on the success of the commuter train service between Arrochar and Glasgow which was introduced last year on the West Highland Line.

This service allows people to get into and out of Glasgow to suit office hours, instead of arriving too late or having to hang around to catch a train home.

'Five a day'

Highland Rail Partnership is looking at the moves and consultants are preparing a report.

'We are working on increasing the number of trains to five a day,' said Councillor MacIntyre. 'They would complement the bus service running between, rather than at the same time. We are working on that at the moment.'

'The benefit of an early train would be getting people to Glasgow at 9am and then getting a train back mid-afternoon.'

'Many people have to attend meetings in Glasgow and they go by car because if they rely on the train they don't get home until 9pm at night.'

He added: 'We need more trains and a better timetable.'

Soroba wants answers

AN OBAN councillor says he is fed up with the length of time it is taking to push forward plans for a community centre in Soroba, Oban.

Councillor Donald McIntosh, Oban South, has demanded that Argyll and Bute Council's head of legal and protective services Susan Mair and leader Councillor Allan Macaskill attend the monthly meeting of Soroba Area Development Group on Monday.

He hopes that the presence of the leader and head of legal and protective services will lead to questions being answered about the length of time it has taken to carry out compulsory purchase orders for the land

on which it is hoped to build a community centre.

'Slated' 'We have regular meetings every month and I am getting slated for it,' said Councillor McIntosh.

'I have been trying to get the compulsory purchases through for three years but the buck stops here,' he said.

He explained that the council had given its permission for the compulsory purchase orders to take place but there had been little movement from the council's legal department.

It has been wrapped up with the complicated Non-Profit Distribution Organisation (NPDO) to build new

public-private partnership schools in the area and the transfer of council housing stock from the local authority to Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA).

Councillor McIntosh said he had asked for Miss Mair, Councillor Macaskill and also chief executive of ACHA Alastair MacGregor to be brought together on Monday night 'so they can answer to the people'.

ACHA is likely to be involved in community projects such as this once the transfer is completed in July.

'I have been working on this since 1999,' said Councillor McIntosh. 'I managed to get £15,000 from the

council via the area committee to carry out the compulsory purchase orders and we got planning permission three years ago but have had to renew it because it has expired.'

'The community is really up in arms and talking about going to the local government ombudsman,' he added.

Soroba Area Development Group wishes to construct a community centre and all-weather pitch on land at Shuna Terrace and the compulsory purchase orders are needed to acquire part of the land. It is also one of the five priorities for the Oban South ward in Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee's strategic plan.

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Tobermory's Toddy finds new home

TODDY the distillery cat has a new home for her retirement, thanks to Argyll Animal Aid and *The Oban Times*.

We highlighted the fact that Toddy was having to retire from her post as chief mouser at Tobermory Distillery because of her age and failing eyesight; with the distillery so close to the main road and opening out onto a large car park there were fears for her safety.

The distillery contacted the Argyll-based animal welfare charity and they asked *The Oban Times* to help.

Toddy's new home is with Laura Dennett and Alan Makeham, just up the hill from the distillery at Riverside Court. Not only is this a new home for Toddy but it is a new home for Laura and Alan as they have just moved to Mull.

Alan has taken up the post of head of maths and science at Tobermory High School after teaching at The Hermitage Academy, Helensburgh. Laura worked as an assistant registrar in the town and is looking for a new job on Mull.

'Toddy has settled in fine and she has even been outside but because of her blind-

ness we might buy her a harness and lead for safety because she is still remarkably fast,' said Laura. 'The lady from the distillery who used to look after her has been up to see Toddy as well.'

Toddy became something of a celebrity at the distillery, always welcoming people to the visitors' centre and shop. She featured in many people's holiday photographs and even had one fan who used to buy her smoked salmon.

Toddy follows in a long line of distinguished rodent control executives at the distillery; her predecessor was Mrs Tibbs and the situation is currently vacant.



Toddy at her new home with Laura Dennett. 0818002



Talking you into being sick

YOU MAY be familiar with the concept of a placebo, this is an inert treatment, which can nonetheless produce an improvement in the person being treated.

When drugs are tested in clinical trials, they are compared to placebo or dummy pills. Both the drug and the placebo have a placebo effect, but only the drug has an active effect. How much better, or worse, the drug performs, is a measure of its therapeutic effect. Often people think of the placebo response as an imagined or sham effect, as it results from a dummy treatment, but this is not the case. All treatments owe part of their success to the patients' placebo response, and the degree can be dramatic.

In a review of 26 studies on pain relief, placebo was more than half as effective as morphine.

But it's not just subjective factors such as pain that can be altered by placebo response; objective changes that have been measured include lowered blood fats, increased exercise tolerance of the heart, decreased swelling after facial surgery and improved healing of duodenal ulcers.

In an experiment, medical students were given a single drug dose, allegedly to practice being able to recognise and record signs and symptoms. Half were given a stimulant in a red capsule, while the others were given a sedative in a blue capsule, and the likely effects of these drugs were explained to them. They then paired up to observe and record the effects in each other. Not surprisingly, many of them experienced the effects of the drugs as they had been described, despite the fact that the red capsules actually contained sedatives, and the blue capsules actually contained stimulants. So not only were the students able to generate the effects of drugs they hadn't taken, they also overcame the opposing effects of the drugs they had taken.

The power of placebo lies within the patient, not the medicine.

It is based on the power of belief or expectation, even though the belief or expectation may be completely unconscious. But what happens if a negative or limiting belief or expectation is planted in our mind? The effects can be just as powerful, and this is then referred to as a nocebo response. In other words, negative beliefs or expectations can create disease effects that would not otherwise be there, or exaggerate ones that are there.

Comments like 'there is no treatment for this and it will probably get worse' can damage the health of those receiving them. So be careful about the comments you take to heart, especially if they come from an 'expert'.

A few years ago I was running a training session for GP registrars. I remember their GP trainer saying that any doctor who says 'there is nothing that can be done' should be struck off.

I agree with him. People and their ability to recover are nothing short of miraculous; anyone who claims to be so sure of anything is rather too arrogant to work in healthcare.

Andrew Pallas ND DO MRN, Osteopath & Naturopath, Oban Complementary Health Centre. Telephone 01631 567054

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Glasgow Gaelic music conference 'food for the soul'

BREATHTAKINGLY lyrical, toe-tapping, heart-stopping food for the soul - Gaelic music is all of these to Argyll-born Anne Lorne Gillies.

Now the huge surge in international popularity of Gaelic music is to be discussed at Scotland's first dedicated Gaelic Music Conference, Iul Ciuil, and, as one of the people who has helped to promote this growth, the well-known performer will be there.

The two-day event is for lovers of Gaelic music and takes place on March 22 and 23 in the Recital Room at City Halls, Glasgow.

Iul Ciuil will celebrate the incredible growth in popularity and plans will also be laid to set up a development strategy for the future of Gaelic music.

The cream of Gaelic music performers will be there including Donald Shaw of *Capercaille*, Donnie Munro, former *Runrig* lead singer, Dermot McLaughlin, musician and former music director with the Irish Arts Council, and John Purser, musician, historian, composer and broadcaster, and others.

All the delegates have experience in performing, recording, producing and broadcasting.

Organised by The Gaelic arts agency Proiseact nan Ealan, the conference will be dedicated to enhancing the future of Gaelic music. It will be based on a sharing of skills and ideas so a strategy can be developed, but it won't all be work.

A special ceilidh has been organised for the night of Wednesday March 22, at which musicians are invited to take along their instruments and join in with the Gaelic music celebrities.

Dr Anne Lorne Gillies said: 'Whether you see Gaelic music as a window upon an ancient and still vibrant culture or as one of Scotland's premiere commercial assets, as a vehicle for teaching the language or a way of getting together and having a good time, as a career-path or as breath-takingly lyrical, toe-tap-

ping, heart-stopping food for the soul, then you should come to Iul Ciuil. I have found it to be all these things.'

The focus on the first day will be on music and the community, with discussions centring on education, tradition-bearing, the role of music and song in language development and community music-making. Day two will concentrate

on professional development with the focus on touring and performing, new music, songwriting, recording, marketing and promotion, digital technology, copyright, performing rights and funding.

Both days will include keynote sessions with speakers, panel discussions, break-out groups and surgery sessions with specialist advisers.



Graham Campbell flanked by Hans Rissman, Hospitality Industry Trust bursary chairman, left, and television and radio presenter Fred MacAulay, right.

Passion for food wins Oban chef top award

AN OBAN chef has been recognised as one of the country's up and coming talents in the hospitality industry.

Graham Campbell, of the Caledonian Hotel, Oban,

was given one of 20 scholarships to work with some of the industry's most successful leaders.

Some of last year's winners at the Emerging Talent Scholarships spent time in exotic locations such as Dubai, the Disney Institute, Florida, or even Bruichladdich Distillery on Islay.

Graham received the good news at Scotland's Emerging Talent conference, organised by the Hospitality Industry Trust, in Edinburgh.

A spokesperson for the event said: 'Graham won his award because of his passion as a chef, his ultimate goal being to open his own restaurant, and for his recognition of the need to broaden his horizons, not only for himself, but to improve what he does as a representative of Scotland.'

Call for NHS Highland to come to aid of Argyll and Bute Hospital

NHS HIGHLAND is being asked to take a swift hand in the future of Argyll and Bute Hospital in Mid Argyll when it takes over from NHS Argyll and Clyde in April.

Following a meeting with staff at the hospital, who have been facing an uncertain future since NHS Argyll and Clyde announced it was reorganising mental health services in Argyll, MSP George Lyon has asked for a meeting with NHS Highland.

The Argyll and Bute MSP said staff had raised concerns about the lack of progress on the future of

mental health services at the hospital. Staff had expressed frustration, he said, at delays on how the new mental health services would be configured and how many specialist beds there would be at Lochgilphead.

'The long delays and failure to agree on how mental health services in Argyll and Bute will be configured has been damaging to staff morale and it is therefore vital that decisions are reached quickly,' he said. He claimed there had been a lack of investment at the hospital because of the uncertainty and that he would be asking NHS Highland to remedy that situation as quickly as possible.

'I will also urge Highland Health Board to engage with staff at the Mid Argyll hospital to seek their views on the future of these vital services.'

NHS Argyll and Clyde

told staff at the hospital last month that all posts were at risk as there would be an 'overall reduction of the resources and staff' needed at the hospital.

A spokesman for the health authority said last month there had been a shift away from inpatient treatment over the last decade towards care in the community.

Some hospital staff would remain in Mid Argyll but others would be given support and redeployment costs to other suitable posts to avoid any redundancies.

Housing association appoints new chief

WEST Highland Housing Association Limited has a new chief executive, Lesley McInnes.

Lesley comes to the Oban-based association after working as a senior manager in both local authorities and housing associations.

Her most recent experience involved the negotiation of an extensive stock transfer in Ayrshire and thereafter setting up a company which deals with jobs for young people within the construction industry; both fields are very relevant to

Ken MacColl, association chairman, said: 'We are delighted that someone of Lesley's experience and ability is joining us at West Highland and we are looking forward to working with her to continue our progress of steady growth across our area with good, well-built, affordable homes incorporating sustainable technology in years ahead.'

Lesley leaves her current position as director of care and housing with Margaret Blackwood Housing next week.



Lesley McInnes.

the housing and construction scene in Argyll at present.

Skye fiddle fest aims for three days

AFTER the success of last year's inaugural Skye Fiddle and Accordion Club festival, this year's event is again set to run for three days.

Formally scheduled to appear at the festival which takes place in May are Marian Anderson, Ross MacPherson and the Ballochmyle Ceilidh Band.

The informal ceilidhs which sprang up in pubs around Portree defined last year's festival and organisers are hoping for more of the same this summer.

Between 50 and 60 musicians from all over Argyll, the Highlands, Western Isles and the central belt performed in 2005 and this year's festival runs from May 25-27.

February ceilidh
Meanwhile the Skye club welcomed a healthy contingent from Highland Accordion and Fiddle Club from Inverness at its February ceilidh in the Royal Hotel.

Local musicians performed for the first half with Lorraine Gillies on piano accordion, James Stewart on second box and Donald John Campbell on drums. They opened the proceedings with a lively set of jigs including a tune written for Lorraine's grandfather entitled *Kenny Gillies of Portalong*.

The evening ended when the trio played another two sets before handing over to Steven Barclay, aged 10, who played a march, strathspey and reel. Steven was followed by young solo fiddle player Kirsty MacLeod and making his debut at the club on piano accordion was popular local piper and Emmerdale extra Alastair MacPherson, accompanied on second box by James Stewart and on drums by Hamish MacKenzie. James Stewart moved from second box to lead on some great sets of marches, jigs and Shetland tunes, with drummer Francis Coghill from Kyle.

The second half opened in style with Sheila Urquhart on piano accordion. Sheila is well-known in Skye where she lived for many years with her late husband Roddy whose own band was always in great demand throughout the island. Sheila was backed by Susie Simpson on second box, Jacquie MacDonald on keyboards, Murd Watson on fiddle and drummer Donald MacRae.

Jimmy Smith gave a tremendous selection on his mouth organ including some beautiful Gaelic waltzes. The 'moothee' is seldom ever heard on Skye and was particularly appreciated by the local audience.

The evening ended when the trio played another two sets before handing over to

CalMac's Irish ferry contract extended

FERRY company Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) has had its contract to run the Ballycastle to Rathlin ferry extended until the beginning of April 2007.

'We are delighted to have our contract as operator of this service extended for a further year and we look forward to developing our on-going relationship with the communities of Rathlin and the mainland of Northern Ireland,' said Dr Harold Mills, CalMac chairman.

The ferry company has been running the service since 1996 and last year came to a new leasing arrangement with Moyle District Council in Northern Ireland.

'Since we started operating the service we have seen a spell of considerable growth on the route,' said Dr Mills.

'Caledonian MacBrayne will continue to work with all the appropriate agencies to offer the best service possible to the island community while the future requirements of the route are being assessed,' added Dr Mills.

AQUACULTURE TODAY 2006

28 - 30 MARCH

Fit for the Future



Aquaculture Today 2006 is being held at Edinburgh's five star Sheraton Hotel & Spa from March 28-30 and is set to be one of the most influential events of its kind held in the UK.

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

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

- Markets
- Fish Health
- Innovation
- Species Development.

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



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

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WEEKLY programmes broadcast on Oban FM on Monday evenings between 5pm and 6pm are boosting Gaelic in the Oban area.

They are presented by Joy Dunlop, An Commun Gaidhealach's Gaelic Development Officer for Argyll and Bute.

Given over largely to traditional Gaelic music, the programmes also feature interviews with local native Gaelic speakers who are always welcome.

Anyone who has any news of interest to Gaelic which they would like broadcast should phone Joy at her office on 565475.

Also proving highly successful are Gaelic conversation classes organised by Joy in Oban's Lancaster Hotel every Monday. These are open both to fluent speakers and learners.

The next will take place on March 6.

Joy, who lives in Connel, is a graduate of Sabhal Mor Ostaig, the Gaelic college on Skye.

MEETING in the Regent Hotel on Monday February 6, members of Oban Camera Club found themselves touring China courtesy of that evening's guest speaker, David Hay, Pitlochry, the prominent Scottish photographer and Scottish Photographic Federation judge.

Mr Hay's creative skills were seen to full advantage as he concentrated on showing the people of that huge and fascinating country unposed and in natural settings.

The vote of thanks was proposed by vice president Jim Kirkpatrick.

MEMBERS of the Oban group of the National Trust of Scotland found themselves touring the Inner Hebrides when they met in St Moluag's Church Centre, Oban, on Saturday February 4.

Conducting the trip via an outstanding slide show was Pete McHugh, Oban. Visited were Iona, Burgh on Mull and the lovely island of Canna.

AN OBAN schoolgirl has won the runners-up award in a national racial equality poster competition.

The prize has gone to Anmol Arshad, a primary six pupil at Park Primary School.

She and her family have been invited to attend an awards ceremony in the banquet hall in Glasgow City Chambers.

Head teacher Gillian Carney said: 'We are delighted by her success.'

The school is currently taking part in an eco project which involves creating an outdoor classroom in the quadrangle area.

The Royal Bank, which runs the scheme, has given the school £4,000 to



Katie receives her award from Graham MacQueen. Also in the photograph are Rotarians Bill Taylor, left, and Kenny Munro, right.



Lewis Evan celebrates his win with Rotarian Bill Taylor and Graham MacQueen.

redesign the area. Parents willing to help in clearing the ground of old paving slabs and stones and in landscaping it are invited to contact the school office.

THE CHILLS of winter were effectively dispelled for members of Oban Rotary Club when, meeting recently in the Regent Hotel, they enjoyed an illustrated talk on a cruise round Italy, given by former Rotarian Jim Kirkpatrick, Oban.

Jim took his audience on a fascinating tour from Sicily to the Adriatic, concentrating on such places of interest as the volcanoes of Etna and Vesuvius and the latter's victim Pompeii, destroyed in 79 AD.

Other places visited included Rome and Dubrovnik where their guest had photographed many historic buildings including some beautiful churches.

Votes of thanks were proposed by the president, John Macfarlane, Taynuilt.

JANUARY was a highly active month for members of Oban Inner Wheel.

The Wheel marked National Inner Wheel Day on January 10 with a visit to Dunmar Court, the Oban council-run residential care centre for the elderly, where they distributed generous quantities of home-baking and other gifts before spending the afternoon chatting to residents.

On January 10, a bring-and-buy sale, arranged by the overseas committee, was held in the Regent Hotel, raising around £80 which will be distributed to various overseas charities.

Afterwards, over dinner, members discussed business.

On Saturday February 11, the Regent was the setting for a coffee morning run by the Wheel. A strong attendance enabled the organisers to raise more than £300.

Attractions included sales tables and a raffle. Proceeds are to be distributed to local charities.

Planned next is a bingo night at which the forthcoming Inner Wheel Conference in Belfast will be discussed.

A delegation from Oban will attend the conference.

AN ART competition, run by Oban Rotary Club and open to local primary schools, drew more than 180 entries, all of a high standard.

The winners were: primaries four to seven - Lewis Evans of Dunbeg primary and primaries one to three - Katie Trafford of Park Primary, Oban.

They each received a cheque for £20 and a canvas bonded print of their winning entry, presented by Graham MacQueen, the club's senior vice president.

Their schools received a cheque for £30.

Island postmasters speak out against plans to halt card accounts

RURAL postmasters have joined politicians in decrying the announcement that the government intends to abolish the Post Office Card Account by 2010.

The account was introduced three years ago as an alternative to pensions and benefits being paid directly into recipients' bank ac-

counts after widespread protests at the removal of the benefit book and the effect that would have on both Post Office branches and their customers.

Sandy Brunton, from Fionnphort Post Office on Mull, said: 'It is another service that is being taken away from the Post Office.

'When the scheme was introduced no indication was given at all that it was going to be a temporary situation. It seems the government is determined to take customers away from Post Offices.'

Mr Brunton said that abolition of the card account could see rural Post Offices forced to close through a

lack of custom. Post Offices are absolutely crucial to the infrastructure of the whole country but are particularly important in rural locations,' he said.

'The Post Office and local shop are in many cases so closely linked that one could not survive without the other. At a time when

we should be looking to do all we can to persuade people to stay on the islands and in our rural communities a decision like this does us no favours at all.'

Catherine Mactaggart, from Bowmore Post Office on Islay, felt that her business would be hit hard if the scheme was abolished.

'We would have far fewer customers because it would have a massive impact on the service that we would be offering, she said.

'Our customers are concerned about it as well. Many of them have already made a conscious decision to use the card account to help keep their local Post

Offices open but it seems the government is trying to railroad them into using the banks.

'In the long-term this could lead to the closure of this Post Office; if people stop coming here for their money, will they stop coming here for their stamps and other things?'

Oban Gaelic youth club visits Pharos

SOME new Gaelic words were learned by members of Sradagan an Obain after a tour round the Northern Lighthouse Board ship Pharos.

As part of the Gaelic Youth Club's aim to extend the use of Gaelic among primary school children in Oban beyond school, the club organises trips out with the help of Gaelic-speaking adults.

Eric Smith, originally from Lewis, a parent of one club member and captain of the Pharos, organised to take around 25 children around the lighthouse board ship last Tuesday.

Captain Smith talked to them in Gaelic about what the ship does and how it operates. The guided tour included a visit to the ship's bridge, seeing the crew's quarters and mess and ended with them going down in small groups to see the engines.

The tour was followed by a quiz and word search, where the children had to find 15 new words and



Sradagan an Obain members beside the Pharos at the Northern Lighthouse Board's pier in Oban. (08yhb01)

were rewarded for their efforts with some goodies courtesy of the Northern Lighthouse Board.

The club, overseen by a voluntary committee, has been running since 2000 and meets on a Tuesday night in the Free Church

Hall, Oban. Sradagan an Obain is part of a national network of Gaelic youth clubs and the Oban branch hopes to organise more trips to organisations around the town.

It is also looking for more helpers who speak Gaelic

as many of the parents, although willing to help, are not Gaelic speakers themselves.

Anyone who would like to help and speaks Gaelic should contact secretary Lesley MacPherson on 01631 565119.

Dunstaffnage science park planning stalls

TWO OBJECTORS could hold up the entire plans for a science park expansion at Dunstaffnage.

They have objected to land being zoned for development in the draft local plan and as such can force an inquiry.

The Scottish Association for Marine Science has been storming ahead with its new multi-million pound premises and the adjoining European Centre for Marine Biotechnology letting off its 'business incubator units' to new companies and growing into a major success story.

Land has been earmarked alongside the complex at Dunstaffnage and its adjoining Argyll College campus for a science park; it has even been highlighted for such in the local plan.

But two people have objected and the whole plan now grinds to a halt.

Ken Abernethy, chief executive of Argyll and Islands Enterprise, said how 'frustrating' it would be to see the science park stall.

The Highlands and Islands Enterprise network strategy for the region as a whole is based on a strategy of 'A Smart, Successful Highlands and Islands', which ties in with national strategy to attract good quality, hi-tech businesses and jobs to the country.

The Scottish Association for Marine Science is already seeking to employ 24

new senior staff - professors, readers and lecturers in a cross section of marine sciences - plus 14 support staff to join the existing staff of 135.

Mr Abernethy told The Oban Times: 'With the science park at Dunstaffnage we have secured access to land alongside Dunstaffnage.

'However, two objectors to the local area plan want to address this development. The council will have no alternative but to turn down the application and it looks like the area plan will have to go to inquiry with a delay of two years.'

With so much interest in Dunstaffnage, so many firms interested in opening

up there and more jobs being created there, any delay is frustrating, Mr Abernethy feels.

'Two years in securing the park isn't catastrophic but it is pretty frustrating.'

He added: 'I am surprised we are having to do this at Dunstaffnage with firms knocking at the door.'

Highlands and Islands Enterprise strategy for the region is to attract quality, high-paid jobs.

'We are in the process of changing gear to a higher-value economy.

'We are actively welcoming new residents to the area and we need many more,' said William Rae, chairman of Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Round trip to Tiree as rope snaps

PASSENGERS on the Oban to Tiree ferry last Thursday had an unscheduled round trip when a rope snapped as the boat docked at Tiree.

Would-be-passengers waiting on the island were left on the pier.

Caledonian MacBrayne's MV Lord of the Isles morning sailing from Oban reached Tiree and lowered its vehicle ramp after being tied up. However, a combination of a large swell and a high tide caused the stern line to snap.

No passengers or vehicles had departed or boarded the ship when the rope snapped.

The vessel sailed on to Coll without dropping off or picking up passengers at Tiree and then returned to Oban.

Wrong name 'for a laugh' man admonished

A MAN facing a warrant for his arrest gave Oban police officers a false identity in an attempt to avoid being arrested.

David MacKenzie, aged 40, who is currently serving a sentence in Lowmoss Prison, pled guilty and was admonished for attempting to pervert the course of justice when he appeared at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

When police officers approached MacKenzie on July 21 last year at the Port Beag slip on Gallanach Road, Oban, he had been sleeping on a derelict boat.

He told them his name was Ian MacKenzie and gave a false date of birth.

Procurator Fiscal Clifford Most told the court MacKenzie had told the policemen a false name 'just for a laugh'.



The pupils from Lochnell and Rockfield primary schools were the group winners at Lorn Maths Fest. (08mau01)

Lorn Maths Fest success

NEVER mind a double period of maths. Lorn pupils faced a full day of maths in Oban High School.

The annual Lorn Maths Fest was held for the seventh time with around 60 budding

Organisers Nan Johnstone and Ruth Livingstone said the pupils had all been very bright and keen in their problem solving.

The Maths Fest received praise from school inspectors two years ago in a report on Oban high.

Problem solving and written problems were on the menu for the youngsters with representatives from each primary school working as markers.

Organisers Nan Johnstone and Ruth Livingstone said the pupils had all been very bright and keen in their problem solving.

The Maths Fest received praise from school inspectors two years ago in a report on Oban high.

Lismore welcomes back 'their' Eigg with open arms

LISMORE will get its more familiar MV Isle of Eigg ferry back sooner than expected.

The ferry, which runs between Oban and Lismore, has been missed during its recent refit as some feel its replacement does not meet islanders' needs.

It was thought the ferry would not return until the end of March but a spokesman for Caledonian MacBrayne has confirmed the Isle of Eigg will return during the middle of next week.

The spokesman also dismissed rumours the ferry

would work the Tayinloan to Gigha run.

In the meantime, Lismore islanders have been given the MV Bruernish.

John Carmichael, a crofter and the island's community council chairman, said: 'The Bruernish has not got an extended wheelhouse so hay lorries are not allowed on the boat. The boat's driver cannot see over the top of the hay lorries.'

Although the Isle of Eigg can carry hay lorries because of its higher wheelhouse, ongoing problems with building materials will

continue when it returns. Neither the Isle of Eigg nor the Bruernish can carry building materials on a lorry with any bulk.

Mr Carmichael added: 'Mull Building Supplies can carry some materials on the boat but no builders' lorries can get on either of the boats so any major works are a problem. The least we should expect is a vehicle that can travel on public roads can travel on the ferry.'

'We're not asking for huge articulated lorries but we need to get lorries over that can carry building materials.'

Glencruitten bids for new playpark

MOVES are afoot to create a play area in the Mossfield area of Oban for younger children whose nearest playground is at Atlantis Leisure on Dalriach Road.

Glencruitten and Miller Road Residents' and Tenants' Association has created a sub-committee to deal with the issue and has already approached Argyll and Bute Council.

The council has been asked by the association if it can lease an area of ground next to the playing fields at the end of Mossfield Avenue.

The 95 square metres of land is at present un-used and would need to be cleared of scrub and weeds as well as be levelled.

Association member Neil MacIntyre is in charge of the sub-committee and he explained the reasoning behind the request.

'It would be just for the young ones, so the mums

don't have to go too far for somewhere to let the kids play.

'We'd just have some picnic tables and some swings and maybe a slide,' he said.

He said the association was really at the start of exploring the possibilities and the first step was to ask the council if the association could lease the land.

Further down the line, the association will need to deal with the issue of maintenance and insurance but at the moment has its sights set on fund raising to clear the land.

After that it would turn its attention to raising the funding necessary to buy equipment.

It was agreed at last week's Strategic Policy Committee of Argyll and Bute Council that the land should be rented to the association on a 21-year lease. This has to be ratified by the Scottish Executive and planning permission will be needed too.

Ferry terminal lacks left luggage office

CALEDONIAN MacBrayne (CalMac) is still waiting to receive advice on whether or not it can install a left luggage department at Oban's ferry terminal.

Ferry passengers sailing to and from Oban currently have to carry their luggage around with them while they wait for their connecting ferries, a situation which has prompted Western Isles MP Angus MacNeil to write to CalMac managing director Lawrie Sinclair.

CalMac this week blamed the delay on a lack of information being made available to the company.

A spokesman for the company said: 'We are awaiting guidance from the appropriate authorities as to what we should be doing and until such time as we receive that guidance we are

not in a position to act. We regret any inconvenience this causes our passengers but it is all down to the delay in us receiving clear information and guidance from the appropriate authorities.'

Mr MacNeil has called on CalMac to consider putting interim measures in place until a decision is made on whether or not a left luggage service is put in place.

Mr MacNeil said: 'Passengers who travel through Oban to catch onward ferries to Castlebay and Lochboisdale have to cart their luggage round the town as there is nowhere at the ferry terminal for them to leave their luggage.'

'Finding out that nothing has been done to progress the matter is unsatisfactory and something that will disappoint many people.'

Police files

Call centre

INSPECTOR Neil Wallace has said the shifting of Oban Police Station's incoming calls to a call centre is 'nothing to be frightened of.'

The change was made on Tuesday and all calls to Oban Police Station will be re-routed to call centres in Glasgow and Motherwell.

However, Inspector Wallace said this system would make the police response faster. He added: 'Because of the number of jobs being done in the office there were times when the phone may not have been answered immediately.'

'As of Tuesday people will get an immediate answer to their phone call.

'The call representatives who answer the phones are trained to deal with the vast majority of police queries.

'The move is nothing to be frightened of.'

See Page 5.

Hoax call

POLICE were called to what was reported as a road accident near Pennyfuir last Wednesday.

The caller said a car had overturned but on arrival there was no evidence of an accident.

Inspector Neil Wallace said: 'If a person making a hoax call is detected a report will go to the procurator fiscal.'

Tiree accident

A ROAD accident involving two cars occurred on Tiree last Saturday outside the Scarnish Hotel.

No-one was injured in the accident.

Car damaged

THE OFFSIDE wing mirror of a car was broken off overnight in Oban between Friday February 17 and Saturday February 18.

The car was parked in Croft Avenue when the incident occurred.

Anyone with any information should phone 01631 510500.

Car abandoned

A REPORT came into Oban Police Station at 11.55am last Friday of an abandoned car on Fearnoch Hill on the A85. Police enquiries revealed the car was owned by a local man and the car had broken down.

Invernevis group call on local councillors to stand up and be counted

A GROUP aiming to prevent the privatisation of a Fort William care home for the elderly are calling on local councillors to stand up and be counted.

After a meeting of Invernevis Action Group in Fort William's Nevis Centre on Monday the group has decided to call a meeting with all local councillors in Fort William to gauge their support.

The group has also invited Highland Council's housing and social work committee chairperson Margaret Davidson to a meeting in Fort William to discuss the council's plan to turn over 30 residential care places at Invernevis to the private sector.

Last week the council's care home sub-committee agreed to continue its consultation with residents, families, staff and local action groups before it decides whether or not to privatise elderly care homes at a special meeting of its housing and social work committee on Thursday May 4. Invernevis Action Group joined a demonstration as the sub-committee held its second meeting last week in Inverness.

Margaret Davidson said: 'We had a very constructive meeting today and have moved a number of matters forward in a positive way.'

'We have to modernise the way we provide care to older

people in recognition of the projected 37 per cent increase in older people over the next 20 years. We need to provide services fit for purpose and put in place a comprehensive range of care measures.'

Council vice convener Michael Foxley said: 'We want to provide for more and better packages of care for our elderly, either in their own homes or in sheltered housing. We want to develop our proposals by working with the local communities and with our colleagues in the health service.'

After the meeting last week, the Wade Centre in Kingussie, was taken off the privatisation list.

The fate of the other six care homes - Ach an Eas and Burnside, Inverness; Invernevis House in Fort William; Grant House in Grantown; Urray House in Muir of Ord, and Duthac House in Tain - has been delayed.

Councillor Davidson is expected to meet members of the Highland Senior Citizens Network on Monday February 27 for further talks.

Invernevis group member John Morrison said: 'We are not accepting the fact that Invernevis will be privatised. We are trying to get a meeting with all Lochaber's councillors to get them to tell us whether they are with us or against us.'

Progress on waterfront project

PROGRESS on Fort William's waterfront project was top of the agenda at a recent meeting of the town's steering group.

Property consultant Mark Robertson outlined the revised development brief and members of Fort William Steering Group (FWSG) were pleased to see this next stage is moving forward. There were also several additional suggestions for inclusion in the brief. While FWSG members say they are still enthusiastic about the project, concerns were expressed about any further delays and Highland Council was requested to ensure that the tendering process was undertaken as quickly as possible.

The council's joint venture group will consider the report at the end of February and the council's area committee and FWSG will be able to make their observations on the report at a meeting in early March, after which developers will be invited to submit their plans.

FWSG chairman and local councillor Neil Clark said: 'I am delighted to see this project take another step forward. While progress has been slower than many of us would have hoped for, it has been important to make sure all the necessary elements are included in the development brief that suit the town.'

Fort lifeboat campaign launched

COASTGUARD officers in Lochaber are calling for a dedicated lifeboat for the Fort William area.

The nearest lifeboat to Fort William, based in Oban, takes up to one hour to reach the town and may also be needed elsewhere on the west coast.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) is to visit Fort William next month to look at fundraising for the lifeboat, which could be based at Fort William or Corpach and crewed by local volunteers.

The RNLI visit next month will also see further discussions on the idea, put forward by HM Coastguard Lochaber area manager Phil Wren.

He said: 'We have never had a rescue boat dedicated to the waters around Fort William.'

'There is an all-weather

RNLI Lifeboat based in Oban which can be tasked to Loch Linnhe but could take up to an hour to get here and may well be tasked elsewhere.

Rescue

'There are also two fast Coastguard patrol boats based at Dunstaffnage but they are not permanently manned.'

'The dedicated Coastguard rescue boat on Loch Ness has to remain on that loch at all times and most rescue helicopters have a one hour transit time to Fort William.'

Phil said that statistics showed that it would be advantageous to have an RNLI inshore lifeboat (D Class) based in Fort William, housed somewhere on the Fort William or Corpach waterfront and crewed by locals.

Another smaller lifeboat on a trailer would not only

enable a fast launch but could respond to inland water incidents on, for example, lochs Lochy, Oich, Arkaig and Morar.

HM Coastguard recorded another busy year for search and rescue with rescue officers throughout Lochaber attending 114 incidents in 2005.

Phil said: 'I would take this opportunity to stress to anyone who, either for work or pleasure ventures out on small boats, to wear a lifejacket.'

'There have been eight deaths in one week alone in January 2006 around the UK coast through not wearing a lifejacket.'

Phil added that if anyone in Lochaber was interested in joining the campaign for a Fort William lifeboat and would like to help they should contact Phil Wren on 01397 772122 or 07769 640775.



Young musicians Geum Chrystal, Kirsten Coleman and Jennifer MacCallum with strings instructor Nick Hadwen. 1080rc02

Another string to Lochaber school's bow

THREE young musicians from Lochaber High School have been picked to play for the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland.

Violinists Geum Chrystal and Kirsten Coleman, both

aged 15, and viola player Jennifer MacCallum, 16, were chosen ahead of a record number of applicants for the prestigious orchestra.

It is an incredible achieve-

ment for the school as there were a record number of auditions for the orchestra this year which takes young people up to the age of 21.

All three girls hope to become professional musi-

cians in the future. Kirsten wants to study music in London and join a professional orchestra, Jennifer would like to study music in Manchester and Geum wants to teach the violin.

Instructor Nick Coleman said: 'It is an incredible achievement.'

'The fact that this school produced three students who got into the orchestra is great.'

High noon at Kinlochleven

PUPILS from Kinlochleven High School will be staging an ambitious performance of a comedy western, *The Golden Nugget of Badcrow*, next month.

The show will run for three nights from Tuesday March 14 to Thursday March 16.

Tickets, priced £3 and £1.50 for students and OAPs, are on sale now.

Band night for youth shelter

LOCAL bands are to stage a concert in Ballachulish Village Hall on Saturday February 25 at 8pm to raise funds for a youth shelter for Ballachulish and Glencoe.

Admission is free but donations will be gratefully accepted.

Marine park questions unanswered

A MORAR fisherman claims Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has not answered questions about the impact of a coastal marine park on communities, with the deadline for a site to be proposed to the Scottish Executive approaching.

Ardnamurchan, the Small Isles and south Skye and Argyll and the islands are now the front runners to be recommended by SNH as a site for a marine park at the end of March.

ASNH report stated each of the areas have a 'different balance of strengths and weaknesses'.

Ian MacKinnon from Tougal, Morar, has been a fisherman and oyster farmer for 20 years and says he is not opposed to the idea of a marine park but simply does not know enough about it - even after attending two meetings organised by SNH. He said: 'I had a list of questions but nobody seems to have been able to

answer them. Will marine park status solve the problems of housing, get me a dentist in Lochaber or get more teachers for schools in Mallaig and Ardnarmurchan? We know that otters, golden eagles and water voles will be okay but who will guarantee our elderly people will be looked after?'

Mr MacDonald said he did not believe SNH was equipped to carry out the consultation. He added:

'They are an environmental group and don't have economists on the board. We don't have a huge finance or insurance sector on the west coast but have fishing, aquaculture, crofting and tourism and we have done a pretty good job of conservation so far.'

SNH says there will be a 'full public consultation' after tendering the short list.

The executive will announce the marine park area in 2007.

Business as usual for Skye poulterer despite bird flu

A SKYE poultry rearer says there is a lot of 'silly, panicky stories' going around about bird flu but it is business as usual for him.

Donald MacDonald from Struan has run Skye Pullets for more than 30 years and sells young hens, geese and ducks throughout the west coast.

Mr MacDonald says some of his customers who buy small numbers of his birds

have delayed delivery. He said: 'A man from Harris was going to take 150 hens but has put it off until the end of the month but I sold those hens to other customers who were delighted to get the birds early. The government is getting a lot of criticism but I think it is handling it pretty well. People who don't keep hens and are calling for all poultry to be

kept indoors should be aware that it would have a devastating effect on egg production as hens normally kept outside stop laying if they are moved indoors.'

But Mr MacDonald is concerned about a possible ban on moving poultry as he will be selling around 800 birds at the end of the month. He added: 'That would be a disaster because

they would start laying and I wouldn't have the facilities for them. There are a lot of silly, panicky stories going about. I know a Western Isles woman who thought an egg with a thin shell was bird flu while somebody took a dead cockerel to the vet because she thought it had died of the disease. But west coasters are sensible people in the main.'

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Lewis branch 'no' to Sunday sailings

THE LEWIS branch of the Lord's Day Observance Society (LDOS) has urged Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) to continue its policy of no Sunday sailings on the Sound of Harris.

The issue is on the agenda for a meeting of the Shipping Advisory Service Committee today (Thursday) and Angus Mackay, secretary of the Lewis branch of the LDOS, has written to CalMac chief executive Lawrie Sinclair.

He said: 'The pressures of sustaining an economically viable existence in this remote corner are exacting an increasingly high price on our family and community life. In that context, the loss of our day of rest would be a catastrophic blow to our social stability.'

'It is a recognition of that fact that leaves many non-Christians in our community supportive of the Sabbath.'

NEWSDESK 01631 568000

'Boost' for Lochaber woman

A LOCHABER hotel manager is celebrating after losing more than five stone in weight in just 10 months, allowing her to hit the shops for size 10 dresses.

Manja Gibson, who is originally from Germany, manages Glenfinnan House Hotel with husband Duncan.

Manja decided to make strides to lose weight when she saw pictures of herself on holiday on the beach.

Manja said: 'I looked terrible in all the holiday photos, especially the ones where I was wearing a bikini. That's when I realised just how much I had let myself go.'

As a result Manja joined Scottish Slimmers in Fort William and with the support of tutor Linda Hegarty began taking inspiration from other class members. 'Every time the target bell rang to announce that a member had reached their target weight, I would be really happy for them and wonder when it would be my turn,' she said.

Exercise, healthy eating



Manja Gibson. and a treat of a new outfit success saw her being invited to Glasgow for a dress size saw Manja slim 'makeover' and posing for to 10 stone. Manja's slimmers' magazine *Boost!*

Highlands get £125m for Argyll

HIGHLAND'S health board has received just over £125 million this year to pay for the absorption of NHS Argyll and Clyde services.

The Scottish Executive used the Arbutnott Formula to calculate how NHS Argyll and Clyde's funding should be split between NHS Highland and NHS Greater Glasgow, which received £424m.

The Arbutnott formula takes account of population, level of deprivation, age of population, gender and the proportion of population living in remote and rural areas. In total NHS Highland was allocated a budget of just over £419m including the £125m payment for Argyll and Clyde services, a rise of nearly eight per cent on last year's budget of £272m.

Health minister Andy Kerr said: 'I want boards to use this funding to deliver the highest standards of patient care as locally as possible and as specialised as necessary.'

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Faraidhean saor

THA RIAGHALTAS na h-Alba air ainmeachadh gu tig lùghdachadh mòr air faraidhean adhair dha luchd-siubhal nan eilean.

Chaidh fàilte chridheil a chur air an naidheachd agus e air fhàicinn mar nì a bheir leasachadh air eaconamaidhean nan Eilean Siar.

Bidh na faraidhean air an lùghdachadh suas ri 40% dhaibh-san a tha a' siubhal a-mach às na h-eileanan, ged nach bi isleachadh sam bith dhaibh-san a bhios a' siubhal bho na bailtean mòra chun nan eilean.

Thuir ball-parlaimid nan Eilean Siar, Alasdair Mòreasdan, gun robh iad an dòchas an sgeama a chur an-sàs as t-samhradh. 'S e ceum mòr dha-rìribh a tha seo dha eileanaich agus nì e fada nas fhasa dha daoine siubhal air plèana,' thuir e.

'Mar eisimpleir faodaidh daoine na saor-làithean aca, ann am Breatainn agus thall-thairis, a-nis ullachadh le bhith cleachdadh nan seirbheisean a tha a' ruith eadar na h-eileanan agus tìr-mòr Alba.

'Tha mi an dòchas gum broснаich an sgeama seo companaidhean adhair diofraichte seirbheisean a ruith bho na h-eileanan.'

The Scottish Executive has announced that islanders will receive a significant reduction in air fares.

The news was warmly welcomed as it will be seen as a measure to bring economic development to the Western Isles. Fares will be cut by up to 40 per cent for those who travel from the islands, although there will be no reduction for passengers travelling from mainland cities to the islands.

Western Isles MP Alasdair Morrison said he hoped the scheme will be introduced in the summer.

'This reduction represents a quantum leap in support for the islands and will make air travel affordable for all,' he said.

'It will, for example, allow families to plan holidays within the UK and further afield using the existing air links between the islands and the Scottish mainland.'

'I hope this scheme will also encourage a variety of airlines to think about providing services to and from the islands.'

Togail dha companaidh

THA A' chompanaidh a tha stèidhichte ann an garadh ola Aranais faisg air Steòrnabhagh air cùmhannan ùr fhaighinn a chumas ann an obair iad suas chun Chèitean.

Chaidh iarraidh air Camcal 16 tìr a thogail dha tuathanas-gaoithe san Olaind. Bidh iad gu lèir 70 meatair a dh'ard agus thèid an toirt a-nall dhan Roinn Eòrpa air soitheach.

Thuir stiùiriche na companaidh, Phil Mac a' Ghobhainn: 'Tha sinn air leth toilichte le seo oir 's e a' chiad ordugh againn a tha a' dol a-mach às an dùthaich agus tha e a' sealltainn gun urrainn dhuinn farpais ann an dòigh làidir le companaidhean eile a tha togail turaichean san Roinn Eòrpa.'

'S e a' chiad cùmhannan a bh' aig a' chompanaidh inneal a thogail a bha a' cruthachadh dealan bho tuinn. Bha e luach £5.5 millean.

Chaidh an seann garadh ola ath-leasachadh le Iomairt na Gaidhealtachd 's nan Eilean agus iad airson fhaicinn mar ghòireas togail airson gnìomhachas a' chumhachd ath-nadhachail. Chosg iad £10 millean air gu lèir.

THE COMPANY based at the Arnish oil fabrication yard near Stornoway has secured a new contract which will keep them in work up till May.

Camcal was asked to build 16 turbines for a windfarm in Holland. They will be 70 metres in height and will be shipped to the continent.

Company director Phil Smith said: 'We are very pleased with it because it is our first export order and shows that we can compete in an effective way with other tower manufacturers on the continent.'

The first contract the company won was to build a device which produced electricity from waves. It was worth £5.5 million. The former oil yard was renovated by Highlands and Islands Enterprise with a view to establishing it as a construction base for the renewable energy industry. It spent a total of £10 million.

Fosgladh An Lanntair

DH'FHOSGAIL a' Chiad Mhinistear ann an Riaghaltas na h-Alba, Jack McConnell, ionad ealain ùr ann an Leòdhas an t-seachdain a chaidh.

Chosg An Lanntair £5 millean agus tha e ri fhaicinn gu follaiseach an teas mheadhan baile Steòrnabhagh, a' coimhead a-mach air cala a' bhaile gu pròiseil.

'S e an t-ionad ealain as motha air Ghàidhealtachd 's sna h-Eileanan taobh a-muigh Theatar Eden Court ann an Inbhir Nis.

A' bruidhinn air beulaibh còrr air 200 duine, thuir Mgr McConnell: 'Tha An Lanntair a' dearbhadh nach eil a bhith fuireach anns na h-àiteachan iomallach na chnap-starradh airson cothrom fhaighinn air na rudan as fheàrr a tha cultar Bhreatainn a' tabhann.'

SCOTTISH Executive first minister Jack McConnell opened a new arts centre in Lewis last week.

An Lanntair - the lantern - cost £5 million and can be seen in a prominent position in Stornoway town centre, proudly overlooking the town's harbour. It is the biggest arts centre in the Highlands and Islands outside Eden Court Theatre in Inverness. Speaking in front of an audience of more than 200 people, Mr McConnell said: 'An Lanntair proves living in remote areas need prove no barrier to enjoying the very best of what British culture has to offer.'

Arran 10-year-old comes of age



Planning manager Mark Callachan beside the first bottles.

AN ISLAND distillery is celebrating a new youngster in its midst - a 10-year-old.

Isle of Arran Distillers has just bottled its first 10-year-old single malt whisky at the company's distillery in Lochranza on the isle of Arran.

Managing director Douglas Davidson said: 'We have had a hugely positive response to the new 10-year-old from all our European distributors.'

'The level of forward orders has been greatly encouraging and our sales director Euan Mitchell left last weekend for a three-week tour of our Far East markets where I feel sure he will get a similar response.'

The new 10-year-old has been bottled at 46 per cent proof by volume and comes from bourbon and sherry casks.

Isle of Arran Distillers won the Queen's Award for International Trade in 2005 and increased bottled malt sales by 29 per cent.

The Lochranza distillery opened in 1995 and has since gone from strength to strength.

All local calls diverted as Argyll joins police call centre system

ARGYLL joined Strathclyde Police's new call management system this week.

This means that calls to local police stations from

members of the public will be automatically transferred to new contact centres in Glasgow and Motherwell, which have been on-line since August last year.

The aim is to improve call handling and ensure the days of being held in a queue or getting an answer machine should be at an end.

Strathclyde Police main-

tains staff at the contact centres will be aware of local issues and the unique geography of Argyll, Bute and West Dunbartonshire.

Those handling the calls

will also have access to geographical mapping systems to help identify where the caller is calling from and confirm a particular location.

Chief Superintendent

Mitch Rodger said: 'Quite simply callers to the police will be automatically transferred to the contact centre and answered promptly. Calls will be dealt with in a much

more efficient method than at present.' According to Strathclyde Police the average waiting time is four seconds and more than 400,000 calls have been received.

Lochaber women encouraged to start own businesses

WOMEN in Lochaber are being encouraged to start their own business as they have a 'huge amount to offer' the local economy.

Lochaber Enterprise has highlighted three women who have found success in business with a little help from the enterprise company.

The three women were able to turn their interests in jewellery, horses and childcare into viable businesses.

Tracy Macdonald, aged 34, from Mallaig, makes jewellery in a style that offers a contemporary take on traditional designs.

She said: 'I have always wanted to start up my own business and I love the idea of creating something from nothing. To start off with metal wires or a sheet and turn them into a three dimensional shape is really exciting.'

'Jewellery is quite frivolous and there is not always a demand for it, but I think I have something different to offer the market.'

Tracy invested a considerable amount of her own savings into the business, but a start-up grant of just under £4,000 from the local enterprise company was crucial to its formation.

Bonny Mealand was a full-time mother for seven

'It is great to see such a diverse range of new businesses starting up in the area.'

Charlotte Wright, Lochaber Enterprise.

years before deciding to turn her love of horses into a small business.

With a diploma in agriculture and years of experience working with horses, she decided to offer her services treating the hoofs of the animals, as well as providing therapeutic shoeing.

Bonny, also 34, who lives in Morvern and is also a retained firefighter, said: 'I had to trim the feet of my own five horses because I couldn't get anyone else to do it. That's when I realised there could be a market for a service like this.'

Janet McIntyre, who has experience in childcare, has started a business as a registered childminder in her home in Onich.

She is registered to care for up to six children under the age of 16, with a maximum of three being under primary school age and one under 12 months.

She hopes to take on additional staff in the future. Janet, who can take chil-

dren full or part-time and on bank holidays, completed a Scottish Childminding Association course and then received confirmation from the Care Commission that she had been approved as a registered childminder.

Janet, 47, who has an eight-year old daughter, received £1,500 to start the business from Lochaber Enterprise and a grant of up to £250 from the Lochaber Childcare and Family Resource Programme towards the construction of a shed for play equipment.

Janet said: 'Having a business like this gives me independence and I definitely think there is a lot of potential for it in this area.'

Charlotte Wright, chief executive of Lochaber Enterprise, said it was important to encourage women to start their own businesses as they had a huge amount to offer.

She said: 'It is great to see such a diverse range of new businesses starting up in the area.'



Bonny Mealand has turned her love of horses into a small business.

Council tax will hurt many claims MSP

'THIS will hurt a great many people on low and fixed incomes and will damage local businesses by swallowing up yet more money from the local economy.'

This was the reaction of Highlands and Islands MSP and Shadow Enterprise Minister Jim Mather to the news that Argyll and Bute Council is increasing its council tax from April 1 by 3.49 per cent.

'This is higher than the 2.5 per cent the Scottish Executive was unreasonably trying to impose but better than expectation given the pressures on Argyll and Bute Council,' said Mr Mather.

'In the long term we need less contention and fewer last minute deals, which only cause stress, damage services and public service morale.'

He said that what was needed was a fairer local income tax, as proposed by the SNP, and the national government treating local government as a full partner to address issues like boosting the population of working age people to widen the tax base and reduce the burden.

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Graduations



Sharon Robertson

GRADUATED from Glasgow University with a Bachelor of Nursing. Sharon is the daughter of Jimmy and Jessie Robertson, Kilmore, and grand-daughter of Agnus and the late Alex Robertson, Oban, and John and Jessie Brown, Isle of Seil. Sharon is a former pupil of Easdale primary and Oban high schools.



Carolyn MacGillivray

GRADUATED with a BA (Honours) in Nursing from Glasgow Caledonian University. Carolyn is the daughter of Donnie and Celia MacGillivray, Acharacle, and a former pupil of Mingarry and Lochaber high schools. She is currently working as a staff nurse in the Western Infirmary.



Laura Campbell

GRADUATED from the University of Glasgow with a Bachelor of Nursing. Laura is the eldest daughter of Iain and Theresa Campbell, Fiskavaig, grand-daughter of May and the late Ronnie Gillies, Fort William, and Cathie and the late Angus Murdo Campbell, Portnalong. Laura is currently working as a staff nurse at the Western Infirmary, Glasgow.



Grace Morrison

GRADUATED from Stirling University (Western Isles Campus) with a BSc in Adult Nursing with Merit. Grace is the daughter of Alex and Violet Morrison, Melbost Borve, and grand-daughter of Sheila and the late Duncan Henderson, Acharacle, Argyll, and the late Murdo and Annie Morrison, Melbost Borve, Isle of Lewis.



Lorna Campbell

GRADUATED from the Central College of Commerce, Glasgow, with an HNC in Hairdressing and Salon Organisation. Lorna, of Fidden, Isle of Mull, is the eldest daughter of Jimmy and Christine Campbell.



Jacqueline Peacock

GRADUATED from Glasgow Caledonian University with a BSc in Community Nursing. Jacqueline is wife of George, mother of Billy and daughter of Jean and the late Jack Watson.



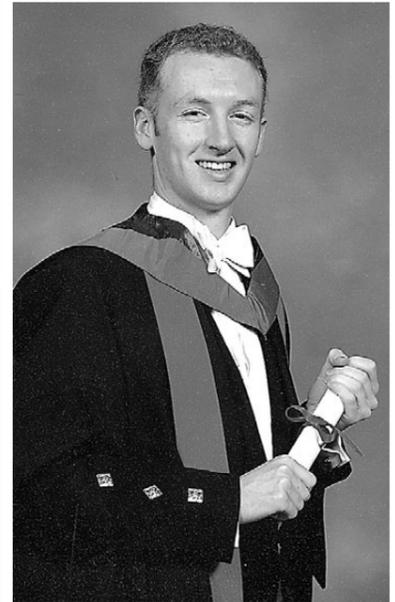
Mairi Mclellan

GRADUATED from Cardonald College with an HND in Media and Communication. Mairi is the daughter of Tom and Margaret Mclellan, Taynuilt, and grand-daughter of the late John and Sheila Macleod, Manish, Harris, and the late Thomas and Mary Mclellan, Helensburgh. She is currently studying at the University of Paisley.

Send your graduation photos to The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB

The Oban Times HOTLINE

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



Colin Dunsmore, MChem

GRADUATED with a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Edinburgh. Colin is the eldest son of Alex and June Dunsmore, Dunblane, and grandson of Colin and Morag Urquhart, Pennyfuir, Oban. Colin is now a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the University of Leeds.



Katie Ogilby-Wood

GRADUATED from The University of Paisley with a Bachelor of Science in Sports Studies. Katie is a former pupil of Tobermory High School and daughter of Chris and Rae Ogilby-Wood. Katie hopes to go on to do a post graduate certificate in teaching.



Kathleen Maclean

GRADUATED from Birkbeck College University of London with a BSc in Geology. Kathleen is the eldest child and only daughter of the late Donald Angus Maclean, formerly of Ranish, Isle of Lewis.



Janette Swainston

GRADUATED from Robert Gordon University with a Bachelor of Nursing. Janette is the daughter of Isa Cameron, Spean Bridge, and is a former pupil of Inverlochy primary and Lochaber high schools.



Elizabeth Bradley

GRADUATED from the UHI Millennium Institute with a Bachelor of Arts in the Cultural Studies of the Highlands and Islands. Elizabeth is from Bumbank, Campbeltown.



Ann Boa

GRADUATED from the University of the Highlands and Islands - Perth College with a BA in Tourism. Ann is the daughter of Willie and Isobel Boa, Fort William, and grand-daughter of the late Willie and Annie MacLean, Inverlochy Place, and Alex and Catherine Boa, Spean Bridge.



John Inglis

GRADUATED from Glasgow University in Mechanical Design Engineering. John, grand-son of Mrs H Gunn, Lynn Gardens, Oban, is a former pupil of St John's primary and Oban high schools.

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A pint and a purpose

THERE'S going to the pub for a pint and there's going to the pub for a pint and asking 'What on earth am I here for?'

That is one of the bigger questions of life that is being asked over a pint on a Thursday night in The Lorne in Oban by local Christian church, Destiny Church Oban.

Discussion and chilled out talk is the aim; talking about one of the best selling non-fiction books of all time - The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren - is the topic. Everyone is invited to these discussions but Destiny Church feels the relaxed location will appeal to those who would not necessarily go to church or see themselves as religious but would like to talk about spiritual matters, the purpose of life, God and other such issues.

Leader of Destiny Church Oban Andy McCulloch said: 'Why the pub?'

'People often forget that Jesus's first miracle was turning water into wine at a wedding in Cana because they ran out of wine.'

'My question is: if Jesus was living in Oban today, where would he hang out? Who would he hang out with?'

'You don't have to read the Gospels in the Bible for long before realising that Jesus was totally pre-occupied with people.'

'He loved people and would therefore go to any lengths to spend time with them. Often this meant meeting them in their environment.'

He said he believed that it would be Jesus's desire not to see the church hiding behind four walls but out in the streets reaching out to where people were.

'This challenges me as a leader of one of the local churches here in Oban, knowing that in Jesus's day miracles mostly happened in the streets, not in the synagogue,' he added.

Destiny Church Oban is a contemporary church that meets every Sunday at Drummore School, Lower Soroba. Included is lively music, motivational teaching and a fun-packed programme for children.

Forteith beef it up for Oban trade show

AN OBAN butcher was cooking up a storm last week and demonstrating to customers the quality of Scottish beef with a premium Aberdeen Angus beef burger.

More than 50 different firms from all over Europe were represented at Forteith Foodservice's West Highlands and Islands Trade Show in the Corran Halls.

Willie Reid is Forteith's head butcher and attracted dozens of customers to his stall where he was cooking the burgers.

Forteith is launching its own brand line of Aberdeen Angus steak sausages and pork and leek sausages.

Willie said Forteiths only

used Scottish beef and the meat content of the new range of sausages is extremely high.

He said: 'The Aberdeen Angus burgers I am cooking today have a meat content of 95 per cent, the rest is just seasoning.'

'Everybody makes sausages at around 31 per cent meat content but these sausages are around 85 per cent.'

'We are not the cheapest butchers in the world but we are very high in quality.'

Suppliers from all over the country and mainland Europe congregated at the trade show which is hosted by Forteith every two years.



Oban butcher Willie Reid shows off Forteith's new range of sausages. ©08/for03

Oban aids local Oxfam

DISASTERS and subsequent global fundraising was a mark of 2005 but Oban's Oxfam shop is encouraging people to show last year was not a one-off.

The charity is looking for one million new members in 100 days. Fundraising for the tsunami clear up, the Pakistan earthquake and the Make Poverty History campaign all contributed to Oxfam having one of its busiest years with an influx of new members.

The 'I'm in' campaign has been launched to ensure Oxfam increases its support throughout the country. Morvern MacDougall of Oxfam Oban branch said: 'Time and time again we are overwhelmed by the support and generosity we receive from local people for our appeals, campaigns and shop work.'

'We know how many people here want to do something about poverty and 'I'm in' shows them how even small steps can make a big difference.'



From Argyll Square to Red Square, Oban's Michael and Joanie wowed their audience in Russia.

Musician duo warm hearts in Russia's coldest winter

REPRESENTING Scotland at two international Burns suppers has been a 'cool' experience for two Oban musicians.

Accordian and fiddle duo Michael and Joanie Garvin, who run Oban's Greencourt Guesthouse, spent four days in Moscow recently where they performed for the St Andrew's Society of Russia.

However, their visit was during the city's coldest weather in decades with temperatures falling to -37 degrees Celsius - twice as cold as the inside of a domestic freezer.

Joanie said: Last year when Michael went over Moscow had its heaviest snowfall for years and this year it had record low temperatures.'

The couple also received a frosty reception from customs officers who accused Joanie of smuggling her violin out of

Couple accused of smuggling 'Russian heirloom' at airport

the country. Joanie said: 'On the way home customs officers saw my violin and asked for my documentation for it but I hadn't signed anything for it on the way into Russia.'

'There was a bit of a stand-off with the guards. They thought I was smuggling a Russian heirloom out of the country despite me pointing to the 'Made in Glasgow' sign on my violin.'

The stand-off eventually subsided but Joanie believes that only happened because the guards had something 'more important' to deal with.

Regardless of this incident the couple said they really enjoyed their trip and have been invited back next year.

Joanie is counting the

days until they return to Moscow but added she would take documentation for her violin next year.

On this trip the couple joined up with guitarist Gordon Ross and mandolin player John MacGregor, both from Dumbarton.

The Dumbarton pair had played in Moscow with Michael last year but this was Joanie's first trip.

'We played to the St Andrew's Society of Russia in the Marriott Hotel Aurora where there was a real mix of nationalities who all loved Burns and everything to do with Scotland,' said Joanie.

'The whisky was flowing freely and there were some country dancers from Moscow there.'

The foursome also played in an Irish theme pub

during their time in Moscow where they met a few Scots.

After their four days in Moscow, the couple travelled to the Channel Islands where they played for the St Andrew's Society of Jersey.

The Garvins had clearly brought the Russian weather with them and arrived during Jersey's first snowfall in eight years.

Joanie said: 'The crowd was mostly Scots as there is a long established St Andrew's society there.'

Hypnotherapy can help you kick your bad habits

UNWANTED habits or afflictions like nail biting, stuttering and smoking could be kicked into touch through the efforts of a highly regarded clinical hypnotherapist who now has a clinic in Argyll.

Graeme Mathew, who has clinics in Dunoon and Glasgow, is a fully qualified clinical hypnotherapist under the auspices of the British Society of Clinical Hypnosis (BSCH). Graeme said: 'I use a combination of different techniques to help you

achieve the desired change that you want and I guarantee all my work.'

'Hypnosis is a natural, effective way of making contact with the inner, unconscious self.'

'When someone is hypnotised they always remain in control of themselves.'

Graeme also treats pain control, phobias, nervous conditions, stress and anxiety and urges suffers to make an appointment with him on 01369 701009.



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8.15 FRIDAY and SATURDAY - 2.45 SUNDAY
8.15 MONDAY to THURSDAY
MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA 12A

6.00 FRIDAY - 1.00 and 6.00 SATURDAY - 12.30 SUNDAY
8.15 MONDAY to THURSDAY
CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 PG

6.30 and 8.30 FRIDAY - 1.30, 6.30 and 8.30 SATURDAY
1.15 and 3.15 SUNDAY - 6.30 and 8.30 MONDAY to THURSDAY
FINAL DESTINATION 3 15

STUDIO CINEMA 01397 705095
CAMERON SQUARE - FORT WILLIAM

5.30 FRIDAY - 2.00 and 5.30 SATURDAY - 2.00 SUNDAY
ZATHURA - A Space Adventure PG

5.45 FRIDAY - 2.15 and 5.45 SATURDAY - 2.15 SUNDAY
THE LITTLE POLAR BEAR U

8.00 FRIDAY and SATURDAY - 7.00 MONDAY to THURSDAY
BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 15

8.15 FRIDAY and SATURDAY - 7.15 MONDAY to THURSDAY
JARHEAD 15

At the Cinema

MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
Screen One - 12 A
Certificate - 145 Minutes
OBAN HIGHLAND THEATRE
8.15 FRIDAY and SATURDAY - 2.45 SUNDAY - 8.15 MONDAY to THURSDAY

The compulsive novel by Arthur Golden, that told the story of a secret Japanese world, sold over four million English-language editions and was translated into thirty-two other languages.

MEMOIRS of a Geisha is a feast for the eye, thanks to outstanding cinematography, excellent production and rich costumes. Directed by Rob Marshall, the movie adaption of the best seller is outstanding, the life of a penniless child sold into slavery, then taken under the wing of a legendary Geisha, being followed in care and detail.

FINAL DESTINATION 3
Screen Two - 15
Certificate - 93 Minutes
OBAN HIGHLAND THEATRE
6.30 and 8.30 Friday - 1.30, 6.30 and 8.30 Saturday
1.15 and 3.15 SUNDAY - 6.30 and 8.30 MONDAY to THURSDAY

Director James Wong returns to the helm, raising questions of fate and predestination, in a screen story written by James and Glen Morgan.

A true horror movie, **Final Destination 3** stars Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Ryan Merriman and Kris Lemche, is certainly not a movie for squeamish filmgoers, so be warned. F.D.3 could best be described as an orgy of carnage.

CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
Screen One - PG
Certificate - 90 Minutes
OBAN HIGHLAND THEATRE
6.00 FRIDAY - 1.00 and 6.00 SATURDAY - 12.30 SUNDAY - 6.00 MONDAY to THURSDAY

The Bakers are back with a vengeance, with STEVE MARTIN starring in the sequel to his 2003 movie success, this time under the direction of ADAM SHANKMAN (Director of 'The Pacifier'). On this occasion they are toe-to-toe against another clan in an ultimate inter-family battle.

The entire **CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN** cast unites, including Bonnie Hunt, Hilary Duff, Tom Welling and Piper Perabo, and are joined by a new family, headed by Eugene Levy. Bigger scale with more laughs and action than before.

In **CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2**, Tom Baker (Steve Martin) and wife Kate bring their family together at their long-time holiday home, on the shores of Lake Winnetka. Their away-from-it-all retreat soon turns cutthroat however, when they enter into competition with the over-achieving members of the large family headed by Tom's deadly rival Jim Murtaugh (Eugene Levy).

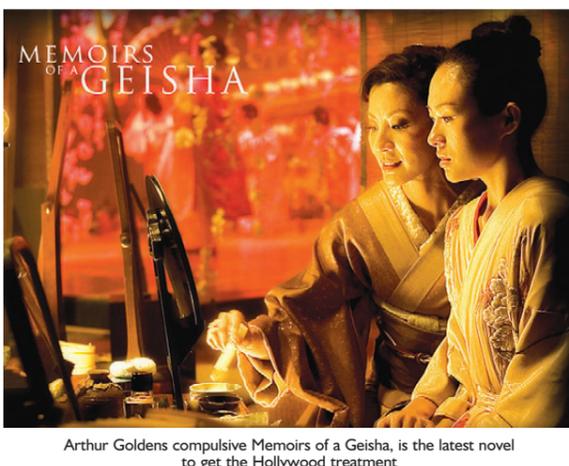
THE LITTLE POLAR BEAR 2: "The Mysterious Island"
U Certificate - 81 Minutes
FORT WILLIAM STUDIO THEATRE
5.45 FRIDAY - 2.15 and 5.45 SATURDAY - 2.15 SUNDAY

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 dangers of an erupting volcano. Starring 'Maximilian Artajo', the delightfully drawn and colourful images make this a movie to give pleasure to the younger generation.

ZATHURA - A Space Adventure
PG Certificate - 101 Minutes
FORT WILLIAM STUDIO CINEMA
5.30 FRIDAY - 2.00 and 5.30 SATURDAY - 2.00 SUNDAY

After their father (Tim Robbins) leaves for work, six-year-old Danny (Jonah Bobo) and ten-year-old Walter (Josh Hutcherson), are left in the care of their older sister Lisa (Kristen Stewart). Finding an old tattered board game called 'Zathura', Danny tries to get his brother to play the game with him, but without success. He therefore then decides to tackle the game on his own....

Danny is in for a big surprise however when he discovers this is no ordinary board game. For a start, he finds out that his spaceship marker moves by itself and, when it finally lands on a space, a card is ejected carrying an urgent message: "Meteor Shower, take evasive action" (and a gaping hole appears in the roof of their house). They discover, to their horror, that they have propelled into



Arthur Golden's compulsive *Memoirs of a Geisha*, is the latest novel to get the Hollywood treatment

Your Stars with Patrick Arundell

ARIES February ends with a tussle still going on between the Sun and Mars. The problem for you can be an excess of nervous energy, or the feeling that you are not being quite as well informed as you might be. Why? At the least it can seem that others are less willing to bring things to your attention. At it's worse, this can point to backbiting and gossip making. Do be guarded. For more, please call me..

TAURUS You could need the support of others. The more receptive they are, the smoother things can go. Will you get it? Ah, that's a different matter. Your expectations may not be met, least of all from a financial perspective. Then again, a chance could present itself which could be very tempting, but it may go against the grain - your grain! Generally, struggle can be to the fore. For more, please call me..

GEMINI Since the 18th of February you have been much more inclined to assert yourself. How are others reacting? Has this led to progress or do you feel that greater respect has come your way? Either way, this week can be a crunch time. You probably won't suffer fools gladly and even at home, you will be looking for people to be a little more attuned to what you have to say. For more, please call me..

CANCER A big need to expand your situation is maintained, but how will this fit together with the obligations that you already have? If there is little scope for some give and take, the tensions can ratchet up. You can be one of the steadiest of people when it comes to fulfilling your responsibilities but (strangely) now you could feel much less inclined to toe the line. For more, please call me..

LEO The New Moon gives you a lot of hope that things can start to fall in place from a long term financial or property perspective. And they can. However, you may have to revise some plans when it comes to how that they interface with others. Someone may have a change of heart which can affect you. Perhaps they are set to reverse their long term hopes and very suddenly. For more, please call me..

VIRGO A re-launch for one involvement can see life yet be breathed into this - but there is a caveat. This suggests that you can't have everything your own way. Then again, you may have to stand up to someone who tends to forget your rights. Being prepared to sit down and discuss things can certainly provide the ventilation for improvement. Solo? Someone new can soon enter your orbit. For more, please call me..

LIBRA Words can wound. Yet of all the zodiac's members, you can often hide your cutting edge under the silkiest of veneers. But not everyone is as sensitive and someone could test your patience with their brittle take on something dear to your heart. However, the chance to really improve an area of your life which is not working very well, is a real possibility. Ignore any criticisms. For more, please call me..

SCORPIO There is, to use the military expression, a bit of a pincer movement going on in your scope this week. How apt for a Scorpion like you! The problem is that it may not be you who is set to deploy the sting. That there can be fun and frivolity in your situation is of little doubt, however in the pursuit of pleasure, your finances could get a little stretched. How much is down to you. For more, please call me..

SAGITTARIUS You may want to make changes to where you live. If you share a flat or house, this could be less problematic, because this type of situation is fluid by nature. If you share ownership, much less so. In short, how your restlessness or need for change impacts on your personal relationships could be at the centre of what absorbs you this week. A lot of tactfulness can help. For more, please call me..

CAPRICORN There is a lot being discussed and there can be a real freshness about a this which can be whetting your appetite and giving you an enthusiasm. Yet there can also be a need to revitalise any part of your life, which has become dull and predictable. However tempting it may be to make snap decisions, if you do, the impact on your peace of mind could be greater than you imagine. For more, please call me..

AQUARIUS Some demand absolute accuracy from astrology but influences can work in a number of ways. For example, this week, a surprise windfall is possible. You might therefore want to have a punt. And money can come in other surprising ways. But then costs can also unexpectedly crop up. A piece of electrical equipment may fail. Yet you could be ingenious too and this can bring its rewards. For more, please call me..

PISCES You, more than other star signs, could find yourself with a dilemma on your hands. Do you stick or do you twist? Older readers will even think of opening the box! But seriously, there is an enormous amount of excitement bubbling around. Yet this need for change, to do something quite spontaneously can be very strong too. Will you sacrifice something solid to satisfy this? For more, please call me..

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The Oban Times & West Highland Times
What's On Guide

Friday 3rd March
X-Factor Dance Company, Sunart Centre, Strontian 8 pm

Tuesday 7th March
Stories from poet and storyteller John Sutch Pickard, Corran Halls, Oban, 7.30 pm

Tuesday 28th March
Traditional Highland Folk Tales, Corran Halls, Oban, 7.30pm. Tickets £5/£3. Tel: Corran Halls 01631 567333

Saturday 22nd April
Singing Kettle, Corran Halls, Oban, 2pm

TO BE INCLUDED IN The Oban Times WHAT'S ON GUIDE CONTACT - 01631 568000

forthcoming events

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

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

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

Saturday 25th March Oban & Lorn Strathspey & Reel Society, Fiddlers Rally' Corran Halls, Oban

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

Thursday 27th April - Bonhams - Valuers and Auctioneers, McTavish's Kitchens, Oban, at 7.30pm. Further details nearer the date

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Superbly produced and directed, strongly acted and crammed with indelible images, this is an all action movie that will leave a deep impression. Adapted from Anthony Swafford's honest memoir of his contribution to Desert Storm, **Jarhead** goes from the days of inaction to hard fighting, with oil wells burning under blood red skies.

Directed by Sam Mendes, from the screenplay by William Brayles, the cast includes Jake Gyllenhaal, Jamie Foxx, Peter Sarsgaard, Chris Cooper and Scott Macdonald. But be warned, this is certainly not a movie for the faint-hearted.

Argyll and Bute Young Scot Live!

Wot is it doin 2 co 4 u?

Oban's Roanna Taylor is the new Argyll and Bute Young Scot co-ordinator. a07sco01

Roanna becomes young voice

AN OBAN woman has been tasked with ensuring the views of Argyll's youngsters are heard.

Roanna Taylor has been appointed Argyll and Bute Young Scot co-ordinator and will be based in Lochgilphead.

Roanna said: 'I will be getting in touch with the satellite offices in Oban, Campbeltown, Dunoon, Helensburgh, Islay and Rothesay.

'I'm hoping to raise the profile of Young Scot and I want the organisation to be known for more than just discounts. I will initially be concentrating on the 18-26 year-old age group as there is a lack of services for them.'

One of her Roanna's first jobs will be to ensure Argyll's first year and fourth year high school pupils are issued new Young Scot cards.

Young Scot cards can be used as a proof of age card and entitle the holder to discounts at local outlets.

At the moment there are 90 outlets offering discounts but Young Scot will be adding more to the list.

A former Oban High School pupil, Roanna graduated from Edinburgh University in 2003 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Community Education.

She worked with the children's charity NCH in Lochaber before returning to Oban to work in Kerrera Lodge.

Roanna said she is excited about working with Argyll's young people adding, 'The job is great and is going really well so far.'

Recently Roanna visited the main Young Scot office in Edinburgh where the focus has been on Dialogue Youth, a project which brings more young people into politics and decision making.

Roanna sat in on a meeting of Edinburgh City Council where young people involved in the Dialogue Youth project made a silent protest with placards showing their demands.

They were invited into the meeting and held a question and answer session with councillors.



Oban's Roanna Taylor is the new Argyll and Bute Young Scot co-ordinator. a07sco01

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The Highland Wedding Show models take to the stage in Oban's Corran Halls on Sunday. #08wed01

Highland Wedding Show has everything but the honeymoon

IT HAD everything but the honeymoon. The Highland Wedding Show held in Oban's Corran Halls on Sunday brought everything needed for a spectacular Highland wedding under one roof. There were 32 exhibitors, almost all from the Argyll area. Among the more popular stands were the chocolate fountain and wine tasting. There were also 32 local models who paraded a number of dresses and kilt outfits. Two of the town's hairdressing salons gave on-stage hair and beauty demonstrations which were projected onto large screens. Organiser Nicky Murphy said: 'The point of the show is to let people know they don't have to go to the city for their dream wedding, everything they need is right on their doorstep.' Live music was provided by the Allestree Quartet from Taynuilt. Outside the Corran Halls was a vintage Rolls Royce and even a horse and cart to show two modes of transport for a wedding day. A steady stream of visitors all agreed it was a very successful day.

Oban choir entertain in Taynuilt

OBAN Gaelic Choir turned out in force to entertain the Taynuilt audience last Saturday at An Comunn Gaidhealach, Meur Chruachain.

The Chruachain branch got a three for one deal from the choir.

Popular

Choir member Iain Crichton was Fear and Tighe for the evening and conductor Sileas Sinclair brought along her accordion as well as the choir singing in both halves of the evening.

Another popular performer during the evening was clarsach player Rosie Morton.

Abundance

The night opened with piper Daniel Johnstone of Oban followed by Eilidh MacInnes dancers: Kerrie Anne Ramsay, Louise MacLachlan and Karina Black.

Throughout the programme there were slots for soloists to appear and Meur



Oban Gaelic Choir and other performers at the Meur Chruachain ceilidh last Saturday. #08cei01

Chruachain had them in abundance. All appearing on stage were: Riona MacInnes, Sarah Sinclair, Colin Donnelly, Murdo MacLeod and Mary MacKinnon. A large collection of prizes were up for grabs in the raffle and the draw for that and the vote of thanks were given before Oban

Gaelic Choir closed the programme. The evening ended with the singing of *Soraidh Leibh*.

Superb night at Nether Lorn Piping Society

FROM one of the world's finest pipers, to youngsters making their debut the audience at the Nether Lorn Piping Society had a superb night's entertainment.

The guest piper at the society's February meeting in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls was Roddy MacLeod MBE, from Cumbernauld.

Roddy gave an excellent performance, which was greatly appreciated by those present and it was clear to see why he is considered one of the finest pipers in the world.

Roddy not only played outstandingly well but he took the time to introduce his tunes and gave the history of the piobaireachd he played, which was *A Flame of Wrath for Squinting Patrick*.

Also providing support on the evening were four young chanter players who were performing in front of an audience for the first time.

They were Gavin MacMillan, James MacPherson, Ruairidh MacKinnon and Duncan Buchanan, who all acquitted themselves very well.

Also performing on the night were two members of Oban Pipe Band, Emma Law and Callum MacLeod who both gave fine performances, which were enjoyed by the audience.

As always Iain Hurst was master of ceremonies and his piping knowledge and relaxed style added to the enjoyment of the evening.

The next recital will be on March 15 at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls and it will be a club night when all the pipers will be from the Argyll area. All welcome.



Argyll team manager Lesley Jeffries, far left, with helpers and new members of Slimming World in Oban's Masonic Hall. #08sm01

Women turn out for Slimming World - but men are conspicuous by their absence

THE FIRST night of a new slimming club in Oban attracted more than 50 women through the doors but no men.

Lesley Jeffries, who is Argyll team manager of Slimming World, said a club in Campbeltown had been

running for more than a year with more than 100 members, of which around 30-40 are men.

In a tremendous achievement Lesley said the Campbeltown group had lost 163 stone in six months last year. Lesley

said: 'We asked the men if they wanted their own club but they didn't because they enjoy the laugh with the women too much.'

We teach them how to feel good about themselves. It is not about embarrassing people.' The club which meets at Oban's Masonic Hall meets every Wednesday night is open to both sexes and people of all ages. Slimming World works on 'food optimising' and promotes healthy eating and activity.



Rev Andy Campbell and his wife Fiona pictured at their leaving party with Oban's Julie Robertson, aged nine, and Amelia MacAllister, aged eight, while Sandra Clark, Lake Falconer and Roy Wood look on. #08and01

Church of Scotland says goodbye to Rev Andy

OBAN minister Rev Andy Campbell said one last goodbye to friends, colleagues and Church of Scotland members at a party in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls at the weekend.

More than 200 guests attended the evening which looked back on Rev Campbell's 26 years in Oban. Rev Campbell, minister

of Kilmore and Oban parish of the Church of Scotland, is leaving to take on a new role which will see him encourage congregations around the country to take on a more modern way of worship.

Administrator

At the party last Friday Andy and his wife Fiona were presented with a camcorder and a cheque

from the congregation. The camcorder was presented by Sandra Clark who has been church administrator for 30 years.

There were also gifts from the War and Peace Museum and the church choir.

Master of ceremonies was Roy Wood with Lake Falconer leading the tributes.

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COMMUNITY Noticeboard

Save The Children North Argyll Branch **COFFEE MORNING** Regent Hotel Oban Sat 25th February 10.30 - Noon baking, plants, jewellery, bottle & bric-a-brac stalls, raffle.

COMUNN GAIDHEALACH AN OBAIN Local interest evening **OLD OBAN** by Bob MacCulloch (in English) Free High Church Hall, Oban Friday 24th February at 7.30pm Tea and Biscuits Admission £3

CEILIDH DANCE Saturday 25th February 7.30pm to midnight **Victory Hall, Benderloch** Tickets, Adults £5, Children £2 (payment on the door) Cakes & Sandwiches provided Good music, bar, raffle All profits towards Barcalaine Village Hall

OBAN FLOWER CLUB (affiliated to SAFAS) **ANNUAL DINNER** Thurs 2nd March 7pm for 7.30pm McTavish's Kitchens, Oban Demonstrator: Alan Beatty, Co Tyrone, Ireland "GALLIMAUFRY" Tickets £20 - from The Flower Basket, Stafford St, or The Flower House, Stevenson St, Oban

DIABETES UK North Argyll Voluntary Group **An Open Meeting** Monday 27th February 7.30pm Church Centre Glencruitten Road, Oban To discuss the formation of the above group All interested parties and carers are invited.

SNX **SUNDAY NIGHT EXTRA** Modern informal worship with singing led by H2O Praise Band with a talk from Rev Angus Morrison 7.30pm 26th Feb Corran Esplanade Church All welcome no church, any church

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Connel crash lorry driver keeps licence

A LORRY driver who crashed into a car in Connel has kept his licence despite receiving enough penalty points to have it revoked.

Henry Caulfield, aged 64, of 5 Hawkwood Way, Stonehouse, Larkhall, pled guilty to driving without due care and attention at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

Caulfield crashed into the back of a car which was carrying a woman driver, her mother and five children on August 10 last year.

The vehicles had crossed Connel Bridge and the crash occurred at the junction onto the A85. There were no injuries.

Defence agent Edward Thornton said: 'If he loses his licence he will lose his job.'

'The vehicle in front of Mr Caulfield stopped suddenly. At that moment Mr Caulfield was looking to his right to check for any traffic coming and although he braked in time the momentum took his lorry into the back of the car.'

Sheriff Douglas Small imposed three penalty points, bringing Caulfield's total points to 12, enough to have his licence taken from him.

However, Sheriff Small said: 'There are special circumstances in this case and this is a suitable case for me not to disqualify you.'

Caulfield was also fined £500.

Oban parents group

A GROUP of parents and grandparents from all walks of life are now over halfway through their parenting skills course, held weekly at Parenting Matters at the Kelvin Hotel, Oban.

Sheena MacLean, proprietress of the Kelvin Hotel, kindly offered Parent Network, the organisation running the course, use of her premises.

Sheena is interested in the project because of her own background working in the voluntary sector.

The hotel has been a hive of activity as some members of the group have also been working on starting up a new group called Parents Together.

Parents and family members with a parenting role will soon be able to meet other parents at this group, talk over parenting issues and get support.

With several already committed to starting the new group, anyone interested in being involved in organising or helping with Parents Together can phone Janet Gibson on 01631 563832, Gil Stewart on 01631 567198 or Colline MacKiggan on 01631 567217.

Heritage funding comes to the aid of Stornoway's town hall

A HUGE cash injection is being given to Stornoway to restore its crumbling town hall and Female Industrial School as part of a town centre regeneration.

Heritage Lottery Fund is giving £1.2 million to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar from its UK-wide Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI).

The news was greeted with delight by the comhairle, which is striving to ensure the heart of the town remains vibrant, colourful and economic.

The idea behind granting the cash, apart from maintaining the town's sense of history, is to create new jobs, said Colin McLean, Heritage Lottery Fund Manager for Scotland. He added: 'We hope it will also act as a

lever for additional funding and helping to address economic and social decline.'

Councillor Angus McCormack, chairman of Stornoway Regeneration Group, said the news was very welcome. 'It will help us to make significant investment in Stornoway and its historic buildings,' he said.

The historic heart of the town forms part of an Outstanding Conservation Area and the money will go towards work to fix inappropriate changes which the comhairle feels do not complement historic buildings that have survived untouched or have been restored sympathetically.

The handsome town hall will be the main focus of the

restoration scheme, with vacant floor space being brought back into use.

It was opened in 1929 by Thomas Bassett Macaulay of Montreal, president of the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada.

His father, Robertson, who had also been the company's president, was, until he emigrated to Canada, brought up on Lewis by an aunt following the death of his Uig-born father in Fraserburgh.

The town hall replaced one built in 1905 which was completely destroyed by fire in 1918.

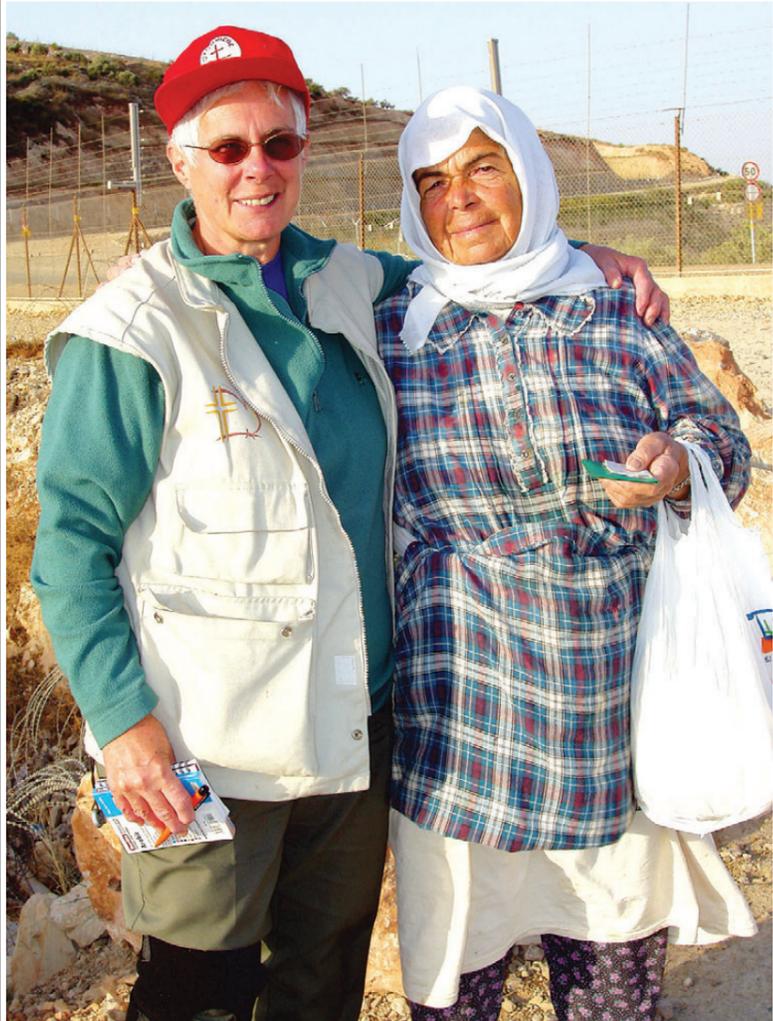
The Female Industrial School in Keith Street was opened in 1849, having been built the previous year by

Lord and Lady Matheson. It was dedicated to the education of the poor and to provide education for island girls and was highly respected in its day.

Adjacent properties of both buildings will also be included in the improvement works.

Donnie Macaulay, chief executive of Western Isles Enterprise, said he regarded the grant as a significant one.

'A sense of place is integral to our strategy and we look forward to supporting key elements of the Stornoway THI, which will realise economic opportunity from the town's historic value and bring vacant and under-used properties back into use,' he said.



Jan with Zahara, a Palestinian widow, at a checkpoint that separates Zahara from her olive trees.

Back from Palestine with a story to tell

MULL woman Jan Such Pickard is back from three months as a peace monitor in Palestine and has some tales to tell.

Jan, from Bunnassan on the Ross of Mull, featured in *The Oban Times* last autumn as she set off to spend three months as a peace monitor with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel, known as EAPPI.

Donald MacLaughlan of Strachur was also a

volunteer with this programme and he is only just returning, so the pair of them have strengthened the links with the West of Scotland and the West Bank.

Both Donald and Jan both have many tales to tell. Jan is a member of the Scottish Storytelling Network and it is in this capacity she will be at the Corran Halls on March 7 with a lively collection of tales from different parts of the world.

As a member of the Iona Community, committed to work for justice and peace, Jan said that at points, as

An Comunn in cash crisis

THE BALANCE sheet put before members of An Comunn Gàidhealach does not make happy reading.

'Disturbing', 'particularly difficult' and 'hard' are just some of the words that accompany the figures in the annual report for 2004 - 2005 that has been sent out to members ahead of the annual meeting, which will be held on March 10 at the Argyll Hotel, Dunoon.

An Comunn might have to join forces with other organisations to continue.

Perth Mod

It suffered a loss during the financial year which saw the Royal National Mod take place in Perth, at a loss of £27,760; the high cost of renting venues in the city centre hit An Comunn hard.

Its Gaelic newspaper *An Gaideal Ur* traded at a loss

with costs of £76,522 but an income of only £21,897.

The wage bill, pensions and costs rose from £29,731 the year before to £101,09.

'The accounts for 2004-2005 show a somewhat disturbing loss of £76,148 due to income remaining static while costs continued to rise,' said Alasdair MacInnes, treasurer in his report.

'Wages and salaries were £7,000 higher due to the employment of our development officers without full funding.

'Payments were also made to cover the absence of a chief executive and there was also a reallocation of wages and salaries between the Mod and An Comunn.'

But he said that major changes are taking place within An Comunn which will result in a greater control of spending.

The good news is that the figures for 2005-2006 will show a better financial picture because of the success of the Western Isles Mod.

'The amount received from Bòrd Na Gàidhlig is not as much as we would like as it is in the position where its own resources are restricted at this point in time,' said Mr MacInnes.

'Difficult'

President of An Comunn Angus Macdonald admitted that this had been 'a particularly difficult year'.

He said it was quite clear that urgent steps needed to be taken to restructure and modernise An Comunn in order to safeguard its future.

'We are no longer in a position where we can rely

Border Heather explosion report highlights on-board problems

FATIGUE and a 'difficult working relationship' between the captain and chief officer contributed to a major explosion in an oil tanker which serves the west coast and Western Isles.

The BP tanker *Border Heather* was leaving Grangemouth oil refinery on October 31 2004 when the front of the vessel caught fire.

It had loaded 3,000 tonnes of fuel and was heading to Shetland and Orkney when an explosion in a motor room occurred after leaking petrol ignited after coming into contact with electrical equipment.

The fire was put out after 40 minutes and no-one was hurt.

Four ships had made up BP's coastal fleet of tankers but they were to be replaced by three new vessels, of which the *Border Heather* was the first. It had just been in operation for only over a month when the explosion happened.

A report into the explosion and fire, carried out by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch, noted that the chief officer had been overworked on the new vessel.

It stated: 'He was faced with modern equipment, the operation of which was foreign to him and which had its own teething problems, together with difficulties associated with cargo operations that resulted in spillages and incorrect ship/shore figures.'

The report added that the chief officer had not had much sleep but had previously done the same while working on the older fleet with which he was more familiar.

The report said: 'In short, his service on the older vessels was unchallenging and reasonably free of stress and anxiety.'

It went on to state that the chief officer was working as a second officer as well as understudying the delivery voyage master and was faced with more technology on the *Border Heather* than he had been used to.

'Performing both of these roles almost certainly overloaded the chief officer,' the report concluded.

The chief officer also failed to keep the captain informed about the leaking petrol which was a 'misjudgement' and had its origins in the difficult relationship between the two.

The report concluded that the crew did not have enough time to become familiar with the *Border Heather* and '...were expected to overcome various problems and learn about a comparatively sophisticated vessel while operating her commercially'.



Sheila Kerr, senior care officer, with manager Morag Telfer and North Argyll Eventide Home Association secretary Margaret MacPherson.

Certificate for carer

SHEILA Kerr is the latest member of staff at North Argyll House in Oban to pass a Scottish Qualification Authority certificate with help from Argyll Training.

The Health and Social Care Adult Level 3 certificate provides Sheila with the qualification to back up the work she already carries out at the North Argyll Eventide Association home at the top of Dunollie Road. Sheila joined North Argyll House four years ago after serving as a nurse on Ward B at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital in Oban.

She said she enjoyed the experience of getting to know the residents, something that she didn't have in the hospital.

Sheila achieved her SQA in a year, with the help of Argyll Training assessor Jill Millar, who said that Sheila had carried out the course in record time using a 'paper-free environment'.

Executive change at Gaelic Media Service

DIRECTOR of the Gaelic Media Service (GMS) John Angus Mackay will relinquish his post in June this year.

Announcing this decision Neil Fraser, GMS chairman, said: 'John Angus wishes to be free to pursue other interests and responsibilities.'

'He has made an outstanding contribution not only to Gaelic broadcasting but to Highlands and islands and Gaelic development in general over the past 30 years.'

'In recent years he has been a lead player in the campaign to establish a Gaelic television channel.'

'The Gaelic community is indebted to him for his diligence and dedication.'

'The Board of GMS is grateful for his assiduous efforts on behalf of the organisation and of the Gaelic radio and television audience.'

'We wish him well in his future endeavours. His considerable talents and experience will be an asset to any enterprise with which he is associated.'

Mr MacKay said: 'Now that a Gaelic channel and a new structure for Gaelic broadcasting are imminent, the time is right for me to pursue other opportunities and undertake new challenges.'

'The quest for a better deal for Gaelic broadcast-



Gaelic Media Services chairman Neil Fraser. Fraser has been demanding but exciting. My enjoyment of it has been due in large measure to the support of an excellent staff and of successive boards. Neil Fraser said that the search for a new head of the GMS will proceed in parallel with organisational restructuring in anticipation of the new channel and the continuing discussions regarding a GMS-BBC partnership to manage and operate it. BBC Scotland Controller Ken MacQuarrie said: 'Through his work with Comataidh Telebhisean Gàidhlig, Comataidh Craolaidh Gàidhlig and the GMS, John Angus has led the way on a whole range of projects. His contribution has been of immense value and benefit to Gaelic audiences and to the Gaelic community as a whole.'

Free bus travel from this April

MORE than a million people are set to benefit from the new Scotland-wide free bus concessionary travel scheme due to be introduced from April 1 this year.

Older and disabled people will be able to use their new national entitlement card to travel free anywhere in Scotland on local buses and long-distance scheduled coaches. However, less than half of those entitled to claim free travel have applied for a card and those who have not yet applied are being urged to do so as only 400,000 cards have been allocated.

According to a recent survey, 83 per cent of older Scots would like to see more of their home country, with 72 per cent likely to take a day trip, short break or holiday in Scotland during the coming year.

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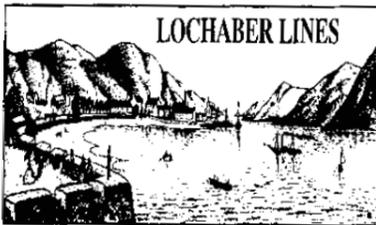
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Highlands & Islands ENTERPRISE

MOFFATCENTRE MC



email lochaberlines@obantimes.co.uk

WE WERE chatting to a barmaid about customers who, in days gone by, would use their dogs as a pretext to get out for a drink.

We remembered some of the high street public bars taking on the mantle of Crufts with dogs of all descriptions out for a walk. Today we can't think of a hostelry which would entertain dogs and our friend came up with the hilarious circumstances of the last pub to ban dogs. She recalled being in the Maryburgh when, a number of years ago, it was under different ownership. At closing time the licensee efficiently cleared the bar of customers but was rather disconcerted when he was left with three dogs on the premises.

It transpired that two of the dogs were owned by customers who had been ejected during the course of the evening and the third belonged to a customer who had forgotten that he had taken his dog for a walk.

The experienced licensee had dealt with some tough customers but nothing had prepared him for the snarling dogs, who were refusing to leave without their minders. After half an hour and dexterous use of a bar stool, which would have done credit to a lion tamer, the awkward customers were shoed out into the high street. The next morning a 'No Dogs' notice appeared on the door of the premises.

CUE FOR the true shaggy dog story of Sandy who never left his dog in the pub.

Quite the opposite, in fact, because when his sheepdog became bored he would often call for taxi to take the dog home to Camaghael whilst he remained for another dram. The story of the taxi driver, summoned by Sandy, coming into the pub and shouting 'Taxi for MacAulay' is part of Lochaber folklore.

A READER has been in touch to complain about an entry regarding Fort William Football Club on an internet site, which details all the football grounds in the United Kingdom.

Most of the content is fairly accurate and complimentary. For example: 'Claggan Park is probably the most picturesque ground in British football. It would be even better if they could screen the electrical substation at the far end of the ground with a few trees.'

The contributor states that there is a ramshackle covered stand on the road side of the ground but the best views are had from the opposite side, behind the dugouts. He also claims it is a bit disconcerting to tuck into a mutton pie at half-time and realise there are sheep grazing behind the far goal!

Nothing too controversial there but the entry under car parking is a cause for concern. In bold type it reads: 'Do not park your car in the estate before the ground. Park it in the club car park or leave it in town and walk. This is advice from Fort William Football Club themselves, as the estate they back onto is very rough and theft is high.'

Now before Claggan residents become apoplectic over this libellous allegation, we should point out we have been in touch with a club official who was most concerned about this information. He disassociated the club from the offending remarks and, like ourselves, does not believe that anyone connected with Fort William FC would have uttered such an adverse comment.

We have passed on details of the internet site to the club who will take steps for the removal of the offending words.

DID YOU have ticket number 26 when you attended Lochaber Burns Club supper?

If so, club member Scott Nolan would like to hear from you. Scott arrived home with the wrong jacket and his only clue to its owner is the ticket in a pocket. The owner of ticket number 26 probably has Scott's jacket and the Marine Harvest manager would like to arrange a swap before he emigrates to Tasmania in the near future.

Don't be put off by the word jacket. As Scott is 6 feet five inches tall the 'jacket' he has in his possession may be your coat and the new trench coat you have acquired may be Scott's jacket.

It seems it is a tradition of the Burns Club for jackets to be swapped. A few years ago, on the day following the supper, a member of the club was attempting to open up his joiner's yard with the keys of a surgery whilst a doctor was considering calling out the joiner because the keys of the joiners wouldn't work the locks of the surgery.

OVER the years shinty fans in Lochaber have, in the cold light of day, admired the nous and tactics of Kingussie Shinty Club as it racked up victory upon victory.

Teamwork has always been the key to its success and the Badenoch community appear to have taken up that ethic in its fight to save the Wade Centre, its equivalent of Invernevis House.

At last Thursday's Highland Council Care Homes Sub-Committee meeting in Inverness it pulled off a win to rival any Camanachd Cup success when the Wade Centre was withdrawn from the hit list of homes to be put out to private tender.

The irony is that the Wade Centre was on the original hit list of six homes to be privatised and at a late hour was joined by Invernevis House thanks to the votes of three Lochaber councillors and an abstention from a fourth. In shinty terms, three own goals and a glaring miss in front of an open goal. One councillor had a change of heart and joined at least two colleagues in support of Invernevis House.

Let us hope that those councillors who are offside at present, start pulling for Team Lochaber. This is a subject we will return to for some time to come, certainly until the council elections in May 2007.

Charlie's Challenge 2007: Lotto numbers 7-11-20. No takers so prize money for this week is £200.

Don't forget this week's ceilidh in the West End Hotel on Saturday February 25, which features gold medallists from previous National Mods in the Gearasdan.

Lochaber Past Times - from the archives of The Oban Times

100 years ago

FORT William Amateur Dramatic Association made its first public appearance in the town hall on the evening of Thursday last, when there was a large and representative audience.

Indeed, many failed to gain admission and the necessity for a bigger hall was on the occasion amply demonstrated. The Sunart lead mines are still idle. The start that was recently made met with little success.

Most of the column inches were taken up by tributes to the late James Chinnery Haldane, Episcopal Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, whose funeral took place 100 years ago this week at St Bride's, North Ballachulish.

He served as a bishop for 23 years having been consecrated at St Andrew's, Fort William, on August 14 1883.

40 years ago

IN 1966 amateur dramatics again took pride of place in Fort William Town Hall with nine teams, eight from Lochaber and one from Barcaldine, competing over three nights in the Scottish Community Dramatic Association's district finals.

Caol Choral and Dramatic Club's 'B' team won the festival. Joint runners-up were Caol's 'A' team and Glenfinnan Dramatic Club. Thus a situation, which aroused controversy last year, arose again.

A ruling stipulated that only one team from each club could go forward to the divisional finals so Caol 'A' team had to give way to Arisaig Dramatic Club.

After a meeting on Tuesday night in Kilmonivaig Junior Secondary School, Spean Bridge, parents voted three-to-one in favour of a scheme to close the secondary department. Under the plan for secondary re-organisation, all pupils would transfer to Lochaber High School or Lochside Junior Secondary.

Pilgrims look for Australian saint-to-be's Lochaber roots

A NINETEENTH century nun who fed Australia's poor children and is being proposed as Australia's first saint has led to Lochaber becoming the destination for pilgrimages from the other side of the globe.

St Margaret's Church in Roy Bridge has a shrine to Blessed Mary McKillop, an Australian nun who opened the country's first free school for children in 1861.

Eventually Mary McKillop had 17 free schools under her care and dedicated her life to the education of Australia's poor children.

Mary's father, Alexander McKillop, was raised in Roy Bridge at Cranachan Croft, another important place for the pilgrims.

Her mother, Flora MacDonald, was born in the Ben Nevis Inn in Fort William High Street.

In 1995 Pope John Paul II declared Mary 'blessed' during a visit to Sydney - an important step towards formal acknowledgement as a saint.

Before that, in 1973, she became the first Australian to be formally proposed to Rome as a candidate for canonization.

People can only become saints if the Catholic church finds evidence of miracles

connected with them. In 1961 Mary's spirit is believed by followers to have helped a terminally ill woman overcome cancer.

Pilgrims are now heading to the tiny Lochaber village to find out more about the early life of her parents.

Mary McKillop set up her own order, the Sisters of St Joseph, in 1866, which was dedicated to the education of poor children.

Australian nuns Sister Patricia Keane and Sister Rose McDonald, from the Australian order, have set up home in Fort William so they can help nuns from their order and pilgrims coming to the area.

Insight

Sister Patricia said that they are here to look after nuns from the Sisters of St Joseph's and give them an insight into the area. She said: 'They want to come and get in touch with the land and the countryside and see the place where Mary's parents came from and get a feel for the Scottish connection with Australia, because Mary always acknowledged that strong Scottish connection.'

Faith

'When she visited Lochaber in 1873 Mary said that the faith in Scotland was great and strong and that it was

wonderful to meet the people of the area where her parents had grown up.'

The nuns guide visitors around the main areas the pilgrims are interested in including Roy Bridge, Glen Spean and Fort William.

Sister Patricia added: 'Our work here is finding and putting together a little location map to point places out to people.'

'At Roy Bridge there is an old cemetery where a lot of Mary's great-grandparents would be buried.'

'We have taken sisters to the Roy Bridge Church and to the croft.'

'There was also once a convent on the site of Belford Hospital, which she visited.'

'Our work here is to make the story of Mary McKillop more widely known.'

Sister Patricia added that people across the world prayed through Mary McKillop and that 'great things had been happening', although the Catholic church is 'wisely cautious' about verifying miracles too early.

Shrine

There are Mary McKillop Centres in every state in Australia and shrines in New Zealand, Ireland, Peru and East Timor.

At St Margaret's Church in Roy Bridge there is a



Sisters Patricia Keane and Rose McDonald.

small shrine to Mary and a Mary McKillop Centre could be a possibility in the future.

Sister Patricia added: 'It would be great to have that down the track but we are not going to force that on

local people, yes if there is interest and people want to know more we will go further.'

No change to Skye bus services

THERE will be no disruption to the Inverness to Skye or Ullapool bus services after the company operating the routes for Scottish Citylink gave up its tender.

From March 26 Rapsons Coaches will stop providing buses for the long haul journeys because it wants to concentrate on its 'core business' of school runs and local routes in the Highlands.

A Scottish Citylink spokesman said it would be talking to local operators about taking over the services but were not in a position to give any more details.

The spokesman said: 'We can assure passengers that there will be no disruption to current services.'

'It will be a seamless transition.'

Fort William residents object to Lochaber wind farm mast plan

FORT William residents are objecting to two masts being built to measure wind speeds at Loch Arkaig and Drumfada.

Councillors on Highland Council's Lochaber area planning committee are being recommended to allow the masts to be operated by North British Windpower Limited despite the objections.

The 'anemometer' masts were originally given planning permission in August 2003 and installed on the sites in 2004.

The company appealed to the Scottish Executive to

overturn a decision by Lochaber area planning committee not to give consent.

Now it is applying for a temporary extension until March 2007 to allow it to further test the area's suitability for a wind farm, which is what objectors fear most.

A report to the committee by council planning officials stated: 'Although two representations have been received, comments pertaining to these applications representing a precursor to a possible wind farm are both premature

and irrelevant and have no bearing to the determination of the current proposals. It would be inappropriate to prejudice the fact that the information obtained of wind, its direction, strength and consistency may at some time in the future be used to support an application for the development of a wind farm. Such a proposal would be the subject of a separate planning application and would require to be considered on its own merits and be accompanied with an environmental assessment.'

'It is not inconceivable that the information gathered may render the two sites unsuitable for the development of a wind farm. It is therefore necessary to emphasise that the planning assessment of this application must be confined to the anemometer masts themselves.'

The report stated that the mast at Loch Arkaig will be largely hidden from public view by steeply rising ground. The Drumfada site is within an area of open moorland above and to the west of a built-up area. It is fronted by an extensive

plantation which will lessen the impact. The company says the extension is needed to collect more data on wind resources in the areas.

The council says the applicant has indicated a willingness to provide the affected communities with any useful information as and when it becomes available but stressed that the data needs to be analysed prior to any decisions being made.

Councillors will make their decision at a meeting of Lochaber area planning committee on Monday February 27.



The young film makers with their award.

Lochaber film hits the big screen

YOUNG film makers from Lochaber High School hit the dizzy heights of fame when they won an award for their movie, titled *Poached Salmon Eggs*, which was filmed and produced in Lochaber.

The group received a commemorative plate and a £200 cheque from 'Scooby' Patterson after winning a Fort William Mountain Film Festival competition.

The young people had been involved in writing a script which was then entered into a competition run by the MacAninch Trust Fund. The winning script was turned

into a short film with the help of Cal MacAninch and director Ian Bustard. The story, written by John MacGillivray, Martin MacLeod and Alistair Morrison, features young boys living in the Fort William area who decide to go on a fishing trip with a difference.

The boys encounter a water bailiff who teaches them the importance of protecting the fish stocks and managing the river.

Cal MacAninch also presented the boys with their Duke of Edinburgh certificates for Film Making.

people to make the most of their lives.

'Jack teaches techniques that can help us all get more out of our lives.'

Finlay Finlayson, Chairman of Outdoor Capital of the UK, said: 'Lochaber has already shown that by pulling together we can make a huge difference.'

'For example, The Belford campaign and the formation of Outdoor Capital of the UK Limited. 'But this doesn't happen enough.

Skye students jump on band wagon

SIX HIGH school students from Skye are jumping on the band-wagon and forming their own company.

The students, from Portree High School, have taken advantage of a craze among young people for wearing wristbands and formed a company to design and sell them.

The group is taking part in a Young Enterprise competition to claim the prize of Young Enterprise Company 2006.

Managing director Calum Montgomery said the company had spotted a gap in the market for high quality wristbands promoting the Isle of Skye.

Company directors had collaborated on the design of the bands and an initial run of 1,000 bi-lingual English and Gaelic bands had been commissioned. Sales and marketing director Tracy Meicklejohn said: 'Several hundred of the distinctive blue and white bands have already been sold and demand for

them has been very high. We have certainly achieved our initial sales targets.'

Calum MacVicar, financial director, added: 'The company is already quite profitable but while the bottom line is important, producing a quality product and maintaining good customer service is what we really aim to achieve. We raised our initial funds by holding a raffle at the end of school term and all of us have risked some of our own money on the venture.'

The wrist bands are available in most Skye shops and can be ordered over the internet.

Highland schools face hard choices

SOME courses offered at Highland secondary schools could be dropped as schools struggle to meet a new national agreement on teaching hours.

A £769,000 grant from the Scottish Executive to Highland Council will be spent entirely on primary schools meaning some secondary schools could face hard choices on whether or not to drop some subjects.

Bruce Robertson, Highland Council's director of education, said: 'If we were to give every school in Highland an additional hour for each teacher, the total bill would be £2.7 million, and in the case of secondary schools, £1.4m. It is clear therefore that we are not in a position to allocate additional funding to all schools for this purpose.'

'Because primary schools have little flexibility in their staffing levels, they must be

Police files

Wheel trims stolen

SOMETIME during the night of Wednesday February 15 four wheel trims were stolen from a Peugeot car parked in Ballachulish.

Parked car vandalised

SOMETIME between February 12 and 17, a Vauxhall Vectra parked on Park Road, Ballachulish, was vandalised.

Guest house light damaged

ABOUT 6.30pm on Friday February 17 a light illuminating a guest house sign at a house at Lochside, Fort William, was damaged by a youth wearing a red top and light coloured trousers.

Vehicle vandalised

SOMETIME between 1am and 10am on Sunday February 19 a Sierra car parked on Carn Dearg Road, Claggan, was vandalised.

Anyone with knowledge of any of these incidents is asked to contact Fort William police station on 01397 702361 or the confidential line on 01397 702000.

Members of the public may also report any crime or anything suspicious by telephoning Crime-stoppers on 0800 555111.

Broadband bus tours Lochaber

A BROADBAND bus will be touring Ardnamurchan, stopping off at Kilchoan, Glenborrodale, Achacrae, Strontian, Lochaline and Ardgour this week.

The bus, which contains a broadband satellite connection and 10 computers, will be staffed to provide home users, community groups, and businesses, with impartial broadband information and advice.

During 2005, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and the Scottish Executive launched the Broadband for Scotland Rural and Remote Areas initiative, providing broadband for a large number of communities throughout Scotland and now, every telephone exchange in Ardnamurchan can supply basic broadband.

Bus timetable: Thursday February 23 - 9.30am to 12 noon, Kilchoan Community Centre; 1.30pm to 3pm, Glenmore Visitor Centre, Glenborrodale; 4.30pm - 7pm, Achacrae Village Shop.

Friday February 24 - 10am to 12.30pm, The Village Shop, Strontian; 3pm - 5pm, The Lochaline Hotel, Lochaline; 6.30pm to 8pm, The Inn at Ardgour, Ardgour.

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

GLASGOW LETTER

Night with a difference

FOR THOSE of us who have been attending ceilidh dances for years, and in my case this goes back to the hey days of the Highlander's Institute in the 1960s, the annual buffet ceilidh of the Glasgow Argyll Association managed to throw up some surprises.

When did you last perform a Bavarian Strip the Willow or a Swedish Masquerade? Probably never, I am sure, but many of those in attendance were experts leaving the rest of us spectating in admiration. The hall at Hillhead Sports Club was an excellent venue for this function.

The catering was of the usual high standard and with the dancing interspersed by songs, in Gaelic and English, from Mod Gold Medalists Mairi MacArthur and Norman MacKinnon, the capacity crowd, which included many who had travelled from distant parts of Argyll, thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

Clydebank ceilidh

THE RECENT ceilidh at Clydebank lived up to the expected high standard and members were particularly pleased to welcome vice president John MacKay, aged 93, who was visiting from his home in Lochgoilhead.

It was again pleasing to see youngsters taking to the stage. Resident piper Philip Barlow opened proceedings and there were songs from Norrie MacIver, Lewis, and Sineag MacIntyre, South Uist, both students on the Traditional Music Course at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

Norrie showed the versatility expected of students on this course by playing outstanding selections on a borrowed accordion.

The ever-popular Freddie MacKenzie from Oban also sang and Mairi MacArthur contributed the Scot's songs for the evening. Musical accompaniment was provided by Anna Cameron and Mark Wylie ensured proceedings ran smoothly. Members and friends of Clydebank will now be in good form for their annual dinner this coming Saturday.

St Columba's ceilidh

SIX YEARS ago a party from St Columba's travelled to Oban to host a ceilidh and it was agreed then that their friends would reciprocate.

A promise is a promise and at long last both parties managed to arrange a suitable time for this ceilidh to take place. It was well worth waiting for!

"The best ceilidh for years" was the often used comment from those who packed the hall. The resounding choruses could be heard afar as singers Freddie MacKenzie, Catriona Fair and Archie MacLean, yet again defying his age, captivated their audience.

Ably supported by piper and accordionist Alasdair MacDonal and accompanist Kirsteen Grant, Donald MacKinnon, in the chair for the evening, ensured the success of the evening.

Unfortunately news came through that Mairi MacKenzie, Mairi "Renfrew" as she is affectionately known, had been involved in a car accident not far from the church.

Mairi is currently in the Western Infirmary. We wish her a speedy recovery and look forward to her return to the local scene to which she has made an invaluable contribution over the years.

Choir concert

OFTEN my problem is which function to attend but not this coming Friday.

I have been 'ordered' to attend the Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir Concert in Kessington Hall at 7.30 pm.

It should be an excellent night's entertainment with both the senior and junior choirs exhibiting the hard work they have put in over the winter months. See you there.

A Skye man of science

ON FRIDAY March 17 Professor Norman MacDonald with Caillean MacLean will speak on the life of Professor Magnus MacLean - a Skye man of science.

Tickets for this event, which will take place in Partick Burgh Hall at 7.30pm, cost £10 and £5 for students.

Oban High School annual dinner

FORMER pupils of Oban High School are again reminded that the annual dinner of the Glasgow branch will take place on Saturday March 11 in the Swallow Hotel.

Tickets are available from Anne Byiers 0141 943 0281 or Isobel Ross 0141 563 9729.

Ronnie MacDonald

AFTER being unwell for many years, Ronnie MacDonald, Arisaig, retired Detective Inspector of Strathclyde Police, died on February 10.

We extend our sympathy to his wife Rachel and daughters Anne, Mary, Rona and Karen and their families.

Anne was a member of Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir for many years.

Diary dates

Thursday February 23: Jenna Reid and Kevin MacKenzie, St Andrews in the Square.

Friday February 24: Helensburgh Highlander's Association, cabaret dance, 8pm, Albany Dance Band, Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir, annual concert, Kessington Hall, Bearsden, 7.30pm. Glasgow Uist and Barra Association, ceilidh dance, Community Hall, Whitefield Road, Ibrox, 9pm.

Saturday February 25: Clydebank and District Highlander's Association, Dinner Dance, Motherwell and District Highlander's Association, ceilidh dance, Dalziel St Andrew's Church Hall, 7.30pm. Glasgow branch An Comunn, family ceilidh, Partick Burgh Hall, 7.30pm.

Friday March 3: Glasgow Islay Association, annual gathering, Partick Burgh Hall, 7.30pm. Dance, Oran Mor, 10pm to 2am, with Fergie MacDonald's Band. Edinburgh Argyll Association, ceilidh, St Mark's Church Hall, Castle Terrace, 7.30pm.

Saturday March 4: Stirling An Comunn, ceilidh, Lesser Albert Hall, 7.30pm. Glasgow Tírce Association, dinner dance, Hilton Grosvenor Hotel, 7 for 7.30pm.

Thursday March 9: Comunn Taobh-an-Iar, closing ceilidh, Kessington Hall, 7.30pm.

Pub scene

FOR FANS of Skerryvore all roads lead to the Park Bar where they will be performing on both Saturday and Sunday evenings this weekend.

Gary Forrest will provide the Friday entertainment.

In the Islay Inn, Beetroutie will play on Friday and it will be Campbell Brown and Johnnie Scoullar on Saturday.

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

press policy

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

It is the policy of The Oban Times Group to correct any errors in print.

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

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



Dunollie Road Church Dramatic Club 1953

This week's flashback photograph features Oban's Dunollie Road Church Dramatic Club performing the three-act play *The Lady from Edinburgh* in 1953. Pictured, back row, left to right, John McCulloch, Maragret Maule, Netta Watters, Bill Niven, Margaret Falconer and George McKay. Front, Jean Edwards, the Very Rev James Whyte and Enid Henderson. The photo was submitted by Margaret Falconer of Glenmore Road, Oban. We would like readers to send in 'Flashback' photographs. Please send prints to *The Oban Times*, 'Flashback' Photo, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Prints must be accompanied by a caption, name and address, stamped addressed envelope and telephone number. Each month a photo will win £10.

Letters to the Editor

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Keep Argyll archivist

Sir,

I am writing to express my astonishment at the decision of Argyll and Bute Council to discontinue its Archives Department after the retirement of Murdo MacDonald at the end of March 2006, as reported in *The Oban Times* last week.

I am a member of Dalmally Historical Association and we have found the archives and particularly the knowledge and expertise of the county archivist invaluable.

We have been extremely fortunate to have such a resource in this area and I feel the council has made a short-sighted decision. It is a shame the local historical groups were not consulted over this matter.

I hope the council reviews its decision and appoints a successor to Mr MacDonald.

Kate Craig, Dalmally Historical Association.

Maintain the legacy

Sir,

Argyll and Bute Council should feel proud of the area's rich heritage and the preservation of local archives by the council archivist.

The archivist has extended his services to schoolchildren, historical societies, the Argyllshire diaspora in Britain and abroad and to countless people with an interest in Argyll and Bute.

This service has been provided for the past 30 years by Murdo MacDonald, who is to retire at the end of next month.

There can scarcely be a publication about Argyll published during these years that has not mentioned Murdo as a source of information.

I would doubt if there can have been a finer ambassador for Argyll and Bute Council than Murdo and I can understand the feeling he would be irreplaceable.

However, the decision made by the council to axe this post is, I believe, extremely short-sighted.

The value of the archives themselves must be significant, but their value extends far beyond financial assets. I can only hope the council will keep these in a way that ensures Murdo's legacy is appropriately maintained, unlike the job.

Roderick D Buchanan, Kilmartin.

Appalling decision

Sir,

I have just learnt there is no intention to replace the council archivist long-term

tree researchers is a step backwards. Argyllshire's history is its gold. Increasing services is the proper direction to go and we all would be the better for it.

Mary Fletcher Harris Barrie, Canada, by email.

Historical treasure trove

Sir,

I was appalled to read of a Lochaber councillor referring to the written history of his area as 'old junk', *The Oban Times*, February 9.

If the concept of an archive centre is of stuffy academics poring over huge tomes in badly lit, poky rooms, nothing could be further from the truth. Local record offices are used by historians, teachers and children, visitors searching for genealogical information, who bring considerable wealth to the area, as well as council officials who rely on local records to supply information when building warrants and planning applications are processed.

A very large part of local archive material is unique; it cannot be found anywhere else which is why local authorities, such as The Highland Council, are responsible for ensuring the preservation, effective management and ready use of a historical treasure trove of proven usefulness and immense national importance.

This argument should be considered in an historical context. Many languages world wide have been subjected to English language coercion, in particular Welsh, but including Gaelic and in truth had partizons of Gaelic displayed a more organised and spirited defence of their own language the present Sleaf controversy might not have arisen.

Inevitably there will be a suggestion that those advocates of Gaelic-only in this school are acting in an autocratic or dictatorial fashion.

One can sympathise with the parents who oppose Sleaf Primary School becoming monolingual. Through no fault of their own, they have been put in a difficult situation, but when confronted by the dramatic decline in the number of Gaelic speakers to the extent that a national newspaper can observe matter of factly 'Gaelic as a living language will be extinct by the end of the third quarter of the 21st century' perhaps they could reconsider their position.

Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Colin Stewart Winter, Kilchrenan.

Big names should pay their way

Sir,

I read last week's edition with great interest, particularly the front page story about Asda and other big names desperate to come to Oban.

Surely, having made the mistake of letting Tesco into Oban without demanding substantial benefits for the community, if further chains come to Oban, paying for ongoing benefits to the community should be a condition of entry.

I believe this has already happened in other parts of the UK.

An ice rink in Oban would give the town and surrounding areas a great boost.

There could be recreational ice skating, ice hockey, curling and ice dancing.

Oban is growing so we need better recreational centres for all age groups and another place for our youth to either strive for excellence or just a place to meet, relax and play, making sure that costs are met, in the main, by those benefitting from Oban's shoppers - the national chains.

Your letters

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

A VIEW FROM THE TOWER

By McCAIG



Millions for council

HARDLY has there been time for the ink on the fine detail of Councillor Allan Macaskill's Argyll and Bute Council budget for the next financial year to dry than he has another calculation to make.

Sometime this week, the Scottish Executive will announce the final settlement for the financial year that is about to end in six weeks' time. And it is good news for the local authority except that deputy Finance Minister George Lyon, who just happens to be the MSP for this constituency, has stated publicly that he expects the council leader to use the major part of the £4.58 million payout to provide 'full personal care' for those who have been denied it since last November when it was announced that there was no cash in the kitty to provide the statutory entitlements for frail, ill and elderly constituents.

As a result of this failure to meet the assessments for more than 100 of those entitled to 'full personal care', there has been bed-blocking in hospitals and there have been those who had elderly relatives at home requiring far more than those attempting to look after them could provide.

Now, every year this final settlement by the executive comes along about the same time as the council's budget has to be declared. It should not be beyond the wit of a local authority employee in the treasurer's department to seek the necessary information from his counterpart in the executive's finance department as to what the level of the final payment for 2005-06 might be. Given that this might have been too difficult, or allegedly unethical, what was to prevent Councillor Macaskill asking George Lyon, Deputy Finance Minister, for information on what was liable to reach the council's coffers before the end of this month?

I know the cost of 'full personal care' is a nightmare for all local councils which is why they have been landed with it to administer. Neither the executive nor the NHS health trusts wanted to have anything to do with it, having studied what the former First Minister Henry McLeish had announced.

But I pose this question: which is more important, ensuring that everyone who needs 'full personal care' receives it or promoting trivialities, such as the Young Scot Card and a whole range of similar schemes?

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McCaig

DE THA DOL?

Turas dhan Fhiaclair

THÀINIG orm a dhol gu fhaclair ùr air an t-seachdain seo.

Tha mi air a bhith a' frithealadh an aon fhaclair bho chionn bliadhnaichean agus bha e a' còrdadh riom mhath - uill cho math is a chòrdas turas gu fhaclair ri neach sam bith. Ged a bhiodh e a' bhruidhinn fhads a bha e ag obair, cha robh e a' foighneachd cheistean dhomh fhads a bha a' chòrd na mo bheul agus mo bheul straoindte fosgailte. Bha dealbhan eibhinn air mullach na h-ionad-leigheis agus tanca le eisg a' snàmh gu cùin ri mo thaobh. Bha an t-àite cho comhartaile is a dh' iarradh tu. Ach bho chionn ghoirid dheònaich e a dhol prìobhaideach. Agus toilichte is gun robh mi leis an t-seirbheis a bha e a' toirt seachd, bha seo a' dol an aghaidh nam prìonnasapanal agam - gu h-àraid seach gu bheil mi, còmhla ris a h-uile neach eile, air a bhith a' pàigheadh cìs airson seirbheisean slàinte bho chionn iomadach bliadhna. As dèidh don fhaclair ùr sùil a thoirt air na fhaclan agam thuir i nach robh iad feumach air aire bhuaipese ach gum b' fheàrr iad beagan aire bhon t-slàinteachair - seo facal a rinn mi fhèin suas - ma bha mi deònach. Cha robh mi air a leithid a fhrithealadh roimhe seo ach dh' aontaich mi a comhairle a ghabhail. Cha do dhùin a beul, a' foighneachd cheistean, fhads a bha mi nam shineadh anns an t-sèithear agus mo bheul fosgailte làn ionsramaidean.

'Am bi thu a' coimhead East Enders?' 'Uh, uh.' 'De m dheidhinn Coronation Street?' 'Uh, uh?' Agus mar sin air adhart. Mu dheireadh dh' iarr i orm mo bheul a sgoladh agus fhads a bha e làn stuth-sgoilaidh dh' fhoighneachd i dhomh an robh planaichean agam airson an deireadh sheachdain. Bha mi dìreach a' dol a chur a-mach na bha na mo bheul a dh' fhoighneachd dhith carson a bhiodh planaichean agam airson an deireadh sheachdain nuair a thàinig e a-staigh orm gun

robh rèidio a' dol anns an ionad-leigheis ged nach tug mi an aire thuire seo agus bha Terry Wogan ag ràdh aig an dearbh àm, 'They stick a lump of rubber in your gob and then they ask you if you've got plans for the week-end.'

Theab mi tacadh ach gu fortanach bha mo chùlaibh rithe. Nuair a chaidh mi dhachaidh bha mi ag innse dhan Bhodach mun chòmhradh annasach a bha seo. 'Uill, ars esan, 's e do chuire fhèin a th' ann. Carson a thagh thu fhaclair boireann?' Theab mi grèim a thoirt às.

Phrases

Thàinig orm a dhol gu fhaclair ùr - I had to go to a new dentist. Cho math is a chòrdas turas gu fhaclair ri neach sam bith - as well as anyone enjoys a visit to a dentist. Fhads a bha a' chòrd na mo bheul - while his fist was in my mouth. Agus mo bheul straoindte fosgailte - and my mouth wide open. Dheònaich e a dhol prìobhaideach - he chose to go private. Thuir i nach robh iad feumach air aire bhuaipese -

Lismore

Your correspondent is Pauline Dowling: 01631 760 293

Annual overhaul

THE CALEDONIAN MacBrayne ferry MV Eigg left for its annual overhaul on February 8.

It will be away for approximately six weeks. The temporary replacement vessel will not be able to carry high vehicles such as hay lorries.

As Caledonian MacBrayne did not advise Lismore Community Council in advance, any farmers needing hay will have to wait until the end of March.

Lismore/Port Appin ferry

A SERVICE agreement has been reached with Argyll and Bute Council to establish a bank of out-of-hours ferries.

This will give ferry passengers the right to expect out-of-hours ferries when required rather than their availability being subject to restrictions on the ferries' working hours.

However, it is of little use as the huge rise in fares for this service means few will consider using it.

Concern has been voiced about the storage of life jackets in the luggage hold. When the hold is full, access to some of the lifejackets is restricted.

Welcome back to ferryman Alan MacKellar after an absence of a few months. Alan is as obliging and friendly a ferryman as any island could wish.

Out-of-hours health care

THERE is great concern about the future of out-of-hours health care, which at the moment is covered by Port Appin Surgery and the nurse practitioner.

No date has been set for GPs to opt out but inevitably the time is approaching.



Cash boost for North Argyll carers' coffers

A successful Valentine's Day afternoon at Glencruitten Church Hall, Oban, saw £500 raised for North Argyll Carers and Crossroads Care. 'Staff' for the day were dressed accordingly and music was provided by young clarsach players and Oban accordion player Craig MacFadyen.

An NHS official has suggested that elsewhere volunteer firefighters have 'played a key role following opt out'.

Lismore volunteer firefighters say they are in no way trained or equipped to replace medical personnel as potential First Responders.

It is not just Lismore but all rural areas which are geographically unsuited to the future plans of the NHS.

Slow road to broadband

BROADBAND is slowly coming to Lismore, a few hours at a time.

But the island is not going to get the full service, only one offering a speed of 512KB.

It has been suggested that the problem lies in the routing of the Lismore service through Mull exchanges that are not able to carry the full speed.

Meanwhile BT engineers are busy doing a health and safety survey on all above ground equipment on the island to eliminate the chance of any personal injury to residents.

Jura

Your correspondent is Sandra Muir: 01496 820180

A changing island

THERE are a lot of changes taking place on the island.

The vast extraction of wood from the two forests is producing totally different views. The scenery has completely changed, opening up areas that have been hidden for many years.

The down side is the steady flow of tractors and trailers passing through the village which has taken its toll on roads and disturbs the usual island tranquility.

Craighouse care centre

BUILDING work on the care centre at Craighouse is well under way.

The foundations are being laid and frames are being built on site.

Tobermory

work for islanders. It is good to see the project progress.

More houses will be built in the next few years as some young former Jura residents have returned to the island with their partners and are planning to build new croft houses in the Knockrome area.

Parking outcry

PROPOSALS by Argyll and Bute Council to charge residents for on-street and off-street parking in Tobermory has caused an outcry from north Mull residents.

When the area committee of Argyll and Bute Council met recently in Tobermory, councillors were left in no doubt that this proposal was regarded by most residents as adding another cost without any foreseeable improvement in the quality of life.

Richard West, representing the residents' action group, asked: 'Given that Main Street in Tobermory

is the only shopping area in the town, have the councillors considered the impact this proposal will have on the aged, infirm and disabled residents of Tobermory and on people on low incomes?'

There has been no offer of a free parking area close to the shops and in a small community with a fragile economy, where residents are already paying above normal costs for basic commodities, this will cause real hardship.

Whilst everyone in Tobermory recognises there are traffic management and pedestrian safety issues on Main Street, charging for parking is not regarded the best solution.

Yes, the popularity of Tobermory has brought increased visitor numbers for a couple of months in the summer, but the unique setting of the town where locals and visitors can mingle in the heart of the community lends Tobermory its essential character.

It appears particularly insensitive of the council to be considering this proposal whilst refusing to address the disgraceful state of the roads on Mull. The community is therefore working hard to get Argyll and Bute to look at a more sensitive solution that places traffic management and safety above making money.

Invergarry

Your correspondent is Gilean Sangster: 01809 511292

Glengarry Community Council

THE FOLLOWING items were discussed at a recent meeting of Glengarry Community Council:

Invernevis House, Fort William: Fears have been expressed to Councillor Bill Clark and members of the community council by relatives of family members who are at present resident in Invernevis House that there has been insufficient

Several items, which had been discussed at previous meetings, have now been attended to. These include: **Marauding deer:** The forest ranger has disposed of two hinds and a stag so village gardens will hopefully now be left untouched by deer. **Pothole on A87:** Councillor Bill Clark has contacted BEAR, the trunk roads authority, with regard to the pothole on the A87 at the fish hatchery in the village. **Coping stones:** The contractor will attend to the problem of the coping stones at the Post Office.

Killin

Your correspondent is Judy Forster: 01567 820298

Community council

KILLIN Community Council met recently and among the items discussed were:

Waste services: Stirling Council has spoken to crews about returning wheeie bins to their original place but they are still being left on the wrong side of the street. Councillor Finch is to take up the matter. **Post bus:** There is no post bus serving Ardeonaig. A complaint had been received about the price rise for passengers travelling to Stirling. It was suggested the community council should campaign for through ticketing. Passengers have to buy a ticket to Callendar and then another for Callendar to Stirling. It was asked why the post bus no longer runs to Callendar. It was thought that the contract was lost as the company involved had stopped supplying a big enough bus and passengers were being left at Strathyre.

The community council expressed concern about the lack of consultation about the post bus service. It was agreed to write to try and find out the reason. **Path lights:** It was agreed that the installation of lights

had made the Breadalbane Park footpath safer for everyone.

Resurfacing of Main Street: It was agreed that the efficient way Main Street, Killin, had been resurfaced with the minimum of disruption should be acknowledged.

Council house transfer: Stirling Council is proposing to transfer all its council houses to a new local organisation called Housing Stirling as it believes it is the best way forward for tenants and if it goes ahead the Scottish Executive will write off the council's housing debt ensuring that every £1 rent paid by tenants can be spent on providing good housing services and improving homes. Council tenants will have the same rights as at present, including the right to buy, tenancy agreements will be the same and tenants won't have to move.

All council tenants will have the chance to vote in a ballot in spring 2006. If the majority of those voting vote 'yes' homes will transfer to Housing Stirling about six to eight months after the ballot.

An unpaid board of 16 including six tenants, five councillors and five independent people is now setting up Housing Stirling.

Housing Stirling's fully costed business plan will show tenants how it can pay for improvements to their homes for the next 30 years while keeping rents affordable. The association is guaranteeing a maximum rent increase based on inflation plus one per cent and Housing Stirling will consult tenants before setting rents in the future.

Housing Stirling will have a contract with the council to ensure it delivers on its promises to tenants, including those on rents and investment.

Every tenant will be able to become a member of Housing Stirling and decide who is on the board and Housing Stirling will take up the ownership of the council's 6,700 homes and deliver housing repairs. Most of the housing

employees now work for the council will transfer across, as will employees in building services, so tenants will deal with the same faces as they do now.

There will be no change in the way repairs are done. Building services tradespeople will transfer to Housing Stirling and carry out repairs. A ballot paper will be sent direct to every tenant in spring 2006. Joint tenants will each be able to vote and by then more details will be available about Housing Stirling's plans.

Tenants' conference

STIRLING Tenants Association held a successful conference on the proposed business plan by Housing Stirling ahead of a proposed ballot to transfer housing stock from Stirling Council.

The three main issues were estate management, building services and rent and investment.

Because of a delay at the Scottish Executive it was not possible to present the full business plan but delegates discussed the themes as part of the initial consultation and comments were taken back to the community ownership team.

Following the conference, the Stirling Tenants Association annual general meeting was held and a new committee of 14 - including Moira Robertson from Crianlarich - was elected. A resolution proposing that ex-council tenants be allowed three places on the committee was defeated.

SNH films in Killin

SCOTTISH Natural Heritage has been filming scenes for an advert on the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Filming took place over three days and shows the responsible way for canoeists and fisherman to behave on the river. The advert is due to be shown in the last week of February and the first week in March.

Around the Rurals

Kilmore

MRS STUART, president, welcomed the ladies to the first meeting of the new year.

After business was dealt with, Mrs Stuart introduced guest speaker Kevin Baker, head librarian for Lorn and the islands.

Mr Baker provided a highly entertaining talk on his life leading up to his current post and the various aspects of the job.

This was interspersed with fine singing from Mr Baker who received a hearty vote of thanks from Mrs Stuart, on behalf of the institute. Tea was served.

Competition - favourite book binding: 1 Valerie Marshall; 2 Isobel Smith.

Salen

MICHAEL Shilson was welcomed to the February meeting when he gave a fascinating talk about the Japanese healing therapy of Shiatsu.

He explained that touching with gentle pressure and massage on acupuncture points helps recovery through self-healing. The aims of Shiatsu are to remove stress and tension, to stimulate the immune system, to detoxify the body by eating plenty fresh organic fruit and vegetables and to have the will-power to be a 'well person'.

Michael's presentation was followed by Ruth and Norma's delicious refreshments and a chance to ask the speaker many questions.

Fionnphort

THE FIONNPHORT branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute met at Creich Hall on February 1.

Guest speaker was Jan Such-Pickard, Bunesan, who spoke on her recent experiences working on the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel. This is a joint project run by Churches Together, Christian Aid, Quaker Peace and Social Witness and The World Council of Churches.

In September 2005, Jan lived with a Palestinian family in the village of Jayyous as an ecumenical companion, a volunteer post which helps provide protection to inhabitants through a non-violent presence and solidarity with all Palestinians and Israelis struggling against occupation.

Her photographs of the people she met there showed how difficult it is for ordinary human beings to conduct a normal life in such desperate conditions but how their spirit would not be broken. It was a very thought provoking evening. Further information is available at www.eappi@quaker.org.uk. For details on how to help make a quilt for peace visit www.quiltforpalestine@hotmail.co.uk.

Jan's talk ended with a reading of her poignant poem *Narcissus*, a metaphor for peace in the 'no man's, no woman's, no child's land' she had experienced. Thanks went to Jan for an informative and well presented discussion and the branch's best wishes were extended for her continued efforts in the peace process. Refreshments were provided by Gill and Linda.



Strathaven Pipe Band and their supporters in Tiree's Scarinish Hotel.

Bands get together for Tiree piping fun

TIREE and Strathaven pipers got together to strike up the band.

Thirty one members of Strathaven Pipe Band took up the invitation of their Tiree counterparts and

recently enjoyed a visit to the island.

The bands played on the beach at Scarinish before Strathaven Pipe Band entertained island senior citizens having marched to

from Scamish to the venue in gale force winds.

Other highlights of the visit included tag piping on the beach and a fun night in Tiree Hall.

This June, Tiree Pipe

Band hopes to visit Strathaven for three days to take part in the town's gala day and other events.

Fund-raising is underway to help towards the cost of the trip.

The Oban Times GENERAL KNOWLEDGE DOUBLE CROSSWORD No. 421

- ACROSS
7. Tex., film cartoon director who created Daffy Duck (5)
8. Silvery-white metallic element used chiefly as a source of nuclear energy (7)
9. '... of the Sorrows', unfinished play by J.M. Synge (7)
10. One of The Three Musketeers in the novel by Dumas (5)
12. Australian Test cricket captain in their 1997 Ashes series against England (4,6)
15. Chief port of Egypt (10)
18. City in central Japan which was capital of the country from 794 to 1868 (5)
19. 'The ...', 1982 Sidney Lumet film which won a Best Picture Oscar nomination (7)
21. Former standard unit of currency of the Netherlands (7)
22. Country which hosted the 1992 summer Olympics (5)

Crossword grid with numbers 1-22 indicating starting positions for words.

- DOWN
1. Dutch detective created by Nicholas Freeling (3,3,4)
2. Lavrenti, Soviet chief of secret police killed in 1953 (5)
3. Richard, U.S. explorer who was navigator on the first aeroplane flight over the North Pole (4)
4. German port on the Baltic Sea at the mouth of the River Trave (6)
5. Seaport in Japan destroyed by a nuclear bomb in World War II (8)
6. Peter, author of the play The National Health (7)
11. Dark green or brown mineral found in igneous and metamorphic rocks (10)
13. Large nonvenomous snake of tropical South America (8)
14. A member of a nomadic tribe inhabiting parts of the Sahara (7)
16. Aubrey Thonon, Irish writer whose works include English Misrule and Irish Misdeeds (2,4)
17. Standard unit of currency of Jordan (5)
20. Dean, U.S. secretary of state 1961-69 (4)

SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE - Across: 1 Savitrag; 8 Rio; 9 Maya Angelou; 11 Sellers; 12 Omega; 13 Scotch; 15 Athena; 17 Aorta; 18 Sejanus; 20 Vice Admiral; 22 Ace; 23 LadySmith.
Down: 2 A-Ha; 3 Frame; 4 August; 5 Elliott; 6 Bruce Jenner; 7 John Adams; 10 Yellow River; 11 Sasafra; 14 Chancel; 16 Island; 19 James; 21 Ant.
QUICK - Across: 1 Awestruck; 8 Lie; 9 Exceptional; 11 Twaddle; 12 Cover; 13 Redden; 15 Sprain; 17 Ensue; 18 Restive; 20 Intolerance; 22 Sin; 23 Recapture.
Down: 2 Wax; 3 Tepid; 4 United; 5 Kingcup; 6 Alleviation; 7 Reference; 10 Clandestine; 11 Terseless; 14 Elector; 16 Frolic; 19 Scrap; 21 Cur.

- QUICK CLUES DOWN
1. Opponent (10)
2. Range (5)
3. Carry (4)
4. Fisherman (6)
5. Suggestion (8)
6. Artist (7)
11. Books (10)
13. False (8)
14. Cospel (7)
16. Away (6)
17. Robust (5)
20. Scheme (4)

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10 Years Ago Those Were The Days The Oban Times Thursday February 27, 1996. Second bid for Ganavan. A SECOND bid has been launched for Millennium funding for The Crucible, a futuristic cultural centre planned for Ganavan, near Oban. The centre will be the first of its kind in Britain, bringing together aspects of the past, present and future of the West Highlands through a variety of media. The £25 million project, expected to create 132 jobs on the premises and indirect employment for around another 500, aims to bring visitors from all over the UK and abroad, giving a £10 million cash injection to the local economy. Plans for The Crucible, drawn up by prominent businessmen Sandy Orr and Bill Crerar, both from Oban, were turned down for Millennium cash last year. The proposals have now been revised and have been lodged again with the Millennium Commission in the hope of attracting 50 per cent of the capital costs. A third of workforce laid off. MORE than a third of the workers at Campbelltown Shipyard have been laid off, just a week after the yard won a new order which was meant to safeguard their jobs. A hold-up has delayed the start of the work on a £1.5 million order for the Fraserburgh-based Steadfast Trawling Company and 20 workers at the yard were told last Thursday there was no work for them for the moment. The yard's managing director John Shannon told a workers' meeting some staff would have to be laid off. Each of the 20 workers was told they would receive a further week's pay but there was no need for them to come into the yard to work. Uist priest in hiding. SCOTLAND'S most senior churchman has appealed for the safety of a South Uist priest forced to go into hiding in Ecuador. Cardinal Thomas Winning was in touch with the embassy in Quito after Father Colin MacInnes disappeared this week. It is understood he had to flee from Commite del Pueblo, where he has worked for the last 10 years, after speaking out against the government. Father MacInnes is a priest of the Argyll and Isles Diocese currently on secondment to the Society of St James. Support for CalMac ferry bid. A 3,000 name petition calling for Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) to be allowed to operate the proposed ferry link between Campbelltown and Northern Ireland has been handed over to the Scottish Office. Organised by the Scottish National Party, it was delivered by the party's prospective parliamentary candidate for Argyll and Bute Professor Neil MacCormick. The party decided to circulate the petition after reports that the Scottish Office was against allowing the state-owned CalMac to become involved.

Coach House Limousins to 125p per kilo at Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 100 cattle (63 bullocks and 37 heifers) at its weekly prime sale.

Bullocks sold to a top of 122p per kilo for a Charolais cross from J G Ross and Partners, Wester Cullucudden, and for a Limousin from MacIntyre Findon Farms, both to John M Munro Ltd., Dingwall, and to £779 per head for a Limousin from J and J G Hannan, Tore Farm, also to John M Munro Ltd.

Heifers to a top of 125p per kilo for Limousins from K H McKenzie, Coach House, to Ness Foods, Inverness, and from Cullisse Partners and A Moore (Drummond) Ltd. to Fraser Brothers, Dingwall, also to a top of £707 per head for a Simmental cross from Burton and Fraser Farms, to Woodhead Brothers, Turriff.

The company also sold 1207 prime sheep with lambs selling to a top of £50 per head for Suffolk crosses from J Ross, Ankerhill, to Fraser Brothers, and to 112.6p per kilo for Texel crosses from D Gillies, Charleston to Woodhead Brothers.

Skipness hosts trials final

THE FINAL of Kintyre Sheepdog Nursery Trials was held at Skipness on Saturday when 15 dogs ran against high wind and driving rain.

Result
1 B Strachan Bonnie, 92 pts
2 B Strachan Cap, 85
3 A McCuish Sweep, 84pts
4 M McNally Moss, 83 pts
5 K Greive Roy, 82 pts.
Class 2
1 L Clark Jim, 91 pts
2 J Casey Jock, 89 pts
3 J McDonald Nan, 87 pts

Following a run off for fourth place by Brian Strachan (Cap) and John McLachlan (Taff) the team to represent Kintyre in the Nursery finals is as follows:
1 B Strachan Bonnie
2 A McCuish Sweep
3 K Greive Roy
4 B Strachan Cap
5 J McLachlan Taff (reserve)

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Email: aoban@sac.co.uk

Islanders join the queue to build drystone dykes on Barra

A DRY stone walling course designed to help to restore part of a wall of a famous monastic settlement on Barra, has proved so popular that islanders are queuing up for the next course which starts in the spring.

Led by islander Iain MacNeil, men and women on the island enrolled on a 10-week course to learn the ancient

craft and complete the work on the boundary wall at St Barr's at Northbay.

Now many hope to re-enrol to learn more and other are waiting to join, says Western Isles Volunteering Centre.

The work the islanders have done has been important in conserving the ancient site and its environs and is the

result of an environment impact study between the volunteer centre, Northbay Community Initiative and Lewis Castle College's Barra Learning Centre.

Iain was encouraged by the community initiative to undergo specialist instructor training with the Dry Stone Walling Association in the Lake District.

The church of St Barr dates from the 12th century and is believed to be part of a collection of buildings forming a monastic community. One building has been restored, the others are in ruins.

Saint Barr is thought to have set up the original church in 620AD.



John Montgomery takes his mobile dipping unit throughout the west coast from his Strachur base as demand from the Argyll and the Islands Rural Business Ring increases

North Argyll Young Farmers rekindle club

THE NEWLY revived branch of North Argyll Young Farmers Club held a very successful progressive whist drive which was held on Friday in Kilmore Village Hall to raise funds for club activities.

A good turnout and light hearted friendly banter added to the evening, as did the enthusiastic consumption of tea, sandwiches and home baking whilst score cards were being checked.

The results verified by cardmaster for the evening, Neil MacCorkindale, were as follows; First gent A Dickie, Second gent W Neilson, First lady W J Neilson, Second lady J Neilson.

Booby prizes went to S. Anderson and N Jordan.

The club aim to make this a regular activity and the good news is you don't have to be young or a farmer to enjoy its whist drives.

This precedes, The National Young Farmers Competition Weekend in which Oban can expect more than 300 young farmers to descend upon Oban for the National Winter Competitions.

Various events will take place over this coming weekend, this will include, 10-pin bowling, Member of the Year Award and a dance on Saturday night. Also five aside football, senior speechmaking and the all important quiz on the Sunday.

The next event the North Argyll club have planned is an inaugural annual dinner dance which will be held in Taynuilt Hotel.

Texels to £55.50 at Stirling

UNITED Auctions Stirling had 2786 prime sheep including 1820 hogs (average 109.7p/kg) and 966 ewes and rams at its sale on Thursday when Texel lambs from Guardswell sold to £55.50 and to 130.2p per kilo for Texels from Longfauld.

Highland cows and calves for sale
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Crofters fear environmental 'hijacking' of reform bill

CROFTERS' concerns that environmental lobbyists and quangos are 'hijacking' the consultation into the draft Crofting Reform Bill were voiced at a meeting in Appin this week.

A well attended meeting of the North Argyll branch of the Scottish Crofting Foundation (SCF) was addressed by Crofters Commission chairman David Green and Highlands and Islands MSP Jamie McGrigor.

Mr McGrigor said there was concern that bodies such as Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Scotland appeared to be attempting to impose their ideologies into any legislation.

He said: 'It [the consultation] should take into account the grass roots of crofting, that is the coalface and what working crofters actually need. These people have been working the land for centuries. It is important that the Bill is for the benefits of crofters and not given over to a kind of political dogma.'

Mr McGrigor said he is writing to Environment and Rural Affairs Minister Ross Finnie to call for an evaluation into what crofting is financially worth to Scotland.

Other issues debated included why a new bill hire scheme has not replaced the interim scheme, why the high rate of the Croft House Grant Scheme (CHGS) does not apply anywhere in Argyll, the preservation of quality crofting in-by-land from

housing development and the way in which crofters would like to see the Crofters Commission itself evolve.

Crofters Commission chairman David Green said he enjoyed the 'full and frank discussion' and was happy to allay fears that the Bill would put a monetary value on crofts and open up speculation.

He said: 'It was an opportunity to correct some misunderstandings. There is nothing about market values in the Bill. Let's be perfectly frank, this is the Scottish Executive's Crofting Bill, not my Bill. It is about sorting out aspects of crofting.'

Speaking from a crofter's viewpoint the commission chairman said he didn't know a 'hijacking' of the consultation was true was

although he said that bodies such as SNH and RSPB are geared to making their representations heard better than individuals.

Mr Green added that an announcement on whether Arran would be invited to become part of the crofting counties was pending from the Scottish Executive but refused to confirm if the island's bid had been successful.

He admitted that there was no sense of apathy from Arran towards the proposal and felt there was a desire to right a wrong in that the island had historically never been part of the counties. He added that a packed meeting in Brodick last year and the 100 written responses from the islanders had been noted.

'It is a matter for the Scottish Executive,' he added.

Scottish gamekeepers host day near Perth

GAMEKEEPERS from throughout the west coast will gather at Scone Palace next month for the 13th annual Scottish Gamekeepers' Day being held near Perth on Wednesday March 8.

The day will feature both presentations and discussion to pass on the latest information on the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Bill, avian flu, deer culling at Caenlochan, tourism and food hygiene.

A sporting clay shoot will be held in the afternoon with a number of prizes on offer, including the Calor Gas Cup. The top three shots will qualify for the final of the BASC National Gamekeepers' Clay Shoot to be held at the Midland Game Fair, Weston Park in September.

British Association for Shooting and Conservation

(BASC) Director for Scotland, Colin Shedden, said: 'We are delighted to return to Scone Palace and are grateful to our host Lord Mansfield for making the Palace and grounds available.'

'Keepers, stalkers and ghillies from across Scotland will be there, exchanging news and views with each other, with our guest speakers and BASC staff.'

The gamekeeper's role now covers a wide range of activities extending from the traditional through to being a professional countryside manager, preserving habitats for a wide range of wildlife.'

The event is free and open to all BASC Scotland Gamekeeper members. For more details please contact BASC Scotland on 01350 723 226.

Argyll 'ring' celebrates first year success

ARGYLL and the Islands Rural Business Ring this month celebrates a year in operation with 110 members on its books and a growing number of farmers and crofters using the advantages of membership to buy commodities and share machinery.

In February 2005 the first person to sign was John Montgomery from Strachur.

Now his Ring membership has helped John to extend his mobile dipping service to the island of Bute, helping to justify the major investment in equipment.

For Brian and Janet Hill who farm at The Plan on Bute dipping was something of a nightmare. They have 1,000 sheep to put through a system designed for 300, and every ewe has to be manhandled into the dipper. When they heard that John's mobile dipper was available for hire they decided to give it a try.

A phone call to Ring manager, Colin Cameron, was all that was required to set the arrangements in motion.

With the dipper in tow John crossed by the Colintraive ferry and when he arrived at The Plan another advantage of its mobility became clear. It could be placed beside the lambing polytunnel and ewes held there overnight, dry,

whatever the weather, and ready for an early start the next day.

Brian Hill said: 'My wife looks after the sheep and with the handling required would normally be hiring another four people to help with dipping.'

'With this easy to use system she was able to work away dipping and dosing with just one assistant. I was redundant and could get on with the cattle work - it certainly worked well for me.'

Brian heard about the mobile dipper from another Bute farmer Graeme Martin, who had seen it when carrying out work arranged through the Ring on John Montgomery's farm.

Rory Colville, chairman of Argyll and the Islands Business Ring said: 'Farmers can be more confident in buying high cost specialist equipment like the mobile dipper when they know there is a market for it through the Ring.'

'We now have 110 members and more are coming to understand how time can be saved, and administration cut down, if they phone the Ring manager and leave the arrangements to him.'

He said that although farming continues to go through a period of uncertainty with the introduction

of the Single Farm payment there are still many people in Argyll and the Islands determined to succeed in the industry.

For some that means spreading their services beyond their traditional area.

For example, the Ring with its database of members can help mainland members who are prepared to work in the islands and island members whose equipment is in demand on the mainland.

The directors of the Ring were grateful for the support they had received from a number of agencies, in particular the Scottish Agricultural Organisations Society, Argyll and the Islands Enterprise, Argyll and Bute Council, Whelk Leader + and Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department.

While the Ring has concentrated on farm related services in its first year the aim is to extend its services gradually to other rural industries in the area.

The Annual General Meeting of the Ring takes place in the Templars Hall, Tarbert this Friday, 24 February at 2 pm.

Prospective members and other interested people looking for information should contact the manager Colin Cameron on 01369 860117.

Suffolk to £44 at Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 1323 store sheep at its weekly sale with all classes continued to sell well.

Suffolk lambs from Greenville fetched £44 with Texels from the same home and Cheviots from Rhifail Farms to £43.

Charolais to 141p per kilo at United Auctions Stirling

UNITED Auctions Stirling had 723 store cattle and 88 cast cows, plus 1042 store and feeding sheep at Kildean on Wednesday.

Bullocks sold to 141p per kilo while heifers sold to 138p per kilo for a Simmental cross off Back O'Muir to average 117.2p per kilo.

Cast cows sold to 91p per kilo for a Simmental cross off New Blainisle to average at 65.3p per kilo.

Hoggs sold to £45.50 for Texel crosses off Balegra while in-lamb Mule ewes from Linkshead sold to £52.

Nature Times

STRAIGHT, healthy trees are good for timber but old, misshapen and damaged trees are usually better for wildlife!

I was reminded of this recently on a wet and windy walk from Port Appin. This took me round the headland which looks down the Lynn of Lorn, between mainland Argyll and the Isle of Lismore.

There are some impressive high cliffs round the headland. These were created during the ice age when the sea level was considerably higher than it is now - the subsequent drop in level leaving a 'bench' between the cliffs and the shore, on which a variety of trees now grow. The older broadleaves are draped with lungwort and other lichens, benefiting from the humid climate and the purity of the air.

A cluster of more than fifty small, brown toadstools growing on the mossy trunk of an old willow caught my attention. Woodland toadstools are most numerous in autumn but some species, such as the glistening inkcap, also fruit in winter, especially where sheltered from frosts.

The glistening inkcap, also known as the glittering toadstool, is an attractive fungus which grows on dead wood. It takes its names from the scattering



When visiting woodlands in winter, look for toadstools such as these glistening inkcaps

of tiny granular crystals which decorate the cap of young specimens, but these grains, made of calcium oxalate, soon disappear as the toadstool ripens. Each bell-shaped cap, up to 3cm across, is yellow or orange-brown with a pale stalk. A distinctive feature is the parallel grooves on the outside of the cap. Like other types of inkcap the gills may turn to a black liquid as they ripen, a process called 'autodigestion'.

The glistening inkcap often grows on tree stumps and fallen logs, though

sometimes, as here, ascends mossy trunks. However the hidden network of threads or 'mycelium' of the fungus feeds only on dead wood rather than the living tree.

Further on I noticed a gnarled sycamore, with thick mossy roots raised above the ground. A flurry of movement caught my eye and I went over to investigate. I was delighted to see a weasel, which darted to and fro beneath the roots, occasionally stopping to lift its head and look at me.

The weasel is very similar to the stoat, with red-

dish-brown fur and a white underside, but lacks a black tip to its short tail. It is also significantly smaller, an adult male being not much more than 20cm long, excluding the tail, and the female is even smaller. Our smallest carnivore, its main diet is mice and voles, killed by a sharp bite on the back of the neck. Weasels are solitary for most of the year, but mating takes place in early spring, with a first litter born around May and usually a second in late summer.

Highland Darter

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Detached Cairnbaan house has lots of quality



Two Pipers Road . . . within easy reach of Lochgilphead's amenities

SITUATED near to the Crinan Canal and the gently moving vessels which use it, Cairnbaan is a seductive hamlet located three miles north of the area's main town, Lochgilphead.

It revels in a peaceful rural setting while still being within easy reach of all the amenities offered by a town such as Lochgilphead.

Specialist

These include excellent shopping, first class schools, both primary and secondary, a hospital, top class swimming pool, various specialist shops and a fine golf course.

Two Pipers Road is a high-quality modern detached house sited in a relatively recent development comprising a mixture of house types.

Located in a pleasant cul-de-sac, this property has a head-start in good looks and offers the prospective purchaser the opportunity to acquire a well-appointed home equipped with all the benefits of double-glazing and electrical central heating.

The tastefully-decorated accommodation includes a bright sitting room, fitted

kitchen, dining room leading to a conservatory, two double bedrooms and a modern bathroom. There is off-road parking leading to a good-sized garage, a car port and easy-to-maintain garden.

The side entrance door leads to a small vestibule area which hosts a coats cupboard.

A graceful archway introduces a refined hallway where a further storage cupboard is available. An ample and attractive sitting-room looks to the front through dual windows and incorporates a recessed multi-fuel stove. Under foot is rich carpeting.

Integrated

The kitchen is well supplied with base and wall units while housing a ceramic hob and integrated oven/grill. There is also space for a fridge and plumbing for a washing machine. Again the outlook is frontal.

A pleasant dining-room opens through double doors to a restful sun-trap conservatory.

The tastefully decorated bedrooms are fitted with either double wardrobes or

cupboards.

A gleaming bathroom contains a white suite of W.C., wash-hand basin and corner bath with overhead electric shower. The surrounds are tiled.

Parking

A short driveway to the side of the property provides parking. From here there is ready access both to the carport and the garage which is supplied with power, light and overhead storage.

Neat lawns front the property whilst the rear garden features a paved and gravelled patio area protected by a grassy bank.

The ideal setting for afternoon tea enjoyed to the scent of the country.

A rear garden summerhouse, supplied with both power and light, is currently used as a small studio by the present owners.

Offers

The sale of this highly appealing property is being conducted by the Lochgilphead office of solicitors and estate agents MacArthur Stewart, who are seeking offers over £150,000. The quality of this house and its location will ensure high interest.

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Offers over £82,500

84 GEORGE STREET, TOP FLOOR FLAT, OBAN

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DEVELOPMENT LAND AT FOUNTAINHEAD, BUNESSAN, ISLE OF MULL

Opportunity to acquire site with outline planning consent for residential development at Bunessan on the Ross of Mull. It is understood the land extends to 2.1 acres (0.849 hectare) (approximately) and has superb views over Bunessan Bay and beyond. Offers over £250,000 are invited

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PUNTO TOPS SALES CHART IN WESTERN EUROPE



For the first time in almost 10 years, an Italian car has topped the overall sales charts in western Europe.

Last month, (January 2006), Punto (including Grande Punto) was not only the leading seller in B-

segment, (Punto 37,977; Clio 36,016; Fiesta 31,470); but also in the European car market outright.

In the same month, Fiat Auto recorded over 100,000 vehicle sales in Europe, which represents a 17.9% growth over January

2005. This excellent result was achieved in a market that grew by 2.6% compared with January last year. Fiat Auto's European market share stands at 8.4%, which represents a 1.1% increase over the same month a year ago.

IT'S GOOD TO BLOG, SAYS HONDA

An internet blogging network that lets users create content and express opinion on well-known brands and products, is being supported by Honda (UK).

The 2TalkAbout site will provide a trusted community-based environment for users with similar interests and tastes to share unbiased information. Honda is the first major brand to commit to the project.

Visitors to 2TalkAbout can publish their views, respond to what other people are saying on the community and gain unbiased opinion and information about particular products and services.

The Honda-sponsored site is aimed at anyone with an interest in Honda cars – particularly the new Civic. Although the content will be completely independent from Honda, engineers will regularly log-on to contribute and respond to feedback, providing users with direct access to the brand.

"We like people talking about our cars," says John Goodbody, Website Manager at Honda (UK). "And now there's a blog site where you can discuss your Honda experiences with others or get a useful insight into Honda ownership. We encourage our customers to interact, and this is a great medium for doing just that."

David Rivier, 2TalkAbout Marketing Manager, says: "At 2TalkAbout we're passionate about bringing people together and encouraging dialogue, interaction and sharing views and content. We're pleased that Honda shares this vision and is the first sponsor to support our objectives."

Other companies, including some from the mobile communications, financial services and FMCG industries have already expressed a strong interest in participating on the 2TalkAbout network.

The network launches on 28 February with the unveiling of the Civic Type R Concept car – 2TalkAbout visitors will have an early opportunity to see the new model.

ALERT OVER UNSAFE USE OF NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT

In-car navigation equipment could be proving to be more of a hindrance than a help to the nation's drivers, according to new research by safe driver champion, Privilege Insurance.

As satellite navigation systems become as common as CD players the research reveals that over one in ten drivers (11 per cent) have used the controls on their satellite navigation while driving, instead of programming their route before hitting the road. What's more, over half of these (53 per cent) admit that doing so meant that their eyes were taken off the road, leading to driving danger.

Nearly one in eight (13 per cent) of drivers who use a satellite navigation device while driving confess to not spending any time

planning a route they are unfamiliar with prior to setting off, relying heavily on the equipment to get them to their destination.

Its not just misuse of satellite navigation systems that can be a danger to drivers, the Privilege Insurance research reveals. Almost one in four (22 per cent) drivers admitted to reading a map while driving in the last twelve months, with over a quarter of these (26 per cent) doing so at least once per month.

The majority of drivers using any form of navigational equipment while driving (75 per cent) spent up to 10 seconds doing so which, at 60mph, means the drivers would find themselves travelling twice the length of a football pitch* without their full concentration on the road.

The navigational mayhem hotspots are the UK's cities, according to the Privilege research. Over a quarter (27 per cent) of drivers who used navigational equipment while trying to negotiate their way around, did so in Britain's urban sprawls, compared to 20 per cent in the countryside and just seven per cent in a small town.

It seems that when it comes to safety, the satellite navigation systems can be more of a distraction to drivers than good, old-fashioned map reading. The Privilege Insurance research reveals that almost one in five (19 per cent) of drivers using the controls of their satellite navigation while driving lost concentration, compared to 17 per cent of those who read a map while behind the wheel.

NEW CAR INDEX

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Drive Times
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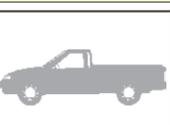
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Fire Equipment TECHNICIAN

Required in Argyll Area

Training given, over 25, driving licence essential

Apply to Box No 37
The Oban Times Ltd

ENNSTONE THISTLE

The following vacancy has arisen at our Regional Office at Dunbeg, by Oban.

SALES ADMINISTRATOR

Ideal candidate will be computer literate, but training will be provided on office computer system. Duties will involve providing clerical and administration support to all staff including typing, filing, reception and answering telephone. Must be able to work as part of a team or on own initiative in a very busy office. A driving licence is essential for this position.

Please send or email CV and covering letter to:
Rosemary Morrison
rosemary.morrison@ennstonehthistle.co.uk
Customer Services & Transport Manager
Ennstone Thistle Ltd, Dunbeg, By Oban PA37 1PX

"Thanks to The Oban Times Group recruitment, we have successfully filled the Property Sales Negotiator position. We advertised on the Thursday, receiving nine applications - all of a high quality - over the following two weeks, and, as a direct result of The Oban Times, the position was filled. We were delighted with the response, quality of applicants and the help received from the advertising and design teams. We will have no hesitation in advertising through our local newspaper in the future!"

MacPhee & Partners, 8 George Street, Oban, Argyll 23/2/06

Caledonian MacBrayne
Hebridean & Clyde Ferries

Caledonian MacBrayne Limited has a requirement for
Port Assistants (3 Seasonal Posts)

Location: Kennacraig or Tarbert (Loch Fyne) Ref: 4-SB
Salary: £13,863

Applications are invited for the positions of Port Assistants based at Kennacraig or Tarbert (Loch Fyne) for seasonal duties with start dates available from 31 March - 21 October and from 19 May - 25 September 2006.

Reporting to the Port Supervisor/Manager, you will need a flexible approach to your day-to-day responsibilities. You will deal with customer enquiries and assist in sales of passenger/vehicle tickets; cash handling and control of passengers and vehicles embarking and disembarking from vessels. You will be involved in duties connected with ship movements and gangways and any other duties required by the Port Supervisor/Manager.

You must be computer literate, with excellent verbal and written communication skills. You are expected to have a flexible approach to working as shift and weekend work will be involved. You must be customer focused, have a clear understanding of the customer interface and have a proactive approach to customer care.

If you are interested in this position, please respond by sending your CV quoting reference number 4-SB no later than Friday 10 March 2006 to:

Caledonian MacBrayne HR (UK) Limited
Ferry Terminal, Gourock, PA19 1QP
t: 01475 650100 f: 01475 650268

Caledonian MacBrayne Limited is a modern, dynamic company providing lifeline ferry services to 22 islands and four peninsulas on the west coast of Scotland.

Caledonian MacBrayne is an equal opportunities employer www.calmac.co.uk

SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES ADVISOR* **NHS**
Argyll & Clyde

£21,549 - £25,212 per annum (Under Review)
37.5 hours per week

With at least 3 years' experience in an HR environment, preferably in a generalist role, you should possess degree level qualifications (or equivalent in working experience) and have either achieved Graduate CIPD membership or be enthusiastically working towards this. Ref: 051a/2120

HUMAN RESOURCES ADVISOR*

£17,714 - £21,549 per annum (Under Review)
37.5 hours per week

Fixed term for 6 months from 1 April 2006

Covering for maternity leave, you will provide a range of HR advice and solutions using your knowledge of policies, legislation and good professional practice. With at least 2 years' experience in an HR office environment, you will be proficient in Microsoft Word and Excel. You should preferably possess an HR qualification and knowledge of HR legislation and policies.

You will be given every opportunity to increase your skills and knowledge working closely with senior colleagues and also having your own portfolio of HR issues to manage. Ref: 051a/2117

HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR (RECRUITMENT)

£12,580 - £17,714 per annum (pro rata) (Under Review)
30 hours per week

You will work closely with the Argyll and Bute HR team and also link to the recruitment team of NHS Highland in Inverness. While recruitment is the primary task you will also provide secretarial support to the HR team and be a source of HR information to staff and applicants.

You must have Standard Grade or equivalent in Maths and English, excellent keyboard skills using Microsoft word and the ability to communicate clearly both by word and in writing.

Experience in recruitment would be an advantage, as would knowledge of HR policies and practice. Ref: 051a/2116

The above 3 posts will be based in Aros, Lochgilphead and will be involved in the development of the Argyll and Bute CHP and the moving forward into the new NHS Highland, as well as many service developments and national initiatives.

*These posts involve extensive travel throughout Argyll and Bute and require a car owner/driver. For more information on the HR posts, please contact David Logue, HR Manager on 01546 605648 or e-mail david.logue@nhs.net

TRAINEE DENTAL NURSE

Trainee MTO £10,249 - £12,322 per annum (Under Review)
37.5 hours per week

Fixed term for 3 years

You will join the expanding salaried dental service based at the Rockfield Primary Care Centre, Tobermory with some duties involving clinics throughout Mull. Experience of dental nursing is not essential as training will be provided, some of which will be on the mainland. Eventual qualification as a Dental Nurse will be expected within three years.

Consideration will be given to a school leaver with a minimum of 4 Standard Grades including English who wishes to pursue a career in dental nursing. A driving licence would be advantageous.

Informal enquiries to Margaret Sanderson, Senior Dental Nurse on 01436 655018. Ref: 051a/2198

For an application pack, quoting appropriate reference please contact our Recruitment Team on our 24 hour answer service by calling 0141 314 0425 or email: recruitment.line@nhs.uk

Closing date for all posts 13th March 2006.
For a full list of current vacancies visit www.nhs.uk

TOGETHER WE LL GO FAR

Secondary Plant Store Person
Full-Time c.£18,500 - Glensanda Quarry

To apply please send your CV to Miss Carol Ross, Foster Yeoman Limited, Glensanda Quarry, Rhuigh Garbh Depot, Barcaldine, Argyll PA37 1SE.
For more details please go to www.foster-yeoman.co.uk



Life. Changing.

BIDWELLS

SINGLE HANDED RIVER MANAGER/GHILLIE
Isle of Mull wanted

Experience should include river management and maintenance; hatchery and general estate work; stalking. Excavator experience desirable.

An excellent remuneration package is offered, together with a modern three bedroomed house.

Partner to work part time private Lodge.

Please write enclosing CV to:
Teresa Tait
Bidwells, Alder House, Cradlehall Business Park, Inverness, IV2 5GH
Tel 01463 796050 Email: ttait@bidwells.co.uk

Market Research Interviewers

Earn £59.40-£64.89 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 assessment/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: 5251M11

020 8433 4490

the operations centre

MACHRIHANISH MARINE FARM LTD

COD HATCHERY TECHNICIAN

FULL TIME, PERMANENT POST

Working as part of the small team in the cod hatchery at Machrihanish, applications are invited from anyone with a genuine interest in the post, and who is willing to offer a long term commitment to us. Full training will be given to the successful applicant and no previous experience is necessary, but all candidates must be practical, enthusiastic, reliable and in good health. Education to degree level would be seen as an advantage but is not essential.

You will work on a rota basis, 10 days on and four days off, 0800 to 1700 daily. In addition to this night duty and alarm cover is required. Duties of the post involves all aspects of the care and welfare of the juvenile stages of cod.

The post is salaried and will depend on ability. Applications in writing only, by March 3, please, to:
Mr J. A. Pajak
Machrihanish Marine Farm Ltd
Lossit Point
Machrihanish, PA28 6PZ

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

Community Service Supervisor*

£7.94 per hour Community Services, Soroba Road, Oban

Sessional

You will supervise a group of offenders who have been placed on Community Service Orders by the Court and instruct/demonstrate skills in gardening, painting, decorating etc, ensuring good adherence to Health and Safety procedures.

You must have good organisational, practical painting, decorating and gardening skills and a valid driving licence. Supervisory experience an advantage. Ref: CSA07999.

For a recruitment pack call 01546 604570.

Caretaker/Cleaner* (2 posts) (Temporary until 31 March 2007)

£5,9138 Enhanced rates paid for hours worked over 37 per week Oban High Community Sports Facility

16 hours per week (minimum) Flexible hours to suit demands of the service with weekend and evening work involved

Caretaker/cleaners required to provide a service for the all weather sports facility located at the school. You will be required to ensure a safe and clean environment for all users and encourage responsible use of the facilities.

Janitorial/Cleaning experience is essential. Ref: OSF20903/OSF20904.

Cleaner

£5,5314 per hour Whitegates Offices, Lochgilphead

7.5 hours per week

Required for general cleaning duties within offices. Cleaning experience is desirable. Ref: OSF20448.

For a recruitment pack for the above three posts call 01369 708536.

*Applicants should note that this is an EXCEPTED POST, i.e. a post to which the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975, as amended, applies. Successful applicants will be subject to Disclosure Scotland vetting. Closing date for all posts 10th March 2006.

The Council welcomes applications from New Deal Applicants.

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

We are an Equal Opportunities Employer
A "no smoking" policy is operated

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Sessional

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Mid Highland Community Health Partnership

Belhaven Ward, Belford Hospital, Fort William

Senior II Occupational Therapist

Full-time, 37.5 hours per week (job-share considered)
Maternity leave cover for approximately 6 months
*£20,222 - £25,744

Ref: ES4/06/33

Belhaven Ward is a purpose built Rehabilitation Unit, where you will provide an occupational therapy service to referred patients. You will have a BSc/Diploma in Occupational Therapy, be registered with the Health Professions Council, and have a minimum of 18 months post graduate experience. A sound knowledge of rehabilitation techniques, standardised assessments and health and safety, is essential, along with IT skills, a full, current driving licence and the use of your own car for work purposes.

Informal enquiries to Veronica Macdonald, Occupational Therapist - Tel: 01397 702481.

Application forms available from Recruitment and Employment Services Section, Human Resources Department, Raigmore Hospital, Inverness IV2 3JJ - Tel: 01463 704592 or by emailing recruitment@hptcsot.nhs.uk quoting the reference number.

Closing date for receipt of completed applications: 12 noon Thursday 9 March 2006.

*Subject to "Agenda for Change" review.

Working with you to make Highland the healthy place to be. www.show.scot.nhs.uk/nshighland www.returntoscotland.com

Lynn of Lorne Care Home

Benderloch requires the following:
TRAINED NURSES
part-time/full-time/
bank staff
£11.07 per hour
£12.07 per hour weekends
- also -
CARE ASSISTANTS
part-time/full-time/
bank staff
£6.18 per hour
Assistance with travel from Oban is available
Please contact
Cathy Lee, Manager - **01631 720278**

marineharvest

Farm Managers

Due to a proposed restructure within our South Area Seawater Operations, three Manager positions have become available for the post of Farms Manager covering our sites in Kingairloch/Leven, Linnhe/Gorsten and Loch Sunart. The roles will be to provide effective management and control for day to day production and support operations on farm sites within the specific management area.

The successful candidates will be expected to help drive and implement best practice and operational excellence to satisfy the high quality product and environmental standards demanded by our customers.

Principle responsibilities will include feed and stock management, harvest and grading planning, asset management, people resource and performance management and HSEQ management.

Potential candidates should have at least three years practical knowledge and experience of fish farming and will have held a supervisory position for at least two years. Initiative, the ability to motivate others, good organisation skills, computer literacy, a strong desire and proven ability to achieve results without close supervision are some of the necessary skills required for this post.

In return the successful candidate will benefit from an attractive salary package, including bonus, and the opportunity to develop their career.

If you feel you have the necessary skills to rise to this challenge, please apply in writing including a full career history no later than Friday 10th March to: Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Manager, Marine Harvest (Scotland) Limited, Business Resource Centre, Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 7PT.

MAINSTREAM

Mainstream Scotland are currently seeking a Full Time or Part time worker, to join the team at their freshwater cage operation, producing salmon smolt, on Loch Garasdale, near Tayinloan.

No experience necessary, as full training will given. Must be flexible and have a full driving licence.

Contact David on - 01583 441339 or 07766 821402 for further details.

CARER

For disabled but mentally alert man and helping family in isolated Glen, Near Oban.

Rent free small cottage and part time wage.

Full details apply to Box No 39
The Oban Times, Oban

SECRETARY

Required for busy local office. The applicant must be computer literate, have excellent communicating skills and be able to work on own initiative. The varied and interesting duties include account management (experience with sage accounting preferred), payroll, advertising, correspondence etc.

Please apply in writing with CV to Helen McMillan, MacMillan Foods, The Roading, Campbeltown.

CRANNOG RESTAURANT Fort William

RE-OPENING MID-MARCH

Waiting Staff/Chefs required

Full-time/Part-time
To apply, telephone
01397 703786

Oban Times RECRUITMENT

Oban Times RECRUITMENT

Oban Times

PUBLIC NOTICES

THE WEST HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS BEST READ PUBLIC NOTICE BOARD SEEN BY MORE THAN *40,000 READERS EACH WEEK (* Source JICREG Reader per copy average from ABC Audit)

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

THE A85 TRUNK ROAD (LOCHAWE) (30MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 200

THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS hereby give notice that they propose to make the above Order under section 84(1)(a) as read with section 124(1)(d) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which will have the effect of imposing a 30mph speed limit on the following length of road:

That length of the A85 Tyndrum - Oban Trunk Road at Lochawe from a point 45 metres or thereby south west of the extended west gable of No 1 St Conan's Road north eastwards to a point 115 metres or thereby northeast of the centreline of the access road leading to Carraig Thura Hotel, a distance of 2.1 kilometres or thereby. The Trunk Roads (Route A85) (40mph speed limit) (Lochawe) Order 1981 is revoked by this Order.

Full details of the proposal are contained in the Order which, together with a plan showing the length of road involved, a copy of the Order to be revoked and a statement of the Scottish Ministers' reasons for proposing to make the Order, may be examined free of charge during normal business hours from 23rd February 2006 until 23rd March 2006 at Transport Scotland, Trunk Roads Network Management Directorate, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh; and Lochawe Stores (Post Office), Lochawe PA33 1AQ. Any person wishing to object to the proposed Order should send details of the grounds for objection in writing to Transport Scotland, Trunk Roads Network Management Directorate, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ by 23rd March 2006.

J G BARTON
A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers
Transport Scotland, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ.

CROFTERS COMMISSION
SÌOBHARRAN NA CRÒITÈARAN

Iain M Mulholland is applying to **decroft** part of the croft at Sealladh-Na-Mara, Isle of Jura, extending to 0.173 hectare, for the purpose of providing the site for a dwellinghouse. Ref: C/21478.

Miss Marion MacDougall is applying to **decroft** part of the croft at Pt 21 and 22 Achintore, Kilmallie, extending to 0.55 hectare, for the purpose of providing sites for four dwellinghouses. Ref: C/6938.

If you consider that the decrofting of these areas will adversely affect your crofting interests or that of the local crofting community, please make written representations to the Crofters Commission, Castle Wynd, Inverness IV2 3EQ, by March 13, 2006, quoting the appropriate reference. Representations will be copied to the applicant. Comments on any earlier applications cannot be taken into account on this occasion.

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

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: 06/00290/OUT
Applicant: West Highland Housing Association
Proposal: Outline Permission for Proposed Affordable Housing Development (2 Units)
Site Address: Land West Of 20 Dalavich Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00337/DET
Applicant: R Atkinson Esq
Proposal: Erection of Dwellinghouse
Site Address: Plot 2 Land East Of Arle Farm Aros Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Salen
Section 34 and Article 9 Advert 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00336/DET
Applicant: R Atkinson Esq
Proposal: Erection of proposed dwellinghouse
Site Address: Plot 1 Land East Of Arle Farm Aros Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Salen
Section 34 and Article 9 Advert 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00304/OUT
Applicant: Argyll Properties Ltd
Proposal: Site for Flatted Development
Site Address: Land North Of Congregational Church Tweedale Street Oban
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00309/OUT
Applicant: Mr And Mrs C Ogilby-Wood
Proposal: Site for Erection of Dwellinghouse
Site Address: Site North East Of Ormsaig Beadoun Tobermory Isle Of Mull
Location of Plans: Tobermory Area Office
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 05/02587/DET
Applicant: Argyll Properties Ltd
Proposal: Erection of Brewery
Site Address: Baliscate Tobermory Isle Of Mull
Location of Plans: Tobermory Area Office
Section 34 and Article 9 Advert 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00257/DET
Applicant: Roger Bichaniz
Proposal: Construction of Detached Garage
Site Address: Tigh Na Lochan Bunnassan Isle Of Mull
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Bunnassan Isle Of Mull
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00281/NID
Applicant: Argyll And Bute Council
Proposal: Erection of steel framed transfer station for re-cycling paper
Site Address: Moleigh Waste Disposal Site Kilmore Oban Argyll
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office
Notice of Intention To Develop - 21 Days
- Ref No: 06/00132/DET
Applicant: Fraser Homes (Scotland) Ltd
Proposal: Proposed Additional Access from Local Distributor Road
Site Address: Plot 2 Land South East Of Sonachan House Portsonachan Dalmally Argyll
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Dalmally
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00289/OUT
Applicant: Amanda Karen Algar
Proposal: Site for Erection of a Dwelling House
Site Address: Field South West Of Toman Nan Eun Isle Of Coll PA78 6TB
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Isle Of Coll
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00274/DET
Applicant: Mull Theatre
Proposal: Variation to Rehearsal Room Roof and Minor Changes to Window Arrangements Relative to Theatre Production Centre Approved Under 05/01238/DET
Site Address: Land At Upper Drumfin Aros Park Tobermory Isle Of Mull
Location of Plans: Tobermory Area Office
Article 9 Vacant Land - 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 Dalmally
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

● Ref No: 06/00244/DET
Applicant: Mr D Mundle
Proposal: Erection of Dwelling House
Site Address: Plot 4 Erray Road Tobermory Isle Of Mull
Location of Plans: Tobermory Area Office
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

● Ref No: 06/00323/DET
Applicant: Highland House Developments Ltd
Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouses on plots 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8
Site Address: Land South Of Brochroy Farm Taynuilt Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

● Ref No: 06/00338/OUT
Applicant: D And S Orr
Proposal: Erection of Dwellinghouse
Site Address: Land South Of Seabank Cottage Benderloch Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Ledaig
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

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

● Ref No: 06/00311/COU
Applicant: Simon Osborne
Proposal: Temporary site compound for the construction of Bowmore Waste Water Treatment Works
Site Address: Builders Yard Stanalane Bowmore Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Bowmore Area Office Isle Of Islay
Section 34 Advert - 14 Days

Area Team Leader Development Control, Planning Services, 67 Chalmers Street, Ardrishaig PA30 8DX

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

The following planning applications have been lodged for determination with Argyll and Bute Council and are available for inspection during normal working hours at the local area office/Post Office identified below. The proposals contained in the application are considered to be a departure or potential departure from the Development Plan for the area concerned.

Anyone wishing to make representations about any of the applications identified below should do so in writing within 21 days from the date of publication of this notice to the Area Team Leader Development Control at the address below. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF PLANS

- Reference No: 06/00327/OUT
Applicant: Keith Ferguson MacLean
Proposal: Erection of Dwellinghouse
Site Address: Ground In Front Of Craobh Mhor Clachan Seil Isle Of Seil Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Balcar
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Reference No: 06/00338/OUT
Applicant: D And S Orr
Proposal: Erection of Dwellinghouse
Site Address: Land South Of Seabank Cottage Benderloch Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Ledaig
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

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

COUNCILLOR'S SURGERY

Councillor Donald McIntosh (E.W. 13 Oban South) will not be holding a surgery during the month of March but can be contacted by phoning 07788 882200.

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Notices Under the Town and Country Planning Acts

The applications for Planning Permission listed below, and Environmental Statements where appropriate, together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be examined at the AREA PLANNING OFFICE, FULTON HOUSE, GORDON SQUARE, FT WILLIAM, PH33 6XY, between the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and at the location where listed below during normal office hours.

Written comments (whether supporting or opposing the applications) may be made to the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS MANAGER at the address below within the period listed below from the date of publication of this notice.

Applicant Name & Development Address Reference Number	Proposal Description	Location where application may be inspected & reason for Advertisement
The Royal Bank Of Scotland Royal Bank Of Scotland 6 High Street Fort William Inverness-Shire 06/00050/LBCLO	Erection of 3 Signs	Listed Building (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

PORTSONACHAN HALL

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 8 March
at 8 p.m.
Portsonachan Hall
ALL WELCOME

COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949

APPLICATION FOR PONTOONS AT LEODAMUS BAY, PORT ELLEN, ISLE OF ISLAY

Notice is hereby given that Mr Johnstone, on behalf of Port Ellen Harbour Association Limited, 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 the placing of pontoons at the above location in the position:

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Mooring	55 37.68 N	06 11.26 W

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Port Ellen Post Office.

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: 2SPC12/4/39.

Mr Johnstone
Balaclava Croft
Port Ellen, Isle of Islay, Argyll

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS THERAPY CENTRE (OBAN) LTD

A.G.M

Thursday 9 March
The Centre,
Glencruitten Road
at 7 p.m.
All friends of the centre are welcome to attend

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

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The Oban Times
www.obantimes.co.uk
Tel: 01631 568000

Please note that the offices of Argyll and the Islands Enterprise and Careers Scotland Centres in Argyll will be closed from 13.30 on Tuesday, 28th February 2006 and all day on Wednesday, 1st March 2006, for staff training.

Please also note that the offices Lochaber Enterprise and the Lochaber Careers Scotland Centre will be closed all day on Wednesday, 1st March 2006.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Argyll & the Islands ENTERPRISE

Lochaber Enterprise
Ionaire Lochabar

careers scotland

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

ROADS (SCOTLAND) ACT 1984

THE A82 TRUNK ROAD (AONACHAN LAY-BY, SPEAN BRIDGE) (STOPPING UP) ORDER 2006

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT on 7th February 2006 the Scottish Ministers, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 71(2) of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 made the above mentioned Order.

Copies of the Order as made and of the accompanying plan have been deposited at the offices of Transport Scotland, Trunk Roads Network Management Directorate, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ; the offices of BEAR Scotland Ltd, Annat Point, Corpach, Fort William; and Spean Bridge Post Office, Spean Bridge and may be inspected there free of charge from 23rd February 2006 to 23rd March 2006. The effect of this Order is stated in Notice 1501/265 in the Edinburgh Gazette Number 25941 dated 11th November 2005 and in the Oban Times dated 10th November 2005. The Order comes into force on 23rd February 2006.

J G BARTON
A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers
Transport Scotland
Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
7th February 2006

RECRUITMENT

Group Accountant

nbh Holdings Ltd

A Group Accountant is sought for a varied and challenging role for a group operation with locations within the Highlands.

He/she will be a qualified accountant with post qualification experience of 2-5 years. The successful applicant will be a good all rounder to join the management team. A commercial background with strong management accounting skills is essential for this role and he/she will be responsible for overseeing the finance function.

Apply by sending a full CV by email to:
The Group Managing Director
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The NEW Training Centre at Lochaber College needs an innovative manager to drive it forward.

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Permanent position
(contract could be offered on a full-time or part-time basis)

Salary range: £17 - £20k

For an application pack please contact
Allison MacInnes on
01397 874 206 or
allison.macinnes@lochaber.uhi.ac.uk
www.lochabercollege.co.uk

Closing date for applications:
Friday, 10th March 2006

LOCHABER COLLEGE

ESF

COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949

APPLICATION FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A SEA OUTFALL AT ARDRISHAIG AND LOCHGILPHEAD

Notice is hereby given that Mr McMillan, on behalf of Scottish Water Solutions, 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 construction of two sea outfalls at the above location in the positions:

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Outfall	56 00.64 N	05 26.84 W
	56 01.03 N	05 26.77 W

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Lochgilphead Branch Library, Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8QZ.

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: 2SPC11/5/64.

Scottish Water Solutions
Leven House, Balmore Road
Glasgow, G22 6NP

Gàidhlig ann an Glaschu
Gaelic in Glasgow

AN LÒCHRAN

Worn Weld Ltd.

Oban
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for further details contact Malcolm Hall
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We regret that unsuccessful applicants will not be contacted.

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1st Prize £500

Compose a new piece of instrumental music or a Gaelic song to celebrate the Gaelic language and culture in the City of Glasgow.

This competition will close on Tuesday 18th April 2006.

The winner will be selected by the staff, pupils and parents of the Glasgow Gaelic Primary School.

FARPAIS CIÙIL

1d Duais £500

Cruthaich pios ciùil ionnsramaid às ùr no òran Gàidhlig a tha comharrachadh an cultur agus an cànan Gàidhlig ann am Baile Ghlaschu.

Tha an fharpais seo a'dùnadh air Dimàirt 18mh Giblean 2006.

Bi am pios ciùil a' bhuannaicheadh air a thaghadh le sgoilearan, luchd-obrach agus pàrantan Bunsgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu.

For more information and a copy of the rules please contact:

Carole Maclean, Project Director,
An Lòchran, 22 Mansfield Street, Glasgow G11 5QP
0141 342 4119 or 0141 339 2022

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MAN/BOYS bike, reasonable condition, £25. Telephone 01631 563935.

BLINDS
VELUX BLINDS X 3 size MO4 in white, used for 2 weeks, boxed with instructions, new £70 each offers around £100. Telephone 01866 822747.

BUILDING EQUIPMENT
NEW GEORGIAN plaster cornice, 12-metres, £250. Telephone 01631 730522.

CHANDELIERS
6 TRIPLE GLASS globe chandeliers in good condition and working order. Would suit large house or commercial premises. £19.99 each. Telephone 01631 566332.

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COMPUTER WORKSTATION corner unit beech - effect 900w/d, £450. Telephone 01631 710398.
OFFICE DESK with drawers, good condition, £49.99. Telephone 01838 200672.
WORKSTATION beech effect, takes all peripherals, disc storage, immaculate. Cost £115 will sell for £29.99. Telephone 01546 606805.

DIY
DEWALT W800 radial arm saw complete with stand, vgc, £300 ono, heavy duty pvc pipes, various sizes, ideal for culverts or drainage. Telephone 07771 774265.

DOMESTIC APPLIANCES
BEKO FRIDGE good working order. Has been electrically tested, £15. Telephone 01631 564848.
COOKER - ceramic top, 2 ovens, good condition. Telephone 01546 602525.
CREDA REVERSAIR energy save tumble dryer, hardly used, £40 vgc. Telephone 01631 563691.
FRIDGE AND FREEZER matching white normal size with reverse door option, £49 for both. Telephone 01631 571177.
FRIDGE FREEZER, 4 month old, small freezer, large fridge, £49. Telephone 07785702840.
NEW WORLD mains gas cooker, very clean, £29. Telephone 01631 564848.
PANASONIC NN-K125MB, 800w microwave oven/grill. Unwanted gift. Used once only and in original packaging, £75. Can deliver in Oban area. Tel. 01852500651.
STOVE Cast Iron, green enamelled, 'Dahlia' design by Faure Revin £350 ono. Telephone: 01631 730 384.

DOMESTIC PETS
AFRICAN GREY PARROT 4 years female, great talker, comes with large cage and toys, £400. Telephone 07990731845 (Oban).
FULL PEDIGREE Golden Labrador pup, KC reg, one dog left, both parents excellent hip scores, real beauty. Ready now. Telephone 01866 822593.
JACK RUSSELL PUPS farm reared dogs and bitches (Tails not Docked). Lovely markings and temperaments, all pups wormed and ready to go, £160. No time wasters please. Telephone 01631 710636 or Mobile 07880733868 (Oban Area).
SPRINGER SPANIEL PUPS, liver and white and black and white. Excellent pedigree. Both parents can be seen. 2 bitches, 4 dogs. Ready now. Bitches £350. Dogs £300. Telephone 01687 450746.
SPRINGER SPANIEL dog pups, can see dam. Telephone Abi 01855 811316.

FURNITURE
BREAKFAST SET wood effect table top and silver tubular metal frame with shelving plus two folding stools, £25. Telephone 01631 563691.

DARK WOOD lounge unit 6' long. Includes shelves, drinks cabinet and 3 cupboards £49.99 v.g.c. Telephone 01546 606301.
DINING Table, solid wood, 'Distressed', 6' x 3'6" with matching upholstered four chairs and two carvers, £450. Telephone 01631 730384.
DISPLAY CABINET 5ft, top glass doors, three drawers, two bottom cupboards, good condition, £49.99 ono. Telephone 01631 564255.
DOUBLE BED divan plus mattress slight damage but still usable, free to good home. Telephone 07881950746.
DOUBLE HEADBOARD rose pink velour nice shape, excellent condition, £30. Telephone 01631 720230.
FOLDING BED v.g.c., £10. Telephone 01546 606301.
FOLD UP DOUBLE bed with mattress, £30, buyer to uplift. Telephone 01546 603446.
GORGEOUS TAUPE leather Italian corner sofa, vgc, £1800 new, accept £195 for quick sale. Telephone 01852 300221.
SOLID PINE Circular Table and Chairs, seats 4, £60. Telephone 01631 563303.
SOLID OAK TABLE and chairs 42" round with 12" extension, £47.00. Telephone 01631 720629.
STAG (Minstral) Drinks Cabinet £197.
Stag (Minstral) Hi Fi Cabinet £150. Mahogany Repr Bookcase £50. Telephone 01631 710056 or 07974768148.

TWO x two seater settees, blue, vgc, £150. Telephone 01631 565733.
3 PIECE SUITE - blue with detachable covers. Good condition, any reasonable offer. Telephone 01546 603308.

GARDEN EQUIPMENT
JCB LAWN MOWER electric rotary mower metal blade fold down handle, £30 vgc. Telephone 01631 563691.
VIKING electric hedge cutter (HEL 700), as new, £150. Flymo Turbo Compact grass cutter, good condition, £30. Telephone 01631 760222.

GREYHOUNDS
The Retired Greyhound Trust have beautiful dogs and bitches suitable for adoption. These dogs are fully vaccinated and speyed/neutered. If you feel you could offer one of these ex-racers a home please contact Northern Division on 01470 511705 or 01463 235696. The RGT is a registered charity No 269668. A donation is required. Look forward to hearing from you.

HEATERS
VALOR FIRELITE gas heater for calor gas, good condition, £40. Telephone 01631 566466.

HOME ENTERTAINMENT
BUSH INTERNET T.V. box with keyboard, £10. Telephone 01631 565733.

KITCHEN UNITS
KITCHEN BASE UNIT - 500cm, drawer / door. New un-used. Warm cherry wood, £40. Telephone 01546 602525.

KILT ACCESSORIES
KILT, Mackay tartan, 8 years old, waist 32", length 27" £50. Telephone 01546 602525.
KILT BELT, black leather, 32" waist, no buckle, £20. Telephone 01397 703928.
KILT JACKET, green tweed, 40" chest, as new, £49.99. Telephone 01397 703928.

LADIES CLOTHING
LADIES D.B. wool grey jacket, new, size 16, £15. Telephone 01631 564358.

LOST AND FOUND
LADIES engagement ring lost in Oban on February 17, 2006. Reward £50. Telephone 01546 870 643.

MISCELLANEOUS
BEER KIT(2) barrels plus complete kit, £30. Telephone 07919173532.
HUNTING HORN copper and brass 4ft, £10. Telephone 01631 565143.

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TWO excellent disability scooters, TGA Superlight, £700 and Buzz, £500. Proceeds to Motor Neurone Disease Association. Telephone 01631 720556.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
BALIE PIANO Accordion 120 bass, 24 treble. Very good condition £600. Telephone 01499 302031.
MARLBOROUGH modern upright piano in mahogany. View at Connell £150. Telephone 07748274983.
PIANO ACCORDION ESoprani 96 bass, four voice, two years old. £800 ono, owner wants 72 bass. Telephone 01369 706229.
PIANO, suit beginner, children, youth club. Regularly played and tuned. Free to anyone who can use it. Telephone 01866 822 447.

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POOL TABLE 6 foot slate bed, new cloth and cushions, all accessories. £395. Telephone: 01866 833 240.

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HIGHLAND DANCE outfit to fit 8½ year old girl. Telephone 01369 870372.

WINDOWS
NEW VELUX WINDOWS 550 x 780, flashing and blind, £150 ono. Telephone 01631 710487.

PERSONALS
Hugh Morrison wishes to send warmest thanks to relatives and friends for the presents, cards and good wishes received on the occasion of his 60th birthday, which were received with much appreciation. Also thanks to those who managed to join him in the Keel - Row for his birthday celebration on 12th February 2006.

PERSONALS
HAPPY 21ST BIRTHDAY KERRY

Love Mum and Donald and Dad, Tina and Eilidh.

FAB AT "52" Happy Birthday on February 28th

NFH'S X

Oban Times PERSONALS
Oban Times PERSONALS
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Oban Times PERSONALS

£500 was raised for North Argyll Carers Centre and Crossroads Valentines Tea. We would like to thank everyone who came along to support us on the day.

SELL YOUR ITEMS WORTH £50 OR MORE FOR AS LITTLE AS £10.93
You could have just what our 40,000 readers are looking for!
You can sell those items that you no longer need for just £10.93 for up to 16 words, £13.10 for up to 20 words £15.28 for up to 24 words or £17.45 for up to 28 words

TURN YOUR UNWANTED ITEMS INTO CASH! UNDER £50 FREE!
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One word per box (max 16 words)

• Only 1 item per coupon
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• No livestock
• No business ads or traders
• All advertisements will appear space permitting
• All advertisements must be on valid coupon
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IN PERSON - Fill in the booking form below. Call into one of our four West Highland sales offices with your advert and one of our sales team will take your details.
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BY POST - Fill in the booking form below and send it with your booking fee and details to our Oban office.

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PLEASE NOTE: DEADLINE MONDAY 4.00pm

TO ADVERTISERS - No trade advertisers in private sales
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Card No: Expiry Date: Signature:

Name: Address: Tel:

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FORT WILLIAM: The Oban Times, Marine House, The Parade, Fort William PH33 6BA
CAMPBELTOWN: The Campbeltown Courier, Courier Centre, Main & Langton South, Campbeltown, Argyll PA28 6AE
LOCHALPHECH: Argyllshire Advertiser, Argyll Street, Lochalsh, Argyll PA31 8UG

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Trade Display:
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£8.50 per single column centimetre
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£8.50 per single column centimetre (all rates exclusive of VAT)
Personals:
£5.00 per single column centimetre
Payment: Pre-payment required for advertisements of less than £50 (excluding death notices)
Please make cheques and postal orders payable to The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB
www.obantimes.co.uk
or telephone your advertisement to Oban (01631) 568000
Lochalphead (01546) 602345
Campbeltown (01586) 554646
Fort William (01397) 703003
Please note copy deadline: Monday 4.30 p.m. in Oban HELPS TO HELP YOU... PRE-PAY SMALL ADVERTISERS!

CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE FOR ADVERTISEMENTS
YOUR attention is drawn to the following terms and conditions which relate to the placing of advertisements in all publications owned by The Oban Times Limited.
Parties to this agreement are the Publisher, The Oban Times Limited on the one part and the Advertiser on the other part. The Publisher publishes newspapers, magazines, books and provides advertising space therein or provides for the delivery of advertising materials to the public within these publications.
1. Advertising copy shall be legal, decent, honest and truthful and comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice and all other codes.
2. The Publisher does not guarantee the insertion of any particular advertisement.
3. The Publisher reserves the right to cancel or alter the advertisement by giving reasonable notice.
4. An order for an advertisement shall be deemed to be made on acceptance of the advertiser's order by the Publisher whether placed by telephone, mail, fax or in person.
5. Cancellation of display advertising must be received by the Publisher before the publishing deadline, failing which, the publisher reserves the right to invoice the customer in full for the whole cost of the advertisement.
6. The parties submit to the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts and Scots Law. In the event of any dispute or action by the Publisher to recover payment from an advertiser, it is agreed that matters will be settled in the Oban, Argyll Sheriff Court or such other Court as the Publisher may choose.
7. The Publisher shall not be liable for any loss or damage occasioned by any total or partial failure (however caused) of publication or distribution of any newspaper or edition in which any advertisement is scheduled to appear. In the event of any error, misprint or omission in the printing of an advertisement or part of an advertisement, the Publisher will either re-insert the advertisement or relevant part of the advertisement, as the case may be, or make reasonable refund or adjustment to the cost. No re-insertion, refund or adjustment will be made where the error, misprint or omission does not materially detract from the advertisement.
8. Errors must be notified to the Publisher in writing within fourteen days of publication. In no circumstances shall the total liability of the Publisher for any error, misprint or omission exceed the amount of a full refund of any price paid to the Publisher for the particular advertisement in connection with which liability arose or the cost of a further or corrective advertisement of a type and standard reasonably comparable to that in connection with which liability arose.
9. The Advertiser/Advertising Agency agrees to indemnify the Publisher in respect of all costs, damages or other charges falling upon the publication as the result of legal actions or threatened legal actions arising from the publication of the advertisement in any one or more of a series of advertisements published in accordance with copy instructions supplied to the publication in pursuance of the Advertiser/Advertising Agency order.
10. Adverts under the value of £75 must be paid on acceptance of order by the Publisher. All advertising on a credit basis must be agreed with the Publisher in advance.
11. Payment of any invoice raised by the Publisher will be due 15 days from the date of invoice or as otherwise directed on the invoice. In the event of non-payment the Publisher may charge late payment interest at a rate of 2% and this is chargeable on a daily basis from the date until the bill is paid. In addition the Publisher may charge a late payment levy of £10 as an administration fee. In the event of late payment the Publisher reserves the right to disallow any discounts given and to raise an additional invoice for the discount which will be treated as though it has been raised with the original invoice.
12. A request to insert an advertisement assumes acceptance of our conditions.
Published by The Oban Times Limited, P.O. Box 1, Oban, PA34 5HB, (01631) 568000 Fax (01631) 568001 - www.obantimes.co.uk and registered as a newspaper at the Post Office

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

THE OBAN TIMES
West Highland Times

THE REGIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE WEST HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS AND ARGYLL



The Oban Times is the best-selling weekly newspaper in the Highlands and is distributed via 1742 newsagents every week

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Fax: **Oban 568001**
E-mail: **editor@obantimes.co.uk**

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Fort William
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Fax (01397) 702495

Lochgilphead
☎(01546) 602345
Fax (01546) 602661

Campbeltown
☎(01586) 554646

EDGAR - John Stoddart. Peacefully at home on Tuesday, February 7, 2006 after a long illness borne with great courage and dignity. John aged 65 years beloved husband of Ella and dear father of Christine. A loving brother and uncle. Funeral service was held in St. John's Church on February 9, 2006 followed by interment at Kilnaughton Cemetery, Port Ellen, Islay.

KELLY - Suddenly at 1 Caledonian Road, Corpach, on February 13, 2006, Vincent, aged 56 years, beloved husband of the late Flora Kelly (née MacDonald), father of Donna, Charles and Sean and the late Martin. R.I.P.

MACEACHERN - Peacefully at home in Blair Atholl on February 15, 2006, Archie, beloved husband of Jean Seaton and much loved father of Neil. Last surviving son of the late Archie and Kate Maceachern, Ballachulish.

MACFARLANE - Suddenly at his home, 2 Lower Achinreir, Barcaldine, on February 10, 2006, Hugh, aged 78 years, a dear brother and uncle. Funeral took place on February 20, 2006.

McLELLAN - Very suddenly on Wednesday, February 14, 2006 at Glangarry Hotel, Callander, Hugh McLellan, son of the late Alexander and Mary McLellan, late of Caol-Ila, Islay, dear brother to Katie, Colin, Donald and Annie.

McNEILL - At Dumfries Royal Infirmary on February 12, 2006, Anne McNeill (Anne Gartcosh), lately of Colonsay, dearly loved mother of Diane, Morag and Alison, mother-in-law of John, Chris and James and much loved gran of Barbara, Malcolm and Catriona.

PORTER - Peacefully at Borders General Hospital, Melrose, on February 14, 2006, in her 99th year, Alice (née Mitchell) Main Street, Leitholm, (Berwickshire) beloved wife of the late Allan, dear mother of Muir, Bryce and Les and a much loved great-grandmother. A funeral service was held at Leitholm Kirk and Leitholm Cemetery, on Tuesday, February 21, 2006.

HALL - Jonnie and Alice (née Ross), Haddington, are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Samuel Albert, on December 27, 2005 at the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh. A brother for Daniel, fourth grandchild for Katie, Newtonmeans and Tobemory, and Anne and Tom, Newcastle.

PIKE - KYLE - Noel and Kirsty are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Liam, at Raigmore Hospital on February 9, 2006. A little brother for Kieran. Thanks to Dr Lees and all staff in Wards 9&10, Raigmore and midwives at Belford Hospital.

BIRTHS

CAMPBELL - Kathryn and Stephen are delighted to announce the birth of Ewen William, a beautiful wee brother for Beth, on February 12, 2006 at The Lorn and Islands District General Hospital. Many thanks to all midwives involved.

HALL - Jonnie and Alice (née Ross), Haddington, are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Samuel Albert, on December 27, 2005 at the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh. A brother for Daniel, fourth grandchild for Katie, Newtonmeans and Tobemory, and Anne and Tom, Newcastle.

ENGAGEMENTS

GRAHAM - McCUISSH - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Jamie, eldest son of Dougal and Allison, Knipoch Place to Jennifer, only daughter of Roddy and Marian, Dalintart Drive.

MACKENZIE - McCULLOCH - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Mhairi-Anne, only daughter of Lachlan and Sandra MacKenzie, Ayr and Luig to Scott Euan, elder son of Gordon and Joyce McCulloch, Ayr.

NEISH - HILL - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Ruaraidh, son of Brian and Brenda Neish, Kilchrenan (formerly Ardnamurchan), to Ainsley, daughter of Karen and Alistair Hill, Troon, Ayrshire.

TAYLOR - SMART - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement on February 12, 2006, of Kevin to Ailsa. Congratulations.

DEATHS

BLACK - Peacefully and surrounded by his family, on Monday, February 20, 2006, aged 49 years, John Archie Black, beloved husband of Annette, dear father of Justine and Jane and much loved son of Susanne and the late Archie Black. Sorely missed.

MACINTYRE - Peggy and family would like to thank all who paid their respects at the cathedral and graveside at the funeral of her husband, Alisdair. Thanks also to Canon McKay, Canon Fraser, Mr Hoey and Son for funeral arrangements, the doctors and nurses in Ward B at The Lorn and Islands Hospital, the doctors and staff at Taynuilt Surgery, the ambulance service and Kings Knoll Hotel for excellent refreshments. Thanks also to Rebecca Troedson, Shona MacLeman and Jim Murphy. Thank you all.

MILLER - Minnie (née McKinnon) formerly of Crieff. John and Janet would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind thoughts and comforting messages, a special thank you to Donald McKinnon of Oban for his support, guidance and ministry and thanks also to Gaults Undertakers for smooth arrangements sympathetically carried out.

MACPHERSON - The family and sister of the late Jessie MacPherson, thank everyone for the much appreciated expressions of sympathy, flowers and cards. Special thanks to Dr Buchanan and the staff of the Pines Medical Centre, to all the staff at the MacKintosh Centre, Mallaig and her home carers Tracy and Allison. Thanks to John Fraser who conducted the service and to Barbara for playing the organ. Grateful thanks to all who attended the service and graveside, to Mike, Ewan and Theresa for caring funeral arrangements. The sum of £180 was contributed to Christian Aid.

MACQUEEN - The family of the late Murdo MacQueen would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind expressions of sympathy, floral tributes, cards, letters and telephone calls, also to all who paid their respects at the church and graveside. Special thanks to Rev Richard Corbett and John Fraser for a comforting service, also to Ian and Mary Kennedy and Graham Buchanan. Thank you to Mike McFall and staff for their compassionate and professional funeral arrangements. Thanks also to the staff at the Moorings Hotel, we would especially like to acknowledge the care and kindness shown to Murdo by the staff of Mossparc Nursing Home. Donations to staff at Mossparc £332.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CONNELLY - Archie would like to thank, most sincerely, family, friends and neighbours for all their support, flowers, letters and cards, following the loss of his dear wife Gladys. Special thanks to Rev Liz Gibson for the comforting service, D and A Munn for professional and caring funeral services and to everyone who paid their last respects in church and at Pennyfuir Cemetery.

EDGAR - John Stoddart, Ella and Christine wish to sincerely thank relatives, friends and neighbours for all the cards, flowers, visits and expressions of sympathy they received at this sad time. Special thanks to Dr A McDonald and staff at the Beatson Oncology Centre, staff of Glasgow Royal and Western Infirmary and particularly of Wards 4C and 5C of Gartnavel General. To road and air ambulance crews, the magnificent local medical team of doctors Knowles, Brown, Lyon and Pickering, the wonderful district nurses, Anne, John, Sylvia and Allison who looked after John, Jennifer the Macmillan nurse and to everyone who paid their last respects at St. John's Church and Kilnaughton Cemetery, Port Ellen, Islay. To Rev Angus Morrison for the beautiful service, Dan Edgar for the Eulogy, to Marjory Gallimore organist, Jean and Craig MacAffer for funeral arrangements efficiently and sensitively performed and to the Machrie Hotel for the excellent purvey. Thanks to all who donated to the generous sum of £1500 for Cancer Research.

BROWN - In loving memory of my dear husband, Alisdair, who died on February 25, 2005 and Hector who died March 24, 2004. Sadly missed along life's way. Quietly remembered every day.

- Donald Archie, Nancy, Donise and family, Tیره and Linwood.

BROWN - In loving memory of a dear brother, Alisdair, who passed away February 25, 2005. Also remembering loved ones gone before.

- Loved and remembered always.

- Ina and families, Balinoe, Tیره.

CAMPBELL (MacLarty) - In loving memory of our dear mum, Bella, who passed away February 21, 2000, aged 86 years. Gone is the face we loved so well. Gone is the voice we long to hear. No words or verse could ever say. How much you are sadly missed each day. Forever in our hearts.

- Norma, Mairi, Bob, Norman, Michael and all the grandchildren.

CAMPBELL - Peacefully and surrounded by his family, on Monday, February 20, 2006, aged 49 years, John Archie Black, beloved husband of Annette, dear father of Justine and Jane and much loved son of Susanne and the late Archie Black. Sorely missed.

service also sincere thanks to Roddy MacDonald and staff for the efficient and caring funeral arrangements.

FARQUHAR - In loving memory of Molly and Donald.

- Rhoda.

GALLACHER - In loving memory of my dear husband, Neil, who died on February 29, 2000. Time may hide the sadness. Like the smile. That hides the tears. But nothing will hide the heartache. Despite the passing years. Inserted by his loving wife.

- Ella Ann and family.

No matter how our lives have changed. No matter what we do. We'll never forget those precious years. The ones we shared with you.

- Winnie and family.

GIBSON - In loving memory of my dear wife, Mary-Bell, who died February 23, 1987. Loved and remembered every day.

- Jimmy and family.

GIBSON - Precious memories of our dear mum, Mary-Bell who died, February 23, 1987. Deep in our hearts. You will always stay. Loved and remembered every day.

With love

- Iain and family, Dalmally.

- Margaret and family Canada.

KING - In memory of a loving husband, Donald, who died March 1, 2004. A daily thought a silent tear. A constant wish that you were here.

- Inserted by his wife Katie, 8 Achaphubuil, Fort William.

MACCORMICK - In loving memory of Catherine, who died February 27, 2002, a much loved mother and gran.

You fell asleep without goodbye. But memories of you will never die. Sadly missed.

- Colin, Flora and Graeme.

MACCORMICK - In loving memory of my dear mother, Catherine, died February 27, 2002. 'Til roses lose their petals. 'Til heather has lost its dew. 'Til the end of time dear mother. I will remember you.

- Her daughter, Mary.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of my dear parents, Alexander, who died on May 23, 1993 and Mary, who died on February 24, 1998. Both loved and remembered everyday.

- Jessie and Ian.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of a dear father and papa, Hamish, who died suddenly on February 28, 1992. In our hearts you will always stay. Loved and remembered every day.

Loved always.

- Ronnie and family, Kinlochlaggan.

MACDONALD - Precious memories of our beloved mother and gran, Margaret MacDonald, who passed away on February 21, 2005. A year has passed. Since that sad day. The mum we loved. Was called away. A wonderful mum. So very rare. Content in her home. And always there. She guided our paths. And helped us along. If we walk in her footsteps. We'll never go wrong. A smile for all. A heart of gold. The best of the world. Could ever hold. Never selfish always kind. These are the memories. She left behind. Sorely missed. Remembering loved ones gone before.

- May Margaret and Tearlach. Main Road Farm. Balesphuil, Isle of Tیره.

MACDONALD - Treasured memories of our beloved mother, Margaret MacDonald, who passed away on February 21, 2005. If you could grant us. One wish lord. We know what we would ask. Just a chance. To say goodbye mam. And hold you to us hearts. On that sad day. One year ago. God called you home to rest. He needed another angel. So he only chose the best. You left us very lonely. And so very very sad. But we do know you're. Happy now you're up there. With our dad.

- Mary Flora and Alistair. Sandra and Lachie. We miss you gran. And always will. You left a place. No one can fill. You shared our lives. Our smiles and tears. Thank you gran. For those precious years.

- Grandson, Lachie and Alison, Glasgow.

Gentle Jesus up above. Please give we gran all our love.

- Great-Grandsons, Jack and Jamie.

When flowers I place. Upon your grave. I stand and think awhile. Of the gran I loved.

So very much. Who always made me smile. You left a void. That can't be filled. I miss you gran. And always will.

- Granddaughter, Mairi, Glasgow.

I miss your warm welcome. And your cheery wave goodbye.

I miss your words of wisdom. And the fun we used to have.

You spread a ray of sunshine. To all you knew and more. But most of all. I miss you gran. Because I loved you so.

- Grandson, Ettie.

MACDONALD - In memory of our beloved gran and great gran, Margaret MacDonald who died on February 21, 2005. A year has passed. Since that sad day. You closed your eyes. And slipped away. You gave us lots. Of memories to treasure. They will remain. In our hearts forever. Loved and remembered always.

- Dougie and Diane.

We look up at the sky each night. At all the stars. That shine so bright. We know you watch. Us night and day. We miss you more. Than words can say. Love you always.

- Lauren and Dougie.

MADYEN - In loving memory of Hugh, a dearly loved brother, brother-in-law, uncle and grand-uncle who died so suddenly on February 25, 2005, aged 55. Always remembered.

- Helen, Neil and family. Oban, Blandford, New Zealand.

MAGGILL - In loving memory of Donald MacGill, much loved husband and father, who passed away on February 23, 1991. Always in our thoughts.

- Nancy, Anne and Neil.

MACINTYRE - William, precious memories of my much loved husband, who passed away February 27, 2005. You whispered not a last farewell. You said goodbye to none. The heavenly gates just opened. And a gentle voice said come.

- Your devoted wife, Mary x

MACINTYRE - Treasured memories of a much loved dad and grandpa, Willie, who passed away on February 27, 2005. We miss your smile, your cheery ways. We miss the things you used to say. And when old times we do recall. It's when we miss you most of all.

- Jimmy and Caroline.

Sleep peacefully Grandpa.

- Fiona and Jamie xx.

MACKAY - Remembering my dearly loved husband, Alex, who died on February 23, 2003. A greatly missed father, grandad, and great-grandfather. No longer in our lives to share, but in our hearts you're always there. Loving memories keep you near, as time unfolds another year. God bless.

- Sheila and family, Ardrishaig, Lochgilphead, Glasgow, Oban, Alva, Inverness, Kilmarnock and Forres.

MACKINNON - Treasured memories of my dear wife Phemie, (Munro), who passed away on February 23, 2003. Always in my thoughts.

- Alistair, Strontian.

MACLAREN - Treasured memories of our dear dad, grandpa and great-grandpa Alistair, who passed away on February 28, 2003. When thoughts go back as they often do. We treasure the memories we have of you.

- Mary, Alison and Archie, Sandy, Sharon and families.

MACLEOD - Norman. Dad you were tragically taken on February 20, 2005. Always in our thoughts.

- Love son James, daughter-in-law Michele and grandson Jamie.

MACQUEEN - In loving memory of my dear mum Veronica, who died February 25, 2000. Your life was full of kindly deeds. A helping hand for others' needs. Sincere in heart and mind. Beautiful memories left behind. Today, tomorrow, my whole life through. I'll always be grateful my mum was you. Love you, always.

- From Yvonne, Richard, Michael and Innes.

MACQUEEN - Treasured memories of my darling daughter, Veronica, who passed away February 25, 2000. This time comes with sad regret. The hour, the day, I will never forget. You slipped away without goodbye. My love for you will never die.

- Love, Mother.

IN MEMORIAM

BROWN - In loving memory of my dear husband, Alisdair, who died at his home on February 25, 2005. It's hard to put on paper. The words I'd like to say. To say how much I miss you. Each and every day. No matter how I spend my time. No matter what I do. I never close my eyes at night. Without a thought of you. Gad Caoidh's Gad Ionndrainn.

- Seonaid, Hillside, 11 Balesphuil, Tیره.

BROWN - Treasured memories of my two brothers, Alaisdair, who died February 25, 2005 and Hector who died March 24, 2004. Sadly missed along life's way. Quietly remembered every day.

- Donald Archie, Nancy, Donise and family, Tیره and Linwood.

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Loved and remembered always.

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- Norma, Mairi, Bob, Norman, Michael and all the grandchildren.

CAMPBELL - In loving memory of our parents, Neil and Peggy, who died February 14, 1977 and February 27, 1985, respectively. R.I.P. Our Lady of the Isles pray for them.

- Inserted by the family, South Uist, Fort William and Devon.

MACQUEEN - In loving memory of a dear sister and auntie Veronica. Deep in our hearts. You will always stay. Loved and remembered every day.

- Love Jennifer, Karl and family.

MACQUEEN - Treasured memories of Veronica, a much loved sister and auntie. Your presence we miss. Your memory we treasure. Loving you always. Forgetting you never.

- Love Janette, John, Trevor and Jacqueline.

MACQUEEN - Treasured memories of a much loved sister and auntie, Veronica, who passed away February 25, 2000. Sunshine passes. Shadows fall. But our love and memories outlast them all.

- From Violet and family.

MACTAGART - Treasured memories of a dear sister, loving Auntie, Great Auntie and Great Great Auntie, Katie who passed away on February 25, 2005, so sorely missed. Your life was one of kindly deeds, a helping hand for others needs. Sincere and true in heart and mind, beautiful memories left behind.

- Joan, Bella, Florrie, Cathie and Families, Islay and Drymen.

MORTON - In loving memory of a beloved wife and dear mother Catherine, died February 24, 1995. Always in our thoughts.

- John, John and David.

MORTON - In loving memory of a dear daughter-in-law Catherine, passed away February 24, 1995. Always in my thoughts.

- Mum.

MORTON - In loving memory of a dear mum and nana Catherine, passed away February 24, 1995. In our hearts and thoughts each day. We miss you mum in every way.

Love always.

- Karen, Norman, Christopher xx and Lewis xx.

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- Sandra, Gilleasbuig and Lauren.

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- Gordon, Mairi, Alan and Kyle.

THOULESS - In loving memory of my dear granddaughter and niece, Carina. Forever in our thoughts.

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ECCLESIASTICAL NOTICES

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION

Sunday 26 February 2006

Quinquagesima

St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Communion 0800
Sung Eucharist 1015
Sunday School and Creche
Loop System
Large Print Hymn Books
All welcome

Norman MacCallum, Provost
☎(01631) 562323

Christ Church, Lochgilphead
Loop System
Holy Eucharist 0900
Mattins and
Holy Eucharist 1100
St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Mattins 1100
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist 1000

LORN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Sunday 11 a.m.
Argyll College,
Dunstaffnage
All welcome
Telephone
(01631) 710208

ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN

Campbell Street Church
Sunday 26 February 2006
11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.
Phone-In 'Worship Link' available
Wednesday 1 March 2006
7.30 p.m.
Prayer and Bible Ministry
Rev. Archie McPhail
MA, MTh
☎(01631) 567076
All welcome

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- Love Jennifer, Karl and family.

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MEMORIALS

MACLACHLAN'S OBAN MONUMENTAL WORKS

Design and Price Lists on Request
Cleaning and Restoration
Gravestones and Memorial Seats
Gravestone Loans
Lochcristall - Oban
(01631) 566629
563785 (evening)

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FOR THE BLIND CHILDREN OF SCOTLAND'S ACADEMIC TUITION AT THE ROYAL SCHOOL IN EDINBURGH

Please give your financial support by donation, deed of covenant or legacy

Please send to **Appeals Department, Highland Arts Effort, Royal Blind Asylum School, R.O. Box 500, Gillespie Crescent, Edinburgh, EH10 4HZ**



Confirmations at St Margaret's
Bishop of Argyll and Isles, Bishop Ian Murray, visited St Margaret's Church in Lochgilphead for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Pictured with Bishop Murray, centre, are Mairi McNiven of Ardfern and Hannah Prill from Skipness, both of whom were confirmed on the day and parish priest Father Michael Hutson.

CHARITY DONATIONS

Oban Hospice
CARING FOR THE FUTURE
Donations always gratefully accepted
Please contact
David Mudge (Treasurer)
Oban Hospice Ltd
The Croft
Kilmore

Macmillan cancer relief
Working towards a time when every person in Scotland has equal and ready access to the best information, treatment and care for cancer
Macmillan Cancer Relief
79-81 Lauderdale Gardens
Hyndland, Glasgow, G12 9QU
Freephone 0800 100 6000
In memory of Dawn Joyce

CANCER RESEARCH UK Scotland
Fighting Cancer on all fronts...
CRC Scotland spends more on research than any other organisation
Commitment of over £15 million each year
Cancer Research UK Scotland
Suite 1/1, Unit 4 Blair Court
Clydebank Business Park
Clydebank, G81 2LA

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DESTINY CHURCH
OBAN
Sunday 26 February
Drummole School
Lower Soroba
Oban
11 a.m.
Guest Speaker:
Gordon Macintosh
Telephone:
01631 564283
www.destiny-church.com

Thought for the week
Why stop?

WHAT would make you stop?
How busy are you? Very busy with hardly a moment to spare, or just hectic with no moments to spare?
Does it surprise you to know that the greatest man who ever lived ensured that his life was punctuated with plenty of 'moments to spare'?

Before Jesus said or did anything of great import in his life, he stopped and encouraged himself in prayer.

In a short but busy life he took time off to be at one with his Father in prayer. If our Lord thought it necessary to arm himself with prayer before any of his great utterances and amazing deeds then how about lesser mortals like you and me copying his example?

Do you think your life could be encouraged, your business

TIMES Sport

Lochaber scales new heights

LOCHABER'S claim to be the outdoor capital of the UK scaled new heights this week when the area was named as having the best ice climbing in the world.

The UK's best all-round climber, Dave McLeod, made the comments as he officially launched the Outdoor Capital website in Kinlochleven.

The initiative aims to establish Fort William and Lochaber as the UK's foremost destination for outdoor pursuits and adventure tourism.

Jobs

It hopes to increase tourism by five per cent for the next five years and create at least 500 new jobs by 2008.

This year alone Lochaber will host the Scottish Six Days trial bike competition, the Mountain Bike World Cup, the Wilderness Arc adventure race, the Three Peaks Challenge yacht race and the Ten Under the Ben mountain bike race, as well as various other outdoor events.

Outdoor Capital director

Outdoor sports

Marian Austin said: 'The outdoor capital is a great place for the adventurous but this is also great 'idling country', wandering along old drove roads, cycling through the forests, picnicking in amazing scenery, exploring old deserted villages and castles, messing about in boats, enjoying loch cruises or touring the glens - you don't have to be a fear-junkie to enjoy yourself here.'

Climber Dave McLeod said: 'Everyone involved in the outdoors is looking for adventure but you can have adventure at different levels depending on experience.'

Mountains

'That's how I got into climbing. I live in Glasgow and one day I cycled out and saw the hills - I didn't even know that Scotland had mountains and had no idea that this was just up the road from me.'

'What I am looking for now is high standard bits of

rock and bits of ice to climb and there is so much unclimbed rock in Scotland.

'The main rock challenges in all the other popular places like the Lake District and Wales have already been climbed but I did a new route on Ben Nevis in the summer and I quite like exploring new bits of rock.'

Climbing

'The weather is the key to ice climbing and the quality of ice here is the best in the world without doubt. The new website promotes everything that the local guides do and gives information about how to enjoy the mountains safely as people do go out on the hills and don't really know the dangers.'

Dave also climbed a 20 metre ice pillar in Fort William with climbers Fiona Murray, who was ninth in the ice climbing World Cup in Austria and Kevin Shields, who has one hand and has made his own prosthetic ice axe.



The UK's best all-round climber, Dave McLeod launches Lochaber's outdoor capital initiative at the Ice Factor, Kinlochleven.

Senior boys win small schools league

Football

ARDNAMURCHAN High School's senior boys team has had a tremendous season winning the small schools league (south).

After their 14 league matches Ardnamurchan finished seven points clear of second placed Kilchuim High School and only conceded two goals.

In the Highland finals they were narrowly beaten one-nil by Ullapool High in a tense encounter. Ullapool won the trophy for the second consecutive year.

Ardnamurchan coach and English teacher Murdo Graham said he was very proud of the team's performances and consistency, in particular their excellent defensive record.

Murdo said: 'It was quite a stunning tournament by the boys. To only lose two goals is a fantastic tribute to their concentration and determination.'

'If I'd been told that before the tournament I would have staked my mortgage on them winning it. Football can be cruel.'

Ardnamurchan warm up with Perth draw

Shinty

A SPIRITED comeback after being two goals down saw Ardnamurchan Camanachd come away from Perth with a hard fought draw at the weekend.

In an exciting match Ardnamurchan found themselves two goals down to Aberdour in the first 20 minutes but they began to claw themselves back into the game and created a series of chances.

Former Oban Celtic player John Nudds put the visitors back in to the game with an excellent strike in a game which flowed well and was played in perfect conditions.

Chances were being created at both ends but Darren Anderson from Kenra went on to equalise for Ardnamurchan who began to dominate the game and should have won their second warm-up match before the season starts next month.

Winter indoor league table

Football

Fort William indoor winter league		
	Pld	Pts
Lochaber Bar	11	30
Scotrail	11	28
B. Nevis Les.	11	26
Lochaber Les.	11	24
Morrison's	11	21
Russels Rovers	11	20
Five Alive	11	16
Celtic	11	14
BT	11	12
Ballachulish	11	12
Caley Boys	11	12
Scatter Halfs	11	11
Torlundy	11	11
Mean Machine	11	0

Highland football academy officially opened

Football

A NEW £2 million football academy for the Highlands was officially opened last week.

The Highland Football Academy was officially opened by Julia Bracewell OBE, chairwoman of sportscotland after four years of hard work to create top class facilities for the Highland footballing community and to promote excellence in the game.

The Highland Football Academy Trust was established in April 2002 in a partnership between Highland Council, Inverness Caledonian Thistle FC and Ross County FC.

The academy boasts a floodlit grass pitch, an outdoor training area and an indoor arena at Victoria Park in Dingwall with a fitness suite, a sports injury clinic, meeting rooms, offices and a learning suite.

There are also two high quality grass pitches, a grass training area and a floodlit new generation artificial pitch within the grounds of Charleston Academy in Inverness.

Julia Bracewell said: 'We are delighted to have supported the creation of the Highland Football Academy

with an award of £1 million from the sportscotland Lottery Fund.

'The investment in this project demonstrates our commitment to investing in football over the length and breadth of Scotland, providing first class facilities and support services to develop our young footballing talent.'

'This project is an excellent example of the co-ordinated approach to youth development in Scottish football. Not only will it have an important impact on the game nationally, increasing the number of talented Scottish players progressing to first team and national levels, but also in giving every young footballer the opportunity to be the best that they can.'

The academy's principal funders have been the sportscotland Lottery Fund, the Scottish Football Partnership, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Highland Council.

Council convener Alison Magee said: 'The Highland

Council is proud to be a partner in the Highland Football Academy Trust and look forward to it being the hub of football development across the Highlands.

'With these excellent facilities and by working in close partnership with Inverness Caledonian Thistle and Ross County football clubs, the academy will be able to identify and develop young talent as well as promote health and fitness to the whole community.'

Colin Baillie and Jock Watt are co-chairmen of the Football Academy Trust.

Jock Watt said: 'We are delighted that this day has finally arrived. The development of the Highland Football Academy has been a most challenging project. Although there have been many difficulties to overcome along the way, the finished project has made the journey most worthwhile.'

Colin Baillie added: 'If there was ever a question about the value of such facilities, then the use being made of them by a vast range of organisations from all levels of football provides the most telling of answers.'



Fencing coach Kathleen Hannigan with Olympian fencer Linda McMahon. 10816003

Olympian helps to launch Oban fencing club

Fencing

THREE-time Olympian Linda McMahon travelled from London to help launch a new Oban fencing club.

The new club, Swordplay, is being organised by fencing coach Kathleen Hannigan from Taynuilt.

Kathleen said she knows of quite a few people in the Oban and Lorn area who have fenced before, some to a fairly high standard, but welcomes anyone who is new to the sport.

She said: 'I am a newly qualified coach and I am hoping to promote fencing across Argyll.'

She was helped by her friend Linda McMahon

who helped her get the club started at a taster session at The Beach last Thursday.

As well as representing Great Britain at the Olympics, Linda is a three-time British champion and Commonwealth Games bronze medallist.

Linda said: 'Fencing is like any combat sport; you need timing, good footwork, controlled aggression and good reactions.'

'Some call it the European martial art.'

Swordplay will be held at The Beach leisure centre on Sundays at 4pm.

Matthew claims national cross country bronze

Athletics

KINTYRE athlete Matthew Turner, from Kilkenzie, won a bronze medal at the Scottish Cross Country Championships held at Callender Park, Falkirk last Saturday.

Matthew has won several national and district titles on the track in recent years but this was his first medal success over the country.

Matthew was third in the under 17s race over 6.4 kilometres in a time of 23 minutes 39 seconds.

The race was won by Michael Gillespie of Central A C in 22:56 with Michael Haskett of Aberdeen in 2nd place.

Matthew's main event is the 800metres on the track and he is the reigning Scottish under 17 champion over the distance.

Matthew is a fifth year pupil at Campbeltown Grammar School and his successes in 2005 have resulted in him being included in the Bank of Scotland sponsored elite squad of young athletes.

He competes for Mid Argyll Athletic Club and Shetleston Harriers and the latest much deserved reward for all his efforts is an invitation to attend a warm weather training camp in Gran Canaria for two weeks during the Easter school holidays.

Too little too late for Fort

Football

DESPITE being five goals down at the interval, a depleted Fort William put in a solid second half performance away to Fraserburgh although it was too little too late.

The east coast team were ahead after only eight minutes when a ball into the Fort box found Fraserburgh striker Graeme Johnston, who slotted home after rounding Fort keeper Mark McRitchie. The home side then saw their top scorer Gavin Wemyss add to his

tally in the 23rd minute while Johnston notched a brace five minutes later. The roles were then reversed with Wemyss scoring his second after being picked out by Johnston and then going on to hit a hat-trick before half-time.

Halfway through the second half Fort pulled a goal back through Stuart Pearce, who dispossessed a Fraserburgh defender and scored from the edge of the area.

Trialist Nathan McLaughlan surged forward for Fort in the dying moments of the game and fed Danny MacKintosh, who was in space on the left wing. MacKintosh found Ryan Haggerty whose composed finish beat the Fraserburgh keeper.

Fort manager Rab Mulheron expressed his disappointment that the squad was hit by a number of late call-offs and had to bring in a number of trialists as a result.

Fort woman in world record paddling attempt

Paddleboarding

A FORT William woman is looking to get herself into the Guinness Book of Records with an all-new paddleboarding world record attempt.

Mary Ellen 'Mamie' Campbell will join an American and an Orosay man in an attempt to paddle across three of Britain's water channels in 12 days.

The trio will cross the English Channel first before paddling the length of Loch Ness and ending with a crossing from the Mull of Kintyre to Ballycastle in

the board, which is just over six foot long, and paddle with your arms.'

Mamie is no stranger to the water having been a member of HM Coastguard and a fish farm worker.

Mamie was part of the rescue crew when the team paddled Loch Ness last year and is hoping to raise some sponsorship for this year's world record attempt.

Mamie added: 'We are looking for sponsorship because we have to hire boats and stuff like that which is expensive.'



Mamie Campbell is hoping to get into the Guinness Book of Records this year.



Action from the Lochaber versus Garioch match.

Lochaber fight back to overwhelm Garioch

Rugby

LOCHABER consolidated their position in the top three of National League Division 5 (Caledonia) B by adding a further five points to their tally with a win over Garioch at Banavie this Saturday.

The home side eventually beat the Inverurie men by four tries to one although at one point it looked as though it could have gone either way.

Luke Smith returned to the side on the wing but that was the only change from the side that beat Aberdeen Wanderers two weeks ago. This continuity paid dividends as Lochaber quickly found their rhythm and

and scoring under the posts to tie the match at 10-10

The Lochaber pack raised their game and Ross Wallace darted through a gap at the side of a ruck and dived under the posts for a try and Brett Hess was rewarded for his hard graft at centre with his first try for his new club.

Lochaber now have a tough series of away matches starting with Carnoustie and Shetland. The club has taken the bold step of chartering a flight from Inverness for the crunch match against Shetland which should decide second and third places in the league.

Coming next week - your chance to win free tickets to a top SPL match



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TIMES Sport

Lochcarron win away to Beaully

LOCHCARRON came away from Beaully on Saturday with a well-deserved win in a friendly against the North First Division champions.

The west coasters travelled to Beaully without Ross Matheson, John MacLennan, Andrew Mackenzie, Michael Cooper, Peter Mackenzie and captain Gregor Cushnie but brought in David Cameron and Crisdean Finlayson to give them their first team chance and Lewis Patience returned after missing most of last season.

But Lochcarron lined-up with a very different look as Graham MacRae started at full back Mark Sproule at wing centre, Darren Coyle at buckshee forward and Alan Mackenzie, who has made the full-back position his own over recent seasons, was at full forward.

In the opening exchanges the visitors looked the brighter side but both teams

were finding it difficult to play on a slippery frozen surface.

Darren Coyle decided to keep the ball of the surface and went on a run with the ball on his stick and from 30 yards struck a volley past the Beaully keeper to open his account and put Lochcarron one up.

With their centre line supplying good ball into their forwards, Lochcarron went close again through Ian Mackenzie but this seemed to be the wake up call Beaully needed and they began to pull themselves back into the game. Barrie Macdonald broke free of defender Aaron Matheson to get a shot in but send it wide of the post.

Again Beaully came at Lochcarron with a long dangerous ball behind the

Lochcarron defence from the lively Jamie MacLennan but full back MacRae was quick to clear the danger and keep the visitors one goal ahead at the break.

The second half began as a much more even affair and when Lochcarron full centre Kenny Ross had to leave the field for treatment, Beaully had their best spell of the game and went close when MacDonald hit the post.

The dual between Beaully half back Innes Simpson and Darren Cole was becoming a joy to watch and when full centre Ross returned, the dual between him and MacLennan proved much the same.

Lochcarron replaced Mark Sproule with Crisdean Finlayson at wing centre and the switch re-

sulted in a goal when the ball broke to Alan Mackenzie and he unleashed a ferocious drive that took a wicked deflection off young wing back Mackay Murray and flew into the roof of the Beaully net.

Lochcarron's next change saw David Cameron replaced by player manager Fraser Mackenzie who went in at wing forward.

Youngster Crisdean Finlayson was next to go close as he drove bravely through between two tackles and had a shot saved from the home keeper.

The visitors did extend their lead shortly after as Darren Coyle latched onto a loose ball 20 yards from goal and drove the ball home to effectively kill the tie.

To the home side's credit they came back at

Lochcarron and pulled a goal back when a shot from Simon Holmes was deflected past Macmillan in the Lochcarron goal.

Beaully then had a spell of pressure but good defending from Graham MacRae, Angus Mackay and Lewis Patience kept them at bay.

The final goal in an entertaining tie came five minutes from the end when wing centre John Martin Phillips sent a great ball over the wing back to Fraser Mackenzie who took one touch to knock to ball past wing back Murray before crashing the ball into the corner of the net.

Both teams gained much needed match practice with Lochcarron being the happier after creating plenty chances and scoring four goals. Patience, at wing back, Coyle at half forward and Beaully's MacLennan were the pick of the bunch with youngster Finlayson also impressed.



Lochcarron played their first full pre-season match at Braeview Park, Beaully on Saturday

Next week: Ardnamurchan Camanachd - a new club is born **New season round-up - the managers' view**



Fort William's Gordie MacKinnon gets in close at An Aird on Saturday

Lochbroom overcome Lochcarron in friendly

Shinty
LOCHBROOM Camanachd won a pre-season friendly against a more-fancied Lochcarron when the teams met at Morefield Brae, Ullapool on Saturday. Goals from James Dorrian and Steven Mackinnon earned the latest addition to shinty's are league structure a 2-0 victory with the side looking forward to their first away match in North Division Three against fellow league newcomers Naim on March 4.

Oban Camanachd and GMA meet in Oban

Shinty

OBAN CAMANACHD will play Glasgow Mid Argyll in a pre-season challenge match at Mossfield this Saturday, February 25 with a 1.30pm throw-up.

The teams will play for the Carmichael Memorial Trophy which Oban Camanachd have held for the last two seasons.

The following day, Sunday February 26, Oban Camanachd's under-17s meet Kyles Athletic for the MacDougall Trophy.

The match will be played at Glendaruel with a 2pm throw-up.

Last Saturday's planned friendly between Fort William and Lochside Rovers was cancelled as it was anticipated that An Aird would not stand-up to two matches on the same day, with Fort William's first team due to play Lochaber.

Newtonmore victorious in Ferguson Cup tie

Shinty

NEWTONMORE retained the Ferguson Memorial Trophy at Portree when they scored five times without reply.

Three goals from David Cheyne, plus one-a-piece from Danny MacRae and Paul MacArthur gave Newtonmore victory.

MacRae received an arm injury which may rule him out of the start of the season.

Fort limber up for new season with Torlundy Cup win

TWO goals from Victor Smith helped Fort William to a friendly win over neighbours and local rivals Lochaber in the Torlundy Cup challenge match at An Aird on Saturday.

The game saw some end-to-end shinty in an exciting first half but a rash of substitutions in the second half ended the game as a spectacle as both teams had a last look at fringe players before the start of the new season next week.

Victor Smith opened the scoring after only six minutes reacting first to a free hit.

Shinty
Fort William 3
Lochaber 2

Lochaber equalised in the 11th minute with a well taken goal but Victor Smith put Fort back in the lead in 29 minutes with some nice play along the forward line. He found himself some space and scored with a good strike from 20 yards out.

Lochaber again equalised with a nice move but Chris Bamber scored on 35 minutes, worked from another free hit.

Fort William coach Davie Stafford said it was nice to see goals coming from free hit situations straight off the training ground.

In the second half Fort William gave all 17 players in the squad a run-out.

Davie Stafford said: 'We're just getting ourselves organised and training hard for the start of the season.'

'That's what Saturday's game was all about.'

'Both teams benefitted and the game was played in a sporting manner and well refereed by Duncan Kelly.'

Perth tournament start for Ardnamurchan

ARDNAMURCHAN Camanachd travelled to Perth last Saturday for a pre-season friendly tournament with fellow new-comers Aberdeen and Edinburgh East Lothian (EEL).

In their first round-robin match, Ardnamurchan came back from a 2-0 half-time deficit to earn a 2-2 draw. In a competitive end-to-end tie Ardnamurchan were slow to start and found themselves two down within five minutes. However they rallied and produced some fine link-

ing play especially in the second half and were rewarded with goals from John Foster and John Nudds.

After a short break Ardnamurchan faced a strong EEL side and had most of the play in the first half. A free-hit on the edge of the EEL D' was converted by Darren Anderson after clever play to put Ardnamurchan 1-0 ahead. However, EEL netted two before the break after two goals when Ardnamurchan failed to clear the ball from defence each time.

Shinty

The second half was evenly fought with chances at both ends however it was EEL who eventually put the tie beyond doubt when a speculative lob from midway in the Ardnamurchan half dipped under the cross-bar to make the final score 3-1 for EEL.

Ardnamurchan can take great heart from their performances against these two teams as they continue their preparation for North Division Three this season.

SHINTY BALL Competition

Spot The

All you have to do

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons. The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void. Prizes will be shared between those submitting correct entries.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 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 4HB 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.

WIN £2100

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...

This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are: Mrs G Lamont, 5 Longsdale Crescent, Oban and Carole MacFadyen, 36 Lora View, N. Connel, Oban

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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Hot shot Jonathan has medal in his sights

A TARBERT hot shot will be the youngest ever Scottish competitor in his discipline when he targets a Commonwealth Games medal next month. Jonathan Reid, 20-years-old, is the country's youngest ever Olympic Trap Shooter at the games and is looking forward to

Shooting

pit his wits against some of the world's best. He told *The Oban Times*: 'I feel excited and proud to represent my country and it's great that I am the youngest ever to shoot for Scotland at the games in the Olympic

Trap event.' Living in Tarbert makes it difficult for Jonathan to train as the nearest shooting range available for practice is Dalry, North Ayrshire. His coach, Peter Croft is based in Tamworth, near Birmingham.

However he gets most of his shooting practice through his job as a game-keeper in Tayinloan.

Jonathan shot the required score at a competition in Ireland last August and is one of three in the Olympic Trap team which also includes Ossie MacLean (Glasgow) and Shona Marshall (Aberdeen).

The Tarbert man will compete in two events: an individual shoot and will pair up with Ossie for a two-man shoot.

Although he still shoots at junior level, Jonathan hopes to compete with the professionals who will be gunning for glory in Melbourne between March 15-26.

He said: 'I can't wait to get their and shoot with the other competitors. It will probably be the Australians looking to take top honours as they have the best shooters in the Commonwealth but if I beat my

personal best by even one target I don't think I will be far from the medals.'

Jonathan has only been shooting since the age of 14 but has held the title of Scottish Junior Champion every year since 2000.

He follows in the footsteps of his father, John, who shot for Scotland for 16 consecutive years.

Jonathan, pictured below, also turned out for the British Junior Team at last year's European Championship in Belgrade.

Despite his success Jonathan admits it is difficult to gain sponsorship for his training and competition fees which can be as much as £600 for one competition. He added: 'Sponsorship is near impossible because as soon as you mention guns, potential sponsors just say, "we don't do that kind of thing" but some local businesses have helped me out this year.'

He made the move to Olympic Trap from Down the Line shooting in order to fulfill his aspirations to shoot for Great Britain, a goal he could not achieve shooting Down the Line.

Anyone interested in sponsoring Jonathan can contact him on 01880 825514.



Linda Allan in action during the Snowman Rally in Inverness at the weekend. Picture courtesy of AML Photography

Linda makes a flying start

AN OBAN rally driver got off to a flying start in the first round of the Scottish Forest Championship at the Snowman Rally in Inverness.

Linda Allan was driving her new car for the season at the weekend, a Mitsubishi Evo, and finished first lady and 21st overall. Linda, whose co-

Rallying

driver is Louise Sutherland from Invergarry, has just moved onto the four-wheel drive Mitsubishi after winning the two-wheel drive class for the last two years in her Vauxhall Astra.

Fellow Oban driver Willie Bonniwell has since bought

the Astra from her. Linda said: 'This was the first time I have driven the car on a forest track so it was an exceptional result.'

'I was 21st out of 87 starters so I beat most of the men. 'Although there is a mu-

tual respect between the drivers I think some do mind being beaten by a woman.

'But at the end of the day you are just another driver and most are very kind to me.'

Linda began competitive

driving seven years ago, following in the tracks of her father, James, and her uncle John.

She drives for Borders-based team Andrew Wood Motorsport and Andrew himself is her coach.

Linda, sponsored by Brogan Fuels, will compete in next month's Border Counties Rally.

Tides

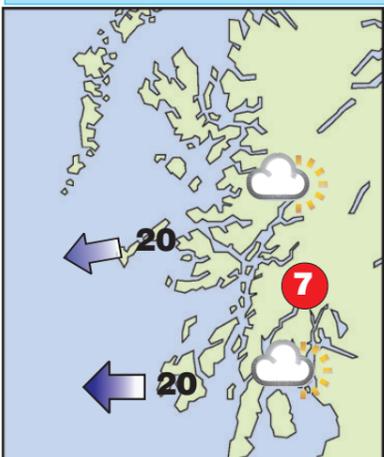
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday, April 14, 2005 are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	00.22 2.8 07.00 1.9 14.12 2.8 20.01 1.9	
Fri	03.01 3.0 08.37 1.7 15.40 3.1 21.20 1.6	
Sat	03.59 3.4 09.59 1.4 16.28 3.4 22.19 1.2	
Sun	04.43 3.8 10.54 1.0 17.06 3.6 23.06 0.8	
Mon	05.23 4.1 11.40 0.6 17.41 3.8 23.49 0.4	
Tues	06.02 4.3 12.22 0.4 18.16 4.0 *** ** *	
Wed	06.31 0.2 06.39 4.4 13.01 0.3 18.50 4.0	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrihaig	-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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Friday the weather

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Thursday, February 23
 Will be generally cloudy with some light rain at times. Winds will be moderate to fresh easterly. Temperatures 0°C to 7°C.

Friday, February 24
 Will be generally dry with sunny spells at times. Winds will be moderate to fresh easterly. Temperatures 2°C to 7°C.

Saturday and Sunday
 Saturday and Sunday are both expected to be dry with sunny spells at times. Winds will be moderate to fresh easterly. Temperatures 2°C to 7°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States
 Oban to Barra/South Uist - Moderate to rough
 Oban to Coll/Tiree - As above
 Kennacraig to Islay - As above



Easdale's Andy takes out the Viking

LOCHGILPHEAD crack-shot Andy Hetherington, originally from Easdale, has taken the darts world by storm by beating former world champion Andy 'The Viking' Fordham.

Andy Hetherington travelled to the Scottish Open Darts Championships at the Normandy Hotel, Renfrew, at the weekend with Lochgilphead darts buddies Michael Todd and Eoghan MacInnes, who is also from Easdale.

The three players, who only play darts around once-a-year, all did exceptionally well with Eoghan making it to the final on his board, Andy making it to the quarter-final and Michael making the semi-final.

The Scottish Open is the third-largest darts open in the world and it was Eoghan who was the last Argyll man

Darts

standing. He made it down to the last 124 out of 1280 players. Michael Todd said: 'When there's a star on a board the place is mobbed. Everyone crowds round the board. Andy was playing 2004 World Darts Champion Andy Fordham. He (Andy Hetherington) took the first leg and the place just erupted. Then he took the second leg and he must have thought, "I could beat him". Fordham was sitting on a double 18 and Andy was on 121, and he finished it on the bull. 'There were folk asking for Andy's [Hetherington's] autograph! Andy Fordham couldn't have been any nicer. He offered to buy him a drink and gave him a big cuddle.'

Atlantis Leisure Works League

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Atlantis	11	9	0	2	27
Fortieiths	9	9	0	2	27
Foster Yeoman	10	8	1	1	25
Oban High	9	7	1	1	22
AM Transport	10	4	1	5	13
Oban Times	11	4	1	6	13
Burnside	10	3	0	7	9
Hydro Hotel	11	2	0	9	6
The Hotels	10	2	0	8	6
The Hospital	9	0	0	9	0

Results (Sunday February 19): AM Transport 4 The Hotels 7; Oban Times 4 Atlantis 7; Hydro Board 3 Fortieiths 4; Burnside 1 Foster Yeoman 11.

Oban Pool League

	P	W	L	Pts
Loch B	12	11	1	22
Markie Dans	12	10	2	20
Claredon	12	9	3	18
Cellar A	12	9	3	18
Loch A	12	10	2	14
Cellar B	12	5	7	10
Bowling A	12	5	7	10
J & D B	12	4	8	10
J & D A	12	4	8	6
Bowling B	12	2	10	0

Ross strikes Saints into quarter finals

Marshall Trophy 2nd Round OBAN SAINTS 1 CAMBRIA 0 (after extra time)

A GOAL nine minutes into the first period of extra time from Ross Maitland was enough to see Saints through to the last eight of the Jimmy Marshall Trophy, but unfortunately for the good crowd of spectators the game never reached the heights, of the previous week's one against Denny.

Manager Iain Jackson gave a vote of confidence to last week's starting line-up and the home side should have taken the lead as early as the fourth minute when Ross Graham crossed from the left and young Colin Carswell headed wide when it looked easier to score.

Cambria, managed by former Saints favourites of 20 years ago, Danny Young and Jim Cunningham started the game well and were passing the ball about confidently with Sinclair Patience looking impressive at the back, but they weren't really causing the Saints rear-guard too many problems.

The home side had a good chance when Ross Maitland fired over a great cross from the right, but Dean Walker headed over the bar from six yards. Keith Millar and Darin Bryars then combined well but again this effort was off target.

Saints lost the services of Dante Lopez after 22 minutes with a groin strain, his place in the centre of midfield

Football

was taken by his brother Joe. Both teams were playing a 3-5-2 formation, which meant a lot of the play was concentrated in the middle of the park and although the standard of football was good, they cancelled each other out and the game lacked that vital spark and cutting edge.

Saints keeper Tim Woodcock was caught being a bit too casual on the ball in the 34th minute and it almost proved costly, but thankfully he was able to rectify his mistake with no damage caused.

Just before half time Ross Maitland sent over a deep cross from the right which everybody thought was too long, but somehow Colin Carswell got on the end of it and he hammered a net bound rocket which looked a goal all the way until Cambria keeper Jim Doherty made a brilliant point blank block up at the postage stamp corner to save what looked like a certain goal.

The second half continued very much like the first, with neither team able to raise the pace of the game which meant it lacked goalmouth incidents.

Saints introduced top scorer Allan MacKay for Darin Bryars in the second half and he was unlucky with a clever shot that almost caught out Jim Doherty. Allan then set up Dean Walker but his header was saved by the Cambria keeper.

The home side took off Colin Carswell and introduced Willie Gemmill on the right of midfield and Willie sent over a great ball across the face of the Cambria goals, but there was no takers and a good opportunity was missed.

Neither team was able to break the deadlock during the 90 minutes, so the game went into half an hour of extra time.

The home side took the lead in the ninth minute when the ball was slipped through the middle for Ross Maitland, who noticed keeper Jim Doherty was off his line and the wee midfielder cleverly chipped the ball over his head and into the net to give Saints a narrow lead.

In the second period of extra time Cambria pushed men forward in an attempt to get back on level terms, which meant they left spaces at the back and Dean Walker should have killed

the game off when he raced clear but his shot hit the bar and scrambled clear.

Tim Woodcock had to deal with a difficult cross ball that came out of the sun, but he managed to tip it over the bar at the last second.

Allan MacKay had another good chance to wrap the game up but his shot was well saved by the keeper.

Saints held out for a narrow 1-0 win in a game that never set the heather on fire, but at the end of the day the final result is what counts and Saints were through to the quarter finals.

A sporting encounter was well handled by referee John Scott who had a good game. Manager Iain Jackson was happy to go through to the next round, but a bit disappointed with the performance. He said: 'We played really well the previous Saturday and I was looking for something similar today but we lacked urgency and the workrate just wasn't the same as it was against Denny. However, we created more goal scoring chances than Cambria and I think we deserved to take our place to the quarter finals.'

This Saturday Saints play their first league game since the end of October when they face a tough test against league leaders Pollok. The game will take place at Glencruitten with a 2.30 pm kick-off.

Saints Under 17s lost 4-0 away to Calderdale but the Under 19s had a good 1-0 away win against Renfrew Burgh. More club information on www.obansaintsafc.co.uk



Oban Celtic's winning Under 14 team which lifted the Oban Area Coaching Committee's Under 14 5-a-side Shield

Oban Celtic win winter league on goal difference

THE OBAN Area Coaching Committee's Under 14s winter league shield was decided on goal difference on Sunday after local rivals Oban Celtic and Oban Camanachd tied on points.

Shinty

astro-turf, the winter league ended: 1 Oban Celtic; 2 Oban Camanachd; 3 Lochside Rovers; 4 Lochside Juniors; 5 Celtic Juniors; 6 Glenorchy; 7 Camanachd Juniors. Played for the first time on