

BALLACHULISH - A RAILWAY LINE REMEMBERED

Argyll duo do well at Melbourne games

FORMER Oban High School pupil Susan Partridge finished an impressive 10th in the Commonwealth Games Marathon event - despite suffering from a cold.

Susan nearly didn't run in the event as a result and had to leave the athletes village the night before she ran to minimise the risk of infecting her fellow runners.

However, Susan was there on the starting line on Sunday and dug deep in the final miles to finish the race in Melbourne Cricket Ground in front of mum, Irene, and around 80,000 other spectators.

Dad, Alan, a teacher at Oban High School said he was very proud of his daughter.

'The ironic thing is Irene had a cold herself and didn't get near Susan in the days leading up to the race,' said Alan.

'Susan got excellent coverage on the television because she was with the leading group until the halfway stage and in the circumstances she was really pleased with how she ran.'

'The runners got a great reception in the stadium and it was a great experience for her.'

'She said she was feeling rough in the last few miles but she heard the noise in the stadium and couldn't bear the thought of not finishing. That kept her going.'

The 26-year-old will stay in Melbourne until the end of the games on Sunday before returning to Leeds where she is at university studying Interpreting and Translating.

Tarbert gamekeeper Jonathan Reid, at 20-years-old is the youngest competitor in his individual shooting event.

In the individual trap competition he finished 24th.

Jonathan and team-mate Ozzie McLean were 11th in the Men's trap pairs event.

Shirley MacIntosh, high performance manager for the Scottish Target Shooting Federation, told *The Oban Times*: 'Jonathan is just out of the junior competitions and this is a great experience for him.'

WATER PROBLEMS STALL BUILDING THROUGHOUT THE WEST COAST

REMEMBER - PUT YOUR CLOCKS FORWARD ON SUNDAY



Overall ploughing champion John MacCormick celebrates his haul of trophies with daughters Isla, left, and Kirsty, right, and father Gregor. (122p1601)

Appin brothers plough their way to victory

THE MACCORMICK brothers made it a family first and second in this year's Lorn Ploughing Match, held at Dunolliebeg Farm by permission of Alistair MacLeod.

Appin's John MacCormick pipped his brother Gregor, also from Appin, to win the overall prize.

John's haul of trophies on the day included a victory in the mounted plough and the awards for best start, best finish, straightest plough and levellest plough.

John also won the Ploughman's Race.

The champion said: 'This is the third time I have won. It is excellent to have won it.'

'It is hard work but I have been well rewarded at the end of the day.'

'Everyone here puts in a lot of effort but a lot of it is luck on the day. It is very competitive but everyone wants it to be enjoyable and it is the taking part that counts.'

'Ploughing is an old art and we need people to keep it going.'

Willie Buchanan, Aberfeldy and Tam MacMillan from the Isle of Bute, were second and third respectively.

The trailing ploughs competition was won by North Connell's Charlie Campbell. Entry to the event was free but donations were accepted and a total of £1,000 was collected for Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease.

Dunstaffnage leads war on MRSA

ONLY weeks after concern was voiced about the presence of the MRSA bug within Lorn and the Islands District General Hospital in Oban, *The Oban Times* has discovered that an important weapon in the war against the killer bug is being developed right here on the outskirts of the town.

For Dr Andrew Mearns Spragg and Dr Kathryn Fraser, who came to Oban to set up their company Aquapharm at Dunstaffnage in 2004, are working on a number of new anti-infective molecules that target multi-drug resistant infections such as MRSA.

'We can now achieve this in a petrie dish,' explained Dr Mearns Spragg. 'It has a distance to go before it is developed into a drug, but we're working on it.'

New antibiotics
'There is a definite need for new types of antibiotics to combat bacterial infections that have become resistant to most of our available antibiotics.'

Winning a top scientific award in 2000 catapulted the founder of Aquapharm into the world of big business - and one that looks set to become really big business.

Proving that he is at the forefront of the UK's scientific field Dr Mearns

Spragg won a fellowship from the Royal Society of Edinburgh for Enterprise in 2000 after completing a PhD at Heriot Watt.

With assistance from Argyll and the Isles Enterprise he identified Argyll as the prime location to set up business and now the 10-strong team is attracting worldwide attention for their research into identifying pharmaceutical compounds among marine microbes.

Life science
Encouraging Dr Mearns Spragg to set up at Dunstaffnage was part of AIE's overall strategy to establish a cluster of life science operations in the area.

Chief Executive of AIE, Ken Abernethy commented: 'North Argyll now hosts the biggest share of marine biology research and development work in the UK.'

'It's a great asset to the area and we are proud of the contribution that it makes and will continue to make to future medical advances.'

Based at the European Centre for Marine Biotechnology at Dunstaffnage, Dr Mearns Spragg and his team specialise in discovering and developing antibiotics that target multi-drug resistant infections and biologically de-

rived industrial products. The move to Oban was a good one says Dr Mearns Spragg.

'When I speak to other contacts in the industry they are all envious of this beautiful location.'

'I hope that the work of our company and others around here will act as a magnet and more will come to join us.'

'Particularly pharmaceutical companies who could develop products - this would have a major impact on the area.'

'There is no reason why this shouldn't develop in the same way as the Cambridge Science Park.'

'We employ local people as well as scientists from as far afield as China and the Reunion Islands.'

'We've had no problems recruiting so far, it's a wonderful place to live.'

One local recruit is production scientist Karen Jukes from Lochgilphead who went to Edinburgh University after leaving Lochgilphead High School, and was pleased to be able to return to such a high calibre job in her home county.

'We're going to be doing exciting stuff over the next two years and some of our work looks as though it's going to be very commercial,' said Karen.

MAIB report calls for boat drink limit

THE POWERBOAT which crashed at Tarbert Harbour last summer, killing three, was being operated by someone nearly two-and-a-half times over the alcohol limit for driving a car.

It has prompted more calls for a drink limit for leisure sailors.

The boat's owner Gordon Thomson, aged 42; Robin Brechin, 48; and Isabella Flemming, 39; died at the scene when *Sea Snake* struck Candy Rock at the entrance to the harbour while travelling at high speeds. The tragedy took

place at around 2am on Sunday July 10 last year.

Isabella Flemming's husband and the wives of Gordon Thomson and Robin Brechin were all seriously injured. The group of friends were from the Dunoon area.

The Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) report released on Monday said that the two helmsmen, Mr Thomson and Mr Brechin, were both nearly two-and-a-half times over the drink drive limit.

The report said: 'It is clear that the combination of

excessive alcohol consumption and fatigue will have significantly impaired the judgement and reaction times of those on board *Sea Snake*.'

'Evidence suggests these were the principal factors in this accident which resulted in tragically fatal consequences for three people and serious injury for three others.'

National laws

In publishing its findings the MAIB reiterated the recommendations it made last year after an fatal accident involving the collision of two leisure craft where

alcohol was also a factor. It has called for national laws against operating leisure craft while under the influence of drink.

Argyll and Bute MP Alan Reid has added his support to the move and called on Transport Minister Alistair Darling to introduce national laws against operating leisure craft while under the influence of alcohol.

Mr Reid said: 'My sincere sympathy goes to the families of those who lost their lives in this tragic boating accident at Tarbert last summer.'

'The MAIB report into the accident has stated that 'a national limit for users of pleasure craft, in line with national driving limits and that already applied to professional mariners, would act as a deterrent'.

'The MAIB made a similar recommendation last year and in the light of these I have written to Transport Secretary Alistair Darling and asked him to introduce, as a matter of urgency, regulations to place limits on the amount of alcohol which may be consumed by operators of leisure craft.'

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Colonsay fire threat

OVER a tenth of Colonsay burned on Monday night in a heather fire so large that it was spotted by a military jet on exercise, which raised the alarm.

It gave the island's volunteer fire crew its biggest call-out ever with the team fighting the fire and standing by for 12 hours, overnight, to protect property.

The only loss was a television booster aerial and a few electricity and telephone poles were scorched but not lost thanks to the work of the six-strong crew using their brand new fire appliance.

The fire hit the remotest part of the island and only at its edges were properties threatened; houses at West Milbuie and at Garvard.

'They did exceptionally well, the effort and commitment they put in is second to none they are a credit to Strathclyde Fire and Rescue and the community they serve,' said Danny Downie, group manager for the service in Argyll and Bute.

Bishop Murray celebrates 50 years

ARGYLL and Isles Bishop the Rt Rev Ian Murray has celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination with his family and parishioners.

A mass of thanksgiving was held at St Columba's Cathedral, Oban, conducted by Monsignor Donald MacKinnon of Fort William, Vicar General of the Diocese.

The Bishop's vocation has been an international one; he was ordained at the historic Royal Scots' College in Valladolid in Spain, one of the first two young Scottish priests, with Monsignor John Sheriden from Ayrshire, to be ordained after the historic college reopened following the Spanish Civil and Second World wars. The date

was March 17 1956 and he was 23 years old. He had begun preparing for the priesthood at Blairs College when he was 13-years-old. He also served as vice rector and then rector of the college.

Last year the bishop spent a month in Rome at the Synod of Bishops and his work for the International Commission for English in the Liturgy has taken him to China, America and New Zealand amongst his destinations.

Three generations of Monsignor Murray's family came from all over Scotland the UK to be at the Mass and next month, on April 21 there will be a Mass and dinner for the priests of the diocese

Bishop Ian Murray on the steps of St Columba's Cathedral, Oban

Tuesday is strike day

TUESDAY will be a day of strike action by public sector workers in support of their pension rights.

Local government departments across the board could be hit.

Members of UNISON supported strike action to demand fair treatment over pension rights in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

General secretary Dave Prentis said: 'Civil servants, teachers, police, firefighters and the NHS have all been given protection for existing members over changes to their pension scheme.'

'There is absolutely no rhyme or reason in singling out LGPS members for such unfair and unjust treatment. Our members deserve the pensions they have already paid for.'

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'As a result of the action some schools and council offices could be closed and services affected, though it is hoped to keep disruption to a minimum. Further information will appear on the council website when it becomes available.'

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Ancestor hunters to gather on Mull in May

MULL will play host to the a genealogical gathering in May when ancestor hunters will be gathering from all over the world.

A partnership of Mull Museum, Mull Historical and Archaeological Society, Ross of Mull Historical Centre, the Gaelic Partnership, Holiday Mull Visit Scotland, Mull and Iona Community and local tour guides and land owners will all be involved, helping the delegates explore the past.

The event runs from May 14 to 19 and will have a varied programme of lectures, tours and workshops all planned to help family researchers to understand Mull as the land of their blood and birthright.

Local people are being invited to take part and share their experiences and knowledge with the delegates.

Look out for more details about the Mull Genealogical Gathering, or MUGG 2006 on the website: www.mullgenealogy.co.uk

Islay hosts Jobsfair in Ionad Chalum Chille ile

A JOBSFAIR was held on Islay yesterday (Wednesday) thanks to the Islay into Employment Group and Jobcentre Plus, Campbeltown.

The Islay into Employment Group, Islay and Jura Council of Voluntary Services, Argyll and Bute Employability Team and Argyll College were all involved in the event which was held in the Columba Centre, Ionad Chalum Chille Ile.

People attending were able to talk about training opportunities, courses and work in the voluntary sector.

Keith Millar, a Jobcentre Plus advisor explained that it was an informal event to help employers meet potential staff.

'Jobcentre Plus advisers were able to sit with people and calculate how much better off they could be if they were working,' he said.

'We have a range of financial incentives, which can really make it possible for people to look at opportunities they might have overlooked due to money worries.

'People in some circumstances can even return to work on a part-time basis and still receive their benefit, which can really help ease the move back into work.'



Oighreachd connsaideach air a reic

Chaidh oighreachd air taobh siar Leòdhais, a bha an teas mheadhan connsaid laghail, a reic - ach chan eil fhios fhathast cò na h-uachdarain ùra no dè a phàigh iad air a son.

Thug seann uachdaran Oighreachd Mhorgail, Robin Davidson, croitear gu cùirt agus e airson casg a chur air na beathaichean bho bhith a' tighinn air a' chiud fearann. Bha seo a dh' aoidheoin 's gun robh teaghlach Fhionnlaigh Dhòmhnallaich air a bhith cleachdadh na h-oighreachd airson còrr air 80 bliadhna.

Tha Morsgail a' gabhail a-staigh 12,500 acair, ged nach eil duine a' fuireachd air ach luchd-obrach na h-oighreachd fhèin.

Cha tàinig fuasgladh sam bith air a' chùis lagha oir bhàsaich Mgr Davidson an-uiridh an dèidh tuiteam bho àrdadh.

Ach, chan eil fhios a-nis dè thachras an dèidh co-dhùnadh bean Mgr Davidson, Karen, an oighreachd a reic.

Thuir manasair Mhorgail, Harry Harper: 'Chan eil fhios am air mòran mu dheidhinn, ach gun deach a reic. B' fheàrr leum gun robh. Tha na h-uachdarain ùra a' tighinn suas aig deireadh na mìos agus bidh fios againn air barrachd an uairsin.'

An estate on the west side of Lewis, which has been at the centre of a legal controversy, has been sold - but it is unknown to who or for how much.

The former owner of Morsgail Estate, Robin Davidson, took a crofter to court to try and stop him using the land for animals. This was despite the fact that the family of Finlay MacDonald had made use of the estate for over 80 years.

Morsgail takes in 12,500 acres, although no-one lives on it except estate workers.

No resolution was reached on the legal case after Mr Davidson died last year when he fell off a ladder.

But it is now uncertain what the future holds following the decision of Mr Davidson's wife, Karen, to sell the estate.

Morsgail manager Harry Harper said: 'I don't know much about it, apart from it's been sold. I wish I did. The new owners are coming up at the end of the month so we'll know more then.'

Sgrìobhaiche ùr

Tha Colaisde a' Chaisteil air Iain Moireach à Barabhas fhastadh mar sgrìobhaiche gus ionmhach sgrìobhadh cruthachail a thogail sna h-Eileanan Siar. Leanaidh a' chùmhnaidh aige sia mìosan.

Bidh Mgr Moireach ag obair, chan ann a' mhàin taobh a-staigh na colaiste agus Oithigh na Gàidhealtachd, ach anns na coimhearsnachdan agus sna sgìoltean cuideachd.

ES e sàr sgrìobhadair a th' ann an Iain aig a bheil eòlas farsaing air litreachas na Gàidhlig. B' e a' chiad neach deasachaidh a bh' aig Comhairle nan Leabhraichean agus bha e cuideachd os cionn Radio nan Gàidheal aig aon àm.

Thuir oifigear leasachaidh Gàidhlig na colaiste, Anna NicSuaib: 'Tha sinn air leth taingeil do na buidhnean a thug taic airgid dhuinn gus Iain a chur ann an dreuchd, gu sònraichte GASD tro Phròiseact nan Ealan agus Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

'Tha Iain a' dol a-mach leanaidh am pròiseact seo airson 6 mìosan agus thathar an dùil gun tig sgrìobhadh ùr Gàidhlig a-mach às bho oileanaich, sgoiltean àrd-sgoiltean nan Eilean Siar agus inbhidh.'

Thuir Iain: 'S e cothrom uabhasach math a tha seo dhà na h-oileanaich agus dhomh fhèin cuideachd agus tha mi an dòchas gun gabh daoine iudh ann.'

Lewis Castle College have appointed John Murray from Barvas as a writer with the aim of promoting the image of creative writing in the Western Isles. His contract will run for six months.

Mr Murray will be working, not only within the confines of the college and the University of the Highlands and Islands, but in communities and schools.

John is a renown writer with a vast experience of Gaelic literature. He was the first editor of the Gaelic Books Council and was in also in charge of BBC Radio Scotland's Gaelic output.

College Gaelic development officer, Annie MacSweeney said: 'We are extremely grateful to the organisations which gave us financial assistance to enable us to employ John, especially GASD through the Gaelic Arts Agency and the Western Isles Council.

'In the first instance this project will run for six months and it is hoped that new Gaelic writing will emerge from students, secondary pupils and adults.'

John said: 'This is a wonderful opportunity for myself and the students and I hope people will take an interest in it.'

Argyll firm aims to produce a third of the world's salmon eggs

A FIRM founded in Argyll 25 years ago aims to produce a third of all the salmon eggs in the world market within the next five years.

Landcatch Natural Selection founded by the Scottish-based and family-run Lithgow business already produces 50 million eggs a year in Scotland and 25 million in Chile. Together these represent 14 per cent of the world's Atlantic salmon egg market. The company's target is a global market share of 30 per cent by 2011.

And as part of its plans Landcatch Natural Selection has announced two new appointments.

Dr Phillip David, the former chief executive of Sygen International has become a non-executive director.

Bill Miller, the international veterinary and sup-

ply-chain consultant who also previously acted for Sygen has been appointed to the board of Landcatch Natural Selection.

'These are both major appointments for us, adding a new layer of commercial and scientific strength to our board at a time of significant development of our company,' said Hugh Currie the chairman of Landcatch.

The appointments follow the purchase in December of Marine Harvest's 50 per cent stake in Landcatch Chile; the other 50 per cent of which was already owned by Landcatch Ltd.

This is part of a wider expansion of Landcatch Natural Selection. Over the next five years this will involve what the firm describes as significant production increases in Scotland Chile and one other possible location as Landcatch works towards its goal.

Mr Currie said: 'All successful businesses consist of good facilities and excellent people. Having taken key decisions in recent months to expand our breeding and production we are delighted to now be able to add Phillip and Bill to the 'people power' of our business.'

Airmail with a difference



Lieutenant Commander Alastair Haigh of HMS Argyll's helicopter crew delivers a special parcel to Kieran (left) and Cameron Wragg. The parcel was sent by the boys' dad Chris, a chief petty officer on board HMS Liverpool, currently stationed in the Falkland Islands. Watching the boys receive the parcel is their mum Alison. a12he01

Special delivery for Lochgilpead brothers

MOST people are happy to receive their mail from their local postman, but two Lochgilpead boys last week received an extra special delivery - from a RAF helicopter.

Nine-year-old Cameron Wragg and his eight-year-old brother Kieran were shocked when Lieutenant Commander Alastair Haigh of HMS Argyll's helicopter crew stepped out of the Lynx helicopter with a huge brown envelope addressed to them.

The boys' dad Chris is a chief petty officer onboard HMS Liverpool, currently stationed in the Falkland Islands for six months. Fellow pupils at Lochgilpead Primary School have been known to joke with Cameron and Kieran that their dad is away so much.

So when their mum Alison heard that HMS Argyll was due to visit Loch Fyne, she arranged the surprise. She said: 'When I heard about HMS Argyll's visit and that some of the crew were visiting primary schools in the area, I told Chris about it during our weekly phone call.

'He said he would email the ship and get a message to the boys during the visit to the primary school, but little did we know that it would be delivered by Royal Navy helicopter.'

Hash tea to Tiree woman is fined at Oban Sheriff Court

A WOMAN from Benderloch who used cannabis tea to help relieve medical symptoms was fined £500 after sending a packet of herbal cannabis through the post.

Patricia Stannage, Beech Caravan, Keil Gardens Ledaig, Benderloch, appeared before Oban Sheriff Court on Monday and admitted being concerned in the supply of herbal cannabis and also being in possession of herbal cannabis.

Procurator fiscal Clifford Most said a parcel was wrongly delivered to a couple living on Tiree.

Inside was found to be 6.3 grammes of herbal cannabis.

'The intended recipient no longer resides on Tiree and there are a number of homes of the same name which explains why it was delivered to the wrong address,' said Mr Most.

The parcel was traced back to Stannage and when her home was searched the other cannabis, weighing 12.4 grammes was found.

Defence advocate Hamish Melrose said that Stannage, aged 56, was a first offender who had previously injured her arms and had been treated with cortisone injections when living in Germany; this treatment was not available in Scotland and she had started to use cannabis to make a herbal tea to relieve the stress she suffered from being in pain.

'She naively sent a parcel as a present to a friend who lived on Tiree who had hurt his back,' said Mr Melrose, adding that Stannage in turn had never bought cannabis herself but had been given gifts of it to help ease her pain.

Since the offence she had stopped using cannabis.

Sheriff Douglas Small told Stannage: 'There are special circumstances in your case; you appear before me as a first offender and you are categorised as an extremely low risk of re-offending. I am advised by your solicitor and social worker that you used cannabis to alleviate the symptoms of pain.'

He fined her £500 and warned if she appeared before the court again he would deal with the matter more seriously.

Roads deaths drop in Argyll and Bute

ARGYLL and Bute has seen a welcome drop in the number of people killed and injured on its roads.

Motorcycle deaths remain a worrying statistic as does the number of drivers under the age of 25 who are involved in accidents.

The casualty statistics for 2005 in a report by Strathclyde Police for the West of Scotland Road Safety Forum show nine people died compared to 15 in 2004 and 14 in 2003.

The casualty figures show 80 seriously injured and 377 slightly injured. The seriously injured number is down from 96 and 124 for the two previous years but the number of those slightly injured has risen to 377, from 314 and 331 in the two years before.

In the preceding two years Argyll and Bute's death rate on the roads has been on a par with the heavily populated City of Glasgow police division.

In the West of Scotland 775 drivers of private cars aged between 17 and 25 were killed or injured. This terrible figure represents 26.5 per cent of all private car drivers who were involved in crashes that resulted in injuries.

There were nine motorcycle deaths during 2005 compared to 15 in 2004 but of the nine, three were in Argyll and Bute; all the riders were male all were over the age of 30.

The top six reasons for collisions were drivers failing to look properly; slippery roads due to weather conditions; pedestrians failing to look properly; a poor turn or manoeuvre; following too closely and failing to judge other peoples' path or speed.



Wendy Bruce, Eleanor MacKinnon, Felicity Kelly, Eileen Rae, Ian Cleaver, Lorna Elliot, Alison MacKenzie and Arlene Cullum at the final Meet the Funders Roadshow in Oban. f10 fm01

Funding roadshow success

VOLUNTARY groups in Argyll and Bute are now armed with the best information how to get funding.

A series of six Meet the Funders Roadshows was held across the area, to give advice on how to get through the maze of paperwork and different organisations.

More than 1,000 people attended the six at Helensburgh, Dunoon, Campbeltown, Islay, Lochgilpead and finally in Oban.

In all, 20 organisations including several different departments of Argyll and Bute Council were on hand to give advice and information on how and where to get funding.

The idea for Meet the Funders came from a request from a few voluntary sector groups who wanted to meet first-hand with those who distribute funding.

Understanding

The whole idea was to give voluntary sector groups a better understanding of the funders' requirements and priorities when applying for cash and to tell the funders themselves, in turn, the particular circumstances of voluntary groups.

Hotelier Ian Cleaver, a director of Argyll and Islands Enterprise, opened the event in Oban.

He told his audience that Argyll and Bute has the second largest geographic area in Scotland but less than 1.8 per cent of the Scottish population yet it has the second highest number of volunteers when compared to other council areas.

'Argyll and Bute has a voluntary sector worth £28 million sustaining 836 jobs,' said Mr Cleaver.

'The Scottish average for numbers volunteering is 23 per cent and in Argyll and Bute it is 35 per cent.'

Dunoon man joins Waterwatch Scotland

PROFESSOR James Sharp of Innellan, Dunoon has become an local panel member for Waterwatch Scotland.

This new agency has been formed to represent the interests of commercial and domestic customers of Scottish Water.

Members such as Professor Sharp act as local points of contact for people wishing to raise issues such as customer service, household charging and consultation.

He joins the current panel members Councillor Len Scoullar from Bute, Jim Cockburn of Inverness and Councillor David Chisolm of Muir of Ord as the representatives for the north west of the country.

Good report card for Inveraray

HIGH performance, a strong record of improvement and very effective leadership are just some of the praised heaped upon Inveraray Primary School and its 'outstanding atmosphere for learning'.

The glowing praise came from the latest inspection report by HM Inspectorate of Education. The key strengths of the school were seen as the pupils skills in listening, talking and working together use of the outdoor environment to stimulate pupils to learn; pastoral care; supportive and productive partnerships with parents the school board and the community and the leadership of the head teacher.

New scheme welcomed, with warning

A SCHEME to give pensioners central heating and help them stay warm in winter is to be extended.

The news has been welcomed by Highlands and Islands MSP Jamie McGrigor but he has warned that better delivery of the Central Heating and Warm Deal scheme is needed.

He exposed problems last year with delays in getting the systems into homes.

'The executive must ensure that applications are dealt with quickly and efficiently, that work is carried out on time, with the minimum of inconvenience to householders and that local companies are allowed to play a greater role in installation work,' he said.

The scheme provides central heating systems and insulation where a person is 60 or over and where there is either no system at all or one which is irreparably broken down. The Warm Deal provides £500 for insulation measures to households in receipt of benefits and other sums for those not



Royal National Mod Convener John A MacIver, Cal Mac's Hugh Dan MacLennan, chief executive of An Comunn Gaidhealach Calum Iain MacLeod and president of An Comunn Gaidhealach Angus MacDonald.

CalMac keeps up Mod support

C A L E D O N I A N with Mod organisers An MacBrayne has announced it is keeping up its support of the Royal National Mod, this year in Dunoon, for the fifth year in a row.

The ferry company first supported the Gaelic cultural festival in Largs in 2002 and in 2004 won the Brand Identity category in the Arts and Business Scotland awards in partnership

of our staff take part in different ways, whether it be as competitors or in supporting roles.'

Calum Iain MacLeod, chief executive of An Comunn Gaidhealach, said: 'Over the years CalMac has maintained a strong commitment to supporting the Gaelic culture across its network and its support for the Mod reaffirms this commitment.'

Firefighter tackle the West Highland Way for rescuers

Members of blue watch at Oban Fire Station held a sponsored walk of the West Highland Way on behalf of Oban Mountain Rescue Team last year. They collected more than £350 and Steven Gibbon and Sharon Sales-Mossop from blue watch presented Oban Mountain Rescue Team's assistant team leader Ian Campbell with the money at Oban Fire Station. f12bh1d



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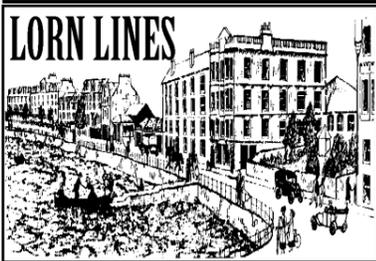
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OBAN Accordion and Fiddle Club has this season been drawing capacity crowds to the town's McTavish's Kitchen and the club night held there on March 9 was no exception.

Guest artists were the hugely talented young group Deoch'n'Dorus. With Stuart Cameron, Fort William, on piano accordion, Andrew MacPherson, Portree, on drums and Simon Moran, Isle of Jura, on fiddle, the group delighted an appreciative audience with well-varied selections creating a magical sound.

Local artists included, on accordion, chairman Michael Garvin, Robert Roberston, Craig MacFadyen and Niall Kirkpatrick, all Oban, and Sileas Sinclair, Connel.

On drums there was Archie Cameron and David Cameron, Oban, and Angus MacColl, Benderloch, and, on fiddle, the wife of the chairman, Joanie McLachlan, Oban.

A comprehensive vote of thanks was proposed by Michael Garvin.

The next club night, on Thursday April 6, will see the club welcome guest artists the Ian Hutson Band.

SAHARAN trekkers Avril Lamont from Dunbeg and Alex Milligan from Oban, returned recently after yet another successful encounter with this awesome desert, Avril's fourth and Alex's fifth.

Arriving at Marrakesh Airport they were met by a group of Berbers who recognised them immediately, greeting them in full Berber tradition.

The Berbers are the local tribe who lead such treks, looking after their charges on the way in an area where weather conditions can change dramatically. This time the pair found themselves challenged by sandstorms.

The duo go on these trips to raise cash for Macmillan Cancer Relief. With support a little slow in coming in, the pair are holding extra car boot sales to compensate for promised pledges which have not, so far, materialised.

The next will be held on Sunday April 2 in the Coop Car Park, Oban, from 11am to 3pm. Space for a car or table costs £5 and there is no need to book; just turn up.

Avril and Alex would like to thank everyone who has supported them in their fund-raising efforts for charity.

THE MUSICAL partnership between Sydney MacEwan and Duncan Morrison was remarkable, achieving great success in the 1930s despite crossing the religious boundaries of the time.

It brought together the young tenor Sydney MacEwan, a Catholic from Springburn in Glasgow, and Duncan, a Presbyterian from Ness in Lewis, who became his piano accompanist. They were on the verge of achieving international recognition when Sydney abruptly abandoned the possibility of a major singing career to become a priest.

He served for 17 years in Lochgilphead and his later concert tours helped to pay for the roof of Oban's St Columba's Cathedral.

Seventy years on, the old 78 records they made can now be heard on computer-enhanced CDs.

This fascinating story will be the subject of a talk, supported by slides and recordings, to be given by Bill Innes in the Free Church Hall on Friday March 31 at 7.30pm.

The presentation will be the last of the current series of winter meetings promoted by the local branch of An Comunn Gaidhealach.

AT A RECENT lunch in Oban's Regent Hotel, members of Oban Rotary

Club learned about the work of H2O Hope to Oban, a Christian initiative for the young people of the town.

Given by Donald Skinner, president of H2O, and Roy Clunie, one of the directors, the talk left their audience amazed by the progress that has been made over the last three years. During that period the organisation has attracted £170,000 in funding which has been spent to the benefit of young people of the area.

With its dedicated team and two youth workers, Ewen Munro and Tom Sutherland, H2O is developing strong links with young people at local youth clubs and drop-in centres while developing its association with Oban High School and local churches.

Supported since its inception by various trusts such as the Rank Organisation, the Robertson Trust and the Laidlaw Trust, in addition to local church groups, H2O will, in the future, be faced with raising its own funds.

Thanking the speakers for their illuminating talk, Rotary past president Phil White, congratulated H2O on its vision and success.

STAGED in Oban's Argyllshire Gathering Hall on Wednesday March 8, in aid of Save the Children, and featuring a range of talented youngsters from the area's primary schools, it was a presentation guaranteed to draw a strong attendance.

Contributing to an outstanding programme, introduced by Peter MacLeod, Ganavan, were piper Joe MacDougall, Oban High School; Oban Strings, Hayley Edwards, Lochnell primary; Oban Junior Polish Choir; Oban Youth Theatre Group; Arinagour Primary School from Coll; Achaleven Gaelic Choir; Kilniver primary; Easdale primary and St Columba's primary, all of whose performances were a credit both to the children and their teachers.

Rousing combined performances by the entire company brought the evening to a close.

The concert, which raised more than £400 for Save the Children, was organised by members of the local committee of this group whose efforts were co-ordinated by Maggie Anderson, head teacher at Easdale.

SCOTLAND may have failed to qualify for the World Cup but the country will still have a representative centre-stage at the colourful opening ceremony of the finals in Germany this summer.

This will be in the shape of a young woman with an Oban background.

Picked to represent her area, Bad Reichenhall, is champion dancer Tamara MacCuish, aged 18, who will perform a Bavarian folk dance. Her father, Donald MacCuish, moved to Germany with his mother Kathie and sister Valerie 10 years ago. He and his German wife have two daughters, Tamara and Vanessa.

Regular visitors from Oban to their relatives in Bad Reichenhall are Donald's brother Roddy MacCuish and his wife Marion.

Their most recent visit at New Year will be remembered for all the wrong reasons for their relatives' home is within yards of the ice rink which collapsed because of the weight of snow on the roof with appalling loss of life.

Recalled Roddy: 'We were even planning to visit it. We couldn't believe what had happened. It was just awful.'

Roddy and Marion hope to get tickets for the opening ceremony at the World Cup so they can see their niece dancing.

80 new homes to be built on Mull within four years

A MAJOR housing investment has been announced for Mull and could see 80 new homes on the island by 2009.

Argyll and Bute MSP George Lyon has been campaigning long and hard at

Holyrood about the housing crisis on the island, where reasonably-priced accommodation can be hard to find for key workers.

A number of people have to rely on either caravans or winter lets of holiday

homes. The island is desperately short of accommodation for single people. **£7.3 million**

But Johann Lamont MSP the communities minister has announced a £7.3 million Housing Investment

programme for new island homes, including Mull; it could lead to up to 80 new houses on Mull between now and 2009.

Mr Lyon said this would be the equivalent of a ten-fold increase in the housing

budget for the island. 'This a dramatic step up and a substantial response to the housing crisis on the island,' he said.

'I will be pressing Communities Scotland to ensure that this programme is de-

livered as swiftly as possible to try and meet the urgent demand for socially-rented houses on Mull.'

Ms Lamont told Mr Lyon: 'It is reasonable to say that the prospects for affordable housing on Mull looks bet-

ter now than they have for some years.'

But the final number of new houses and cash invested in housing will depend on the amount of money in the rural programme.

Benderloch Christmas row ends in court

A CHRISTMAS row led to a man appearing before Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

Christopher Healey of 1 Achanduin, Benderloch, pled guilty to assaulting Kevin Healey on December 26 last year at 21E Shuna Terrace, Oban, by striking him on the head with a metal bar; and to possessing cannabis resin on the same day.

Procurator fiscal Clifford Most said that Kevin Healey had awakened at his home early on Boxing Day morning to find his brother Christopher outside his flat.

'He was brandishing a tyre lever and asking where the complainant was,' said Mr Most. 'The accused struck Kevin Healey on the head with a tyre iron.'

Police were called and when Christopher Healey was interviewed at Oban Police Station 0.1 grammes of cannabis resin was found in his pocket.

Hamish Melrose, defence agent said that Healey, aged 25, had had to somersault out of the way over the bonnet when his brother Kevin had driven at him earlier that night. In the fall he had hurt his kidneys and back.

'A situation had developed' at their parents home when Kevin Healey, his partner and baby had visited for Christmas. 'There is no love lost between the brothers your Lordship,' said Mr Melrose. Sheriff Small deferred sentence until December 5 for Healey to be of good behaviour.



Lord Lieutenant of Argyll and Bute Kenneth MacKinnon cuts the ribbon to officially open Oban War and Peace Museum as museum chairman John Wilson, left, and HMS Argyll Commander Will Warrander look on. (12war04)

War and Peace officially opens its doors

THE NEW War and Peace Museum was filled with directors, committee members and invited guests at its official opening on Saturday.

Lord Lieutenant of Argyll and Bute Kenneth MacKinnon cut the ribbon to declare the museum open.

Since its formation in 1995 the museum has never owned its own building but the opening of its new premises, in The Old Oban Times Building on the Es-

planade, marks an exciting landmark in the museum's history.

Piper Donald Files opened the proceedings on Saturday before War and Peace chairman John Wilson addressed the guests.

He said: 'For the past 11 years we have been located in several rented premises on the North Pier, always with the fear of closing when Argyll and Bute Council sold the premises. Well, it did, and our offer

to purchase was not acceptable. In fairness it offered us a disused toilet next to the town sewerage treatment plant. We didn't answer that letter and some of our members were offended.'

'We had to find premises and the directors started negotiations with The Oban Times which has always been supportive to us.'

'We are delighted to have, at last, a permanent home for the museum.'

Mr Wilson thanked all the directors, committee members and watchkeepers, especially former curator Bill Grant and development officer Alison Palmer.

He also welcomed all the guests including: Commander Will Warrander and executive warrant officer Ian Fox of HMS Argyll and Lorne Campbell, whose mother Norma was one of the founding members of the museum.

Before finishing, Mr Wilson added the museum still needed to find

£100,000 and introduced the Friends of the Museum scheme.

For £10 'friends' will be sent a newsletter and be informed of forthcoming functions and events relating to the museum.

The Lord Lieutenant agreed to become the first 'friend'.

Baroness Ray Michie of Gallanach was unable to attend the event but passed on her congratulations to the directors and members of the committee.

Housing drought hits

ARGYLL is suffering from a housing drought - the supply of housing is going to dry up because of a lack of water.

Apart from Cardross and Rothesay every settlement in Argyll and Bute is close to or at capacity for water and, or, sewers.

With the Argyll and Bute Local Plan and Highland and Islands Enterprise economic blueprint both crying out for more housing to help fulfil their needs, land has been found all over the area to build upon.

But all the land zoning and approvals in the world won't help if there isn't the water to pipe into the homes and the sewerage to take the waste away.

The directors of M and K MacLeod Ltd Argyll's largest construction company

have said they are concerned that Scottish Water's failure to provide essential services is curtailing development in the Oban area and all other parts of Argyll and Bute.

The company spokesman said this week: 'The outlook for economic growth in Argyll and Bute is bleak unless Scottish Water provides improved water connections and sewage treatment throughout the area.'

'It appears that at the moment Scottish Water is barely meeting existing demands and the directors wonder whether, if we experience a dry summer this year, Argyll and Bute will be in a similar situation to the south-east of England where, at the moment, there is a threat of hose-pipe bans and similar restrictions.'

At a political level Jim Mather MSP has written to the rural development minister Ross Finnie asking him to explain what Scottish Water has hit these problems.

'I have been made aware that Scottish Water is writing or has written, to developers, architects and housing associations across Argyll and Bute to advise them that at this time there are to be no more water connections,' said Mr Mather, who said that Scottish Water's lack of finance and existing regulations effectively has put a moratorium on development in certain areas.

West Highland Housing Association's next development of over 40 homes at Glenshellach could also stall because of Scottish Water.

In Kintyre, developments at Glenbarr and Southend smaller have been halted. The Southend development had planning permission but could not connect to the utilities.

'At Glenbarr there is permission for up to five houses but Scottish Water said no, because the sewers could not cope. The developer was told Scottish Water would examine the sewer to see what could be done but at a cost of £17,000. The developer is now looking at putting in their own waste treatment works.'

A spokesman for Scottish Water said that the within the coming month the next eight-year investment plan will be announced by Scottish Water and one of its priorities was to connect 120,000 new homes across

Scotland at a cost of over £2billion. At its formation in 2002, Scottish Water's first investment programme saw the government give it the task of improving water quality; this second plan was to add more capacity for more new homes.

'And Argyll and Bute is not unique; all across the Highlands, more and more development plans are falling down when it comes to Scottish Water being unable to provide the essential utilities.'

Mallaig and Morar councillor, Charlie King, said: 'Anyone wishing to build a house in the Mallaig and Morar area has to apply for water and are being told that Scottish Water can't supply the development.'

'I feel that to build one house is not a development

and to refuse one house in a place like Mallaig or Arisaig, where the population trebles during the summer, is nonsense. It's only going to effect something like one quarter of a per cent of their supply. I just feel that they are not looking at each application individually, they are just saying no to developments automatically which is having a blanket effect.'

Mr King added that a development of 18 affordable homes in Mallaig only got the go-ahead after Scottish Water agreed to install a separate tank from the public supply.

Lifeboat launch

OBAN Lifeboat was launched on Saturday after a holidaymaker on Mull suffered a suspected heart attack.

The lifeboat took the woman from Craignure to Lorn and Islands District Hospital. She was discharged from hospital the following day.



Elizabeth Carson and husband Jim with friends and colleagues at the Manor House, Oban. (12mid01)

Oban midwife retires

AN OBAN midwife celebrated her retirement on Saturday marking 25 years working in Oban's hospitals.

Elizabeth Carson and her husband Jim were joined by staff from the maternity ward in Lorn and Islands District General Hospital (LIDGH) at a dinner in the Manor House.

Elizabeth spent the majority of her career in Oban, working in Genuachar Maternity Hospital, and holds fond memories of her time as a midwife in the town.

Elizabeth worked the night shift in the maternity

ward, the time when most babies are born and colleagues paid tribute to her work, saying babies would always sleep well if she was working.

LIDGH senior midwife Helen Munro told The Oban Times: 'This is the end of an era.'

'Elizabeth has been very dedicated and hard working and she has delivered more babies than any of us.'

'If we had a problem we could always phone her for advice, even if she was off-duty, and the women used to say it was like staying in a four-star hotel when Elizabeth was working.'

Elizabeth said she felt the role of the midwife had changed a lot over the past few years but has enjoyed her time in the hospital: 'I have really enjoyed working with the team of midwives in Oban who have provided a wonderful service.'

'We've had lots of nice times with them and the other staff and it has always been a team effort.'

'I am meeting adults now that I delivered when they were born. I just hope all the babies I have delivered grow to be fit and healthy men and women.'

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Your correspondent is Marilyn Henderson: 01866 833201



Refuse collection

NOT MANY householders are taking the opportunity to separate their paper refuse from everyday household rubbish.

The paper recycle bins are only being collected in the area once every fortnight. If every home in the area used this service, perhaps the bins would be emptied every week. This would help local businesses who need this service weekly. It might also help to save the planet.

Roads

IN THE recent snowfall, the roads department of Argyll and Bute Council quickly cleared the route from Tainult to Dalavich.

But spare a thought for the poor driver of one of the snow ploughs which went off the road near Inverinan at the weekend.

Wind farm meeting

IF KILCHRENAN Primary School is available on Monday April 20, it is hoped that members of the public will be able to see the environmental statement for the proposed wind farm at Brackley Farm, now known as Shira wind farm.

The proposed development would consist of 22 wind turbines on land to the south of Dalmally.

This application has been lodged with the Scottish Executive.

Kilchrenan Community Council has received a report from North British Windpower, which is proposing a 20 turbine wind farm next to the existing wind farm at Beinn Ghlas.

This report will be on view at the meeting in the school.

Notices of the meeting will be on local noticeboards.



The 1st Tobermory Guides outside the Scottish Parliament building in Edinburgh.

Mull Guides enjoy trip to Edinburgh

THE 1ST Tobermory Guides recently enjoyed a fun-packed weekend trip to Edinburgh.

The 11 Guides, three Guiders and two babies stayed at Guide head quarters in the capital.

After a night's sleep, first stop the next morning was Murryfield Ice Rink. Then it was off to the Scottish Parliament where the group enrolled four new Guides and the older Guides renewed their promise.

There was still time to fit in a trip to Leith Water World, where the girls enjoyed water slides and a wave machine.

Dinner was at the Hard Rock Café. There were music videos on large screens around the café. However, the guides asked if they could watch the rugby! Staff played it on one of the screens and soon the whole café was cheering Scotland on to a great victory. It was one of

the Guide's birthdays and she was delighted when a waiter arrived with a bunch of balloons and everyone sang Happy Birthday.

It was then time to head to the Playhouse for the musical Grease.

On Sunday morning the group headed for Stirling for a shopping spree before returning to Oban to catch the 4pm ferry.

The trip was made possible by a donation from the Mull White Tailed Sea

Eagles project, a partnership of Scottish Natural Heritage, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland, Forestry Commission Scotland and Mull and Iona Community Trust. The Guides are also grateful to parents and members of the community who supported fund-raising events, Betty MacPhail for baking for the raffle, Mull Lions, British Trust Hotels and the Co-op Community Dividend Fund.

Around the Rurals

Salen

EVERY member of the Salen branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute (SWRI) was present for the meeting on March 1.

Since it was St David's Day, Alison made her welcome in Welsh.

Anne Cleave made a three-grain loaf using a recipe from the healthy living section of the federation show schedule. Ingredients included strong white wholemeal and granary flours, black treacle, yeast and light olive oil.

Refreshments were provided by Alison and Betsy, after which the loaf was raffled and won by Eileen. The competition was won by Jean who had knitted a beautiful dress for a baby girl.

Fionnphort

FIONNPHORT SWRI held its annual general meeting on March 1.

A small buffet was provided by Enid, Emily and Rita and the evening included songs from Emily, Linda and Valerie and a poetry reading.

On the agenda was the election of 2006/7 officers. Brik Halcrow accepted the post of president, with Christine MacCallum the new vice president. Linda Dawson remains secretary for a third term and Rita King continues as treasurer.

Brik also takes on housewives and handicrafts and Janet Schofield continues as press secretary. Lorna Davies announced her intention to stand down from her position of president, but was nominated for, and accepted, the position of social secretary.

Lorna was thanked for the many years' service that she has given to Fionnphort SWRI. Her efforts have been tireless and her energy and motivation essential to the fund-raising projects and social activities of the group and institute as a whole.

Dervaig

DERVAIG SWRI met on March 8 when Jane Russell gave a talk entitled 'Creative Writing'. She pointed out that creative writing is writing for fun, for oneself, not the sort of writing everyone has to do so much of the time for business, shopping lists and reminders.

Creative writing is 'embroidery' as opposed to 'darning and sewing on buttons'!

She asked members to think of things in unusual ways and used as an example a poem by Carol Ann Duffy in which an onion becomes a symbol of love. She illustrated her talk with excellent examples of poems collected during her years as an English teacher and encouraged members to think about presentation and finding the words that work for sound and rhythm and then just to 'have a go'.

Val Thomas thanked her for a stimulating talk and tea was served by Linda Paterson and Elizabeth Smith.

Members of Dervaig SWRI thank everyone who contributed to the success of the 'Odds and Ends' coffee morning held on February 10 when more than £300 was raised.

This money will be sent, in memory of Sheila Macfarlane, to the Sarah Matheson Trust, an organisation that provides support and information to people

with Multiple System Atrophy and funds research into its causes.

Torosay

THE PROSPECT of hearing Eve Eckstein give a talk on antiques attracted a good number of members and friends to the March meeting.

Mrs Eckstein's talk was about a collection of decorative hatpins from around 1900. A lady of fashion of that era needed hatpins to keep her elaborate hats secure on her head. Members were shown pictures of beautiful and very varied hatpins which have become collectors' pieces and also some pictures of hats and outfits taken from advertisements of the period.

President Janet Ackroyd thanked Mrs Eckstein for a most interesting evening.

Appin

PRESIDENT Alison MacCorquodale welcomed 33 members and two visitors to the March meeting of Appin SWRI.

An interesting evening ensued with a talk on the origins and the art of Tai Chi by Susanne Lin Jensen.

Susanne is the Oban instructor of the Rising Dragon Tai Chi Argyll School.

Under instruction, members then took part in various movements and much was learned.

The vote of thanks was given by Brenda McLeod. Competitions were as follows: Fruit preserved in alcohol - Silver, Alison MacCorquodale. Butterfly in any medium - Gold, Brenda McLeod and Linda McLeod; Silver, Kath McNicol; Red, Jane Williams.

The evening ended with the customary cup of tea and raffle.

Kilmallie

THE MARCH meeting of the Kilmallie branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute was held recently at Walter Cameron Way. After the conclusion of

business, Morag McKell, president, introduced the guest speaker, Audrey Hebborn.

Mrs Hebborn's subject was Barnardo's, not a description of the work done by Barnardo's today on behalf of disadvantaged children, but of her early life as a Dr Barnardo's girl beginning in the early 1940s and how, despite initial educational shortcomings, she later qualified as a nurse.

Recently Barnardo's has opened their personal files to their previous charges and welcomed them, along with their families, to reunions and Mrs Hebborn is one who has benefited from this.

Mrs Hebborn's talk was accompanied by photographs, including some of herself and her brother and sister as children, and the various Barnardo's homes where she stayed.

After answering a wide variety of questions, Mrs Hebborn was very sincerely thanked and then joined members in a lovely tea provided by Mrs McKell and Mrs Leadbitter.

The competition for a favourite soft toy was won by Chrissie Taylor with a lovely rag doll. Mrs Ina Stevens' penguin was second and Mrs Joan Thomson's teddy bears third.

The raffle was won by Mrs Thomson and Mrs Sutton.

Marines help get school shipshape

IT WAS a case of out with the old and in with the new when a team of Royal Marines from HM Naval Base Clyde helped refurbish classrooms and offices in Arrochar Primary School.

Six marines, part of the Fleet Protection Group within the base, helped new head teacher Alison Palmer and staff at the school by using their brains as well as brawn to help assemble new furniture and move out old desks, cupboards and lockers.

Alison said: 'I'm grateful to the Royal Marines for all their efforts. Their help meant we got rid of the old fixtures and installed the new furniture without any disruption to the children.'

Corporal Dan Spink of the marines said: 'We were glad to be able to assist with all the heavy lifting and assembly.'



Six marines from Fleet Protection Group help head teacher Alison Palmer and secretary Joyce Sally get Arrochar Primary School shipshape.

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The Oban Times Wedding Album



Reed - MacLeod

Julie Reed and Michael MacLeod, both of Wareside, Hertfordshire, were married at Duncansburgh Church, Fort William, by the Rev Donald MacQuarrie. The couple held a reception at The Nevis Bank Hotel. Photograph by Anthony MacMillan Photography.



Hill - Biddle

Valerie Hill and Robert Biddle, both of Norwich, Norfolk, were married at Fort William Registry Office. The couple held a reception in The Nevis Bank Hotel, Fort William. Photograph by Anthony MacMillan, Fort William.



Usbach - MacKenzie

Deoni Usbach, from Cape Town, South Africa, and Simon MacKenzie, of Fank Brae, Mallaig, were married recently in Hermanus, South Africa.



Meekin - Carmichael

Laura Meekin, formerly of Benderloch, and Keith Carmichael, formerly of Appin, were married in the Bunchrew Hotel, Inverness, where they also held their reception. They are now living in Oban. Photograph by Anthony MacMillan, Fort William.

Send your wedding photographs to
The Editor,
PO Box 1,
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or email
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McDonald - Austin

Katherine McDonald and Michael Austin were married at Finlaggan, Isle of Islay, by registrar Louise McNiven. Photograph by Islay Studios, Bruichladdich, Isle of Islay.

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LOOK AT OBAN



More help on the way for young carers via Princess Royal Trust

YOUNG carers in North Argyll could benefit from a £1 million grants programme that The Princess Royal Trust for Carers has been asked to run by Comic Relief.

In North Argyll alone at least 40 young people have been identified as young carers but the Princess Royal Trust believes this figure probably only represents five per cent of the number of young carers actually in the area.

The grants programme will run nationwide but charitable organisations in North Argyll are being encouraged to apply.

The grants will be given out in two sections - up to £25,000 over three years for projects to support and create new ways of reaching young carers and small awards of up to £2,000 to support individual carers.

North Argyll Carers Centre in Oban, which is affiliated

to the Princess Royal Trust and managed by Quarriers, will be applying for funding from the grants. Ruth Moodie, centre manager, told *The Oban Times*: 'There are a lot of young people out there getting no support, especially around drugs and alcohol abuse in parents or older brothers and sisters, and the stigma can be quite horrendous.'

The centre, which already has a member of staff working with schools in the area, is aiming to identify many more young carers, aged eight to 18 years, in the coming months and offer them support.

Liaising with schools is one way of trying to identify young carers, as often the youngsters will be either missing school, finding it difficult to hand in homework on time or misbehaving as frustrations from home manifest themselves in school.

Many young carers speak of how their teachers criticise them for not doing homework but no-one tries to find out why.

'Not everyone wants to become part of a support group but we can still offer them support with education grants and different funds. There is so much we can do once we have identified them,' said Ruth.

She said they could offer mentoring, counselling and alternative therapies for young carers.

The young carers project in Oban is funded through the Carers Strategy fund by money that comes from Argyll and Bute Council and the Rural Challenge Fund. Louise McDonald, Scottish Young Carers' service development co-ordinator for the Princess Royal Trust, said: 'We believe, in an ideal world, no child would have to take on caring roles that are more appropriate for an

adult. Neither the child or the cared for person would choose this situation but, because of low levels of awareness of the issues and patchy support service, this is a reality for many children.'

The trust also believes there is a role for social workers and other health professionals to play by asking who is doing the majority of caring for the person who is ill and helping to organise support.

Many adults or single parents are afraid to say it is the child who is providing the care in case they are taken away but it was emphasised this was the last thing social workers wanted to do.

Applications for round one of the Comic Relief funding will be open until March 27 and application forms can be found at www.carers.org/comicrelief or by telephoning 0207 709 1332.

No insurance leads to no licence

A TWENTY-three-year-old Oban man has lost his driving licence for a year after admitting driving with no insurance.

Stephen MacLaughlin of 14 Shuna Terrace, Oban, also pled guilty last week at Oban Sheriff Court to driving a scooter without a licence on September 25 last year in McCaig Road, Oban.

The court heard he had been convicted of a similar offence in 2003 and Sheriff Douglas Small fined him a total of £400.

Fined £300 on careless driving charge

A PORTUGUESE national was fined £300 at Oban Sheriff Court last week after pleading guilty to careless driving.

The court heard that Hugo Martins, aged 24, 9B Burnside Place, Oban, had failed to stop at temporary traffic lights on the A85 at Pennyfuir Cemetery, near Oban, on December 8 last year.

He had hit the back of another vehicle, being driven by one of his colleagues from the fish farm where he worked, which then hit a vehicle in front of him. No-one was injured but all the vehicles involved were damaged.

Martins, who had five points added to his licence, accepted that he had been travelling too close to the vehicle in front.

Weekend of events

COMUNN Gàidhealach an Obain has a great weekend of events planned.

On Friday March 31 the organisation is hosting a talk with slides and recordings by Bill Innes on the musical partnership of Sydney MacEwan and Duncan Morrison.

It is a remarkable tale of a young Catholic tenor from Glasgow and a Presbyterian pianist from Ness, Lewis.

They were on the brink of international fame when Sydney gave it all up for the Catholic church. As Father Sydney MacEwan he served for 17 years as Lochlighead parish priest and his late performances helped to raise money to pay for the roof of St Columba's Cathedral Oban. The talk is at 7.30pm at the Free Church Hall, Oban. The day after the talk there will be a coffee morning at the Congregational Church Hall; both events to help raise funds.

Tourists need 'joined-up thinking'

VISITORS to Oban and Lorn should be able to find out what the area has to offer when they're buttering their toast at the breakfast table instead of trooping into the tourist information centre.

That is the view of Philip Riddle, chief executive of VisitScotland, who was visiting Argyll last week to discuss the way forward for the industry.

Ahead of the tourism season, Mr Riddle and area director James Fraser were in Oban and Mull to discuss the issues concerning tourism reliant businesses as well as having informal meetings with businesses in the area.

Friendliness

Both Mr Riddle and Mr Fraser said research indicated that the friendliness of people in Oban and Lorn was consistently remarked upon by visitors.

However, Mr Riddle said there were still areas for improvement and called for more 'joined-up thinking'.

He said: 'We have got a fantastic tourist information centre in Oban but we need to get information out to people instead of them having to walk in to ask for it. We have to get information to visitors and help it along so that can mean telling them about the place at the breakfast table in the guesthouse.'

'We need to have joined up thinking because when you join it all up it is really going to give that bit more to the whole thing.'

The tourism chiefs visited the War and Peace Museum

ahead of its official opening and met Mike Perrett, Alison Palmer and Donald Skinner on the new premises.

Mr Skinner told both men that the museum added to the town's indoor attractions, which he feels Oban lacks.

Short breaks of two to three days are set to become the biggest growth market in tourism in the next few years and Mr Riddle and Mr Fraser believe Oban is well placed to take advantage.

But Mr Riddle said there has to be plenty of attractions on offer because visitors want to pack in a lot more activities into two or three days.

'People spend a lot more so they expect to do a lot more,' he said.

Mr Fraser said a 10-year plan was now in place to increase the number of visitors coming to Scotland by 50 per cent by 2015 so VisitScotland was looking at what had to be done at national and local level.

Mr Fraser added that improved ferry timetables had made a difference as had the concentration of good quality businesses in Oban.

Mr Fraser said: 'Across the area we have to know our action plan.'

'There is a big growth market in short breaks in the shoulder months and visitors want to get close to the people in the area,' he said.

Mr Fraser said 'shoulder months' were periods such as March and April before the season proper.

The area director believes it is intriguing that tourist businesses had not really been involved in the media debate about a possible marine coastal park for Argyll and the islands.

He said a forthcoming visit from a representative of the Cairngorm National Park would be a good opportunity for the people of Oban and the west coast to find out how a marine park would affect tourism businesses.

He said: 'There is some confusion about what it really means but in our action plan there is a lot of support for a marine park from businesses.'



Oban lifeboat is dwarfed by the 280-tonne FV Edward Henry as she eases her alongside the South Pier.

Lifeboat comes to aid of Dartmouth fishing boat

OBAN lifeboat brought the FV Edward Henry safely back into port after she experienced engine problems last week.

The 280-tonne Dartmouth

registered fishing boat skippered by David Stephenson was undergoing sea trials following repairs to her propulsion and pitch controls when the problem

occurred. Oban's Royal National Lifeboat Institution lifeboat *Mora Edith Macdonald* was called and brought her back to the safety of the harbour under

tow. Rick Mitchelmore, owner of the *Edward Henry*, said: 'They towed her in and put spring ropes up to bring her alongside the South Pier. After the

problem was solved she left again on Thursday night.'

The Dartmouth boat her in and put spring ropes up to bring her alongside the South Pier. After the

Kyle's ceilidh boosts local Alzheimer's fund



Kyle Lockhart hands over a bumper cheque for £3,054 to Henry Woodman of the Oban and Lorn branch of Alzheimer's Scotland. The money was raised at a ceilidh in McTavish's, Oban. Oban FM's Ann Watt, Tina Robertson and Allan MacKechnie are in the background with Iain MacKenzie, Margaret Melville and Kate Taylor of the local Alzheimer's branch. The money will be spent locally. 112al201

Fined for dumping waste without licence

AN OBAN man was fined £200 at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday after he admitted tipping waste without a licence.

But Malcolm Kerr, aged 39, of 8E Scalpary Terrace, Oban, said he had removed the offending rubble soon after and used it as part of a wall.

Kerr had pled guilty to knowingly permitting or causing controlled waste to be deposited without a licence in or on land at the former Alexander Black's Builder's Yard, Glenshellach Road, on October 7 last year.

Procurator Fiscal Clifford Most said that a number of instances of fly tipping had occurred in the area.

Council officials had traced this particular waste from a demolition and clearance job undertaken by Kerr at a property in Benderloch.

Kerr's solicitor said that the materials were mainly breeze blocks and had been re-used by Kerr soon after to build a wall at his father's property.

The building company in question had gone into liquidation and Kerr had permission from the liquidator to use the yard.

The materials were moved soon after. Sheriff Douglas Small accepted that Kerr had permission in this instance to use the land.

He fined Kerr £200.

Oban one of Scottish Opera's eight tour dates

OBAN is one of eight venues for the largest tour of the year by Scottish Opera with its production of *La bohème*.

The production in the Corran Halls on Thursday April 6 features a full set, costumes and a cast of seven singers accompanied by an ensemble of 16 from

the Orchestra of Scottish Opera, conducted by Derek Clark, Scottish Opera's head of music.

Mr Clark said: 'I am delighted that we are returning to the Corran Halls with *La bohème*.

'This is an ideal introduction for those who are coming to an opera for

the first time, as well as being a much-loved favourite for those who attend regularly.

'*La bohème* contains some of Puccini's most inspired music and is guaranteed to provide a memorable and moving evening at the opera.'

Sarah Redgwick, soprano,

plays Mimi; Nicholas Ransley, tenor, makes his Scottish Opera debut as Rodolfo and Paul Carey Jones will play Marcello.

The director is Caroline Sharman. The tour also includes Stirling, Forfar, Ayr, Clydebank, Kelso, Kirkcaldy and Hamilton.

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Island fuel deal bid

HIGHLANDS and Islands MSP Maureen Macmillan has added her voice to the campaign to get a better deal on fuel for islanders. She has written to both the Transport Minister Tavish Scott MSP and the Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown on the issue. 'Following recent sharp rises in oil prices for domestic heating and road fuel I have received a suggestion from Councillor Ian Gillies of Treen proposing that oil tankers be allowed to travel free on CalMac ferries.'

The Minister said such a scheme could raise difficulties due to the way state aid is governed by European Commission regulation.

These difficulties would not occur if lower or zero tariffs for fuel tankers were specified in the service specifications for a tendering exercise but he said he was willing to consider this.

Mrs MacMillan also wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown, regarding a suggestion from Mull Community Council that the U follow the French example and vary price structure for fuel to support island communities.

Young business people wanted

YOUNG entrepreneurs aged 16 to 30 years in Argyll have until March 31 to enter the prestigious Shell Livewire Awards 2006 for a chance to win £10,000. Shell Livewire has been running for 24 years and recognises the UK's most outstanding young entrepreneurs, with prizes across the UK starting at the regional heats.

More than 10,000 entrants have been received since the awards began, including Innocent, the smoothie drink manufacturer.

The awards are open to young entrepreneurs whose businesses have been running for between three months and 18 months by the closing date.

An online application can be found at www.shell-livewire.org/win10k.

Dalmally house

PERMISSION has been given for a house to be built in the garden of Craig Villa, Dalmally. Members of Oban Lorn and the Isles Area Committee gave their consent to an outline planning application for the house at their March meeting.

Ballachulish - a rail line remembered

WHEN the Oban to Ballachulish railway line closed 40 years ago on March 26, Britain lost one of its most spectacular train routes.

For 63 years it ran across magnificently engineered bridges and viaducts, through pretty woods and compact, neat stations, all the while hugging the shores of the Firth of Lorn, Loch Creran and Loch Linnhe with their islands, castles and skerries and with superb views of mountains on both sides.

It was a journey of unsurpassable beauty and passengers must have thrilled at the sight of the mountains the Ardnarmurchan Peninsula on the one hand and the Glencoe mountains on the other as they passed along.

Traces of this rural line and its associated buildings can still be seen, of course, and much thought is presently being devoted to us-

ing parts of it for the planned West Coast Cycle Route.

Because it was such a picturesque line it would be easy to think it was solely for passenger use, but it served a very important role in carrying fabricated material from Kinlochleven aluminium smelting plant to the central belt and beyond.

1903

The Oban-Ballachulish railway opened in 1903 as an extension to the Oban-Callander branch of the Caledonian Railway. It ran from Connel Ferry, where the cantilevered Connel Bridge was built to carry it. From 1909 to 1914 foot passengers went across by rail bus but the bridge was then converted to allow for rail, road and foot traffic. At one time there were ramps at either end of the bridge for loading cars.

Connel Bridge is a lasting legacy of a failed railway

and is now a well-known landmark straddling the entrance to Loch Etive, offering a beauty of its own and providing a spectacular view of the Falls of Lora beneath the bridge.

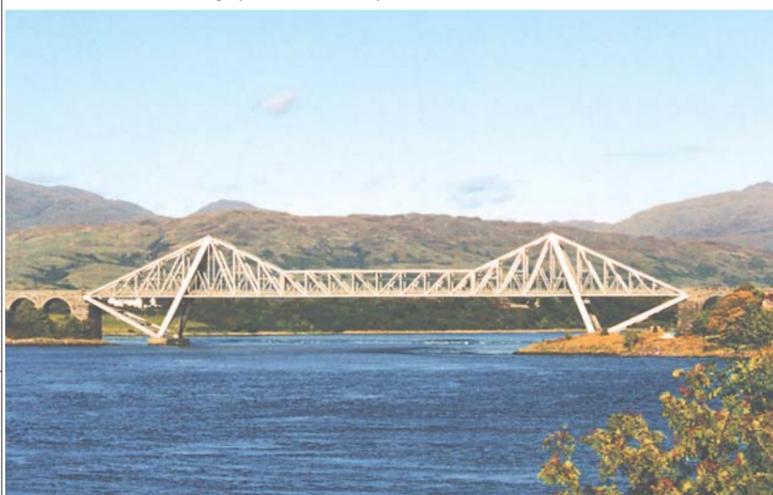
The importance of Connel Ferry as a railway link was highlighted by its having five platforms, three through ones and two bay platforms. Here trains for Ballachulish, which came from Oban, reversed, with

the locomotive being changed from one end of a train to the other.

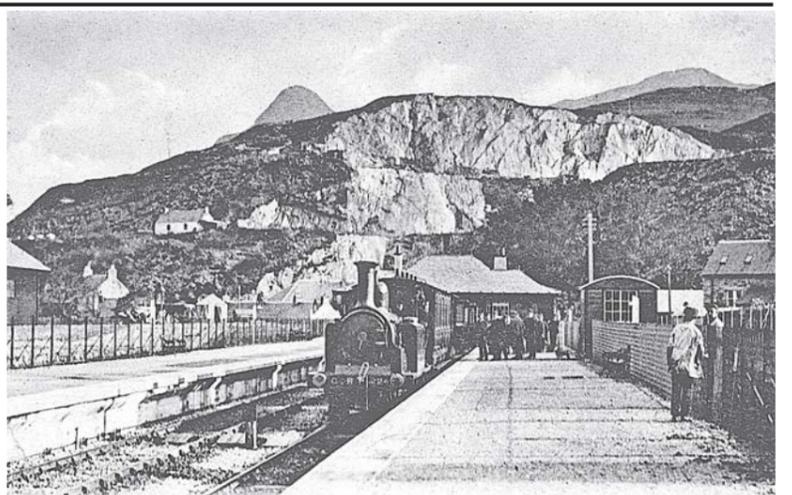
The Ballachulish line was closed because it was under-used, although today, with tourism being such a huge asset to the economy of the West Highlands, it would undoubtedly tell a different story. It provided a link with the major Oban to Glasgow route, but this was not enough and it was closed in 1966.



In 1966 the Chairman of British Railways Board, Lord Beeching axed the Ballachulish line



Connel Bridge originally carried the railway line North from Oban via Connel, Benderloch, Barcaldine, Creagan, Appin, Duror, Kentallen, Ballachulish Ferry and Ballachulish Village. Today only road traffic and pedestrians use the famous metal structure.



Its stations closed with it, shut down by the then Chairman of the British Railways Board, Dr Beeching. But until 1966 it had served the communities through which it passed as well as industry, and it took tourists further than they otherwise might have travelled: to the magnificence of Glencoe and the shores of Loch Etive or on to Fort William.

But a 40-year anniversary is a good excuse to take a nostalgic look at the railway and to take a railway trip in one's mind along the route through North Connel, Benderloch, Barcaldine goods, Creagan, Appin, Duror, Kentallen, Ballachulish Ferry and Ballachulish itself.

Each day at 6am he would take his van to the station to pick up bread and other goods for his shop. 'Everything he needed for the shop was delivered that way and I also remember cattle pens at the station, with cattle going to the mart at Oban,' Aonghas said.

'The number of cattle that were to travel was calculated beforehand so it was known how many vans were needed.'

Not everything ran smoothly, of course. One abiding memory for Aonghas is around 1957/58 when the railway bridge at Barcaldine was washed away and part of the embankment between Ballachulish and Kentallen.

Of course the train at Duror couldn't go on to Connel Ferry but couldn't go back either.

'The line was closed for a long time after that and buses were laid on,' said Aonghas. 'Today much of the line's trackbed can still be seen and walked along.'

Some of the stations are still there, converted to homes and one even a luxury hotel. One restored gem is the station at Creagan. Duror Station, where

During the 1940s his father ran a hire care service for people using Duror Station which was two miles out of the village.

Aonghas also remembers the spectacular summertime Glen Etive Tour which took in the Ballachulish line. Visitors from Oban would take the route to Ballachulish and then be taken by bus to the Kingshouse Hotel and down to the head of Loch Etive where they disembarked at Achnacloch and took a boat down the loch to pick up a train back to Oban.

'You could do it in either direction and from any station on the line,' recalled Aonghas.

Near to the next station up the line, Creagan, was the Creagan viaduct. After 1966 it remained closed except for pedestrians who always used an official walkway alongside the trackbed. Several years ago the bridge decking was taken down and the piers renovated. The viaduct was replaced by a girder road bridge over Loch Creran.

This resulted in a shortening of the road from Connel to Ballachulish which previously had had to circumnavigate the loch.

Until the 1980s Creagan, the next station up the line, was overgrown and difficult to see. Now the land round it has been cleared and the island platform and station building can be seen quite clearly. This is the only one of the line's stations left and it remains a beautifully preserved piece of railway history. Painted in the old Caledonian

Brown, it has been lovingly restored and is a joy to behold. A portion of the line's water tower also remains as well as original fencing and a loading bank.

The station at Appin had two concrete platforms which can still be seen. Duror also had two platforms. The two-platform

Aonghas would get the train, is now a private house.

A realignment of the A828 road to Ballachulish at North Connel brought about the demolition of the North Connel halt. There had been a small timber platform and a small timber shed at the north end of the bridge with a ramp for loading cars on to trains.

At Benderloch there was a more imposing station with two platforms. Now the site has been landscaped, but a fraction of one of the platforms can still be seen in a car park at the village.

Barcaldine goods, the next station, was built for cargo carrying but also had a timber passenger halt by a bridge over the road.

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Kentallen Station is now

The Holly Tree hotel and it would be difficult to find a station with a lovelier setting than this one had, right on the shore of Loch Linnhe looking over to Ardgour on the Ardnarmurchan Peninsula. The station was by a pier and there are platform remains. The pier was a calling point for ferries from Fort William at one time. Parts of the old railway station including the booking office and tea room are incorporated into the hotel.

Almost at journey's end, the line's penultimate stop was at Ballachulish Ferry which had a single platform and a shelter.

Quarries

With the closure of the line, which terminated at Ballachulish, also came the closure of the local slate quarries in 1966. But again, here the old railway station has been charmingly preserved and is now a busy medical practice serving the village and its surrounding communities. Its two platforms have gone and houses have been built on their site. A special narrow gauge line ran from the station's goods yard to the slate quarries so slates could be carried away to be used to roof the central belt and other areas of the UK.

It would have sad for all these communities to lose their railway but the demise of one form of transport brought about the improvement in another and today the A828 from Connel to Ballachulish, where it joins the A82 fort William to Glasgow road, has had a great deal of work done to it to make it safer and shorter.

Much of the Oban-Ballachulish trackbed is now planned to be of the West Coast Cycle Route, giving access into local forestry for walking and cycling. So although the line has gone and with it a piece of railway history, it can still be followed and its beauty still appreciated.

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From left, Craig Tosh, Raymond Shaw, Natasha MacDougall, Fiona Blue and Linda Parisella, sitting.

Trinity raises cash for Oban hospice

OBAN Hospice Ltd has picked up another cheque for its worthy cause, this time from Trinity Hairdressing. The Oban High Street hairdressers raised £130 during the Highland Wedding Show at the Corran Halls in Oban a few weeks ago. The staff put together a lucky dip with prizes such as a GHD hair straighteners roll bag, KMS products boxes and haircuts and sold tickets to those at the show. The money was presented to Oban Hospice Ltd representative Raymond Shaw, who thanked the staff for their generous cheque.

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Rogue traders under fire as complaints to trading standards rise

ROGUE traders are leading to a rise in the number of complaints to Argyll and Bute Council's trading standards - including the practises of certain builders.

These builders are causing particular concern because they are getting large deposits to buy materials then using the money for other purposes.

The promised work is not completed, with the builder citing 'cash-flow problems' as the reason for the delay.

This has led to some people losing large amounts of money, often four-figure sums.

'Reputable builders usually have accounts with their

suppliers that offer credit facilities,' said a trading standards spokesman.

'Customers should consider why a builder needs a deposit for materials that he has not yet ordered, when he is unlikely to have to pay for them until he actually collects them from his supplier or even some months later.'

As a result of the rise in the number of complaints about rogue traders Argyll and Bute Council is looking at using special powers to stop them for the first time.

'We have had these powers for a number of years but

have not previously had to use them,' said the spokesman.

'The overwhelming majority of Argyll and Bute traders operate fairly and do not set out to defraud their customers but we have noticed a significant rise in certain types of complaints.'

If there is a sufficient volume of complaints against a certain builder to establish a pattern of behaviour, the powers under the Enterprise Act 2000 allow the council to approach the builder.

If the builder fails to take action and continues with their malpractice, the council can get an interdict forbidding them to continue and ultimately the builder can face criminal court action. The powers have been used successfully by other councils, such as East Ayrshire.

Anyone who wishes advice on what should be in a written contract with a builder can approach trading standards and, for that matter, so can small traders to ensure they get paid.

Anyone who feels they may have been defrauded in the manner above should contact their local trading standards office on 01546 604779 or 01631 567915.

Gaelic spellchecker goes online

A NEW Gaelic aid has gone online to help students and users of the language to get it right, down to the very last letter.

The Gaelic spell-checker Proiseact an Dearbhair launched last week by Education Minister Peter Peacock, contains more than 525,000 words and has been designed to be a useful everyday tool for Gaelic users, based on a nationally-agreed standard of spelling.

The idea is to ensure that Gaelic continues to cement its reputation as a language of the future rather than the past. Although there are twice as many words as originally envisaged, the project took less than three years to complete by The European Language Initiative (TELI).

At the launch Peter Peacock, who has ministerial responsibility for Gaelic, said: 'The launch of this spell-checker is proof, if proof were needed, that Gaelic is a living language.

'For the growing number of people who are learning and using Gaelic, I'm sure this will quickly become an invaluable tool in their daily lives.'

Project director Clive Leo McNeir, head of TELI, said

although the spell-checker was now available, its first year would be regarded as a consultation period and he wanted everyone using to contribute to the project.

He said: 'We would like to know if there are extra words that should be added, or if any errors are spotted. 'No database of this size can expect to be perfect but working together we can make a good tool even better.'

The launch was welcomed by Bòrd na Gàidhlig chairman Matthew MacIver who said it was another important step forward for Gaelic. 'This spell-checker should be widely publicised and I am confident it will be of great use to Gaelic speakers and learners at all levels,' he said.

Proiseact an Dearbhair can be downloaded free-of-charge from the website, www.itscotland.org.uk/gaidhlig/spellpress.asp.

The version being launched operates through Microsoft Word but other types of software are currently being developed and will be announced shortly.

The £105,500 funding for the spell-checker was provided by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Comunn na Gàl

Science comes to life at SAMS

SCIENCE students back from Antarctica were on hand to bring their work to life for school pupils visiting the Scottish Association of Marine Science (SAMS) at Dunstaffnage.

Pupils from Ardchattan, Easdale, Strath of Appin, Dunbeg, Barcaldine, Kilchrenan, Lochnell and Achaleven primary schools not only found out about the scientific work carried out by PHD students Lindsay Vare and Suzie Cox in Antarctica but about how they managed to carry out their studies in such a challenging atmosphere.

SAMS lecturer and activities manager Anuschka Miller said the open day was an opportunity for youngsters to find out more about what the scientists are working on at Dunstaffnage and all around the world.

Anuschka said science taught in classrooms could be 'dry'.

'When science is read it doesn't really come to life. Coming here allows them to really think things through and understand about things like climate change,' she said.

There are 15 students studying at SAMS through the UHI with external examiners praising the quality of the teaching and practical work which has seen third year students working in Antarctica.



Two Achaleven Primary School pupils get to grips with a sea urchin. 112sam01

CalMac preferred bidder for Northern Isles ferries

FERRY operators Caledonian MacBrayne has been named as the preferred bidder for the ferry services to the Northern Isles.

The Scottish Executive has announced that state-owned CalMac had been nominated for the tender for the new service in early summer.

A bid was also submitted by V-Ships UK Ltd as well as the west coast ferry operator, NorthLink currently operates the services.

The services will include reduced freight tariffs, inclusion of a new livestock container system and the possible increase of berth numbers from Aberdeen to the islands.

CalMac chairman director Harold Mills welcomed the news: 'CalMac has always believed that we could produce a compelling bid for the services and the company is delighted that all our hard work has taken us to this stage.'

Transport Minister Tavish Scott said: 'There will now be an intense period of contract negotiation before the official handover. The six-year contract will introduce real benefits for local people and businesses, helping the economies of the Northern Isles.'

Kintyre ferry news welcomed

THE NEWS that renewed efforts are being made to find an operator for the Campbelltown to Ballycastle ferry route has been welcomed by Argyll and Bute Council.

'It is heartening that the Scottish Executive has recognised the degree of support a strength of feeling that there is in both Kintyre and Antrim for the reinstatement of the service,' said council leader Allan Macaskill.

'Locally there was deep disappointment at the outcome of the tendering process but this latest announcement has given us a glimmer of hope once again.'

Transport Minister Tavish Scott announced last week that the executive was going to consider all the options in trying to find a suitable operator after the four companies that expressed an interest last year failed to submit a tender.

Councillor Macaskill said the council would continue to support the efforts to bring the ferry back as it had fought for the ferry for years.

The chairman of Moyle District, Councillor Oliver McMullan, said he was delighted.

'There are many benefits to be had, both economic and tourism-based,' he said.



Forging links

OSTEOPATHS tend towards the obsessive when it comes to finding links; we like to trace links throughout the patient in front of us.

These links fall into two broad categories; they may be structural or functional, what osteopaths gain in obsession they lack in imagination, you could boil all osteopathic thinking down to ideas of structure and function. When I refer to a 'structural link' what I mean is a physical connection running through two or more structures.

An example would be the lyrical 'ankle bone connected to the leg bone' and so on. Point out two areas of the body and an osteopath tends to mentally map out the linking structures between. It's a bit like knowing all the road numbers and junctions between every town and city in Britain and is probably just as strong an indication of the need to get out more.

It can be greatly relieving to patients when an osteopath can explain reasons why they suffer from symptoms in several seemingly separate areas by identifying the mechanical or structural links that connect them. It is essential when attempting to deal with a person as a whole to recognise that apparently disparate parts of the body are in fact connected.

Traditional wisdom divides the body into systems, organs and tissues to make study easier, the nervous system or the musculoskeletal system for example. Yet many of the organs of the digestive system living in the abdomen actually hang off the front of the muscles and bones of the back, giving us a very definite mechanical link between the digestive system

and the musculoskeletal system.

Mechanical links transmit mechanical forces such as tension or compression throughout the body.

When you step down off the bus, the force as you land on the ground doesn't stop at your foot, it spreads right up through your body. This allows the body to dissipate forces so preventing excessive forces from acting on any one structure and damaging it.

Obviously there are limits to all protective mechanisms including this one; there is only so much altitude of step you can safely step off. As your foot hits the ground, the arch of your foot flattens slightly. This can occur because of the stretching of the soft tissues that act like a bowstring keeping the arch in shape. In stretching, these tissues absorb some of the shock of the impact - but the cleverness doesn't stop there.

The ankle, knee, hip and back all play there part in dissipating the force, in fact the energy from the impact spreads throughout the whole body, like ripples spreading from the stone dropped in the pond.

Is it any surprise that the effects of that sprained ankle might be felt in the knee, hip or neck? And because all of the systems of the body are mechanically interconnected by these links, they can all be affected by the physical stresses imposed on the body.

Maybe buses should carry government health warnings.

Next time I'll look at the 'functional' links of the 'information super highway.'

Andrew Pallas
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LEISURE TIMES

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HIGHLAND THEATRE 01631 562444
GEORGE STREET - OBAN

8.00 DAILY (inc. SUNDAY) FROM FRIDAY-2.15 SATURDAY MATINEE
GEORGE CLOONEY MOVIE ABOUT THE USA WITCH HUNTS
Goodnight, and Good Luck PG

6.15 DAILY (inc. SUNDAY) FROM FRIDAY-2.00 SATURDAY MATINEE
HILARIOUS TALE OF A CHICKEN RETURNS FOR LAST WEEK
CHICKEN LITTLE U

STUDIO CINEMA 01397 705095
CAMERON SQUARE - FORT WILLIAM

5.45 DAILY (inc. SUNDAY) FROM FRIDAY-2.15 SATURDAY MATINEE
THE BIG MOMMA OF ALL FAMILY COMEDIES IS BACK
Big Momma's House 2 PG

7.30 DAILY (inc. SUNDAY) FROM FRIDAY-2.00 SATURDAY MATINEE
ALL STAR CAST IN THE GREAT JOHNNY CASH STORY
WALK THE LINE 12A

7.45 EVERY EVENING (inc. SUNDAY) FROM FRIDAY
TV MET MAN (NICOLAS CAGE) AND MICHAEL CAINE IN
THE WEATHER MAN 15

At the Cinema

MOVIES FROM FRIDAY 24th March.

CHICKEN LITTLE
U Certificate
81 Minutes
OBAN HIGHLAND THEATRE
6.15 Daily (including Sunday) from Friday - 2.00 Saturday Matinee
In a hilarious twist to the classic tale of a little chicken (voiced by Zach Braff), **Chicken Little** is great for children and highly amusing for mums and dads. Directed by Mark Dindal, this cartoon movie is very much in the **Madagascar** style - coming from the great **Walt Disney Studios**.

THE WEATHERMAN
15 Certificate
101 Minutes
FORT WILLIAM STUDIO CINEMA
7.45 every Evening (including Sunday)
Nicolas Cage plays high-profile TV weatherman **David Spritz**, but his success has come at a very heavy personal price, with the breakdown of his marriage.
His father, played by **Michael Caine**, a "Pulitzer Prize" writer, regards his son's choice of career with withering disdain. David's ex wife (**Hope Davis**) has even less respect for her ex husband, adding to the pressures on our star "TV Met Man". Directed by **Gore Verbenas**, the **Weatherman** co-stars **Nicholas Hoult** and **Gil Bellows**

GOODNIGHT, and GOOD LUCK
PG Certificate
93 Minutes
OBAN HIGHLAND THEATRE
8.00 Daily (including Sunday) from Friday - 2.15 Saturday Matinee
George Clooney directs a great movie, set at the time of the communist witch hunts in the 1950s, in the USA. Legendary broadcaster **Edward R Murrow** (played by **David Strathairn**) decides to risk his high reputation as a news man and career to battle 'live on the radio' with the tyrannical witch-finder himself, **Senator Joe McCarthy**.

WALK THE LINE
12A Certificate
136 Minutes
(Under-12's admitted with an adult aged 18 or over)
FORT WILLIAM STUDIO CINEMA
7.30 Daily, (including Sunday) - from Friday - 2.00 Saturday Matinee
Excitingly made and superbly acted, this is a movie that is a tribute to **Johnny Cash** - his life and his songs. Directed by **James Mangold** and starring **Joaquin Phoenix**, **Reese Witherspoon**, **Robert Patrick**, **Ginnifer Goodwin** and **Dallas Roberts**, the great **Twentieth Century Fox Studios** have managed to successfully capture the traumas and triumphs of an outstanding performer.



Members of Oban and Lorn Lions who attended their most recent meeting. 1111001

Oban Lions Club celebrate 20 years

OBAN and Lorn Lions Club is 20-years-old this year. To celebrate the club's anniversary members organised a charter dinner dance last Saturday in the Royal Hotel. It was attended by 102 people including members, family and friends with music from Blue turns grey. Following the meal a number of toasts by Lion presidents, past and future, were made. Lion David Don, immediate past president, opened proceedings with grace which was followed by The Loyal Toast given by Lion Gordon Johnson. Current president Derek Coates gave the introduction and welcome. It was then left to main speaker Ted Heath to grab the audience's attention. He toasted to the Lions Club International and the Oban and Lorn Lions. Lion Jim Carson, district governor, gave the reply and Jim Edge toasted to the guests. It was left to the club's current secretary and past president, John Lloyd to carry out his duties as Toast Master. Everyone agreed it had been a successful and most enjoyable night.

Your Stars with Patrick Arundell

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
This week has the potential to be one of the most positive of 2006 thus far. And one situation which has dragged on for much longer than you would have liked can be concluded satisfactorily. As long as you stay mindful of the details of things, you can also begin new projects or involvements and romance can also be blessed. A religious or spiritual calling could also grow. For more, please call me... 09111 767 272

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
There is a lot of scope for delving into your vat of creative talents. Be it sketching, painting, writing, playing music, or listening to those of others, can all help to fortify your senses against the strains of life. Your aesthetic appreciation can be enhanced all round. Bulls can also benefit from new or renewed interest in alternative medicine or the healing arts. For more, please call me... 09111 767 273

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
The world really is your oyster. Others will be making a bee line to you and other opportunities to progress can surface too. There are times of the year when lots of things are possible and this is certainly one for you. Fun pursuits such as Latin American dancing, outward bound activities, social clubs or team sports are the type of areas where you can do so very well. For more, please call me... 09111 767 274

CANCER (June 22 - July 22)
Some Cancer folk may be in the process of fixing up a completely new role in life. And a heady mix of your charm, stealth and ability to get things done, suggests there is a very good chance that you can get ahead. This is not a time to be demure, it's a time to be bold. Not everyone will understand your motives, but shed the stars and see where it takes you. For more, please call me... 09111 767 275

LEO (July 23 - Aug 23)
Some truly exciting developments are possible all this week - if you can let go of your need for life to have a degree of routine. It will be where you are most adventurous that things can turn out best for you. Travel, higher education or action orientated pursuits could all add zest, but perhaps this will see you needing to move outside the comfort zone in order to capitalise. For more, please call me... 09111 767 276

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
As long as you don't expect everything on your own terms a promotion is in the works but then perhaps you can shuffle your pack as far as your personal financial resources are concerned. New contracts, or the chance to embrace others about a business concept can also feature. However, if something really isn't working in your world, you may decide to move on once and for all. For more, please call me... 09111 767 277

LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct 23)
Any form of interaction or relationship can be supported by the magical power of the Solar Eclipse. And with your ruler still angling up superbly to Mars, if you really want good things from the way you relate with others, there is a lot to suggest you can. Part of your success will be an ability to be true to yourself and yet be sensitive to others. You can be at your best. For more, please call me... 09111 767 278

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)
With your co-ruler Pluto starting to reverse, the suggestion is that when it comes to serious financial considerations or your own value systems, you are set to go on a journey of discovery in the coming months. However, with Mercury edging forwards again, at least your sense of humour can help you to keep an even keel. Completing practical improvements at home can come into focus. For more, please call me... 09111 767 279

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 21)
This could be a brilliant week for you with you having a real ability to radiate a lot of warmth and goodness which others can respond well too. And if there is someone you have long admired, or a new player pops up on your celestial radar this week, you can show a nice blend of confidence and charm to win their attention. Win their heart? Well, that may take a little more guile! For more, please call me... 09111 767 280

CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 20)
The things that bring you the greatest amount of peace of mind, could be within touching distance this week - whatever your life situation or status. This is because wherever you stand now, you can go forwards in a very balanced way and firm up the foundations of your world. This is classic territory for you - so why look a gift horse in the mouth? Make the most of it while you can. For more, please call me... 09111 767 281

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Your natural gift as a communicator gets a real chance to shine this week. And where as sometimes it may seem as if your forthright ideas or novel approach falls to make an impression, that is unlikely to be so now. In fact, there are three major influences all helping you to go forwards and there can be good news on the financial front too. A cracking week is in prospect! For more, please call me... 09111 767 282

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
Softly and slowly does it, but a new world order can continue to shape up nicely for you this week. You may not be quite ready to shout this from the rooftops, you may want to only whisper it to those who really matter, but positive change is in the works. However, a worldly issue, may need revisiting, and an old skill could yet come in handy, ironically, in your revised set-up. For more, please call me... 09111 767 283

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

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2
PG Certificate
99 Minutes
FORT WILLIAM STUDIO CINEMA
5.45 Daily (including Sunday) from Friday - 2.15 Saturday Matinee
Big Momma is back in an hilarious sequel to the highly successful first

THE SINGING KETTLE
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all action singalong farmyard adventure
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The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES
What's On Guide

Thursday 23rd March
Oban High School production of Grease, Corran Halls, Oban, 7pm, Tickets: Adult £4, Child £2, Family £10

Saturday 25th March
Fiddlers Rally, Corran Halls
MK Jewellery launch new catalogue, Oyster Inn, Connel 8pm

Fishermen's Mission, Mallaig, Table Top Sale, 10 am till 1 pm

Tuesday 28th March
Traditional Highland Folk Tales, Corran Halls, Oban, 7.30pm.

Beasties and Bogles, Traditional Highland Folktales, Corran Halls, Oban, 7.30pm, Tickets £5/£3. Box Office 01631 567333

Thursday 30th and Friday 31st March
Argyll Youth Theatre Group, Corran Halls, Oban, 7.30 pm. Tickets £5 and £3

Friday 31st March
Battle of the Bands, Portree Community Centre, 7.30 pm. Free transport and admission www.cuillinfm.co.uk

Saturday 1st April
Smokie in Concert Corran Halls 7.30pm

Sunday 2nd April
Car Boot Sale, Taynuilt Village Hall, 1.30 pm

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

Sunday 7th May
ABCD 10K race starting from the Lorn and Islands District General Hospital at 1pm

Sunday 28th May
Mull of Kintyre Half Marathon. Entry form from Atlantis Leisure

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



Violin and piano duo for Oban's final concert

THE FINAL concert of the Oban Music Society current series takes place on Friday March 24 in St John's Cathedral at 7.30pm with a violin and piano duo. Harry Kerr and Eleni Mavroumoustaki formed the Kerr Duo whilst they were both studying at the Royal College of Music in London. Since graduating, they have pursued busy careers as soloists and chamber musicians. Based in Edinburgh, they travel regularly throughout the UK and abroad and have made a number of TV and radio broadcasts. Harry also works with several orchestras including the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

forthcoming events

- 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 - Sunday 30th April Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival
- Thursday 27th April - Bonhams - Valuers and Auctioneers, McTavish's Kitchens, Oban, at 7.30pm. Further details nearer the date
- Sunday 7th May ABCD 10k race starting from Lorn & Islands District General Hospital at 1pm
- Tuesday 9th May Oban Maternity User Group meeting, Day Centre in the Lorn and Islands Hospital
- Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th May Loch Fyne Food Fair, Clachan, Cairndow, Loch Fyne
- Tuesday 30th May - Annual Local Biodiversity Conference, Craignure Hall, Isle of Mull, Tel 01631 562125 (Linda Brown)
- 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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COMMUNITY Noticeboard
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Oban War & Peace Museum
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Corran Esplanade
(next to Regent Hotel)

Seil Island Community Hall
Charity and Easdale Carpet Bowling Club
Open Bowls Doubles
In aid of Community Hall Fund
Easdale Hall
Saturday 25th March 7pm prompt
Entries to John 01852 300 347 or Brian 01852 300 348

Commun Gàidhealach an Obain
Local Interest Evening
FATHER SYDNEY MACEWAN and DUNCAN MORRISON
A musical partnership
Talk (in English) with slides and recordings
By Bill Jones
Free High Church Hall, Oban
Fri 31st March at 7.30pm
Tea & Biscuits
Admission £3

SNX-SUNDAY NIGHT EXTRA
Modern informal worship led by H2O
Praise Band with a talk from Ed Jeffrey (Youth For Christ)
7.30pm 26th March
Corran Esplanade Church
All welcome - no church, any church

CAR BOOT SALE
Sunday 2nd April at 1.30pm
Taynuilt Village Hall
Please phone Beth Morse on 01866 822091 to book a table
Proceeds to Taynuilt Village Hall

North Argyll House DAFFODIL TEA
in the house
Thursday 6th April 2.30pm
Stalls, Raffle, Flowers, Baking.
Tea £1.50

Breathe Easy Oban breatheeasy
BREATHING FACILITIES IN RESPIRATORY NETWORK
NEXT MEETING
Monday 27th March Dunmar Court at 2pm
Including a talk by benefits advisor
Everybody Welcome

Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Partnership
BIRD WATCHING TRAINING EVENT
with Stuart Gibson
Saturday, 1st April 2006 11.00 am-4.00 pm
APPIN VILLAGE HALL
Morning slideshow in Appin Hall, followed by practical workshop at Jubilee Bridge/Birdhide. Lunch will be provided. Wear suitable clothing and bring binoculars.
This event is FREE, but booking is essential. Please contact Linda Brown on 01631 562125
(This project is part-funded by the EU)

NORTH ARGYLL CANCER SUPPORT GROUP
Next Meeting
Wednesday 29th March 6 - 7 pm
Dunmar Court, Oban
ALL WELCOME
For info contact Lucy 01631 789040

LEISURE TIMES



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Joint winners in festival

THE MAIN prize at the Lorn Drama Festival, The Robin Banks Trophy, has been shared for the first time.
Carradale Drama Club, performing *Melons at the Parsonage* and Appin WRI with *All Right on the Night* were judged to be equally brilliant by adjudicator Lynda Henderson.
Appin WRI also won the Dan Cleland Trophy for the highest marks for dramatic production
Second place overall was

also shared between Lochgilphead Drama Club and Dalmally and Lochawe Drama Club.
There was an outright winner for third place which went to Fyneside which won *The Oban Times Salver*.

Junior

The other big winner from the festival held between March 13-17 in the Corran Halls was the Taynuilt And District Drama Society junior group which took the

top junior prize, The Lorn Drama Festival Trophy.
First-time actors Fergus Matheson and Poppy Honeyman helped to win the group a second trophy, the Ian MacKay Memorial Trophy for a moment in theatre. Linda Robb of Benderloch and North Connell Drama Club won the Adjudicator's Award, the Ardentalen Trophy and Dalmally and Lochawe Drama Club won the JR Smith Trophy for, according to the adjudicator, "an

impeccable stage set." Chairman for the final evening on Friday, Andrew McIntyre thanked everyone involved in such a successful week including the organisers.
However he conveyed the feelings of most involved with the festival when he said, 'I have said this before and I will say it again; where is the Oban team. It is a shame that there has been no team from the town the event is held in for so many years.'



Appin WRI producer Pat Wyeth-Webb and Carradale Drama Club producer Mary MacAlister Hall collect the Robin Banks Trophy which both teams shared as overall winners. This is the first time the top prize has been shared. t12dma03



Taynuilt and District Drama Society (TADDS) Juniors, pictured with producer Carol Thomson, had a successful festival winning the junior section and the Ian MacKay Memorial Trophy for a moment in theatre. t12dma02

Right: *The Oban Times Salver* for third-placed adult team was won this year by Fyneside. Producer Jenifer Phillimore, second from right, collected the prize. t12dra08.

Top young bands to battle for £1,000 prize

FEATURING the best of young musical talent in Skye and Lochalsh, this is one gig not to be missed.
Eight local bands will compete for a £1,000 prize. Your opinion counts so come along on the night and have your say!
Skye and Lochalsh Drug and Alcohol Forum is staging a major music competition for young people who live in the Skye and Lochalsh area. The eight bands entered will play live in front of an audience and a panel of judges, with the winning band receiving a cheque for £1,000 to go towards musical equipment or recording costs.
This event is aimed at the 14-25 year age group, with

the emphasis on promoting positive lifestyle choices, and is being supported by Highland Council, Skye & Lochalsh Learning Centre Network, Highland 2007, The Drink Aware Trust, Isle of Skye Round Table, MacLeod Hotels, Portree and Isle of Skye Lodge St Kilda and Cuillin FM.
The bands taking part are Exit, Caustic, Krona, Inflation, Haggis, The Daisy Chains, Audiovoid, Pappazzi and Bushbaby.
When all the bands have performed a panel of judges will give feedback to each one and select the two finalists to be put to an audience vote. If the vote is close, then it's back to the panel for a final decision on the winners.

The judges are:
Denis Blackham: Long established music mastering engineer, now based in Skye, Denis has spent 36 years at the very heart of the British recording industry. He has worked with top artists and bands, including The Bee Gees, Status Quo and The Eurythmics.
Denis relocated to the Isle of Skye in 2002 and continues to run his successful business, Skye Mastering, from his studio in Edinbane.
Dougie Pincock: Before taking up his present post as Director of the Centre of Excellence for Traditional Music in Plockton in 2000, Dougie was already well known as a piping instructor,

broadcaster and traditional musician who played with the popular Scottish folk group, The Battlefield Band, for seven years.
Rorie Mackenzie: Played in numerous metal bands throughout the UK before moving to Scotland in 2001 to start work as a music supervisor at the Centre of Excellence for Traditional Music, Plockton.
Rorie has been involved with the Channel 4 'Make Tracks' project, helping out artists such as Mylo, Raar and Mull Historical Society. He is currently working to promote all hopeful young bands on the west coast through the active website www.intheshadowofmountains.com.

Presenters on the night will be Alex MacLeod of Portree Learning Centre and 'Granny' aka Chrisanne MacDonald, his co-presenter on Cuillin FM's 'Teuchter Rock' show.
Transport
The event also offers free transport:
Coach 1 - Kyle to Portree departs 6.30 pm from Kyle bus stop. Afterwards three coaches will leave the Community Centre at 12.15 am, with Coach 1 returning to Kyle, Coach 2 for the North End and Coach 3 going to Dunvegan.
Come along to Portree Community Centre on Friday March 31 and make this fantastic musical event a night to remember!



cap-Accent Juniors producer Jackie Westerman picked up the prize for second-placed junior team from adjudicator Lynda Henderson and chairman for the evening Andrew McIntyre. t12dra08



Accent Juniors from Campbeltown were second in the junior competition. t12dra10



The KERR DUO
Violin and piano
MOZART - Sonata in B flat major
BRAHMS - Sonata in A major
PROKOFIEV - Sonata in F minor
Friday 24th March 2006 7.30pm.
St John's Cathedral, Oban.
Tickets £6.50/£6.00, students £2.00, under 18 FREE
Oban Music Society is subsidised by Enterprise Music Scotland

Your Mother's Day Messages

<p>To Mum Happy Mothers Day Love Mairi, Elaine, Jennifer and William. And the Best Granny in the World. Love Aran. xx</p>	 <p>Happy Mothers Day From Euan, Innes and Rowan</p>	 <p>Your a Mum in a million Happy Mother's Day Love Jamie & Stephanie</p>	<p>To our Mum You're just "Simply the Best" Lots of Love and Kisses John, Michael, Kayleigh and Sean xx</p>
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No more queues

NO ONE should have to queue for more than five minutes at a Post Office, the watchdog for postal services, Postwatch Scotland believes.
The organisation wants to hear from anyone who has had to queue recently in a post office for more than five minutes so that it can investigate and seek action from Post Office Ltd.
Tricia Dow, the director of Postwatch Services said: 'Changes in the post office network have resulted in fewer post offices in Scotland and in some cases that may have resulted in longer queues.'
She added that it was unacceptable for anyone to have to queue for more than five minutes.
If you have had to queue and would like to complain, copies of the complaint form are on: www.postwatch.co.uk or from Freepost CCPS.

CORRAN HALLS
Tuesday 28 March
7.30pm
BEASTIES AND BOGLES
Traditional Highland folk tales with **Andrew Mackintosh**
Tickets £5/£3
Box Office: 01631 567333

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Roast Rib Eye of Prime Scottish Beef with Roasted Vegetables, Yorkshire Pudding and a Red Wine Sauce

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Argyll Youth Theatre Group
Present
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A part of the Broadway Junior Collection™
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Music & Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Originally directed on Broadway by James Lapine
Performances given by permission of Josef Weinberger Limited on behalf of Musical Theatre International
Corran Halls Thursday 30th and Friday 31st March 7.30pm
Tickets Full £5.00 & Concessions £3.00
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Mon 27th March 11am - 6pm
FREE of charge
Activities available for adults, children and people with disabilities
All sessions are on a come and try basis.
To guarantee any activity you can book a place in advance at reception.
Call 01631 566800 for more information or just turn up on the day.

Smokie
LIVE IN CONCERT
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Staff in talks to keep Glencoe hospital open despite nursing shortage

DESPITE reports that Glencoe Hospital is to close for six months, staff and management at NHS Highland are currently working on ways to keep the hospital open.

Staff at the geriatric unit are working with management on shift rotas that could mean the hospital remains open despite staff shortages.

There were fears in the community that the announcement of the temporary closure was the 'thin end of the wedge' and that the hospital would not re-open.

NHS Highland has replied to criticism that it had not advertised for vacant posts by saying it is in a 'constant recruitment process'.

A spokesperson for NHS Highland said: 'The community health partnership is working with staff on a sustainable rota at the moment to try and keep the hospital open.'

'We are constantly recruiting in the area. There are 16 posts currently shortlisted at interview stage.'

The 20-bed hospital, in the former home of Lord Strathcona, caters for elderly patients from Fort William, Appin and Loch Leven.

NHS Highland had announced that the hospital would close on March 29 because of difficulties with staff recruitment.

Staff and the 10 patients involved were advised that they may be transferred to the Belhaven Ward at the Belford Hospital, Fort William.

Gill McVicar, general manager of the mid-Highland Community Health Partnership, who is responsible for the safe running of hospitals in the area, said the board had a shortfall of 21 qualified nurses in Fort William.

She said: 'We have a very dedicated and committed staff in Glencoe Hospital who have been working flexibly over and above the call of duty and actually coming in to work on their holidays to ensure the unit was covered and patients were cared for.'

'This cannot continue indefinitely and unfortunately it is unsustainable in the future.'

'This decision will be upsetting for staff who have worked so hard to keep the hospital covered, but the safety of both patients and staff must be uppermost in our minds.'

Balachulish community councillor Mel MacAskill said: 'We have concerns at just how quickly this was decided. We are seeking a meeting with Gill McVicar to discuss where it leaves us in the long term.'

'There is a feeling that the community is being kept out of the loop.'

Lochaber's Room 13 to star on TV

PUPILS from three art projects in Lochaber are to star on national television.

Youngsters from the Room 13 art projects at Caol and Lochside primary schools and Lochaber High School have been involved in making a series of short documentary films to be broadcast on Channel Four next week.

The films will feature in a new series of 'Three Minute Wonders' and will focus on a different aspect of the development of Room 13.

Together they will tell the story of how Room 13 has expanded over the past three years with a similar project set up in Africa.

The programmes will form a sequel to the 2004 Room 13 documentary film *What Age Can You Start Being an Artist?* The series will be shown throughout the week of March 27-30 at 7.55pm on Channel Four with Caol featuring on March 27, Lochside and the worldwide expansion the following evening, Lochaber high on March 29 and Room 13 in South Africa on March 30.

Birthday party for A82 lights

DRIVERS waiting at the 'temporary' traffic lights on Loch Lomondside tomorrow will be handed a piece of birthday cake in a bid by a pressure group to mark the 30th birthday of the temporary lights, and to highlight the lack of work on this section of road over the last 30 years.

The A82 Partnership is an umbrella group of businesses, individuals, organisations and government agencies working to ensure the upgrading of the A82 between Balloch and Inverness.

The traffic lights were installed as a temporary measure in the mid-1970s following subsidence of part of the road.

The group says the lights now appear to have become

a permanent fixture and are a constant reminder to the people of the west Highlands of the lack of investment in their economic and social lifeline to the south.

A spokesperson for The A82 Partnership said: 'It beggars belief that these temporary traffic lights have now been in existence for 30 years and no attempt has been made to rectify the situation.'

Safety

'When a beam collapses in the new Scottish Parliament building no expense is spared to ensure the safety of the MSPs but no-one seems to be concerned about the safety or well-being of travellers on this main trunk road to and from the west of Scotland.'

'A Route Action Plan for the A82, which was due for publication last October, is still awaited. Transport Scotland, the new national transport agency for Scotland, has not returned our calls requesting information on the Route Action Plan. The only work on the 147 miles of the A82 from Balloch to Inverness presently included by Transport Scotland on its website is the replacement of the bridge at Glencoe Gorge.'

Fergus Ewing MSP said: 'The A82 is a national embarrassment and the traffic lights are a symbol of this situation. If the lights get any older I wouldn't be surprised if Historic Scotland was to seek to preserve them as a national monument.'



Almost 1,000 Lochaber High School pupils showed racism the red card this week. (12red01)

School flag day highlights pupil diversity

AROUND 950 pupils and 80 Lochaber High School teachers became a mass of red and white this week in a colourfully choreographed spectacle

renouncing discrimination and celebrating a multi-cultural Lochaber.

The pupils and teachers were manoeuvred into position in the school's

quadrangle by teachers John McGilp and Ian Welch and given red and white cards. After much finger pointing, reversing and shuffling the cards were

held up to 'Show Racism the Red Card' and promote 'One Scotland'.

Rector Donnie Campbell said the reason behind 'Diversity Day' was to

build bridges with the increasing migrant worker population in the community and highlight the diversity of the school population.

Fifty new teachers needed

MORE than 50 new teachers will be required in the Highlands by August 2007 under a plan to reduce class sizes.

Highland Council is to spend nearly £2.5 million recruiting 55 teachers to reduce the time spent by existing teachers in class.

The Scottish Executive funding will allow the council to reduce class sizes in Maths and English in secondary schools and reduce primary one classes to a maximum of 25 pupils.

Mallaig to host marine park meeting

FISHERMEN in a Lochaber village, which could be at the centre of a new marine national park, have organised a public meeting to discuss local concerns over the plan.

Organisers Mallaig and Northwest Fishermen's Association (MNWFA) and People Too, a group concerned at the loss of local democracy, want to provide people with a chance to air concerns in

response to what they say is a 'total lack of local consultation' by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

The government agency is to report to Scottish Executive ministers at the end of this month with a list of potential sites for the national park with Lochaber already named as a possible area. SNH denies it has not consulted locally saying that talking to local people is the first stage of

any consultation. It has also held meetings in Inverness and Glasgow.

John Hermse of MNWFA said: 'Marine park status brings no added value for the main marine stakeholders in the area and it would certainly lead to another layer of bureaucracy. The fishing industry already has a morass of regulations without the need for national park status.'

Kirsty MacLeod of People Too, which says it is concerned about the erosion of local democracy in favour of government quangos like SNH, said: 'Some of us have come to the informed conclusion that the advantages of a conservation zone are far out-weighted by the disadvantages of the accompanying bureaucracy and loss of democratic rights to outside interests.'

Lochaber MSP Fergus Ewing said constituents would much rather see investment in transport, health or affordable housing. 'The cost of each of the land-based national parks, namely Cairngorm and Loch Lomond, is £5million each year,' he said. 'My opinion is that 99 out of 100 Oban Times readers would agree there are better ways to spend such a sum of money.'

Historic golf course unearthed on Uists

A FORGOTTEN links course, designed by one of the most famous names in golf, has been unearthed beneath a golf course on South Uist.

The discovery by Askernish Golf Club could boost tourism on the island as golfers from across the world travel to play on the 18-hole course designed by Old Tom Morris in 1892.

A modern nine-hole

course sits on top of the original course and the restoration of the old course is the brainchild of a master greenkeeper. While on a trip to South Uist, Gordon Irvine was told by an islander that the new course was built on top of an original 18-hole course designed by Morris, who helped establish the Open Championship. He won the event four times and

designed nearly 70 courses including Carnoustie and Muirfield.

Volunteers pegged out the course in preparation for the restoration of the original course in May this year. Askernish Golf Club is now looking for European funding for the work, but needs approval from Askernish Common Grazings Committee before work can start.

Buses replace train to Mallaig

BUSES are to replace trains between Mallaig and Fort William for the next two weeks as work on £2 million worth of rail improvements gets underway.

From Friday March 24 all rail services between Fort William and Mallaig will start and terminate at Fort William and be replaced by a bus service.

The project will include abseilers working on rock abankments to improve their long-term stability. Other work includes waterproofing a road bridge, tunnel repairs and renewing eight culverts.

Brownies get their badges

CONNEL Brownies have been very enterprising in the last few weeks and have been rewarded for their efforts.

As part of a Careers Scotland initiative, the Connel Brownies took up the challenge of coming up with an enterprise which could raise money for their adventures and activities.

The result is the Connel Brownie Baking Book, which will be sold at the Brownies' 'chocolate morning' on March 25.

The Brownies brought in their favourite recipes from

home, illustrated them and put them together into an A4 booklet. A competition to design the cover was won by Claire MacPherson and the runner-up was Hannah Gillies, whose design is at the end of the book.

Liz Simpson, Careers Scotland, presented the girls with their Enterprising Brownie badges.

She said Careers Scotland used to just work with schools but had now expanded to go into the communities more and encourage a 'can do' attitude among all ages.



Connel Brownies with their recipe books and Enterprising Brownie badges presented by Liz Simpson from Careers Scotland. (11bew01)

Helpline promotion success

TWO EVENTS in Mull and Oban to promote a helpline for those considering suicide or harming themselves have proved a success.

Breathing Space, set up primarily to help young men who are most at risk of committing suicide, teamed up with Choose Life in Argyll and Bute to bring the speakers and workshops to the Royal Hotel in Oban and Criagnure Village Hall, Mull.

The main aim was to let people in rural areas know about the phone line, which is manned out-of-hours by a highly-trained team who can talk to callers about anything from mental

health to self-harm to depression and suicide.

Project worker Marie Park said: 'We are often told that in more remote areas of Argyll and Bute, people may not be able to access the kind of services available in places like Glasgow. But Breathing Space is a Scottish resource and anyone who needs to talk to someone can use it.'

Speakers included personal stories shared by Jean Johnston and Terry Tuffs and delegates from a range of organisations took part in workshops on both Breathing Space and Choose Life.

Argyll and Bute has the second highest suicide rate in Scotland and Marie said

that it was important to make sure that as many people as possible knew about Breathing Space.

It has been running for two years and is funded by the Scottish Executive.

It was originally set up for men as it was discovered that 74 per cent of all suicides in Scotland were young men.

It is free and confidential and is open from 6pm to 2am on 0800 838587.

Choose Life is working to reduce the suicide rate by training people in intervention skills and running courses on dealing with self-harm, promoting mental health, and raising awareness of mental health, depression and suicide.

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Mountain bike world cup volunteers required

UP TO 200 volunteers are needed to work on this year's mountain bike world cup in Fort William.

The town will host the first event of the 2006 world cup series in May this year with 400 world class riders from more than 35 countries competing in front of 18,000 enthusiastic spectators.

Leemo Reid from Rare Management said: 'Our hardworking, enthusiastic volunteers are crucial to the overwhelming success of the world cup events at Fort William, being in no small part responsible for ensuring that Fort William has remained the best venue on the circuit for the past four years.'

Volunteers are needed for course marshals, parking and traffic control, sign and course installations, administration, media and VIP support, world cup village security, drivers and merchandise sales.

'KK' celebrates 60 years

WELL-KNOWN Onich bakers and grocers, Kenneth and Florence Cameron, celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary with family and friends last week.

Kenneth, known locally as 'Kenny KK' of K K Cameron, the long-established family business, left the Royal Air Force after the war to take over after the death of his father Kenneth Kennedy Cameron.

The couple were both in the forces and married in 1946 expanding the business to include a restaurant, a bakery and two mobile vans.

Mention KK's to any local over 50 years of age and there will always be a story about penny cream buns, jam doughnuts and vienna loafs.

Walter Ewan Cameron started the business in Fort William High Street in 1874. Many a night shift worker came to the bakehouse after his shift for fresh warm rolls.

Florence and Kenneth Cameron pictured at their diamond wedding anniversary party in the Four Season Hotel, Onich.

Even the night 'bobby' grand-children and one great grandchild. One hundred and thirty two years later KK's still continues, now in the village of Caol, with the fourth generation Cameron, Kenneth Kennedy (Kim). It is still known as KK's.

Angling club leads river buyout bid

A LOCHABER angling club hopes to mount a community buyout for fishing rights on the Highland river where it has held the tenancy for more than a century.

Fort William Angling Association has called a public meeting to discuss the proposed sale of the River Nevis fishing rights by its present owners, and seek support for mounting a community buyout.

Kevin Dignan, secretary of the bid team, said that his association's members believe this vital resource must come under local control. He said: 'Our association has tenanted the river for more than 100 years. The Nevis is the only locally available salmon fishing for residents and visitors to the area and is regularly fished throughout the season.'

A meeting has been called for March 29 at Lochaber House with Lochaber's MSP Fergus Ewing and Westminster MP Charles Kennedy having already pledged their support.

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Kinlochleven in the spotlight

IT WAS 'High Noon' at Kinlochleven High School last week as the school presented the comedy western *The Golden Nugget of Badcrow*.

Everyone in the school, including head master Jim Sutherland who played 'Trapper Murdo', got behind the show and made it a huge success.

Starring the school pupils the show, adapted, produced and directed by Ilona Munro from Eden Court Theatre in Inverness, sold out for the three nights it ran last week in the school hall, which was transformed into a theatre complete with stage and lights.

Drama

Director Ilona Munro said that she hoped the experience would mean some pupils would continue to take part in drama.

Ilona said: 'We work for Eden Court Theatre as part of the outreach education

team. For this show we picked a script that suited the school. We have a hard time finding scripts for school shows that aren't musicals.'

'But the team leader from Eden Court had a script he had written.'

The Golden Nugget of Badcrow was written by John Batty, Peter Clough and Christopher West.

'So we added some songs and changed it a wee bit to suit the kids.'

'The biggest thing about the show was that a few months back they absolutely refused to sing.'

'So we approached Chas Stewart, a local musician, and begged him to get involved and through his Glaswegian patter he managed to get them to sing. So it has improved their confidence.'

'But for this show it must be magic to be a 16-year-old boy and be a cowboy and get into shoot-outs with your teacher.'

'We do hope that some of them continue to do more drama.'

Siobhan Cooper and Eilidh Sykes, who play 'saloon girls' in the play, were the only two girls to volunteer from all the local primary schools in the area.

They said that the show was 'brilliant' and 'well worth it' and not only because they got out of classes!

Stage management was by Miss Petty, Ms Mackintosh, Mr Morrison and Mrs Lathe with costumes by Mrs Young and Mrs Hamilton.

The show starred Bryony Nelson as 'Organza Bonanza', Grant MacKenzie as gunslinger 'Sly MacMaster' and Michael Gardiner as his partner in crime 'Lennie'.

Rachel MacKenzie was 'Consuela', Vicki Armour was 'Barbie', Lucy Doogan was 'Sindy', Sarah MacKenzie was 'Constance' and Nicole Theobald was 'Lucinda'.

Postman Pat Garrick was played by Joshua Brown.

school, I think it's good. It's a good opportunity and it's a good craic. And at the end of the shows members of the cast were taken on a trip to see a big theatre show.'

Music for the show was provided by 'The Antler Boys' - musicians Chaz Stewart, Paul Hornby-Batrick and Mr J Shepherd.

Stage management was by Miss Petty, Ms Mackintosh, Mr Morrison and Mrs Lathe with costumes by Mrs Young and Mrs Hamilton.

The show starred Bryony Nelson as 'Organza Bonanza', Grant MacKenzie as gunslinger 'Sly MacMaster' and Michael Gardiner as his partner in crime 'Lennie'.

Rachel MacKenzie was 'Consuela', Vicki Armour was 'Barbie', Lucy Doogan was 'Sindy', Sarah MacKenzie was 'Constance' and Nicole Theobald was 'Lucinda'.

Postman Pat Garrick was played by Joshua Brown.



Siobhan Cooper from Glencoe Primary School, Vicki Armour as 'Barbie', Michael Gardiner as 'Lenny' and Eilidh Sykes from St Brides primary on the stage at Kinlochleven High School last week. f12k01



Kinlochleven Angling Club and members of the community council helped to clear up riverbanks in the village this week including this part of the Tailrace, pictured before the clean up. f12k0103

New community councillors want to hear from Kinlochleven residents

A NEWLY-elected community council in Kinlochleven is calling for local people to get in touch and suggest ways they can improve the village in future.

After a number of years without a community council, new secretary Jane Morrison is calling for local people to come forward with their ideas on how to improve the quality of life in the village.

Members of the new community council got involved in a clean up operation last weekend which cleared riverbanks in the town which had become clogged with rubbish.

With tourist attractions like the Ice Factor and the Aluminium Story in the village, the unsightly riverbanks were not the sort of image Kinlochleven wanted to portray to tourists.

Jane Morrison said the newly-elected community council was working hard for the community to get things right in Kinlochleven.

Jane said: 'The new community council was elected in December but it didn't get underway properly until January. The community council wants to see improvements in the village and wants to see it cleaned up.'

'For a long time Kinlochleven hasn't had people to stand up for members of the community.'

The new office bearers in the community council are Ian Morrison, chairman; Duncan Cameron, vice-chairman; Jane Morrison, secretary and Evelyn Cross, treasurer.

Jane continued: 'We hope to clean up the area and get new signs up at the entrances to the village.'

'We have also been trying to get all the old cars cleared away that have been dumped around the village.'

'We're just getting to know everyone and finding out what's going on.'

'If any of the community has any ideas and would like the community council to look at them, any member of the community council will be more than happy to listen.'

'The riverbank clean up is the sort of thing that the community council wants to get involved in and we want to work with groups to improve the village.'

The clean up was organised by members of Kinlochleven Angling Club.

Member Jim McKinlay said the clean up had resulted in a skip being filled completely full of rubbish.

Jane Morrison added that 25 people had turned out to support the event and they had spent the whole day clearing up rubbish.

Auld Alliance alive in Kinlochleven

IT WAS the Auld Alliance in Kinlochleven this week as the high school hosted a party of pupils and teachers from France.

Pupils and teachers from Lycee Diwan School in Brittany were in Scotland for a week-long trip to see the country and improve their English.

Breton is the language spoken by the native people in Brittany and the Lycee Diwan is the only school for youngsters aged between 15 to 18 which teaches subjects in the language.

Teacher Catherine Urcun said the language was very similar to Welsh and had around 500,000 speakers. However, only around 20

per cent of the school's pupils spoke Breton at home.

A ceilidh in Kinlochleven High School hall saw the visitors introduced to some fine Scottish culinary fare including salmon, black pudding, haggis and Tunnocks Teacakes!

The Kinlochleven pupils were resplendent in kilts loaned to them for the night by the Territorial Army in Inverness.

Music was provided by Lochaber Fiddle Orchestra, Lochaber Schools' Pipe Band and Lochside Ceilidh Band.

The Scots and the French hit the dance floor with Breton dances being



The pupils and teachers from Brittany who visited Kinlochleven. f12k0101

demonstrated by the Gallic visitors and their version of the bagpipes the 'binou' being played. Catherine said: 'Our pupils are quite good at dancing as they often go to 'festou-noz' which are similar to ceilidhs. Head teacher Jim Sutherland said around 180 people enjoyed the ceilidh.'



Primary pupils' book fair fund-raiser day

Kinlochleven Primary School pupils who were able to buy £75 worth of books for their school library after holding a book sale. The sale raised more than £200 in total for school funds. The school also held a successful car boot sale raising more than £570 for school funds. Primary seven pupils are now running a savings bank in the school as an enterprise project. The bank opens every Friday when pupils are encouraged to save small sums in their savings books and to be responsible about money. The money is to be used for pocket money on the forthcoming school trip. The primary school also received a visit from the Forestry Commission which ran a mountain bike skills course.

The Oban Times GENERAL KNOWLEDGE DOUBLE CROSSWORD No. 425

ACROSS

- Thorny Eurasian shrub also called the sloe (10)
- German 9mm calibre automatic pistol (5)
- 'Campbell's —', novel by Hammond Innes (7)
- Scarce metallic element, symbol V (8)
- Harold, Australian prime minister who died in 1967 (4)
- Hard silvery-white element, symbol Co (6)
- Breed of dog originally bred to hunt waterfowl (6)
- E.E., inventor of a type of automatic sub-machine-gun first used by Australian forces in World War II (4)
- Hans-Dietrich, leader of the West German F.D.P. from 1974-85 (8)
- Gottlieb, engineer who, in 1889, designed one of the earliest roadworthy motor cars (7)
- 1974 novel by Gore Vidal (5)
- Prehistoric ruin on Salisbury Plain, England (10)

DOWN

- Menachem, Israeli prime minister 1977-83 (5)
- Large rough-haired tan-coloured breed of terrier (8)
- 20 Down. Secret society formed after the American Civil War to maintain white supremacy in southern U.S.A. (2,4,4)
- Unit used for measuring the height of horses (4)
- Giant coniferous tree of coastal regions of California (7)
- Keyboard instrument developed in the 14th Century with strings hit by metal 'tangents' (10)
- Francois, French president 1981-95 (10)
- John, American actor who collaborated with Orson Welles in running the Mercury Theatre (8)
- Louis, first man to fly across the English Channel (7)
- 'The Cloister and the —', 1861 novel by Charles Reade (6)
- Domesticated mammal, *Equus caballus* (5)
- See 3 Down

SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE - Across: 6 Conakry; 7 Seles; 9 Old; 10 Octopus; 12 Wolf-Ferrari; 15 Little Women; 17 Nelly Dean; 19 Fez; 21 Ovetto; 22 Coetzee.

Down: 1 Polly; 2 Jay; 3 Eric; 4 Fenugreek; 5 Measure; 8 Bolero; 11 Mortality; 13 Fields; 14 Minerva; 16 Betel; 18 Amos; 20 Eta.

QUICK - Across: 6 Chaplet; 7 Smear; 9 Jab; 10 Hidebound; 12 Controversy; 15 Intrepidity; 17 Warehouse; 19 Own; 21 Occur; 22 Janitor.

Down: 1 Shear; 2 Spa; 3 Peri; 4 Immodesty; 5 Earnest; 8 Second; 11 Courtesee; 13 Tip-top; 14 Infancy; 16 Swoon; 18 Sway; 20 Die.

QUICK CLUES ACROSS

- Prosperous (10)
- Sovereign (5)
- Masque tower (7)
- Last (8)
- Kiln (4)
- Portray (6)
- Develop (6)
- Frank (4)
- Four-fifths of air (8)
- Rascally (7)
- Accumulate (5)
- Backward view (10)

QUICK CLUES DOWN

- Cleave (5)
- Pottery (8)
- Hated (6)
- Dispatch (4)
- Disentangle (7)
- Basis (10)
- Compassion (10)
- Vanquished (8)
- Introduction (7)
- Wealth (6)
- Award (5)
- Row (4)

30 Years Ago

Those Were The Days

The Oban Times

Thursday March 23, 1976

Parents unhappy at move to transfer Oban pupils

A SCHOOL council decision carried by a majority of one vote means that 31 pupils presently attending Oban's Rockfield Primary School will be transferred to Park primary at the end of the 1976-77 term.

Lorn, Coll and Colonsay School Council agreed to the switch by 19 votes to 18 at a meeting in Oban last week.

The pupils affected live in the Gallanach, Kilbowie, Glenlonan, Lochneil, Soroba, Kilmore and Ganavan areas.

Notice was also given at the meeting that the whole question of children outwith the Rockfield 'zone' who had been 'specially admitted' to the school would have to be reviewed by the council in the near future.

The move has come about following a letter from Dr Charles E Stewart, divisional director of education, in which he warned that continuing with the present catchment areas would lead to accommodation and staffing difficulties in Rockfield while resulting in spare capacity in Park.

It was necessary, he said, to redefine the catchment areas.

Concern was expressed on behalf of several parents by Mr J Lloyd who wanted to know if the scheme was long-term or just for the next two years.

He asked: 'How long will it be until we have to look at another scheme?'

Park head master Mr R MacKay said: 'It is possible that there will be redefinition of the line at a later date. No-one can guarantee that these are going to be permanent catchment areas.'

Part-time education on Vatersay

PUPILS on Vatersay in the Western Isles are only getting 'part-time education' because of a fault in the car ferry which links the island with Barra.

This was the angry claim made this week by local parents.

The Vatersay children are all pupils of Castlebay Secondary School.

Since the car ferry was withdrawn from service at the end of January because of an engine fault, the crossing has been operated by a small open boat which offers little protection from the weather during the two-mile crossing between the islands.

In consequence, say the parents, the children on average are able to attend school on only two or three days per week.

Nan Gillies, Vatersay, whose two children attend school on Barra, said: 'You can't send them to school when it is stormy because the children get soaked to the skin on the way to Castlebay.'

'And you can't expect children to sit in school all day with their clothes soaking.'

The Gillies children, Elizabeth, aged 15, and Neil, 14, attended Lochaber High School before Castlebay went comprehensive.

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Young pipers hit all the right notes

DUMBARTON and District Pipe Band held its 12th annual juvenile chanter and bagpipe competition on Saturday March 4 at its hall in Renton near Dumbarton. Although snow had been forecast many competitors travelled from all over Scotland and some from Ireland to attend the event.

The standard of playing was extremely high and the judges for the day all agreed that the future of piping is in good hands.

Judges for the day were Pipe Major Michael Gray MBE, Pipe Major Donald Mackay, Pipe Major Jim Wark and Pipe Major Gordon Lawrie.

On behalf of the judges Donald Mackay thanked all the children for their great performances and also parents and tutors for all their hard work and encouragement.

West Dunbartonshire Provost Alistair Macdonald presented the prizes and said how good it was to see so many young children taking an interest in Scotland's national instrument and coming from all parts to compete in this centre of piping excellence.

Competition organisers were extremely grateful to the major sponsors of the event: The Kilt Centre, Hamilton; Pipe Dreams, Glasgow and Macleod Highland Supplies, Glasgow.



Left to right: Marco Gresnigt, Netherlands; Andreas Hamsch, Germany; William G Brown, Germany/Scotland; Brian Mulhearn, Troon; Jenny Hazzard, Edinburgh, Colin R MacLellan, Edinburgh, and Martin Kessler, Germany, at the Arthur Gillies memorial event.

Arthur Gillies memorial event

BETWEEN 1997 and 2003 the late Arthur G Gillies from Kilchrenan taught numerous players from Germany, Netherlands and Denmark at summer schools and workshops.

Most of them took place at Weikersheim Castle in southern Germany. Arthur's legacy continues in an annual memorial event, which took place for the third time from March 3 to 6.

The event combines a competition with further education and entertainment, including a lecture on four piobaireachds and a recital by the judges.

For the second time, Colin R MacLellan and Jenny Hazzard from Edinburgh

shouldered the weight of this programme and turned it into a great success.

The competition was open to currently non-graded players' Association members graded B or C in piobaireachd.

The aim of this format is to gradually introduce the basic distinction between amateur and professional events unfamiliar to continental European piping competitions so far.

The overall winner of the memorial competition, who won the Arthur G Gillies Memorial Quaich and a chanter supplied by Inveran Bagpipes, came all the way from Troon, Scotland. He

and all the other prizewinners got chinters and practice chinters kindly provided by main sponsors, McCallum Bagpipes.

Kilts and More subsidised the entry fees that were also supported by the Bagpipe Association of Germany.

Piobaireachd, James Campbell of Kilberry Piobaireachd Trophy: 1 Brian Mulhearn, Scotland, MacCrimmon's Sweetheart; 2 William G Brown, Germany, Earl of Seaforth's Salute; 3 Andreas Hamsch, Germany, Glengarry's March.

Also competing from Germany were: Bernd Möble, Klaus Linhart, Dr Andy Fluck, Stefan Rau, Marco Kreissl, Jan Belak, Christian Grammel, from the Netherlands: Marco Gresnigt and Marc Stoop, Judges: Colin R MacLellan and Jenny Hazzard.

March, Strathspey and Reel, Pipe Major Angus Lawrie, Oban, Cup: 1 Brian Mulhearn, Scotland; 2 Andreas Hamsch, Germany; 3 Marco Gresnigt, Netherlands. Also competing from Germany were: Bernd Möble, Klaus Linhart, Stefan A Christ, Dr Andy Fluck, Stefan Rau, Marco Kreissl, Jan Belak, William G Brown, Christian Grammel and from the Netherlands: Marc Stoop, Judge: Martin Keßler.

The event was organized by Martin Keßler, Germany.

The Piping Scene

Judging dilemma

A TALKING point which has arisen again recently is the problem created by the dwindling number of judges at senior level.

Various suggestions have been made to get round this problem but the fact is that top quality judges are thin on the ground. Most, if not all, of those judges are drawn from the ranks of former top competitors.

Judging, like any other skill, has to be learned, and good players don't necessarily always make good judges - but at least they will have knowledge and experience of the finer points of technique and musicianship that those who have never 'trodden the boards' at top level will lack.

The judging experience will follow when they start to serve their time on the bench. The joint committee has categorised a senior judge as: 'Those who have competed successfully at the highest level and can demonstrate sufficient knowledge and experience in judging'.

Those so categorised are eligible to judge any competition.

The Competing Pipers' Association (CPA) has in recent years tried to ensure that the main competitions have a minimum of three senior judges.

Maybe circumstances will dictate that at anything other than the very top

competitions, like the Clasp or Gold Medal, promoters may only require one approved judge in the current usual mix of three, thereby easing the pressure on the shrinking senior list.

On a related topic, the joint committee for judging recently met to decide the fate of those who wish to compete in the Gold and Silver Medal competitions and the various light music graded events at the two main solo contests held at The Argyllshire Gathering and The Northern Meeting.

By mid-March the applicants will have been notified whether or not they will be allocated a place in their respective competitions. I wonder though, could this decision have been made three months earlier? Is it not rather late to be deciding on participants, who then have to turn their attention to specific set tunes, four months before the competitions are due to take place?

Everyone recognises that the competitive season ends in September, so would it be so difficult to finalise the selection arrangements in the ensuing two or three months in order to give the competitors the maximum amount of notice?

I know there are strong feelings amongst competitors and their tutors that this decision could, and should, be made much earlier, say by the end of December.

Uist and Barra contest

THE ANNUAL Uist and Barra solo piping competition was held in the National Piping Centre on Saturday March 11.

There were three contests covering piobaireachd, march strathspey and reel and, for the first time at this venue, a jig competition. The judges were: A J Wilson, A J MacLellan and N M Mulvie.

Results were as follows: Piobaireachd: 1 Chris Armstrong; 2 Gavin Walker; 3 Angus MacColl; 4 James Murray; 5 Stuart

Liddell, March, Strathspey and Reel: 1 Angus MacColl; 2 Chris Armstrong; 3 Gavin Walker; 4 Douglas Murray; 5 Alan Russell. Jig: 1 Angus MacColl; 2 Gavin Walker; 3 Chris Armstrong; 4 Douglas Murray; 5 Iain Speirs.

Archie Kenneth Quaich

THE AMATEUR piobaireachd contest run by the Piobaireachd Society in memory of the late Archie Kenneth, that master of canntaireachd, and whose wise counsel is sorely missed from the piping scene, was held in Edinburgh on March 4.

Results were: 1 A Frater; 2 A Forbes; 3 R Aitken; 4 M Lowe.

Twenty participants played on the day.

Forthcoming junior competitions in Argyll

THE JUNIOR competitions of the piping societies based in Inveraray and Campbeltown hold their junior contests on April 1 and April 22 respectively.

Early reports from Inveraray and District Society suggest there will be strong interest and their various grades will be keenly contested.

Nether Lorn Piping Society

AS HAS been reported elsewhere in *The Oban Times*, Nether Lorn Piping Society is going well and has had good attendances for both local and guest appearance meetings.

The object is to raise enough money to start a junior band and we wish them well in that venture.

Everyone is welcome to attend their meetings which are held in The Argyllshire Gathering Hall and are advertised locally in Oban.

Hugh MacCallum.



Overall winners of the Dumbarton and District Pipe Band Juvenile chanter and bagpipe contest Emma Buchan and Bradley Parker pictured with West Dunbartonshire Provost Alistair Macdonald.

Dumbarton and District Pipe Band juvenile contest results

J A G CUP, 10 years and under chanter: 1 Alexander MacKechnie, Strachur; 2 Kristina MacDonald, Glasgow Schools; 3 Abbie Semple, Kintyre Schools.

Dick Finlay Trophy, Most Promising Player: Rebecca Tierney, Lanarkshire.

Ian Lawrie Memorial Cup, Confined Chanter: Aimee Craig, Dumbarton and District.

J A G Cup, 11 to 14 years chanter: 1 Daryl Lynch, Dumbarton and District; 2 Mark Gaffney, Burntisland and District; 3 Robert Plues,

Dumbarton and District. Dick Finlay Trophy, Most Promising Player, Eilidh Cummine, Dumbarton and District. Angus McKenzie Memorial Scroll, confined chanter, Daryl Lynch, Dumbarton and District. The Band Room Quaich, 18 years and under novice march, bagpipe, 1 Stephanie Brodie, Kintyre Schools; 2 Iain Alastair Wilson, Dunoon; 3 Ruairish Morrison, Glasgow Schools. Archie Rennie Memorial Trophy, confined novice march, James Summers, Dumbarton and

District. The J A G Cup, 14 years and under march, strathspey and reel: 1 Andrew Travers, Blairadam; 2 Billy Stewart, Blairadam; 3 Emmet Conway, Balinderry Bridge, Northern Ireland.

William Dempster Memorial Trophy, 14 years and under march, strathspey and reel, confined: Stewart McGregor, Dumbarton and District.

Helensburgh Trophy Centre Trophy, 15 to 18 years march, strathspey and reel: 1 Emma Buchan, Boghall and Bathgate; 2 Callum McCaig,

Glasgow Skye; 3 Nathan Drysdale, Clan Gregor.

E & M McCready Memorial Shield, 14 years and under hornpipe and jig: 1 Fiona Mitchell, Kintyre Schools; 2 Scott McLean, Mid Argyll; 3 Andrew McPhee, Kinross.

Dumbarton Lion's Club Cup, 15 to 18 years hornpipe and jig: 1 Emma Buchan, Boghall and Bathgate; 2 Nathan Drysdale, Clan Gregor; 3 Jonathan Graham, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue.

MacLeod Highland Supplies Trophy, 14 years and under

piobaireachd: 1 Andrew McPhee, Kinross; 2 Bradley Parker, Portavadie, Northern Ireland; 3 Fiona Mitchell, Kintyre Schools.

ALD Kiltmaker's Scroll, 15 to 18 years piobaireachd: 1 Emma Buchan, Boghall and Bathgate; 2 Daniel Cairns, Lomond and Clyde; 3 Jordan Drysdale, Clan Gregor.

Overall winners: Dumbarton and District Pipe Band Cups, 15 to 18 years, Emma Buchan, Boghall and Bathgate, 14 years and under, Bradley Parker, Portavadie, Northern Ireland.

Graduations



Denise Boyd

GRADUATED from Stirling University with a BSc in Nursing. Denise is the daughter of Duncan and Dorothy Boyd, Blaich.



David Allan

GRADUATED from Glasgow Caledonian University with a Diploma in Higher Education. David is the son of Davie and Alice Allan, Inverlochty, and was educated at Kilmonivaig School, Spean Bridge, and Lochaber High School.

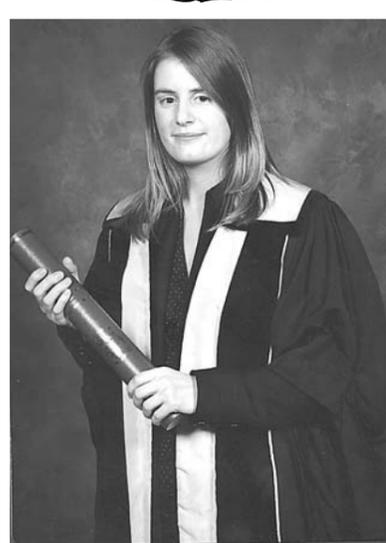


Eilidh Porrelli

GRADUATED with BEd (Honours in Education from Edinburgh University. Eilidh now teaches at Melrose Primary School. She is the daughter of June Telfer, Kilmartin, and the late Andrew Porrelli.

The Oban Times
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Dr Catriona M Douglas

GRADUATED as a member of the Royal College of Surgeons from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow. Catriona is the oldest daughter of Dr James and Christine Douglas, Fort William, and a former pupil of Upper Achintore primary and Lochaber high schools. She is continuing her surgical training with a research fellowship at The Christie Hospital, Manchester.



Laura Marie Campbell

GRADUATED from the University of Glasgow with a Bachelor of Nursing degree. 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 Munro Campbell, Portalong. Laura is currently working as a staff nurse at the Western Infirmary, Glasgow.



Anne McFadyen

GRADUATED with an HNC in Childcare and Education from James Watt College in Greenock. Anne is the only daughter of John and Katie Mary Campbell, Islay Road, Oban.



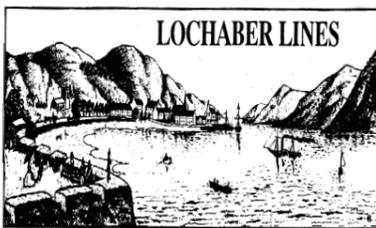
Laura Corrigan

GRADUATED with a Bachelor of Nursing from Glasgow University. Laura is the daughter of David and Ishy Corrigan. She is a former pupil of Ardour primary and Lochaber high schools. Laura is now working as a staff nurse in the accident and emergency department of Glasgow's Western Infirmary.



Ilona Margaret McNeill

GRADUATED Doctorandus cum lauda (Master of Science with Honours) in social and organisational psychology from the University of Leiden, the Netherlands. Ilona, pictured left, is the daughter of John and Mariska and the grand-daughter of the late Alex and Margaret McNeill of Frederick Crescent, Port Ellen, Islay. She has started her studies as a PhD candidate at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands.



email lochaberlines@obantimes.co.uk

FIFTEEN days now since we packed in the fags and that feeling of self righteousness is still winning the battle over the monkey on our shoulder who is telling us that we are more crabbit than usual and whispering that we wouldn't have got the cold had we continued smoking.

We feel evangelical and very positive, so much so, that to motivate others we are considering hiring the Nevis Centre for a two-day seminar.

With tickets priced ridiculously low at £245 plus VAT thanks to an enterprise grant we feel sure we could pack the place with smokers. What a wheeze, eh!

What do you mean someone has beaten us to it?

INVERLOCHY Primary School celebrates its 75th anniversary this year and to mark the occasion staff and pupils are planning an open day on Friday April 21.

Organisers of the celebration would like to hear from former staff and pupils willing to share their fond memories of the establishment, or may have photographs to lend for a display, or any information to mark the anniversary.

If you have a story you can tell contact Tanya Ross or Fiona Livingstone at the school on 01397 702620. If you have a story you can't tell then contact Lochaber Lines and we will, of course, treat it in the strictest of confidence.

A READER posed the question to a national newspaper: 'Everyone's aware of the Khyber Pass between Afghanistan and Pakistan, but I've heard there's also a Khyber Pass in Scotland, True?'

The answer given was that there are two places in the Highlands and Islands of that name.

One is in Stromness where a narrow path, hemmed in by houses on either side, rises steeply up the hill from the sea. The second is a stretch of riverside in Nairn.

The good people of Mallaig may have something to say about that.

THE CLOCK is ticking towards the May meeting in Inverness when The Highland Council will make a decision on the future of Invernevis House and yet, as we have said in the past, some Lochaber councillors appear to have adopted the tactics of an ostrich.

It is time for them to remove their heads from the sand and declare whether they are backing the majority view that the care home should remain as a council-run establishment or explain their reasons for taking a contrary view.

The electorate deserves to have a clear and unambiguous declaration from individual councillors and the collective stance to be taken by Lochaber Area Committee should be known.

Councillors will be well aware that the May meeting takes place exactly 12 months before the next election and voters will be looking for clear and decisive leadership in this matter.

WE WILL save the blushes of a friend, not in the first flush of youth, who made a faux pas on a visit to Glasgow.

As he had the decency to grass on himself rather than wait for a third party to inform us, we will protect his anonymity. You may be interested to note our policy.

Anyway, our day tripper needed a photograph for a new-fangled driving licence so when his wife went shopping in a supermarket he took the chance to enter a booth for his passport-style photo. He composed himself in that self-conscious way that you do and awaited the first flash.

He was soon searching for the 'beam me up Scottie' button when a 'Postman Pat' video began to play.

CHARLIE'S Challenge 2007: The Modfather is this week doing his bit to help smokers visiting the doctor for patches. 'I have a pain here.' 'Tha cradh an seo' (Ha craigh uhsho) and 'My tongue is coated.' 'Tha li air mo theanga.' (Ha lee air moh heng-uh).

This week's Mod Lotto jackpot is up to £600 with no-one claiming last week's numbers of 3 - 10 - 13.

A cracking fund-raising ceilidh for the 2007 Royal National Mod is being held this Saturday, March 25, at 7.30pm in the popular venue of the West End Hotel. Tickets, priced £6, can be bought at the door. Fear-an-tighe John MacNeill will introduce the artists who will include favourites such as Ishbel MacAskill, Catriona Watt, Freddie MacKenzie, Kenny Thomson, Murdo MacDonalld and piper Calum MacColl. Music for dancing will be provided by Donnie and Dianne.

With a cup of tea included and good craic from Chrissie behind the bar you won't find better value for a night out.

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

ON TUESDAY, as James MacMaster was crossing his father's croft at Drimarbin, near Fort William, he came across an adder sunning itself on the grass.

After some manoeuvring he killed the serpent which measured near a foot in length.

It is somewhat unusual for adders to be met so early in the year.

The Freemasons, together with a large number of invited guests, had a most successful smoker within the Masonic Hall on Friday evening.

For harmony and vivacity the function would be difficult to surpass, and what with the obeisance done to my lady nicotine and the banter of sociability, the company were loth to dispense. Perhaps the answer for today's persecuted smokers who wish for a secret drag with their dram would be to join the Lodge.

Throughout Friday rain fell incessantly in Lochaber and for the 24 hours ended 9am on Saturday the registered deposit was within a fraction of three inches, or equivalent to 300 tons of water to the acre.

The rivers Lochy and Nevis flooded and much produce and many sheep were destroyed. A shinty match between Brae Lochaber and the recently formed Spean Bridge Club took place at Spean. Eleven MacDonallds took part with the Braes progressing to the next round of the District Shinty Cup.

HISTORY was made when the 492 foot, 16,000 ton motor ship Banak arrived in Loch Eil with a cargo of wood chips for the pulp mill at Annat Point.

This was the first time a ship of the Banak's size had carried a cargo of chips to Britain and no cargo vessel as big had sailed so close to the heart of the Highlands.

The Reverend James Annand, Minister of Duncansburgh Parish Church since 1956, is the sole nominee for the charge Dryfesdale, Lockerbie.

Mr and Mrs Ian Fyfe's new MacDuff Motel with 14 bedrooms was featured in an article which described how the Fyfes took over a three-bedroom croft house in Achintore and through their own efforts designed and built the motel.

Mr Fyfe, who over four years did all the labouring, bricklaying, plumbing and electrical work, was not surprisingly quoted as saying: 'Work is my hobby'.

Deadlock over care home plan

A PUBLIC meeting in Fort William to discuss selling Invernevis House to the private sector would 'not be helpful' according to The Highland Council.

Invernevis House is one of seven council-run residential homes in the Highlands involved in a tender exercise aimed at establishing whether the private sector can provide residential care.

Liz Campbell of the Invernevis Action Group said a meeting in Inverness with Highland councillors saw both sides 'deadlocked' with the tendering process to be signed off in a matter of weeks.

Ms Campbell said: 'We asked them if they will come to a public meeting in Fort William but they said it would not be helpful. It is really deadlocked but we are not going to give up.'

'It is not that we are worried about the standard

of care in a private home but we have concerns whether a private home would be viable in Fort William and have no confidence in the private sector.'

But the chairman of the council's housing and social work committee Councillor Margaret Davidson said it had been 'a very useful meeting'.

Modern Councillor Davidson said: 'The delegation which met us recognises the need for a modern new home for Fort William which provides nursing as well as residential care.'

'Where our views differ over whether it should be owned and run by the council or the independent sector. The independent sector already provides around 80 per cent of the residential care we manage in the Highlands.'

'We want to establish if they can provide additional quality, affordable

residential care so that we can free monies to devote to keeping people longer in their own homes.'

The council told the action group that a private company might not come forward to tender for Invernevis. If that is the case the council told the action group it would look to its contingency plan of a new build or upgrade which it currently says cannot be carried out at Invernevis because the residents would have to be moved.

Campaign Meanwhile the action group has launched a website at www.invernevishouse.co.uk and invites supporters to log on and support their campaign. Ms Campbell said they would now be seeking the support of more councillors in the run up to May 4 when Highland Council will be asked to sign off the tendering process.

Fears for fish farming jobs

CALLS have been made for the Office of Fair Trading to investigate the latest buyout moves in the salmon farming industry.

Vice convener of Western Isles Council Councillor Angus Campbell has called for the Office of Fair Trading to investigate the latest move by fish farming giant Pan Fish in buying a controlling stake in salmon farming multi-national Fjord Seafood.

Pan Fish bought the world's largest Atlantic salmon farming company Marine Harvest from Nutreco and Stolt earlier this month.

The company also bought just over 14 per cent of the Fjord shares for £58m, to add to the 25 per cent it had already bought last year.

This places ownership or control of three of the top salmon farming companies in the world in the hands of Norway's richest man, John Fredriksen, whose company Gevevan Trading is the majority shareholder in Pan Fish.

Mr Fredriksen made clear last year that he saw an opportunity to consolidate salmon farming production and sales, and that he thought the industry was on the rise after several years of low prices and amalgamations.

The latest move has alarmed people in the

Once upon a time on the Isle of Skye

ACTORS, singers and musicians will descend on a Skye primary school this week as part of a £10,000 storytelling project.

Portree Primary School will host a full week of activities and workshops in Gaelic and English as part of the ambitious project.

The events, involving all 240 pupils and staff, will include a storytelling ceilidh tonight (Thursday) at 6.30pm in the school hall. Children will have the chance to hear traditional stories being told by highly respected professional storytellers.

Local storyteller Cailean Maclean is joined by Janet MacInnes from Alness, Bob Pegg from Strathpeffer and Jess Smith, from Crieff, a member of a Scottish traveller family.

The driving force behind the project are Portree Primary School teachers who wanted to organise an event to celebrate National Book Week.

School head teacher John Finlayson said: 'The week ahead will be a very exciting and busy one for everyone and it will encourage pupils to be creative as well as helping them to develop both their English and Gaelic language skills.'

'I would like to thank our funders and all those individuals and groups who have worked so hard.'



Rock from Banavie Quarry is being used to repair sea defences at Lochaber Yacht Club.

Sailing club strengthens sea defences

ROCKS from Banavie Quarry are being used to repair a Fort William sea wall in damaged by the January storms last year.

Last year Lochaber Yacht Club raised the sea defence wall and repaired its car park which was damaged by the storm.

In the last year, however, sea water has come over the wall resulting in more damage. The club is now raising

the sea defence wall with tonnes of rock. Club Commodore Richard Rumney said: 'It was felt that we should raise the level of the sea wall again so that in the event of another high tide and high gale it won't damage the car park.'

'With all the work we are doing, visitors driving into the town should get a lovely view of Fort William as they approach on the A82.'

Public consulted on future of education

THE PUBLIC are being asked to give their views on the future of education in Lochaber with two consultations given the go-ahead this week.

A controversial proposal to turn Slea Primary School on Skye into a designated Gaelic school has gone a step further with the news that statutory consultation will take place.

The matter was agreed last week by Skye and Lochalsh Area members of The Highland Council. Consultation starts on April 18 and runs until mid-June.

The consultation paper will be sent to parents of children attending the school as well as parents of pre-school children and the UK and Scottish parliaments.

Request The move follows a request from Comann nam Parant Shleite, Comunn na Gaidhlig and other interested parties to consider the school as a designated Gaelic educational establishment.

At present the school has a Gaelic medium unit, but Comann nam Parant Shleite says it feels that partial immersion is not delivering the goods and it wants to

see total immersion. However, some parents in the Slea area are opposing the proposal and want to keep the status quo.

Two options will be set out in the consultation paper - maintaining the status quo or designating the school all-Gaelic.

Meetings A council spokesman said public announcements would be made about the availability of the consultation paper. Meetings with parents will also be arranged at a minimum of 14 days' notice.

A period of 28 days would be allowed following publication of the consultation paper for written comments to be sent to the Skye and Lochalsh Area Education Manager before the Education, Culture and Sport Committee considers and decides on the matter.

That committee also agreed to consult with the public on proposals to change provision of education in Brae Lochaber.

Spean Bridge and Roy Bridge primary schools are situated approximately three miles apart with rolls

Stone lions stolen from garden

POLICE in Fort William are investigating the theft of three ornamental stone lions from a garden in the town.

The two-foot high lions, described as pale grey in colour, were stolen from a garden in Braemore Place, Fort William, sometime between Thursday March 16 and Saturday March 18.

Sometime between 2.30pm on Sunday March 12 and 2pm on Tuesday March 14 a Vauxhall Astra was vandalised while it was parked on Park Road, Ballachulish.

Sometime between March 8 and 14 a specialised hard rock mountain bike was stolen from a garden shed in North Ballachulish.

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

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

FORT WILLIAM NEWSDESK 01397 703003 fort@obantimes.co.uk



'Astronaut' Brian Smith on South Uist last week.

'Astronaut' lands on South Uist

FIFTY four days and counting - the space age has reached the tiny Hebridean island of Raasay with the landing of an 'astronaut' to keep a band happy.

Strangely, he decided to leave his spaceship on Skye and complete his journey by Caledonian MacBrayne ferry, just to see how earthlings travelled.

Islanders could have been forgiven for thinking it was an alien invasion but in fact the 'astronaut' was Brian Smith, a member of a film crew making a short documentary about top Glasgow band Quinn whose single Astronauts is released on May 15.

'We have the technology,' said Steve Mackay of Livingston-based Red Zebra Productions, director of the video film which is to be showcased in Glasgow and Edinburgh as well as in festivals in the UK and abroad. But we wanted to shoot the 'astronaut' coming off a ferry.'

The single is on Quinn's second album. It comes out on June 1 and is called Luss. Co-producer on the film is North Uist-based Uisdean Murray, who has worked on a number of films including the trilogy of spoof action films The Agents, a half-hour drama Culture Shock,

the short film Toon Runners, a dark tale of corruption and betrayal among a group of Glasgow drug dealers, and Jimima. The band is made up of vocalist/guitarist Louise Quinn and drummer/computer whiz Bal Cooke. Quinn's songs have been used in a number of film scores including David McKenzie's The Last Great Wilderness and Penny Woolcock's Principles of Lust.

The replica spacesuit was supplied by The Planetary Society in Birmingham and the space vehicle used in the film was from Edinburgh Scotamart.

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The Oban Times & West Highland Times

'Water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink'

NUMEROUS studies have shown that a major hurdle in the growth of the West Highlands is the availability of housing.

And there must be considerable irony in the fact that a lack of development in the house building sector is directly related to water - or the lack of it.

In an area widely regarded as one of the wettest in the UK, would-be home owners, builders and planners are continually being thwarted in their efforts by Scottish Water's inability to provide essential basic services such as water and sewage.

Scottish Water claims a planned £2 billion eight-year investment programme will sort the rapidly rising problem but for many the solution may be too little, too late.

GLASGOW LETTER

A Skye genius

HAVE you ever felt exhausted at the end of a literary night?

I have, after listening to the life and works of Professor Magnus MacLean and wondering how one man could possibly achieve so much and be involved in so much.

The talk was hosted by Glasgow Skye Association and delivered by Professor Norman MacDonal and Caillean MacLean.

Nowadays talk is often of busy lives and the resultant stress but spare a thought for the boy from Glendale who spent 40 years with higher education establishments in Glasgow.

After showing an early interest in equations and electricity, Magnus MacLean became the first paid assistant of Lord Kelvin. He was also the first Highlander to be awarded a doctorate of science from Glasgow University and the person who introduced sandwich courses to higher education so that students could receive vocational training as well as being the author of many papers and texts from his detailed research.

So what did he do in his spare time? He set up the Department of Celtic Studies at Glasgow University and lectured there and was one of those responsible for the setting up of An Comunn Gàidhealach and actually gave the Mod its name. He played a similar role within the Gaelic Society of Glasgow, he prepared submissions for Glendale crofters to the Napier Commission, he was responsible for the provision of telephones to all rural doctors and for the setting up of cottage hospitals. And in between times he married and had a family.

Why then is he not better known? This is an unanswered question but from what we heard from Professor MacDonal one can only wonder. Apparently he is better known in Japan than here! Is it just another example of Highland modesty?

Don't think this was just an evening of listening. It was exhausting tucking into the excellent buffet provided for what was an evening with a difference.

The local scene

CLYDEBANK and District Highlanders continued its successful season with a well-attended March ceilidh.

Expertly chaired by Tommy MacLennan from Cardross, vocal entertainment was provided by Norman MacKinnon, Hector MacLeod, Nicola Pearson, Oban, and Alison Wood, Cardross, with Kirsteen Grant as accompanist and Ivor Brown playing accordion selections.

Presentations were made to Philip Barlow, resident piper at Clydebank, and to Catherine McNicol. Philip is moving to Aberdeen having completed his studies in optometry.

Catherine was celebrating her 90th birthday and as part of the celebration the audience shared birthday cake and dumpling.

It took me back to holidays in Lewis when the whole village would help each other at the taking home of the peats. It was the unwritten duty of the lady of the house to provide a 'duff', as the dumpling was known in Lewis, and the men took great pleasure in deciding which was best.

An enjoyable competition to judge as I remember! Supporters of Clydebank are asked to note that the annual bus run will now take place on April 29.

The Erskine Charity Concert will take place on Friday April 7 in Clydebank Town Hall. Entertainment

will be provided by Shonaigh Rostant, Anne Bone MacLean, Amanda Milne, Willie John MacAulay, Billy MacPhee, accordion, and Iain MacPhee, piper. John Fitzsimmons of the BBC will chair proceedings.

Despite a rather disappointing attendance, supporters of the Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association recently enjoyed a marag supper.

After sumptuous fayre, entertainment was provided by Morag Dunn, Kirsteen MacDonal, Claire Thomson and Kenneth Thomson.

Also held recently was the annual concert of Stirling Gaelic Choir. A packed hall heard contributions from both junior and senior choirs and from Gleusda, the folk group consisting of choir members.

A particular highlight was the accordion playing of Mairi MacDonald, aged 13, from Lewis. She also plays the fiddle and the bagpipes.

It is heartening to see the huge number of youngsters throughout the land who are able to play our traditional music to such high standards.

Well done Mairi. We look forward to hearing you play for many years.

Eight teams took part in the quiz evening at St Columba's Church. Victors were Balshagray Victoria Park Church with Glasgow Skye Association in second place.

Annual concert

THE ANNUAL concert of Govan Gaelic Choir takes place tomorrow (Friday) at 7.30pm in St Columba's Church.

The Govan choir has a long tradition and it is pleasing to see that after years when only the dedication of stalwarts ensured its existence, it is once again thriving. Its concerts in the past few years have had an excellent attendance so go along early to make sure you get a good seat.

One couldn't mention Govan choir stalwarts without thinking of Mairi MacKenzie who, readers will be delighted to know, is making an excellent recovery after her recent road accident.

I am sure readers will also be delighted to learn that Mina Smith took her first few steps last week after her accident on Boxing Day. Our continued best wishes go to both Mairi and Mina.

Diary dates

Thursday March 23: Glasgow Arts Council, conference, City Halls. Andrasda and students of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, St Andrews in the Square, 8pm.

Friday March 24: Perth Gaelic Society, annual Gaelic lecture, St Mark's Church, Tay Road, Perth. Govan Gaelic Choir, annual concert, St Columba's Church, 7.30pm.

Saturday March 25: Motherwell and Wishaw Highlander's Association, ceilidh/dance.

Thursday March 30: Star Club, St Andrew's in the Square, 8pm. Maeve MacKinnon.

Friday March 31: Helensburgh Highlanders Association, ceilidh/dance, Commodore Hotel, Helensburgh, 8pm. Uist and Barra Association, ceilidh/dance, Whitefield Road Community Hall, Ibrox, 9pm.

Pub scene

CAMPBELL Brown and Johnnie Scouller will be playing in the Islay Inn on Friday evening and in the Park Bar on Saturday and Sunday evenings.

The Ballochmyle Band will play the Park Bar on Friday while in the Islay Inn music will be provided by Donald MacRae/Gary Forest on Saturday and Pat Gillespie and friends on Sunday.

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



Kinlochleven High School pupils

Hughena MacAngus of Kinlochleven sent us this week's flashback photograph which shows Kinlochleven High School pupils from around 1950. 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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Speak for yourself!

Sir,
In response to Marilyn Henderson's letter last week - Great roads job by council - Mrs Henderson has, once again, looked at the view from her own house and without checking with other residents spoken for her entire community council area.

The B845 Glen Nant to Dalavich road was not cleared of snow by Sunday morning.

I'm not sure just how far the snow-plough had travelled between Kilchrenan and Dalavich before it went off the road - I hope the driver is okay - but I can assure readers the road into and through Dalavich was not ploughed until very late on Sunday night.

I am not writing this letter to moan at Argyll and Bute Council as it did its best in very poor conditions.

And I greatly appreciated that the council worked through the night to ensure the road was clear to enable residents to safely travel to work on the Monday morning.

But Mrs Henderson, please check the views of all residents before speaking on their behalf. Name and address supplied.

Waste of public money

Sir,
Having lived in Achaphubuil for 25 years I have many memories of the Camus nan Gaul ferry, not all good I have to say.

For a start, the ferry's location is wrong in relation to the area it is supposed to serve. If you live further up the lochside you are as well taking a car.

The Highland Council claims to have had 2,500 passengers in the last year. As I see it, if you cross by the ferry you have to return by the same means. If so, this means 1,250 passengers which adds up to a whopping four passengers per day! At

Council money

Sir,
I would like to comment on the Scottish Parliamentary Report by George Lyon MSP, which recently arrived in every household in Argyll and Bute.

With reference to the allegation that Argyll and Bute Council holds £15million in reserves, council leader Allan Macaskill has already contacted Mr Lyon to

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 4HB 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.

Your letters

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 200 words in length for publication on this page. The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on e-mails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not be printed. Please write or fax to: Letters Page, *The Oban Times*, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Fax (01631) 568001. E-mail editor@obantimes.co.uk.

£90,000 a year to run the service why don't we buy these people a car each instead? It may sound silly but if we, the council tax payers, are forking out this much to keep a 'valuable lifeline' on the go, then we clearly have money to burn.

Dr Foxley wants to increase the use of the ferry through better marketing, fair enough, but the present direction seems to be about tourists seeing woodlands and the wildlife. What woodlands? What wildlife? Does he mean the sheep or the tree? I once saw a hedgehog at Picnic Corner, thrilling!

Then there is staffing. On a Saturday there are six return crossings. Each crossing takes, on average, eight minutes, which means staff are needed for one hour 36 minutes per day. Do the ferrymen get paid for that time? No, they get a full day's pay, and rightly so, but what are council tax payers getting for their money?

It seems we pay for someone to sit around doing nothing for most of the day.

One year the ferry went for its annual service and was replaced by a bus. It picked you up at your house and took you back to your doorstep again. This was far quicker than using the ferry if you lived further up the lochside, it was a lot comfier, more civilised and didn't get vomited off.

Why does Dr Foxley want to keep the ferry running? It's pure nostalgia, that's all.

Camus nan Gaul ferry is 20 years out of date and a waste of public money.

Stephen Cameron, formerly 4 Achaphubuil.

Council money

Sir,
I would like to comment on the Scottish Parliamentary Report by George Lyon MSP, which recently arrived in every household in Argyll and Bute.

With reference to the allegation that Argyll and Bute Council holds £15million in reserves, council leader Allan Macaskill has already contacted Mr Lyon to

inform him that the figure is only £2 million and his letter to Mr Lyon has already been published.

George Lyon, in the same article, states that the Liberal Democrat Council Group put forward a proposal to reprioritise £1.5million of extra resources for home and personal care. This amendment to the ruling group's motion was proposed by Councillor Alison Hay of the Liberal Democrats and seconded by Councillor Gary Mulvaney of the Conservative Group, and was also supported by the SNP group.

No political councillor supported the Independent Group's motion, which won the day.

If George is not aware of this fact, I am sure my good friend Alison Hay can confirm it.

Councillor Robert Macintyre, SNP Group Leader, Argyll and Bute Council.

Songs of Gaelic Scotland

Sir,
First may I use your columns to thank the many people who have written to me about my book *Songs of Gaelic Scotland*.

I have replied personally to many and intend to write to everyone in time. It has been a humbling experience and I am most grateful for the comments and reminiscences that the book has elicited, proof, as if we needed it, that these songs truly do belong to the people who sing, transmit and continue to enjoy them, without whom there would have been no book in the first place. Mo mhile taing.

Of course, points of debate and discussion have also been raised, mostly, I am glad to say, relating to sins of omission: ie favourite songs that were not included.

However, it has also been brought to my attention that I have committed one real blunder. In the chapter called Fearann is fògradh, I attributed the much-loved song *Mo mhàthair* to the Skye poet Niall MacLeod (Niall Dhòmhnail nan Òran) instead of a more recent poet, the late Niall MacLean - known popularly as 'the Govan bard'.

Though I number very few of Niall MacLeod's songs in my personal repertoire, it would certainly have been remiss not to have represented his prolific published work, which made him by far the most popular Gaelic songwriter of his time. And so I had included his *Cumha an t-seana Ghàidheil* (Sgiathan na h-oidhche) in my original selection, using the melody given in the Columba Collection of Gaelic Song.

But with my book about to go to the printer I felt nervous about relying upon a single printed source and

with no time to seek out alternative oral sources decided instead to make a last-minute switch to *Mo mhàthair*: a sentimental but touching song which I have been singing for more than 40 years under the entirely erroneous impression that it was composed by MacLeod!

There is no excuse for such spur-of-the-moment decisions in a labour of love and responsibility and I beg forgiveness not only for my failure to check the provenance of this song and for the confusion which this has caused readers, but also for my unintended slight towards the memory of Niall MacLean and any of his family who may survive. Not to mention that of Niall Dhòmhnail nan Òran, whose craftsmanlike poetry and pleasant melodies remain most unfairly unrepresented in *Songs of Gaelic Scotland*. Mo mhile mathanas.

Le gach deagh dhùrachd,
Anna Latharna NicGilliosa/Dr Anne Lorne Gillies.

MSP votes against public inquiry

Sir,
Any readers who watched the 'Frontline' programme on BBC television on Wednesday March 8 must be appalled by the number of unanswered questions surrounding the Shirley McKie case.

They must also be curious as to why Argyll and Bute MSP George Lyon voted against establishing a public inquiry into this most serious matter.

Perhaps Mr Lyon could write to *The Oban Times* explaining the reasons for his action. I hope he hasn't joined the 'unavailable for comment' brigade.

Dorothy Macdonald, by email.

Now ban alcohol

Sir,
Now that Westminster has had the good sense to follow the Scottish Parliament in banning smoking in pubs and clubs, when will it take the next bold step of banning that other unhealthy scourge of such dens of iniquity: alcohol?

John Eoin Douglas, by email.

Keeping the fishing fleet alive

Sir,
I was brought up on the Shetland Islands and was one of the first students of a new fishing course that started just as I left school.

During that time I spent a short time on the Scalloway boat 'Sunshine II', skippered by Scottie Ward.

Many years have passed

since then and although I no longer work in a sea-related industry I remember the experience well. I have now turned my attention to building model fishing boats, of which there are few good examples in the model boat community. I recently started a website dedicated to the art of building scale model trawlers and fishing boats.

Sadly, as the fishing fleet declines further each year, more and more boats are lost to the EU decommissioning process. Whilst many photos of these vessels remain, there is nothing quite like seeing a large-scale model ploughing through the water. One side issue of the demise of the fishing fleet is the loss of UK boatyards. Traditionally these yards built vessels to their own designs and, as such, they held the plans. With the closure of so many yards these plans have been lost making it very difficult to accurately produce working models.

A key part of creating a good model is reference material from which to work and I appeal to readers to email me with photos and/or information? I am looking for any subject matter to do with commercial fishing including the normally overlooked items such as nets, floats and buoys.

Dave Leishman, www.trawlermodels.co.uk

Pointless

Sir,
The Liberal Democrat's campaign to fight plans by the government to withdraw post office card accounts makes no sense.

It is well known it is Lib-Dem policy to dispose of three-quarters of the Royal Mail network. The accounts will be no use once the post office network has been decimated.

Mark Grant, Inverness.

DE THA DOL?

Cor na Gàidhlig

MO BHEANNACHD aig na comhairlichean sin ann an Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd a tha a' seasamh cho làidir an aghaidh iadsan nan measg a tha, mean air mhean, mar a thuiridh an comhairliche Seumas Dhòmhnallach, a' dèanamh an dicheall gus cur às dhan Ghàidhlig agus sin a' dol calg-dhreach an aghaidh poileasaidh na Comhairle.

Tha e annasach a' mhi-rùn a th' aig a' bheag-chuid - agus chan e Goill a-mhàin a th' anna - dhan Ghàidhlig. Glè thrìc 's iad na Goill is taiceile. Dè cho tric 's a chluinneas tu, 'Chan eil dad agamsa an aghaidh na Gàidhlig ach....' Anns an latha th' ann, nuair a tha sinn uile air fas nas mothachaile air co-ionannachd is còraichean air cinne-daonna agus nuair a tha laghan ann a' dìon a' chò-ionannachd is na còraichean sin, gu bheil feadhainn ann fhathast a' togail an guth an aghaidh na Gàidhlig nach gabhadh orra fhèin a leithid a' dèanamh an aghaidh cànan no cultar chinneach sam bith eile. Tha e mar gum biodh a' chànan a' cur eagal orra agus tha soidhnichean-rathaide g h-àraid nan cnapan-starra dhaibh. Tha iad còsgaiseach. Uill, tha sin fòr mun h-uile rud. Tha Beurla aig a h-uile duine. Uill, chan eil agus cha mhòtha na sin a tha a' mhòr-chuid de dh' ainmean-àite na dùthcha ann am Beurla. Cuiridh soidhneachan Gàidhlig an luchd-turais iomrall. Uill, Cha chuala mi gun robh sgaoth de luchd-turais air chail air feadh an Eilean Sgitheanaich bhon a chaidh na

soidhnichean Gàidhlig a chuir suas. 'S ann a tha an luchd-turais a' dèanamh toileachadh riutha. Agus cha mhòtha na sin a tha a' faicinn soidhnichean Beurla air feadh na Roinn Eòrpa ged a tha gu leòr againn a-nis a' siubhal air feadh agus a' tilleadh dhachaidh gun strì. Nach e an saoghal a' bhiodh mi-thlachdmhor às aonais caochlaideachd.

Phrases

SIN A' dol calg-dhreach an aghaidh poileasaidh na Comhairle - and so going directly against the Council's policy. Tha e annasach a' mhi-rùn a th' aig a' bheag-chuid - it is strange the antagonism that a minority have. Nas mothachaile air co-ionannachd is còraichean air cinne-daonna - more aware of the equality and the rights of our fellow-men. Nach gabhadh orra fhèin a leithid a' dèanamh - who would not dare do such a thing. An aghaidh cànan no cultar chinneach sam bith eile - against the language or culture of any other people. Agus cha mhòtha na sin a tha a' mhòr-chuid de dh' ainmean-àite na dùthcha ann am Beurla - And neither are the majority of our placenames in English. Cuiridh soidhnichean Gàidhlig an luchd-turais iomrall - Gaelic signs will confuse tourists. Agus a' tilleadh dhachaidh gun strì - and returning home without difficulty. Nach e an saoghal a' bhiodh mi-thlachmhor às aonais caochlaideachd - wouldn't the world be a boring place without variety.

Crossaidh Dick.

A VIEW FROM THE TOWER

By McCAIG



Lords, loans and lust

WHEN hereditary peerages were sold for cash in the last century there was justified outrage that money alone entitled those who had made brass to buy their way into the 'aristocracy'.

This for no other reason than they could hand over the pre-requisite wad of lucre before going to their tailor to order up the ermine and seek admission to some of London's more tolerant clubs.

Those who condemned such practices, and Labour premier Ramsay MacDonald for encouraging it, thought the legislation put in place would prevent such chicanery happening again. For generations it did.

But the rot set in during Harold Wilson's occupancy of No 10 Downing Street. Some of his appointments of life peers were openly questioned by the media, none more so than the manufacturer of a certain type of raincoat that he wore frequently.

However, subsequent prime ministers, realising that the electorate was very much opposed to the purchase of honours, were more subtle about their nominations and the way these were presented to the committee that scrutinised them. No so, Mr Blair.

Now that he has been found out, he is making all sorts of specious proposals to prevent him having to resign as any honourable prime minister would.

Consequently, there is a subtlety about the way money was handed over to the Labour party; instead of cash, it came in the form of a loan, almost certainly never to be repaid.

Then the donor sat back to await the summons to present his credentials to the appropriate officials at the House of Lords.

Unfortunately, the scrutineers were not impressed with the case for ennobling some of those who had made such generous loans and, not to put too fine a point on it, blackballed them. This was certainly too much for one gentleman of ethic origin who had made the loan and allegedly expected the honour automatically.

Now he is spilling the beans. He won't get his title but there's nothing like an ambitious man with an even more ambitious wife scorned. Will this be the scandal that finally pushes Tony from No 10? Probably not, but it might be a good ground for impeachment.

If I were allowed to present an Oscar for the festival it would be to Margaret Ross of Appin Women's Rural Institute Drama Group for her outstanding performance as the 'special effects' person as well as part of the stage management team and a cameo part as Blind Meg.

However, once again Oban failed to enter a team. Shame on us.

Is small no longer beautiful?

THE CONVENTION of Scottish Local Authorities seems, under threat from the Scottish Executive, to believe small is no longer beautiful if it is to protect its position as one of the checks and balances in the government of Scotland.

Faced with a threat from First Minister Jack McConnell, who wants to

reform local government in such a way as to take any semblance of contact between the elected and the elector out of the equation, it has come up with its own proposals that are not so draconian but serve the same purpose.

Naturally, those of us who still believe that the elector should know and have access to a local councillor will have it cast up to us that the smallest local authority, that in the Western Isles, is possibly one of the most badly run. That is the fault of the councillors, not of the principle that local government should be kept local.

How does Argyll and Bute fit into any of the reforming proposals? It doesn't. It would either be added as another appendage to Highland Council, or to that which is now called North Strathclyde as far as the courts system is concerned.

Amateur drama is the new 'cool'

FOR SEVERAL nights last week, I left my television switched off - no new experience as the programmes on the terrestrial channels get more inane.

It was no surprise that the BBC has been told to improve the quality of its programmes and stop copying its commercial rivals.

For entertainment, I took myself along to the Lorn Drama Festival in Oban's Corran Halls and was bowled over by the quality of writing in one-act plays, the almost professional standard of the acting and the talent displayed so ably by the three youth teams.

With great respect to the adults, the young people made the festival on and off the stage. On the last night, the young men turned up in a variety of kilts, worn with accessories that might have made some of their grandfathers apoplectic but showed that the modernistic designs of fashion conscious kiltmakers have struck a chord.

As regards the performances, the youth teams chose very serious and very difficult moralistic plays that held audiences spellbound with even a tear being shed here and there.

As Linda Robb, festival committee chairman, said: 'Drama may be cool again', but these young actors were not just passing the night away; they were passionate about what they were doing and saying.'

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McCaig

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Tiree guest-house and restaurant have potential to be extended and linked



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IF the idea of running a well-established, easily-managed business in a stunning island environment sounds an appealing prospect, then the Glassary Restaurant and Guest House on Tiree is for you.

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Beaches
The most westerly of the Inner Hebrides, it is noted for its magnificent, sugar-white sandy beaches and spreading machair, extensive areas of flat, fertile, sand-based grazing land, renowned for the quality of the livestock it sustains.

The island can proudly boast the UK's highest average hours of sunshine.

Popular
A popular holiday destination which creates a high demand for accommodation and dining facilities, in recent years it has also become popular with windsurfers whose activities have extended the season into October and even November.

Situated in the small community of Sandaig, the Glassary Restaurant and Guest House, is little

more than a stone's throw from the shore and those tantalising, pristine beaches.

It is about 20 minutes' drive from the ferry and ten from the airport.

Enclosed
The restaurant and guest house are positioned beside each other within garden ground enclosed by a low stone wall and fencing.

Whilst they are currently detached, planning consent has been obtained to extend and link the two buildings.

The well-planned restaurant incorporates a conservatory extension seating 50 and including male and female toilets.

There are fully-equipped kitchens with walk-in chill room and freezer.

A full public-house liquor licence with regular extensions is held.

The guesthouse provides accommodation of a high standard on one floor.

This includes an entrance vestibule, hall, lounge, fitted kitchen, principal bedroom suite with dressing room and bathroom, five further bedrooms, four with en-suite shower facilities, plus an additional bathroom.

In its present configuration the house sleeps nine guests in two

double, one twin and three single bedrooms, but is easily adaptable.

The subjects are covered by a current fire certificate.

Last year trading income for the restaurant amounted to nearly £65,000 and for the guest house, over £22,600.

The sale includes a full range of good quality trade fixtures, fittings, furniture and equipment.

Offers
The sale of the two properties is being conducted by the Oban office of estate agents Alexander Dawson, who have invited offers over £250,000.

However, offers for the restaurant and guest-house as separate lots will also be considered.



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WOODLANDS, BARCALDINE, ARGYLL

Woodlands is an attractive, detached bungalow, set on an elevated site, within mature garden ground and surrounding woodland and enjoying partial views towards Loch Creran and the hills beyond. The well appointed accommodation comprises: Entrance vestibule, hallway, living room, dining room, kitchen, utility room, bathroom, three bedrooms (master with en-suite shower room). The property has a good sized area of garden ground with mature trees, shrubs and rhododendrons. Driveway with parking. Single car garage with workshop. Open car port. Triple glazing and Color Gas central heating. **Offers over £205,000**



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This first floor flat is situated in a traditional stone building within the town centre, close to Argyll Square and situated above retail shops on the ground floor. The surprisingly spacious accommodation comprises: L-shaped hallway, living room, kitchen, large double bedroom, useful box-room and bathroom. Electric heating. Some contents are included in the sale. **Offers over £72,500**



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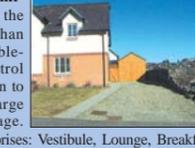
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THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (SCOTLAND) ACT 2004 REGISTRATION OF PRIVATE LANDLORDS
By 30th April 2006 all private landlords letting properties in Scotland must have applied for registration in the Register of Landlords. It will be an offence to let a property (unless that property is exempt) after this date without either being registered or having submitted a valid application for registration. The aim of the landlord registration scheme is to ensure that all private landlords are 'fit and proper' to be letting residential property. The requirement will help remove disreputable landlords from the market and protect tenants and their neighbours from the impact of antisocial behaviour and mismanaged property in the wider community. For further information including details of how to apply for registration please contact:
Licensing Officer, The Highland Council, Ross and Cromarty Area, High Street, Dingwall, IV15 9QN. Tel: (01349) 868579
Licensing Officer, The Highland Council, Inverness Area, Town House, Inverness, IV1 1JJ. Tel: (01463) 724298
Or visit: www.betterrentingscotland.com or www.highland.gov.uk
Glenurquhart Road, Inverness. Alistair B. Dodds
Director of Corporate Services
15th March 2006

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03 MAZDA MX5 1.8 CONVERTIBLE
Met splash green, black trim, alloys, full electrics, only 7000 miles, great value, check our price
SALE PRICE £9495 SAVE £500
04 VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.8 LS 5 DOOR
Star silver, power steering, air con, CD radio, 31,000 miles, great order
SOLD SOLD SOLD SOLD SOLD SOLD SOLD
03 SUZUKI JIMNY 1.3 02 SOFT TOP
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SALE PRICE £5295 SAVE £500
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Drive Times

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Telephone
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03 Plate

Telephone
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£800 o.n.o.

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£3000 o.n.o.

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Met Black, 3dr, 03 reg, one non-smoking lady owner from new, sunroof, alloy wheels, CD player, excellent condition, well maintained

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Telephone **01546 605246 / 07711 378513**

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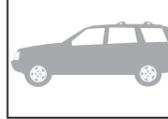


150 B.H.P, Black 02 plate, all vw extras, Mot Nov 06, 60,000 miles, excellent condition.

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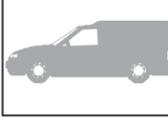


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1st £395 secures

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£975 o.n.o.

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N Reg, 1 year MOT and 6 months tax

Telephone **01770 830282 (after 5 p.m.)**

£550

NISSAN 1 TON PICKUP



MOT

Telephone **07899 896608**

£1650 o.n.o.

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R reg, S.W.B. MOT and Taxed

Telephone **07899 896608**

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£1500 o.n.o.

CITROEN ZX 1.9R



(M Reg), 6 months MOT, 3 door hatchback

Telephone **01770 302540**

£600

ISUZU TROOPER



3.1 Turbo Diesel, Duty model, 3 door Metallic Grey '99 MOT & Taxed Service History 90,000 miles In very clean condition

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£4900

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Taxed and MOT'd, M reg, flat bed extended chassis, towbar, CD etc, good condition

£1800

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OBAN
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Zinal's advice to anyone thinking of a career at Nationwide, is "definitely go for it, because you'll learn a lot and in double quick time". She also talked about the support. "It's a great team – everyone helps each other and shares the load."

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To apply, please telephone Retail Recruitment on 0800 1690 100 (Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm), alternatively visit www.nationwide.co.uk/careers or you can email us at retail.recruitment@nationwide.co.uk. CVs are not required at this stage. Please quote ref: KCA/15704/AD. Closing date: 6th April 2006.

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Hairdressing tutor

The successful candidate will be a fully trained, occupationally competent hairdresser. An Assessor qualification would be an advantage, although training will be given to the successful candidate. In addition, the candidate will have a full, clean driving licence as travel throughout Argyll is required. This is a part-time position with hours to be agreed depending on student numbers. Salary (including an employer contribution towards a final salary pension scheme) will depend on experience.

Initial applications in the form of a CV (maximum 2 pages A4) and one page covering letter should be sent by **Friday March 31st 2006** to:

Rosemary Fife-Jackson, Argyll College, Lochgilphead Learning Centre, Oban Road, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA37 1PZ.
Fax: 01631 559561
E-mail: rosemary.fifejackson@argyllcollege.ac.uk

Interviews will be held during week commencing April 3rd 2006.

Argyll College aims to be an Equal Opportunities Employer



Coast

Stylish restaurant on Oban's main street serving the best local shellfish, fish and Scottish meats

SOUS CHEF and COMMIS
(rates of pay dependent on age and experience)

Full-Time/Permanent Position

Telephone Richard on **01631 569900**

104 George Street, Oban, PA34 5NT
www.coastoban.co.uk

LIVINGSTONE & MCEACHRAN
Plumbing and Heating Engineers, Campbeltown

Have the following full time vacancies:

OFFICE MANAGER
The successful applicant must possess good communication and organisational skills to ensure the smooth running of our busy office, book keeping, Sage and PAYE experience essential.

GAS SERVICE ENGINEER
Experienced individual required for ongoing service and maintenance contract in Campbeltown, relevant gas safety courses and driving licence essential.

HOURLY RATES NEGOTIABLE.

Apply with CV to: James McEachran, Avondale High Askomil, Campbeltown PA28 6EN or by email to jamesmceachran@hotmail.co.uk



PCV Drivers
Oban, Argyll

Full time and part time vacancies exist within our Oban depot for PCV drivers.

Full training will be provided, subject to our terms and conditions.

Trainee applicants must be 21 years or over and have held a clean driving licence for 2 years to be considered.

For further details please contact **West Coast Motors, Glengallan Road, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HH**
Tel: 01631 570 500

BLUE TRIANGLE (GLASGOW) HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

We are an equal opportunities employer and a lead provider of accommodation and support to vulnerable people.

We are currently recruiting for the following staff vacancies throughout Argyll and Bute.

PROJECT MANAGER
£25,149 - 26,379 p.a. (pay award pending)
35 hours, Solas Project

An appropriate qualification is essential, e.g. SVQ Level 4 in Care, Nursing, etc.

RELIEF WORKERS
£7.05 per hour (Throughout Argyll)

Applicants should have either experience of working with vulnerable people and/or hold a qualification in Social Care.

To apply telephone 0141 221 8365 or email admin@btha.org.uk

Successful applicants will be subject to an enhanced disclosure.
The Closing Date for applications is **Wednesday 29th March 2006.**

CAN YOU COOK OR BAKE?

No experience necessary

We are looking for a part time person to work 3 days a week which will include working one weekend in 3.

Hours are normally 9am to 5.30pm, but we can be flexible for the right person.

Good rates of pay, age no barrier and must have a good sense of humour.

Please ring **01499 600263**

or write to: - Paul Tate, Retail Manager, Cairndow, Argyll, PA26 8BH (Next to Loch Fyne Oysters)

www.scottishtrees.co.uk

TREE SHOP



Working with disabled children and adults across Scotland – join us and make a difference.

Sense Scotland is a dynamic and forward-thinking organisation, working with children and adults offering a range of services including services in health, arts, outdoor activities and international work.

Support Worker 1-3

Glenfinnan - 2 positions 16 hours per week. (Ref. E/02/OT)
£12,536 - £15,892 per annum pro rata.

As a Support Worker you would help others to achieve as much independence as possible, both in their own homes and community settings. Experience is not essential however we are looking for team members who are committed to meeting the challenges of these rewarding positions and want to make a difference to people's lives. We may consider one 30 hour post.

Closing date for all posts: Tuesday 4th April 2006
Interviews will be held: Monday 17th April 2006

Download an application pack from www.sensescotland.org.uk
OR CONTACT: Sense Scotland, The Gatehouse, Quarry Road, Northfield, Aberdeen, AB16 5UU
Recruitment Hotline: 01224 789942 Fax: 01224 789945
Email: recruitment@sensescotland.org.uk

We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all sections of the community.

Sense Scotland

Creating communication together



LGV DRIVERS
(Concrete Bowser + Tipper Class 1 or 2)

Due to increased work load we have vacancies for LGV drivers. You will be required to deliver asphalt, aggregate and ready-mix concrete. Experience in these fields would be desirable, but training will be given. These permanent positions are covered by the Working Time Regulations and include a generous remuneration package.

Please write or e-mail CV and covering letter to:
Rosemary Morrison
rosemary.morrison@ennstonethistle.co.uk
Customer Services & Transport Manager
Ennstone Thistle Ltd, Dunbeg, By Oban PA37 1PX

HANDYPERSON/ GROUNDS PERSON

Responsible, capable and versatile person required for ground care and general maintenance duties.

Practical skills essential. Varied work with some week-end working in peak season.

Permanent position for suitable person

Telephone 01631 562425 or write Oban Caravan and Camping Park Gallanachmore Farm, Oban PA34 4QH

OSSIANS RETIREMENT HOME
North Connell, By Oban

Has the following vacancies

Registered Nurse
Day/Night Shift hours are available £11.55 per hour

Activity Co-ordinator
35 hours per week (could be flexible) £5.60 per hour

Domestic Cleaner
30 hours per week - £5.50 per hour

Kitchen Assistant
22 hours per week - £5.50 per hour

Relief Chef
18 hours per week - £5.80 per hour

For further information please contact Senior Care Assistant on duty on 01631 710 322
Ossians is now under new ownership

ENTERTAINERS

Highland Heritage Coach Tours Ltd

MUSICAL ENTERTAINERS REQUIRED

Regular nights and holiday cover FOR COACH TOUR HOTELS

Telephone Linzi or Sheena on **01838 200 444**

Highland Heritage Limited

MACLEOD
MACLEOD CONSTRUCTION LTD

MOBILE CRANE OPERATOR REQUIRED FOR OBAN AREA

- CLEAN DRIVING LICENCE ESSENTIAL
- TRAINING AVAILABLE

Applications in writing to **MACLEOD CONSTRUCTION LTD**
Kilmory Industrial Estate Lochgilphead PA31 8RR.
e-mail jobs@mkmacleod.co.uk

SECOND CHEF

UNIQUE opportunity to join a small and highly motivated brigade of three in our 2 AA Rosette (approaching 3 AA rosette) kitchen serving 30 cover restaurant and 4 star Country House Hotel. Candidates must have experience at or approaching 2 AA rosette level and will be required to provide back-up during Head Chef's time off, as well as general support and assistance in all aspects of the kitchen. Plenty of scope to use initiative and creative skills and to expand your knowledge and expertise. Our food standards are high and all dishes are made in house. We serve breakfast, lunch and dinner and are open throughout the year (closed January). This position is, however, full time, and offers an annual starting salary of £18,000 (reviewed after six months) plus four weeks' paid holiday, tips and bonuses. Accommodation can be provided initially at no charge and would include all meals on duty.

Please send CV to Sally Fox or Neil Mellis at **Kilcamb Lodge Hotel, Strontian, Argyll, PH36 4HY** or telephone direct on **01967 402257** to arrange a meeting

Self-employed AGENTS

Required in your area

Hours to suit you. Own transport and mobile phone required.

Call Charles McGuigan at Provident Personal Credit on 01786 445643.



Arctic Penguin Maritime Heritage Centre Limited are currently seeking **SEASONAL STAFF** with the possibility of permanent employment. Interested parties should contact **01499 302213**

Distributors Wanted

To deliver the new phone book
A car is required

For more information, details of other work available, and to apply on-line please go to: www.deya.co.uk/jobs

Alternatively to apply call us (24 hours) on: **(0118) 989 9909** or **Freephone 0800 298 7101**

DEYA

The Clan MacDuff Hotel

Fort William Tel: 01397 702341

Full Time Receptionist

Responsible, mature person experienced in dealing with the public required to work in family managed hotel. Capable of coping with all aspects of reception duties and working unsupervised. Previous hotel experience not essential as full training is provided. Short working week 32hours - 2pm until 10pm with flexible working days. £216 p.w plus holiday pay. Housekeeping and waiting vacancies are also available.

For more details or to arrange an interview please phone **01397 702341**

HOUSE OF STIRLING are Recruiting for **Permanent Self-Employed Sales Collectors**

We have a full time vacancy covering the Fort William area and a part time vacancy covering the Aviemore area. Excellent rates of commission paid. Own car, telephone and driving licence are essential.

Please contact us on 0870 4000 500 or visit www.houseofstirling.co.uk quoting reference HoS625 for further details



J.M. BRECKENRIDGE
Oban

Office Assistant required

Good communication skills and experience in working in an office environment would be beneficial. Part-time position

Apply in writing to Mr C. McDonald
Tweedmill Buildings, Soroba Road, Oban, PA34 4HQ

PART-TIME BOOK-KEEPER and Sage WAGES PERSON required

Apply to **Hazelbank Motors Oban**

Telephone **01631 566476**

HELPING HANDS

Cleaner required in the Lochgilphead area

5 evenings per week, 5.30pm start, Monday to Friday (7½ - 10 hours p.w.)
Tel Vicky for more details 01631 571252.

SALES REPRESENTATIVE
Highland Perthshire / West Coast

Selling Janitorial & Hygiene supplies business to business.

Good salary, Commission, Pension.

Apply in writing to:
Personel Department, Co-An Group, Welton Road Industrial Estate, Blairgowrie, Perthshire, Scotland, PH10 6EP.

Campbeltown Medical Practice

MEDICAL RECEPTIONIST

Medical Receptionist (1 Full-time or 2 Part-time job shares) required to join our busy Medical Centre. Duties will include registering patients, booking appointments, general office duties and dealing with a high volume of calls. Applicant must be computer literate, have excellent communication skills and be able to work under pressure.

Hours: 9am - 5.30pm, Monday - Friday

Please telephone 01586 552105 for application form To be returned to **Katie Ferguson, Practice Manager**
Campbeltown Medical Practice, Stewart Road, Campbeltown PA28 6AT.
(Closing Date: Friday 7th April 2006)



Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust
Research - Education - Conservation

We are recruiting:

EDUCATION OFFICER (MATERNITY COVER) to run our education programme for a minimum of six months from May 1. Post involves liaising with schools, delivering talks and events programme in and around Argyll, developing educational resources and courses. **Six months - £8200**

MARINE BIODIVERSITY OFFICER to work on its conservation research and monitoring land and boat-based projects in the Hebrides. Experience of marine mammal monitoring techniques. **Eight months annually - £10,900**

Also **RELIEF FIRST MATES** onboard *Silurian* and **VOLUNTEERS** required

All information see www.hwdt.org
Telephone **01688 302 620**. Closing date: March 31
HWDT, 28 Main Street, Tobermory, Mull, PA75 6NU

Oban Times RECRUITMENT
Oban Times RECRUITMENT
Oban Times RECRUITMENT
Oban Times RECRUITMENT

Education, Culture & Sport Leisure Attendant

Fort William, £225.72 per wk + shift allowance, 37 hrs per wk

We need a self-motivated individual who is friendly, helpful and flexible about working hours. Duties include poolside life guarding, coaching/teaching, general cleaning, and reception duties. Good communication skills and a general understanding of customer care are essential. You should possess the RLS National Pool Life Guarding qualification or have good swimming ability.

Informal enquiries to Graham Brooks, tel (01397) 707254.

Application packs quoting Ref: L/36/06 are available, from our website or by telephoning, (01397) 707220.

Closing date: 7 April 2006
www.highland.gov.uk/jobs



GAMEKEEPER

Part-time Required for Killean Estate Farms

Telephone **01583 441294.**

Argyll Arms Hotel Southend (by Campbeltown) Requires **CHEF/COOK**

Hours and Salary Negotiable
Telephone - Bill or Margaret on 01586 830622.

Lorn Counselling Service

Is seeking a **PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR**

Who is professional, dynamic & self-motivated, with excellent management & supervision skills, to continue to develop & progress our service.

Part-time flexible hours.
£15,500 - £19,500 pro-rata

contact: Rachel - 01631 566666
e-mail: lcservice@tiscali.co.uk

RECRUITMENT

PUBLIC NOTICES

Lynn of Lorne Care Home

Benderloch requires the following:

Full-Time Trained Nurses
£24,897 per annum plus Overtime and Weekend Enhancements

Also required:

Part-Time and Bank Nurses

Please contact Cathy Lee, Manager
01631 720278

PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR
£17,714 - £21,549 per annum (pro rata)
(Under Review)
20 hours per week
Fixed term for 18 Months



We are seeking a highly motivated individual to set up and then coordinate a new pilot project. The project will initially focus on the development of volunteer befriending of people with mental ill health on the Isle of Bute. Future expansion across all the Argyll and Bute area is seen as the second stage of this project.

The remit will involve the recruitment and training of volunteers and matching of these volunteers with beneficiaries.

Informal enquiries to: Hugh O'Neill, Service Development Worker on 01546 604940 or email hugh.oneill@nhs.net Ref: 051a/2344.

NURSING AUXILIARY (2 POSTS)
Based with Campbeltown Hospital
£11,148 - £13,022 per annum (Under Review)
37.5 hours per week

Working within the Bengullion Ward, you will be committed and want to join our team to make a difference to the care of older people. Ref: 051a/2409.

£11,148 - £13,022 per annum (pro rata) (Under Review)
30 hours per week
Fixed term for 2 Years

You will provide social and nursing care to patients under the supervision of a Registered Nurse within the A&E Department. No formal qualifications required, however, you will be reliable and able to work with minimal supervision. Ref: 051a/2408.

LINEN/LAUNDRY ASSISTANT
£5.70 per hour (Under Review)
37.5 hours per week
(Mon - Sat 7.30am-1.15pm)

Based within Lorn & Islands District General Hospital, you will provide a linen/laundry and uniform/clothing service, to the hospital and patients. No experience is required, as on the job training will be given. Ref: 051a/2313.

DOMESTIC ASSISTANT
£5.70 per hour (Under Review)
18.5 hours per week
Fixed term for 1 year

Based at Lochgilphead hospital, you will be responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of ward, department, residential and office accommodation. You will be reliable and able to work with minimum supervision as part of a busy team, whilst being neat, tidy and producing high standards. Experience is not essential, as training will be given. Ref: 051a/2373.

For further information, please contact the Hotel Services Department Lochgilphead Hospital on 01546 602323.

For an application pack quoting appropriate reference, please contact NHS Argyll & Clyde, Argyll & Bute CHP, HR Department, Aros, Lochgilphead Argyll PA31 8LB. Tel: 01546 606788 Email: recruitment.ab@nhs.net

Closing date for all posts 10th April 2006.
For a full list of current vacancies visit www.nhs.scot.nhs.uk

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

Senior Janitor*
Oban High School
£6,480 per hour
37 hours per week

You will be responsible for the health and safety of the school and surrounds, the control of litter and liaising with property services regarding building maintenance. You will carry out adult presence duties and as required by the school, duties including cash handling and the supervision and monitoring of work by assistant janitors and caretakers. Good communication and interpersonal skills would be an advantage. Ref: OSF20290.

For a recruitment pack call 01369 708536.

Home Help* (2 posts)
£6,290 per hour
Lochgilphead Ref: CSC06187.
Inverary (evening) Ref: CSC06188
Variable locations

Duties may include household tasks such as cleaning and cooking, shopping and washing and physical tasks relating to personal care (dressing, washing and assisting with nutritional needs). You will provide general support to the client as part of a caring team, liaising with other services as necessary.

A valid driving licence and availability of transport, and experience of working with older people or other similar client groups are essential. You must be able to work flexible hours whilst a good basic education is desirable.

For a recruitment pack call 01586 553536.

Driver/Escort*
£5,913 per hour
Oban Area
Variable relief

You will transport school children as required to and from educational establishments within the time bands advised by the department. A valid driving licence is essential. Ref: CSE66210.

For a recruitment pack call 01369 708546.

Catering Assistant* (2 posts)
Aqualibrium Centre, Campbeltown
£5,718 per hour, 20 hours per week
hours of duty worked 5 days over 7, Ref: OSF20907
£5,534 per hour, 18 hours per week, hours of duty worked 5 days over 7, Ref: OSF20908

You will assist in the preparation and service of food in the Aqualibrium Cafe under the guidance of the Cafe Manager. You will also be required to carry out cleaning duties, cash handling and all other activities associated with the service delivery.

A Food Handler's Certificate and catering experience are desirable.

For a recruitment pack call 01369 708536.

*Applicants should note that this is an EXCEPTED POST, i.e. a post to which the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exceptions) (Scotland) Order 2003 applies. Successful applicants will be subject to Disclosure Scotland vetting. Closing date for all posts 7th April 2006.

The Council welcomes applications from New Deal Applicants.

CROSSROADS Caring for Carers
DALRIADA & THE ISLES

WE HAVE VACANCIES FOR Home Care Attendants on a sessional basis for: Kintyre, Mid Argyll, Islay (Salary £6.30 per hour plus travel expenses)

This position is to deliver a respite service to carers within the home. Applicants should have a caring nature, be flexible in their working hours, a current driving license and own transport essential. Relevant experience preferable but training will be given.

For a full job description and an application form please contact Helen Kessell, Co-ordinator, Crossroads (Dalriada & The Isles), Department of Community Health, NHS Headquarters, Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8LE
Tel 01546 603082
Closing Date Friday 7th April 2006

QUALIFIED Dental Nurse WANTED

Basic computer skills needed

Please send your C.V. to:
The Practice Manager
Argyll Square Dental Practice, 21 Argyll Square, Oban PA34 4AT

BADDEN FARM NURSERY
Full-time Pre-School Officer required

Fully Trained
NNEB - SBQ3 - PDA

Fully knowledgeable with the 5 areas of the curriculum
Experience essential in the running of a busy pre-school room

Excellent salary to the right applicant
4 weeks Holiday per annum plus Public Holidays

For application form please contact:
Jennifer Campbell on -
Tel - 01546 600072

Knipoch Hotel
(6 miles South of Oban)

requires
WAITING STAFF/ GENERAL ASSISTANT
Live in available.

Full time, permanent position.

Contact
Kamma Craig
01852 316 251

WANTED

Enthusiastic & hard working individual for Bar, Restaurant & occasional house keeping duties

Fulltime including evenings & weekends

Immediate start

Please telephone Mark or Zoe on 01586 554385
The Seaford Hotel
Kilkerran Rd Campbeltown

JOB SEARCH

Experienced Carer Available for private work in Oban area

- Meal preparation
- Personal care
- Nursing tasks
- Household duties
- Excellent Rates

Apply to Box No 41
The Oban Times Ltd,
P.O Box 1 Oban

Melfort Village
KILMELFORD

PART-TIME SATURDAY CLEANERS

We would welcome mature (over 16 yrs), responsible cleaners to join our Saturday change-over team.

Hours 10 am - 4 pm every Saturday (all year round) with break for lunch.

Training given.
£7.50/hour gross.

Assistance given with transport expenses.

Please telephone Christine Roberts on 01852 200257

OFFICE CLERK REQUIRED

Full Time or Part Time Position

Experience of Sage Accounts & Payroll Software an advantage but not essential as training will be given

Apply in own handwriting to:-
McFadyens Transport Ltd
Glebe Street
CAMPBELTOWN
PA28 6JJ

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 Group Royal Bank Of Scotland, 6 High Street, Fort William 06/00110/LBCL0	Installation of Task Lights and Provision of Ramp to provide Level Access for Wheelchair Users	Lochaber Area Planning Office 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

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT SERVICE
LOCHABER AREA

PROPOSAL TO CHANGE PROVISION OF EDUCATION IN BRAE LOCHABER

The Highland Council has issued a consultative paper in terms of the Education (Scotland) Acts regarding proposals to:

change provision of education in Brae Lochaber

Copies of the paper may be obtained from the Highland Council Service Point at Fort William and from Rosemary Bridge, Area Education Manager, Education, Culture and Sport Office, Camaghel Hostel, Camaghel, Fort William, PH33 7ND (Tel. 01397 707350) to whom written observations must be submitted no later than Tuesday 2 May 2006.

Arrangements have been made as undernoted for representatives of the Education Authority to discuss the proposals with the parents of children who may now or in the future be affected by the implications of the proposals.

Date of Meeting	Time	Venue
Tuesday 25 April 2006	7.30 pm	Roy Bridge Village Hall

SAVE THE CHILDREN
North Argyll Branch
A.G.M.
Thursday
20 April 2006
at 7.30 p.m.
CALEDONIAN HOTEL OBAN
All welcome

Charles Kennedy MP
Serving Ross, Skye and Lochaber

FORT WILLIAM SURGERY
Saturday March 25, 2006
Caol Community Centre
10am - 11am
No appointment necessary

01349 862152

CROFTERS COMMISSION
UGHADARAS NAN CROITLARAN

John Allan MacKintosh is applying to decroft part of the croft at 49, 50 and 52 Banavie, Kilmallie, extending to 0.1066 hectare for the purpose of providing the site for a replacement dwelling-house. Ref. C/10991.

If you consider that the decrofting of this area 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 April 10, 2006, quoting the reference. Representations will be copied to the applicant. Comments on any earlier applications cannot be taken into account on this occasion.

Co-Roinn Ghàidhlig Latharna LORN GAELIC PARTNERSHIP Coinneamh Bhlaidhnail ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
7:00/7 p.m. 27mh am Màirt/27th March
Taigh-Òsta Rioghail
ROYAL HOTEL, ARGYLL SQUARE, OBAN
01631 564555

Deasbad air cùisean Ghàidhlig as deìdh làimh
Discussion of Gaelic development afterwards
Fàilte chridheil oirbh uile!
A warm welcome to all!

Scottish Pre-Retirement Council

will be running a one day seminar on retirement to be held in the Oban Caledonian Hotel on Thursday, April 20.

The topics that we would hope to cover in this one-day course would be State Pensions, Savings and Investments, Health Matters and Lifestyle Changes.

For further information please contact The Scottish Pre-Retirement Council, 260 Bath Street, Glasgow, G2 4JP. Telephone/Fax 0141 332 9427.

COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949

APPLICATION FOR Single mooring at Port Nam Freumh, Drimmin

Notice is hereby given that Mr Jackson has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Executive, under section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by the section 36 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988, to carry out single mooring at the above location in the positions(s):

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Mooring	56 36.71N	05 59.00W

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspection at Ardnarmurchan Community Library, Ardnarmurchan High School, Strontian, Acharacle, PH36 4JA

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: 2SP/C/215/249
Mr Jackson, Ardnarmurchan Charters, Bruach Na Fearna Laga Bay, Acharacle, Argyll PH36 4JW

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

All-Na-Craig House
Ardrishaig
are looking for
PART-TIME WAITRESSING and HOUSEKEEPING STAFF
for busy season ahead
Good rates
Telephone
01546 603245

Oban Times RECRUITMENT
Oban Times RECRUITMENT

REMEMBER DEADLINE FOR ADVERTS MONDAY 4PM

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Tel: 01631 568000

www.obantimes.co.uk

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: 06/00497/DET
Applicant: Mr And Mrs P Beattie
Proposal: Erection of Dwellinghouse
Site Address: Land West Of Inshaig Park House Ellenabeich Isle Of Seil Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Balvicar Development in Conservation Area 21 Days
- Ref No: 06/00497/DET
Applicant: Mr And Mrs P Beattie
Proposal: Erection of Dwellinghouse
Site Address: Land West Of Inshaig Park House Ellenabeich Isle Of Seil Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Balvicar Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00392/DET
Applicant: Waterfront Co Ltd
Proposal: Alterations to Public Bar and Part Change of Use from Office to Public Bar
Site Address: The Waterfront Railway Pier Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4LW
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office Section 34 and Article 9 Advert 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00311/COU
Applicant: Simon Osborne
Proposal: Temporary site compound for the construction of Bannmore Waste Water Treatment Works
Site Address: Land opposite residential development, Stanlane, Bannmore, Isle of Islay
Location of Plans: Bannmore Area Office Isle of Islay Discretionary Advert - 14 Days
- Ref No: 06/00500/OUT
Applicant: Mr Robert Baker
Proposal: Erection of dwelling, new entrance to site, and installation of a septic tank
Site Address: Foreland Estate Bruichladdich Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA49 7JU
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Bridgend Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

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

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

The following planning applications have been lodged for determination with Argyll and Bute Council and are available for inspection during normal working hours at the local area office/Post Office identified below. The proposals contained in the application are considered to be a departure or potential departure from the Development Plan for the area concerned.

Anyone wishing to make representations about any of the applications identified below should do so in writing within 21 days from the date of publication of this notice to the Area Team Leader Development Control at the address below.

Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF PLANS

- Ref No: 06/00219/OUT
Applicant: Mr S Barton
Proposal: Site for dwelling and septic tank
Site Address: Plot 2 Driveway Land East Of Heather Cottage Ichnachan Taynuilt
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt Potential Departure from Policy H022 of the Lorn Local Plan, Second Alteration.
- Ref No: 06/00497/DET
Applicant: Mr And Mrs P Beattie
Proposal: Erection of Dwellinghouse
Site Address: Land West Of Inshaig Park House Ellenabeich Isle Of Seil Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Balvicar Potential Departure from Policy H022 of Lorn Local Plan 2nd Alteration A18 Local Plan Potential Depart Adv (21)

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

STEALAWAY CONSTRUCTION LTD

Notice is hereby given that on 14th February 2006 a petition was presented to the Sheriff of North Strathclyde at Oban Sheriff Court by Stealaway Construction Ltd a company incorporated under the Companies Acts (Company Registration number SC120464) and having their Registered Office at An Tobar, Lerags, Oban, PA34 4SE craving the Court, inter alia, that the said Stealaway Construction Ltd be wound up by the Court and that an Interim Liquidator be appointed; and that in the meantime Duncan Donald McGruther, Chartered Accountant and qualified Insolvency Practitioner, PB Recovery Ltd, McGregor House, Southbank Business Park, Donaldson Crescent, Glasgow, G66 1XF be appointed as Provisional Liquidator of the said company; and in which petition the Sheriff by Interlocutor dated 14th February 2006 appointed all persons having an interest to lodge Answers in the hands of the Sheriff Clerk at Oban Sheriff Court, Sheriff Court House, Albany Street, Oban, PA34 4AL within eight days after such intimation, service or advertisement; and *eo die* appointed the said Duncan Donald McGruther to be the Provisional Liquidator of the said company in terms of the Insolvency Act 1986, with all the powers necessary for the interim preservation of the said company's assets and particularly the powers contained in Sections 167 and 169 and schedule 4 Part II of the Insolvency Act 1986 until further order of the court; All of which Notice is hereby given.

Archibald Campbell & Harley, WS
37 Queen Street, Edinburgh EH2 1JX
Agents for the Petitioners

Highlands & Islands ENTERPRISE

Invitation to tender
ADVICE SUPPLY PARTNERS

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) is looking for suppliers to provide advice to local enterprise company clients across the Highlands and Islands.

A single contract is being offered in three lots, covering different groups of LEC areas. The contract will begin in October and run for three and a half years

Suppliers wishing to express interest in tendering for this work can do so through the HIE website - www.hie.co.uk/tenders.htm

This tender is being advertised internationally through the European Union's official journal <http://ted.publications.eu.int/>

Further information can be obtained from:
Martin Murphy, SCMG, 1 Todd Campus, West of Scotland Science Park, Glasgow G20 0XA
Tel: 0141 945 6461 Fax: 0141 945 0427
Email: tender@headvice.com

Spring implement sale at Humberston

DINGWALL and Highland Marts held its spring sale of tractors, trailers, implements and vehicles at the Humberston Mart.

A large crowd in attendance from throughout the Highlands and islands led to a very satisfactory sale.

Tractors – Zetor 6245 with fore loader, Ford 4610 £4100; MF240 with MF 875 fore loader £4050; JCB Telescopic Farm Special with dung and pallet forks £3600.

Quads – Arctic Cat £1650; Kawasaki £1100.

Field equipment – Hay Leveller £1600; Rau sprayer £1300, Keverland 3 furrow reversible plough £880.

Trailers – Ifor Williams livestock trailer £1600; Ifor Williams horse box, Ifor Williams twin axle trailer £1400; Cattle feed wagon £1050; Fraser tipping trailer £650; Double axle car trailer £550.

Findon Farms Limousins lead Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 88 cattle (60 bullocks and 28 heifers) at its weekly prime sale.

Bullocks sold to a top of 131p per kilo for Limousins (620kg, 580kg) from MacIntyre Findon Farms to Woodhead Brothers, Turriff, and to £843 per head for a Limousin also from Findon to John M Munro Ltd., Dingwall.

Heifers sold to a top of 133p for a 600kg Limousin from J M Fraser and Son, Easter Clune, to Woodhead Brothers, and to £800 per head for Limousin from A J Macnab, Kildun, to John M Munro Ltd.

The company also sold 2046 prime sheep with lambs selling to a top of £65 per head for Texels from S B Morrison and Company, Easter Urray to John M Munro Ltd., and to 147.1p per kilo for Beltex crosses from MacIntyre Findon Farms to A J Ingram, East Comalgey.

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Tel: 01988 840 272

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Phone for Photos

Oban Times FARMING

AUCTION SALE
in Lochaber Rural Complex, Anoch Mor Road on Saturday 8 April, commencing 11 a.m.

Antique and modern furniture, Jewellery, Fine Art, Bric-a-brac, Musical Instruments, Gardening Tools And Mowers, Bicycles, Engineering and Joiners' Tools, Car Trailer and all the usual selection of interesting items

Entries accepted: Thursday 6th, 2-7 p.m. and Friday 7th, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Viewing on sale morning 9-11 a.m.

Next Sale - Saturday 13 May GRASS SEED

Agent for Long Term, Upland, Amenity and Organic Mixtures. Also pre-lambing mineral buckets, Phos and Magnesium Buckets and Tubs

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Further particulars and terms on application
Ewen M. Campbell
Telephone: 01397 701039 Mobile: 0777 5875 172

MANAGING ACCESS ON YOUR FARM
A ONE-DAY TRAINING WORKSHOP

Tuesday 28th March 2006
Ifferdale Farm, Saddell, by Campbelltown
Courtesy of Andrew Gemmill
or Wednesday March 29th
Barndromin Farm, Knipoch, by Oban
Courtesy of Jamie Mellor

- Do you have public access related issues on your farm?
- Would you like to find out more about the Scottish Outdoor Access Code?
- Do you want to find out more about the LMC option for 'Improving Access'?

If the answer is 'YES' to any of these questions then this event is for you.

The workshops are FREE to all farmers, crofters and land managers with an agricultural holding number; non-farming delegates will be charged £20 per head. All refreshments tea/coffee/light lunch provided plus a delegates pack of resources

Places limited so booking essential.

For further information or to book your place at one of the workshops contact Lucy Sumsion, Argyll FWAG
Tel: 01499 600113 or email: argyll@fwag.org.uk

This training course has been part-funded by:

Oban Times FARMING

Shetland crofter takes the helm at Crofters' Foundation for first time

A SHETLAND crofter took the helm for the first time when the Scottish Crofting Foundation (SCF) held its fifth Annual General Meeting in Strathpeffer community centre and enthusiastically welcomed a new chairman in Norman Leask.

Mr Leask has been very active in his role of vice chair and is now a familiar face in Scottish rural policy fora.

It is the first time for a Shetlander to take the helm at SCF.

In his opening remarks Mr

Leask gave a warm tribute to the departing chairperson, Ena MacDonald of Uist and pointed out how brave she had been to take on the chair at a time when there was so much change taking place in crofting, in agriculture and within the SCF itself.

Lewis vice-chairman

He also welcomed Neil MacLeod from Lewis as his vice chairman.

Mr Leask also said: 'There are still many challenges ahead for crofting and the SCF.'

Leask also added the Less

'Foremost is the reform to crofting legislation that is in a Bill before Parliament as we speak.

'It is vital that everyone takes the opportunity to submit evidence to the Parliamentary Environment and Rural Policy Committee, as will the SCF.'

'There is still a long way to go to ensure that crofting is protected as the present version of the Bill still does not do this yet.'

'We must press for amendments.'

Leask also added the Less

Favoured Area Support Scheme, livestock transport and livestock traceability as key issues affecting the wellbeing of crofting and that will need constant pressure on the policy makers from the crofters' organisation, the SCF.

He added: 'These are certainly times of change which can bring opportunity.'

'We have to look at new ways of deriving income from crofts and sometimes we actually have to look back to the past to identify

and use successful strategies.

'The SCF Croft Land Use Programme is leading in this.'

During discussion several delegates expressed their dismay at the Crofting Bill presented to Parliament, as it doesn't appear to reflect the strong opinions given by so many crofters in the 'consultation', and is very difficult to understand.

As one crofter put it 'it is a thought they do not want us to know what they are doing to our legislation'.



New SCF chairman Norman Leask

Access workshops scheduled for Argyll

ARGYLL farmers, land managers, advisers, interested individuals and organisations are being invited to attend two workshops, hosted by Farm and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS) and Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD), in Argyll at the end of March.

With the new Scottish Outdoor Access Code in place those attending the event will hear how working farms and estates can integrate walkers, cyclists and horse riders with ongoing management of their land.

The Managing Access on Your Farm workshops will be held at a choice of two locations in Argyll.

The first will be on Tuesday March 28 at Ifferdale Farm, Saddell, by Campbelltown - courtesy of Andrew Gemmill.

The second workshop will be on Wednesday March 29 at Barndromin Farm, Knipoch - courtesy of Jamie Mellor.

Farmers are invited to choose to attend either of these two dates.

The workshops will involve input from a range of speakers, including Lucy Sumsion, farm conservation adviser with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group and Sue Hilder, access officer with the National Farmers Union Scotland. Also on hand to also help answer queries will be Argyll and Bute Council access officers along with local SEERAD and SNH staff.

Topics to be covered will include managing access on farms and crofts, resources and support available for

land managers and local authority roles and responsibilities.

Clarification

Of particular interest to many land managers will be further information and clarification on the Land Management Contract option for 'Improving Access'.

The organisers hope that the final attendance list will include local farmers and crofters, estate representatives, public bodies that own land and farm business advisers.

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code explains the new statutory right of responsible access, which gives more opportunities for everyone to enjoy the outdoors for recreation and education.

With Argyll having plenty of scope for people to enjoy a range of outdoor pursuits, such as walking, mountain biking and horse riding, managing access is a topic cropping up for many. The aim of the day is to share good practice and to help land managers think about how public access on their land can be managed to benefit everyone.

Sue Hilder, access officer for NFUS, said: 'I am delighted to be involved with this course as it will provide very timely and useful information to farmers in Argyll and Bute.'

'Given the numbers of visitors attracted to the west coast, it is very important that farmers are supported in their efforts to integrate public access with land management, and the course will go a long way towards delivering that support.'

Allan Nicol, senior agri-

cultural officer with SEERAD based in Oban, who will also be involved in the workshops said: 'SEERAD welcomes and fully supports these workshops.'

'Our experience has shown that attendance at such events leads to a better understanding of scheme objectives and requirements. This in turn, provides benefits through greater ownership and scheme participation.'

Argyll FWAG have organised this event to bring together land managers in Argyll with those who can advise on access.

Lucy Sumsion, FWAG Farm Conservation adviser said: 'I would encourage any land managers in Argyll who would like help and advice on their access responsibilities or on Land Management Contracts to sign up for one of the workshops.'

These workshops have been supported with funding from Scottish Natural Heritage along with the Scottish Agricultural College and the EU through the Highlands and Islands Partnership Programme.

The workshops are free to all farmers, crofters and land managers with an agricultural holding number; non-farming delegates will be charged £20 per head. Both workshops will start at 10.00 am, with lunch and light refreshments provided.

Places are limited so booking is essential.

For further information on these workshops and to book your place contact Lucy Sumsion, Argyll FWAG tel: 01499 600113 or email: argyll@fwag.org.uk.



Tam MacMillan of Bute guides his plough as Stephen Jones of Campbelltown helps guide the Clydesdale horses at the Lorn Ploughing Match held at Dunolliebog Farm, Oban on Saturday. Tam finished in third place in the horse drawn section. 112p602

Lorn ploughing match success

THERE was fierce competition, but great fun at the annual Lorn ploughing match held this year at Dunolliebog Farm on the outskirts of Oban.

The MacCormick brothers from Appin, John and Gregor, dominated the prizelist with John taking the overall award and then

winning the fun event, the ploughman's race.

As a result of the popular competition £1,000 was collected for Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease.

Results

Horse class

1 Neil MacPhail, Campbelltown
2 Allan Thomson, Aberfeldy
3 Tam MacMillan, Bute

Trailing plough

1 Charlie Campbell, N Connel
2 Rab Birrell, Perth
3 M Blacklaw, Perth
4 George Mutch, Perth

Mounted plough

1 John MacCormick, Appin
2 Gregor MacCormick, Appin
3 Willie Buchanan, Achnaba
4 Craig Cameron, Inion
5 Ian Livingston, Bute
6 Colin Campbell, Achnacreebry

Overall

1 John MacCormick

2 Gregor MacCormick
3 Willie Buchanan

Best Start

1 John MacCormick
2 Colin Campbell

Straightest

1 John MacCormick
2 Gregor MacCormick

Levellest

1 John MacCormick

Ins and outs

1 Gregor MacCormick

Ploughman's race

1 John MacCormick

SAC urge cooperation over sheep scab prevention measures

THE Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) is advising sheep farmers to co-operate to tackle sheep scab.

This advice comes in the wake of the suspension of cypermethrin sheep dips by the Government on February 22, this year which further reduces the options for the treatment and control of this highly infectious disease and other external parasites of sheep such as lice and ticks.

At this time of the year, the effects of sheep scab are particularly severe. And, stock returning from away wintering provide increase opportunities for the disease to spread. Animals at risk from sheep scab should receive the appropriate treatment.

The Scottish Sheep Scab Initiative (SSSI) and SAC strongly support the formation of local Sheep Scab Action Groups.

Outbreaks should be reported to neighbours and the SSSI Helpline (0131 472 4031) so that the disease can be stamped out.

Sheep scab is recognised as one of the most contagious diseases of sheep in Britain.

The disease severely affects the welfare of sheep and has a significant economic impact through its effect on the condition of ewes, the growth rate of lambs, damage to wool and reduced quality of sheep skins. Sheep scab occurs in most areas of the country - potentially all year round, but more commonly in the winter and spring. The disease is treated by dipping or by injecting sheep with a macrocyclic lactone (ML) wormer.

Following the suspension of cypermethrin dips, the only dips available to control sheep scab contain diazinon, an organophosphate (OP). Organic producers may not use OP dips. The use of ML wormers to control both sheep scab and internal parasites is probably unsustainable in the long term.

The Scottish Sheep Scab Initiative was launched at the Kelso Ram Sales in September 2003 and is a response to concerns about the increased spread of sheep scab throughout Scotland since the end of compulsory dipping in 1992.

According to Brian Hosie from SAC Veterinary Services - who is supporting the Initiative with veterinary advice designed to control and eventually eradicate sheep scab from Scotland - the Initiative has a three-pronged approach.

'The aim of the initiative is to (1) promote best practice in terms of scab control, (2) minimise the impact of any outbreaks through effective and coordinated treatment, and (3) maximise the effects of preventative action, by highlighting the key risk periods,' he explains.

Brian Hosie says, that quite apart from the fact that it is an offence under the Sheep Scab Order 1997 for owners and keepers of sheep to fail to treat scab cases or move affected sheep, it is vital that producers plan their scab control strategy because of the high economic and welfare impact of the disease.

'Farmers must seek advice from their vet and discuss plans with their neighbours to maximise the benefits of their actions. The shame is not in having the disease, but in not treating it,' he stressed.

New flock rules in force

LAST MONDAY, (March 20) new rules on the recording of sheep movements on farm came into force.

The rules demand that farmers have a separate flock register for each of their holdings, even if they operate only one flock under one business name.

Farmers running one flock over, for example three or four holdings, each with a different Country Parish Holding (CPH) number, will be required to keep separate flock registers for each one and movements between these units must be notified to SEERAD.

To minimise bureaucracy and to avoid the need for duplicate and unnecessary sets of records on each holding, farmers can amalgamate their CPH numbers.

The National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS) is encouraging farmers to consider this option before the new regime starts next week.

NFUS Vice President Bob Howat said: 'I have two farms with two different sheep flocks so I understand why there is a need for me to have separate flock registers.'

'But many farmers will run one flock across more than one holding. Given that the flock is one unit as far as disease control is concerned, there is no reason to have duplicate paperwork at three or four sites when one will do the job.'

'We raised this with Executive officials who have accepted that point.'

'So, to address this potential problem, farmers can amalgamate their CPH numbers, which bring together the various holdings under one number and allows one set of records to be kept.'

'The new system started last Monday and, in theory, inspections could also begin from then. We don't want any members to inadvertently fall foul of the rules when they can take a relatively simple step by phoning their local SEERAD office and amalgamating the holding numbers.'

'Farmers should also bear in mind that the sheep identification rules are part of cross-compliance, so if farmers get it wrong, their Single Farm Payment could face a penalty.'

'I'd urge sheep farmers to look at their own situation and see if they need to act over the next few days.'

Glasna Mules top Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 2854 store and breeding sheep at its fortnightly sale.

Mule and Cheviot Mule lambs from Glasna sold to £50 and £73 for in-lamb Mule ewes from the same home.

Stirling Wednesday

UNITED Auctions had forward 1648 store cattle and 58 cast cows store and 835 store hoggets and mule ewes with lambs at foot.

Bullocks sold to 159p for a Charolais cross off Capenoch to average 127.1p.

Heifers sold to 138p for a Charolais cross from the same home to average 117.4p

Cast cows sold to 98p per kilo for a Limousin cross off of Westhall to average 73.6p per kilo.

Farmers given registration extension in water 'shambles'

THE National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS) Scotland has received confirmation from Rural Development Minister Ross Finnie that the deadline by which farmers can register to abstract water at a lower charge will be extended from 31 March to 30 September.

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency had been proposing to increase the registration charge for farmers wishing to abstract water from £134 before 31 March to nearly £3000 thereafter.

However, despite being only 10 days from the original application deadline, there has been absolutely no official information to farmers about this change of deadline or even what the details of the new Water Environment Charging Scheme are.

There has been a public



presumption they have only 10 days left to register at the reduced rate even though they have no idea of the details of the scheme.

'We have now been told the original deadline will be extended to 30 September. That will give farmers more time, and crucially give time for the Executive or SEPA to announce what farmers are being told they have to register for.'

'However, whilst this extension gives some relief, we now hear unofficially that the reduced rate will rise from £134 to £214. That is not a huge amount of money, but I would like to know how SEPA can justify that rise.'

'There are a host of questions that need answered immediately.'

'What exactly are the details of the new scheme?'

'SEPA changed them half way through the consulta-

tion but there has been no word on the outcome of that consultation.'

'Will SEPA also be asking farmers to pay the annual subsistence charge this year?'

'If the registration period is extended until 30 September after the summer irrigation period, I don't know it can justify charging farmers for the costs of inspections that won't take place because farmers haven't registered? Also, will new application forms be issued that reflect the new rules?'

'We need urgent clarification from the Executive on all these points immediately.'

Market report

DINGWALL - Dingwall and Highland Marts

Lambs

Mule - £50 Glasna; £38.50 Lochduh; £34.50 Pitmain.
Cheviot mule - £50 Glasna; £31 East Clyde.
Cheviot - £48 South Balkeith; £45.50 Salscraggie; £44 Bual.
Texel cross - £47.50 34 Lochbay; £46.50 Balvaire; £38.50 Lower Seafield.
Blackface - £43.50 Drynie; £38.50 34 Lochbay; £37 Midfeam Farms.
Suffolk cross - £43 Lochduh; £39.50 Balvaire; £39 Mains of Aigas.
Cross - £41 Brin Mains; £35.50 Glenside; £29 Shewglie.
Leyn cross - £35 Peallaig.
Charollais cross - £33.50 Rockfield.
Beltex cross - £33 Knockie
Half bred - £32 Bogburn; £27.50 Rockfield.

Gimmers

Croft - £33 Muirends.
Mule - £26 Glasna.

In-lamb gimmers

Mule - £85 Peallaig; £67 Glasna.
Cheviot mule - £66 Peallaig.

Feeding ewes

Texel - £70 Burnside Croft; £66 Woodside; £65 Corrieofis.
Rouge - £70 Woodside.
Rockfield cross - £67 Kilcoy; £65 Inshes; £62 Conon Brae Farms.
Suffolk - £67 Lochduh; £65 Strathskiaich.

Texel cross - £60 Kilcoy; £52 Conon Brae Farms; £49 Bunchrew.
Half bred - £56 Kilcoy.
Cheviot - £55 South Balkeith; £48 Lochduh; £47 Morvich.
Cross - £55 Little Croy; £47 Lower Seafield; £35 Bunchrew.
Mule - £47.50 Conon Brae Farms; £44 6 Woodside of Culloden; £42.50 Fornightly.
Cheviot mule - £47 Lochduh.
Blackface - £37 Drynie; £31 Blackford; £30.50 Gaskbeg.

In-lamb ewes

Mule - £73, £67 Glasna. Lleyn - £60 Peallaig.
Cross - £50 Glasna; £42 Peallaig.
Cheviot - £42 Peallaig; £32 Fasach.
Cheviot mule - £37 Glasna.
Blackface - £36 Glasna; £30 Peallaig.
Texel cross - £26 Glasna.

Ewes with lambs at foot

Mule - £35 Topferlie.

Wedders

Cheviot - £36 194 Migdale; £31.50 Croyroston; £26 Rhamnich.

Rams

Suffolk - £55 Conon Brae Farms; £51 Lower Seafield; £50 The Arr.
Texel - £52.50 Drynie; £49 Lower Gartally; £40 Kilcoy.
Cheviot - £47.50 Lower Gartally; £45 South Balkeith; £35 Torrish Estate.
Border Leicester - £39.50 Little Croy.
Blackface - £39.50 Drynie; £34 6 Woodside of Culloden.
Lleyn - £32 Peallaig.

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FIREARMS SAKO HUNTER .243, threaded for T8, very good condition, FAC required, £350 ono.

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BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

THE OBAN TIMES

West Highland Times

THE REGIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE WEST HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS AND ARGYLL



The Oban Times

The Oban Times is the best-selling weekly newspaper in the Highlands and is distributed via 1742 newsagents every week

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BLACK - Annette and family of the late John Black wish to thank all relatives and friends for kindness, flowers and cards. Thanks to Doctors at Lorn Medical Centre, also Macmillan nurses. Thanks to Hamish Hoy for arranging funeral and cremation. Also thanks to Christopher Stevenson for lovely service and music.

BROWN - Effie and the family of the late John Brown would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind expressions of sympathy received at this very sad time. Thanks also to Tweeddale Surgery, in particular Dr Massie, the District Nurses, Home Carers and the medical staff at the Belford Hospital. To Mike and Ewen, we are grateful for the thoughtful and caring manner you arranged the funeral and cremation. Many thanks to all who paid their respects at the Church and the Crematorium and to all who contributed donations to Tweeddale Surgery.

IN MEMORIAM

ARMSTRONG - In loving memory of my dear mother, who passed away on March 23, 1975; also remembering dear friends Tootsie and Marie Campbell, Mrs Madge MacIsaac, and the Rev. John MacLeod, also Donnie Ferguson, a very kind and caring vet. - Inserted by Mrs Mary Lamont.

BROWN - In loving memory of my dear brother-in-law, Hector, who died at his home on March 24, 2004.

You left me with many happy memories Always in my thoughts. Sadly missing you. - Seonaid, Hillside, 11 Balesphuil, Tiree.

CAMERON - In ever loving memory of Ian (Don), who died March 15, 2005. Treasured memories fill our lives. - Heather, Nik and all the family.

CHAMBERS - Kieran. But everyday We remember and miss you 'Our little angel.' Taken from us March 25, 2000. Forever in our thoughts, Safe in God's keeping Always loved. - Mum and Dad.

DEMPSTER - In loving memory of our dear mother, Morag Scouler, who died March 24, 1986; also her husband Kenny, died December 1, 1989. - Fondly remembered by John, Hugh, Marjorie, Annabel and the grandchildren.

GRAY - In loving memory of our dear mum, gran and great-granny, Morag, who died March 25, 2004. You always had a smile to share Time to give and time to care A loving nature kind and true These are the memories we have of you. So dearly loved So sadly missed.

- Irene, David, Sharon, Paul, Freya and Anna xx.
MACDONALD - In loving memory of Lachie, dearly loved husband, dad, father-in-law and papa who died on March 21, 2002. Always in my thoughts. - Effie. Loved and remembered always.

- Mairi-Anne and Neil. We miss you, papa. -Lots of love, Kieran, Kyle and Ryan, xxx.

MCCORQUODALE - Donald and Morag are delighted to announce the birth of their son (Angus), a wee brother for Ewan and Fraser.

MCCORQUODALE - Donald and Morag are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Donald James, on March 3, 2006, a wee brother for Mairi. Special thanks to Connel Surgery, Oban Maternity and RAH, Paisley.

THOMSON - Fergus and Katie (nee Kerr) are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter, Anna Jane, on February 14, 2006 at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley.

MARRIAGES
ROBINSON - In St George's Church, Kendal on February 25, 2006, Norman, younger son of the late Donald and the late Shiena, North Connel, to Laura, second daughter of Austen and Marilyn, Kendal.

RUBY WEDDING
MACLEOD - On March 23, 1966 at Oban Old Parish Church, by Rev William MacDonald, Bruce to Elizabeth, 59 Nant Drive, Oban.

RAMSAY - McINTYRE - At St Conan's Church, Lochawe, on March 26, 1966, George to Margaret, Balnaspick Cottage, Kincaig, By Kintessie.

DEATHS
AMBROSE - James, retired radiologist, died peacefully at the Argyll & Bute Hospital on March 12, 2006. Much loved husband of Sheena and dear father of Euan and Lucy. Private Cremation followed by a service of thanksgiving at Ardchattan Kirk, North Connel on Friday March 24, at 1pm to which all are warmly invited. Family flowers only Retiring collection for R.N.L.I.

HAY - Peacefully on March 18, 2006, at the Lynn of Lorn Nursing Home, Benderloch, James (Jimmy), aged 75 years, beloved husband of Johanna, 12 Longdale Crescent, Oban much loved father of Michael, Donald, Anthea, Iain and the late James, dearly loved grandfather of Christopher, Melissa, Josh, Daniel, Robert, Rebecca and Jennifer.

ROBERTSON - Kathleen, peacefully after a short illness at Belford Hospital on March 21, 2006, wife of the late Alan, dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral service on Monday, March 27, at St Mary's RC Church, Fort William, at 10.15am and thereafter to Inverness Crematorium. Family flowers only.

McNICOL - Precious memories of dear parents

and grandparents, Janet, died March 24, 1986 and Duncan, died November 29, 1987. Love and memories linger As time goes on its way. - Nellie, Tommy and family.
TONG - Treasured memories of Iris, beloved wife and mum, who passed away March 25, 2005. Always in our thoughts and hearts. - Alec, Alison and Steve.

ECCLESIASTICAL NOTICES

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION
Sunday 26 March 2006
Lent 4

Mothering Sunday
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Communion 0800
Choral Mattins 1015
Sunday School and Creche
Parish Eucharist 1130

Loop System
Large Print Hymn Books
All welcome
Norman MacCallum, Provost
Tel: (01631) 562323

Christ Church, Lochgilhead
Loop System
Holy Eucharist 0900
Service for Mid-Lent
Sunday 1100

St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Holy Eucharist 1100
St Columba, Bishop's House,

ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN
Campbell Street Church
Sunday 26 March 2006
11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

Phone-In 'Worship Link' available
Wednesday 29 March 2006
7.30 p.m.

Prayer and Bible Ministry
Rev. Archie McPhail MA, MTh
Tel: (01631) 567076
All welcome

DESTINY CHURCH
OBAN
Sunday 26 March
Drummore School
Lower Soroba
Oban

11 a.m.
And meeting on
Thursday evening,
7.30 p.m., in the Lorne
Speaker:
Dave Henderson

Telephone:
01631 564283
www.destiny-church.com

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The Croft
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In memory of Dawn Joyce

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CRC Scotland spends more on research than any other organisation
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Clydebank, G81 2LA

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Please give your financial support by donation, deed of covenant or legacy
Please send to Appeals Department, Highland Arts Effort, Royal Blind Asylum School, P.O. Box 500, Gillespie Crescent, Edinburgh, EH10 4HZ

MEMORIALS
MACLACHLAN'S OBAN MONUMENTAL WORKS
Design and Price List on Request
Cleaning and Restoration
Gravestone and Memorial Seats
Graveside
Lochgilhead - Oban
(01631) 566629
563785 (evening)

Oban Times ANNOUNCEMENTS
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Thought for the Week

RECENT coverage in the media of the decision of a vicar in the Church of England to withdraw 'for a season' from her work has served to highlight the Christian experience of forgiveness.

It wasn't that she hadn't received God's pardon for her own soul, but that she felt unable to extend any human expression of it to those homicide-bombers who murdered her daughter last July in London.

But, the matter goes deeper. It appears that this servant of the Gospel was taking 'time out' to try to unravel the complex of her own feelings that she felt was preventing her from fulfilling her ministry for God.

Weighed down by such a burden, she will be seeking to experience more of the sufficiency of God's enabling love. She will do this because her desire will be to come to a place from which she can look back upon her terrible loss without bitterness. She will be seeking a way to that place within her own being from which she will be able to extend the gift of forgiveness to those who would, with a contrite heart, seek it.

As she said: 'A commission or a government cannot forgive; only I, eventually, could do it. And I am not yet ready to forgive.'

What an honest and courageous thing to say. Her willingness to step back and seek such grace is immensely impressive and void of hypocrisy. Surely God, in his time and by his mercy in Christ, will honour his servant because such a worthy desire is the kind God loves to fulfil.

This desire is expressed within the limitations of our

human condition. It means 'taking time' to get things sorted out.

But let us not glibly think that 'time' heals all personal wounds. Clearly it does not. It is what we do with our time, and the opportunities within it, which can bring us the measure of inner healing and determination we need to move on from the past and face the future, freed from the shackles of anger and resentment.

This is never easy, but it is always necessary. Yet this is, sadly, not always the way it is with us. There are some who, though they have the time to seek resolution with those who have wronged them, prefer to nurse their grudges. They harden their hearts and remain twisted. There are some who delight to fan into flame past grievances which should have been starved of such oxygen long ago.

This 'beating of the air' only works exhaustion and dissatisfaction. At this time of the year many of us approach the events of the Death and Resurrection of God's Son with thankful hearts. As we do so, it remains for us to have such a sight of the Saviour that we will be prepared to confront any grievances we may have with others and get them sorted out while we have time and before it is too late to do anything about them.

It is right that we should pray for this vicar that God will bless and restore her. But we should also pray for ourselves that we may be generous to forgive others in their need, just as God in Christ would forgive us in ours.

The Rev Bob Nelson, Minister, Isle of Mull parishes.

Muckairn Church Guild

MUCKAIRN Church Guild recently held a free tea in the village hall, Taynuilt.

Twenty five people attended and were able to learn about the work of the guild from literature on show and from Sheila Potts, Presbyterian Project Co-ordinator.

On the evening of March 3, the World Day of Prayer service was held in Muckairn Church.

Readers from four different denominations took part.

The order of service, Signs of the Times, was written by women of South Africa.

Refreshments

A short address was given by the Rev Margaret Millar; Daphne Campbell played the organ and refreshments were provided by guild members.

Fellowship in warm and comfortable surroundings were much appreciated on a cold night.

Muckairn Guild members met in the church on the afternoon of Monday March 6.

The meeting began with the hymn 'Brother, Sister, Let me Serve You' and a reading from Matthew's Gospel giving the humility and faith of a child as an example to Christians.

Talk
Toril Frantzen from Argyll and Bute Social Work Department then gave an interesting talk on fostering.

The Family Placement

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Please keep sending in the news about your church!
Church News, The Oban Times, PO Box 1
Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB or FAX: (01631) 568001



Alan Reid MP, centre, visited Oban and gave his support to the Fairtrade campaigners. 12Feb01

Fairtrade Fortnight sees Oban move nearer to town status

DURING the Fairtrade Fortnight the number Fairtrade towns and cities in the UK has risen from 150 to 170. Dunoon is one of them and it is hoped that Oban will soon be another.

Special events in this year's Fairtrade Fortnight include a visit by Alan Reid, MP for Argyll and Bute and Councillor Allan Macaskill, leader of Argyll and Bute Council. Members of the Oban High School Young Enterprise Group also joined in; the pupils sold Fairtrade Christmas hampers. Managing director S6 pupil Steven Kersley said: 'The hampers sold well. We are trying to alert people in the town to Fairtrade products

Throughout the UK sales of products with the Fairtrade mark are now running at £200 million a year.

Virgin Trains is switching all its tea, coffee, hot chocolate, sugar and chocolate sprinkles to Fairtrade.

Altogether 1,500 Fairtrade products are now available. Fairtrade benefits farmers and workers in developing countries, offering a fair price, an additional premium, environmental benefits and more secure markets.

Murdoch Gatward, of Imani Enterprises in Oban, regularly visits Fairtrade projects in Africa and sees for himself the new schools, hospitals and other facilities being

built with the social capital being created through the community bonuses engendered by Fairtrade.

He is in Africa now, during this Fairtrade fortnight. The Fairtrade steering group in Oban is open for anyone to join.

It has links with Taynuilt, Connel and Appin as well as with Dunoon.

As far as Oban is concerned several churches, schools and businesses are in the process of being included in the Oban Fairtrade Directory but more are needed to register in order to gain recognition from the Fairtrade Foundation.

On June 29 this year it is hoped that Oban will become a Fairtrade Town.

More businesses are needed to register including catering establishments, bed and breakfast premises and hotels.

They can include any group who agree to serve only fairly traded tea and coffee in its canteen and which agrees to promote Fairtrade, especially in Fairtrade Fortnight.

Anyone wishing to enquire about registration is invited to contact Moira Copeland on the E-mail address: moiraatcolryn@aol.com

Obituary

Alastair Dugald Jackson

ALASTAIR Dugald Jackson was born in the village of Ardrishaig on 18 September 1911.

After leaving Oban High School, he began his life-time work in public service with Argyll County Council by joining the County Clerk's office in Lochgilhead during 1930.

Officer

Throughout the Second World War, 1939-45, he was commissioned as an officer with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (ASH) during which time he served as an adjutant and a company commander.

He was mentioned in despatches for gallantry and outstanding service in North West Europe while serving as a captain with the ASH.

Retiring

On return to civilian life in 1946, he was appointed Deputy County Clerk. During 1949 he was appointed County Clerk of Argyll and occupied this position until retiring in 1973.

In remarks made to The Oban Times at the time of his retirement, the convenor of Argyll County Council,



Alastair Dugald Jackson

the late J G Mathieson, summed up his working life: 'Alastair Jackson has truly served his native county with distinction and his contribution to the general wellbeing of Argyll has been outstanding. Quietly efficient and administratively gifted, Alastair Jackson has always been a delightful person to work with and I look back on our long and close association with pleasure.'

Upgrading

Of the many problems encountered during his long service with the

opportunity to continue their studies.

Outside work, Alastair Jackson was a TA officer in the Argylls, founder president of Mid Argyll Rotary Club, Justice of the Peace for more than 50 years and appointed an Honorary Sheriff in 1963.

On his retiral as County Clerk, he represented Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay on Strathclyde Regional Council, simultaneously acting as chairman of the Argyll and Bute Valuation Appeal Committee.

He was happily married to June Rowe, who predeceased him in 1999 and they spent the majority of their married life in Mid Argyll, moving to the North Lorn area in 1979 to be closer to their family.

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TIMES Sport

New code of safety for Loch Linnhe

A NEW code of practice has been developed to promote safety in the upper Loch Linnhe area.

The new code, drawn up by Highland Council, has been welcomed by Lochaber Yacht Club.

Large vessels going with the tide will generally have right of way over large vessels stemming the tide under the new code.

Passage

No small vessel, including a sailing vessel, will be permitted to impede the passage of a large vessel on the loch under the new code of safety.

The area where the code will apply is bounded to the

Sailing

south by a line drawn east-west through the southern most navigation buoy to the south of the Corran Narrows and to the north by a line drawn across the western end of the Annat Narrows.

All vessels operating in the area should listen on VHF channel 16 and all vessels exceeding 40 metres in length should make a brief safety announcement on that channel prior to entering, manoeuvring or departing.

Vessels navigating the upper loch to berth at ClydeBoyd Pier in Corpach

Sailing

must give at least 24 hours notice and obtain suitable berthing times.

Vessels should call up Corpach Pier after passing Glensanda Quarry then again when going through the Corran Narrows in order to confirm times for the boatmen at the ClydeBoyd Pier.

Starboard

Vessels not familiar with berthing and tidal conditions must not proceed beyond the green starboard hand buoy at River Lochy, except on slack water or ebb tides.

If a vessel is required to

wait for berth or tides a suitable safe anchorage would be Inverscaddle Bay or Treslaig Bay.

Welcoming the new safety measures, Lochaber Yacht Club treasurer, Bob Aitken, said: 'If we have a regatta it has to be controlled for safety reasons.'

'We are participating because it is of interest to the club not to have big ships coming down when we are holding events.'

'And more importantly, for big boats to know they are landing in a fleet of little yachts.'

'These are safety measures we are happy to support.'

Oban Lorne face last league tie of the season

OBAN Lorne will be in action for the last time this season in Division 5 West A against Cumbernauld at Glencruitten.

This is a vital match for the men in green as a win would guarantee their place in Division 4 next season.

A defeat would leave Oban counting on other teams doing them a favour by beating their three closest rivals who can all overtake them on points.

Cumbernauld are currently third in the league

Rugby

and have the best defensive record in the division this year.

Oban will really have their work cut out if they are going to overturn the narrow defeat suffered away from home earlier this season.

It will take a determined effort by all 15 men for the entire 80 minutes, such as was seen in defeating GHK, if a home win is to be recorded.

Oban certainly have the talent and the strike runners to do some damage but they will need application and teamwork to go along with these qualities on the day.

The 2nd XV also have their final league match against Cumbernauld in a double header which will be played at Connel, both matches kick off at 3pm.

A good turnout of supporters would be welcomed to close out the season in style.

Hockey heroes make final cut for Scotland

HOT on the heels of their victory in the Scottish School's Hockey Cup Final, 12 Lochaber youngsters represented the Highlands in the Inter-District cup which is the main selection event for Scotland's national side.

And what a weekend of hockey it proved to be, with Barnaby Barber chosen to be Scotland's number one keeper at under-18 level, and Lewis Gibson making the final cut for the first time.

Yan Adams and Ieuan Scott-Woodhouse completed a tally of four Highland Youngsters in the under-18 team while Wei Adams and Craig Matheson are in with a real chance of making the under-16 team after commendations from the under-18 selectors.

During the competition itself, Highland had their best performance in years coming away with two wins

Hockey

from four, and missing out on second place by just a point.

West District, with most of Scotland's existing squad, once again dominated proceedings by winning all four matches.

Highland went into the last match against East needing at least a draw for second place. East took the lead on three occasions only for Highland to equalise each time with goals from Yan (2) and Ieuan.

Highland looked comfortable but with two minutes remaining East scored to secure a 4-3 win and take second place away from their younger, less experienced Highland opponents.

Highland Squad: B Barber, C Matheson, C Luxton, L Gibson, S Easton, M Hemm, W Adams, S Sedgwick, E Tregaskis, A Shepherd, D Davidson (all Lochaber), I Scott-Woodhouse, S Scott-Woodhouse, D MacKay

Shinty first for Upper Achintore



The new Upper Achintore shinty team.

A NEW primary shinty team from Upper Achintore took on the history and tradition of teams such as Newtonmore and Kyles Athletic in pursuit of the national first shinty title at Fort William's Nevis Centre last week.

Strathpeffer won the competition with a 3-1 victory over Oban's Park Primary in the final but in a truly pulsating competition the day's play saw 14 regional qualifiers from an original entry of 172 teams give their all in pursuit of the title for primary aged children.

The league stages showed the quality of the teams as the games were played at a hectic pace, with no shortage of skill, with intriguing competition between new teams such as Ardriahag, and Upper Achintore taking on more established names such as Newtonmore and Kyles Athletic.

With the competition so evenly matched the league sections were very competitive, with the free scoring Strathpeffer team eventually qualifying for the semi final stages as league winners of Section A, with Portree joining them in the runner up spot.

In Section B, Park School qualified as the winners of their section and they were joined by a spirited Milngavie and Bearsden team who had to wait until the very last

Shinty

league game where Loch Duich, Wester Ross, took a valuable point from Lochaber team Banavie to send Milngavie and Bearsden through at the expense of a good Banavie team on goal difference.

Park took the lead in the final and looked strong, but Strathpeffer struck back to level the match making the last minutes very tense.

Extra-time was looming when Player of the Tournament Tom Evans of Strathpeffer picked up the ball in midfield and drove the ball into the net to give Strathpeffer the lead.

He repeated the feat seconds later from the penalty spot to ensure that the trophy was heading to the north of Scotland and make the final score 3-1 for Strathpeffer.

At the end of play the Chieftain of the Camanachd Association Douglas MacIntosh MBE and President of the Camanachd Association, John MacKenzie presented t-shirts and certificates to all teams.

There was a special fair play award to the Raigmor team from Inverness who displayed outstanding sportsmanship.

See the wild woods by canoe

Canoeing

FORESTRY Commission Scotland is running a guided open canoe trip on Saturday, April 15, an opportunity for the adventurous to paddle the rivers and lochs of Galloway with forest and wildlife experts.

Allan MacKenzie of Lochaber Forest District enthused: 'Travelling along the forest edge by river and loch will allow people to experience some of Britain's most remote and spectacular woodlands.'

'There will be great opportunities for seeing a range of wildlife close up such as otter and osprey - as well as an abundance of native plants, which we'll be pointing out to people.'

'In addition, as water was the main means of transport in the Highlands from pre-historic times up until the 19th century, there will be many traces of ancient settlements and ways of life to see along the route.'

Equipment and expert tuition in handling an open canoe will be provided by experienced instructors from Monster Activities.

No previous experience in canoeing is necessary.

Anyone interested in taking part should contact Adele Beck at Forestry Commission Scotland, 01397 702184 for further information.

Costs are £40 adults and £20 for accompanied children. Pre-booking is essential.

Indoor football league

Football

Ali Young Indoor League first division

Club	Pt	Pts
1 Lochaber Bar	2	6
2 Ben Nevis Leisure	2	3
3 Scotrail	2	3
4 Russels Rangers	2	3
5 Morrisons	2	3
6 Five Alive	2	3
7 Lochaber Leisure	2	3
8 Celtic	2	0

Results: Celtic 0-12 Ben Nevis Leisure; Five Alive 4-2 Russels Rangers; Lochaber Bar 1-0 Morrisons; Scotrail 4-5 Lochaber Leisure

Fixtures: Ben Nevis Leisure v Lochaber Bar; Lochaber Leisure v Five Alive; Morrisons v Celtic; Russels Rangers v Scotrail.

Shinty



Club	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Fort William	3	3	0	0	13	3	6
Newtonmore	3	1	2	0	5	3	4
Kilmalieu	2	1	1	0	4	3	3
Strathglass	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Inveraray	3	0	2	1	5	7	2
Oban Cam	3	0	2	1	5	10	2
Kingussie	2	0	1	1	1	4	1
Lochcarron	2	0	2	4	7	0	0

Club	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Lovat	2	1	1	0	4	2	3
Caberfeidh	1	1	0	0	6	0	2
Glennquhart	2	1	0	1	3	1	2
Beauly	1	1	0	0	1	0	2
Kintlochiel	1	0	1	0	2	1	1
Inverness	2	0	1	1	0	3	1
Aberdeen U	2	0	1	0	6	1	1
Lochaber	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skye	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Club	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Glennorchy	3	2	1	0	9	4	5
Bute	2	2	0	0	4	0	4
Lochside	3	2	0	1	7	3	4
GMA	3	1	2	0	9	7	4
Kyles	2	0	2	0	4	2	2
Ballauchulish	3	0	1	2	1	5	1
Kilmory	2	0	0	2	0	5	0
Tayforth	2	0	2	2	8	0	0

Club	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Skye	3	2	1	0	13	8	5
Fort William	2	2	0	0	6	2	4
Newtonmore	2	2	0	0	8	5	4
Kingussie	2	1	0	1	7	3	2
Lovat	2	1	0	1	6	7	2
Strathglass	2	0	1	1	5	6	1
Glennorchy	2	0	1	1	4	5	1
Caberfeidh	2	0	1	1	4	7	1
Boleskine	2	0	1	1	6	1	1
Kilmalieu	3	0	1	2	6	1	1

Club	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Strachur	3	1	2	0	3	2	3
Oban Celtic	2	1	1	0	8	0	2
Inveraray	1	1	0	0	4	0	2
Glennorchy	1	1	0	0	3	0	2
Edinburgh	1	1	0	0	3	2	2
Kyles	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
Colglen	1	0	0	1	2	0	0
GMA	2	0	2	2	7	0	0
Aberdour	2	0	2	0	11	0	0

Club	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Lochcarron	2	2	0	0	13	0	4
Lochaber	2	2	0	0	13	2	4
Nairn	2	2	0	0	4	1	4
Kintlochiel	2	1	0	1	7	2	3
Kincraig	2	1	0	1	3	6	2
Glennorchy	1	0	1	0	2	1	1
Lochbroom	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Beauly	2	0	2	2	8	0	0
Inverness	2	0	2	1	7	0	0
Ardnamhain	2	0	2	0	15	0	0

Women's rugby team beat Spain

Rugby

LOCHMADDY'S Beth Macleod played in the Scotland Women rugby team's last game in their Six Nations campaign.

The team finished on a high in Spain beating the home side 16-12.

But it was an uphill struggle after going 12-8 down at half-time.

Scotland's try scorers were Karen Findlay and Lucy Millard with Paula Chalmers kicking a penalty in each half.

The next test for the Scottish ladies is a warm-up match against Ireland in August before the world cup in Edmonton.

Coach Gil Stevenson said: 'I'm delighted. It was important to win here and it is not the easiest thing to do in Spain.'

'It was even more important because Spain are in our world cup pool along with Kazakhstan and New Zealand.'

Pool

Club	P	W	L	Pts
Loch B	14	13	1	26
Markie Dans	15	13	2	26
Cellar A	15	11	4	22
Claredon	15	10	5	20
Loch A	14	11	3	16
Cellar B	15	7	8	14
Bowling A	15	6	9	12
J & D B	15	6	9	12
J & D A	15	6	9	10



Kyleakin and Skye Wanderers after the friendly on the new pitch. (12/06/01)

Friendly launches Kyleakin pitch

FIVE years after Kyleakin's community hall was built on the site of the village's old playing field, its new pitch witnessed its first action.

The Glasgow-based island exiles Skye Wanderers played Kyleakin FC in a friendly match and won 3-2 in a closely fought contest on a good playing surface.

Kyleakin's young team boasted three Fort William players in George Nesbett, Michael Taylor and Scott Graham who were all playing for their home team. It was a 'made in Fort William' opening goal for Kyleakin with Nesbett crossing from the left for Scott Graham to slot the ball home. Wanderers came back into the match and

Football

midfielder Jamie Hamilton, who was on loan from Sleet for the day, split the home team's defence and Norman MacDonald ran on to equalise.

Darren Wainwright added a second but goals from Jonathon Campbell and Dave MacAskill saw Wanderers clinch the win. Wanderers captain Jonathon Campbell picked up the Brian Comrie Memorial Cup for the win but Kyleakin served notice that they could be challenging at the top of the Skye and Lochalsh Bagshaw League if they can keep a settled starting line-up.

Ardgour man's eighth London marathon

ARDGOUR athlete Jon Tombs is to run his eighth London marathon in aid of a cancer charity.

John, who has raised over £18,000 for MacMillan Cancer Relief is putting the finishing touches to his training schedule for the marathon on April 23 this year.

He said: 'I hope to raise as much money as possible again this year to help MacMillan continue its fantastic work.'

'We all know someone living with cancer - one in three people are diagnosed with it during their lifetime.'

Athletics

MacMillan is there to provide them with expert care and emotional support in the face of cancer. I'm running for MacMillan because of a family loss to cancer.'

People can sponsor Jon by visiting the www.justgiving.com/jontombs website.

MacMillan is hoping to raise £1 million this year to support the one million people living with cancer in the UK.



Glengarry Girls are ladies' shinty champions

'Garry girls retain their crown

GLENGARRY Girls are ladies' shinty champions once more after winning both leagues at their own indoor tournament held last Saturday in the Nevis Centre, Fort William.

Glengarry 'A' held onto the tournament cup by winning every game in their league, followed by 5-2 a win over Forth Camanachd in the final, while Glen-

Women's shinty

garry 'B' met Aberdeen University in a tough match that ended in tense penalties.

Linda Henderson, the captain of Glengarry was presented the Johnstone Cup by sponsor Mrs Ailsa Johnstone of D A Johnstone, Invergarry.

The tournament saw 11 teams from seven clubs take part in a great show of shinty.

Referees Michael Delaney and Shaun Nicholson awarded the player of the tournament to Kelly Murray, aged 12, from Oban.

Glengarry also awarded their player of the year shield to Fenella Macrae from Kyle of Lochalsh.

Year award

Offaly in Ireland started playing camogie at the age of 12. She joined Tir Connail immediately after moving to Glasgow six years ago. Hilda's shinty highlights include being selected for the first two International combination rule games against Ireland. Off the pitch Hilda is a horticulturalist and enjoys travelling the world.

Coming next week - your chance to win free tickets to a top SPL match



TIMES Sport



Lochbroom lose league debut tie to Kineraig

Shinty

Lochbroom 1
Kineraig 3

LOCHBROOM'S league challenge finally got under way last Saturday after their first two games were postponed due to poor weather. On Saturday they played host to Kineraig, who were formed by Lochbroom's Davie Irvine some 30-odd years ago.

The young home started very nervously against a much more experienced team but Lochbroom dominated the first half hour and it was against the run of play that Kineraig took the lead from a Peter Ross penalty.

The home side's heads went down and within two minutes Kineraig doubled their lead through Paul John Mackintosh.

Three minutes into the second half Lochbroom drew a goal back when an Ian 'Darkie' Fraser shot beat the keeper.

Lochbroom continued to pressurise the Kineraig defence but were still unable to add to their score and Kineraig capitalised on 'Broom's eagerness to press forward and sealed the away win in the 66th minute when Greg Chisolm gave keeper Davie Irvine no chance.

Next week, Lochbroom travel to play Beaully while Kineraig are at home to Glenurquhart.

Saturday's results

Shinty

Saturday March 18 2006
Marine Harvest Premier League
 Kilmallie 3 Lochcarron 2
 Kingussie 0 Fort William 3
 Oban Camanachd 2 Inveraray 2
 Strathglass 0 Newtonmore 0

North Division One
 Aberdeen Uni 0 Caberfeidh 6
 Inverness 0 Glenurquhart 3
 Kinlochshiel 2 Lovat 2

South Division One
 Bute 2 Ballachulish 0
 GMA 4 Kyles Athletic 4
 Glenorchy 5 Tayforth 1
 Lochside Rovers 3 Kilmory 0

North Division Two
 Boleskine 1 Glengarry 1
 Caberfeidh 2 Skye Camanachd 5
 Fort William 3 Kingussie 2
 Lovat 4 Strathglass 3
 Newtonmore 4 Kilmallie 2

South Division Two
 Aberdeen 0 Oban Celtic 8
 Edinburgh EL P Col Glen P
 Inveraray 4 GMA 0
 Strachur 1 Kyles Athletic 1

North Division Three
 Glenurquhart 2 Kinlochshiel 2
 Lochaber 6 Beaully 2
 Lochbroom 1 Kineraig 3
 Lochcarron 8 Ardnamurchan 0
 Nairnshire 2 Inverness 1

Massie snatches dramatic late winner for Kilmallie at Canal Park

A FRASER MASSIE goal in injury time earned Kilmallie full league points against Lochcarron at Canal Park on Saturday.

Kilmallie showed one change from the previous week with Ian Robertson dropping to the bench being replaced by 'Tottie' MacNichol. James MacNichol returned to the side in the unfamiliar role as substitute.

The visitors pressurised from the off and the home defence conceded an early free hit as they struggled to

clear their lines. The danger appeared to be averted but another weak clearance led to the ball reaching the unmarked Iain 'Jek' Mackenzie at the back post who blasted the ball past Kevin Toye in the home goal.

The home side's response was almost immediate. A sharp passing movement found 'Tottie' MacNichol and he turned Maclennan and fired in a fierce drive that was well saved by the young Lochcarron keeper.

Kilmallie were finding it hard to play the fluent pass-

ing shinty of the previous week against the powerful and physical visitors. Lochcarron played a more direct game aiming to get the ball forward to Allan 'Ham' Mackenzie and feed off the imposing full forward with Kenny Ross intercepted an attempted clearance and powered into the area to slip the ball past Toye to double the visitor's advantage.

On the half hour sustained pressure from the home side led to John Stewart pouncing on an error in the

Shinty

Kilmallie 3 Lochcarron 2

visitors defence to drive the ball across the keeper and into the back of the net.

Stewart, Rodger and Massie with fine touch play and instant control began to trouble the visiting defence and MacNichol was the focal point around which the home forwards buzzed.

The visiting keeper made a fine double save minutes before half time to deny the home side but just as the

Shinty

Kilmallie 3 Lochcarron 2

were now growing in confidence and used their pace to snuff out the danger. Kilmallie remained committed to pass and move upfront and created a number of chances but poor finishing prevented them from gaining the lead.

Lochcarron still proved dangerous and a fantastic save from Toye denied the ever-alert Mackenzie after 65 minutes.

Kilmallie introduced Robertson for the hard working Macpherson to freshen midfield and min-

utes later Donald Lamont pulled up injured and led to major reconstruction in the home ranks. James MacNicol went in at full back. Ewan Stoddart moved to half back with John Macphie moving to full centre and his hard running added impetus to the home sides' efforts.

In injury time, Kilmallie played the ball into the area and while the keeper blocked the first effort Fraser Massie showed the instincts of a poacher to force the ball into the net to seal victory.

This was highly competitive league tie and Lochcarron will be disappointed to throw away a two-goal lead but the young home side continued to show skill and determination in their play and merited the victory after a sticky start.

A young Kilmallie team travel to play an injury-struck Newtonmore this weekend while bottom-of-the-table Lochcarron go to Inveraray who are also still looking for their first win of the season.

Celtic hit eight at Aberdour

Shinty

Aberdour 0
Oban Celtic 8

AN EIGHT-goal thumping of newcomers Aberdour gave Oban Celtic their first away points of the season, with Scott Burnett enjoying a five-goal bonanza.

At least that's how it looks on paper but the scoreline flatters the visitors, who opened in style, netting three times in the 15 minutes with a brace from Burnett and one from Kevin Lockhart.

However, for the rest of the first-half Aberdour's young squad proved difficult to break down further and presented themselves as a stuffy outfit who persistently snuffed out any thoughts that the visitors may have had of increasing their lead before the break.

As a result, Oban Celtic players became increasingly frustrated and didn't settle again until the 49th minute when Burnett secured his hat-trick.

Further goals from Burnett on the hour and six minutes after, plus one apiece for Angus Campbell and Steven Davidson secured league points for the visitors and banished their first half jitters.

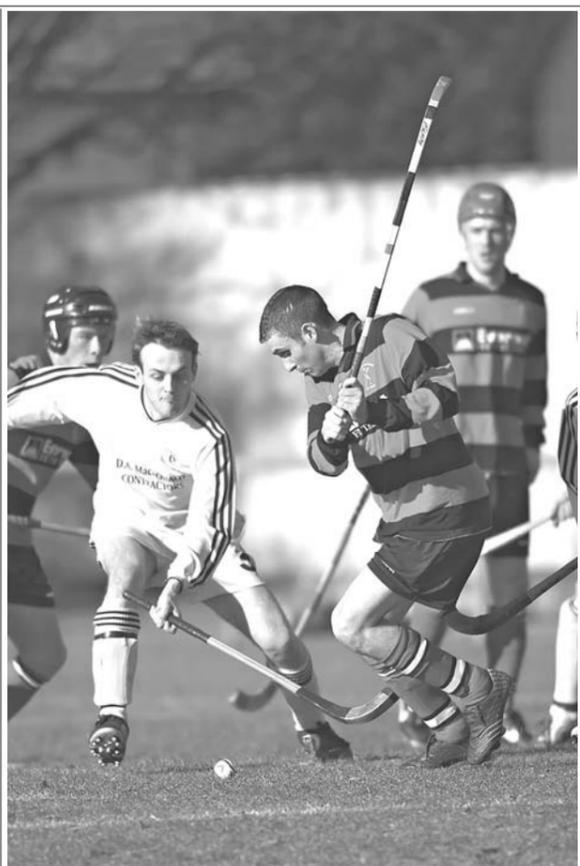
Instrumental in kick starting their team in the second period were Celtic's half-back Steven Lockhart and winger Lee Askew.

Oban Celtic manager Davy Hamilton was the first to acknowledge that Aberdour, once they have gained a bit more experience, could well prove to be an awkward team to overcome on their home ground.

Jim Jameson, Kyles Athletic

THE shinty world was saddened to learn of the death of Jim Jameson, Kyles Athletic. Jim captained the Kyles Camanachd Cup winning team at Oban in 1965 against Kilmallie.

The sympathy of all in the sport goes to his wife Lorna and sons Craig and Stuart.



Ian MacMillan fires home the opening goal at Mossfield. Picture - John MacTavish

Duffy double gives Lochside full points

Shinty

LOCHSIDE's home tie against Kilmory started at a hectic pace with Lochside goalkeeper Gavin Stobbart pulling off a fine save after only two minutes.

Early nerves were settled when Alan Duffy's well taken half-volley gave Lochside a ninth minute lead but half way through the first half tempers rose to boiling point and a stramash ended in a double sending off, each side losing a player.

In an evenly balanced second half, Alan Duffy scored again after 75 minutes and, five minutes later, Josh Rippon provided a pass to Johnny Will who scored the goal of the game, leaving Kilmory keeper Carmichael with no chance.

Lochside will need a top performance this weekend as they meet Kyles for the first time while Kilmory are away to Ballachulish.

Saturday March 25 2006

Marine Harvest Premier League
 Fort William v Strathglass
 Kingussie v Oban Camanachd
 Lochcarron v Inveraray
 Newtonmore v Kilmallie

North Division One
 Caberfeidh v Beaully
 Glenurquhart v Skye Camanachd
 Lochaber v Aberdeen University
 Lovat v Inverness

South Division One
 Ballachulish v Kilmory
 Glenorchy v Bute
 Lochside Rovers v Kyles
 Tayforth v Glasgow Mid Argyll
 Boleskine v Newtonmore
 Glengarry v Caberfeidh
 Kilmallie v Lovat

North Division Two
 Strathglass v Kingussie
 Kyles v Glasgow Mid Argyll
 Oban Celtic v Edinburgh EL
 Strachur v Glenorchy

North Division Three
 Ardnamurchan v Nairn
 Beaully v Lochbroom
 Inverness v Lochcarron
 Kineraig v Glenurquhart
 Kinlochshiel v Lochaber

Fort in control at the Dell

Shinty

Kingussie 0 Fort William 3

FOR THE first time in many years, this season's Premier table has a very different look - albeit only a handful of matches into the programme.

After last Saturday's victory at the Dell, Fort William are two points clear of Newtonmore-with Kingussie second from bottom.

On Saturday, Kingussie lost a Premier league tie for the first time since Lochcarron defeated them in May 2004. However, the level of Saturday's victory is not mirrored by the 0-3 scoreline. Fort William dominated large periods of the tie and were denied a greater margin of victory by some great goalkeeping by Andrew Borthwick.

Ronald Ross opened the contest with a fierce shot after two minutes which

Clark met a through pass from Smith to net Fort's second but the visitors had injuries to defenders Liam MacIntyre and John MacDonald, with both having to be replaced within minutes of the second-half starting.

The forced changes failed to stall Fort's flow and when Gordie MacKinnon ran in from the left to chip a third goal past Borthwick, the destination of the league point looked decided.

Borthwick produced another great reaction save as Smith tried an audacious chip shot over his shoulder and Smith blazed an easier effort over the bar before the Kingussie keeper again

saved well, this time from Chris Bamber.

In the 76th minute Fort William were denied a blatant penalty when Clark raced into the box where he was unceremoniously brought down by the keeper but Fort were awarded a free-hit outside the penalty area, which came to nothing.

In the closing minute, Bamber was again denied by Borthwick but Fort William cruised to the final whistle in total control.

This Saturday, Kingussie may include Russell Dallas in their squad, following his transfer from Glasgow Mid Argyll, for their home tie against Oban Camanachd while Fort William are also at home against league newcomers Strathglass.

Late Robertson equaliser at Oban

Shinty

Oban Camanachd 2
Inveraray 2

A SCOTT Robertson equaliser two minutes from time gave Inveraray a point at Oban.

Conditions were ideal for this Premier league clash at Mossfield and both teams set about playing fast attractive shinty from the off, with neither dominating.

The break-through came in 38 minutes when Camanachd's Daniel MacIntyre dispatched a quick free-hit into the Inveraray area, the ball broke to Ian MacMillan who fired home from 15 yards.

It seemed then that the home side would go into the interval in the lead but right on the stroke of half-time a Euan MacMurdo shot deflected off an Oban defender to steer the ball past stand-in goalkeeper Christopher Eccleston.

The second half was

equally balanced until the 77th minute when a long-range effort from Fraser Inglis beat Graham MacPherson in the 'Aray goal.

However, Inveraray to their credit kept searching for a way back into the tie and were rewarded two minutes from time when Scott Robertson netted the equaliser.

The match, which was sponsored by the Lochavullin Bar, was ably refereed by Duncan Kelly, Fort William, who kept a firm grip on proceedings without producing any cards.

Oban Camanachd go to Kingussie this week while Inveraray are at home to Lochcarron.

Glenorchy net five to go top of the table

Shinty

Glenorchy 5
Tayforth 1

GLENORCHY maintained their undefeated record this season and move to the top of South Division One after a convincing 5-1 win over Tayforth.

On a perfect day for shinty, Glenorchy started brightly and took a 12th minute lead thanks to Stuart Scott's quick finish.

The Perth side regained their composure but never really threatened and found themselves another gao, down when Willie Neilson's drive nestled in the net.

On the stroke of half-time, Glenorchy found the killer goal when Scott's shot from 20 yards sailed into the top corner.

The second-half proved scrappy with Glenorchy pressing forward and Tayforth resolutely defending but a fourth goal for the

home side came on the hour with Alex Keay slotting home a low drive.

Glenorchy took the opportunity to make some positional changes and were rewarded when substitute Duncan Smith reacting first to a good save by the Tayforth keeper to net Glen's fifth.

Five minutes from time, Kenny Spiers firing a consolation goal for the visitors.

This Saturday, Glenorchy welcome second top placed Bute to Dalnally for South Division One's match of the day while Tayforth are at home to Glasgow Mid Argyll.



WIN £2300

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are: Ivy MacDougall, 16 Lynn Court, Oban and Mrs Pearson, 7 Dalintart Drive, Oban

Spot The SHINTY BALL Competition

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.



enclose £1 (note) for 20 crosses (tick box) The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules.

How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1.

Name _____

Address _____

Tel No. _____

Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

TIMES Sport

Colts lead primary football league

Primary football

Oban Express Primary Football League

Senior League		
Club	Pld	Pts
Colts	3	9
Spurs	3	6
Jewson	2	6
Keyline	3	4
Hawks	3	3
Benderloch	2	2
Appin	3	2
Bulldogs	2	1
Dunbeg	3	0
Strontian	0	0
Junior League		
Club	Pld	Pts
Rovers	4	10
Sharks	4	10
Cobras	4	8
Appin	4	7
Dunbeg	4	4
K-oz	4	3
United	4	3
Dolphins	4	0

MacCuish team wins Captain's Scramble

Primary football

Glenruitten Golf Club Captains Scramble Saturday 18 March 2006
Winners
1 P MacCuish snr, D MacCuish, P MacCuish, K Mackie 49 - 2.2 = 46.8
2 G Currie, K MacLean, K G MacLean, G MacColl 52 - 3.3 = 48.7
3 A Mackie, C Aitken, J McGhee, I MacNab 51 - 2.1 = 48.9

The first competition of the season was played in cold dry sunny conditions - very unusual for March.

Unlike the weather the result was more predictable with the MacCuish team turning in another fantastic performance to narrowly win the first Scramble of the year.

Wheelers move to Wolftrax for next race

Mountain biking

WEST HIGHLAND Wheelers will move to the Wolftrax course at Laggan this Sunday, March 26 for the next race in their Winter League series.

The purpose-built track has proved very popular and could offer very different from the Wheelers last venue at Invergarry which provided a combination of long climbs, single track descents and a long moor crossing which tested riders endurance to the extreme.

Alex Johnston celebrated his last race before heading for Antigua with a win, with Michael Bossard in second place. First lady was debutant KT Tuer from Lochgilphead who finished strongly.

Learning the ropes at Lochaber yacht club

BUOYS were being laid in Loch Leven this week in preparation for the new sailing season next month. Lochaber Sailing Club are to start the season with its annual beginners sailing courses.

The club will be running a Royal Yachting Association level two dinghy sailing course over two weekends on April 22 and April 29.

There will also be two Thursday evening sessions

with the first muster on Thursday, April 20.

For members of the club the cost of the course is £35 covering the cost of the safety boat fuel, handbooks and certificates. For non-members the cost is £68

which will cover club membership for the rest of the year and the cost of the course.

It is recommended that all parts of the course are at-

Sailing

tended and with enough interest an improvers course is to follow soon after the level two course.

There will also be race training later in the year,

again if there is sufficient demand.

A limited amount of sailing kit is available at the club but those attending the course are asked to provide themselves with warm clothes, waterproofs, a

buoyancy aid and a wetsuit.

The course will be limited in numbers and places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Club treasurer Bob Aitken said: 'The course is about people who simply want to

find out what sailing is about. They will be sailing in dinghies and will learn the basics.'

If you would like to take part contact the club on its website at ww.lochaber-yacht-club.co.uk.



Grand-parents still at their peak, Alan and Linda Thomson with Wooden Spoon Four Peaks Challenge team-mates Duncan Cameron and Alasdair MacLean.

Lochaber couple's mountain magic

DESPITE being almost as old as the hills they climb, a retired couple are set to take part in one of the UK's most daunting mountain challenges for the 10th time.

Grand-parents Alan and Linda Thomson, both aged 59, and their various team-mates have raised more than £60,000 by completing the annual Wooden Spoon Four Peaks Challenge nine times. Now the young at heart couple, from Strontian are training for their 10th successful challenge in which they must run and walk to the summits of four of the highest peaks in Britain and Ireland inside 48 hours.

The challenge to climb Ben Nevis in Scotland, Helvellyn in England, Snowdon in Wales and Carantouhill in Ireland is one of the UK's toughest challenges. It is also one of the most rewarding, with more than £4 million raised for disabled and disadvantaged children.

This year Alan and Linda's team will include friends Alasdair MacLean

and Duncan Cameron, both 40, who are also both from Strontian, taking the team's combined age to 198.

Alan said: 'We fell in love with this event the first time we took part but I'm not sure we ever dreamed we'd still be climbing the four peaks 10 years later. Wooden Spoon is a wonderful charity and this is a first class event. There's always great camaraderie between all the competitors and marshals and we're delighted that we're fit enough to be able to keep coming back for more punishment.'

'Linda and I are the only ever-presents in the team but together with our various team-mates over the years we have raised well over £60,000 and we hope to take that total to over £70,000 this year. We are the only Scottish team at the moment so we would like to throw down the challenge to any others who might like to enter. There's nothing like some local rivalry to bring out the best in us!'

The couple moved to Strontian three years ago from Edinburgh where they were in business for many years. Alasdair works for Scottish Hydro Electric where his job is to ensure that the remote communities of the Lochaber area have electricity even during the worst of West Highland weather. He is known locally for having competed in a number of endurance challenges and hill races including the famous Ben Nevis Race.

Duncan works for Highland Council where his duties include keeping the roads open in winter when the weather threatens to cut off some of the remote communities. He has also done a great deal of long distance truck driving so is ideally qualified as the team driver.

Alan added: 'We're happy to be flying the flag for Lochaber again. Living in one of the finest mountain areas in the UK, we are spoiled for choice of train-

ing areas but our favourite is Ben Nevis where we can be seen plodding up and down the Tourist Path almost every week between March and June.

'[We find this is the best way of getting our ageing bodies into the sort of condition necessary for the rigours of The Wooden Spoon Four Peaks Challenge. Once, when our sponsors were particularly generous and we were younger, fitter and faster, we actually won the challenge but most often we have been content to compete with the other geriatrics for the Veterans Award.'

'Although this is the charity of British rugby, any funds we raise locally are matched by Wooden Spoon HQ and spent on various projects throughout Scotland, including The Highlands, for the benefit of children.'

Wooden Spoon chief executive Geoff Morris said: 'This challenge wouldn't be the same without Alan and Linda. I'd like to thank

them for their continued commitment to the challenge and to Wooden Spoon. To have completed the challenge nine times and to have raised over £60,000 in the process is a quite magnificent achievement.'

'I'm delighted to welcome them back for this year's event and I know they'll be giving many of the younger teams a run for their money. The event has gained a deserved reputation as being the very best of its kind. It's a very tough challenge but it's also fantastic fun and it raises huge amounts of money to help the most vulnerable members of our society.'

'We already have more than half the 60 teams allowed, so we are appealing for any individuals or companies across the country that want to get involved to please contact us urgently as places are being snapped up.'

For more information please contact the Wooden Spoon challenge office on 01889 582889 or visit www.woodenspoon.com.

Anglers try 'early water'

THE MONTH of March, 'In like a lion - out like a lamb' so the saying goes and, this old adage could equally apply to trout anglers.

With the new trout season already underway no doubt some hardy souls have roared up the hills on opening day March 15 only to return bleating.

The first few weeks of the season are certainly no place for the faint of heart. The water's still cold, the weather's poor - or at best unpredictable and the higher lochs still in the grip of winter, nevertheless fish can be taken for those brave enough to try.

Stick with known, 'early waters' such as Loch Awe, the Nant and Loch a' Phearsain, or low altitude lochs for a chance of sport.

Fishing

Stay warm, dress for the conditions and keep moving - concentration is the key and hungry trout are no respecters of frozen digits and slow wits. Keep it simple and workmanlike, with steady pulling wet fly tactics on sunken lines. Forget all those fanciful patterns tied by the fireside on those long winter's nights and stick with the basics for early work. Think 'Henry Ford' (Any colour, as long as it's black!) with proven patterns like Kates, bibios, spiders and pennels top of the list. If you have to put on something garish - save it for the top dropper, as a pulling fly.

Don't be expecting hatches of flies bringing fish to the surface instead

fish close to the shore or in the shallow water - anywhere the sun's rays can penetrate and stimulate a bit of weed growth. What little invertebrate life there is at this time of year will kick off here grazing on the algae and it follows that hungry trout shouldn't be too far away!

Oban and Lorn Angling Club boats will be put out in April and members are asked to lend the usual hand. Negotiations are also underway for a couple of new waters for 2006 and details will be announced shortly.

Oban curlers take title at Drimsynie



The victorious Oban Curling Club which won the Monday League at Drimsynie Ice Rink in a nailbiting finish. To win the league Oban had to beat top-of-the-table JACL by more than two shots in the last game of the season.

Oban went into the last end one shot up and went on to win by three. This was a great achievement for the team who are unable to practice as often as many of their opponents. Pictured are the Oban team members, from left, David Howie, Walter Spiers, Allan Stewart and Davy Thomson (skip). 012***01

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Paul MacKinnon and Ewen MacGillivray in action during The Brick and Steel Border Counties Rally. Picture courtesy of www.ecossexip.co.uk

Puncture prevents Paul's first rally win

PAUL MacKinnon was on course to win his first ever rally in the Scottish championship until a puncture blew his chances.

Paul recovered to finish strongly in ninth place overall but observers admitted

the young Muilleach was unlucky not to have had a better result.

Paul and his co-driver Ewen MacGillivray took third place in their class.

This was the first round of the County Saab Scottish Rally Championship that Paul has competed in this year after missing the first round, the Snowman Rally.

Last year, he drove in the Peugeot 205 Ecosse Challenge but after acquiring a new Subaru Impreza has made the step up in competition. Paul said: 'To say this

is a big step up from the Peugeot 205 I was driving last year is a massive understatement.

'We're renting the car from John Pye Motorsport in England, and are contemplating using it again.'

OHS girls in Scottish semi-final

OBAN High School senior girls football team will play their Scottish Schools Cup semi-final match next Wednesday.

They have been drawn against Edinburgh side St. Augustine's and the match will kick-off at 3pm at Stirling Uni

Donald MacLeod, Active Schools co-ordinator at Oban High School, said: 'We are all very proud of the girls for getting this far and it would be great to get to the final.'



Maps in hand, ready to start the short course are, from left, Ellen and Katie Barlow (Luig), Roanne Lilley, Anja Powell and Ceri Powell, (Taynuilt).

EckO orienteers at Atlantis

BUDDING orienteers could be found at Atlantis Leisure on Sunday when EckO, Argyll's orienteering club held a 'come and try' event.

Around 40 participants enjoyed two courses: a short cross country course around Atlantis Leisure and a Street Score event around

Orienteering

Oban's town centre. The club used a state-of-the-art electronic punching system for the short course to record times.

Results for the short course: 1 Bryony Kincaid, 2 James Kane, 3 Amy Kincaid. Results for the

Street Score: 1 Paul Frost, 2 Lynne Walker, 3 Bryony Kincaid.

The club is attempting to expand the number of events it does in the Oban area and the next two club events are on May 7 at Achnacloch and May 23 at Inverawe. For more information: www.ecko.org.uk.

Cameron's triple crown

OBAN'S Cameron Barbour netted a hat trick of winner's medals in the Argyll and Bute Badminton Championships which has been resurrected following a three year absence.

Cameron beat brother Stuart in the singles final but teamed up with him to take the men's doubles trophy and added the mixed doubles with Yvonne Clark.

The event was organised by the Mid Argyll Badminton Association and played on Saturday, March 4.

There were three pools of competitors in the girls' singles competition. Leader in pool one was Cameron Barbour of Oban, who won all his games, followed by Dunoon's Kevin Anderson. Andrew Hunter beat fellow Dunoon player Gordon Tyre to first place in the second pool.

In pool three Stuart Barbour won all of his games. Mid Argyll's Alastair Cunningham was runner-up to Stuart with a total of 55 points. This was the highest point score of the three pool runners-up resulting in Alastair advancing to the semi-final stage.

There he met Cameron Barbour, who beat him 21-5. Andrew Hunter played Cameron's brother Stuart in the second semi-final, losing 21-15, leaving the Barbour brothers to contest

Badminton

the final. Cameron won the first game 15-5 but was almost taken to three sets by Stuart who narrowly lost 17-15.

Denise Gemmell of Oban and Kirsty Hunter, Dunoon, won all their pool games in the ladies singles and faced each other in the final. Kirsty took the title 11-9, 11-4.

Denise Gemmell and Yvonne Clark won all their ladies doubles games and continued their winning ways to win the final 15-9, 15-13.

Cameron and Stuart Barbour topped pool one in the girls' doubles. In pool two it was Mid Argyll's Charlie Ellis teamed with Dunoon's Andrew Hunter who came out on top ahead of Mid Argyll's Gavin Brown and Dunoon's Gordon McKinnon. In pool three Jack McIntosh and Mark Balmforth from the Waverley Club, Helensburgh, won all their games. Kevin and Gordon, being the highest scoring runners-up, took the semi-final place were beaten by Cameron and Stuart 21-7. Jack and Mark won the second semi-final by beating Charlie and Andrew 21-17. The Oban brothers beat Jack and Mark 15-7, 15-13.

Only two couples entered the ladies doubles for the

veterans. Karen Haggerty and Helen MacDonald, Helensburgh, won the title over Mary Galloway and Alison Turner of Dunoon, 15-2, 15-2.

Five couples sought the girls' doubles veterans title. The final game of the league saw Duncan MacBrayne and Charlie Ellis facing Jack McIntosh and Mark Balmforth across the net, both couples having thus far won all their games. Duncan and Charlie saw to it that the title stayed in Mid Argyll, winning 15-10.

There were 14 pairs in the mixed doubles competition. It gave the last final of the day where Cameron Barbour and Yvonne Clark lift the mixed doubles trophy with a 15-5, 15-6 win over Karen Haggerty and Mark Balmforth.

At the end of play Bob McMorran presented the trophies and medals to winners and runners-up.

Peter Tait of the Mid Argyll Badminton Association thanked all who had played or helped in any way with the organisation of the whole competition and the generous donors for helping to revive the competition.

Next year it is hoped the Argyll and Bute championships will be staged in Oban and then in 2008 in Dunoon.

Saints squeezed out of west cup

West of Scotland Cup
6th Round
REDBRAE 1
OBAN SAINTS 0

OBAN Saints travelled to Merkland Park, Kirkintilloch, to take on top Central League side Redbrae in the last sixteen of the Colville Park Country Club West of Scotland Amateur Cup with a home tie against MLS Leeds in the quarter finals the prize for the winners.

The Oban side were still without injured striker Dean Walker, but welcomed back Mark MacCallum and Duncan Campbell into the squad.

The Central League outfit are on a tremendous run at the moment, not having lost in their domestic league and still involved in both major cup competitions - West of Scotland and Scottish Amateur Cups, so a tough match was in prospect for the young Saints side.

However, the Oban lads played their part in a great game of football enjoyed by the large crowd of spectators.

The home side started off well and had Saints back pedalling in the opening exchanges, but the Saints defence of Mark MacCallum, Bertie Gemmell and Alex Grindlay looked to be in good form, ably assisted by the Lopez brothers Joe and Dante, who were playing the holding roll in midfield.

Saints keeper Tim Woodcock was brought into action in the 7th minutes when he made a good save from a Donnie McDonald shot.

Gradually Saints clawed themselves back into the game and Willie Gemmell found Darin Bryars with a fine cross from the right, but Darin's header shaved the wrong side of the post.

Saints were starting to push forward and were unlucky not to have taken the lead in the 14th minute when Willie

Football

Gemmell found Allan MacKay lurking at the back post with a pin point cross, but Allan's header hit the bar with keeper Billy Davidson beaten.

The game was flowing from end to end with both teams going for broke, in a pulsating cup tie. Darin Bryars had another chance in the 25th

minute, but his shot was at a nice height for keeper Billy Davidson to make a good diving save to his right.

The half time whistle arrived with the scoreline blank, but on chances created Saints were ahead on points.

The second period was only two minutes old when Saints were awarded a corner on the left. Ross Maitland sent over the cross which was flicked on at the front post but Joe Lopez could only head the ball straight at the keeper and a good chance was missed.

A minute later Saints almost got caught out at a free kick, but thankfully Tim Woodcock was switched on and made a good diving save low down to his right hand side.

Saints were giving as good as they were getting against one of the cup favourites and Keith Millar was having a great game in midfield, getting forward as much as he could to help out his strikers.

Allan MacKay had a half chance when he turned his

marker at the edge of the box, but his shot sailed over the bar.

The home side took the lead in the 72nd minute when a long throw into the penalty area caused the Saints defence problems. Instead of heading the ball clear, it was allowed to bounce in the box and it fell kindly for Alan Barraclough who was closely marked by Mark MacCallum, but Barraclough who had his back to goals, somehow managed to get his foot round the ball to fire home a well taken goal from six yards giving Tim Woodcock no chance, the ball coming off the underside of the bar and into the net.

This was a disappointing goal for Saints to lose as the long throw should have been headed cleared.

However, the Oban side rolled their sleeves up and had a real go at Redbrae. Allan MacKay should have levelled the scores when he got on the end of a Willie Gemmell cross, but he headed it straight at the keeper, when it looked easier to score.

With Saints pushing men forward Redbrae looked dangerous on the break and Ewan McRae fired a great ball across the face of the Saints penalty box but there were no takers.

Saints introduced Duncan Campbell in attack in place of Darin Bryars as the game entered its latter stages. The visitors had their tails up now and were pushing extra men forward and Redbrae had some desperate defending to do but their central pairing of Jim Mulvay and David McCaig were in excellent form, keeping the eager Saints attack at bay.

Keith Millar made a great run into the box and seemed to be wrestled to the ground, but referee Peter Kerr from

Uddingston waved away the penalty claims.

As the game drew to a close Redbrae were content to run down the clock by taking the ball into the corners to try and waste as much time as possible.

Saints tried everything they knew to break down the Redbrae defence, and almost equalised in the last minute of added on time when the Redbrae keeper dropped a cross ball, but Ross Maitland was crowded out before he could get a shot on target and in the end Redbrae held on to win a very close game by the narrowest of margins.

Manager Iain Jackson was bitterly disappointed at the result, but praised all his players who had put up a tremendous performance against a very good Redbrae side.

He said: 'The boys were excellent today, everybody worked really hard for the team. We created more scoring chances than they did but at this level you must take these chances when they come along or you'll get punished and unfortunately that's what happened today. However, it has been a great experience for the young lads in the squad having had a good run in both the West and Scottish Cups this season, playing against some of the top teams in the country.'

More Saints information available on the club website www.obansaints.co.uk

This Saturday Saints stay on cup duty with a home tie against Inverclyde in the quarter final of the Marshall Trophy. The game will take place at Glenruitten, 2 pm kick-off, with referee John Scott in charge. The winners take on Gartcosh United in the semi-final.

Saints Under 19s had a good 6-0 home win over Erskine BC, but the Under 17s went down to their Erskine counterparts 2-0.

Tides

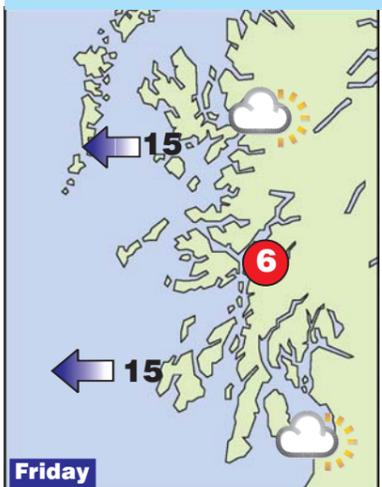
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday, March 23, 2005 are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

Date	am	pm
Thur	05.04 1.8 10.40 2.7 17.59 1.9 ** ** *	1.8
Fri	00.16 2.8 06.56 1.8 14.18 2.7 19.39 1.8	1.4
Sat	02.43 3.1 08.36 1.6 15.25 3.0 21.00 1.4	1.0
Sun	03.38 3.5 09.47 1.2 16.10 3.3 21.58 1.0	0.6
Mon	04.21 3.8 10.36 0.8 16.46 3.6 22.46 0.6	0.3
Tues	05.01 4.1 11.18 0.5 17.19 3.8 23.29 0.3	** *
Wed	05.39 4.3 11.58 0.4 17.51 4.0 *** ** *	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrisaig	-5.35	Lochboisdale	+0.30
Campbeltown	-5.30	Mallaig	+0.25
Crinan	-0.47	Portree	+0.55
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Torbemory	+0.16
		Dover	+5.30

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Friday the weather

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Thursday, March 23
Will be cloudy with perhaps a few wintry showers at times. Winds will be moderate south easterly.

Temperatures -1°C to 6°C.
Friday, March 24
Will be dry with variable amounts of cloud and sunny or bright spells. Winds will be light to moderate east or north-easterly.

Temperatures -1°C to 6°C.
Saturday and Sunday
Saturday and Sunday are both expected to be dry with sunny spells. Winds will be a moderate south-easterly.

Temperatures 2°C to 8°C.
Ferry Crossings/Sea States
Oban to Barra/South Uist - Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree -As above
Kennacraig to Islay -As above

GMA made to work for point

A FIRST half hat trick by Neil Andrews gave Glasgow Mid Argyll a flying start against Kyles Athletic.

But the Tighnabraich side battled back and in the end it required an injury time goal for the Glasgow outfit to salvage a 4-4 draw at Peterson Park.

The south division one game was barely two minutes old when Andrews bagged his first of the afternoon, firing home from ten yards through the legs of Kenny Macdonald. The visitors didn't take long to respond and Dan MacRae restored parity bundling the ball home from close range.

Both Duncan MacAde and Yogi McSween were missing from the home defence and the pace of the Kyles forwards was causing problems down the flanks.

With ten minutes of the first half remaining the away side took the lead through Davy Martin but Andrews equalised almost immediately, pouncing on a loose ball in the dee to expertly touch home.

Final league standings

Curling

Monday League	P	W	D	L	Pts
Oban	12	7	3	2	17
JACL	12	8	1	3	17
Fyne Team	12	6	1	3	13
Team Cluny	12	6	1	3	13
Upper Cowal	12	4	2	4	10
Dunoon Ladies	12	2	3	4	7
Mike the Knife	12	3	1	5	7

Tuesday League

P	W	D	L	Pts
Drimsynie Office	14	10	1	32
Benmore	14	9	2	32
Tighnabraich	14	9	1	19
Sandbank	14	9	1	19
Drim. Construction	14	7	2	16
Dunoon Argyll 1	14	5	0	10
Lochgail	14	3	1	7
Dunoon Ladies	14	0	14	0

Thursday League

P	W	D	L	Pts
Big Deal	14	11	0	32
Tighnabraich	14	9	1	19
Glen Orchy	14	9	1	19
Cot House	14	7	0	14
Cairdow	14	7	0	14
Arrochar	14	5	1	11
Dunoon Argyll 2	14	3	3	8
Inveraray	14	1	2	4

Shinty

GMA then went on to take the lead with the last hit of the first half. Patrick Jamieson's long shy from the left seemed to be heading past the post, but Andrews darted in at the back post to glance in a volley.

his fourth with a stinging long range effort which Macdonald tipped past.

But in injury time GMA's Jamieson chipped in a corner and Fulton Ross brought the ball down on the run. His shot flew into the top corner to give GMA a share of the spoils.

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Name Address

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