

# The Oban Times

## & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Concluding this week

## Review of the Year 2012



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### Barra and Lochgilphead women on Honours List

JESSIE MacNeil from the Isle of Barra admits she is delighted to receive the British Empire Medal in recognition of her services to the island, but says she shares the honour with the community.

Jessie, 66, was a key figure at Voluntary Action Barra and Vatersay and helped numerous community groups find their feet over a number of years.

While she retired from the role last May, she continues to be active in the community and volunteers as an individual for a number of initiatives.

She said: 'I'm completely unaware she had been nominated for the honour and dedicated it to those she has worked with over the years.'

She said: 'It's a huge honour that people felt so highly of what I've done they put me forward for the award. My understanding is it is not an easy process, so it's very humbling.'

Lochgilphead woman, Jenny Campbell, has dedicated six decades of her life to supporting her community and helping people through illness. She also has been named on the 2013 Queen's Honours List.

Originally from Campbeltown, the 82 year old has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for her 60 years service to the British Red Cross. The medal is awarded to recognise people's hard work and dedication in serving their communities.

The honour comes two and a half years after Jenny was awarded the Red Cross badge of honour for outstanding service – the highest accolade awarded by the international charity.

Commenting on the latest honour, Jenny told *The Oban Times*: 'I can't believe it.'

'Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would get this.'

Explaining she first got a letter about the honour from the Prime Minister in November, Jenny said: 'It has been hard to keep it a secret. My family knew and my brothers but that was it.'

Showing no signs of slowing down Jenny said: 'Every winter I say I'll give it up but you get going again and away you go.'



Clarsach player Becky Hill is following in the footsteps of some of Scotland's best traditional musicians after securing a place at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. 16\_01becky02

### Music first for Connel's Becky

A YOUNG clarsach player has become the first Oban High School pupil to take up a place on the prestigious traditional music course at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Becky Hill, from Connel, will study a BA Hons in Scottish traditional music later this year after securing one of only two clarsach places on the course, which started in 1996. Among the musicians on that first course were Rachel Walker and Allan Henderson.

There have also been four Tiree High School pupils on the course, including Iain Smith, who is currently a student there.

As part of the three-year course, Becky will receive tuition from some of the biggest names in traditional music and play at Celtic Connections in 2014.

Becky, who turns 17 years old on Sunday, started playing the clarsach at the age of eight and was tutored by Toni Russell

but she also thanked Morven McKerrell and the Oban High School music department and her cousin, Sileas Sinclair, for helping her with piano and theory.

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland was formerly known as the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (RSAMD).

Becky is a great niece of Connel accordianist Neil Sinclair, who this week laughed off rumours he was retiring. 'I couldn't afford it,' he joked.

## Loch Etive fish farm plan may go to court

'There are other areas that would be better for us but to go through planning to get there would be very difficult.'

OBJECTORS to a proposed 2,500 tonne fish farm on Loch Etive say they are prepared to go to court in a bid to prevent it going ahead.

Argyll and Bute Council's planning department received some 700 comments regarding Dawnfresh's application to build a £2.5million, 14 pen rainbow trout farm at Silean Ruadh ahead of last week's deadline, with the vast majority against the proposal.

Amongst those to express concern over the farm are Jamie McGregor MSP, who has objected on a personal level as part owner and manager of the Anderson fishing syndicate on River Awe, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Royal Yachting Association Scotland (RYAS).

Some letters of support have also been received, but the majority of these are from the Inverness area.

Stretching south east from Airds Point to parallel with the Muckairn Castle jetty, it would be equivalent to the largest available farm for aquaculture in Scotland, including those in open water.

Guy Linley-Adams, the lawyer representing objectors via the Friends of Loch Etive website, believes the council's planning department will recommend the application for refusal given the volume of objections and its own management plan for the loch, which he says prevents such a development as it already recommends the consolidation of two existing fish farms on Etive.

While SNH has not objected to the site, it has highlighted potential impact on nesting terns that use the area.

It also stated that Dawnfresh's environmental impact assessment contained a 'poor quality' visual survey, that the location



Dawnfresh have applied to build a £2.5million, 14 pen rainbow trout farm on Loch Etive

'If they were to choose the route of granting this application this will go to court, without a shadow of a doubt.'

He said: 'The council already have more than enough on their desk to merit rejecting the application, including their own Loch Etive management plan.'

'It's their own management plan – either it means something or it means nothing. It's a fairly easy choice, frankly. If they were to choose the route of granting this application this will go to court, without a shadow of a doubt.'

While SNH has not objected to the site, it has highlighted potential impact on nesting terns that use the area.

Supporters say the development would be good for the Scottish and local economy.

Gideon Pringle, Dawnfresh's fish farm manager, said he got the impression people had been

would exacerbate the visual impact and that noise would be a concern.

The RYAS and the West Highland Anchorage and Moorings Association say the site is a hazard to navigation.

Individual objections point to the loss of visual amenity, potential harm to tourism, potential for harm to the local environment caused by escapes, noise and possible impact on the resident spurdog population.

Supporters say the development would be good for the Scottish and local economy.

Gideon Pringle, Dawnfresh's fish farm manager, said he got the impression people had been

'misled' on light and sound from the farm site, but he had not seen SNH's concerns about the noise the site would emit.

He added: 'I certainly hope the planners do recommend the application for approval. From my point of view I don't believe it significantly alters the character of the loch.'

'This is an incremental development of the fish farming already happening on the loch and has been established for a long time.'

On the RYAS suggestion that the site could be moved further into the loch, Mr Pringle said: 'Absolutely, although we're largely governed by legislation and planning guidance.'

'There are other areas that would be better for us but to go through planning to get there would be very difficult.'

### Appin cafe fire causes temporary festive closure

CASTLE Stalker View Cafe will re-open on Valentine's Day after a fire caused the business to close over the festive period.

The fire was contained to the boiler room of the Appin cafe and had burnt itself out by the time staff discovered the damage last Thursday morning and fire appliances from Appin and Oban attended to make the area safe.

Cafe owner Nicola Meekin said: 'We are usually busy over the week between Christmas and New Year, so I am just sorry to all our customers.'

The cafe was due to close as normal on January 4.

### Celebrating 100 years with her family around her

THERE was more than 103 years between the oldest and youngest person to attend Betty Paxton's 100th birthday celebrations in Oban on Sunday.

The former farmer and bed and breakfast owner was joined by four generations of family at The Olive Garden for the landmark event, with 35 people travelling from every corner of the world to toast the special day.

Youngest to attend was 16 month old Eliza Cant, daughter of Betty's grand-daughter Karina Black, while Betty's sister, 105 year old Jean Campbell also raised a glass to mark her special day.

Born Elizabeth Connell in Craignish on December 30, 1912, Betty went to school in Benderloch before marrying husband Bill and moving abroad. Sadly, Bill died in an accident when they were living in Nigeria and Betty returned to Oban with children Claire, James and Doreen 60 years ago.

Betty said her secret to long life was good old-fashioned exercise and healthy living.

'Plenty of walking helps. Early to bed and early to rise helps too,' she said.

'I didn't ask for anything, at my age you're beyond presents. Just having the family here was enough.'



Joining Betty Paxton for her 100th birthday fun and frolics was daughter Claire Black, granddaughter Karina Black and great granddaughter Eliza Cant. 16\_01paxton1

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## Oban High School pupils show talents at pensioners' tea

EIGHTY members of the senior community attended Oban High School for the ninth annual Pensioners' Treat.

The town's older residents were treated to a morning of music, home baking, tea and coffee.

Entertainment was provided by pupils from the music department with choirs, wind orchestra, string group and soloists all taking part.

Morven McKerrell, head of the music department, said: 'This is an opportunity for the younger people and older people to come together.'

'It has been really well attended over the years it is just a nice thing to do – for the youngsters especially.'

Refreshments were provided by the students from the food technology department with third year pupils carrying out the service.

One resident who attended said: 'The young musicians performing were excellent and equally impressive were the youngsters from the food technology department who fed us.'



OHS Pipe Band entertained the audience at the Pensioners' Treat.

16\_151treat02

## Criticism of Mull centre's telecare system

**Claims from families that elderly residents are 'frightened' by callouts**

ELDERLY people are being left frightened in the middle of the night by treatment from telecare staff at the progressive care centre on the Isle of Mull, according to some families.

Recent calls for the residential area of the facility, Bowman Court, to be taken over and run as a care home follows concerns over the way residents are being dealt with.

One woman told *The Oban Times* her 87-year-old relative was left scared after two Carr Gorm workers, responding to her alarm, entered her room in the middle of the night and made physical contact without introducing themselves.

She said: 'At 3am she found this both frightening and intimidating and asked them to leave her room. The carer on duty was

not even told of her call for help as she was in the hospital side of the building.'

Heather Becket said her father was due to move into the facility after suffering a stroke, which left him requiring 24-hour care.

She claims she was initially told her mother could move in but would have to move out if her father passed away – a statement which has since been reversed.

The family have spent £3,000 carpeting and furnishing the flat as well as other preparations. She said: 'We are on the brink of our father being transferred.'

'I am still unable to ascertain a price for the meals, a contact number for the staff on duty or an answer as to what the facility is registered as because at present it appears to be a block of very nice flats.'

Lesley McInnes, chief executive of West Highland Housing Association, which runs Bowman Court said: 'The flats are based on individual tenancies therefore it is normal for people to furnish these themselves – for most people this is preferable.'

'When people move in they are provided with a secure tenancy, if it is a couple that move in they will be offered a joint tenancy.'

In the majority of cases the joint tenant may require the level of care offered by the facility.'

Cleland Sneddon, executive director of community services for Argyll and Bute Council, added: 'It is not practical for staff who provide an overnight service to be introduced to everyone who uses telecare in advance of a first visit given the number of service users who receive the service.'

CALLS for Colonsay to opt for a community buyout of the island have come from one resident at a recent meeting about the process.

Scott Weatherston of Colonsay Community Development Company (CCDC) made the comments at a recent Community Land Scotland (CLS) Seminar held at the Corran Halls in Oban.

Mr Weatherstone stressed it was his personal opinion – and not one held by other

members of CCDC – he said: 'I'm interested in looking at a total buyout of Colonsay. I have a lot of friends on Eigg and have seen the way the island has been turned around.'

Adding that the people of Colonsay should decide the future, Mr Weatherstone said: 'After all the encouragement we received at the conference today, I think we should consider the pros and cons of all the options for Colonsay: the status quo, partial community

purchase and full community purchase.'

Brian Donald Macneill, the local development officer for Colonsay said he was in favour of land acquisition, to be used for creating homes and businesses, rather than a total buyout.

Alan Piper, a director of CCDC added: 'We're looking at issues of housing, crofts and businesses, we can't respond to this need without a land parcel.'

Lorne MacLeod of CLS Stornoway

Uibhist told *The Oban Times* there are a number of groups along west coast currently in the early stages of looking at community buyouts.

He said: 'We're trying to encourage people by giving examples at this event. I'm amazed at the interest that has been generated.'

'There are a lot of groups in Argyll that are looking at community buyouts – there is a lot of opportunities for it in this area.'



Pensioners were treated to a morning of musical entertainment. 16\_151treat05

## Call for Isle of Colonsay buyout heard at seminar

### Council help for small businesses

A NEW programme to help small businesses win public sector contracts has been launched by Argyll and Bute Council.

The Supplier Development Programme (SDP) aims to assist small to medium sized local businesses improve their performance in winning contracts with public sector organisations by providing information, news and events.

All businesses based in Argyll can access the support for free by registering their business details at [www.sdpscotland.co.uk](http://www.sdpscotland.co.uk).

SDP will also host a range of free events and training to help members compete for tenders. Details of the events programme being created for Argyll and Bute will be available in January 2013.

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## Charity uses anniversary to encourage youngsters



Pupils from Oban High School are joined by speakers and representatives of the Imani Development Group. 16\_151imani01

AN INTERNATIONAL development group that has a base in Oban is celebrating its 30th anniversary – and encouraging Oban's youth to get involved in overseas aid.

Imani Development Group aims to work with and advise governments, companies and charities on policies and strategies to reduce poverty worldwide.

In Oban, as the group celebrated its landmark year last Friday, pupils from Rockfield Primary School and Oban High School heard from local charity workers, who used Imani's principles in their work.

Neil Matheson, representing Friends of Pabane; John MacDonald, representing Tear Fund; Catherine Brown of Mercy Ships; and Ken MacDonald, who formed his own charity, Vision Action, spoke to the pupils about their overseas charitable work.

The talks, held in Oban's CalMac building, also gave

the pupils the chance to see the Scotland v Poverty Exhibition run by the Network of International Development Organisations in Scotland (NIDOS), of which Imani is a member.

Roy Clunie, of the Imani Development Group in Oban, said: 'The pupils will go back to school after hearing these talks and try to work up projects over the next three years.'

'The purpose of this is advocacy. We need to tell young people about overseas aid because the next generation has to have our passion.'

'A lot of young people think, "what can I do about it"? They don't realise they are already doing something by raising money for Children in Need but there are lots of other organisations they could help.'

Other speakers at the anniversary reception included Ken Ross, chairman of the Scottish Malawi Partnership and Richard Hess, chairman of the Imani Development Group.

### Residents to check council's winter performance

RESIDENTS throughout Argyll and Bute are being urged to keep an eye on how well the council looks after vulnerable older people.

Age Scotland's Winter Weather Watch campaign asks members of the community to note the council's response to severe weather incidents such as ice and snow and to report back on how successful it is in preventing older people being cut off from their community and vital public services.

Age Scotland campaigner, Doug Anthony, said: 'Argyll and Bute Council says it is ready to look after older residents; we want to test its claims and, if necessary, hold it to account with public help.'

The charity's senior policy and parliamentary officer, Calum Chomczuk, said: 'Argyll and Bute Council doesn't have dedicated older people's winter support plan.'

'However prior to winter adult care and social work services do identify and support vulnerable clients.'

'We're pleased to see that it is promoting the winter support that's available through public road-shows, newspaper articles and leafleting.'

'We look forward to hearing from residents how well this is working in practice.'

To take part, those interested register at [agescotland.org.uk/watch](http://agescotland.org.uk/watch) or by phone on 0845 833 0200 and they will be contacted in the spring to be asked about their winter experiences.

### Argyll countryside charity established

AN INDEPENDENT charity is being set up by Argyll and Bute Council to look at maintenance and improvements of the county's countryside.

Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (AICCT) is being set up after agreement at a meeting of the council last Thursday.

The trust will develop and promote outdoor access, tackle invasive species and look after small scale environmental improvements and biodiversity projects at a time when budgets are falling.

Council leader Roddy McCuish said: 'This is very good news, particularly as the AICCT will primarily carry out works on the ground which will provide local employment opportunities.'

The work of the AICCT will cover the full geographic area of Argyll and Bute, including the area covered by the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.

Argyll and Bute Council will fund the trust with £42,000 over the next three years, subject to meeting performance targets.

### Fears for rural services in future budget cuts

A NEW report has warned that rural communities will bear the brunt of government and council cuts.

Rural Services Network chief executive Graham Biggs this week claimed that councils in rural areas will suffer a bigger reduction in their budgets than those in urban areas, which he says paints a 'bleak picture' for the countryside.

Rural Services Network chief executive Graham Biggs said: 'This is a body blow for rural councils already struggling to provide services to countryside communities. Even before these reductions, urban areas received about half as much more funding per head than rural areas.'

'This settlement further widens the gap.'

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## Electric company invests £6m in preparation for storms

THE ELECTRICITY network in Argyll and the west Highlands is in a better position to cope with a repeat of the storms in the region a year ago, according to the company responsible for its maintenance.

Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution (SHEPD) has invested £6m in preparation for the winter months as part of a planned £160 million company-wide investment programme over the next four years.

The latest round of spending brings SHEPD's total investment in 2012 to £30m this year in maintenance and refurbishment of its entire network. In Argyll, a £1.1m investment programme is nearing completion to upgrade the electricity network serving Dunoon and the islands of Bute and Cumbrae and on Islay a £2m programme has been carried out to improve the security of supply to the Rhinns area.

A significant amount of tree cutting has been carried out to reduce the risk of power lines being brought down by trees and branches in high winds with a key focus on the strategic circuits supplying Dunoon, Bute, Jura and Islay.

In addition, £230,000 will be invested in the Kilchoan area of Lochaber, harvesting trees clear of a section of overhead line.

If customers do find themselves without electricity, the emergency contact number for them to call is 0800 300 999.

### Man struck by vehicle in Oban

INJURIES sustained by a man who was struck by a vehicle on Soroba Road, Oban last Friday are not life threatening, say police.

The 59-year-old was struck by the car near to the traffic lights outside Oban High School at 8.44pm and was in Lorn and Islands Hospital overnight.

The road was closed for three hours while police enquiries were carried out.

### Sex offender to appeal decision

A MAN jailed for four years at a court in Oban for a sexual offence has appealed the decision.

Timothy Robson, aged 50, was jailed in August following a sheriff and jury trial, when he was unanimously found guilty of plying a young woman with drink and drugs and photographing himself sexually assaulting her.

Robson is also seeking bail at the High Court of Criminal Appeal in Edinburgh today (Thursday) while his appeal is being prepared.

Robson, who lived at Balineo Cottage, Kilmore, was reported to police by staff at Tesco in Oban, where Robson went to have his pictures put onto CD.

### Yorkshire man accused of assaulting woman

A YORKSHIRE man, accused of assaulting a woman in Oban, appeared from custody last Thursday at Oban Sheriff Court.

Gareth Duncan, aged 37, denied assaulting the woman by repeatedly punching her on the head on the morning of his appearance in court.

Mr Duncan, who lives at Unit 1, 289 Wheeland Road, Shartston, Wakefield, was bailed and an intermediate diet was set for February 5.

### Man pleads not guilty to alleged Christmas assault

A MAN spent Christmas night in the cells after being accused of seizing a woman by the neck and forcing her to the ground.

Thomas Johnstone, aged 28, from Fyne View Lodge, Lochgilphead, appeared from custody at Oban Sheriff Court last Thursday and pled not guilty to the alleged assault on Christmas Day.

He also denies behaving in a threatening manner by shouting and swearing and repeatedly banging his head on a police vehicle.

Mr Johnstone was granted bail and will next appear on an intermediate diet on February 5.

**Canadian newspaper votes the Isle of Iona as one of the top worldwide destinations**

READERS and staff from a Canadian newspaper have selected the Isle of Iona as one of the best places to visit.

The Edmonton Journal, a daily newspaper in Alberta, asked edi-

## Lane closure at Rest and Be Thankful planned

MOTORISTS will face disruption at the Rest and Be Thankful for the next three months with the A83 at the landslide hotspot reduced to a single carriageway.

From today (Thursday), work to mitigate landslide risk will

mean traffic lights in operation continuously until March 22.

### Landslide barrier

The measures are required for Scotland Transerv staff to install a new landslide barrier and debris basin to limit the chances of any future slips clos-

ing the road.

The basin will be installed at the site of August's failure, while the landslide barrier will be installed below the site of November's landslide.

A shallow barrier, in two sections will comprise of flexible

ring net fencing, 3.5metres high and approximately 90 metres in length, in 60 and 30-metre sections.

Some 40m of rock barrier, in two 20m sections is being proposed for the section above that barrier to limit rockfall hit-

ting the carriageway, as it did in June last year.

A spokesman for Scotland Transerv said: 'Motorists should allow extra time for their journeys and pay attention to any advisory signs which will be in place throughout the works.'



Mike and Maureen Drummond at home in Highcliff 16\_101lights02

## Third time lucky for Oban couple's Christmas lights display

A DETERMINED Oban couple have overcome a Christmas curse to brighten up the town over the festive period.

Mike and Maureen Drummond bought £1,000 worth of Christmas lights this year to decorate their garden with a colourful display of reindeer, snowmen and waterfall features – all of which were bought in Oban.

### Extravagant display

But the couple, who run Highcliff Guesthouse, Glencruitten, had previously had their festive display ruined on two occasions.

In 2010, Mike and Maureen planned an extravagant display before they went on a pre-Christmas holiday.

But on their return home, 10 days later, they were greeted by a wave of water from their front door and discovered a pipe had burst in their loft while they were away – destroying their furniture and a vast collection of Christmas lights.

The couple spent the next 10 months in a caravan at Benderloch while the house was repaired and again planned a Christmas lights display for 2011.

But just as Mike had put the finishing touches on his bright idea, some of the most severe storms that west coast has seen in recent times ripped the



Highcliff has been brightly lit for the festive period – at the third time of asking. 16\_152lights01

display apart and damaged all of the features.

Undeterred, the couple bought more decorations for a display this year, which was up in time for Christmas and will proudly be shown outside their home throughout January.

### Rewarded

Maureen, who also volunteers at the Mary's Meals shop in Oban, said: 'It was horrible getting all those setbacks but I suppose it has been third time lucky for us this year.'

'We do it primarily for the children that walk up and down Glencruitten Road and it makes you feel good when you hear them all shouting "wow" when

they see them.'

'I have seen taxi drivers slowing down as they pass, to let their passengers see them and some cars have reversed back up the road to have a look.'

Asked whether the couple had considered the impact on their electricity bills, Maureen replied: 'We don't know what it will be and I don't care; it's for Christmas.'

Mike and Maureen have been rewarded for their hard work since the flood in 2010 by gaining a four-star gold rating from both VisitScotland and the AA. They also received an AA breakfast award, all since re-opening in September 2011.

Meanwhile, the council spent

### Islay energy project gains £17 million of Euro cash

THE SOUND of Islay Tidal Energy Project has been awarded up to £17m funding from Europe.

The European Union's NER300 scheme is used to support innovative renewable energy technology as well as carbon capture and storage projects.

Islay Energy Trust tidal energy project officer, Andy Macdonald, said: 'This award confirms the Sound of Islay as the leading tidal array project in Europe.'

'It demonstrates the EU's support for new technology and recognises the importance of both tidal and wave energy as important areas of development.'

'This is excellent news for the project and for Scotland's marine renewables industry.'



Oban's Polar Express travelled through the town on Christmas Eve, delivering festive cheer in timely fashion. Picture by Dennis Hardley Photography

## Downpour fails to halt festive truckers

OBAN'S very own version of the Polar Express helped raise more than £300 for charity, despite a torrential downpour halfway through its journey.

Arranged by local firm Oban Express, the specially decked out lorry brought an extra helping of festive cheer to the town,

with all funds raised donated to the Oban and Lorn Lions Club.

### Heavy rain

Thankfully, despite having been earlier re-arranged due to bad weather, the heavy rain didn't dilute the Christmas spirit.

Oban Express director, Lor-

aine Parrot, said: 'It was great, regardless of the weather. The rain really did start to rush down at Argyll Square, it was very, very wet but it was a great day.'

'It was so good in fact that we've already got additional plans for next year.'

caves, coves and beaches, watch for seals and sea eagles, or take a boat ride out to Fingal's Cave on nearby Staffa.'

But he warns: 'Take a raincoat and sweater, though.'

## Lorn Lines

LORN Archaeological and Historical Society's December meeting was treated to a special interpretation on the Brooch of Lorn.

In a deviation from the usual lecture format, Catherine Gillies arrived in Jacobean costume, and with the replica brooch present she proceeded to trace its journey through 800 years of turbulent history.

This proud MacDougall of Dunollie brooch has appeared and disappeared over the centuries. The central charmstone was torn from Robert the Bruce by a MacDougall in the 1306 rout at Dalrigh near Tyndrum and was later set into an unusual silver turreted brooch.

From the back of the hall a dramatic entry was made by Kenny Lindsay who burst into the room reciting 'The Brus' in broad Scots and introducing himself as the 14th century poet John Barbour.

Knowledgeable on her subject Catherine explored Barbour's version of the battle and the subsequent myths that have propelled down the centuries.

Taken in secrecy from Kerrera during the Scottish Civil War in the 1640s the brooch's whereabouts remained a mystery until its re-emergence in Victorian times to become part of the great Scottish revival and was subsequently returned to the MacDouglas by the Campbells. Mentioned and discussed nationally, coveted at one stage by royalty, this brooch's absence over the centuries all combines to make it one of the great stories of Lorn.

The original brooch was recently on display at the British Museum with two other turreted brooches from Mull and Kintyre.

Former Development officer at Dunollie, Catherine Gillies's extensive knowledge 'of all things Dunollie' is a great asset to have within the local area.

The next speaker will be Clive Bonsall, Professor of Early Pre-history at Edinburgh University. A specialist in the early Hunter Gatherer and Farming Societies, he is no stranger to the Oban area as he took part of the Archaeological surveys in this area during the 1990s. His talk on 'The Obanian problem revisited' will explore the west coast's Mesolithic past.

This meeting on Friday, January 18 begins at 7.30pm and anyone interested is reminded that lectures are now held in St. Columba's Church Hall, behind the Cathedral off Corran Brae, Oban where parking is available.



Oban's Lodge Commercial 180 made a donation of £1,100 to Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease (ABCD) in memory of former member Ian 'Parrot' MacMillan, who died recently. The money was raised through a fundraising ceilidh at the lodge with Gunna Sound, organised by Kenny Pearson, far left. Right Worshipful Master of the Lodge, Ian Russell, right, is pictured handing over the cheque to ABCD's Willie Melville. ABCD members Alfie MacKenzie and Andy Henderson and Mr MacMillan's widow and daughter, Mary and Iona, are also pictured.

A WEBSITE highlighting Oban as a prime tourist destination is one of the most popular in the UK.

The oban.org.uk website, run by the Oban and Lorn Tourism Association (OLTA), now attracts more than half a million visitors a year, up on 2011's traffic, with more than two million pages looked at between them.

According to webmaster Duncan Monteith-Hodge, a large proportion of that increase comes from smartphone and tablet computers.

He said: 'The webcams continue to be the most popular pages on the site and are brilliant at showcasing the town.'

Membership of the association runs from January each year and is open to anyone with a business interest in tourism in Oban and Lorn.

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## New music course at Lewis Castle College

NORTH Uist is hoping to draw participants from across Europe and beyond to a new music course based at Lewis Castle College in Benbecula.

Hebrides Tunes from March 11-16 will feature music workshops, ceilidhs, step dancing, Gaelic language and excursions to local historical sites.

Tuition for pipers, fiddlers, whistlers, guitarists and bodhran players will be provided by BA Traditional Music students and staff at the college.

The Angus Nicolson Trio will provide the core of instrumental tuition and groupwork.



Geese and gulls take cover: the gyrfalcon is now on South Uist. Photograph by John Kemp.

## Alarm at arrival of gyrfalcon on the Uists

AN UNUSUAL visitor from the skies has flown in from the icy north to terrify wildlife on the Uists.

The gyrfalcon, which probably flew in from Greenland, was first seen around the RSPB Balranald reserve on North Uist.

Now the feathered predator has moved south and according to Balranald site manager Jamie Boyle is causing 'some alarm'.

'This gyrfalcon has been hunting a wide range of prey from gulls to geese and has an incredible effect on the wildlife,' he said. 'You can almost feel the tension in the air when it's around.'

'They hunt small mammals as well as birds, so rabbits might be playing a part in keeping it here.'

'The books say that on the whole they are not migratory and hang around the ice flows and mountains of the Arctic but we seem to get them almost every year in the Uists.'

The gyrfalcon is the biggest falcon and is about the same size as a buzzard. They hunt on the ground, waiting on a rock or tussock watching for prey.

## Wetherspoon is coming to Fort

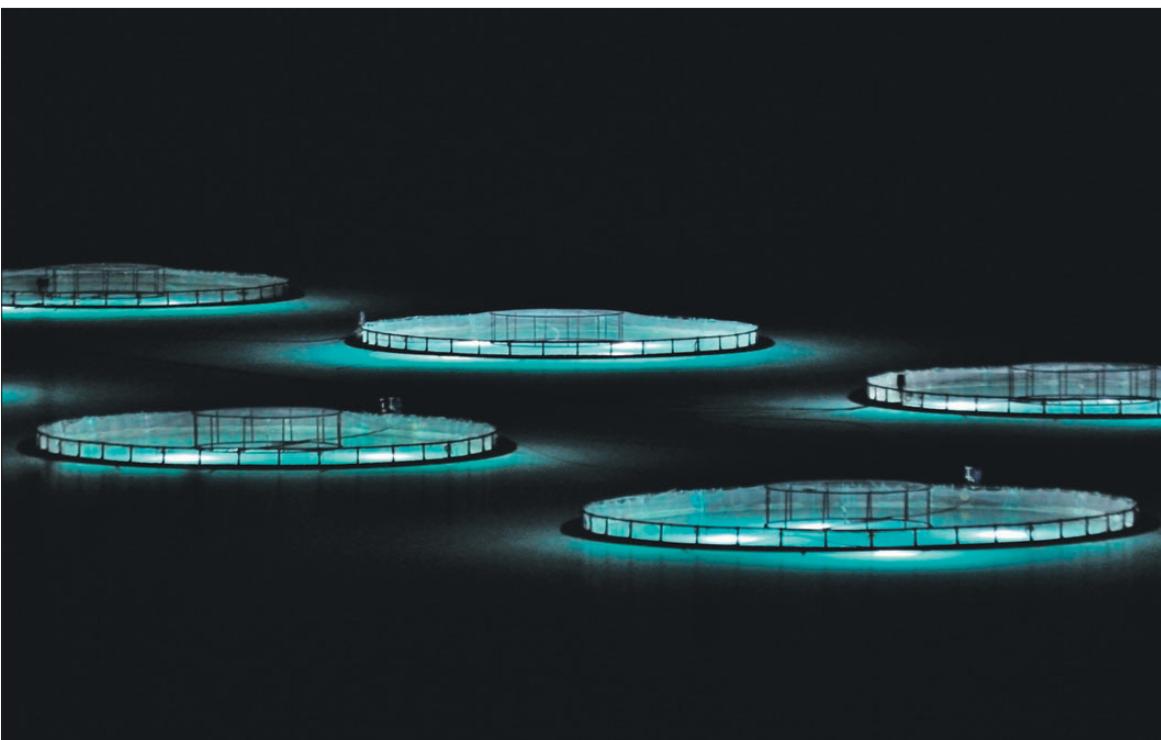
RUOMERS that JD Wetherspoon would not be coming to Fort William have been scotched after the pub chain confirmed it will open its new bar later this year.

The street level outlet in the West End is one of 30 being opened in towns across the UK under a £35 million expansion programme.

The bar, located at the start/finish point of the West Highland Way, will be called The Great Glen after an *Oban Times* readers' competition last April.

JD Wetherspoon chairman Tim Martin said: 'We are looking forward to opening the new pubs, many of which will be in areas where Wetherspoon is not yet represented.'

The bar forms a key part of Ashford Property Group's £8 million development on the site of the former Grand Hotel, which was destroyed by fire in 2007.



## Alien invasion? No just fish farm cages at night

It may look like an alien invasion, but these spectral discs are not flying saucers from outer space. They are in fact salmon cages at Marine Harvest's Caraig fish farm on Loch Einort at Caraig, near Luib, on the road between Portree and Broadford. The cages are illuminated at night, *The Oban Times* understands, to regulate the growth of the fish. Photograph by The Tartan Lens.

# Tree felling at Glen Righ to close one lane of A82

## Traffic management in place until late March

TIMBER harvesting operations on a steep hillside next to the A82 between Fort William and the Corran Ferry will start on Monday, Forestry Commission Scotland has announced.

The felling in Glen Righ Forest will see the road reduced to one lane during the working week until late March - and closed for short intervals during that time.

Project manager Alex MacLeod said traffic management would be in place from January 14 with a lane closure immediately south of the Loch Linnhe car park. He said: 'There will also be a need for regular but short periods of road closure in both directions though it is expected these will be for no more than

10 minutes at a time and we will ensure that vehicles will be allowed to clear between each of these. We understand that road users will find this frustrating, and we apologise in advance for the inconvenience, but the harvesting work is very difficult and potentially dangerous and the safety of our operators and road users is of paramount importance.'

The harvesting operations are expected to last until late March with traffic management initially in place between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday. The Commission will also ensure the short road closures are delayed until

after 9am. The news follows a series of consultation events to update the public on the work.

Mr MacLeod said: 'Some of the constructive feedback from our recent successful drop-in events asked that we keep up the good work with regards to keeping people informed about what's happening when, and we aim to do that.'

Visitors to the drop-ins viewed maps of the forest areas, photographs showing the harvesting challenges, work methods and work completed to date.

According to Mr MacLeod, the majority agreed with 'the sensible long term plan for a serious problem' and were 'pleased to have the opportunity to hear of the work programmes'.



## Pupils raise money for charity

English medium P1-3 pupils at Dunvegan Primary School show off posters and bags of reindeer food they made to sell at their successful Christmas show, when £40 was raised for Save the Children. The Dunvegan kids chose the charity following their study of how other countries across the globe celebrated Christmas. Class teacher Liz Macfarlane told *The Oban Times*: 'They were very moved by the difficulties in Israel and Gaza and decided to raise money so that children in that part of the world would have something to celebrate during the festive season.'

## Entries open for major Cancer Research event

ENTRIES have opened for a major fundraiser in aid of Cancer Research UK in Fort William on Saturday April 27.

Participants in 'Run Together', which is being billed as a 'fun event for the whole family', either walk, run or jog a five-kilometre course.

The popular event, now in its third year, will take place at the BA Club from 11am to 3pm. Star attraction will be a display by strongmen at 2pm.

Event manager Adam Ramsey told *The Oban Times* he had high hopes the day would be the most successful yet.

He said: 'We nearly touched 400 competitors last year and this time we are aiming for 700 people to take part.'

'We are trying to encourage whole families to get involved. We are printing out registration forms and we will deliver them

to every single home in Fort William.'

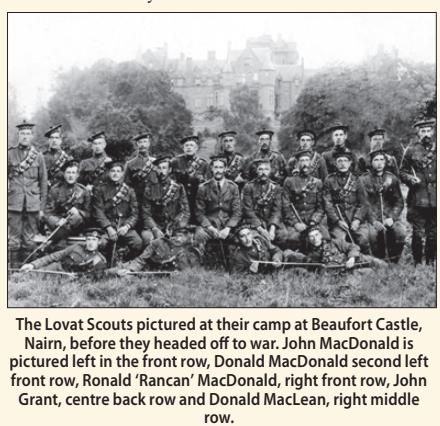
'We raised £14,000 the first year and that dropped a little to £11,000 last year so we aim to beat that this time.'

'We need to raise as much money as we can to help pay for clinical trials.'

Last April's event saw more than 300 people complete the route from the BA Club up through Inverlochy and back, with local youngster Craig MacLean repeating his win from 2011.

The day was also marked by a poignant balloon release in memory of loved ones claimed by cancer.

Anyone wishing to take part or become a sponsor in Run Together 2013 can register at [www.lochabertogether.co.uk](http://www.lochabertogether.co.uk) or at the Cancer Research UK shop in High Street.



The Lovat Scouts pictured at their camp at Beaufort Castle, Nairn, before they headed off to war. John MacDonald is pictured left in the front row, Donald MacDonald second left front row, Ronald 'Rancan' MacDonald, right front row, John Grant, centre back row and Donald MacLean, right middle row.

## MSP slams 'environmental extremism'

A WEST Highlands MSP has claimed 'environmental extremism' is damaging informed debate on fish farm applications.

Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch representative Dave Thompson said outspoken aquaculture opponents could 'detract from genuine objections from local communities' and restrict the industry's growth.

He said: 'While it is important to recognise genuine environmental and local concerns, it is regrettable that advocates of extreme positions can hold up the planning process.'



## Gaelic singer is Oscar nominee

NORTH Uist Gaelic singer Julie Fowlis has won more plaudits after being nominated for a best song Oscar.

Highlands and Islands MSP Rob Gibson has lodged a motion in parliament congratulating the Hebridean star and praising her contribution to promoting Scotland's native language.

The nomination, said Mr Gibson, was 'a great achievement'.

He added: 'She is a fantastic ambassador for Gaelic music and Scots music in general, putting it on the world map.'

'This latest advancement seems a world away from the Feis Rois offices in Dingwall where she worked so effectively.'

'Julie should be proud of her efforts to raise the profile of Scots song around the world. This nomination is a reflection of her hard work and talent for writing beautiful songs.'

Fowlis' song *'Touch the Sky'*, which features on the soundtrack of the Disney Pixar film *Brave*, is on a long-list of seven at the awards ceremony to be held in Los Angeles on February 24.

Katie Perry, Jessie J, actress Scarlett Johansson and the big screen version of the musical *Les Misérables* are also in the running.

Right: Julie Fowlis is in the running for an Oscar.

Photograph by Deborah Coleman.

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## EU talks agree Scottish whitefish and prawn quotas

NO FURTHER cuts will be made to the quotas for Scottish whitefish and prawn fleets following key EU talks.

The Scottish Fishermen's Federation has welcomed a decision by the council of ministers at the EU fisheries negotiations in Brussels, which means fishermen can spend the same number of days at sea next year.

The talks also removed the

threat of further automatic cuts as part of the EU's Cod Recovery Plan.

On the west coast of Scotland, a proposed 48 per cent cut in the haddock quota was reduced to a 30 per cent fall so as to better reflect the long term management plan for an increasingly healthy stock.

Since 2008, the spawning stock biomass of cod in the North Sea has doubled.

Against this background of a recovering cod stock, which has been aided by innovative conservation measures adopted by the Scottish fleet, the council of ministers overruled the legal red tape surrounding the cod plan and has instead adopted a more pragmatic approach that will freeze fishing effort next year at 2012 levels.

The agreement also paves the way for the EU to negotiate with

Norway a cod total allowable catch for 2013 for the North Sea that is at the same level as this year, rather than the 20 per cent cut originally proposed.

Bertie Armstrong, chief executive of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation, said: 'Considerable credit has to go to the Scottish and UK Governments for their negotiating stance, which has ensured that a common-sense approach on fisheries manage-

ment based on the science has been adopted.'

'We were facing the very real danger of the decision-making being caught in legal red tape that would have caused immense economic hardship and done nothing to aid fish stock conservation and sustainable harvesting.'

'Fishing effort in Scotland has been slashed by almost 70 per cent over the last 10 years and

we were quite simply at a stage where the fleet could not sustain any more cuts.'

'These were hard fought negotiations but on balance the package of measures agreed brings a degree of stability for the Scottish fleet in 2013.'

A commitment was also given by the Scottish and UK Governments at the talks to continue with pioneering and positive selectivity measures

adopted by the fleet that have dramatically reduced discards in recent years. For example, new prawn trawls developed by the Scottish industry have reduced cod discards by up to 87 per cent.

Mr Armstrong said: 'Developing and refining these conservation measures will help ensure the steady growth in stocks that we are currently experiencing.'

# First building opens at Oban's European Marine Science Park

'This is a special building, not just for Dunbeg and Oban, but for the Highlands and Islands, SAMS and Scotland as a whole.'

OBAN'S reputation as a centre of excellence for marine science has been further enhanced following the completion of the first building in the European Marine Science Park.

Costing £5.8million, the new cutting-edge building opposite the world-renowned Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Dunbeg offers a total lettable area of 1,800

square metres for scientific firms. It is hoped that the facility, the first of three planned buildings, will offer fledgling businesses at SAMS the opportunity to grow on their own doorstep, as well as attract firms from across the world to establish a base on the shores of Dunstaffnage.

It is anticipated the building will be worth some £5.6million gross value added (GVA) to the Scottish economy per annum, with a significant proportion of that likely to feed into the local area.

*The Oban Times* visited when the building was handed over by contractors Robertson Northern to Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) this month. Douglas Cowan, Argyll and the Islands area manager for HIE, described his hopes for the building.

'The building almost sells itself when you see it finished,' he said. 'The site itself is now a mix of research, education and commercial elements, with SAMS next door.'

'What makes this building very special, though, is the location. It's almost a boutique science park.'

'Yet, there is scope to do more. We will see how this building goes and what the trend is.'

'Marine Science is a broad field and a growing sector; one of the few growth sectors.'

Some 40 per cent of the capital for the building was provided by European Rural Development Funding, with the rest funded by HIE. Much of the ethos behind the building was to make it environmentally friendly, sustainable and as adaptable as possible.

As such, the building is powered by a detached biomass heating system, which is extendable should the two other buildings planned for the site be required.

Natural light is a big part of the building, with large windows swooping down either side of the building. Natural light portals reflect sunlight in towards the centre of the building to ensure it is as brightly lit as possible.

A smart building, everything about its design has been carefully planned to ensure it requires as little heating – or even cooling – as possible.

One key example of that is actuators built into the window frames which, when the rooms hit a certain temperature, open automatically to cool the rooms.

Such is the environmental credentials of the design that it has earned an 'excellent' rating from Breeam, the world's leading design and assessment method for sustainable buildings.

Project director for Robertson Northern, Allan Macleod, is proud of the building.

He said: 'The important thing about the building is it has been designed to manage itself. It's also a very high specification building.'

'This is something we will use as a showcase – very much so. We've learned a lot from this.'

Project manager for HIE, Morag Goodfellow, said: 'It's an amazing place to be. The more time you spend here the more you appreciate it.'

'The area helps though. Oban is part of the package with the transport links from air, road, rail and ferry.'

'It is more than that though – it's about what Oban and living in Oban has to offer. Just showing people the area and having a meal in Oban helps sell the place as somewhere not just to work, but to live.'

The lettable area extends over two floors, with each completely customisable by HIE depending on the specification of the client.

Its proximity to SAMS is also seen as a major boost, meaning private firms based at the new European Marine Science Centre will have access to more than 150 scientists covering all aspects of marine science, first class laboratory facilities and the Europe's largest collection of algae and protozoa.

There has already been some tentative interest from an Australian firm, but HIE says the finishing of the building is just the beginning.

Douglas concluded: 'This is a special building, not just for Dunbeg and Oban, but for the Highlands and Islands, SAMS and Scotland as a whole.'



The entrance foyer to the building, which has been build to a 'very high' specification. 16\_151hiehandover5



Designed to look as contemporary as possible, the building has been described as science's very own Grand Design. 16\_151hiehandover6



Like the ground floor, the first floor of the new building is completely customisable depending on the client's wishes. 16\_151hiehandover8



The exterior of the new building has been sympathetically designed to blend with its surroundings. 16\_151hiehandover4



Allan Macleod, left, of Robertson Northern, handing over the new European Marine Science Park's first building to Douglas Cowan, area manager for Highlands and Islands Enterprise. 16\_151hiehandover3

## Pairc Estate community bid court decision may open doors

A 'HOSTILE' community bid to buy a crofting estate on Lewis does not violate the landlord's human rights, Scotland's top civil court has ruled.

### Revenue

The Court of Session in Edinburgh found against Pairc estate owner Barry Lomas, who took the Scottish Government to court after it gave the Pairc Trust permission to proceed with the buyout under the Scottish Land Reform Act.

At stake is ownership of common grazings on 20,000 wild acres in South Lochs – but more importantly potentially huge revenues from a proposed windfarm on the boggy moorland.

Stornoway Sheriff Court will hear a separate legal challenge from the landlord in the New Year.

Mr Lomas will contest the validity of a ballot held by the trust in December 2009, in which the 400-strong

community voted 'yes' to buying Pairc Estate's common grazings and an associated lease.

Both parties maintain the legal wrangle does not preclude agreement being reached on an 'amicable transfer' of the estate.

Meanwhile, the Scottish Crofting Federation welcomed the court's ruling. Chair Derek Flynn said: 'Other communities will be heartened by this result.'



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## West police have new assistant chief with single force

THE MAN who will help shape local policing in the west of Scotland from April has been appointed.

Wayne Mawson will become the assistant chief constable, local policing west, when the new single force comes into operation next year.

Mr Mawson is currently a chief superintendent in Strathclyde, where he is currently divisional commander and is responsible for local policing strategy in Glasgow North East and East Dunbartonshire.

Another five assistant chief constables have also been appointed to cover various aspects of policing. Salaries are between £90,726 and £105,849.

Chief constable Stephen House said: 'The six assistant chief constables who have been appointed will play critical roles in the future of policing in Scotland.'

'The team will now drive forward local policing, deliver operationally on organised crime, major incidents, counter terrorism, public protection and operational support.'

'They will work closely with the deputy chief constables to shape the best possible service for communities to keep people safe.'

## Scaffolding goes up on iconic Torosay Castle

RECENT renovations to an iconic castle on the Isle of Mull have seen a large amount of scaffolding surround it.

Torosay Castle was sold in September after being in the same family for 147 years. Former owner Chris James said at the time he was 'relieved' to have sold the property.

The castle was purchased by a Swiss family for more than £1.65 million. Roof repairs alone are estimated at more than £1 million.

Torosay was previously up for sale at £2.8 million, at which point an American noted interest, claiming to be a descendant of the Macleans of Duart.

James Dudgeon, who even contacted *The Oban Times* looking for help with purchasing the castle, turned out to be a convicted thief with orders against him to 'protect investors'.

## INVERARAY

INVERARAY and District Pipe Band will make its debut at one of the most prestigious concerts on the pipe band calendar.

The band will take to the stage of the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on Wednesday August 14 2013 at the 'Pre Worlds' concert.

The concert is aptly named 'Ascension' as the band has, in only eight years, risen from the humble beginnings of a Tuesday night chanter class to one of the top Grade 1 pipe bands in the world.

'We are delighted to be asked by the Glasgow Skye Association to do the 2013 Pre-Worlds Concert,' said pipe major Stuart Liddell.

'This event has become a highlight of the pipe band calendar and we are honoured to follow in the footsteps of so many great bands.'

'Our main aim is to entertain the audience, ensuring that everyone has an enjoyable evening and goes home happy.'

Inveraray and District Pipe Band, led by Stuart and leading drummer Steven McWhirter, formed in 2005 but joined the top flight of the pipe band world in 2010.

Throughout the concert the band hopes to provide the listener with an appreciation of a wide variety of music from all corners of the globe.

The audience should expect to hear presentations of the traditional classics to some of the more contemporary arrangements and compositions by pipe sergeant Dougie Campbell, band member Alasdair Henderson and Australian composer and new band member Mark Saul.

The audience can also look forward to an alternative presentation of what has become the band's signature tune, 'The Water is Wide'.

The band has confirmed it will be joined by a supporting cast of young folk musicians in the fore of the Scottish traditional music scene and some other special guests.

## WESTERN ISLES

TWO WESTERN Isles fishing boats have received a cash boost from the European Fisheries Fund.

The Brighter Morn of Arveenish in Barra was granted £11,938 towards a new hydraulic system to improve the hauling of nets on board.

The new gear will significantly improve the safety of the crew and reduce damage to the catch, therefore improving returns.

On North Uist, the Heather Isle received £22,278 for its conversion to static gear operations, meaning the business can diversify its operation during October to March through prawn creeling.

Elsewhere, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar was awarded £99,201 towards improvements in refuelling provision for inshore fishermen at fishery piers, including upgraded tanks and new technology.

## BARCALDINE



Primary seven pupils at Barcaldine Primary School went along to the local farmers' market on Thursday December 5 to sell their enterprise goods. The children have been busy making lots of things to sell as part of their enterprise project and took everything along. The group was busy manning its stall and raised more than £65 towards their school fund.

## KINLOCHLEVEN



Kinlochleven Primary School eco group: raised money for two new projects in the New Year.

Philippines through Lend with Care, an organisation which gives small affordable loans to people in poorer countries to start up or expand a business to provide for their families.

The second project will see pupils sponsor the under-threat Scottish wildcat through the school's eco ethos of helping sustain the planet by respecting the creatures we share it with.

Pupils were asked to bring in any unwanted toys, books or games in good condition for the 'Re-Sale', which made a total of £44.12 thanks to a fantastic response. The cash means pupils can help a family in the Philippines through Lend with Care, an organisation which gives small affordable loans to people in poorer countries to start up or expand a business to provide for their families.

## PORTREE



Parent council members Moreen Pringle and Helen Gilpin cut the ribbon to declare the play area open.

PORTREE Primary School recently celebrated a huge community effort with the official opening of a new playground and outdoor classroom.

Last August the parent council decided to start raising the £25,000 needed and inside 12 months had reached its target.

The dedicated mums and dads organised many events, as did the school, while the wider Portree community also did their bit. All those who helped were invited to the opening and included Callie and Kathleen Maclean, Billy and Mary MacAskill, Lucky 2Bhere, Portree Free Church, Scottish Salmon Company, Home Farm Nursing Home, Comann na Parant, Highland Council Skye Ward Discretionary Fund, Shirley Taylor and Fiona Gordon of the West Highland Way Walkers.

## COMING SOON

**Fort William & Lochaber**

**2013**

**Oban Index**

The Oban Index lists telephone subscribers, trades, businesses and services within the Oban area.

Check your Oban Times for details

## CAOL



Caol Primary School staged a Christmas concert and nativity play - and received a festive boost when local firm Intrabiz Scaffolding handed over £450 sponsorship at rehearsals prior to the show. P1 and P2 performed 'Hump the Camel' and P3-P7 'The Time Travellers' before the whole school joined the 'Merry Christmas Everybody' finale. 20\_f52caol01

## CARBOST



Carbost Primary School children performed 'Baa Baa Bethlehem' for the local community at their Christmas concert before the New Year break. Clerical assistant Mina Bruce said: 'The evening was a great success.'

## INVERGARRY



Parents and friends packed out Invergarry Primary School for the annual Christmas show. The pupils and nursery youngsters performed 'It Takes a Village' and after the show a sale of Christmas crafts and cakes was held, with a raffle to raise funds for Cancer Care in the Highlands. Head teacher Jane Strachan said: 'The show was a sell out and everybody enjoyed it. It was very apt as so many from the community had helped us put the show together echoing the message of the show.'

## BALLACHULISH



Three artistic Ballachulish Primary School pupils won a Christmas Card design competition run by Abbeyfield Ballachulish. Winners, left to right, Megan MacDonald P5, Abbi Mitchell P3 and Rachael Thorne P6 each received a framed copy of their design and a cash prize.

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IN THE next couple of years

## Plockton Village Hall annual general meeting

PLOCKTON village hall committee held its AGM with the usual attendance.

John MacDonald after 26 years and George Glasgow after six years both retired from the committee and Sybil Cameron was added.

All other committee members were re-elected including the secretary/treasurer Charlie M MacRae, now in his 52nd year in the post.

The treasurer submitted a satisfactory report despite expenditure of £9,370.55.

The hall committee continues to make improvements, including recently putting a new floor in the exhibition area, painting this area and installing new blinds.

A new outside sign has been ordered

and the kitchen will be renovated with the purchase of a dishwasher.

A questionnaire will be sent to all the clubs using the hall asking them for any suggestions on improving facilities in the hall.

Plockton and District Community Council has received an anonymous donation of £500 to be used in keeping the village tidy.

The community council will hold its first meeting of the New Year in Plockton hall January 29.

Among the items discussed at the last meeting were:

Proposed speed limit in Plockton - the community council agreed with the proposals apart from the part time 20mph

## Islay Letter

work and achievements. They must be breathing great sighs of relief that it is all behind them now. Oh yes it is!

## Editor retires

CARL Reavey, editor of local newspaper the *Ileach*, has laid aside his quill after occupying the editorial chair for close on eight years.

During his tenure, he has brought the fortnightly publication into the 21st century and ensured that the paper, under his direction, maintained high journalistic standards.

He was always informative, sometimes controversial, but always ensured the paper became a 'must read' both locally and far beyond these shores.

Carl, a former mine host at both Port Charlotte and Portnahaven hotels, also acted as a roving reporter, itinerant photographer, reviewer and researcher.

He still continues to have business, social and cultural interests on the island and is involved in the Museum of Islay Life at Port Charlotte.

Although Carl is forsaking his quill, I have it on very good authority that his cycling helmet and bicycle clips will continue to be fully used.

Cheers Carl. You will be greatly missed in your accustomed place, scoffing down homemade bread with paté and cucumber.

## Broadcaster's visit

GAELOC activist Roddy MacLean better known to Gaelic radio listeners as Ruairidh MacIleathain, writer and presenter of the weekly Litir do Luchd-Iomnsachaidh (The Learners' Letter) addressed a large crowd at Ionad Chaluim Chille Ile on the benefits of bilingual education.

Port Ellen Primary School forsook the pantomime format this year and presented its own version of the Nativity story. This was an innovative take on a well-known theme and although the main Nativity characters were much to the fore the production also featured a chilly owl, bats and rabbits to name but a few. Also much in evidence were two Santas who provided the narrations with great aplomb and kept the unfolding story on even rails.

Everyone

who took part in these productions acted their little hearts out and greatly impressed with their talents.

Plaudits must also go to the production teams and behind the scenes staff on their hard

knowledge of landscape and nature and their links to the Gaelic language and spoke of the diversity of expression derived from the possession of another native language.

The broadcaster, who also edits the Gaelic magazine *Cothrom*, shared these views with pupils at the island high school and also carried his message to the neighbouring Isle of Jura.

Hugh Smith, 4 Flora Street, Bowmore, Islay PA43 7JX. Tel: 01496 810658.

## LISMORE



Lismore Primary School pupils performed their nativity play in the church this year and greatly impressed the congregation with their confident clear voices and well rehearsed moves. Colourful costumes added to the occasion as did the communal carol singing and mince pies and mulled wine on offer afterwards. Well done to all.

LISMORE Primary School would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who contributed to the Island Christmas Card and helped raise £600 which will be divided between Guide Dogs for the Blind and Crisis at Christmas.

CONGRATULATIONS to islander Nic Jones who has been appointed manager of BidOBAN.

At the moment Nic is doing an excellent job as volunteer manager of Ionad Naomh Molag, the Lismore Gaelic Heritage Centre. We wish him well in his new job.

Everyone is welcome, adults and young people, but not dogs. It should take an hour or so and will involve nothing energetic. However, it would be useful to have a digital camera or good phone/camera, if possible with inbuilt GPS. For further information go to www.isleoflismore.com.

adjacent to the high school which it was felt should be extended to a permanent one.

Station Road - Plockton's worst road is causing a major concern in the village. Station Road is not adopted so Highland Council is refusing to do any work on it. Scottair say it belongs to council.

Road matters - the chairman had met with Sandy MacVaris from the roads department and discussed various problems including Harbour Street and airstrip road.

Stromeferry bypass - Iain Matheson represented the community council at a meeting in Strathcarron Hotel on December 4 at which what is to be done in the future was discussed.

**'Old New Year'**  
**shinty match**  
**at Glenfinnan**

GLENFINNAN residents will celebrate the 'Old New Year' of January 12 next Saturday with an ancient tradition - a shinty game between villagers.

A bonfire beside the River Finnan will keep spectators warm as men, women and children of all ages play the fixture on a rough field below the Glenfinnan viaduct.

The fun afternoon will see 'The Glenfinnan '45s' take on the rest in one of most eagerly anticipated social events on the local calendar.

Match organiser, Glenfinnan Estate manager Alasdair Gibson told *The Oban Times*: 'It's one one the most important things we do in the year - children, women, dads, uncles - everybody plays.'

'It is a fairly laid back affair - nobody wants to be captain and nobody wants to referee! It's a bit of fun and exercise before some indulgence.'

The Glenfinnan Estate field has also seen rugby, football and even cricket challenge matches in recent years.

**Lochaber gathers to honour 2012 sporting success**

LOCHABER'S sporting community came together to celebrate the great and good of 2012 at the second annual Lochaber Sports Association awards ceremony on Saturday night.

A wide range of sports were represented by the winners - from shinty to sailing and hill running to roller skating.

The two big awards on the night went to runner Finlay Wild and Lochaber Camanachd for top individual and top team respectively.

For a full report and photos from the night see the sports section.

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Jessie Colquhoun: honoured with an MBE for her years of dedicated service to West Ardnamurchan.

**Ceremony to mark 70th anniversary of Ben Nevis Spitfire crash**

THE SITE on Ben Nevis where a Spitfire crashed during World War II killing the young pilot is to be marked with a ceremony to mark the 70th anniversary of the incident. LAS chairman Robert Cairns told *The Oban Times*: 'The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has asked us to photograph and record the site and said it will now be classified as a war grave. On May 16 - 70 years to the day - the Royal British Legion will walk up to the site and lay a wreath. A plaque will be made up and placed in the

Glen Nevis Visitor Centre car park, which overlooks the crash site, because we don't want to put it up on the hill where no one will see it. This guy gave his life when he crashed over Fort William, so this memorial is well overdue. How many people know the whole story of what happened? Maybe even his family back home in Canada don't know. The people of Lochaber will finally be able mark their respects after 70 years.'

RCAF is trying to trace members of Mr McDonnell's family with a view to inviting them to the ceremony.

**Tesco declines to give start date for building new Fort William store**

TESCO has declined to give a start date for its new 60,000sq ft store in Fort William despite hopes work would start this month. It had been hoped infrastructure works at the Blair Mhor would be completed by Christmas.

A Tesco spokesperson told *The Oban Times*: 'All our developments have to be considered against all other developments across the UK and we have to go through a process of dealing with when they will be built.'

'We should be in a better position to provide more information in January or February.'

He added: 'We understand people are very keen to see the Tesco store come forward. Once we have a start date we will inform the local community.'

**The Oban Times**  
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

**20 years ago**

**Thursday, December 31, 1992**

**Gigha looks forward to a good New Year**

THE RECESSION has hit Gigha but hopes are running high that the new owners will help build up the island's economy during 1993.

Despite concern throughout 1992 over ownership of Gigha, islanders have kept faith and are now looking forward to a bright new year.

Mr Derek Holt, of Holt Leisure Parks, bought Gigha in September after the island was repossessed at the beginning of 1992. Mr Holt's daughter and son-in-law live on the island.

Islanders are looking forward to a bright 1993 with the new owners after a 'disappointing' 1992.

Islander Margaret McSporran said: 'The summer was very disappointing. We think it was with everybody, but the yachts were the worst.'

'In the summer there was only two nights that we managed to get

30 yachts. The yacht trade was very much down.'

'We don't know whether to blame it on the circumstances of the island or the recession - probably a bit of both.'

**Loganair plays Santa Claus**

LOGANAIR played Santa Claus last week to make sure a Mull pensioner could spend Christmas on her home island.

Ninety-two-year-old Morag MacColl, Achnamara, Craignure, was airlifted from Mull to the Southern General Hospital in Glasgow on December 12 after suffering an accident which resulted in a broken leg.

Following expert treatment at the hospital, Mrs MacColl, who, until she was airlifted the previous week, had never before been in an aircraft, was flown back to Glenforsa airport on

Mull on Christmas Eve. She was immediately transferred from the twin-engine Islander to Dunaros hospital, Salen, where she is said to be making excellent progress.

Local carol singers who toured the hospital paid a visit to her room that evening and the following day found Mrs MacColl up and joining other patients for Christmas lunch.

A member of staff said: 'She is a wonderful old lady who is already surprisingly mobile despite her accident. We are all very fond of her.'

**Waterfront discussions**

THE CREATOR of Oban's Heritage Wharf centre, Peter Plimley, is set to meet with the town's community council to answer any questions about the waterfront development.

Oban Community Council has invited Mr Plimley to attend a meet-

ing on January 11, 1993. He said: 'It is likely that I will be there.'

He intends answering any queries the community council has about phase one or the prospective phase two of the £6.5 million development.

It is proposed to start work on phase two, which includes a new £3 million hotel and curling rink in the spring.

**Jobless go back to school**

ADULTS are prepared to go back to school rather than face Lochaber's growing dole queue, it has been revealed.

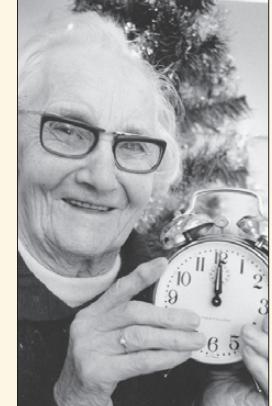
In just two years, the number of adults seeking advice on further education opportunities has nearly doubled.

'In 1990 the number of adults using our careers advice service was 228. This year, the figure is set to reach 400,' said area careers officer, Philip Leckie, who is based in Fort William.

Last week, a report issued by the General Municipal and Boilermakers Union indicated that Lochaber had the fastest growing unemployment level in Scotland. Skye and Oban are experiencing the same problem.



Primary seven pupils at Oban's Park Primary School raised £400 for the people of war-torn Bosnia. They are pictured handing over the cheque to John MacGillivray. t52twentysix



When the bells chime to bring in the New Year, they will also herald the 98th birthday of Miss Christine MacNeill. A resident of north Argyll house, Oban, Miss MacNeill is originally from Salen on Mull. She wishes everyone a happy and prosperous New Year. t52twentysix

# Dedicated Jessie honoured with New Year MBE

Former district nurse named in Honours List for services to healthcare in Ardnamurchan

ONE OF Lochaber's most dedicated health professionals has spoken of her delight at an MBE in the Queen's 2013 New Year Honours List.

Jessie Colquhoun, from Kilchoan, received the honour for 'services to healthcare in Ardnamurchan, Argyll.'

Jessie officially retired in February 2012 after 55 years of dedicated service, the last 36 of those as district nurse in West Ardnamurchan.

The active 70-year-old's nursing career began at the age of 15, when she began work as an auxiliary nurse at a small cottage hospital in Auchterarder, Perthshire.

From there, a move to Dundee Royal former training followed, then two six-months spells doing midwifery in Sunderland and Liverpool.

Next stage in her career was

By STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

a return to Scotland for district nursing in Perth and Kinross, then a spell training as a health visitor in Edinburgh.

All those qualifications meant Jessie became a 'triple-duty' district nurse, skills she brought to Kilchoan where she began work in 1976, a position she held until her retirement.

The new MBE told *The Oban Times*: 'I am very honoured. To me nursing is more than just a job - it's a vocation, looking after people from the day they were born to the end of their lives.'

'Having retired I still feel fit and I now do the emergency responders' scheme and also Marie Curie bank nursing. I am so pleased I am able to work in a caring profession.'

'I could not have done this

without the support of my husband Laurie, who sadly died from a terminal illness in January 2011. The community has been very supportive throughout. We are one big happy family down here.'

Jessie added: 'In the summer time I love my garden, I have a dog and I am pleased I'm still able to live here in the community and contribute a bit to looking after them still.'

Jessie hit the headlines when she was due to retire in early 2011. She was not going to be replaced, leaving the remote community without full local nursing cover.

She agreed to stay on an extra year while consultations about replacing district nurses continued.

Local reaction was swift - and West Ardnamurchan Agricultural Show and Sports chairman

Gus MacLean summed up local people's reaction.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'Everybody here is extremely pleased and proud of her Jessie's achievement. She is very well respected throughout West Ardnamurchan and has given so much to the community over the years. This recognition is richly deserved.'

Local online commentators were also fulsome in their praise. One Kilchoan blogger said: 'Many congratulations - this has given us much greater faith in the honours system - awards going to those who best deserve them.'

'This is a vindication for the hard struggle the community recently had to fight and shows that somebody, somewhere, can really appreciate dedicated service given for the benefit of others.'

## Community council takes first steps to set up hydropower profit group

A LOCHABER community council will take the first steps towards setting up a new company to handle potential earnings from a raft of micro hydropower schemes at a meeting next Tuesday evening.

Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry will hear from Highland Council wards manager Dot Ferguson about the mechanics of setting up a company to receive any community benefit.

But community council chairman John Fotheringham said he feared benefit from proposed schemes in Loch Arkaig may go to local residents association

Achnacarry, Bunarkraig and Clunes (ABC) Group rather than a new community company.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'I think a lot of the money is going to go to the ABC Group. The developers are the ones who decide who they give the money to and in the case of developments on Lochiel's land he will almost certainly give it to someone he knows.'

'We're still going to go ahead with our plans. There's been a number of occasions recently where a community company would have been of benefit to the community.'

ABC Group chairman Richard Sidwick is expected to attend the meeting at Spean Bridge Primary School.

Mr Sidwick could not be contacted before *The Oban Times* went to press.

The community council recently discussed a number of planning applications for small-scale power schemes, which will be decided imminently.

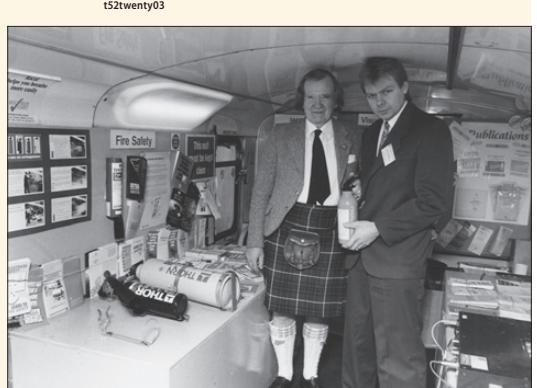
Highland Council encourage companies developing new schemes to contribute to a community benefit fund, which is given to local residents affected by the development.



Soroba Young Families' Group celebrated its first birthday in the new premises. Cutting the cake are Janice Kay and Susan Moore, with children (left to right) Lewis Ross, Graeme Darling and Donna MacLachlan, all three. t52twentysix



Jonathon Faragher and Carlene Armstrong, both primary one pupils at Dunbeg Primary School, played Mary and Joseph in the school's nativity play. t52twentysix



Mr Robin Banks, councillor for Soroba, is shown some of the equipment on board the 'health and safety' Euro Bus by Alan Morrison, senior environmental health officer for Argyll and Bute. The bus recently visited Oban's North Pier. t52twentysix

# WYVEX MEDIA Photo of the year

sponsored by **TESCO**

*Every little helps*

Lochside, Oban,  
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NEW YEAR, new photos and new headaches for our judges with some striking images entered in to our Photo of the Year competition.

This week, the west coast's stunning skyline is a popular choice as amateur photographers demonstrate why they love the west coast so much.

Remember you can vote for your favourite by sending a text to 88010 using the keyword POY followed by the code below your favourite photograph if you think it's worthy of a prize.

For example, if the number below your photograph is 123, your message would read POY 123.

Alternatively, complete the voting form attached. Photocopies will not be accepted.

To submit your own photographs for the competition, log on to our website at [www.obantimes.co.uk/poy](http://www.obantimes.co.uk/poy).

Please note that photographs must be large enough to print.



033

Bob Goodman, Campbeltown: Westport Beach Kintyre, taken on a late August evening 10 minutes before the sun set. T01bobgoodman1no



034

Ruth Reid, Glenbarry: Oban Sealife Centre August 2012. T01ruthreid1no

## WYVEX MEDIA

### Photo of the Year competition

To cast your vote in Wyvex Media's Photo of the Year competition complete the form below or text 88010 using the keyword POY followed by the code below your favourite photograph.

Texts cost £1 plus your standard network rate. Full details and terms and conditions are on the right.

Photo .....	
Name .....	
Address .....	
.....	
Telephone .....	
Email .....	
Please post your entries to The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB	
Entries to be in by 12 noon Friday 8th February 2013.	
Normal Oban Times rules apply. The Editor's decision is final. Photocopied entries will not be accepted.	

**Terms and conditions:** Editor's decision is final. Competition is for amateur photographers only. The winner must be willing to take part in publicity. Photographs not of a high enough resolution to appear in print will be disqualified. By submitting to the competition, including but not limited to digital video and images, mobile text messages, blogging, message boards, emails and audio submissions, you automatically grant Wyvex Media the royalty-free, perpetual, irrevocable, exclusive right and license to use, reproduce, modify, edit, adapt, publish, translate, create derivative works from, distribute, perform and display such material (in whole or part) worldwide and/or to incorporate it in other works in any form, media, or technology now known or later developed for the full term of any rights that may exist in such content. Prizes are as stated, no cash alternative. Employees of Wyvex Media and their immediate family are prohibited from entering. Text votes cost £1 plus one message at standard network rate.



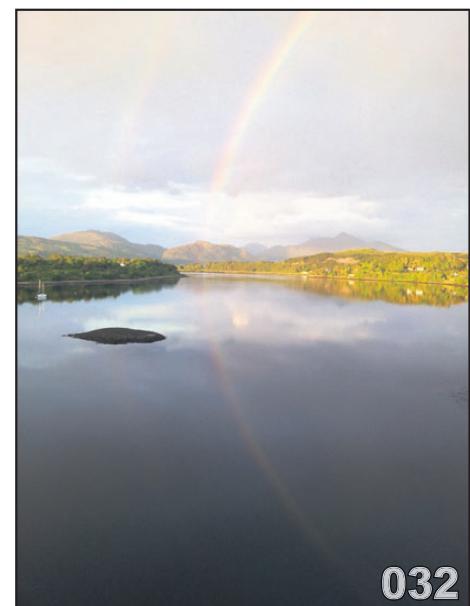
027

Alasdair Paine, Cambridge: Mull and the Firth of Lorne from a kayak off Little Ganavan, Oban, 14 August 2012, with the sun setting at around 8pm. T01alasdairpaine1no



026

Susan Watkins, Lerwick: This was taken from the main road of A816 by Bridgend, Argyll. The freezing fog was just coming down in the month of December, it was freezing but I was glad to be able to take this wonderful scene. You cannot beat the Sunsets on the West Coast of Scotland, they are fantastic. T52susanwatkins1no



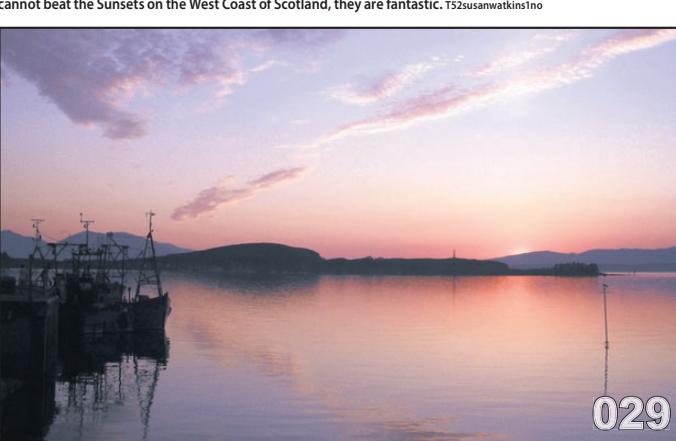
032

Shane Rodwell, North Connel: Double reflected full rainbow over Loch Etive from Connel Bridge this summer. Only hung around briefly but luckily I was in the right place at the right time. T01shanelrodwell1no



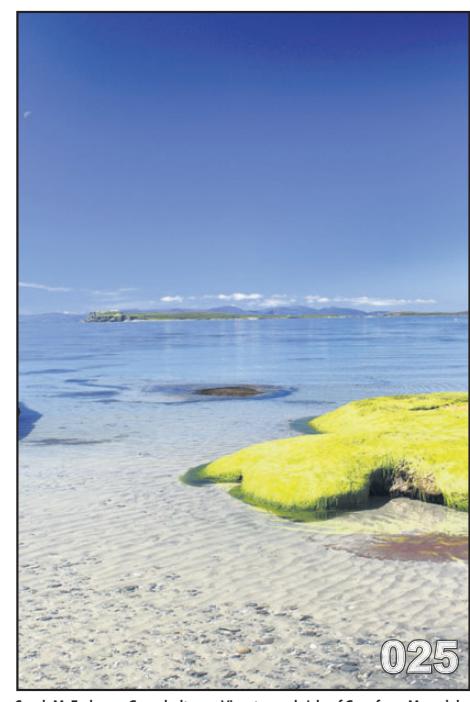
028

Fay Rowntree, Acharacle: Whilst running my tour business, we came across this exceptional Ardnamurchan stag just coming out of velvet. T01fayrowntree1no



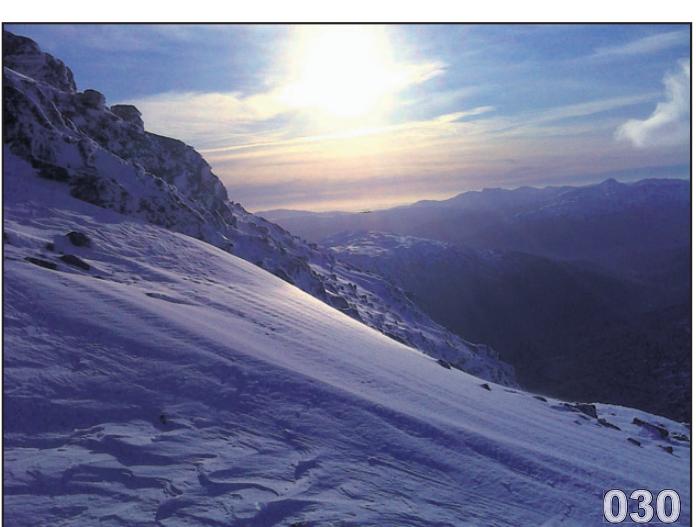
029

Marion Tinney, Oban: Oban Bay sunset. T01mariontinney1no



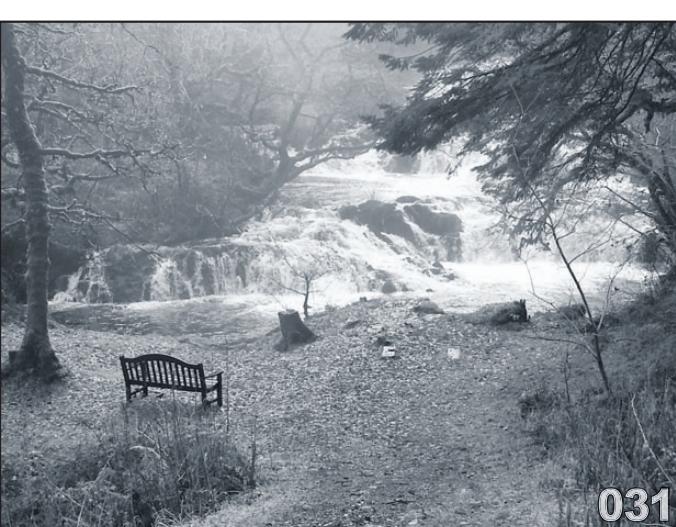
025

Sarah McFadzean, Campbeltown: View towards Isle of Cara from Muasdale. T52sarahmcfadzean1no



030

Leon Durbin, Lochailort: From just below summit of Gulvain, Lochaber on 16 November 2011. T01leondurbin1no



031

Rachael Tyrrell, Oban: Dalavich Falls, December 2012. T01rachaelytyrell1no

## Morvern Lines

IN RESPONSE to many enquiries, here is a further selection of Morvern place names and their meaning.

Leac na Saighe (Black Glen) – rock or flag stone of the arrows. There was a battle fought here in 1596 between the Macleans of Ardnamurchan, the Macleans of Duart and Morvern and the Camerons of Lochiel.

Angus Mor, the leader of the Macleans, was killed when an archer called MacLachlan in the employment of Cameron of Lochiel, shot him in the face with an arrow.

Angus Mor's body was carried down Glen Laudale to Laudale House from where it was taken by boat to Lochaline for burial at Kiel.

Ariens – often explained as 'Angus's shieling' but the Rev Norman Macleod, minister of Morvern from 1775 to 1824 and a fluent Gaelic speaker well versed in the local dialect of the day, gives - the shieling of good bedding for cattle.

Steall an Eigg (Kingairloch) – the place of the little sputtering waterfalls - now lost in the construction of a recent hydroelectric scheme.

The name described perfectly a series of small cascades descending from the outfall of Loch Uisge into the Coimich River.

Glen Galmadale (Kingairloch) – Galma's Dale or Glen, from a personal name.

Airigh Shamhraida – the summer shieling - between the mouth of Loch a' Choire and Glenslava.

Once the mansion house of the Macleans of Kingairloch, which they occupied during the winter months. The reason for this was that their main residence at the head of Loch a' Choire, unlike Airigh Shamhraida, was situated in a frost hollow and therefore did not get the sun throughout the year. An interesting and unusual double play on the meaning.

Achnaha – the field of the kiln. Achabeg – the little field.

Carna – the rocky island. Baile Geamhradh (Barr, Loch Taeacus) – the summer village or settlement.

Coire Borradail and Coire Lundie (between Fiunary and Killundie) contains the personal names Borradail and Lundie who, according to tradition were two Norse leaders who were killed in these corries in a battle in the 12th century against Somerled, the progenitor of the MacDonald dynasty. However, Lundie can sometimes mean a marsh or wet place.

Salachan (west of Fiunary) – the place of the willows. Tom na Croiche (near Savary) the hanging knoll where the MacDonalds of Ardtonish disposed of their victims. Savary – wood.

sorrel shieling. Meall a' Chaise (Glen Laudale) – an isolated knoll standing at the head of a glen – very appropriate in this instance.

Beinn Mheadhoin (Kingairloch) – the middle hill. Leac na Fidhle (a steep sided burn forming the boundary between the parishes of Morvern and Ardgor and the Glensanda and Ardtonish estate march) - the rock or flagstone of the fiddler. Here, according to local history, a fiddler was found dead after a winter storm.

Tom na Luinge (head of Loch Teacuis) – the knoll of watching (ships) usually on sea lochs, in this case Loch Sunart.

Druin na Sgalag (Rahoy) – the servant's ridge; its history has been lost. Torr nam Broc (Loch Teacuis) – the knoll of the badgers.

Poll Achadh Luachrach (Barr, Loch Teacuis) – the muddy field of the rushes. The word Luachrach comes from Gaelic and Irish meaning splendour or brightness and from the Latin lucerna meaning a lamp.

In the old days lamp wicks were made of the pith of rushes soaked in melted fish oil and goose fat and left to dry.

Eas Stangadail (Barr) – Stangadail's waterfall. It is recorded in local folklore that Stangadail took part in the battle with Somerled but, unlike Borradail and Lundie, managed to escape.

On horseback Stangadail made his way to Loch Teacuis where his longship lay on the beach. He forced his horse to leap across the Barr River just above a waterfall but the distance was too great.

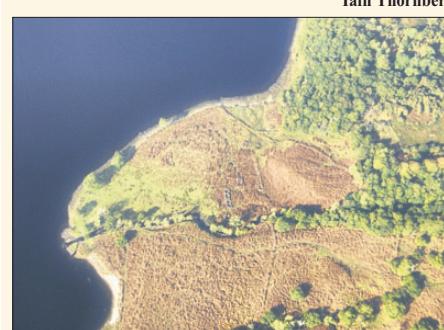
The beast shied and only its forelegs touched the opposite bank with the result that both he and the animal were swept away and drowned in the pool below. On a clear day, when the water is very low, the marks of the horse's hooves are said to be seen on the rocks where it struck the riverbank.

An interesting early record of the incident has come to light through Edward Lluyd, second keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, who, between 1697 and 1701 made a grand tour of the Celtic speaking countries gathering important Gaelic documents.

In his travels Lluyd met the Rev John Beaton (c1640-1715), Episcopalian minister of Killinian, Mull, and the last member of that famous medical family whose ancestors were physicians to the Lords of the Isles.

Beaton showed Lluyd a 14th century manuscript containing the following: 'The mark of the two hooves of the horse of Stangadel, the great King of the Norsemen, is on a rock in the waterfall of Stangadel, in Morvern, since the time when he fought with Samhairle Mac Gille Brighde Mac Gille Domhain.'

Iain Thorner



The ruined settlement at Ariens: the name could mean either 'Angus's shieling' or 'the shieling of good bedding for cattle'.



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# Skye project's make or break search for funds



Waiting game: CDI director Susan Walker. 20\_f0susana01

A SOUTH Skye community is facing a make or break few weeks as they seek core funding for a local project.

Camuscross and Duisdale Initiative (CDI) hopes to build a £1.8 million community hub on Camuscross common grazings above the road to Broadford.

The hub – if it goes ahead – will become the centre of economic and social life in the area.

Principle features in the development include a gathering space, shop, cafe, small office and toilets.

Highland Council granted the project planning permission in

By STEPHEN NORRIS  
[snorris@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:snorris@obantimes.co.uk)

October. CDI director Susan Walker told *The Oban Times* work was underway on funding bids – with Big Lottery cash the key.

She said: 'We have a big job over the next few weeks – we need to get our application in to the Big Lottery towards the end of January. We expect to hear within four months.'

'After that, if we are successful, we will have other applications to go on.'

Ms Walker stressed if the funding application was rejected it could mean the end of the road.

She said: 'If we don't get the Big Lottery funding then I don't see how we can take it any further.'

'But if we do get it then we will be in a much stronger position to apply to other funders. It's very much a waiting game.'

Should grant support come through it would be a second major boost for Sleat after a new village planned for Kilbeg

received £3 million Scottish Government funding last week.

Finance secretary John Swin-

ney announced the cash for the 93-home settlement under a £50 million Scotland-wide house-building programme.

The project is being taken forward jointly by Gaelic college Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and local landowner, the Armadale-based Clan Donald Trust.

New college buildings for research and teaching, a conference facility, hotel accommodation and sports facilities are also planned.

Local MSP Dave Thompson said it was 'great news' for Sleat and would boost both Gaelic and the local economy.

## Thieves snatch alcohol from Kinlochleven bar

A KINLOCHLEVEN bar was victim of a break in theft on Saturday evening, with a quantity of alcohol stolen.

The downstairs restaurant in the Highland Getaway on Leven Road was broken into and a number of bottles taken sometime between 9pm and 11.15am. The upstairs bar was open during the incident.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Glencoe Police on 01855 812100 or to call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

## Five escape serious injury after car slips down embankment

FIVE PEOPLE escaped with minor injuries after the car they were travelling in slid 100 feet down an embankment and ended up in Loch Ness on Monday morning.

The incident occurred on the A82 between Drumnadrochit and Invermoriston.

Emergency services attended the scene and took the casualties to Raigmore Hospital for treatment.

## Chain saw and tool box stolen

A CHAIN saw and a tool box have been stolen from a shed in Cuilcheanna near Onich.

The theft occurred sometime between Tuesday December 18 and Christmas Eve.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Fort William Police on 01397 702361.

## Lochaber Historical Society welcomes back land agent

THE FIRST meeting of Lochaber Historical Society in the New Year sees the return of retired local land agent Richard Sidwick as guest speaker.

Mr Sidwick will present the results of his investigations into local estate history under the title 'Land Ownership in Lochaber II'.

Society chairman Chris Robinson said: 'Richard has a working lifetime's knowledge of Lochaber's estates and has gathered so much of interest that this is the second in what could be a series of talks covering the history of the land and its ownership in Lochaber.'

'This is an opportunity not to be missed with much new information and insight.'

All are welcome to the meeting in the Ben Nevis Hotel on Thursday, January 10 at 8pm.

**Newsdesk**  
01631  
568000

## Sailings cancelled as car falls off Corran Ferry slipway



CORRAN Ferry sailings were cancelled on Saturday morning – to allow a tourist's car to be retrieved from Loch Linnhe.

A couple visiting Lochaber from England stopped their BMW on the ferry slipway at around 9.30pm on Friday night and got out the car, but seemingly forgot to apply the handbrake.

Police said most of the couple's belongings, including clothes and a mobile phone, were in the car when it went into the water.

Chisholm's Recovery Specialists, with the help of a specially trained dive team and ferry workers, located the car lying on the loch bed on Saturday morning.

The operation to retrieve the vehicle took a number of hours, with divers having to smash the rear windows to allow a winch to take hold of the car.

The ferry started sailing again at around 11.30am but the car was not lifted out of the water until 3pm, by which time a crowd of interested locals had gathered to watch the unusual recovery mission.

Above left: The sodden BMW is lifted from the waters of Loch Linnhe on Saturday afternoon

Left: The couple lost many personal belongings as well as the car, but were unharmed in the incident.

## Floodwater partially closes A82 through Fort

THE A82 through Fort William was partially closed by floodwater for a short time on Monday morning. Torrential overnight rain com-

bined with snowmelt saw the road badly affected by flooding in several places and reduced to a single lane at Claggan, where the water was

almost two feet deep at one stage. By 11am the situation had eased and the road was passable in both directions with care.

Flood hazard: The A82 through Fort William on Monday morning. 20\_f0flood01

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## Lightning strike power cut blacks out 21,000 homes for two hours

A MAJOR power cut blacked out all of Skye, the Western Isles and parts of Lochalsh on Saturday night when lightning struck overhead lines just after 10pm.

Some 21,000 properties were affected and power was restored within two hours after electricity supplies were rerouted through the network.

Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) said the outage was caused by a lightning strike on the main transmission line.

Reports on where the line was damaged were conflicting with some citing the west coast mainland while local sources suggested

on with candles,' he told *The Oban Times*. 'The Incredible String Band were playing but they just carried on as well.'

Spokesperson Marie Clelton told *The Oban Times*: 'It caused us one or two problems because all the tilts work through computers.'

'We had to shut the bars down because there were no lights and it was too dangerous. These things happen I suppose. The whole town was out.'

SSE told *The Oban Times* the main transmission line carried 132,000 volts from Fort Augustus to the Outer Isles.

A spokesperson said: 'This particular strike happened on Skye.'

Engineers were completing repairs on Monday, the company said.

# The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

## If 2012 was a year of promise, then 2013 needs to be the year of action

As we enter 2013, there is a mixture of hope and uncertainty after a 2012 that saw the recession really bite in the west Highlands.

Yet, the fear of a failing local economy has brought out the best in proactive communities up and down the west Highlands and islands.

The local council elections last year provided the Scottish National Party with leaders in both Argyll and Bute and Highland councils, illustrating a desire for change.

Residents also became more active in the running of their services, helping to hold the Scottish Government and local councils to account.

The result is a taskforce for the A82 upgrade and a similar group established to pressure the government into a quicker response to the recent landslides at the Rest and Be Thankful.

In Oban, proposals to install pontoons in Oban Bay were taken forward by a community-led group and a Business Improvement District (BID) scheme was also established to try and reinvigorate the town centre.

Towards the end of 2012 the Fort William Chamber of Commerce reached its 100th member, becoming a major player in west Highlands business community.

But what is planning and promise without delivery and action?

If the people of the west Highlands are to realise more hope than uncertainty, it is up to every single one of us to make sure the early promise of 2012 is carried on into a vibrant 2013.

It cannot be left solely to the determined few to ensure our economic prosperity, as the continuing government 'austerity measures' continue.

Indeed, the Highlands and Islands often suffers a delayed effect when such cuts are enforced, so most predict 2013 - and the subsequent years to come - will be tougher still.

All the more reason, then, to ensure the innovative ideas and community-led reinvention of our towns do not stall into the New Year.

### GLASGOW LETTER

#### Looking forward to 2013

BEFORE looking forward to what might feature in this column during the next 12 months, perhaps we should look back at the year 2012 and assess the part played by local associations.

The Glasgow Islay Association celebrated 150 years in the city and gave us the opportunity to remind ourselves of the intended role when the associations were set up, many of them in the latter part of the 19th century.

An important part of this was their function as benevolent organisations. Glasgow had attracted huge numbers of people from the Gaelic speaking areas and like most immigrants anywhere in the world they would originally have entered employment in the lowest paid jobs necessitating support as they strove to establish themselves in an alien environment. Local associations would give support in times of need and would also, over the years, organise social events which would attract huge audiences keen to hear the music of their homelands.

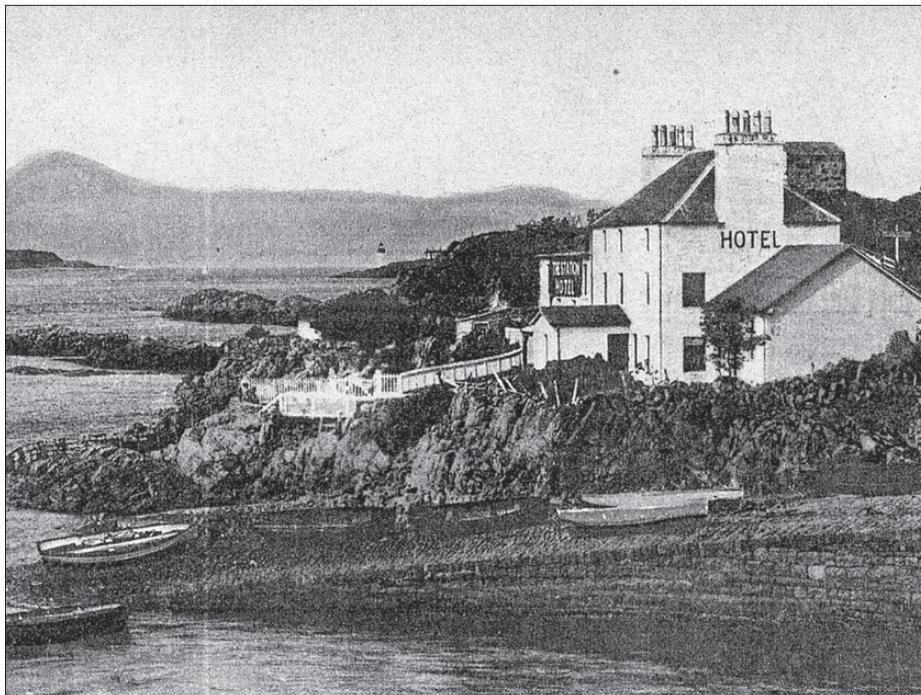
That said, these same people did not lack ambition particularly for their families who were encouraged to maximise their educational opportunities in a way which was not probably available to themselves, although intellectually they would have been more than capable. A major consequence of this educational development has been the migration of these dependents away from the traditional inner city areas to the suburbs of the city. Another has been increased affluence which has affected the role of the local associations in that their benevolence is no longer mainly providing for hardship experienced by their members.

Instead they tend to support projects with links to their own areas or to the descendants from these areas.

A huge change has been seen in the numbers attending functions and annual gatherings, which at one time and even as recently as the middle of the last century would have attracted capacity audiences to some of the largest venues in the city such as the St Andrews Halls and the city halls, are often poorly attended.

Functions throughout the session, and these are greatly reduced in number, face a further problem in the demography of those attending.

In the past few weeks the results of the 2011 Census have been published and for the first time in Scotland they show that the population in the over 65 age group now outnumber the youngsters and this is, of course, causing concern to the authorities.



## Station Hotel, Kyle of Lochalsh

Regular contributor Colin Armstrong, of Coventry, submitted this week's flashback photograph which shows the Station Hotel, Kyle of Lochalsh. Please send prints to The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing their prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

## Letters to the editor

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[www.obantimes.co.uk](http://www.obantimes.co.uk)

Telephone: 01631 568000  
Fax: 01631 568001

### Clansman crew and shore staff thanked

Sir,  
New Year's 'honours' to the crew of Caledonian MacBrayne's *Clansman* and the shore staff at Tiree and Coll, for successful mooring at both piers on Saturday December 29 in nasty conditions.

Our seasonal celebrations started early - many thanks!

Ewen McGee, Isle of Coll - for the New Year.

### Agreement on future of former Rockfield School

Sir,  
I wholeheartedly agree with the letter in your pages last week from Alastair MacGregor, chief executive of Argyll Community Housing Association - 'The future of old Rockfield school'.

In all my years living here I, too, have never had any problem finding a parking space, even in the height of the summer season.

The last thing Oban needs in its very heart is a dead, sterile temporary storage facility for an imaginary number of vehicles whose (tourist?) occupants are apparently assumed to be flocking to shop in a town that is, still just about 'upright' but (BID4Oban notwithstanding) noticeably dying on its feet.

It's not good for residents, either, to be living in a town where the majority of the existant shops sell tartan tourist tat.

What I think we do need is the continental model of people

- families - living in the town centre; within walking distance of their work; within walking distance of buying daily supplies - bread, meat and vegetables.

Who knows, if there were people living in town on the Rockfield site, some sad and long-empty shops on George Street might revive to supply their needs.

We need to look to the needs of our own, rather than focussing on the fickle tourist dollar.

Jenny Smith, 33a Easdale Island.

### Call for housing investigation

Sir,  
Edinburgh City Council is having to pay back thousands of pounds to house owners and tenants for defrauding them for the housing regeneration programme.

Apparently it was found that builders, plumbers, electricians and scaffolding erectors were like pigs in a trough and had their snouts in the trough.

In my opinion a similar investigation needs to be carried out in Oban, Argyll, where in my opinion the same conclusion would be reached.

Having said the Edinburgh council is paying this back, it is in fact the taxpayers of Edinburgh the 'Joe Soaps' of this nation.

Sorobatents and owners, Soroba Road, Dunollie, need I go on, are all up in arms at the huge bills they have been presented with by Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA).

Now ACHA wants to buy the former Rockfield Primary School. This comes as no surprise to me as I am sure they have

very large pockets in their coats. These are only my opinions and I am sure your world wide readers will form their own opinions.

Elizabeth Smith, Timbertown, Barcaldine.

### Crass stupidity

Sir,  
Two recent 'letters to the editor' were excellent examples of the crass stupidity of many of our elected 'political servants' in Scotland.

Paul Keegan's letter concerning the Oban Airport debacle exposes the mismanagement and colossal waste of taxpayers' money on the Oban Airport project by Argyll and Bute Council. A Rodger's letter concerning taxpayers' cash being poured into promoting the Gaelic language highlighted the Scottish Government's foolishness in funding a cherished hope of less than one per cent of the popula-

tion that elects its members. I totally agree with both correspondents and would suggest the SNP and their supporters in the upcoming referendum debate consider carefully the failings that are so evident in our existing local and state politicians.

I dread to contemplate what might happen should Scotland be saddled with such examples of waste and parochial policies should the referendum result in a 'yes' vote.

I am a proud Scot and have flown the Saltire Cross on my flagpole for many years, but with Alec Salmond hijacking this most Scottish of symbols I have sadly decided to abandon it until the vote is decided. The Union Flag will declare my loyalty to Queen and country and deplore the failure and largely failed political class that are in power today.

Hamish MacDougall, Appin.

### YOUR LETTERS

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 300 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 emails, 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. Email editor@obantimes.co.uk.

### PRESS POLICY

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

It is the policy of The Oban Times Group to correct any errors in print. If you find an error of fact on our pages please write to The Editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 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.

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

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

CHRISTMAS cheer was still alive and well in Oban last Friday evening when a group of friends had their bill paid for a kind stranger.

During the main course the eight girls at the table were approached by the man, who had been sitting near them and had been dining alone. He wished them all a happy New Year and left.

'We still can't believe it. What a nice note to end 2012 on.'

'The trouble with the rat race is that even if you win, you're still a rat,' - Lily Tomlin.

'Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first.' - Mark Twain.

'Be more concerned with your character than your reputation because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are,' - John Wooden.

**Quotes of the week**

'The trouble with the rat race is that even if you win, you're still a rat,' - Lily Tomlin.

'Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first.' - Mark Twain.

'Be more concerned with your character than your reputation because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are,' - John Wooden.

## Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

BLIADHNA MHATH ÚR dhuibh uile agus gach soirbheachadh agus sonas troimhpe!

Tha mi a' sgriobhadh seo ro dhéireadh na seann bliadhna agus le dochas a bhith a' tort a-staigh na bliadhna' iire ann a cuideachadh deasg obaig anna Meur Inbhir Nis den Chomunn Gháidhealach.

Seo an ceathramh cruinneachadh bliadhna' iire den t-seòrsa seo a tha sinn air a chur air doigh agus tha iad uile air a bhith sónraichte math.

Tha sin air a dheagh dhearbhadh leis cho luath 's a thà na tiogaean gan reic is barrachd iarratas ann gach bliadhna na th'againn de rum. Bhí shealladh a' Mheur e rud air leth math a tha sin is an damns gach bliadhna a' cuideachadh le airgead a thogail dha Mòd ionadail Inbhir Nis agus nuair a tha an t-amás sin ga choileanadh agus daointe a' faotainn toileachas aig an aon

an, tha cuisean sònraichte soirbheachail.

Carson a tha na cruinneachadh seo ag obrachadh cho math! Saoradh sinne gum bheil caochladh adhbharr ann. Leis gur ann an talla coimearsnach a tha sinn, tha còthrom air clann a bhith an láthair an cuideachadh phàrantan agus sin a déanamh cinnteach gum bheil fior dheagh cheol againn.

Tha daoinne a' tort a' cuid deoch fhéin leatha agus a thà sin a' torta dhàibh truimsear stovies cuideachd! Chan eil an t-ionad ro mhór agus mar sin is faireachadh cairdeil air a' chruinnmeachadh, ach leis gum bheil a' currim a' páighheadh cho math dhuiinn, feumaidh sin aideachadh gum bu mhath leinn nan robh an t-áite beagan na bu mhotha!

Ach carson a tha mì an gnáin seo dhuibh, a bharrachd air gum bi fos agaibh ciamar a tha mise an dòchas a' bhliadhna' ur a thoirt a-staigh?

Tha air sgáth luach cairdeis! Tha mi 'n dòchas gun robh sibh ann an sunnd a' cur fáilte air a' bhliadhna ùr agus gun robh ann measg náibhidhean agus charaidean tagtha. Is math an sgáth suil caraid that an seanfhacal ag rádh agus chan eil teagamh nach e caraid gasta sochair cho luachmhor 's a bhios aig duine againn agus tha e eudromach dhuiinn uile an luach a

an, tha sinn a' cur air cárdeas a nochtadh.

Chan eil am as freagarrachadh sin a dhéanamh na àm bliadhna' iire, ach tha e cuideachadh curomach cuimhneachadh gum bheil an cárdeas a' leabhairn fad na bliadhna! Tha mi 'n dòchas gun mar mar sin a bhios cuisean dhuibhse!

I WISH you all a happy and prosperous New Year!

Writing this before the end of the old year I look forward to welcoming 2013 at a dance being organised to raise funds for the Inverness Local Mod. This will be the fourth such event and its growing popularity is reflected in the demand for more tickets than we can accommodate!

Successful in every sense and a wonderful opportunity to celebrate in the company of good friends and neighbours, surely one of the most valuable assets we can possess!

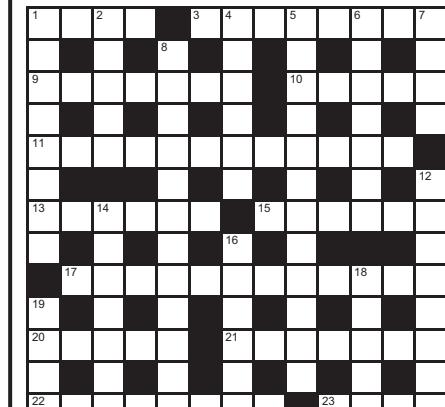
Ailean Caimbeul (Allan Campbell) ailean@obantimes.co.uk.

## Le taic bho



[www.smo.uhi.ac.uk](http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk)

## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD



### Across

1 Become tiresome (4)

3 Though not named as such, it can be used to cook vegetables too! (8)

9 Celebrate noisily (7)

10 Eminent (5)

11 In line for a ticket (6-6)

13 Keen (6)

15 Misbehave (4,2)

17 One who has been here for four score years (12)

20 Part of Gothic architecture (5)

21 Moulded, as metal

# Review of the Year 2012



## Tough conditions for Tiree Regatta

AUGUST kicked off in style with high winds and excitement at Tiree's 2012 Regatta – described as the toughest in 20 years.

The weather failed to dampen people's spirits with the event getting off to a bright start in Scarinish Harbour, with conditions dry and sunny.

As the boats sailed off, the wind freshened and in high winds and tough sailing conditions, the dinghies finished in record time.

Finn MacDonald, aged 11, helming his Pico with dad as crew, followed his success in last year's centenary regatta by winning the dinghy class.

## Young Lochaber pipers' success



Roy Bridge piping brothers Sandy, right, and Finlay Campbell were among the trophy winners at the Cruinneachadh Loch Abar - The Lochaber Gathering Festival of Piping in the Nevis Centre, Fort William. Sandy, 15, won the piobaireachd and march, strathspey and reel competitions while 10 year-old Finlay received a cup as youngest competitor. 20\_f31piping01

## South Uist calls for help with coastal erosion projects

SOUTH UIST islanders fighting to protect their coastline from climate change impacts are urging the Scottish Government to help secure their project's future.

The plea came as environment and climate change minister Stewart Stevenson made his first visit to the island.

Mr Stevenson heard how coastal erosion caused by rising sea levels and more frequent storms are putting homes and livelihoods at risk.

Lochboisdale Amenity Trust (LAT) and local people have been planting trees and erecting sand blow fencing to counter the threat.

Dunes guarding the machair have been strengthened using old fishing nets, fence posts and old fencing and drainage systems in flood-prone low-lying land upgraded.

LAT hopes it can secure public funding to continue its work for two more years and expand it to North Uist, Barra and Vatersay.



Stewart Stevenson, left, and crofter Seumas Macdonald view coastal erosion protection work at Daliburgh

## Arisaig wins painting dispute

CAMPAIGNERS in Arisaig celebrated winning their battle to keep an oil painting of local historical interest in the village. West Highland Museum (WHM) had planned to remove 'Letters and News at the Lochside', which it owns, to its premises in Fort William for display there. The move was strongly opposed by many in Arisaig and Morar – as were earlier proposals to sell it to help fund an expansion at the museum.

The huge canvas will now remain on public view in Arisaig House where it has hung for over a century.

The former stately home, set in woodlands a mile from Arisaig and now a luxury guesthouse, was previously the abode of the late Miss Joan Becher, who bequeathed it to the museum.



## Big entry for Great Oban Raft Race

THINGS didn't get any drier towards the end of August as the second Great Oban Bay Raft Race took place.

Not a space was be had around Oban's bay when the crowds turned out in force to support the Lions Club's second annual raft race.

Hundreds of people took to the beach and lined the north and railway piers to watch in blistering sunshine as 18 rafts built by members of the community piled into the water to race around the bay, all in aid of local good causes.

Winners were aboard the lime-green raft Cutlass, with captain John MacDonald, aided by a crew made up of nephew Ewen MacDonald, John Campbell and Andrew Gray.



## Close finish to West Highland Yachting Week

IN ONE of the closest races in memory Cove sailors Alan Harper and Eric Robertson and crew on their Sigma 33 Leaky Roof 2 lifted the top prize at West Highland Yachting Week (WHYW) in August.

Only seconds separated some of the top three in each class. It was also the story of the week for Popcorn, the little Contessa 25 from Lochaber belonging to the Fyfe family.

Restored over the last 18 months after 26 years lying in the garden this was the first event Angus and his family had competed in since the boat was launched.

The event finished on a high note with the usual prize-giving in the Corran Halls in Oban.

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The event finished on a high note with the usual prize-giving in the Corran Halls in Oban.

## Serious injury mars Skye games day



The ambulance arrives to ferry Ms MacKenzie to hospital 20\_f33sky06

## Fairy tale ending to Kilchoan Jetty Pram race as Red Riding Hood wins



Katie Gane and Grant Cameron produced a fairytale finish to the Kilchoan Jetty Pram Race

LITTLE Red Riding Hood and the Wolf don't normally team up – but it was a different story for the Jetty Pram Race in Kilchoan on August 3.

Katie Gane in her red cape and Grant Cameron in a frilly granny nightie and blanket certainly looked the part – and proved too fast for their rivals, winning in a time of 11 minutes and 39 seconds.

The popular annual event saw hundreds of locals and holidaymakers line the village main street in the sunshine to cheer on the competitors in prams and carts of varying degrees of roadworthiness.

### Glenfinnan Games

GLENFINNAN Games once again made for a marvellous spectacle as fine weather ensured a bumper crowd at atmospheric Loch Shiel-side.

Games field manager Alastair Gibson said: 'I think Glenfinnan is a very traditional games and we must keep it going. You don't see sideshows that are tacky – Clan Donald and Clan Cameron are among those who have a marquee here.'

An Fir Dileas (The Loyal Men) with their Jacobite banners, period costumes and weapons proved a big hit with the crowd.



David and June Boyter from Kinlochleven with An Fir Dileas at Glenfinnan 20\_f34glen09

## West Highlands and Lochaber avoid attack from deadly bee disease

PROSPECTS for honey production in the West Highlands and Lochaber are looking sweet after it emerged a deadly bee parasite has been unable to invade the region.

It had been thought the varroa mite had infested Scotland beyond the point of no return.

But a study by Acharacle beekeeper Kate Atchley and colleague Gavin Ramsay shows much of the country's northwest is free of the pest because of mountain and water barriers.

The Scottish Government lifted restrictions on the movement of bees in 2004 after deciding the battle against the parasite was lost.

However, Ms Atchley's findings prove otherwise – and now the country's beekeepers are being urged to adopt a voluntary code of practice to prevent varroa spreading.



Kate Atchley checks her bees

## AUGUST

### Appin Show success



Sunshine and silverware were the order of the day at Appin Show in August as young Dougie MacDonald and his family took home a trailer full of trophies. 15\_t34appin04

## Sun is out for lifeboat open day

BLISTERING sun-shine ensured a large crowd turned up for Oban RNLI Lifeboat Station's 40th anniversary open day, raising more than £2,100 for the charity.

Hundreds of people turned up for the event at the station's home on Gallanach Road in August, taking a tour of the lifeboat, the Mora Edith MacDonald, before perusing the stalls and activities on offer.

One of the most popular attractions was from boat trip operator, Sea.fari, who took visitors on a high-speed tour of Oban's bay, generating £760 towards the day's takings.



Four year old twins Rannoch, left, and Struan Wilson found out what it was like to take Oban Lifeboat, Mora Edith MacDonald out for a spin during Saturday's open day. 15\_t33mlt01

## 14 swimmers tackle K2K

FOURTEEN people gave the Skye Bridge a miss on Saturday, August 11 to swim across to the mainland.

But it was all in a good cause as the hardy group took the plunge into the narrows to raise cash for another water feature - a new spa bath at Lochalsh Leisure Centre in Kyle.

The Kyleakin to Kyle swim, or K2K as it is known, each year marks the opening of the leisure centre in August 1992.

First swimmer home was Cathy Kitson Jones of Plockton followed very closely by Gil-leasbuig Ferguson from Carbost on Skye.



Leisure centre manager Chris Mackinnon welcomes last swimmer home Mark MacDonald at the Kyle slipway.



# Review of the Year 2012

**The Oban Times**  
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

## SEPTEMBER

### 10th anniversary celebrations in Ardnamurchan

ARDNAMURCHAN High School and Sunart Centre celebrated their 10th anniversary on Saturday September 8 with a community fair.

Local people came out to celebrate the anniversary with an afternoon meal and fun day at the school.

### £3 million sports hub for Fort

LOCHABER councillors unanimously backed draft proposals for a new £3million community sports hub in Fort William.

If implemented, the ambitious plan, unveiled at a business meeting in Lochaber House on Monday September 17, would see the new hub built at Lochaber High School.

The plan features two main projects - re-covering the school's astroturf pitch in a 3G surface suitable for all sports, and an indoor centre with a 60x40 metre pitch - big enough for golf and cricket practice.

### Highland pull plug on lights scheme

HIGHLAND Council pulled the plug on a streetlight switch-off scheme in Kinlochleven and Dunvegan.

The cash-saving trial saw lights turned off between midnight and 6am to save cash - but came in for heavy criticism amid fears over pedestrian safety and increased criminal activity.

### Lochaber children walk away from double decker

A BUS company was slated for using a double decker bus to take Lochaber children to school over an exposed mountain route.

Stagecoach usually schedules a coach to ferry Onich and North Ballachulish pupils to Kinlochleven High School via the B863 'high road' from Glencoe.

But when a double decker appeared as the 44 service from Fort William at North Ballachulish on Friday September 14 at 8.15am, the schoolchildren refused to board. On the day, Lochaber was being battered by the tail end of Tropical Storm Leslie and Hurricane Michael, with 50mph winds.

### Stone skimming championships

MORE skimmers than ever before turned up for Sunday's 15th annual World Stone Skimming Championships on Easdale, with entries just under the 400 mark.

Competitors from across the UK, Europe and beyond arrived en masse for the landmark event, which received a last-minute reprieve after a threat from the landowner, Jonathan Feigenbaum, to stop it going ahead in a dispute over cash and insurance.

Such was the success of this year's competition the community group, Eilean Easdale, had to close entries early, with more than 500 arriving on the island over the course of the day. Organisers, says the group is now considering measures on how to either limit entries or expand its scope.

This year's champion tosser was Welshman Ron Long.



Local MSP Dave Thompson cutting the ribbon to herald a new beginning for Lochaline's mining industry

## Lochaline's heart is restored as mine reopens

LOCHALINE's industrial heart is beating again - and that's official.

The Morvern port took a hammer blow in December 2008 when Tarmac UK shut down its silica sand mine with the loss of 11 jobs. But now those jobs have been restored

to the remote community of 200 souls after production of high-grade quartz sand got underway.

At the official opening on Friday September 14, local people and invited guests gathered beside a huge white mound of

sand, newly blasted from the honeycomb workings tunnelled a mile under the hillside.

Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch MSP Dave Thompson cut the ribbon to declare the mine open.

### Giorgio helps raise funds for others

A LITTLE Lochaber boy fighting a deadly muscle wasting disease helped raise funds towards his hoped-for cure by pedalling from Glasgow to Edinburgh on a specially adapted bike.

Giorgio Berardelli, towed by his mum Elspeth, left Glasgow Green on Sunday September 9 in a 28-strong Lochaber contingent in the Freshnlo Pedal for Scotland 2012. The country's biggest charity cycle event saw 8,500 take part and when Giorgio's entourage, rode into Murrayfield Stadium there was hardly a dry eye among friends and supporters. The brave eight year-old, from Achindaul, Spean Bridge, suffers from Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD), a progressive condition for which there is no betterment.



Giorgio Berardelli, centre, pedalled all the way from Glasgow to Edinburgh - with a little help from his mum Elspeth



A stunning photograph of a Scots pine in Steall Gorge, Glen Nevis won a Fort William man third place in a UK-wide competition. Amateur John Cameron, who works as a refuse lorry driver, was walking his dog in Glen Nevis in April when he captured the atmospheric scene.



Winners from the Caol Gardening Show

## Colour comes to Caol

CAOL Community Centre was alive with colour and fragrance for the 11th annual Caol Gardening Show.

The home baking tables were filled with an array of flowers and vegetables, with Raymond MacPherson taking home the prize for best exhibit in show and best flower.

Invergarry's Gayle Rand won the most points in show and most points in the vegetable section.



Banavie school shinty team defeating Kingussie in the final to lift the Fraser MacPhee Memorial Trophy for the third year in a row



The new Crofting Commission convener is Camuscross crofter Susan Walker

### New crofting appointment

SKYE CROFTER Susan Walker was appointed the first convener of the Crofting Commission. An active crofter for 30 years, Ms Walker is a director of Camuscross and Duisdale Initiative in Sleat, which works with crofters on local food and community infrastructure projects.

Her first job will be pulling together a five-year plan governing crofting's regulation and development for the Scottish Government.

A 'very honoured' Ms Walker said: 'All the [consultation] responses are in and we are just beginning to consider these. We will be meeting fairly soon to go through them all and decide how to revise the plan now that we have all the comments.'



Shannon, pictured here at Broadford aged three months, is back in the wilds of her native Ireland

### 'Skye' Otter heads home to ireland

A YOUNG otter was successfully released back into the wilds of her native Ireland after spending a year on Skye.

Shannon was a two-month-old orphan when a Donegal family found her and alerted their local National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) conservation officer.

None of the Irish rehabilitators were rearing otter cubs so an SOS went out to the Broadford-based International Otter Survival Fund.

The Irish orphan was brought to Skye and spent the next 12 months being reared with the other youngster until she was old enough to fend for herself.



Jessica Baker, left, and her mum Fiona after finishing the swim across the bay

### Arisaig youngsters swim loch for cash

AROUND 20 Arisaig Primary youngsters and their parents braved the cold waters of Loch nan Ceall for a fundraising swim.

The annual swim across the bay raised around £200 for books and outdoor activities in the school.

The local community came out to cheer the swimmers as they made their way from Murrach to the old pier.

### Uist horse event goes on despite bad weather

THE ANNUAL Uist Community Riding School show went ahead with neither horses or spectators put off by the poor weather.

A number of local and visiting horses entered the 23 classes at Balivanich, with judging starting at 8am. Hannah MacDonald was named overall rider of the day, while Jack was the horse with most points.

## Oban Lorne marks 50th anniversary

FOUR players from the first ever Oban Lorne rugby team and well-known speakers were the special guests at a dinner and dance to mark the golden anniversary of the club.

The event at the Argyllshire Gathering on Saturday was attended by around 250 guests, who had played for or assisted the club throughout its 50-year history.

Among them was a quartet of former players who played in the club's first year: Guido Faccenda, Joe Black, Ian Weir and Dr Ronnie Frew.

Broadcaster and former British Lion John Beattie gave a toast to The Game and the reply came from Alan Lawson, president of the Scottish Rugby Union and former Scottish international.

Bill Nolan, a board director for European rugby, gave a toast to the club.

John Beattie then swapped his microphone for his guitar as his band took to the stage for the dance.

Right: Four of the original Oban Lorne team from 1962, from left: Guido Faccenda, Joe Black, Ian Weir and Dr Ronnie Frew.

15\_135rugby02

### New hotel opens in Oban

OBAN'S newest hotel has been doing a roaring trade just two weeks since opening at the start of the month.

The Ranald Hotel, in Stevenson Street, opened on September 1 without fanfare, as they were immediately expecting the first 100 guests.

The 17-bedroom hotel is named after its designer, Oban man Ranald MacColl, who now lives in Glasgow and has designed the interior of many of the city's



More than 1,000 attend triathlon event

businesses in Oban may have seen an unexpected boost to the end of its tourist season last weekend when an estimated 1,200 people came to the town for the Craggy Island Triathlon.

The Kerrera event, which only began last year, was named most enjoyable event in 2011 at the Scottish Triathlon Awards and was featured by the BBC's Adventure Show, sparking UK-wide interest in the event.

This prompted organisers to



Susie Wolff.

## Susie takes a drive down memory lane

A WORLD famous racing driver appeared at Park Primary School last week for a wander down memory lane.

Susie Wolff, who was Susie Stoddart when she attended the school, revisited Park last Thursday as part of a documentary following the year leading up to her F1 test debut.

The film, which the BBC commissioned her brother David to make, charts her background and explains how Susie got to where she is today. As part of the visit to Park, primary seven pupils got the opportunity to ask Susie some questions including why she no longer has a Scottish accent, did she enjoy her time at Park and how she got into racing.

Susie, also a former pupil of Park Primary School, has spent a year filming the documentary so far. Her due to start editing soon, a process that is expected to last two months. Once completed the hour long show will air on BBC Two.

# Review of the Year 2012



## Tyndrum mine estimated valued up to £190 million

NEW drilling results and high gold prices mean a mine to be built at Cononish near Tyndrum has boosted its potential value by £40million to nearly £190million.

At its AGM on Monday, Scotgold Resources revealed final drilling results, estimating there is 160,000 ounces of gold and 596,000 ounces of silver in the hill, more than was indicated by earlier studies.

With gold fetching £1,102.9 per ounce and silver £21.1 per ounce at the time of going to press, the combined indicative value of precious metals in Cononish now stands at £189.05million, up from initial estimates of £150million.

The results were presented to shareholders in Edinburgh and by video link to Australia on Monday, after which shares were trading at 45p.

Scotgold said the figures were encouraging, but were purely indicative at this stage.

## Oban becomes a BIDS town after landslide vote

THE STEERING committee behind Oban's hugely successful Business Improvement District (BID) campaign has vowed to persuade doubters of its merit over the next five years.

Friday's vote saw a landslide 'yes' vote in favour of establishing a BID company, with 90 per cent of the 49 per cent turnout giving the five-year scheme their backing and making Oban Scotland's first whole-town BID.

The turnout represented 57 per cent of the town's rateable value, with 246 businesses in total casting their ballots.

The chairman of the BID4Oban steering group, Graham MacQueen, said work has already begun to ensure the BID company is up and running on October 31.

As a result of the BID creation, all eligible businesses within the 30mph zone will be required to pay a small compulsory levy over the next five years.

The result will be £840,000 investment in the town, with 20 separate commitments to be met. Argyll and Bute Council will contribute £100,000 towards the BID, plus £203,500 in financial and in-kind support.

## 'Otter' island stays in public hands

EILEAN Bàn – the tiny isle below the Skye Bridge which was home to 'Ring of Bright Water' author Gavin Maxwell - is to stay in public hands.

The Scottish Government has announced that ownership of the six-acre island will be transferred to the Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS).

There had been fears local people and visitors would lose access after present owners Transport Scotland put Eilean Bàn on the market.

## Holed cruise boat to return

A PLOCKTON wildlife cruise boat which ended up submerged in Loch Carron is expected to be repaired and back in business next year.

MV Sula Mhor was taken out by owner Calum Mackenzie with seven friends for a fishing trip, but ran into trouble just outside Plockton Harbour.

A hole was ripped in hull of the 51-foot vessel, which had held up 61 passengers, after it struck rocks and the boat started to take on water.

Stornoway Coastguard was called out, but Mr Mackenzie was able to steer the boat towards the pontoon to allow his passengers to get off safely.

## Kilmallie celebrate new clubhouse

KILMALLIE Shinty Club's past, present and future came together to celebrate the opening of its new clubhouse on Saturday October 6.

The afternoon attracted hundreds of local to Canal Parks, Caol, to witness the formal ceremony in the autumn sunshine.

The duty of cutting the ribbon to officially open the new facility went to members of Kilmallie's 1964 Camanachd Cup winning side – the only time the Caol club has lifted shinty's biggest prize.

The £130,000 building includes changing rooms with showers, a meeting room and a small clubroom.



A unique and memorable concert in Oban's Corran Halls has raised more than £12,000 for two cancer charities. A fervent audience of almost 700 people were treated to high-energy performances from headliners Manran and Skerryvore after Oban youngsters Ceol an Aire had set the tone for an exceptional evening of musicianship. The concert, entitled 'We'll Walk This Road Together', a Manran song lyric, was organised by Nonnie and Karen MacInnes. The couple set up the DMI Cancer Trust ahead of the concert, having seen members of their family struggle with the disease. 16\_140walk16



BID4Oban chairman Graham MacQueen, left, pops the champagne as the steering group celebrates the BID success. Pictured are, from left, front row: John Forteith, Lindsay MacDonald, Pauline Cameron and Sandy MacArthur. Back row: Raymond Hyams, Andy Spence and Alistair Jackson. 16\_141bid01



## Fiona is top Gaelic student

A FORT WILLIAM student scooped a top honour at this year's graduation at Sabhal Mor Ostaig UHI, the Gaelic college on Skye.

Fiona MacIntyre, from Torlundy, won the Farquhar MacIntosh Memorial Prize for the student achieving academic excellence across all courses.

Fiona, 22, was one of the first three students to graduate with honours from SMO with an MA (Hons) in Gaelic with Education, along with 26 year-old Fiona Rice from South Uist and Amanda Souter, 22, from Dornie in Lochalsh.

## Couple say farewell to Small Isles

A CUNNA couple broke their silence on why they decided to bid farewell to the Small Isles after just five months.

When Graham and Olivia Uney left their Sanday home for Shetland on October 15, the island's population will drop to just 10 – down from 22 in 2010.

The couple only arrived at the end of April, when Mr Uney became gardener at Canna House for Canna's owners, the National Trust for Scotland.

Like other families who have come and gone, the pair are scathing of the trust's management and claim they had no option but to seek pastures new.

Lochaber were confirmed as champs on October 6 when Strathglass were forced to concede the points as they were unable to field a team.

The trophy presentation was delayed, but after Lochcarron pulled out for similar reasons, Lochaber decided to hold their ceremony at home after a bounce game between the first and second teams. Camanachd Association director of communications Donald Stewart and Davie Corrigan of sponsors Marine Harvest congratulated Lochaber on their fine season before handing the trophy to captain Hughie Innes, who thanked his players and everyone connected with the club.

The champagne flowed at Spean Bridge



Fiona MacIntyre receives the Farquhar MacIntosh Memorial Prize for academic excellence from Prof Matthew MacIver



Saying farewell to Canna - the Uneys in their garden at Sanday, looking across the bay to Canna

## Hallowe'en coffee at Roy Bridge

Right - Roy Bridge folk turned out in force to enjoy a Hallowe'en coffee morning in the village hall on Saturday October 27.

The event, organised by Roy Bridge Primary School PTA, proved hugely popular, with all monies raised going towards school activities and equipment. Left to right, PTA volunteers Lynne Nairn, Mhairi Ross, Julie Allison and Claire Venn McNeil take a break at the

## Islay juniors taste Mod success

ISLAY competitors stormed to a multiple trophy haul after just one day of this year's Royal National Mod in Dunoon, in a celebration of the island's dialect.

Scoring consistently high marks for Gaelic, despite every competitor speaking with the unique Islay dialect, the young Ileachs dominated learner competitions on Monday.

Coisir Og Ghaidhlig Ile led the way, winning seven trophies in total, brought about by a double win in the under-19 puirt-a-beul and unison competitions. The young choir was also victorious in the two part harmony.

Port Ellen Primary School won the choral puirt (under-13), securing the Oliver Campbell MBE Trophy, closely followed by their fellow islanders, Bowmore Primary School in second place.

Much of the success was put down to the work of the Gaelic tutor Libby Morris, who coaches most of the youngsters.

## Major roadworks announced for Oban

MAJOR roadworks to resurface Oban's George Street and Esplanade is scheduled to take place later this year – seven years after the work was first approved.

Scotland Transdev is proposing to carry out the work to repair the crumbling road surfaces over three weeks between November 19 to December 7.

The Esplanade will be resurfaced between November 19 and November 27, 9am – 4pm, and traffic will be able to pass through during the work.

The George Street work (November 28 to December 7) stretches from the traffic lights at Stafford Street to Airds Place and are scheduled to be carried out between 9pm and 6am.

The work was first approved in 2005 but work by utility companies stalled the road resurfacing until 2009. Councillor Duncan MacIntyre, then Argyll and Bute Council's spokesman on roads, was told in November 2010 that the work would be completed in 2011. However, the plans took another backwards step when in March 2011 it was announced the project's funding was in jeopardy.



AN OBAN butcher has started selling sausages containing Scotland's 'other national drink'. Wynne the Butchers, on Combie Street, has been doing a roaring trade in special Irn Bru and chilli flavoured sausages since they started making them a month ago. Shop owner, Iain Darling said they just wanted to 'try different things'. He added: 'They are going very well, people are saying the sausage are great and it's something very different.'



Local children enjoyed getting their photo taken with Heather Stanning and the Olympic gold

## Olympic gold comes to Arisaig

OLYMPIC gold medallist Heather Stanning celebrated her Lochaber connections during a visit to Arisaig on Saturday October 13 - and gave her backing to plans for upgrading the local playing field.

Around 60 locals came out to congratulate rower Heather on her Olympic success and to have their photo taken, as she visited her parents who have a home in the village. Children and adults alike queued up to inspect the medal at close quarters.



Charlotte and Murdo MacLean: feel let down by NHS treatment given to their late sister Joan (pictured left in framed photo)

## NHS Highland make changes after elderly Skye woman dies

NHS HIGHLAND changed its medical procedures after an elderly Skye woman died in agony from a perforated bowel in Broadford Hospital.

Joan Maclean passed away aged 87 early on March 20, just hours after being transferred in a critical condition from Portree Hospital.

Following their loss, Miss Maclean's distraught brother Murdo, 85, and sister Charlotte, 84, who lived with Joan in their Carbost croft house, formally complained to the NHS about her standard of care.

Mr Maclean detailed his complaint, which stated medical staff failed to record Joan's bowels had not moved during her two-week stay at Portree, where she had been receiving treatment for infected swollen legs.

It was only after Charlotte complained to medics four days before Joan died, he said, that she received strong laxatives, but it was too late.

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# Review of the Year 2012

NOVEMBER



Robert 'Bodie' Bowman with his daughter Dawn



Piper Raj Smith leads out staff and students for the procession along the parade before the ceremony - 20\_f45grado2

## West Highland College UHI students celebrate

MORE than 80 West Highland College UHI students picked up their certificates at a celebration, achievement and graduation ceremony in Duncansburgh

MacIntosh Parish Church, Fort William.

All the graduates and achievers from the college were present to receive their awards, and student of the year Alistair Buchanan, from Kirkcudbright, was presented with his cheque for £150 by college chair Dr Michael Foxley.

Robert 'Bodie' Bowman performed a repertoire of David Bowie classics dressed as Ziggy Stardust with local musician Steve Brown in the Astley Hall.

The money raised on the night was donated to the hospitals which have treated Bodie's two year-old daughter Dawn since she was born – Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, Edinburgh's Royal Hospital for Sick Kids and Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Dawn was born with a host of health problems, including a cleft palate and meningitis and requires regular medical care. Bodie said the tot was still unable to walk or talk, but has responded well to medical treatment.

### Lochaline charity donates £23,000

A CHARITY set up by a Lochaline husband and wife has donated almost £23,000 to various good causes over the past year.

And Kirsty's Kids is now looking for a final push of donations to reach their winter appeal target of £4,000. The charity was setup by John Bryden and his wife Jan in memory of their daughter Kirsty who died in a car crash on the A830 in 2010 aged 20.

### Further delays on A83 diversion

CONTINUED delays to securing the Old Military Road at the Rest and Be Thankful mean a landside diversion route won't be ready until at least February.

Legal complications over the purchase of the road from a private landlord mean completion of the A83 bypass is now nearly four months behind schedule. Once a deal is agreed, construction is anticipated to take nine weeks.

When he announced the formation of the Task Force comprising government officials and local stakeholders in August, then infrastructure minister Alex Neil said the diversion would be open 'by November at the latest'.

But as landside warning lights were switched on again on Tuesday, fresh fears were expressed that the work will take even longer in the winter weather.

Now members of the Scottish Government's A83 Task Force have warned confidence in its ability is at risk over limited progress and a lack of communication from officials.

Describing Mr Neil's initial statement as 'optimistic', Jane MacLeod, secretary of the Mid Argyll Chamber of Commerce, said: 'There's been a lot of frustration, although much of the problem is outwith the control of the Task Force or Transport Scotland.'



Andrew and Angie Henderson from Oban meet up with their niece, Ella, at the X-Factor live shows.

### Oban fanbase helps X-Factor Ella

X-FACTOR finalist Ella Henderson took another step towards winning the contest at the weekend, thanks in part to her family fanbase in Oban.

The town has adopted the 16-year-old singing sensation after her uncle and auntie, Andrew and Angie Henderson, began throwing X-Factor parties for friends and erected a banner of support outside their Dunollie flat. There is also one of their banners outside Aulay's Bar in the centre of town.

Andrew and Angie's sons, Andrew junior and Craig, also live in Oban and work with their dad at Breedon Aggregates. Another Breedon workmate is Andrew's brother, David, who lives on Lismore.

### Publicans voice fears over Wetherspoon

OBAN'S publicans fear further closures after pub giant JD Wetherspoon's was given the green light to come into the town.

Argyll and Bute Council's planning committee last Wednesday agreed a recommendation by planners to approve Wetherspoon's application to change the Caithness Glass unit on the Railway Pier from retail use to a pub.

There were seven representations of support, which welcomed the increased choice a pub chain would bring.

But the plan had 20 registered objections, including Oban and District Licensed Trade Association, although issues such as over-provision of pubs and increased competition were dismissed as immaterial to planning considerations.



Queen guitar legend Brian May, Grace Yoxon the IFAW award at the House of Lords from Baroness Gale, Robbie Marsland, country director of IFAW UK, is pictured left.

### Skye wildlife charity wins conservation award

ROCK LEGEND Brian May presented a Skye-based otter welfare charity with a major conservation award.

IOSF, which operates one of the world's leading otter charities from Broadford, was honoured for its work both in Scotland and worldwide. Co-founder Grace Yoxon travelled to London to receive the accolade.

for Animal Welfare's (IFAW) conservation award.

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# Review of the Year 2012



## Saulmore Bay golf course work starts

LONG-awaited construction work at the site of Saulmore Bay Golf Course has begun this week, more than six years after being given the go ahead.

Preparatory works are now under way on the Dunstaffnage Estate ground by developers Guardian House (Scotland) Ltd.

The first phase of drainage operations commence this week with the major works starting early in the New Year.

## Carbon capture trial success in Ardmucknish Bay

A WORLD-first experiment in Ardmucknish Bay to test the ramifications of a leak from carbon capture schemes has been declared a success.

Final results of the study are currently being compiled, but the lead scientist behind the scheme, Dr Henrik Stahl, from Dunbeg's Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS), said he was delighted by the initial findings.

Between May 17 and July 22, a controlled quantity of carbon dioxide(CO<sub>2</sub>) was pumped into loose sediment on the bed of Ardmucknish Bay, near Benderloch, in a bid to see how a leak would affect the environment at the same time as testing a series of detection systems.

The full results are expected to be published early next year.

## Taynuilt Hotel aims to become 'gastronomic' pub

THE CENTURIES-old Taynuilt Hotel could be transformed into a 'gastronomic destination' in the coming months as an ambitious young chef takes ownership of the old inn.

John McNulty jnr, from Tayvallich, is embarking on a major renovation programme, during which only the public bar will remain open.

The 23-year-old aims to reinvent the hotel as a first-class rural retreat for great food and drink.

With the hotel kitchen, restaurant and accommodation already closed, John said he planned to relaunch the hotel in March 2013.

## Lochaline Scout Hut gains grant

PLANS to demolish a dilapidated former Scout hut in Lochaline have received a boost after Morvern Community Development Company received a £6,080 grant from the Big Lottery Fund's Investing in Ideas programme.

The cash means MCDC can now commission a feasibility study into a new building or buildings on the site.

Tarmac UK, the former owners of the Lochaline sand mine, gifted the hut and the land it stands on to the community after the mine was sold.

## New mill plan for North Uist wool

NORTH Uist is going 'back to the future' by reviving a traditional craft industry to create much-needed employment.

The island's last spinning mill at Locheport ran for just a decade from the 1950s.

But now community enterprise Uist Wool is on track to open a new mill at Scotevin on Grimsay.

South Uist contractor JJ Macdonald and Sons have started work at the site, heralding the building's completion by the spring.

## No church left in Plockton as sale notice goes up

PLOCKTON could soon be left with no churches after the Church of Scotland put the last remaining house of worship in the village up for sale.

And despite the disposal of Plockton Church being mooted for the past year, locals have still not been told if the adjacent graveyard is part of the sale or not.

Community Council chairman Charlie MacRae told The Oban Times locals were 'very sad' at the church being sold, 'but said the possibility of the graveyard being lost had caused upset.'

He said: 'People are horrified. Quite a few people in Plockton still have relatives in the graveyard.'

Plockton used to have three churches. One was sold converted into flats 20 years ago and more recently the local Free Presbyterian Church was similarly converted.



Soroba Young Family Group held its Christmas party in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Oban. Eighteen-month-old Brendan Flynn was delighted to meet Santa.

## Jura islanders vote to take over community store

JURA Stores could reopen as early as next spring after islanders voted overwhelmingly to take it under community ownership.

In a ballot last week the people of the Isle of Jura voted to buy

their local shop for the market value of £95,000.

Turnout for the vote last Wednesday was high; 84 per cent of eligible residents exercised their right to vote, of which 77 per cent voted in

favour of the buy-out.

John Potts, chairman of the Jura Development Trust (JDT), said: 'We are delighted that the people of Jura wish JDT to buy the shop on behalf of the community. The positive outcome of

this ballot is an important step forward in saving the island's only shop and demonstrates the commitment of Jura's people to protecting and developing the community for future generations.'

Funding for the purchase of the land and property has been agreed in principle with Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Big Lottery. The funders have also supported JDT through the Right to Buy process.

Alasdair Ferguson said the port

is design work and performance modelling.

### Wave power

The devices work by harnessing wave action to supply off-grid renewable electricity, reducing reliance on off-shore diesel generation.

During the Kishorn tests, the PowerPod prototype will be attached to the side of a deep-water jetty.

Kishorn Port Ltd director Alasdair Ferguson said the port

was 'ideally suited' for such projects.

He added: 'We see this agreement between KPL and Trident Energy as only the beginning.'

Potential projects and developments on site for the renewable energy sector for offshore wind, wave and tidal will be able to utilise the exceptionally deep water, berths, dry dock,

quarry and expansive laydown land which Kishorn Port has to offer.'



Kishorn Port Ltd director Ali Ferguson signed deal

## Kishorn moves towards becoming offshore renewables centre

KISHORN Port Ltd in Wester Ross has made a breakthrough in its bid to become a centre of operations for the offshore renewables sector.

The company announced a lease with Trident Energy, an independent developer of attachable wave energy power devices for oilrigs and wind turbines.

Starting in spring, TE will test its PowerPod technology at sea and gather data to inform

design work and performance modelling.

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Kishorn Port Ltd director Alasdair Ferguson said the port

## Fish farm helps Lochcarron playgroup

FOURTEEN children at Lochcarron Playgroup in Wester Ross have new a touch screen system – thanks in part to a Scottish Sea Farms' (SSF) Heart of the Community Trust grant of £1,300.

The 42-inch screen can be used for interactive projects, independent learning, films and presentations. The system also comes with a digital microscope.

Senior playleader Jenny Baker thanked SSF for topping up existing funding from Highland Childcare Partnership.

Gregor Cushnie, SSF site manager at Kishorn said: 'This is a really innovative project that is helping to familiarise young children with touch screen technology.'



Gregor Cushnie with the Lochcarron children and their new touch screen

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## Bridge of Orchy's ongoing water woes may find solution

AFTER years of disagreement over the broken water supply in Bridge of Orchy, residents and Argyll and Bute Council finally found common ground – a pursuit of Scottish Water to take responsibility for the supply to take responsibility for it.

At a meeting in the Bridge of Orchy Hotel last Wednesday residents and representatives of Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council were told by Malcolm MacFadyen, the council's head of facilities services, that attempts to convince Scottish Water to take on the supply at 'the highest level' had been unsuccessful.

However, the council's regulatory services manager, Alan Morrison, revealed Scottish Water might consider taking on the supply if an estimated £350,000 was spent, bringing it up to standard.

The water supply system first broke down during a hard frost in November 2010, leading to Argyll and Bute Council declaring the village's water unsafe to drink.

However, the council ceased maintaining the supply after closing the primary school in the village – its only remaining

property.

Neither the community, nor the council is willing to legally admit responsibility for the repair and maintenance of the supply, leading to a stalemate.

But at last week's meeting, there was a consensus that Scottish Water taking on the supply was the solution.

AN ALL-female crew has launched the Royal National Lifeboat Institution's (RNLI) newest lifeboat in Tighnabruaich.

The Atlantic 85 class inshore lifeboat, RNLB James and Helen Mason, was taken for a spin by the four female members of the Cowal station at the official launch last Saturday.

There are currently only 70 women among the RNLI's 909 Scottish crew list.

DRIVERS on Oban's one-way Tweeddale Street were forced back against the flow of traffic on Monday after a huge jet of water burst from the mains under the road.

Scottish Water was repairing the main underneath the road when a powerful jet of water shot upwards from the pipe. Witnesses say the jet of water went higher than the roof of the nearby three-storey Woodside Hotel.

SCOTLAND'S world-famous beach landing strip will this month defend its title as the best landing strip in the world in a public vote.

Air charter company Private Fly has compiled a list of more than 30 unusual airport approaches which includes runways on mountain slopes, tropical islands and major cities.

Barra trumped the lot last year, but face strong competition from the likes of Amsterdam Schiphol, Bermuda, Hong Kong, Cape Town and Rio de Janeiro.

ONE OF Scotland's most remote GP surgeries has warned it will

have to cut doctor numbers if plans for a pharmacy in Killin are approved.

Nearly 300 people turned up to a public meeting in Killin last Wednesday after it emerged

that the surgery serves the wider Strathfillan and Balquhidder areas, a patch of some 300 square miles.

However, the company behind the application, W Davidson Ltd, says the GPs are being 'underhand' and accused them of using scare tactics to ward off the company.

The surgery's Dr Elizabeth Watson refuted allegations of scaremongering, saying it was a matter of real concern for the residents.

Davidson's Chemists lodged an application to open a pharmacy in the village.

If approved by Forth Valley NHS, it would automatically become a GP-run dispensary

– a move which the surgery says

will cost it one of its three doctors and have a significant impact on patients.

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<b>Oban Phoenix Cinema</b>	Thursday 3rd Jan - 16:00, 20:00
<b>The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey</b>	Fri 4th, 17:30 • Sat 5th, 17:30 • Sun 6th, 15:00, 18:00 Mon 7th, 17:30 • Tue 8th, 20:30 • Wed 9th, 17:30 Thur 10th, 17:30
<b>Skyfall</b>	Fri 4th, 15:00 • Sat 5th, 13:00, 15:00 • Sun 6th, 13:00
<b>Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted</b>	Fri 4th, 20:30 • Sat 5th, 20:30 • Sun 6th, 20:45 Mon 7th, 20:30 • Tue 8th, 18:00 • Wed 9th, 20:30 Thur 10th, 20:30



## Soroba Young Family Group enjoys fun-filled Christmas party

Fun, games and a visit from Santa were the order of the day at the Soroba Young Family Group's Christmas party. The annual event, held in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls, saw Father Christmas handing out presents to youngsters after a morning of celebrations. Dressed in their best party clothes, the children had a brilliant time – with parents along for the party too. 16\_t52soroba01



## Triple celebration for Oban's Caroline

Friends, family and colleagues of Caroline Silkowski gathered at Oban's Royal Hotel recently for a triple celebration: her 60th birthday, retirement and Christmas. Caroline, pictured centre wearing a tiara, worked in community services for the social work department. 16\_t50silkowski1

## Inveraray and District Accordion and Fiddle Club

BECAUSE of the wintry weather, chairman Niall Iain MacLean welcomed a smaller than usual crowd to the December night of Inveraray and District Accordion and Fiddle Club in the Argyll Hotel.

Supporting players were Fyne Folk, with Sally Hall and Jake MacKay on fiddle, Iain Macaskill and Nick MacFarlane on accordion and Agnes Liddell on keyboard. Also, John Renton and Johnny Fisher on accordion; James MacArthur on melodeon; Jimmy MacDonald on keyboard and Sandy McDonald on drums with a couple of songs from Ian Burns accompanying himself on guitar.

All their varied selections were much enjoyed, with some of them having an appropriate 'seasonal' theme to them.

Guest artists were the Charlie Kirkpatrick Trio – Charlie on button box, Derek Hamilton on keyboard and Nicky McMichael on drums.

Charlie is a well known face in the Scottish dance music circle around Argyll and the cran and bantie was as cheery as ever. After a couple of excellent spots both halves, a superb evening ended to the familiar strains of Kate Dalrymple.

The chairman thanked all the artists for a great night's music and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

To start off 2013, the Ross MacPherson Trio will be the welcome guest artists next week.



## Kyleakin Primary pupils win Oban Times competition

TWO KYLEAKIN Primary School pupils are celebrating after scooping prizes in a recent *Oban Times* competition.

To mark the launch of audio story books featuring Myro, the smallest plane in the world, *The Oban Times* teamed up with publishers Nickrose to offer youngsters the chance to win a prize worth £25.

Children from across the west coast sent in their best drawings of Myro or his friends to be in with the chance of winning but Nicole Ireland and Bethany Stewart's efforts really impressed our judges.

The girls each won a Myro audio story book and CD and activity pack. Their teacher was also provided with a Myro story sack so the whole class can enjoy the smallest plane in the world.

Gaye Morison, class teacher, said: 'My two pupils are absolutely delighted to have won runner up in the Myro competition.'

The books follow the adventures of a little British Microlight called Myro – mischievous, curious and prone to disaster – as he settles into his new home in Australia. They are narrated by Christopher Biggins.



Maria Campbell, right in black, recently celebrated her 30th birthday at Oban's Cuan Mor. 16\_t52campbell1

## Museum kicks off new year in style

ARGYLL museum has announced a varied range of events to help kick 2013 off in style. Kilmartin House Museum's programme for the new year starts on Wednesday January 23 when Roddy Regan will give a presentation on recent archaeological finds in Argyll.

Looking at archaeological finds over the last year, he will be discussing the results of recent excavations at Tayvallach Mill, Dun Mhuirich Dun, Carnasserie and research survey work on Colonsay.

Those interested in permaculture have been invited to go along to the Open Space meeting at the museum on Saturday January 26. The meeting will be held 2pm until 6pm, followed by a meal and ceilidh.

The Great Auks is an archaeological club for young people, and has lots of interesting events planned for the year. On Saturday January 26, the club will be visiting Campbeltown Museum, followed by a visit to Tarbert Castle.

Kilmartin House Museum offers a wide range of volunteer opportunities including guided



## Lucky tenant wins hamper of goodies

A HAMPER full of festive goodies has been won by a lucky housing tenant who lives in Appin.

Mrs Drysdale, a resident in an Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) property, was the winner of its member's prize draw and received a hamper of Christmas food.

She said: 'I am delighted to win this lovely hamper – I never win anything.'

Life membership of ACHA is available to those in Argyll and Bute for just £1 and offers a range of benefits including entry to the annual prize draw in the organisation's four areas.

Members also elect the area committees and board of management, the governing bodies that direct ACHA. This means they have a real say in how ACHA is run.

Colette Benham, ACHA's director of human resources and corporate services, said: 'Members are important to ACHA and they deserve to be acknowledged. By awarding four hampers ACHA has a chance to say thank you.'

'If you are eligible why not sign up in time for next year's draw?'

Application forms for ACHA membership are available in all ACHA offices, at [www.acha.co.uk](http://www.acha.co.uk) and by phoning Lesley Lindsay on 01546 605971.

whatever you're doing make sure Year of Natural Scotland 2013 is a year to remember for you. There's no limit to the number of photos and videos you can upload and the project is open to everyone.'

'We want sports from bowling to triathlon and events from regattas to highland games featured, along with everything else in between.'

You can follow Argyll and the Isles Apps on Twitter @Argyll\_IslesApp.

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## New smartphone app aims to capture a year in pictures

A NEW app has launched for smartphones giving more reasons than ever to visit the west.

Argyll and the Isles Apps launched its 50,000 Reasons to visit Argyll and the Isles app to help make sure the Year of Natural Scotland 2013 gets off to a flying start.

A new video has been launched to explain how residents can be a part of the project by uploading their own photographs to the app. It is hoped that, by the end of 2013, the next

12 months will be documented like no year before it.

There's no limit to the number of photos and videos you can upload and the project is open to everyone.

Argyll and the Isles Apps founder Catriona Craig said: 'The 50,000 Reasons to Visit Argyll and the Isles is our most ambitious project yet.'

'We aim to build a map of Argyll and the Isles through photos. Starting on January

1 with the ringing in of New Year, right through to Hogmanay 2013 we will capture a year in pictures.'

### Excited

'I believe this is the first time anything of this nature has been done in the area and I'm very excited that Argyll and the Isles Apps is launching it in Scotland's special year.'

To get involved, email photo@argyllandtheisles.info.

Catriona said: 'Wherever you are and

## PROPERTY

**6**

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**Primary Teacher (Gaelic)**  
Tollcross Primary School, EH3  
Salary: £21,438 - £34,200, Hours: 35 per week.  
Ref: EDN00478

**Closing Date: 18 January 2013**  
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Yours attention is drawn to the following terms and conditions which relate to the placing of advertisements in all publications owned by Wyvex Media Limited. Parties to this agreement are the Publisher, Wyvex Media Limited Limited in the one part and the advertiser on the other part. The Publisher publishes newspapers, magazines, books and provides advertising space therein or provides for the delivery of advertising materials to the public within these publications.

1 Advertising copy shall be legal, decent, honest and truthful and conform with the British Code of Advertising Practice and all other codes.

2 The Publisher does not guarantee the insertion of any particular advertisement.

3 The Publisher reserves the right to cancel or alter the advertisement by giving reasonable notice.

4 An order for an advertisement shall be deemed to be made on the date when the publisher receives it from the publisher whether placed by telephone, mail, fax or in person.

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6 The parties submit to the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts and Scots Law. In the event of any dispute or action by the Publisher to recover payment from an advertiser, it is agreed that matters will be settled in the Oban, Argyll Sheriff Court or such other Courts as the Publisher may choose.

7 The Publisher shall not be liable for any loss or damage occasioned by any total or partial failure (however caused) of publication or distribution of any newspaper or edition in which any advertisement is scheduled to appear. In the event of any error, misprint or omission in the printing of an advertisement or other matter contained in the publication, the publisher will correct the advertisement or relevant part of the advertisement, as the case may be, or make reasonable refund or adjustment to the cost. No re-insertion, refund or adjustment will be made where the error, misprint or omission does not materially detract from the advertisement.

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12 A request to insert an advertisement assumes acceptance of our conditions.

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## PLANNING

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at [www.arryll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.arryll-bute.gov.uk). Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

## TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
12/02662/PP	Temporary siting of modular site office building, 2 storage containers, vehicle parking and formation of vehicular access (all for a period of 5 years)	Land South of The Bunker North Connell Oban Argyll and Bute PA37 1RW	Sub Post Office Ledaig
12/02748/PP	Erection of 6 semi detached dwellinghouses (Renewal of planning permission 07/01748/DET)	Land North East Of Tigh Na Creag Pulpit Rock Oban Argyll and Bute	Oban Area Office

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 67 Chalmers Street Ardribsaig PA30 8DX, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at [www.arryll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.arryll-bute.gov.uk). Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

## TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
12/02665/PPP	Site for the erection of four dwellinghouses, formation of two vehicular accesses and installation of waste water treatment system(s)	Land to North of 10 - 15 Distillery Cottages Lagavulin Isle of Islay	Sub Post Office Port Ellen
12/02775/PP	Erection of two dwelling houses (Renewal of planning permission 09/01480/PP)	Land South West of Garta Ghobhan Machrins Isle of Colonsay Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Isle of Colonsay

Argyll and Bute council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: [https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk](http://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk)

The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Whitegates Office Whitegates Road Lochgilphead PA31 8SY.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at the above address and at all Council Libraries.

Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered.

## COUNCILLOR SURGERY

Councillor Louise Glen-Lee (EWS) Oban North and Lorn  
Councillor Glen-Lee will be holding drop in surgeries during the month of JANUARY as follows:-Monday afternoons in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 4.00pm - 5.00pm on the following dates:

Monday 7th January, Monday 14th January, Monday 21st January and Monday 28th January

Councillor Louise Glen-Lee can also be contacted by phone - Tel: 01631 567 955 or by email - [louise.glen-lee@arryll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:louise.glen-lee@arryll-bute.gov.uk)

## COMMUNITY SERVICES: EDUCATION

## REGISTRATION OF INFANT BEGINNERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS SESSION 2013/2014

Children who attain the age of five years between 1 March 2013 and 28 February 2014 should be registered for education during the week commencing 14 January 2013.

Parents concerned should take their children to the appropriate local primary school on one of the school days during the above week between the hours of 10.00am and 3.00pm.

## Gaelic Medium Education

Gaelic Medium Education is available in the following schools:- Bowmore Primary School, Islay; Tiree Primary School, Tiree; Salen Primary School, Mull; Rockfield Primary School, Oban; Strath of Appin Primary School, by Oban and Sandbank Primary School, Dunoon. Further information on Gaelic Medium Education can be obtained from Donald MacLeod, Education Officer ([donald.macleod@arryll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:donald.macleod@arryll-bute.gov.uk))

The child's birth certificate should be produced. A leaflet providing information for parents on enrolment of children in school and giving details of placing request procedures (including under age placing requests) may be obtained from any school or from Community Services, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon, PA23 8AJ (Tel: 01369 708560).

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Interviews for these posts will be held in late January / early February 2013

**CARER required to help look after 68 year old man who is mentally alert but in wheel chair with limited speech. 30 hours at £225 net per week, plus small tied cottage.**

Would suit couple as in remote glen 18 miles south of Oban.

Driver essential. Tel: 01866 844212,

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**PERSONALS****RETIREMENT**

Sheri Amanda Murphy

Retiring from Sheri's Headquarters F/W and Kinlochleven

Just to let you know how proud we are of how hard you have worked and what you have achieved. We are so proud to be your parents Sheri. Enjoy your new life as I know I will. Looking forward to some mum and daughter time together. Love you. Mum and Dad

**Oban Times PERSONALS**

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**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.

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 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavulin, 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.

# Spot the SHINTY BALL Competition



I enclose £1 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. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

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**BIRTHS**

**MACLEOD** – Donald and Kimberley (née Beckett) of Tobermory are delighted to announce the birth of Grace Elizabeth at Southern General Hospital on December 23, 2012. A beautiful granddaughter for both families.

**ENGAGEMENTS**

**BLACK-MACINTYRE**  
- David to Vicki  
on Christmas Day 2012.  
Love and Congratulations to  
you both.



**WALTHO-BELL** – Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Kirsty, daughter of Dave and Mary Waltho to Brad, son of Daved Bell and Jeanne Shaw, New York State. Love and congratulations to you both.

**DEATHS**

**CHRISTINE** - Finlay peacefully at home on Wednesday December 26, 2012 beloved husband of Sacha and much loved father of Connor and Carys. Funeral service on Thursday, January 3, 2013 at St Kilda's Church, Lochbuie at 12.30 and on Friday January 4, 2013 at Linn Crematorium at 3pm. Family flowers only please. Donations to 'Friends of the Beatson'.

**CROSSAN** - Peacefully at Lynn of Lorne Care Home, Benderloch, on December 28, 2012. John, 85, musician with BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (retired), beloved husband of Maureen and loving father of Jonathan, David, Helen, Andrew and Katy, and doting Grampa of Rachel, Kirsty, Liam, Maria and Shona. John's family would like to thank all the doctors, medical and care staff for their kindness, professionalism and dedication over the years. Funeral and burial at the Cathedral Church of St. Moulag, Isle of Lismore, Wednesday, January 9, 2013, 1pm to which all are welcome. Donations to Alzheimer Scotland in lieu of flowers.

**CRUICKSHANK** - Suddenly, at home, Hillside, Benderloch, on December 24, 2012. Anne MacGregor Cruickshank, (née Black), beloved wife of Gordon and devoted and loving mother of Alasdair and Mary, fondly cherished nanny to Fiona, Dugie, Morven, Michael, Ryan and Evan, much loved mother-in-law, sister and aunt. Funeral service at St. Modans, Benderloch, on Friday, January 4, 2013 at 1pm. Family flowers only. So dearly loved, so sadly missed.

**LEWKOWIEZ** - Jan. Peacefully at Forth Valley Hospital, with his friends on December 28, 2012. Jan beloved son of Renee and the late Bohdan. Interment at Pennyfuir Cemetery on Friday, January 11 at 2pm with a gathering in memory of Jan thereafter in North Connel Village Hall, Oban.

**MACINTYRE** – Suddenly but peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital on December 28, 2012. Jean aged 76, beloved wife of Dougie, devoted mother to Christine, Dougie and Gordon and dearly loved nanny to Lauren and Ashley, Gillian, Nicola, Robert, Blair and Kirsty. Sadly missed.

**MACKAY** – Donald William Munro, son of Donald Alexander Rankin MacKay and Elizabeth (née Scott), formerly Taynall and Barriemore Hotel, Oban and husband of Helen and father of Gillian, died December 26, 2012, peacefully at his home in Peterculter, Aberdeenshire, aged 86, brother of the late Rena Spence (née MacKay) and Mrs R Dougall (née MacKay), now Gullane.

**MCALLUM** – John, passed away on December 25, 2012, at Lorn and Islands Hospital, aged 66, formerly of Taynall, Glencruitten and Lochawe. Service to be held at Oban Parish Church on January 7, 2013 at 1.30pm. Family flowers only.

**SHAW** - Ian Hamilton aged 86 years, of Kervora, Oban (formerly of The Manor House Hotel, Oban). A former Yacht Broker with Warden and Bell and a former Director of G L Watson & Co Ltd, Glasgow. He passed away peacefully at home on December 27, 2012 after a long illness. A special friend to Joop Miener and a friend to many. An evening service of thanksgiving will take place at Glencruitten Road Parish Church, Oban at 7pm on Wednesday January 9, 2013. The funeral service will be held at Linn Crematorium, Catheart on Thursday 10 at 12.45 p.m. Family flowers only please. If desired, retiral collection/donations to ABCD (Argyll beats Cardiovascular Disease)

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**FERNS** - The Ferns family would like to thank the Bunessan Community for all the kindness and support given to Pat throughout his lifetime. We would also like to thank the doctors and nurses of Ward B at Lorn and Islands Hospital, a special thank you to Fr James McNeil from Oban for his spiritual support. Thank you for all the kind donations which will be donated to Bunessan Surgery.

**MAITLAND** – Teeny, Marie, Ross and families wish to thank doctors, nurses and staff at RAH Paisley, Vale of Leven Hospital, Lorn and Islands Hospital and Lom Medical Centre for their caring and unfailing attention to James during his long illness. There are too many of you to mention. We would also like to thank family, friends and neighbours for all their love and support after the sad and unbearable passing of James. Thanks for all cards and phone calls. Special thanks to the Reverend Bill Gray and Donald MacKinnon for a beautiful service and to our dear friend Sandy Gow for the wonderful eulogy which summed up James to a 'T'. Thanks also to Ian at D & A Munn for arrangements carried out so professionally and my lovely sister Lorraine – you know what you did. Thanks also to Alan and Mary at the Woodside for food and refreshments. Lastly to the lovely people who filled the church and hall and paid their respects at the graveside to our unique James. Love you all.

**SINCLAIR** – The family of the late Carol Sinclair, would like to thank everyone who attended the church and graveside and those who sent sympathy cards. Special thanks to Rev Varwell and Mike McFall and Staff for efficient funeral arrangements. Collection at church raised £150 for Alzheimer's Scotland.

**THOMSON** – Heartfelt thanks to everyone for the kind expressions of sympathy following the death of our mum, grandmother and great-grandmother Georgia (née Harkins). Grateful thanks to Father MacKinnon, Mgr Wynne and Deaconate Thomas Wyne for the very comforting funeral mass. Thanks also to McLellans for their very caring service. Special thanks to everyone who paid their last respects at the church, cemetery and Ben Nevis Hotel where many special times were recalled by Georgia's fellow 'West Enders' and others when looking through her photo album.

**ROBERTSON** - With special and loving memory of my dear husband and our dearest father George, who passed away on January 6, 2011.

**THOMSON** – Heartfelt thanks to everyone for the kind expressions of sympathy following the death of our mum, grandmother and great-grandmother Georgia (née Harkins). Grateful thanks to Father MacKinnon, Mgr Wynne and Deaconate Thomas Wyne for the very comforting funeral mass. Thanks also to McLellans for their very caring service. Special thanks to everyone who paid their last respects at the church, cemetery and Ben Nevis Hotel where many special times were recalled by Georgia's fellow 'West Enders' and others when looking through her photo album.

**WATKINS** – In loving memory of my beloved husband, John, who died suddenly on January 6, 2011.

**SIMPSON** – In loving memory of my beloved husband, John, who died suddenly on January 6, 2011.

Forever remembered.

- Fiona.

**WHYTE** – Treasured memories of Aileen, a dear sister and much loved aunt who died on January 3, 2012.

Ill panis dabat eis qui solum saxum dabant ei.

- Marie and Caitlin.

**WOOD** - George (Podger), died January 3, 1983,

Thank you for the years we shared,

Thank you for the way you cared,

We loved you then

And we love you still

Forget you, we never will.

- Love Freda and Jim.

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St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona

Holy Eucharist.....09.30

Dad, Mum, Craig and Calum x

**Oban Times****BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS****Oban Times****BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS****Thought for the week****The star still shines**

MACLEOD - In loving memory of my two beloved sons and our brothers Neil, who died January 3, 2004 and George, who died in the Philippines January 5, 2009.

The calls were sudden

The shocks severe

To lose two sons

I loved so dear.

- Forever mum xx

Remembering you always

Forgetting you never.

- Ian, Rory, Daniel, Donald,

Christine and Marina xx.

**MACNAUGHTON** - In

loving memory of mum, Ruby

MacNaughton, who passed away

on January 3, 2009 and dad, Colin

MacNaughton who passed away

on December 26, 1984.

Loved deeply and forever in our thoughts.

- Johnnie, Alec, Mairi and their families.

**MACPHAIL** - Treasured

memories of a very special

grandson, nephew and cousin

Ryan, who died January 7, 2003.

Always in our hearts.

- Granny Penny, Denise, Angus,

Michael and Iain.

**McKINNON** - In loving memory of my dear husband Charles McKinnon who died suddenly on December 28, 2005, also those who have gone before and since.

Always in my thoughts.

- May, Colonsay.

**MCLEISH** - In loving memory of my dear mother Moran, who passed away on January 3, 2011.

Sadly missed in every way

Quietly remembered every day.

- Christine and family.

**MORRISON** - In loving memory of Mary, a dear sister, aunt and great-aunt who passed away January 1, 2008.

Always in our thoughts.

- Katie and family

**ROBERTSON** - With special and loving memory of my dear husband and our dearest father George, who passed away on January 6, 2011.

There will always be heartache

And often a silent tear

But always great memories of the days when you were here.

- Margaret, sons George and Lorne and daughter-in-law Helen.

**SIMPSON** - In loving memory of my beloved husband, John, who died suddenly on January 6, 2011.

Forever remembered.

- Fiona.

**WHYTE** - Treasured memories of Aileen, a dear sister and much loved aunt who died on January 3, 2012.

Ill panis dabat eis qui solum saxum dabant ei.

- Marie and Caitlin.

**WOOD** - George (Podger), died January 3, 1983,

Thank you for the years we shared,

Thank you for the way you cared,

We loved you then

And we love you still

Forget you, we never will.

- Love Freda and Jim.

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Oban Celtic Shinty Club held their annual Boxing Day challenge match between a team of Golden Oldies and a team of Young Guns at Mossfield Stadium. Pictured are the teams before the match. 07\_101celtic02



Ally McKerracher gets his block in as Marc MacCallum clears the ball. 16\_101celtic01

## Celtic old boys turn on the style in Boxing Day challenge match

'There was a good turnout of ex-players and supporters, making it a fantastic occasion'

PLAYERS past and present turned out for Oban Celtic's annual Boxing Day match at Mossfield, with the old boys showing their younger counterparts how to take penalties.

After the match ended 2-2, the

Golden Oldies won a penalty

shoot-out 2-0 against the Young

Guns, thanks to strikes from

Donald MacKay and captain

Campbell Clark.

Man of the match Scott Buchanan made three penalty saves for the Golden Oldies.

Clark was presented with the Carnie and Pearson Trophy at a prizegiving after the match at the Masonic Lodge, where Buchanan also picked up his award.

### Not-so-old

After a slow start to the match, the Golden Oldies opened the

game through the not-so-old John McNulty.

Malcolm Clark, guesting for

Oban Celtic, scored the equaliser

and Alan Duffy gave the young

team a 2-1 lead.

Sandy MacLeod scored the

equaliser to take the match to

penalties.

Club representative David

Hamilton said: 'It is always a

great day for the club, as it brings

scoring through the not-so-old John McNulty.

Malcolm Clark, guesting for

Oban Celtic, scored the equaliser

and Alan Duffy gave the young

team a 2-1 lead.

Sandy MacLeod scored the

equaliser to take the match to

penalties.

Club representative David

Hamilton said: 'It is always a

great day for the club, as it brings

### SHINTY

together the current squad and former players.

'There was a very good turnout

of ex-players and supporters,

making it a fantastic occasion.'

The match is played in memory

of former players Vince Carnie

and Jamie Pearson, who died in

a road crash along with David

MacDougall in 1996.

## Saints at home to Postal United on Saturday

### FOOTBALL

OBAN SAINTS return to Scottish Amateur League Premier Division action on Saturday after the festive break with a tough home game against last season's treble winners Postal United.

The game will take place at Glencruitten with a 2pm kick-off.

Postal lifted three pieces of silverware last season winning the Centenary Cup, Jimmy Marshall Trophy and the Premier Division league championship which was a tremendous feat so the Oban lads know they will be in for a difficult match.

Saints' manager Iain Jackson is confident though and should have a full squad to choose from for this important game.

He said: 'We've been playing well this season, but this will be a real test as Postal are one of the best teams around at the moment.'

'Due to the festive break the 3G pitch at Oban High School has been closed, which is not ideal, as we haven't been able to train for the last couple of weeks, but we've organised a session for the tennis courts at Atlantis Leisure tonight (Thursday) from 6 till 8pm.

'We've only played three league games this season while Postal have played seven so if we picked up all three points this would leave us only five points behind them with four games in hand.'

### New manager and players wanted

### SHINTY

ARDNAMURCHAN Camanachd are currently looking for a new senior manager and players for the 2013 season.

The youthful team is based in Strontian and has excellent facilities.

All interested parties should contact Stuart Carmichael - sc-joinery@hotmail.co.uk.



## Tag match marks end of 2012

### RUGBY

PLAYERS from Oban Lorne Rugby Football Club made sure a game was played on the final day of the club's 50th anniversary year.

The tag rugby match was held at the rugby pitch, Glencruitten, on Hogmanay and was a welcome run out especially for the senior players who have not had a game in 11 weeks.

In 2012, the club marked its golden anniversary with a series of events, culminating in a sportsman's dinner and dance with ex-Scotland international and Radio Scotland presenter John Beattie among the special guests.

Left: Allan Wright is halted in his tracks by Murray Hamilton, left, and Alex Rawcliffe. 07\_101rugby1



## Kyokushin members pass grading test

Oban club members of Kyokushin Karate Scotland are pictured with their certificates for passing a recent grading test at the Mid Argyll Sports Centre in Lochgilphead. New members will be welcome at the club in the New Year, with classes starting from Thursday, January 10, at 6pm until 7pm for 8-12 year olds and 7pm until 8:30pm for those aged 13 and over. Pictured, back row, left to right: Angus MacLean, Damien Williamson, Keith Johnston, Andrew MacKinnon, Sharon Dickson, Paul MacKay. Front row: Megan Williamson, Michael MacFarlane, Kaitlynne MacLeod, Charlie McLaughlin, Darryl McLaughlin, Jordan MacKay.

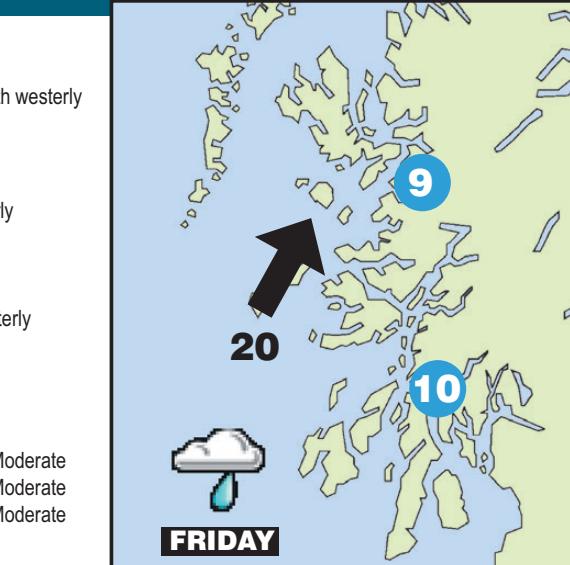
## Weather

**Thursday** Cloudy  
Winds moderate, west south westerly  
Temperatures 9C to 9C

**Friday** Light rain  
Winds strong, south westerly  
Temperatures 9C to 10C.

**Weekend Outlook** Cloudy  
Winds moderate south easterly  
Temperatures 8C to 9C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States  
Oban to Barra/South Uist  
Oban to Coll/Tiree  
Kennacraig to Islay



## Tides

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# **The following pages are from the Fort William (Northern) Edition of The Oban Times.**

The Oban Times prints two editions of the paper. There is the main edition as well as the Fort William (Northern) Edition.

Sometimes pages that appear in the Fort William edition do not appear in the main edition (and vice versa).

As an electronic subscriber you get the main edition plus the pages that appear in the Northern edition.

# The Oban Times

## & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Concluding this week

## Review of the Year 2012



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### 'Old New Year' shinty match at Glenfinnan

GLENFINNAN residents will celebrate the 'Old New Year' of January 12 next Saturday with an ancient tradition - a shinty game between villagers.

A bonfire beside the River Finn will keep spectators warm as men, women and children of all ages play the fixture on a rough field below the Glenfinnan viaduct.

The fun afternoon will see 'The Glenfinnan '48s' take on the rest in one of most eagerly anticipated social events on the local calendar.

Match organiser, Glenfinnan Estate manager Alasdair Gibson told *The Oban Times*: 'It's one of the most important things we do in the year - children, women, dads, uncles - everybody plays.'

'It is a fairly laid back affair - nobody wants to be captain and nobody wants to referee! It's a bit of fun and exercise before some indulgence.'

The Glenfinnan Estate field has also seen rugby, football and even cricket challenge matches in recent years.

### Lochaber gathers to honour 2012 sporting success

LOCHABER'S sporting community came together to celebrate the great and good of 2012 at the second annual Lochaber Sports Association awards ceremony on Saturday night.

A wide range of sports were represented by the winners - from shinty to sailing and hill running to roller skating.

The two big awards on the night went to runner Finlay Wild and Lochaber Camanachd for top individual and top team respectively.

For a full report and photos from the night see the sports section.

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Jessie Colquhoun: honoured with an MBE for her years of dedicated service to West Ardnamurchan.

### Ceremony to mark 70th anniversary of Ben Nevis Spitfire crash

THE SITE on Ben Nevis where a Spitfire crashed during World War II killing the young pilot is to be marked with a ceremony to mark the 70th anniversary of the accident.

Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) flying officer John Donald McDonell's final flight saw him heading over Fort William on his way back to his Fraserburgh base when he encountered engine problems on May 16 1943.

The 21-year-old was looking for a safe place to land but was caught out by low cloud and

crashed into the hillside at Melante, killing him instantly. Lochaber Archaeological Society (LAS) members recently came across some remains of the plane and contacted authorities to find out more information.

LAS chairman Robert Cairns told *The Oban Times*: 'The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has asked us to photograph and record the site and said it will now be classified as a war grave. On May 16 - 70 years to the day - the Royal British Legion will walk up to the site and lay a wreath. A plaque will be made up and placed in the

Glen Nevis Visitor Centre car park, which overlooks the crash site, because we don't want to put it up on the hill where no one will see it. This guy gave his life when he crashed over Fort William, so this memorial is well overdue. How many people know the whole story of what happened? Maybe even his family back home in Canada don't know. The people of Lochaber will finally be able mark their respects after 70 years.'

RCAF is trying to trace members of Mr McDonell's family with a view to inviting them to the ceremony.

'We should be in a better position to provide more information in January or February.' He added: 'We understand people are very keen to see the Tesco store come forward. Once we have a start date we will inform the local community.'

### Tesco declines to give start date for building new Fort William store

TESCO has declined to give a start date for its new 60,000sq ft store in Fort William despite hopes work would start this month.

It had been hoped infrastructure works at the Blair Mhor would be completed by Christmas.

A Tesco spokesperson told *The Oban Times*: 'All our developments have to be considered against all other developments across the UK and we have to go through a process of dealing with when they will be built.'

'Having retired I still feel fit and I now do the emergency responders' scheme and also Marie Curie bank nursing. I am so pleased I am able to work in a caring profession.'

'I could not have done this

without the support of my

husband Laurie, who sadly died

from a terminal illness in January 2011. The community has been very supportive throughout. We are one big happy family down here.'

Jessie added: 'In the summer time I love my garden, I have a dog and I am pleased I'm still able to live here in the community and contribute a bit to looking after them still.'

Jessie hit the headlines when she was due to retire in early 2011. She was not going to be replaced, leaving the community without full local nursing cover.

She agreed to stay on an

extra year while consultations about replacing district nurses continued.

Local reaction was swift - and

West Ardnamurchan Agricultural Show and Sports chairman

of others.'

Gus MacLean summed up local people's reaction.

He told *The Oban Times*:

'Everybody here is extremely

pleased and proud of her Jessie's achievement. She is very well respected throughout West Ardnamurchan and has given so much to the community over the years. This recognition is richly deserved.'

Local online commentators

were also fulsome in their praise.

One Kilchoan blogger said:

'Many congratulations - this

has given us much greater faith

in the honours system - awards

going to those who best deserve them.'

'This is a vindication for the

hard struggle the community

recently had to fight and shows

that somebody, somewhere,

can really appreciate dedicated

service given for the benefit of

others.'

## Dedicated Jessie honoured with New Year MBE

Former district nurse named in Honours List for services to healthcare in Ardnamurchan

ONE OF Lochaber's most dedicated health professionals has spoken of her delight at an MBE in the Queen's 2013 New Year Honours List.

Jessie Colquhoun, from Kilchoan, received the honour for 'services to healthcare in Ardnamurchan, Argyll.'

Jessie officially retired in February 2012 after 55 years of dedicated service, the last 36 of those as district nurse in West Ardnamurchan.

The active 70-year-old's nursing career began at the age of 15, when she began work as an auxiliary nurse at a small cottage hospital in Auchterarder, Perthshire.

From there, a move to Dundee Royal former training followed, then two six-months spells doing midwifery in Sunderland and Liverpool.

Next stage in her career was

By STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

a return to Scotland for district nursing in Perth and Kinross, then a spell training as a health visitor in Edinburgh.

All those qualifications meant Jessie became a 'triple-duty' district nurse, skills she brought to Kilchoan where she began work in 1976, a position she held until her retirement.

The new MBE told *The Oban Times*: 'I am very honoured. To me nursing is more than just a job - it's a vocation, looking after people from the day they were born to the end of their lives.'

'Having retired I still feel fit and I now do the emergency responders' scheme and also Marie Curie bank nursing. I am so pleased I am able to work in a caring profession.'

'I could not have done this

without the support of my husband Laurie, who sadly died from a terminal illness in January 2011. The community has been very supportive throughout. We are one big happy family down here.'

Gus MacLean summed up local people's reaction.

He told *The Oban Times*:

'Everybody here is extremely

pleased and proud of her Jessie's achievement. She is very

well respected throughout West

Ardnamurchan and has given so

much to the community over the

years. This recognition is richly

deserved.'

Local online commentators

were also fulsome in their praise.

One Kilchoan blogger said:

'Many congratulations - this

has given us much greater faith

in the honours system - awards

going to those who best deserve them.'

## Community council takes first steps to set up hydropower profit group

A LOCHABER community council will take the first steps towards setting up a new company to handle potential earnings from a raft of micro hydropower schemes at a meeting next Tuesday evening.

Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achinarry will hear from Highland Council wards manager Dot Ferguson about the mechanics of setting up a company to receive any community benefit.

'We're still going to go ahead with our plans. There's been a number of occasions recently where a community company would have been of benefit to the community.'

Achnacarry, Bunarkaig and Clunes (ABC) Group rather than a new community company.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'I think a lot of the money is going to go to the ABC Group. The developers are the ones who decide who they give the money to and in the case of developments on Lochiel's land he will almost certainly give it to someone he knows.'

'But community council chairman John Fotheringham said he feared benefit from proposed schemes in Loch Arkaig may go to local residents association

ABC Group chairman Richard Sidgwick is expected to attend the meeting at Spean Bridge Primary School.

Mr Sidgwick could not be contacted before *The Oban Times* went to press.

The community council

recently discussed a number of

planning applications for small-

scale power schemes, which will

be decided imminently.

Highland Council encourage

companies developing new

schemes to contribute to a com-

munity benefit fund, which is

given to local residents affected

by the development.



Graham Paterson: died while walking in the Cuillins.



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## Tributes paid to Skye mountain walking guide found dead after falling in the Cuillins

TRIBUTES have been paid to a Skye mountain walking guide who was found dead after falling while walking in the Cuillins.

Graham Greig Paterson, of Carbost, was reported missing on Friday afternoon after another walker saw him slip near Glenbrittle.

A search involving police, RAF, mountain rescue teams from Skye and Kintail and SARDA dogs was launched but was unable to find Mr Paterson before darkness fell.

Early on Saturday morning the search resumed and his body was found.

The 60-year-old ran Sky Hi Cuillin Mountain Guides and had been guiding walks in the Cuillins since 1995.

A number of tributes were left for Mr Paterson on Facebook. Andrew Grassick said: 'Graham guided us up the Skye Cuillin in June and the Aonach Eagach in August 2012. He helped us achieve our dreams and left us with memories that will last a lifetime.'

'It was a privilege to see a man at work who was so knowledgeable and who clearly loved being up in the hills.'

Spike Sellers said: 'Fond memories of a wonderful man have flooded my heart as the skies cleared above Blaich this morning.'

Lois Nicol said: 'Sad to hear he didn't make it. Well done to the mountain rescue team for doing their best to find him in terrible conditions.'

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- Harness awareness training (Half day)

FW

## New music course at Lewis Castle College

NORTH Uist is hoping to draw participants from across Europe and beyond to a new music course based at Lewis Castle College in Benbecula.

Hebrides Tunes from March 11-16 will feature music workshops, ceilidhs, step dancing, Gaelic language and excursions to local historical sites.

Tuition for pipers, fiddlers, whistlers, guitarists and bodhran players will be provided by BA Traditional Music students and staff at the college.

The Angus Nicolson Trio will provide the core of instrumental tuition and groupwork.



Geese and gulls take cover: the gyrfalcon is now on South Uist.  
Photograph by John Kemp.

## Alarm at arrival of gyrfalcon on the Uists

AN UNUSUAL visitor from the skies has flown in from the icy north to terrify wildlife on the Uists.

The gyrfalcon, which probably flew in from Greenland, was first seen around the RSPB Balranald reserve on North Uist.

Now the feathered predator has moved south and according to Balranald site manager Jamie Boyle is causing 'some alarm'.

'This gyrfalcon has been hunting a wide range of prey from gulls to geese and has an incredible effect on the wildlife,' he said. 'You can almost feel the tension in the air when it's around.'

'They hunt small mammals as well as birds, so rabbits might be playing a part in keeping it here.'

'The books say that on the whole they are not migratory and hang around the ice flows and mountains of the Arctic but we seem to get them almost every year in the Uists.'

The gyrfalcon is the biggest falcon and is about the same size as a buzzard. They hunt on the ground, waiting on a rock or tussock watching for prey.

## Wetherspoon is coming to Fort

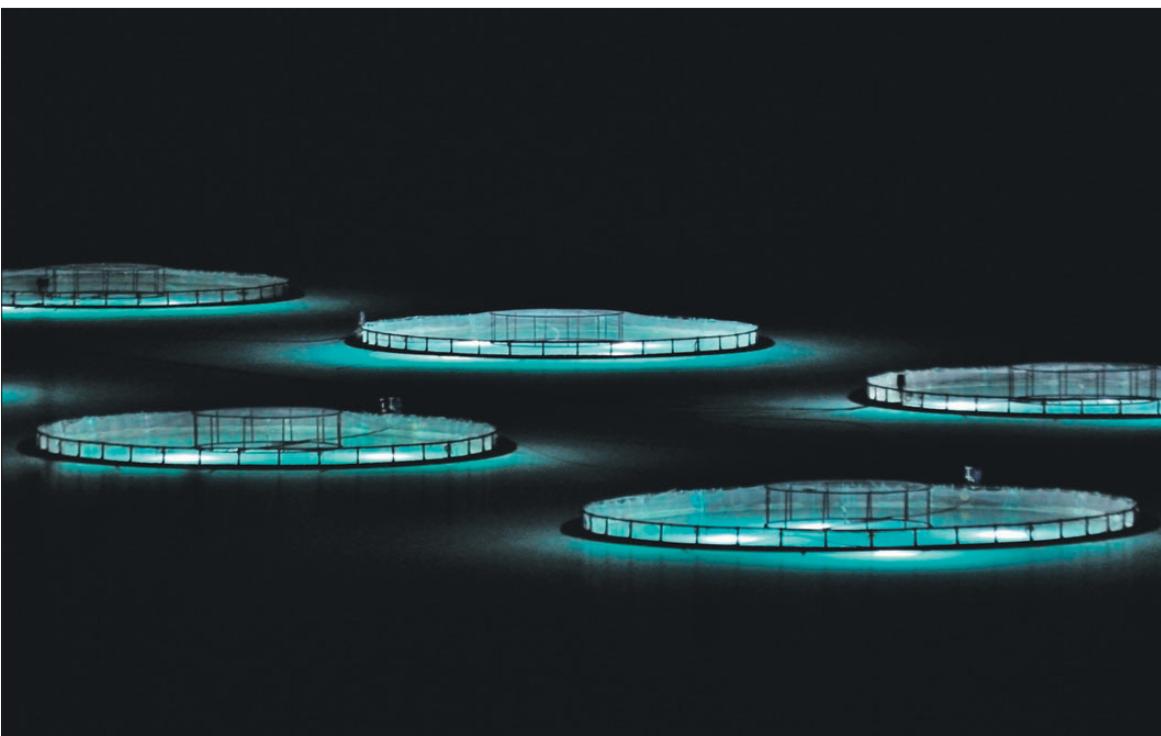
RUMOURS that JD Wetherspoon would not be coming to Fort William have been scotched after the pub chain confirmed it will open its new bar later this year.

The street level outlet in the West End is one of 30 being opened in towns across the UK under a £35 million expansion programme.

The bar, located at the start/finish point of the West Highland Way, will be called The Great Glen after an *Oban Times* readers' competition last April.

JD Wetherspoon chairman Tim Martin said: 'We are looking forward to opening the new pubs, many of which will be in areas where Wetherspoon is not yet represented.'

The bar forms a key part of Ashford Property Group's £8 million development on the site of the former Grand Hotel, which was destroyed by fire in 2007.



## Alien invasion? No just fish farm cages at night

It may look like an alien invasion, but these spectral discs are not flying saucers from outer space. They are in fact salmon cages at Marine Harvest's Caraig fish farm on Loch Einort at Caraig, near Luib, on the road between Portree and Broadford. The cages are illuminated at night, *The Oban Times* understands, to regulate the growth of the fish. Photograph by The Tartan Lens.

# Tree felling at Glen Righ to close one lane of A82

## Traffic management in place until late March

TIMBER harvesting operations on a steep hillside next to the A82 between Fort William and the Corran Ferry will start on Monday, Forestry Commission Scotland has announced.

The felling in Glen Righ Forest will see the road reduced to one lane during the working week until late March - and closed for short intervals during that time.

Project manager Alex MacLeod said traffic management would be in place from January 14 with a lane closure immediately south of the Loch Linnhe car park. He said: 'There will also be a need for regular but short periods of road closure in both directions though it is expected these will be for no more than

10 minutes at a time and we will ensure that vehicles will be allowed to clear between each of these. We understand that road users will find this frustrating, and we apologise in advance for the inconvenience, but the harvesting work is very difficult and potentially dangerous and the safety of our operators and road users is of paramount importance.'

The harvesting operations are expected to last until late March with traffic management initially in place between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday. The Commission will also ensure the short road closures are delayed until

after 9am. The news follows a series of consultation events to update the public on the work.

Mr MacLeod said: 'Some of the constructive feedback from our recent successful drop-in events asked that we keep up the good work with regards to keeping people informed about what's happening when, and we aim to do that.'

Visitors to the drop-ins viewed maps of the forest areas, photographs showing the harvesting challenges, work methods and work completed to date.

According to Mr MacLeod, the majority agreed with 'the sensible long term plan for a serious problem' and were 'pleased to have the opportunity to hear of the work programmes'.



## Pupils raise money for charity

English medium P1-3 pupils at Dunvegan Primary School show off posters and bags of reindeer food they made to sell at their successful Christmas show, when £40 was raised for Save the Children. The Dunvegan kids chose the charity following their study of how other countries across the globe celebrated Christmas. Class teacher Liz Macfarlane told *The Oban Times*: 'They were very moved by the difficulties in Israel and Gaza and decided to raise money so that children in that part of the world would have something to celebrate during the festive season.'

## Entries open for major Cancer Research event

ENTRIES have opened for a major fundraiser in aid of Cancer Research UK in Fort William on Saturday April 27.

Participants in 'Run Together', which is being billed as a 'fun event for the whole family', either walk, run or jog a five-kilometre course.

The popular event, now in its third year, will take place at the BA Club from 11am to 3pm. Star attraction will be a display by strongmen at 2pm.

Event manager Adam Ramsey told *The Oban Times* he had high hopes the day would be the most successful yet.

He said: 'We nearly touched 400 competitors last year and this time we are aiming for 700 people to take part.'

'We are trying to encourage whole families to get involved. We are printing out registration forms and we will deliver them

to every single home in Fort William.'

'We raised £14,000 the first year and that dropped a little to £11,000 last year so we aim to beat that this time.'

'We need to raise as much money as we can to help pay for clinical trials.'

Last April's event saw more than 300 people complete the route from the BA Club up through Inverlochy and back, with local youngster Craig MacLean repeating his win from 2011.

The day was also marked by a poignant balloon release in memory of loved ones claimed by cancer.

Anyone wishing to take part or become a sponsor in Run Together 2013 can register at [www.lochabertogether.co.uk](http://www.lochabertogether.co.uk) or at the Cancer Research UK shop in High Street.



## Fergie's Folk

with Fergie MacDonald

### Ronald MacDonald (Private)

### Lovat Scouts - Moidart

THE LOVAT Scouts Territorial Drill Hall in Acharacle, now referred to as the Shielbridge Hall, was the scene of extensive military mobilisation during the summer of 1914 ahead of the declaration of war on Germany.

On the evening of August 4, hundreds of people gathered on the new bridge over the River Shiel to witness a blazing red sunset.

The older people had never seen anything like it - and predicted a period of bloodshed to follow on a scale unimaginable. They got it right.

Standing orders were posted up in the hall that evening so that every soldier knew exactly what to do as soon as the call to arms came.

They didn't have to wait long: at midnight the Lovat Scouts were mobilised.

My father John MacDonald was detailed to contact Ronald MacDonald, affectionately known locally as 'Rancan', who stayed at Kinlochmoidart.

The task meant a five-mile walk on a mountain track, collect Rancan and bring him back to the hall.

Although Rancan was wide awake, uncharacteristically he refused point blank to get out of bed. Having exhausted all his verbal persuasive powers, my father had to physically pull Rancan out - a circumstance he talked to me many times about during his life.

After a year of manoeuvres near Hunstanton on The Wash and thinking that they were heading for France and the western front, the scouts suddenly found themselves in Devonport boarding the troopship *Andania*. They knew then it was destination Dardanelles.

After sailing through the Mediterranean, the *Andania* finally anchored near Mudros Harbour looking over towards Gallipoli.

By cover of night in late September 1915, the Lovat Scouts landed at Suvla Bay and pushed inland to take up positions in the reserve trenches.

On the night of October 6/7, the scouts moved into forward positions in the frontline trenches, in a sector where the Turkish front line trenches were between 200 and 300 yards away.

The front line trenches in Gallipoli were sectioned into bays, the logic being that if a shell burst in the trench, chances were that casualties would be confined to one bay because shrapnel would be prevented from causing havoc further along the trench. The trench was usually around eight feet deep with a fire step four feet from the top. Each bay had four soldiers in full battle order.

At night the sentry on guard in each bay had to stand up on the fire step with his head and chest above the parapet. This was the situation in every bay all along the line in case of an enemy frontal night attack.

Every bay had a name. This bay in question was called Shiel Cottage. There were five boys from Moidart in this bay. They were Sergeant John Grant of Dalilea - who was changing the guard at the time- Corporal Donald MacDonald from Moss, Private Rancan MacDonald of Kinlochmoidart, my father Private John MacDonald from Mingarry and Private Donald MacLean from Moss.

On a very cold night with frost and snow in mid October, my father was on guard from midnight until he was relieved at 2am. It was then the turn of Rancan to climb on to the fire step and take up sentry duty.

Without going into details in this family newspaper, after only seconds in this most dangerous position Rancan fell back into the trench, killed instantly by a sniper's round through his neck.

This tragic story was related to me on countless occasions. I don't think my father ever came to terms with it.

He always asked the question, why did it take over one hour to get Rancan out of his bed on that August night?

As I write this article, I am holding in my left hand a copper plaque issued by the war office to families who had a son killed in action during World War I. It reads:

'Ronald MacDonald who died for freedom and honour.'

Think about it. Gallipoli and the Dardanelles! Read about this scandalous campaign and the idiots who dreamed it up. Two hundred and fifty casualties. For what?



The Lovat Scouts pictured at their camp at Beaufort Castle, Nairn, before they headed off to war. John MacDonald is pictured left in the front row, Donald MacDonald second left front row, Ronald 'Rancan' MacDonald, right front row, John Grant, centre back row and Donald MacLean, right middle row.

### MSP slams 'environmental extremism'

A WEST Highlands MSP has claimed 'environmental extremism' is damaging informed debate on fish farm applications.

Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch representative Dave Thompson said outspoken aquaculture opponents could 'detract from genuine objections from local communities' and restrict the industry's growth.

He said: 'While it is important to recognise genuine environmental and local concerns, it is regrettable that advocates of extreme positions can hold up the planning process.'



## Gaelic singer is Oscar nominee

NORTH Uist Gaelic singer Julie Fowlis has won more plaudits after being nominated for a best song Oscar.

Highlands and Islands MSP Rob Gibson has lodged a motion in parliament congratulating the Hebridean star and praising her contribution to promoting Scotland's native language.

The nomination, said Mr Gibson, was 'a great achievement'.

He added: 'She is a fantastic ambassador for Gaelic music and Scots music in general, putting it on the world map.'

'This latest advancement seems a world away from the Féis Rois offices in Dingwall where she worked so effectively.'

'Julie should be proud of her efforts to raise the profile of Scots song around the world. This nomination is a reflection of her hard work and talent for writing beautiful songs.'

Fowlis' song *Touch the Sky*, which features on the soundtrack of the Disney Pixar film *Brave*, is on a long-list of seven at the awards ceremony to be held in Los Angeles on February 24.

Katie Perry, Jessie J, actress Scarlett Johansson and the big screen version of the musical *Les Misérables* are also in the running.

Right: Julie Fowlis is in the running for an Oscar.

Photograph by Deborah Coleman.

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## Morvern Lines

IN RESPONSE to many enquiries, here is a further selection of Morvern place names and their meaning.

Leac na Saighe (Black Glen) – rock or flag stone of the arrows. There was a battle fought here in 1596 between the Macleans of Ardnamurchan, the Macleans of Duart and Morvern and the Camerons of Lochiel.

Angus Mor, the leader of the Macleans, was killed when an archer called MacLachlan in the employment of Cameron of Lochiel, shot him in the face with an arrow.

Angus Mor's body was carried down Glen Laudale to Laudale House from where it was taken by boat to Lochaline for burial at Kiel.

Ariens – often explained as 'Angus's shieling' but the Rev Norman Macleod, minister of Morvern from 1775 to 1824 and a fluent Gaelic speaker well versed in the local dialect of the day, gives - the shieling of good bedding for cattle.

Steall an Eigg (Kingairloch) – the place of the little sputtering waterfalls - now lost in the construction of a recent hydroelectric scheme.

The name described perfectly a series of small cascades descending from the outfall of Loch Uisge into the Coimich River.

Glen Galmadale (Kingairloch) – Galma's Dale or Glen, from a personal name.

Airigh Shamhraida – the summer shieling - between the mouth of Loch a' Choire and Glenslava.

Once the mansion house of the Macleans of Kingairloch, which they occupied during the winter months. The reason for this was that their main residence at the head of Loch a' Choire, unlike Airigh Shamhraida, was situated in a frost hollow and therefore did not get the sun throughout the year. An interesting and unusual double play on the meaning.

Achnaha – the field of the kiln. Achabeg – the little field.

Carna – the rocky island. Baile Geamhradh (Barr, Loch Taecuis) – the summer village or settlement.

Coire Borradail and Coire Lundie (between Fiunary and Killundie) contains the personal names Borradail and Lundie who, according to tradition were two Norse leaders who were killed in these corries in a battle in the 12th century against Somerled, the progenitor of the MacDonald dynasty. However, Lundie can sometimes mean a marsh or wet place.

Salachan (west of Fiunary) – the place of the willows. Tom na Croiche (near Savary) the hanging knoll where the MacDonalds of Ardornish disposed of their victims. Savary – wood.

sorrel shieling. Meall a' Chaise (Glen Laudale) – an isolated knoll standing at the head of a glen – very appropriate in this instance.

Beinn Mheadhoin (Kingairloch) – the middle hill. Leac na Fidhle (a steep sided burn forming the boundary between the parishes of Morvern and Ardour and the Glensanda and Ardornish estate march) - the rock or flagstone of the fiddler. Here, according to local history, a fiddler was found dead after a winter storm.

Tom na Luinge (head of Loch Teacuis) – the knoll of watching (for ships) usually on sea lochs, in this case Loch Sunart.

Druim na Sgalag (Rahoy) – the servant's ridge; its history has been lost. Torr nam Broc (Loch Teacuis) – the knoll of the badgers.

Poll Achadh Luachrach (Barr, Loch Teacuis) – the muddy field of the rushes. The word Luachrach comes from Gaelic and Irish meaning splendour or brightness and from the Latin lucerna meaning a lamp.

In the old days lamp wicks were made of the pith of rushes soaked in melted fish oil and goose fat and left to dry.

Eas Stangadail (Barr) – Stangadail's waterfall. It is recorded in local folklore that Stangadail took part in the battle with Somerled but, unlike Borradail and Lundie, managed to escape.

On horseback Stangadail made his way to Loch Teacuis where his longship lay on the beach. He forced his horse to leap across the Barr River just above a waterfall but the distance was too great.

The beast shied and only its forelegs touched the opposite bank with the result that both he and the animal were swept away and drowned in the pool below. On a clear day, when the water is very low, the marks of the horse's hooves are said to be seen on the rocks where it struck the riverbank.

An interesting early record of the incident has come to light through Edward Lluyd, second keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, who, between 1697 and 1701 made a grand tour of the Celtic speaking countries gathering important Gaelic documents.

In his travels Lluyd met the Rev John Beaton (c1640-1715), Episcopalian minister of Killinian, Mull, and the last member of that famous medical family whose ancestors were physicians to the Lords of the Isles.

Beaton showed Lluyd a 14th century manuscript containing the following: 'The mark of the two hooves of the horse of Stangadel, the great King of the Norsemen, is on a rock in the waterfall of Stangadel, in Morvern, since the time when he fought with Samhairle Mac Gille Brighde Mac Gille Domhain.'

Iain Thorner



The ruined settlement at Ariens: the name could mean either 'Angus's shieling' or 'the shieling of good bedding for cattle'.



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# Skye project's make or break search for funds



Waiting game: CDI director Susan Walker. 20\_f0susana01

A SOUTH Skye community is facing a make or break few weeks as they seek core funding for a local project.

Camuscross and Duisdale Initiative (CDI) hopes to build a £1.8 million community hub on Camuscross common grazings above the road to Broadford.

The hub – if it goes ahead – will become the centre of economic and social life in the area.

Principle features in the development include a gathering space, shop, café, small office and toilets.

Highland Council granted the project planning permission in

By STEPHEN NORRIS  
[snorris@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:snorris@obantimes.co.uk)

October. CDI director Susan Walker told *The Oban Times* work was underway on funding bids – with Big Lottery cash the key.

She said: 'We have a big job over the next few weeks – we need to get our application in to the Big Lottery towards the end of January. We expect to hear within four months.'

'After that, if we are successful, we will have other applications to go on.'

Ms Walker stressed if the funding application was rejected it could mean the end of the road.

She said: 'If we don't get the Big Lottery funding then I don't see how we can take it any further.'

'But if we do get it then we will be in a much stronger position to apply to other funders. It's very much a waiting game.'

Should grant support come through it would be a second major boost for Sleat after a new village planned for Kilbeg received £3 million Scottish Government funding last week.

Finance secretary John Swin-

ney announced the cash for the 93-home settlement under a £50 million Scotland-wide house-building programme.

The project is being taken forward jointly by Gaelic college Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and local landowner, the Armadale-based Clan Donald Trust.

New college buildings for research and teaching, a conference facility, hotel accommodation and sports facilities are also planned.

Local MSP Dave Thompson said it was 'great news' for Sleat and would boost both Gaelic and the local economy.

## Thieves snatch alcohol from Kinlochleven bar

A KINLOCHLEVEN bar was victim of a break in theft on Saturday evening, with a quantity of alcohol stolen.

The downstairs restaurant in the Highland Getaway on Leven Road was broken into and a number of bottles taken sometime between 9pm and 11.15am. The upstairs bar was open during the incident.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Glencoe Police on 01855 812100 or to call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

## Five escape serious injury after car slips down embankment

FIVE PEOPLE escaped with minor injuries after the car they were travelling in slid 100 feet down an embankment and ended up in Loch Ness on Monday morning.

The incident occurred on the A82 between Drumnadrochit and Invermoriston.

Emergency services attended the scene and took the casualties to Raigmore Hospital for treatment.

## Chain saw and tool box stolen

A CHAIN saw and a tool box have been stolen from a shed in Cuilcheanna near Onich.

The theft occurred sometime between Tuesday December 18 and Christmas Eve.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Fort William Police on 01397 702361.

## Lochaber Historical Society welcomes back land agent

THE FIRST meeting of Lochaber Historical Society in the New Year sees the return of retired local land agent Richard Sidwick as guest speaker.

Mr Sidwick will present the results of his investigations into local estate history under the title 'Land Ownership in Lochaber II'.

Society chairman Chris Robinson said: 'Richard has a working lifetime's knowledge of Lochaber's estates and has gathered so much of interest that this is the second in what could be a series of talks covering the history of the land and its ownership in Lochaber.'

'This is an opportunity not to be missed with much new information and insight.'

All are welcome to the meeting in the Ben Nevis Hotel on Thursday, January 10 at 8pm.

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## Sailings cancelled as car falls off Corran Ferry slipway



CORRAN Ferry sailings were cancelled on Saturday morning – to allow a tourist's car to be retrieved from Loch Linnhe.

A couple visiting Lochaber from England stopped their BMW on the ferry slipway at around 9.30pm on Friday night and got out the car, but seemingly forgot to apply the handbrake.

Police said most of the couple's belongings, including clothes and a mobile phone, were in the car when it went into the water.

Chisholm's Recovery Specialists, with the help of a specially trained dive team and ferry workers, located the car lying on the loch bed on Saturday morning.

The operation to retrieve the vehicle took a number of hours, with divers having to smash the rear windows to allow a winch to take hold of the car.

The ferry started sailing again at around 11.30am but the car was not lifted out of the water until 3pm, by which time a crowd of interested locals had gathered to watch the unusual recovery mission.

Above left: The sodden BMW is lifted from the waters of Loch Linnhe on Saturday afternoon

Left: The couple lost many personal belongings as well as the car, but were unharmed in the incident.



## Floodwater partially closes A82 through Fort

THE A82 through Fort William was partially closed by floodwater for a short time on Monday morning.

Torrential overnight rain combined with snowmelt saw the road badly affected by flooding in several places and reduced to a single lane at Claggan, where the water was

almost two feet deep at one stage. By 11am the situation had eased and the road was passable in both directions with care.

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## Lightning strike power cut blacks out 21,000 homes for two hours

BY STEPHEN NORRIS  
[snorris@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:snorris@obantimes.co.uk)

Broadford. In Broadford Co-op on Monday morning people reported hearing a 'bang' just before power was lost.

The power cut disrupted festivities across the affected area in the run up to Hogmanay but in typical Highland fashion people made light of adversity.

At Plockton, revellers didn't let a power cut spoil their night out, according to Plockton Community Council chairman Charlie MacRae.

'There were big crowds in the pubs, but in the Plockton Inn they carried

on with candles,' he told *The Oban Times*. 'The Incredible String Band were playing but they just carried on as well.'

Spokesperson Marie Clelton told *The Oban Times*: 'It caused us one or two problems because all the tills work through computers.'

'We had to shut the bars down because there were no lights and it was too dangerous. These things happen I suppose. The whole town was out.'

SSE told *The Oban Times* the main transmission line carried 132,000 volts from Fort Augustus to the Outer Isles.

A spokesperson said: 'This particular strike happened on Skye.

Across in Portree, the Royal Hotel was doing a roaring trade when the lights went out.

Spokesperson Marie Clelton told *The Oban Times*: 'It caused us one or two problems because all the tills work through computers.'

'The damage affected 21,000 customers when lightning struck the main transmission line from the mainland.'

'Supply went off just after 10pm but we were able to reroute it to get all customers back on within a couple of hours.'

'We would like to thank customers for their patience last night while we addressed the problem.'

Engineers were completing repairs on Monday, the company said.

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## Oban High School pupils show talents at pensioners' tea

EIGHTY members of the senior community attended Oban High School for the ninth annual Pensioners' Treat.

The town's older residents were treated to a morning of music, home baking, tea and coffee.

Entertainment was provided by pupils from the music department with choirs, wind orchestra, string group and soloists all taking part.

Morven McKerrell, head of the music department, said: 'This is an opportunity for the younger people and older people to come together.'

'It has been really well attended over the years it is just a nice thing to do – for the youngsters especially.'

Refreshments were provided by the students from the food technology department with third year pupils carrying out the service.

One resident who attended said: 'The young musicians performing were excellent and equally impressive were the youngsters from the food technology department who fed us.'



OHS Pipe Band entertained the audience at the Pensioners' Treat.

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## Criticism of Mull centre's telecare system

**Claims from families that elderly residents are 'frightened' by callouts**

ELDERLY people are being left frightened in the middle of the night by treatment from telecare staff at the progressive care centre on the Isle of Mull, according to some families.

Recent calls for the residential area of the facility, Bowman Court, to be taken over and run as a care home follows concerns over the way residents are being dealt with.

One woman told *The Oban Times* her 87-year-old relative was left scared after two Carr Gorm workers, responding to her alarm, entered her room in the middle of the night and made physical contact without introducing themselves.

She said: 'At 3am she found this both frightening and intimidating and asked them to leave her room. The carer on duty was

not even told of her call for help as she was in the hospital side of the building.'

Heather Becket said her father was due to move into the facility after suffering a stroke, which left him requiring 24-hour care.

She claims she was initially told her mother could move in but would have to move out if her father passed away – a statement which has since been reversed.

The family have spent £3,000 carpeting and furnishing the flat as well as other preparations. She said: 'We are on the brink of our father being transferred.'

'I am still unable to ascertain a price for the meals, a contact number for the staff on duty or an answer as to what the facility is registered as because at present it appears to be a block of very nice flats.'

Lesley McInnes, chief executive of West Highland Housing Association, which runs Bowman Court said: 'The flats are based on individual tenancies therefore it is normal for people to furnish these themselves – for most people this is preferable.'

'When people move in they are provided with a secure tenancy, if it is a couple that move in they will be offered a joint tenancy. In the majority of cases the joint tenant may require the level of care offered by the facility.'

Cleland Sneddon, executive director of community services for Argyll and Bute Council, added: 'It is not practical for staff who provide an overnight service to be introduced to everyone who uses telecare in advance of a first visit given the number of service users who receive the service.'

CALLS for Colonsay to opt for a community buyout of the island have come from one tenant at a recent meeting about the process.

Scott Weatherston of Colonsay Community Development Company (CCDC) made the comments at a recent Community Land Scotland (CLS) Seminar held at the Corran Halls in Oban.

Mr Weatherstone stressed it was his personal opinion – and not one held by other

members of CCDC – he said: 'I'm interested in looking at a total buyout of Colonsay. I have a lot of friends on Eigg and have seen the way the island has been turned around.'

Adding that the people of Colonsay should decide the future, Mr Weatherstone said: 'After all the encouragement we received at the conference today, I think we should consider the pros and cons of all the options for Colonsay: the status quo, partial community

purchase and full community purchase.'

Brian Donald Macneill, the local development officer for Colonsay said he was in favour of land acquisition, to be used for creating homes and businesses, rather than a total buyout.

Alan Piper, a director of CCDC added: 'We're looking at issues of housing, crofts and businesses, we can't respond to this need without a land parcel.'

Lorne MacLeod of CLS Stornoway

Uibhist told *The Oban Times* there are a number of groups along west coast currently in the early stages of looking at community buyouts.

He said: 'We're trying to encourage people by giving examples at this event. I'm amazed at the interest that has been generated.'

'There are a lot of groups in Argyll that are looking at community buyouts – there is a lot of opportunities for it in this area.'

## Call for Isle of Colonsay buyout heard at seminar

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### Council help for small businesses

A NEW programme to help small businesses win public sector contracts has been launched by Argyll and Bute Council.

The Supplier Development Programme (SDP) aims to assist small to medium sized local businesses improve their performance in winning contracts with public sector organisations by providing information, news and events.

All businesses based in Argyll can access the support for free by registering their business details at [www.sdpscotland.co.uk](http://www.sdpscotland.co.uk).

SDP will also host a range of free events and training to help members compete for tenders. Details of the events programme being created for Argyll and Bute will be available in January 2013.

## Charity uses anniversary to encourage youngsters



Pupils from Oban High School are joined by speakers and representatives of the Imani Development Group. 15\_151imani01

AN INTERNATIONAL development group that has a base in Oban is celebrating its 30th anniversary – and encouraging Oban's youth to get involved in overseas aid.

Imani Development Group aims to work with and advise governments, companies and charities on policies and strategies to reduce poverty worldwide.

In Oban, as the group celebrated its landmark year last Friday, pupils from Rockfield Primary School and Oban High School heard from local charity workers, who used Imani's principles in their work.

Neil Matheson, representing Friends of Pabane; John MacDonald, representing Tear Fund; Catherine Brown of Mercy Ships; and Ken MacDonald, who formed his own charity, Vision Action, spoke to the pupils about their overseas charitable work.

The talks, held in Oban's CalMac building, also gave

the pupils the chance to see the Scotland v Poverty Exhibition run by the Network of International Development Organisations in Scotland (NIDOS), of which Imani is a member.

Roy Clunie, of the Imani Development Group in Oban, said: 'The pupils will go back to school after hearing these talks and try to work up projects over the next three years.'

'The purpose of this is advocacy. We need to tell young people about overseas aid because the next generation has to have our passion.'

'A lot of young people think, "what can I do about it"? They don't realise they are already doing something by raising money for Children in Need but there are lots of other organisations they could help.'

Other speakers at the anniversary reception included Ken Ross, chairman of the Scottish Malawi Partnership and Richard Hess, chairman of the Imani Development Group.

### Fears for rural services in future budget cuts

A NEW report has warned that rural communities will bear the brunt of government and council cuts.

Rural Services Network chief executive Graham Biggs this week claimed that councils in rural areas will suffer a bigger reduction in their budgets than those in urban areas, which he says paints a 'bleak picture' for the countryside.

Rural Services Network chief executive Graham Biggs said: 'This is a body blow for rural councils already struggling to provide services to countryside communities. 'Even before these reductions, urban areas received about half as much more funding per head than rural areas.'

'This settlement further widens the gap.'

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## Barra and Lochgilphead women on Honours List

JESSIE MacNeil from the Isle of Barra admits she is delighted to receive the British Empire Medal in recognition of her services to the island, but says she shares the honour with the community.

Jessie, 66, was a key figure at Voluntary Action Barra and Vatersay and helped numerous community groups find their feet over a number of years.

While she retired from the role last May, she continues to be active in the community and volunteers as an individual for a number of initiatives.

She said she was completely unaware she had been nominated for the honour and dedicated it to those she has worked with over the years.

She said: 'It's a huge honour that people felt so highly of what I've done they put me forward for the award. My understanding is it is not an easy process, so it's very humbling.'

Lochgilphead woman, Jenny Campbell, has dedicated six decades of her life to supporting her community and helping people through illness. She also has been named on the 2013 Queen's Honours List.

Originally from Campbeltown, the 82 year old has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for her 60 years service to the British Red Cross. The medal is awarded to recognise people's hard work and dedication in serving their communities.

The honour comes two and a half years after Jenny was awarded the Red Cross badge of honour for outstanding service – the highest accolade awarded by the international charity.

Commenting on the latest honour, Jenny told *The Oban Times*: 'I can't believe it.'

'Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would get this.'

Explaining she first got a letter about the honour from the Prime Minister in November, Jenny said: 'It has been hard to keep it a secret. My family knew and my brothers but that was it.'

Showing no signs of slowing down Jenny said: 'Every winter I say I'll give it up but you get going again and away you go.'



Clarsach player Becky Hill is following in the footsteps of some of Scotland's best traditional musicians after securing a place at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. 16\_t01becky02

## Music first for Connel's Becky

A YOUNG clarsach player has become the first Oban High School pupil to take up a place on the prestigious traditional music course at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Becky Hill, from Connel, will study a BA Hons in Scottish traditional music later this year after securing one of only two clarsach places on the course, which started in 1996. Among the musicians on that first course were Rachel Walker and Allan Henderson.

There have also been four Tiree High School pupils on the course, including Iain Smith, who is currently a student there.

As part of the three-year course, Becky will receive tuition from some of the biggest names in traditional music and play at Celtic Connections in 2014.

Becky, who turns 17 years old on Sunday, started playing the clarsach at the age of eight and was tutored by Toni Russell

but she also thanked Morven McKerrell and the Oban High School music department and her cousin, Sileas Sinclair, for helping her with piano and theory.

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland was formerly known as the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (RSAMD).

Becky is a great niece of Connel accordionist Neil Sinclair, who this week laughed off rumours he was retiring. 'I couldn't afford it,' he joked.

# Loch Etive fish farm plan may go to court

'There are other areas that would be better for us but to go through planning to get there would be very difficult.'

OBJECTORS to a proposed 2,500 tonne fish farm on Loch Etive say they are prepared to go to court in a bid to prevent it going ahead.

Argyll and Bute Council's planning department received some 700 comments regarding Dawnfresh's application to build a £2.5million, 14 pen rainbow trout farm at Silean Ruadh ahead of last week's deadline, with the vast majority against the proposal.

Amongst those to express concern over the farm are Jamie McGregor MSP, who has objected on a personal level as part owner and manager of the Anderson fishing syndicate on River Awe, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Royal Yachting Association Scotland (RYAS).

Some letters of support have also been received, but the majority of these are from the Inverness area.

Stretching south east from Airds Point to parallel with the Muckairn Castle jetty, it would be equivalent to the largest available farm for aquaculture in Scotland, including those in open water.

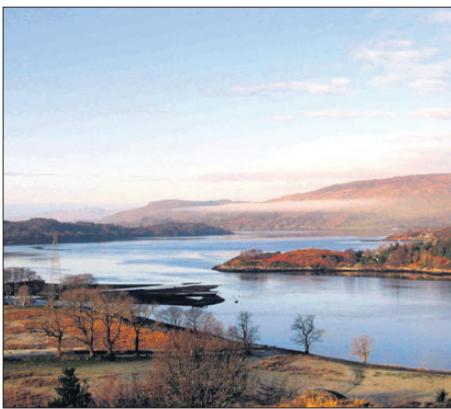
Guy Linley-Adams, the lawyer

representing objectors via the Friends of Loch Etive website,

believes the council's planning department will recommend the application for refusal given the volume of objections and its own management plan for the loch,

which he says prevents such a development as it already recommends the consolidation of two existing fish farms on Etive.

He has warned, however, that the group will go as far as court in a bid to prevent the development going ahead if necessary.



Dawnfresh have applied to build a £2.5million, 14 pen rainbow trout farm on Loch Etive

'If they were to choose the route of granting this application this will go to court, without a shadow of a doubt.'

He said: 'The council already have more than enough on their desk to merit rejecting the application, including their own Loch Etive management plan.'

'It's their own management plan – either it means something or it means nothing. It's a fairly easy choice, frankly. If they were to choose the route of granting this application this will go to court, without a shadow of a doubt.'

While SNH has not objected to the site, it has highlighted potential impact on nesting terns that use the area.

It also stated that Dawnfresh's environmental impact assessment contained a 'poor quality' visual survey, that the location would exacerbate the visual impact and that noise would be a concern.

The RYAS and the West Highland Anchorage and Moorings Association say the site is a hazard to navigation.

Individual objections point to the loss of visual amenity, potential harm to tourism, potential for harm to the local environment caused by escapes, noise and possible impact on the resident spurdog population.

Supporters say the development would be good for the Scottish and local economy.

Gideon Pringle, Dawnfresh's fish farm manager, said he got the impression people had been

'misled' on light and sound from the farm site, but he had not seen SNH's concerns about the noise the site would emit.

He added: 'I certainly hope the planners do recommend the application for approval. From my point of view I don't believe it significantly alters the character of the loch.'

'This is an incremental development of the fish farming already happening on the loch and has been established for a long time.'

On the RYAS suggestion that the site could be moved further into the loch, Mr Pringle said: 'Absolutely, although we're largely governed by legislation and planning guidance.'

'There are other areas that would be better for us but to go through planning to get there would be very difficult.'

## Appin cafe fire causes temporary festive closure

CASTLE Stalker View Cafe will re-open on Valentine's Day after a fire caused the business to close over the festive period.

The fire was contained to the boiler room of the Appin cafe and had burnt itself out by the time staff discovered the damage last Thursday morning and fire appliances from Appin and Oban attended to make the area safe.

Cafe owner Nicola Meekin said: 'We are usually busy over the week between Christmas and New Year, so I am just sorry to all our customers.'

The cafe was due to close as normal on January 4.

## The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

## 20 years ago

**Thursday, December 31, 1992**

### Gigha looks forward to a good New Year

THE RECESSION has hit Gigha but hopes are running high that the new owners will help build up the island's economy during 1993.

Despite concern throughout 1992 over ownership of Gigha, islanders have kept faith and are now looking forward to a bright new year.

Mr Derek Holt, of Holt Leisure Parks, bought Gigha in September after the island was repossessed at the beginning of 1992. Mr Holt's daughter and son-in-law live on the island.

Islanders are looking forward to a bright 1993 with the new owners after a 'disappointing' 1992.

Islander Margaret McSporran said: 'The summer was very disappointing. We think it was with everybody, but the yachts were the worst.'

'In the summer there was only two nights that we managed to get

30 yachts. The yacht trade was very much down.'

'We don't know whether to blame it on the circumstances of the island or the recession – probably a bit of both.'

### Loganair plays Santa Claus

LOGANAIR played Santa Claus last week to make sure a Mull pensioner could spend Christmas on her home island.

Ninety-two-year-old Morag MacColl, Achnamara, Craignure, was airlifted from Mull to the Southern General Hospital in Glasgow on December 12 after suffering an accident which resulted in a broken leg.

Following expert treatment at the hospital, Mrs MacColl, who, until she was airlifted the previous week, had never before been in an aircraft, was flown back to Glenforsa airport on

Mull on Christmas Eve.

She was immediately transferred from the twin-engine Islander to Dunaros hospital, Salen, where she is said to be making excellent progress.

Local carol singers who toured the hospital paid a visit to her room that evening and the following day found Mrs MacColl up and joining other patients for Christmas lunch.

A member of staff said: 'She is a wonderful old lady who is already surprisingly mobile despite her accident. We are all very fond of her.'

### Waterfront discussions

THE CREATOR of Oban's Heritage Wharf centre, Peter Plimley, is set to meet with the town's community council to answer any questions about the waterfront development.

Oban Community Council has invited Mr Plimley to attend a meet-

ing on January 11, 1993. He said: 'It is likely that I will be there.'

He intends answering any queries the community council has about phase one or the prospective phase two of the £6.5 million development.

It is proposed to start work on phase two, which includes a new £3 million hotel and curling rink in the spring.

### Jobless go back to school

ADULTS are prepared to go back to school rather than face Lochaber's growing dole queue, it has been revealed.

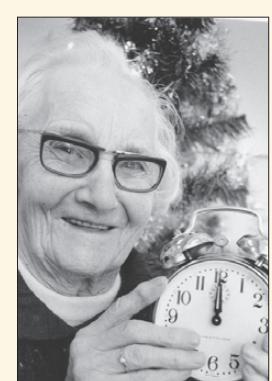
In just two years, the number of adults seeking advice on further education opportunities has nearly doubled.

'In 1990 the number of adults using our careers advice service was 228. This year, the figure is set to reach 400,' said area careers officer, Philip Leckie, who is based in Fort William.

Last week, a report issued by the General Municipal and Boilermakers Union indicated that Lochaber had the fastest growing unemployment level in Scotland. Skye and Oban are experiencing the same problem.



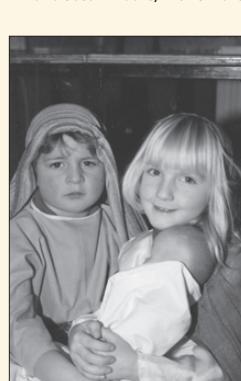
Primary seven pupils at Oban's Park Primary School raised £400 for the people of war-torn Bosnia. They are pictured handing over the cheque to John MacGillivray. t52twentysix



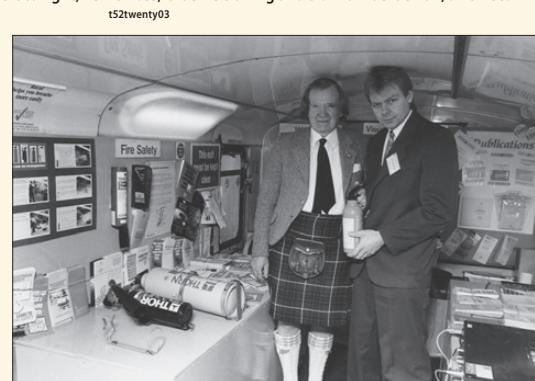
When the bells chime to bring in the New Year, they will also herald the 98th birthday of Miss Christine MacNeill. A resident of north Argyll house, Oban, Miss MacNeill is originally from Salen on Mull. She wishes everyone a happy and prosperous New Year. t52twentysix



Soroba Young Families' Group celebrated its first birthday in the new premises. Cutting the cake are Janice Kay and Susan Moore, with children (left to right) Lewis Ross, Graeme Darling and Donna MacLachlan, all three. t52twentysix



Jonathan Faragher and Carlene Armstrong, both primary one pupils at Dunbeg Primary School, played Mary and Joseph in the school's nativity play. t52twentysix



Mr Robin Banks, councillor for Soroba, is shown some of the equipment on board the 'health and safety' Euro Bus by Alan Morrison, senior environmental health officer for Argyll and Bute. The bus recently visited Oban's North Pier. t52twentysix

## Electric company invests £6m in preparation for storms

THE ELECTRICITY network in Argyll and the west Highlands is in a better position to cope with a repeat of the storms in the region a year ago, according to the company responsible for its maintenance.

Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution (SHEPD) has invested £6m in preparation for the winter months as part of a planned £160 million company-wide investment programme over the next four years.

The latest round of spending brings SHEPD's total investment in 2012 to £30m this year in maintenance and refurbishment of its entire network. In Argyll, a £1.1m investment programme is nearing completion to upgrade the electricity network serving Dunoon and the islands of Bute and Cumbrae and on Islay a £2m programme has been carried out to improve the security of supply to the Rhinns area.

A significant amount of tree cutting has been carried out to reduce the risk of power lines being brought down by trees and branches in high winds with a key focus on the strategic circuits supplying Dunoon, Bute, Jura and Islay.

In addition, £230,000 will be invested in the Kilchoan area of Lochaber, harvesting trees clear of a section of overhead line.

If customers do find themselves without electricity, the emergency contact number for them to call is 0800 300 999.

### Man struck by vehicle in Oban

INJURIES sustained by a man who was struck by a vehicle on Soroba Road, Oban last Friday are not life threatening, say police.

The 59-year-old was struck by the car near to the traffic lights outside Oban High School at 8.44pm and was in Lorn and Islands Hospital overnight.

The road was closed for three hours while police enquiries were carried out.

### Sex offender to appeal decision

A MAN jailed for four years at a court in Oban for a sexual offence has appealed the decision.

Timothy Robson, aged 50, was jailed in August following a sheriff and jury trial, when he was unanimously found guilty of plying a young woman with drink and drugs and photographing himself sexually assaulting her.

Robson is also seeking bail at the High Court of Criminal Appeal in Edinburgh today (Thursday) while his appeal is being prepared.

Robson, who lived at Balinoe Cottage, Kilmore, was reported to police by staff at Tesco in Oban, where Robson went to have his pictures put onto CD.

### Yorkshire man accused of assaulting woman

A YORKSHIRE man, accused of assaulting a woman in Oban, appeared from custody last Thursday at Oban Sheriff Court.

Gareth Duncan, aged 37, denied assaulting the woman by repeatedly punching her on the head on the morning of his appearance in court.

Mr Duncan, who lives at Unit 1, 289 Wheeland Road, Shartston, Wakefield, was bailed and an intermediate diet was set for February 5.

### Man pleads not guilty to alleged Christmas assault

A MAN spent Christmas night in the cells after being accused of seizing a woman by the neck and forcing her to the ground.

Thomas Johnstone, aged 28, from Fyne View Lodge, Lochgilphead, appeared from custody at Oban Sheriff Court last Thursday and pled not guilty to the alleged assault on Christmas Day.

He also denies behaving in a threatening manner by shouting and swearing and repeatedly banging his head on a police vehicle.

Mr Johnstone was granted bail and will next appear on an intermediate diet on February 5.

### Canadian newspaper votes the Isle of Iona as one of the top worldwide destinations

READERS and staff from a Canadian newspaper have selected the Isle of Iona as one of the best places to visit.

The Edmonton Journal, a daily newspaper in Alberta, asked edi-

## Lane closure at Rest and Be Thankful planned

MOTORISTS will face disruption at the Rest and Be Thankful for the next three months with the A83 at the landslide hotspot reduced to a single carriageway.

From today (Thursday), work to mitigate landslide risk will

mean traffic lights in operation continuously until March 22.

### Landslide barrier

The measures are required for Scotland Transerv staff to install a new landslide barrier and debris basin to limit the chances of any future slips clos-

ing the road.

The basin will be installed at the site of August's failure, while the landslide barrier will be installed below the site of November's landslide.

A shallow barrier, in two sections will comprise of flexible

ring net fencing, 3.5metres high and approximately 90 metres in length, in 60 and 30-metre sections.

Some 40m of rock barrier, in two 20m sections is being proposed for the section above that barrier to limit rockfall hit-

ting the carriageway, as it did in June last year.

A spokesman for Scotland Transerv said: 'Motorists should allow extra time for their journeys and pay attention to any advisory signs which will be in place throughout the works.'



Mike and Maureen Drummond at home in Highcliff 16\_101lights02

## Third time lucky for Oban couple's Christmas lights display

A DETERMINED Oban couple have overcome a Christmas curse to brighten up the town over the festive period.

Mike and Maureen Drummond bought £1,000 worth of Christmas lights this year to decorate their garden with a colourful display of reindeer, snowmen and waterfall features – all of which were bought in Oban.

### Extravagant display

But the couple, who run Highcliff Guesthouse, Glencruitten, had previously had their festive display ruined on two occasions.

In 2010, Mike and Maureen planned an extravagant display before they went on a pre-Christmas holiday.

But on their return home, 10 days later, they were greeted by a wave of water from their front door and discovered a pipe had burst in their loft while they were away – destroying their furniture and a vast collection of Christmas lights.

The couple spent the next 10 months in a caravan at Benderloch while the house was repaired and again planned a Christmas lights display for 2011.

But just as Mike had put the finishing touches on his bright idea, some of the most severe storms that west coast has seen in recent times ripped the

display apart and damaged all of the features.

Undeterred, the couple bought more decorations for a display this year, which was up in time for Christmas and will proudly be shown outside their home throughout January.

### Rewarded

Maureen, who also volunteers at the Mary's Meals shop in Oban, said: 'It was horrible getting all those setbacks but I suppose it has been third time lucky for us this year.'

'We do it primarily for the children that walk up and down Glencruitten Road and it makes you feel good when you hear them all shouting "wow" when

they see them.'

'I have seen taxi drivers slowing down as they pass, to let their passengers see them and some cars have reversed back up the road to have a look.'

Asked whether the couple had considered the impact on their electricity bills, Maureen replied: 'We don't know what it will be and I don't care; it's for Christmas.'

Mike and Maureen have been rewarded for their hard work since the flood in 2010 by gaining a four-star gold rating from both VisitScotland and the AA. They also received an AA breakfast award, all since re-opening in September 2011.

Meanwhile, the council spent

£16,000 bill for 'psychometric testing'

ARGYLL and Bute Council spent nearly double as much on consultants last year compared to the year previous – with nearly £335,000 spent over the past three years.

New figures revealed under freedom of information show the local authority spent £118,382.38 on external contractors over the 2011/12 financial year, some £50,240 more than the previous year's spend of £68,141.63.

Of last year's total spent, £67,578.95 can be attributed to the authority's investigation into false allegations that communications manager Jo Smith was 'spying' on council critics.

In July, the council said investigator John Clayton was paid a total of £29,181.88. The new figures show £13,628.95 of that was paid during the 2011/12 financial year, while a further £53,950 went towards Solace Enterprises as part of a review of the council's communications policy. The company is the single largest payee on the consultants list in the past three years.

Solace Enterprises are still working with the authority, but the council has denied they were taken on in reaction to the publicity caused by the false allegations against Ms Smith.

It said: 'Assessment and Development Solutions were also paid £9,750 for training and communication and coaching for managers last year.'

Meanwhile, the council spent



Highcliff has been brightly lit for the festive period – at the third time of asking. 16\_152lights01

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Oban's Polar Express travelled through the town on Christmas Eve, delivering festive cheer in timely fashion. Picture by Dennis Hardley Photography

## Downpour fails to halt festive truckers

OBAN'S very own version of the Polar Express helped raise more than £300 for charity, despite a torrential downpour halfway through its journey.

Arranged by local firm Oban Express, the specially decked out lorry brought an extra helping of festive cheer to the town,

with all funds raised donated to the Oban and Lorn Lions Club.

### Heavy rain

Thankfully, despite having been earlier re-arranged due to bad weather, the heavy rain didn't dilute the Christmas spirit.

Oban Express director, Lor-

aine Parrot, said: 'It was great, regardless of the weather. The rain really did start to rush down at Argyll Square, it was very, very wet but it was a great day.'

'It was so good in fact that we've already got additional plans for next year.'

## Lorn Lines

LORN Archaeological and Historical Society's December meeting was treated to a special interpretation on the Brooch of Lorn.

In a deviation from the usual lecture format, Catherine Gillies arrived in Jacobean costume, and with the replica brooch present she proceeded to trace its journey through 800 years of turbulent history.

This proud MacDougall of Dunollie brooch has appeared and disappeared over the centuries. The central charmstone was torn from Robert the Bruce by a MacDougall in the 1306 rout at Dalrigh near Tyndrum and was later set into an unusual silver turreted brooch.

From the back of the hall a dramatic entry was made by Kenny Lindsay who burst into the room reciting 'The Brus' in broad Scots and introducing himself as the 14th century poet John Barbour.

Knowledgeable on her subject Catherine explored Barbour's version of the battle and the subsequent myths that have propelled down the centuries.

Taken in secrecy from Kerrera during the Scottish Civil War in the 1640's the brooch's whereabouts remained a mystery until its re-emergence in Victorian times to become part of the great Scottish revival and was subsequently returned to the MacDouglas by the Campbells. Mentioned and discussed nationally, coveted at one stage by royalty, this brooch's absence over the centuries all combines to make it one of the great stories of Lorn.

The original brooch was recently on display at the British Museum with two other turreted brooches from Mull and Kintyre.

Former Development officer at Dunollie, Catherine Gillies's extensive knowledge 'of all things Dunollie' is a great asset to have within the local area.

The next speaker will be Clive Bonsall, Professor of Early Prehistory at Edinburgh University. A specialist in the early Hunter Gatherer and Farming Societies, he is no stranger to the Oban area as he took part of the Archaeological surveys in this area during the 1990's. His talk on 'The Obanian problem revisited' will explore the west coast's Mesolithic past.

This meeting on Friday, January 18 begins at 7.30pm and anyone interested is reminded that lectures are now held in St. Columba's Church Hall, behind the Cathedral off Corran Brae, Oban where parking is available.



Oban's Lodge Commercial 180 made a donation of £1,100 to Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease (ABCD) in memory of former member Ian 'Parrot' MacMillan, who died recently.

The money was raised through a fundraising ceilidh at the Lodge with Gunna Sound, organised by Kenny Pearson, far left. Right Worshipful Master of the Lodge, Ian Russell, right, is pictured handing over the cheque to ABCD's Willie Melville.

ABCD members Alfie MacKenzie and Andy Henderson and Mr MacMillan's widow and daughter, Mary and Iona, are also pictured.

A WEBSITE highlighting Oban as a prime tourist destination is one of the most popular in the UK. The oban.org.uk website, run by the Oban and Lorn Tourism Association (OLTA), now attracts more than half a million visitors a year, up on 2011's traffic, with more than two million pages looked at between them.

According to webmaster Duncan Monteith-Hodge, a large proportion of that increase comes from smartphone and tablet computers.

He said: 'The webcams continue to be the most popular pages on the site and are brilliant at showcasing the town.'

Membership of the association runs from January each year and is open to anyone with a business interest in tourism in Oban and Lorn.

Your can send your news from Lorn direct to epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

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Lochaber Rugby Club president Alistair MacKinnon accepted the award for most active club in promotion of sport in the community. 20\_f01awards06

## Lochaber's sports stars honoured

**REPORT BY**  
**RICHARD HADDOCK**  
rhaddock@obantimes.co.uk

SOME OF Lochaber's finest sporting performances from 2012 were remembered and honoured at a ceremony on Saturday night.

Lochaber Sports Association's second annual awards evening saw an audience of members from various sports groups from pack out Lochaber Rugby Club in Banavie.

### Individual

Hill runner Finlay Wild was named individual of the year, while Lochaber Camanachd took home the trophy for team of the year.

LSA's Stewart Sandison

handed out the awards, and said Lochaber athletes had produced some great achievements in 2012.

He said: 'If there's a sport out there, people in Lochaber will play it, and some of them manage to do it to fantastic levels.'

Wild, of Fort William, was given the night's main award after winning the Ben Nevis Race in September in heavy rain and wind ahead of an international field of 450 runners.

It was Wild's third Ben Nevis win in a row as his domination of the event continued.

Lochaber Camanachd enjoyed a superb 2012 season, which saw them winning promotion to the Orion Group Premiership without losing a single league game.

The Spean Bridge side also won the Balliemore Cup and reached the final of the MacTavish Cup, playing exciting, attacking shinty along the way.

### Celebrate

Lochaber Artistic Roller Skating Club, which marked its 25th anniversary this year, were given another reason to celebrate after club stalwart Freida Alexander was named coach of the year.

Young sailor Ruairidh Mills of Glencoe Boat Club came out first ahead of some tough competition to take the Youth Endeavour Award. Mills competes for both Scotland and Great Britain and said he was 'delighted' with the award.

Laura Barbour of Lochaber Athletic Club was named as the top individual working behind

the scenes, and Ruairidh MacKenzie, Michael Lawrie, Donnie Campbell, Lewis Smith and Fraser MacKenzie were announced as winners of the video competition for their short film 'Four Seasons'.

Lochaber Rugby Club was given a shield for the work they have done to advance sport across the area, while Lochaber High School was named as the school or centre most active in promoting sport.

### Physiologist

Before the gongs were handed out former Lochaber Rugby player Dr Barry Fudge, who was part of Mo Farrar's Olympic team, gave a talk about how his work as a physiologist helped Farrar and other Olympians prepare for this year's Games.

### Dr Barry Fudge

Dr Barry Fudge was given a ceremonial quach after his well received talk on the night.

20\_f01awards02



Lochaber Camanachd were named team of the year after winning the Balliemore Cup and promotion to shinty's premiership. 20\_f01awards03



Ben Nevis Race king Finlay Wild was named athlete of the year after winning the race for the third year on the trot in 2012

20\_f01awards01



Glencoe Boat Club youngster Ruairidh Mills took home the Youth Endeavour Award after a year of sailing success. 20\_f01awards04



Lochaber Artistic Roller Skating Club's Hazel Currie (left) and Marjorie Currie (right) with coach of the year Freida Alexander. 20\_f01awards05



Glencoe Boat Club youngster Ruairidh Mills took home the Youth Endeavour Award after a year of sailing success. 20\_f01awards04



Riders in the final West Highland Wheelers race of 2012 set off at Nevis Range. 20\_f01wheelers01

## Liam wins last race of the year

THE FINAL West Highland Wheelers winter league race of the year saw Liam Moynihan prove too strong for the rest of the field.

Despite some intense squally showers, around 37 riders set off from Nevis Range car park using the motocross-style 50 minutes plus a lap format.

Jean Barnes and James Shirley took second and third place respectively, finishing within two minutes of Moynihan.

There was a similar neck and

### CYCLING

neck tussle for the first female rider with the lead changing hands frequently between Fiona Beattie and Hannah Barnes.

Only one second split the two of them with Beattie taking the win on the line.

The first junior home was Stephen Dent, whose time was good enough for 10th place overall. His brother Alex was the second fastest junior rider.

W.H.W.'s Andy Rodgers said: 'Many thanks to Steve Bradley for all of his help, to Ruari Watt

of FCS and to Fraser Coupland for his heated finish shed.'

'Special mention goes to the Strathdee family from Edinburgh who all competed on cyclo cross bikes with father Andy coming home in a very respectable eighth place.'

The first race of 2013 will be the joint NACC Barcaldine duathlon starting from Sutherland's Grove on Sunday January 13.

### FOOTBALL

Conlon said defender Farquhar MacRae is expected to return to training this week and could play at the weekend.

In form Clach scored twice in the first half, with former Fort player Scott Graham grabbing the second just before the break.

After the interval Clach went down to 10 men when Bruce Milne was red carded for pushing Michael Gillespie, but it didn't prevent them from adding two more goals before full time.

Former Fort keeper John Campbell was in outstanding form between the sticks for Clach, denying Fort on a number of occasions.

Conlon told The Oban Times he felt Fort would be able to add to their tally of two points if he had a more settled squad.

He said: 'We feel we can get results if we can get our best 11, or 13 or 14, available every week.'

'We've got a good squad and if everyone's available we're capable of doing it. We should be in a stronger position this weekend.'

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