

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Established 1861 No 7979

Thursday, January 28, 2010

www.obantimes.co.uk

75 pence

Island crofters in community buyout

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Council to find £8million of savings

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Outrage at red deer bounty hunters

Pages 8 and 9

Mull's ice drivers condemned

'IDIOTS' driving around a frozen loch on Mull have been condemned by islanders.

But the 'ice ballet' drivers believe they were only having a bit of fun and filmed their cars on Mishnish Loch, south west of Tobermory, for an internet social site.

One islander said: 'These boys are idiots, their behaviour is reckless.'

Another added: 'They could easily have gone through the ice.'

'The roads are full of potholes but they are still safer to drive on than the Mishnish Lochs.'

Sergeant Angela MacDonald of Tobermory police said: 'We are aware of the situation and our enquiries are ongoing to trace those involved.'

Police seek help with Oban assault

POLICE are seeking witnesses to an assault in the MacDougall Court area of Dunollie, which occurred at 8.30pm last Thursday.

A man was forced to the ground and had a sum of money and a mobile phone stolen from him.

Police suspect a 37-year-old man and are keen to speak to anyone who may have seen anyone acting suspiciously in the area at that time.

Oban Police Inspector Julie Edward said: 'Our officers attended and found the man to be extremely shaken. We would encourage anyone who may have information about this incident to contact DC Andy MacDougall at Oban Police Station.'



More than 1,000 Siberian huskies, Alaskan malamutes and Canadian Eskimo dogs enjoyed the opportunity to race on snow at the weekend

Sled dogs revel in Highland's heavy snow

Annual sled event held on snow for first time in 15 years

HEAVY snowfalls in the Cairngorms were warmly welcomed by sled dog racers who came to the Highlands last weekend and raced over a snow-covered course for the first time since the mid 1990s.

Teams of Siberian huskies, Alaskan malamutes and

Canadian Eskimo dogs raced round a four-mile track at Loch Morlich, near Aviemore, using sledges instead of the usual wheeled rigs, with the weekend event attracting some 3,000 spectators

Siberian Husky Club of Great Britain spokeswoman

Judy Wakker said the annual programme of events and races which cover six days, this year attracted more than 1,000 dogs and 200 of their handlers from throughout the UK and Europe, and was an 'amazing opportunity' for enthusiastic mushers.

'This is the first time we

have run the sleds on snow for 15 years,' she said.

'To get the opportunity to run sled dogs on snow in Scotland is amazing.'

'Normally you have to go to the Alps in France and Germany to get the opportunity to run on snow. The atmosphere is

amazing, it's buzzing,' she added.

One of the event organisers, Sarah Robinson from Watford, described the race as 'one of the most challenging and prestigious of the Siberian Husky Club's series of rallies.'

Community development posts to create 40 rural jobs

AROUND 40 full and part-time jobs are to be created across the Highlands and islands to help some of the area's most fragile communities.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise, in partnership with local authorities and other public agencies, is

to employ community development workers to help build community plans for 40 fragile rural areas.

Jura and Coll in Argyll, Rum and Knoydart, in the Highlands and Barra, Vatersay and Callanish on the Western Isles are among the first to benefit.

John Watt, HIE director for strengthening communities, explained: 'Evaluations of previous LEADER and Initiative at the Edge regeneration schemes shows that groups which employed local officer support generated significantly greater benefits.'

'This new programme will build on this success and add to it.'

'Communities themselves will control and drive their development, with HIE on hand to provide the support they need.'

The aim is for communities to have sustainable

development plans and projects that will benefit them.

HIE is to spend £1.5 million over the next three years on the programme, with £1 million from the European Union's LEADER programme and local authority sources.

Tough budget sees £8m in real cuts for Argyll and Bute Council



Council leader Dick Walsh

CUTTING the number of secondary school teaching posts, grants to charities and rural bus services have been put forward to help Argyll and Bute balance its books.

A draft budget for 2010/11 proposes £8 million savings, though council tax will remain frozen for another year.

Council leader Councillor Dick Walsh stressed, at a briefing on the proposals, no final decisions about services and savings had been taken. The final budget will be set at a full council

meeting on February 11. He also warned this would be the first of a series of tough budgets, as the council faces a tightening of funding in the coming years.

'We have a finite allocation of money and we have got to make it go as far as we can,' he said. 'We fully anticipate that in the next two years the situation for local government will be fairly serious. This is year one in a three-year process and it is a damage limitation exercise.'

Chief executive Sally Loudon said making efficiencies and

savings allowed resources to be diverted to essential services: 'It's about freeing up money to put where we know there are needs. A significant amount more is going into social work.'

However, the tight budget settlement does not take account of an expected pay deal for local government employees. Further savings may have to be found if unions and the national local authority body, COSLA, agree even a small rise.

Full budget details on page 7



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Abair briseadh dùil!
Dè sèorsa gnìomhachas nach urrainn obrachadh ach le duaisean a bharrachd air an t-àrtaist àbhaisteach dhan luchd-obrach? Carson nach tèid aig leithid Banca Rìoghail na h-Alba air an slioghe fhèin a dhèanamh agus diultadh tilleadh chun nan cleachdaidhean millteach a thug cùisean gu leithid a dh'ire roimhe? Carson nach gabh riaghlaidh smachd mu choinneimh an airgid phoblach a chaidh an sàs gus leithid a' Bhanca Rìoghail a ghlèidheadh?

'S e aon fhreagairt air na ceistean sin gum bheil luchd-obrach nam bancaichean an sàs ann a bhith a' reic sheirbheisean agus a' faotainn duaisean a bharrachd na thèid aca air amasan sònraichte a chòilionadh. Thug mi fhìn bliadhnaichean ann an saoghal reic agus tha mi dubh an aghaidh leithid seo a chleachdadh, is chan fhaca mi riamh dad a dh'atharraich m'inntinn. Tha fada bharrachd creideis aig duine sam bith a bhith a' ceannach bho neach a tha dol a thilleadh a chòmhradh riut, agus gu mì-fhortanach anns an t-saoghal a th' againn ann am bancaireachd, agus ann an iomadach seirbheis eile an diugh, chan eil leithid de dhìlseachd aca dha luchd-ceannach.

Tha fhios againn nach gabh airgead doannan gluasad a aon sporan gu fear eile, ach aig àm far am bheil uimhir de chudrom air maoin phoblach, 's iomadh seirbheis phoblach a gheibheadh faothachadh a' fìù 's 5 billeanan not!

Banking bonus billions may be alliterative music for senior bankers, but the wider community feel disgust and a sense of betrayal. Taxpayers will carry the cost burden of the enormous sums used to bail out the banks for years, but the discredited bonus culture is back in operation after a few months.

It is difficult to understand how such practice can be justified and particularly how such massive public investment can carry so little weight in influencing policy. Sadly there is little commitment to real customer loyalty in banking or in many other sectors now, and it is not surprising that so many people have lost confidence in their services.

Even five billion pounds would considerably ease public services being seriously squeezed at a time of extreme budgetary pressure.

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Climber killed in Ben Lui summit fall

Extragalactic astrophysics researcher named after death fall on Tyndrum mountain

POLICE have named a scientist from Edinburgh who was killed while climbing on Ben Lui, near Tyndrum as 27-year-old Dr Timothy Garn, a researcher in extragalactic astrophysics at the Royal Observatory of Edinburgh.

Girlfriend raised alarm
Dr Garn, who lived in Edinburgh, but was brought up in Surrey, fell more than 300ft near the summit while climbing with his girlfriend. She had managed to alert the emergency services by mobile phone.

The incident occurred around 4pm on Sunday, January 17, but details of the incident were not released until Friday, January 22.

In weather conditions described as 'atrocious', Killin Mountain Rescue Team rescued Dr Garn's partner from the summit, and found Dr Garn lying in a corrie. He had suffered serious head injuries and was thought to have also suffered hypothermia. De-

spite strenuous efforts to save his life, Dr Garn was later pronounced dead at Stirling Royal Infirmary.

Chief Inspector Kevin Findlater of Central Scotland Police, who co-ordinated the rescue, praised the efforts of Killin Mountain Rescue Team in what he described as 'a very tough incident'. The rescue team had been forced to operate in 'terrible weather conditions' he said.

Dr Garn had joined Edinburgh University's Institute for Astronomy just over a year ago.

In a statement, the Royal Observatory said: 'He was a very talented young astrophysicist whose research career was blossoming quickly and whose future was extremely bright.'

'An enthusiastic and very likeable young man, he lived life to the full and enriched the lives of those around him. He will be sorely missed, as a colleague and a friend.'

Drunk Islay pensioner loses licence and is ordered to pay compensation after crash

AN ISLAY pensioner, and first time offender, lost his driving licence at Campbeltown Sheriff Court last Wednesday after he crashed into a stationary vehicle while more than twice the drink driving limit.

Allan McDougall, aged 76, of Arivochallum, The Lotts, Port Ellen, admitted having 85 mg of alcohol in 100 ml of breath at Antrim View, Port Ellen on December 27; the legal limit is 35.

Defence agent John Campbell told the court that his client, a first-offender, regretted what he had done.

Sheriff Ruth Anderson QC disqualified McDougall for 18 months and fined him £100.

She also ordered him to pay £300 as compensation for the damage he caused to the other vehicle.



Weather conditions on Ben Lui, near Tyndrum were described as 'atrocious'

Marine scientists warn that sea squirts could prove big problem

Invasive species may have travelled from Wales or Ireland on the hull of leisure craft

MARINE scientists are to survey the Firth of Clyde and the Argyll coast following the discovery of another invasive non-native species in Scottish waters.

Boat owners are being asked to make extra efforts to keep boat hulls clean and free of fouling to help prevent the spread after a small colony of the invasive carpet sea squirt (*Didemnum vexillum*) was found near Largs.

Target species

Surveys will be carried out from late January by the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS), based at Dunstaffnage, near Oban to investigate how widespread it has become. Funded by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Marine Scotland, the information gathered will help decide how the species should be dealt with.

Chris Beveridge of SAMS spotted the small colony of what she suspected to be the carpet sea squirt during a routine survey.

She said: 'This is one of our target species, so when I spotted a mussel on a pontoon, covered with a fawn coloured growth, I immediately suspected the invasive sea squirt.'

She later found a larger colony on a marina's mooring lines. She added: 'We carry out surveys of west coast marinas every year, on the lookout for a variety of non-native spe-

cies that have the potential to reach Scotland. The sea squirt may have been brought into Largs Yacht Haven on the hulls of leisure craft which have travelled from Wales or Ireland, where it is already established. It could be a real menace for all users of the marine environment if it spreads up the coast, with considerable economic impact.'

Carpet sea squirt is most likely to spread by attaching itself to the hulls of boats. It is a distinctive mustard, pale orange-yellow or beige colour and often appears as pale flat patches. Larger growths may look like wax dripping from artificial structures just below water level. Its surface has leaf-like veins with tiny pores and it has a spongy texture and a leathery feel to it.

Dr David Donnan, policy and advice manager at SNH, said: 'The carpet sea squirt can reproduce and spread rapidly and tends to smother other marine life that grows on the seabed. It is especially good at growing over underwater structures such as aquaculture equipment, boat hulls and pontoons. It has spread around the world although it is thought to have originally come from Japan.'

'The removal of the large, gelatinous growths can be difficult and costly.'

'We have been on the lookout for this species in Scotland as it was found in Holyhead Harbour in North Wales in 2008 and more recently in the south of England.'

'This recent finding in Largs Yacht Haven is the first sighting in Scotland.'



Didemnum vexillum has a distinctive mustard, pale orange-yellow or beige colour and appears as pale flat patches

Connel Gaelic singer cuts first album

AHEAD of her debut album launch next month Gaelic singer Joy Dunlop has revealed that she had never considered recording an album until last year.

Joy, from Connel, was touring Argyll and the Highlands with musicians Paul Tracey and Rachel Hair when people began asking for her album.

'I was telling people I didn't have one but then I thought, 'Why not? I'll give it a go'.'

'I have always enjoyed a challenge.'

Joy, who is Argyll and Bute's Gaelic Development Officer, has produced the album of Gaelic songs on her own label, Sradag Music, and features accompaniment from her brother, Andrew Dunlop.

It will be launched at the monthly Ceol 's Craic event at Glasgow's Centre for Contemporary Arts on Saturday February 27.

It was recorded in only six months, in between her full-time job, helping to organise the Royal National Mod in Oban last year, performing at ceilidhs and concerts and moving from her home in Connel to Glasgow.

'I am really excited about the album launch next month,' said Joy, who has been doing Gaelic outreach work at schools in Glasgow during Celtic Connections.

'I have become really involved in the album because I was recording, mixing, editing and producing it with a friend on my own label. I had never done anything like that before, so it was really interesting to learn about.'

Campbeltown close fire - man in court

ONE man has been arrested and charged with fire raising. He appeared from custody at Campbeltown Sheriff Court last Friday.

This follows an investigation by Strathclyde Police into an incident in December when two prams were set alight in a close on Longrow, Campbeltown.

Another man has been reported to the procurator fiscal in relation to the incident.

Fishermen rescued

THREE fishermen were winched to safety after their fishing vessel ran aground at Innellan, near Dunoon recently.

The 11-metre vessel 'Avalon' contacted Clyde Coastguard. Dunoon Coastguard Rescue team and Largs RNLI lifeboat attended the helico.

A rescue helicopter from RNAS Prestwick was also scrambled.

Richard Morgans, Watch Manager at Clyde Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre, said: 'The crew of the fishing vessel were winched to safety and taken to Battery Park, Greenock. The vessel was hard aground.'

'Counter Pollution and the Marine Accident and Investigation Branch (MAIB) were informed and the situation is being monitored. The risk of pollution is small.'

Argyll and Bute appointments

DONALD MacMillan has been appointed to Argyll and Bute Council's Executive Committee to fill a vacancy left by the resignation of Councillor Douglas Philand in December.

At the meeting of the full council last week, Councillor Neil Mackay was also appointed as the new deputy spokesperson for arts, culture and leisure. Appointed as the council's returning officer for the forthcoming general election was chief executive Sally Loudon.

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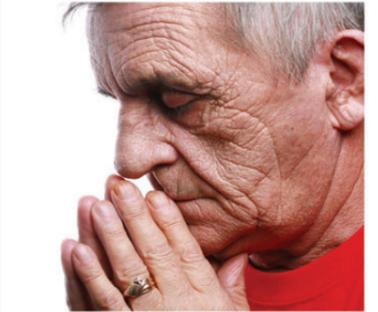
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Author marks life of Lewis historian

ESCAPING to a Hebridean island to write a book as an award proved a great opportunity for a St Andrew's University graduate as she pieced together the history of a Lewis man with a taste for history.

Laura Helyer has produced Paper Cairns, an account in prose and poetry of the life and achievements of the late Angus 'Ease' Macleod, the social historian from the Lochs district of the Isle of Lewis.

Laura was given the award from Gatliff Angus Macleod Archive (GAMA) and lived in one of the island's hostels to complete her work.

Paper Cairns will be launched on Friday February 26 at 7.30 pm at the Ravenspoint Centre, Kershader, South Lochs.

Students are invited to apply for the 2010 award by visiting www.gama.gatliff.co.uk.

Not proven verdict on Islay man accused of drink driving

AN ISLAY man walked free from Campbeltown Sheriff Court last Friday, after the case against him was found not proven.

Alexander Neil Brown, of 16 Benn Avenue, Paisley, was visiting family on the island on May 23 last year when he was charged with being in charge of a motor vehicle after drinking.

He pled not guilty to the offence. Island police had breath-tested Brown, aged 25, after they discovered him behind the wheel of his car in Main Street, Bowmore.

The breath test showed a reading of 55 microgrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath and the legal limit is 35mcg.

But Brown told Campbeltown Sheriff Court that he had no intention of driving the vehicle and had got into his car to keep warm while he used his mobile phone to call and ask for a lift to his family home at Port Charlotte.

The court heard that the car engine was not running and the keys were not in the ignition.

The case against Brown was found not proven.

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Connel's 'height' signs to be replaced

ECO-friendly over height vehicle warning trigger poles in Connel and north of Connel Bridge are likely to be replaced before the end of March.

The £140,000 poles with mini turbines and solar panels on top and over height signs caused some consternation when they first appeared in Connel and north of the bridge in June last year.

Now only one of the four over-height vehicle warning signs for Connel Bridge is believed to be working.

Visually intrusive
Guest house owner Lloyd Halliday and Connel Community Council complained that they were visually intrusive but Scotland Transerv said they were necessary to prevent bridge closures from over-height vehicles hitting the bridge struts.

At a recent meeting of Connel Community Council, members were told that Transerv was due to replace the existing poles, which are thought to be the only ones of their kind for over height vehicle warning signs in the north of Scotland.

The wind turbines and solar panels are to be replaced with a mains electricity supply but the position of the poles will not change, despite requests to move the poles to the outskirts of the village.

Les Stewart, secretary of Connel Community Council, said: 'They haven't worked properly for months.'

A spokesman for Transerv confirmed that the poles were going to be replaced following liaison with the community council.

'Last summer there was an independent safety audit carried out by the police, who were happy that the signs are in the most appropriate positions.'

'There have been efficiency issues and our advice is that a direct power supply should be fitted.'

Former Oban soldier is remanded after alleged knife incident

A FORMER soldier has been remanded in jail after allegedly carrying a knife into Oban Police Station and asking to be imprisoned.

Ross McLellan, aged 19, 19A Glencruitten Drive,

Oban, pled not guilty to carrying a knife in Albany Street on January 23, while on bail.

Procurator fiscal Craig Harris alleged McLellan walked into the police station

in the early hours of the morning, whilst under the influence of alcohol, with a knife and asked officers to arrest him.

Edward Thornton, defence agent, said: 'I don't agree

with these comments.

'He found the knife. His first reaction was to surrender it to the police office.'

Sheriff Douglas Small remanded McLellan until the trial date on February 15.



The busy section of road on the A85 at Achnaoloch Bridge which was closed - but not closed

Emergency roadworks cause traffic confusion

'No-one seemed to know what was going on'

A COLLAPSED section of road on the A85 at Achnaoloch Bridge sparked widespread confusion in the Oban and Lorn area as drivers were given conflicting traffic reports.

Collapsed
When the road underneath the bridge collapsed last Tuesday night it was closed by Scotland Transerv, the organisation responsible for maintaining the trunk road, and emergency repairs were to be carried out.

Throughout the following day traffic reports stated the

road was closed between Tyndrum and Connel.

What wasn't reported was that cars and even small lorries were being allowed through in a convoy system.

The confusion meant that many drivers took a long unnecessary detour via Ballachulish and Glencoe to Tyndrum.

High school pupils east of the bridge, in Taynuilt and Dalmally, missed a day of school when their buses did not come because of the emergency work.

Russell Dods of West Coast Motors in Oban said: 'The police phoned us at 8.30am to say that the road was being opened for a short time but our first bus goes out to Dalavich at 6.30am, so it was too short notice.'

'No-one seemed to know what was going on.'

'We were just going by the Traffic Scotland website, which was saying the road was closed in both directions.'

The Glasgow to Oban bus travelling via Inveraray had to drop off passengers

in Dalmally and instead of continuing along the A85 to Oban, detoured via Tyndrum and Glencoe.

A spokesman for Scotland Transerv said: 'We had an emergency closure on the road from 10pm last Tuesday to 6pm the next day and any convoy system arranged was an unofficial arrangement to help the public.'

'People who took the detour will not be happy that others got through but it was a decision taken at the time by the staff at the scene.'

Oban man remanded after breaking bail conditions

AN OBAN man who caused trouble in the town in the early hours of Saturday morning ended up on remand, after appearing at Oban Sheriff Court.

Stephen Paterson, aged 25, of no fixed abode, admitted wilfully or recklessly breaking a window in West Bay Apartments, breaking a bail condition by entering those apartments, punching a taxi driver and wilfully damaging a taxi.

Procurator fiscal Craig Harris told the court that Mr Paterson was discovered in the West Bay Apartments by a project worker after the window had been smashed. Paterson, whose bail conditions forbade him from being in or near the premises, escaped through the broken window. He then made his way to the taxi rank but had no money to pay a fare. Mr Harris said: 'Paterson jumped into a taxi and became very aggressive. He punched the taxi driver on the face. Paterson then got out of the taxi and kicked the front offside door panel.'

Defence agent Edward Thornton said: 'My client has a very serious problem. My instructions are not to seek bail so that he may get help with a drugs treatment and testing order.'

Sheriff Douglas Small deferred sentence for reports.

Lismore parked car had been taken and damaged

A LISMORE man, who parked his car at the Balure Road entrance on the island over Hogmanay, returned to find it had been moved and damaged. It is believed that the car was damaged sometime between 8pm and 11.30pm on January 1 after the owner

left the keys in the ignition. There was extensive damage to the bonnet of the vehicle.

Oban Police are keen to speak to anyone who may have seen the car. Anyone with information should contact PC Andrew Simpson on 01631 510 500.

'Language is good'

LANGUAGE experts from Edinburgh University are to host a lecture on why language is good for people.

Free admission

The lecture, on February 3 in Oban High School Assembly Hall, will explain the science behind how language learning enhances cognitive skills and brings advantages that may last throughout a lifetime.

Professor Antonella

Sorace, Professor of Developmental Linguistics at the Edinburgh University, and Dr Thomas Bak from the Human Cognitive Neuroscience Team will speak at the free lecture, which starts at 6.30pm.

Organisers, the Royal Society of Edinburgh, ask that anyone register their interest beforehand by telephoning 0131 2402780, or e-mailing events@royalsoced.org.uk.

Rest and Be Thankful works gets underway

REMEDIAL work has begun at the A83 Rest and Be Thankful landslide site.

In the first phase of the project, which began on Monday January 25, two debris fences will be erected on the slopes immediately above the Rest and Be Thankful along with remote sensor equipment.

£310,000 project

The state-of-the-art equipment uses a laser to scan the slope, which helps to identify any movement on the hillside, whilst the fences will minimise the risk of landslip reaching

the road. The work will involve little disruption for drivers, as workmen will use the current traffic light system.

The first phase of the project will cost £310,000 and is expected to last for five weeks, with the whole scheme due for completion by summer.

The project is part of Transport Scotland's Landslide Action Plan with a total investment of £760,000. Scotland Transerv will manage the project on behalf of Transport Scotland.

In the second phase of the programme

an existing culvert will be replaced, the embankment repaired and the road resurfaced.

Finally new wig wag road signs will be installed as part of a two-year pilot to test their efficiency as a warning system for drivers.

A spokesperson from Scotland Transerv said: 'It is pleasing to see that designs are now coming to fruition in this complex geotechnical area. These works will allow the trunk road to re-open to two-way traffic and offer protection and advance warning to the travelling public.'

New executive director is appointed at Argyll and Bute Council

AS part of Argyll and Bute Council's re-structuring of senior posts, Douglas Hendry is the first to be appointed to the new position of executive director.

Mr Hendry, currently director of community services, is the only

director remaining with the council through the re-organisation.

Applications for the remaining two executive director posts, which attract a salary of more than £90,000, closed on Friday.

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Mull Lines



MULL Bird Club welcomed David Lindo, known as The Urban Birder and photographer Russell Spencer to its January meeting.

David is a regular contributor to Spring Watch, The One Show RSPB's Birds magazine, BBC Wildlife Magazine and BirdWatching.

David lives in London and is known for bird spotting in and around Wormwood Scrubs prison. For David the area is his piece of birding paradise - an area of scrubland with young trees and shrubs and a welcome oasis for a huge variety of birds.

David was welcomed to the island by a young sea eagle that passed by the men as they enjoyed a cup of tea shortly after arriving.



AN EVENING of bingo held in Iona Library was a great success towards funding for a new heating system in the village hall. More than 30 people turned out on a windy evening and enjoyed nine exciting games.

A wide range of prizes - many kindly donated by local businesses and residents - were up for grabs.

The evening's top prize of a meal for two at the St Columba Hotel which was won by Mrs Joan Birkett of Maol Farm.

A raffle was held, followed by refreshments, pushed the total raised to £228, which will help towards the hall.

The village hall committee would like to express their gratitude to everyone who contributed to make the evening such a success.



From the left Ken Walker, Donna Hutchinson, Roseanna Cunningham and James McWilliam in Salen Church.

SCOTTISH Environment Minister Roseanna Cunningham MSP presented a cheque for £400 to the 569 Squadron Frontier Yeomanry Volunteers (Light Horse) to help with the restoration of the war memorial in Tobermory. The total cost of renovation is estimated to be around £3000.

The donation was received from the Mull White Tailed Eagle Project which is a partnership of Scottish Natural Heritage, RSPB Scotland, Forestry Commission, Scotland, Strathclyde Police, and the Mull and Iona Community Trust.

The funding is made possible by the White Tailed Eagle Public Viewing Project, donations collected by the Rangers for the Community Trust.



MULL Gaelic Choir is hosting Ceol nan Coisr, its annual singing tutoring day and evening ceilidh, at the Isle of Mull Hotel, Craignure on Saturday February 20.

Choir workshops will be led by Mary Ann Kennedy beginning at 1.30pm costing £2. In the evening a ceilidh dance with Ross MacPherson and Stuart Jackson will be held costing £5. All welcome.



NEW loos are on the agenda for Aros Park in Tobermory.

A planning application has been lodged with Argyll and Bute Council to replace an existing toilet block with new facilities open that will be open to the public 24 hours a day.



MULL Film Club is on the move with Looking for Eric - a film about an ailing Manchester postie who receives visits from football player Eric Cantona.

Directed by Ken Loach, the film was called 'a blinder' by Empire Magazine. The film will be screened in Dervaig Village Hall on Saturday February 20.



To sponsor Mull Lines please contact Isla at 01631-568000

Oban man jailed for eight months after failing to heed court advice

A MAN arrested hours after being ordered to behave himself has been sentenced to eight months behind bars.

John Johnstone, of 15B Millpark Avenue, was given a three-month suspended sentence at Oban Sheriff Court on January 7 after admitting throwing a kitchen knife

at his partner the previous evening. The 62-year-old was released and instructed to be of good behaviour.

Threatened

Last week, in the same court room, he admitted that later on January 7, he threatened police officers who came to his home to check on his partner.

Procurator Fiscal Craig Harris said the officers found Johnstone and another man, Martin Gould.

Aggressive

He said: 'Both were aggressive to them from the outset, shouting, swearing and uttering violent threats to the two officers.'

Street, Glasgow, also admitted threatening police officers and breaching the peace and was fined £120.

Defending Johnstone, Edward Thornton said: 'He regarded the visit by the officers to be provocative.'

His regret is that he allowed himself, because of alcohol, to rise to the bait.'

Sentenced

Sheriff Thomas Ward sentenced Johnstone to four months for threatening the police officers and, because of his failure to behave himself, another four months for the original offence.

Community takes DIY approach to housing problems

One couple has already moved out of the area to find somewhere else to live

AN ARGYLL community facing a number of evictions is moving ahead with its plans to build new homes itself.

Craignish Community Company (C3) estimates up to 50 households in Ardfern, Craobh Haven and the surrounding area need housing. Now C3 is taking action, after a proposed housing association scheme fell through and the initiation of enforcement proceedings.

In 2006, Argyll and Bute Council began taking action against 22 single people and families living in caravans and homes without planning permission on the Lunga Estate, close to Ardfern. A number of council enforcement orders have already expired and others will run out in 2011.

Chairman of the community company Sandy Mackilligin said they had to do something to meet the needs of those living in sub-standard accommodation. One couple has already moved out of the area to find somewhere else to live.

EXCLUSIVE REPORT by

CHRISTINE MCCARTNEY cmcartney@obantimes.co.uk

He said: 'The village has been consulted three times and at each stage there has been a considerable majority in favour of this happening.'

'Let's not pretend there is not a minority against. We are going to have objectors and it is our job to present to them that what we are doing is what the village wants.'

C3 has resurrected a proposal by Craignish Parish Church to put a piece of glebe land to community use. If the community could raise funds to buy the land, they estimate there would be room for 12 new homes. Discussions have already taken place with Craignish Parish Church, after the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland invited the community to put forward a proposal for the site.

Last week, following a community consultation day, C3 appointed Glasgow-based architects John Gilbert

to carry out a feasibility study before proceeding to apply for planning permission for the new homes.

Mr Mackilligin said even with community support, keys to the new homes would not be handed over until late 2011 at the earliest.

'There are so many bridges to be crossed,' he added. 'We would have to raise in excess of one million pounds to build 12 low-rent houses.'

Meanwhile, the council has created a team of officials to consider the way forward for those faced with having to move out of their homes in Craignish.

A spokeswoman said: 'This team will include representatives from planning, social work, housing, legal, building standards and environmental health.'

'An important part of its options appraisal process will be to consult with all stakeholders, including the occupiers and the landowner. 'It is anticipated that the project team's report will go before councillors in late spring.'

Housing association donates to charitable trust

'So many local charities can benefit from this scheme,' says ACHA administration manager

OBAN'S Community Benefit Shop on the North Pier has been given a special donation of office furniture by Argyll Community Housing Association.

And within hours of it being brought into the shop, run by volunteers for MacQueen Bros Charitable Trust, one of the drawer units was sold.

The charitable shop, which has been open for just two months, has made more than £1,000 a week and as quickly as furniture and other household items come in, they are flying back out again.

Following its move from the municipal buildings in Oban's Albany Street to Menzies House at Glenshellach, ACHA decided to donate nine surplus desks, several chairs, two filing cabinets, nine pedestal units and two partition screens to the charity shop.

Proud

Amanda MacKenzie, area administration officer, said: 'ACHA is proud to be able to donate the furniture which is no longer required to the charity, particularly as there are so many local charities that can benefit from this scheme.'

Since MacQueen's started taking furniture people no longer wanted, offering to do house clearances, then selling the furniture using the under £50 classifieds in *The Oban Times*, more than £10,000 has been given out

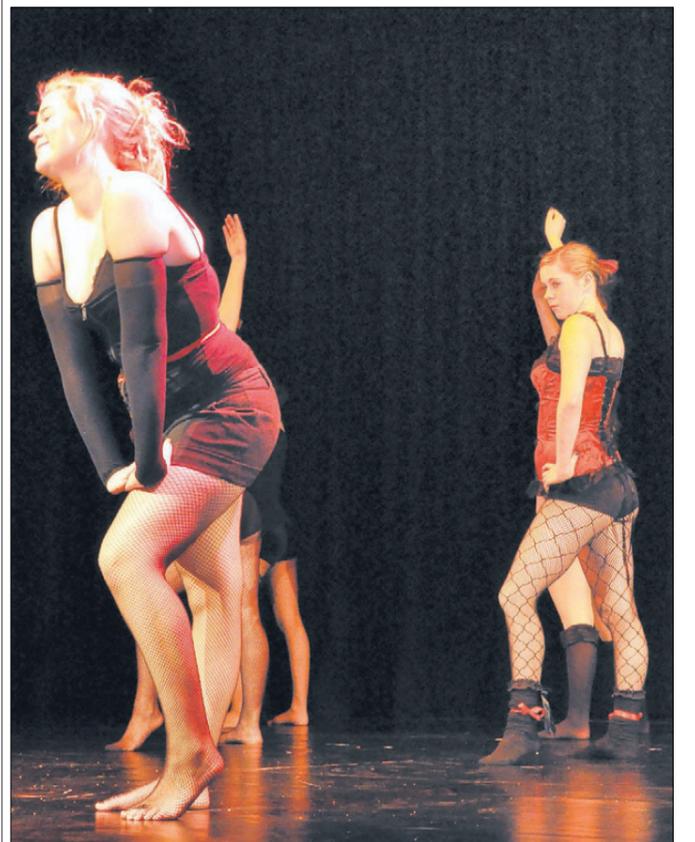


Corrina MacKenzie and Amanda MacKenzie of ACHA and Grace Scott help to off-load the furniture from the MacQueen Bros van. 07_104office02

to community groups across Argyll. Graham MacQueen said: 'We are very grateful for the furniture, all of which is in excellent condition and will be available for sale from the community charity shop on the North Pier. 'The trust is a voluntary

organisation and 100 per cent of all sales go to local charities.'

He paid special tribute to Grace Scott, volunteer manager of the shop, for all the hours she put in. The shop is open from 10am to 4pm, six days a week.



A professional performance by one of the Oban High School dance groups. 07_104dance01

'Dance, despair and all the jazz'

'The standard of performances was exceptional' - event organiser

MORE than 150 Oban High School pupils took part in the school's annual dance show last week, from first year to senior pupils.

The show, called 'Dance, despair and all the jazz', ran at Oban's Corran Halls on two nights to large audiences, who were bowled over by the standard of the performances.

Performances included senior and junior dance groups, Highland dancers performing to modern music, gymnastics, ballet and cheerleading groups, Oban High School Pipe Band and boys and girls from the senior sports coaching group.

Solo

Three solo performances were given by first year gymnast Caitlin Taylor, Highland dancer Allannah Higgins, who performed to Beyonce, and a ballet solo from Emily Steele.



Posing for the 'official' photograph are the senior boys and girls group. 07_104dance05

PE teacher Jamie McCue was compere for the evenings and even managed to fit in a few Michael Jackson moves himself.

Denise Gemmill, of Oban High School PE department who organised the event, was delighted with the response.

She said: 'The standard of performances was exceptional, which demonstrated the effort and time that pupils have been

putting into their routines over the last few months.'

Parents and staff donated more than 50 prizes for a raffle that was drawn over the two nights and Ferguson Hair and Beauty from the town styled more than 20 pupils' hair both evenings.

Oban High School thanked all the parents and the community for supporting the dance show and making it such a success.



Allannah Higgins performs a Highland dance routine to Beyonce. 07_104dance06



Practising their performance at the Corran Halls are girls from Oban High School. 07_104dance02

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Last chance for man with cocaine

AN OBAN man who admitted having cocaine has been warned another offence could land him in jail.

Oban Sheriff Court heard last week David Ogilvie, aged 25, of 12 Camus Road, Oban, tried to throw away a wrap of cocaine when he saw police officers approaching him on Colonsay Terrace on January 15 last year. The package contained around £25-worth of the drug.

Ogilvie's defence agent told Sheriff Thomas Ward that his client was no longer using any drugs.

Sentencing him to 90 hours community service, Sheriff Thomas Ward warned because of his previous convictions: 'It seems to be, Mr Ogilvie, you are on your last chance.'

Oban man bailed

AN OBAN man has been bailed after appearing in private at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

Michael MacPhee, aged 25, of 4 Burnside Court, made no plea or declaration at the hearing on January 19.

He was fully committed on charges of demanding money from a woman and robbery with assault against a man in an incident between September 22 and November 5 last year.

A further charge of assaulting a man to his injury and permanent disfigurement was dropped.

'Family man' regrets police assault

A 'QUIET family man' has been full of regret, remorse and shame since he was arrested for assaulting a police officer, Oban Sheriff Court heard last week.

Kevin Hainey, aged 42, of 44 St Ninian's Avenue, Stranraer, pleaded guilty to assaulting a police officer, trying to punch him and struggling violently with officers trying to arrest him. His pleas of not guilty to two further charges of damaging property and punching a car windscreen were accepted by the Procurator Fiscal.

The court heard that police were called to Breadalbane Street just after 11pm on June 19 2009.

'They approached him and he appeared to be under the influence of alcohol,' said Craig Harris, Procurator Fiscal. 'He then launched towards a constable and tried to punch him.'

Officers used CS spray and handcuffs to restrain Hainey, who threw himself to the ground as they tried to arrest him.

Hainey's defence agent said his client was a 'quiet, family man' who had never been in trouble before.

He said: 'Mr Hainey has spoken to me not only of his regret and remorse, but his deep sense of shame. The whole experience of being in custody and appearing in court is utterly terrifying for him.'

Hainey was fined £280 for the offences.

Community trust winding up as a result of apathy

A COMMUNITY trust which aimed to help voluntary organisations in North Argyll is being wound up.

North Argyll Community Trust (NACT) was set up to provide community groups - from community councils to community organisations - with administrative support

and help in achieving specific projects and goals.

A part-time administrator was employed by the board, which included members of the business community in Oban, a community councillor and councillor.

Oban Community Sensory Garden project and Oban

Community Council's interpretative signs along the waterfront were two such projects helped by NACT.

Reins

Chairman Chris Liversedge explained that after 10 years the board members felt it was time to pass the reins on to others in the community and

had asked for members of the public to come forward at the annual general meeting in November.

'We put an advert in *The Oban Times* saying what we were going to do and three people turned up,' he said.

'You can't run an organisation like that so we

are winding up because of apathy.' He said there were one or two projects to finish up and thereafter NACT would be wound up.

As well as a lack of interest in NACT and what it was doing, Mr Liversedge said many of the funding sources had dried up.

Islanders bid for 'Green Street' environmental prize money



MSP Jim Mather is joined by Keren Cafferty and Jan Fraser of Eilean Eisdeal with director of Scottish Gas Kevin Roxburgh on Easdale jetty at the launch of the Green Streets consultation. 16_104green1

EASDALE islanders have been offered a 'unique opportunity' to make their houses cosy and energy efficient, by winning a Green Streets environmental prize from Scottish Gas.

And the plans are no mean feat for a Hebridean island on the edge of the Atlantic that has no mains gas.

Eilean Eisdeal applied for the £130,000 grant to improve the energy efficiency of the 200-year-old cottages on the island and some of the more modern buildings. The community group won the prize because the island gives Scottish Gas a 'real opportunity' to really make a difference to islanders both by improving energy efficiency and reducing the carbon footprint of the car free island.

The meeting, held in the island's hall, heard some of the ideas to help heat up people's homes.

At present many homes fall below the government's threshold for fuel efficiency and more than 70 per cent of homes of the island are considered to be in fuel poverty.

Plans are also being laid down to heat up the island's museum and the village hall.

A healthy debating session heard many of the ideas for helping to heat up homes. Plans included a heat source water system powered from the quarry, triple glazed windows, solar panels, a nine metre high wind turbine and cavity wall insulation - all subject to planning.

Jack Welch, Scottish Gas project manager, said that Scottish Gas had much to learn from the island and islanders. He said: 'By listening we can make a world of a difference on Easdale. I hope to engage as many residents as possible to take part in the Green Streets project. People will be asked to switch to Scottish Gas so we can monitor the efficiency of the measures we put in place. What we learn from the island's energy consumption and subsequent reduction will be invaluable.'

Kevin Roxburgh, director of Scottish Gas, who attended the meeting said: 'We are here to listen to what islanders like for its community. There is lots of potential on Easdale both for residents to get the best advice on heating and for Scottish Gas to learn about our customers needs. This is a learning opportunity for both of us.'

Keren Cafferty, chairwoman of Eilean Eisdeal, the group which made the application for the money, was keen to point out that the £130,000 award was for everyone, both full-time and part-time residents. She said: 'It is for the community to look at how the money is spent.'

Hosting a community consultation session, MSP Jim Mather said: 'If islanders work together with open minds then there is the very real possibility that Easdale can lead the way in energy efficiency while reducing its carbon footprint.'

Former policeman honoured

FORMER Oban Police Sergeant Neil Owen has been presented with a painting of the town by Oban Community Council for his service to the town.

Sergeant Owen, who retired last year, spent 18 years of his police service in Oban and was also involved in the town's War and Peace Museum, with a particular expertise in the history of aviation.

And this expertise has

served him well in his new job, as a representative of the American company Cyberflight, demonstrating its unmanned aerial vehicles.

Proud

At a community council meeting on Monday, former chairman Kenny MacIntyre presented Mr Owen with the painting. Mr Owen said: 'Working in Oban was all it promised to be and I am proud to have served this community.'



Former Oban Community Council chairman Kenny MacIntyre presents Neil Owen with a painting of Oban. 08_104owen01

Passport office to use video link

OBAN'S passport interview office is to be replaced by a video link after prompting from Argyll and Bute MP Alan Reid.

The Identity and Passport Service (IPS) announced in October last year that it was looking at closing 10 offices around the country, including Oban.

It was one of many opened when new rules were brought in requiring adults to go for an interview when applying for their first UK passport.

But IPS decided in December, after just more than two years, that the Oban office was not generating enough income and it would close.

Mr Reid contacted the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State involved, Meg Hillier, and demanded that at the very least there should be a video link for those travelling from the islands or long distances to get to an interview office.

Following a meeting earlier this week with Ms Hillier, Mr Reid confirmed that a video link would be put in place, subject to a suitable location being found within Oban.

A spokesman for the IPS confirmed that the Oban office would be closing sometime between March and August this year and, in its place, people would be able to access a video link from Oban, Fort William or Tobermory on Mull, within a local authority building, for their interview.

Lorn Lines



TAYNUILT Whist Committee had its latest drive at Taynuilt Village Hall on Friday January 15 and raised £149 for Cancer Research UK.

There were 8¼ tables competing and card master for the evening was David Thomson. In the ladies competition, the results were: 1 Stella Huntingford, 2 Margaret Forbes, Connel; 3 Ann Nicolson, Oban. Mary Scott took the consolation prize. Playing gents were: 1 Cathie Reid; 2 Florence Anderson; 3 Wendy Forces. The consolation prize went to Cathie's grandson Ruairidh Morrison from Mull.

The next whist drive will take place on February 19, raising funds for Erskine.



A PRETENDER to the title of oldest dog in the world was made last week in the national press. But as reader Jack Wilson explains the oldest dog title truly belongs to an Oban mongrel, aged 161 in dog years, living in the town during the 1930s, 40s and 50s.

The dog claiming to be the oldest in the world, last week, was a mere 21 but Mr Wilson remembers a 23-year-old dog, belonging to his aunt, being rescued after a house fire in 1954.

Mr Wilson said: 'I had a grand aunt named Janet (Jenny) Ross, who was a well known character in and around Oban in the 30s, 40s and 50s and was mentioned in your paper several times for charity work in the local area.'

'I remember a photograph of her and her dog aged 23-years of age. The picture was taken shortly after the dog, Jenny and her sister Bella, who was blind, were rescued from the roof at 2 Burnbank Terrace after a house fire.'



IN A CHANGE of programme, members of Oban Photographic Club, instead of having the in-house judging of images of 'the Homecoming' for the Argyll Trophy, saw all the entries from the four Argyll clubs in the recent Frank Walton Argyll Trophy, which was held in Dunoon.

The Helensburgh club won this annual competition, with Oban coming third. The comments on the marks given were interesting to say the least! The revised syllabus is now the Argyll Trophy and SPF portfolio on February 1, the popular Question Time is on February 8 and John McPherson will talk to the club on February 22. Prospective new members are always welcome at any of the club's Monday evening meetings in the Regent Hotel, Oban, at 7.45pm for 8pm.



ARDAINE Gardens near Kilmelford is benefiting from its warmer climate despite the freezing weather that gripped the country for three weeks.

The first snowdrops are flowering and carpeting the National Trust for Scotland garden which is usually more appreciated for its variety of azaleas and rhododendrons. The garden, which is open all year round, is taking part in VisitScotland's Snowdrop Festival which runs from February 1 to March 15.

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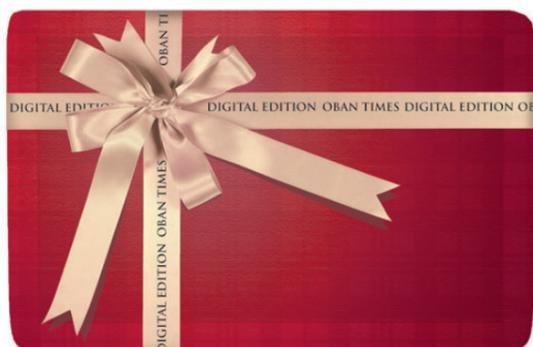
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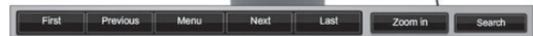
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Lismore

Your correspondent is Pauline Dowling: 01631 760293

Head teacher leaving

JENNIFER Kirkwood, the head teacher of Lismore Primary School, is leaving her post at the end of February.

The post of acting head is currently being advertised with a closing date of January 29. The permanent post will be advertised later with the intention of having a new head teacher in place by the beginning of the new school year in August.

The school, which has close connections to the community, has one pre-5 pupil and nine primary children. As well as embracing the Curriculum For Excellence, the school also has strong roots in music, Gaelic, singing, drama, country dancing and eco issues.

Fitness classes

TWO WEEKLY fitness classes are under way.

A gentle movement and exercise class for seniors is held on a Thursday from 2.30 to 3.30pm in the 'Wee Manse'. Circuit training for anyone feeling up to the challenge started on January 12 and is running for ten weeks on a Tuesday from 4.45 to 5.45pm.

Nursing staff are running the seniors' class and Stuart Ashley of Face West Fitness is putting a large enthusiastic group of all ages through their paces.

It is hoped this will just be the beginning of sustained fitness opportunities on the island as judging by the response there is a demand.

Anyone interested in joining either group should contact one of the nurses.

Taynuilt ceilidh

THE MONTHLY ceilidh of An Comunn Gaidhleachd Muer Chruachain was held in Taynuilt Hall on Saturday January 16.

Piper Emma Law opened the programme followed by the Eilidh MacInnes dancers; Katie MacPherson and Karina Black, Stirling band Gleusda and musicians who delighted the audience with a varied programme of Gaelic songs and musical items.

Deirdre MacDonald, fiddle, and Sileas Sinclair, accordion, played together to great applause while Jake MacKay from Inveraray on mouth organ, accompanied by Sileas Sinclair, received repeated encores.

Cameron Fletcher, originally from Mull, proved to be an excellent fear an taighe.

Tea was served during the interval and the ceilidh ended with the drawing of the raffle, votes of thanks from Moira Dunlop and the singing of Soraidh Leibh.



Norman Johnson, left, and Gus Macaulay, right, instigators of the Comann Na Mara Piping competition.

New piping competition launched from North Uist

A NEW piping competition has been announced from North Uist.

The Comann Na Mara International Open Invitation Piping Competition will invite entries this summer and culminate in a prize-giving ceremony and concert at Piping Live at the National Piping Centre in Glasgow in August 2011.

Comann Na Mara (CNM) is the Western Isle's marine society, based in Lochmaddy, North Uist. Board chairman Gus Macaulay came up with the idea of the piping competition to raise awareness of the society and its work around Loch Maddy Bay Marine Special Area of Conservation.

He said: 'CNM's board of trustees have agreed to the idea of an international, open invitation competition, with all compositions related to the sea.'

'We are delighted that the National Piping Centre, through its principal Roddy MacLeod, has agreed to collaborate with us by organising and administering the competition.'

Mr Macaulay and CNM vice chairman Norman Johnson, a well-known North

Uist piper, met Mr MacLeod in Glasgow to discuss the idea. Mr Johnson said: 'This competition will help strengthen the bond between the Uists and piping. There have been many prize-winning pipers from here and several tunes named after the people and places of the Uists and composed by people from the islands, but no international competition set up from Uist.'

The competition, along with a submission timetable and prize money information, will be formally announced at Piping Live this August. Entries will be invited up to a date next spring and the winners will be announced at Piping Live 2011.

The winners, or their designated pipers, will play in concert at Piping Live, and there are also plans for a similar concert to take place in Lochmaddy.

Mr Macaulay said he is currently seeking competition sponsors. He added: 'We hope to publish the winning manuscripts and are looking at the possibility of a CD.'

He said he was happy to receive early enquiries by email at angusjem@hotmail.com.

Eye to Eye with John Wallace



A lucky break

BEFORE New Year I mentioned to my wife that, unusually, I had not seen anyone during the holidays with previously undetected major vision problems.

I must have been tempting fate. The next day I had two patients needing emergency medical treatment.

The first had not had a full eye examination for several years and was not having any vision problems. This patient had broken his spectacles otherwise he would not have bothered having an examination. He was found to have extremely high pressure in one eye.

Thankfully it had not yet caused any long term damage to his vision. However, if he had not broken his spectacles, he would have

blissfully carried on until severe irreversible vision loss had occurred.

The second had had regular eye examinations and had previously lost the sight of one eye. Vague symptoms of 'something not quite right with my vision' didn't give me much to go on. All standard basic tests were normal and the patient could see almost to the bottom of my eye chart.

This patient had previously lost the sight of one eye due to macular degeneration.

Detailed examination revealed a ring of leaking blood vessels in the central area of the retina - wet macular degeneration.

Wet macular degeneration is a potentially devastating condition that invariably causes extreme loss of central vision.

Islay renewable energy day

A PUBLIC renewable energy information day will be held on Saturday January 30 in Bowmore Hall, Islay.

There will be opportunities to learn about energy sources such as solar water heating, wind turbines or ground source heating, to talk to installers about the practicalities, discuss environmental and planning issues and find out about grants and interest-free loans.

Fun activities for children will be provided by ALIenergy.

Obituaries



Di Huntington.

Di Huntington

DIED October 4 2009 SHE WALKED out of the mist...a lady in a tweed skirt and a headscarf.

'Hello,' she said. 'I'm Di Huntington. I hear you are coming to live at Upper Sonachan so we are going to be neighbours. I hope you will be happy in Argyll.'

This began a friendship which was to last for 53 years.

It was August 1956. Hoping to shoot grouse, we were guests of Sir Ivar Colquhoun on the hills above Luss. But the birds were lucky that day as a thick fog swept in from the Clyde. Clear in my mind remains the charming smile and the distinctive low tenor of voice, features which remained unchanged throughout the long span of her life.

Sixteen years earlier, Di herself had come as a stranger to Argyll. Born in Comerford in Staffordshire in 1917, towards the end of the First World War, she had married Bill Huntington just after the Second World War began and had gone immediately to Bonawe, the large white painted house, originally built for the manager of the iron works nearby. Now owned for many years by the Huntingtons, the walls were hung with replicas of some of the enormous salmon, weighing 50 pounds or more, caught by members of the family in the River Awe.

Running such a house in wartime, with all the restrictions involved, was a formidable task for Bill's 'beautiful bride', as a neighbour fondly remembered her.

But Di was a born homemaker. Bill and their four sons, Nick, Tony, Peter and Ian, the house, the garden and their dogs, usually black Labradors, were the centre of her life.

In addition, during the war years, her husband's nephews and nieces became evacuees.

One nephew, on leave, bought a packet of forget-me-not seeds from Woolworths in Oban which he scattered on the ground before going back to his regiment. He was killed shortly after.

The boys grew up and left home and Bill and Di decided to move to Point Park Cottage on the Loch Etive shore.

Here, again, Di made a garden, amazingly creating

'an oasis' on that wind swept sandy soil. Sewing had always been a hobby. A patchwork quilt was a masterpiece and she often demonstrated at meetings of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute.

Now with a smaller house, she found more time to develop her talent for painting. Few of her friends have not got a plant or water-colour sketch as a treasured memory of someone whose kindness and warmth of personality makes her quite impossible to forget.

Di had the wonderful serenity of one who had conquered and perhaps been strengthened by the tragedies she had endured. Bill died suddenly in Australia and her beloved son Peter was struck down by cancer at a terribly young age.

Many would have been embittered but Di, with her great sweetness of character, became the rock around which not only her family but so many of her friends were drawn to for support. She had a special rapport with young children, including my grand-daughter Violet, whose nametapes she sewed onto her school uniform only weeks before she died.

Age touched her physically. At heart she was forever young.

Mary McGrigor.

Mary Flora Murchison

THE DEATH of Mary Flora Murchison, The Orchard, Balmacara, at Broadford Hospital saddened her many friends over a wide area.

She was 87 years old. Mary Flora was born in Harris but after a few weeks the family moved to Knockfarrel near Dingwall. Mary Flora went to school in Dingwall and completed her secondary education at Dingwall Academy where she was Dux.

In 1940 she left to attend Aberdeen University where she studied Greek, Latin and English and became a teacher. Her first post was in Cromarty.

In 1947 she was asked to go to Plockton for a few weeks as a temporary replacement but 33 years later she was still there until she retired in 1980. Mary Flora was an excellent teacher and many children excelled in later life due to her teaching.

She married Dr Murdo Murchison, a native of Applecross in 1956, but sadly he died 12 years later.

After she retired Mary Flora kept busy, firstly as a guide at Eilean Donan Castle for several years. She also became involved in many local groups including a close involvement with the Church of Scotland.

She was president of the congregational guild and attended church every Sunday when she was able as well as the Wednesday prayer meeting.

She was also involved with the Field Club, the Stroke Club, the Scottish Women's Rural Institute and for a time

was chairman of the South West Ross branch of the Conservatives.

Mary Flora loved animals and her cats were the best fed cats in Skye and Lochalsh.

Mary Flora was also noted for her kindness and sense of humour and with her passing Lochalsh has lost one of its most gifted, highly respected and regarded characters.

Over the past couple of years her health had been failing but she showed amazing courage and resilience as she fought her illness.

A very large crowd attended the funeral service in Kirkton Church of Scotland conducted by the Rev J M MacDonald, assisted by the Rev R Rankin. Burial took place at Applecross Cemetery. Sympathy is expressed to her three sisters, Mrs Joey Fraser in Inverness; Mrs Maggie Nicolson in Dingwall and Annie MacKenzie in London.

John Macleod, Lochmaddy

A SERVICE to celebrate the life of retired GP John Macleod from North Uist has been held in Glasgow.

The University Chapel was packed with family, friends and colleagues of Dr John Macleod of Lochmaddy, who died suddenly last September.

More than 300 people attended the service, coming from the Outer Hebrides, all parts of the UK and as far afield as the US. Further dozens of people watched the service via webcams all over the world, including the Cayman Islands, Australia and New Zealand.

The Reverend Norman Drummond, chaplain to the Queen in Scotland officiated, assisted by the Reverend John Smith of Lochmaddy.

Reverend Drummond paid tribute to Dr Macleod's extraordinary human qualities and his unceasing dedication to duty, his local community, and the wider world community which he moved easily within.

Dr John Wynn-Jones, president of the Institute of Rural Health, told the gathering that Dr Macleod, who followed in his father's footsteps as GP in North Uist from 1973 until his retirement, was a 'the complete doctor, a universal doctor in a time when medicine's obsession is with the detail rather than the bigger picture of professionalism, advocacy, holistic care and leadership'.

He outlined Dr Macleod's achievements in advancing the progress of rural medical practice, his research and the rigorous standard of care he applied to the treatment of his patients.

Dr Wynn-Jones said: 'My memories of John have always been of a man with high impeccable standards and he applied those high standards to how he worked. He was passionate in the Hippocratic tradition that we have a responsibility to mould the next generation

of doctors. He was ahead of his time welcoming local sixth formers from the island to experience general practice with him. He had medical students from all over the world visiting him in Lochmaddy and he was a GP trainer for many years. He organised courses so that young doctors could understand rural issues and rural problems.'

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's director of social work, former colleague and family friend Iain Macaulay, spoke of Dr Macleod's outstanding contribution to all areas of island life, his capacity for warm friendship and hospitality and his unofficial role as global ambassador for North Uist and particularly his beloved Lochmaddy.

Mr Macaulay said: 'We remember his boundless levels of energy, his famous hospitality, his love of the islands. We saw it every day in his enthusiasm, his passion, his determination and in his pioneering spirit that has left a legacy that will be remembered for generations.'

Dr Macleod's son Alasdair and daughter Beth also spoke of their father as an outstanding role model in tributes which captured the capacity of the late doctor for fun and entertainment, his ability to inspire and mentor others and the thoughtful generosity which he bestowed those who crossed his path wherever he went.

At the behest of Dr Macleod's widow Lorna, the chapel was decorated with daffodils, a poignant evocation of one of Dr Macleod's many enthusiasms. He initiated a bulb-planting campaign in Lochmaddy and each spring the community enjoys a spectacular display from the thousands of bulbs planted there, many by Dr Macleod's own hand.

Concert organist Kevin Bowyer played Flor Peeter's moving Lied to the Ocean and accompanied the Glasgow University Chapel Choir throughout. The choir sang Laudate Dominum by Mozart, featuring as soloist Annabel Fleming Brown, daughter of Dr MacLeod's close family friends, Peter and Heather Fleming Brown of Pollokshields.

The choir also sang the Gaelic Blessing and the congregation recited the Ancient Celtic Blessing attributed to St Columba.



Dr John Macleod.

20 Years Ago

Those Were The Days The Oban Times

Thursday January 25 1990

Travelling trio's record

THREE children from the Morvern Peninsula are thought to be the only children in Britain to be going from the mainland to an island every day for school.

Raymond King, Andrew Bull and Helen Homsby step aboard the Lochaline to Mull ferry every morning to attend Tobermory High School.

'Tobermory is such a good school we wanted Helen to go there,' said Mrs Jean Homsby.

'She can also get home every night on the ferry, whereas she would have to board all week at Fort William.'

Although the travel arrangements work out well, the school bus can get held up on the single track Tobermory to Salen road.

'But the ferry operators are really good at looking out for the children,' said Mr Homsby.

Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) changed its winter timetable by ten minutes in order to link the children to

the Craignure to Tobermory bus. 'We are always happy to help people out if we can,' said CalMac area manager William Kindness.

Famous find in island croft

A CACHE of the famous 'Polly' whisky, which was liberated from the holds of the 'Whisky Galore' ship, which went aground off Eriskay 49 years ago, has been found in a croft house on the Hebridean Isle of Barra.

Englishman David Barston of Bruernish on Barra found the whisky when he was renovating the house he bought last May.

He found four bottles of the famous 'Polly', as the whisky became known, underneath the floor boards.

There were 24,000 cases of whisky in the ship's hold - almost 300,000 bottles of liquid gold - aboard the SS Politician when it ran aground in the Sound of Eriskay.

and there were many cases of bottles hidden all over the island.

The incident was immortalised by Compton Mackenzie in his book *Whisky Galore*.

Mr Barston, who moved to the isles with his wife from Haslingden in north Lancashire, said he was carrying out repairs to the floor of the house and was surprised when one of the floorboards popped up near where he was working.

'It was a very skilled piece of joinery,' he said.

'You would not have known it was there. There were four bottles - two full size lying flat and two half bottles standing up in the corner at the back.'

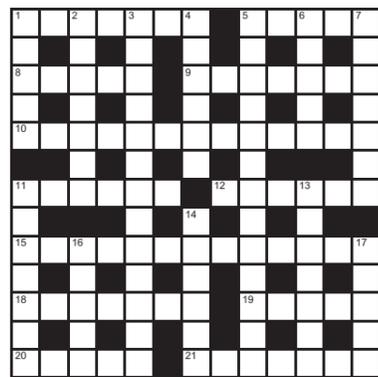
Although eight bottles taken from the wreck two years ago fetched £4,000 when auctioned at Christie's, Mr Barston said he has no intention of selling them.

'They belong to the island. I'll probably put one into the local museum and perhaps one down at the airport where I work as a part-time fireman, and keep the others.'

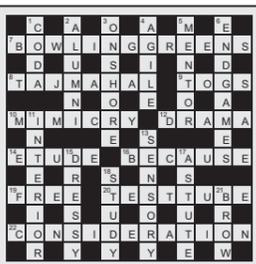
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

- Across
- 1 A salt of hydriodic acid (7)
 - 5 About heredity (5)
 - 8 Russian country house (5)
 - 9 American naturalist and author (7)
 - 10 The shame (13)
 - 11 Proceedure (6)
 - 12 Upturned look (6)
 - 15 One who emigrated to the states from here (5-8)
 - 18 Address (7)
 - 19 Choppers, so to speak (5)
 - 20 Bump into (5)
 - 21 Just one top (7)

- Down
- 1 Self employed (5)
 - 2 Unit of measurement (7)
 - 3 Guesswork (4,9)
 - 4 Subordinate ruler (6)
 - 5 One who goes out of their way for another (4,9)
 - 6 Kin from a sibling (5)
 - 7 Place to live (7)
 - 11 Dense fog (3,4)
 - 13 Milky (7)
 - 14 Puts right (6)
 - 16 Exotic jam flavor (5)
 - 17 Like a pitcher's perfect game in baseball (2-3)



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Hydro potential untapped claims MSP

SCOTLAND could produce twice as much power from water as previously estimated and there is significant potential in Argyll and Bute.

A study published last week calculated up to 1.2 gigawatts could be produced by Scotland's hydro resources, including micro-generation schemes.

Energy minister, Jim Mathers, who also represents Argyll and Bute in the Scottish Parliament, said: 'There is a clear untapped potential for smaller hydro schemes pumping out green energy, especially in Argyll and Bute.'

Investing in hydro power could create hundreds of jobs in manufacturing, installation and distribution, as well as helping to cut the country's carbon emissions, added Mr Mathers.

'While care must be taken to avoid adverse impacts on our water environment, new hydro in Argyll and Bute could provide new long term economic and community benefits.'

'And that is worth both exploring and working at.'

Oban High School news



Haiti

RECENT tragic events in Haiti have touched the hearts of all members of Oban High School.

To show support the school is performing an array of fundraising events over the next few weeks to support Scottish International relief (Mary's Meals) who are in Haiti.

The first fundraising event last Friday, involved a lunch-time concert organised by S5 students who also made and sold green ribbons and students performed a sponsored silence, raising the amazing amount of £700 for the Haiti cause.

Holocaust Memorial Day

ON Wednesday January 27 Oban High commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day.

This year is the 60th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camps by Soviet soldiers on January 27 1945. Auschwitz-Birkenau was the largest Nazi killing camp, where approximately 1.1 million men, women and children died.

Sixth year pupil Asif Arshad gave a small talk and presentation on the horrors of the concentration camps under Nazi Germany to his S6 peers.

As part of this 60th Anniversary year, the Holocaust Education Trust will fund a trip for two history students to visit the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp in Poland.

As part of the course they will also attend a seminar in Glasgow in Holocaust Education. Once completed, this course will enable the students to earn a University of Hull award and accumulate points and undergraduate credits towards their chosen degree in their chosen university.

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) commemorates the tragic loss of life in the genocides of World War II, in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Darfur.

It is a day of respect and remembrance held every year on the Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.

Exams
FIFTH and sixth year Prelim exams started this week.

Good luck to all!



Where the council plans savings

- 400 primary pupils lose free school transport
- Cut £250,000 grants to children and families groups
- Leave the post of road safety officer vacant
- Stop funding for CCTV projects
- New car park charges for Inveraray and Tobermory
- Save £13,000 by planting fewer spring bulbs
- Close part-time registry offices
- Double the charge for collecting bulky waste to £50
- Reduce overtime for roads workers
- Job losses
- Review staffing across council departments – up to 55 jobs could go initially

Future bleak for Lochgilhead respite home in care cuts

FYNE View respite home in Lochgilhead could face closure if a proposal by Argyll and Bute Council to stop using the facility is agreed.

In a move to trim the adult care budget, the council could stop using the home, saving £97,000.

The purpose-built home opened six years ago to plug a gap in respite services for adults under 65.

Fyne View is run by a private provider, Care UK, and has services with the council for adults with learning disabilities.

A council spokeswoman said: 'Fyne View will always be viewed as a popular service for the limited numbers of people who use it.'

'However, there has been wide-ranging consultation specifically on respite services which indicated that clients generally want less institutional care, greater flexibility of access, more direct payments and local access to respite.'

'For the majority of service users, Fyne View does not meet these requirements.'

A worker from Fyne View, who asked not be named, said staff were hoping closure was not on the cards.

'The only way we could stay open is if the house was run as a private facility but that would be too expensive.'

'We've been kept in the dark about this and it's not only worrying for the staff but for the users of the service as well.'

Denis Burke from Clachan has cared for his wife since 1996 and uses Fyne View for six weeks each year.

Mr Burke said closure would be 'totally devastating'.

'I'm not prepared to send my wife somewhere where there would not be a good level of care; I wouldn't let her suffer like that,' he said.

No service spared cuts in tough budget settlement

Education to bear £1.6m of this year's savings

AGAINST a bleak financial backdrop for the public sector, Argyll and Bute Council's Executive will meet today (Thursday) to discuss the authority's draft budget for the first time.

In two weeks' time, on February 11, all councillors will face tough decisions on whether to accept more than £8 million in real terms savings across services.

All departments have been asked to come up with cuts of 15 per cent to their budgets in the next three years, as well as 'quick wins' to save money fast. Among these quick wins are the proposed closure of a highly-rated respite home in Lochgilhead, new car parking charges in Tobermory on the Isle of Mull and freezing the post of a road safety officer.

As one of the council's biggest spending departments, education will bear £1.6m of this year's savings and will have to identify three times as much next year. School closures and mergers have not been ruled out for the second phase of the service review.

Reducing hours for clerical staff, classroom assistants and management time for

headteachers, losing 17 full time equivalent secondary teacher posts and cutting back on cover arrangements have been proposed for this year's budget.

Dougie Mackie, secretary of the Argyll and Bute Local Association of the EIS union said the proposals would reduce time for staff training and development while pushing up working hours.

'We are very concerned about the level of cuts and the impact on children's education. We will see continued pressure on the 35-

hour working week, which research shows teachers are already working over.'

He said the package of measures would reduce staffing, harm professional development and impact on the Curriculum for Excellence.

'If anything, we have even greater concern for the 2011/12 budget, where the cuts are predicted to be three times as savage,' he said.

An extra 400 primary pupils could also have to pay for transport to school under plans to increase the qualifying minimum distance from

home to two miles.

Other areas earmarked for savings include £100,000 in subsidies for rural transport initiatives, community learning and ending the provision of face-to-face services for communities on Colonsay, Jura and in Cairndow.

Services for people with learning disabilities are also under pressure. A proposal to close four neighbourhood networks, helping 30 people to live independently in the community at a cost of £109,000, was criticised by national charity Values into Action.

Co-ordinator Norma Curran said: 'It seems ironic that in these challenging financial times, it is the most vulnerable of society and those least likely to speak for themselves who become easy targets when local authorities have to make cuts.'

If all the proposals for savings and efficiencies are adopted by councillors, a small surplus of £396,000 will be left.

Head of strategic finance Bruce West said raising council tax was not a viable option to increase income, as it would trigger the withdrawal of millions in Scottish government grants.

'We have even greater concern for the 2011/12 budget, where the cuts are predicted to be three times as savage'

Dougie Mackie, secretary of the Argyll and Bute Local Association of the EIS union



Despite refurbishment, Campbeltown town hall may be mothballed to save money

Campbeltown Town House could be mothballed

'Once they close they never reopen'

ARGYLL and Bute Council is considering closing Campbeltown town hall and putting it in 'mothballs' until a new use can be found for the historic building.

Closing for the foreseeable future was an option put forward in the council's draft budget last week to save £13,000 a year until 2013.

The Campbeltown Town House, to give the building its proper name, is classed as one of finest in Scotland, built in 1758.

But it is in poor condition despite recent rewiring and painting the outside; wood is starting to rot and the interior needs to be redecorated throughout and brought up to modern standards.

Other council buildings in Campbeltown could house the town hall's meetings, exhibitions, keep fit classes and coffee mornings.

'It's a disgrace if it closes,' said Campbeltown Community Council leader Jim Martin.

'The council will have to go some to save money.'

'Month after month we sit there in freezing conditions at our monthly meetings.'

'They only open the door and put the lights on for us, we switch them off and lock the place. It will cost more to keep one of the other buildings open late and keep a member of staff on for us!'

And he added: 'The fear is with places like this is once they close they never reopen.'

Argyll and Bute wants to find a 'sustainable future' for the building as part of the Town Centre Regeneration project; there has been a public meeting into the future of the town hall.

Voluntary groups hit hard by council cuts

CHARITIES and community groups which rely on grants from Argyll and Bute Council will be expected to share the pain of budget cuts.

'Quick win' savings A total of £250,000 in cuts have been proposed to achieve 'quick win' savings in the children and families budget alone.

Affected groups include charities supporting families, disabled children and small childcare projects.

Homestart Lorn could lose most of its funding from the council, along with sister charity Homestart Mid Argyll, Jura, Islay and Kintyre.

Aileen Binner, Lorn coordinator, said: 'It is a shock that the first I have heard about it was when The Oban Times phoned me.'

'Where is the partnership?'

Ms Binner said by using volunteers to provide one-to-one support to vulnerable families with young children, Homestart offers the council excellent value for money: 'Our service will go to the wall if we lose funding like that.'

'Just put one child into care for a year and I'm sure you would pay for our service twice over, as well as the damage that does to a child.'

She added the cuts would have a devastating effect, because council funding allows charities to unlock grants from trusts.

The draft budget warns councillors that proposed cuts of £65,000 in grants to childcare groups could result in the closure of some playgroups and creches.

Soroba Young Families Group and Family Media-

tion are among other groups which could see grants reduced.

Closure of the council's restorative justice project for young offenders is also proposed.

Outdoor pursuits organisation Stramash could lose funds already committed for the next financial year if the proposals are accepted by councillors on February 11.

A spokesperson for the organisation said they were already in discussions with the council to find a way forward.

He said: 'It is the whole economic climate at the moment and the council does need to make tough decisions.'

'If that cut was made, we would need to sit down and look at which of our services it would impact, because there would be an impact.'



Have you had your say today?

REPORT by CHRISTINE McCARTNEY
cmccartney@obantimes.co.uk

Loganair in talks with Royal Mail to solve Uist paper problems

LOGANAIR has told North Uist residents it is in high-level talks with Royal Mail to try to resolve a situation which has meant newspapers arriving in island shops after midday.

Winter timetable changes have seen the removal of the 7.20am flight from Glasgow to Benbecula, which ensured that the papers arrived by around 10am.

The flight now arrives at 11am during the week and an hour later on Saturdays, so papers do not reach shops far from the airport until 1pm or later.

Loganair's commercial director Jonathan Hinkles told North Uist

Community Council the company was in talks with Royal Mail to see if its 6.30am chartered flight from Inverness could be used to get papers to the islands.



He said: 'We understand with Royal Mail there are conflicting demands and they are very demanding of flight departure punctuality. 'We can't take the risk that by

putting newspapers on at Inverness the plane might have to wait, but as a broad principle, Royal Mail are looking at ways of making money from their chartered aircraft and they are happy to continue discussions.'

Mr Hinkles said he was aware members of the community had complained of the impossibility of flying early to Glasgow to conduct business and return the same day under the winter timetable. He said in practice only four per cent of passengers using the service took day returns, and that the move had been made to benefit the majority of passengers and those with onward connections.

The new summer timetable will see earlier morning flights to and from Glasgow on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, he said.

Mr Hinkles added the last 18 months had been challenging for all airlines, with 2009 passenger numbers falling by two per cent between Glasgow and Benbecula.

He said: 'These figures are not welcome, we're doing the best we can to try and sustain and continue to provide air services.'

'Increased competition from ferries with the introduction of RET especially on the shorter ferry routes saw our passenger numbers drop, especially during peak summer.'

One held following Sunday morning assault

LAST Sunday morning, two men allegedly assaulted a 25-year-old man outside Oban High School as he made his way home.

The men are alleged to have pulled him to the ground, punched him repeatedly and stolen his mobile phone.

The victim suffered extensive injuries to his face, ribs and elbow.

One of the men responsible has been apprehended, while police are following a positive line of enquiry into finding the second attacker.

Glasgow man arrested on theft charges

A 22-year-old man has been arrested in connection with thefts at Bridge of Awe Service Station, in Ardchattan and at a garage in Killin.

The man, from Possil Park, Maryhill, in Glasgow was arrested in the city.

Enquiries are continuing with regard to his alleged accomplice.

Search for missing woman



Missing woman Niloofer Polvande or Anny Rasason

POLICE are continuing to carry out inquiries on a missing woman who was last seen in Tarbert, Mid Argyll, on January 6.

Fifty-one-year-old Niloofer Polvande was reported missing by staff at Stonefield Castle Hotel on January 7. Then there was a confirmed sighting of her standing at the bus stop in Harbour Street, Tarbert, at 12 noon the same day.

Inquiries have revealed that the woman may also have been known as Anny Rasason, who appeared to have been an artist specialising in Egyptian sculpture.

PC Greg Bryce at Lochgilhead Police Office said: 'I am very keen to emphasise our concern for Ms Polvande or Rasason and that our priority is to establish that she is safe and well as opposed to being involved in anything criminal.'

'She was a regular visitor to Argyll and may have travelled to Southend, on the Mull of Kintyre on Thursday January 7.'

'It is also known that she is a religious person and therefore I'd like to speak to anyone who may have seen her at a church or monastery since her disappearance.'

Anyone with any information regarding the missing woman is asked to contact Lochgilhead Police office on 01546 702201.

Drugs find

A HOUSE in Oban was searched by police at noon last Saturday and found to contain a quantity of heroin and cannabis resin. A 28-year-old man has been reported to the procurator fiscal.

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Fort primary school in appeal to parents

By STEPHEN NORRIS
FORT William Primary School parent council has taken the unusual step of going public with an appeal to local parents to consider enrolling their children there.

Parents and staff feel the school has received an unfair press as Highland Council continues its appraisal of rationalising Greater Fort William's school estate to give all local children schools fit for the 21st century.

An amalgamation between Fort William and Upper Achintore primaries either on the latter's existing site or

at a new location has been mooted, but Fort William parents are deeply committed to their school and point out if the amalgamation plan was to be implemented it would not happen for six or seven years - equivalent to a child's entire primary school education.

Even then, they say, union with Upper Achintore would only happen if Highland Council had sufficient resources to build a new school.

In a statement to *The Oban Times*, FWPS parent council said their 'vibrant, welcoming and friendly school' was very much open for business and had

'lots to offer' children. Member Carol Cummings, who has two children attending the school, said: 'Parents within the FWPS catchment area are sending their children to other schools because they think our school is set to close in the imminent future, and this is just not true.'

Fort William and Ardnamurchan councillor Donald Cameron backed that stance.

He said: 'Whatever the outcome of the present appraisal of primary school education in Greater Fort William there is no imminent closure of Fort William

Primary School. At last week's meeting to update parent councils education officials foresaw any new build school to replace Upper Achintore and Fort William primary schools not occurring until 2017/18. All four ward councillors are committed to a new school which will have modern community-use facilities.'

Enrolment dates at Fort William Primary School for new primary ones starting in August 2010 are February 1 to 5 inclusive from 3pm at the school. Parents are requested to bring their child's birth certificate.

THIS MONTH IN SCOTTISH FIELD... ON SALE

READ...

HARBINGERS OF SPRING Dozens of gardens get together for the Scottish Snowdrop Festival.

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WIN £500 WORTH OF DUBARRY CLOTHING

Eager young pupils lead the way with shore litter picks

FORT William Primary School eco club members are doing their bit for the environment each week by cleaning litter from the Loch Linnhe shoreline and keeping an eye out for pollution.

Pupils in the vibrant club also note down weather conditions, any wildlife they encounter and monitor pollution in the loch, reporting to the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency if they find a problem.

Recently they noted a large amount of dirty, muddy water running off via a stream into Loch Linnhe from the building work in Upper Achintore.

School secretary Janet Hickman said eco-minded pupils were 'horrified' at the amount of litter that is thrown

around. 'Every time they visit at least four carrier bags full are collected,' she said. 'Our children are learning about how they can make a difference to their environment by caring for it and they are hopefully spreading this message to others.'

Man denies beer theft

A GLENFINNAN man has denied stealing a crate of beer from a Fort William store.

It is alleged James Leighton, aged 21, of 6 Tor an Eas, stole the alcohol from the Spar shop at Grange Road on October 10 last year. Trial was set for March 4.



A group of Fort William Primary School pupils get busy on the shore opposite the school. 10_05litter01

Police files

A GARDEN in Lorn Drive, Glencoe, was entered and a quantity of coal was stolen from a coal bunker between Thursday January 7 and Saturday January 9.

A MOTOR CYCLE was pushed over and damaged outside the garages on Kennedy Road, Fort William between early morning on Monday January 18 and the morning of Tuesday January 19.

ANYONE with knowledge of these incidents is asked to contact Fort William Police Station on 01397 702361 or the confidential line on 010397 702000.

Closure concern

LOCAL MSP Fergus Ewing has written to Highland Council asking for clarification on proposals to close the Corran Ferry later in 2010 to allow repairs to the Nether Lochaber slipway to be made.

Mr Ewing said he was 'very concerned' to learn of proposals to suspend the busy ferry during a very busy period of the year.

In a letter to chief executive Alastair Dodds, Mr Ewing asks for information regarding the assessment of the urgency of the work, and suggests further

consultation be held with local communities to decide when the work should be done and what alternative arrangements should be put in place during the contract.

Evidence
He said: 'In particular, I have mooted the idea of postponing the work, unless evidence exists that it must be carried out within the timescale envisaged.'

'I have also asked for much more detail about the nature of the work needed, and the estimated costs.'

Outrage at red deer 'free for all'

Continued from page 9

Kingie Estate stalker John Cameron said the Deer Commission for Scotland (DCS) recently authorised the John Muir Trust (JMT) to kill deer all year round on 2,000 acres of open hill it owns on Knoydart. The trust also intended to remove fences from a further 1,000 acres which, he said, would be 'a magnet' for deer from surrounding areas and would lead to even more being shot, impacting on neighbouring estates and possibly jobs.

He said: 'To try to grow trees without fences is madness. I questioned the DCS at the last meeting on how they could justify giving an out-of-season authorisation on unfenced ground surrounded by deer forests without even asking the opinion of or notifying neighbouring landowners. I was told this did not have to be done, and the JMT had met the criteria for authorisation.'

On Mull, one deer management worker said constant culling in FCS plantations and on tenanted farms meant remaining stags were getting 'younger and younger'. Representations had been made to FCS regularly over the past two years urging them to repair damaged water gates across hillside burns where stags could easily get through, but to no avail. Mature 'Monarch of the Glen' adult males with 12 or 14 antler points, he claimed, were disappearing because they were worth more dead than lighter, younger stags.

'I'll go into a corrie and see a beautiful 12-pointer and think 'are you going to be there next year?' I would not shoot him but others would. It's a complete and total free for all. The deer are at the sharp end and the stags are coming out the worst.'

Head of land management for the John Muir Trust Andrew Campbell told *The Oban Times* the trust wanted to improve the condition of all land it owned, moorland and woodland, and was permitted to shoot deer out of season under the law.

Fences, he said, create 'a number of negative impacts' on wild land and habitats being restored, and if deer were drawn in from surrounding areas it would be because of improved grazing and shelter.

'If neighbouring estates are concerned about deer welfare and starving deer they too should increase the quality of their grazing and shelter,' he said.

Mr Campbell confirmed 20 red deer were culled in Coire Dhorcaill and Li in November 2008 and left there because weather conditions prevented a helicopter lifting carcasses.

He added: 'A sustainable population of deer, managed as a national resource, is vital for our environment. Our priorities differ from that of many sporting estates who aim to maximise deer densities in order to provide private clients with the best opportunity to shoot stags. A number of our estates, including Sandwood and Li and Coire Dhorcaill (sic), now employ more people than before we took ownership.'

An FCS spokesperson said wildlife rangers assisted by contractors, deer lease holders and permit stalkers control deer numbers, with shorter term shooting contracts 'occasionally' tendered.

'Night shooting of deer is permitted by the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 to prevent serious damage,' he said.

'All Commission night shooting is carried out using Deer Commission Scotland best practice guidance. Deer are present in all of the national forest estate and are valued. Complete eradication is neither desirable nor possible, but their numbers need managed.'

'Unusual weather events such as that experienced recently can upset set cull levels due to incursions of deer. In such circumstances culls may increase on the affected areas. Perimeter deer fences are inspected and any repairs vital to the effectiveness of the fence are completed timeously.'

69%

of the business community read the regional press

Source: Business Choice II, The Newspaper Society

Regional Press
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ADVERTORIAL

MAKE A NEW START WITH BUSINESS GATEWAY

New starts and change are a common theme at the beginning of every year and 2010 is set to be no different for the Argyll and Bute business community.

Figures show that the first few months of the year can be a busy time for business service providers such as Business Gateway, with more people considering changes to their lifestyle, including starting up their own business.

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'There is no doubt that the sheer volume of information can be daunting,' explains Kate Fraser from Business Gateway. 'However, our team of experienced business advisers can help you get the most from our online resources and pinpoint the support available for the issues important to your business. There is even a unique piece of software that allows users to assess the current health of their company.'

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In addition to the comprehensive online presence and local Business Adviser support, Business Gateway organises a range of local workshops throughout the year to support the Argyll and Bute business community.

A full programme of upcoming events can be found on the Business Gateway website www.bgateway.com/events, however highlights over the coming few weeks will include the following:

Business Start Up Workshops:

17th-18th February, Corran Halls, Oban

23rd-24th February, Community Centre, Lochgilphead

16th-17th March, Queens Hall, Dunoon

To find out more about events in your area and how Business Gateway can help your business visit www.bgateway.com or call 0845 609 6611. Alternatively you can contact your local office on 01546 605 459.



Business Gateway services are delivered by Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Government, with the support of associated partner organisations. Maximum call charge from BT landline is 3p per minute. Call costs from other networks may vary. Text costs vary depending on your mobile operator.

Salmon river boss falls foul of the law

A SALMON river boss himself fell foul of the law when shooting on land where he helps keep poachers at bay.

River Lochy Association fishery manager Jonathan Robert Gibb, of Drimsallie Mill, Glenfinnan, was out with his shotgun near the river at Camisky on December 19 when challenged by police.

Officers had received a report from a member of the public that a man was walking along the riverbank with a shotgun. Mr Gibb had a valid certificate for the weapon - but not for the special

silencer with which it was fitted. Under gun laws the silencer is classed as a firearms accessory to diminish noise and requires a separate licence.

Mr Gibb, aged 44, was unaware he was breaking any law, Fort William Sheriff Court heard.

'He helps deal with poaching, but unfortunately today he appears in the dock,' said defence lawyer Stephen Kennedy.

Admonishing Mr Gibb, Sheriff Douglas Small told him: 'I accept this was an oversight on your part.'

Ardnamurchan High School film short-listed for MG Alba award

ARDNAMURCHAN High School's Gaelic short film 'An Texan a'illeadh dhachaigh' has been short listed for 'Best Film' award by MG Alba.

The comedy drama, made by S5/6 native Gaelic speakers and learners, was filmed in November and tells the tale of Texan Alisdair Begg coming home to Strontian for Homecoming 2009. MG Alba chose four films out of nearly 30 entries for the short list.

Gaelic teacher Colm O'Rua was

'delighted' the school was shortlisted at its first attempt. He said: 'The pupils enjoyed every aspect of filming and editing, which gave them an insight into working with the language and possible job opportunities.'

Some of the Ardnamurchan High School young filmmakers will attend the award ceremony at Eden Court on February 5.

The film can be viewed on the FilmG website www.filmg.co.uk.

2010 February 2010 Mar 2010

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Curling club celebrates 140th birthday

LOCHABER Curling Club marks its 140th birthday today (Thursday), fittingly in one of the coldest winters for years. Celebrations began yesterday when members met on the steps of solicitors and estate agents MacIntyre & Co, the site of the former Caledonian Hotel where the first committee formed the club in 1870. Old curling memorabilia and Victorian curling outfits added to the sense of occasion. The commemoration continues tonight in the West Highland Museum at 7pm when members will gather for birthday cake, a glass of wine and a chance to have a look at old minute books.

Archive and artefact night

LOCHABER Local History Society will welcome local archivist Alex du Toit to its monthly meeting in the West Highland Museum on Thursday February 4 at 8pm. Mr du Toit will bring old school records, town council minutes and police records to the 'archive and artefact night' - and members are encouraged to bring in other records of local interest. Everyone welcome.

Rail travel help for the blind

HIGHLAND Council and First Scotrail are to implement a local blind persons companion travel scheme from May 23. The initiative will allow one companion to travel with a blind travel cardholder on each journey for a flat fare of 50p within the Highlands and to and from Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

Catering centre to open in Oban

A CENTRE of excellence for catering and hospitality in the Highlands and Islands is set to open at Soroba House Hotel, Oban, in the early spring. Creating up to 30 training opportunities, the hotel will be leased to hospitality expert Helen Crawford, who aims to use the disused building to put Scottish cooking and hospitality at the heart of the hotel's work. She said: 'Here in Argyll we have the best produce from the land and sea and we welcome thousands of people every year - I hope that by opening a training hotel we can give people from Oban and the islands the skills to take up positions in the local hospitality industry.'



Sponsor Gerry Hallas of Lochaber Building Supplies, left, with ten pin bowling scratch league champions Alleycats and handicap league champions Morrisons. f05bowl01

Ten pin bowlers celebrate good season

TEN PIN bowlers have celebrated the end of another successful winter series at the West Highlands' only centre for the sport. Teams played the last game of the Lochaber Building Supplies League at the Nevis Centre, Fort William, on Monday night and after the presentation of trophies immediately set about preparing for the singles tournament which kicks off next week. Alleycats won the scratch division with 63 out of a maximum 65 points, with the Council Workers second and Ardtoe Marine third. Everyone is welcome to take part in the eight-week singles league, which starts on Monday February 1 at 8pm. See Lochaber sports round up, back page.

West Harris Trust makes history with community buyout of crofting estate

WEST Harris people took control of their own destiny on Monday when they became the first community to buy out a Scottish Government owned crofting estate. West Harris Trust is now the proud new owners of the Borne, Luskenytre and Scaristavore estates and will immediately start work on reversing decades of neglect and population decline. Environment Minister Roseanna Cunningham attended the historic signing ceremony in the tiny village school at Seilebost at which more than 16,000 acres of land was transferred to the local population of only 123. Only one child is under school age, a situation the trust hopes to address by building affordable homes, creating jobs, developing renewable energy projects, boosting tourism and attracting young families to the scenic but rugged area. Ms Cunningham said: 'This land transfer is the culmination of a great deal of hard work, determination and commitment on the part of the West Harris Trust. It is an exciting day for the community and a landmark day for the Scottish Government's commitment to community ownership of land and empowerment. Community ownership plays a very important role in the empowerment of communities. It improves self-reliance and offers opportunities for employment, skill development and economic success.' Trust chairman Murdo Mackay, who crofts at Luskenytre, said the buyout would breathe new life into the community. 'We want to promote Harris as a great place to live and work and we hope to get more families into the area and create new crofts and bring currently under-used land into production,' he said. Ms Cunningham also addressed 'The Future of Crofting' conference in the Caberfeidh Hotel in Stornoway on Tuesday.

Plan to re-open Castle Toward 1,300 people sign petition against sale

TWO Argyll residential centres are due to operate at full capacity again, after difficulties were resolved between owner and operator. The two centres, Castle Toward and Ardentinny on the Cowal peninsula, are owned by Argyll and Bute Council while outwardbound and education programmes are run by Actual Reality Learning and Leadership Ltd. On Thursday, council officials said they were satisfied at safety improvements at Ardentinny, allowing a temporary restriction on numbers to be lifted. An action plan was agreed by both parties on Friday to re-open Castle Toward to residential groups by March. The council confirmed it still intends to put Castle Toward on the market, despite controversy. Over 1,300 people have signed a petition against the sale while a picnic, march and public meeting are planned for Saturday at Innellan Village Hall at 3pm. Agreement Christopher Mason, a director of Actual Reality, said: 'We made an agreement with the council for a plan of action that's intended by both parties to result in re-opening Castle Toward for normal business on Monday, March 1. 'It's not definite, but we hope to be starting discussions with the council which will result in us purchasing Castle Toward. Our first priority is to get the business back to normal running.' Closed Doors were closed to residential groups at Castle Toward in November after a council fire risk assessment highlighted shortcomings. Groups booked were being accommodated at Ardentinny until the council restricted capacity at that centre earlier this month, again after safety concerns. A council spokesperson said it would help with the necessary work: 'If the agreed works are completed to the satisfaction of both parties, Castle Toward will be able to be used by Actual Reality for the delivery of its outdoor education programme. 'As of yet, Castle Toward has not been put on the open market for sale. 'That will happen shortly and Actual Reality has confirmed to the council that it will wish to make an offer for the property.'

Outrage at red deer 'free for all'

Bounty hunters' £2,000 a day: shot deer left in Knoydart corrie

EXCLUSIVE REPORT By STEPHEN NORRIS

WILD red deer straying into public forests for winter food and shelter are being shot day and night across the West Highlands, it has emerged. Last week *The Oban Times* revealed how 26 starving stags were controversially culled in a Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) plantation at Loch Arkaig side in brutal winter conditions on January 8. Senior FCS staff had overturned a verbal agreement struck the day before with other local deer management group members to postpone the cull until attempts had been made to drive out the animals. FCS said the deer had damaged 50 per cent of the young trees and killing them was the only option. Publication of the incident appears to have lit the fuse to an explosive issue. Crofters, stalkers, gamekeepers and deer industry personnel from Argyll to Kintail have contacted this newspaper telling of similar unlimited slaughterings elsewhere. Several, who asked not to be identified for fear of their jobs, claimed bounty hunters hired by FCS and conservation bodies to cull deer encroaching into plantations can make up to £2,000 a day shooting the animals. The contractors, often shooting at night and at close range with spot lamps, are paid £90 for each kill. *The Oban Times* was also told men convicted of poaching are among those hired by FCS to cull deer. FCS says everyone hired to shoot on the national forest estate must be qualified to a high level and hold both police firearms certificates and industry recognised qualifications and insurance. Police confirmed applicants with a long standing poaching conviction could be considered for a firearms licence if the crime was classed as 'spent' and could prove they were 'a fit and proper person'. Deer industry workers claim stag numbers across the West Highlands have become so depleted that, contrary to current thinking, red deer are disappearing through indiscriminate culling, rendering deer management policies at local and national level redundant and threatening their jobs and hundreds of others in tourism-related businesses. Lea MacNally, aged 58, from Invergarry, a stalker on the 16,000-acre Glen Quich Estate for 41 years, is a member of the Glenelg deer management group. He said: 'The deer stock on the west coast has been seriously depleted in the last year. We now have the John Muir Trust in Knoydart, the deer management area next to us, trying to regenerate trees without fencing and they are shooting deer all year round. In 2008 they shot a number of deer in Coire Dhorcaill. They were supposed to get a helicopter in, but they just left them lying dead on the hill. They shot hinds as well. 'They are a charity and folk are putting money into this charity, but people don't have a clue what's going on. They are a law unto themselves. 'At the very least they should be consulting with local people. 'We are the folk that are living here at the end of the day and whose jobs are on the line.' Crofter Willie MacKenzie, aged 79, from Corran in Arnsdale, condemned the culling as 'disgraceful'. He told *The Oban Times*: 'The John Muir Trust have a bit in Knoydart across from us. They shot the whole lot of them in Coire Dhorcaill and the hinds were near calving. We have a government, but who the heck are these people, really? 'They want to talk more to local people who have been brought up with nature - we are seeing what goes on. The sheep are away from here and now they want the deer away from here altogether. I'm very, very sad to see the way things are going. It's high time the public opened their mouths a little more.'

Continued on page 8.

Oban sheriff takes a chance on Dunbeg teenager

A DUNBEG teenager has had his sentence deferred for a number of offences after proving he can be of good behaviour. Steven Pattison, aged 19, 29 Lochnell Road, appeared at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday having previously admitted a number of offences between October 2008 and September 2009, including five breaches of the peace, an assault and vandalism, all in and around Oban. A social inquiry report said Pattison had been in a 'self-destruct' mode at the time of the offences. But Sheriff Douglas Small noted he now looked physically much better. Defence agent Duncan Durbin said: 'Pattison has gone into a different gear. 'He has matured and he just seems to have changed.' Sheriff Douglas Small said: 'I want to see you in court again in three months. The ball is in your court. 'I wish you every success with interviews for jobs. 'I am taking a chance on you so please do not let me down.'

Police issue timely warning to dog owners

POLICE forces throughout the country are reminding dog owners to take additional care when walking their pets near livestock and when allowing their dogs out unaccompanied, especially as lambing time approaches. Crofters and farmers in Scotland have the right to destroy any dog discovered attacking their flock and police can bring charges against irresponsible dog owners who allow their animals to become involved in such an incident. Oban police have been notified that last week sheep had to be put down after being attacked by a dog in the Oban area.

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Web-wise pupils launch new blog

P1 AND P2 pupils at Ballachulish Primary School have launched a new internet blog to let the world know what they are doing. The web-wise children helped their teacher Miss Wilson set up the link after she attended an in-service training session in Dingwall.

Designs

The blog features some of the pupils' work such as winter jumper designs, and sections on Ballachulish, the school, the eco committee, pupil council and a photo gallery.

First event flagged up is a non-uniform day tomorrow (Friday) to raise money for the Haiti Earthquake. Head teacher Sam Clark said: 'Members of the public are encouraged to visit the site and post a comment.'

To view the blog, visit www.ballachulish.edublogs.org.

Online: Ballachulish pupils show off their new blog.

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MON 1st February 6.30 MUTH FILM CLUB

Friday 5th February
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The Nutcracker comes to Oban

BALLET West will perform the seasonal classic The Nutcracker at the Corran Halls, Oban on Friday and Saturday this week.

This production was such a success last year on its Scottish tour that a Chinese promoter has invited the company to tour China this spring. The company will set off on its 24-show, 48-day tour in April and will take in 13 major cities including Beijing and Shanghai. Before leaving, the company will perform the same production in venues around Scotland starting in Oban this week.

The Nutcracker begins at the Christmas party in the Stahlbaum household and the young Clara is given a beautiful Nutcracker doll. After everyone has gone to bed and the house is quiet, Clara returns to be with her Nutcracker doll and discovers that he can take her on magical adventures through the land of the Mouse King, dancing snowflakes and the wonderful land of sweets.

The choreographer for this magical seasonal classic is Alexander Bennett. Born in Edinburgh, Mr Bennett achieved international acclaim in the Ballet Rambert and the Royal Ballet. Throughout his years as a principal dancer in both companies he partnered such distinguished ballerinas as Dame Margot Fonteyn and Lynn Seymour, and worked with many of the great choreographers including Peter Darrell, Sir Peter Wright and Sir Robert Helpmann. This production was the last full-length work completed by Mr Bennett.

The Nutcracker is an essential part of wintertime, a wonderful escape for children of all ages into a magical world of snow, sweets and the Sugar Plum Fairy.



Members of the cast of Rupelstiltskin in their 60s get-ups on stage in Taynuilt. 16_05panto1

Taynuilt panto sells out each night

AFTER three successful performances by Taynuilt and District Drama Society (TADDS) Anna Kane, panto director, praised staff for a fantastic show.

The production of Rumpelstiltskin with a cast of 31 including 24 young people was sold out each night.

Anna Kane said: 'I decided to set this panto in the 1960s which meant we then had a great opportunity to use some excellent music and costumes reminiscent of the era.'

'We were lucky enough to have local musician Willie Cameron as our head of music who worked hard on the musical arrangements and he was joined by fellow excellent musicians Winnie McNicol on keyboard and Freddie Nicolson on drums.'

'Another aspect that has made this production so special is the use of so many local references in both the scenery and the ad-libbing. Audiences have really enjoyed the banter and there have been

some amazingly funny and memorable moments such as Queen Lottie and King Clueless arguing over his toy elephant; Bess Dress dancing to Foxy Lady; Justin Tyme and Iona Dress's slow motion sequence as he comes to rescue her and hungry cannibals dancing their way onto the set.

'Rumpelstiltskin's henchmen are dressed as Mods and together they are a great gang of 4 who combine excellent comic timing, singing, dancing and mime with their slick acting performances. Playing the title role is Philip Price who is mesmerising as the villainous Rumpelstiltskin - a true panto baddie to boo and hiss.'

'The whole production has been a great deal of team work with experienced Stage Manager Vivienne Price ensuring the smooth running of each performance. Our final song is the Beatles' 'With a little help from my friends' and this has been the whole ethos of the show - a great team effort and lots of fun!'

Daybreakers - 15
It's 2019 and a plague has transformed almost every human into vampires. It's up to Ethan Hawke, a researcher who refuses to feed on human blood, to perfect a substitute that might sustain vampires and spare humanity. Clever take on the vampire myths with inventive shocks and copious blood loss.

Did You Hear About The Morgans? - PG
Sarah Jessica Parker and Hugh Grant have almost-perfect lives, except for their dissolving marriage. The relationship takes a new turn when they witness a murder and have to escape from New York to a tiny town in Wyoming.

Toy Story - PG
Toy Story 3 is coming, so it's the perfect time to revisit, or see it for the first time on the big screen. Woody and Buzz's first outing. It's 15 years old but still one of the best animated features ever made.

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January 29 & 30 > Ballet West
Corran Halls Nutcracker

Friday 12 February > Abbamania
Corran Halls, Oban

Saturday 13 February > Abbamania
Queens Hall, Dunoon

Netherlorn Piping Society start year 'in the pink'

NETHERLORN Piping Society kicked off 2010 by showing its support for a local charity at its first recital of the year at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Oban.

The night started with a rousing set played by pipe major Angus MacColl and Oban High School Pipe Band, the drummers of which were using pink drumsticks generously donated by BeatStreet, for which the youngsters of the band will make a donation to Breast Cancer Awareness. The band will continue to use the pink drumsticks at future events to show their continued support of the charity.

Norman MacLean
Renowned piper, entertainer and author Norman MacLean joined the society to make a presentation to two of the society's members. Matty McMaster and John Cameron recently left Oban High School and are thus no longer eligible to play with the school's pipe band. Both boys were presented with framed photographs

of the band and inscribed quiches to mark their hard work over the years. The boys, both drummers, announced they will continue playing in the Oban Pipe Band.

It was not just the pipers that were the centre of attention on the night but also the bag pipes themselves. Pipe major Euan Dewar played a set of pipes which had not been played for more than 60 years.

Alexander Morrison Henry, who moved to Oban in 1927 from Ardtornish Estate in Morvern, where he was taught by famous piper Willie Ross, had owned the pipes. Unfortunately, as a relatively young man, serious illness prevented Alex from continuing to play his pipes. He has since passed away.

The bagpipes lay silent for 60 years until Alex's daughter Margaret discovered them at his home and had them refurbished.

The next Netherlorn Piping Society recital will be on February 24, when the guest piper will be Cameron Drummond.



Oban School Pipe Band shows their support for Breast Cancer Awareness 07_topiping01

YOUR STARS WITH PATRICK ARUNDEL

ARIES Mar 21st - Apr 20th 090 6612 4520
This week is dominated by the change of the month and a potent Full Moon. You may also find yourself involved in some feisty exchanges - especially if you find yourself unsure of whom to spend your leisure time with. If you are looking to move in a new circle, an existing friend can feel pushed out. Or is it a partner who will try to dominate your time? Call now for your love scope in full...

TAURUS Apr 21st - May 21st 090 6612 4521
There may be someone you have to deal with on an everyday basis who is set to be a thorn in your side. If you are in a supervisory or management role, it may be an uncooperative colleague or at home, an awkward offspring or partner. Or perhaps you'll find someone rather overbearing. Yet solace comes from a surprise thread, which can delight. Call me now for your in-depth forecast...

GEMINI May 22nd - Jun 21st 090 6612 4522
If you love a good debate, you can be in your element this week, but then a pub quiz could see you sparkle too. Yet there's a fine line between harmless banter and getting into heated encounters which will do little for your blood pressure. Maybe you will have to stand up for yourself, and rightly, but disagreeing over trivial stuff, just isn't worth the hassle Gemini. Call me for more astral advice...

CANCER Jun 22nd - Jul 23rd 090 6612 4523
An unusual person can have a profound affect. This doesn't need to be in a romantic context either it could be someone with dazzling business ideas. You could find yourself drawn to them like a moth to a flame but equally you can feel the need to suddenly separate yourself from someone else, whose company you are no longer enjoying. Call your special Cancer prediction line for more advice...

LEO Jul 24th - Aug 23rd 090 6612 4524
This can be a crunch week for relationships, as Mars in Leo and a Full Moon in your sign, combine to stir some mischief. How? Someone you've recently met may no longer seem so enticing, or you may want to raise your dissatisfaction with a long standing partner. Yet if you are solo, an extra slice of confidence and devilment can draw someone spicy to you. Call now for your love scope in full...

VIRGO Aug 24th - Sep 23rd 090 6612 4525
Prevention is better than cure, so if one of your health resolutions has gone by the wayside, this is an opportune time to get a grip on things. If you feel under par, but can't quite figure out why, don't discount a psychological factor. In fact, the more you hold in any concerns, the more they'll fester. If need be, arrange an appointment with your GP for a chat. Call me for more news and astral advice...

LIBRA Sep 24th - Oct 23rd 090 6612 4526
Think back to the middle of last month. Then you may have had a very clear idea of where you were heading. Now fast-forwards to now. Are things still the same Libra? Umm, maybe not! The reason for this is that for all your hustle and bustle and the undoubted highlights of the year so far, you may find yourself having second thoughts, but if you do, just go with it. Call for more news and advice...

SCORPIO Oct 24th - Nov 22nd 090 6612 4527
An overbearing attitude can disguise just how unsure you really are. Try to avoid getting snared up in politics, instead surf the dynamic energy of Jupiter and Pluto. They encourage you to dismantle the barricades and become more availing to the to and fro of conversation. This may leave you vulnerable, but you will also gain plenty. Why not risk it? Call now for your in-depth forecast...

SAGITTARIUS Nov 23rd - Dec 21st 090 6612 4528
There may be elements of your world that you want to change. If you are single, and have no outstanding obligations, why not? Yet if you have other people in the equation, this may prove much trickier. The trick will be to stay calm. To quietly explain what you want to do. If there is not instant agreement, don't fret. It may be a compromise can yet be reached. Call me now for more news...

CAPRICORN Dec 22nd - Jan 20th 090 6612 4529
As you reach the end of the first month of 2010, do you feel satisfied with how you're balancing up your in and outgoings? If so, you may feel that you deserve a little treat to celebrate. But just recheck your thoughts and your paperwork. Are you sure there are no bills or costs about to come out of the proverbial woodwork? Be prepared Capricorn. Call me now for your financial forecast in full...

AQUARIUS Jan 21st - Feb 19th 090 6612 4530
You might come up against a major challenge or test, but that doesn't mean that you are going to fail, it just means you need to be very sure of how you handle any kind of contentious issue. The best tact is to listen. You can be good at this, realising that even if people are unhappy, it's better for them to get it off their chests and so it can prove. Call your special prediction line for more news...

PISCES Feb 20th - Mar 20th 090 6612 4531
Is someone being truly genuine? If they're not, the revelation of this can prove upsetting. But then it may be you who is finding you want to flow in a new direction, and someone else will find this difficult. However, being evasive might, in the short term, save face or feelings, but when the truth eventually outs, it will just prove far more uncomfortable. Call now for more news and advice...

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Caledonian Hotel, Oban
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A warm welcome to all members and an opportunity for anyone interested to find out about U3A activities.

Comunn Gaidhealach an Obain
Ceilidh
Masonic Hall, Oban
Saturday 6th February, 2010, 7.30pm
Artists
Catriona Fair, John Howie
Morag Smith, Sandy Molison
Pipes: Ian Hurst
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Fear an Taigh: Donald Harrison
Admission £5

Free Public Lecture
Oban High School
Wednesday 3 February 2010
6.30pm

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Professor Antonella Sorace FRSE
Professor of Development Linguistics,
University of Edinburgh
And Dr Thomas Bak
Human Cognitive Neuroscience Team,
University of Edinburgh

The number of bilingual families is rising but there are still many misconceptions about early child bilingualism. Recent research shows that growing up with two languages can enhance specific cognitive skills and bring advantages that may last throughout the lifespan. A panel of cognitive scientists will present these findings and discuss their implications for parents, teachers, and policy makers.



THE BURNS Club of Oban hosted an enjoyable Burns' Supper last Friday in the Regent Hotel, Oban, chaired by Roy Wood.

After the traditional Selkirk Grace, the gathering sat down to the meal after Torquhil Telfer piped in the haggis.

Mr Wood announced a donation of £1,000 to Oban Lifeboat Station with further funds being allocated to Argyll Riding for the Disabled.

The evening's speeches were interspersed by the singing of Peter Sinclair and fiddle player Maurice Duncan. The immortal memory was given by Stewart McBain and Jim MacMillan, Inveraray, gave an entertaining rendition of Tam O' Shanter, moving round the tables, acting out the tale as it unfolded. Dr Iain MacNicol from Appin proposed the toast The Land We Live In, while Councillor Roddy McCuish proposed a hilarious Toast to the Lassies. George Seaton rounded off the speeches with the vote of thanks and the evening closed with a lusty rendition of Auld Lang Syne.



Norman MacLean presented framed prints to school leavers Matty McMaster and John Cameron 07_topiping02



Pipe Major Euan Dewar with bagpipes played for the first time in over 60 years 07_topiping03

The Nutcracker

Ballet West

Corran Halls, Oban
Friday 29 Jan 2010
7.30pm

Saturday 30 Jan 2010
7.30pm

£10/£8

01631 567333

Benderloch Burns Supper boosts local charity

A BURNS Supper organised by Homestart Lorn in the Victory Hall, Benderloch, has raised £1,000 for the charity.

Alex and Carol Needham from the Waterfront Restaurant in Oban provided the catering and the staff for the event, held last Friday, and a great turnout from the people of Benderloch and the surrounding area contributed to the success of the evening.

Twelve-year-old George Needham drew a huge cheer from guests after he gave the Address to the Haggis.

Homestart Lorn co-ordinator Aileen Binner said: 'My thanks to the Needhams, the piper Emma Law and all the excellent speakers and performers.'

'This was the first time I have organised a Burns Supper and I am ecstatic that it has raised so much money for the charity.'

Appin celebrates the Bard

CREAGAN Inn hosted the Appin Burns Supper on Monday, which acted as a fundraiser for the village's youth club.

Entertaining speeches were given by Ian Weir (The Immortal Memory), Iain McNicol (Toast to the Lassies), Marina Colthart (Reply from the Lassies) and Ethel Johnston (The Land We Live In), who was attending her first Burns supper.

Humorous
Rev Roderick Campbell chaired the evening and Stuart Carmichael gave a humorous vote of thanks.

In his opening address Rev Campbell said: 'The youth club is going to be an important part our

community. There has been a lot of enthusiasm for it so far but that has to be maintained.'

He added: 'The gun club has offered to teach the youngsters how to shoot clay pigeons and I have done my bit by allocating some land in front of The Manse to help them learn how to look after a garden!'

Appin's young people were well represented by Allan Carmichael, who gave the Selkirk Grace at the beginning of the night and Aimee MacDonald, who sang three Burns songs.

The company also sang some of the more popular Burns songs, including Auld Lang Syne to bring the evening to a close.

Mid Argyll community takes plan for the future into its own hands

EVERY resident in Craignish will be asked their views on the future of the area, as part of a new document to influence planners, council officials and community priorities.

Surveys will be sent to every home and children will also be given their say in the first community plan of its kind in Argyll and Bute.

Craignish Community Council started the project in response to Argyll and

Bute Council's Local Plan, which guides land use, planning and environmental decisions for the next five years.

Mary Smith, secretary of the steering group, said: 'There was a feeling that although Argyll and Bute Council had done a lot of consultation with communities, it is very difficult in an area like Argyll to get to the bottom of all the issues.'

'Some of the things that were put in

the local plan for Craignish were not necessarily what we would want.'

The project was launched last Friday at Craignish Village Hall and 60 people turned out to give their views on local priorities.

Input

Ms Smyth said their plan would have more community input and will be put to councillors to adopt as planning guidance.

'I think it will be at a much more local level,' she added. 'The community have more ownership of it. In terms of actual planning, it will highlight areas that the community do not want developed and areas that could be developed.'

Fergus Murray, development policy manager for the council, was present at the launch.

He said the Craignish approach could be an example to other communities seeking

to influence the council's plans. Mr Murray said: 'It was suggested that the community could take forward its own settlement plan with input from council officials at key stages of the process.'

'This new plan, which is subject to extensive public engagement conducted by a local steering group, is intended to inform the new Local Development Plan and hopefully serve as a pilot project for others.'

Lochgilhead pool meeting seeks solution

KEY PLAYERS in the fight to save Mid Argyll Swimming Pool recently met with MSP Jim Mather at Lochgilhead.

Representatives from Argyll and Bute Council, NHS Highland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Strathclyde Police, Atlantis Leisure in Oban and Mid Argyll Round Table gathered to seek ways forward for the cash-struck facility.

Jenny Davies, from Mid Argyll Community Enterprises Limited, the pool board, said: 'It's a constant battle.'

'We're fire-fighting with money and we need a way forward.'

She added: 'We try to apply for grant funding but no-one will even look at us because we're running at a deficit.'

'It's a Catch 22 situation.'

A number of potential business development strategies are now being looked at by the board.

Speaking after the meeting Jim Mather said: 'I feel that we made a good deal of progress. Those present got a far better understanding of the underlying problems faced by the pool.'

'It is my hope that the co-operation and collaboration that was evident will be what is needed to help the pool back to a sustainable basis and one that will greatly benefit the community in the future.'

Fears grow for the future of 'west coast community' of Orca

A COMMUNITY, or pod, of Orca whales has been identified off the west coast of Scotland - but a two-year study on the group of nine is predicting that its numbers will fall.

The Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust (HWDT) and PhD student Andy Foote have together been studying the small population of killer whales.

The 'west coast community', as they are known in the field, was identified using a technique called photo-identification (photo-ID), so that each animal in the group could be recognised by unique markings on their dorsal fins.

The photo-ID studies have also revealed that of the nine individuals in the pod, there are four males and five females.

However, the conservation status of the group is thought to be critical since no live calves have been sighted since research began almost two decades ago.

Unlike the other orca populations in the north Atlantic, which feed primarily on pelagic fish and seals, HWDT still has little evidence of what the west coast group is feeding on, although it is likely it is feeding on other cetaceans, such as harbour porpoises and possibly minke whales.



The 'west coast community' of orca whales.

MEP backs fight for clearer labelling of Scottish produce



Struan Stevenson MEP is calling on the public to back a better labelling of food campaign.

IF IT states Scottish on the label, it should only contain Scottish produce claims an MEP who is campaigning for the clearer labelling of food.

Struan Stevenson MEP said that accurate information on the label is not only of great importance to the producer but also to local retailers and their customers.

He said: 'In these tough economic times local businesses and farmers need our support.'

'Locally sourced produce is no longer a fashionable phrase, it now relates to the

very survival of local shops and businesses.'

The Conservative MEP, who has been a member of the parliament in Brussels for 11 years and is well known for his commitment to animal welfare issues, said the people of Scotland recognise the quality of home-grown produce and want to buy food that is genuinely Scottish.

Duped

'For too long consumers have been duped by products that have been mislabelled or not labelled at all,' he said.

'For example Scottish Smoked Salmon and Smoked Scottish Salmon can mean entirely different things, with the former being foreign salmon smoked in Scotland and the latter being Scottish salmon potentially smoked and packaged abroad.'

'Consumers are in the dark about which country is really responsible for our produce. This is misleading and unacceptable.'

'It is about time that producers are given clear guidelines for labelling and I will continue to campaign

to have existing legislation changed to reflect the choice and clarity that consumers expect.'

'I want people to know that if it says produced in Scotland on the label, the central ingredient is at least of Scottish origin.'

Campaign

Struan Stevenson added he wants the public to join the fight for proper labelling of food and is asking his constituents to join in the campaign and help protect Scotland's local farmers and businesses.

Food fans slow down for weekend celebration

AROUND 30 producers, cooks and fans of quality west coast food are planning a special culinary celebration.

The 'slow food' weekend, to be held at Ardornish House, Morvern, over the weekend of February 6 and 7, is planned as the antedote to bland, fast, mass produced cuisine.

It will also be the annual general meeting of the West Highlands and Islands Slow Food group, which has been showcasing regional ingredients, produced with time and care, since it was founded six years ago.

Jane Stuart-Smith, who runs the Whitehouse Restaurant and founded the local slow food group, said the principles of good food, produced cleanly and fairly, fit naturally with the west coast's culinary traditions.

'There is tremendous enthusiasm, and it's not just tourists, it's everyone,' she said.

'The real difficulty is getting hold of it. The shellfish are all shipped to Spain and our beef is mostly sent away to be finished.'

The weekend has proved so popular it is fully booked with crofters, restaurateurs, producers and food writers.

On the menu are talks from Sarah Heward, co-founder and owner of the Real Food Cafe in Tyndrum, and Marjory and Tom Nelson, of Glengorm, Isle of Mull, as well as a chance to sample tasty local beef and other quality ingredients.

'Our speakers in different ways show the very best of our region,' said Jane. 'We are pretty practical but we do like to have fun and eat well at the same time.'

Man versus mountain



PHYSICALLY shaking George Berry, aged 53, took the first tentative steps to a new body this week by walking through the doors of a health club in Oban.

The warm hearted Obanite has made a life changing decision to lose more than eight stones in weight and raise money for Oban Hospice. And he is terrified.

George has been many things in his time - fireman, taxi driver, delivery driver, radio presenter, model maker and tenor drummer but few would have imagined that one day he would also be a fitness guru.

George hopes by shedding the pounds he will raise £10,000 for Oban Hospice and help other people to get fit alongside him.

The man, who really will be worth his weight in gold, joined Energie Fitness last Thursday evening and vowed to get fit to climb Ben Nevis in September. No mean feat for a man who says he is regularly ridiculed because of his size.

George said: 'I am absolutely terrified about being a member of the gym. I always thought I was too big to go to the gym. But they are very kind here at Energie Fitness.'

'Every since I was a child I have been ridiculed

for being big. And as I have grown older it has gotten steadily worse. It took my confidence away and I never thought it would be possible for me to be slim - diets don't work.'

'It wasn't until last summer that I decided that I wanted to take charge of my health. It was a lovely summer, so my wife Caroline and I would go walks along the new Ganavan to Dunbeg path, where nobody could see me. I was ashamed that I was exercising. But I needn't have worried - that path is busier than George Street.'

'One day Graham MacQueen saw me and said that I should be raising money while I was exercising. And basically he has stalked me ever since to join the gym.'

'It is MacQueen Bros. who are sponsoring me to be a member of the gym, along with my wife Caroline, and it is Graham who has organised me with sponsorship forms to start raising money.'

'I think the world of the people raising money for Oban Hospice. My brother, Michael, has brain damage and brittle bone disease staying in a hospice in Inverness. I only wish that there was a similar place in Oban.'

'I have always wanted to climb Ben Nevis and I would

be so pleased if as many people as possible sponsor me to lose weight and climb the mountain - while raising money for Oban Hospice.'

Sponsorship forms to support George can be picked up at Energie Fitness, MacQueen Bros Charity Shop and Oban Express.

The Oban Times will be following George's progress at Energie Fitness every week in Lorn Lines - sponsored by MacQueen Bros.

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Robin Morton from Energie Fitness with George and wife Carolyn.

The Oban Times

& West Highland Times

Unpalatable but unavoidable

MANY of the proposed savings in this year's Argyll and Bute Council budget will come as a shock to the public.

Several organisations first learned they face a funding cut when The Oban Times contacted them to ask their views - that is avoidable and unacceptable. But there is no getting away from it, the economic situation and settlement for local authorities leaves less in the pot.

The books must be balanced and it would be irresponsible of a council to simply swallow its financial reserves instead of living within its means. Going back on a three-year deal to freeze council tax would incur penalties that rule out this option. It is easy to criticise individual proposals but it is no doubt much more difficult to be in the shoes of councillors tasked with making the final decisions.

Glasgow Letter

Plenty Gaelic

CELTIC Connections may have widened its remit in the past few years but there is still plenty Gaelic and traditional west coast music on the programme.

Last weekend, for example, was a bonanza but I will have to restrict my comments to the concerts I attended.

Where better to start than with the James Graham Trio in St Andrew's in the Square where James was accompanied by James Ross, piano, and Neil Johnstone, cello. Yet again he showed why he was a worthy winner of the Young Traditional Musician of the Year a few years ago.

The second part of the evening featured Maggie MacInnes, together with Brian McAlpine and Anna Massie, and she included much of the material from her fifth solo album, *A Fagail Mhìughhaligh*.

Each year at Celtic Connections Ceol's Craic has concerts on three consecutive evenings in the CCA and on Friday evening the event was shared with their Irish partners Colmille.

From Ireland there was traditional singing as well as Nuala Kennedy, flute and whistles, and her band, while the main act of the evening was Rachel Walker and friends. Fiona Dunn, Glasgow University's first Gaelic officer, together with Hamish Napier, keyboard, and James Lindsay, double bass, set the mood for more Gaelic song. Rachel's third solo album, which is well worth buying, was launched at this concert and she was accompanied on stage by an array of talent. James Graham assisted with vocals and with Rachel also playing keyboard the band was made up of Catherine Boyle, Jenna Reid, Angus MacKenzie, Ewan Robertson, Alec Dalgligh and Barry Caulfield. Quite a band and they can all be heard on the new CD, *Air Chall*.

Last week I reported on the opening concert which concentrated on bridging the gap between the classical and traditional genres and a concert in the City Halls also did just that.

Normally we associate Aly Bain with Phil Cunningham but on this occasion it was Aly and 11 string players making up a Scottish ensemble. This music turned out to be sensational as Aly took us on a journey through Norway and Sweden as well as his own Shetland. It was followed by Karen Matheson playing with the ensemble. Not just the ensemble, of course, because the packed hall was treated to the presence on stage of Donald Shaw, James Grant, Mike McGoldrick, Brendan Power and Ewen Vernal.

For those with time to spare during the day, there was the privilege of being able to attend Norman MacLean in conversation with Iain Anderson. Fellow Uisteach Mairi MacInnes was also present. This was an hour of humour and laughter as Norman regaled the sizeable audience with excerpts from his book, *The Leper's Bell*.

Tales of his youth and schooldays in Glasgow were hilarious and, of course, his city life within a Hebridean family was similar to that of many of us.

To complete a most enjoyable lunchtime session Mairi sang a couple of songs.

New Year Dance

DESPITE the conflict with Ceol's Craic, more than 150 attended the New Year Dance run by Glasgow Uist and Berneray Association in Glasgow University Union.

This was a most successful occasion with a range of age groups thoroughly enjoying dancing to the music of Deoch 'n Dorus who, of course, have recently released their second excellent CD.

Haiti disaster

AT VERY short notice a concert in aid of the victims of the Haiti earthquake has been organised to take place in the Gaelic School this coming Saturday at 7.30pm.

Performing will be at least 14 winners of either, or both, the Gold Medal or the Traditional Medal at the Mod together with others.

Diary dates

Thursday January 28: Glasgow Sutherland Association, Burns' Night, Buffs Club, Dumbarton Road, 7pm. Showcase Scotland, Fred Morrison, Old Blind Dogs, Alyth McCormack, The Shee, ABC Glasgow, 7.30pm. Traditional Songs of Scotland, Universal Club, 8pm.

Friday January 29: Helensburgh and District Highlanders Association, ceilidh dance, Commodore Hotel, 7.30pm. Finlay MacDonald and friends and Mhairi Hall Trio, Strathclyde Suite, 7.30pm. Strathclyde Night, St Andrew's in the Square, 7.30pm. MacGregor, Brechin and O'hEadhra, Tron Theatre, 8pm. Session A9 with Kris Drever, Old Fruitmarket, 9pm.

Saturday January 30: Glasgow Islay Association Burns' ceilidh, Maryhill Community Hall, 7pm. College of Piping, 65th birthday celebrations, Shotts and Dykehead and Inveraray/Stuart Liddell. Motherwell and District Highlander's Association ceilidh dance, Dalziel St Andrew's Church Hall, 7.30pm. TMSA Young Trad Tour with guests from Plockton High School, Strathclyde Suite, 1pm. Take the Floor, Pearce Institute, 7pm. Duncan Chisholm and Skaidi, St Andrew's in the Square, 7.30pm. Griogair Labraidh, City Halls, Recital Room, 8pm. Haiti Disaster Concert - see above.

Sunday January 31: BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year, City Halls, 5pm. Young Musician of the Year 10th birthday bash, Strathclyde Suite, 9pm. Peatbog Faeries, Old Fruitmarket, 8pm.

Friday February 5: Perth Gaelic Society lecture/ceilidh, St Matthew's Church Hall, Tay Street, Perth, 7.30pm.

Saturday February 6: Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association marag supper, Partick Burgh (Lesser) Hall, 7.45pm.

Pub scene

PARTING Glass will play in the Islay Inn on Friday with Deoch 'n Dorus on Saturday while in the Park Bar this weekend it will be Ballochmyle on Friday, John Burns Ceilidh Band with Islay MacTaggart on Saturday and Willie Cameron/Martin Pottinger on Sunday.

Neil Murray. Tel: 0141 954 8105. Email: neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk.



Port Ellen FC show their new colours

Here is a picture from our sporting past - Port Ellen Football Club from the Isle of Islay on the day that they received their new strips from team sponsor Angus McQueen. Back row, left to right: A McQueen, sponsor, B MacAulay, C McMillan, N Johnston, K Campbell, B O'Neill, G Ferguson, C Graham, manager. Front row: G Campbell, D Holyoake, C Campbell, D Carmichael, J Campbell, R Johnston, A Cumming, coach.. We would like readers to send in flashback photographs and photographs of *The Oban Times* being read in far flung places. 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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Needless slaughter

Sir, I write with reference to the needless and heartless slaughter of the red deer stags on January 8.

The blame is being laid at the door of the Forestry Commission. They are instructed to cull any animal that could cause damage to plantations.

The commission rangers are known for being too eager - if it moves shoot it - to help maintain their targets.

In this case they are true to form, but surely some compassion should have been shown due to the deer being in the plantation in the first place because of the severe weather conditions?

In this case I believe both parties should have shown some modicum of common sense and removed the deer from the plantation back onto Mr Cameron's land from whence they came, and they should have been fed temporarily to keep them out of the forest plantation.

In the end it is Mr Cameron's income that will suffer come the stag hunting season at the end of the year.

I also believe that the ranger guilty of pulling the trigger should be severely reprimanded if not actually dismissed, as he has the ultimate sanction for causing bad publicity and bringing the Commission in to disrepute.

Penny Airlie, Ford.

Disgust at deer cull

Sir, After reading the article in *The Oban Times* of the slaughtered deer I was totally disgusted.

Our red deer are a very important part of Scottish wildlife and are managed by estates throughout Scotland in a proper manner.

What a shame Forestry Enterprise does not manage its work in the same way. It is obvious that fences were in a state of disrepair. The deer sought refuge

where they could during the adverse weather conditions - a natural thing for them to do. As Mr Cameron says, manpower from various estates were prepared to carry out a deer drive to help, men who are passionate about deer management, but sadly for these deer this was not to take place.

This begs the question: was it too much like hard work or too much in hourly pay for Forestry Enterprise rangers and contractors to do the deer drive? Was the bullet cheaper?

What a sad state of affairs. Once again we see a government-funded organisation culling deer and taking the law of nature into their own hands.

Sarah Walker, by e-mail.

Questions need answered

Sir, I congratulate *The Oban Times* for printing the deer slaughter photograph and story in last week's edition.

The stalker who aired the subject is also to be congratulated for letting the public know what is going on behind our backs and with our money.

Slaughter of deer should surely be done by local stalkers and at the right time and the correct animals taken out, not by other people brought in by the Forestry Commission.

I always thought the Forestry Commission was for protecting the countryside and the livestock on it, not destroying what is needed by the other estates where a stalker's living depends on a decent number of animals for shooting at the right time of year.

What I hate most is that as well as the unnecessary slaughter all over Lochaber, including my remote area, we have to pay for it in our taxes. How many of us want this mass slaughter in our name?

Definitely not me and I'm sure many more like-minded people.

All this destruction could

have been avoided if the Forestry Commission and any other landowners used fences instead of blaming deer for damage. How can deer know which area to graze on or where to shelter? We need answers to a lot of questions.

Name and address supplied.

Blood money and greed

Sir, With regard to Stephen Norris' article last week, I do not agree with hand rearing deer for shooting in estates controlled by a bunch of foreigners to provide sport for the elite, who pay for the privilege of sometimes wounding beautiful creatures through poor marksmanship, only to pursue them to finish them off by other means.

Secondly, to slaughter weak animals sheltering from the worst winter in decades - unless it is to stop their suffering - is nothing short of barbaric.

Is there no one left who respects these beautiful creatures, or is it all about blood money and greed?

Elizabeth Walker, Milngavie.

Luing link must embrace tidal power

Sir, If this project, which has been mooted on several occasions in the past, is actually to go ahead in the form of a low level causeway or bridge, it will close the safe sheltered passage through Cuan Sound to smaller vessels, avoiding the sometimes very rough Sound of Luing.

For this reason, as one of many sailors who use the passage regularly, I would oppose the project.

However, if the project is to go ahead, it should not be carried out with a narrow remit solely to form a causeway or bridge to Luing.

The tidal stream which runs through this narrow channel is one of the strongest in the area, and the opportunity exists to create a first for this area in harnessing this massive tidal power to generate electricity from one of the best sustainable sources known - tidal, which is probably the ultimate in renewable energy sources, as it is only dependent on the reliable naturally occurring tidal variation.

Technology is currently available to harness this source, and it would be

extremely short sighted to allow the construction of a crossing without incorporating a tidal power generation system.

The link to the National Grid is available via existing cables at the Sound of Luing, so connection costs should be minimal, and the opportunity to generate income should not be overlooked.

If our cash strapped council cannot fund this, then perhaps a partnership with one of the power generation companies would prove lucrative, and the fixed link could be funded by the partner at minimal cost to the council.

Eric Chapman, Oban.

Causeway not the solution

Sir, Your front page article of January 21 suggests that Luing may be provided with a fixed link by means of a causeway across Cuan Sound to replace the existing ferry service.

It is not long since Argyll and Bute Council paid consultants to advise on a crossing (2007 - see Argyll and Bute Council website - STAG1 Report) and they came down in favour of an improved ferry service or a high-level bridge in order to maintain navigation.

One wonders whether those who have chosen to buy or rent accommodation on Luing did not appreciate at the time that it is an island; and surely that is part of its charm.

Cuan Sound provides a short and sheltered navigation route between the Firth of Lorn and Loch Melfort and is an important navigation channel.

In order for it to be closed by a causeway there would need to be consent from the Scottish Government under Section 34 of the Coast Protection Act, which deals with obstructions to navigation, and also from the Crown Estate on whose seabed it would be located.

Let us hope that neither of these consents is ever granted; certainly before that could happen there would be a case in the High Court.

There is only one possible solution for a fixed link to Luing and that is a high-level bridge like that to Scalpay in the Outer Hebrides, or to Skye from the mainland, and that would be prohibitively expensive.

The only realistic transport solution is for an improved ferry service.
Colin Davidson, Ardfern.

A VIEW FROM THE TOWER

By McCAIG



'A Man's a Man..'

THIS week, we have been celebrating the 251st anniversary of the birth of our National Bard Robert Burns.

After all the high profile celebrations and commemorations last year will Burns' Suppers return to their usual fare and, on occasion, eloquence from some local dignitary who knows a bit about the 'plowman lad', or more usually a decent soul with a liking for the Bard's works who has been prevailed upon to propose the Immortal Memory, the Land We Live In, or The Lassies and has sweated blood over his speech until it has become so thoroughly polished that it slides off his tongue over the heads of his audience.

Of course, there are no replies to the Toast to the Lassies if the event is done by the rules of the World Burns Federation but, increasingly many have become mixed affairs and some of the best speeches have come in the feminine replies.

I recollect two, both of which happened at Burns Suppers that I had helped to organise with my good friend John MacGregor, formerly of the Taynuilt Hotel and currently with others at Oban's Argyllshire Gathering Hall.

Marina Curran Coltart, Argyll and Bute Council's Bio-diversity Officer, in her charming Irish brogue, did a superb job while Chief Inspector - now Chief Superintendent - Ciorstan Shearer proved she knew her Burns and could tell superbly crafted jokes to earn a standing ovation.

But what would Robbie have thought of the whole idea of a Burns Supper and especially of ladies making speeches?

As for the food and, of course, the dram, he would have been really enthusiastic.

All too often, it is forgotten that while he may have been just a 'peasant' he was in reality someone with a good education and able, after his Kilmarnock edition came out, to hold court at the fashionable tables of Edinburgh society.

As for ladies making speeches, I'm sure if Robbie had been alive today Mrs Colthart and Mrs Shearer would have been immortalised in verse.

'A hard road but one that cannot be denied'

ALAN Cochrane, a leading Scottish journalist and an economic realist, has frequently queried our First Minister's failure to

recognise that we are in recession.

And no matter how often Alex Salmond says we are going to spend our way out of it, reality tells the rest of his Cabinet and most of business and academic Scotland that we can't and won't.

For one thing, we don't ultimately control our own purse-strings and therefore there's another Scot - this time a member of the British Cabinet, Alastair Darling, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who ultimately can deny Mr Salmond the cash to go on spending largesse.

Perhaps we should remember the thorny question of the cost and where it is to come from for the third Forth Bridge has not been settled and appears to be languishing in some file somewhere in St Andrews House awaiting divine intervention.

Unfortunately, because of Mr Salmond's almost flippant attitude to thrift the idea has got abroad that 'things aren't really that bad' and we can still spend, spend, spend.

Now, that might have been Fred Goodwin economics at one time but look what happened to him and his bank.

Mind you, had he succeeded in what he was trying to do, he would have been lauded all round the world even by little old Morningside ladies.

The acid-tongued Gordon strikes again

AT THE end of last year, I drew attention to the vitriol that seems to pour from the pen of a distinctly acidic journalist: Tom Gordon who has connections with Herald newspapers.

Last time, it was my old friend Sir Jamie McGrigor who was the butt of his scorn as he had lost his driving licence for having too many penalty points for speeding on it. I'm happy to report he has got it back.

Now, it is Annabel Goldie, the Scottish Tory Parliamentary Leader, who seems to cause Mr Gordon to have a severe dose of dyspepsia over Auntie Annabel travelling on the Bishopton to Edinburgh train first class.

This has cost the Scottish Government around £10,000 over the past four years. So what? That's just over £2,000 a year, or £55 a week, which must be something like the equivalent of three return journeys a week. Of course, Mr Gordon cycles to and fro from Auld Reekie!

McCaig

Caring for Oban Bay swans

Sir, Do people realise that Oban swans have their own bank account held by Iain Campbell, who feeds them wheat every morning?

The Scottish Wildlife Trust contribute, as do many visitors in the summer.

If there are any vet bills, as there were with a dying swan recently, Argyll Animal Aid foots the bill.

Mr Campbell keeps in touch with Mr McAvoy regularly and it was he who reported their oiled state.

Should anyone wish to contribute, the account is held at the Royal Bank of Scotland titled Oban Bay Swans.

Jane Lloyd, Laurel Road, Oban.

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.

Point heifers sell to £990 at Stirling

UNITED Auctions sold 902 store cattle, 61 cast cows and 250 store sheep at Stirling last Wednesday when both bullocks and heifers showed a considerable rise on the last sale.

Bullocks averaged 186.59p (+21.49p) and sold to 239.4p per kg for a 118kg Blonde D'Aquataine cross from Drumelzier and £1,090 for a 648kg Charolais cross from Wester Borland.

Heifers averaged 178.25p (+3.85) and sold to 208.1p per kg for a 394kg Limousin cross from Monzie and £990 for a 572kg and 504kg Charolais cross and Limousin cross from Point and Monzie, respectively.

Cast cows averaged 105.35p and sold to 140.8p and £1085 for a British Blue cross from High Unthank.

Texel cross hogs from Point sold to £75.50 and £75 with Texel ewes from the same home fetching £64.

Bullocks sell to 237p per kilo at Lochmaddy

DINGWALL and Highland Marts Ltd sold 108 store cattle, five breeding cattle and six Over 30 Month cattle at Lochmaddy when all classes met an excellent demand.

Bullocks averaged 196.2p and sold to 237p per kg for a pen of 270kg Limousin crosses from 10 Hougharry, Lochmaddy and £760 for a 345kg Limousin cross from 4 Tigharry, Lochmaddy.

Heifers averaged 167.9p and sold to 209.8p per kg for a 305kg Limousin cross from 4 Tigharry, and £770 for a 575kg Charolais cross from 25 Balmore, Bayhead. Breeding cattle sold to £1,260 for a Simmental in-calf cow from 6 Newton, Lochmaddy.

OTM cattle sold to 96.3p per kg for a 675kg Simmental cross from 15 Tigharry, Lochmaddy, and £880 for a 920kg Limousin from 8 Balranald, Tigharry.

Courses encouraged as new snaring laws come into force

NEWS LAWS covering the use of snares in Scotland will come into force on Thursday, March 11 which will mean that snares must be checked at least once every day at intervals of no more than 24 hours to make sure they are free-running.

The news laws state that snares must be fitted with

a safety stop at a length determined by the intended target species and must be staked to the ground or attached to prevent them being dragged.

Snares must also be set in locations where the target species can be safely restrained.

The legislation is

broadly in line with advice contained in the existing code of practice: Snaring in Scotland: A Practitioners' Guide, written by the land management industry group and endorsed by Scottish Government.

New training courses have been developed to help people comply with the

law. BASC Scotland, the Scottish Gamekeepers Association and the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust have collaborated to produce and provide training in the use of snares in Scotland.

BASC Scotland Director Dr Colin Shedden said:

'BASC welcomes the introduction of this legislation as it reinforces the advice contained in the Practitioners' Guide, published by the industry last year.

'We are always seeking to improve the welfare of animals restrained by snares and to reduce the risk to

non-target species and this new legislation will help.

'We would encourage people to take part in the new snaring accreditation courses and to follow the advice contained in the Practitioners' Guide.

'Copies are available free of charge from BASC Scotland.'

Trade remains high at Oban

CALEDONIAN Marts (Stirling) Ltd had forward 1,249 store hoggets, feeding ewes and 49 store cattle at Oban last Tuesday when the recent high trading levels were maintained.

Hoggets sold to £84 for Texels from Mackie Campbell Trust, Kilberry Home Farm and to £80.50 for Cheviots from Knock. Ewes sold to £80 for Texels from F Ronald, Saulmore Farm, Connel, with Cheviots from Poltalloch selling to £65.

Tups sold to £80 for a Texel from I Campbell & Son, Strongorm and Bargvilean.

Bullocks sold to £600 for a consignment from A McDonald, 19 East Hynish, Isle of Tiree while heifers sold to £540 twice from J McNicol & Sons, Turnault and from D McDonald, No.3 Balevullin, Tiree.

Breeding Cattle sold to £680 for in-calf Saler heifers from J Gillies, Garrygall, Isle of Barra.

Over 30 Month cattle sold to £565 from Dunadd.

Findhorn Aberdeen Angus herd attracts keen interest

DINGWALL and Highland Marts Ltd sold 26 Aberdeen Angus cattle at a dispersal sale on behalf of the Executors of Messrs Stark, Aiten Farm, Ardsier, (Findhorn herd).

Bulls sold to 4,400gns for the five-year old Duncanziemere Edwin by Rawburn Transformer and out of Duncanziemere Edwina.

Cows with female calves sold to 1,600gns for Findhorn Petula, a Nightingale Regent daughter out of Findhorn Petite, with Findhorn Petra at foot.

In-calf cows sold to 1,850gns for Findhorn Jilleen Erica, a daughter of Ballyheather Denmark and out of Findhorn Jill Erica.

Heifers sold to 1700gns for Findhorn Jilly Erica, out of Findhorn Jilleen Erica and by Duncanziemere Edwina.

Bullocks sold to 720gns.



Caroline Ronald sets off to fetch more water for her animals at Saulmore Farm after her mains water supply was shut off without warning. 07_105car01

Connel farm had water supply cut off Scottish Water to investigate lack of communication

A WOMAN who runs a catering business single-handedly from her farm was without water for her business and her livestock for nearly two weeks after Scottish Water turned off her water supply without telling her - and forgot to turn it on again.

Investigation Scottish Water has apologised to Caroline Ronald, of Saulmore Farm, Connel, for not making contact and have begun an investigation into the matter.

Mrs Ronald had assumed that she had become a victim

of the big freeze when, on January 8, her water supply suddenly stopped. She was forced to reply on daily trips to her father's house a few miles away to fill containers for her and her animals.

Twelve days later, on January 20, the farm water supply was still off and Mrs Ronald contacted Scottish Water to be told that the supply had been turned off by the company.

Mrs Ronald said: 'I was so angry because I would have understood if they had warned me but they just shut it off without any notice.

'I have spoken to other

people in and around the village who believe they were also cut off without being informed.

Freezing 'All that time I assumed there was a problem with pipes freezing and I just had to make do. I didn't contact Scottish Water because I thought they would have a lot of other people to worry about, like young families and older people.'

The water at Saulmore Farm was back on again at 1.25pm on January 20 - 20 minutes after Mrs Ronald telephone call.

A spokesman for Scottish

Water said: 'A Scottish Water operator who was working in the area noticed water rising near the farm and closed a valve to stop the water leaking.'

'Scottish Water tried to speak to the customer at the property at that time but got no reply. Unfortunately we did not follow this up and this was an oversight on our part for which we have apologised.'

'Scottish Water has been dealing with a large number of bursts caused by the recent severe weather and the volume of work was a factor in this incident.'

Suckled calves sell to £855 and 238 pence per kilo at Lochboisdale

UNITED Auctions held their Annual January Sale of all classes of cattle and sheep at Lochboisdale Auction Mart when 231 cattle and a few sheep were sold.

A good offering of suckled calves and store cattle met spirited bidding with 10 months old suckled calves selling to £855 for Limousin crosses from No136 Stilligarry.

Dunganachy, Benbecula led the top call per kilo when their Limousin bullock calves sold to 238 pence and this was closely followed by heifers from No261 Daliburgh when their Simmental heifer calves sold at 233 pence per kilo.

Heifer calves per head sold to £800, also Simmental crosses, this time from No344 North Boisdale.

Breeding cattle sold to £900 for in-calf cows from No8 Kildonan whilst farrow cows from No12 Ormiclate sold to £880.

Prime sheep trade rises at Stirling

UNITED Auctions sold 4,714 prime sheep including 3,707 hogs averaging 210.4p (+24.7p) and 1,007 ewes and rams at Stirling last Thursday.

Texel hogs from Kinneil Mill sold to £108, with Invermillon selling Suffolks to £104.

Killoccraw sold Cheviots to £93.50 and 234p per kilo while Gleneherve sold Mules to £93, with Mules from Gartvaigh selling to 221p per kilo.

Texel ewes from Oatfield sold to £160 with Mules from Whitehouse selling to £129.

Market reports

LOCHMADDY Dingwall and Highland Marts

Bullocks up to 250kg - Ardmore, Carinish, £560, 224p; 251-300kg - 10 Hougharry, £640, 7 Middlequarter, Solas, 225.9p;

301-350kg - 1 Stilligarry, Lochboisdale, £740, 9 Illeray, Lochmaddy, 232.3p; 351-400kg - 2 Hougharry, £720, 202.8p.

Heifers up to 250kg - 8 Balranald, £450, 15 Tigharry, 187.5p;

251-300kg - 4 Tigharry, £620, 206.7p;

301-350kg - 4 Tigharry, £640, 10 Hougharry, 187.5p; 351-400kg - 7 Tigharry, £650, 178.1p;

401-450kg - 9 Clachan Sands, Lochmaddy, £710, 161.4p; 451-500kg - 16 Tigharry, Lochmaddy, £720, 156.5p.

Breeding cattle In calf heifers: SimX - Hastain, Bayhead, £1,020; LimX - Hastain, £900. In calf cows: LimX - 8 Balranald, £1,000; Sim - 6 Newton, £1,000.

LOCHBOISDALE United Auctions

Bullocks Aberdeen AngusX: £755(2) and £740 299 Kilpheder £705 319 Kilpheder £665 4 Kildonan £660 352 South Boisdale £655 and £635 11 Howmore £620 301 Kilpheder £605 319 Kilpheder

£600 136 Stilligarry. LimousinX: £855, £835, £830, £815 and £800 136 Stilligarry £795 1 Drimisdale £785 136 Stilligarry £755 1 Milton £745 356 South Boisdale £720 3 Bunavullin £710 18 West Gerinish £705 3 Askernish £700 352 South Boisdale £685 3 Askernish and 11 Howmore £680 5 Dunmor £670 14 West Gerinish £655 3 Askernish and 11 Howmore £645 136 Stilligarry, 5 Dunmor and 11 Howmore £640 18 West Gerinish £635 356 South Boisdale, 6 Dunganachy, 301 Kilpheder and 271 Daliburgh £625 6 Dunganachy £620 7 Frobost £615 6 Dunganachy £610 458 North Lochboisdale £605 6 Dunganachy, 7 Eoligarry, Barra, 3 Askernish and 44 Linique £600 6 Dunganachy, 202 Stoneybridge, 18 West Gerinish, 1 Milton and 458 North Lochboisdale. SalerX: £625 3 Askernish ShorthornX: £685 438 North Lochboisdale. SimmentalX: £825 Cnoc An Torr £800 and £770 348 North Boisdale £760 344 North Boisdale £750 328 North Boisdale and 344 North Boisdale £735 342 North Boisdale £725 328 North Boisdale and 342 North Boisdale £715 15 Bornish £705 (2) 328 North Boisdale £685 439/1 North Lochboisdale £665 15 Bornish £605 253 Daliburgh.

Heifers British BlueX: £700 8 Kildonan CharolaisX: £590 8 Kildonan LimousinX: £750, £635 and £605(2) 136 Stilligarry £590 3 Bunavullin, Eriskay £585 271 Daliburgh £575 5 Dunmor and 5a Balla. SimmentalX: £800 344 North Boisdale £760 328 North Boisdale £710 348 North Boisdale £700 291 Daliburgh £690 328 North Boisdale £660 348 North Boisdale £636 344 North Boisdale £600 342 North Boisdale.

Breeding cattle Cow with calf: £800 8 Kildonan In-calf cows: £900 and £830 8 Kildonan Over 30 Month: £880 12 Ormiclate £700 1 Airidhmuilinn and 393 Garrynamonie. Prices per kilo Bullocks Aberdeen AngusX: 222p 4 Kildonan 196p 319 Kilpheder 194p 352 South Boisdale 192p and 189p 319 Kilpheder 183p 5 Milton 181p 3 Milton 180p 468 North Lochboisdale. LimousinX: 238p 6 Dunganachy 232p 3 Askernish 231p 202 Stoneybridge and 7 Eoligarry 225p (2) 5 Dunganachy 222p 6 Dunganachy and 5 Dunganachy 220p 3 Askernish 217p and 216p 6 Dunganachy 213p 356 South Boisdale, 439/1 North Lochboisdale, 6 Dunganachy

and 136 Stilligarry 209p 3 Askernish 206p 202 Stoneybridge and 5 Frobost 205p 439/1 North Lochboisdale, 6 Dunganachy and 271 Daliburgh 204p 136 Stilligarry, 1 Milton and 1 Drimisdale(2) 203p 18 West Gerinish and 14 West Gerinish 202p 6 Dunganachy 201p 136 Stilligarry 200p 7 Frobost, 136 Stilligarry, 18 West Gerinish, 7 Griminish, 5 Frobost and 352 South Boisdale 199p 1 Milton 198p 356 South Boisdale 197p 3 Bunavullin 196p 5 Dunganachy(2) and 7 Griminish 195p and 194p 136 Stilligarry 193p 14 West Gerinish and 3 Askernish 190p 18 West Gerinish. SalerX: 195p 3 Askernish ShorthornX: 214p 438 North Lochboisdale. SimmentalX: 233p and 210p(2) 261 Daliburgh 208p - 348 North Boisdale 203p 328 North Boisdale 197p 344 North Boisdale 195p 261 Daliburgh 190p 348 North Boisdale.

Heifers British BlueX: 222p 8 Kildonan LimousinX: 200p 6 Dunganachy and 19 West Gerinish 198p 5 Dunganachy(2), 136 Stilligarry, 5a Balla and 1 Drimisdale 193p and 192p 7 Griminish 191p 1 Drimisdale 190p 3 Bunavullin. SimmentalX: 219p 291 Daliburgh 211p 344 North Boisdale 203p 348 North Boisdale 192p 336 North

Boisdale 190p 324 North Boisdale. Oban Caledonian Marts (Stirling) Ltd Sheep Hoggets Cheviot: £80.50 Knock Texel: Kilberry £80; Continental: £77 Balure of Shian; Suffolk: £78 Balcaldine; Blackface: £74 Soroba; SuffolkX: £70 Frackersaig TexelX: £70 Ballmackilichan. Ewes: Cheviot: £65 Poltalloch; Continental: £62 Saulmore; Blackface: £48 Poltalloch; BlackfaceX: £45 Achmacreemore; CheviotX: £50.20 Castle Estates. Tups: Texel: £78 Newfield; Suffolk: £80 Barcaldine Home Farm; Bluefaced Leicester: £70 Bargvilean; Beltex: £70 Bargvilean; Blackface: £59 Kilberry Home Farm; BlackfaceX: £58 Pennygown. Cattle Limousin: 224p; £560 Iochdar; British Blue: - 211p; £580 19East Hynish; Simmental: 207p; £580 19East Hynish; ShorthornX: - 211p; £540 19East Hynish.

In-calf heifers: Salers: £680 24 Garrygall. Over 30 Month: £565 Dunadd. STIRLING United Auctions Bullocks: Up to 250kg Taiglim £500, Drumelzier 239.4p; 251-300kgs - Sorn Mains £635, 230.1p; 301-350kgs - Braendam £790, High Unthank 238.7p; 351-400kgs - Taiglim £850, 224.4p; 401-450kgs - Ardmaleish £880, Calton 206.7p; 451-500kgs - Point £930, 192.9p; 501-550kgs - Formal £1000, Sorn Mains 186.1p; 551-600kgs - Formal £1080, 183.7p. Heifers: Up to 250kg West Milrig £420, Drumelzier 197.2p; 251-300kg Taiglim £545, 189.9p; 301-350kgs Taiglim £690, 206.6p; 351-400kgs Monzie £820, 208.1p; 401-450kgs Monzie £900, 201.8p; 451-500kgs Monzie £980, 199.2p; 501-550kgs Monzie £990, 196.4p; 551-600kgs Point £990, 173.1p. Sheep Hoggs Point (Tex) £75.50; (TexX) £75; Rhodders (BF) £62.20; Craighed (BF) £62. Ewes: Point (TexX) £64.

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Oban Livestock Centre
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The Highland Cattle Society
Stirling Agricultural Centre, Stirling FK9 4RN
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TEMPORARY HOUSING OFFICER – MATERNITY COVER FOR ONE YEAR EVH GRADE 6 [£22,659 – £24,822]

West Highland Housing Association is a charitable housing association based in Oban. The organisation has an excellent reputation for delivering high quality affordable and innovative housing in the area.

We require a Housing Officer for a period of one year to cover a maternity leave. You will require a proven background of relevant skills, experience and IT competence. A key part of the job is to work flexibly as part of a small office team.

The Housing Officer will provide high quality housing management services to our existing tenants and to people on the Home Argyll waiting list. The Association is looking for someone with experience in housing management and with good ability in arrears management.

Access to a car and possession of a full current driving licence are essential as is the ability to stay away overnight occasionally.

An enhanced disclosure check will be carried out for the successful candidate.

The Association will consider some assistance with accommodation and will also consider flexible working arrangements for the right candidate.

The post will be based at the Association's office in Crannog Lane and Office hours are 9am – 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am – 4pm Friday.

Application packs can be e-mailed to people – mail@westhighlandha.co.uk or downloaded from the Employers in Voluntary Housing [EVH] website www.evh.org.uk.

Applications should be returned by the 12th February.

Interviews will likely be held week commencing 22nd February.

Should you wish further information regarding the post please contact **Graeme Bruce, Operations Manager.**

West Highland Housing Association is a Registered Social Landlord and a Scottish Charity [SC017357]

West Highland Housing Association aims to be an Equal Opportunities Employer.

INVERARAY CASTLE HEAD GARDENER

The position of Head Gardener has arisen at Inveraray Castle in Argyll.

Responsible for maintaining the gardens at the Castle, a small proportion of which are now open to the public, the successful candidate should be hard working, capable of high standards and conscientious with established practical experience in a similar post. A further under gardener will work alongside the successful applicant and therefore the ability to communicate and programme work is essential. A small traditional cottage may be available.

Please write for full details, stating your current salary, to:-

The Factor
Argyll Estates Office
Cherry Park, INVERARAY
Argyll PA32 8XE



2 FULL TIME POSITIONS MAINTENANCE WORKER GARDEN/ESTATE WORKER

For further information please apply in writing to Isle of Eriska Hotel, Benderloch, Oban, Argyll PA37 1SD or email to Beppo@eriska-hotel.co.uk



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- 1 Site Manager/Supervisor
- 5 Fish Farm Operatives
- 1 Administrator

Ideally, candidates will come with several years' appropriate experience, however, training will be available for other suitable candidates.

If you are interested in any of the above posts, please apply in writing with your CV to:

Alan Anderson
Loch Duart Ltd
Pierhead
Lochcarnan
Isle of South Uist
HS8 5PD
Or email alan.anderson37@virgin.net

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Oban Times Oban Times RECRUITMENT RECRUITMENT



Dawnfresh

Loch Etive Site Manager

Dawnfresh Seafoods require a Site manager for their fish farm in Loch Etive.

Candidates should have at least four years practical knowledge and experience of marine fish farming (ideally in a multi site operation), and will have a minimum of two years management experience. A sound understanding of fish husbandry, biology, welfare and containment as well as competence in finance, budget control and planning, stock management, stakeholder interactions, personnel management and promotion of health and safety. Strong planning, organisational, interpersonal and communication skills are advantageous.

Boatmasters and forklift certificates desirable.

Please Telephone 44(0)1698 810008

Argyll & Bute Community Health Partnership



Mid Argyll Locality Community Staff Nurse – Band 5 (2 Posts)

£20,710 - £26,839 pro rata

Post 1: 22.5 Hours per week, Fixed Term until 14/01/2011

Post 2: 37.5 Hours per week, Permanent

Mid Argyll Community Hospital and Integrated Care Centre

Ref: 09ab/185b

Ref: 10ab/009

We are looking for two highly motivated individuals to join our team, covering the areas of Tarbert, Lochgilphead and Inveraray. We are a pilot site for Review of Nursing in the Community hoping to help shape the future of Community Care. Community experience is desirable but not essential as training will be ongoing and supported. Assessment and IT skills are essential as is a full driving licence. You will be confident at working independently as well as being a good team member. Short term/long term relocation packages are available for these posts.

Informal enquiries are welcomed by Dorothy Clark, Team Leader/PHN, on 01546 462219. Application packs are available from the HR Department, NHS Highland, Argyll & Bute CHP, Aros, Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8LB, call 01546 606788 (24 hour answering service) or email: recruitment.ab@nhs.net

Please quote applicable job reference number as above. Closing date for receipt of applications: 15 February 2010.

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positive about age practical about life

Cashier/Administrator

Lorn & Islands Hospital, Oban • £2,001 per annum
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We are looking for a numerate well organised person to reconcile the takings and banking for the shop and coffee shop in the Lorn & Islands Hospital, Oban.

Application packs are available from Sandra Robertson, WRVS Territory Manager, (Marked Private & Confidential), Unit 37, 20 Causeyside Street, Paisley PA1 1UN. Alternatively visit www.wrvs.org.uk/jobs

Ref: J190

Closing date: 15th February 2010.

Registered charity no 1015988 & SC038924

AQUARIST

The Role

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The Person

Experience within the aquarium or fish farming industry would be advantageous, but not essential, as full training will be provided. More important, is the drive and enthusiasm to develop your knowledge and skills and apply them appropriately. As part of a busy team, you must be well organised, physically fit and capable of working with others. A flexible approach to working hours is also essential.

The Application

Please apply with full a CV to: alex.blackman@merlinentertainments.biz Alternatively post to Alex Blackman, Scottish SEA LIFE Sanctuary, Barcaldine, PA37 1SE



Scottish Natural Heritage is the leading public body responsible for advising Ministers on matters relating to the natural heritage. The natural environment is a key asset that underpins Scotland's wealth, health and quality of life. Our job is to conserve this resource, to promote its sustainable management and to encourage people to access and enjoy it responsibly.

Admin Support

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Lochgilphead

(Ref: 071-038)

You will provide Admin support to the staff at the Lochgilphead office and on occasion to staff throughout the Argyll & Stirling area. The post will be responsible for providing telephone/reception cover, a filing service and word processing support for staff in addition to other general administrative tasks.

You must have excellent word processing skills with experience of Microsoft word and excel, experience of filing systems, be enthusiastic and have excellent communication and organisational skills. As you will be required to drive SNH pool cars you must have a valid driving licence.

We're as supportive, committed and proud of our people as we are of the natural world around us. Find out more, and apply, online. Alternatively, call 01463 725182.

Closing date: Monday 15 February 2010.



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Mallaig & District Swimming Pool Association

SC018367

LEISURE CENTRE MANAGER

Required from March 2010, a suitably qualified and experienced individual to manage the pool, spa, sauna and fitness suite. The applicant will be responsible for all staff and facility operations. Salary according to experience and qualifications.

Application forms and job description from: Catherine McDonnell, Mallaig Swimming Pool, Fank Brae, Mallaig PH41 4RG Tel: 01687 462229 Email: catherine@mallaigswimmingpool.co.uk Web site: www.mallaigswimmingpool.co.uk Closing date Mon 15th February

NANNY FOR 2 CHILDREN NR LOCHGILPHEAD.

5 full days/week. Can live in. No qualifications required but must enjoy children and country things. Driver essential. Apply in Writing: Box No 55 Oban Times, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB



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Campbeltown Ref: OSF20345/R

Leisure Assistant

£288.23 per week

Lochgilphead Ref: OSF40190

Mid Argyll Sports Centre, 37hrs per week

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Due to the continued expansion of our busy Oban showroom we now have a vacancy for a **Fulltime Depot Sales / Counter Assistant**
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Some experience of the construction trade / computers would be an advantage.
The successful candidate must be both friendly and helpful with a willingness to work under supervision and on his or her own initiative.
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Hours and salary to be agreed.
Please apply in writing to:- Graeme Sprout, Manager, Argyll Buildbase Ltd, Unit 1 Snipefield Ind Estate, Campbeltown, Argyll, PA28 6SY
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Email: cairndowhr@lighthousecaledonia.com
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SCOTTISH BEAVER TRIAL
The Scottish Beaver Trial is a partnership project between the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, the Scottish Wildlife Trust and the Forestry Commission Scotland to undertake a time-limited, five year long trial reintroduction of the European beaver (Castor fiber) to Knapdale, Mid-Argyll.
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For an application form please see www.swt.org.uk email recruitment@swt.org.uk or contact Catherine Douglas, HR Manager on 0131 312 4731.
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Research Technicians: Marine Renewable Energy
The Environmental Research Institute (ERI) of the North Highland College in Thurso together with the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Oban, have successfully secured £4M funding for a unique multi-disciplinary research programme, Marine Renewable Energy and the Environment (MaREE). Both organisations are partners in the UHI Millennium Institute (UHI); the 'emergent university of the Highlands and Islands'.
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For further information on the positions and details of how to apply to either institution please visit www.eri.ac.uk and www.sams.ac.uk or contact Prof. Stuart Gibb, ERI, UHI-North Highland College, Thurso + 44 (0)1847 889581, Stuart.Gibb@thurso.uhi.ac.uk for details about the MaREE programme and the positions at ERI or Dr Ben Wilson, UHI-SAMS, Oban +44 (0)1631-559346 Ben.Wilson@sams.ac.uk for details about the position at SAMS.
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FLIT

Caol flat plan gets go ahead

A FORT William builder has won permission to build a small flat behind business premises at Caol Shopping Centre.

Planners had recommended the one-bedroom apartment proposed by A A Young Limited be refused as its location behind Caol Cuts lacked 'a reasonable level of residential amenity'.

But local councillor Eddie Hunter told Ross, Skye and Lochaber planning committee similar bids for flats above Sheraton Retail Park at Lochybridge, at the Spar Shop in Claggan and at Caol Shopping Centre had previously been passed 'with no problems'.

'To say there are no parking spaces available is somewhat disingenuous,' he said.

'There is plentiful parking at the front and at Caol Community Centre.

'These are two of the largest parking areas in the largest village in Scotland.'

After hearing Councillor Hunter's representations, the committee voted 8-2 to approve the application.

Lochaber groups' cash boost

THREE Lochaber groups have benefited in the latest round of awards from the local Highland Council members' discretionary budget.

Kinlochleven Community Trust received £750 towards the design of a bike park and Kilmallie Playgroup a £250 contribution for replacement toys.

Ceillear Acharacle, which promotes the revival of Gaelic through group singing, was awarded an £800 grant to help with tutor fees.



Area of dispute: flats and parking bays could be built on this land behind the former Craignevis surgery. 10_f05alma01

Development plan put on hold

PLANS for a controversial development in a residential area of Fort William have been put on hold after an intervention by Highland Council leader Councillor Michael Foxley.

Local property developer Derek Classe is seeking permission to build two flats and three parking bays on steeply sloping land between Alma Road and the rear of the former Craignevis surgery, which fronts onto Belford Road.

EXCLUSIVE
By STEPHEN NORRIS

However, in a letter read out to Ross, Skye and Lochaber planning committee, local GP Councillor Foxley explained he had wanted to extend the surgery several years ago, but dropped the move after planners advised him the extension would be refused 'because it would overlook adjoining properties'.

The practice, comprising six doctors and three nurses,

needed space to expand and subsequently moved to Fort William Health Centre at Camaghael.

'It is therefore astonishing', Councillor Foxley stated in his submission, that Mr Classe's application 'for a much bigger building' was being recommended for approval in principle.

Seven householders in surrounding properties are objecting to the development, citing inadequate parking and road and pedestrian

safety issues. The residents also expressed concerns over access, an increase in traffic, over-development, the building's size, privacy and amenity and loss of daylight.

Planners, however, say the proposal would be 'an acceptable use' of land in a mixed residential/B&B/guest house area.

The meeting agreed to Councillor Donald Cameron's call for a site visit on March 2.

Forest study to focus on tourism

BROAD details have emerged on the possible blueprint for a major private sector tourism and leisure development in woodlands near Fort William.

Forestry Commission Scotland last week commissioned a study to investigate siting a new outdoor activities centre in the 7,300-acre publicly owned Leanachan Forest, charging consultants GL Hearn to report back with their findings by spring this year.

An FCS spokesman told *The Oban Times* the sustainable project's scale was as yet 'very much undetermined' but that it could range from small scale accommodation units or 'something more ambitious', to a larger hotel type development with added facilities and attractions.

He said: 'It's very early in the process so we don't have any fixed view at this stage. What is essential to the Commission is that if any development became a reality then it would need to fit within the forest

By STEPHEN NORRIS

environment in a sensitive manner.

'When we say sustainable, we would expect developers would look into clean energy systems such as woodfuel heating systems or construction elements that have a reduced impact on the environment.

'We'd expect the research to be finished sometime in the spring and then the Commission will have time to study the findings in more detail. At that stage we'll be able to take a decision on whether any private sector development is viable and if so what sort is most likely.

Potential visitors would be expected to come from an outdoor/sports/adventure lifestyle background, the spokesperson said, but depending on the development it could simply attract people wanting to enjoy the area for the scenery, fresh air and Highlands.

Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise are also backing

the study, which follows an HIE survey undertaken in 2008. It identified the forest, which lies next to the access road to Aonach Mor and already draws thousands of visitors each year, as having development potential.

Developing businesses

A LOCHABER business development evening has been organised at the Moorings Hotel, Banavie, on Wednesday February 10 from 6pm to 9pm.

Rene Cooper of 4TM Marketing will lead the event, where there will be opportunities to network, swap promotional information and discuss how businesses can collaborate.

Special presentations from industry experts to help businesses become more sustainable will also feature.

Outdoor Capital members are invited to the free event and places must be reserved as soon as possible.



George the snake: back home after five months.

Snake found after five months

THE SCOTTISH SPCA has reunited an escaped snake with his worried owner after he went missing for five months and turned up in a Lochaber Spar store.

George, a pet corn snake, was found curled around a heating pipe in the shop in Mallaig after a worker discovered the foot-long creature.

Adventurous George had escaped from his tank in his owner's flat

above the shop and slid down to the ground floor, where he took up residence among the central heating pipes.

Scottish SPCA Inspector Dawna Connolly said: 'It's quite remarkable because George was only two months old when he disappeared and he survived on his own for five months, probably without eating anything at all.

'He was very thin when we collected him, so he would definitely have been ready for a welcome home meal.'

Delighted

George is now happily reunited with his owner, Rosemary Leckie, and her 15-year-old son Stefan. Rosemary said: 'We're delighted to have George back with us. I thought he was dead.

'My son keeps him in his room and he managed to escape through a tiny wee gap in the lid of his tank. Apparently corn snakes are good escape artists so we'll be keeping a close eye on him now.'

Anyone interested in re-homing an animal or wishing to donate to or join the Scottish SPCA can visit scottishspca.org or telephone 03000 999999.

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The children spend their day under the guidance of our qualified and caring nursery nurses, in a happy and secure environment. Central to the nursery is our philosophy that a positive attitude must be adopted at all times towards the children, each other and the nursery.

We operate a keyworker system in which each child has a nursery nurse who is responsible for passing on information to parents on a regular basis. We also have a dedicated page on our website PARENTZONE where parents can share information and experiences. Our nursery nurses also maintain and update records of development on each of their children, which parents can access at any time.

We are committed to healthy eating and believe good healthy food is essential for young children's development. Our menus are varied and interesting and are based on current healthy eating guidelines.

We offer a range of services to suit any working parent including a full day (8am to 6pm) and morning (8.30am to 1.30pm) and afternoon (1.30pm to 6pm) sessions for pre-school children.

Government funding is available for 37 weeks of the year.

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These days real nappies have moved on a long way from the days of terry towelling nappies where pins and soaking were required. Today easy-care, shaped nappies in natural or fleece fabrics, breathable wraps with poppers and Velcro are now the norm.

Real nappies are easy to use, they need no soaking or boiling, a biodegradable liner means you can just flush them (with solids) down the toilet and wash nappies on 60°C. They can also save you money! Real nappies can save you anything from £500-£1000 compared to the cost of disposables (WEN, 2006), especially if used on a second child.

Disposable nappies cause a major waste problem. Using real nappies, even for some of the time, reduces the number of disposables going to landfill. Using just one real nappy a day will stop 365 disposable nappies being thrown away a year. Disposables are estimated to take over 200 years to breakdown, so as disposable nappies were invented in the 1950's that means that every disposable nappy ever used is still in existence somewhere today!

Argyll & Bute Real Nappy Network can supply Starter Packs at subsidised cost. The pack contains four different nappy types with two wraps and a pack of liners. Everything you need to get you started. Costing between £40-50 yours for £10. We also have Lending Kits which can be hired for 3 weeks to help you work out which type of nappy will suit you best.

Roxys

Imagine you're out, it's raining and your baby starts crying. What do you do? By grabbing your copy of 'The Oban Baby and Toddler Friendly Guide' you see over 70 establishments in and around Oban that have highchairs, baby change facilities, pram access and children's menus. You also find out 'what's on' during the week. The guide is produced by volunteer mums from 'The Toy Cupboard', and is funded by local businesses, like Roxys's, much loved by local mums!

'The Toy Cupboard' is open on Tuesdays during term time from 1.30pm - 3.30pm and on Fridays all year from 10am - 12 noon in Glencruitten church hall. A vast range of toys, games, book and ride-ons suitable for babies until about six years, along with a range of special needs toys, are available to hire from as little as 50p per week. Children can play with toys during sessions, while the adults enjoy a well earned cuppa and decide what toy to hire! Contact Cynthia 01631 563243 or Cynthia222@tiscali.co.uk

The first group that a new mum in Oban may go to is Bumps and Babies. It's an informal coffee morning for pregnant women and those with a new baby. It's run by

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Bowen has been successful in treating pregnancy related problems such as back pain, pelvic pain and neck tension.

Babies suffering from colic and childhood issues such as asthma can also usually see effective results.

An extensive range of problems from musculo-skeletal to digestive and respiratory can all benefit and it is very rewarding to see an improvement in the quality of peoples lives as this lovely service alleviates pain and encourages healing.

If you would like to discuss the Bowen treatment or book an appointment you can contact Hazel Munro on 07770 575745 or email her at hazel@argyllbowenpractice.com

volunteers of the National Childbirth Trust (NCT) and is a great place to meet new people in a similar situation. It's currently running every Monday 11-1pm in Dunmar Court but may become a monthly group as we are short of volunteers. Contact Sally on 01631 570902 or must_sai@hotmail.com

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Black cat spotted

A BIG BLACK cat has been spotted at Kilniver, near Oban.

The large black panther-like animal was spotted 'moving quickly' on the hillside. The witness, an American living in the area for a year has never seen anything like it.

Cassie Cairey said: 'I was on the phone to a friend when I saw this large black cat moving quickly along the hillside. I reached for my camera but by the time I switched it on the cat had slipped into a ravine.'

A previous sighting of a large cat in the same area, was made by tourist Johnny Fellingham in July 2008.

Survey hope for road remnants

SURVIVING remnants along one of the Highlands' most notorious highways stand a better chance of being conserved after a Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) survey.

Archaeologists have logged a series of stone features along stretches of the 18th century military road built by General Wade and Major Caulfield from Lochaber to Easter Ross following the failed 1715, 1719 and 1745 Risings.

Built over three decades, the road at first allowed Redcoat troops to move quickly between Fort William, Fort Augustus and Fort George and beyond as the Highlands were forcibly subdued, but later it proved an invaluable aid to commerce and communication.

In one area alone, the survey uncovered 144 individual previously unrecorded features, including well-preserved sections of road, fords, bridges and culverts.

The commission hopes to work with local groups to fund works to preserve stoneworks, in order, they say, that the road 'continues to fulfil the job it was designed for'.

FCS archaeologist Matt Ritchie said: 'By confirming and extending the power of the crown, it played a key role in the course of Scottish history and as such is a hugely important artefact.'

'Before General Wade, travel within the Highlands was done on foot or by horseback and the military road network outlived its military purpose and enhanced communications and development throughout the region.'

'The network should also be seen as an astonishing feat of engineering, given the ruggedness of the landscape and the fact they relied on muscle power, hand tools and materials at hand.'

Drink driver banned for two years

THE CHANCE to view a new home proved too much for an Arisaig man still under the influence from a party the night before - and cost him his driving licence.

First offender Robert Dempster, aged 55, of 2 Glengarry Place, was banned from driving and fined £300 after breath tests found him to be more than three times over the limit.

Defence lawyer Hamish Melrose told Fort William Sheriff Court: 'At his brother's house a lot of friends came over and a lot of drink was consumed.'

'The next morning he got a call from Scottish Homes to go to Mallaig to view a prospective house and he decided to go back to Mallaig.'

Dempster, a building industry worker, pled guilty to driving on the A830 near Mallaig while over the legal limit at 11.20am on January 20. Banning Dempster for two years, Sheriff Douglas Small told him: 'You posed a very high risk not just to yourself, but to other road users.'

SMS text messaging to emergency services to be encouraged

NHS Highland says people to register for the service immediately

AN EMERGENCY SMS service has been developed for those with communication problems to contact the emergency services.

The service allows those who are deaf, hearing impaired or who have a speech-impairment to send an SMS text message to the UK's 999 service, where it will be passed on to ambulance, police, fire rescue or coastguard services.

In an emergency the

user should spell out the emergency service they require, the nature of the emergency and the location and text it to 999.

Text confirmation
The emergency services will text to confirm they have received the information with further instructions for that person, if necessary.

In order to use the service people need to register their phone first. Anyone can register their phone by SMS texting the word 'register' to 999.

NHS Highland is encouraging people to register for the service immediately.

Anna Maria Kaczmarek, Policy Development Manager for NHS Highland said: 'This is a shared responsibility for every person in our community to ensure that those with sensory impairments have access to the information about the service and how to use it, and can receive help from others in case they are unable to use the service at

the time of a need.

She added: 'I would like to encourage everyone to pass this message on to as many people as possible in their family and community; by doing so you may indirectly save someone's life or health.'

The service is a UK Government initiative backed by Ofcom and is a joint venture between various UK telecom firms.

If the pilot is successful it will become permanent in early 2010.



Lochaber High School S4 drama pupils with teacher Jacqi Hume and BBC staff Patricia, Laura Jane and Jo.

Lochaber drama class enjoys tour of BBC studios

TWELVE members of Lochaber High School's fourth year Standard Grade drama class travelled to the BBC studios at Pacific Quay, Glasgow, last Monday.

The group, accompanied by drama teacher Jacqi Hume and head teacher Jim Sutherland, toured the new facility and called in on Fred MacAulay while the popular presenter was doing

his morning show live on air. Next on the agenda was a BBC L.A.B. 'Film in a Day' workshop, led by Jo, Laura-Jane and Patricia. The session involved planning and devising films, storytelling, scripting, filming, editing and using sound effects and music.

Two 'very impressive' short films were produced which will, in due course, be uploaded to the BBC L.A.B.

website, Mrs Hume said. She added: 'This was an excellent opportunity for our pupils to learn new skills, incorporating existing drama skills which they had learned in class. It was also good to see round a building we're all familiar with and to see how it works on a daily basis. In only one day the pupils completed making their films - sit back and enjoy them.'

Fort teenager jailed after late night assault

A FORT William teenager who dragged his partner along the road by her hair during a brutal late night assault has been jailed.

Dean Conn, aged 19, fell out with his girlfriend at an address in Inverlochy in the early hours of December 19 before attacking her in a drunken rage.

The terrified woman ran out of the house in her socks to try to escape, but Conn caught her and continued the attack.

Alarmed neighbours phoned police when they heard the woman's screams as Conn hit her in street. Conn was

arrested at the scene and detained. The woman was taken to the Belford Hospital and x-rayed, but fortunately was found to have suffered only minor injuries.

Fort William Sheriff Court heard how Conn had been on a Christmas night out in Fort William on the night of the assault.

'His recollection of events is almost nil,' Stephen Kennedy, defending, said. 'Both were accusing each other of being unfaithful.'

Appearing from custody, Conn had earlier admitted throwing books at the

woman's head, repeatedly punching her on the head, pushing her on the body, chasing her along the street, pulling her by the hair and dragging her along the ground and punching her on the head, all to her injury.

Jailing him for four-and-a-half months, Sheriff Douglas Small told Conn: 'This was a most unpleasant incident involving your partner. She was so alarmed she ran into the street screaming for help, but you ran after her, caught up with her and assaulted her in the street. This type of conduct is completely unacceptable.'

Loch Carron homes get green light

OUTLINE planning permission for two houses on a scenic site overlooking Loch Carron were granted

outline approval at Ross, Skye and Lochaber planning committee - by a single vote.

Planning officials had recommended that Mr P Stirling's bid to build two

dwelling in a wood-fringed field near The Creagan, Lochcarron, should be turned down.

The proposed site, a mile south from Lochcarron village, sits high over the Lochcarron to Ardeneaskan road in an area of scattered settlement.

Planning chief Dafydd

Jones said the proposed homes would be 'very prominent' when viewed from the road and 'failed to reflect the prevailing settlement pattern of this area'.

Local members Isabelle Campbell and Audrey Sinclair disagreed, arguing that the development would not be obtrusive.

Councillor Sinclair said: 'Lochcarron is a long village and in that area there is not much of a pattern. It's more of a random spread of houses and this would not be out of keeping.'

Benderloch holiday park boosts Macmillan funds

THE OWNER of Tralee Bay Holiday Park, who organises a Hogmanay party for the community of Benderloch, has donated £600 raised at the event to Macmillan Cancer Relief.

David Shellcock has organised the party at his park every year since 2000 and made it a fundraising night in memory of his father, Brian, who built the park 26 years ago and died of cancer in April 2000. David said: 'The Macmillan nurses did a great job when my father had cancer and this is my way of saying thank you.'

'The party is always free but we ask for donations from the people that come and give the proceeds to a different charity each year. This year we had around 200 people here.'

David's mother, Pauline organised food for the party, along with Shirley Harden, and national soft drinks company Barrs donated the refreshments for the event to help keep down costs.

Rosemary Young, chairwoman of the Macmillan fundraising committee in Oban, said: 'This is a fantastic amount of money, which will be used to help Macmillan nurses locally. These nurses are brilliant for families and that, combined with the chemotherapy services here, is a huge benefit to people.'



Rosemary Young, chairwoman of the Macmillan fundraising committee in Oban accepts a £600 cheque from David Shellcock of Tralee Bay Holiday Park raised during a Hogmanay party held at the holiday park 07_10Sch01

Pilot project to help businesses break into new markets

THREE food and drink businesses from Skye and Lochaber are to take part in a pilot project to help them break into new markets.

Kinloch Lodge in Sleat, Great Glen Game from Roy Bridge and Acharacle-based Moidart Shellfish will receive customised advice on product promotion under an

initiative set up by Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

HIE has targeted a range of large and small companies keen to work with top marketing experts on issues such as packaging, pricing points and access to or dealing with buyers.

Russell Ferguson Marketing is delivering

the project for HIE. Mr Ferguson said: 'We want businesses to be ambitious. There are many excellent products selling at market price when they could be promoted and sold at premium rates. Just because you are physically remote doesn't mean you can't sell.'

Better services for Skye and Lochalsh top agenda

Workshop looks to healthy future

By STEPHEN NORRIS
DETAILS of next month's NHS Highland workshop in Broadford to discuss ways to improve local health services have been published.

The event, exclusively flagged up by *The Oban Times* on January 14, was originally scheduled for last summer but was delayed to enable the public to have their say on how local health provision should develop.

NHS Highland subsequently commissioned a five-week 'public engagement exercise' on health services in Skye and Lochalsh local last autumn.

Highland Community Care Forum and Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations carried out the consultation, which produced more than 400 responses from community workshops and a survey.

Results showed many people praised current services but wanted safeguards against future withdrawal of services or support.

Quality of care or treatment consistently featured as the most important overall issue, while location of treatment and speed of appointments emerged as the two top areas in need of improvement.

More local services and facilities, particularly a local hospital with modern medical facilities, improved emergency/24 hour cover and an NHS dentist came out as the major preferred changes.

Community council representatives, Highland councillors, MPs and MSPs, locality and clinical staff, managers and partner organisations will now meet at the Dunollie Hotel on February 12 to consider the findings.

HCCF director Sheena Munro said: 'HCCF has gathered a wealth of information through

this public engagement exercise and we are confident it will help those who attend the workshop make the best possible decisions for future healthcare in Skye.'

Mid Highland CHP General Manager Gill McVicar said: 'The workshop on February 12 is being held to explore options for the improvement and, in some cases, redesign of health services in Skye and Lochalsh.'

Scottish Government health policy, Ms MacVicar added, was strongly based on the need to shift some types of healthcare from hospital-based services to community services, partly in response to the wishes of patients who have said services should be as close to home as possible to help people maintain their independence for as long as possible.

The changing needs of the population also mean that NHS Highland has to consider different ways of providing healthcare, Ms MacVicar said.

Last summer at a 200-strong public meeting in Portree speakers attacked NHS Highland for its lack of consultation over plans many feared would see Portree Hospital closed and services centralised at the Mackinnon Memorial Hospital in Broadford. NHS Highland now appears committed to both hospitals. However, community representatives suggest Broadford, with land available, is likely to see the main building programme.

Health broadcaster and journalist Pennie Taylor will lead the February 12 workshop, while a prominent national expert will provide an overview of national policy and strategy.

A summary report on the public engagement exercise is available online at www.hccf.org.uk and www.slcvo.org.uk.

Study proves public confident in Northern Constabulary

NORTHERN Constabulary enjoys the highest levels of public confidence of any police force in Scotland, according to a major new study.

Figures released by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland show the Highlands and Islands force polled highest on all questions in a public survey on various aspects of police performance.

However, the findings give police chiefs plenty to think about.

Barely half - 55 per cent - of the 1,620 Northern area respondents are confident in

their force's ability to prevent crime. Satisfaction levels were better on response times to calls - 69 per cent; on dealing with incidents as they occur, 72 per cent; on investigating incidents after they occur, 75 per cent; on solving crimes, 66 per cent, and catching criminals, 67 per cent.

On average, Northern Constabulary scored 11 per cent above the national average in each category.

Chief Constable Ian Latimer said the survey supported the force's own regional findings.

He added: 'Northern

Constabulary enjoys the support of the public and values the contribution of the public to successful and effective policing.'

'Crime rates continue to fall across the Highlands and Islands and detection rates remain amongst the highest in the UK. The force area saw a reduction of seven per cent in 2008-9 and this year we have seen a further reduction of around 12 per cent to date, which equates to significantly fewer victims of crime.'

Around 16,000 people across Scotland took part in the telephone poll.

Police seek witnesses to Oban night assault

POLICE are seeking witnesses to an assault in the MacDougall Court area of Dunollie, which occurred at 8.30pm last Thursday.

Robbed
A man was forced to the ground and had personal items stolen, including

a sum of money and a mobile phone.

Police suspect a 37-year-old man and are keen to speak to anyone who may have seen anyone acting suspiciously in the area at that time.

Oban Police Inspector

Julie Edward said:

'Our officers attended and found the man to be extremely shaken. We would encourage anyone who may have information about this incident to contact DC

Andy MacDougall to Oban Police Station.'

The Saw Doctors

Wed 14th April

The Corran Halls Oban

Box Office: 0871 297 0077, 01631 567 333, Web: www.seetickets.com
In Person: The Corran Halls, Oban

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk



PLANNING

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Take notice that the applications in the following schedule may be inspected during normal office hours at Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR and the location details below, by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications. Anyone wishing to make representations should do so in writing to the undersigned within 21 days of the appearance of this notice, whichever is applicable as indicated below. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

Written comments for the following list of applications may be made to Planning Services Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban PA34 4AR by the 18/02/2010.

SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION PLANS

● **Ref No: 10/00026/LIB**
Applicant: Mr Peter Cooke
Proposal: Erection of a single storey side extension
Site Address: Cullipool House, Cullipool, Isle of Luing, Oban, Argyll and Bute PA34 4TX
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Cullipool

● **Ref No: 10/00141/LIB**
Applicant: Mr and Mrs Bennett
Proposal: Installation of replacement windows and erection of slate roof over flat roof at front annex and removal of window
Site Address: Ardchattan Point, Ardchattan, Oban, Argyll and Bute, PA37 1RG
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Council

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Applications for planning permission listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be examined at Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR and the location details below between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and by logging to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications.

Written comments for the following list of applications may be made to Planning Services Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban PA34 4AR by the 18/02/2010

● **Ref No: 09/01821/PP**
Applicant: Mr M E and Mrs Inall
Proposal: Erection of extension to dwellinghouse
Site Address: Forestbank, Taynuilt, Argyll and Bute, PA35 1JE
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

● **Ref No: 09/01825/PP**
Applicant: Mr John Stancer
Proposal: Erection of single storey extension
Site Address: Stalkers House, Glenforsa Road, Glenforsa, Isle of Mull, Argyll and Bute, PA72 6IN
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

● **Ref No: 09/01831/PP**
Applicant: Ms Elaine Chalmers
Proposal: Erection of two storey rear extension
Site Address: Dunshee, C61 Dalmally Village Loop Road, Dalmally, Argyll and Bute, PA33 1AA
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Dalmally

● **Ref No: 09/01842/PP**
Applicant: Mr Douglas M Humphries
Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse and garage
Site Address: Land North West of Ossians Retirement Home (Plot 7), North Connel, Oban, Argyll and Bute PA37 1QX
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Council

● **Ref No: 09/01862/PP**
Applicant: Mr M Tye
Proposal: Extension to dwellinghouse
Site Address: The Chalet, Laggan, Glenshellach Road, Oban, Argyll and Bute, PA34 4QJ
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

● **Ref No: 10/00002/PP**
Applicant: Tom MacLennan as Trustee Of Andrew Sandilands
Proposal: Erection of farmhouse and outbuildings
Site Address: Lagganbeg Cottage, Kilniver, Oban, Argyll and Bute, PA34 4UU
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

● **Ref No: 10/00014/PP**
Applicant: Awe Holdings Ltd
Proposal: Erection of dwelling and installation of septic tank
Site Address: Land North East Of Achnasmeorach, Kilchrenan, Taynuilt, Argyll, PA35 1HF
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

● **Ref No: 10/00033/PP**
Applicant: Mr Ashley Toole
Proposal: Alterations and extension
Site Address: 5 Polfearn House, Taynuilt, Argyll and Bute, PA35 1JD
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

● **Ref No: 10/00103/PPP**
Applicant: Donald McLaren And Andrew Sutherland
Proposal: Site for the erection of 7 dwellinghouses
Site Address: Land North East Of Kerdon, Dalmally, Argyll And Bute PA37 1SR
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Dalmally

● **Ref No: 10/00104/PP**
Applicant: Mr And Mrs Hudson
Proposal: Demolition of existing bothy and erection of one storey bothy
Site Address: Dahl Beg, Loch Etive, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute, PA35 1RL
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

● **Ref No: 10/00122/PPP**
Applicant: Mr A Sutherland
Proposal: Residential development site
Site Address: Land South Of Railway Station, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

Argyll and Bute Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at Planning Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST. An extant list of planning applications which can be viewed on the Councils website www.argyll-bute.gov.uk A weekly list of applications which can be viewed at Planning Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST and Argyll and Bute Council Libraries.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Applications for planning permission listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be examined at 67/69 Chalmers Street Ardriahga PA30 8DX and the location details below between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and by logging to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications.

Written comments for the following list of applications may be made to Planning Services, 67/69 Chalmers Street Ardriahga PA30 8DX by the 19/02/2010

● **Ref No: 10/00028/PP**
Applicant: Mr C and Mrs S Walker
Proposal: Erection of a dwellinghouse (Revised design of previous granted consent Ref: 04/02230/DET)
Site Address: Land North Of Colnatarun, Upper Kilchattan, Isle of Colonsay, Argyll and Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Isle of Colonsay

● **Ref No: 09/01868/PP**
Applicant: Mr Blair Rozga
Proposal: Erection of 18 metre high 20 kilowatt domestic wind turbine
Site Address: Land To South Of Upper Kilmerny Farm Ballygrant Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA45 7QW
Location of plans Sub post office Ballygrant

Any letter of representation the council receives about a planning application is considered a public document. Please therefore note that representations will be made available for public inspection and, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, will be copied on request. They will also be published on the council's web site.

The author of such a representation is solely responsible for its content and accuracy. Anonymous representations will be "shredded" and those marked confidential will be returned to the sender. Neither will be taken into account when the application is being considered. Details of representations we receive on planning applications can be viewed on the council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/publicaccess

COMMUNITY SERVICES: EDUCATION

IS YOUR CHILD ELIGIBLE FOR FREE PRE SCHOOL EDUCATION PROVISION?

Pre School Education from August 2010 will be available for:-

- Four year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2006 and 28th February 2007
- Three year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2007 and 28th February 2008

A list of current pre school education providers, including those offering Gaelic Medium, is displayed at the following locations:

- All Primary Schools
- Health Visitors/Doctors' Surgeries
- All Council Offices
- Libraries
- Playgroups & Day Care Centres

Information leaflets will be available from pre school education providers at the time of registration and parents can obtain further guidance from the Pre School Education Helpline, Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon PA23 8AJ (Telephone 01369 708503/708560).

Parents of eligible children should register at their preferred pre school education provider during week commencing 1st February 2010 during the normal operational hours of the unit.

A.G.M.
OBAN PIPE BAND
will hold their A.G.M. on
Tuesday 2nd February
in the Band Hall, at 8pm.
A full turn out of members is requested.

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE
David Stuart Alsop trading as Alsop Transport Services of Rycroft, Cuan Road, Seil, Oban, Argyll PA34 4RJ is applying to change an existing licence as follows: to add an operating centre to keep 5 goods vehicles and 5 trailers at The Yard, Upper Soroba Farm, Upper Soroba Road, Oban PA34 4SD. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner, Scottish Traffic Area, Hillcrest House, 386, Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

The Scottish Parliament
David Stewart, Rhoda Grant and Peter Peacock
Regional MSPs for the Highland and Islands
Telephone Surgery every Wednesday, 6pm-7pm
Ring 07948 515206 (during parliamentary session)
Contact details:
Write to: PO BOX 5717, Inverness IV1 1YT
Tel. No: 01463 716299 (Constituency Office)
0131 348 5766 (Scottish Parliament)
Email: rhoda.grant.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
peter.peacock.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
david.stewart.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

Alan Reid MP
Alan Reid will hold a surgery in Oban on Friday 5 February 2010 at the Columba Hotel, North Pier, Oban between 5.00pm and 6.00pm
To make an appointment, please phone Alan Reid's office 01369 704840

CROFTERS COMMISSION
The following decrofting Directions have been granted:
Part Croft
74A Camaghael, Kilmallie
Direction dated 19 January 2010 granted to Ewen M Campbell. Area ext to 0.098 ha.
Conditions: Purchase within 5 years. The land is used for a house site. Complete enclosure of the site with a stock-proof fence or barrier within 4 months of completion of the proposed development.
Case Number: 4.86.20640
The granting of this Direction may be appealed to the Scottish Land Court, within 42 days from the date of this advert. Information on how to appeal is available from the Crofters Commission.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES
Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES
Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS OFFICE, FULTON HOUSE, GORDON SQUARE, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6XY and, where given, the alternative location(s).
Written comments should be made to the Area Planning and Building Standards Manager at this office within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description	Alternative locations where application may be inspected and time period for comments
09/00487/FULLO	The Craggan Harbour View Mallaig	Change of use from shop to restaurant	Mallaig Service Point (14 days)
09/00492/FULLO	4 Upper Scotstown Strontrion	Alterations & extension to house	Strontrion Post Office (14 days)
09/00495/PIPLO	Land 70m North of Camus Caimin Glenanacross Road Moar Mallaig	Erection of house (Plot A)	Mallaig Service Point (14 days)
09/00497/PIPLO	Land 120m North of Camus Caimin Glenanacross Road Moar Mallaig	Erection of house (Plot B)	Mallaig Service Point (14 days)
10/00005/FULLO	Woodlands Onich Fort William	Erection of porch	Ballochulish Post Office (14 days)
10/00010/PIPLO	Site 40m East of Gowan Brae Anahalt Strontrion Acharacle	Erection of 2 houses	Strontrion Post Office (14 days)
10/00011/FULLO	Victoria Court Belford Road Fort William	Part re-roofing	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
10/00012/FULLO	Land 40m North of Craigowan Invercaimbe Arisaig	Erection of 2 holiday cottages	Arisaig Post Office (14 days)
10/00013/PIPLO	Land East of The Old Forge Inverie Knoydart Mallaig	Erection of house	Knoydart Post Office (14 days)
10/00015/FULLO	The Teapot Gairloch Spean Bridge	Demolition of old house & erection of cottage	Spean Bridge Post Office (14 days)
10/00016/PIPLO	Land 145m North East of Linthe View 15 North Ballochulish Onich	Erection of 10 houses and associated roadworks	Ballochulish Post Office (14 days)
10/00017/PIPLO	Land 110m North West of Garmore House Moar	Erection of house (Plot 1)	Mallaig Service Point (14 days)
10/00018/PIPLO	Land 60m South East of Garmore House Moar	Erection of house (Plot 2)	Mallaig Service Point (14 days)

Area Planning and Building Standards Manager, Ross, Skye & Lochaber: Dafydd Jones, Highland Council, Fulton House, Gordon Square, Fort William, PH33 6XY Tel: (01397) 707015 Fax: (01397) 707022 e-mail: planning.lochaber@highland.gov.uk

Will your child be five before 28 February 2011?
Yes? Then it's time to enrol them for school.
The next school session starts on 17 August 2010. Children who will be five on or before that date must be enrolled for school during Enrolment week commencing 1 February 2010.
Children who will be five between 18 August 2010 and 28 February 2011 may also enrol at this time although it may be decided, after discussion, to delay entry.

When	Where	What to bring
3.00pm 1 - 5 February 2010	Local Primary School	Child's birth certificate

Where Gaelic medium education is available, parents should indicate their preference when enrolling their child.
If you wish your child to attend a school other than your Local Primary School then you will still need to enrol at the Local Primary School in the first instance.

Am bi an leanabh agaibh còig ro 28 Gearran 2011?
Bidh? Ma-thà, tha an t-àm ann an clàrachadh airson na sgoile.
Bidh an ath sheisean sgoile a' tòiseachadh air 17 Lùnastal 2010. Feumaidh clann a bhios còig air an latha sin no roimhe a bhith air an clàrachadh airson na sgoile rè na seachdain Clàrachaidh a' tòiseachadh 1 Gearran 2010.
Faodaidh clann a bhios còig eadar 18 Lùnastal 2010 agus 28 Gearran 2011 clàrachadh aig an àm seo cuideachd ach bidh roghainn aca inntigeadh a chur dheth.

Cuin	Càite	Dè bheir sibh leibh?
3.00f 1 - 5 Gearran 2010	A' Bhun-sgoil Ionadail	Teisteanas breith an leanabh agaibh

Ma tha foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ri fhaotainn, bu chòir do phàrantan innse dè as fheàrr leotha nuair a tha iad a' clàrachadh an leanabh aca.
Ma tha sibh airson 's gun tèid an leanabh agaibh gu sgoil eile seach a' Bhun-sgoil Ionadail, feumaidh sibh fhathast clàrachadh aig a' Bhun-sgoil Ionadail an toiseach.

The EU Birds Directive
proposed Special Protection Areas for golden eagles
On behalf of the Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage is consulting over proposals to create up to six new Special Protection Areas for golden eagles.
You can comment on the proposals up to 7 April 2010.
Find out more at www.snh.org.uk Scottish Natural Heritage

Mr. Colin Crawford will be leaving Shore St Dental Surgery at the end of January 2010 after many years of dedicated service to his patients and the practice.
He will be taking up a new post at the LIDG Hospital in Oban and we wish him well for the future.
I am pleased to inform you that Mr. David Bell will be joining the practice as his replacement and he will take over Mr. Crawford's patient list.
Eileen McKay Practice Manager

Proposed Let of Part of a Croft
Lochshiel Estate Ltd is applying to the Crofters Commission for consent to let the tenancy of part of the croft at 1-4 Langal, Acharacle, Inverness-shire to Mrs Violet Hogg, 4 Langal, Acharacle, Inverness-shire. If you have any objection to the proposal, you may submit representations in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofters Commission, Castle Wynd, Inverness IV2 3EQ by 25th February 2010, specifying your interest in the application and your reasons for objecting. A copy of any representations made will be forwarded to the applicant.

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL COMHAIRLE NA GÀIDHEALTACHD
Snow Damaged Trees & Vegetation Adjacent to Public Roads
Following the recent spell of severe winter weather The Highland Council would like to remind landowners of their obligation to deal in a timely and appropriate manner with any tree or other vegetation which has been damaged, bent or broken by the weight of snow, and which is now posing a potential hazard to road users or causing an obstruction. Landowners should particularly check that there are no weakened or broken boughs suspended at height which may subsequently fall onto the road or footpath below. Snow-damaged trees caused a significant obstruction to snowploughs during the recent winter conditions. Owners are asked to examine their roadside trees and take measures to remove trees or branches with the potential to collapse into the road as a result of future snowfall. Under Section 91 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 the Council may serve notice requiring the landowner to carry out work to remove the cause of any danger or obstruction, or if the danger is considered imminent, may take such action as is considered appropriate to remove the danger and recover the expenses incurred in so doing from the landowner. Should landowners need advice regarding traffic management requirements they should contact their local TEC Services Office details of which can be found on the Council's Website at www.highland.gov.uk.

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"WATER ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES (SCOTLAND) ACT 2003 THE WATER ENVIRONMENT (CONTROLLED ACTIVITIES) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2005 ("the 2005 Regulations")
"Notice is hereby given, in accordance with Regulation 13 of the Regulations, that an application has been made to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) by Black Mount Estate for authorisation to carry out a controlled activity, namely:-
1) Abstraction of 44,524 m³ per day from Allt Coire Achaladair at NGR NN 3270 4302 from February 2012.
2) Impoundment of water within the Allt Coire Achaladair at NGR NN 3270 4302 from March 2011.
"Any person affected or likely to be affected by, or having an interest in, the application may make representations about the application to SEPA in writing within 28 days beginning with the date of this advertisement, at the following address, quoting reference number CAR/L/1080611:
The Registry Department, SEPA, Graesser House, Fodderty Way, Dingwall, IV15 9XB.
A copy of the application may be inspected free of charge, at the above address, between 9.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (except local and national holidays) or by prior arrangement at SEPA's Lochgilphead office.
"Written representations received within 28 days of this advertisement will be taken into consideration in determining the application. Any such representations will be placed in a public register unless the person making them requests that they should not be. Where such a request is made there will be included in the register a statement indicating that representations have been made which have been the subject of such a request."

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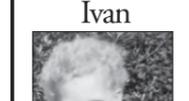
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BIRTHS

MACALISTER HALL - Niall and Emma are delighted to announce the birth of Zoe Joy on January 8, 2010 at Edinburgh. Special thanks to all staff in the Simpson Neonatal Unit for their excellent support.

MACLEAN - SMITH

Onic and Lee are delighted to announce the arrival of their beautiful son, Leon Kai on Saturday, January 23, 2010 at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban. Special thanks to Isle of Mull Ferry and the excellent care we received from midwives Pauline, Jaki and Fiona.

ENGAGEMENTS

KILMURRAY - Family and friends are delighted to announce the engagement on Christmas Day of Samantha to Ruari.

SUTHERLAND - The engagement is announced between Andrew, son of Alistair and Viki Sutherland, Torren, Glencoe, Argyll and Suzanne, daughter of Ross and Merry Harrison of Perth, Western Australia.

DEATHS

ANDERSON - Peacefully on Thursday, January 21, 2010 in the tender loving care of the staff at Pinewood Nursing Home, Callander with her beloved daughters Joan and Janet at her side Margaret (Peggy) (née Macleod) beloved wife of the late Jimmie Anderson, Cambusirich, Killin and Raasay. Treasured and loving granny of Donna and a much respected mother-in-law of Donald, a dear aunt and cousin.

CRAIG - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on January 18, 2010, aged 63, David, much loved husband of Etta and dad of Lesley. Loving papa of Kallan and a dear son, brother and father-in-law. Donations if desired to Glencoe Mountain Rescue.

LUARD - Sheila (widow of Jock Luard) died peacefully at home on January 16, 2010, aged 95 years. Funeral service was held on Saturday, January 23, 2010 at St Mary's Church, Wisington near Nayland, Suffolk. Interment at Gruline Church Yard, Isle of Mull.

MACBETH - Lizzie, passed away peacefully at home in her 93rd year, with her girls on Sunday, January 24, 2010. Loving wife of the late Jimmy and adored mammy of Betty and Mima and precious granny to Kathleen, Elizabeth, Susan and Frances and wonderful great-granny to Damien, Ryan, Caitlin, Kyle, Ellie, Fergus, Grace and Constance. Will be sadly missed by all the family. Life will never be the same again.

MAY - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on Saturday, January 23, 2010, in his 90th year, Alfred (Alfie), devoted husband of Nancy Campbell, dear father of Pamela and Allison, father-in-law to Maurice, much loved grandpa of Nicola, Mark and Kyle, will be sorely missed. Funeral service will take place from the Church

of Scotland, Glencruitten Road, Oban on Friday, January 29, 2010 at 1pm. Thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only please. Retiring Collection/Donations if desired for Alzheimer Scotland, Action on Dementia.

WRIGHT - Peacefully on Thursday, January 21, 2010 at Culloden Court Nursing Home, with his loved family present and in the exceptional kindness and care of the nursing staff, Bill Wright, 7 Towerhill Gardens, Inverness aged 76 years, retired builder and diver formerly of Achintee Farm, Fort William and Ballachulish much loved husband of Mo cherished father to Debbie, Andrea, Alec and Caz, a dear father-in-law, grandfather and a good friend to many. A service to celebrate a life full of adventure on Saturday, January 30 at 11.30am in the Funeral Home of William T Fraser and Son, Funeral Directors, Calduthel Road, Inverness. All welcome to attend.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GILLIES - Alasdair would like to thank relatives, friends, neighbours and ex-colleagues for their kind expressions of sympathy, cards, flowers and phone calls after the sad loss of his much loved mum. Special thanks to Rev Philip Burroughs for a much comforting service, my cousin Donald Kirsop for his well chosen words, David Gardiner for his fine choice of music and Alasdair and Kenneth Blair for their compassion and expertise. Thanks to Dr Leftley for his care and a special thanks to The Integrated Care Team Kintyre and District Nurses for their loving home care, the President of Campbeltown Bowling Club, Committee and members, Alex Russell and staff for their catering after the services and to all who attended the church and graveside. The retiring collection realized £275 which will be divided between the Integrated Care Team Kintyre and District Nurses.

MAC TAGGART - Margaret (née MacLachlan), Kitty, Milda and families would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for all the phone calls, letters, cards and beautiful floral tributes given to them following the death of their sister, Margaret. Thank you to Rev Angus Morrison for his comforting service at Kilmeny Church and at the graveside, to the organist Marsali Thomson and to piper James MacEachern. Thank you also to Craig MacAffer for his very efficient funeral arrangements, to Bridgend Hotel for the excellent purvey and to all who paid their last respects at church and graveside.

STARK - (née Donaldson), Alana, Eleanor, George and Shirley wish to thank most sincerely all relatives and friends for the many kind expressions of sympathy, letters, cards and support received in their recent very sad loss of Agnes, their mum. Special thanks to all ambulance staff and doctors and nurses at the Intensive Care Unit, Ninewells Hospital for the exceptional care and attention given to their mum, to Rev Jane Taylor for her most moving, personal and comforting service, to Maurice and staff at James Ashton Funeral Directors for their sensitive attention to detail and to all who paid their last respects at the Crematorium and to those who donated so generously to the collection for Intensive Care Unit, Ninewells Hospital.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

STARK - (Donaldson). A memorial service will be held in Tarbert Parish Church on Saturday, February 6, 2010, at 1.00pm in memory of the late Agnes Stark. The family extends an invitation to all to join them at Tarbert Bowling Club opposite Tarbert Parish Church for refreshments after the service. There will be a collection for ICU, Ninewells Hospital.

IN MEMORIAM

BIRCH - Betty Strang (née Henry) at rest January 30, 1998, the perfect wife of Peter. Never forgotten. Loved every day.

KELLY - In loving memory of my dear daughter and our sister, Flora Elizabeth, who died on January 31, 1988, R.I.P. Many a lonely heartache. Many a silent tear. But always a beautiful memory. Of one we loved so dear. - 118 Kilmallie Road, Caol.

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Business Park, Clydebank G81 2DR
Tel 0808 100 6000
In memory of Dawn Joyce

FOR THE BLIND CHILDREN OF SCOTLAND'S ACADEMIC TUITION AT THE ROYAL SCHOOL IN EDINBURGH
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Please send to **Appeals Department, Highland Arts Effort, Royal Blind Asylum School, P.O. Box 500, Gillespie Crescent, Edinburgh, EH10 4HZ**

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KIRSOP - Treasured memories of John who died on January 25, 2007, steadfast husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather. Forever in our thoughts. Always in our hearts. - Mary and family.

LIVINGSTONE - In loving memory of my dear husband John, who died January 25, 2001. Fondly remembered. - Helen.

MACAULAY - In loving memory of Willie died January 29, 2009 and his dear wife Katie (née Kirkpatrick) died August 6, 2006. Secret tears and happy memories. - Families at home and abroad.

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New minister inducted at Muckairn Parish Church

MORE than 60 members of his previous congregation in Stirling travelled to see Reverend Robert Brookes inducted at Muckairn Parish Church, Tainui.

Rev Brookes, who is originally from Newtonmore, will now be responsible for the parishes of Kilchrean and Dalavich, linked with Muckairn.

After graduating from Aberdeen University in 2006, Rev Brookes spent his probationary years in St Columba's Parish Church and his popularity there was evident when so many members of his previous parish attended the induction at Tainui on December 5.

The church service was followed by a tea and social event in Tainui Village Hall, which, like the church, was packed to capacity.

Rev Brookes was welcomed to the parish by Anne Pascoe, Canon Fraser and Mary Nicholson and was presented with a painting by Annie MacAulay, the church's oldest member.

Rev Susan Sutherland spoke on his behalf and the event was chaired by Rev George Cringles, Minister of the Island of Coll, linked with Connel: St. Oran's and Dunbeg.

Entertainment was provided by Campbell Anderson and his band, singers Cathie Henderson and Duncan MacDonald and the Muckairn Church Choir.

Rev Brookes said that his interests included gardening and walking.

ECCLESIASTICAL NOTICES

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION

Sunday 31st January 2010
Septuagesima
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Communion..... 08:00
Choral Mattins..... 10:15
Sunday School and Creeche Parish Eucharist..... 11:30
Loop System
Large Print Hymn Books
All Welcome
Norman MacCallum,
Provost.
(01631) 562323
St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Mattins..... 11.00
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist..... 10.00

LORN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Sunday 31st January 2010
Oban High School
Main Hall
10:30am
All Welcome
Telephone
07836 342 622
www.lorncf.org.uk

ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN

Campbell Street Church
Sunday 31st January 2010
11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.
Phone-In 'Worship Link' available
Rev. Archie McPhail
MA, MTh
(01631) 567076
All welcome

Graduations

Jennifer MacArthur graduated from University of Stirling with a BSc in Adult Nursing. Jennifer is currently working within Glenaray Ward in the Mid Argyll Community Hospital and Integrated Care Centre. Jennifer is the daughter of Walter and Eileen MacArthur, Lochgilphead.

Graduated with distinction from Manchester University with an Msc in Environmental Governance Karen Anne Alexander, daughter of Iain and Alison Alexander, Kilchrean. Karen is currently studying for her Phd at the Scottish Marine Institute at Dunbeg.

Joan Beaton graduated from Edinburgh's Telford College with an HND in Art and Design (Theatre Costume Interpretation) Joan is a former pupil of Rockfield Primary and Oban High Schools and is a daughter of James and Jenny Beaton, Oban.

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Oban Times ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHARITY DONATIONS

Oban Hospice
CARING FOR THE FUTURE
Donations always gratefully accepted
Please contact **David Mudie (Treasurer)**
Oban Hospice Ltd
The Croft
Kilmore

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Working towards a time when every person in Scotland has equal and ready access to the best information, treatment and care for cancer
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Thought for the Week

White as snow

I am writing this 'Thought' in the middle of January when we have been experiencing one of the coldest spells of weather for many years with much of the country covered in a blanket of snow.

This reminds me of some words from the Old Testament book of the prophet Isaiah. "Come now, let us reason together" says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool." (Isaiah 1:18)

Most men will know what it is like to get a tiny drop of blood on an immaculately clean white shirt. Perhaps a tiny cut from shaving in the morning has caused the problem. Against the best white that a washing powder can produce, that little drop of crimson blood stands out for all to see. Even a man full of confidence and assurance feels self-conscious when that happens because he knows that everyone he meets is bound to notice it.

That scenario highlights the fact that there are hardly any colours more garish than scarlet or crimson. None could be a greater contrast to white, especially the white of a fresh fall of snow, which is why the prophet uses this picture to illustrate the extent of God's mercy to us.

Sadly our sin is terrible and has marred God's creation. Sometimes people take a lenient view of their lives and make excuses for their sin. But God is pure and holy, and wants us to be the same.

Yet there is no one who is 'white' in that they are perfect. Paul reminds us that we have all sinned and fall far short of the standard God requires of us. In God's sight our sins stand out like scarlet or crimson.

But they don't need to stay like that. God can cleanse us from all sin if we turn to him and believe in Jesus Christ. He sent his

Juniors in north squad

Athletics

LEANACHAN Forest Junior races were only the second set of races in the Lochaber AC league this year due to weather conditions.

A good turnout of juniors across the age groups and a couple of course records made for some exciting races on a cold morning.

Calum Fraser ran 16.45 and Isla Mackay 19.19 setting course records in the under-15 races over 4km, despite racing the day before at Forres cross country.

Stephen MacPhee ran 18.46 to win the male youth race, Innes Blackhall ran 10.31 and Eilidh Moynihan 13.26 to win the under-13 races, while Ewan MacLean ran 11.58 to take victory in the under-11 boys race.

The under-11 girls race saw the closest race of the day with three seconds splitting the first three with Chloe MacDonald of Invergarry winning in 13.29 ahead of Abbie and Robyn Blackhall of Caol Primary in 13.32.

Innes, Calum and Isla were all selected to run for the North of Scotland junior teams a couple of weeks ago at the inter district races in Edinburgh, which are held in conjunction with the televised international race. Innes had an excellent run coming home with a bronze team medal.

The vitrified fort races are the next Junior event in Glen Nevis on Sunday 28th February.

Netball coaching

Netball

NETBALL sessions for P7 up to adults are now running on a Friday at Lochaber High School temporary gym from 3.45pm to 5.15pm.

The next sessions, which have been organised as part of the active schools programme, will be January 29, February 5 and February 19. Netball coach Jermaine McCracken, from Cromarty, will lead the training.

Anyone interested in playing netball should contact Bridget Thomas on 07747762497.

Charity auction

Rugby

AN AUCTION to raise funds for Oban Lorne RFC will be held on February 6.

Among the more unusual items up for auction at the event in the clubhouse include shark fishing.

Alongside a meet and greet with the current Mr Scotland there will be a bar, buffet and disco.

Footballer fulfils American dream

Football



John Kennedy will leave in August to start his prestigious football scholarship with Campbellsville University in Kentucky.

A LEADING Lochgilphead football talent will be packing his passport and football boots later this year after securing a prestigious football scholarship in America.

John Kennedy, who has played for Lochgilphead Red Star and Oban Saints, will head to Kentucky in August to take up the four-year scholarship at Campbellsville University.

The 18-year-old, who is currently working in Glasgow, will also undertake a degree in Education.

'Playing football day in day out will be great but also doing my degree means that if one doesn't work out then I'll have the other to fall back on,' said John.

Scholarship

He explained that the scholarship came about after he contacted First Point USA, a sports scholarship consultancy firm, based in Glasgow.

After playing in a 'Showcase Scotland' match

with other prospective candidates, John was lucky enough to be selected for Campbellsville University.

He said: 'There are 400 places available for students to study in America. The football coaches will see 24 folk every fortnight, so they go through a good amount

of people and I was lucky enough to be one of those that was chosen.'

As well as playing football for Lochgilphead and Oban, John has played for East Stirling FC, Ardrishaig, Wanderers and Lochgilphead Soccer Centre.

He also played shinty for Kilmory Camanachd.

'I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the teams I've played for. They've all helped me to get where I am,' added John.

Proud

On behalf of the family, mum Catherine said: 'We are all very proud of John and he's worked so hard to get to where he is today.'

John, who attended Lochgilphead Primary and High Schools, is now working hard to save money and source funding for his studies.

Anyone interested in giving John some financial backing can contact Catherine by emailing jnkennedy@hotmail.co.uk



Primary football league thankful for the thaw

Saints Boys striker Lewis Buchanan skips past a Stoddarts players during a match between the two teams in the Oban Express Primary Football League, which is now in full swing following the winter break. The league matches are played at the Oban High School Community Pitch, which was frozen over for weeks during the recent cold snap.

Shinty cup fixtures

Shinty

THE CAMANACHD Association, the governing body of shinty, announced the draws for this season's cup competitions on Tuesday.

The draw for the Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup will be made at a later date.

Glasgow Celtic Society Cup

Round One to be played on April 3: GMA v Taynuilt; Kilmory v Ballachulish. Byes are given to Inveraray, Oban Celtic, Bute, Oban Camanachd, Kyles Athletic and Glenorchy.

MacTavish Cup

Round One to be played on April 3: Lochcarron v Skye; Fort William v Kinlochshiel; Strathglass v Kilmallie; Newtonmore v Lovat; Glenurquhart v Kingussie; Lochaber v Inverness. Byes are given to Caberfeidh and Beaulay.

Aberdein Considine Sutherland Cup

Round One to be played on April 10: Lovat v Newtonmore; Skye v Taynuilt; Kinlochshiel v Kilmallie; Aberdour v Lochbroom; Col Glen v Taynuilt; Caberfeidh v Lochside Rovers; Strathglass v Lochaber; Fort William v Glengarry; Lewis v Inveraray; GMA v Bute; Kingussie v Boleskine; Inverness v Aberdeen Uni; Lochcarron v Glenurquhart.

Byes to Kyles Athletic, Beaulay and Strachur.

Bullough Cup

Round One to be played week commencing May 24: Taynuilt v Bute; Ballachulish v Aberdour; GMA v Tayforth; Inveraray v Strachur; Lochside Rovers v Col Glen.

Byes given to The Scots, London and Kyles.

Strathdearn Cup

Round One to be played week commencing May 10: Kinlochshiel v Kingussie; Lewis v Skye; Lochaber v Aberdeen Uni.

Byes given to Fort William, Lovat, Beaulay, Caberfeidh, Glenurquhart, Inverness, Glengarry, Lochbroom, Boleskine, Strathglass, Kilmallie, Lochcarron and Newtonmore.

The 2010 season is set to commence on Saturday March 6.

Briony's Scotland call-up



Briony Kincaid at last year's Scottish Championship.

Orienteering

AN OBAN teenager has been called up to represent her country in orienteering.

Briony Kincaid, age 13, from Oban has been selected to join The Scottish Junior Orienteering Squad.

This provides training and a development programme for teenagers showing a high ability in the sport.

Each year the team is reselected using results from throughout the previous year's main competitions.

The selection panel looks for 24 to 30 squad members each year between the ages of 13 and 18.

This year 30 youths have been selected in total.

Briony is a member of the local orienteering club, Loch Eck Orienteers (EckO).

She has been picked along with two other girls and three boys from different parts of Scotland.

Glenloy action

Cycling

WEST Highland Wheelers' Winter League, sponsored by Off Beat Bikes, returned to action at Glenloy on Sunday after a snow and ice enforced break.

Local riders were keen to turn a wheel again but none could match the pace of Ruari Watt on his stripped-down single speed.

Joe Barnes' finely tuned downhill skills helped him to a fine second place. Gavin Shirley in third pipped Jamie Maxwell by 0.6 of a second.

Bowls league

Bowls

Lorn Carpet Bowling League

	P	Pts
North Connel	5	24
Benderloch	4	18
Kilmore	3	18
Easdale	4	16
Cairnbaan	3	14
Connel	4	14
Taynuilt	4	8

Spot the

SHINTY BALL

Competition

WIN £950

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...

This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:
D Galbraith, Dukes Road, Comrie and C Geddes, Nant Drive, Oban

All you have to do

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void. Prizes will be shared between those submitting correct entries.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to reach "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition Rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.

The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.

Employees of The Oban Times Limited, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

I enclose £1 (note) for 20 crosses (tick box) The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules.

How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1.

Name _____

Address _____

Tel No. _____

Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

Corporate stationery
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www.krispprint.co.uk

Lochaber lose to league leaders

Lochaber RFC 11
RAF Lossiemouth 17

Rugby

PLUCKY Lochaber gave RAF Lossiemouth a real run for their money at Banavie on Saturday, pushing the league leaders all the way and were unlucky not to win.

This was only Lochaber's third home match of the season and for once they managed to field a full-strength team.

Bolstered by the return of stand-off Kenny Turnbull from New Zealand, centre Niall MacPhee and back-row Adam Mercer from Edinburgh, Lochaber gave the home crowd a performance to cheer about.

Lossie exploited gaps on the wing to open the scoring in the corner.

Lochaber replied with two well-struck penalty goals from Rory Mackay, bringing them back to within a point.

Lossie caught the home defence napping right on the stroke of half time with another quickly taken penalty resulting in a try in the corner. The half-time

score was 12 - 6 but few would have predicted it would be so close.

Lochaber played with passion and commitment in the second half and were eventually rewarded with a try.

Captain Ally Rivett crashed into a pile of defenders but managed to reach forward at full stretch to touch the ball down on the line.

Lossie hit back before Lochaber re-grouped after their Herculean effort. Winning the ball at the kick-off, Lochaber gave away a penalty and Lossie ran the ball wide to score in the corner and held on until full time.

Lochaber's Kenny Turnbull was awarded man of the match.

The club can look forward to a busy end to the season with a run of four home matches.

Next weekend, Lochaber play host to Moray - kick-off at 3pm.



Lochaber's Niall MacPhee wraps up Lossie's Nat Lucas. 10_05rugby02

Open archery competition

Archery

FOLLOWING a current down turn, the entry for this year's Open Portsmouth Competition at Oban's Atlantis Leisure is lower than previous years.

The competition, organised by Oban and Lorn Archers, will be held on January 31.

Organisers are hoping there will still be strong competition on the day, with entries expected from all over Scotland.

Marathon fundraiser

Athletics

ORGANISERS of the Baxters Loch Ness Marathon and Festival of Running have announced an impressive sum of £661,119 was raised for charities from the October 4 event last year.

The money will benefit many local, national and worldwide causes, including the event's four nominated charities, Highland Hospice, Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie Cancer Care and the Scottish Community Foundation, and over 35 other associated national and Scottish charities. More than 7,500 people raced on the day.

Islay Golf Club

Golf

Winter League week six: 1 Charles Holyoake, 38pts; 2 Robert Shaw, 36pts; 3 Jay Doherty, 36pts. Css 70.

Magic twos - Ruairaidh MacIntyre.

January Medal: 1 Alistair Livingstone, 76 less 7 net 69; 2 Kevin Johnston, 88 less 16 net 72; 3 Kenny Gillies, 84 less 11 net 73. Css 72.

Magic twos - Iain MacCuaig and Nigel Carmichael.

Oban over-35 six-a-sides

Football

	P	Pts
Emergency	3	9
Spartak	3	9
Trialists	3	9
Taynuilt	4	9
Seil	4	6
Clan Trees	4	3
Hydro	4	3
Teachers	3	0
Owen Sails	4	0

Results: Clan Trees 3, Taynuilt 4; Hydro 4, Owen Sails 1.

Oban Pool League

Pool

AS OF Sunday both Lochavullin teams have withdrawn from the league.

League cup semi-final fixtures on March 11 are as follows: Gluepot v Kelvindale; Markie Dan's B v Claredon A.

	P	Pts
Lochnell	10	16
Markie's A	10	14
Lancaster	10	14
Cellar	10	14
Claredon A	10	12
Kelvindale	10	12
Markie's B	10	12
Gluepot	10	8
Claredon B	10	8

Netball lessons

Netball

NETBALL sessions for people aged P7 to adult are running on a Friday at Lochaber High School temporary gym from 3.45pm. The next session, organised as part of Active Schools, is on January 29.

Island endurance cyclist hits the road

Cycling

AN ISLAY cyclist will attempt to break a number of British and European road records over the next two years, including Land's End to John O'Groats in less than two days.

Wilderness guide Jez Hastings, from Port Charlotte, and his friend Dave Harmon have been cycling together since the 1980s.

While Jez has specialised in endurance events, Dave has become the voice of cycling commentary on Eurosport.

Team Wiggle

Both men, representing Team Wiggle, will work literally in tandem in an ambitious plan to break records held by the Road Records Association.

Jez, who moved to Islay from the Borders 10 years ago, spoke to The Oban Times before embarking on a five-hour training cycle round the island.

He said: 'These records were first taken down in 1892 and the oldest record we will be going for was set in 1959, so it is a great challenge for us.'

Both men are in their 40s and Jez, a member of Islay's Velo Club d'Ardbeg, insists that it is the perfect time to enter the race as endurance cyclists are at their peak at that age.

'This challenge will test our mental capacity and we hopefully have the experience to cope.'

'It is going to be about pain and suffering but we are good at that in Scotland!'

Dave added: 'We are aware that neither Jez or I could hold a candle physically to some of the great record holders of the past but we feel that using advances in training and equipment we have a realistic chance of success.'

Beginning in late March the pair aim to set a new benchmark of less than 17 hours for the Side to Side route from Pembroke in West Wales to Yarmouth in East Anglia, before attempting the 12-hour record for Liverpool to Edinburgh.

An even more ambitious 2011 calendar could see Team Wiggle Tandem mount assaults on the End to End record and venture abroad to the legendary Paris-Brest-Paris route, which must be completed in less than 50 hours.

Team Wiggle will ride a Rocket 1 tandem bike, a development tandem built by world famous constructor Terry Dolan.

Training will move on to Snowdonia, followed by a week riding with Team Endura in Southern France.

Team Wiggle Tandem is still keen to hear from any sponsors who may be interested in working with the team.

Follow the team on teamwiggetandem.com



Dave Harmon, left, and Jez Hastings with their tandem.

Fort handed home tie against Huntly in league cup

Football

THE FIRST round of the Fosters Highland League Cup has seen Fort William, Fraserburgh, Wick Academy and Huntly all handed ties, with the Lochaber men welcoming the Broch.

Meanwhile the Black and Golds will make the trip to Harmsworth Park.

With a full card of Highland League games scheduled for the same day as the first round of the cup, the draw means that the Buckie Thistle v Fraserburgh, Fort William v Huntly and Wick Academy v Clachnacuddin Highland League fixtures that were due to be played on March 6th will now have to be fitted in elsewhere in the calendar.

The rest of the rounds were drawn: in the second round holders Inverurie Locos will welcome Deveronvale to Harlaw Park in the pick of the ties.

Forres Mechanics host the winners of the Huntly v Wick Academy tie while last year's runners up, Fraserburgh will be at home to Clachnacuddin - if they can get past Fort William in round one.

Cup debutants Turiff United will be at Rothes in the second round as manager Kris Hunter pits his wits against his former assistant Graham McBeath while Strathspey Thistle have a tough task to progress as they welcome Buckie Thistle to Seaford Park in their first ever tie in this competition.

The third new club in the competition are Formartine United and they go to Lossiemouth in round two.

The cup draw was made at the Inverurie Loco Works Social Club at Harlaw Park. Paul Allan representing sponsors Fosters picked out the home clubs while Highland League President Eddie Innes pulled the away teams out of the hat.

Saints back on Scottish Cup duty

Football

FOSTER'S Scottish Amateur Cup 5th round tie between Falkirk and Oban Saints, due to be played at Little Kerse, Grangemouth, last Saturday was called-off due pitch waterlogging.

The match, which has now been postponed three times due to the weather, has been re-arranged for this Saturday at the same venue, with a 2pm kick-off.

The winners of the Falkirk v Saints match have been drawn away to Slamannan in the 6th round.

Saints Under 13s were on Regional Cup duty and won a pulsating match against Barcalmond 6-4 on Saturday at the Community Pitch. The Oban boys were cruising at one stage leading 5-1 but all credit to Barcalmond, they clawed their way back into the game and made it a nervy last few minutes for the Oban side. Despite the onslaught they managed to hold on to win 6-4.

This win puts the Oban youngsters into the last sixteen of the competition.

Saints goal scorers were Jamie Easton (2), Connor Howe, Kieran Hendry, Zak Straub and Ally MacLean.

The Under 15s lost 2-1 in a close away match with Blair Thistle. Netting for Saints was Martin MacPherson.

This Saturday the Under 13s are away to Helensburgh and the Under 15s travel to take on Dumbarton Rock.

On Saturday Oban Old Crocks took on Glasgow side Cambria at the community pitch with the visitors winning a great game by the odd goal in five. Netting for Oban were Hamish Matheson and George Easton.

Cambria were, of course, boosted by four former Oban Saints players - Archie MacLean, Rocky MacMillan, Calum Stewart and Alex Beaton.



Oban Old Crocks and Cambria Veterans face the camera before last Saturday's game at the Oban High School Community Pitch.

Tides

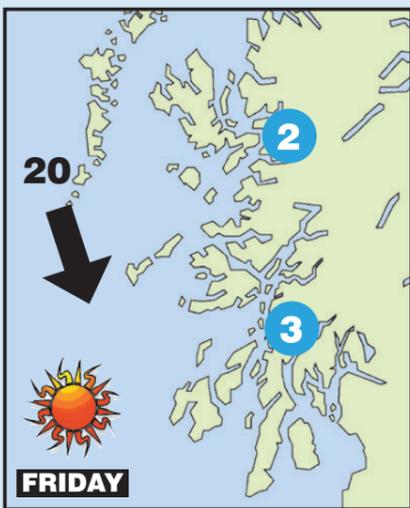
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday, January 28, 2010 are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	04.08 3.5 10.34 1.3 16.48 3.7 23.33 1.0	
Fri	04.55 3.9 11.26 0.9 17.29 3.9 23.22 0.6	
Sat	05.38 4.1 12.11 0.7 18.07 4.0 *** **	
Sun	00.08 0.4 06.19 4.3 12.55 0.5 18.44 4.1	
Mon	00.53 0.2 06.59 4.3 13.36 0.5 19.22 4.0	
Tues	01.37 0.2 07.38 4.2 14.16 0.6 19.59 3.9	
Wed	02.20 0.3 08.17 4.0 14.56 0.8 20.37 3.7	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrihaig	-5.35	Lochboisdale	+0.30
Campbeltown	-5.30	Mallaig	+0.25
Crinan	-0.47	Portree	+0.55
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Tobermory	+0.16
		Dover	+5.30

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the weather

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Thursday
Light rain forecast. Winds light to moderate north to north-westerly. Temperatures 0°C to 5°C

Friday
Expect extended spells of sunshine in Argyll but the Highland region will see light showers.
Winds moderate to strong north/north-westerly. Temperatures 2°C to 3°C.

Weekend Outlook
Bright spells and sunshine to continue.
Winds moderate north/north-westerly. Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States
Oban to Barra/South Uist - Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree - As above
Kennacraig to Islay - As above

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