

# The Oban Times

## & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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### Saints' secretary bags top award

### Kids - WIN a year's entry to Atlantis's new play area

### INSIDE: Collect tokens for your SEA LIFE Annual Pass



Also inside this week: More Bonnie Babies • Rockfield's Got Talent • Firefighters' desert challenge

## Hospital staff in fear of their jobs

### Workers still waiting for job confirmation just one week before wards are merged

HOSPITAL workers in Oban are at their wits end with management after waiting months to be told where they are going to work.

One week before two wards at Lorn and Islands Hospital are merged, some still do not know what the future holds.

Nurses and domestic staff have told the *The Oban Times* of low morale in the hospital as the wards, Cruachan and Ward C, are merged.

Fifty-one members of staff currently work between the two wards - after the merger there will only be 30 jobs. It is understood there are 10 vacant posts, which leaves 11 staff members without a permanent job.

Hospital managers have promised there will be no

**EXCLUSIVE**

REPORT by

LOUISE LEE

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redundancies, but 'displaced' staff members say they feel 'deflated undervalued, nomadic and used.'

In a letter to *The Oban Times* one said: 'We are all classed as displaced and are awaiting the outcome of a job matching process to find out where we are offered a post.'

'No one is disputing the fact that the NHS has to save money, but is too much to ask to be treated compassionately.'

Another said: 'NHS Highland seeks to save money but at what cost to its staff's

mental health?'

An NHS Highland spokesman said: 'In the summer of last year a service redesign task group was set up in Lorn and Islands Hospital to look into the redesign of inpatient services within the hospital.'

'The review identified an Intermediate Care Ward within the hospital which would be created through the merger of Ward C and Cruachan Ward.'

'For the staff working in both wards this obviously means change and all staff working in these two wards have been displaced as per our policy of ensuring staff terms and conditions are protected and no-one gets preference over one of their

colleagues.'

'There will be a small number of staff that we will need to work with as there may not currently be suitable vacancies, however, we are confident that we will find them a post and we have reassured all staff that there will be no compulsory redundancies.'

'We do understand that the review process may be unsettling for staff and we have ensured that staff have been supported by local managers, our human resources department and our staff partnership colleagues.'

'However if any member of staff feels they have not been given enough information or support, we can look into it as soon as possible.'

## Coastguard service cuts report to come this week

THE UK Government and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) will this week publish a risk assessment on controversial planned cuts to the coastguard service.

Shipping Minister, Mike Penning, made the announcement last Thursday following a Westminster debate on the proposals.

Western Isles MP, Angus MacNeil, said: 'It seems that the MCA are trying to plug gaps in their thinking. It is clear they have been exposed as having left out a huge plank in any argument for restructuring the Coastguards.'

Meanwhile, the leader of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Angus Campbell, said he was satisfied with this week's meeting between council conveners and Mr Penning. He said: 'We outlined our case over the increased risks which we think will arise if the proposals to cut the Coastguard stations at either Stornoway or Lerwick go ahead. The minister assured us that the consultation process was genuine and that he would listen to all views in reaching a conclusion.'

Mr Penning said he would also visit the Western Isles before the end of the consultation period.

## Council prepares to swing budget axe

COUNCILLORS will meet today, Thursday, to agree a series of drastic cuts that will affect every area of life in Argyll and Bute.

More than 200 council jobs are directly at risk along with others which rely on local authority funding as the council aims to cut £55 million from its budget during the next three years.

Among the proposals are increased charges, transferring ownership of council halls to community trusts, reducing provision of cleaning and janitorial services, increasing the cost of school meals for primary

school pupils and changing approaches to recycling.

The council also proposes to close libraries, cut community transport, withdraw funding to groups, axe swimming lessons, close public toilets, withdraw music instructors and replace sheltered housing wardens with home care and tele-care services.

Council leader Dick Walsh said: 'It's not easy deciding to remove or change services but we do not have the money to do everything the way we did in the past.' More on Council budget implications - see Page 5



Julie MacQueen with the 'February' Christmas card - from her near neighbours

## Luing Christmas card travels 'round the corner' in eight weeks

A CHRISTMAS card posted first class on December 12, 2010 took eight weeks to travel to the recipients - who live a few hundred yards away.

Julie and Neil MacQueen on the Isle of Luing were delighted to receive a Christmas card from friends Peter, Fumiko and Musashi Miller - and a paw print from Rusky the dog. However, the card was delivered about

60 days after it was posted within sight of their home.

Julie said: 'When I got the card I did a double take.'

'Peter and Fumiko pass my door most days so they could have just handed it to me.'

**Weather problems**

ARoyalMailspokeswoman said: 'Royal Mail dealt with over 180 million items of mail over the festive season in Scotland.'

'The severe weather did mean that on a few occasions, we dispatched mail down south to be sorted and then returned to be delivered to customers.'

'Royal Mail has a vast network all over the UK and it is right and proper that we utilised this when we were hampered by the most hostile start to winter weather in the UK in living memory.'

## Barcaldine man's 'dead' brother discovered in Honolulu

A BARCALDINE pastor who for 49 years believed his brother was dead has discovered he is alive and has been using his identity since the 1960s.

Paul Woodhouse, 62, who preaches at Soroba Community Church and often prayed his half-brother Roy would one day return to him, received a message from US immigration that he was being held in a detention centre in Honolulu, Hawaii.

'It is amazing, a miracle,' said Paul. 'The news was an incredible mixture of relief, excitement, nervousness and shock.'

The whereabouts of his brother only came to light after 69-year-old Roy admitted to prison officials he had been using his brother's identity.

Paul said their father told him Roy had died in South Africa but spoke to him on the phone last week and now hopes for a reunion.

## Lorry overturns near Appin

PART of the A828 was closed near to Stalker Cafe, Appin, after a 38-tonne lorry overturned on a bend in the road.

The vehicle was not loaded when it overturned on Monday at about 8.30pm and the road, which links Oban and Fort William, was closed until 1am to allow recovery of the damaged vehicle.

The lorry driver, who was taken to the Belford Hospital, Fort William, with minor injuries, is subject of a report to the procurator fiscal.



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## 'No improper talks' over airport future

DISCUSSIONS between Argyll and Bute Council and Highlands and Islands Airports Limited (HIAL) over the way ahead for Oban Airport could have compromised the future management of the airfield, it was claimed this week.

Paul Keegan, the former managing director of the company which ran the airport on behalf of the council, said he was 'very concerned' that talks between the authority and HIAL had taken place before any tendering process had begun.

Mr Keegan, now managing director of Total Logistics

Concepts Limited, based at Oban Airport, said: 'My understanding is that there is to be a public tendering process for the operation of Oban Airport and the airports on Coll and Colonsay.'

'To ensure honesty, openness and transparency in any tendering process there are published guidelines which the recent discussions between the council and HIAL seem to have deliberately ignored.'

He said he plans to take the matter to the Standards Commissioner.

Responding to Mr Keegan's concerns, an Argyll and Bute

Council spokeswoman said the authority was still reviewing its plans for Oban Airport.

'This has involved market testing, to see if any commercial organisations would be interested in responding to a tender to take over the management of the site.'

'Discussions with prospective suppliers at this early stage in the process are regarded as good practice.'

'There have been no 'improper' discussions. We have a formal tendering process and the procurement officer who will oversee the process was not involved in

the market testing and has had no discussions with anyone regarding Oban Airport.'

'During the tender process itself, the council will not engage in any discussion or correspondence with any bidder or third party, that is not shared with all participating bidders.'

'This is in line with the council's commitment to open, fair and transparent trading.'

'The decision to issue the tender is still subject to legal and financial scrutiny by the council. Once this is completed and the decision has been taken to proceed, we will issue the tender documents.'

Take a stroll with whom you hold most dear  
Down to the restaurant nestled on the pier  
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Inspector judges Luining Primary top of the class

SCHOOL kids on the Isle of Luining go to a great school - so says Her Majesty's Inspector of Education (HMIIE).

The school was inspected in November, while still on Argyll and Bute Council's list of proposed closures, and the deputy director of HMIIE, Alistair Marquis, who undertook the inspection, was impressed with what he saw.

Mhari Ritchie, chairwoman of the school board, said: 'Everyone in the school was on tenterhooks because not only were we being inspected but one of the top inspectors in the country

was coming to our school. Our school was also under threat of closure so a good inspection was even more prevalent for us.

'However, there can be no doubt the results are absolutely tremendous. It is great to see in black and white that we have a great school that is part of the community and our children are happy.

Praise 'I would like to give every praise to all the staff members in the school in particular to Mrs McMahon and Mr Glen-Lee who do a tremendous job.'

Luining Primary was praised

for every aspect of provision for its pupils, which includes five children in the nursery. The majority of areas were judged as 'very good' or 'good'.

Confident Among the particular strengths highlighted by HMIIE were the confident and well-behaved children who are proud of their school and enjoy the wide range of activities to raise achievement, including the Ukulele Luining band involving all children.

Other strengths included the effective teaching in the nursery and primary stages which provides

children with interesting and motivating learning experiences, particularly through outdoor activities; the nurturing and supporting ethos, based on shared values and mutual respect; leadership of the head teacher; and the teamwork and commitment of all staff, teaching and support, to ensure all children make progress in their learning and enjoy school.

Councillor Ellen Morton, Argyll and Bute Council's education and lifelong learning spokesperson, congratulated everyone at Luining Primary School and Nursery.

She said: 'This is a very good report, and I warmly congratulate all those who have worked so hard to make the school what it is - pupils, staff, parents and the wider community,' she said.

'The excellent work being done by Mr Glen-Lee and his team in ensuring that Isle of Luining youngsters have the best possible start in their education will, I am sure, have a major impact when it comes to fulfilling their potential in secondary school and beyond.'

A full copy of the report can be viewed at www.hmie.gov.uk.



Beachd Ailein Ailean Caimbeul

FAD LINNTEAN bha beatha làitheil a mhòr chuid de Ghàidheil fo bhuidh na h-aimsire. 'S dòcha gur e sin a dh'fhàg gum bheil Gàidheil chun an latha 'n diugh nas dualtaiche fàilte a chur air nàbaidh le iomradh air an aimsir. Cha bheag an t-iongnadh ged a bhiodh cuid a' magadh nach biodh còmhraidh idir eadarainn mura b' è an side! Thar nam fichead bliadhna na mar sin a chaidh tha luchd ionnsachaidh, òigridh, agus gu h-àraidh Gàidheil nam bailtean mòra nas dualtaiche an latha a bheannachadh dha chèile le "Madainn mhath!" Ach gu h-inntinneach ged a tha sin air a bhonntachadh air a' Bheurla dh' fhaodais fhathast gabhail ris mar iomradh air aimsir an latha.

Theagmh mairsin gur e pàirt de dhualchas na Gàidhlig a tha seo agus tha fhios gum bidh Gàidheil às gach ceàrnaidh a' deanamh gairdeachais gum faigh iad iomradh oifigeil air an t-side ann an Gàidhlig bho Oifis na Side uair sam bith. Le taic bho Bhòrd na Gàidhlig tha Oifis na Side air seirbheis ùr a stèidheachadh gus ro-aithrisean side ann an Gàidhlig fhòilseachadh air an làrach-lìn aige, air an ùrachadh gu cunbhalach leis an fhiosrachadh is na rabhaidhean as ùire mun aimsir. Tha Oifis na Side a' libhrigeadh ro-aithrisean agus rabhaidhean ceithir uairean fichead gach latha agus tha an leasachadh ùr seo a' tairginn seirbheis shònraichte dha luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig agus luchd-ionnsachaidh aig gach ìre.

Ach cluinnidh mi mar tha cnàmhan thall sa bhos mun "chosgais gun adhbhar" a tha an seo le buidheann phoblach, agus ged a tha na bliadhnaichean a' dol seachad chan eil "Pìobaire an Aona Phuir" dad nas fhasa dhòmhsa èisteachd ris!

Biodh aca! Tha e ceart is iomchaidh seo a dhèanamh agus tha Achd na Gàidhlig a' gealltainn co-ionannachd spèis dhan Ghàidhlig ri Beurla ann an Alba, agus tha sin a' ciallachadh co-ionannachd spèis dha luchd-cleachdaidh na Gàidhlig cuideachd! 'S i a cheist cuin a thèid còirichean luchd-cleachdaidh na Gàidhlig a dhainneachadh ann an cùirt-lagha an aghaidh nan ionnsaighean làitheil ann am pàipearan naidheachd na dùthcha. Tha an càineadh gun sgr sin air a' cànan is ar dualchas tàireil mar an aimsir fhèin agus ged a tha e dualach dhuinn seasamh ris nach bu mhath dòchas air leasachadh side!

"Thig latha, thig comhairle", mar a chanadh m' athair!

IT IS little wonder that some have jokingly said that without the perpetual topic of the weather the Gàidhealtachd would be silent!

But for generations of poverty stricken Gaels whose lives were a matter of single minded concentration on sheer survival this passionate interest in weather is understandable, and it continues today driven by leisure and tourism interests as well as traditional crofting and fishing.

Gaelic users should now welcome the new Gaelic weather forecasting service available from the Met Office in Scotland.

Not only is this service fulfilling the Gaelic Language Act pledge of equal respect for Gaelic with English, it also marks Scotland's cultural diversity and provides new employment.

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

Tiree firefighters turn out for Gobi charity trek

REPORT By STEVEN FLANAGAN sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk

TWO TIREE firefighters will tear themselves away from Hampden at half time during a crucial European Championship qualifier - to go for a walk in the Gobi desert.

Craig Watson, aged 42, and Andy Phillips, 39, who both work at Tiree airport, will walk 100 miles across Mongolia's famous desert as part of a football-themed charity effort.

The pair hope to raise £10,000 by completing the walk, with the money to be split between Motor Neurone Disease Scotland, in tribute to Celtic great Jimmy 'Jinky' Johnstone, who died from the condition, and the Davie Cooper Centre, a proposed family centre in Clydebank for children and adults with special needs, named after the former Rangers and Clydebank legend who tragically died suddenly at the age of 39.

While leaving Hampden halfway through Scotland's



Andy Phillips and Craig Murray meet Rangers' assistant manager Ally McCoist, centre, at the club's Murray Park training ground ahead of this weekend's charity walk.

vital fixture against the Czech Republic on September 3 will be hard enough, the challenge facing them in Mongolia is nothing short of demanding.

Andy said: 'The desert

walking along the ridge of the dunes, some of which are 3,000 ft high, while the temperatures range from around 40°C during the day to -10°C at night.'

It's not all walking though.

It's an extreme environment. We will be walking along the ridge of the dunes, some of which are 3,000 ft high, while the temperatures range from around 40°C during the day to -10°C at night.'

Craig and Andy will be travelling to the country as Gobi United FC, made up of fans from across Scotland, and will become the first Western side to play on Mongolian soil with a friendly against local club side Muzala before setting off.

To prepare, the team of 12 took a trip to Rangers' training ground, Murray Park, to meet the club's assistant manager Ally McCoist.

Fundraising However, there's still a long way to go. The fundraising is in its infancy and the pair need to raise £2,000 each before setting off.

That effort starts in earnest this weekend when the Rangers supporting firefighters will complete a sponsored 12-mile walk across Tiree, from the radar station to Caolas.

To find out more about Craig and Andy's fundraising effort, or to donate, check the website at gobidesert2011.webs.com or phone Andy on 01879 220128 or Craig on 01879 220034.

Diver went armed with speargun after dispute

A SCALLOP diver took to the streets of Tobermory in the early hours of the morning with a speargun as part of a territorial dispute.

At Oban Sheriff Court last week, Christopher David Williams, aged 31, of 9 Waterfront Court, Main Street, Tobermory, admitted taking to Main Street with the weapon at 2.40am on October 3 last year after being 'set about' by two rival fishermen.

Police officers on patrol spotted him with the weapon and arrested him.

When asked why he had the speargun, Williams said: 'Two guys just set about me, it's for them.'

Procurator Fiscal David Glancy presented the weapon to the court.

Sharp While it was broken, and therefore unable to fire, the speargun was loaded and the point of the spear sharp.

Mr Glancy said: 'It's for fishing - it's certainly not for going after other citizens of Tobermory at 2.40am.'

Defending agent Stephen Macleod said Williams had been involved in a long-running dispute with the men over their fishing territory and there had been

an argument days before the incident. 'He had been set on by the two males on the evening.

'He had been intoxicated at the time and he foolishly went home after, having been followed by the males.

'He then stood outside on the doorstep and foolishly went out in the street, as he said, to 'scare them off'.

'He had only walked about 100 yards from his home. 'He realised what he was doing wasn't smart and when he saw the police he put the speargun in the ground and backed away.'

Mr Macleod said that, since the incident, Williams has removed himself from scallop diving and now works as a driver for the local authority.

However, Williams did not report the assault on him that night to the police.

Sheriff Mungo Bovey told Williams: 'This is a very serious matter.

'It is not acceptable for you to take the law into your own hands, it is not acceptable for you not to report matters to the police and it is not acceptable for you to carry offensive weapons.'

He was fined £750 and the speargun was forfeited.



The Barcaldine pupils celebrate their green flag success.

Three of the best for Barcaldine

BARCALDINE Primary School has gained its third Eco Schools Green Flag Award.

Assessors said they were most impressed by how well the school has continued to involve parents and the community, especially with regards to school grounds.

The school was praised for calling on the expertise of environmental agencies such as The Grab Trust and

Scottish Natural Heritage, as well as liaising with local authority departments and the active schools co-ordinator. It was also commended on the range of charities it supported at home and overseas.

In terms of curricular work, Eco Schools assessors were pleased to see the school forging strong connections between the eco schools programme

and the work already going on in class. Head teacher Jeanette Morrison said: 'We illustrated this by our super inter-disciplinary and cross-stage topic work and they commended us on the beautiful wall displays throughout the building.'

'They also praised us for our links with other rural schools and Oban High, sharing resources and good practice.'

Sale of less popular species soar after Fish Fight

CHANNEL 4's Fish Fight series has caused sales of less popular fish to rocket, but not without causing some disquiet at a major west coast fish farm.

Since the series of programmes aired last month, the sales of species such as dab, coley, mussels, squid and sardines has significantly increased, with one supermarket saying the

sales of pollack had leaped by 167 per cent.

Organic salmon sales had increased by 16 per cent overall, but normal salmon sales remain unchanged.

While the fishing industry was hugely supportive of the Fish Fight on the whole - particularly with regard to attempting to eliminate the EU imposed process of discards - Marine Harvest

say celebrity chef Hugh Fearnle-Whittingstall misrepresented them when he showed footage claiming three times as many wild fish are used for feed to produce one tonne of farmed salmon.

In fact, over the last five years, Marine Harvest had reduced the quantity of fish component in its feed, substituting a portion of

fish oil and protein with vegetable equivalents. In reality, around 1.7 tonnes of fish produce goes into the feed to produce one tonne of salmon. That aside though, Marine Harvest was happy to throw its weight behind the campaign to end wasteful discards.

A spokesman for the Norwegian-owned farming giant said: 'During

filming, we did cover feed composition in detail. What wasn't shown was that we have made great strides to reduce the wild fish component in our salmon feed. On the positive side, Hugh did mention Marine Harvest's openness, site tidiness, good animal welfare and positive changes we have made within our business.'

Heated discussions at Benbecula conference

THE HEAT was on as more than 50 delegates from all over Britain attended a conference in Benbecula on how to keep warm at home.

The event, organised by local climate change campaigning organisation Sustainable Uist, was part of a project to improve energy efficiency of hundreds of islands homes.

The mostly pre-1970 properties have missed out on the Home Insulation Scheme because of their antiquated construction.

Western Isles Council, which funded the conference with the Climate Challenge Fund, estimates more than 50 per cent of all householders in Eilean Siar are in fuel poverty.

Delegates heard presentations from

Sustainable Uist, the Comhairle, the Energy Saving Trust and Changeworks, who set out their strategy to lower costs in 'hard to treat' housing, while specialist professional and industry representatives outlined new insulation methods, condensation problems and low CO2 heating systems.

Day two saw insulation manufacturers, architects, local builders and builders' merchants, building control and Comhairle technicians discuss insulation treatments available.

Historic Scotland, the Climate Challenge Fund, Changeworks and the Energy Saving Trust also contributed, with MSPs Rhoda Grant and Dr Alasdair Allan in attendance.

UHI looks to benefit from university status

THE NEWLY formalised University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) has taken part in a leading European study into how higher education can benefit regional economic development.

Representatives from the UHI travelled to Sofia, in Bulgaria, to join delegates from across the EU for the first University Collaboration in Development Spaces (UNICREDS) conference. Joe Irvine is the head of Knowledge Exchange at the UHI.

He said: 'This is a very important project exploring the unique issues which remote and rural communities face and how businesses, the public sector and further and higher education can work together to have a positive impact on the local economy.'

It is expected that the findings of the conference and related research will be delivered at the next UNICREDS conference at Skye's Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI in June.

Oban town centre arrest

IT WAS a case of three strikes and you're under arrest for one man who was detained by police on Sunday evening.

The suspect was charged

with trying to enter a licensed premises in Oban while drunk, urinating in George Street and causing damage to a sign in Stevenson Street.

# Black ice causes 'Carmageddon' in North Lorn



Richard Ayling's Nissan Navara turned onto its roof before coming to rest on its side near to Oban Airport after hitting black ice. 'There was nothing I could do,' he said. t06carnage4



A Mitsubishi 4x4 came to rest on its roof too, this time around one mile north of Benderloch. t06carnage3



This Nissan Navara turned onto its off Tuesday morning after hitting a patch of black ice near to Rhugarbh. t06carnage2

THERE was car-nage on the road between North Connel and Barcaldine on Tuesday morning, when black ice forced five cars off the road.

Miraculously, nobody was injured in any of the accidents on the A828, despite four of the cars flipping on to their roofs after hitting the ice.

Three of the cars involved were 4x4 'offroad' vehicles. Gritters were called to the affected four mile stretch of road by Strathclyde Police just after 8am to make the surface safe.

Richard Ayling, the owner of Oban surveying firm, Digital Land Surveys, was one of the first motorists to become a victim of the black ice on Tuesday.

He was travelling towards Oban shortly before 8am when his Nissan Navara hit black ice between Oban Airport and North Ledaig.

**EXCLUSIVE**  
REPORT by  
STEVEN FLANAGAN  
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*"The car started skidding and there was nothing I could do."*

**4 x 4 driver**

He said: 'I came round the corner just after the 40mph zone, I'd obviously built up speed but wasn't going that fast, maybe about 50mph.

'The car just started skidding and from that point there was nothing I could do.'

'I've been driving for 34 years and I've come off the road twice in that time, today and four or five years ago. Both times was on this stretch of road and because of black ice.'

Another Nissan Navara came off the road near Rhugarbh, while a Mitsubishi 4x4 travelling towards Benderloch came off the road around a mile from the village.

Two cars also came off the road a few metres from the Twisted Wheel Cafe, Barcaldine, each travelling in opposite directions.

Oban's Chief Inspector Glen Bland said: 'We called out Transerv to get the road gritted this morning after a number of accidents caused by the icy conditions.

'Drivers should take care and plan ahead, leave plenty of time for their journey and drive according to the conditions.'

A spokesperson for Scotland Transerv said the road was treated on Monday evening following a frosty forecast and monitored from its control room for developing conditions.

## Thieves steal windfarm wire from Kilchrenan

POLICE are attempting to trace thieves who took two 100-foot lengths of copper wire from a sub power station at Carraig Gheal windfarm, near Kilchrenan.

The theft took place between January 21 and February 2 and Oban police are keen to hear from anyone who has any information regarding the thefts.

Oban Police Sergeant Mike Wood said: 'Sub stations are dangerous places and any unauthorised access or tampering with the cables presents a potentially fatal situation.'

## Oban woman accused of TV theft

AN OBAN woman accused of stealing a television from a superstore in Oban has appeared from custody at Oban Sheriff Court.

Patricia McGuire, aged 46, of 2A Scalpay Terrace pled not guilty to two charges of theft from the Oban

Tesco store. She is accused of stealing a television on January 26 and a quantity of alcohol on February 4.

An intermediate diet was set for March 2 and bail was refused.

## Teenager arrested

A TEENAGER was arrested in the early hours of Sunday morning after allegedly assaulting a 40-year-old man in George Street, Oban.

## Pupils face seven days school in April

OBAN High School's third year will not sit preparatory exams this year thanks to a holiday schedule that means pupils will spend just seven days in school in April.

The news was delivered to parents by letter on Friday, despite the school schedule having been known for at least a year in advance.

Rather than determine any final grades, the S3 exams, are designed to prepare

pupils for the following year's tests. Parents claim the move could impact on those preparations.

The letter states: 'The unusual holiday pattern this year gives very little school time to allow the S3 exams to be timetabled before the SQA exams start. It also gives pupils a long break from the school, revision and teacher guidance.

'To then come back to a

really intensive four days of exams would be stressful for them.' The letter also states departments may carry out smaller end of topic tests.

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said the decision was taken following concern from teachers and parents alike, adding that any tests will be done at a time and pace that best suits individual pupils and departments.

## Meeting on Tیره tonight to hear of community's bid for care home

A SOCIAL enterprise business is to be formed on Tیره in a bid for the community to take over the island's care home.

Tیره Community Development Trust (TCDT) will host a public meeting at An Talla today (Thursday) for interested parties to come and either express an interest in taking part or suggest possible ways forward.

The move comes after Argyll and Bute Council moved to tender out its older peoples' services in a bid to cut costs.

The proposed Tیره social enterprise will be headed up by island doctor, John Holliday, who last week warned that the loss of the Evantide Home in Scarinish would result in 'unthinkable' consequences.

**EXCLUSIVE**  
REPORT by  
STEVEN FLANAGAN  
sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk

He is hopeful that, by taking on the running of the home, known as Tigh-An-Rudha, it could lead to an improved service.

He said: 'I would like to go back to square one and look at what people actually need and see if we could provide that in a more modern and efficient way.

'There are certainly be a number of fundamental changes to the way it is currently run that could be made, so it is entirely possible that we will be able to get a better level of service at the end of the day.'

'So, as one door closes, another one opens.'

The TCDT's public meeting on the possibility of a social enterprise will be held at 7.30pm, with all welcome to attend.

The Evantide Home currently costs the local authority around £750,000 a year to run, but hope that outsourcing the operation of the facility will save thousands of pounds a year.

Currently home to six residents, the home is one of the island's biggest employers, with 24 staff. In addition to providing residential care, it runs the island's meals on wheels service, provides respite care for families, and much of the care for the medical beds in the Continuing Care Unit.

## Drug dealers evicted from Oban and Appin

DRUG dealers in Oban and Appin have been evicted from social housing as Argyll Community Housing Association's (ACHA) activated its zero tolerance policy.

**Court order**  
The ACHA tenants, who were previously prosecuted for drug dealing, were subsequently evicted by order of Oban Sheriff Court.

Commenting on the court decision, ACHA's chief executive, Alastair MacGregor stated: 'We have given a commitment that we will pursue, through the courts, those convicted of unlawful activity related to drugs in ACHA properties.

'I am pleased that the continuing partnership involving ACHA staff, the police, the courts and, crucially, members of the community, is delivering tangible

results against drug dealers.'

He further added: 'We regularly see the tragic consequences, particularly among the young, of drug dealing in our communities. We hope that the actions we are taking send a powerful signal if you deal in ACHA homes you will lose your ACHA home.'

**Very clear message**

Argyll and Bute Councillor Roddy McCuish, Council representative on ACHA's board of management, stated: 'This sends out a very clear message that anyone dealing drugs from ACHA properties will result in them losing their home. I would urge anyone who has any suspicion of drug dealing in their area to contact the police immediately.

'Only by working together can we make our communities a safer place.'

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## Common good fund falls short

A FOURTH member for Oban Common Good Fund's (OCGF) board cannot be found after elected members refused to work with the current committee.

In last week's council reshuffle Mull councillor Mary-Jean Devon, Kilmore-based Duncan MacIntyre and Oban's Neil Mackay were named as board members - with a vacant seat for a member from Ward Four.

However, SNP councillors claim the new group is being used as a 'political tool. Councillor Donald Macdonald said: 'These appointments to the Oban Common Good Fund should have nothing to do with politics whether of the local or party kind. They should be made without regard to any new political administration that has been established.'

Gordon Chalmers of The Argyll and Bute Independent Councillors Group has indicated that he will not take the seat.

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre, chair of the OCGF, said: 'With the advent of multi-member wards in 2007 the four OCGF members are divided into two members for each ward. 'The OCGF has not been political. The previous coalition appointed the last four members, and this administration has now done likewise.'

## Cabling fault leaves Dunollie in darkness

'It's a disgrace that the street lights are still not working'

RESIDENTS of the Dunollie area of Oban have been left in the dark yet again after streetlights on Corran Brae failed for the third time this winter. In a repeat of power cuts in November and December, the lights have been out for more than a fortnight - but on this occasion the darkness extends up the brae towards the local shop.

**82 year old grandmother falls**  
In another similarity, locals say nothing appears to have been done to remedy the situation, and a number of people have suffered falls as a result.

Diarmid Macmillan contacted *The Oban Times* via Facebook to complain about the latest outage after his 82 year old grandmother fell while trying to navigate the path in pitch darkness.

He said: 'It's a disgrace that the street lights are still not working in Dunollie. When will the council get their act together and sort this mess?'

Duncan Black, who lives Dunollie, said: 'How many times are they going to have to come and carry out inadequate repairs which obviously do not solve the problem?'

The owner of Dunollie Stores, Betty Paterson, said she has been inundated with complaints about the latest outage from customers, many of whom have had to stop going out after dark to avoid injury.

She said: 'One gentleman was in yesterday, for example, who nearly fell just trying to walk the paths.

'It's affecting my business as people aren't going out after it gets dark. 'There hasn't been anyone here from the council to try and fix the problem.'

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'We are aware of the faults in this location, which have been caused by cabling which is well beyond its ideal design life. 'We are in the process of arranging for our tracking squad - which is currently working in Campbelltown where there is a similar situation - to get on site to replace the cabling.'

**Antiques & Gold Roadshow**

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**IT'S THE Antiques Roadshow - but not as you know it.**

The Gold Shop in Oban is hosting an antiques and gold fair, giving residents of Oban and the surrounding area the chance to have memorabilia, pottery and precious metals valued for free. Cartier, Rolexes and any other prestige watches can also be valued in the Stafford Street shop at the event next Tuesday and Wednesday, 9am - 5pm.

It is not the first time The Gold Shop has held an Antiques Roadshow in the town and it was the tremendous response to previous open days in the Caledonian Hotel that sparked the idea to open a shop in Oban. The company will bring along renowned antique experts and specialists in gold and coin buying all the way from its Birkenhead main office.

Following a valuation, The Gold Shop may even offer to buy items. Mark Manning from The Gold Shop said: 'We especially want gold coin sets and war memorabilia but we may also buy pottery, silver sets, art, and any collectables. 'Come and see us on Tuesday and Wednesday to find out more.'

If you can't get to the shop on either day or during opening hours, The Gold Shop is happy to arrange a home visit. Phone the shop on 0800 954 5306 or 01631 565957 to find out how.

**TUESDAY 15TH & WEDNESDAY 16TH FEBRUARY • 9AM TO 5PM AT THE GOLDSHOP**

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**Lorn Lines**

A LARGE attendance of members, wives and friends enjoyed an excellent evening at the annual Ladies Night of Oban Speakers Club.

In the first half of the programme, chairman Alex Clark introduced Bill Leech who spoke on 'Brittania', Willie Melville, who talked on 'Be my Valentine' and Louise Lee who gave an excellent talk on '150 years of The Oban Times'.

Their immediate critics were Peter Abbott, Roy Wood and Guido Faccenda.

In an entertaining and amusing topics session, chairman Ian Fullarton gave a wide variety of subjects to speakers Donald Macaskill, Cameron Fletcher, Norman Martin, Carol Leech, John Maclean and Eamonn Arthur. Timekeeper for the evening was Frank Walton and the general evaluator was Tom Clegg.

The next meeting will be held in the Regent Hotel on February 17 at 8pm.



**P7 pupils from St Columba's Primary School have just returned from a week's residential course in Castle Toward, Dunoon. They were joined by two schools from the Glasgow area, Tinto Primary and Glengarrnock Primary. They took part in a range of activities including archery, gorge walking and orienteering and despite being very tired by the end of the week they enjoyed a superb experience. 'It was magic,' said Charlie-Anne McGrath. Liam MacLean added: 'I enjoyed mixing with the other people and I made new friends.'**



ON JANUARY 25, members of Oban SWRI celebrated the first meeting of 2011 with a Burns Night.

A traditional Scottish meal was prepared by Margaret Devine and Karen Mackie and was much enjoyed by the 18 ladies present.

Tartan adornments were the order of the day and music was provided by Margaret Fletcher, piano, and Ann Campbell and Elizabeth MacFarlane, fiddles, while Nan Black gave appropriate recitations.

Competitions: Favourite Brooch: Gold, Dorothy Bark, Anne Malloch; Silver, Christine MacKillop, Margaret Devine.



THE WEEKLY meeting of Oban Photographic Club eagerly looked forward to the annual visit by professional photographer Dennis Hardley, and they were not disappointed.

Providing his own detailed commentary Dennis took his audience on a grand tour of Scotland and the Western Isles including Oban, Mull and Tiree.

His stunning landscape and seascape images proved that Dennis is one of Scotland's foremost landscape photographers. As a bonus, club members and visitors were treated to some stately home interiors, digital abstracts and to round off the evening they travelled to Nashville, Tennessee, courtesy of a short presentation by Dennis' son Tony.

President Alex Clark thanked Dennis for an excellent evening. The next meeting is on February 14 in the Regent Hotel at 8pm, when the club looks forward to a digital portfolio from the Scottish Photographic Federation. Entries for the Simply Blue Competition should be handed in at the meeting.

**Dragon marks major milestone for Mary's Meals**

DRAGON'S Den star Duncan Bannatyne travelled to Haiti this week to help the Mary's Meals charity mark a significant milestone in its school feeding project.

The entrepreneur joined staff from the Dalmally charity, which is now feeding 500,000 children in 16 countries through its school feeding projects.

Mary's Meals started just nine years ago supporting a handful of orphans in Malawi.

**Progress**

The visit to Cite Soleil, a notorious slum in Haiti's capital Port-au-Prince, was a chance for Mr Bannatyne to see the progress made since the earthquake, rebuilding schools and helping children to get back to class, and to attend the opening of a brand new school, where children will start to receive



**Known for his sharp tongue on Dragon's Den, Duncan Bannatyne showed his charitable side by helping Dalmally charity Mary's Meals celebrate its milestone.**

a nutritious daily meal of rice and beans, and their first taste of education, next week.

Mr Bannatyne said: 'Mary's Meals is doing

fantastic work here. They are feeding children in school, so that they will go to school and get an education.

'When you see the

people of Haiti, who are so beautiful at heart. 'One thing you don't see is laziness. Everyone is working, trying to make a living. People never complain, although they're always looking to improve, because they're living in tents and they know that's not right and they want to get out of it.'

**Supporter**

Mr Bannatyne is a long-term supporter of Mary's Meals and has visited its projects in Romania and Malawi. He recently presented a BBC Radio 4 appeal on the charity's behalf.

'I remember when I first saw Mary's Meals, they were just starting the feeding programme in Malawi. For them to now be feeding 500,000 children, every single day in school, that's phenomenal,' he said.

**New plans in pipeline for Oban marina**

THE PROJECT to float pontoons in Oban Bay is still on track, despite Argyll and Bute Council pulling the plug on its part of the funding.

Officials working to turn the plan into reality say new plans will be revealed at a public meeting.

They also confirmed other funders had pledged their continued support for the project.

The decision of the council's Oban CHORD Project Board in August 2010 not to part fund the short stay marina proposed by Oban Bay Marine (OBM) could have spelt the end of the ambitious scheme.

But the OBM steering group has continued to work to ensure the project does happen.

A spokeswoman for the group said despite the setback, OBM board members felt they owed it to their supporters to explore alternative ways forward.

She said OBM officials were unanimous in their determination to steer

**REPORT**

by LOUISE LEE  
llee@obantimes.co.uk

the project through to commissioning.

'Since September, we have thoroughly re-examined the project proposals prepared by Wallace Stone, with a view to trimming the costs where practicable, and on reaching initial indications that we could deliver the project for less than originally envisaged, we began to prepare a revised business case to underpin the venture.

**Finance**

'A board meeting with funders and other interested parties including Jim Mather MSP in November boosted support from many sides, and the Crown Estate and HIE indicated they remain willing to finance the project in part.

'We are working hard exploring other funding opportunities to ensure the proposals come to fruition.

'While Argyll and Bute Council have indicated that

they are unable to support the project financially at this time, they recognise the need and value of such a development.

'The board has been in discussion with two nationally known marina construction companies asking them to quote on a design and build basis.

**Design ideas**

'Their detailed presentations to the board have produced refined and improved design ideas, indicated cost reductions and savings and shown increased income potential.

'Together with the appointment of an experienced main marine contractor to oversee the project, the board is intent on obtaining firm prices for reassurance of our funders.

'A joint meeting with representatives from all interested stakeholder parties around Oban Harbour is being planned for March 15, to be followed by a general members meeting - further details to follow in due course.'

**Redundancy threat as work dries up at Skykon**

SKYKON is on a knife-edge. The factory at Machrihanish has just one week of full-time work left but this week potential buyers have been visiting the factory.

Administrators from Ernst and Young met the workforce last Friday at the factory and told them there was enough work left to take the factory up to February 18.

'We would then need to start looking at redundancies,' a press spokesman for Ernst and Young said.

Although in the hands of administrators since the collapse of its Danish parent company, the wind turbine tower manufacturing plant

at Machrihanish has been completing an order for 30 towers for the 350-megawatt onshore Clyde wind farm at Lanarkshire, for Siemens; the firm has been paying the wage bill at Skykon while the order was being completed. Fifteen different parties have registered an interest in buying Skykon, the spokesman added, but said that all had signed confidentiality agreements with Ernst and Young and no more details could be given.

'What I can say is that this week interested parties will begin visiting the site,' he said.

**Catalogue of offences led to ban from roads**

A MULTITUDE of driving offences has led to an Ardfern man losing his licence and being fined almost £1,000.

Daniel MacDonald, of 1 Ardfern Cottages, pled guilty to four road traffic offences when he appeared before Sheriff Desmond McCaffrey at Lochgilhead annex of Dunoon Sheriff Court.

The 21-year-old was fined £200 for driving his car with no licence on October 1 last year in Poltalloch Street, Lochgilhead. On the same date and location, MacDonald drove his car

with no insurance; he was fined £600 and issued with eight penalty points. He had no MOT certificate for his car and was fined £50. MacDonald had also declared his car as being off the road when he was caught by police driving it; a fine of £100 was imposed.

MacDonald's defence agent, Laura Russell, said: 'My client is sorry for getting himself into this situation.'

Banning MacDonald for six months, Sheriff McCaffrey, said: 'You are an extremely foolish young man.'

**Telecom worker's £150 speeding fine**

A TELECOM engineer caught speeding through Taynuilt was fined £150 at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

Paul Deehan, aged 22, of 1, Flat 23, John Street, Barrhead, Glasgow, admitted that on September 23 he drove at 40mph through the village, 10mph over the limit. Deehan, who already had six points on his licence, was also given three penalty points.

**New transport boss sought for region**

**STRATHCLYDE**

Partnership for Transport (SPT) is hoping to appoint a new chief executive on a salary of £136,069.

The post holder will be in charge of the many transport links around the old Strathclyde area including those within Argyll and Bute.

He or she will oversee decisions on concessionary travel, maintenance of bus shelters and running a subsidised bus service in rural areas amongst other travel and transport issues.

**Man ordered to do 100 hours work**

A BENDERLOCH man who breached a community order served on him in England has been told to complete 100 hours' unpaid work.

Oban Sheriff Court heard that Nicholas Travers, 32, of 20 Keil Gardens, Benderloch, had breached the order by returning to his previous address in Barnsley for a short time without notifying police.

**Gary's the main man for surveyors**

CHARTERED surveyors DM Hall has appointed Gary Duff to run the firm's Oban office.

Gary has been an associate at the firm for nearly 10 years and has been in charge of the Oban office since the start of this year.

A native of Uddington, Lanarkshire, the 43-year-old joined DM Hall as an apprentice chartered surveyor in 1989 and has risen through the ranks, working in the Falkirk and Kirkintilloch offices before moving to Oban in 1996.

He will continue to work from the Oban office, whose remit runs to Mallaig and Invergarry to the north, including Fort William, Campbeltown to the south, Crianlarich to the east and the Inner Hebridean islands including Mull, Coll, Tiree,Islay, Jura and Colonsay to the west.

**Lifeboat called to assist divers**

OBAN'S lifeboat was called out on Saturday afternoon to help four divers who were in difficulty in Ardmucknish Bay.

The party had been diving at the war-time wreck of the 'Breda' cargo vessel, but were unable to restart their boat, the *Rotherham Diver*, on their return. The *Mora Edith Macdonald* was launched at 1.31pm and towed the boat back to the Puffin Dive Centre in the Sound of Kerrera.

**Frustration grows as £1 million community centre remains shut**

THERE is growing anger in Dalmally over its new £1million community centre - which remains dormant despite being finished four months ago.

Contractors TSL completed the construction of the hall at the start of October, but a land ownership dispute with a local property developer has halted proceedings.

Until resolved, Dalmally Community Company (DCC) is unable to connect the hall's sewage pipes, a basic requirement if it is to be used.

The hall was originally scheduled to open on November 9 2010.

DCC director Dr Kenny Black told The Oban Times in December: 'A lot of progress has been made.'

'We hope to be able to make some sort of announcement in the very near future.'

'There are still things that need to be resolved but the hall will be completed on budget.'

'I can't say much more than that at the moment. We cannot give a date for the official opening at this stage.'

Chairman of the community council David Fellowes said he was just as frustrated now as he was back when the opening was first delayed.

He said: 'Dr Kenny Black came to the community council's January meeting.'

He said he would not discuss the details, and said apportioning blame might result in further delays, possibly legal action.

'There will also be financial implications from the problems for DCC, but apparently they had funds that were separate from the grants given.'

'Obviously it continues to be frustrating and it's frustrating for the community as a whole.'

'It will almost certainly be on the agenda for the [community] council's March meeting, because we want answers.'

**Drink-drive chef banned for a year**

A DALMALLY chef has been banned from driving for a year and fined £300 after being found guilty of drink-driving.

Iain Bell, of 10 Forestry Cottages, Dalmally, was found nearly double the legal limit after crashing his car into a ditch on the B840 road between the A816 north of Kilmartin and Ford, on June 30, last year.

The 40-year-old father, who pled guilty, appeared at Lochgilhead annex of Dunoon Sheriff Court.

Procurator Fiscal David Webster said police were notified by a civilian witness of a car in a ditch with the driver trapped inside.

Mr Webster said Bell had sprained his right shoulder and police took a blood sample at the hospital, which showed Bell to be over the limit.

Defence agent Sandy Mitchell said: 'My client was driving home from his work. At work he had been joined by his friend who had problems and they began drinking. The crash came about because he struck a pothole. Up until that point he had managed to negotiate a series of tight bends.'

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.

## Argyll and Bute budget proposals - where will the axe fall?

### Drastic proposals for community recycling

COMMUNITY recycling schemes - which account for 12 per cent of all waste recycled - will become a thing of the past if councillors back proposals to scrap grants to projects throughout Argyll and Bute.

Under budget proposals, the council will take back control of the service and transport lorries full of waste to the central belt of Scotland.

The proposals, introduced at the 'eleventh hour' by councillors, will see cuts in budgets of 75 per cent this year with a total cut the following year.

A service review, completed earlier in the year, had highlighted the fact that services would be cut by five per cent - therefore proposals for the mammoth cut of 75 per cent have come as a body blow for charities such as The Group for Recycling in Argyll and Bute (GRAB), Mull and Iona Environmentally Sensitive Solutions (MESS), Recycling Jura Islay Group (ReJIG), EcoBiz, Fyne Futures and Kintyre Recycling Limited.

On Mull the MESS project has worked at recycling waste on the island and putting it back into the community. MESS's Mhari Greg said: 'Collectively Third Sector recycling groups in Argyll handle at least 12 per cent of the total recycling. We were expecting a five per cent cut in funding for the next financial year, but the cuts were completely unexpected. If the options are taken, there will be very little community involvement in recycling in Argyll by 2012/13.'

Amanda Card, who manages Kintyre Recycling Limited, said: 'Argyll and Bute Council will be recycling by taking waste to a co-mingled waste site in the central belt of Scotland. But I don't see how they will be saving money.'

David Protherough of ReJIG added: 'The carbon footprint of moving waste from islands, the journey cost and the rising cost of diesel will be expensive. It will also be a rising cost as the cost of diesel will only ever increase.'

'Taking two lorry loads of waste off the island every week will have a substantial cost.'

Roddy McCuish, director of The GRAB Trust, added: 'We were never consulted about this further cut. I would like the groups to be given an opportunity to come up with a different way of saving money.'

### Few residents take part in consultations

FEWER than three per cent of the population in Argyll and Bute responded to budget consultations. Despite the council delivering 8,000 leaflets to libraries and council offices, paying for a consultation with Hexagon Research and Consulting, holding Forward Together and focus group meetings, only a small number of responses were received by the council.

Council papers reveal: 'The information gathered presents a number of common themes, particularly in the areas where there are larger numbers of respondents.'

Overall responses said people were willing to pay more for services provided by the council. People also suggested cutting directors' pay and asking all staff to take a three per cent pay cut. Responses from 68 people were made on the education service. Some claimed that small schools should be closed while others said they should remain open. Respondents agreed with plans to reduce waste collection frequency and asked the council to recycle more. The budget consultation was the first of its kind to be carried out by the council.

### 'Put libraries at the heart of community'

THE Friends of Oban Library have thrown their support behind under-threat facilities elsewhere in Argyll.

They claim rather than putting libraries at the heart of the community, the council is 'hell-bent' on running the service down.

Consultation documents from the council show Lorn Mobile Library, Lochgilphead, Cardross, Roseneath and Tarbert libraries are under threat. Cat Newsheller, from Oban, said: 'Proposals for libraries are short-sighted with no long-term vision. There is so much a library offers to a community - it is not only a place to find books, it is a place to engage with the world.'

'We should be expanding the library service rather than cutting it. I am in complete support of the national campaign to keep our libraries open.'

'If libraries go they will never be replaced. Then there will be an undemocratic access to information whether it be through internet, books, research or genealogy.'

### Service charges to rise

CHARGES for services in Argyll and Bute will increase by an average of three per cent in April, with a further 2.5 per cent added to fees in order to fund the rise in VAT.

To date the VAT increase has not been applied to fixed cost services from the council.

An Argyll and Bute Council spokeswoman said: 'Where we charged customers a

set amount and remit VAT from that to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) we have not changed the set amount charged to customers and are remitting the VAT element based on 20 per cent to HMRC. **Increasing** 'The increases proposed from April will address this going forward by increasing these charges by 5.5 per cent.'

# Charity fears loss of council funding

FUNDING for a young person's charity will be slashed if councillors accept proposals at their budget meeting today, Thursday.

Officials at Oban's Quarrier Rooftops, which provides accommodation and support for vulnerable young people, were expecting a cut in their grant from the council.

But when figures were revealed last Thursday they came as something of a shock.

David Lyon, project manager, said: 'We knew we were to make cuts and thought we may lose up to 10 or 15 per cent of our budget.'

'We had no idea that our funding would be cut altogether until a phone call from the council last Wednesday.'

'From April, our funding has been reduced by half and for years following there is no money proposed in the Argyll and Bute Council budget. This will effectively see the end of our service.'

'A review to evaluate our service has been started but it is nowhere near finished.'

**REPORT**  
by LOUISE LEE  
llee@obantimes.co.uk

Mr Lyon added: 'Our project provides 11 tenancies for young people who would otherwise find it almost impossible to find accommodation. We also offer a support service for people aged 16-30 who have their own homes.'

'The project is wholly funded by the council therefore there is very little hope for the future if these proposals are taken forward.'

'Our project is fundamental in providing accommodation for young people from Oban, Lorn and the islands who want to stay and live in the area. Our rents are reasonable meaning people can afford to work and pay rent rather than live on benefits.'

Rent at Quarriers is £42 per week as opposed to other supported accommodation in the town which charges up to four times that amount for a similar service.

'A low rent in good safe, accommodation is a vital



David Lyon, project manager of Oban's Quarrier Rooftops, says the proposed cut in funding will end the service.

incentive for people to work. We also have staff on hand to make sure any problems are ironed out.'

The Scottish Council for

Single Homeless estimated the cost of a failed tenancy to be a minimum of £11,000 due to lost rent, repairs and follow on support.

## Mull Lines

A SPECIAL performance will be hitting the stage at Mull Theatre this Saturday, February 12, at 8pm. Solo for Two comprises a mixed bill of three live works by award-winning choreographer Thomas Small. Performance company Smallpetitklein produces and tours visually arresting work that is epic in scale, atmosphere and design.

The work centres on a unique movement style that is highly physical, deeply individual and emotive. Solo for Two explores the impact and effect of loss and identity.

The programme endeavours to create a rich and evocative world, creating complex and emotive movement that excites and moves the audience.

Solo for Two features a performance of S/HE which recently premiered at London's Royal Opera House to sell out audiences and the Scottish premiere of the unashamedly beautiful solo, Scarlet Snow.



DANCE classes at Mull Theatre have started after a short winter break.

The classes run every Wednesday from 6.30 to 7pm with ballet and stretch exercises followed by a 7 to 8pm tap dance.

Beginners welcome. Phone 01688 302 828 for more details.



THE FAMOUS Pennyghael curry nights get under way this Saturday, February 12, with all funds going to the Village Hall renovation project.

Villagers are continuing with their coffee mornings held on the first Saturday of every month at 11am. Different members of the community host the socials each time.



A COMMUNITY group has been set up to support the communities of north west Mull.

Ulva School Community Association (USCA) was set up at a meeting in January to pursue the principles of sustainable and rural development including education about the area, its history and culture.

Convener Helen Mackay said she was delighted with the strength of support for the USCA. Contact Helen by email: lagganulva@gmail.com

# Re-jig time at Oban Music



OBAN Music has reopened with a whole new look, more instruments and greater variety thanks to a three-week refurbishment.

The new look shop is now even better equipped to meet every musical need, whether your instrument has strings, skins or keys.

And because the business is dedicated to proving an unparalleled level of customer service, you can rest assured that everything you need for your instrument - including sheet music and accessories - can be found in the shop in Argyll Square.

Run by Jean Gillies, Oban Music has established a reputation for quality products at affordable prices. The revamp of the shop brings that vision into even crisper focus, with the emphasis being on delivering a more satisfying customer experience.

This extends from simple design features such as new browser shelves for sheet music - making it far easier to find what you're looking for - to more floor space, letting you properly get to grips with the instruments before making your choice.

With an even bigger choice of instruments available, that's just as well.

Starting with strings, Oban Music's branded range of violins, cellos and violas are destined to please. Masterfully crafted acoustic instruments are complemented with a range of sleek electric fiddles, which can be plugged straight into an

amplifier for a stadium-filling sound.

Moving to guitars, the comprehensive range of acoustic and acoustic/electric guitars has expanded, while the shop is undoubtedly the best source for ukuleles, banjos and mandolins in the area; each and every one built to the highest specification.

Spare strings, plectrums and slide bars are all on offer, and you'll find tuners, capos and everything else you need to get precisely the sound you want.

If percussion is more your thing - fret no more. In the shop you'll find a selection of smaller percussive instruments, including djembes, bongos and the cajon.

The range of keyboards on offer is impressive too. Stocking only best quality Yamaha products, you'll not only find portable keyboards, but full-size Clavinovas too. Like all the instruments in stock, you'll get a chance to try before you consider whether or not to buy.

Looking towards accordions, everything from the top-of-the-range

Crucianelli accordions to Stephanellis and even miniature varieties is on offer - catering for experts and beginners alike.

Wind instruments are also present in force - from bagpipes and whistles to harmonicas, woodwind and brass. Again, a full range of related accessories and essentials are on offer, including carry cases to keep your instrument of choice safe.

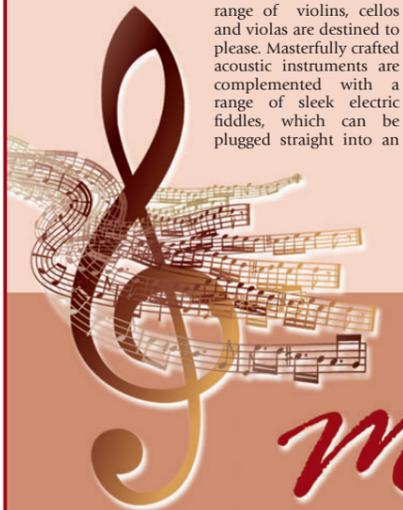
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Completing the line-up, Oban Music stocks a range of microphones, radio mic kits and Marshall amplifiers, together with essential cabling.

If you're no musician but know someone that is, you'll be glad to hear Oban Music sells a range of gifts - including gift vouchers.

And if you want to become a musician, Oban Music can put you in contact with the finest teachers in the area.

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## Onich man admits drugs charges

AN ONICH man has admitted carrying drugs and throwing away more in a garden in Strontian.

Angus Grant, of North Winds, Corran Gardens, pled guilty to possessing the class 'A' drug ecstasy, class 'C' recreational drug BZP and culpably and recklessly throwing away an insecure container of controlled drugs in the garden at Dalnavor, where young children, in particular, could have found and eaten them to their danger and injury.

Grant, aged 19, will be sentenced at Fort William Sheriff Court on March 3. Co-accused Sean Carmichael, aged 20, of Eanachaidh, Glenuig, denies the same charges and will appear in court on that date.

## South Lochaber restaurant in running for top award

A SOUTH Lochaber restaurant is in the running for a major industry award after being named as one of three contenders.

The Loch Leven Seafood Café, near Kinlochleven, is on the shortlist for Seafood Restaurant of the Year at 2011 Scottish Restaurant Awards at Glasgow Science Centre on February 28.

The prizewinning Lochaber eatery will take on the Seafood Restaurant in St Andrews and Two Fat Ladies in Glasgow for the title.

## Hurricane force winds batter ski resort

NEVIS Range ski resort was battered by hurricane force winds during storms last week.

When staff arrived to work on Friday morning, meter readings showed winds at the gondola had reached 100mph, whilst the summit saw winds of 131pmh.

The powerful gusts blew in a window at the restaurant and derailed one of the ski lifts at the summit of Aonach Mor by knocking wire cables out of place. Staff members worked most of the day to repair the damage done.

It wasn't all bad news for the resort though, as the strong winds brought with them plenty of snow, with drifts of up to two metres on some slopes.

# Morvern homes plan welcomed

Achabeag township will help house permanent residents

MORVERN Community Council has given a broad welcome to news that detailed plans for 20 new homes in the remote Lochaber district have been lodged with Highland Council.

Applicant Ardtornish Estate intends to develop the new township at Achabeag, two miles west of Lochaline overlooking the Sound of Mull.

The houses, intended for local families, newcomers who want Morvern to be their home and for Ardtornish's own use, include a minimum of six new affordable homes, the estate says.

The site was first identified for new housing by a community consultation several years ago. The plans have been developed by one of the UK's leading sustainable building designers, Morvern-based architect Roderick James.

The estate is 'hopeful' of getting detailed consent in the spring and has appointed architect Peter Smith, who recently moved to Morvern full time after practising in Glasgow.

Morvern Community Council chairman Iain Thornber hoped the move would help address the chronic lack of available local housing for young permanent residents.

He said: 'The community council looks forward to working with the developer through the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust to establish more affordable homes in Morvern

**"The community council looks forward to working with the developer to establish more affordable homes."**

**Iain Thornber, Morvern Community Council chairman.**

REPORT by  
STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

particularly for young families who would like to live and work in the area.

'Morvern has been landlocked for many years and anything that can be done to house and create a more vibrant, working community with access to the land is to be encouraged.'

Mr James said a condition of Highland Council's provisional approval of the scheme was that the houses would be 'a sustainable interpretation' of Scottish traditional building.

He said: 'If we succeed with detailed planning we'll ensure they're built to very high design and environmental standards. 'The overall aim is that the development as a whole should be carefully located, worthy of its setting, and the result of imaginative, responsive and sensitive design.

He added: 'We hope this settlement will start a new approach to procurement in Scotland - developing housing systems which can be made in Morvern and sold all over the UK while providing apprenticeships for local people.'

Hugh Raven, of Ardtornish Estate, said 'a number of serious buyers' were committed to moving to the area, and if detailed planning consent was secured building could begin this summer.

He said: 'We've had very constructive discussions with Highland Council, Highland Small Communities Housing Trust, and Morvern Community Council about affordable homes as part of the development.

'There has also been a significant amount of work on site within our existing permission, with a full tree survey by local expert Donald Kennedy, and ground-works for water supply and site clearance.'



Tor's kennel and run was hit by the spruce tree.

## Estate dog's narrow escape from 100mph storm

A TERRIER dog on Glen Kingie Estate, near Invergarry, narrowly avoided being a casualty of last Thursday and Friday's storm.

Six-year-old Jack Russell terrier Tor was safely in his master John Cameron's house when the top of a huge Sitka spruce snapped off and crashed down on his kennel and run outside the back door, sometime during the night. Mr Cameron, a stalker on the estate, told *The Oban Times*: 'Tor was in the house at the time, luckily.'

Invergarry also had to contend with snow and more high winds last Friday. Mr Cameron said about two inches fell on Friday morning.

# Searchers find body of missing Ben hill walker

THE BODY of missing hill walker Hyder Ali Manir was found on Ben Nevis Sunday afternoon.

Sixty searchers from eight mountain rescue teams, including Lochaber, RAF Kinloss and RAF Valley, Cairngorm, Torridon, Dundonnell, Assynt and Ochils, were involved in the operation.

Mr Manir, aged 20 and from Worcester, had been reported

missing to Fort William police on Sunday, January 30, when he had failed to return from climbing the ben.

The five-day search was hampered throughout by extremely poor weather conditions and reduced visibility.

Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team leader John Stevenson told *The Oban Times* Mr Manir had been making

his way off the mountain towards Steall in Glen Nevis, when it appeared he tumbled down a steep snow slope.

Mr Manir's body was found above and east of the water slide at the top car park in the glen, at altitude of only 1,500 feet. He was less than a mile from safety.

Mr Stevenson said: 'He may have slid quite a long way.'

from SARDA and Northern Constabulary dog section, Rescue 177 from Gannet and Rescue 137 from Lossiemouth assisted the search operation.

During Saturday's search for Mr Manir Lochaber MRT were diverted to another incident on the ben after a man fell down Coire Leis on the north face.

He was taken to Belford Hospital with leg injuries.

## Ballachulish fundraising day a great success

A FUNDRAISING day in Ballachulish has raised more than £800 for the *Royal National Lifeboat Institution*.

The visitor centre in the village held its fourth annual charity day recently as part of RNLI's SOS Day.

The highlight of the day was a silent auction for a framed, signed, limited edition print of a Michael Macgregor photograph of Rannoch Moor.

There were also sudoku puzzles, a word search, a sweepstake, crosswords and raffles. Cups of tea and coffee were for sale, with £1 from each cup going to RNLI. Centre manager Stewart Borland said: 'Despite the economic climate, we raised a fabulous £803.21.

'A huge thanks go to all our suppliers who donated raffle prizes, including Michael Macgregor for another great

silent auction picture and Michelle MacPhee for providing the great free entertainment in the afternoon, and not forgetting all our customers who supported the day so tremendously.'

Mr Borland added the fundraising days had raised £3,200 since 2008. He said: 'RNLI receive no government funding, and hopefully our running total will help make a difference.'

## Drink drive crash pensioner vows to give up his car

A LOCHABER pensioner who crashed into a car next to a busy main road while more than twice the drink drive limit has pledged never to get behind the wheel again.

Harry MacLennan Douglas, of Innisfree, Badabrie, Banavie admitted drink driving on the A830 at Corpach on January 13.

Douglas, aged 68, also admitted driving without due care and attention by reversing at speed, colliding with a stationary vehicle parked on the main street, mounting the pavement and striking a pedestrian.

Defending, Hamish Melrose told Fort William Sheriff Court: 'He has no intention of driving any longer and will sell his car. He intends meeting the full cost of repairs to the other vehicle.'

Sheriff Paul Crozier banned Douglas from driving for 18 months and fined him a total of £450.

## Holocaust survivor invited to give talk

A HOLOCAUST survivor has been invited to give a presentation to Lochaber High School pupils.

Harry Bibring will also answer pupils' questions at the March 1 event. Mr Bibring was born in Austria and was evacuated to Britain with his sister at a very young age.

The event follows the visit of Lochaber High School sixth year pupils Isla MacKinnon and Nikki Donnelly to Nazi concentration camps Auschwitz and Birkenau in Poland.

The girls arranged a presentation to all S2 pupils on the Holocaust last month.

More than six million Jews, gypsies, Soviet prisoners of war and citizens, and others were killed in the death camps.

## Fort man accused of drink driving

A FORT William man accused of drink driving in the town is due to stand trial in April.

Neil Clark, 29, of 14 Perth Place, is being charged with driving on the A82 at the Inverloch junction whilst nearly twice the drink drive limit.

The trial is scheduled to be held at Fort William Sheriff Court on April 1.

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**Make the most of online trading and marketing**  
 This FREE workshop will help businesses develop their online presence and increase online sales. It is aimed at those who have a little experience now looking to increase the amount of trading they do online, or those businesses new to online trading keen to exploit the opportunity. Workshops will be held in Oban, Inveraray & Dunoon.

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 Learn from scratch how to build and manage an attractive and effective website for your business. The workshop will show you how simple it is to develop your own business website and keep it up to date yourself. Workshops will be held in Oban, Inveraray & Dunoon.

**Practical basic book-keeping**  
 Book-keeping is a core business skill, and, even if someone else does it for you, you still need to understand and value the process. If you want to know the starting point for good record-keeping, this is the course for you. Those new to business and with little or no formal training in book-keeping will particularly benefit. Workshops will be held in Dunoon, Rothesay, Inveraray & Oban.

For workshop dates please contact the Argyll Business Gateway team on 01546 605459.

**0845 609 6611**  
[www.bgateway.com](http://www.bgateway.com)  
 or visit your local office

## Storyteller's visit delights Banavie primary pupils

Children at Banavie Primary School learned all about the art of storytelling when a professional raconteur came to visit last Wednesday.

Scottish Storytellers Forum member John Wheeler visited the school last Wednesday as part of Storytelling Week in Lochaber. He treated the pupils to a mixture of myths, folk stories and fables from across the world. P6 teacher Mrs Woods told *The Oban Times* the visit would benefit the pupils. She said: 'Storytelling teaches the children about listening and speaking, which are just as important as reading and writing.'



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## Bail breach man admonished

AN ONICH man has been admonished for breaking a bail condition ordering him to stay away from his girlfriend.

Douglas Brown, aged 33, whose address at Fort William Sheriff Court was given as c/o the Corran Inn, had earlier pled guilty to breaking a bail order imposed in 2008 at Perth Sheriff Court not to approach or contact Lorraine McKenna at Righ Crescent, Inchree, who he had assaulted. Defending, Hamish Melrose said: 'It is his partner's express wish for them to get back together.'

Sheriff Paul Crozier heard the couple's family circumstances had changed and admonished Brown.

## Woman denies benefit fraud

A CAOL woman has pled not guilty to defrauding the state of benefit cash.

Claire Johnston, 32, of 15 Clunes Avenue, denies claiming income support, housing benefit and council tax benefit to which she was not entitled between May 15, 2008, and October 10, 2009. The case was continued at Fort William Sheriff Court to a further hearing on May 26. Trial was fixed for July 1.

## Man fined for 'nasty' assault

A MAN has been fined after gouging another in the eye in a fight outside a Fort William pub.

Alan Gordon got involved in a row with Dougal MacPhee in the Station Bar and waited outside to attack Mr MacPhee after being asked to leave by bar staff.

Gordon, a first offender, of 131 Hornbeam Road Cumbernauld, had earlier pled guilty to assaulting Mr MacPhee by seizing him by the head and pushing his finger into his eye on October 14 last year.

Prosecutor Simon Crabb told Fort William Sheriff Court: 'The complainant came outside, where the accused grabbed his victim and proceeded to push his fingers into his eyes. Another member of the public intervened to separate them.' Mr MacPhee did not require any medical treatment.

Defending, Hamish Melrose said it was 'disappointing' for his client that he was appearing in court for the first time at the age of 43.

He said: 'Mr Gordon was working in the area as a painter, but the job got rained off and went to the pub to drink. He only has a vague recollection of events.'

Fining Gordon £300, Sheriff Paul Crozier told him: 'This was a nasty assault.'



## Gaelic nursery pupils entertain at Burns Supper

Children at the Gaelic Nursery at Fort William RC Primary entertained their mums, dads and friends of the school when they celebrated Burns' night recently. All 22 pupils wore tartan to nursery, and then sang some of Robbie Burns' best-known songs, accompanied by pupils from the primary school. Local piper Calum MacColl, who regularly plays at Highland dancing competitions from Skye to Lochaber, delivered some fine tunes. 10\_06BURNS01

# Fort high street shop deal signed

Outdoor clothing retailer coming to town

AN EAGERLY awaited shop and hotel project on Fort William's High Street has been given a major boost after the developers agreed terms with a retail chain, it has emerged.

Ashford Property Group has signed up multi-award winning outdoor clothing retailer Cotswold Outdoor for its Grand Hotel/McTavish's Kitchens development in the west end, raising hopes work will soon get underway.

It is understood the lease involves 7,000 sq ft of retail space, approximately 35 per cent of the total available.

Edinburgh-based Ashford has already concluded a deal with Travelodge to operate a 60-bed hotel on the upper

REPORT by  
STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

floors of the development. Terms have also been agreed with a further two occupiers to take an additional 10,000 sq ft of the proposed retail space, leaving only about 4,500 sq ft in up to two units available for rent.

Ashford Property Group director Andrew Smith said: 'We are delighted to have secured the UK's premier outdoor clothing retailer for our scheme, and are looking forward to making further letting announcements soon. 'This development will create large units not currently available elsewhere

on Fort William's High Street. It provides a great opportunity for retailers in the outdoor capital of the UK, especially with the final stretch of the West Highland Way being relocated to a spot immediately adjacent to the proposed development.'

He added: 'We are fully committed to Fort William and this development and are encouraged by the high level of interest we are receiving from potential tenants. We have a contractor standing by and our intention is to start on site as soon as possible.'

Cotswold Outdoor's Steve Teuten said: 'We are delighted to be opening our fifth Scottish store in Fort William.'

## Teenager broke bail curfew on visit

A TEENAGER broke a bail curfew banning him from alcohol to go drinking during a trip to see his aunt in Fort William.

Donald McPhee, aged 17, of Rossie Youth Accommodation Service, Montrose, admitted breaching a bail order set on October 4. He appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court from custody.

McPhee had been under curfew not to leave his accommodation between 9pm and 6am and to not drink alcohol, but was allowed to visit his aunt on October 30

under the supervision of a worker from Rossie School. McPhee managed to escape his supervisor and went drinking. Police arrested McPhee after he failed to turn up at Arbroath Sheriff Court for a scheduled court appearance on February 1. It later transpired a social worker had contacted McPhee and told him he didn't have to attend as social work reports had not been finished.

Sheriff Paul Crozier deferred sentencing McPhee until March 23 for the outcome of the case in Arbroath.

## Jazz music extravaganza at Lochaber High School

LOCHABER High School will be the scene of a charity jazz music extravaganza when the school's Big Band performs with the visiting St Augustine's Big Band from Blackburn.

The English group use Lochaber for their annual rehearsal week and have performed with the school's band many times in the past.

The show will be held in the school hall at 7.30pm on Wednesday, February 23, giving the public a chance to hear some of Lochaber and Lancashire's finest young musicians perform. The music being performed ranges from Duke Ellington and Glenn Miller to James Brown, Deep Purple and the Beatles. Entry to the show is free, with any donations on the night going to local charities.

## Man stole from store two days after prison release

A FORT William man has been jailed for four months after stealing from a town store only two days after he got out of prison.

Alastair Orr admitted stealing a 12-pack of beer, a pack of razor blades and two cans of anti-perspirant from Morrisons supermarket on January 9.

Defending, Stephen Kennedy told Fort William Sheriff Court Orr was only released from jail on January 7 and had been banned from every retail premises in the centre of Fort William.

Jailing Orr, Sheriff Paul Crozier said the court 'had a duty' to protect local businesses.

## Sheriff's warning to chef who bought vodka for 14-year-old

A 14-YEAR-OLD Kinlochleven, had initially refused the girl's mobile phone request to buy her drink but relented.

'He would not have purchased the alcohol if he had known she was 14 at the time,' he said.

'There was no profit involved. He is under no illusions about how serious this offence is.'

Deferring sentence for Higgins to be of good behaviour for six months, Sheriff Paul Crozier told him: 'Don't go buying drink for any youngsters.'

Territorial Army recruit Higgins, who is currently at James Watt College in Greenock on a professional chef course, had previously admitted buying the alcohol in Fort William on behalf of a child on December 9 last year.

## Former Mallaig man denies stabbing brother

A FORMER Mallaig man has denied stabbing his brother at a house in the Lochaber port.

It is alleged that Stewart Grant, now c/o 78 King Street Inverness, struck William John Grant on the body with a knife to his severe injury at 22 Lovat Crescent on August 30 last year. Grant maintained his not guilty plea at Fort William Sheriff Court.

Sheriff Paul Crozier continued bail on condition that the accused, aged 53, does not approach or contact his brother, or enter Lovat Terrace.

A further hearing will be held on March 3. Trial has been provisionally set for April 1.

# Re-jig time at Oban Music



OBAN Music has reopened with a whole new look, more instruments and greater variety thanks to a three-week refurbishment.

The new look shop is now even better equipped to meet every musical need, whether your instrument has strings, skins or keys.

And because the business is dedicated to providing an unparalleled level of customer service, you can rest assured that everything you need for your instrument - including sheet music and accessories - can be found in the shop in Argyll Square.

Run by Jean Gillies, Oban Music has established a reputation for quality products at affordable prices. The revamp of the shop brings that vision into even crisper focus, with the emphasis being on delivering a more satisfying customer experience.

This extends from simple design features such as new browser shelves for sheet music - making it far easier to find what you're looking for - to more floor space, letting you properly get to grips with the instruments before making your choice.

With an even bigger choice of instruments available, that's just as well.

Starting with strings, Oban Music's branded range of violins, cellos and violas are destined to please. Masterfully crafted acoustic instruments are complemented with a range of sleek electric fiddles, which can be plugged straight into an

amplifier for a stadium-filling sound.

Moving to guitars, the comprehensive range of acoustic and acoustic/electric guitars has expanded, while the shop is undoubtedly the best source for ukuleles, banjos and mandolins in the area; each and every one built to the highest specification.

Spare strings, plectrums and slide bars are all on offer, and you'll find tuners, capos and everything else you need to get precisely the sound you want.

If percussion is more your thing - fret no more. In the shop you'll find a selection of smaller percussive instruments, including djembes, bongos and the cajon.

The range of keyboards on offer is impressive too. Stocking only best quality Yamaha products, you'll not only find portable keyboards, but full-size Clavinovas too. Like all the instruments in stock, you'll get a chance to try before you consider whether or not to buy.

Looking towards accordions, everything from the top-of-the-range

Crucianelli accordions to Stephanellis and even miniature varieties is on offer - catering for experts and beginners alike.

Wind instruments are also present in force - from bagpipes and whistles to harmonicas, woodwind and brass. Again, a full range of related accessories and essentials are on offer, including carry cases to keep your instrument of choice safe.

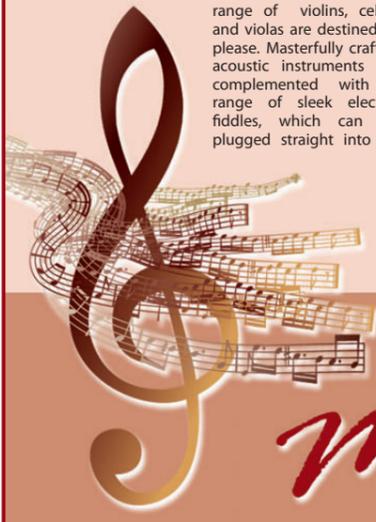
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**Down Your Way**

**This week - Rum**



ISLE OF RUM auxiliary coastguards Sean Morris and Marcel Blankens put in a 15-hour shift last Tuesday as 14 French fishermen were airlifted from their stricken vessel, which had wrecked on rocks near Kilmory.

The men were called out at 12.15 am by Stornoway Coastguard to man the landing site in front of Kinloch Castle, in case the rescue helicopter had to land. Two hours later coastguard control informed Sean and Marcel that the fishermen were safely in Stornoway and the pair grabbed a few hours sleep.

At first light Sean and Marcel were back on duty, keeping a watching brief on the 200-foot cliffs overlooking the fishing boat, the Jack Abry II, which was listing in heavy seas below.

Sean told *The Oban Times*: 'It was mostly dry to begin with, but then we had squally showers. The southwest wind was force 6-8, with occasional force 9 gusts. We stood by until 3pm.'



RUM Primary school children are busy working with Eigg, Muck, Canna, Lady Lovat and Inverie primaries on a collaborative class project with a 'Famous Scots' theme.

Head teacher Stewart Poole said each age group across the six schools was working together to prepare a report on a well-known personage from Scottish history.

Rum's school roll currently stands at only two, with one child from the nursery due to start school next session.

He said: 'There are a few babies about, so if they all stay we should be OK.'



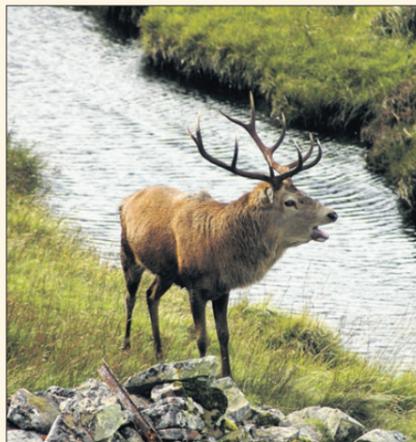
MAJOR repairs are underway on Kinloch Castle to ensure the building is wind and watertight for the new tourist season.

The refurbishment is believed to be costing owners SNH a six-figure sum and involves rewiring, plumbing and gas supply work. The upgrade will also ensure the castle meets health and safety standards.

The red sandstone former hunting lodge, which was completed in 1902, can accommodate 58 visitors at present in a hostel and single and double rooms.

Manager Linda Hoejlund told *The Oban Times* that figure is likely to fall once renovations are complete.

'We will need some of the rooms for staff,' she said. Work began in October last year and is expected to be complete by March 31, Ms Hoejlund added.



Rum red deer stag Percy, star of BBC Autumnwatch  
Photo: Sean Morris, Rum

THE RUM red deer research project has signed up enough volunteers to allow it to carry out research work for the coming calving season, which runs from May to July.

Research into the animals has been conducted since 1953, and since 1972 an individual-based study of deer has been conducted in the 'North Block' or Kilmory area of the island.

The continuing collection of information a long period of time has allowed research into important topics, such as ageing, long-term population trends, and the inheritance of individual characteristics that can rarely be explored in detail in natural settings. The Kilmory red deer research project is now widely regarded as one of the most complete scientific studies of a population of vertebrates in the world, and has been the subject of over 100 scientific papers and several books.

The study has produced groundbreaking research in behavioural ecology, population ecology, and evolutionary biology and is widely cited in biological textbooks.

The initiative has involved more than 30 scientists based at Cambridge, Edinburgh and other universities and institutes.

Information on the project's research findings and scientific papers on the island's red deer population can be found on [www.zoo.cam.ac.uk](http://www.zoo.cam.ac.uk).

**Next week DOWN YOUR WAY visits Craignure on the Isle of Mull with senior reporter Louise Lee you can contact her at - 01631 568000 or email [llee@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:llee@obantimes.co.uk)**

**TAYNUILT**

TAYNUILT Whist Committee raised £165 for the Friends of Oban Hospice at last month's meeting.

The results of the competition, played at Taynuilt Village Hall on Friday, January 21, are as follows.

Ladies: 1 Mary Mitchell; 2 Wendy Forbes; 3 Mariana MacInnes of Connell; 4 Sandra Steel; consolation, Amy Boyce.

Men: 1 Cathie Reid; 2 Dougie MacDougall; 3 Jim Grant of Connell; 4 Mary Scott; consolation Christine Allan.

There were eight and three quarter tables and the card master was Dougie MacDougall.

The next whist will be on February 18 at Taynuilt Village Hall, in aid of Mary's Meals.

**DALMALLY**

GLENORCHY and Inishail WRI held their annual Burns Night celebration to which Lochawe WRI were invited.

More than 20 people took part and after a festive meal, they enjoyed a photo quiz and raffle.

Mrs Christine MacDougall thanked the hosts on behalf of Lochawe WRI.

A good time was had by all.

**CRIANLARICH**

LOCAL councillor and provost of Stirling Council, Fergus Wood, is in a wheelchair after injuring his leg while working on his farm.

The Trossachs and Teith councillor has cancelled next week's surgery appointments at Crianlarich Village Hall as a result.

THE Crianlarich Hotel hosted a bingo night on Monday in aid of Search and Rescue Dogs.

Strathfillan Community Council will hold its next meeting at Crianlarich Village Hall on Monday, February 14 at 7.30pm.

PUPILS from Crianlarich Primary School made a profit of £142 by selling festive products at a Christmas fayre.

The pupils of Class Two set up a company called Christmas Stars Ltd and got a loan from the school to make items such as greeting cards and decorations.

Pupils Jadynd and Jorden said: 'Our Christmas Fair was very successful. Our total profit, after paying back the loan, was £142.16!'

The pupils later heard presentations from local businessmen and women about the advantages and disadvantages of running their own business.

STRATHFILLAN Community Council's proposal to devolve responsibility of local services to rural communities has received the backing of Stirling provost, Fergus Wood.

Mr Wood believes that the suggestion by the chair of the community council John Riley, made sense, as it would improve the standard of local services and save the council money.

Under the proposal, community councils would be responsible for tasking a village or community officer, while the cost of electricity, consumables and equipment would continue to be met by the local authority.

The chief executive of Stirling Council, Bob Jack, is visiting a host of community councils to gauge opinion on the idea.

Mr Wood, who is in a wheelchair at the moment having ruptured his Achilles tendon while working on his farm, said that, with fuel prices rising all the time, the proposal could become a reality sooner rather than later.

Mr Wood said: 'If you send someone up to Killin from Springhill in Stirling or Callander to clean the toilets, you spend more going there and coming back than you do cleaning the toilets. John Riley and I are 100



Children from Taynuilt Primary School took part in their annual Burns celebrations.

**Taynuilt school hosts Burns competition**

PRIMARY six and seven pupils from Taynuilt Primary School took part in a Burns' themed competition in front of a panel of judges comprising Reverend Robert Brookes, Willie

Campbell, Iain Campbell and David Paterson.

**Poetry competition**

The pupils either recited or read samples of Burns' poetry and were marked on five different aspects of

their performances.

With all the youngsters doing well, the four local judges had a difficult task in choosing a winner, however, they eventually decided that Breagha Charlton's rendition

of 'To a Louse' had been the outstanding performance of the afternoon.

Parents and pupils provided food which was thoroughly enjoyed by all competitors and judges.

**SEIL**

MONTHLY family services will be taking place at Kilbrandon Church on the Isle of Seil, at 10 am followed by sister service at Kilchattan Church on the Isle of Luing at 11.30 am.

Parish minister Ken Ross said: 'This will be a different type of service with the accent very much on children and young people. A warm welcome is extended to all and especially to children and families living on Seil and Luing.'

Members decided that hand-knitted underwear was unlikely to make a comeback.

The vote of thanks was given by Janice Baxter.

**SPEAN BRIDGE**

SPEAN Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council is hoping special constables can fill the gap after the area lost its only police station.

Members were told at last Tuesday's meeting that the decision to shut Spean Bridge police station was

irrevocable.

Area Commander Chief Inspector John Chisholm said: 'We are facing unprecedented challenges with regard to our budget.'

During the meeting speakers expressed concern that once the deterrent effect of having a police station was lost crime could come into an area, which hitherto had been relatively free of problems.

Chief Inspector Chisholm said that it was important that officers should be stationed in areas, which

**LOCHEARNHEAD**

RESIDENTS of Lochearnhead have been urged to be on their guard after a door-to-door caller was spotted targeting homes of vulnerable residents.

The man, who was apparently encouraging people to sell any old gold or jewellery, was challenged by one local after being witnessed going from one house of a vulnerable resident to another. He subsequently left.

A spokesman for Central Scotland Police said: 'I would urge everybody to be very careful of any cold callers looking to do you a deal.'

**KENMORE**

THE way in which angling is managed on the River Tay is to be changed following a three year survey.

Orchestrated by environmental charity, Scottish Native Woods, the restructure will mean the Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board (TDSFB) will devolve responsibility for many elements of river management to a new group, provisionally called the Tay Western Catches Partnership.

Project manager, Victor Clements, said: 'Having the political backing of the TDSFB is hugely significant and we can now be open doors and make things happen.'

**ABERFELDY**

ABERFELDY Community Council is to investigate rumours that the village's council run caravan park recorded a loss of £132,000 between 2005-2010.

Self-appointed Highland Perthshire watchdog, Authority Watch, made the claim last month, saying it equated to an average cost of £26,500 to the taxpayer per annum.

Community council secretary, Victor Clements, said: 'We are in the process of getting additional information on this at present.'

'The caravan park finances are something we have been interested in for some time as they provide the only regular source of funds to the Aberfeldy Common Good Fund.'



Pupils from Craignish Primary School display their Green Flag, presented for good environmental initiatives within the school.

**Craignish school gains first eco friendly flag**

CRAIGNISH Primary School was awarded its first Green Flag in acknowledgement of all the excellent eco work the whole school has been undertaking over the past six years.

The Eco group really impressed the Eco Schools inspectors as they gave them a detailed tour of the school and its grounds.

**Recycling**

Children pointed out all the recycling work which goes on, the wildlife areas within the grounds, the vegetable planting areas which the children and parents have been developing, the bird feeding station, the willow snake, the new markings which the children designed and had painted professionally on their playground and their big red litter bin.

They also highlighted a big display in school of all the health-promoting activities they get up to including the recent fun run which raised

over £600 for flood victims in Pakistan and Children in Need.

The inspectors were also impressed with the amount of work that goes on every year cleaning the beaches around the Craignish peninsula. In addition to the tours around the school, children gave an excellent eco-presentation in assembly.

This was accompanied by a power-point slide show of lots of the activities they undertake on a daily basis. This reminded everyone just how much is done to help look after the planet.

Head teacher Miss Anne Wilson said: 'We are all very proud of this achievement and I personally would like to thank all the children, staff, parents and friends of the school who work hard at ensuring sound environmental practice is achieved and sustained both at the school and in the wider community.'

were more likely to have crime.

However he welcomed the suggestion that people could volunteer as special constables as it could lead to career prospects as full-time officers.

Speaking after the meeting, community council chairman Richard Wallis said: 'The possibility that special constables could play a greater role in the area, perhaps by going on the beat, is something we will look at. As the chief inspector said, it does offer good career prospects to those taking part.'

Some 15 police stations are due to close in Northern Constabulary area due to budget cuts.

**ONICH**

AN ONICH guesthouse has surrendered its on sales drinks licence.

Cuilcheanna House, run by Mary and Kirstie Black, has been providing quality bed and breakfast accommodation for over 50 years.

The four-star establishment will continue to trade as normal. Highland Licensing Board councillors have approved the move.

**LOCHALINE**

LOCHALINE Primary School pupils learned how to take care of salmon smolts last week.

Lucy Smith of Lochaber Fisheries visited the school to show children an aquarium and explain how to feed the fish ahead of a project where the children will take care of 100 salmon eggs.

The eggs will be delivered to the school in April, and the pupils will nurture the salmon young until they are developed enough to be released into the River Aline.

**DUNVEGAN**

DUNVEGAN eatery Three Chimneys has been named as a finalist in two categories at the 2011 Scottish Restaurant Awards at Glasgow Science Centre on February 28.

The Colbost-based establishment is up against Eat on the Green from Ellon and the Monachyle Mhor in Perthshire for Best Rural Restaurant of the Year.

In the Fine Dining Experience of the Year, the Three Chimneys' rivals for the top prize are Martin Wishart in Edinburgh and Glasgow's Hotel Du Vin.

Husband and wife team Shirley and Eddie Spear have owned the multi award-winning restaurant since they moved to Skye 26 years ago.

Speaking to The Oban Times during final preparations for reopening last Friday, Shirley said: 'These are the awards that we value the most. We are absolutely delighted to be flying the flag for Skye and all other rural parts of Scotland.'

'Personally I do my utmost to promote rural Scotland - it is so important that people get out of the city and explore their own country.'

Three Chimneys was recently named as one of the top 30 in the UK - sharing that honour with only three others in Scotland. The restaurant also boasts a VisitScotland Gold 5-star rating.

Head chef Michael Smith from Inverness and second chef Kevin MacLean from Oban lead the team in the kitchen.

**TAYNUILT**

SEVERAL P6 and P7 pupils from Taynuilt Primary School last week took part in a Burns' competition, each reciting a poem by the Bard.

Judges the Rev Robert Brookes, Willie Campbell, Iain Campbell and David Paterson judged the performances on five different criteria and had a difficult task choosing the winner.

The winner was Breagha Charlton, whose rendition of *To a Louse* was judged to have been the best performance of the afternoon.

Parents and pupils provided food, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all the participants and judges after the competition.

**ISLAY**

ISLAY Energy Trust's (IET) Renewables Day Two, held on January 29, was a great success with more than 130 attendees during the course of the day, 48 of whom joined as new members of IET.

The day's new format, running presentations alongside the drop-in session, worked well. Scott Currie's personal experience of installing and using solar photovoltaic panels at Conisby proved particularly popular and inspired a rush of inquiries.

In the display area, Margaret and Blair Rozga supplied a beautifully documented account of the installation of their 20kw wind turbine at Kilmeny Farm, which made the project look straightforward.

All the exhibitors will return to the island to carry out survey work for potential customers and one has already taken an order for a 4kw PV.

Islay High School Hospitality Group worked hard to keep all the guests fed and watered.

ISLAY Natural History Trust has met with television producer Nigel Pope ahead of his new wildlife documentary series for the BBC about the Hebrides.

BBC Scotland has commissioned a series of programmes from Mr Pope and John Aitchison, two of the best known producers of television wildlife documentaries. Filming will take place over two years, producing four episodes based around the seasonal cycle in the Hebrides and it is anticipated Islay will feature prominently.

The series is expected to be broadcast some time in 2013. The team made its first visit to Islay last week

and successfully obtained footage featuring Golden Eagles on the Oa.

SYLLABUSES and entry forms are available for Mòd Ìle 2011, taking place in Islay High School on June 4.

They can be obtained from Mòd secretary Alison Gray on [alisongray@islay.aol.co.uk](mailto:alisongray@islay.aol.co.uk) or by telephoning 01496 301546.

The closing date for entries is April 23, and essay submissions should be received by May 21.

MARINE Scotland held a meeting in Bowmore Hall on January 20 to consult on its draft plan and strategic environmental assessment for Offshore Wind Energy in Scottish Territorial Waters.

The offshore wind consultation team were Phil Gilmour, of Marine Scotland, and Dr Fiona Simpson, head of Environmental Assessment.

Few people attending this open meeting and Mr Gilmour suggested that instead of following their prepared workshop format, participants would gather round the table, watch their presentations and discuss the documents were shown. This made for some lively questions and answers and it was a good chance for Islay people to question, air their views and make their points.

Mr Gilmour and Dr Simpson advise Scottish Government ministers on marine and environment matters.

A comprehensive description of the proposed windfarm project in Islay's waters, Islay Offshore Wind Farm Scoping Document March 2010: SSE Renewables and AMEC joint Scoping Document, is available online at [www.sse-islay.com](http://www.sse-islay.com). Email comments to [IslayOffshoreWind@amec.com](mailto:IslayOffshoreWind@amec.com).

ISLAY'S Jazz Festival 2011 is to retain its headline sponsorship from Lagavulin.

The festival, which this year will take place from September 16 to 18, attracts hundreds of jazz lovers to the island.

The events of the festival are spread over three days and many venues on Islay. In 2010 the festival programme featured the lyrical pianism of Zoe Rahman; the feel-good saxophone of Jesse Davis; the Blue Note inspired Mercy, Mercy, Mercy; award-winning Scottish guitarist Graham Stephen; the commanding tenor of John Burgess and a new take on 1920s and '30s jazz from Nova Scotia Jazz Band. Concerts were presented across the island,



**Search begins for Coisir Og Dhail Riata instructor**

**Mid Argyll's Gaelic choir, Coisir Og Dhail Riata is searching for a new choir instructor after the retirement of Fiona Munro. Mrs Munro, who joined the choir more than five years ago, saw the girls achieve great success, winning cache of trophies in recent years.**

in a mix of unique settings: village halls, distilleries, bird sanctuaries and small bars and inns.

Three of the events were staged at Lagavulin Distillery.

Commenting on behalf of Lagavulin and Diageo's Classic Malts Selection, Nick Morgan, Diageo's Scotch Knowledge and Heritage Manager, said: 'We are absolutely delighted to be able once again to sponsor this world-class festival, which brings so many discerning jazz lovers to venues throughout Islay.'

'We were pleased with the public and local reaction to our sponsorship last year and even more thrilled by the outstanding performances and talent that the artists brought to the festival. It confirmed our view that live jazz and fine malt whisky are the best of partners.'

The festival is promoted by Jazz Scotland and The Islay Arts Association, and also supported by Argyll and Bute Council, Creative Scotland and Scotland's Islands.

songs for the show with their teachers. A team of arts education specialists and performers will then spend a day with pupils to prepare them for a performance of *Scotland, our Scotland!* for their parents and other pupils.

The opera features a host of colourful costumes and props, and songs including *Fit Like?*, *Looking Good* and *Heart of the Dream*.

The performance in Iochdar is scheduled for Friday March 25.

**TIGHNABRUACH**

PEOPLE living in Tighnabruach and Strachur are learning more about the changes being made to the GP out of hours service in their area.

As *The Oban Times* goes to press (Wednesday) representatives from NHS Highland are visiting both villages to explain and discuss possible options for the service post March 17, when Dr Carle of the Kyles Practices stops providing medical cover in the evenings and weekends.

Members of the working group set up to find an alternative service provider will do a presentation and are available to answer questions when they visit both communities.

The group was at Kames Village Hall yesterday, Wednesday, February 9, from 3pm to 7pm and will be at Strachur Memorial Hall today, Thursday, February 10, between 4pm and 8pm.

**KYLEAKIN**

THE POST OFFICE is to seek the views of local customers and stakeholders on a proposal to make the temporary Post Office at the former Cameron's Shop in Kyleakin a permanent move.

Over the next six weeks, locals can let Post Office Ltd know what issues they would like to be considered including, access and facilities at the new location, the proposed days and hours of service, and local issues specific to Kyleakin. The closing date for views to be submitted is Tuesday March 22.

The service would continue to be provided by the existing Core Sub postmaster from Broadford Post Office branch in the former Cameron Shop. The Hosted service will operate for a total of seven hours per week, on a Tuesday and Thursday between 9.30am and 1pm.

Customers will still be able to access the same range of products and services as the existing service, with the addition of Euro/Dollar On Demand Bureau De Change facilities.

Post Office Ltd believes the proposed arrangement presents the best solution to allow it to maintain and safeguard Post Office services in the area in the longer term.

Kenny Lamont, Field Change Advisor for Post Office Limited, said: 'Post Office Ltd proposes to make this service permanent to help safeguard Post Office services in Kyleakin well into the future.'

'The hosted service has been operating well and I am confident that it meets the needs of our customers.'

Anyone with any comments or concerns about the proposal can write to Kenny Lamont, c/o Post Office Ltd, National Consultation Team, PO Box 2060, Watford, WD18 8ZW.

**ERISKAY**

A SUCCESSFUL social evening was held on Eriskay last Saturday to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the running around of *The Politician*.

Ceòlas worked closely with local hoteliers Morag and Neil to organise an exhibition and celebration ceilidh in Am Politician.

A group travelled from Lewis to join in the celebrations and they were not disappointed in the welcome they were given.

Willie 'Bucach' (Buckie Rescue), an 87-year-old member of the Stormoway ProBus group, regaled all present with his memories of staying in MacInnes' in Bunmhullin at the time of the event.

Radio presenter Niall Iain Dhòmhnaillach produced a photograph of his late uncle,

**DUNVEGAN**

THE DUNVEGAN area of Skye is set to benefit when more than 12 kilometres of water mains is replaced over the next nine months.

The work, worth about £970,000, will reduce the likelihood of supply interruptions for customers caused by burst pipes. The old pipes are mainly made from cement and date from the 1960s. The new water mains are made from tough but flexible plastic, less prone to bursts.

Over the next nine months contractors will start work in Balmealach, Caroy, Dunvegan, Feorlig, Harlosh, Heribost, Kilmuir, Roskhill and Vatten. There will be occasions when Scottish Water has to switch off supplies but customers will be given advance notice.

Project Manager Neil Cowper of Scottish Water's Capital Investment Delivery team said: 'This investment will result in a modern supply network that ensures clear, fresh drinking water for customers and fewer interruptions from bursts. The new mains will be better suited to the changing ground conditions of this rural area. We'll do our best to keep any disruption during the work to a minimum.'

**ARISAIG**

THE ARISAIG branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute held its January meeting in the Astley Hall with 15 members and friends attending.

They heard an interesting talk on Malawi by John O'Neil.

The competition was to describe the content of a Burns poem and provide artwork to go alongside it: 1 Anne Cameron; 2 June Cairns; 3 Anne Cameron.

The raffle was won by Anne Cameron.

Ronald MacDonald, who was one of the first locals to go aboard the wrecked *Politician*.

The ceilidh was opened in the traditional way with piping and Ceolas musicians provided lively entertainment.

The audience was highly amused by the anecdotes and songs which told the story of life in the community of Eriskay at the time of 'the Polly' and how the parish priest referred to the shipwreck as 'a gift from God'. Many people participated in the storytelling and banter and an unforgettable moment was the final singing by the senior citizens.

Father Calum MacLellan made a great contribution in his own style.

People of all ages enjoyed sharing the memories and the evening was mainly hosted in Gaelic. Neil MacDonald was host and told his own stories from his younger days of searching for *Politician* treasure!

A planned excursion out to sea was cancelled because of bad weather but will be rescheduled for Ceolas week. Everyone who attended had a great time.

The event was supported from Councillor Peter Carlin's Ward Fund, Community Education, AJ Campbell of Survival Crafts, Co-op Membership Dept and Scottish Islands Fund.

**CONNEL**



Kate Little with her winning pancake design.

**Kate's a winner with her tasty pancake design**

ACHALEVEN school pupils had a wonderful treat this week thanks to one of the primary seven pupils.

Kate Little won the Pancake Place's 'Design a Pancake' competition, meaning her creation will appear on the restaurant's menu.

Kate and her fellow pupils from the Connel school celebrated recently with a visit to the Pancake Place.

The unique pancake design is a confection of a vanilla flavoured pancake, topped with chocolate sauce, strawberries, blueberries, ice cream or squishy cream and little vanilla fudge chunks.

Achaleven Primary School head teacher Sharon Burt said: 'Kate decided to make a pancake using all her favourite things.'

'Although we didn't get to taste Kate's fantastic pancake we did have a lovely lunch and we can't wait for the new pancake to appear on the menu.'

The pupils also recently visited Oban Library, where they met head librarian Kevin Baker.

Kevin helped them with their story writing and lived up proceedings with some quick drama activities to really get ideas flowing.

**BROADFORD**



**Burns' Supper celebrations**

Broadford Primary School pupils held their Burns' Supper celebrations last week, which included the nursery children designing their own tartan. All the pupils wore tartan for the day, and as is tradition, haggis, neeps and tatties were on the menu for lunch. The haggis was piped into the room and pupils from the senior classes recited some of Burns' best-known songs and poems. Pictures drawn by P4, P5 and P6 pupils of Burns were displayed during the meal.

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**KINLOCHLEVEN**



The talented school pupils from Kinlochleven Primary School.

**Talent shines through at Kinlochleven Primary**

SOUTH Lochaber youngsters recently showcased their singing and dancing skills as well as some more unusual talents at Kinlochleven Primary's Got Talent show.

The pupil council auditioned 15 acts before the show, with nine making it through to the final in the school hall.

The acts included singing, playing the harmonica, tin whistle playing, mime and dance. The finalists were out to impress the panel of judges - made up of head Cheryl Allan, high school headmaster John McGilp, librarian Amy MacDougal and student teacher Iona Doherty.

The judges gave third place to P4 singer Valentina Federici and second place to P6's David Green and his tin whistle.

But David Wilson, P3, and James Ramsey, P4, act 'The Human Calculator' won them the competition. They impressed the judges with their ability to perform complicated maths calculations in their heads.

**SOUTH UIST**

SCOTTISH Opera is to visit Iochdar Primary School as part of its new primary schools tour *Scotland, our Scotland!*

The opera, which P5-P7 pupils all over the country will learn and perform in their own schools, has been awarded the London 2012 Inspire mark which recognises innovative and exceptional projects that are directly inspired by the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and *Scotland, our Scotland!* was one of the first projects north of the border to be given the award.

About 8,500 pupils in Scottish primary schools are already rehearsing the



**NATIONAL SPRING CLEAN 2011**

For a fun, family day out this spring, why not join tens of thousands of people taking part in National Spring Clean?

For campaign information visit [www.keepsotlandtidy.org/springclean](http://www.keepsotlandtidy.org/springclean)

Keep Scotland Beautiful is an operating name of Environmental Campaigns (Scotland). Scottish Charity Number SC030332



**SCALPAY**

WHILE January began as a quiet month in terms of strong winds and gales, the end of the month was very different with blustery winds rising to storm force. The weather forecast suggests very strong winds and cold weather to follow.

The wind and waves used to bring ashore a harvest of seaweed which was gathered and kept as compost to spread on the fields or the gardens when the warmer weather came and the islanders started planting their seed potatoes.

There appeared to be a backlog of Christmas mail which arrived throughout January, however, it was still very welcome. Several people were 'home' for the festive season and we look forward to seeing them, and more, at Easter.

While there has been some debate about the cull of hedgehogs in the Western Isles it is not a problem on Scalpay. Efforts were made to introduce hedgehogs to the island several years ago but it is believed that they died out before producing offspring.

Perhaps as a result of the lack of predators, such as the hedgehog, sea birds continue to thrive with puffins popular with visitors. Seagulls are dominant and appear to be breeding in ever increasing numbers such as to become a pest.

The flesh of several seabirds was a common delicacy throughout the Western Isles and while the guga or young gannet is the one that

most people know about, islanders also captured puffins and cormorants for the pot.

Around Scalpay's shores can be found the remnants of dry walled lobster weirs of keeps where local fishermen would put their catch until collected.

Fishermen from Scalpay used to travel far in search of their catch. St Kilda, to the west of Harris was tried and one lobster boat went to the Flannan Isles a few years ago, but with little success.

Like many islands, the population of Scalpay has fallen by quite a number in recent years. Grocery vans are a welcome sight on the island with islanders going to Tarbert in Harris for newspapers. Visitors to Scalpay are reminded that there is no fuel available on the island.

**KYLEAKIN**

KYLEAKIN Local History Society held a well supported Burns Supper in the community hall as a fundraising event - and raised an amazing £1,391.

The group, which was only formed in October 2010, has already 60 members and has held two talks to date. The group will host a third talk in the hall on March 9 when the guest speaker will be retired GP Dr John Adamson, Kyle.

The society are looking for old photographs and memorabilia of interest to form a display this summer. Photographs can be copied and returned if required.

Please contact Caroline Clouston on 01599 534768.



Thanks to the heating system in the hall the island's playgroup has been well attended despite cold weather

## Islanders on Iona turn up the heat on village hall improvements

ISLANDERS on Iona are pressing forward with plans to get their village hall, in its ninth decade, back in shape.

With support from Awards for All, Argyll and Bute Council, The Russell Trust, Iona Community Council, Iona Golf Committee and residents via fundraising events, the hall now has, amongst many improvements, a new sound system, new drainage

around the site, new lighting, new ceiling tiles and a fresh lick of paint.

A major part of the improvements has been the new Air-to-Air heat exchange pump supplied by Lowergy Ltd, which utilises cheap renewable energy technology to ensure a warm welcome for those using the village hall.

The improvements will make the hall a more comfortable space for

a wider range of uses, particularly during the winter months.

Earlier this month the hall committee hosted a fundraising Burns Supper - something that would have been impossible in the past during the winter - and the playgroup has been well attended despite the cold weather.

Since 1928, the village hall on Iona has been hosting many island events.

Hundreds of ceilidhs, fundraising events, wedding dances and discos have been hosted in the hall since it was built. The hall is available to hire by residents and non-residents alike.

These improvements are the first stage in a programme of planned fundraising and refurbishment for the Hall, which will hopefully see its future secured as the heart of the island community for another 90 years.

**TIREE**

THE Tiree mother and daughter team that walked the Great Wall of China for the Eve Appeal have blasted through the £10,000 mark.

Kirsteen Jewell and mum Fiona MacLeod held a final fundraising event at An Talla, where they shared their Asian experiences.

A raffle raised an astonishing £653.50, taking their grand total to £10,760, drawing to a close a solid year of fundraising.

Kirsteen said: 'In the last year we have been totally amazed by the generosity and goodwill of all our friends and family.'

'Thanks for your continued support throughout our adventure.'

**COLL**

FOUR bridges on Coll's Arnabost-Sorisdale road will be closed for three weeks at a time to allow council staff to make repairs.

The closures, which start at one minute past midnight, are: Corraig Bridge, between February 5-February 26; Cloich Bridge, between February 11-March 4; Torastan Bridge between February 17-March 10 and Clabbach Bridge between February 23 and March 16.

**JURA**

THE Isle of Jura is aiming to attract new blood to the island with the approval by the Crofters Commission of five new croft sites.

The 1.5 hectare bareland units, situated by the roadside between Lussagiven

and Ardlussa, will be made available to tenants and anyone interested should contact Andy or Claire Fletcher on 01496 820323.

FOLLOWING Dr Frank Teunisse's return to Holland, Dr Ali Prust becomes locum in charge until the appointment of a full time, resident doctor.

The full time post is expected to be advertised shortly.

ISLAY and Jura Transport Forum will hold their first meeting of 2011 at Islay Airport on March 9, 2011.

THE Jura Business Forum will meet next week to identify new business opportunities and formulate plans to mitigate common areas of risk.

The meeting will take place at the Isle of Jura Hotel at 7pm on Tuesday, February 15.

Anyone with a current or new business interest who wishes to attend should email cath@jurahotel.co.uk to confirm attendance.

**BARRA**

STORM force winds brought the Isle of Barra to a virtual standstill last Thursday, closing the island's schools, the airstrip and stopping ferry sailings from Oban to Castlebay.

The strength and sudden arrival of the winds took many islanders by surprise, gathering pace just after noon.

One island resident said: 'At 11am it was fine, but by 2pm we were getting battered.'

## Your Oban Times Bonnie Babies



Riley Anderson, Oban, aged 14 weeks.



Henley McCulloch, Oban, aged 4 days.



Christopher Jamieson, Islay, aged 22 months.



Jasmine Aitkenhead, Connel, aged 5 months.



Ian MacEwan, Oban, 12 weeks.



Stuart Stibbs, Glasgow, aged 6 months.

**Everyone's favourite competition is back and The Oban Times is looking to find the west coast's bonniest baby in 2011.**

*If you think your baby is the cutest in the West of Scotland then nominate them.*

Our panel of judges will help us find our Bonnie Baby of 2011 and the top tot will be crowned Oban Times Bonnie Baby 2011 and his/her parent or guardian will receive a top prize with two runners up also receiving an award.

The deadline to enter your child is **Monday, February 28 at 5pm** and children must be two or under on **28/02/2011**.

Parent/Guardian must consent to publication of their child's photograph in our papers by signing the entry form.

Entries, including one photograph, **MUST** be accompanied by the official entry form which can only be obtained from The Oban Times. Photocopies will not be accepted.

If you wish your picture returned, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

Normal Oban Times terms and conditions apply and the editor's decision is final.

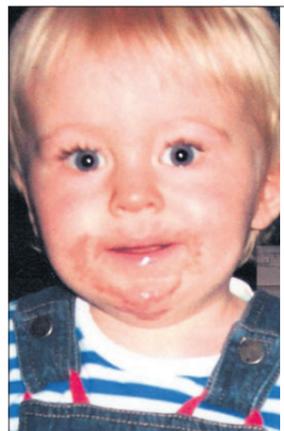
Send your entry to:  
The Oban Times Bonnie Baby Competition, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll

Name of parent/guardian:.....

Address:.....

Full name of child: ..... Age at 24/01/2011:.....

Signature of parent/guardian:.....



Ryan Rowsell, Caol, aged 23 months.



Ashley Wood, N Connel, aged 10 months.



Sarah White, Ballachulish, aged 14 months



Kieran Beaton, Lochgilphead, 8 months.



Logan Faragher, Oban, aged 5 months.



Hannah Vick, Taynuilt, aged 24 months



Erin Greig, Mull, aged 11 months.



Levi Armour, Oban, aged 10 weeks.

**Court sets death boat inquiry date**

AN INQUIRY into the deaths of three fishermen off the coast of Ardnamurchan a year-and-a-half ago is due to be held on February 21. Thomas Sanderson, Peter Hilton, both 52, and skipper Tony Hayton, 45, were killed when their vessel *Aquila* capsized a mile off the coast on July 20, 2009. A fourth crew member was rescued by a nearby yacht. Fort William Sheriff Court was told the fatal accident inquiry will hear from 34 witnesses and is expected the last at least two weeks.

**Massacre victims remembered**

THE CEREMONY to commemorate the victims of the Massacre of Glencoe takes place on Sunday under new organisers the Clan Donald Lands Trust. The trust, based at Armadale, took over responsibility for the annual event after Clan Donald Edinburgh relinquished the role. Between 50 and 60 people are expected to attend the 11.30am remembrance service in St Mary's Episcopal Church in Glencoe Village, led by the Rev Adrian Fallows, and the traditional procession at 12.30pm from the old bridge to the Celtic cross at Upper Carnoch. Local piper John MacCallum will lead the procession. At the memorial, a short service will be held and wreaths will be laid by the Canada and Highlands and Islands Clan Donald societies, Clan Henderson and Glencoe Heritage Trust. Clan Donald Lands Trust executive director David MacDonald told *The Oban Times*: 'I think it's very important to remember those who lost their lives in slaughter under trust.'

At the memorial, a short service will be held and wreaths will be laid by the Canada and Highlands and Islands Clan Donald societies, Clan Henderson and Glencoe Heritage Trust. Clan Donald Lands Trust executive director David MacDonald told *The Oban Times*: 'I think it's very important to remember those who lost their lives in slaughter under trust.'

**NEWSDESK**  
**01631 568000**



An emotional Father Roddy Johnston bids farewell to Lochside RC pupils on Friday. 10\_106roddy01

**Lochside school bids farewell to popular parish priest**

PUPILS and staff at Lochside RC Primary School held a special farewell assembly for Father Roddy Johnston on Friday as he prepared to take up a new parish on Lewis. The popular parish priest was presented with a selection of gifts and a poem 'Our School Priest', which was specially composed for the event. Each class sang a song and some pupils played musical instruments in what was an emotional farewell

for all concerned. Head teacher Violet Smith said Father Roddy had worked closely with the school during his time in Lochaber, both as school board chairman and parent council clerk. She said: 'Father Roddy's support and loyalty has always been greatly appreciated by everyone at Lochside School. We will miss him very much but we have very

fond memories of his time with us as school chaplain. We wish Father Roddy every success and happiness in his new parish.'

Father Roddy conducted his last mass at St John's Church in Caol on Sunday before heading to Stornoway to take over from Father Tom Kearns at Our Holy Redeemer RC Church. He said Father Roddy he had been 'honoured' to serve the people of Caol for 12 years.

**Caol pensioner loses crofting land battle with theatre impresario**

A CAOL pensioner and former soldier has lost his crofting battle with theatre impresario and Lochaber laird Sir Cameron Macintosh. Battle-scarred Arnhem veteran Donald Cameron had wanted to buy his 711-acre croft at 1 and 2 Tarbet, Morar, from Sir Cameron's Nevis Estate and associated companies.

But in a 55-page finding Scottish Land Court judge Lord McGhie instead backed the laird's claim on 22 acres of croft woodland for a bunkhouse and smallholding as part of his estate regeneration plan to revive the remote area. Mr Cameron, however, claimed his 300 ewes need

the copse for winter shelter. Sir Cameron hailed the result as a victory for people interested in safeguarding the countryside for future generations over 'a few self-interested crofters'.

The 64-year-old said: 'I had to defend what I considered was right for the local community and protect an ancient woodland for future generations.'

Mr Cameron, aged 87, told *The Oban Times* he may continue his legal battle and use crofting legislation to force the musical producer to sell him the rest of the croft. He said: 'I am not happy at all. I will have to

discuss an appeal with my lawyer Mr Kermack, but I can't say at this very moment what the outcome will be.'

'They want 22 acres and access down to the pier, that's another 10 acres. I want to buy the rest of the croft, because if that's the decision there is no other option.'

'It has cost me quite a lot of money so far and I'm prepared to spend a bit more to get a decent judgment. We will see what happens.'

Crucially, Lord McGhie found no legal reason to reject Mr Cameron's application to buy the remainder of the croft.

**Mid Argyll diseased forest faces the axe**

HUNDREDS of trees infected with a deadly disease on the Craignish Peninsula will be felled by the end of the month, the Forestry Commission for Scotland has said.

The felling starts after Ramorum disease was discovered in Japanese larch trees on the three-acre forestry plantation on December 8 last year.

**First in Scotland** It is the first time the fatal disease - which only last year was discovered to infect Japanese larch - has been found in Scotland.

Ramorum disease, caused by the fungus like pathogen *Phytophthora*, produces reproductive spores on larch trees, killing them.

**SSPCA to call on primary schools in Argyll and Bute**

ANIMAL charity Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA) is inviting primary schools in Argyll and Bute to take part in its prevention through education programme this year.

Aimed at primary four to seven pupils, the programme is offered free of charge and encourages children to treat animals with compassion and respect. Scotland's animal welfare charity spoke to 2,341 children in Argyll and Bute last year and over 81,000 children across Scotland. Gilly Mendes Ferreira education manager said: 'We'll be contacting every school in Argyll and Bute and offering to come along and visit but schools are also welcome to get in touch with us if they'd like to book early.'

To book a Scottish SPCA visit call 03000 999 999 or visit [scottishspca.org/education](http://scottishspca.org/education).

The forestry commission has been working with the landowner since the discovery to seek a felling order and minimise the risk of the infection spreading. Harvesting companies are currently being sought to carryout the work, which should take approximately four to five days to complete.

A spokesman for Forestry Commission Scotland said: 'We are very grateful that everyone involved in tackling this outbreak of Ramorum disease on Japanese larch has acted quickly enough to give us a chance of containing the disease. Nevertheless, there is no room for complacency and the forestry commission will be undertaking further surveys of potential host species in this area over the coming weeks.'

The commission has confirmed that the west coast of Scotland is particularly vulnerable as the disease thrives best in wetter climates. It can spread in mists, watercourses, air currents and water splash on boots, vehicle tyres and equipment, and by the movement of infected plants.

The spokesman added: 'We are also advising landowners and managers - as well as members of the public - to keep a keen eye on the condition of trees, particularly larch trees, in the area and to report anything untoward or suspicious. Walkers, and their dogs, are also advised to stick to roads and paths to reduce the risk of spreading the disease or indeed bringing infection back to their own garden plants.'

Symptoms on Japanese larch trees include wilting shoot tips, needles turning black and falling prematurely, and cankers that bleed resin can appear on the branches and upper trunk.

**Coll kids' 10-hour ordeal on ferry**

SCHOOLCHILDREN were left without food and water for nearly 10 hours after a Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) ferry failed to dock in Coll on Saturday.

About 10 teenage Oban High School pupils had boarded the MV Isle of Mull ferry, which was standing in for the MV Lord of the Isles, at 6am on Saturday, hoping to have one day home for the weekend.

However, adverse weather prevented their safe arrival at Coll or Tiree, so the vessel turned back for Oban, returning to dock at 3.45pm.

But CalMac staff failed to offer the pupils - who were travelling without cash - a

snack or a drink to keep them comfortable on their return to Oban, despite a concerned phone call from at least one parent; Victoria Bastow, of Arnigour.

Victoria's three teenage children, James, 17, Frances 15, and Josh 14, had used their money for the week, so were unable to buy snacks or drinks. That, says Victoria, is not the point.

She said: 'To be fair to the staff, they tried their hardest to dock at Coll but it was too choppy to do so safely, so they turned back. I can't fault them for that.'

'The only disappointment was the food and drink situation. I phoned the main line and then spoke to a man

at the Oban office, who said he'd pass a message to the stewards, but the kids didn't get anything.'

'I thought after eight hours they would do that anyway, but nothing was handed out. There must have been other people on the boat in the same position.'

A spokesman for CalMac said: 'We are looking into this matter, but have so far been unable to establish who this lady spoke to.'

'Naturally we regret any upset caused to the children travelling to Coll, and if, in the future, they found themselves in a similar situation, would encourage them to contact a member of crew for assistance.'

**Music lunch fundraiser success**

A FUNDRAISING soup lunch hosted jointly by Fèis Latharna and the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival on Saturday at Oban's Glencruitten Church Centre raised £380 for the two organisations.

Those in attendance enjoyed soup, home baking and excellent live music provided by local musicians including Ukulele Luings.

the Fèis Gaelic singing group, Michael Garvin and Sileas Sinclair, Stewart and Don McAllister, James MacPherson and Highland dancing by Kirsty Campbell.

The well-attended lunch was an opportunity to promote forthcoming events for the two organisations, with the launch of leaflets for the Oban Easter Fèis

on Oban Primary Campus, April 4 - 8 and the syllabus for the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival April 28 - May 1.

Information on the Easter Fèis and Fèis Saturday classes is available from Ewen MacPherson on 07733 001283.

Information about the music festival is available at [www.obanfestival.org](http://www.obanfestival.org)



Ukulele Luings warm up for their performance at the fundraising soup lunch at Oban's Glencruitten Church Centre on Saturday, by impersonating some of their own guitar heroes. 10\_106uke2

**Former Oban nurse tells High Court how fiance faked leukaemia**

A FORMER Oban nurse has told a murder trial how her fiance admitted faking leukaemia - after police warned her she was in danger from him.

Former Lorn and Islands Hospital theatre manager Simone Banerjee, 41, began a relationship with colleague Malcolm Webster, 51, in 2005 after he told her he had the terminal disease.

But two years later, when the couple were engaged, despite Webster still being married, police investigating the death of his first wife Claire and a road smash in which his second wife Felicity was badly injured arrived at the hospital to warn her of his past.

Miss Banerjee told the High Court in Glasgow last Wednesday that she confronted Webster, of Guildford, Surrey, the following day at the home

**Trust hits back over deer cull**

THE CHAIRMAN of the John Muir Trust (JMT) has hit back at claims that the conservation body's slaughter of red deer is excessive and could damage the tourist trade.

Responding to *The Oban Times* exclusive last week on how hillwalkers found deer hinds and calves shot dead in upper Glen Nevis by JMT contractors, John Hutchison defended the action as essential for deer welfare and native habitat regeneration. Mr Hutchison took particular exception to criticisms from Lochaline stalker Iain Thornber, who is collating information on red deer culls for the Scottish Gamekeepers Association.

Mr Thornber, also the deputy Lord Lieutenant for Lochaber, told *The Oban Times* the killings were 'excessive' and voiced concerns about Lochaber's image if visitors came across deer carcasses in the hills.

Mr Hutchison replied: 'Last week's quotation from Iain Thornber suggesting that they are 'in Glen Nevis where... hundreds of thousands of visitors...viewing putrefying carcasses' is completely misleading to the public.'

'We have culled deer on the very upper reaches of the Nevis, spread over an area of six square kilometres, left on the hill to encourage eagles, well upstream of the Nevis Gorge and above 500 metres in altitude.'

'We adjust the cull each year according to the results of monitoring the natural habitats we wish to encourage. This may result

**EXCLUSIVE**  
REPORT by  
STEPHEN NORRIS  
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in deer densities of less than five per square kilometre to allow food for a sensible deer population.'

He added: 'Current management practices in Scotland led to tens of thousands of beasts dying from starvation last winter and left on the hill. This was well researched by the Deer Commission (now SNH) and should be regarded as a far more worrying matter. We welcome this opportunity to have our scientific based management aired in the public domain and to raise the profile of the real plight and suffering of red deer.'

Mr Thornber is understood to be preparing a detailed response.

Kingie Estate stalker John Cameron, from Invergarry, said this week deer were being treated 'like vermin' and temporary deer fences were a better option.

Mr Hutchison responded that work to improve habitats being damaged by deer frequently took place in places that cannot be fenced.

Asked how wild goats are treated, Mr Hutchison said: 'We don't have a specific policy on goats and I am not aware of any on Nevis.'

See Letters, page 12. What do you think? Write to us or have your say on Facebook.

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**Burns 'comes' to St Columba's**

PUPILS from St Columba's Primary School, in Oban, were given an informative presentation about the life and times of Rabbe Burns by Dr Fred Freeman.

Dr Freeman has recently completed a project for The National Library of Scotland and has produced a collection of Burns songs. His workshops provided an introduction to Burns through singing, tapping-out rhythms, listening and questioning.

The children had a great experience and their knowledge of the Scots language was enhanced.

**Seaplane flights stall for Oban**

LOCH Lomond Sea Planes have stopped offering flights to and from Oban.

The company say the decision, taken in December, came as a result of increased demand for their Discovery tours. Director, Olivia Spencer, said: 'Loch Lomond Seaplanes has always and continues to run a "regular-on-demand" service so the situation with regard to Oban will be reviewed periodically.'

**Historic Scotland aim for Young Scots**

COMMUNITIES on the west coast are being encouraged to recognise the achievements of young people who care for and protect Scotland's heritage.

Historic Scotland is asking communities to nominate young people who have worked passionately to support and promote their heritage as part of this year's Young Scot Awards.

Ruth Parsons, Chief Executive, Historic Scotland, said: 'It is fantastic to see so many young people with a passion for their heritage. We look forward to reading the entries which are always hugely inspirational.'

**Drimnin ferry may yet be saved**

HOPES of saving one of the West Highlands' smallest ferries remain alive after a public meeting in Morvern on Monday.

**Lifeline**

More than 30 local people packed into Drimnin village hall to urge local councillors and Highland Council officials to throw the Drimnin-Loch Sunart-Tobermory ferry a lifeline.

The service, run by the Sound of Mull Transport group, was facing closure after the council's TEC services committee recommended its £35,000 annual funding be axed. The move sparked local fury because the ferry was the only service to be handed a 100 per cent cut.

SOMTG chairman Jim Traynor told *The Oban Times* after the meeting councillors recognised Drimnin's strong desire to keep the 'lifeline' ferry running.

He said: 'The councillors are sympathetic to the ferry group's requirements and have given their assurance that they will consider proposals.'

'The Sound of Mull Transport Group will now work to ensure that a bid is with the councillors before the end of February.'

Local councillors Bren Gormley, Brian Murphy and Donald Cameron attended the meeting. Councillor Gormley said: 'There is a way forward but we are at the 11th hour.'



Tuneful protest: Plockton music school supporters were out in force in George Square on Saturday.

# Music school axe plan condemned

FIFTEEN young music hopefuls converged on the National Centre for Excellence in Traditional Music in Plockton last weekend - despite a closure threat hanging over the world-renowned school.

The secondary pupils from as far afield as Edinburgh, Stornoway, Irvine and Portree were attending two open days with a view to competing for a place at enrolment auditions on March 28.

Highland councillors, however, could today at Inverness vote to axe the centre's entire £317,000 annual funding from July 2012.

In his report to councillors, director of finance Alan Geddes will warn tough choices must be made in order to balance the books under UK Government plans to trim public sector spending by 11 per cent over four years.

Closure of the Plockton High School-based institution would mean students from S4 down having their studies curtailed.

Seven children selected from the March auditions would be the last entrants.

REPORT by  
STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

Civic and cultural leaders are horrified at the prospect of Scotland losing the centre, while a grassroots campaign to save it has snowballed. Music school graduates struck up a musical protest in Glasgow's George Square on Saturday - and a similar demonstration is planned outside today's Inverness summit.

Nationally, Creative Scotland chief executive Andrew Dixon told Highland Council it is 'vitaly important' to secure the centre's future.

Education secretary Mike Russell and Tony Blair's spin doctor Alasdair Campbell both lent their backing.

And Highlands SNP MSP and musician Rob Gibson attended and played at the George Square 'protest session'. He said: 'I'm sure that a solution can be found to avert the Highland Council administration planned cuts. A small cut is acceptable, a 100 per cent cut is out of the question. When I directed the Dingwall Folk Festival we invited the Plockton students

to play on our stage from the very start in 2001. We shared ceilidhs in Plockton and I've supported them ever since.'

Local Lib Dem candidate Alan MacRae added his support to the campaign, which is being led online by former Plockton student Suzanne Houston.

As of Tuesday, more than 8,200 people had signed the petition.

Locally, Plockton Community Council chairman Charlie MacRae said it would be 'a tragedy' if the centre closed.

Plockton High School Parent Council chairman George Hendry, from Strathcarron, added: 'This is not just flogging off the family silver but dismantling ten years of cultural investment in Scotland's national musical heritage. The knock-on effect of the departure of the music pupils also means the school's hostel will lose two-thirds of its occupants with implication for its domestic staff. The High School roll will, at a stroke, drop by almost ten per cent with further implications for the existing academic teaching staff.'

Colonsay girl Caitlin

MacNeil and her fellow students were 'speechless' at the plan to withdraw funding.

She said: 'Words can't really describe the time, effort and care that has gone into making the music school the success it is today. Mr Dougie Pincock, the director, has put the last ten years of his life into this place and we can't let it all go to waste.'

Caitlin pledged music school students would play their instruments outside today's Inverness meeting to show Highland Council 'and everyone else' what they can do.

Professional musicians at the school currently tutor 24 students in traditional instruments and Gaelic and Scots song. Nineteen pupils stay at the high school hostel, while five are local. They follow the normal S1-S6 curriculum in addition to their musical studies.

Plockton students have played in the European and Scottish parliament and at festivals in Scotland and Canada. Graduates have forged successful musical careers and formed at least 25 traditional bands.

## Police warn drivers to lock up

POLICE in Fort William are warning residents to make sure their vehicles are locked at all times following reports of individuals 'trying' doors to gain access.

It is believed opportunist thieves have been operating in the town over the past few days hoping to find cars unlocked and valuables inside.

## String of motoring offences denied

A FORT William man has denied stealing a car while on bail from Inverness and Fort William sheriff courts. Michael MacDonald, of Dalriada, 71 Camaghale, pled not guilty at Fort William Sheriff Court to stealing the vehicle from Abrach Road, Fort William on January 22.

MacDonald, 21, also denies driving the car away without the owner's consent, driving around Fort William while disqualified and having no insurance, all in breach of bail conditions.

Bail was continued until a further hearing on March 3. MacDonald will be sentenced for two separate offences on the same date.

## Mountain Festival gets underway

THE 2011 Fort William Mountain Festival gets underway tomorrow with events at the Ice Factor in Kinlochleven, Nevis Range and the Nevis Centre.

The varied five-day programme includes presentations from top climbers, mountain filmmakers, inspirational speakers and film screenings. Family climbing, mountaineering and skiing workshops also feature. The festival highlight will be the announcement of the winner of the 2011 Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture.

## Concern voiced over Ballachulish lights

BALLACHULISH Community Council has expressed concern at inadequate lighting through the underpass below the A82 at the village.

Concerns were also raised about fires being lit in the underpass and the amount of broken glass. Chairman Mel MacAskill is to ask police to monitor the situation.

## Offensive remark was made 'in the heat of the moment'

A KINLOCHLEVEN man has been fined after for screaming 'you're a f\*\*\*ing cripple' at a wheelchair-bound woman at a Halloween party in the village.

Fort William Sheriff Court heard how William Fordham traded insults with Jayne Wilkinson before coming out with the slur. The abuse caused 'considerable upset to the complainer' who began to cry, prosecutor Simon Crabb said.

Defending, Stephen Kennedy said supermarket worker Fordham, a member of the board running the local hall, was sitting with Ms Wilkinson when she suddenly

told him she 'hated his wife and daughter'. Fordham then made the offensive remark 'in the heat of the moment'.

'He regrets what he said,' Mr Kennedy said.

Fordham, 64, of 7 Corrie Road admitted breaching the peace by shouting, swearing and being abusive to Jayne Wilkinson in the Leven Centre on October 30, the offence being aggravated with prejudice regarding her disability.

Fining Fordham £200, Sheriff Paul Crozier told him: 'The comments you used, no matter what was said before, were unacceptable.'

## Dispute led to windows being smashed twice

A MAN twice smashed windows at Fort William after falling out with the occupier.

Lewis Sneddon, of 164 Smithdon Park, Inverness, admitted two charges of wilfully and recklessly destroying or damaging the property of another by throwing bricks through windows of the Hillside Estate home on October 10 and 16 last year. Prosecutor Simon Crabb told Fort William Sheriff Court the house owner was woken by the sound of smashing glass at 3am on October 10, and looked down to see a brick

and glass from his smashed bedroom window on the floor.

Six days later the man was again woken in the early hours by glass smashing and found two double-glazed windows panned in. Sneddon, aged 18, admitted to police he was responsible after the complainant named him as the possible culprit.

'The owner suspected it might have been the accused because they recently had a fall out,' Mr Crabb said. Deferring sentence on Sneddon, Sheriff Paul Crozier said: 'I need to find out how much damage was caused.'

## Tribute paid as UHI gains university status

THE UNIVERSITY of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) has been declared Scotland's newest university.

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning Mike Russell announced the news after the Privy Council, which rules on university status, gave the go-ahead. UHI's 13 colleges, specialist institutions and research centres include West Highland College at Fort William and Gairloch and Gaelic College Sabhal Mòr

Ostaig (SMO) on Skye. Chairman of the SMO board Sheriff Roddy John Macleod said the 'historic' day was the culmination of a long, hard battle and paid tribute his predecessor the late Dr Farquhar Macintosh who campaigned for a University of the Highlands and Islands from the 1960s.

Mr Macleod said: 'He would have been proud to see this day and it is up to those of us who to ensure the new university lives up to his vision.'

## Buying underage friend drink proves costly

A MAN who bought alcohol to share with his 15-year-old friend has been fined £290.

Desmond Jaffrey, of 2 Kestral Way, Perth, had earlier pled guilty to buying a bottle of cider, a quantity of Tennents lager and two bottles of WKD Blue for an under age person.

He bought the alcohol from at the Co-op store in Kinlochleven on May 8.

After the incident, Jaffrey, aged 20, left his Kinlochleven flat and moved in with his mother in Perth. Defence solicitor Hamish Melrose said Jaffrey had failed to turn up to Fort William Sheriff Court for sentencing on August 30 as he missed his bus.

Sheriff Paul Crozier said: 'What you did was irresponsible. On the basis of that irresponsibility, I am going to fine you.'

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Big donation: Jane Young, George Grant and Elsie McCubbin receiving their cheque from Mike Humphries and Wendy Harding. 10\_f06shop01

## Shop 'makes a difference' to Glencoe senior citizens

A SOUTH Lochaber shop has raised nearly £400 for elderly people in the area.

The Nisa store in Glencoe raised £391.50 for the Glencoe Senior Citizens Association as part of the chain's nationwide 'make a difference locally' campaign.

A percentage of the price of certain items in the store was donated to the final total.

Store manager Mike Humphries told *The Oban Times* they want to help seniors as they are a large part of the shops customer base.

He said: 'We chose to support them because they support our customers. The senior citizens deserve it.'

Association member George Grant said: 'We're very grateful, to Mike and Wendy especially. The donation is very much appreciated.'

## Caol man fined £600 for pushing two police constables

A CAOL man has been fined £600 at Fort William Sheriff Court for pushing two police constables and running away after he was arrested.

Brian Tolmie, aged 21, of 48 Camesky Road, admitted assaulting the officers in the execution of their

duty at Station Brae in Fort William on November 14, running away and attempting to avoid arrest with the intention of defeating the ends of justice. Intoxicated Tolmie was caught when he sprained his ankle trying to make his escape.

## Save YOUR cinema with the Oban Times Ticket appeal

Join one of the many A-list filmstars: Harry Potter's Hagrid, Robbie Coltrane, the White Witch from *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Oscar winner Tilda Swinton, *Four Wedding and A Funeral's* John Hannah, Scottish film director Bill Forsyth and the inimitable Mr Bean, Rowan Atkinson and help re-open Oban's Cinema

The Oban Times Ticket appeal is simple:  
Buy a Gold, Silver or Bronze ticket and help raise the funds needed to re-open the cinema.

Your ticket will be printed out and proudly displayed on the wall of the newly refurbished cinema along with your name, so future visitors of the cinema can see who helped raise the "phoenix from the ashes"

*"I love local cinemas. Not only because they provide, like a church or a football ground, a reason for a community to come together but because they are invariably the best places to watch a film, compared to which a trendy cinema is a miserable experience. My personal vested interest is that comedy films, in particular, benefit from the shared excitement and communal laughter of a large audience in a proper cinema. I do wish the Oban Phoenix campaign the very best of luck."*  
Rowan Atkinson

### How to pledge your cash.

There are three types of ticket - Gold at £50, Silver at £25 and Bronze at £5. Every donation will be carefully invested in the future of the cinema. If for any reason the cinema doesn't get up and running all monies will be returned.

Name: .....

Address: .....

Email address: .....

Pledge  GOLD  SILVER  BRONZE  (Tick as applicable)

I would like to pay an extra £17.75 for the framing of my ticket as a gift.

Post or hand in to: Times Ticket, The Oban Times, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban PA34 4HB  
Cheques or Postal Orders made payable to Times Ticket.

A full list of donors can be viewed in the Oban Times until the cinema is opened.

Total amount paid: ..... Name you want to appear on the ticket: .....

**Items sought for cinema fundraiser**

HAS ANYONE got a spare Picasso in the attic? If so, let Oban Phoenix Cinema fundraisers know as they hope to raise a bob or two from items gifted to the group.

On offer so far at the fundraiser on Sunday February 20, at 2.30pm in Cuan Mor, George Street, are a spectacular Jolomo painting, a meal for two at The Manor House, a hamper from Inverawe Smokery, framed prints, signed pictures from patrons and, courtesy of Caledonian MacBrayne, an eight-day Rover ticket for two passengers and a car return to Mull.

To donate further items to the group, contact Kay McNiven on obanphoenixcinema@gmail.com. There is a £2 entry fee and registration cost.

**Inverness date for legendary group**

LEGENDARY Scots band Simple Minds is to play at Inverness in July - the supergroup's only Scottish tour date this year.

Joining the 'Minds' classic Scottish rock will be Big Country at the Northern Meeting Park 'Summer in the City' July 16 event.

Kenny Cameron, of promoters CK Events, said of the venue: 'It will provide space for thousands of concert goers and offer the convenience of being right on the doorstep for many Inverness residents.'



Mrs Gillies' dance group was one of the first acts to take to the stage at the Rockfield's Got Talent auditions on Friday and they hope they've won a place in next Thursday's final. 15. t06rockfield2

**Pupils show off their talent**

SONG, dance, music, stories and jokes were the order of the day in Soroba on Friday for the auditions of Rockfield's Got Talent.

The competition, organised by Rockfield Primary School's P7 class, saw pupils from all classes compete against each other for a place in next week's grand final.

Judges for the auditions were P7 pupils Liam Higgins, Jaimie Cathra, Shannon McCuish and Ruari McNiven.

As well as running the auditions, pupils practised recording the auditions with the intention of making a DVD of the main event.

The final will be held at Rockfield Primary School at 7pm on Thursday February 17.



Primary 2 pupil Finlay Murphy told a tiger-themed story and a few jokes at his audition, a performance that saw him one of the first acts to make the final. 15. t06rockfield1

**Argyll-only line-up at Gathering Halls**

CHAIRMAN Michael Garvin welcomed a good turnout of players and spectators to the monthly Oban Accordion and Fiddle Club concert - despite the stormy weather.

There was a line-up of Argyll-only artists for the concert in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls on February 3, headed up by the Ross MacPherson Trio: Ross MacPherson, Connel, on accordion; Calum MacPhail, Dalmally, playing fiddle; and Angus MacColl, Benderloch, on drums. The band delighted the audience with many fine sets, including a solo from Calum on the fiddle and from world champion piper Angus.

Opening proceedings was Murray Willis, Isle of Lismore, playing piano accordion, accompanied by Archie Cameron, Oban, on drums.

The other accordion players were: Cameron Bennett, North Connel; Alex MacKinnon, Carradale; Calum MacDonald, Fort William; Michael Garvin, Oban; Scott Sinclair and Sileas Sinclair, both Connel; and James MacArthur, Oban, on melodeon.

Playing fiddle was Finlay Bennett, North Connel, on drums Dave Laverty, Oban, and Angus John MacColl, Benderloch, on small pipes.

Next month's concert is on March 3 when the Nicky McMichan Trio are guests.

Oban Accordion and Fiddle Club held a very successful annual dance in Argyllshire Gathering Hall on January 14 to the music of Charlie Kirkpatrick.

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**Packed lodge for ceilidh**



Oban's Commercial Lodge was packed on Saturday night for the monthly ceilidh, Comunn Gaidhealach an Obain. The performers, pictured during the evening's interval, were, back row from left: singer Charlie MacColl from Fort William, Nicola Pearson from Oban and Wilma Kennedy from Dundee, who sang a duet. Mod Gold Medal winner Joy Dunlop, accordion player Alasdair MacDonald and singer Moira Dunlop, are all from Connel. Front are bagpipers Angus MacColl, senior and junior, with young singer, Ealasaid MacLean from North Connel. 15. t06ceilidh1

**Screen Machine will support campaign to re-open Phoenix**

THE SCREEN Machine has confirmed its location for a forthcoming visit to the town.

The mobile cinema will be showing The King's Speech, Tangled (in 3D) and Love and Other Drugs at special screenings from Monday February 14, for four days.

After negotiations it will be sited at the Longsdale car park at Atlantis Leisure in Dalriach Road.

The visit has been arranged by its operator Regional Screen Scotland which is the development agency for cinema in rural, remote and smaller town areas.

Ron Inglis, Regional Screen Scotland's director, said: 'We are

delighted to be able to bring our unique mobile cinema to Oban and to support the campaign to get a full-time cinema back in Oban.'

The visit to Oban has been greatly assisted by Oban's Phoenix Cinema group, which is campaigning to re-open and re-develop the former Highland Theatre cinema. Members of the Phoenix Cinema group will be present at the screenings in February.

Tickets for the Screen Machine screenings are available online from www.screenmachine.co.uk and from www.thebooth.co.uk.

Tickets are also on sale from the cinema 30 minutes before each screening.

**Solo piping star to guest at Netherlorn society**

NETHERLORN Piping Society is continuing this year's busy schedule with Campbeltown's Willie MacCallum the guest at its February recital.

Willie, who has won every major prize in solo piping, will be supported by a number of Angus MacColl's young pupils at the recital on February 23. Before then, the piping society will be supporting a Valentine's Day coffee afternoon in the Lynnside Day Care Centre between 1.30pm

and 3pm. Margaret MacLennan, event organiser, is donating the proceeds to Oban Pipe Band.

The society kicked off the year with a well-attended piping tribute to the great North Argyll piper and composer John MacColl.

The large turnout learned about this great man's life, from his birth at Kentallen in 1860, his many successes in major piping competitions as well as his sporting achievements through to his death in 1943. His life story

**ARGYLL ANIMAL AID**

**PATCH**

Very well behaved lady. Would prefer to be the one and only cat in the house. Is spayed.

Contact Pat on 01852 300362  
aaa.rescueteam@btconnect.com  
http://www.smallpaws.co.uk

Reg. charity SCO13211

**gig argyll**  
your essential guide to live music in argyll

**Friday 12 February >** Under 18s Foam Party  
Skipinnish Ceilidh Bar Open 7.30pm - 10pm  
Tickets £5

**Friday 12 February >** Valentines Weekend  
Skipinnish Ceilidh Bar Foam Party  
Doors Open 11pm Tickets £6

**Friday 18 February >** Oban Mountain Rescue Team  
Skipinnish Ceilidh Bar Fundraiser with Trail West  
Tickets £7 - 9pm

**Friday 25 February >** Ivan Drever Solo  
Skipinnish Ceilidh Bar 8pm - Tickets £6

★★★★ The Herald  
★★★★ Scottish Daily Express

**Opera Highlights**

**Ballachulish Village Hall**  
Tuesday 1 March, 7.30pm  
Tickets from: Ballachulish Visitor Centre  
Tel: 01855 811 866

**Craignish Village Hall, Ardfern**  
Thursday 3 March, 7.30pm  
Tickets from: Diane Steele  
Tel: 01852 500 746

Tickets: £11 / £5 Under 26s

Find out more at [scottishopera.org.uk](http://scottishopera.org.uk)

Registered in Scotland Number SC037531 Scottish Charity Number SC019787

**COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD**

**nct**  
The UK's leading charity for parents

**Nearly New Sale**  
Sat 19th Feb, 1-3pm  
Glencrudden Church Centre, Oban.  
Time to spring clean  
Strictly baby, child and maternity clothes, toys, books, prams, cots etc

To book a table (£5) contact:  
Sally Weaser on 01631 570902  
or must\_sai@hotmail.com

**Highlands and Islands Music & Dance Festival**  
28 April - 1 May, 2011  
**SYLLABUS & ENTRY FORMS**  
Download from [www.obanfestival.org](http://www.obanfestival.org)  
CLOSING DATE 14 MARCH  
Ticket & info Tel. 07510841198  
from 5 April, 2011

The Leven Centre, Kinlochleven is holding a fundraiser for Macmillan Nurses and Breast Cancer Research on Saturday 12th February at 7.30pm till late. Local group, The Shine are playing for the night for free. Tickets £2.50 from Kinlochleven Co-op, Post Office and The Leven Centre. Please come along and support these very important charities. Contact Kirsteen Hine on 01855 831119

*Càrn air a' Mhonadh*

**Public Launch of Duncan Macdonald's Debut CD**

in The Argyllshire Gathering Halls on Saturday 26 February, 2 - 4pm

Everyone Welcome  
Free Refreshments on Entry

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

**THE CRIANLARICH HOTEL**

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**Four Course Candlelit Supper**  
Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> & Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February  
£50.00 per couple

**Mothers Day Lunch**  
Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April  
£17.95 per adult / £8.95 per child (under 12)

**Dinner/Dance Weekend**  
Friday 1<sup>st</sup> & Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April  
£22.50 per person  
3 course evening meal followed by dancing  
£69 per person  
Dinner/Dance evening, accommodation and breakfast

**BOOK NOW - 01838 300272**

**WELCOME to the SEA LIFE Annual Pass**

FOLLOWING the success of last year's annual pass scheme, the Scottish Sea Life Sanctuary and The Oban Times have teamed up again to bring you another great offer.

Collect the SEA LIFE PASS token from each of the next three weeks of The Oban Times and enjoy huge savings on an annual pass.

To get this very special deal collect a token each week over the next 3 weeks

When you have all 3 tokens (3 per person) take them to the Sea Life Sanctuary at Barcaldine near Oban along with two passport size photographs, and ask for your special deal on a SEA LIFE Annual Pass.

With your tokens, an annual pass will cost £6 for children under 14 (normally £24) and £8 for adults (normally £36) - you can now enjoy 12 months unlimited entry into 10 UK Sea Life centres and Sanctuaries.

With your new membership you can dive beneath the sea without getting wet at any of our UK SEA LIFE centres and Sanctuaries\* - choose from Birmingham, Blackpool, Brighton, Great Yarmouth, Gweek, Hunstanton, Loch Lomond, Oban, Scarborough and Weymouth!

Not only will you get 12 months unlimited FREE entry into the 10 UK SEA LIFE centres and Sanctuaries\*, you can also take advantage of other discounts exclusive to SEA LIFE Annual Pass holders:

- 20% off Gift Shop
- 20% off hot drinks in the café
- Half Price Guide Book
- £5 off entry into York and Edinburgh Dungeons

Redeem your passes from 26th February to 13th March inclusive

If you have not provided a photo to us there are a few things you need to do to activate your new SEA LIFE Annual Pass:

- Ensure you have signed the card
- On your next visit using your SEA LIFE Annual Pass, you must take along two passport sized photographs so that our dedicated team can activate the card

\*\*Please note that without two passport sized photographs to activate your card, entry into SEA LIFE will not be permitted

Finally, enjoy your visits and we hope to see you soon!

\* SEA LIFE Annual Pass is not valid for entry at SEA LIFE London Aquarium

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**The Scottish Sealife Sanctuary has teamed up with The Oban Times for their new passes**

**TOKEN 1**

# The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

## You had your chance

ONE of the more worrying aspects of the whole Argyll and Bute budget process, which reaches its climax today, is that when directly asked for their views, so few residents actually bothered to respond.

Out of more than 90,000 people who live here, fewer than 3,000 took the time to suggest where the axe should fall.

Given the scale of the cutbacks the council is being forced to make, this suggests widespread disillusionment with our elected members.

But when the decisions have been made and the outcry begins, they will be justified in turning round and saying: 'You had your chance - and you blew it.'

### GLASGOW LETTER

#### Young Traditional Musician of the Year

THERE is always great excitement, not least because it is broadcast live, at the BBC Radio Scotland Young Musician of the Year Final held in the City Halls on the closing day of Celtic Connections.

This year was no exception with each of the six participants who had survived the rigorous earlier qualification rounds showcasing their highly developed musical skills during a 15 minute spot, with the audience being treated to a variety of instruments as well as vocals.

After what must have been a difficult decision for the judges we congratulate the winner - fiddle playing Kirstan Harvey from Orkney.

Like many previous winners of this competition, Kirstan will hopefully be able to enjoy a musical career but such was the quality of this final, this option may be available for them all. On this evidence traditional music in Scotland is very healthy.

#### Mull and Iona Association

FOR THE past two years, the Mull and Iona Association has held its annual concert and dance at the Glasgow University Union and members will return there on Friday, February 11, when they hope to recreate the same relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

Artists this year are Norrie MacIver, Atomic Piseag, Raymond Bremner, Winnie Moir and the association piper and the chairman will be Angus Johnstone. The concert starts at 7.30pm with the dance, to the music of Gunna Sound, at 10pm until late. Tickets cost £8 for concert and dance, including a cup of tea, or £5 for dance only.

#### Gaelic learning for families

FOR THE past seven years courses have been organised at Sabhal Mor Ostaig for families whose children are being educated through the medium of Gaelic and this year it will take place during the week beginning Monday, July 4.

For the whole week, parents will be given the opportunity to attend one of the college's language courses while the youngsters take part in a variety of sports, including kayaking, and arts activities through the medium of Gaelic. Last year more than 30 families took part and it would appear to me to be the

ideal chance for families in the Glasgow area, where being taught in Gaelic is proving extremely popular, and where often there can be no history of Gaelic speaking within the family. Places are limited and early application is recommended with the last date being March 25. For more information or for an application form contact the project co-ordinator by email flw.clad@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 07972 735413. Families will be advised in early April about the success of their application. The project is funded by the Community Learning and Development Group for Gaelic and Bord na Gaidhlig with support from Sabhal Mor Ostaig and Highland Council.

#### Clydebank dinner dance

THE ANNUAL dinner dance of Clydebank and District Highlander's Association will be held in Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick, on Saturday February 26 at 5pm.

Music will be provided by the Monach Isles Band. For tickets telephone 01389 879749 or 01389 388146.

#### Diary dates

**Thursday February 10:** Live at the Star, St Andrew's in the Square, 8pm, Ian Bruce and Ian Walker.

**Friday February 11:** Mull and Iona Association Annual Concert and Dance - see above. Clydebank and District Highlander's Association ceidh, Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick, 7.30pm. Caperaille, Perth Concert Hall, 7.30pm.

**Saturday February 12:** Paisley and District Highlander's Association Burns Night, Johnstone Town Hall, 7.30pm.

**Tuesday February 15:** Glasgow Gaelic Society, Sgoil Gaidhlig Glaschu, 7.30pm, Gillebride MacMillan.

**Wednesday February 16:** Gaelic Quiz, Park Bar, 7.30pm.

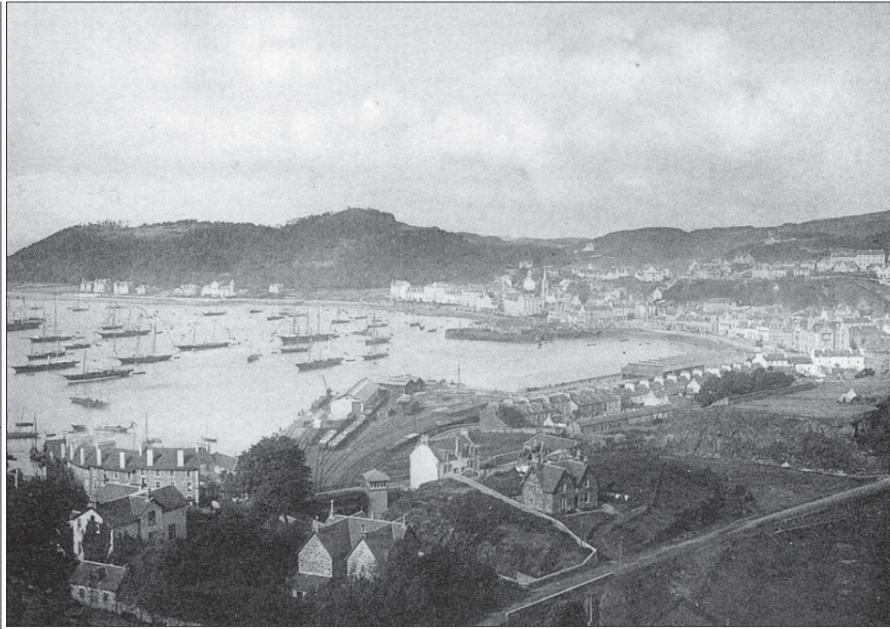
**Thursday February 17:** Live at the Star, St Andrew's in the Square, 8pm, Frank McLaughlin/Stewart Hardy.

**Saturday February 19:** Glasgow Skye Association Buntata's Sgadan, Partick Burgh Hall, 7.30pm. Highlander's Club, Partick Burgh Hall, 8pm, Ian Muir's Band. Junior Piping Competition at National Piping Centre.

#### Pub scene

GUNNA Sound will be playing in the Park Bar on both Saturday and Sunday this weekend with Pneumatic Drills on Friday while in the Islay Inn it will be the Keelies on Friday and on Saturday.

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



## A look back at Oban from the south west

This week's flashback photograph is a view of Oban from the south west from days gone by. It was submitted by Colin Armstrong, of Coventry, who found it in an Oban souvenir album, produced by D MacKay, Queen's Park Place, George Street, Oban. The album is in his collection of Scottish books and postcards. We invite readers to send in flashback photographs. 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

PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB  
email: editor@obantimes.co.uk

www.obantimes.co.uk

Telephone: 01631 568000  
Fax: 01631 568001

#### Hotel 'prop up' a ludicrous waste of money

Sir,  
No wonder Argyll and Bute Council is struggling to make ends meet.

As all of Oban knows, we have been battling to gain planning permission to demolish the 12-years derelict Argyll Hotel. The planners have agreed it cannot be saved yet in the last six weeks they have had us spend more than £15,000 propping it up.

What a ludicrous waste of money - money that should have been spent on the enhancement of Oban's first new hotel for years.

The will of the people is being totally ignored by these self-serving bureaucrats.

Why have our councillors not demanded this disgraceful waste of money is dealt with immediately?  
**Alan Macleod, Tigh Bahn, Appin.**

#### John Muir Trust deer cull clarification

Sir,  
The John Muir Trust wishes to clarify some issues in response to the article 'Hillwalkers' gruesome find in Glen Nevis' in *The Oban Times* of February 3 and in particular the accusations attributed to Iain Thornber.

Trained staff and contractors carried out a planned cull of hinds over several months, across a wide area in the upper reaches of Glen Nevis. They were paid to carry out deer control, but were not asked to provide evidence of the number of deer killed by removing ears.

Iain Thornber also referred to John Muir. When Muir arrived in Yosemite, he quickly recognised the impact grazing animals had on the natural environment.

This was one of the factors that led Muir to push for greater protection of the area, culminating in the founding of the Yosemite National Park.

The Scottish Highlands have suffered from similar problems of overgrazing, largely as a result of man's interventions. In the interests of some sporting estates deer numbers have been allowed to increase dramatically in some areas over the last century.

This is why many of our most important habitats, including forests and moorlands, are struggling to flourish and why so many deer perish every winter as a result of starvation.

Scottish Natural Heritage recently estimated that 30,000 deer died in this manner across Scotland last winter. Surely, in Iain Thornber's words, this is a 'completely unacceptable and irresponsible' way to manage our national deer herd?

The John Muir Trust has a responsibility to protect and enhance the land it manages and all the species that depend on it.

We recognise the iconic status of red deer, but it is also widely recognised their current numbers are unsustainable in some areas, doing harm to habitats, and in turn other species, which could potentially thrive alongside a healthy population of native deer.

Our members and the wider public are kept informed about this important work.

**Rory Syme, Press Officer, John Muir Trust.**

#### Fencing the way forward

Sir,  
Having read your article on the deer being killed in Glen Nevis, it makes me wonder where all this will end.

Leaving aside the fact that a lot of venison was left on the hill, which is a terrible waste, surely it is time for a stop to be put to attempts at tree regeneration/planting without the use of deer fences, especially in areas surrounded by deer forests. Bullets are being used instead of fencing with little or no regard to the effect on neighbours' interests, which may often depend on deer.

Many deer forests have already been badly affected by slaughters of deer to make way for unfenced trees. Stalkers' jobs are being put on the line and deer are often being treated like vermin. If hedgehogs or seals got the same treatment there would be a huge outcry.

Trees are obviously a great benefit to deer in the long run, providing shelter, but surely fencing has to be used to protect them for the first 20 to 25 years, with fence lines being carefully chosen using local knowledge of deer movements and habits.

If this was done in rotation, with fences being removed when the trees are beyond their most vulnerable to damage, then both deer and trees should be able to exist side by side, unlike the present situation where neither can thrive.

The density of deer required for a viable deer forest far exceeds the density of deer required for trees to regenerate, therefore they cannot co-exist without

fences.

When an area is cleared of deer, and the trees start to regenerate, it immediately becomes more attractive to deer and others will move in - creating a never-ending problem for both the grower of the trees and the neighbours who will continually lose deer.

Various reasons are often given for not using fencing including black game being killed on the fence line and that some grazing pressure is needed to stop trees being choked out.

A simple answer is to allow a controlled number of deer inside the fence. Fences can be unsightly and are expensive, but are surely a much better option than not using them.

**John Cameron, Stalker's Cottage, Invergarry.**

#### Plockton music school funding cut condemned

Sir,  
Highland Council is set to withdraw funding from the National Centre for Excellence in Traditional Music at Plockton High School for a paper saving of £317,000 from a £241.7 million education budget.

This is not just flogging off the family silver but dismantling ten years of cultural investment in Scotland's national musical heritage. The centre has brought great credit to the Highlands and to Scotland.

As international ambassadors, pupils have performed in Cape Breton, New York, before the European Parliament and at Holyrood.

Former pupils include two winners of the BBC Young Scottish Musician of the Year Award and several who have graduated to well-known folk and traditional music bands.

The current 24 pupils are drawn from the best throughout Scotland, trained in southwest Ross-shire with its piping and Gaelic song traditions, tutored by specialist professional musicians.

Quite apart from the immediate loss to music, the closure will leave behind instruments, soundproofed practice rooms, a first-class recording studio and ironically a suite of Steinway pianos, secured just days ago under a leasing agreement.

The knock-on effect of the departure of the music pupils also means the school's hostel will lose two-thirds of its occupants with implication for its domestic staff. The high school roll will,

at a stroke, drop by almost ten per cent with further implications for the existing academic teaching staff. The parent council condemns this shortsighted measure.

Highland councillors, in the administration and opposition, need to think carefully about the message they send to the nation.

We ask the wider public to support the campaign to protect this country's endowment in Scotland's cultural heritage.

**George Hendry, chairman Plockton High School Parent Council, Balnacara, Strathcarron.**

#### Oban Airport and Highland and Islands Airports Limited

Sir,  
It was with astonishment that I read in *The Oban Times* of February 3 of extensive discussions between Argyll and Bute Council and Highlands and Islands Airports Limited (HIAL) about the future management of Oban Airport.

It is proposed the management contract be subject to a public tendering process, not yet begun, which has very clearly defined rules and guidelines which the council has sought to undermine by engaging in extensive talks with a prospective bidder.

This is yet another example of how some people within the council have a complete disregard for openness and transparency especially in reference to the ongoing Oban Airport fiasco.

I have written to the chief executive of the council to lodge a formal complaint.

For HIAL to have conferred on it a preferred bidder status before any tendering process begins is nonsense.

HIAL is a company that is on each year's trading insolvent but for annual injections of cash of between £25m and £30m by the Scottish Government.

Regular and bumptious press releases from HIAL seek to disguise its true trading picture.

The actual question of how HIAL is funded is becoming an increasing concern to privately funded companies who see their position as a breach of European competition rules.

If anyone thinks HIAL has anything positive to add to the Oban Airport situation they are deluding themselves at the ratepayers' expense.

**Paul Keegan, Total Logistics Concepts Aviation Support, Oban Airport, North Connell.**

## A view from the tower

by McCaig

#### Where's the solution Mr Cameron?

SINCE the Coalition took power last year, we have had little in the way of solutions and much on ill-considered proposals with parrot-style repetition: 'must cut deficit; must cut deficit' ad infinitum.

There haven't been any innovative or radical solutions, just the blunt instrument of 'get rid of staff, cut expenditure, prune local government budgets and, of course, the benefits of that well known student jape 'the Big Society'. Last week, he shook the country rigid with his rousing call for the necessity for immigrants - particularly those of the Muslim persuasion - to become more 'British' and to integrate into our society, a speech similar to that being made in a number of European countries which also in the latter half of the last century opened their doors to such immigrants seeing in them cheap labour. Now we and they are faced with an alien community within our midst who cannot be sent back to their country of origin as the current generation of those most likely to cause trouble were born in this country and are therefore deemed to be 'British'. And education does nothing to knock the rough edges of their Muslim radicalism. Think of the attempt to blow up one of the terminals at Glasgow Airport in 2007.

Those behind that plot which could have killed and maimed thousands of travellers were highly educated and qualified as doctors - one of whom was destined to take up a post at our local hospital. If he and his mate had been successful I doubt if Oban would ever have seen him but it is a sobering thought that patients were to be treated by a militant terrorist who was dedicated to fighting for Allah.

Enoch Powell's speech several decades ago about 'rivers of blood in Wolverhampton' was greeted with almost universal condemnation because of the extreme language he used. It ended his career as a serious politician but David Cameron, the German Chancellor and the Italian Prime Minister are all warning that something has to be done to get these people fully integrated into western society or we face a growing problem of deliberate disaffection - that age-old one 'power without responsibility'.

Now you have enunciated the problem, Mr Cameron, can you provide practical solutions?

Insistence on learning English would be a start and proving that immigrants can speak it, but that requires the co-operation of the Muslim religious authorities. Not a hope in many cases.

**Save the traditional music school**

OF ALL the Scottish local authorities Highland

Council, whose writ covers more than half of the country's land mass without too many cities and large towns within its ambit, seems to have been the most unimaginative in finding ways of saving money, thus riling almost all the people all the time.

Not a recipe for the current councillors' re-election next May.

But one proposed cut that I cannot support under any circumstances is the proposed closure of the National Centre for Excellence in Traditional Music at Plockton.

This has been one of the major successes of the promotion of Gaelic through the Feis movement and through the outstanding work done by Dougie Pincock, its director, and his staff of excellent tutors, as well as by Duncan Ferguson, the headmaster at Plockton and formerly of Tobermory.

Initially I believed that the Centre of Excellence should be funded by the Scottish Education Department and this was further supported by a speech made by Education Minister Mike Russell who was bemoaning that even consideration was being given to such a proposal.

Then I discovered it was and is but due to the SNP's refusal to 'ring fence' Scottish Executive money destined for local government projects Highland Council, while paying out what they have already received for Plockton, are warning that, if the same grant were to be made to it though they would use the money for other purposes and close what is one of the few 'jewels in their crown'.

Perhaps this sort of sharp practice will now convince Alex Salmond and his party to support ring-fencing as all other Scottish political parties do.

However, do everything in your power to lobby to keep Plockton open, even if it were to become the foundation of a music faculty in the new University of the Highlands and Islands.

**'D'-Day for Argyle and Bute**

TODAY is 'D-Day' for Argyll and Bute councillors to name the cuts they are to make in next year's budget.

What is noticeable is that school closures and amalgamations have been put on hold, they haven't been dropped.

Councillor Ellen Morton, that age-old one 'power without responsibility'.

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McCaig

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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 daytime 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.

### YOUR LETTERS

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Literary great Iain Crichton-Smith who taught at Oban High School before leaving to become a full-time writer.

# Pointed, serious - but with a wicked sense of humour

*"Iain was a lovely person to be in the company of... he was also quite hilarious: he could have just as easily been a comedian as a writer."*

**Close friend and former student Lorn MacIntyre.**

**STEVEN FLANAGAN** recalls the work of Iain Crichton-Smith, who left his job as a teacher to become one of the country's most respected poets and authors in Gaelic and English.

AS CELEBRATIONS for Burns' Day draw to a close, it can be easy to overlook the works of some of Scotland's other literary greats.

One such man was Iain Crichton-Smith who decided to quit working as a teacher in Oban High School to start a new career as a writer in 1977, aged 49.

He went on to establish himself as one of the country's most respected and successful poets and authors, both in English and Gaelic, earning himself an OBE in 1980 in the process.

Indeed, such was his repute that it was his poem, *The Beginning of a New Song*, that was read aloud as part of the Scottish Parliament's opening ceremony on July 1 1999.

Sadly the writer, who lived in Taynuilt with his wife Donald, died from cancer the year before, on October 15 1998, so was unable to enjoy this achievement.

His start in life was anything but easy. Born in Glasgow in 1928, he moved to Bayble on Stornoway with his family aged just two. His father died shortly afterwards and he and his brothers were brought up by their mother, with barely a penny to the household.

Despite being best known for his English-language poems, Crichton-Smith was, in fact, a native Gaelic speaker and his first encounter with English didn't come until he attended school at the island's Nicolson Institute.

While Gaelic was his preferred language, he recognised that the language's popularity was failing. Wishing a mainstream audience for his work, Crichton-Smith went on to read English at the University of Aberdeen, graduating in 1949.

After a spell of National Service in the 1950s, he went on to teach at Clydebank, Dumbarton and finally in Oban in 1955.

It was there he started to establish himself as a poet of some skill, later releasing his first novel in 1968 - *Consider the Lilies* - about the Highland Clearances.

While teaching English, Crichton-Smith never lost touch with his roots and, known by his Gaelic name of Iain Mac a'Ghobhainn, he was one of the most prolific writers of Gaelic fiction and poetry.

He also used his skills to translate the works of other Gaelic poets such as Duncan MacIntyre and Sorley MacLean.

However, it was the sheer variety of his work that set him apart from his contemporaries.

Most of Crichton-Smith's work was quite serious in nature, but one of his most loved creations is also his funniest - Murdo.

Murdo captured Crichton-Smith's own perceptions and observations of those around him; inward looking, naive, insistent - yet utterly oblivious.

Perhaps Murdo's tales also captured Crichton-Smith's own hidden side, his wicked sense of humour.

He was also pointed, serious - perhaps even cutting in his work. One of the most common targets for his angst was undoubtedly the Free Church which he saw as an icon of all that he stood against - restriction, censorship

and control. He questioned the logic of the church, asking in a letter to *The Scotsman*: 'Do they really believe that only they have a hot line to God and that Catholics are unfit to speak to him?'

It is not unfair to say that Murdo could be seen channelling Crichton-Smith's view of the Free Church in many of his own yarns.

In all, Crichton-Smith released 10 English novels, two Gaelic, nearly a dozen volumes of short stories, even more books of verse in English alone. He was prolific, flowing and the awards he received were as numerous as his publications.

More remarkable was, while in Oban, he split his time between teaching, writing and looking after his mother at their home in Combie Street.

One of Crichton-Smith's closest friends was former student Lorn MacIntyre, who continues to be inspired by his old friend.

He said: 'Iain was an extremely lovely person to be in the company of and a tremendously caring human being.'

'He was very close to his mother and continued to look after her into his 40s at their home in Combie Street.'

'He was also quite hilarious; he could have just as easily have been a comedian as a writer.'

'Of course, he was a Gaelic speaker first, so he thought in Gaelic. Someone once asked him what 'spaghetti bolognaise' was in Gaelic. He said: 'I don't know. What is it in English?'

'Coming from the background he did, what he did was a remarkable achievement. It is testimony to his tremendous talent and self discipline.'

In addition to his OBE, Crichton-Smith won several literary prizes, Saltire Society and Scottish Arts Council awards and fellowships and was awarded three honorary doctorates from the universities of Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen.

He was undoubtedly a master of his work and as worthy of praise as any writer of his or any other era.

Lorn said: 'I miss him a great deal and think about him constantly.'

'He was a remarkably talented man and I do think he should be thought of in the same terms as Burns.'

Another of Crichton-Smith's contemporaries and closest friends, the late Scottish poet Edwin Morgan, said: 'I shall not attempt to sum up any grand verdict on an author who would have disliked such a thing. The range and variety of his work, and the naturalness of his best pieces, will always attract and please.'

'If he has anger, he also has compassion, and he opens our ears to 'the unpredicted voices of our kind'.'

*"Someone once asked him what spaghetti bolognaise was in Gaelic. He said: 'I don't know. What is it in English?'"*

**Lorn MacIntyre**

## 'Apprentice' Ruth helped sell holidays at home

**REPORT**  
by EDEL KENEALY  
ekenealy@obantimes.co.uk

AN ARGYLL family, which has been at the helm of the county's tourism industry for more than 40 years, is enjoying renewed success.

Argyll Holidays, owned and managed by the Campbell family, of Lochgoilhead, has seen a significant rise in holiday bookings for 2011.

The company, which offers hotel, caravan and holiday home accommodation in Loch Eck, Strathcreek, Loch Awe, Hunter's Quay, St Catherine's and Lochgoilhead, is benefiting from increased market share thanks to its dedicated sales office.

Having experienced the effects of the recession, and with various holiday agents operating in a very difficult trading environment, the company invested in a dedicated sales team, which it says has paid dividends.

As part of the project, the firm called on the help of Ruth Badger, who rose to prominence as runner-



Ruth Badger of Ruth Badger Consulting with directors of Argyll Holidays Campbell brothers Roy, Alan and Keith.

up in the 2006 series of *The Apprentice*, before going on to set up her own consultancy and fronting her own business TV show - *Badger or Bust* - for Sky.

The rise in demand for Argyll Holidays comes in the

same week that the website [travelsupermarket.com](http://travelsupermarket.com) announced figures showing that fewer Scots will be going on holiday in 2011 and they will be spending a sixth less.

Despite this, the company

says it has seen an increase in the number of Scottish people holidaying at home.

Director at Argyll Holidays Alan Campbell said: 'We are definitely seeing more Scottish people booking with us, especially within the last year.'

But he added: 'The staycation trade doesn't come to you - you have to go and get it.'

The company and its sales team attribute their success to this 'go-getter attitude' saying that increased target marketing and acting on customer feedback is paying off.

Leonard Gow, marketing and e-commerce manager for Argyll Holidays, added: 'In spite of the recession

we continue to do well by concentrating on getting the message out about what we offer as well as raising standards and customer service.'

It is not just the sales figures that the company is focusing on but the unemployment figures in Argyll as well.

The company, which currently employs 240 people, has taken on an additional five people to work with the sales team and is actively seeking to recruit more.

Looking to the future Mr Gow said: 'We are fortunate that we have an area such as Argyll to promote.'

'As we continue to do that we will create more jobs as we grow.'

## Rise in number of tourists staying in Oban - and they're spending more

OBAN continues to outperform the rest of Scotland during the tourist season, despite the ongoing difficult trading conditions.

The figures, from Oban and Lorn Tourism Association, show that while footfall into the town's visitor centre has dropped, there was an increase in visitor spend and the number of people

staying in the town, up 7.62 per cent and 5.92 per cent respectively.

Meanwhile the use of the internet and social networking has also resulted in a boost in enquiries and the association is looking into the possibility of employing someone to provide a 'live chat' service, which would effectively be an online Oban concierge.

10 Years Ago

## Those Were The Days The Oban Times

Thursday February 8 2001



### Oban pays tribute to Iain Crichton Smith

IAIN Crichton Smith, the internationally acclaimed poet, writer and playwright who made his home in Taynuilt, is to be honoured with a one-day conference to celebrate his work.

Prominent academics will come to Oban on March 31 to pay tribute to the man who once taught at Oban High School and inspired generations of pupils.

The event has been organised by Lorn Gaelic Partnership and the committee of the steering group for a Gaelic cultural centre.

Academics taking part will be Bernard MacLavery, writer; Donald Meek, professor

of Celtic, University of Aberdeen, who will talk on the Gaelic writings of Iain Crichton Smith, and Carl MacDougall, writer, who will talk about Iain's novels.

Stewart Conn, the poet and playwright, will discuss Iain's plays in English, and Alasdair Macrae, senior lecturer in English will give the after dinner speech entitled Iain Crichton Smith, Flower of Bayble. All the papers will be presented in English.

The Edinburgh drama group Cluicheadirean Dhun Eideann will perform 'A' Chuir, a play by Iain, and the conference will end with a ceilidh.

Hugh MacLean, chairman of Lorn Gaelic Partnership, said: 'The partnership is excited about this conference and

the calibre of the speakers and artists.

'It promises to be a wonderful day. We feel that the cultural and economic impact for Oban will be significant and we appeal to businesses and to the public to support this event.'

### Oban tourism plan launched

AN AMBITIOUS tourism action plan has been launched to help steer Oban out of the tourism doldrums.

Local businesses are being asked to dig deep to help raise £50,000 to fund a major marketing campaign for the area.

The five-year plan was unveiled at Oban and Lorn Tourism Association's (OLTA) AGM by chairman Colin Mossman. Concerned

at the lack of specific advertising for the town, OLTA has decided to take a proactive marketing role.

'Tourism figures over the last three years have been disappointing and I think we all know that,' said Mr Mossman.

OLTA wants to work with groups such as Argyll and the Islands Enterprise, the chamber of commerce, traders association, Forum for North Argyll and local rotary club to ensure tourism in Oban flourishes. 'This town should have a clear vision with everyone working together,' said Mr Mossman. It's not going to happen overnight but unless we focus on five years hence, and if trends continue the way they are, we are on a hiding to nothing.'

### Oban firefighters win petition backing

THE SCOTTISH Parliament's Public Relations Committee this week backed the Retained Firefighters Union's campaign to have Strathclyde Fire Brigade justify plans to cut Oban's retained firefighting force and build a new station outside the town centre.

Meeting on Tuesday, the cross-party committee agreed that the petition should be forwarded to Strathclyde's Firemaster for answers.

It will also be sent to Justice Minister Jim Wallace with a request he delay his decision until the questions raised by the Retained Firefighters Union were answered.

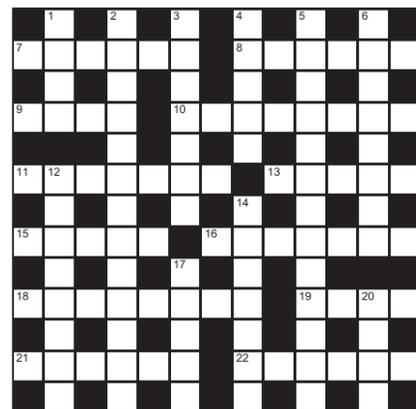
## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

Across

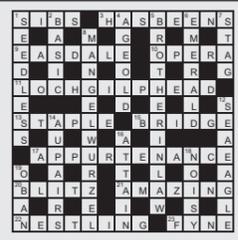
- 7 Tapering from a wide mouth (6)
- 8 Noisy snack (6)
- 9 Attempt (4)
- 10 Buffoon (8)
- 11 Objectionable person... (7)
- 13 To provide (5)
- 15 Vicious (5)
- 16 Informer (7)
- 18 Ingratiating drink? (8)
- 19 Make more comfortable for (4)
- 21 Record of personal details (2,4)
- 22 Charge (6)

Down

- 1 Exclamation of pain (4)
- 2 Prison-like maybe? (13)
- 3 Absolute (7)
- 4 Wee rascal (5)
- 5 Jagged cutters (7,6)
- 6 Sound of approval (8)
- 12 Set religious verse to music (8)
- 14 Small novelty (7)
- 17 Hue (5)
- 20 Indifferent (2-2)



### Last Week's Solution



## Kids - WIN a year's free entry to Atlantis Leisure's new play area

KIDS - how do you fancy a year's free entry to the new futuristic play area at Atlantis Leisure?

That's the prize on offer to whoever comes up with the best name for the new soft play area which is being installed at the centre during the coming few weeks.

The only catch is that you have to be aged 11 or under to enter the competition.

Last week, *The Oban Times* reported on how the existing climbing wall at Atlantis Leisure is being replaced by a new climbing 'cube'.

Surrounding the cube will be a multi-level children's play area which can cater for up to 60 youngsters at a time, ranging from babies and toddlers to juniors up to the age of 11.



Futuristic - how the new play area will look.

It has been designed in line with Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents guidelines.

To enter the competition, simply fill in the voucher and take it along to

Atlantis Leisure, or email your suggestion to [nick@atlantisleisure.co.uk](mailto:nick@atlantisleisure.co.uk) - and don't forget to include your name and address. The closing date for entries in Friday February 25.

### My suggestion for the name of Atlantis Leisure's new children's soft play area is:

Name:.....

Age:.....

Address.....

Email.....

## Parliament votes 'no' as rural MPs bid to force fuel discount scheme

A JOINT motion by SNP and Plaid Cymru MPs to force the UK Government into introducing a fuel price regulator and rural duty discount has failed.

The motion by the Scottish and Welsh nationalists MPs was brought to a Westminster debate on Monday, but received no widespread support, losing by 303 votes to 14.

However, Treasury minister Justine Greening said that talks were ongoing with the European Commission with a view to introducing a pilot scheme that would deliver a discount of up to 5p per litre on duty in remote rural areas.

She also suggested that both the Scottish and Welsh administrations should consider funding their own

grant scheme to support motorists in such areas.

Opening the debate was the SNP's Westminster Treasury spokesperson, Stuart Hosie. After the motion was defeated, he said: 'These record fuel costs are putting a huge and unnecessary amount of pressure on our communities and on vital sectors of the Scottish economy.'

The news comes a week after small businesses and representative groups from across Argyll told *The Oban Times* that rising fuel prices, increased costs and high taxes were pushing them to the brink.

During the debate Argyll and Bute Liberal Democrat MP Alan Reid urged his own government not to press ahead with the planned

fuel price escalator. Such a move, he said, would have a crippling effect on the rural economy.

Mr Reid told his Westminster colleagues: 'Under the previous Labour Government's policy in their last budget, the fuel escalator - the tax on fuel - would increase by more than 4p a litre in April.'

'I hope that the Government does not follow Labour's policy. That would be grim news for a rural economy that is already struggling under the burden of a high fuel price. I urge the chancellor to heed the warnings he has received on the impact another 4p per litre increase would have. I plead with him to cancel the proposed fuel duty increase in the Budget.'

## Business brains get together over breakfast

MORE than 50 entrepreneurs and members of the Oban and Lorn business community came together at the launch of a new business networking initiative.

The event, held on February 2, was hosted by Argyll and Bute Council's Business Gateway at the Oban Bay Hotel.

Award winning young entrepreneur Fraser Doherty, of SuperJam, proved an inspiring guest speaker at the event, which was held over breakfast and attracted a broad mix of businesses.

'Demand for this type of event was evident from the excellent turnout and confirmed how the business community in Oban relishes the chance to network,' said Nicky Archibald, Business Gateway Advisor for Oban.

Supplier Guests heard how Fraser - who at the age of 14 started his jam-making business from his parents' kitchen - became the youngest ever supplier to a supermarket chain. His products are sold in



Fraser Doherty of SuperJam and Nicky Archibald, Business Gateway, at the networking event in Oban Bay Hotel.

more than 1,000 supermarket outlets across the UK and he is now looking to Europe and the USA to develop sales.

Useful George Seaton, of DM MacKinnon, said: 'The event was a very useful opportunity to meet local business people against the backdrop of an inspiring presentation by such a

young and successful entrepreneur.'

Essential Callum MacLeod of Ee-usk described the networking events as essential to meeting the aspirations of the town.

Linda Battison, of Oban Lorn Tourist Association, said: 'The event was both informative and inspirational and it was a

great opportunity to talk to business people from many different sectors - all of whom share a common goal - to be successful and prosperous in Argyll and contribute to the local economy.'

'Events like this build common ground and allow the relationships between businesses to develop and grow.'

## Luig's Alastair and Zoe save the day

IN ANOTHER unforeseeable re-arrangement of the winter programme at Lorn Archaeological Club, Alastair And Zoe Fleming, from Luig, stepped in at short notice to present a talk entitled 'From Water on the Rocks to Whisky on the Rocks'.

This was an enjoyable departure from the society's normal talks and explored water within rocks, the make up of hard and soft waters and the distribution of malt distilleries in relationship to their geological positions and water supply source.

Chairman, the Rev Ian Walter, unveiled a new website - [www.lahsoc.org.uk](http://www.lahsoc.org.uk) - which recently went live with up-to-date society information. The next meeting will be at 7.30pm at The Undercroft, Glencruitten Centre, on Friday February 18, when Dr Kirsty Owen, from Historic Scotland, will talk on restoration within Royal Palace at Stirling Castle.

## Wrong information was supplied

THE GOVERNMENT organisation responsible for maintaining Scotland's trunk roads has moved to correct information it gave to *The Oban Times* about gritting on the A85 last week.

Scotland Transerv had originally said no precautionary treatment had taken place on the A85 prior to an accident on January 27 caused by black ice; despite a forecast for frosty conditions.

However, it now says that incorrect information was issued as a result of an internal mix up and have moved to correct their stance.

A spokesperson said: 'The A85 at Strone Hill was precautionary treated on January 26 in advance of the forecast of overnight frost conditions. It was further patrolled overnight using a loaded Spreader/Gritter and also monitored from our Control Room.'

# Political 'carve up' at council HQ

A MAJOR political reshuffle at Argyll and Bute Council has been called a 'carve up' by opposition members.

The reshuffle was necessary after SNP group members in Argyll and Bute Council took the decision to leave the ruling alliance over school consultation papers on closure of 26 primary schools.

That left council leader Dick Walsh with the task of changing the positions of the many members, including those appointed to organisations outwith the council.

However, behind closed doors opposition councillors are calling the changes a 'carve up' that do not take into account any commitment

REPORT by LOUISE LEE [llee@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:llee@obantimes.co.uk)

and relationships elected members had built up in roles and posts within the authority.

Workload Oban's councillors Duncan MacIntyre, Neil Mackay and Elaine Robertson have seen their workloads triple in some cases.

Councillor MacIntyre remains the statutory representative with HITRANS, Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme Joint Committee and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport.

He is also the substitute member for the Strathclyde Pension Fund Representative

Forum and the member for CoSLA's Regeneration and Sustainable Development Group as well as serving on the West of Scotland Road Safety Forum.

Councillor MacKay is the statutory representative to Scotland Excel, the local authority procurement body.

He also became the representative on Highlands and Islands, Argyll and the Islands Board, the Local Economy Forum for Argyll and the Islands, Argyll and Bute Care and Repair Agency, CoSLA All of Scotland Group 2014, Highlands and Islands Film Commission and Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA).

Councillor Robertson became a member of the Future Use of Older People's Services Committee and Project Board, a statutory member for the Criminal Justice Partnership, the substitute member for the North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority, as well as remaining on the Argyll and Bute Health and Care Partnership. She has also joined the board of NHS Highland.

Councillor Mary-Jean Devon was appointed as vice-chairman of Oban, Lorn and the Isles area committee and is the representative to the Raasay, Skye Small Islands, Ardnamurchan and Mull Ferry Users Group.

## 'Wig-Wag' signs will alert drivers to the threat of landslides

NEW SIGNS warning drivers there is a higher risk of landslides are now in action on the A83 between Ardgarten and Cairndow. A two-year trial is being

undertaken by Transport Scotland in a bid to highlight the risk of landslides on that section of road.

The 'Wig-Wag' road signs came into use last

Wednesday (February 2).

Six signs in total have been placed between Ardgarten and Cairndow. They will flash when there is a higher risk of a landslide, alerting

drivers to take extra care on the road.

If the signs are illuminated drivers are advised to proceed with increased caution. The A83 at the Rest

and Be Thankful has been blighted with landslides over the years. Drivers have faced lengthy detours after slips in 2007, 2009 and September last year.

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West Coast Property Guide

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**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (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; online at www.highland.gov.uk and, where given, the alternative location(s).

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below 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
11/00223/FUL	1 Righ Crescent Onich Fort William PH33 6SG	Extension to house	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00143/PIP	Land 110m North West of Garramore Morar	Erection of house - amended site position to 10/00017/PIPL0	Mallaig Service Point (14 days)
11/00256/PIP	Roshven Farm Cottages Glenmuir Lochalart PH38 4NB	Erection of three chalets, one manager's house and new access road (renewal of 07/00405/OUTL0)	Acharacle Service Point (14 days)
11/00323/FUL	Silversands Morar Mallaig PH40 4PA	Erection of garage	Mallaig Service Point (14 days)
11/00331/FUL	The Heathers Spean Bridge PH34 4DY	Covered area to back door, small outside store	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00329/PIP	Plot 2 to rear of former filling station Onich	Erection of house and associated car park (Renewal of 05/00390/ OUTL0)	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office Section 60 Affecting Setting of Listed Building (21 Days)
11/00326/FUL	Invernevis Achnitore Road Fort William PH33 6RN	Change of use to bed and breakfast	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00261/FUL	Achalidh Curtaig Morar Mallaig PH40 4PD	Extension to house	Mallaig Service Point (14 days)

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Although not necessarily having an Agricultural background you should be able to demonstrate a clear desire to work with livestock. However, ideally you will have a good knowledge of farming and have experience in working with livestock or perhaps be a graduate of Agricultural College or similar.

More experienced candidates, perhaps those already working in livestock marketing and who wish to further their careers, will also be considered.

Applications should be made in writing to Carolyn Murrie, Executive PA, United Auctions, Stirling Agricultural Centre, Stirling, FK9 4RN. Email: cmurrie@uagroup.co.uk  
Informal enquiries can also be made by contacting Donald Morrison, Regional Managing Director, tel. 07771644507  
**Closing date Friday 18th February 2011**

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**COUNCILLOR SURGERY**

Councillor Donald McIntosh (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles) will be holding a surgery in The Area Office, Breadalbane Street, Tobermory, Isle of Mull on Wednesday 16th February 2011 between 2pm and 3pm.

**PLANNING**

**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 detailed 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](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk) and clicking on Online Planning Applications. Written comments for the following list of applications may be made to Planning and Regulatory Services Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR by the 03/03/2011

● Ref No: 10/02144/PP

Applicant: Mr Tom Nelson

Proposal: Reinstatement of existing abattoir and erection of extension  
Site Address: Mull Slaughterhouse Glenforsa Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA27 6JN  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Aros Isle of Mull

● Ref No: 11/00064/PP

Applicant: Ms Rowan Hindley

Proposal: Erection of 1 x 50 metre high anemometer mast for a period of 3 years (Retrospective)  
Site Address: Land At Cruach Airdrey South Of Taynuilt Argyll And Bute  
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

● Ref No: 11/00149/PP

Applicant: Stanley Jeffery

Proposal: Installation of replacement windows  
Site Address: Flat C1 60 George Street Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 5SD  
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

● Ref No: 11/00174/PPP

Applicant: Karen Elizabeth Payne

Proposal: Site for erection of dwellinghouse  
Site Address: The Old Schoolhouse Kilmore Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4OR  
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

Argyll and Bute Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST. An extant list of planning applications can be viewed on the Councils website [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk).

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST and Argyll and Bute Council Libraries.

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](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/publicaccess)

**COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949 APPLICATION FOR SINGLE MOORING: SOUND OF MULL**

Notice is hereby given that Paul Hilton has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Executive, under section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by the section 36 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988, in respect of a single mooring at the following location in the Sound of Mull:

Description	Latitude	Longitude
New Mooring	56 32.398N	05 57.771W

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at The Aros Post Office, Isle of Mull

Objections relating to safety of navigation, in respect of the application should be made in writing to:

Gordon Hastie, The Scottish Government, Ports and Harbours Branch, Area 2G North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

within 28 days of the date of this notice quoting reference: 2SPC|2|5|436

Paul Hilton, Elm House, Danemere Street, London

**Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES**

**Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES**

**Mr & Mrs Robert Wainwright are applying to the Crofters Commission for consent to let the tenancy of part of the croft at Benmeanach & Clabbach to Ian Donald Rae of Limetree, Arinagour, Isle of Coll**

If you are a crofter, shareholder or owner of a croft in the township or if the Commission consider that you have a direct interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or other permanent form to the Crofters Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (e-mail: [info@crofterscommission.org.uk](mailto:info@crofterscommission.org.uk)) by 10th March 2011. Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry. Frivolous, vexatious or unreasonable comments cannot be accepted.

**North Argyll Stroke Support Association**

will be holding their AGM on **Tuesday 22nd February 2011** in Dunmar Court Lounge at 1.30pm.  
*All are welcome*

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**Oban Times RECRUITMENT**

**Oban Times RECRUITMENT**

**Oban Times**

**Oban Times**

**KILCHOAN COMMON GRAZINGS**

Ardnamurchan and Sunart are holding a meeting to appoint a new committee on March 2, 2011 at 8pm at Kilchoan Community Centre

**2011 Calendars**



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The Oban Times - £6.99\*

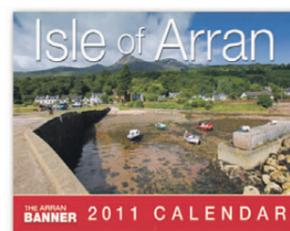


Scottish Field Mini - £6.99\*

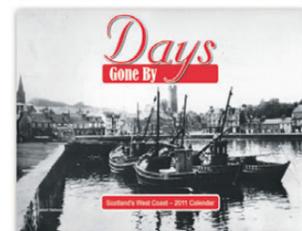
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Source: Business Choice II, The Newspaper Society

**Turbiskill Charolais top Stirling sale**

UNITED Auctions sold 1,202 store cattle and 130 cows, plus 1,808 store sheep and grit ewes.

Bullocks averaged 162.11p (+3.55p) and sold to 209.4p per kg for a 277kg Charolais cross from Turbiskill and £1,040 for a 625kg Charolais cross from Victoria

Heifers averaged 159.63p (+3.91p) and sold to 199p per kg for a 206kg Charolais cross from Turbiskill and £940 for a 560kg Limousin cross from Elmscleugh.

Cast cows averaged 100.2p and sold to 146p for a Charolais cross from Carsloe and £1095 for a Limousin cross from Upper Spittalton.

Forward cattle averaged 132.4p and sold to 165.2p per kg and £945 for a Limousin cross from Monzie.

Texel cross hogs from Naemoor sold to £72.50 with Suffolk crosses from Glenmollachan to £72. Blackfaces from West Tandlemuir sold to £63.50 and to £57.50 Letters.

Beltex gimmers in lamb from Mannerston sold to £180.

Blackface ewes scanned for Bluefaced Leicester twins sold to £72 from Kilpatrick with cross Swale one-crop ewes running with a Swale tup from Corryharmag selling to £63.

**Prime sheep trade still rising**

CALEDONIAN Marts (Stirling) Ltd had forward 2,067 prime lambs and 1,021 cast ewes and rams at Stirling last Tuesday when a feature of the sale was a consignment of 177 Blackface ewes from Pearsie Farms selling to £65.50 and averaging £61.74.

Prime lambs averaged 179.11p (+4.06p on the week), selling to 235p for Beltex's scaling 37kgs consigned by A Morton, Lochend Farm, Denny.

Ewes sold to £100 for Texels from Mrs E Robertson, Skeoch while cast rams sold to £115.50 for Texels from W Shaw, West Lethans.

**Sheep trade up again at Dingwall**

DINGWALL and Highland Marts Ltd sold 46 prime cattle and 1,001 prime sheep at Dingwall last Wednesday where lambs continued to rise in trade on the week.

Lambs averaged 175.3p (+3.1p) and sold to 191p per kg for 39kg Texel crosses from Fornightly Farm, Lethen, and £84 for 44.5kg Beltex crosses from Torgorm, Conon Bridge.

Prime bullocks averaged 165.3p (-0.9p) and sold to 170p per kg on four occasions for a 600kg Limousin cross from Kindeace, Alness, a 665kg Limousin cross from Findon Mains, Culbokie, a 590kg Limousin cross from Tore Farm, Culbokie, and a 605kg Limousin cross from Lower Whitebog, Fortrose, and £1,198.05 for a 735kg Charolais cross from Kindeace.

Prime heifers averaged 164.5p (+0.5p) and sold to 166p per kg twice for Charolais' from Kindeace, and £1,012.60 for a 610kg Charolais from Kindeace.

**STIRLING United Auctions**

**Bullocks:** Up to 250kgs Turbiskill £475, 208.3p; 251-300kgs Turbiskill £580, 209.4p; 301-350kgs West Auchenlongford £650, 202.6p; 351-400kgs Birkenhead £765, Brackley 197.3p; 401-450kgs Nutholm £770, Nether Dalkeith 185.3p; 451-500kgs Elmscleugh £830, 174.3p; 501-550kgs Beechwood £885, 169.5p; 551-600kgs Hayfield £925, Victoria 158.8p; 601-650kgs Victoria £1040, 116.4p; 651-700kgs Cobblehaugh £990, 148.2p.  
**Heifers:** Up to 250kgs Turbiskill £410, 199p; 251-300kgs Ballochgar £545,



Alan Bosomworth, stockman at Ormsary Estates, with their three-year-old homebred bull, Ariagh Buid Heach, which will be forward for this coming weeks Highland Cattle Society Spring Show and Sale in Oban.

**Ormsary Estate have high hopes for Oban's Spring Highland show and sale**

AFTER investing in the champion bull at the Highland Cattle Society's Annual Spring Show and Sale at Oban last year, Ormsary Estates, Lochgilphead will return to Oban Livestock Centre this weekend, to put forward quality Highland heifers carrying the progeny of the 2010 champion.

Ormsary Estate manager, Archie MacArthur, purchased the award winning bull, Callum 2nd of Goldenberry, by Callum of Cir Mhor and out of Cannach 2nd of West Merkland, from Alan Kennedy of West Kilbride, and is now looking forward to this year's event with considerable interest.

Speaking ahead of the Sunday and Monday show and sale, Mr MacArthur,

said: 'The heifers, which are out of two of our folds, Ormsary and Carsaig, are seniors; they will be four-years-old when they calf.'

**European interest**

'We're looking forward to the sale. It's our main sale for our Highlanders as we don't trade at the Autumn sale in Oban.

'This sale always attracts a lot of interest, including some European visitors. And this year there is also quite a bit of interest from south of the border.'

In addition to the Ormsary and Carsaig heifers, the estate will also present their three-year-old homebred bull, Ariagh Buid Heach of Ormsary, for sale.

All three heifers, and the homebred bull, are bred from the estate's former

stock bull, Hamish Mhor the 2nd of Callachally.

Ormsary Estates has three folds of pedigree Highland cattle: the Inver Fold, owned by Sir William Lithgow and his son John; the Carsaig Fold, owned by Lady Lithgow; and the Ormsary Fold, owned by Sir William and his son James.

The estate currently runs 200 head of cattle of various commercial breeds, including their 20 pedigree Highlanders.

Highland Cattle Society Past President Andrew Kirkpatrick will have the onerous task of judging the annual Spring Show on Sunday.

Over 160 animals including 47 bulls will be in front of him, with three new exhibitors travelling from

south of the border for the first time.

Breed secretary Hazel Baxter said: 'There has been great interest from the home crowd with various members looking for new bulls.'

'We are pleased to say that, so far, there will be potential buyers from Finland, Germany and Denmark and visitors from Switzerland returning after enjoying the international gathering in September.'

She added: 'The sale kicks off another busy year for the Highland Cattle Society including two open days north and south of the Border highlighting the many benefits of using Highland cows for the first cross using native and continental sires.'

**Store sale stays ahead of expectations**

DINGWALL and Highland Marts Ltd., sold 112 store cattle and 50 Over 30 Month cattle at Dingwall last Wednesday when a very mixed show saw prices in general ahead of expectations.

Bullocks averaged 159.7p and sold to 188.7p per kg for a 265kg Limousin cross from Birchview, Lairg, and £1,090 for a 795kg Limousin cross from The Laurels, Balblair.

Heifers averaged 151.9p and sold to 188.5p per kg for a pen of 252kg Limousin crosses from Birchview, and £890 for a 620kg Charolais cross from Ardjachie, Tain.

Young bulls averaged 134.1p and sold to 169.0p per kg for a 355kg Limousin from Docharty Farm, Dingwall, and £1,000 for a 830kg Limousin from Borrowston Mains, Thurso.

Over 30 Month heifers and bullocks sold to 121.1p per kg for a 380kg Limousin cross from Dalmagary Farms, Moy.

Over 30 Month feeding cows averaged 90.7p and sold to 112.4p per kg twice for a 805kg Simmental cross from Balnadelson, Lairg and a 725kg Limousin cross from Rhannich Farm, Edderton, and £905 twice for a 825kg Charolais cross from Boggiewell, Fortrose and a 805kg Charolais cross from Balnadelson.

Over 30 Month bulls averaged 96.2 per kg and sold to 102.0p for a Limousin from Achnabat, Torness, and £1,015 for a 1,115kg Limousin from Easter Clune, Lethen.

**Gartvaigh lambs to £90 at Stirling prime sale**

UNITED Auctions sold 4,501 prime sheep including 3,549 hogs averaging 177.4p/kg (+2.3p) and 952 ewes and rams at Stirling last Thursday.

Texel lambs from Mill of Montague sold to £92 with Beltex from Guardswell selling to £91 and 212p per kilo. Suffolks from Gartvaigh fetched £90, with Mules from Stronachullin to £78. Blackface lambs from Merkins sold to £77.80 and to 185p per kilo from East Greenhill.

Texel ewes from Muirpark and Guardswell sold to £92.

**Crofters to listen to Swedish conference thanks to Vodafone**

CROFTERS will attend a major international conference in Sweden on food issues thanks to financial support from mobile phone company Vodafone.

The Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) will send a delegation to Sweden later this year after winning support from The Vodafone Foundation's 'World of Difference' competition which gives people the chance to propose projects that will support a local charity.

The award to the SCF is one of 500 received by different charity based projects throughout the UK.

The funding will enable Iain MacKinnon, whose research specialises in the area of traditional ecological knowledge, to organise and prepare for crofters to have a presence at the Swedish conference which will discuss issues of agricultural biodiversity, local food systems and traditional knowledge, and is being held by the international

Slow Food movement and the Sami, the people who are indigenous to many parts of northern Europe.

Iain is currently completing a PhD at the University of Ulster exploring distinctive ways of thinking about land that are held in different indigenous cultures.



Researcher Iain MacKinnon off to Sweden

He said: 'I am very grateful to Vodafone for supporting this project. Their funding will allow the SCF to find out more about the parallels that exist between the attitudes towards land and nature that people in crofting areas

have held, with the kinds of relationships that other indigenous communities have with their homelands.'

The opportunity to attend the event arose after an SCF delegation travelled to Turin in October to the 'Terra Madre' gathering of global food communities which is held in that city every two years.

The event is organised by Slow Food and last year more than 6,000 people from different communities all over the world gathered to share their traditions and their foods. Among the groups that crofters met and were inspired by were Maori fishermen and Sami reindeer herders. When they heard that Slow Food and the Sami were planning to hold an indigenous peoples' Terra Madre in Sweden in 2011, the SCF began making their own plans to attend it.

SCF chair Eleanor Arthur said: 'Travelling to Italy last year and meeting such inspiring people committed

to their food traditions showed us that crofters are not alone in the challenges we face in working to maintain and transmit our own way of living. There are many other cultures of the world who are equally as proud of their histories and traditions as crofters are, and have experiences to share from which we can learn.'



SCF chair Eleanor Arthur aims to build on lessons from other cultures

'The indigenous peoples' Terra Madre in Sweden will be a great opportunity to connect with them and

so we are very pleased that Vodafone have given us this opportunity to employ an accomplished researcher in these issues who can show our crofting connections in a global context.

Iain MacKinnon added that different ways of thinking about land and what it is for can have practical consequences.

'For many cultures land is a source of sustenance and identity,' he said.

'As the Terra Madre gathering shows, many indigenous peoples take pride not just in their homelands, but in producing foods that are distinctly of their own culture.'

'It's for this reason that indigenous communities tend to be sources of agricultural biodiversity and why many believe that the traditional knowledge held by indigenous peoples in relation to their lands and ecology will have a vital role to play in creating a sustainable global agriculture.'

**ANNUAL SPRING SHOW & SALE OF 160 PEDIGREE HIGHLAND CATTLE**  
Oban Livestock Centre, Oban, Argyll  
**Show: Sunday 13th February 2011**  
**Sale: Monday 14th February 2011**  
Full details and catalogues from: Auctioneers Caledonian Marts (Stirling) Ltd  
Tel: 01786 450922 Fax: 01786 473332  
Oban Livestock Centre  
Tel: 01631 570631 Fax: 01631 565275  
The Highland Cattle Society  
Stirling Agricultural Centre, Stirling FK9 4RN  
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Kilpatrick 188.4p; 301-350kgs Ballochgar £605, Hihg Unthank 179.1p; 351-400kgs Auchenrivoch £750, 189.4p; 401-450kgs Elmscleugh £780, 179.6p; 451-500kgs Beechwood £820, Balgray 169.6p; 501-550kgs Auchenstarry £885, 163.9p; 551-600kgs Elmscleugh £940, 167.9p; 651-700kgs Kirkton of Lundie £920, Auchenstarry 147.9p  
**OTM Cows:** Upper Spittalton (Lim) £1095, 129.4p; Kirkton (Sim) £995, Shanry 118.1p; Midfield (BB) £985, 126p; Heathfield (Cha) £975, Carsloe 146p; Hardiston (BDA) £875, Buskin 125.7p; Capenoch (AA) £835, 136.9p  
**OTM Bulls:** Craigend (Sim) £1330, 103.9p; Hardiston (AA) £1130, 104.2p; Loanhead of Duchally (Lim) £1070, 109.4p; West Lethans (AA) £1050, Hardiston 102.9p.

**Dairy cattle:** Pimerry (in-milk) £650.  
**Sheep**  
**Hoggets;** Naemoor (TexX) £72.50; Glenmollachan (SuffX) £72; Kilwinnet (TexX) £70.50; Glenmollachan (TexX) £70; Bankhead (BtexX) £69; Kirkettle (SuffX) £67.50; High Milndovan (BtexX) £67; Glenmollachan (Mul) £65; West Tandlemuir (BF) £63.50; Lettre (BF) £57.50.  
**Gimmers in-lamb:** Mannerston (Beltex) £180; Spott (Wood-hall) (Mule) and Mannerston (TexX) £142; Scotstounpark (TexX) £115.  
**Breeding sheep:** Kilpatrick (BF ewes twins to BL) £72; Corryharmag (SwaX ewes 1crop RW Swa Tup) £63, (SwaX ewes 2-3crop RW Swa Tup) £55, (SwaX gimmers RW Swa Tup) £56; Kilpatrick (BF ewes singles to BL) £55; Corryharmag (SwaX ewes 4crop RW Swa Tup) £50.

**DINGWALL Dingwall and Highland Marts**  
**Bullocks** up to 250kg West Helmsdale, Sutherland, £430, 172.0p; 251-300kg Birchview, £500; 351-400kg Easter Muckernich, £675, 179.7p; 401-450kg Easter Muckernich, £670, 156.9p; 451-500kg Ardjachie, £800, 167.7p; 501-550kg Ardjachie, £855, 162.9p; over 601kg The Laurels, £880, Ardjachie, 143.6p.  
**Feeding cows**  
2 Glaick, Ardross, (LimX), £825; 19 Baleshare, Lochmaddy and Rhannich Farm, (LimX), £815; Boggiewell, (SimX), £805.

**STIRLING Caledonian Marts**  
**Bullocks:** 0-250kgs £425 Mains of Struie, 198p Mains of Struie; 251-300kgs £535 Maudslie Mains, 189p Mains of Struie; 301-350kgs £630 Murrayshall, 190p Murrayshall; 351-400kgs £720 Maidenwells, 190p Eskechreggan;  
401-450kgs £775 Martnaham Mains, 183p Over Hillhouse; 451-500kgs £845 Powflats, 169p Powflats; 501-550kgs £915 Linfairm, 174p Linfairm; 551-600kgs £945 Linfairm, 166p Linfairm; 601-650kgs £1020 Linfairm, 158p Linfairm.  
**Heifers:** 0-250kgs £410 Grahamsfield, 171p Mains of Struie; 251-300kgs £520 Wester Whin, 193p Wester Whin; 301-350kgs £605 Glenhead, 190p Glenhead; 351-400kgs £655 Eskechreggan, 177p Eskechreggan; 401-450kgs £710 Hall of Torbane, 169p Hall of Torbane; 451-500kgs £865 Martnaham Mains, 173p Martnaham Mains; 501-550kgs £870 Powflats, 166p Powflats.  
**Bulls:** 401-450kgs £640 Balcacchie, 148p Balcacchie; 451-500kgs £675 Carden, 145p Carden.

301-350kg Muirend Croft, Auldeam, £615, 180.9p; 351-400kg Easter Muckernich, £675, 179.7p; 401-450kg Easter Muckernich, £670, 156.9p; 451-500kg Ardjachie, £800, 167.7p; 501-550kg Ardjachie, £855, 162.9p; over 601kg The Laurels, £880, Ardjachie, 143.6p.  
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PERSONALS

LEDAIG MOTORS Benderloch We would like to advise our customers that Chris MacPherson will after almost 30 years of loyal service, be leaving our employment to take up a sea going post with Caledonian MacBrayne.

We wish Chris well in his new career. Lewis and Heather Morrison

Vivienne Hopperton - Dunlop Heartfelt thanks to friends, family and neighbours who rallied round my family and me while I was in hospital recovering from my operation. Thanks to Port Appin Doctors, Oban Hospital and Southern General Hospital, all were wonderful. Thanks to the amazing support of Appin Community, it makes me proud to be part of such a caring village. Thanks to all for cards, flowers and phone calls. God Bless. Vivienne xxx

Sister Seonaid Morrison Just a BIG THANK YOU for all your support and friendship over the years. - From all your staff on Ward C

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, and evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." Christ died for you, do you know Him? www.WordsbytheWayside.co.uk

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**BIRTHS**

**CHAMBERLAIN - CAMERON** - Chas, Paula and Kayden would like to announce the birth of Rhys Ronald Chamberlain on January 27, 2011 at 12.02pm, 7lbs 12oz, fifth grandchild for Flora Geogeson, Oban, third grandchild for Liz Cameron Lochgilphead.

**LAWSON** - Eilidh Rose born 10/11/11 in Stirling to Stuart and Helen, daughter of Murdoch and Carole Gatward of Oban, new cousin for Isaac MacPherson Gatward, born 17/02/10 son of Iain and Ruth.

**LEWIS** - William and Marie are delighted to announce the safe early arrival of their son Archie James at Oban Maternity Unit on January 28, 2011, a wee brother for Alasdair. Special thanks to all Oban midwives.

**DEATHS**

**JOHNSTONE** - Ronald Kerr (Roy) aged 74, Invergary, unexpectedly after a short illness at the Belford Hospital, Fort William, on Friday, February 4, 2011. Much loved husband of Sheila, father, granddad, great-granddad, brother, uncle and friend. Funeral to be held at Invergary Parish Church on Friday, February 11, at 12 noon followed by interment in Invergary Cemetery. Family flowers only. Donations if so desired to Belford Hospital.

**MACDONALD** - Peacefully at Belford Hospital, on Monday, January 31, 2011, James (Jimmy) MacDonald of 5 Glebe Hill, Kilchoan. Funeral service on Friday, February 11, at 1pm at Kilchoan Parish Church, thereafter to Kilchoan Cemetery. All friends and family are respectfully invited. Donations if so desired to Cancer Research.

**MACGILVRAY** - Jean, late of Ach-An-Dubh, Benderloch, Peacefully at Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, on February 4, 2011, in her 95th year, Jean, loving wife of the late Allan and much loved mother of Donald and Wilma and adored gran of Steven, Shona, Allan and Donald. Sadly missed by her family and friends. Funeral will take place at Morton-Hall Crematorium, Edinburgh at 2.30pm on Friday, February 11, 2011.

**MACKINNON** - Molly Mackinnon, Peacefully, at her home in Bunnass, Isle of Mull on February 4, 2011 in her 83rd year. Dear mother to Alasdair John, Sandra and Anne, mother-in-law to Iain and Ivor, much loved Granny to Jodi, Rebekah, Lewis, Morven and Claire and sister to Nancy.

**MACINNES** - Peacefully, surrounded by her family, at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on February 8, 2011, Nan, beloved wife of the late Colin, much loved mum of Moira, devoted granny to Alyson and Colin and a wonderful sister and aunt.

**McMILLAN** - Peacefully at his home on February 5, 2011, with his family by his side, after a dignified battle against his illness, Donald McMillan aged 70 years of Mingarry, Bishopton Road Lochgilphead. Beloved husband of Isobel and loving father of Fiona, Donna and Marian much loved Pappap of Iain, Hayley, Louise, Craig, Ewan, Kyle, Kern and Ruan, dear brother of Gladys. Respected father in law of Iain, Donald and the late Lachlan, dear uncle and cousin to all the family. A good neighbour, friend and work colleague to many. Funeral service was held in Lochgilphead Parish Church, followed by interment at Achnabreac Cemetery on Wednesday February 9, 2011. Forever in our thoughts

**ROBERTSON** - Peacefully at Stirling Royal Infirmary on February 3, 2011, Jessie (Rosie), formerly of Kinlochleven, dear mother of Audrey and Murray and a loving granny and great-granny.

**ROBERTSON** - Jessie (née Rosie), Kinlochleven (aged 81), died in Stirling Royal Infirmary on February 3, 2011, after a short illness. A special thanks to all those who came to visit her to keep her spirits up when she was unwell. A loving mum, grandmother and great grandmother, to all the family.

**WILLIS** - Ian, Suddenly, but peacefully, on February 7, 2011, Ian Willis, in his 75th year, of Ford, Argyll. (Former proprietor of Highland Heathers). Beloved husband of Valerie, dear father of Nigel and Alistair. Funeral service will be held at Kilmartin Parish Church, on Friday February 11, 2011 at 11.30am - no black ties please. Kilts and bright colours would be preferred. Family flowers only. Donations to 'Mary's Meals' and Glassary, Kilmartin and Ford Church Funds. Thereafter a private family service will be held at the crematorium.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**KERR** - The family of the late William Kerr would like to thank family and friends for their kind expressions of sympathy, flowers, cards and telephone calls, to D and A Munn for their professional services, to Rev. Kat for conducting a lovely service and organ music, also Iain Donaldson for piping his favourite tunes and to all who came from near and far to pay respects. Thanking staff at the Rowantree for catering services. Thanks again.

**MACKAY** - The family of the late Agnes MacKay wish to thank all concerned for the kindness and expressions of sympathy following their sad loss. Not least they appreciated the support of all who were able to attend St John's Cathedral and Pennyfuir Cemetery. Our particular thanks to Cannon Allan MacLean for specially travelling to Oban to undertake the funeral service and interment, and to the Rev. Ian Walters in his support. Thanks also to Provost Norman MacCallum for his faithful house visits and Pastoral Services. The family also thank carers, home-helps, district nurses, doctors and hospital staff for their services of care. To D & A Munn our thanks for detailed professional services and to the Royal Hotel for excellent facilities and buffet.

**McKERRELL** - The family would like to thank relatives and friends on Islay and the mainland for attending the funeral of the late Mary McKerrell. We would like to thank everyone for phone calls, cards, flowers and home baking. Thanks also for the support received during and after Mary's death, particular thanks to nurses, doctors, home carers and Jennifer, also thanks to Angela Stather for the lovely comforting service, thanks to Craig and Jean MacAffer and staff for all funeral arrangements, also to Duffy and Roberta for the purvey. The sum of £479.27 was gifted to Islay Hospital.

**IN MEMORIAM**

**ANDERSON** - In loving memory of Catherine (Rena) who passed away on February 13, 2009, a much loved mother, mother-in-law and nana.

As time unfolds another year memories keep you ever near silent thoughts of time together hold memories that last forever

- Mandy and Duncan, Margaret and Donald, Elaine, Kenny and Craig. **ANDERSON** - Treasured memories of our dear Parents and Grandparents. Alexander Anderson who died on February 13, 1992 and Jessie nee McCallum who died on February 18, 1988.

Always in our thoughts. Inserted by the Family in Tullibody, Islay and Inverurie.

**CAMPBELL** - We cherish the memory of our mum, Anne, who died February 15, 2007.

So dearly loved and sorely missed

- By all the family at home in Oban and away.xx

**CURRIE** - Cherished memories of Lily, who died February 15, 1989 and Archie who died June 1, 1998. Remembered always with love.

-Margaret, Donald and family. Always in my thoughts. -Mike, London.

**HAMILTON** - Mischa Karli, died February 7, 2002, aged 9 years. Loved and missed everyday.

- Mummy, Cara, Aimi and Joss.xxxx

**INNES** - In loving memory of Allie, loving husband, father and grandfather, died February 12, 1996. Precious memories keep you near

As time unfolds another year

Loved always.

- Margaret and family.

**INNES** - In loving memory of Allie a dear father, father-in-law and grandpa, who died February 12, 1996.

Loved and remembered always.

- Iain, Christine, Eileen and Eilidh.

**INNES** - Cherished memories of a much loved father and grandpa, Allie. Never more than a thought away

Loved and remembered every day.

- Ann-Margaret, Iain and family xx.

**LAIRD** - In loving memory of Susan (Oozie), a much loved wife, mum and nana, who died February 14, 2003.

Deep in our hearts you will always stay

Loved and remembered every day.

- Davy and the family.

**LAIRD** - In loving memory of our dear mother Oozie, who passed away February 14, 2003.

In our hearts always

Love Brenda, Poacher, Danica, Leigh and wee sister Alice xxx

Love you always

**LIVINGSTONE** - In loving memory of my dear parents Morag, who died February 10, 2005 and Archie who died March 23, 2003 and my brother Alastair, who died December 5, 2009.

Gone are the days we used to share

But in my heart you are always there.

- Lilian, Strontian.

**MACALLISTER** - Treasured memories of a dear husband, father and grandfather, William (Billy), died February 8, 2010.

Loved and remembered always.

- Mary Jane and family.

**MACALLISTER** - In loving memory of my dad William (Billy), who passed away February 8, 2010

Always in our thoughts

Never far away

From his daughter Wilma, husband Donald, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

**MACALLISTER** - In loving memory of my dear dad, Billy who died February 8, 2010. Sadly missed.

- Peter John, Mary and family.

**MACCALLUM** - Treasured memories of Alastair, a much loved brother and uncle, tragically taken from us on February 11, 2010.

The place you rest we visit And place each flower with care

But no one knows the heartache

As we turn and leave you there.

- Inserted by Catherine Ellen, Allan, Wilma and their families xxx

**MACDONALD** - Johnnie. Third anniversary. Fond and loving memories of my dear husband who died on February 14, 2008.

I miss you in so many ways

I miss the things you used to say

And when old times I do recall

It's then I miss you most of all

Will love and miss you always

-Your loving wife Ina.

**MACDONALD** - Treasured memories of my dad, Johnnie, who died on February 14, 2008.

To say how much I miss you I wouldn't know where to start

As it seems like only yesterday

My whole world fell apart

My heart still aches with sadness

And silent tears still flow

For what it meant to lose you Dad

No-one will ever know.

Loved and missed every day.

- Your daughter Hazel and Liam.

**MACDONALD** - In loving memory of our dear parents and grandparents, Thomas Freeland, passed away February 12, 1986 and Jessie MacKenzie, passed away February 7, 1994.

Forever in our thoughts.

- Inserted by Donald, Neil, Isobel and family.

**MACLEAN** - Cherished memories of Mary Campbell MacLean (nee MacDonald) a darling wife, mother, granny and mother-in-law, who died on February 8, 2005 aged 65 years.

Those we love don't go away

They walk beside us everyday

Unseen, unheard, but always near

Still loved, still missed, and very dear.

Alistair, Dugald, Arlene and families, Glen Alma, Soroba Road.

**MACLEAN** - Remembering always a loving sister, sister-in-law and auntie Mary Campbell, who died February 8, 2005.

Those we love don't go away

They walk beside us every day

Unseen, unheard, but always near

Still loved, still missed and very dear.

Margaret, Archie, Fiona and Duncan

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**MACLEAN** - In loving memory of a dear sister, auntie and grand-auntie Katie, died February 8, 2010. We watched you getting tired

A cure was not to be

God put his arms around you

And whispered come with me

Our Lady of the Isles pray for her.

- Annag and family, Oban and Glasgow.

**McCLOUNNAN** - In cherished memory of my husband David, who died at his home Balephuil, Tiree on February 17, 2006.

No one knows how much I miss you

Or the ache that's in my heart

But the day God took you from me

My whole world fell apart

Inserted by your wife Nan, Balephuil, Tiree

**McCLOUNNAN** - In loving memory of my dear son Calum, who died at Dalavich on March 27, 2007.

You always had a smile to share

Time to give and time to care

A loving nature kind and true

Those are the memories I keep of you.

Your loving Mum, Balephuil, Tiree.

**McKINNEY** - In loving memory of our dear brother Owen who died February 12, 2009.

You will never be forgotten.

- Pat and Jessie.

**MENZIES** - In loving memory of Hamish a much loved husband, father, father-in-law and grandpa who died February 10, 2007. Always in our thoughts.

- Betty, David, Ibbey, Willie and Isla.

**SPREADBURY - MUIR** - In loving memory of my dearest wife Donna, who passed away February 16, 2006.

Precious are the memories of the times we spent together and the love we shared.

Your loving husband Alasdair xxx

**SPREADBURY - MUIR** - In memory of our beautiful friend Donna, who passed away February 16, 2006.

Love and miss you

Brenda, Poacher and family xxx

**STEWART** - Cherished memories of Mena, who died February 12, 2002, Jimmy who died January 6, 2010 and James died December 25, 1983 also loved ones gone before and after.

Deep are the memories

Precious they stay

No length of time

Can take them away.

- From all the family.

**SUTHERLAND** - Precious memories of our dearly loved son, Innes, taken from us on February 14, 1999, aged 21 years.

There is a place in our hearts that is yours alone

A part of our lives no one can own

Deep in our memories you are with us yet

To love, cherish and never forget

Loved and remembered everyday.

- Mum and Dad xx.

Innes, a much loved brother, brother-in-law and uncle.

We miss your smile, your joking ways

We miss the things you used to say

When old times we do recall

It's then we miss you most of all.

Forever in our thoughts and hearts.

- Your big sisters, Kerri, Iona and Catherine xxx.



Pictured at the cheque presentation are, from left, Pets at Home manager Cara Bald, Rebecca O'Brien, Pat Blumsden and Margaret Jack from Argyll Animal Aid, and Lizzy Hearn. 15\_106pets1

**Pets find a happy new home**

PETS at Home's Oban staff have handed a cheque for £5,000 to Argyll Animal Aid to go towards the cost of a new outdoor enclosure.

The money comes from the company's charity, Support Adoption for Pets, taking the total given to Argyll Animal Aid to £7,500 in the last financial year.

Meanwhile, last week's Give a Pet a Home feature in *The Oban Times* prompted a phenomenal response from locals, with every single animal featured finding new homes.

In fact, so successful was the feature that the Argyll Animal

Aid charity has had to draw up a waiting list for cats, which will be dealt with when suitable animals come in.

**Pleased**  
Pat Blumsden, of Argyll Animal Aid, said: 'We were so pleased with the response to the feature this year. Usually we re-home some of the dogs, and I don't usually re-home any of the cats.'

'We were worried about one little puppy who nobody wanted for some reason, but thankfully it was chosen on Sunday afternoon.'

'I think this has been the most successful year so far with regards to features.'

OBAN pet shop, Pets at Home, will hold a series of free pet workshops from this weekend for children enjoying their half term holidays.

**Workshops**  
The workshops have been designed to increase awareness and knowledge of how to care for different types of pets responsibly.

The first workshop takes place this Saturday and runs until Friday, February 18.

For more information and times of workshops, drop into the shop at Pets at Home's Oban store in Lochavullin Drive.

**Speeding Ted on hand with safety tips**

CHILDREN in Argyll and Bute will be among the first to be introduced to a new fictional character designed to make them think about the dangers of speeding.

Speeding Ted, a teddy bear, is the star of the latest road safety pack for primary schools.

The pack was developed by leading Scottish educational consultant, Lynda Keith, on behalf of the Strathclyde Safety Camera Partnership in association with Road Safety Officers from the West of Scotland Road Safety Forum, which includes Argyll

and Bute. Copies are being distributed to all primaries in the area by the council's Road Safety team.

The pack is linked to Curriculum for Excellence and it provides opportunities for children to understand the dangers of speeding.

**Fatal**

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre, Argyll and Bute's spokesman for Transport and Infrastructure, said: 'Speed plays an important part in many serious and fatal road crashes, and all too often we see young drivers and their

passengers in particular being involved in tragic incidents.

'Attitudes to driving are actually formed at a young age and primary children can easily understand that speeding is dangerous, anti-social and against the law.'

'We hope the information and activities in this pack will be helpful in reinforcing these positive attitudes for when the children grow older and become drivers themselves.'

For further information please contact June Graham, Road Safety Officer on 01546 604182.



Anthony, left, and Gavin are pictured with their certificates.

**NVQ success for Forteith duo**

TWO employees of Forteith Foodservice, in Oban, Anthony Gallagher and Gavin McKecknie, have gained a qualification in distribution, warehousing and store operations.

Since completing the NVQ course - funded by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) - Anthony has been

promoted to warehouse supervisor.

**Trainees**

Anthony and Gavin both started at Forteith's as Get Ready for Work trainees, which is run by Argyll Training Ltd and funded by SDS, becoming full employees after completing the course.

promoted to warehouse supervisor.

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Since completing the NVQ

# Coaching weekend proves to be a great success

## Californian joins record number of coaches at three-day Oban event

CALIFORNIAN Michael Bentley was the furthest travelled delegate to the weekend's Argyll and Bute Sports Coaching programme, taking a 24-hour return trip



Michael Bentley, who took a 24-hour round trip to Oban specifically for Argyll and Bute Sports Coaching 2011's shinty course on Sunday. 15\_106bentley1

to learn about shinty. The Berkley resident established a shinty team in the town ten years ago, Northern California Camanachd, after becoming interested in the game while researching his family's Scottish heritage.

Since then, four more clubs have been set up in the USA, but Michael is keen to establish a firm foundation of rules and coaching as early as possible to let the stateside game develop properly.

He said: 'I want to develop US Camanachd and we're now at the point where it needs some proper coaching, rules and regulations.'

'Some of the things being discussed here are exactly what we need, from child protection, code of conduct, release forms etcetera. 'It keeps everyone on the same level and makes sure we're all playing the same game.'

One of the biggest challenges facing any new sport in the US is travelling distances. While there are four more clubs in existence, some are a ten hour drive apart, so each club

### COACHING

administers its own mini-league. Northern California Camanachd's six-a-side league has been running successfully now for six years.

It's a clear sign though that the game is growing in popularity.

He said: 'We've got 150 members now and it is a growing sport.'

'I think it's got the appeal of soccer and ice-hockey, but there isn't much ice-hockey in California!'

### Return

Michael will return to the states this week after taking in the course, but will return with his club for a tour of Scotland in September, including a game against Skye Camanachd; with whom the club are closely associated.

Meanwhile, a record 405 would-be coaches signed up for this year's coaching programme, coming from the length and breadth of Scotland.

Between 2008-2010, the

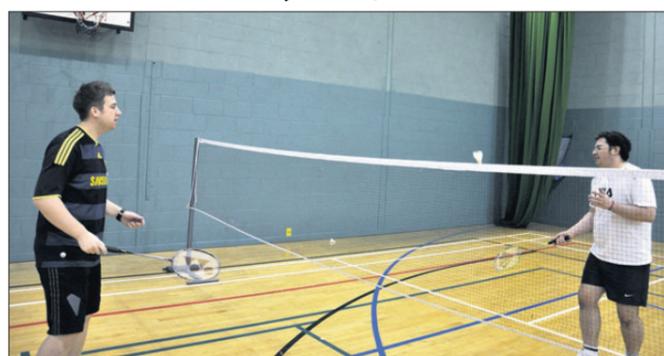


Potential tennis coach, Kevin Keen, from Oban, gets into the swing of things at Argyll and Bute Sports Coaching 2011's course at Atlantis Leisure in Oban on Saturday. 15\_106coaching1

programme, which is run and subsidised by Argyll and Bute Council and Sport Scotland, helped train around 800 coaches, meaning this year's figure adds a third to the running total.

Participants learned how to get the most out of students in all kinds of sports, from football, shinty and tennis, to mountaineering, swimming and even Zumba - one of the most popular courses on the day.

The council is hoping to hold the event again next year to continue to increase the quality and quantity of sporting opportunities in Argyll and Bute.



Badminton was the order of the day for Atlantis staff members Ben Pollock and Paul Lopez, who were taking part in this year's Argyll and Bute Sports Coaching programme. 15\_106coaching2

## Fort's youngsters desperate to make amends

FORT WILLIAM welcome Huntly to Claggan Park on Saturday - and Calum MacLean's young team is desperate to make amends after last weekend's disappointment at Lossiemouth.

Fort should have almost a full squad available, the only injury worry being Sean Grant, who hurt his foot against Lossie. On the plus side, Mark Gillespie is in the frame for a start after being tied up with work commitments.

For assistant boss James Annette having a full complement of players is a bonus in the battle to leapfrog fellow strugglers Rothes and Strathspey Thistle.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'It just gives us a few more numbers to work with. We were really disappointed on

### FOOTBALL

Saturday, but we have quite a young squad and they are stepping up to the mark. Four of the boys are under 18 at the minute and consistency can be a bit up and down.

'Against Lossie we played quite well, but it was definitely a game we should have taken something from. We got punished for every mistake.'

Fort made a dream start against the Coasters when Sean Ellis lobbed McConnachie, but proceeded to miss several chances to add to their lead.

Lossie suckerced the visitors with two goals and made it three after the break before Fort hitman Iain MacLennan missed a penalty to make it 3-2.

## Underdogs are still the top dogs

IN WEEK 11 of the scratch division of the Lochaber Building Supplies 10-pin bowling league at the Nevis Centre, top team Underdogs crushed second placed Alleycats 5-0 to extend their lead to six points.

Alleycats remain in second with Council still in third place a further three points behind.

In the handicap division Underdogs remain in top spot after beating second place Alleycats 5-0 and now lead by five points. Likely Lads remain in third place despite going down 3-2 to Fairway Fillies.

Top scratch team game

### TEN PIN BOWLING

of the week went to Council with 546 whilst Rotavators had the top handicap game with 809. Top two game scratch series went to Council with 1068.

Individually the top scratch game of the week came from Underdogs' Graeme Robertson with 177 followed by Council's Brian Stewart with 170. Top scratch series went to Brian Stewart with 326. Top handicap game was from Graeme Robertson with 250.

Alleycats' Pam Weller still holds the top scratch average with 145 with Brian Stewart now second on 143.

## MacTavish Cup draw throws up one all-premier division tie

HOLDERS Kingussie will receive a bye, along with Lochaber, to the second round of this season's Co-operative MacTavish Cup.

The cup draw was made on Monday by the Co-op's Lorraine Christie and Stuart Ramsay at the Telford Street Co-operative Food store, Inverness.

The round one fixtures have thrown up one all-premier

tie with the division's new boys, Kilmallie, against Glenurquhart.

The matches will be played on March 26.

### Delighted

Ronald Ross MBE, Captain of current Cup holders Kingussie, was also in attendance at the draw and said, 'We were delighted to lift The Co-operative MacTavish Cup last year,

especially having lost out in the 2009 final, and we are determined to hold on to it.

'Taking on teams outwith your own league is what makes cup competitions all the more exciting and we are very much looking forward to it.'

Co-operative MacTavish Cup Round One: Strathglass v Fort William; Inverness v Beaulay; Caberfeidh v

### SHINTY

Lochcarron; Newtonmore v Skye; Kilmallie v Glenurquhart; Lovat v Kinlochshiel.

Byes: Lochaber and Kingussie.

The final will be played on June 18 at Bught Park, Inverness..



Lorraine Christie, The Co-operative Food's Regional Operations Manager, and Stuart Ramsay, member of The Co-operative Group's Scotland and Northern Ireland Board with Kingussie captain Ronald Ross MBE.

## Opening shinty fixtures announced

THE NEW shinty season will commence on Saturday March 5 with the following league fixtures.

Scottish Hydro Premier Division: Fort William v Glenurquhart; Inveraray v Newtonmore; Kilmallie v Oban Camanachd; Kingussie v Lovat; Kyles Athletic v Glenorchy.

Marine Harvest North Division One: Inverness v Lochcarron; Kinlochshiel v Caberfeidh; Lochaber v Beaulay; Strathglass v Skye.

Marine Harvest South Division One: Aberdeen v Bute; Lochside Rovers v Kilmory; Oban Celtic v Kyles Athletic; Taynuilt v Ballachulish.

Marine Harvest North Division Two: Glengarry v Kinlochshiel; Glenurquhart v Fort William; Lovat v Kingussie; Newtonmore v Lochaber; Skye v Kilmallie.

Marine Harvest South Division Two: Ballachulish v Strachur; Bute v Tayforth; Col Glen v Inveraray; Glasgow Mid Argyll v

### SHINTY

Aberdour.

Marine Harvest North Division Three: Beaulay v Lewis; Boleskine v Inverness; Caberfeidh v Aberdeen University; Lochbroom v Ardnamurchan; Lochcarron v Strathglass.

## A few surprises for primary cross country runners

THE FIRST-EVER South Lochaber Primary Schools Cross Country Festival will be held at Glencoe Lochan tomorrow.

Ballachulish, Kinlochleven, Duror, Glencoe and St Brides have all entered mixed teams of four P6 and P7 pupils.

The children will run a course just over a mile long through the woods - with 'a few surprises' on the way.

The event is being run with support from Ruari Watt from Forestry Commission Scotland and pupils from Kinlochleven High School, who will act as marshalls and front and back runners on the day.

Active Schools coordinator Tracey Jeffrey said the festival was 'a great opportunity' to increase pupils' fitness whilst enjoying the outdoors,

### CROSS COUNTRY

getting to know some other pupils and to have fun.

She said: 'The practices and festival have been a great opportunity for the some of the pupils to try a new activity, which they can carry on within their locality and build their confidence at a local level before entering competitions further afield.'

The day, part of the wider Lochaber Active Schools PE programme of festivals, will see the winners getting the chance to take part in a race against other schools from Fort William and rest of Lochaber later in the month.

Ms Jeffrey thanked all parents and teachers who have been running practice sessions at each school in preparation for the event.

## Vikings win both age groups at Dalriada Festival

ETIVE Vikings were victorious in both age groups at the recent round of the Mini Rugby Dalriada Festival, hosted by Oban Lorne Rugby Football Club.

The Taynuilt team won the primary four/five and the primary six/seven groups at the tournament on January 30.

Teams from Oban, Cowal and reigning Dalriada champions Mull also competed throughout the afternoon, with Oban Lorne and Isle of Mull making a close challenge to the Vikings

### RUGBY

in the P4/5 age group.

With only three teams competing at primary six/ seven level the players competed in a development game, which featured scrums and lineouts - a change to the norm that will be a huge benefit to the young players' development.

The results from the tournament will be added to the overall Dalriada results for this season, which will count towards the Dalriada Trophy.

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# Lochaber skier back on track after fall in Italian slalom

Lachlan is one of the UK's top three ski racers in his age group

**REPORT**  
by **STEPHEN NORRIS**  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

A YOUNG Lochaber skier is back on track for major honours after crashing out of championship race in Italy last month.

Lachlan Veitch was airlifted to hospital after falling during the first slalom race of the British Alpine Racing Ski Clubs Championship at Champoluc on January 6.

Lachlan, of Camesky Steading in Torlundy, was airlifted to hospital for x-rays but suffered no more than bruised ribs, a bad cold - and a slight dent in his ego.

The 12-year-old had already

won a podium place in the giant slalom.

The youngster spent two days recovering before getting back into training at the British Ski Academy (BSA) base at Chamonix, France.

**Top Three**

Lochaber High School pupil Lachlan, who turns 13 on February 19, heads to Slovenia later this month for another big European event as one of the UK's top three alpine ski racers in his age group. He then goes straight to Bormio in Italy for the English Championships.

Two weeks of intensive training at the BSA follow before the British

**SKIING**

Championships in Meribel, France in early April.

It has been a great start to the new year for the Torlundy flier, who claimed silver at the Anglo-Scottish championships at Les Houches, Chamonix last month.

Last week Lachlan picked up three medals at his first World event in Andorra representing Team GB, including a bronze for Super G (super giant slalom). He also finished fifth in the giant slalom and fifth in the super combined.

The premier event featured



**Lachlan Veitch: Scottish skiing talent.**

alpine racing children from over 20 different countries - some of the best young skiers in Europe.

Lachlan's dad John told *The Oban Times*: 'This was a different level of skiing. To come back with three medals was quite an achievement and he's hoping to go on and show what he's capable of.'

'Without setting his sights on the Olympics and the

World Cup stage, which is his ultimate target, his short term goals are to continue to improve and enhance his technique and speed, continue to represent TeamGB at major events and win as many podium positions as possible.'

'But to achieve his goals Lachlan needs support and sponsorship. The cost of training, racing

and equipment is hugely expensive and without local support he simply could not sustain his current racing programme, which would be shame for such a talented individual.'

To allow him to train at Chamonix for six weeks, Lachlan was awarded the Rannoch Bursary for the second time in two years. He spent his first 10 years

of his life living in an Alpine town in the French Alps, started skiing at age two and was race training at age six, when he won his first race. He returned to live in Scotland in 2008 and joined the Scottish ski club. Last year he was selected to join the British Children Alpine Ski Team for season 2010/2011.

Lachlan, who also plays

football for Fort William FC under 15s, said: 'This level and intensity of training is a must for my progression.'

The talented youngster is currently working on his website design which will hopefully go live next month. All sponsors and supports and anyone wishing to support Lachlan can contact him at LachlanV1@hotmail.com

## Primary school rugby training

LOCHABER primary school children got back to rugby training at Banavie on Saturday for the first time in the New Year.

Plenty of skill and movement was on display at the two-hour morning session, organised by Lochaber Rugby Club youth coaches. S1 and S2 pupils have already held several training sessions since the

Christmas break. Involving young players in the sport at an early age forms an integral part of the club's youth policy.

Next event designed to broaden rugby's appeal among local children is a 'bring a buddy' day at Banavie on February 19.

Youth convener Gary Hendrie told *The Oban Times*: 'We are holding the

**RUGBY**

event to encourage young kids who have not tried out rugby before to come along and enjoy a game.'

Training sessions for primary pupils are held on Saturday mornings. S1 and S2 train on Tuesdays and Saturdays and S3 and S4 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.



**Cameron Davis from Mallaig gets his pass away despite Jack Hamilton's tackle. Jordan Morrison looks on.**

## Wheelers winter league takes on a new challenge

A NEW venue and course greeted West Highland Wheelers at the Outward Bound Centre at Kinlochail in round five of the club's winter league.

Set by Rory Stewart and Graham Anderson, it started with a fiendish climb, gaining almost 1,800 feet on undulating forest roads.

The descent of over 1,000 feet was immense and made sure that everyone crossed the line with a big grin. Although only just 8.8 miles in length, it was a real challenge for all who took part.

Local knowledge combined with good fitness saw Liam Moynihan romp away with a win, followed by the two Bens. James Shirley pipped Gavin Maclean for fourth on the final drop through the forest and Fiona Thompson was first lady home, with Marian Austin in second

**CYCLING**

place. Further down the field, Lachlan Blair continues his climb up the rankings, finishing ahead of some veteran Wheelers talent.

The club wishes to thank Rory, Graham, Ali, Fiona and Jim for all of the preparations for a great day and to Stuart Wilkie of Fassfern for his help. Next event is down at Duror on February 20.

Results: 1 Liam Moynihan 46:45; 2 Ben Thompson 48:51; 3 Ben Miller 50:21; 4 James Shirley 51:06; 5 Gavin Maclean 51:09; 6 Gavin Shirley 56:38; 7 John Shirley 58:00; 8 Ed Daynes 59:38; 9 Andrew Foggo 59:40; 10 Spook Munro 60:00; 11 Lachlan Blair 61:50; 12 Hendry McNicol 63:00; 13 Davy Gunn 64:00; 14 Roddy Wells 67:15; 15 Andy Rogers 71:30; 16 Alan Dent 76:21; 17 Doug Little 79:00; 18 Fiona Thompson 79:47; 19 Marian Austin 88:32; 20 Iain Jenner 91:34; 21 Rich Hill 99:11; 22 Gavin Linfield 100:00. Short Course: 1 Fiona Gunn 62:06; 2 Stephen Dent 70:00.

## Phoenix have new champion

LOCHABER Phoenix Boxing Club packed in three tournaments in three days last weekend - and picked up a new champion along the way when 16 year-old Denver Small claimed the featherweight title at the North of Scotland championships in Aberdeen on Saturday.

In a fine display of textbook boxing, Denver outfought aggressive southpaw Artom Selivanos of Peterhead ABC.

Denver's tight defence, exceptional footwork and straight single counters were a feature in the first - and round two followed much in the same vein.

Realising he needed a big last round to edge a tremendously close contest, Denver delivered in style as he fired off some explosive combinations to score three or four points - then shut up shop to deny Selivanos any opportunities. Coach Niall Clark said: 'This is a first title for Small who showed impressive focus, and hopefully something he can build on for the remainder of the season.'

On Sunday, 22 year-old light-welterweight Stephen Cameron outpointed James Thomson, of 13/14 Bannockburn ABC after being considered unlucky to lose an earlier bout between the pair.



**Niall Clark**

Kinross ABC gave this rematch top billing - and it did not disappoint. Both men tried to stamp their authority in the first two rounds then in the last Cameron landed a powerful right cross that landed flush.

Thomson, one of the premier boxers in Scotland, is a class act, however, and tried to come back as both boxers stood toe to toe for a grandstand finish.

When the judges scored it

**BOXING**

by a 2-1 majority in Stephen's favour it was sweet revenge for the Lochaber man after losing by the same margin in the first bout.

Meanwhile, 14 year-old Igor Sliwinski showed great potential in his debut bout against Findlay McGlade of Linwood ABC in Paisley last Friday night. Igor, who is quite a handful for the older boys in the gym, dominated every round of the schoolboy contest.

The Lochaber coaches believe Igor could just prove to be the major find of the season as he bullied McGlade around the ring in the opener with powerful punches from both hands. In round two Igor showed some defensive prowess as McGlade tried to get back in the fight but just could not connect and Igor was landing at least four punches to one.

The final stanza saw Igor tiring understandably in his first contest but still having far too much firepower for his more experienced opponent.

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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.

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## Top award for Oban Saints secretary

### 'Winning this award is a tremendous honour'

DAVID Buchanan from Oban, is celebrating after walking away with a top honour at the eighth annual McDonald's / Sunday Mail Grassroots Awards, in partnership with the Scottish Football Association.

David, who is responsible for the day-to-day running of the senior Oban Saints team, who play in the Scottish Amateur League Premier Division, was named Best Volunteer in Adult Football at an awards ceremony, held at Hampden Park on February 3.

The awards celebrate the tireless efforts of the volunteers who give up their time to provide footballing

opportunities in communities across Scotland.

Scotland legend and McDonald's Head of Scottish Football, Kenny Dalglish, singled out David's work to help youths and adults in Oban get the most out of the game.

**Commitment**

Kenny said: "Football in communities is built on the hard work and commitment of volunteers like David. His dedication to football and Oban Saints has contributed enormously to the development of the game in the community of Oban."

'As a long-term supporter of grassroots football in Scottish communities, Mc-

#### FOOTBALL

Donald's is proud to honour and recognise David's achievement.'

David, who is also chairman of the Oban Football Development Group, added: 'Winning this award is a tremendous honour - not just for me but for all the members of Oban Saints Football Club. Without the volunteers who put in so much work, the game in Oban would not be in the positive state that it is today.'

Club colleagues Iain Jackson and Thomas Sharp accompanied David at the



David is pictured with Scotland legend Kenny Dalglish and Scotland manager Craig Levein.

awards ceremony. Also in attendance at Hampden was Scotland manager Craig Levein, who is well known to the Oban lads through the Keyline Cup tournament.

This is the fifth major honour the club has been awarded over the last couple

of years. They have won the Sunday Mail / sportsScotland Club of the Year; Argyll and Bute Council's Sports Organisation of the Year; the Atlantis Leisure Club of the Year and are also proud holders of the Scottish Football Association's Co-

munity Club Quality network of McDonald's restaurant franchisees to provide kit and equipment to clubs through the club twinning programme.

In 2010, McDonald's helped to create over 700 new boys and girls teams in the local community.

## Saints seniors back in action

OBAN Saints senior team are due back in league action this Saturday with a tough away game against old rivals Greenock HSFP.

The match will take place at Battery Park with a 2pm kick-off. Referee is Alessandro Saverese.

SCOTTISH AMATEUR LEAGUE - PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Oban Saints	9	5	3	1	28	14	18
Kilpatrick	7	5	1	1	17	11	16
St Josephs	8	5	0	3	14	17	15
Greenock HSFP	7	4	2	1	12	9	14
Arkleston	5	2	2	1	13	11	8
Thorn Athletic	6	2	1	3	10	14	7
Aikenhead	4	1	2	1	8	5	5
Castlemilk	6	1	1	4	7	14	4
Inverclyde	6	0	2	4	10	7	2
Cambria	6	0	0	6	3	10	0

## Saints youth results and fixtures

#### FOOTBALL

LAST weekend's results: Under 13s 0, Dalmuir Park 4; Under 14s no game; Under 15s 2, Argyll Athletic 6. Scoring for Saints was Alan McPhee with a double, Milngavie 2, Under 16s 1. Netting for Saints was Martin MacPherson.

This weekend's fixtures: Under 13s v Torrance Thistle; Kilpatrick v Under 14s; Ardencaple v Under 15s; Dumbarnton Rock v Under 16s.

## Islay Golf Club

#### GOLF

FEBRUARY Medal: 1 Donald Logan 85 less 19 net 66; 2 Nigel Carmichael 73 less 6 net 67; 3 Keith MacDonald 75 less 7 net 68. Css 69

## Over-35s Indoor League

#### FOOTBALL

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Taynuilt	6	5	1	0	16
Trialists	5	5	0	0	15
Hydro	5	4	0	1	12
Emergency	5	2	1	2	7
Seil	5	2	0	3	6
Spartak	5	2	0	3	6
Teachers	5	1	1	3	4
Clan Trees	5	1	0	4	3
WCM	4	0	1	3	1
Owen Sails	3	0	0	3	0

Results: Teachers 3, Trialists 5; Clan trees 0, Hydro 7; Emergency 5 West Coast Marine 4; Spartak 2, Taynuilt 7; Clan Trees 2, Seil 7.

## Robert Wylie Memorial Cup

#### SHINTY

OBAN Celtic and North Division 1 side Inverness will compete for the annual Robert Wylie Memorial Cup this Saturday, February 12, at Mossfield Park.

Throw-up is at 1.30pm and the referee will be Billy Wotherspoon.

## Six league wins in a row for Oban Lorne

Scottish Hydro Electric West Division 1 **Oban Lorne 33 Cumnock 6**

OBAN Lorne recorded their sixth consecutive league win and their largest winning margin of the season last Saturday to strengthen their grip on third place.

The bullish victory over Cumnock was the best

possible preparation for this Saturday's Regional Bowl third round tie against Lenzie, Oban Lorne's most important match of the season so far.

**Changes**

Last Saturday saw four changes made to the previous weekend's team with Lorne MacLauchlan starting in the second row,

Ryan Jackson returning from injury in the back row and Colin Chadwick returning at fullback. Robert Wright also started at stand-off, replacing Chris MacDonald.

An early penalty was converted by Angus MacCallum to give Oban the lead but the away side had most of the pressure in the early stages of this

encounter, which resulted in an equalising penalty kick.

However, Oban, who were now exploiting Cumnock's lighter pack, restored their three-point advantage with another MacCallum penalty.

Soon after, player/coach Corrie Louw managed to dive over the line following sustained pressure on the Cumnock try line.

Oban's forwards grew even stronger after this and shortly after scored a very similar try to the first, this time with captain Struan Smith the scorer. MacCallum converted to extend the lead to 18-3.

Oban made a half-time change with Romanian centre Radu Teororu making his debut in place of Angus MacCallum.

Cumnock started the second half as the stronger team and would have claimed a try of their own if it had not been for some superb covering defence from Oban Lorne.

The away side were however rewarded for their efforts with a penalty that narrowed the score to 18-6.

With the rain falling hard Oban kept the ball tight

with their forwards and had a large period of substantial pressure on the Cumnock line.

After several try saving tackles Oban finally breached the strong Cumnock defence with Robert Wright somehow finding himself lost in the forwards to dive in from close range.

**Pressure**

With three tries created from immense pressure by the Oban forwards the home side continued what had worked for them so far in the game and scored two more similar tries: Lorne MacLauchlan got his first Oban Lorne score and then a second for Corrie Louw.

This weekend's match kicks off at 2.30pm at Glencruitten as Oban seek nine wins in a row in all competitions.

Team: M. Downie, R. MacQueen, K. Kennedy, L. MacLauchlan, C. Nicholson, S. Smith, C. R. Jackson, C. Louw, F. Matheson, A. Beaton, R. Wright, G. MacEwan, A. MacCallum, A. MacDougall, C. Chadwick, D. Williams, C. MacLauchlan, A. Wright, R. Teororu



The Oban Lorne defence thwarts a Cumnock attack. 15\_106rugby2

## Argyll rugby boys in bowl quarter final

#### RUGBY

ARGYLL Schools rugby team will be better prepared than ever when they take to the field for their forthcoming Scottish Schools Bowl quarter-final this month.

The under-16 side has ploughed through the rounds to win a Glasgow district final against Biggar, which qualified them for the quarter-final stage at national level.

The talented squad, made up of players from Oban, Mull and Mid Argyll, features three Glasgow district players.

However, coach Murray Hamilton admitted the geographical difficulties in organising regular training sessions hampers scrums and set-piece moves.

To try to address that issue

#### RUGBY

the team's coaches have called on Glasgow region performance manager Nick Humphries to put the boys through their paces.

Nick works with elite youth players, including Oban Lorne's Magnus Bradbury, who plays for the under-16 team, and will lead a training session the day before the quarter final against Firhill High School on February 25.

Murray said: 'Because our players are from all over Argyll it is difficult to have training sessions on so we are sometimes lacking in our scrums and set pieces.'

The match kicks off at 2pm.

## Owzatt for a great PE lesson

#### CRICKET

LAST week, P7 pupils from St Columba's Primary visited Atlantis Leisure for a cricket taster session.

Three members of the Oban Cricket Club were on-hand to show the pupils the skills required to become a successful cricketer.

#### CRICKET

Luke Walton and Linda Gitonga were named 'Pupils of the Day' and the remaining youngsters were delighted that there will be an inter-schools competition on Thursday, March 3.

**Weather**  
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**Thursday**  
Sunny.  
Winds light, east, south easterly.  
Temperatures 3°C to 7°C

**Friday**  
Heavy rain.  
Winds moderate, south, south easterly.  
Temperatures 3°C to 8°C.

**Weekend Outlook**  
Sunny.  
Winds moderate, southerly.  
Temperatures 4°C to 6°C.

**Ferry Crossings/Sea States**  
Oban to Barra/South Uist - Moderate  
Oban to Coll/Tiree - As Above  
Kennacraig to Islay - As Above

**Tides**  
Sponsored by **NANCY BLACK** Ships' Chandler  
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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, February 10, 2011** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur 03.26	1.7 09.29 3.3	16.07 1.8 21.38 3.2
Fri 04.03	1.9 10.11 3.1	17.06 1.9 22.25 3.0
Sat 05.11	2.0 11.17 2.9	18.21 2.0 23.37 2.9
Sun 06.51	2.1 14.24 2.9	19.38 1.9 *** **
Mon 02.22	2.9 08.32 1.9	15.30 3.1 20.48 1.6
Tues 03.32	3.2 09.57 1.6	16.15 3.4 21.48 1.3
Wed 04.18	3.5 10.47 1.2	16.54 3.6 22.38 0.9

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardershaig	-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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