

# The Oban Times

## & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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**SCOTTISH HOTEL AWARDS**  
2017 regional winners

# THE BRIDEGUIDE

PART 1 - INSIDE THIS WEEK

## Soroba residents' rat surprise

**DAVID MCPHEE**  
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk

A SOROBA couple were surprised last week after their dog captured a rat outside their close in Colonsay Terrace.

However, this was not the only shock Sheila and Andy Brown received.

Upon going on to Argyll and Bute Council's website, Mrs Brown discovered that it would cost them £76.35 to call out a pest control officer.

She labelled this charge 'ridiculous' and said: 'If I did not have dogs, I would want them to check out my house and I imagine everyone else [in the block of flats] would too. That would be more than £600. It is ludicrous.'

'If they had not mucked up things with the bins and created this rat paradise there would not be rats there. There never was before and there have been bins there for years.'

'I hope the councillors do what they said to me they would do and get something done about it quickly because it is a health hazard.'

The couple share two large general waste bins and one recycling bin with seven other households.

The general, grey, bins are emptied every three weeks following the changes to the refuse collections in November last year.

Mrs Brown and her husband have two dogs and it was their Staffordshire bull terrier who was quick enough to catch the rodent.

Sheila added: '[Mr Brown] just let the dogs out for a pee and the younger dog's nose went up and she shot off and growled.'

'She normally leaves some-

thing alone if you shout her, but she wouldn't and she came back with a rat in her mouth.'

The couple's neighbour has also had an encounter with a rat.

'The girl upstairs has three children under five,' Mrs Brown added. 'She said she could hear something in her cupboard and my neighbour, who has a small terrier dog, went to look and they found a rat.'

'It is unlikely I will get a rat in the house because I have the dogs, but my neighbour upstairs is terrified.'

'It is only going to get worse because it is going to get warmer. The smell is going to travel further and it is going to attract more rats and they will breed.'

'They have a very good source of food; it is not going to get better until someone does something about the bins situation.'

Community councillor and former Soroba resident Sean MacIntyre said: 'I would hope the council would look at the schedule again for Soroba.'

'The problem needs addressed. It is ludicrous. The schedule needs updated to two-weekly uplifts.'

'I know that there are rats about, but I am getting reports about people seeing them during the day.'

'They contacted the council and were told they would have to pay around £76 [to have pest control come out].'

'Some families can't afford that. I know nothing comes free in this world, but this is caused by the lack of uplifts. It needs to be addressed.'

'I was up there on Saturday and the bins were emptied on Wednesday and two out of six were full. I really do think Soroba is unlike anywhere else in the town.'



This rat was caught in their garden by the Brown's Staffordshire bull terrier.

Councillor for Oban South and the Isles Neil MacIntyre said: 'We know it is a mess. You have to put your hands up. I take full responsibility. I voted for it and we are going to have to fix it.'

Fellow area councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'We did receive complaints. The pest control officer did visit the area and

took the appropriate actions. 'I fully understand this problem could get worse. At present we are working with Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) to see about additional uplifts. Until that work is completed we will be monitoring the area weekly to try and prevent this happening again. I have sympathy

with the residents of Soroba. 'The pest control officer visited the area at my request, I would ask other residents if they are concerned about rats to contact me directly on 01546 604305.'

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'We introduced the new refuse and recycling service to 47,000

properties across Argyll and Bute, which has been a huge change for our communities.'

'It is working well in most areas and we would like to thank people for their patience and for working with us to help increase recycling.'

'We will arrange for additional uplifts to deal with overflowing bins and apologise for any inconvenience.'

'We are grateful to residents for their patience.'

'The total volume of the large general waste bins exceeds the volume of storage when compared to a standard green bin being provided to each individual property.'

'We are working with ACHA to resolve the issues being experienced and identify areas where additional bins can be stored. There is limited space on the street without compromising safety.'

'We sought public health advice from the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency when we were thinking about a three-weekly model.'

'We were advised that there should not be any increased risk to public health as long as existing common sense standards are followed such as wrapping waste and keeping the lids of bins firmly closed.'

'Anyone who is concerned should contact the property owner or their landlord in the first instance. The council can provide eradication services, for which a fee is payable.'

Oban's councillors and community councillors are due to discuss Soroba's overflowing bins at a meeting with Argyll and Bute Council's head of service on Thursday February 9 at 10.30am in ACHA offices. The meeting is not open to the public, but the press are invited to attend.

## TIMESLINE



Magnus MacFarlane Barrow with Brendan O'Hara MP.

## Charity founder honoured

THE EXTRAORDINARY work of Argyll man Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, founder of Mary's Meals, was recognised at an award ceremony in the Palace of Westminster on Tuesday February 7.

The 'Westminster Award for Human Life, Human Rights and Human Dignity' recognises outstanding contribution and achievements of individuals that safeguard the dignity and right to life of human beings.

## Oban Times' team's fundraiser update

A TEAM of 10 *Oban Times* staff walking one million steps this month to raise money for Cancer Research UK have already raised £690 of their £1,000 target and are 6,183 steps ahead of schedule.

The challenge is being measured by step-counter devices such as Fitbits, which showed team member Louise Steele walked 13,032 steps on Monday alone. To donate, visit OTmillion steps at [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com).



**EE·USK**

### À la carte menu

A seafood cocktail .....£9.95  
The local ALL stars ,crab ,lobster and prawns.  
Oyster Thermidor .....£10.95  
6 loch Creran oysters baked in a Thermidor sauce  
Crab Sushi .....£7.95  
Luing crab with with an Oriental Twist.

Surf and Turf. ....28.95  
Ally Jacksons ribeye with local prawns and queenies  
Barra Scallops.....19.95  
King scallops with borlotti beans and Boulangere potato  
Whole Turbot.....£23.95  
600-800 g Turbot roasted on the bone with a dill and lemon butter and EEUSK chips

Choc and Baileys cheesecake .....£6.95  
Almond brose .....£6.95

Full menu available

North Pier, Oban. Tel: 565666

## Positive talks despite budget cuts

SAVINGS of £16million are yet to be found in the £22m black hole in Argyll and Bute's health and social care budget.

Argyll and Bute Integration Joint Board (IJB) is facing a deficit of £16.3m in 2017-18, and a further £5.7m in 2018-19, in its annual budget of £256m.

Cost-saving plans to change more services from the hospital to the community have been devised by the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Locality group and a public engagement exercise on these 'difficult choices' will start soon to help inform the IJB's decision.

IJB chairman councillor Kieron Green revealed at Monday's

meeting of the Health and Care Forum in Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital: 'We have to make £22m in savings over the next two years. Of this, we have plans for £5.5m. This should be a relatively easy sell.'

However, referring to the remaining £16m of savings yet to be identified, he said: 'There is lots that is going to be about money - balancing the books.'

Councillor Green told *The Oban Times*: 'If we cannot deliver our statutory obligations, we will have to go back to our parent bodies stating we need extra funds.'

Despite the 'unprecedented' challenges, Dr Richard Wilson,

the locality's primary care clinical lead, appealed to the meeting: 'Let's get positive.'

'This hospital is the most stable rural hospital in rural Scotland, by quite a long way.'

'We are in a very good position. This is a training hospital. This is how we get [doctors] in. It is absolutely vital. We have a number of GPs looking for work in the area.'

'This hospital has the most cost-effective beds in Argyll and Bute.' Councillor Green agreed: 'It costs twice as much to treat someone on Mull than in Oban.'

Annie MacLeod, locality manager, added: 'The hospital was never going to close. We are

making sure we have a good, sustainable, teaching hospital that is secure for years to come.'

We are trying to bring in contracts to make it more attractive to doctors. We are pleased to welcome Alasdair Macmillan, a new surgeon. The diagnostic services we have are second to none.'

A new cardiac ultrasound machine also arrives next week and a new ultrasound scanner for pregnant mothers is expected early this year.

Councillor Elaine Robertson implored: 'We have to start to be positive.'

'We cannot go on undermining.'

Ever since we met you have had me hooked  
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For you my love have sealed my fate.

**EE·USK** **PIAZZA**

**PIAZZA**

### À la carte menu

Trio of Salmon .....£9.95  
Smoked, hot smoked and fresh Scottish salmon with a horseradish cream and salad  
Surf n Turf antipasti.....£9.95  
A small selection of seafood and cured meats  
Mushroom Veloute.....£6.95  
Velvety rich mushroom soup

Steak Diane .....£21.95  
Ally Jacksons finest Bounce sirloin with a cream and mushroom sauce  
Crab Linguine .....£12.95  
Luing crab with garlic and chilli  
Roasted Halibut.....£21.95  
Wild Halibut served on a bed of a leek and cream pasta

Knickerbocker Tuesday .....£6.50  
Selection of ices and fruit marinated in Cointreau  
Tiramisu.....£4.95

Full menu available. No Beat the Clock

North Pier, Oban. Tel: 565666

OT



Left to right: Stewart Laing, Jim McEwan, Andrew Laing and Scott Laing. Photograph: Ralph Dunning.

## Jim tempted out of retirement for new distillery

WHISKY distiller Jim McEwan has been appointed production director of the new Ardnahoe Distillery on Islay - 18 months after he retired.

The Islay-born renowned industry icon, who has 53 years' experience, has been hired by Hunter Laing & Co, the company behind Ardnahoe, the first distillery to be built on Islay for more than a decade.

Ardnahoe is being built on the north-east coast of Islay and will become the ninth distillery on the island. It expects to start distilling whisky in early 2018.

Jim is playing a pivotal role at the distillery for the Laing family - father Stewart and sons Andrew and Scott. The distillery, which will include a visitor centre, café, shop and tasting room, will produce traditional peated Islay single malt.

Jim retired in July 2015 after a prodigious career that began in 1963 and later saw his name become synonymous with both Islay and the whisky industry.

In his last role, he was master distiller at Bruichladdich for 15 years where he produced a series of innovative whiskies including, notably, Octomore, the world's most heavily-peated whisky, as well as revered Islay gin The Botanist.

Prior to that, he spent 38 years in a variety of roles at Bowmore, the distillery he first joined as a 15-year-old apprentice cooper in 1963. While there, he worked in every aspect of the distillery from warehousing and cellar master, to trainee blender, distillery

manager and global brand ambassador.

During his brief retirement, Jim turned his hand once again to gin distilling, spending time in the Australian rainforests sourcing botanicals to help Cape Byron Distillery launch Brookie's Byron Dry Gin.

Jim said: 'I had intended to retire off into the sunset, but I've known Stewart for many years and have always been impressed with Hunter Laing whisky. When the call came in, it really excited me.'

'Then when I visited the distillery site with the Laing family, it absolutely blew me away. It's an incredible spot up on a hill overlooking the Sound of Islay out to Mull in the north and across to Jura. It has to be one of the most beautiful sites for a distillery anywhere in the world.'

'It felt as though the stars were aligning - the amazing location, my history with Islay, my relationship with the Laing family, their passion for the project, the calibre of architect Iain Hepburn, plus my chance to get involved with the design of a distillery for the first time in my career, all made it feel like it was meant to happen.'

Hunter Laing has said it will be taking part in Feis Ile, the Islay Festival of Music and Malt, from May 26 to June 3.

Oban Times  
newsdesk 01631  
568000

# Meet the dynamic team behind Oban's lifeboat

MARTIN LAING  
mlaing@obantimes.co.uk

IT HAS been a busy start to the year for the crew and support staff at Oban lifeboat.

The RNLI station next to Railway Pier has been a hive of activity, with a far higher than usual number of call-outs for January. There were nine emergencies last month alone, compared with a single call-out in January last year and a total of 51 for the whole of 2015.

The past few months have also seen changes, with a new coxswain and mechanic for the lifeboat *Mora Edith MacDonald*.

The new coxswain, Richard Johnson, joined the station at the end of last year when he moved with his family to the West Highlands from Filey in North Yorkshire. Mechanic Tom Kennedy has notched up his first year having arrived in Oban last February from his native Troon, in Ayrshire.

Richard and Tom are the only full-time, paid employees of the RNLI in Oban. They are supported by a team of volunteers, headed by a kenspeckle stalwart of the charity, Billy Forteith, who is lifeboat operations manager. There are other support staff such as press officers, a medical adviser and an enthusiastic fundraising group.

Billy is certainly the best known member of the team, having been volunteering in various capacities for more than 40 years and having his long-standing dedication recognised with the award of the RNLI's gold badge last year.

Of the nine call-outs in January, eight were for medical transfers to Oban from nearby islands and there has been some public criticism of that role for the lifeboat.

However, there is absolutely no doubt in Richard's or Billy's minds that it is necessary and a proper part of the RNLI's remit.

Billy said: 'It's been a bit of



Tom Kennedy, Billy Forteith and Richard Johnson aboard the *Mora Edith MacDonald*. 16\_T06Lifeboat2

an unusual start to the year but it's down to circumstances, sometimes owing to the weather and visibility or the availability of the helicopter.'

Richard added: 'It's about prioritising. If, for example, we were on our way to Mull and a vessel shouted 'mayday', we would deviate to that. And there are other lifeboat stations - you've also got Islay and Tobermory.'

'With a medical transfer, we are never really more than half an hour from our home port so we could get back out quite quickly.'

'Medical transfers fit right in with the RNLI's vision of community lifesaving. If someone in the community is going to benefit from us transferring them from one of the islands, then we are duty-bound to do that. I certainly see it as part of our job.'

Billy who, as lifeboat manager, ultimately makes the call on whether to respond or not, concurs. 'We are tasked to do a job and just get on with it,' he said. 'It's down to me to decide on the launching of the boat and I will

ask all the relevant questions. If I deem it is inappropriate, we won't do it.'

Richard added: 'There will be a lot of considerations that will have been explored such as whether we can get an ambulance there and back by ferry or if we can get an air ambulance to do it before we launch.'

Billy is a former deputy coxswain but brought his days of going out on the boat to a close in 2006 as a result of health problems. 'I had to retire because of a heart condition,' he explained. 'I started in 1972 so I've been through the whole spectrum and when I retired I became operations manager.'

Richard, who is married to Sara with whom he has toddler Sebastian, says he is loving his new role at Oban, though the commitment required would be daunting for most people. 'Tom and I work a basic Monday to Friday, nine till five, with two weekends off a month but obviously we are on standby and a lot of the call-outs come at night. It's just part of the job and we accept that. If I want to leave town, even for an hour,

I've got to make sure one of my deputies can cover.'

Richard was enticed to Oban by a family connection and the prospect of taking over at a busy station.

'I saw the job advertised up here and I fancied a change. I was looking for a different lifestyle and my brother is up here working for CalMac.'

'For me, it's a new crew and a new challenge. It's a very good crew and a busy station, which is always appealing. The regular call-outs are good for the crew rotation as it means everyone gets involved and can build their skills. It's a station that allows crews to develop very quickly.'

For Tom, making the move north with wife Kirsty was an opportunity to change things for the better.

'I was working on farms and was deputy mechanic on the Troon lifeboat,' he said. 'But I wasn't particularly happy in my job so I decided to come up here and I've been really enjoying Oban.'

'Without the support of your family, you couldn't do this job because it's very tiring.'

## Organisations join forces in energy efficiency drive

WESTERN Isles Development Trust has agreed to work with Community Energy Scotland to help Western Isles community groups to become more energy efficient and progress with renewable energy schemes over a two-year period.

Community groups are invited to apply for funding for projects focusing on tackling fuel poverty and promoting renewable energy sources.

Further information can be found on either organisation's website.



## Iona glamping pods given go ahead

TEN GLAMPING pods on the Isle of Iona have been given planning permission by Argyll and Bute Council.

The application, submitted by Glen MacDonald of Iona, proposed 'camping facilities, including 10 glamping pods with associated external decks, plus a services building, septic tank and new vehicle access on land south of Bishops Walk.'

One supporter from Fionnphort hailed the 'significant investment in tourism development for Iona and the Ross of Mull' and the importance of 'diversifying the range of accommodation for visitors on modest budgets'.

One objector, however, while not against 'the principal of the campsite', argued this proposal would be 'detrimental'.

'Iona is a very special island,' he said, 'and any new buildings should be carefully considered, more so than many other places.'

The 'closely packed', 'off-the-shelf pre-fabricated timber units', he added, 'will give the impression of a holiday park. They have very little architectural merit and bear no resemblance to the architectural quality of the island. It will be visible from the abbey grounds.'

'I would question the requirement for 10 of these pods, which seems an over-development.'

Historic Scotland said the site 'should have a relatively low, unobtrusive profile in the landscape' and that it lies '200m away from the most significant views' from Iona Abbey.

The National Trust for Scotland 'recognise[d] the need and welcome[d] sustainable business proposals that will help support the island economy'.

However it called for an area capacity evaluation to assess the capacity of the landscape to absorb the 'medium-sized development'.

## Hugh Smith's letter from Islay

### New post for distiller Jim McEwan

JIM MCEWAN, master distiller at Bruichladdich Distillery until his retirement 18 months ago, is to be production director at Ardnahoe. See article above left.

We all wish Jim well as he goes on to make his own telling mark at Ardnahoe.

### Port Mòr Burns lunch

MEMBERS of Port Mòr Lunch Club paid tribute to Scotland's national bard at a Burns' Lunch at their Port Charlotte venue.

Everyone was welcomed by club member Mike Senior who chaired the proceedings and the Selkirk Grace was honoured by Trevor Harvey.

The 'great chieftain', carried aloft by hostess Debbie Mack, was piped by James MacEachern to pride of place where it was lustily addressed by the knife-wielding Seonaid Baker.

I proposed the toast to the Immortal Memory and John MacIntyre attended to 'the lassies' with his customary good humour. This brought a ready response from club member Moira MacGillivray who, as well as being the moving force behind the event, poetically put Tam o' Shanter in his place.

Rona MacKenzie fulsomely praised the organisers and the participants including singers Bronwen Currie, Lynn MacDonald and Andrew McCowan, whose selection of Burns' favourites went down a treat.

### Loch Gorm Castle

LOCH Gorm in the Kilchoman district and situated a little over a mile from Islay's western Atlantic coast is the largest body of fresh water on the



The unassuming Eilean Mòr, which houses what little remains of Loch Gorm castle.

island. Standing a few hundred metres from the loch's south-east shore is Eilean Mòr which houses what little remains of Loch Gorm castle.

It had a chequered history and was built as a stronghold and regular fort for the ruling MacDonald dynasty.

In the late 16th and early 17th century, the island castle played a prominent role in the continuing conflict between the MacDonalds of Islay and the Mull MacLeans of Duart who kept a garrison at the Loch Gorm fort even if its tenure was of short duration.

The castle became an operational base for further inter-clan warfare before it was severely damaged by Lord Ochiltree and the King's soldiers in 1608.

A further rebellion in 1614 saw a resurgence of military action at Loch Gorm before the island fortress was

retaken by the MacDonalds in 1615 and who, shortly afterwards, finally surrendered to the Earl of Argyll.

Despite the end of the hostilities, the island stronghold retained a military presence and a private garrison was maintained on Eilean Mòr until the early 1640s.

Today, little remains of the castle. What is left is almost completely covered with vegetation which is also steadily encroaching on the 48 metre wide island.

The waters of the loch are now a magnet for trout fishermen but they once witnessed less tranquil scenes involving fighting, bloodshed and intrigue.

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

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## Former soldier jailed for assault

AN OBAN ex-soldier has been jailed for punching a man who asked for his partner's phone number. Ross Steven MacLellan, 26, of 8c Corran Brae, Oban, pleaded guilty to assaulting the man on January 22 by punching him on the head. Procurator Alasdair Shaw told Oban Sheriff Court last Wednesday the incident followed a remark to MacLellan's partner at a public house in Oban.

'The accused took umbrage and challenged [the complainer] to a fight,' said Mr Shaw. '[The complainer] sensibly refused and left the pub.'

'He goes across the road to [another bar], where, 15 minutes later, the accused entered and immediately went up to the complainer and punched him on the head.'

Defence agent Jane McLaren said: 'The remark was that he wanted to go up the road with her and that her phone number was asked for. He accepts he went back to the bar to punch [him].'

Sheriff Ruth Anderson asked: 'He asked someone where he was? It is getting worse, Ms McLaren.'

Ms McLaren acknowledged the accused's 'lengthy and appalling record': 'He has clearly had his own drug issues. Up until 2011, they have been all drug related. Further back he does have breaches of the peace and assault charges.'

She said MacLellan had served in the army for three and a half years from 2006, including six months in Afghanistan in 2008.

'He is on medication for mental health issues,' she added, 'for post traumatic stress disorder. It seems recently he has been doing relatively well dealing with his drug problem, now he is in a relationship with his partner.'

Sentencing, Ruth Anderson said: 'He is going to prison today.'

'You have a lengthy and appalling record. This is another example. The sentence would have been six months. I am reducing it to four months, because of your plea at the first opportunity.'

## Former instructor fell asleep at the wheel

A FORMER driving instructor who fell asleep at the wheel after an appointment to fit a new leg has been fined £300.

Gordon Cowan Cruikshank, 68, of 35 Lochnell Road, Dunbeg, admitted driving carelessly on August 10, when he fell asleep while driving his vehicle on the A85 near Taynuilt, causing it to enter a ditch.

Procurator fiscal Alasdair Shaw told Oban Sheriff Court on Wednesday February 1 that 'the accused was driving at 30 to 35mph [and] was not injured'.

Defence agent Edward Thornton said Cruikshank had 'an excellent driving history' since 1968, and had worked as a driving instructor. 'He lost his leg in an accident where he was the innocent victim,' he added.

Mr Thornton explained Cruikshank was due to get a new leg and was driving back from an appointment at a hospital in Glasgow when he began to feel tired at Bridge of Awe, and intended to pull in.

'The next recollection he had was he was in the ditch,' said Mr Thornton.

Sentencing, Sheriff Ruth Anderson said: 'It is an unfortunate incident against an exemplary driving licence.'

She fined Cruikshank £300 and imposed six penalty points.

# Councillor apologises over 'disused scrap yard' row

**SANDY NEIL**  
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

AN OBAN councillor has apologised after neighbours objected to his 'despicable' plans to keep a 'dangerous', 'shambolic heap of junk' next to their homes.

In January, Oban North and Lorn councillor Iain MacLean applied to Argyll and Bute Council for a certificate of lawfulness to use his land by Falls View Apartments in North Connel for 'general storage purposes'.

Since then the application has drawn many objections, including from his fellow councillor Kieron Green who argued residents 'are extremely disappointed by the failure of the applicant to comply with polite requests, and more recently a voluntary arrangement, with the council to tidy the site.'

'This situation has been ongoing for many years now, with residents trusting the applicant would be true to his word. The impression now given, that the applicant will do anything to shirk responsibility and claiming that this has been tolerated as ground used for general storage, reflects badly both on him, and unfortunately by extension on the council as a whole due to his connection.'

'This cannot be tolerated any longer and a firm signal must be sent that the planning system



Neighbours have objected to Iain MacLean's plans to keep a 'shambolic heap of junk' next to their homes in North Connel.



cannot be abused in this manner.'

Immediate neighbours have also lodged objections, with one arguing: 'We have had to put up with views of decaying caravans, a portacabin, dead cars and junk which would make Steptoe's yard look organised. Please Mr MacLean start being respectful of your neighbours.'

Another added: 'This shambolic heap of junk should never have been allowed to accumulate in an established residential area.'

Others said: 'The area is already full of scrap and the

council has already asked the owner to tidy up this and nearby scrap cars. So far the order has not been complied with.'

'Making this a legal piece of ground for further storage is a disgrace,' another neighbour agreed: 'Not only does it devalue my and neighbouring properties, it is also a hazard for my children to play in locally and an eye-sore.'

One neighbour 100m away deemed the site 'full of debris likely to cause vermin infestation and disease': 'I am friends of people who are living in the flats and know first hand how their lives are affected by the inconsideration of this man. For a councillor to act in this roughshod way is despicable. What he is storing is dangerous and a health hazard and envi-

ronmental hazard and [I] do not want this to spread to other land which he owns.'

Another nearby called it a 'disused scrap yard' and a 'blight on the local amenity', 'clearly visible from both Connel and North Connel, adding: 'If this application is supported then you will be opening the flood gates for others and encouraging what is no better than fly tipping.'

'I think it is a disgrace that an elected official, paid from the public purse, has such disregard for the area in which we all live.'

'At a time of cuts to refuse collections and the increasing problem of fly-tipping, surely this application must be refused and an enforcement order put in place to have all the rubbish removed without further delay.'

Ardchattan community councillor Breege Smyth said: 'It would be an abuse of the planning system to make legal what is in practise a rubbish dump and scrap yard.'

Responding to these objections, Mr MacLean told *The Oban Times*: 'I am acutely aware of neighbouring concerns and wish to publicly profusely apologise to everyone for the delays in the regularising process to achieve tidy storage, in an area used as such for many, many years.'

'This has been, in the main, due to circumstances which I have been unable to control.'

## Sentence deferred on Oban teenager

AN OBAN teenager has admitted drug dealing after being caught with £1,000 worth of cannabis in his bedroom.

John Samuel Scott, 18, of 10 Hazeldean Crescent, Oban, pleaded guilty to being concerned in the supply of herbal cannabis, a controlled drug, on January 18.

Procurator fiscal Alasdair Shaw told Oban Sheriff Court on Wednesday February 1 that 'police attended the home address of the accused,' and 'within the bedroom they found 12 wraps and £100 within a plastic bag.'

Mr Shaw said officers also found £1,390 in cash and 'a set of digital scales with green herbal matter on it, and a tick list'. He added that 'the combined total was 71.79g, with an approximate street value of £1,000.'

Defending, Jane McLaren said: 'Mr Scott made a full and frank admission to police. He tells me he is himself a cannabis user and he would sell it to friends. He was funding his own habit.'

Sheriff Ruth Anderson said: 'This is a serious matter. I shall call for a criminal justice social work report.'

Sentencing was deferred until February 28.

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## Top dog Lonan generously gifts whisky to owner

Lonan the Spaniel was celebrating this week after winning the *West Coast Review* magazine's sudoku competition. The top dog was presented with bottle of Oban whisky.

Lonan's owner, Martin Wilson of Oban, who completed the puzzle but filled in his dog's name on the entry form, will do his part drinking the single malt, while four-year-old Lonan, named after Glen Lonan, continues to enjoy chasing balls in the mud. Collecting his prize at *The Oban Times* office, the 62-year-old former teacher apologised for



THE OBAN TIMES

Lonan's muddy paws and explained that, since he [Martin] won the fendishly difficult sudoku challenge a year ago, he's been generously entering Lonan instead - and putting his brother's dog on raffle tickets.



## Council launches new procurement strategy to support changes

ARGYLL and Bute Council has launched its new procurement strategy which will guide the way it buys goods and services over the next year, supporting change and innovation as the council continues with its ambitious transformation agenda.

Councillor Dick Walsh, Policy Lead for Customer Services, said: 'The new strategy puts people in Argyll and Bute first. They are at the heart of what we do. This is a time of unprecedented challenge for local government finances.'

'As we move forward, effective procurement will become even more important, making sure we can get the very best value for the goods and services we buy in so that we can continue to support the services our communities have told us matter most to them.'

'The document covers the rest of this financial year and the next one. Thereafter we will be updating it annually, with feedback from our customers being crucial to that process.'

'Our procurement team has and continues to save the council money wherever possible, money that can then be used for frontline services.'

'The team also works hard to support the local economy, awarding over a third of council contracts to local businesses last year, amounting to 67 individual contract awards, and there are now more than 100 businesses on our supplier development programme.'

The strategy is available to view at: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-and-government/plans-policies-and-key-documents](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-and-government/plans-policies-and-key-documents)

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## Trump rally in Oban sparks debate

AN ANTI-TRUMP rally in Oban last week attracted both support and criticism from local residents.

The 'Argyll against Trump' rally, demanding President Donald Trump end his 'Muslim travel ban' and the UK Government cancels Mr Trump's state visit, was held in Stafford Street last Thursday.

Around 20 protestors gathered in the rain, responding to a Facebook page posted by Oban resident William Mohieddeen, a 30-year-old student engagement assistant for the Highlands and Islands Students' Association.

Explaining his motivation, Mr Mohieddeen wrote: 'US President Donald Trump has moved quickly to enact a violent, racist and misogynistic course for Government... and the UK Prime Minister, Theresa May, is fully behind him.'

'This is not ordinary times - it's important that around the country, as around the world, people who share the values of human understanding, friendship, care and solidarity express their opposition to Trump's actions.'

On the night, protestors were invited to speak. Oban councillor Kieron Green began: 'Trump is against everything we stand for in the town. We as a society cannot support him.'

Councillor Elaine Robertson added: 'This is absolutely horrific. It breeds hatred and contempt of democracy.'

Another protestor, Alastair MacGregor, said: 'If America calls itself the leader of the free world, it should look at itself in the mirror and cry.'

Councillor Roddy McCuish began by quoting an inscription on the Statue of Liberty, 'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses', and argued: 'The credibility of this country is far more important than any trade deal. Some say it will not affect anyone in Oban. It affects us all.'

The rally drew an angry reaction from a passer-by, who began shouting and swearing.

One protestor, Mairi Stones, engaged the man in conversation, and said afterwards: 'He was starting to get aggressive. I do not think it was the way forward to meet aggression with aggression. That guy is scared.'

The rally also drew criticism on Facebook as 'factually incorrect', 'a total joke', 'a wind-up' and 'pointless'.

# Oban campaigner backs Yazidi woman's plea to First Minister

**SANDY NEIL**  
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

A WOMAN who survived sexual slavery by ISIS has been joined by local campaigners to ask Scotland's First Minister and Argyll residents to help persecuted Yazidi refugees.

The Yazidis, a Kurdish-speaking people, native to Iraq and Syria and who practise an ancient religion combining Christianity, Islam and Zoroastrianism, are suffering in an ongoing genocide at the hands of fundamentalist jihadists of 'Islamic State of Iraq and Syria', called ISIS or Daesh.

In April, Westminster MPs voted unanimously, 278 to zero, to declare ISIS' atrocities a genocide.

Campaigners for the global Yazidi NGO, Yazda, are calling on governments to investigate and prosecute Isis' crimes and establish a safe zone to protect vulnerable minorities.

Their website states the genocide of August 2014 has 'resulted in the death of 3,000-5,000 civilians, the abduction of 5,000-7,000, mostly women and children and the displacement of 400,000 people from the Yazidi homelands.'

Last week Yazidi human rights activists Nadia Murad, 22, visited Holyrood with Yazda delegates to ask the First Minister Nicola Sturgeon to help resettle survivors of Daesh's violence and degradation.

Earlier in November, Argyll



Above: First Minister Nicola Sturgeon learned about Nadia Murad's experiences as a survivor of human trafficking and outlined Scotland's progress in tackling these crimes of exploitation and in supporting the victims. Right: from left, Michael Russell MSP welcomes Nadia Murad and Yazda campaigners Fiona Bennett, Anna Duncan and Ahmed Khudida.



and Bute SNP MP Brendan O'Hara also implored the UK Government to help 'one of the most abused and vulnerable groups of people on this earth,'

and to not let them simply be 'subsumed into the greater refugee crisis.'

Mr O'Hara recounted Nadia's first-hand testimony to the House of Commons, saying:

'Until August 2014, Nadia lived quietly in the village of Kocho with her mother, her brothers and her sisters. Then Daesh arrived, with the sole intention of completely destroying that small community through murder, rape and kidnap.'

'Nadia told us in her own words that, 'They used rape as the means of destruction for Yazidi women and girls, ensuring these women will never return to a normal life'.

'Days after Nadia was taken captive, she had to watch from a school building as six of her brothers were executed. She was given to a Daesh fighter. She was repeatedly tortured and raped by the man, before one night, in desperation, she tried to escape.'

'She was caught and punished. She said, about the man: 'He beat me up, forced me to undress and put me in a room with six militants. They continued to commit crimes to my body until I became unconscious.'

'Three months later, remarkably, and showing incredible courage, she attempted another escape. This time she was successful and is now resettled in Germany.'

Tragically, he added, Nadia's story is far from unique.

'Rather than hiding away from the world, she has devoted her life to highlighting the plight of the people of her community, pleading with the world not to turn its back on them. Nadia Murad is, without

doubt, one of the bravest and most courageous people I have ever met or, indeed, am likely ever to meet.'

Nadia, now a UN Goodwill Ambassador, was joined in the First Minister's office by Yazda UK board member Fiona Bennett from Ardochattan, who first contacted Mr O'Hara about the Yazidis' plight, and locally has been raising awareness and funds for the cause.

Ms Bennett said of the humanitarian crisis: 'There is no torture too brutal. Children are being beheaded in front of their parents. Some 3,400 women are still being held as sex slaves. They are being tortured for attempting suicide. Women are asking to be bombed because they cannot take it.'

'People need to know what these people are escaping, what they are taking their families away from. We owe it to the women who are raped and the children enslaved. I want Argyll to get behind a campaign for Yazidis and other minorities who are being tortured.'

Ms Bennett hopes more campaigners will help pressure the UK and Scottish Governments to shelter Yazidi refugees in safety in Britain.

Argyll and Bute SNP MSP Michael Russell said: '[Nadia's] campaign, backed by Fiona, is of immense importance and shows huge courage. The world needs to recognise the huge suffering of many refugees, and our duty to help them wherever they come from.'

## Driver clocked at 100mph

A PORSCHE driver clocked at 100mph on the Arrivain straight has avoided disqualification by one penalty point.

Imran Meraj Farooqi, 41, of Flat 37, Bronwen Court, Grove End Road, London, pleaded guilty to driving without due care and attention at 100mph on the A85 at Arrivain, where the speed limit is 60mph, on May 29.

Procurator fiscal Alasdair Shaw told Oban Sheriff Court on Wednesday February 1: 'The accused was driving a Porsche Cayenne which, when it approached the straight section,



accelerated hard and made an overtaking manoeuvre. Police recorded the car driving at 100mph.'

Defending, Steven Farmer said: 'It is agreed Mr Farooqi overtook. He recalls three vehicles. He accepts he should not have driven at 100mph. It is all too easy to speed in these cars, particularly when

attempting to overtake.' Sheriff Ruth Anderson said: 'It is a bit of a Roman road.'

Mr Farmer replied: 'It is straight for a kilometre. There was no oncoming traffic.'

Farooqi, he added, had 'no previous convictions' but 'three penalty points'.

Sentencing, Sheriff Anderson said: 'The way I am going to deal with this is to allow you to keep your licence, but you will have to be exceptionally careful.'

'It will put him right at the edge.' She imposed eight penalty points on Farooqi's licence and fined him £400.

## Approval sought for housing strategy

ARGYLL and Bute's Local Housing Strategy, which sets out the council's shared vision and investment priorities for the area's housing sector over the next five years, has been submitted to the Scottish Government for ministerial approval.

The strategy was developed in partnership with the Scottish Government, registered social landlords, Fyne Homes, West Highland Housing Association, Dunbritton Housing Association, Argyll Community Housing Association and other

key stakeholders. It reflects extensive stakeholder and public engagement and builds on the positive achievements of the previous Local Housing Strategy - 2011-2016.

Councillor Robin Currie, the council's policy lead for housing, said: 'This milestone is the result of an ongoing and very productive collaboration between the council and its partners.'

The document can be found at: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategies-consultations-and-research-0#lts](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategies-consultations-and-research-0#lts)

## Speeding biker came to Argyll 'to play'

A BIKER who came to Argyll to 'play' has been disqualified for driving at more than 115mph.

Paul Coleman, 49, of 16 Alloway Crescent, Paisley, pleaded guilty to driving without due care and attention on the A85 near Arrivain on May 29 2016, by driving a motorcycle at 117mph.

Procurator fiscal Alasdair Shaw told Oban Sheriff Court last Wednesday: 'Having been cautioned and charged, he said: 'It's a long straight. That's why I have got a bike like this. I come up here and play.'

Defending, Paul Coyle said: 'This is a grossly excessive speed. He was driving towards Dalmally. A bus indicated it was safe to pass. Mr Coleman pulled out and accelerated to that speed. He accelerated for a bit longer than necessary in hindsight.'

Sheriff Ruth Anderson said: 'He is still going to be disqualified, but not for a year.'

Mr Coyle added: 'This is a road he has driven without mishap for a number of years. He does not remember saying those words.'

Sheriff Anderson responded: 'I understand that the temptation was there.'

'I understand if you are a biker, you are on an open road of cars, you are going to play.'

She disqualified Coleman from driving for three months and fined him £400, to be paid within 20 days.

Sheriff Anderson suggested further measures might be needed to control speed on the Arrivain straight, saying: 'It is 60mph, but the temptation on this stretch is too much to overcome,' she said.

'It might put brakes on some of the driving.'

Mr Shaw replied: 'It keeps us in business.'

'It certainly does,' Sheriff Anderson responded.

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## At Random

MARTIN LAING  
mlaing@obantimes.co.uk

### Trump rally in Oban sparks discussion

THERE was a huge response on The Oban Times Facebook page following a post last Thursday informing readers there was to be an Argyll Against Trump rally in Stafford Street, Oban, that evening.

A small number of hardy souls - probably between 20 and 30 - gathered on a cold, dreich evening to vent their spleens at the new United States president.

A large number of those who commented on our social media platform were incensed that people would demonstrate against Mr Trump, ranting on that those at the rally would be better served protesting about more important issues such as the failing waste collection system in Argyll and Bute.

I have been a vociferous critic of the three-weekly bins schedule but would defend absolutely the right of the protesters to demonstrate against the US head of state.

People can feel strongly about more than one issue and it is quite correct for them to air those opinions in public.

As for those who berated the protesters, we live in a democracy in which people are perfectly entitled to speak out on what they consider to be important issues.

Perhaps instead of chiding them, they should be organising their own rallies on the topics they believe to be more important.

No, I don't suppose for a minute that the new administration will alter one iota of its governmental programme, but hats off to those who turned out last week for having the courage of their convictions and making them known.



Around 20 protestors, including councillors, attended the rally.

### Former Argyll Hotel site is a real eyesore

WHAT is happening with the old Argyll Hotel site?

The fenced-off derelict area is in a key part of the town, right behind the Oban Inn and before the Regent Hotel on the Esplanade.

The old Argyll Hotel was demolished at the end of December 2011 and the plot has been sadly abandoned since.

But the security fencing around the vacant lot has become damaged and the site is litter-strewn.

Now we are into February and looking forward to spring, the tourist season is imminent.

It would do Oban's reputation no good at all for the Argyll Hotel site to remain an eyesore.

It would be great if an entrepreneur came up with a plan to build there but, at the very least, whoever is responsible for the site should tidy it up and make it secure again.

### Oban Times team steps out for charity

AS WE reported last week, 10 of my colleagues - no, I am not one of charity fundraising team - are walking one million steps this month to raise cash for Cancer Research UK.

The fundraising challenge was the idea of the company's production manager Andy Bruce, who many people will know as the frontman of local band The Signal Fires.

It's an excellent challenge and I wish them all well.

Why not get behind the walkers and help them smash their target of £1,000.

To donate, go to [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/OTmillionsteps](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/OTmillionsteps).

### What do you think?

Write to The Oban Times, Crannog Lane, Oban, PA34 4 HB, or by email to [mlaing@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:mlaing@obantimes.co.uk).

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## Western Isles leader welcomes ferry ruling

THE EUROPEAN Commission has informed the Scottish Government that in its view an exemption to current state aid rules could now allow the direct award of ferry services contracts to a public sector operator.

Commenting on the announcement by Scotland's Transport Minister Humza Yousaf MSP, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar leader Councillor Angus Campbell, said: 'We very much welcome this development.'

'While it has taken a long time to reach this stage, it is very pleasing to hear that our island ferry services may no longer need to go out to tender, allowing more resources to be spent on services rather than expensive tendering processes.'

'We look forward to continuing our constructive working relationship on this issue with both Caledonian MacBrayne and the Scottish Government.'



Leader Dick Walsh.

## Council launches safety strategy

ARGYLL and Bute Council has launched its Community Safety Strategy 2016-20.

Developed by the Strategic Community Safety Co-ordinating and Tasking Partnership, the strategy is the basis from which community safety partners and communities will work together to ensure 'safer and stronger communities' in line with the Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement.

Following an assessment of community safety issues, the strategy has identified the following four priorities:

- Tackle disorder, anti-social behaviour and violence.
- Promote safer communities and the personal safety of the young, elderly and vulnerable groups.
- Protect the natural and built environment
- Encourage safer road use

Leader of Argyll and Bute Council, Councillor Dick Walsh said: 'The launch of Community Safety Strategy 2016-20 is extremely welcoming.'

'Argyll and Bute is a safe place to live and visit. It has a very low crime rate but, nevertheless, there are localised issues which impact on community safety such as anti-social behaviour and vandalism. We want to do all we can to combat issues such as these.'

'This strategy will see a range of partners coming together to achieve the community safety outcomes through individual action within their service plans, as well as working together and with communities.'

'Actions will be developed for each outcome which will be underpinned by a problem solving approach with a balanced focus on prevention, intervention and enforcement measures.'

'It is a positive measure and one which I look forward seeing progress.'

For further information contact [communitysafety@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

# Care-at-home review launched in bid to improve service

**SANDY NEIL**  
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

A REVIEW of home care in Oban and Lorn, which totals 7,000 visits per week, is under way.

Home care services have reduced in Oban and Lorn over the last year, a meeting of the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) heard at Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital on Monday evening (February 6).

Pamela MacLeod, local area

manager, cited underlying factors in a presentation, including recruitment and retention of staff, increasing demand and more complex care requirements.

The problem has been particularly difficult in Dunollie, Ganavan, Dalmally, Taynuilt, Connel, North Connel, Benderloch, Barcaldine and on the back road between Oban and Connel, she explained.

'Lots of our carers do not drive,' she said. 'We are sending carers from Oban to all these places. Can we make them more localised?' She confirmed later

that carers do get paid travel time.

Across Oban and Lorn, she continued, 258 clients are receiving care-at-home services, totalling on average 3,361.5 hours of support each week.

Since 2013, care-at-home services have been provided externally in Oban and Lorn, from Carr Gomm, Care Plus, Carers Direct and Crossroads.

The review, she said, will evaluate and encourage a roll-out of the Appin and Lismore Community Care Scheme: an innovative 'social enterprise' model of home care that em-

ploys local carers to deliver care to local people and has now recruited 11 staff. It will also investigate the total spend and terms and conditions of current contracts and 'compare current costs against costs of similar service delivered internally'.

An HSCP spokesperson added: 'We are currently in the process of reviewing how the care-at-home service is provided.'

'We want to ensure that the model of care meets the needs of those individuals requiring the service and that we also get value for money from our exter-

nal providers. We are also keen to highlight the good work that care staff carry out on a daily basis, but at the same time we do need to highlight there have been a number of significant challenges facing the service.'

'These include the recruitment and retention of staff, the increase both in the number of individuals requiring care and those who have complex care requirements, as well as the challenge in delivering care at home across a remote and rural area such as Oban and Lorn.'

'One of the main pressures facing the service has been the

retention of staff and we hope the recent agreement between the providers and the HSCP to introduce the living wage for staff will significantly reduce staff turnover while at the same time assist with the recruitment of new staff.'

'We are also working closely with the providers on a range of other recruitment initiatives and we will soon be launching neighbourhood recruitment fairs across the Oban and Lorn areas, as well as promoting the service at a Scottish Government recruitment fair at the Corran Halls in March.'

## Coll youngsters celebrate the Bard



PUPILS from Arinagour Primary School on the Isle of Coll attended their annual Burns Supper at the Island Café on the national bard's

birthday, Wednesday January 25.

All pupils wore a kilt for the ceremony, with those that didn't have their own wearing

some supplied by school secretary Mrs Fay Anderson.

The children recited poems, sang songs, played recorders and cello, danced the High-

land Fling and, honouring tradition across the land, gave the Address to a Haggis, the immortal memory and toasted the lads and lassies.

## Health forum to hold elections

ARGYLL and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership is to hold an election to find a chairman and vice chairman for the Mid Argyll Health and Care Forum (HCF).

Caroline Champion, public involvement manager for Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership, said: 'The Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership recognises and values the role that Health and Care Forum members have in the redesign, development and delivery of services in their locality.'

'Members of Mid Argyll HCF continue to significantly contribute to and influence the work of the HSCP particularly in representing the views of the public and the people who use our health and social care services.'

'As chairman and vice chairman of Mid Argyll HCF, the elected candidates will have an important role to play in shaping the future of services in the local area.'

'To be eligible for election to the positions, people should live or have a substantial interest in Mid Argyll, for example working or living locally.'

'If you are interested in self nominating then you must be a registered member of the Argyll and Bute HCF.'

'We aim to include as many people as possible in this election process therefore anyone who is not a registered member but interested in either position



may join at the same time as self nominating.'

Appointment of a chairman and vice chairman will be for either two or three years and candidates can be re-elected up to a maximum of six years.

Individuals who are employed by either NHS Highland, Argyll and Bute Council or the Third Sector will not be eligible to self nominate because of the potential for a conflict of interest.

Current members of the Mid Argyll HCF who fit the eligibility criteria have already been invited to stand for election with letters inviting self nominations mailed out on February 3, with a deadline for receipt of self nomination forms by noon on Monday February 20.

Following the receipt of nominations from interested individuals the ballot papers will be sent out on Monday March 6 to members who fit the eligibility criteria, with the ballot closing at noon on Monday April 3.

An independent witness will oversee the opening and counting of the ballot papers.

All candidates will be notified of the outcome on the same day and the results will be published on the HSCP website on Tuesday April 4.

## £70,000 improvements on A82 to start on Monday

MOTORISTS using the A82 between Inverarnan and Crianlarch are to benefit from an improved road surface as £70,000 worth of resurfacing works are carried out next week.

Works on the 5km section of the A82 north of Inverarnan will begin on Monday February 13 and are expected to take up to three days to complete.

The work will be carried out between 7am and 7pm each day.

The road will remain open, however as a result of the limited road width through this section a convoy traffic management system will be put

in place to ensure the safety of road workers and motorists.

Traffic management will be removed outwith working hours, but a reduced speed limit of 30mph will remain in place as traffic will be running over a temporary surface.

Eddie Ross, BEAR Scotland's Representative for the North West, said: 'These essential resurfacing works will upgrade the existing road surface, greatly improving the ride quality and safety for road users.'

'We've scheduled these works to take place ahead of the busy

tourist season to minimise any impact to motorists and the local economy, and encourage motorists to follow any traffic management signs in place for their safety.'

'We thank motorists for their patience in advance and would also encourage them to plan ahead before setting out by checking the Traffic Scotland website for up to date travel information.'

Real-time journey planning information can be obtained by visiting [www.trafficscotland.org](http://www.trafficscotland.org) or Twitter @trafficscotland.

## Comedy coach to deliver unique XPONorth class

XPONorth (Writing and Publishing) will run a new one-day comedy writing workshop with leading comedy coach Logan Murray - but places are limited to just six lucky participants.

Delivering what is widely regarded as the most successful comedy course in Europe, Murray has taught Greg Davies, Andi Osho, Rhod Gilbert, Josh Widdicombe, Diane Morgan, Marcel Leont and Kavan Novak.

Comedy, like any other art form, is a craft - there are tips and techniques to be learned.

Peter Urpeth, Director (Writing and Publishing),

XPONorth said: 'Comedy is often considered to be one of the hardest skills for writers working in any genre or form to master.'

'But comedy is a craft that has developed with forms and structures that can be understood and really enable writers and performers to develop their work.'

The workshop takes place in a controlled and supportive environment and is suitable for writers (and writer/performers, including stand-up) seeking to advance their comedy writing and ideas.

From finding your creative

inspiration to learning the building blocks of jokes, this workshop will help you discover your unique comic voice.

Murray's workshop, *Unlock your inner idiot for fun and profit!*, takes place at Eden Court Theatre, Inverness, on Thursday April 20.

Places are limited and open only to applicants living in the Highlands and Islands. Financial assistance may be available for applicants from the islands.

For all enquiries or further details, contact Peter Urpeth, Director (Writing and Publishing) Emergents/XPONorth at: [peterurpeth@xponorth.net](mailto:peterurpeth@xponorth.net)



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OT

**Oban**

OBAN and Lorn Lions Club promise to put 'the fun into fundraising' at its annual Charities Day fair and parade on Saturday June 10 at Station Square, Oban.

Any group, club or organisation wishing to raise awareness of their cause is urged to take a stall. The event also gives them a chance to generate funds and hopefully enlist new volunteers. Booking forms for stalls are available from Hannah's Newsagents on Stevenson Street and Webster of Oban Photographic Centre on George Street.

If you have any enquiries regarding the event, call 07880 535550 or email: Oban3108@aol.com.

**Argyll**

ARGYLL-BASED charity Mary's Meals is to receive £450,000 from People's Postcode Lottery players to provide life-changing school meals for children living in Africa.

Mary's Meals runs school feeding programmes in some of the world's poorest communities to enable chronically hungry children to achieve an education that can set them free from poverty in the future.

The funding ensures Mary's Meals can provide one good meal every school day to at least 36,000 children living in poverty across Malawi, Liberia, Zambia and Kenya this year.

The majority of the children to benefit from the funding are in Malawi, where a deepening food crisis has left 6.5 million people – 40 per cent of the population – needing help. Mary's Meals is helping to ease the burden on impoverished families, most of whom have no food stores at home following a very poor harvest.

One such family is headed by Fanny Galeta, mother of five. Thankfully, four of her five children attend Chigona Primary School, where every pupil receives a daily mug of maize porridge, cooked and served by community volunteers on behalf of Mary's Meals.

Fanny said: 'I don't have to wake the kids in the morning. They know they will eat at school, so they get themselves up and say we're going to school.'

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, founder and chief executive of Mary's Meals, said: 'With 61 million children still out of school because of poverty, our work is just beginning and we are grateful to everyone who reaches out to vulnerable, hungry children through our work.'

**Tobermory**

A GROUP called A Moment's Peace is holding a one-day event entitled *Common Ground* in Tobermory, Isle of Mull.

The group says it will be 'unearthing stories about how we live now and how we might live in the future'.

A group spokesman said: 'Having worked across Scotland with diverse communities to gather their thoughts, ideas and creative responses to questions around land and housing, you are invited to hear their thoughts and to have your say about these issues, to see how others live and to add your voice to the conversation.'

The event follows workshops held last year in partnership with Argyll Youth Arts Hub, Comar and Ulva Primary School.

Join in at the Aros Hall on Monday February 20 from 3pm to 5pm. The event is free and suitable for all ages.

**Taynuilt**

TAYNUILT Whist Club's whist drive on Friday January 20, in the capable hands of card master Jim Grout, raised £177.

Ishbel Innell won first place in the ladies section, Sandra and Carla Scott came second, with Judith Day third and Catherine MacMillan fourth. The consolation prize was won by Ruby MacDougall and the travelling prize by Katie Clayton.

The men's prizes were mostly won by women: 1 Emma Grant; 2 Christine Allen; 3 Caitlin Suzan Grant-Murray and 4 Colin Campbell. John McDougall won the consolation prize and Emma Grant the travelling prize.

**Helensburgh**

A SOD-CUTTING event will signal the start of work to regenerate Hermitage Park, Helensburgh, tomorrow (Friday February 10).

The first piece of turf will be cut by Chris Packard, former chairman of the Friends of Hermitage Park Association, at midday.



**Appin show celebrates diamond anniversary**

Appin Agricultural Show committee members past and present got together at the annual show dinner in the Creagan Inn to mark the event's diamond anniversary. The 2017 show, to be held on August 19, is the show's 60th year and president James Henry Weir told more than 70 people at the recent annual show dinner that he was proud to see the event 'thriving'. After the dinner, guests enjoyed a ceilidh led by accordionist Sileas Sinclair.



Dunbeg Primary School's eco committee proudly show off the school's sixth green flag. 15\_145dunbeg01

**Sixth green flag for Dunbeg Primary School**

DUNBEG Primary School pupils have earned their sixth green flag.

The school's eco committee has been focusing on litter, energy, food and the environment. This involved ensuring the school grounds were free from litter and taking part in

litter picking throughout the village as part of the National Spring Clean initiative. They also took part in the Marine Conservation Society's Beachwatch beach clean and recorded all the litter they found and constructed graphs of their findings.

The children learned to grow their own food and made shortbread and soup for the school harvest lunch for senior citizens. They also looked at the labelling on food and explored where it had come from and tasted food from different cultures.

**'Boomtown' bonfire proceeds buy class projector**

MONEY raised at a community bonfire night in Dunbeg has been used to buy a projector for Dunbeg Primary School.

James MacDonald, who helped organise the event, handed over £500 to the school after asking what the

pupils needed. He said: 'We wanted to do something for the school. They needed a projector, so we gave them £500. We made £1,800 on the night. Of that, £600 went on fireworks.'

The left over money will be used to fund next year's event.

Dunbeg Primary School head teacher Sine MacVicar said: 'The school and the community work so closely together and one of the things we needed was a projector. Huge thanks to the organisers for choosing the school. We greatly appreciate it.'

**Young dancers step out in style**



St Columba's Primary School pupils put on a magnificent show at the matinee of the Oban High School Dance Show in the Corran Halls.

Primary pupils performed a traditional Highland Fling, accompanied by Oban High School Pipe Band. The school's Helen McGuigan said: 'The show was a great success. The whole school went along to support the local event and watch their fellow pupils participating. All the children and teachers thoroughly enjoyed the event.'

**Distillery doors open for global celebration**

A NEW global celebration - International Scotch Day - is being introduced in honour of Scotland's gift to the world.

The inaugural celebration will take place on tomorrow (February 10) and will invite people to raise a glass of scotch and celebrate a drink that is made to be enjoyed whichever way you like - with good company, wherever, whenever.

In Scotland, Diageo will be opening the doors of its distillery visitor centres, including Oban Distillery, Caol Ila and Lagavulin Distillery, for free tours as part of the event.

Anyone booking a visit to Diageo's 12 whisky distilleries - Blair Athol, Caol Ila, Cardhu, Clynelish, Cragganmore,

Dalwhinnie, Glenkinchie, Glen Ord, Lagavulin, Oban, Royal Lochnagar and Talisker - for tomorrow, or turning up on the day for a visit, will enjoy a free tour.

Full details of the distilleries can be found at [www.discovering-distilleries.com](http://www.discovering-distilleries.com).

The public will also be offered a unique opportunity to visit its global archive at Menstrie near Alloa - the biggest drinks industry archive in the world with a collection of more than 10,000 bottles.

There will be a limit of 50 tours available on a first-come-first-served basis.

To register for a tour, email [archive.menstrie@diageo.com](mailto:archive.menstrie@diageo.com).

**MORVERN**  
*lines*

**Important that people speak out**

'POWER to the people' is an expression we have heard a lot since President Donald Trump's inaugural speech on January 20 and again during Prime Minister May's recent visit to Washington.

Excuse me, but people power is not new. It's been around since the 5th century BC. It's called democracy and, when it fails, it is usually the people themselves who are to blame.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the Highlands and Islands where there is a tendency to sit back, criticise and think it is someone else's duty to speak up. For example, never in the recorded social history of this area has there been such a lack of interest in the way we are governed.

As a result, councils are being led, not by elected members, but by salaried officials who don't have to go near a ballot box. Worse still, many electors won't even bother to vote.

Little wonder there is now a culture, unknown a generation ago, that doesn't encourage people to put their heads above the battlements or even ask questions for fear of being labelled troublemakers.

The Roman government of old kept the populace happy by distributing free food and staging huge spectacles known as 'bread and circuses'. Today we might call it 'dumbing-down'.

There are exceptions, particularly in some parts of the Inner and Outer Hebrides, where the martial spirit hasn't quite fled yet.

John Lorne Campbell of Canna used a three-pronged process to good effect when he was dealing with officialdom. Firstly, state the problem; secondly, provide the solution; and, thirdly, say what you will do if it isn't remedied.

Nearer home there is a battle to keep a quarry out of Glen Creran. Whether you approve of the quarrying industry or not, it has been refreshing to watch such a highly-organised campaign unfold through a series of informative advertisements in the pages of *The Oban Times*. It is a pity more local communities with genuine grievances don't follow suit instead of sitting on their hands.

Every parish has its problems and frustrations. In Appin there is outrage about cattle rampaging through a new woodland scheme causing untold damage to one of Argyll's most important medieval church sites.

It should have been protected by Forest Enterprise and Historic Scotland during the planning process but it wasn't and not a hand is being raised against it locally.

A few weeks before Christmas a representative from NHS Highland visited Lochaline to tell us that for the first time in 150 years, we should no longer expect to have the services of a full-time doctor.

We were informed there was no money to pay for locums and out-of-office hour cover, no dedicated accommodation for a new doctor and that the 350-patient practice would prove too stressful for any future single-handed GP.

We were assured our needs would be covered by voluntary first responders and that NHS 24 would handle emergencies. As the staff in NHS 24's distant control centre often misdirect casualties to Oban or Campbeltown hospitals because they think their accident and emergency wards are the nearest to Morvern and not Fort William, we were as unconvinced as we were puzzled why the health board had recently sold their GPs' houses in Lochaline and Salen, Sunart.

Despite the magnitude of the proposals they were accepted with humour and without demur by the few who bothered to turn up - although rather less so when it had sunk in.

Other Morvern grievances which would be helped with a bit of public lobbying include lack of progress in upgrading BT's broadband system; urgent repairs to sections of the only public road into Lochaline which has been damaged during the construction of several private hydro schemes; free vehicle crossings on the Corran ferry for residents and council tax payers on the peninsula; a more reliable and constant mail delivery service routed through Fort William instead of Oban; and, more urgently, a massive and unprecedented cull of an ancient strain of wild red deer in favour of a proposed rewilding scheme. There are many more.



Wild deer should not be destroyed for maverick rewilding schemes. Photograph Jessica Creighton.

It is refreshing to read that Scotland is to be exempt from Section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013 contained in the Leveson Enquiry that is being proposed south of the border.

Press regulation is devolved to Scotland and Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop has confirmed the Scottish Government has no plans to introduce statutory measures to persuade Scottish print media to sign up to a state-approved regulator.

If Section 40 is voted through by Westminster and eventually finds its way into Scotland, it will threaten investigative journalism and freedom of the independent press with local newspapers, such as *The Oban Times*, having to bear the costs of a court case whether they are in the wrong or not.

In the words of Martin Luther King Junior: 'History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamour of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.'

Iain Thornber  
[iain.thornber@btinternet.com](mailto:iain.thornber@btinternet.com)

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# Fighting to save Argyll Gaelic from oblivion

COLIN CAMERON  
editor@obantimes.co.uk

THE RACE is on to save the native tongue of Argyll before it disappears, forgotten, into the mists of time.

One man has set out to revive the language and he has appealed for anyone with memories or knowledge of Argyll Gaelic to come forward.

Adhamh O'Broin is a Glaswegian who spent much of his childhood in the Cowal village of Tighnabruaich.

He fell in love with the region and its heritage and is now on a mission to revive the dying embers of the Gaelic language spoken in Mid Argyll and Cowal until not so long ago – a dialect known as Dalriada Gaelic.

The 37-year-old has taught himself the language over the past decade by listening to recordings and studying written records.

He also tracked down 84-year-old Lochgilphead man Robbie MacVicar, whom Mr O'Broin believes to be the last native speaker of Dalriada Gaelic.

Mr MacVicar was brought up on a Lochgair farm speaking the tongue of his forebears and his memory of it persists to this day.

Since 'finding' Mr MacVicar, the road to Lochgilphead has become a familiar one for Adhamh O'Broin, who makes



Adhamh O'Broin believes there is still hope – Dochas – for the local Gaelic dialect. 06\_a06Gaelic02

regular trips to have a blether in the language, learning and recording dialect words, phrases and intonations that might otherwise be lost.

A crowdfunding appeal by Mr O'Broin culminated in August 2015 when £10,789 was raised to enable the recording and promotion of the dialect and to

begin digitally reproducing the handwritten notes of Swedish linguist Nils Holmer who came to Argyll in the 1930s and '40s to set down words, phrases, stories and songs he collected from that last generation of fluent speakers.

The clear passion Adhamh O'Broin has for Dalriada Gaelic was ignited during childhood visits to Cowal, but burst into action after returning to the area as an adult.

'Tighnabruaich and Argyll always felt like home to me,' said Mr O'Broin. 'I went back there when I was 25 and it just felt right. I was interested in the Gaelic language then, but I soon became hooked. I've been back constantly since, seeking out the oldest local people I could find and talking to them.'

He continued: 'From Craignish through Lochawside, Kilmartin and Kilmichael into Knapdale, from Lochfynside across to Cowal and down through to Bute, the same dialect of Argyll Gaelic was spoken.'

Mr O'Broin, who describes himself as a Scottish Gaelic consultant, tutor, translator and singer-songwriter, has brought up his own children speaking Dalriada Gaelic since the day they were born.

the language and will be able to pass it on to others.

'This precious language has to be passed on or it will continue to slide quietly and ignominiously out of existence,' he said.

'I would be overjoyed to hear from anyone who thinks they might know a person who still speaks a smattering of the dialect, especially people who may have left Mid Argyll or Cowal a long time ago for work in the cities or abroad and never returned.'

Argyll and Bute Council's policy lead for Gaelic, Councillor Robin Currie, said: 'It is really good to hear about someone involved in the preservation of Argyll dialects and something I support wholeheartedly.'

'As a native Islay Gaelic speaker, I'm acutely aware of how important it is to keep one's dialect alive and indeed thrive.'

He added: 'We would encourage Mr O'Broin to engage with the Gaelic Forum and share the valuable information he has gathered more widely across Argyll.'

If you would like to help save Argyll's Dalriada Gaelic dialect, contact Adhamh O'Broin by email at dalriadagaelic@gmail.com.

Find out more on the www.dalriada.scot website or via Facebook and Twitter.

## There's a problem with the front door at number 8



Our front door is a disgrace! It's horrible and draughty.

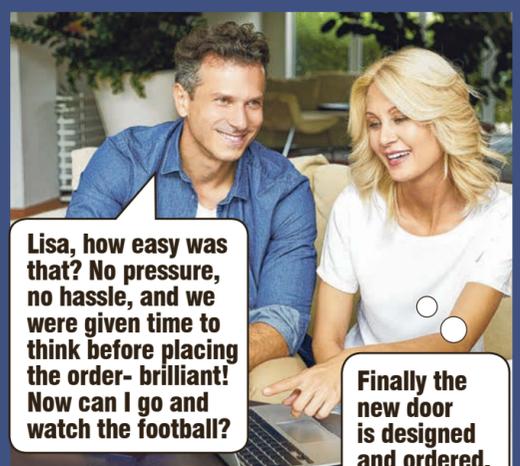
Let's get this sorted, Mike. There are so many to choose from – how do we know which one is right?



Hello Cairngorm – can you help us with a new front door?

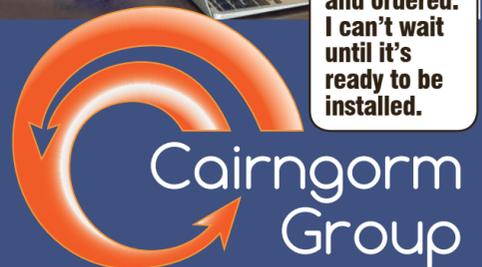


Martin from Cairngorm paid a visit to no 8 and took them through the door builder programme which let Mike and Lisa choose from a massive range of colours, styles and hardware.



Lisa, how easy was that? No pressure, no hassle, and we were given time to think before placing the order – brilliant! Now can I go and watch the football?

Finally the new door is designed and ordered. I can't wait until it's ready to be installed.



1 Longman Drive, Inverness IV1 1SU  
Tel: 01463 238 000  
Tyock Industrial Estate, Elgin IV30 1XY  
Tel: 01343 545315  
6-8 High Street, Thurso KW14 8AG  
Tel: 01847 894956  
Email: info@cairngormgroup.co.uk  
www.cairngormgroup.co.uk

f #MeetTheCairns

## Bodach

In this series, *The Oban Times'* resident Bodach (Gaelic: old man and, by experience, often a storyteller) looks through archive material for articles and pictures that preserve moments from the past. There is always a back story – and sometimes a future one.



Get in touch with your stories at [bodach@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:bodach@obantimes.co.uk)

## Hebridean Heroines

ISLAND nurses are the subject of a new book launching next week in Lewis. *Hebridean Heroines – Twentieth Century Queen's Nurses by Catherine Morrison*, a district nurse in Bernera, Isle of Lewis, is billed as 'a fascinating insight into the lives of women from the Western Isles of Scotland who worked as district nurses in the mid-20th century.'

'Leaving behind their close-knit island communities, these intrepid women undertook the long journey by sea and rail to the mainland of Scotland to train as nurses and midwives,' the book's publisher, the Islands Book Trust said.

'The majority carried out Queen's district nurse training and maintained that it 'prepared them to go to the desert to work' if necessary. Most of them eventually returned to the islands, to work in a role that required strength of body and mind.'

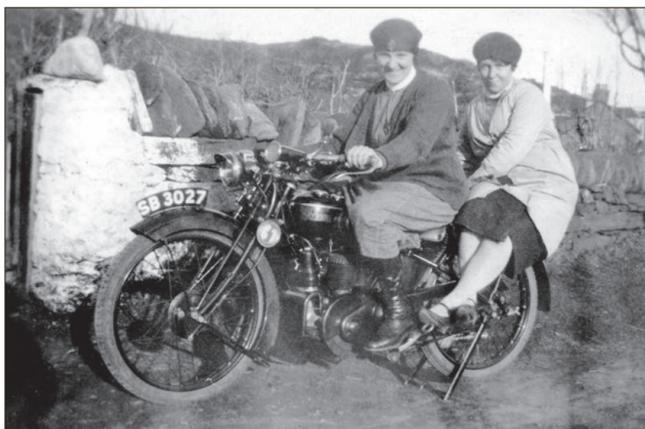
District nurses worked long hours and were always available when called, regardless of hour, weather conditions or remoteness. In the book, they describe in their own words their everyday lives, giving an insight into the challenges they faced and revealing the resilience and strength of character required to do the job.

'These women were true Hebridean heroines,' the trust continued, 'regularly going beyond the call of duty without thought for their own comfort, yet maintaining that 'I was only doing my job, which I loved'. These stories are their legacy.'

The Queen's Nursing Institute Scotland (QNIS), founded in 1889, prided itself on training the best district nurses in the world, taking young women who had already experienced the rigours of Britain's nurse training schools and putting them through a tough and challenging programme of further preparation which both extended their clinical skills and instilled a sense of resourcefulness and inventiveness.

Catherine Morrison said: 'While working as a district nurse I encountered many patients who had been district nurses themselves and had stories to relate about their life and work, which I felt was part of the unique history of the Outer Hebrides and nursing. Then when I retired I became a Queen's Nurse Visitor (visiting Queen's Nurses who are more than 80 years old) and again was in contact with women whose stories about their working lives inspired me. I began to interview them and this book is the result.'

The foreword was written by Clare Cable, chief executive and Nurse Director of QNIS, who writes: 'Contemporary community nurses work in a rapidly



Clockwise from above: A nurse and friend on her motorcycle; Bella Johnstone, copyright Dr Kenneth Robertson; A Hebridean Queen's nurse in the 1930s; Catriona MacAskill – front cover image, copyright Denis Straughan.



changing world which their forebears would hardly recognise – but there is so much to inspire them in the remarkable courage, dedication and self-sacrifice demonstrated by their Queen's Nurse forebears in the Outer Hebrides. Thanks to Catherine Morrison, their unique testimonies have been recorded and preserved.'

Professor Christine Hallett, director of the UK Centre for the History of Nursing at Manchester University, wrote in the introduction: 'What was so impressive about the Queen's Nurses of the Outer Hebrides was their capacity not only to bring fundamental nursing skill to their patients but also to demonstrate the ability to improvise, to push the boundaries of their practice when needed, and to work closely with the communities they served, winning the respect and affection of all.'

'Now that this book is bringing their poignant and moving stories to a wide readership, I hope their personal testimony may help inspire a new generation of nurses to understand the true potential of their work – the ways in which expert nursing practice, coupled with commitment and courage, can transform people's lives.'

*Hebridean Heroines* by Christine Morrison will be launched on Friday February 17, at the Storehouse, Lews Castle, Isle of Lewis, at 7pm.

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#OT7DAYS

**The Oban Times**  
**& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES**

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The first session of the second year of the AHA Futures project began on Monday.

## Young people look to a bright future on project

A PROJECT which aims to unlock the potential of young people living with autism or learning difficulties has welcomed a new group of youngsters.

The Active Healthy Achieving (AHA) Futures 2017 Project welcomed new members to work with Nimblefingers at Caol Community Centre on Monday (February 6).

By working with the young people AHA Futures hopes to enhance their life skills through experiencing new and challenging activities.

Now in its second year and running until the end of November, the government-funded project will feature six-week rotational blocks starting with Nimblefingers, a crafting organisation, fol-

lowed by Greenfingers at Claggan, Lochaber Rural Education Trust (LRET) and Ardgour Adventures. Moira Hartley, trust manager of LRET said on behalf of AHA futures: 'Our key successes from 2016 were the increase in social, communication, independence, life skills, values, confidence and capacity building.'

'In each location, the group enjoyed a full and varied programme of events, with the main objective being to provide a safe, educational pathway for vulnerable young people in the midst of transition.'

'Our 2017 programme looks very exciting and we all look forward to working together again to deliver the second year of our AHA Futures project.'

## TIMESLINE

### Children's home given green light

PLANNING permission to convert a Lochside guest house into a children's residential home has been accepted.

Lochan cottage, a seven-bedroomed guest house, is to be converted into a residential home for up to five children who would live at the property with two staff at the house 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Children will stay for between several weeks up to a number of years. It is believed the residential home will be set up by Scottish children's charity Aberlour Trust, which helps children and families with issues such as living with a disability, growing up in and leaving care and the impact of drugs and alcohol on families.

### College achieves national success

WEST Highland College UHI has been confirmed as one of Scotland's highest performing colleges for the fourth successive year.

UHI's full time student success rates for further education has reached 75.9 per cent, more than 10 per cent higher than the Scottish national average of 65.5 per cent. Principal and chief executive of West Highland College UHI Lydia Rohmer said: 'I am delighted we continue to grow by offering greater numbers of students increasing subject choices in both further and higher education.'

Ms Rohmer extended her congratulations to staff across the 10 UHI centres.



# Community trust continues to make progress on land buyout

MONICA GIBSON  
mgibson@obantimes.co.uk

A COMMUNITY trust pursuing the largest community land buyout on record has been told by a multi-national company that 'sensible proposals' will be considered.

Last month, Liberty House and SIMEC (members of the GFG Alliance) completed a £330million deal with Rio Tinto to buy the aluminium smelter, together with the hydro-power plants at Fort William and Kinlochleven along with the associated estate lands.

East Lochaber and Laggan

Community Trust (ELLCT) was set up in response to Rio Tinto's announcement of intent to sell. The trust's ambition was to buy the 120,000 acre estate to 'safeguard the communities future'. Since the sale has gone through, ELLCT has been in talks with GFG and say it is pleased to have had a seat at the table.

This week the trust held a host of meetings to keep members up to date with action taken during 2016 and outline what it sees the next steps.

Speaking at the first of the meetings in Spean Bridge on Monday night, board members revealed: 'We have had three

face-to-face meetings with GFG Group - that's three more than with Rio Tinto.'

The trust said a feasibility study has been conducted which highlighted the estate had been under-used and unprofitable in recent years. The proposal set out by ELLCT could see it at least breaking even in a matter of years - and that is without a hydro scheme, which was described as the 'cherry on top' of holiday letting and other potential sources of income.

The trust was keen to highlight the Scottish government earmarks £10million per year to the Scottish Land Fund - a grant it wants to get a piece of.

Further, in backing ELLCT's plan it would bring the government closer to its target of having 400,000 acres of land under community ownership by 2020 - a fact ELLCT believes strengthens its case.

ELLCT's John Hutchison said GFG has admitted it still has to get its head round the enormity of the estate but the message the trust left them with was 'we have a plan which allows you to deal with the metal side and us to deal with the estate'.

A GFG Alliance spokesperson told *The Oban Times*: 'It is still very early days as it's only been a matter of weeks since we concluded the deal.

We look forward to continuing open-minded discussions with local communities, Scottish Government, other stakeholders and independent experts on how to maximise the potential of the estate lands for the benefit of everyone involved.'

ELLCT, which gained its 1,000 member in August, will continue to focus on gaining further community backing. There are also plans to hold an emergency annual general meeting in April.

Mr Hutchison explained: 'To make things democratic, all seven members of the existing board will have to stand down and new members will have to be appointed. So we will be keen to

hear from community members who believe they have the right expertise and are willing to take on the role.'

'Once we have a clearer look ahead we will put working groups in place.'

A further meeting will take place tonight in Laggan Village Hall from 7-8pm.

Kate Forbes, the constituency MSP for Lochaber is holding a drop-in session to provide a further update tomorrow night (February 10). Ms Forbes will be joined by staff from the smelter and hydro sites, as well as one of the team from the GFG Alliance, at the Nevis Suite in the Alexandra Hotel from 4-6pm.



SABHAL MÒR OSTAIG

## CÙRSAICHEAN GOIRID

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# 2017



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## A' CHÀISG EASTER

10 - 14/04/17

- Gaelic Song with Christine Primrose
- Flute & Whistle with Hamish Napier
- Media Course in Skye Space Studio
- Advanced Gaelic Conversation with Iain & Muriel Urquhart

17 - 21/04/17

- Fiddle Course with Ewen Henderson
- Gaelic in the Landscape with Roddy MacLean
- Aspects of Highland Material Culture with Margaret Stewart

## SAMHRADH SUMMER

19 - 23/06/17

- Gaelic for Beginners in the Quiraing Lodge
- Learning through Living Culture (Gaelic in Flodigarry)

26 - 30/06/17

- Gaelic on the Island hosted by Muriel Fisher (Intermediate Learners)

03 - 08/07/17

- Piping & Drumming for under 18s
- Family Learning Week

17 - 21/07/17

- Gaelic Conversation Course with Muriel Fisher
- Beartais Cainnt with Iain & Muriel Urquhart
- Gaelic Song with Christine Primrose
- Piano Accordion with Addie Harper Jr
- Button Box with Robert Nairn & Fergie MacDonald
- Gaelic for Irish Speakers (Beginners)

22 - 28/07/17

- Fiddle course with Alasdair Fraser
- Cello course with Natalie Haas

24 - 28/07/17

- Exploring Skye with Gaelic hosted by Muriel Fisher (Beginners)

31/07 - 04/08/17

- Gaelic Pronunciation with Iain & Muriel Urquhart (Advanced Learners)
- Gaelic for Irish Speakers (Advanced Learners)
- Gaelic Conversation Course with Joy Dunlop

07 - 11/08/17

- Clarsach with Ingrid Henderson
- 'The Music in the Fiddle' with Charlie Mckerron
- 'A Seascape of Gaelic Song' with Margaret Stewart

14 - 18/08/17

- Digital Photography
- Gaelic Creative Writing with Alison Lang
- Skye Piping School

21 - 25/08/17

- Adam Sutherland School of Fiddle Summer Camp
- Learning through Living Culture (Gaelic in Flodigarry)
- Accordion Course with Mairearad Green

Tha cùrsaichean a bharrachd air an làrach-lìn againn a leithid na cùrsaichean Gàidhlig Ìrean 1-10. A full list of courses is available on our website including Gaelic Levels 1-10.

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OT

## Viewpoint



Write to us: send your letters to [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk) or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB

## The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Democracy is an interesting word, particularly in these unprecedented times. Last week a group of people came together for an 'Argyll against Trump' rally, to demand that President Donald Trump end his 'Muslim travel ban' and the UK Government cancels Mr Trump's state visit. These people were well within their rights to protest and the event was a peaceful demonstration, other than for one upset bystander. However, it was interesting to read the very many posts on *The Oban Times*' Facebook page ahead of the rally. A number of people were not happy it was taking place and

many did not see the relevance to Oban or even Scotland. One of the refreshing things about Oban is the number of people willing to speak their minds, regardless of whether you agree with them or not. But while many are willing to speak their minds online, what would be even more exciting is if all those people who were unhappy with a local situation – or a national or international one – got together and converted those words into action. It is amazing what people can achieve for their community if they are motivated enough. A good place to start could be joining the local community council or The Rockfield Centre?



## Days gone by – Lochavullin view

Reader Iain Macdonald emailed *The Oban Times* last week with this photograph and note saying: 'You have previously printed a photo I took from the top of the parish church spire which showed Soroba Road. This wasn't the only picture I took when I was up there that day. Here is a photograph I took of the view over to Lochavullin. The place then has no resemblance whatsoever to what it's like today.'

### Macphail

ANGUS MACPHAIL  
angusmacphail@yahoo.co.uk



LAST week I was back on Tiree for the funeral of an old family friend. Over the course of the otherwise very sad trip, there were three unrelated positive threads that added to the experience of being home.

#### Skerryvore single

Last Tuesday, January 31, Skerryvore released their new single, *Live Forever*, and the next day my mother and I were hooked on iTunes, monitoring its ascent up the charts. It very quickly hit number one in the World Music chart and shortly after, burst into the top 100 of the mainstream charts and continued up all day.

Recorded in the USA, the subject matter and the feel of the song are very much in the style that Skerryvore have created and the prevalent electric guitar chord sequences and riffs give a strong rock effect. The lyrics of the chorus have been crafted perfectly to bring an audience to life by singing the repeated words at the end of each

line. This song is going to be a new highlight of their live shows.

#### A new boat for the Acairsaid

As I always do when I'm home, I took a drive down to the harbour at Caolas and then on to the houses at Milton. This is my favourite part of Tiree. Seeing the Acairsaid full of boats is a heartening sight and it is more heartening to know a new addition to the fleet is coming soon.

Coinneach MacKinnon from Hillcrest is upgrading from his 26-foot creel boat to a multi-purpose 37-foot vessel which as well as being rigged for creels, can be easily switched to dredge for scallops or trawl for fish and prawns. Fishing is a stand-out success story in Tiree in recent years and this type of advancement and diversification represents the continued development of this vital industry.

You can have all the music in the world coming off an island but it is young people working and living at

home and having families that will keep it alive.

So until all our dandy musician types can work out a way of conquering the logistics of island travel, it is up to the fishermen, crofters and other year-round residents to keep the population up, and Coinneach is certainly doing a good job of that.

#### Alastair Campbell

At the risk of a flurry of complaints, I admit to having been a fan of Alastair Campbell for many years, so it was nice to meet him twice in the course of the last two weeks, once in Glasgow and then at his Auntie Mairi's funeral on Tiree.

On the way to Milton, I was listening to Radio Four's *Media Show* on which he was a guest. His humour and agility in conversation, his concise style and his clarity of message were, as always, refreshing to hear and completed the trilogy of Tirisdeach tidings of the week.



### Social media

Our article highlighting details of a Trump rally held in Oban last Thursday evening attracted a lot of comment for and against...

**James McCulloch did not think much of the move:** How about protesting something that concerns Oban, like the bin collections for crying out loud, what a waste of time. Oban Times, it's not a 'Muslim Ban', if it was do you not think Indonesia would be on the list as well as a few other countries?

**And John DM Kerr agreed:** Unbelievable that the people in oban can

organise a protest in Oban about an American non issue but our streets are in darkness and our bins are overflowing and they do nothing??

**Vincent Thomas Muir said:** What in the name of the wee man!!! Don't we all have enough to do taking care of your OWN problems? It's not like we are part of the United States. Live our own lives and deal with our own country's problems before involving ourselves in theirs!

**Donald Morris replied to him:** You may have noticed that the actions in

other countries affect this one. For example, when the UK went into Iraq and caused nothing but death and destruction, there was another nation involved. Do you remember?

**Jo Pagan said:** I can't believe a lot of these comments!! So sad that the bigger picture can't be seen. Wow, let's all worry about our litter and just be grateful that we are not being threatened with murder and rape on a daily basis and can't actually escape. Oh to be white and born in Oban, let's forget the rest of the world.

Crannog Lane, Lochavullin estate, Oban, PA34 4HB.

We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO, which will investigate the matter. You can

either telephone IPSO on 0300 123 2220 or email [inquiries@ipso.co.uk](mailto:inquiries@ipso.co.uk). IPSO is an independent body which deals with complaints from the public about the editorial content of newspapers and magazines. We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

### A big thank you to generous supporters

Sir, We would like to say thank you to the whole community of Oban and beyond who supported Hope Kitchen at Christmas.

We were overwhelmed once again by the kindness and generosity shown to us by local people, schools, businesses and churches.

There are too many to mention individually but we would like to express our gratitude through this page to each and every one of you from the bottom of our hearts.

As an expression of our gratitude, we plan to undertake weekly beach cleans and town tidy ups to give a small something back to the community which has supported us so kindly over the past eight years.

We would also like to invite the whole community to pop in for a cup of tea and a warm welcome when we move to our new community cafe on Soroba Road in the coming months.

Lorraine MacCormick,  
Service Manager, Hope Kitchen,  
Oban.

### Tribute to a great hill man – Donnie Ross

Sir, It was with great sadness we recently heard of the passing of Donnie Ross, who will be a huge loss to the whole rural community of the Highlands.

However, I think we gave him a really good send-off in a unique but fitting funeral service. I can honestly say I have never carried a coffin out on a hill before, but if anyone deserved this, it was big Donnie.

The family and the funeral directors are to be commended for organising such a special service for him and many well respected people and personalities from many walks of life were there to see him off. Hundreds of them were on the hillside above his home at Lealt Farm.

Everyone I know loved and respected this great hill man.

He always had time to talk to people and his stories were amazing and so educational. He was a great mentor to me and many others interested in the hills and grazing of traditional livestock.

The one thing I will really miss is looking forward to the next letter in the press from DW Ross of Lealt. His letters were from the heart and as honest as anything I have read in print.

His passion for a way of life that sadly seems to be disappearing and respect and enthusiasm for the cultural heritage of the hill men of the Highlands were well appreciated in many circles.

I just wish more people in conservation, environmental and agricultural bodies would come out from behind their desks and talk more to people like Donnie, although they will need to be quick as they are getting thinner on the ground.

Then they might learn, first, what

### Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL  
ailean@obantimes.co.uk



A E DOIRBH A THUIGSINN carson a tha uimhir a ghainne luchd-teagaisg air nochdadh feadh na dùthcha, ach tha cùisean air ìre a ruigheachd aig cuid a Chomhairlean is gum bheil cunnart ann nach tèid aca air an dleastanas foghlaim a chòileanadh.

Dè th' air tachairt dha iomhaigh obair a bha cho tarraingeach uaireigin? Gun teagamh chan eil an saoghal idir cho mothail am measg chloinne neo an cuid phàrantan 's a bha agus tha sgeulachdan air a bhith a' nochdadh fad bhliadhnaichean a-nise a thaobh an seòrsa mì-rian ris am feum mòran luchd-teagaisg dèiligeadh anns na sgoiltean.

Tha e follaiseach gum bheil an t-uallach seo a' toirt droch bhuaidh air slàinte chuid anns an dreuchd ach tha fhios nach eil sin fìor ach ann an cuid de sgoiltean, agus tha e doirbh a chreidsinn gun tionndaidheadh e mòran dhaoine òga air falbh bho theagaisg a thaghadh mar dhreuchd.

Dè 's coireach ma-thà? An e gum bheil barrachd chloinne ann na bh' ann agus gum bheil feum air barrachd luchd-teagaisg? An e gum bheil laghan

is practical and what works and how it can be achieved but, secondly, to look at our historic use of the hills and the numbers of people who lived there and remember it was a highly managed landscape that has created what we have today.

We do not want the use of our hills to change too much from the way they used to be, especially for the production of beef, mutton and venison.

The day will come with global populations and greenhouse gases and carbon footprints when we will be looking to our hills again to feed us - when we suddenly realise that we can't buy lamb in New Zealand and ship it to the other side of the world. It is, after all, morally wrong to burn all those hydrocarbons.

E Ruairidh Ormiston,  
Croila Croft, Kingussie.

### Appeal for cancer charity volunteers

Sir, There are 672 hours in February and 744 in March – but could you spare us just two?

Marie Curie is collecting at Tesco in Oban on Friday February 24 and at Superdrug in Oban on Saturday March 4.

We really need your help to make the most of these collections and to make every daffodil count. Together, we can help Marie Curie nurses provide vital hands-on care and emotional support to people living with a terminal illness and their loved ones. Every £20 we raise will provide one hour of nursing care. Last year in Argyll and Bute alone we provided 7,100 hours of care to local patients.

If you can give us a couple of hours of your time, we would really appreciate it. Please go to [www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil) to sign up online or phone or text me, Lynsey, your local community fundraiser, on 07771 963622.

Lynsey Neilson,  
Community fundraiser,  
Argyll and Bute.

### Candidates proposed for Useless Island

Sir, There are three islands in the bay opposite Craighouse, Jura, called Rabbit, Goat and Useless Island.

In my opinion, all the current Argyll and Bute councillors, many of whom are past their sell-by date should be sent to live permanently on Useless Island.

The Argyll and Bute Council officials who drew up the timetables for the three-weekly uplift of general waste bins should be deported immediately to Useless Island, along with a couple of football referees.

I am sure readers of *The Oban Times*

can think of many more people who would qualify for residence on Useless Island, which ultimately would lead to Useless Island being the most over-crowded island in the world.

Douglas W Tott,  
Stoneyburn, Bruichladdich,  
Isle of Islay.

### Scotland's strength in the European Union

Sir, There is more than a hint of irony that as Scotland, along with the UK, prepares to leave the EU, the island of Malta, with a population less than that of Edinburgh has just taken over the Presidency of the EU.

This is the first time the island has held the presidency and during the next six months will focus on six key areas: migration, single market, security, social inclusion, Europe's neighbourhood and maritime sector. Leading the EU.

Interestingly Estonia, with a population of less than 1.4 million people, around a quarter that of Scotland, will take over the EU presidency in July.

During the independence referendum, the Better Together camp claimed that the only way to guarantee Scotland's place in the EU was to vote to remain in the UK. Indeed, Scotland was to 'lead the UK' not 'leave the UK'. Times have indeed changed since September 2014 and we are, despite these assurances, heading for the EU exit. Of course, we could have the best of both worlds, part of a single market with the rest of the UK – as promised to Northern Ireland in its relations with the Republic of Ireland – and still members of the EU.

For that to happen of course requires the confidence, as Malta and Estonia have demonstrated, to take full control of our own affairs and be the masters of our own destiny, leading not leaving the EU.

Alex Orr,  
Edinburgh.

### Sturgeon's strange attitude

Sir, Nicola Sturgeon and the SNP insist Scotland must remain in the EU single market and will hold another referendum if it is dragged out against her wishes.

It is a strange attitude to take since Scotland does four times more trade with the rest of the UK than it does with all of the other 27 countries in the EU together.

Furthermore, although goods are sold tariff-free, if our net contribution to the EU paid by taxpayers was imposed on traders it would amount to a tariff of more than seven per cent.

William W Scott,  
St Baldred's Road, North Berwick.



Ailean Caimbeul

ùra agus còraichean chloinne a' dèanamh na h-obrach nas dorra? Neo an e dìreach nam bheil de dh'obair rianachd an lùib na h-obrach?

'S dòcha gur e aon rud a tha a' toirt tlachd air falbh bhon obair an ìre, agus cho tric, 's a tha poileasaidhean foghlaim gan atharrachadh agus an cuideam a tha sin a' cur air an fheadhainn a dh'fheumas innleachdan ùra a chur an gnìomh.

Chunnacas cuideachd thar nam bliadhnaichean mar a bha cothrom ann an gnìomhachas a' tàladh dhaoine le sgilean teagaisg air falbh gu tuarastail nas motha ann an leithid obair na h-ola neo obair-craolaidh, mar a th' air a bhith fìor a thaobh dhaoine le comasan Gàidhlig.

Tha beagan bhliadhnaichean a-nise tha Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd air a bhith a' rannsachadh ach an gabh bagaid sgoiltean beaga a chur an urra ri aon cheannard, agus a rèir choltais tha cùisean air obrachadh cho math is gum bheil a' Chomhairle airson sin a' sgoileadh a-mach feadh an cuid sgoiltean.

Tha dòchas aig a' Chomhairle air caomhnadh ann am buidseat

an fhoghlaim agus cuideachd leasachadh air na th' aige de dhreuchdan cheannardan bàna. Ach mar a bhiodh dùil, chan eil cuid idir ag aontachadh leis a' ghluasad seo. Tuigear na duilgheadasan a bhiodh a' nochdadh a thaobh siubhal eadar sgoiltean dùthchail, ach tha cuideachd ceist mhòr aig feadhainn a thaobh èifeachdas a bhith a' càrnadh tuilleadh rianachd air cheannardan ann an leithid de dhòigh. Feumar an duilgheadas a thaobh a bhith a' tàladh dhaoine gu ruige obair-teagaisg a leasachadh, agus theagamh nach e a bhith a' cruthachadh tuilleadh uallaich rianachd dha cheannardan an dòigh as fheàrr sin a dèanamh.

AS COUNCILS across Scotland struggle to fill vacant teaching posts, many wonder why teaching appears to have become less popular. While Highland Council's 'clustering' solution for head teachers is understandable, some argue this will not help reinstate the profession as an attractive career.

Ailean Caimbeul (Allan Campbell) [ailean@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:ailean@obantimes.co.uk)

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### Your letters

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses

must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not

be printed. Please write or fax to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Fax: 01631 568001. Email [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk).



Councillor Ben Thompson at the Caol five-a-side pitch. Photograph: Abrightside Photography.

## Parent's anger over pitch lights delay

'AN ABSOLUTE joke' was how one Caol parent described the on-going situation at the village's new five-a-side football pitch.

Caol and Mallaig councillor Ben Thompson contacted *The Oban Times* after receiving numerous complaints about lights at the pitch not working. The parent, who asked not to be named, said: 'This problem with the lights has been going on for about five months. It's a farce because the kids can't go out and play now that we are in winter and it's dark early.'

Mr Thompson feared if the situation was not resolved soon it might put people off getting involved in community activities, saying: 'We should be encouraging people in the community to organise activities.'

A Highland Council spokesperson said: 'The new lighting for the community pitch operates on the same principal as the previous lights in that the lighting switches off at a pre-determined time every evening. The new lights have an additional push-button feature which activates the lights for 30-45mins at a time ensuring the lights are not left on unnecessarily when not in use. When initially installed, everything was working as designed apart from the lights still going on after the 10pm shut down time when the push button was activated. This was traced to a fault in the timeclock and a replacement was installed.'

'Shortly after this, the replacement timeclock developed a similar problem and to minimise disturbance to neighbouring properties from the lights being activated in the early hours of the morning, the lights were switched off until a further replacement could be sourced.'

'We have been given assurance from the contractors that an engineer will visit Caol this afternoon (Tuesday February 7) to fit a new controller.'

# No rise in Corran Ferry passenger fares this year

MONICA GIBSON  
mgibson@obantimes.co.uk

CORRAN FERRY passenger fares will not go up this year.

Despite concerns people wanting to cross Loch Linnhe from Nether Lochaber to Ardgour could be charged an additional 10 per cent on the 'already criminal' £8.20, the Highland Council (HC) last week revealed the fare will stay as it is – for the time being.

In a statement, HC budget leader Bill Fernie confirmed: 'We will not increase the charges for existing car parks or the Corran Ferry this year.'

The information was part of an announcement regarding a deal

agreed by the Scottish Government to reduce the gap in the Highland Council's budget from £26 million to £20 million.

While the news was welcomed by some, the local councillor said it came as a bit of a surprise.

Councillor Andrew Baxter, who represents Fort William and Ardnachan, told *The Oban Times*: 'Even when I met with finance officials just prior to the council meeting there was talk of a minimum of a five per cent increase so, yes, I was not expecting this.'

Mr Baxter says the council sees the Corran Ferry as a cash cow and added: 'I will continue campaigning for a fair deal for local residents that avoids year-on-year fare increases.'

In the build up to the announcement, *The Oban Times* had been contacted by readers who believe Morvern and Ardnachan residents are penalised because the ferry is run by the Highland Council and does not comply for Road Equivalent Tariff (RET).

RET was introduced on all CalMac ferry tickets in October 2015 to make island travel cheaper and more affordable, cutting prices by more than £40 on some journeys.

Currently passengers who buy multiple tickets for the Corran Ferry at one time benefit from lower prices. Such discounts would not be allowed under the RET scheme, but Mr Baxter says that does not mean the

option should be ruled out. He said: 'The Corran Ferry is unique. The crossing is really an extension of the road network. If we are going to look at RET moving forward we need to ask the Scottish Government to change the existing rules.'

However, there are some who believe businesses do benefit from the expense of the ferry crossing.

Alistair MacLean from Stron-tion Stores said: 'I have to say I can do well from visitors looking at wines and spirits, and instead of getting the ferry and over to town they will come to me – it makes us even more competitive.'

Chrissie Morgan, who owns Bluebell Croft, says her and her

partner try to save up errands and buy a book of tickets. She says only a handful of guests have complained about the price of the ferry but when it comes to shopping she will more often than not buy online.

She added: 'We are not losing business at the moment but if the fare was to continue to go up then maybe that would be the case.'

'We definitely take it into consideration when buying things – we will choose places which offer free delivery or we will increase our order to qualify for free delivery rather than pay needlessly.'

'Luckily for us, most of our guests come and stay on the peninsula and chill out.'

## Third try at forming community council fails

A THIRD attempt to re-form a community council in Fort William has failed.

Following a mass resignation in January 2016, Fort William Community Council (FWCC) was disbanded. Since then two election attempts have been held to allow FWCC to be re-established. Both efforts turned out to be in vain and FWCC was officially dissolved in November.

It is understood a petition was then created which received 20 signatures, so the Highland Council invited candidates wishing to serve on FWCC to come forward for a third time.

Nominations were invited from Tuesday, January 17 to February 1, but HC confirmed that because the number of validly nominated candidates was less than the minimum required, the community council will not be established at this time.

Duncan Brown is part of For Lochaber which formed after the community council was originally dissolved.

He said: 'This is the second largest town in Highlands and we don't have a community council. It really is regrettable.'

For Lochaber meets on the third Tuesday of every month upstairs in The House of Clan Jamfrie.

A council spokesperson said: 'Should communities wish to re-establish a community council, a petition of 20 electors must be required, as set out in paragraph 13.2 of the community council scheme.'

## POLICE FILES

POLICE are investigating the theft of a slate sign from a house in the Stroncreggan/Treslaig area on Saturday January 28. Anyone with information should contact Strontrian Police Station.

POLICE are still investigating several thefts and break-ins in recent weeks and would welcome information in relation to these crimes.

ANOTHER window has been broken at Drumfada Terrace, Corpach.

The incident occurred on Friday February 3 about 8pm.

Officers are appealing for anyone with information or who saw or heard any suspicious behaviour to contact them on 101 or via Crimestoppers on 0800 550 5111



Ronald Cameron, left, chairman of the Mod 2017 Committee, and secretary Linda Campbell with fellow committee members at the launch of the Mod leaflet. Photograph Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

## Leaflet launched at Mòd Loch Abar open night

AN OPEN evening highlighting the benefits of Mòd Loch Abar 2017 was held on Monday February 6.

The event took place in Mòd Corner in the former Clark's shop on the High Street and included the launch of an information leaflet.

During the evening there were presentations about what the Mòd is, the benefits it could bring to the area and local businesses such as accommodation providers and how they can get involved.

Isabel Campbell, Mòd Corner

convenor, said: 'It was a very good evening and the organising of the Mòd is going well.'

'There were some new faces, but we could still do with more people getting involved.'

She also emphasised the need for businesses to realise the huge income potential of the Mòd, saying it could bring in more than £3million to the area.

Isabel added the committee still needs volunteer stewards – more than 100 will be required to ensure the smooth running of the event – and a stewards' convenor.

## Pupils' senses put to the test on distillery tour

SECONDARY students' senses were put to the test as they learned about the value of one of Scotland's favourite tipples.

As part of their geography curriculum, Ardnachan S2 pupils have been studying world trade, including the whisky export market, and they headed to Ardnachan Distillery at Glenbeg for a site tour.

Pupils learned whisky is Scotland's second biggest export market after oil and is manufactured on a large scale. The pupils were given a comprehensive guided tour which included the mash tubs, which 'smelled like warm porridge', and the stills

and the wooden casks used to give the spirit colour and flavour.

Pupil Dougal MacIntyre appreciated the technical side of the trip. He said: 'It was really interesting to see how whisky is made and why it is such a big part of the economy.'

Bethan White had not been convinced the trip would be up her street but was converted.

She said: 'We saw the mash tubs and were warned if we fell in we would suffocate because of the amount of CO2 present. Initially, I thought the trip didn't sound very interesting but once I got there it was really interesting. It was cool.'



Ardnachan High School pupils learned about Scotland's second largest export at Ardnachan Distillery, Glenbeg.



Joyce Mathers presents £500 to Gaelic school representatives Eliza Moffat and Arran Stephen.

## Ceilidh organisers step in with £500

BUN-SGOIL Ghàidhlig Loch Abar received a generous donation on Friday February 3 from funds raised at Kilmallie community centre's Hogmanay ceilidh.

Joyce Mathers, one of the ceilidh organisers, presented pupils Eliza Moffat and Arran Stephen with a cheque for £500, with the same amount being given to Kilmallie community centre.

Joyce said the ceilidh was sold out and when asked about why the Gaelic school was chosen to receive the donation this year she said: 'We try to share the money around locally. We are involved in the Gaelic school and children are the future. I think the money will be used for uniforms and things for the Mod.'

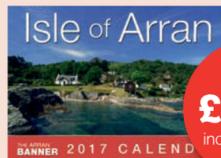
This was the second Hogmanay ceilidh that she has been involved with. Last year the funds were split between the community centre and a care home for the elderly on Skye.

There is a Harris ceilidh planned for February 25 and one for Skye on March 25, both of which will take place in the West End Hotel, Fort William.

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Friday 10 – Thursday 16 February

# Glasgow Letter

**ROBERT ROBERTSON**  
robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



The Park Bar album was well and truly launched on Sunday when 50 years of ceilidh music was rolled into a wonderful eight-hour session of songs, tunes, drams, and nonsense.

For all of us who were there, this was an occasion we will never forget, marking the 50th anniversary of the Park Bar receiving its music licence. Music was from Gary Innes and friends, Skerryvore, Gunna Sound, Dodgy Ground, Deoch 'n' Dorus, Martin Pottinger, Eriskay Lilt, Scott Harvey, Trail West, myself with a couple of the Tide Lines boys, and the star of the show - who else but the legendary Donald Macrae?

It is hard to believe all those bands played on the same stage on the same day but it was all kept going like clockwork by Ross Wilson, who organised the entertainment and also produced the album. As many people said, it is people who make the Park Bar and there were many stalwart attendees

of the pub in attendance.

I enjoyed a good blether with 'Donnie the Hearach', for example, and it was also great to hear a song or two from Bernie Smith senior.

Nina Steele, the current manageress, made a speech in which she thanked all the musicians who have played over the years and everyone who had supported the pub. She also paid tribute to former manager, Terry Ferguson, who first applied for the music licence 50 years ago. Terry couldn't be there but his son, Terry junior, made a fantastic speech which in my view really encapsulated the ethos of the Park perfectly.

'You show me another bar in Glasgow,' he said, 'where you can come on a Saturday night and see a 79-year old dancing with a 19-year-old and nobody bats an eyelid.'

He made special mention of Leslie MacColl and Donald Macrae - whom he described as the 'keystone' of the Park

Bar. He joked that perhaps the Rolling Stones were the only other musical institution to have lasted 50 years - and his comparison between Donald Macrae and Mick Jagger, as well as Martin Pottinger and Keith Richards, brought the house down with laughter.

Terry finished off his speech with the famous quote from the late, great Islay MacTaggart: 'Sing Park Bar!'

And sing they did for the rest of the night. And sing they will, I am certain, for another 50 years at least.

The album is available to buy on eBay and from the Park Bar, with proceeds going to the RNLI.

## What's on

Friday January 27: The Glasgow Uist and Barra Association new year dance in the Glasgow University Union.

January 19-February 5: Celtic Connections Festival - schedule and tickets available on celticconnections.com.



## Pub scene

Park Bar.  
Friday January 20: Gunna Sound.  
Saturday January 21: Beinn Lee.  
Sunday January 22: Beinn Lee.

Islay Inn.  
Friday January 20: Crooked Reel.  
Saturday January 21: The Raggaeels.  
Wednesday January 25: quiz night.



date night

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## BALLERINA | U | 119 MIN

Sat: 12:45  
Children's animation. Set in 1879 Paris. An orphan girl dreams of becoming a ballerina and flees her rural Brittany for Paris, where she passes for someone else and accedes to the position of pupil at the Grand Opera house.

## JACKIE | 15 | 120 MIN

Fri: 21:00, Sat: 19:30, Sun: 17:30, Mon, Tue, Wed, 19:30, Thu: 14:15  
JACKIE is a searing and intimate portrait of one of the most important and tragic moments in American history, seen through the eyes of the iconic First Lady, then Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy (Natalie Portman). JACKIE places us in her world during the days immediately following her husband's assassination. Known for her extraordinary dignity and poise, here we see a psychological portrait of the First Lady as she struggles to maintain her husband's legacy and the world of 'Camelot' that they created and loved so well.

## KIDS CLUB: CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT | U | 85 MIN

Sat: 11:00  
Children's Classic. Wallace and his loyal dog, Gromit, set out to discover the mystery behind the garden sabotage that plagues their village and threatens the annual giant vegetable growing contest.

## LA LA LAND | 12A | 148 MIN

Fri: 15:30, Sat: 15:00, Sun: 11:45, Mon, Tue, Wed: 14:00, Thu: 11:30  
Silver Screening - 'Last Chance to See' - Concessions (age 60+) entry just £3! Sun: 14:30

Mia, an aspiring actress, serves lattes to movie stars in between auditions and Sebastian, a jazz musician, scrapes by playing cocktail party gigs in dingy bars, but as success mounts they are faced with decisions that begin to fray the fragile fabric of their love affair, and the dreams they worked so hard to maintain in each other threaten to rip them apart.

## MANCHESTER BY THE SEA | 15 | 157 MIN

Fri: 20:45, Sat: 17:45, Sun: 17:00, Mon, Tue, Wed: 16:45, Thu: 16:30  
An uncle is forced to take care of his teenage nephew after the boy's father dies.

## MOANA | PG | 133 MIN

Mon, Wed: 11:30  
From Walt Disney Animation Studios comes "Moana," a sweeping, CG-animated feature film about an adventurous teenager who sails out on a daring mission to save her people.

## NT LIVE: SAINT JOAN | 12A | 120 MIN

Thu: 19:00  
Joan: daughter, farm girl, visionary, patriot, king-whisperer, soldier, leader, victor, icon, radical, witch, heretic, saint, martyr, woman. Josie Rourke (Les Liaisons Dangereuses, The Vote, Coriolanus) directs Gemma Arterton (Gemma Boverly, Nell Gwynn, Made in Dagenham) as Joan of Arc in this electrifying production. Bernard Shaw's classic play follows the life and trial of a young country girl who declares a bloody mission to drive the English from France. As one of the first Protestants and nationalists, she threatens the very fabric of the feudal society and the Catholic Church across Europe.

## SING | U | 128 MIN

Fri: 18:30, Sat: 12:00, 17:00, Sun: 15:00, Mon: 12:00, 17:00, Tue: 14:30, Wed: 12:00, 17:00, Thu: 11:30, 16:30  
3D: Fri: 16:00, Sat: 14:30, Sun: 12:30, Mon: 14:30, Tue: 12:00, 17:00, Wed: 14:30, Thu: 14:00  
Parent and Baby Screening: Tue: 11:30  
A koala named Buster recruits his best friend to help him drum up business for his theatre by hosting a singing competition.

## T2: TRAINSPOTTING | 18 | 135 MIN

Fri: 18:15, Sat: 20:30, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu: 19:30  
First there was an opportunity.....then there was a betrayal. Twenty years have gone by. Much has changed but just as much remains the same. Mark Renton (Ewan McGregor) returns to the only place he can ever call home. They are waiting for him: Spud (Ewan Bremner), Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller), and Begbie (Robert Carlyle). Other old friends are waiting too: sorrow, loss, joy, vengeance, hatred, friendship, love, longing, fear, regret, diamorphine, self-destruction and mortal danger, they are all lined up to welcome him, ready to join the dance.

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For requests, competitions or questions please email: studio@obanfm.org.uk or call us on 01631 570057

MONDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Monday Morning With Andy and Stephen, 1100 Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1700 Drivetime With Marcus, 1900 Rosie's Highland Fling, 2000 John McLuckie's Show, 2100 David Cullen  
TUESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 1000 Ken Hunter, 1200 Memories are Made of This with Ken Hunter, 1500 Lesley Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drivetime with Jim Lynch, 1900 Sounds Scottish with Archie Cameron, 2000 Highest Praise with Stuart, 2100 Elaine Lamb, 2300 Northern Soul with Gordon Covey  
WEDNESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Sound Scottish (repeat), 1000 Comfort Zone with Doug Carmichael, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Elaine Lamb, 1700 Drivetime with Campbell, 1900 Country Meets Rock with Len & Ken, 2100 Gordon's Grooves  
THURSDAY: 0800 Morning show, 1100 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Gordon Covey, 1700 Drivetime with Stephen, 1900 Christine's Collection, 2100 Ann's Ceilidh, 2200 Margo Till Midnight  
FRIDAY: 0800 Jean Ainsley Breakfast Show, 1000 Teeny and Tiny Show, 1300 -1500 Weekend Warmup with Ian Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drive Show with Jim Lynch, 1845 Sports View, 1900 Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig, 2000 Friday Night with Innes, 2100 TFI Friday with Jim Lavin  
SATURDAY: 0800 Breakfast Show, 1000 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crosher, 1330 CLYDE 2, 1800 Sports View with the Dream Team, 1900 Marcus, 2000 Dave Lewis  
SUNDAY: 0900 Sunday Morning with Breege, 1100 - 1400 Sunday Brunch, 1630 Archie Darling, 1800 Ken's Friends with Ken Hunter, 1900 New Country Show with David Entwistle, 2100 Drum & Bass with Graham Scott

Four out of five adults use their local paper to find out what's on

Source: Consumers' Choice V, The Newspaper Society

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## 2017

### FORT WILLIAM MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL

15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> February



Presenting Partner  
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CONQUER GIANTS



CELEBRATE everything the great outdoors has to offer at The Fort William Mountain Festival (FWMF) 2017.

In collaboration with presenting partners and sponsors, the event is being staged in and around Fort William, the heart of the 'Outdoor Capital of the UK', from February 15 to 19.

This year's festival is bringing together an amazing line-up of world-class athletes, speakers, and films for your enjoyment.

The festival kicks off with a torchlight decent to open

the Launch Night, followed by four main events, two studio nights, a series of workshops, fringe events, and art festival, and our exhibition area.

Mike Pescod, chairman of the Highland Mountain Culture Association, organisers of the festival, said: 'The Fort William Mountain Festival celebrates our wild landscape and the opportunities it presents. We want to promote the value of the landscape of Lochaber as the best destination in the UK to live, work and play.'

'We have a superb line up of climbers and explorers, mountain films, inspirational speakers and skills workshops. It's not just for adventure addicts though as anyone who appreciates the landscape of the Outdoor

Capital of the UK will find something in the mountain festival.'

You will want to be here to see some #mountainlegends share their passion for mountain culture through tales of epic adventures, first ascents, life challenges, greatest achievements, survival stories, amazing films and so much more.

'We have all of the ingredients to make a memorable moment, the only thing missing from this winning recipe is you', said Mike.

Fort William Mountain Festival is sponsored by Jöttnar and in association with Three Wise Monkeys Climbing and Nevis Landscape Partnership.



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NEW season of exhibitions at the Lime Tree Gallery. The award-winning Lime Tree Gallery in Fort William announces the first show of the new season for spring/summer 2017.

Andy Spink: A Retrospective opens 16th February for four weeks, showcasing the work of Mountain Guide and local artist Andy Spink.

Andy, a graduate of Cardiff School of Art has worked in one of the world's most dramatic landscapes for over thirty years. This exhibition of his work covers the period 1980 to present.

Many of the works have not been shown before in the UK and illustrate the importance that the wild landscapes in which Andy works have on his painting style. The show offers a fascinating insight into a mountaineer and artist's relationship to the landscape.

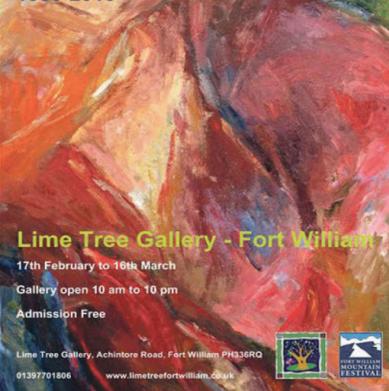
This exhibition is run in conjunction with Fort William Mountain Festival. Owner David Wilson said: 'This is a fantastic opportunity to showcase the work of a local artist, and we are delighted to be a part of the Mountain Festival - one of the major events of the year in Fort William.'

The gallery is open from 10am to 10pm, Tuesday to Saturday. Admission to the gallery is free. Visit our website [www.limetreefortwilliam.co.uk](http://www.limetreefortwilliam.co.uk)

Lime Tree Gallery, Fort William

**ANDY SPINK**  
A RETROSPECTIVE

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1980-2016



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# THE BRIDE GUIDE



Despite the stresses and financial strains that the current economic climate has brought us in recent years, there is one major life event in which people are still happy to spend money – a wedding. The UK's most popular wedding website hitched.co.uk surveyed thousands of newlywed couples last year to reveal an industry worth £10 billion. According to *Brides Magazine*, the average figure for the cost of a UK wedding is a whopping £24,000.

But remember, this is just the average cost, not a target for what you should splash out – many people spend less (or more). Almost a quarter of people surveyed spent less than £5,000 on their wedding. This just goes to show the vast differences in budgets – which means there is no one-size-fits all solution. When it comes down to it, it is a lot of money to spend on a single day, but totally worth the lifetime of memories you will have from it!

The UK Academy of Wedding and Event Planning have identified some key trends for 2016, so if you're looking for the best way to make sure your wedding day is seriously stylish, they have some great ideas.

## Highland romance

ON THE beautiful west coast of Scotland, couples are spoiled for choice when it comes to fabulous wedding venues. Each year, more than 1,000 lucky couples choose the West Coast for their special day, and since there are no residential qualifications for getting married in Scotland, it is a popular wedding destination for people from all over the world.

According to the Provost of Argyll and Bute, Councillor Len Scoullar, anyone choosing to have their wedding here is assured of the warmest of welcomes.

'Whether you already stay in the area or are thinking about coming here for your big day, you can rest assured that you will find the ideal location for your ceremony,' he said. 'We have romantic old castles, breathtaking mountains, beautiful lochs, thousands of miles of stunning coastline, sunny sandy beaches, and much more.'

Couples can opt for a religious or

civil ceremony that is conducted by an authorised or assistant registrar. Either way, you will need to contact the Argyll Bute registrar's office to complete the necessary paperwork. Marriage notice forms can be downloaded from the registrar's office, and should be submitted at least six to eight weeks before the proposed wedding date. The sooner you book, the more likely you will be able to get your preferred date, as there are a limited number of registrars available, especially on weekends.

'The couples who entrust us with their special occasions always remark on how warm, friendly and helpful our registrars are', Councillor Scoullar said. 'Their dedication and commitment, combined with the plethora of perfect locations, makes for a truly memorable day. Argyll and Bute really can offer it all – come and visit us, and see for yourself.'

Many venues are licensed, meaning they are pre-approved by the council. Licensed venues, whether a hotel, castle or garden, usually offer total wedding packages, so can be an excellent choice for couples who prefer to have all the details taken care of by a knowledgeable and professional staff. In addition, there are many experienced florists, jewellers, outfitters and caterers in the area that can take care of everything you need.

DIY weddings at alternative locations, such as a beach, a loch side or a barn are also a popular option; however, the registrar will have to visit the venue beforehand and approve it.

Outdoor weddings are very popular, especially May through August when the weather is at its best, but Scotland's variable climate necessitates a wet weather alternative- registrars are not authorised to conduct weddings

during inclement conditions. This is where a licensed venue can come in handy, as they often have both an outdoor and indoor location, so there is no panic if the skies cloud up on the big day.

Engaged couples can find out more on Argyll Bute Council's website at [argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://argyll-bute.gov.uk), or contact the register directly at [registrars@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:registrars@argyll-bute.gov.uk). Check out their online Civil Ceremonies guide, which is packed with information, venues and ideas for the perfect wedding day.

### Historic wedding

The West Coast boasts dozens of castles, manor houses, chapels, abbeys and cathedrals that will transport the happy couple and their guests into a fable as king and queen of their own castle. Even picturesque ruins or hill forts can provide a storybook backdrop for that special day. For those with

a sense of whimsy and drama, everyone can turn out in ancient Viking or Medieval dress- how fun!

### Country wedding

Pastoral cottages offer an intimate wedding experience, complete with accommodations for all the guests and home cooked fare. For an epic affair with hundreds of guests, consider a barn dance wedding- add hay bale seating, fairy lights and a horse drawn carriage for a rustic atmosphere.

### Island wedding

Whisk guests off to one of the islands for a destination wedding, where scenic hills provide a picture-perfect backdrop against the stunning coastlines. The guests will get to enjoy an exotic holiday before or after the big event.

### Outdoor wedding

Get married on the high seas in a chartered boat, or arrive at a loch

side ceremony in a rowboat. Or choose one of the west coast's many gorgeous gardens, and tie the knot amongst a fragrant profusion of rhododendron and rose blossoms. Barefoot seaside weddings are also very popular, given the plethora of sugary beaches here.

### Theme weddings

Highland-themed affairs are, of course, a popular choice, especially for brides or grooms with ancestral connections to the area. A ceilidh dance is a must for a traditional Highland fling, with the couple and guests twirling and leaping into the wee hours as the natives have done for generations. A whisky-themed wedding at a distillery is another very Scottish option for a memorable day.

**See The Bride Guide Part Two (next week) for church wedding inspiration!**

WYVEX MEDIA PRESENTS...

**The Oban Times**  
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

## Highland Wedding Show

Sunday 2nd April  
11am - 5pm.  
Corran Halls, Oban

### Are you planning a wedding?

Brides, Grooms and their families are invited to this fabulous free event to meet, greet and discuss all things wedding-themed with local specialists. Our visitors can look forward to a glass of fizz on arrival, goodie bag, bridal fashion show, beauty tips and advice and a prize draw not to be missed!



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**We will be delighted to see you at the Oban Times Highland Wedding Show on Sunday 2nd April.**

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See us at the Oban Times Highland Wedding Show on Sunday 2nd April!

**THE BRIDE GUIDE**



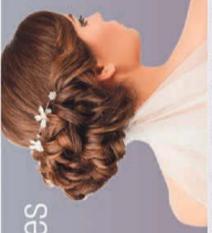
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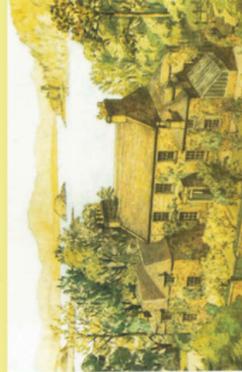
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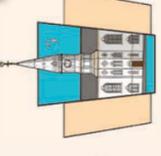
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	BUDGET	ESTIMATE	AMOUNT SPENT	COMPANY
<b>PLANNING</b>				
Wedding planner/coordinator				
Bridal binder/planning book				
Wedding inspiration magazines				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>STATIONERY</b>				
Invitations				
Save the date cards				
Thank you cards				
Postage				
Ceremony programme				
Reception menu cards				
Place cards				
Guest book & pen				
Map & directions				
Seating plan display				
Other				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>PHOTOGRAPHY &amp; VIDEO</b>				
Engagement photography				
Wedding photography				
Videoography				
Photo prints for bride & groom				
Photo prints for thank you card enclosures				
Photo album(s) for bride & groom				
Photo album(s) for parents				
Other				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>BRIDAL ATTIRE</b>				
Wedding dress				
Wedding dress alterations				
Veil/headpiece				
Jewellery and/or accessories				
Shoes				
Garter				
Lingerie and hosiery				
Manicure and/or pedicure				
Hair styling				
Makeup				
Going away outfit/wardrobe change				
Other				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>GROOM'S ATTIRE</b>				
Tuxedo or suit				
Tie or bowtie				
Accessories (watch, cufflinks)				
Other				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>FLORAL</b>				
Bridal bouquet				
Bridesmaids bouquet				
Groom's bouton-hole				
Groomsmen bouton-hole				
Parental bouton-hole/corsages				
Flower girl petals/bouquet				
Ring bearer bouton-hole				
Aisle arrangements				
Reception table arrangements				
Cake table arrangements				
Head table arrangements				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>OTHER</b>				
Rehearsal dinner				
Hotel accommodation				
Hen night				
Stag night				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>Toss bouquet</b>				
Deliver and set-up				
Other				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>WEDDING RINGS</b>				
Bride's ring				
Groom's ring				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>CEREMONY</b>				
Marriage license				
Church/venue fee				
Officiant fee/church donation				
Ring pillow				
Ceremony music/musician				
Other				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>				
Car rental for bride & groom				
Car rental for bridal party				
Transport for out-of-town guests				
Car decorations				
Fuel				
Taxi services				
Other				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>RECEPTION</b>				
Venue hire				
Table and chair hire				
Reception meal and service				
Room decor				
Wine/Fizz				
Non-alcoholic beverages				
Cake				
Cake serving set				
Cake topper				
Late night snack/buffet				
Reception musician				
DJ and/or entertainment				
Dance floor sound system				
Wedding favours/giveaway				
Lighting				
Special occasion permit				
Liability insurance				
Decorations				
Centerpieces				
Other				
<b>TOTAL</b>				
<b>FAVOURS &amp; GIFTS</b>				
Bridesmaid gifts				
Groomsmen gifts				
Ring bearer gifts				
Flower girl gifts				
Other				
<b>TOTAL</b>				

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# WYVEX MEDIA PRESENTS... The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES Wedding Show

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**Please get in touch with Nicky on 01631 568000.**

**And to all brides and grooms to be...we look forward to seeing you on Sunday 2nd April! FREE ADMISSION.**

# SCOTTISH HOTEL AWARDS

## Additional congratulations from The Oban Times Group to the following regional award winners...

- The Portree Hotel, Islands
- Rocpool Reserve, Highlands
- Glenfinnan House Hotel, Highlands
- Glengarry Castle Hotel, Highlands
- Auchrannie Resort, Islands
- Links House at Royal Dornoch, Highlands
- Loch Leven Hotel, Highlands
- The Scalloway Hotel, Islands
- Kylesku Hotel, Islands
- Inverlochry Castle Hotel, Highlands
- Eagle Hotel, Highlands
- Inver Lodge Hotel, Hotel
- Ardtorna B&B, Argyll & Lomond
- Knockderry Country House Hotel, Argyll & Lomond
- Taychreggan Hotel, Argyll & Lomond
- Loch Lomond Arms, Argyll & Lomond
- The Taynuilt Hotel & Etive Restaurant, Argyll & Lomond

# The Regional Scottish Hotel Awards

*a celebration of Scotland's excellence in tourism and hospitality*

<p><b>SKEABOST</b> Isle of Skye HOTEL &amp; RESTAURANT</p>	<p><b>Toravaig</b> Isle of Skye HOTEL &amp; RESTAURANT</p>	<p><b>DUISDALE</b> Isle of Skye HOTEL &amp; RESTAURANT</p>
<p>Tel: 01470 532 202 to book www.skeabosthotel.com info@skeabosthotel.com</p>	<p>Tel: 01471 820 200 to book www.toravaig.com info@toravaig.com</p>	<p>Tel: 01471 833 202 to book www.duisdale.com info@duisdale.com</p>
<p>Skeabost Hotel   Skeabost Bridge Isle of Skye   IV51 9NP</p>	<p>Toravaig House Hotel   Sleat Isle of Skye   IV44 8RE</p>	<p>Duisdale House Hotel   Sleat Isle of Skye   IV43 8QW</p>

It seems that 2017 is off to a flying start already for Scottish tourism. The *Rough Guides* annual rankings of the very best holiday destinations have listed Scotland as the second most desirable place to visit in 2017, while VisitScotland, the nation's tourist board, has also published a report that shows hospitality industry employment is at an all time high. Indeed, tourism is more than a holiday experience for visitors; it offers valuable employment, sustains rural communities, and is at the heart of the Scottish economy.

Now in its 14th year, the Scottish Hotel Awards scheme was established to celebrate this incredible industry and help lead visitors to the nation's very best hotels. This thorough annual assessment, during which each participating hotel is visited twice, highlights both the most outstanding places to stay and also those exceptional hospitality professionals who make each visit one that will never be forgotten.

Victor Clavell, vice president (Hong Kong) at the Ritz Carlton Hotel Company, believes that: 'The most important qualities employees can possess are passion, talent and drive.'

True to this belief, the Scottish Hotel Awards research judges have the vital role of not only assessing the overall guest experience, but also seeking out the unsung heroes of the industry – behind the scenes as well as front of house – and observing their dedication, care and commitment. Those hotel staff members who go the extra mile will be nominated as People of Excellence and be in with a chance of winning one of our National People Awards.

Here, we feature a handful of the award winners from across the regions. We will be publishing a special feature on the national award winner on May 11. The crème de la crème of the hospitality industry in Scotland. Watch this space!

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## Douneside House - Royal Deeside

**AWARD WINNERS FOR NORTH EAST REGION**

Offering luxurious countryside accommodation and fine Highland hospitality in a historic setting, Douneside House Hotel, Wedding and Conference venue in Tarland, Royal Deeside, recently scooped at the North East Regional Final of the Scottish Hotel Awards.

Douneside House, which is owned and managed by The MacRobert Trust, was re-opened in July 2016 by HRH Prince Michael of Kent following a £5million renovation of the 7,500-acre estate, which was the original family home of Lady MacRobert. It features 17 acres of magnificent gardens and spectacular views over the Howe of Cromar and the Grampian Mountains.

Each of the 14 newly refurbished, elegantly furnished bedrooms, as well as a range of apartments and cottages, combines Scottish tradition with modern amenities. Guests can enjoy the new state-of-the-art health club or get outdoors with the variety of walking trails, fishing spots and golf courses nearby. The dining is as luxurious as the surroundings, and features culinary delights using the finest local ingredients, including produce from their own gardens.

Douneside House, won 'Luxury Hotel of the Year', 'Small Country House of the Year' and 'Hotel Breakfast of the Year'. The Douneside team also picked up several 'People Recognition Awards' including Carolanne Duncan (Housekeeper of the Year), Tom Bielawski (Restaurant Manager of the Year) and Jim Barron (Bar Manager of the Year).

For details on their fantastic winter offer see their advertisement within this feature and visit [www.dounesidehouse.co.uk](http://www.dounesidehouse.co.uk)



Hotel Breakfast



Tom Bielawski - Hotel Restaurant Manager of the Year



Small Country Hotel



Jim Barron - Hotel Bar Manager of the Year

**the pierhouse**  
hotel and seafood restaurant

love valentine's  
in seafood heaven

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2017 SMALL COUNTRY HOTEL OF THE YEAR  
ARGYLL & LOMOND REGION

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

## The Pierhouse Hotel & Seafood Restaurant - Port Appin

**AWARD WINNERS FOR ARGYLL & LOMOND REGION**

The Pierhouse Hotel and Seafood Restaurant nestled on the shores of Loch Linnhe in Port Appin has won three prestigious awards at the Argyll and Lomond Regional stage of the 2017 Scottish Hotel Awards.

The awards include Small Country Hotel of the Year, Family Hotel of the Year and Bar Dining Hotel of the Year. Three members of the Pierhouse Hotel team also received 'People of Excellence' awards for their 'passion, drive, care and commitment'. They are:

**Laura Milne - Hotel Chef of the Year, Argyll & Lomond**  
Laura has built a superb team to create a happy, positive, creative kitchen. Laura's cooking is traditional Scottish with a modern twist, utilising fresh, locally sourced & foraged, seasonal ingredients wherever possible. As Laura explains: 'The Pierhouse is perfectly placed to make full use of an incredible range of sustainable fresh fish and seafood fished straight from local waters. Each dish is simply cooked to let the food speak for itself.'

**Sergejs Savickis - Hotel Sous Chef of the Year, Argyll & Lomond**  
Sergejs loves the West Coast and has a real passion for locally sourced, sustainable seafood. For Sergejs, it is fantastic to have direct contact with a local prawn fisherman and oyster farmer who are right on our doorstep – guaranteeing the quality and provenance of the produce.

**Janette Jack - Housekeeper of the Year, Argyll & Lomond.**  
Janette, who lives on the isle of Lismore, has travelled to work at the hotel by ferry for the past seven years. Attention to detail, thoroughness and efficiency are Janette's hallmark. Coordinating a team of housekeepers is crucial in a hotel with consistently high annual occupancy rates – Janette achieves this with maximum effectiveness aided by a fantastic sense of humour.

Laura, Sergejs and Janette are now shortlisted for the national finals in April.



Personal achievement awards for Janette Jack, Housekeeper, Laura Milne, Hotel Chef and Sergejs Savickis, Hotel Sous Chef at the Pierhouse Hotel, Appin.



Award winning Ardanaiseig Hotel



Skeabost - Receptionist of the Year, Fiona Roberts



Fish from The Pierhouse



Dounside House (North East Region) Luxury Hotel

## The Sonas Collection - Isle of Skye

### AWARD WINNERS FOR ISLANDS REGION

Three family-run boutique hotels situated on the Isle of Skye; Duisdale and Toravaig House Hotels on the Sleat Peninsula with sister hotel Skeabost House located near Portree. The period properties are beautifully decorated to enhance the traditional features, using modern fabrics, situated in picturesque gardens with stunning views. The restaurants use the finest of fresh, local ingredients to create delicious, mouth-watering meals in the two AA rosette fine dining restaurants. A la carte dining is also available. Weddings are also a speciality at the Sonas Collection.

Enjoy a unique Highland Getaway this spring. See website for special offers.



Toravaig - Wedding Hotel



Skeabost - Style Hotel



Duisdale - Country House Hotel



Toravaig - Small Country Hotel



Skeabost - Fine Dining Restaurant



Toravaig - Romantic Hotel



Duisdale - Housekeeper, Peter Macpherson

## The Crown Inn in - Stornoway

AWARD WINNERS FOR ISLANDS REGION So the Prince of Wales walks into a bar. It's not a joke; it's a true story from one of Scotland's most iconic, and award-winning bars.

The Crown Inn in Stornoway may be best known as the place a 14-year old Prince Charles snuck away for a brandy, but these days it's garnering awards for attributes such as its friendly, relaxing atmosphere and extensive craft gin selection.

The Crown Inn has won the Best Hotel Bar and Best Bar Manager (Marcus

Hird) at the Islands Regional Final of the Scottish Hotel Awards. Since its 2015 refurbishment, The Crown Lounge Bar has become the place to relax and enjoy a tippie and a snack while visiting the Isle of Lewis, boasting a local feel with a drink selection that rivals a metropolitan area.

As well as an extensive whisky and beer selection, The Crown offers more than 90 craft gins and jenever, each hand selected by Marcus and his knowledgeable team, who are happy to help guests choose the perfect nip.



The dining room at The Crown Inn, Stornoway



Bar Manager Marcus Hird with his award

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info@crownhotelstornoway.com

## Ardanaiseig Hotel - Loch Awe

### AWARD WINNERS FOR ARGYLL & LOMOND REGION

The Scottish Hotel Awards have again named Ardanaiseig Hotel as regional winners in several categories for their People of Excellence awards 2017.

With a fairy tale setting on the banks of Loch Awe near Taynuilt, Ardanaiseig is often described as Scotland's most wildly romantic hotel. The 16-bedroom Grade 2 listed mansion was voted Country House Hotel of 2015-16 and shortlisted in the Luxury and Fine Dining categories in the 2016-17 Scottish Hotel Awards.

Owned by a London antiques dealer, it showcases eccentric ornaments and antique furniture. Statues recline in hedges and paintings of celebrities adorn the walls. Guests can stroll past streams and waterfalls, discover a secret walled garden and take a boat trip to the hotel's private island.

Renowned as a premier wedding venue, its bridal/honeymoon suite is the hotel's Boatshed, lapped by the waters of Scotland's third largest freshwater loch. The hotel has 16 rooms plus a cottage in the grounds, and can comfortably handle up to 50 people for a function. Services can be held in a Greek-style amphitheatre on the lawns, in traditional stone-built churches in the area, or in the hotel itself.

One of the latest tributes to its position as one of the UK's most sought after wedding venues came from the Editors of the Good Hotel Guide - They named it their favourite Scottish Romantic Hotel for 2017.

For information on holding your wedding reception at Ardanaiseig call 01866 833333, email [weddings@ardanaiseig.com](mailto:weddings@ardanaiseig.com) or see [www.ardanaiseig.com](http://www.ardanaiseig.com).



## ARDANAISEIG by Loch Awe



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# OUTDOORS

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## Mountains of fun this February

THIS month Fort William plays host to a mega mountain festival.

Nevis Landscape Partnership is delighted to be launching this year's festival from Nevis Range following the famous torchlit descent on February 15 at 7pm.

Its project Celebrating the Wild, which is being delivered in partnership with Fort William Mountain Festival, is something everyone can get involved in. Whether you want to get your adrenaline racing with Carpe Diem, celebrate the pioneers of mountain culture at the Mountain Legends exhibition at Lochaber Geopark's Visitor Centre or learn about the local landscape from living legend Noel Williams there really is something for everyone.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

■ 1-19 February: Mountain Legends Exhibition, Lochaber Geopark Visitor Centre  
 ■ 15-19 February: Fort William Mountain Festival ([www.mountainfestival.co.uk](http://www.mountainfestival.co.uk))  
 ■ 15 February: Nevis Landscape Launch Fort William Mountain Festival 2017

■ 16 February: Nevis Geology Map & Guide Book Launch, Lochaber Geopark Visitor Centre  
 Nevis Landscape Partnership will be exhibiting at The Nevis Centre during #FWMF2017, so stop by and say hello to its staff and volunteers to find out more about this project and its environmental work.

For more information visit [www.nevislandscape.co.uk](http://www.nevislandscape.co.uk)

## Extended training for students

THE SUCCESS of a groundbreaking winter mountain safety partnership between St John Scotland and Mountaineering Scotland has led to its expansion into the autumn months as well as winter.

The project, funded by St John Scotland, is aimed at young people, with an experienced mountain safety instructor working directly with Scottish university mountaineering clubs.

The scheme began in the winter of 2015-16 when Nick Carter worked with 10 different university mountaineering clubs, giving on-the-hill training to students, teaching them about winter skills, winter mountaineering and winter climbing, depending on their existing levels of experience. He also gave evening winter safety lectures.

By the end of the first season, St John Scotland was so impressed by what the project had achieved it extended it into the autumn term.

This will allow pre-winter training which will prepare often inexperienced students in advance of the less forgiving conditions in winter.

Angus Loudon, St John Scotland's executive director, said: 'The work he does with young people is critical and ensures climbers are equipped with the necessary skills to deal with Scotland's often treacherous terrain and conditions.'

# Campaign maps out trail of Bonnie Prince Charlie

A NEW campaign capitalising on the renewed global appeal of Bonnie Prince Charlie, sparked by Diana Gabaldon's *Outlander*, has been given a £40,000 boost by VisitScotland.

National Museums Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, Royal Collection Trust and The National Trust for Scotland have joined forces to create a new trail of 25 properties and attractions throughout the country whose history is intertwined with Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobites.

The announcement comes on the 229th anniversary of Charlie's death (January 31, 1788) and at a time when the historical figure plays a major role in the hit television series *Outlander*.

A new website - [www.jacobitetrail.co.uk](http://www.jacobitetrail.co.uk) - has been created for the campaign and can be downloaded now, with a range of further resources to be added in the coming months.

Local locations highlighted in the online trail include Dunstaffnage Castle, by Dunbeg, where Flora MacDonald was briefly imprisoned after helping Bonnie Prince Charlie escape Scotland following the defeat at Culloden; Glenfinnan Monument, where the Young Pretender came ashore on August 19 1745 and raised the Stuart standard, beginning the final Jacobite Rising which would end at Culloden; and Fort George, which was established in the aftermath of Culloden to house government soldiers.

Through a combination of creating online videos, media promotions and blogger activity, the £40,000 match-funding from VisitScotland's Growth Fund will allow the campaign to reach a greater digital audience across the UK, while also tying in with the 2017 Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology.



Dressed as 'The Young Pretender', actor Mark Kydd helped launch The Bonnie Prince Charlie trail at Edinburgh Castle - one of the properties on the trail and a building Charlie was famously unable to capture during his lifetime.

A key part of the campaign takes place from June 23 to November 12 when the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh will host the biggest exhibition on the Jacobites in more than 70 years. This will include, Charlie's shield, sword and his travelling canteen.

Malcolm Roughead, chief executive of VisitScotland, said: 'Scotland's history and culture is one of the top reasons for visiting Scotland and 2017 offers huge opportunities for the tourism industry and collaboration across sectors. Bonnie Prince Charlie is one of Scotland's most enduring historical figures and we

are delighted, through the VisitScotland Growth Fund, to support this collaborative campaign that will help visitors follow in his footsteps.'

David Forsyth, lead curator of the National Museum of Scotland's exhibition Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobites, said: 'Our exhibition will present the best material there is - real objects and contemporary accounts and depictions - to present the truth of a story which is even more layered, complex and dramatic than the many fictional and romantic interpretations which exist in popular culture.'

Stephen Duncan, director of commercial and tourism

for Historic Environment Scotland, said: 'It's great to be working collaboratively with other heritage partners on this campaign to get tourists and local visitors following in the footsteps of Bonnie Prince Charlie.'

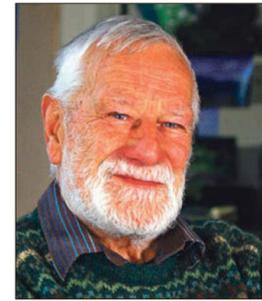
'We've seen a huge increase in footfall to our properties in the wake of the 'Outlander effect' and in Scotland's Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology we've got the perfect opportunity to build on this further by sharing the Jacobite stories associated with them far and wide.'

Deborah Clarke, Senior Curator, Royal Collection Trust, said: 'We are delighted

to partner with National Museums Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, The National Trust for Scotland and VisitScotland on this exciting campaign.'

Growth Fund applicants are required to align their marketing with VisitScotland's strategies and campaigns, including the global Spirit of Scotland campaign. They are also encouraged to think about how they can take advantage of Scotland's Themed Years, with 2017 being named the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology.

For more details, visit [www.jacobitetrail.co.uk](http://www.jacobitetrail.co.uk) or visit [www.visitscotland.org](http://www.visitscotland.org)



Dr Hamish Brown MBE. Photograph: Dave Macleod

## Hamish Brown honoured for mountain excellence

DR HAMISH Brown MBE, Scottish mountaineer, lecturer, photographer, writer, poet and international mountain guide, joins the Fort William Mountain Festival Hall of Fame as the tenth recipient of The Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture.

Dr Brown, 82, is best known for his walking exploits in the Scottish Highlands. He was the first person to walk all the Munros in a single trip and only used the isle of Mull and isle of Skye ferries and a bike as transport.

Hamish's Mountain Walk, the book he wrote in 1978 about that 112-day journey, with 289 peaks over 1,639 miles, remains a popular book on Munros and made him a household name and an inspiration for generations of hillwalkers.

Dr Brown received an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letter from the University of St Andrews for his contribution to mountain writing and poetry in 1997 and in 2002 he was made an MBE for his educational work and a fellow of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society. He was awarded an honorary degree from the Open University as Doctor of the University.

Mike Pescod, chairman of The Highland Mountain Culture Association Limited, organisers of The Fort William Mountain Festival, said: 'Hamish embodies the passion and the excitement that exploring the wild Scottish landscape entails and the great desire to share this sense of adventurous wonder with others.'

'Not only has Hamish explored Scotland and many other mountain areas right across the globe but he has helped countless others do the same and find the same sense of satisfaction. Hamish is a true exponent of mountain culture.'

The award will be presented to Hamish during the Fort William Mountain Festival which runs from February 15 to 19.

## No Fuss goes up in world with fun branding

FORT William mountain bike and outdoor event organisers No Fuss Events has become the first organisation to have a fully wrapped, custom-branded Nevis Range Gondola.

At the launch of the newly decorated gondola last Thursday (February 2), Nevis Range managing director Peter MacFarlane said: 'We've been working alongside No Fuss Events since it first started out in 2005 so it's fitting it is first to sign up to totally wrap a Gondola.'

'We love the quirky design and can't wait to see the No Fuss Gondola out on the hill.'

David (Spook) Munro, partner at No Fuss Events, said: 'We like to do stuff first.'

'It's fun, it looks great, and for us we hope it will bring folk back.'

Frazier Coupland of No Fuss Events added: 'What better way to expose our brand?'

Chris O'Brien, destination manager for Outdoor Capital of the UK, said: 'It's fantastic to see two key Outdoor Capital businesses working in partnership to bring more adventurers to the area.'

'No Fuss consistently runs top-class events that attract people in their thousands.'

'The exposure that Outdoor Capital continues to enjoy as a result of its efforts benefits all of the Lochaber population and we are proud to support them in any way we can.'



Frazier Coupland and David (Spook) Munro in the No Fuss Gondola.

## Learn Skills for the Hills with help of Mountain Aid

AN EVER-GROWING number of Scots are escaping to the hills to enjoy mountain adventures each year.

With spring just around the corner, more than 30 of Scotland's leading outdoor organisations will join forces next month for an event aiming to equip all those who love the

Scottish outdoors with the skills they need to venture out safely.

Held at the Royal Concert Hall in Glasgow on Saturday March 25, Skills for the Hills is organised by the Scottish charity Mountain Aid, in conjunction with Mountaineering Scotland.

It is set to inspire, educate and

entertain the many who head onto the hills, be they summer hill walkers, all-weather climbers or mountain bikers. It also seeks to encourage the many more who don't know what they are missing and signpost some of the ways they can get started.

The event will be officially opened by outdoor broadcaster

and journalist Cameron McNeish, who has been a patron of Mountain Aid since 2010. He will also deliver a keynote lecture on the day.

A varied programme of talks will also give practical advice from expert speakers including Heather Morning, mountain safety adviser with

Mountaineering Scotland, a representative from SARDA (the Search and Rescue Dogs Association) and survival skills personality from Backwoods Survival School Patrick McGlinchey.

There will be interactive skills work stations covering mountain weather services,

navigation, first aid for the hills, avalanche awareness and forecasting.

Skills for the Hills takes place on Saturday March 25 from 10am to 4.30pm.

Full details of the event programme can be found on the Mountain Aid website at [www.mountainaid.org.uk](http://www.mountainaid.org.uk)

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63 FORD TRANSIT 300 2.2 TDCI one stop drop side pick up, 6 speed, electric pack white	£6,950
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09 FORD TRANSIT 350 TDCI MWB high top van, 1 owner, MOD, electric pack, white, 37K	£6,750
12 FORD TRANSIT 260 TDCI SWB van, 6 speed, electric pack, white	£5,950
12 FORD TRANSIT 350 LWB high top van, 6 speed, parking sensors	£5,950
12 FORD TRANSIT 300 TDCI SWB medium roof van, electric pack, heated screen, blue	£5,750
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# FARMING NEWS

THE HIGHLAND CATTLE SOCIETY 125TH ANNIVERSARY

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## Highland Cattle Society set for spring show and sale

THE HIGHLAND Cattle Society hosts its 126th spring show and sale at Oban Livestock Centre, Oban, this weekend (February 11-13).

The iconic nature of the Highland breed continues to generate great interest.

Despite the challenges facing the agricultural industry, recent reports have indicated changing customer trends demanding smaller portion sizes and therefore smaller carcasses, favouring the native breeds and the Highlander in particular.

Breed secretary Sian Sharp said: 'There is constant pressure within the industry to lower input costs and maximise outputs and this is where the Highland breed comes to the fore, with the females being the ideal suckler cow for today's market. Our breed is a traditional breed that meets modern requirements.'

The weekend begins on Saturday (February 11) with the annual general meeting at The Royal Hotel, Oban, at 5pm. This is followed by a drinks reception sponsored by the Provost of Argyll and Bute Council at 6.30pm to welcome new members, existing members, vendors and buyers to Oban.

The show is held on Sunday February 12 at 10am at Oban Livestock Centre where 106 animals will be exhibited in front of veteran judge Jimmy Laing.

There will be 34 bulls forward with excellent bloodlines from proven stock, nine yearling bulls who will be



This year's show will see 106 animals exhibited in front of veteran judge Mr Jimmy Laing.

eligible for full registration from the age of 14 months of age onwards and 63 females who would complement any pedigree or commercial herd and would provide an excellent foundation on which to base a new fold of Highland Cattle.

The Highland Cattle Society is conscious that the enthusiastic young

stock men and women are the future of our breed and a young handlers' class will be held prior to the female championship class.

This year the young handlers will be split into two age groups – Under-12 and 12-18 years of age. The senior competitors will battle to win The Woodneuk Cup, presented by Wil-

liam and Margaret Thomson of the Woodneuk Fold, and the juniors will compete for the Thistle Fold Shield, presented by Mrs Annie Perkins of the Thistle Fold.

Judging the young handlers is Miss Helen Laing.

Trophies will be presented at the society's dinner and ceilidh at The

Royal Hotel on Sunday evening, for which tickets are still available.

The finale of this weekend is the premier sale to be held on Monday February 13 at Oban Livestock Centre, Oban, at 10am.

Buyers from near and far will congregate to bid for their chosen beasts.

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MF 4345 TRACTOR + POWER LOADER (2001) (6235HRS)  
MF 5455 TRACTOR LO - PROFILE (2004) (7689HRS)  
MF 6470 TRACTOR (2010) FRONT LINKAGE + FULL SUSPENSION (3171HRS)  
CASE 795 TRACTOR C/W LOADER - NEW GRAIPE

#### IMPLEMENTS

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LELY FRONT MOWER CONDITIONER - 2.8M (2013)  
LELY MOWER CONDITIONER - 2.8M (2012)  
MARSHALL 11 TONNE SILAGE TRAILER (2005)  
TEAGLE FERTILIZER SPREADER (3 YEARS OLD)  
JARMET SPRAYER 800 LITRES (3 YEARS OLD)  
WEST DUNG SPREADER (NEW ROTOR 4 YEARS OLD)  
REDROCK BUCKRAKE (2006), RECO C230 ROTOVATOR - 2.3M (2009),  
MALGAR SLURRY PUMP, FRASER 5 TON TRAILER, FLAT TRAILER  
HERRON FEED TRAILER, 9 FT FLEMING TOPPER  
FRONT PRESS FOR TRACTOR, MF 500 SEED DRILL  
CAMBRIDGE ROLLER 10FT, FLAT ROLLER 9 FT, CONNER TOPPER  
MCCONNELL DIGGER, SPRAYER, CLARKE METAL BAND SAW  
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### 126th SPRING SHOW & SALE OF HIGHLAND CATTLE OBAN

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Sale – Monday 13th February 2017, 10.00am

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## Fort William to host Lochaber stock judging

ON FRIDAY February 3, Lochaber Shepherds held their annual stock-judging competition at Ben Nevis Auction Mart, Fort William.

There were competitors from far and wide across Lochaber and Argyll competing in judging eight classes of different sheep supplied by local shepherds.

Eighty-two competitors took part in judging the different classes.

Judge for the evening was Dan MacLachlan from Dalmally.

### PRIZE WINNERS

- Children age 5 to 16.
- 1 D MacLachlan 326
- 2 Duncan MacDonald 312
- 3 Calum McColl 283
- 4 Hannah MacDonald 273
- 5 Robert MacDonald 267

Ladies highest score.  
Natasha Mackie 305

### Open competition

- 1 Derek Ferguson 351
- 2 Colin Cameron 338
- 3 Robbie Campbell 328
- 4 Robert Langan 326
- 5 Neil Menzies 325

Highest Local place  
Derek Ferguson 351

Team competition  
1 Natasha Mackie and  
Derek Ferguson 656  
2 Ewan Cameron and Robbie  
Campbell 638  
3 A MacPherson and D MacLachlan 634

Champion draw: Anna Berardelli

Tup Lamb  
1 Kenny McCallum,  
Lundrava  
2 James Weir  
3 Kenny McCallum

The committee would like to thank the shepherds for bringing the sheep to judge, all the sponsors for the raffle prizes, the ladies for the scoring, home baking and serving the teas.

This year two local charities will receive £300 each from the profit of the evening - Abbyfield, Ballachulish and Alzheimers Scotland, Fort William.

## Time right to record ewes

THE FIRST month of 2017 has flown in and we are already into February, writes Ewen Campbell, SRUC's Kirkton and Auchtertyre research farms manager.

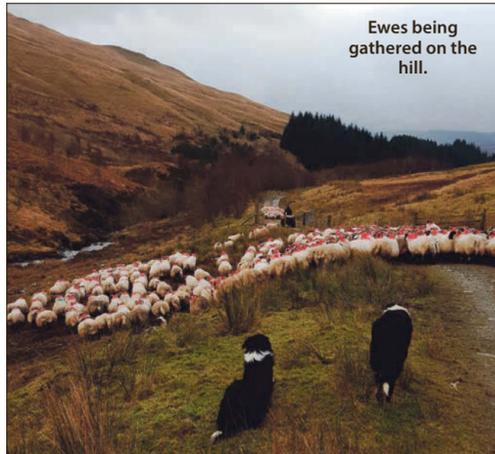
The snow has gone, but the weather is still a bit dreich. However, that does not prevent us from getting on with the recording of our ewes.

We took the chaser rams away at the beginning of last month. As I have explained previously, chasers are rams of a different breed that are put in with the ewes after the first batch of rams have mated with the ewes.

This allows us to know - from the different lambs we get - which ewes conceived early in the mating season and which conceived later. This tells us about an individual ewe's fertility status and can be one of the performance characteristics we use later in the year when deciding which ewes to retain in the flock for next year.

The ewes have now been put in their respective feeding groups. This year, like the year before, we are using our electronic tag (EID) linked weighing equipment to sort the animals according to weight change since before tupping started in November.

This approach means we can assess the ewes much more quickly, as the EID weigh crate automatically sorts the ewes with weight loss or weight gain into different pens. We can then go through and assess the condition of each ewe in detail.



Ewes being gathered on the hill.

Those animals which are lighter than we'd want end up being fed more than those animals that are near to or at the desired weight range. This certainly speeds up the assessment process and makes life much easier for myself and the shepherds.

The cows have also been taking up my time recently - they will be calving mid February so not long now. Of the 27 cows and heifers in calve, four of them have been scanned as potentially carrying twins. So the new bull has certainly been very prolific.

However, six of the heifers that went to the bull are not in calve, which is very unusual given how well the others in the herd took the bull. We suspect those six share an infertility

problem and so we will be transferring them to Oatridge for finishing and won't be keeping them in the breeding herd for next year.

The ground is relatively firm at the moment, given that we have had less than average rain fall over the past few months. This means that we can get the cattle shed mucked out before calving and also get some muck spread on the fields. The grass has also benefited from the mild spell, especially the two fields which were sown out last year which, according to our QMS sward stick, currently have grass heights of 7.3 and 6.1 cm respectively. This has allowed us to stop feeding our park ewes and to graze all the fields with sward heights above 4cms.

## Management to buy United Auctions

A MANAGEMENT consortium has agreed terms to acquire the entire issued share capital of United Auctions, Scotland's leading livestock auctioneers, for an undisclosed sum.

The deal includes all auction markets within the group, including the property holding at Stirling Agricultural Centre.

The seven-strong team - comprising George Purves, John Roberts, Christopher Sharp and Donald Young, backed by fellow directors David Brown, Donald Morrison and Matt Stevenson - assuming operational responsibility for the business was announced in August 2016 as part of the group's succession planning programme.

George Purves, managing director of United Auctions, said: 'This is a big step in the evolution and continued planned progression of the company and we are deeply proud to be sharing the responsibility of taking the business forward for the next generation.'

Former owners Robin Tough, Neil McLean and David Leggat, who stood down from the management team in December, will each continue to have non-executive, advisory roles with the company.

Outgoing executive chairman David Leggat said: 'We feel that this is the right time for us to take a step back and allow the next generation to take the business forward. We have the utmost faith and belief that the next team will continue to build upon the foundations and success the business has had to date.'



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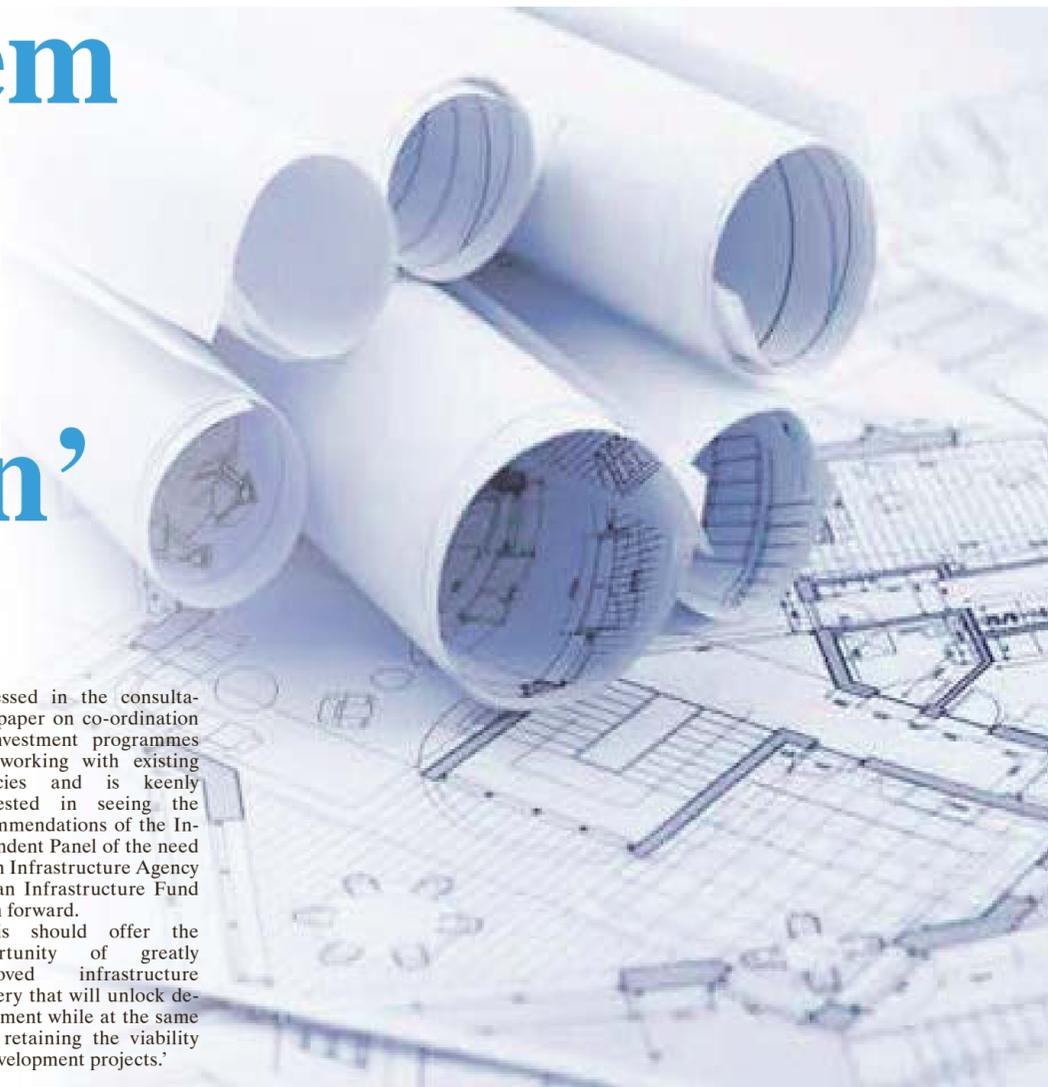
## Planning System Consultation 'Step In The Right Direction' - SPF

A CONSULTATION on proposals to reform Scotland's planning system is a "step in the right direction", according to the Scottish Property Federation (SPF). Housing Minister Kevin Stewart recently launched a consultation paper which sets out 20 proposals to revamp the system. David Melhuish, director of the SPF, said the property industry needs the planning system to "show strong leadership, support appropriate development and welcome new investment in our built

environment'. He continued: 'The launch of the consultation is a welcome step in the direction of giving our planning service a platform for improvement. 'The property industry is increasingly reliant on global capital and if we are to drive local economic growth, jobs and investment we must have strong public leadership and an efficient and aspirational planning service. 'The recent set of quarterly statistics published by the Scottish Government demonstrated a notable

trend of reducing numbers of major planning determinations that continue to take longer to achieve. 'We need the planning system to show strong leadership, support appropriate development and welcome new investment in our built environment.' In addition, Mr Melhuish said the SPF welcomes and supports a 'more aspirational and visionary future role for the planning service'. Mr Melhuish said: 'The development industry fully supports the aspirations

expressed in the consultation paper on co-ordination of investment programmes and working with existing agencies and is keenly interested in seeing the recommendations of the Independent Panel of the need for an Infrastructure Agency and an Infrastructure Fund taken forward. 'This should offer the opportunity of greatly improved infrastructure delivery that will unlock development while at the same time retaining the viability of development projects.'



### PROPERTY OF THE WEEK

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If you are interested in the above position, please contact

**Sophie Handley, Assistant Land Agent**  
on 01631 566122 or  
[Sophie.handley@bellingram.co.uk](mailto:Sophie.handley@bellingram.co.uk)

### SEASONAL PORT SECURITY PERSONNEL, OBAN

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Full security training and uniforms will be provided to the successful candidates throughout February and March. High levels of customer service are essential.

Candidates must be available to attend an interview in Oban on Wednesday 15th February 2017 and to commence employment mid-March.

Please submit your CV to [Oban@clyderecruit.com](mailto:Oban@clyderecruit.com). Closing date is Monday 13th February 2017.



### We are looking for a Manager to run a small but iconic restaurant/B&B in a very remote Highland location.

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The posts are live-in with all meals included. Applicants should be prepared to work in a remote but extremely beautiful part of the world. Anyone with a love of the outdoors and nature would be well suited. This is a unique opportunity to work in one of the most beautiful areas of Scotland. A clean driver's licence is essential and personal licence holder would be an advantage although not essential. Successful applicants should be prepared to interview from the middle of February. Highly competitive rates of pay offered. Please reply with an up to date CV to Post Box No 24, The Oban Times, Lochavullin Estate, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

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# PUBLIC NOTICES

**The Highland Council**  
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL  
(B849 ALINE PARK,  
LOCHALINE) (TEMPORARY  
ROAD CLOSURE) ORDER 2017**

On 6th February 2017, the Highland Council made the above Order in terms of Section 14 (1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, to enable contractors (Ross-shire Engineering) a safe working zone to carry out essential works for the new Lochaline Water Treatment Works on behalf of Scottish Water. The use by vehicles or pedestrians of the length of road specified in the Schedule hereto is prohibited between the hours of 7am – 7pm Mondays to Fridays inclusive within the period from 23rd March 2017 to 21st April 2017 inclusive. Access will be provided for emergency service vehicles only. A signed diversion route will be in place for all other vehicles. A copy of the Order can be inspected at the Service Point, Lochaber House, High Street, Fort William, on weekdays during normal office hours. The Order will be in force from 7am on 23rd March 2017 until 7pm on 21st April 2017. 09/02/2017 Mrs Lesley Howie, Legal Manager Highland Council HQ, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness

**SCHEDULE**

Road Affected  
B849

The closure will commence at a point 250 metres north west of the A884/B849 junction of (Aline Park/Keil Road) extending westerly for a distance of 200 metres or thereby. Emergency services will be permitted access. A diversion route will be in place for all other vehicular traffic.

www.highland.gov.uk

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997  
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>; electronically at the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS OFFICE FULTON HOUSE, GORDON SQUARE, FT WILLIAM, PH33 6XY; or electronically at your nearest Council Service Point. You can find your nearest Service Point via the following link [https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a\\_to\\_z](https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a_to_z)

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
16/05237/FUL	House in The Wood,	Glenachulish, Ballachulish	Change of use to bed and breakfast & holiday accommodation
17/00234/FUL	Land 2130M SW of	Torgulbin, Tulloch, Roy Bridge	Erection of a turbine house to house four hydroelectric turbines for the Ghuilbinn Hydro Scheme
17/00320/PIP	Land at Treslaig,	Fort William	Site for erection of a house
17/00324/FUL	The Knoydart Foundation,	Inverie, Knoydart, Mallaig	Retrospective - change of use from residential to retail shop
17/00326/PIP	Plot 1, Stronchreggan,	Ardgour, Fort William	Site for erection of a house
17/00328/FUL	Plot 3, Stronchreggan,	Ardgour, Fort William	Proposed dwelling house and integral garage

**Time period for comments is 14 days**  
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX  
Email: [epanning@highland.gov.uk](mailto:epanning@highland.gov.uk)

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us @ [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)

Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

**Argyll Bute COUNCIL**

**PLANNING**

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00-12:30 – 13:30-16:00 hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AN, 1A Manse Brae Lochgilphead PA31 8RD, at the alternative locations detailed below during their normal opening times or by logging on to the Council's website at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk).

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
17/00193/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land South Of Collaig House Kilchrean Taynuilt Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Taynuilt
17/00123/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 13/02813/PP (Renovation of derelict bothy to form dwellinghouse and installation of private foul drainage system)	The Bothy North West Of Derryugaig Farmhouse Gribun Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Aros Isle of Mull
17/00231/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land North East Of 2 Claddach Portnahaven Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Portnahaven
17/00163/PP	Installation of septic tank and soakaway (amendment to planning permission 14/01727/PP alteration to position of septic tank and soakaway)	Site At Cui Rhea Port Ramsay Isle Of Lismore Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Lismore
16/03147/PP	Removal of 2 no antenna and installation of 3 antenna, 2 additional equipment cabinets and ancillary works	Achallader Telecommunications Mast Bridge Of Orchy Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Dalmally
17/00180/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and formation of vehicular access	Land South Of Broomhill Breadalbane Street Tobermory Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute	Tobermory Area Office
16/03217/PP	Installation of generator, upgrade of existing access and associated works	Land South East Of Ocean View Nerabus Port Charlotte Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Port Charlotte
17/00146/PP	Erection of telecommunications equipment compound with 20 metre high lattice tower and associated works	Land North West Of Inverinan Taynuilt Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Taynuilt
16/03398/PP	Formation of slipway and concrete pad.	Achnacree Beag Dunderdon North Connell Oban Argyll And Bute PA37 1RE	Sub Post Office Connell

Written comments can be made to the above address or submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed at all Area Offices, Council Libraries and on the Councils website.

**DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL (B8003 BALVICAR-CUAN ROAD) (NORTH CUAN FERRY) (PROHIBITION OF WAITING) ORDER 2017**

Argyll and Bute Council proposes to make a traffic regulation order to introduce a waiting restriction on a section of the B8003 Balvicar-Cuan Ferry Road at the North Cuan Ferry. The service buses are having difficulties turning due to indiscriminate parking in and around the bus turning area. The restrictions are required to alleviate these difficulties and ensure the continuation of the bus service.

Full details of the proposal together with a Plan, and a Statement of Reasons for proposing to make the Traffic Regulation Order can be inspected by logging on to the Council's website at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk) or viewed during normal office hours at the following locations:

- Balvicar Post Office, Balvicar Stores, Balvicar;
- Luing Post Office, Luing Stores, Cullipool;
- Argyll and Bute Council Offices, Kilmory, Lochgilphead.

Any person wishing to object to the proposal should send details of the grounds for objection in writing providing their name and address, to the Head of Governance and Law, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT, by 3rd March 2017.

Jim Smith, Head of Roads & Amenity Services, 1A Manse Brae, LOCHGILPHEAD, PA31 8RD

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**Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES**

**FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT**

Allan MacColl has registered his croft 234 Gorteneorn in the parish of Ardnamurchan on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 19 October.

Details of the registration may be found at [www.crofts.rps.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.rps.gov.uk/register/home). The croft registration number is AO234.

**Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES**

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\* A MacDonald 2 & 4 Mannaal, Tیره Whole croft 76166

\* A MacDonald Mannaal, Tیره Whole croft 76170

Written comments from any member of the crofting community within the locality of the croft may be sent to the Crofting Commission by 10/03/2017 – Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NW, [info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk](mailto:info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk)

\*The Commission will consider any expressions of demand when deciding whether to issue a Direction.

Full details at [www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk)

**FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT**

Charles Self has registered their croft Gleann Sabhail croft, North Knapdale, on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 23 October.

Details of the registration may be found at [www.crofts.rps.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.rps.gov.uk/register/home). The croft registration number is C3611.

**FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT**

David Arthur Kershaw has registered his croft, Glenmore, Ardnamurchan and Sunart on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by October 18, 2017.

Details of the registration can be found at [www.crofts.rps.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.rps.gov.uk/register/home). The croft registration number is C3591.

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DEATHS

BARR - At her home, Duisdale, Lochgilphead, on February 5, 2017, FL Kirstie (née MacLean), in her 81st year, much loved wife of the late W M Barr MRCVS, dear mother of Andrew, Alison, Nancy and Mairi, mother-in-law to Alison, nana to Kirstie, Eilidh, Euan and Aileen, and great nana to Eva, Alyssa and Emilia. Private funeral at Kirstie's request

CAMPBELL - Peacefully at home in Corrairigh, Cornaigbeg, Isle of Tiree, Mairi EKB, née Paterson. Beloved wife of Hector JC, much loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, passed away January 28, 2017, aged 85 years. Interred at Soroba Cemetery, Tiree on January 31, 2017.

MACCOLL - Sadly but peacefully, on February 6, 2017, at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, Mary Evelyn, aged 82, wife of the late Ewen MacColl, dearly loved mother of Dianne and Elaine, loving mother-in-law to Michael and dotting granny to Jason. A friend to many, who will be sorely missed. Funeral service will be held in St. Oran's Church, Connel, on Monday, February 13 at 1.00 p.m. Thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only. Donations if desired, will be taken for the Lynside Day Centre, Oban.

WATSON-HENDERSON - June, (formerly Macarthur). Passed away at home Lynn House, Ganavan on February 2, 2017. Mother of Douglas, Andrew, Valerie and Vivienne. Granny to Molly. Wife of the late Adam Brownie Henderson. Funeral will be held on Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at 1pm in St Johns Cathedral and thereafter at Pennyfuir. A collection will be taken for the local branch of Marie Curie and North Argyll Carers Centre.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

COLTHART - Alastair, Angela and James would like to thank all family, friends and neighbours for their kind messages, cards and support during their recent loss of Mary. They would also like to thank the staff at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Dr Cairns and his colleagues at Port Appin Surgery, all those who took part in the funeral service and those who attended and travelled from a distance. Finally the ladies who provided food and refreshment after the interment.

GRAHAM - Alex and the family of Mary Graham (Brady) would like to sincerely thank Mgr MacKinnon and everyone who attended her Requiem Mass at St Mary's RC Church, Fort William on January 20, 2017. Thank

you also for the generous donations of £453.09 which has been sent to Diabetes UK WHITE - I wish to thank family, friends and neighbours for their kind support and sympathy shown to me on the sad death of my sister Frances. For all cards, phone calls and flowers, also all who came from near and far to attend her Mass and graveside. To Msgr MacKinnon for all comfort and spiritual care shown to Frances, to Jamie of McFall Undertakers for his care and efficiency, also Moss Park Nursing Home for the nine months of caring for Frances. The retiring collection for Deaf Care/Cancer Research came to £350.

MCLUCKIE - Caroline and family would like to sincerely thank everyone for their cards, letters, flowers, baking and support following the death of Peter. Our grateful thanks to D & A Munn for their respectful, caring and professional service. Heartful thanks to cousin, Craig Dyer for taking the service and to Rev. Dugald Cameron for his participation. Sincere thanks to Kirsty for a lovely reading. Thanks also to the Royal Hotel for the catering, M Gracie Flower Basket for the beautiful flowers, piper, John Hunt, Mairi Watson for managing the music, Ken Moncrieff for playing organ and to the Police for their attendance at the service, traffic control and in particular the very thoughtful escort out to Pennyfuir. A huge thank you to all who donated so generously to MND Scotland and ward 7D, Queen Elizabeth University Hospital. The total sum raised was £1,480.

MEMORIAMS

LAIRD - In loving memory of Susan (Oozie), a much loved mum and nana, who died February 14, 2003. Loved and remembered always.

MACCORMICK - In loving memory of John, who passed away February 11, 2014. Missed by all. - Iona and family, Heathervale, Mull.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of our dear parents, 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.

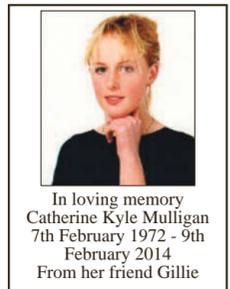
MACLEAN - In loving memory of our dear mum, gran and great gran, Annag MacLean, Kinlochleven, passed away February 10, 2011 also remembering our dad and grampa Calum MacLean, who passed away May 19, 1984. Loved and remembered always.

- Ian, Elizabeth and family and Roddy, Fiona and family.

MACLEAN - In loving memory of my gran Annag MacLean, who sadly passed away on February 10, 2011. Loved and remembered always. - Christina xx.

MACLEAN - In loving memory of Mary Campbell MacLean, (née MacDonald), who died February 8, 2005. Beloved wife of the late Alistair MacLean and a dearly loved mum, granny and mother-in-law. You still live on in the hearts and minds of the family you left behind. - From Dugald, Arlene and families

MACLEAN - In loving memory of a dear sister, sister-in-law and auntie Mary Campbell MacLean, who died on February 8, 2005. Those we love don't go away The walk beside us every day Unseen, unheard, but very near Still loved, still missed and very dear. - Margaret, Archie, Fiona and Duncan



In loving memory Catherine Kyle Mulligan 7th February 1972 - 9th February 2014 From her friend Gillie

ROBERTSON - In loving memory of Robert (Sugar), died February 11, 2015. God called your name so gently that only you could hear No-one heard the footsteps of angels drawing near Softly from the shadows there came a gentle call You closed your eyes and went to sleep You quietly left us all Loved and remembered every day

- Loving wife Margaret, Anne and Robert ROSS - In loving memory of a dear mother, who passed away February 12, 2016. It's been one year since that fateful day When Gaia swooped in and took you away She needed your guidance, your wisdom and heart It's just so sad that you had to part You are still here as a whisper in my mind It will get easier, but you see I find Each day has news I want to share But you are a whisper and not there I miss you mum with each passing day But know you are watching in your own special way I love you mum always and forever Your loving daughter, I shall forget you never XXXXX

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Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

Churches - Netherlorn

NETHERLORN Churches is inviting visitors to explore it's new website, which went live on Saturday at the same address: www.netherlornchurches.org.

Netherlorn Churches encompasses five Argyll churches (Craignish, Kilbrandon, Kilchattan and Kilmelford) all located in one of the cradles of Christianity in Scotland. Their new website has been designed to provide 'the ultimate user-friendly experience', a church spokesperson said, 'with improved navigation and functionality throughout, allowing visitors to access information on services, news and events happening across its five parishes in Craignish, Kilbrandon,

Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

Scottish Bishops offer thanks to Nuncio churches

HIS EXCELLENCY Archbishop Antonio Mennini, who has served as Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain since December 2010, has been appointed by Pope Francis to serve in the Holy See Secretariat of State and will take up his new post in Rome next month.

Reacting to the announcement, Archbishop Philip Tartaglia, President of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland said: 'On behalf

of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland, I congratulate him on his appointment and thank him for the attentive concern he has shown for the Catholic Church in Scotland on his many visits to our country. He has always been a welcome guest in Scotland and his wise counsel has been valued by the Scottish Bishops.

'I thank His Excellency for the sensitive and helpful way he has fulfilled his

role as the representative of the Holy Father to our Bishops' Conference and to the Catholic Church in Scotland, and for his readiness to convey the specific reality of the Catholic Church in Scotland to the Holy See.

On behalf of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland and of the entire Catholic community, I assure him of our prayers as he embarks on his new mission.'



Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

Netherlorn Churches website screenshot showing 'Welcome' message, 'Thought For The Week' by Rev Dr Kenneth Ross, and 'Latest News from Netherlorn Churches' section.

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Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

Thought for the week

"A voice of one calling the desert, 'Prepare the way for the lord.'" (Isaiah 40:3, Matthew 3:3)

THE need to be prepared. Holy Scriptures remind us that preparation is an essential part of life. There are many things for which preparation is necessary. The prophet Amos issued the solemn warning, 'Prepare to meet your God, O Israel. (Amos 4:12)

thew 3:3) The season of Advent is the time when Christians prepare to celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, while Lent is the season when we prepare to celebrate the events of Easter. There are many other matters that call for preparation, often things which can bring changes in life, such as exams, marriage, the birth of a baby, a change in career. Other things of a less dramatic nature also require preparation -

cooking a meal, going on holiday, leading worship on Sunday. I have recently married having been a widower for over six years, and will soon be retiring from parish ministry. These are changes that certainly involve an important element of preparation. But it is most important that we should be prepared in spiritual things. Are we prepared to meet with God, prepared for the way of the Lord

to be fulfilled in us and through us? Nothing can be more vital than preparation for the service of God and the good of our souls. Rev. George G. Cringles (Minister of the Isle of Coll, linked with Connel Parish Church of Scotland)

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# SHINTY

Marine Harvest Media Award winners 2016

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## Pre-season fixtures start in earnest

### Pre-season friendlies - Saturday February 4

A NUMBER of pre-season games beat the wet weather on Saturday February 4.

#### Aberdour 1 Glasgow Mid Argyll 0

Marine Harvest South Division 1 side Aberdour fought off a second half onslaught from Marine Harvest Premiership new-boys Glasgow Mid Argyll to win 1-0 in their friendly match at Silversands.

Angus Thorburn gave Aberdour the lead with a well-taken goal mid-way through the first half.

GMA launched wave after wave of attack on the Aberdour goal in a bid to get back on level terms but they found the Aberdour defence to be well organised and when they did get a shot at goal, Aberdour goalie Tom Bowerman was in inspired form.

The match was played in difficult weather conditions and was cut short to avoid further damage to the pitch, especially around the goal-mouth areas.

#### Aberdour 2 Glasgow Mid Argyll 1

Aberdour's second team beat the Glasgow Mid Argyll seconds 2-1 in their 11.30am throw up at Silversands.

Both Aberdour goals came in the opening 10 minutes, with Craig Girvan and Brian Toal on target.

Former Kilmallie player Seb MacMillan got the GMA goal in the second half.

#### Caberfeidh 6 Glenurquhart 2

Marine Harvest National Division side Caberfeidh beat Glenurquhart from the Marine Harvest Premiership 6-2 in their 2pm throw-up at Castle Leod.

It was a first game back in a Caberfeidh shirt for Kevin Bartlett after his stint with Lovat. And Bartlett made a telling contribution, as the Scotland international scored four times, with Gavin Mclauchlan getting the other two.

'Cabers', who also had former Beaulieu player Ryan MacKay in their side, led 5-2 at the interval, but a half-time tactical switch, which saw 'Glen's' Connor Golebek mark danger-man Kevin Bartlett, made for a more even second half. Neale Reid and Daniel MacKintosh scored for a depleted Glenurquhart squad which was minus a number of recognised players who were

suffering from a sickness bug. John Barr, Euan Lloyd and injured keeper Stuart MacKintosh were also absent and Gary MacKintosh deputised in goal.

Caberfeidh had goal-keeping problems of their own, with regular keeper Ewan Pilcher missing.

#### Fort William P Kyles Athletic P

The Drew Ferguson Memorial Trophy match between Fort William and Kyles Athletic was postponed as the heavy rain left An Aird unplayable. This was a second successive postponement of the Fort after their meeting with Aberdour was called off a week earlier.

#### Glenurquhart 8 Caberfeidh 0

The Glenurquhart second team were too strong for their Caberfeidh counterparts, winning 8-0 at Blairbeg.

Calum Miller scored five, Finlay Ralston bagged a brace and Ewan Carroll got the other goal. Glenurquhart Ladies player Hazel Hunter played 45 minutes for the home side.

#### Inverness P Kinlochshiel P

Inverness called off their friendly against Kinlochshiel which was to have been played on the Bught Park outside pitch. The sides had met at the same venue seven days earlier when 'Shiel were 8-0 winners.

#### Lochaber 2 Newtonmore 3

Newtonmore reserves edged out Lochaber reserves 3-2 in their match at Spean Bridge.

Lochaber's Lachlan Campbell has retired from first team duty but he is on hand to help out the colts and he netted from the penalty spot for the home side with Stuart Matheson getting the other.

Orsten Gardner, who is back in the Newtonmore fold as part of their reserve management team, scored first for the visitors and a John MacKenzie double gave them the win.

#### Lochside Rovers 2 Oban Lorn 1

Lochside Rovers beat Oban Lorn 2-1 in their 12.30pm throw-up at Oban High School's 3G pitch.

The match was originally scheduled for Ganavan but a water-logged pitch led to a change of venue.

Lochside took an early lead through new signing from Glenorchy Calum Kirsop, who took advantage of a re-bound to score.

It was the only goal of a keenly-contested first half.

Michael McQueen scored

what was to prove to be a vital second for Lochside after the re-start, beating the impressive Duncan Blainey in the Oban Lorn goal.

Former Lochside Rovers player Drew Walker halved the deficit but Lochside saw out the remainder of the game, played in wet conditions, to win 2-1.

#### Newtonmore 5 Lochaber 1

Newtonmore beat Lochaber 5-1 in their all-Marine Harvest Premiership 1pm friendly at the Eilan.

On a cold, wet day, Iain Robinson scored twice for Paul John MacKintosh's side with Conor Jones, Paul MacArthur and Norman Campbell getting the others.

Ryan Johnstone got the Lochaber goal. Deek Cameron was the match referee.

#### Oban Camanachd 1 Inveraray 2

As with the Lochside Rovers game, the 2pm throw-up between Oban Camanachd and Inveraray was switched to Oban High School's 3G pitch.

Oban Camanachd were without Gary McKerracher, Scott MacMillan and Matt Rippon, who has rejoined the club. There was a place for Connor Howe, who is back following a spell abroad, and youngsters Daniel MacCuish and Evan MacLellan, both aged 17, who played well.

There are changes at Inveraray this season with Andrew McMurdo and David Robertson stepping down from first team action.

The match was played 10-a-side in three, 30-minute sessions to allow both coaches time to work with their players.

Allan MacDonald put Inveraray ahead after five minutes with a 20-yard snap-shot.

Oban Camanachd had a chance to level from the penalty spot but Scott MacLachlan in the Inveraray goal made a fine save from Andrew MacCuish's spot-hit.

Lewis MacNicol made it 2-0 when he scored direct from a shy on 22 minutes.

Oban Camanachd played well for the remainder of the game and they created a number of chances, only to find keeper Scott MacLachlan in great form.

All Oban Camanachd had to show for their efforts was an Aidan MacIntyre goal which made it 2-1 with 10 minutes to go.

#### Fort William Ladies 3 Lochaber Ladies 4

With an Aird unplayable 24 hours earlier, an improvement in the weather allowed the



Glenurquhart club president Gary Mackintosh had a tough day stepping in as goalkeeper for the game against Caberfeidh, with Kevin Bartlett making a four-goal return for Cabers in a 6-2 win at Castle Leod. Photograph: Neil Paterson.

Fort William and Lochaber Ladies teams to take the field for a 2pm throw-up on Sunday February 5.

Both sides will play in Marine Harvest National Division 1 next season and two goals from Stephanie Walsh and strikes from Sarah Davie and Kirsty Delaney gave Lochaber the win. Ashleigh Fraser scored twice for Fort William and Zoe Smith got the other.

Neither side was more than a goal ahead throughout the game and Kirsty Delaney's winner came just a couple of minutes from time.

Kayleigh Woods in the Fort William goal was player of the match.

#### Jack Asher Sixes

Strathclyde Police won the Jack Asher Sixes at the Garscube Sports Complex on Saturday January 28.

After a competitive tournament, Strathclyde Police defeated the 1990s Glasgow University side 3-2 in the final to secure the trophy.

The event remembers Jack Asher who was a Glasgow University honorary president, former club captain (1958-59) and a renowned shinty player and referee.

#### Dropkick Murphy Sixes

Edinburgh University won the 2017 Dropkick Murphy Sixes, hosted by Edinburgh University Shinty Club at Musselburgh on Saturday February 4.

Edinburgh beat holders Tayforth 2-1 in the final, with Newtonmore's Duncan Gorman and Skye Camanachd's James Pringle getting the goals.

The winning Edinburgh squad also included Alex Dunning from Oban, Calum Grant from Kingussie and Lochcarron's Niall Arnott.

Aberdour took the ladies title, beating Strathclyde in the final. Teams travelled from as far afield as Caithness and the English Shinty Association to take part in the popular event.

#### Shinty action this Saturday

The pre-season friendlies continue on Saturday February 11.

Oban Camanachd host Kyles Athletic at Ganavan; Lochside Rovers take on Kyles Athletic's second team at the same venue whilst Oban Celtic face Glasgow Mid Argyll at Mossfield.

### Marine Harvest North Division 2

Lovat seconds, relegated from North 1 last season, open with a game against Boleskine at Balgate.

The Caberfeidh and Lochaber second teams finished third and fourth places respectively so their clash at Castle Leod will be a close encounter.

Glengarry welcome Lewis Camanachd to Craigard in what is a return to his previous club for Lewis boss Duncan MacIntyre.

The Strathglass second team are back in the league and they make the short journey to the Bught Park to play their Inverness counter-parts.

Strathspey Camanachd and the Kilmallie second team will play at Grantown Grammar School.

Lochcarron finished second in the league at the end of last season and are without a fixture on the opening day of the season in this 11-team league.

### Marine Harvest South Division 2

With Tayforth and Kilmory promoted from last year's Marine Harvest South Division 2, Oban Lorn, who finished third in 2016, make the journey to Strachurmore to play the returning Strachur side, back in the league after a 12-month absence.

With their first teams meeting at the Winterton, the Bute and Inveraray second teams do battle at the Meadows.

The Aberdour and Glasgow Mid Argyll second teams start with a league meeting at Silversands having met at the same venue in a pre-season match which the home side won 2-1.

Dunoon have no fixture in this seven-team league.

### Cameron Sutherland moves to Lochside

Highly-rated goalie Cameron Sutherland has joined Lochside Rovers from Ballachulish.

Sutherland was a star performer for Balla' in the National Division last season and his performances earned him a call up to the Scotland U17 squad which toured Ireland.

He missed the weekend win over Oban Lorn, so Beano Logan played in goal. He's likely to provide competition for Oban Camanachd goalie Gavin Stobbart.

### MacCorquodale makes Oban Lorn switch

Ewan MacCorquodale will play his shinty at Oban Lorn this coming season.

Defender MacCorquodale was hampered by a back injury at Oban Celtic last season but his experience will make him a valuable addition to the Oban Lorn squad.

Having already added Andrew Hunt, Fulton Ronald and 18-year-old Scotland U17 cap Ross MacMillan to his squad, Oban Celtic boss Kenny Wotherspoon will feel he has adequate cover.

Nineteen players all took part in Oban Celtic's 4-0 win over Taynuilt a fortnight ago, with a further ten players unavailable, so Kenny has a sizeable squad at his disposal for the season ahead.

### McIntyre back in the fold

Kilmallie have been boosted by Peter McIntyre's return after a spell abroad.

McIntyre was a first team regular with Kilmallie before playing for Inveraray in the

Marine Harvest Premiership. He relocated to Australia for two years but his recent return is a boost to Mark MacPherson's attacking options as Kilmallie step back into shinty's top flight.

### Fraser Macmillan makes Taynuilt return

Fraser Macmillan has returned to Marine Harvest South Division 1 side Taynuilt for the 2017 season.

Macmillan had a good 2016 season for Oban Celtic, in which the club won Marine Harvest South Division 1 promotion, but work commitments mean he would be unable to feature in most of their away games in the Marine Harvest National Division.

### GMA Ladies seek new boss

Glasgow Mid Argyll Shinty Ladies have invited applications for the position of first team manager for the 2017 shinty season.

GMA were Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup and Marine Harvest National Division 1 winners in 2014 and 2015 but lost out to Lochaber and Skye Camanachd last season.

The club is seeking a new manager who will develop the team further and inspire the players to future success.

Any interested applicants are invited to email details of their experience and how they feel they can contribute to the club and its development to club secretary Norman MacMillan at norman.macmillan@yahoo.co.uk

### Gary's the Caman Man

Former Scotland and Fort William player Gary Innes has made a worthy addition to the shinty songbook with his new single 'The Caman Man' which has already taken the download chart by storm.

The song was launched on Radio nan Gaidheal's Siubhal gu Seachd show where host Derek 'Pluto' Murray gave it its first national broadcast.

Gary Innes started to write the lyrics in the form of a poem in 2014 after hanging up his caman following an illustrious career which included two man of the match performance in Fort William's Camanachd Cup successes in 2005 and 2010. The new song is accompanied by a superb video put together by Norman Strachan who films each week for the Camanachd Association YouTube channel.

Gary said: 'I've been completely blown away by the response to 'The Caman Man' which has now reached out to more than half a million people on Facebook.

'Shinty was such a huge part of my life growing up and I've always felt, in many ways, the music and the sport have complemented each other, so it has been very special to combine the two once more.'

The single is available on iTunes and is included in Gary's new, recently released album entitled ERA.

### Skye Camanachd awards night

Skye Camanachd will hold an awards presentation and ceilidh and supper night at the Skye Camanachd Clubhouse on Saturday February 11.

The 2016 club player of the year awards, including Caman DR and the Angus Murchison trophy, will be presented.

Skye Camanachd are also working on plans for a formal event at the end of the 2017 shinty season year to celebrate the club's 125th anniversary.



Inveraray goalkeeper Scott MacLachlan makes a save from Oban Camanachd's Daniel MacVicar during the pre-season friendly at Oban's community 3G pitch last Saturday. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn.

# Honours even at Argyll schools badminton championships

EIGHTY pupils from Campbeltown Grammar School, Lochgilphead High School, Oban High School and Dunoon Grammar School took part in this year's Argyll and Bute secondary schools badminton championships held at Atlantis Leisure, Oban, on January 30.

Organised by PE teachers Denise Gemmell and Liz Clunie in partnership with Active Schools, the event was again of a very high standard, with lots of very close matches.

The pupils were a credit to their schools on and off the court with some fantastic displays of sportsmanship.

The event is used as an area qualifier and some of the winners will get the chance to represent Argyll and Bute in the Scottish Schools finals in Perth this month.

**Under-14s - Boys' singles:** Fergus Carmichael, Oban; runner-up, Innes Lambert, Dunoon. **Girls' singles:** Jane Scott, Campbeltown; runner-up, Lauren MacKinnon, Campbeltown. **Boys' doubles:** Stuart Head and Neil McCracken, Oban; runners-up, Innes Lambert and Marcus Keith, Dunoon. **Girls' doubles:** Jane Scott and Jennifer McMurchy, Campbeltown; runners-up, Jessica Ronald and Lauren MacKinnon, Campbeltown. **Mixed doubles:** Jennifer McMurchy and Euan Dott Campbeltown;

## Badminton

runners-up, Jane Scott and Andrew McMillan, Campbeltown.

**Under-16 - Boys' singles:** Angus Neil, Oban; runner-up, Jordan McIlkenny, Dunoon. **Girls' singles:** Kirsty McArthur, Oban; runner-up, Susan Shaw, Campbeltown. **Boys' doubles:** Jordan McIlkenny and Patrick Newton, Dunoon; runners-up, Dhyllon Cox and Cameron Reid, Campbeltown. **Girls' doubles:** Kirsty McArthur and Grace Thomson, Oban; runners-up, Susan Shaw and Nicola McKerral, Campbeltown. **Mixed doubles:** Kirsty McArthur and Angus Neil, Oban; runners-up, Susan Shaw and Alasdair Ferguson, Campbeltown.

**Under-19 - Boys' singles:** William Goan, Dunoon; runner-up, Connor Adams, Dunoon. **Girls' singles:** Lizzie Stirling, Dunoon; runner-up, Isla McGarry, Dunoon. **Boys' doubles:** Neil Littleton and Alasdair Ferguson, Campbeltown; runners-up, Craig MacCorquodale and Louis Reeves Oban. **Girls' doubles:** Lizzie Stirling and Isla McGarry, Dunoon; runners-up, Nicole Thomson and Rhona O'May, Campbeltown. **Mixed doubles:** Isla McGarry and William Goan, Dunoon; runners-up, Nicole Thomson and Neil Littleton, Campbeltown.



Prize-winners at the Argyll secondary schools badminton championships held recently at Atlantis Leisure, Oban.

# Lorenzo brings home bronze medal

## Sailing

LORENZO CHIAVARINI returned from Miami with a bronze medal in his hand and his Olympic dreams looking closer.

The Mid Argyll-raised sailor navigated his way into fifth place in the Laser class medal race on Sunday January 29, edging compatriot and two-time world champion Nick Thompson off the third step of the podium by just one point.

Competing in the first world cup regatta of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games cycle, Chiavarini and his fellow British sailors left Miami with a six-medal haul between them.

Before winning bronze and accumulating extra points, Chiavarini was fifth in the world rankings.

The World Cup Series continues in April in Hyeres, south of France, and the final will be sailed in Santander, north of Spain, in June.

## Alasdair is coach of the year

## Sailing

THE SAILING community from around Scotland gathered to recognise the achievements of Scotland's volunteers, coaches, instructors, officials, clubs and performance sailors.

The theme was very much one of 'family' at the recent Royal Yachting Association Scotland awards, emphasising the support network that enables the range of activity represented across the 10 award categories.

Among the highlights at the event, held at Glasgow Science Centre, was the coach of the year accolade, which was handed to Alasdair Young from Tarbert for his creative coaching techniques with class academies and in clubs.

Young said: 'I have been working as a coach for nearly 12 years now at varying levels, and to even be associated with some of the past winners of the award, let alone to win, is an amazing compliment.'



Mid Argyll sailor Alasdair Young accepts his award in Glasgow.

# MARTIAL ARTS

## WITH IAIN RODGER

**BJJ**  
Oban BJJ held a small in club charity completion on Friday February 3, this was to help beginners with ambitions to compete at national level. The proceeds are to go to Soroba Nursery.

The next seminar will be held on Saturday (February 11) and is open to anyone. Club-wide, there are two competitions coming up over the next six weeks; the first on February 18 in Motherwell which looks like being the biggest BJJ comp ever held in Scotland, with more than 300 entrants at time of writing.

Friday's beginner's classes from 7-8pm continue to grow, with student progression improving at a good rate which will hopefully show when they enter their first competitions.

Oban BJJ club is run by Iain (Coogie) Potter who trains under Marcos Nardini. For club info contact Coogie on coogiepots@gmail.com

### Kyokushinkai Karate

Caledonia Kyokushin has clubs in Oban, Lochgilphead and Stirling and is part of a National Kyokushin Union (The IKKU).

Club coach Iain Rodger is currently in the final stages of organising the Scottish Open Knockdown tournament which is held in Glasgow each year. This year's event is on February 25. Iva Bursikova and Karen Paterson from the Oban and Lochgilphead clubs respectively have both entered the novice section of this event for the first time, the other members of the clubs wish them well.

This year's event has brought in entries from

Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Netherlands, Scotland, England, Ireland, Wales and Romania. This is a bare knuckle, full contact event and videos will be uploaded to the IKKU Scotland YouTube page after the event.

During this busy time, assistant Instructors Paul MacKay and Drew Mackinnon are providing invaluable help to club coach Iain Rodger.

Anyone interested in learning Kyokushin karate should contact Iain Rodger on: 07584 166542 or iain@ikku.co.uk

### Shukokai Karate

The Argyll Martial Arts clubs are continuing as normal with instructors Kenny Gray, Flo McBurnie, Andy Buchanan and Andrew Lawson putting the students through their paces.

Beginners are always welcome at the Argyll Martial Arts classes and if you are interested please contact Kenny Gray on 07884 183905 or 01838 200419 or Flo McBurnie on 07765 931902.

### Kickboxing

Senshido Kickboxing student Andrzej Pytko is training hard for the upcoming Scottish Open knockdown tournament, this is his first time out of the novice categories and stepping up to the Open category, the club members wish him well.

Elsewhere the students are working hard towards their next grades.

Beginners are always welcome at the Oban club and anyone looking for more information should contact Wullie Rodger on senshidokb@gmail.com or 07588 513618.

# Green Machine need two wins out of four to escape drop zone

**Oban Lorne**  
**Newton Stewart**  
**BT West Division One**

OBAN LORNE must win two games from their remaining four fixtures this season to secure survival in West Division 1.

The Green Machine's fight against the drop begins this Saturday at Glencruitten as they welcome title chasing Newton Stewart. A win for the visitors would secure the West Division 1 title and promotion to the national leagues.

With Oban Lorne improving in results and performances so far in 2017, Saturday's match is set to be a close affair, with a big crowd expected from both the home and away support in what is an important match for both clubs.

Currently Oban sit ninth in the league, six points adrift from eighth placed Kilmarnock but with three games in hand over their Ayrshire rivals.

Oban still have fixtures remaining - away to Irvine and at home to Garnock - as well as what could become a winner-takes-all fixture at home to Kilmarnock on the last day of the season.

Kick off on Saturday is 1.30pm at Glencruitten.

Remaining league fixtures: Saturday February 18 - Oban Lorne v Garnock (to be rescheduled due to cup tie); Saturday March 4 - Irvine v Oban Lorne; Saturday March 25 - Oban Lorne v Kilmarnock.

### Home draw in West Region semi final

Oban Lorne are now only three wins away from a historic second final appearance at BT Murrayfield in recent years after being drawn at home to the winner of East Kilbride or Carrick in the West Regional Shield Semi Final.

This match will be played at Glencruitten on Saturday

February 18, with the match against East Kilbride and Carrick being played out this weekend.

The winners of the semi final tie will progress to the West Regional Final where they could face Newton Stewart, Irvine or Allan Glens.

### BT West Division Four Cowal v Argyll and Bute

Argyll and Bute travel to Dunoon this Saturday to take on Argyll rivals Cowal in West Division 4.

The teams have not met so far this season, with Argyll looking for a much needed win to lift themselves away from the lower reaches of the league. Kick-off is 3pm at Dunoon Stadium.

### BT Womens National League 2 Lismore v Lorne Ladies

Oban Lorne Ladies make the trip to Edinburgh on Saturday to play Lismore RFC in National Division 2.

The Oban team are unbeaten so far in the league this season and currently sit one point clear at the top of the league with six matches remaining.

The next home game for the ladies is a crucial game against Annan on Sunday February 19.

### West Division 1 - bottom four teams

	P	W	L	D	PF/PA	PD	Pts
7 Allan Glens	17	6	11	0	327:374	-47	33
8 Kilmarnock	17	5	11	1	240:422	-182	26
9 Oban Lorne	14	4	10	0	218:295	-77	20
10 Helensburgh	16	1	15	0	268:700	-432	9

# SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

## THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT £950

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE. . .



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

M McFarlane  
Bridgend  
Isle of Islay

S McArthur  
Ballygrant  
Isle of Islay

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1. If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

**Easy to enter**  
Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday. No refunds will be given for entries received after the deadline. 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

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void. If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company. In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company. The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time. Employees of Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

**Please remember to enclose £1 for 20 crosses.** The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB



Please tape your £1 coin here

Name .....

Address .....

..... Tel No. ....



David McArthur wheels away after opening the scoring in last Saturday's Scottish Amateur Cup tie at Tarbolton. Match report and photos: Derek Black

## Saints march into last 16 of Scottish Cup

OBAN Saints were made to dig deep at Tarbolton Public Park on Saturday to battle their way through to the last 16 of the Scottish Amateur Cup.

Hosts Tarbolton Amateurs of the Ayrshire Amateur Football Association Premier League used the difficult conditions to their advantage to keep the tie hanging in the balance until the dying seconds.

The match was played on something resembling a ploughed field and referee Steven Nicholls was in two minds as to whether the surface was fit for play. Indeed, had it not been for some vigorous forking from the groundsman and the rain which had fallen steadily for days abating in time for kick off, the match would surely have been postponed.

With the exception of injury victim Paul Carmichael, Saints Gaffer Alex Craik stuck with the same starting 11 which had fired six past Ferguslie Star at Glencruitten on the previous Saturday.

Dene Cassells returned to replace Carmichael alongside David McArthur in the centre of defence. Last week's absentees Donald Campbell, Jamie Graham, Myles McAuley and Marc MacCallum joined Martin Bonar on an extremely strong bench.

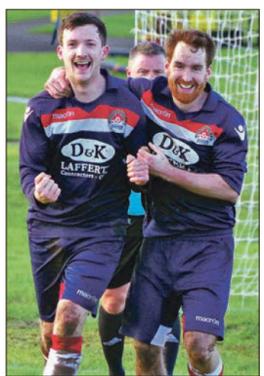
With the strong wind and low sun at their backs, Saints took the match to their hosts from the first whistle. Ross Maitland failed to work Tarbolton keeper Allan McKelvie with a first minute shot from 18 yards which cleared the crossbar by some distance.

The tall shot stopper was tested in the third minute after a long throw from Willie Gemmell was flicked on by Craig MacEwan. Dean Smith reacted

first to MacEwan's header but saw his effort stopped by the feet of McKelvie.

A heavy challenge on MacEwan by Tarbolton full back Evan Armstrong gave Gemmell a chance to show his dead ball prowess from 25 yards.

After a slight delay for some shirt pulling on Cassells by Johnny Dunlop, which attracted the attention of referee Nicholls, Gemmell's low shot left McKelvie rooted to the spot but unfortunately slipped wide



Brian Mackay congratulates Craig MacEwan after he slots home his second penalty of the match.

of big keeper's right hand post. Saints had their hosts pinned back inside their own half and made the breakthrough after 12 minutes with Gemmell claiming the assist.

MacEwan won another free-kick on the left which Gemmell swung into the packed penalty box.

McArthur got in between Blair Kennedy and Brandon Hendren, and from eight yards out glanced Gemmell's delivery into the bottom corner of the net past McKelvie's right hand.

After 15 minutes of being pinned back inside their own half, a Matthew Kelly foul on Jason Scobie inside the centre circle gave the hosts their first chance to get forward. The long ball from Evan Armstrong was, however, too heavy for Stephen Brodie and drifted harmlessly through to Thomas McCulloch. The route one football employed by the hosts against the wind was relatively comfortable for the Saints back four to deal with and it took until the 22nd minute for Tarbolton to create their first chance of note.

Again from a long ball Brodie turned well away from Cassells and carried the ball through the inside right channel and into the Saints box.

Cassells's close attentions forced Brodie wide and his low shot was blocked at the near post by McArthur at the expense of a corner. MacEwan beat Iain Phillips and Steven Richardson to head the corner clear, with Cassells leading the charge from the back before being stopped in his tracks by a crude challenge from Scobie.

From the free-kick Ross Maitland put Tarbolton's McKelvie under pressure forcing the keeper to concede a throw-in on the Saints right. Gemmell found the head of MacEwan on the six yard line and his downward header was blocked by the feet of McKelvie on his goal line.

The rebound looked perfect for Smith, however before he could poke the ball into the net he was pulled back by Dunlop. McKelvie pounced on the loose ball and the unsighted Mr Nicholls dismissed the penalty claim, adding insult to injury by taking Smith's name for his protestations.

As the clock ticked down



Donald Campbell is sent sprawling in the box by Evan Armstrong for Saints first penalty of the match.

towards the half time interval, Saints became less of an attacking threat, too often looking for an extra touch on the boggy surface which favoured the hosts more direct style.

Smith did manage to test McKelvie in the 37th minute with the big keeper making a good save to his right to turn Cassell's 20-yard effort behind for a corner.

Saints knew that the second half wind advantage would bring an aerial bombardment from the hosts, however they failed miserably to deal with the first test and conceded the equaliser 40 seconds after the restart.

From the Saints kick off MacEwan and Brian Mackay drove at the heart of the Tarbolton defence with the final ball from Mackay just beyond MacEwan leaving McKelvie an easy task to collect at the edge of his box. The kick from the hand of the keeper carried almost to the Saints 18-yard line where McArthur missed his header allowing Brodie to run in behind and lift the ball over Thomas McCulloch and into the net to make the score 1-1.

With their first half efforts undone in an instant, Saints knew they were in for an extremely difficult 45 minutes or so.

The inevitable lump up the park again caused panic in the Saints defence with McArthur heading out for a throw-in. This then brought another useful weapon into play for Tarbolton, with Phillips launching a Rory Delap-style low trajectory long throw into the danger area which Scott Maitland managed to turn behind for a corner.

The corner kick from the right was met at the near post with a spectacular overhead kick from Brodie which flew narrowly

wide of McCulloch's left hand post.

At the other end a powerful run from Mackay forced a corner on the Saints right which sparked a stramash in the Tarbolton box. In a frantic spell Cassells, Gemmell, Mackay and Smith all had efforts blocked by the Tarbolton defence before McKelvie finally safely gathered a tame shot from the edge of the box from McArthur.

After only 10 second half minutes, manager Alex Craik rang the changes bringing on the experienced Marc MacCallum, Myles McAuley and Donald Campbell to replace Matthew Kelly, Smith and Ross Maitland.

There was panic in the Saints defence once again in the 64th minute with McCulloch having to claw away an in-swinging corner from the left at his near post.

Campbell sent Mackay up the left wing with 20 minutes to go where Mackay's perseverance won another corner. Gemmell's delivery was short to the near post looking for MacEwan who made a good run but sent his hooked shot wide of the post.

Gemmell then made way for Jamie Graham which signalled a change to a 3-5-2 formation with Graham slotting in at the back alongside MacCallum and Cassells.

The front pairing of MacEwan and Campbell linked up in the 81st minute creating the opening which would lead to Saints second goal. MacEwan showed good strength to hold off Dunlop and hook the ball over his head for Campbell to run on to.

Campbell made his way into the box where his run was held up by Armstrong.

Campbell turned and ran across the box drawing an

### Football

injudicious challenge from Armstrong which sent Campbell sprawling in the mud.

Mr Nicholls had no hesitation in pointing to the penalty spot from where MacEwan gave Saints the lead tucking the ball neatly into the bottom corner of the net.

MacEwan had a shot just wide of target before referee Nicholls announced four minutes of stoppage time. The added minutes gave the hosts some renewed hope however that was quickly snatched away from them when they conceded the second penalty kick of the afternoon.

Campbell sent the every willing Mackay racing up the left wing and into the edge of the box where he was hauled down by the unfortunate Armstrong. MacEwan once again made no mistake from the penalty spot to finally calm the nerves on the sidelines and send Saints through to Friday's seventh round draw.

Manager Alex Craik was a relieved man after the match. He said: 'We were expecting a tough match and that is exactly what we got. However, the boys battled for every ball on a pitch that resembled a ploughed field.'

'The conditions meant that free flowing football was at a premium but we did enough to get through to the last 16 of the national competition.'

Saints return to league duty on Saturday with a home game against Drumchapel Colts who beat the Oban side 2-1 earlier in the season. The match will take place at Glencruitten with a 2pm kick-off. Referee in charge is John Stobo.

### Saints looking for home draw in last 16 of Scottish Cup Football

THE DRAW for the last 16 and quarter finals of this year's Scottish Amateur Cup will take place tomorrow (Friday) at RJM Sports, the premises of new cup sponsors, and will be shown live @ScotAmFA (periscope).

Saints club secretary David Buchanan said: 'There are no bad teams left in the competition at this stage and all you can ask is to get a home draw.'

The Oban side reached the semi-finals last season losing out 2-1 to Leven United after extra time.

### Scottish AFL results and fixtures Football

LAST Saturday's results: Scottish Amateur Cup, sixth round - Tarbolton 1, Oban Saints 3; Jimmy Marshall Cup, second round - Duncannig v Dunoon, postponed; Inverclyde v Campbeltown Pupils, postponed; Lochgilhead Red Star 0, East Kilbride 0, East Kilbride win 3-1 on penalties. Premier Division 2B - FC Argyle v Tarbert, postponed.

This Saturday's fixtures: Premier Division - Oban Saints v Drumchapel Colts; Premier 2A - Port Glasgow OBU v Lochgilhead Red Star; Premier 2B - Tarbert v Duntocher, Jimmy Marshall Cup, 2nd round - Inverclyde v Campbeltown Pupils.

### Oban Saints youth results and fixtures Youth football

LAST weekend's results: Drumchapel Amateurs 12, Under-13s 2. Scoring for Saints was Thomas McCrindle with both goals. Hillwood BC 2, Under-14s 2. On target for Saints was Connor Moore with a double. Scotstoun Athletic v Under-15s, postponed; Under-16s, no game; Under-17s v Antonine, postponed.

This weekend's fixtures: Under-13s no game; Under-14s v Drumchapel United; Under-15s no game; Port Glasgow BC v Under-16s; Ardencaple v Under-17s.

### Weather causes cancellations Youth rugby

S1/2 and girls rugby Oban's U13, U14 boys' teams and S1/2 girls' teams were left without a fixture last weekend as the away games at Cartha Queens Park were called off due to waterlogged pitches.

This Saturday the Oban S1/2 teams entertain Lochaber, Mull and Mid Argyll at Glencruitten.

### Under-16s drawn at home to Dalziel/Strathaven in West Regional Cup

Oban Under-16s have been drawn at home to Dalziel/Strathaven in the West Regional Cup after their recent impressive win at home to Marr RFC. This game will be played on Sunday February 19 in Oban. Kick-off time to be confirmed.



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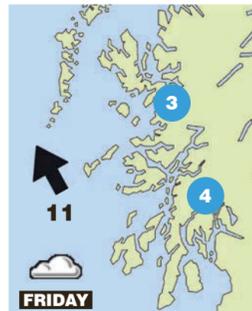
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**Chain, shackles, buoys all available to purchase in Oban**

**WEATHER**

Thursday	Cloudy with sunny intervals Winds moderate south easterly Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.
Friday	Cloudy Winds moderate east south easterly Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.
Weekend Outlook	Cloudy on Saturday Cloudy on Sunday Winds light south easterly Temperatures 2°C to 4°C.



**Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd**

**TIDAL INFORMATION**  
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday February 9, 2017 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour) BST)

Date	am	pm			
Thur	04.28 3.7 10.59 1.0 17.07 3.7 22.59 0.8	Ardershaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Fri	05.10 3.9 11.46 0.8 17.44 3.9 23.45 0.6	Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Sat	05.49 4.1 12.28 0.7 18.19 4.0 *** **	Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Sun	00.27 0.5 06.25 4.1 13.08 0.7 18.52 4.0	Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Mon	01.07 0.5 07.01 4.1 13.45 0.8 19.25 3.9	Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Tues	01.45 0.6 07.35 4.0 14.20 1.0 19.57 3.8				
Wed	02.21 0.8 08.07 3.9 14.54 1.2 20.27 3.7				

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

**Ferry Crossings/Sea States**

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate

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## PART 1 - INSIDE THIS WEEK **THE BRIDEGUIDE**



The first session of the second year of the AHA Futures project began on Monday.

### Young people look to a bright future on project

A PROJECT which aims to unlock the potential of young people living with autism or learning difficulties has welcomed a new group of youngsters.

The Active Healthy Achieving (AHA) Futures 2017 Project welcomed new members to work with Nimblefingers at Caol Community Centre on Monday (February 6).

By working with the young people AHA Futures hopes to enhance their life skills through experiencing new and challenging activities.

Now in its second year and running until the end of November, the government-funded project will feature six-week rotational blocks starting with Nimblefingers, a crafting organisation, fol-

lowed by Greenfingers at Claggan, Lochaber Rural Education Trust (LRET) and Ardour Adventures.

Moirra Hartley, trust manager of LRET said on behalf of AHA futures: 'Our key successes from 2016 were the increase in social, communication, independence, life skills, values, confidence and capacity building.'

'In each location, the group enjoyed a full and varied programme of events, with the main objective being to provide a safe, educational pathway for vulnerable young people in the midst of transition.'

'Our 2017 programme looks very exciting and we all look forward to working together again to deliver the second year of our AHA Futures project.'

### TIMESLINE

#### Children's home given green light

PLANNING permission to convert a Lochside guest house into a children's residential home has been accepted.

Lochan cottage, a seven-bedroomed guest house, is to be converted into a residential home for up to five children who would live at the property with two staff at the house 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Children will stay for between several weeks up to a number of years. It is believed the residential home will be set up by Scottish children's charity Aberlour Trust, which helps children and families with issues such as living with a disability, growing up in and leaving care and the impact of drugs and alcohol on families.

#### College achieves national success

WEST Highland College UHI has been confirmed as one of Scotland's highest performing colleges for the fourth successive year.

UHI's full time student success rates for further education has reached 75.9 per cent, more than 10 per cent higher than the Scottish national average of 65.5 per cent. Principal and chief executive of West Highland College UHI Lydia Rohmer said: 'I am delighted we continue to grow by offering greater numbers of students increasing subject choices in both further and higher education.'

Ms Rohmer extended her congratulations to staff across the 10 UHI centres.

## Community trust continues to make progress on land buyout

MONICA GIBSON  
mgibson@obantimes.co.uk

A COMMUNITY trust pursuing the largest community land buyout on record has been told by a multi-national company that 'sensible proposals' will be considered.

Last month, Liberty House and SIMEC (members of the GFG Alliance) completed a £330million deal with Rio Tinto to buy the aluminium smelter, together with the hydro-power plants at Fort William and Kinlochleven along with the associated estate lands.

East Lochaber and Laggan

Community Trust (ELLCT) was set up in response to Rio Tinto's announcement of intent to sell. The trust's ambition was to buy the 120,000 acre estate to 'safeguard the communities future'. Since the sale has gone through, ELLCT has been in talks with GFG and say it is pleased to have had a seat at the table.

This week the trust held a host of meetings to keep members up to date with action taken during 2016 and outline what it sees the next steps.

Speaking at the first of the meetings in Spean Bridge on Monday night, board members revealed: 'We have had three

face-to-face meetings with GFG Group - that's three more than with Rio Tinto.'

The trust said a feasibility study has been conducted which highlighted the estate had been under-used and unprofitable in recent years. The proposal set out by ELLCT could see it at least breaking even in a matter of years - and that is without a hydro scheme, which was described as the 'cherry on top' of holiday letting and other potential sources of income.

The trust was keen to highlight the Scottish government earmarks £10million per year to the Scottish Land Fund - a grant it wants to get a piece of.

Further, in backing ELLCT's plan it would bring the government closer to its target of having 400,000 acres of land under community ownership by 2020 - a fact ELLCT believes strengthens its case.

ELLCT's John Hutchison said GFG has admitted it still has to get its head round the enormity of the estate but the message the trust left them with was 'we have a plan which allows you to deal with the metal side and us to deal with the estate'.

A GFG Alliance spokesperson told *The Oban Times*: 'It is still very early days as it's only been a matter of weeks since we concluded the deal.

We look forward to continuing open-minded discussions with local communities, Scottish Government, other stakeholders and independent experts on how to maximise the potential of the estate lands for the benefit of everyone involved.'

ELLCT, which gained its 1,000 member in August, will continue to focus on gaining further community backing. There are also plans to hold an emergency annual general meeting in April.

Mr Hutchison explained: 'To make things democratic, all seven members of the existing board will have to stand down and new members will have to be appointed. So we will be keen to

hear from community members who believe they have the right expertise and are willing to take on the role.

'Once we have a clearer look ahead we will put working groups in place.'

A further meeting will take place tonight in Laggan Village Hall from 7-8pm.

Kate Forbes, the constituency MSP for Lochaber is holding a drop-in session to provide a further update tomorrow night (February 10). Ms Forbes will be joined by staff from the smelter and hydro sites, as well as one of the team from the GFG Alliance, at the Nevis Suite in the Alexandra Hotel from 4-6pm.

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## Refugee resettlement taking shape

LOCHABER services are gearing up to give a warm welcome to four Syrian refugee families arriving in Kinlochleven in early spring, writes *Ellie Forbes*.

A second information evening was held in Kinlochleven High School on Monday with representatives from various bodies providing further information about the resettlement programme.

The recruiting process for three positions at the Kinlochleven campus is under way. Two pupil support assistants will be appointed, as well as an additional language teacher.

Heather Thomson, head teacher at Kinlochleven Primary School, said: 'The school is well-placed to give a warm welcome to the children.'

She added that visits to the primary

school in Aleson, where four Syrian refugee families have been resettled, had taken place to see how they have successfully integrated the children.

Flora McKee, from Voluntary Action Lochaber (VAL) reported 13 people had come forward to help welcome the refugees but more were still needed for about two to three hours work a week.

Discussing housing, Sandra MacLennan, said four properties were being prepared. She said: 'We have a very experienced Lochaber housing team, but we are learning. We need to learn how to deal with people who have fled persecution and war, and we really need the community to help us.'

Manager of adult learning at High Life Highland (HLH), Mike Jones, encour-

aged a simple smile to help welcome the refugees. HLH, which will be helping the Syrians learn English, said learning the language would be key.

PC Katy Duncan will be a point of contact between the families and the police. She said the emergency services hope to hold a treble nine event where fire, police and ambulance services would get together to offer the families 'guidance and support' for which service they will require in an emergency, how they do this and, depending on the situation, when to call 999 or 101.

Councillor Thomas MacLennan, who chaired the meeting, said: 'I think the overwhelming majority of people are in favour of the refugees coming to Kinlochleven and wish them well.'

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## Spotlight on travel options

COMHAIRLE nan Eilean Siar is carrying out a survey as part of the Paths For All funded Smarter Travel initiative.

The project aims to increase opportunities for people to choose active and sustainable forms of travel for social, leisure and work commutes by choosing more environmentally-friendly and healthy methods of transport.

The comhairle wants the public to help it design its active travel and road safety policies and inform on how best to provide the right infrastructure to link communities and encourage walking and cycling. The survey will help identify any barriers preventing people from choosing active or sustainable travel and what improvements would best support people to choose these travel methods more often. The survey can be found at [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/O6KD3JB](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/O6KD3JB) and closes on Tuesday February 28.

## New Spirit of Skye festival

A NEW festival is being launched on the isle of Skye this summer.

The Spirit of Skye Festival will bring together Scotland's finest whisky, gin, beer, music and food in Portree on June 16 and 17. Isle of Skye Distillers, Crossbill Gin, Isle of Skye Brewery, Talisker, Diageo, R&B Distillers, Strathearn Distillery and Harris Gin are among the well-known names taking part.

Masterclasses will offer the chance to taste whisky, gin and beer, learn about pairing whisky with food, join a mixology session using botanical gin, enjoy cocktail-making demonstrations and watch one of Scotland's finest chefs in a cookery demonstration.

Visitors will be able to sample and buy a range of drinks and meet the producers and distillers.

On Friday June 16 there will be a night of live music and on Saturday June 17 there will be a hog roast barbecue and traditional ceilidh. There will be activities galore for younger visitors. Tickets will go on sale on Friday April 7.

# Lochaber MSP votes for 'landmark' budget

COMMUNITIES across the Highlands will benefit from greater support as a result of the Scottish Government's budget, SNP MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch Kate Forbes has claimed.

The budget includes an extra £8 million for Highland Coun-

cil, almost £600 million for NHS Highland, £100 million for digital and mobile infrastructure to deliver 100 per cent broadband by 2021, more than £470 million of direct capital investment for affordable housing, as well as continued investment for improvement works for the A9

and A82. The MSP said Labour, Tory and Lib Dem opponents failed to support investment for the Highlands in the budget - with the three opposition parties voting against the SNP's proposals to fund local services last Thursday (February 2). Forbes condemned the

approach taken by the Tories, Labour and Lib Dems, providing 'opposition for opposition's sake rather than supporting investment in communities throughout the region'. Ms Forbes said: 'This Scottish Government budget provides a strong funding deal for the

Highlands, giving spending commitments in the NHS, education, infrastructure, environment and the economy. For the opposition parties, with the exception of the Greens, to vote against all of this was deeply disappointing and against the best interests of our communities.'

# Renowned minister remembered

TRIBUTE has been paid to a renowned minister, conference speaker and friend after he died following a sudden illness.

Reverend Dr Iain D Campbell passed away late last month, aged just 53, after falling ill a week earlier.

As well as being editor of *The Record*, the monthly magazine of The Free Church of Scotland, Dr Campbell was also minister of Knock and Point Free Churches on the Isle of Lewis.

A funeral service took place on Friday February 3 at 1.15pm at Stornoway Free Church. Dr Campbell was so popular that police issued a request on the day for members of the public to avoid the area because of expected high volumes of traffic.

Rev James Maciver, minister of Stornoway Free Church, penned an obituary for Dr Campbell. It reads as follows...

'News of Rev Dr Iain D Campbell's sudden death numbed the Western Isles Free Presbytery and the tremors from the shock extended through the Free Church and well beyond.

'Such was his fitness, vigour and drive, no-one could have expected his demise at 53 years



The Rev Dr Iain D Campbell.

of age. Dr Campbell grew up in Stornoway. Along with his parents and two sisters he attended the Free Church congregation there, becoming a communicant in 1977, aged 14. At an early age he showed an outstanding intellectual ability and spiritual insight, together with a remarkable eloquence, which led many to believe, rightly, he was being prepared for a pulpit ministry.

'As early as in his mid-teens, he could deliver a lecture or address with competent ease, as was evident in youth meetings in church or inter-school debates. He was Joint Dux of the

Nicolson Institute in 1980, proceeding from there to Glasgow University, graduating MA with First Class Honours in 1985.

He then undertook theological studies at the Free Church College - now Edinburgh Theological Seminary - during which time he also took external exams at the University of London, graduating BD with First Class Honours.

'He was ordained and inducted to Snizort Free Church, Skye, in 1988, from which he was called to Back Free Church in 1995, then to Point Free Church in 2009, serving there till his death.

'A few years after entering congregational ministry, Dr Campbell achieved his Master of Theology degree, followed in 2001 by the University of Edinburgh awarding him his PhD.

'Dr Campbell was understandably in demand as a conference speaker throughout the country and overseas. He was due to go to Korea later this month to deliver lectures at a Theological Seminary in Seoul. In addition to his powers of speech he also possessed admirable writing skills, as is evident in his many publications, a fact that was not lost on the Church which twice appointed him as editor of *The Record*, the Church's magazine.

'He had, in earlier years, edited the *Instructor*, the children's magazine of the Church. For many years he contributed a weekly column to the *Stornoway Gazette*, providing stimulating comment on local and national issues, but always within a biblical framework, in addition to articles for *Reformation 21*, and *Tabletalk Magazine*.

Throughout his ministry, Dr Campbell served the Church at various times as a member of committees and boards, the

most recent of which was as vice chairman of the Board of Edinburgh Theological Seminary. He was appointed Moderator of the Free Church General Assembly in 2012.

Although gifted in so many fields, Dr Campbell's great love was preaching the gospel. It was a preaching of the highest calibre. His exposition of Scripture was educative, stimulating, thought-provoking, evangelistic and edifying, even for those most advanced in the Christian faith. Dr Campbell was a consummate Reformed, covenantal theologian who would have enhanced any theological institution in the world.

While we lament his passing and mourn the fact we will never hear his voice in a pulpit again, we are thankful to have a large resource of his recorded sermons and lectures.

We extend sincere condolences to his widow Anne, to their sons Iain and Stephen, and daughter Emily, to his mother Lily and his sisters, Margaret and Alma. We also remember the congregation of Point Free Church who lament the death of their beloved minister.'

# Headland trust celebrates first anniversary

GALLAN Head Community Trust, the Outer Hebridean charity that bought the most northwesterly headland in the UK last year from the Ministry of Defence, is holding a ceilidh and torchlit procession to celebrate its first year as a community land owner.

On January 29, 2016, the trust completed the community right to buy process and became the legal custodian of Gallan Head, the former RAF Aird Uig Cold War radar base on Lewis, allowing public access for the first time in more than 60 years.

In the 12 months since becoming the community landowner, the trust has successfully purchased and converted a house on the edge of the headland



The community-owned headland, Gallan Head, with Gallan Beag in the foreground. Photograph: Richard Davies.

into a restaurant, craft shop and community and visitor hub, as well as raising funds for landscaping.

It now plans to develop a ground-breaking observatory on Gallan Head for studying dark skies, changing weather and whale spotting.

The Cetus Observatory will house an internet-operated robotic telescope, radio telescope, radar, solar telescope, planetarium, space exhibition/display, giant wide field binoculars for wildlife watching, nature webcams, a cafe, educational facilities and a shop.

John Brown, Astronomer Royal for Scotland and patron of the Cetus Observatory, said: 'I am delighted by the progress

the trust is making. We are on track towards opening the Cetus Observatory to the public by 2020. I look forward to visiting Gallan Head again in the next few months.'

Chairwoman of Gallan Head Community Trust Jill Smith said: 'As trustees, are working hard to be sensitive, considerate custodians of this magical landscape.'

'The Cetus Observatory will inspire visitors and bring life back to our community, jobs to our area and will attract young people back to our villages. This weekend we are celebrating both what we have achieved so far and the great potential we have to make a real difference to our island community.'

## TIMESLINE

### Green light for new wind farm

PLANNING permission for a new 10-turbine wind farm in the Highlands has been approved.

Paul Wheelhouse, the minister for business, innovation and energy granted planning permission for the wind farm, 8kms west of Fort Augustus, on Friday February 3.

It is hoped the development will create between four and 50 jobs and generate up to £4million in community benefit, to be divided equally between local communities.

Toni Volpe, chief executive officer of Falck Renewables SPA said: 'This wind farm will also support local community projects, help Scotland meet its energy targets and include measures to protect breeding birds and the environment.'

### Scottish Tourism Award winners

FOUR Highland and island businesses have been recognised in the Scottish Tourism Awards.

The successful establishments were: Best Accommodation Provider, Judges Commendation: Ardgor Estate, Lochaber; Best Informal Eating Experience: Cafe Canna, Isle of Canna; Most Hospitable B&B or Guest House, The Grange, Fort William; and Most Hospitable Hotel, Kinloch Lodge on Skye.

### Ferry disruption expected

FERRY passengers suffered disruption earlier this week as severe gales blew over parts of western and northern Scotland.

A yellow warning for wind in the north and west of Scotland was issued by the Met Office on Monday (February 6) with gusts of up to 60mph.

CalMac sailings between Tobermory and Kilchoan were cancelled because of the high winds, and the Mallaig to Armadale route was also affected.

Other services with possible disruptions and cancellations included sailings from Raasay, Lochaline, Lochmaddy, Uig, Ullapool and Stornoway.



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## Resettlement team seeking volunteers

THE OUTER Hebrides Resettlement Team is seeking more volunteers from Lewis to support re-settled families with aspects of day-to-day life, including using public transport, grocery shopping, attending appointments and participating in children's activities.

Comhairle leader and chairman of the Community Planning Partnership Angus Campbell said: 'The resettlement team is looking for volunteers who are organised and reliable, fluent English speakers, with a friendly, welcoming disposition who, ideally, would be available for at least two hours per week. They will be supported with appropriate training and guidance and reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will be covered. The team is particularly keen to hear from any Arabic speakers.'

To sign up visit the front page of the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar website. Go to the 'features' section to view the role description and volunteering guidelines. Email [catherine.myles@ene-siar.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.myles@ene-siar.gov.uk) with any questions.

## Broadband upgrade in the money

WORK to increase the speed of Tiree's broadband moved a little closer this week when Community Broadband Scotland (CBS) announced it is to give the island's broadband network, Community Information Technology Ltd (CIT Ltd), a major cash boost.

CBS is awarding £80,000 of the £91,000 CIT Ltd needs to upgrade Tiree's internet network and begin offering improved broadband services with speeds up to 30Mbps. The remaining £11,000 will come from Tiree Community Development Trust (CDT).

Mark Vale from Tiree CDT said: 'Tiree Community Development Trust is thrilled we have been able to secure this funding from CBS for our community-owned wireless communications provider CIT Ltd. Improving infrastructure like broadband is a vi-

tal component in the development of our local economy and in our island's fight against depopulation. This project will deliver a greatly improved quality of internet service and speed to 160 households and businesses in our community and enhance the long-term viability of community broadband on Tiree.'

Peter Guthrie of CBS said: 'CBS recognises the dedication and hard work CIT Ltd has put into its network since 2005 and we're delighted we can now help it take the next step towards improved broadband coverage.'

'CBS is committed to supporting rural areas across Scotland access better connectivity and we will continue to work closely with Tiree Broadband as it begins its upgrade work.'

## Cash boost barely dents budget cuts

WESTERN Isles Council has welcomed news that £160 million will be returned to local government, but has said that councils will still be hard pressed to find cuts.

Commenting on the recent announcement, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Leader councillor Angus Campbell said: 'It is to be welcomed that the Scottish Government, in reaching agreement with the Scottish Green Party, has revised its proposed budget.

'However, it has to be remembered that we had been

required to find savings of £4.4million, so with the additional £990,000 revenue funding as a result of this agreement, the required savings are now £3.3m. There is also an additional £350,000 of capital which again is a welcome mitigating move but there is no doubt this remains an extremely challenging period for local authorities.'

To view the papers head to [www.cne-siar.gov.uk/committees/budgets/index.asp](http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/committees/budgets/index.asp)

## 'Listen to the islands' on renewable energy

NA H-EILEANAN an Iar SNP MP Angus MacNeil and MSP Alasdair Allan are urging the UK Government to 'listen to the islands' on renewable energy.

They have both submitted formal responses to the government's consultation on whether island wind projects should be eligible to bid for subsidies.

Mr MacNeil met Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Greg Clark MP and Jesse Norman MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for BEIS earlier this month to give his input to the consultation.

He and Dr Allan met with community wind energy representatives before the meeting to make sure the views of all island-based groups were represented. The Scottish government has also submitted a detailed response in support of remote island wind projects.

Mr MacNeil said: 'There is a strong view from the island energy sector that support from the UK government is crucial as the way forward.

'This is a chance for the UK government to make a real difference to island communities while at the same time reaping the benefits for the UK economy. The islands have the best wind resource in Europe and supporting non-mainland onshore wind through the Contract for Difference scheme offers the best value for money option for the UK government.'

Dr Allan said: 'There has been widespread support for further development of island renewables from the Scottish Government, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, local parliamentarians, developers and, most crucially, communities. The UK government must now listen to reason and allow the island renewable sector the support it deserves.'



Alasdair Allan MSP and Angus MacNeil MP visit a wind energy project in Na h-Eileanan an Iar.



Councillor Ben Thompson at the Caol five-a-side pitch. Photograph: Abrightside Photography.

## Parent's anger over pitch lights delay

'AN ABSOLUTE joke' was how one Caol parent described the on-going situation at the village's new five-a-side football pitch.

Caol and Mallaig councillor Ben Thompson contacted *The Oban Times* after receiving numerous complaints about lights at the pitch not working.

The parent, who asked not to be named, said: 'This problem with the lights has been going on for about five months. It's a farce because the kids can't go out and play now that we are in winter and it's dark early.'

Mr Thompson feared if the situation was not resolved soon it might put people off getting involved in community activities, saying: 'We should be encouraging people in the community to organise activities.'

A Highland Council spokesperson said: 'The new lighting for the community pitch operates on the same principal as the previous lights in that the lighting switches off at a pre-determined time every evening. The new lights have an additional push-button feature which activates the lights for 30-45mins at a time ensuring the lights are not left on unnecessarily when not in use. When initially installed, everything was working as designed apart from the lights still going on after the 10pm shut down time when the push button was activated. This was traced to a fault in the timeclock and a replacement was installed.'

'Shortly after this, the replacement timeclock developed a similar problem and to minimise disturbance to neighbouring properties from the lights being activated in the early hours of the morning, the lights were switched off until a further replacement could be sourced.'

'We have been given assurance from the contractors that an engineer will visit Caol this afternoon (Tuesday February 7) to fit a new controller.'

# No rise in Corran Ferry passenger fares this year

MONICA GIBSON  
mgibson@obantimes.co.uk

CORRAN FERRY passenger fares will not go up this year.

Despite concerns people wanting to cross Loch Linnhe from Nether Lochaber to Ardgour could be charged an additional 10 per cent on the 'already criminal' £8.20, the Highland Council (HC) last week revealed the fare will stay as it is – for the time being.

In a statement, HC budget leader Bill Fernie confirmed: 'We will not increase the charges for existing car parks or the Corran Ferry this year.'

The information was part of an announcement regarding a deal

agreed by the Scottish Government to reduce the gap in the Highland Council's budget from £26 million to £20 million.

While the news was welcomed by some, the local councillor said it came as a bit of a surprise.

Councillor Andrew Baxter, who represents Fort William and Ardnamurchan, told *The Oban Times*: 'Even when I met with finance officials just prior to the council meeting there was talk of a minimum of a five per cent increase so, yes, I was not expecting this.'

Mr Baxter says the council sees the Corran Ferry as a cash cow and added: 'I will continue campaigning for a fair deal for local residents that avoids year-on-year fare increases.'

In the build up to the announcement, *The Oban Times* had been contacted by readers who believe Morvern and Ardnamurchan residents are penalised because the ferry is run by the Highland Council and does not comply for Road Equivalent Tariff (RET).

RET was introduced on all CalMac ferry tickets in October 2015 to make island travel cheaper and more affordable, cutting prices by more than £40 on some journeys.

Currently passengers who buy multiple tickets for the Corran Ferry at one time benefit from lower prices. Such discounts would not be allowed under the RET scheme, but Mr Baxter says that does not mean the

option should be ruled out. He said: 'The Corran Ferry is unique. The crossing is really an extension of the road network. If we are going to look at RET moving forward we need to ask the Scottish Government to change the existing rules.'

However, there are some who believe businesses do benefit from the expense of the ferry crossing.

Alistair MacLean from Stron-tion Stores said: 'I have to say I can do well from visitors looking at wines and spirits, and instead of getting the ferry and over to town they will come to me – it makes us even more competitive.'

Chrissie Morgan, who owns Bluebell Croft, says her and her

partner try to save up errands and buy a book of tickets. She says only a handful of guests have complained about the price of the ferry but when it comes to shopping she will more often than not buy online.

She added: 'We are not losing business at the moment but if the fare was to continue to go up then maybe that would be the case.'

'We definitely take it into consideration when buying things – we will choose places which offer free delivery or we will increase our order to qualify for free delivery rather than pay needlessly.'

'Luckily for us, most of our guests come and stay on the peninsula and chill out.'

## Third try at forming community council fails

A THIRD attempt to re-form a community council in Fort William has failed.

Following a mass resignation in January 2016, Fort William Community Council (FWCC) was disbanded. Since then two election attempts have been held to allow FWCC to be re-established. Both efforts turned out to be in vain and FWCC was officially dissolved in November.

It is understood a petition was then created which received 20 signatures, so the Highland Council invited candidates wishing to serve on FWCC to come forward for a third time.

Nominations were invited from Tuesday, January 17 to February 1, but HC confirmed that because the number of validly nominated candidates was less than the minimum required, the community council will not be established at this time.

Duncan Brown is part of For Lochaber which formed after the community council was originally dissolved.

He said: 'This is the second largest town in Highlands and we don't have a community council. It really is regrettable.'

For Lochaber meets on the third Tuesday of every month upstairs in The House of Clan Jamfrie.

A council spokesperson said: 'Should communities wish to re-establish a community council, a petition of 20 electors must be required, as set out in paragraph 13.2 of the community council scheme.'

## POLICE FILES

POLICE are investigating the theft of a slate sign from a house in the Stroncreggan/Treslaig area on Saturday January 28. Anyone with information should contact Strontrian Police Station.

POLICE are still investigating several thefts and break-ins in recent weeks and would welcome information in relation to these crimes.

ANOTHER window has been broken at Drumfada Terrace, Corpach.

The incident occurred on Friday February 3 about 8pm.

Officers are appealing for anyone with information or who saw or heard any suspicious behaviour to contact them on 101 or via Crimestoppers on 0800 550 5111



Ronald Cameron, left, chairman of the Mod 2017 Committee, and secretary Linda Campbell with fellow committee members at the launch of the Mod leaflet. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

## Leaflet launched at Mòd Loch Abar open night

AN OPEN evening highlighting the benefits of Mòd Loch Abar 2017 was held on Monday February 6.

The event took place in Mòd Corner in the former Clark's shop on the High Street and included the launch of an information leaflet.

During the evening there were presentations about what the Mòd is, the benefits it could bring to the area and local businesses such as accommodation providers and how they can get involved.

Isabel Campbell, Mòd Corner

convenor, said: 'It was a very good evening and the organising of the Mòd is going well.'

'There were some new faces, but we could still do with more people getting involved.'

She also emphasised the need for businesses to realise the huge income potential of the Mòd, saying it could bring in more than £3million to the area.

Isabel added the committee still needs volunteer stewards – more than 100 will be required to ensure the smooth running of the event – and a stewards' convenor.

## Pupils' senses put to the test on distillery tour

SECONDARY students' senses were put to the test as they learned about the value of one of Scotland's favourite tipples.

As part of their geography curriculum, Ardnamurchan S2 pupils have been studying world trade, including the whisky export market, and they headed to Ardnamurchan Distillery at Glenbeg for a site tour.

Pupils learned whisky is Scotland's second biggest export market after oil and is manufactured on a large scale. The pupils were given a comprehensive guided tour which included the mash tubs, which 'smelled like warm porridge', and the stills

and the wooden casks used to give the spirit colour and flavour.

Pupil Dougal MacIntyre appreciated the technical side of the trip. He said: 'It was really interesting to see how whisky is made and why it is such a big part of the economy.'

Bethan White had not been convinced the trip would be up her street but was converted.

She said: 'We saw the mash tubs and were warned if we fell in we would suffocate because of the amount of CO2 present. Initially, I thought the trip didn't sound very interesting but once I got there it was really interesting. It was cool.'



Ardnamurchan High School pupils learned about Scotland's second largest export at Ardnamurchan Distillery, Glenbeg.



Joyce Mathers presents £500 to Gaelic school representatives Eliza Moffat and Arran Stephen.

## Ceilidh organisers step in with £500

BUN-SGOIL Ghàidhlig Loch Abar received a generous donation on Friday February 3 from funds raised at Kilmallie community centre's Hogmanay ceilidh.

Joyce Mathers, one of the ceilidh organisers, presented pupils Eliza Moffat and Arran Stephen with a cheque for £500, with the same amount being given to Kilmallie community centre.

Joyce said the ceilidh was sold out and when asked about why the Gaelic school was chosen to receive the donation this year she said: 'We try to share the money around locally. We are involved in the Gaelic school and children are the future. I think the money will be used for uniforms and things for the Mod.'

This was the second Hogmanay ceilidh that she has been involved with. Last year the funds were split between the community centre and a care home for the elderly on Skye.

There is a Harris ceilidh planned for February 25 and one for Skye on March 25, both of which will take place in the West End Hotel, Fort William.



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## WHAT'S ON

THERE will be a Lochaber Biodiversity Action Group panel discussion at the next meeting of Lochaber Natural History Society on Monday February 13 at 7.30pm in the Alexandra Hotel.

ON MONDAY February 13, representatives of Lochaber Sensory Care for Sight and Hearing Support (LSC) will be in Ardnamurchan.

They will be visiting Acharacle Medical Practice from 10.30am till 11.30am, and Dail Mhor Care Home in Strontian from 12.30pm till 1.30pm. At both venues the LSC team will offer help and advice to locals living with sight or hearing loss.

They will also supply NHS hearing aid batteries, provide re-tubing for hearing aids and help with any difficulties.

LOCHABER Community Wind Band will be performing at Abbeyfield Ballachulish on Saturday February 18 from 2pm.

The care home invites anyone in the community to come along and enjoy the show with clients and staff.

MALLAIG Pool and Leisure Centre is running a slimming club every Thursday evening from 7pm. Deep Water Aqua Aerobics runs before the slimming club, from 6pm each Thursday, and the pool and gym stay open till 9pm.

THE ANNUAL general meeting of Lochaber Sensory Care for Sight and Hearing Support (LSC) is being held on Saturday February 25 in Caol Community Centre.

The meeting, from 2pm till 4pm, will include a report on Sensory Care's year and the election of new board members, followed by a buffet provided by LSC.

LOCHABER Environmental Group is holding a clothes swap evening at Roybridge Hall from 7.30pm on Monday March 6.

Everyone is invited to take along any unwanted items of clothing, accessories and shoes and swap them for something different. Entry is £3 which includes tea, coffee and cake.

Newsdesk  
01397  
703003

# Good forecast for weather watchers as page re-opens

MONICA GLEN  
mglen@obantimes.co.uk

A SOCIAL media page providing accurate Lochaber weather forecasts has risen from the ashes after it fell victim to an online scam.

Until last Friday, Facebook page 'Highlands and Islands Weather' had around 78,000 followers.

Set up by data analyst Lee Schofield three years ago, the page was designed to provide accurate local weather forecasts for the area.

Popularity of the page had grown rapidly, even attracting worldwide attention. Last week, however, Lee lost the page completely.

The father of one told *The Oban Times*: 'As the page started getting more and more likes, I began to receive offers from businesses wanting to buy it from me but I told them 'no it's not for sale'.

'But last Friday, February 3, when I was busy doing a few things at once, I received a message which seemed to be legit asking to check my details. I followed the instructions but the next morning the page was gone. Whoever it was had taken ownership of the account, changed all my details and that was that.



Lee Schofield has brought Facebook page Highlands and Islands Weather back from the ashes after it was hacked.

Technology has made the whole thing possible

Lee Schofield  
Founder of Highlands and Islands Weather

I've contacted Facebook but have heard nothing.'

Describing himself as being 'data driven', Lee claims the great storm in 1987 cemented his interest in meteorology but it wasn't until he moved to Scotland that he decided to try and forecast to the masses.

'I have always had an interest in weather,' he said. 'Even as a youngster I kept records and was fascinated by it. It got to the stage so many people were asking me for the forecast and for my thoughts I decided to

create an online page to share my findings with everyone.'

For his page to function, Lee has created more than 40 weather stations around the Highlands and Scotland which he maintains has mostly self funded.

He said: 'There is one on Eigg, several on Skye and one in Corrach to name but a few. People in Scotland love to talk about the weather but in these parts it is more than that. I am contacted by people from the US, lots of tourists who are planning a trip

and want to know what to expect or when best to travel. Similarly, locals get in touch before having to drive here or there and they find the information useful.'

Disheartened by losing three years of posts, hard work, time and followers, Lee said he was tempted just to forget the whole project. However, the 43-year-old decided to start afresh and his efforts were rewarded as in just a few days he once again racked up more than 10,000 followers, mostly returning and some new.

He added: 'When you have people who are going to be buying boat tickets and going out walking I guess the interest in weather takes on such a greater importance.'

'Technology has made the whole thing possible. I religiously check the stations remotely between 8am and 9am every morning, during the day and in the evening. I work from home, so I am able to do that.'

'I am very data driven. Figures and analysis are always in my head and I enjoy doing it. I received so many messages from various people saying how sorry they were the old page has gone. I really appreciate so many have already managed to find me again. It makes the whole thing worthwhile.'



Ruaridh Lever-Hogg is a contestant in the new series of the BBC's Big Painting Challenge.

## Roybridge artist takes on TV challenge

A ROYBRIDGE art graduate is one of 10 artists selected to take part in the BBC's Big Painting Challenge.

Ruaridh Lever-Hogg, 24, was selected from thousands of applicants to take part in the BBC 1 programme, which starts at 6pm on Sunday February 12.

Ruaridh, who was diagnosed as profoundly deaf as a baby, grew up outside Roybridge, where his parents run Aite Cruinnichidh hostel, and attended Lochside primary and Donaldson's School in Edinburgh, before finishing his schooldays in Mary Hare Grammar school for the deaf.

He graduated with a degree in fine art from Dundee University's Duncan of Jordanstone college and is now working towards his Masters.

After completing his graduate show last summer, Ruaridh was looking for new artistic opportunities when he received an email advertising the show and entered.

Speaking about the audition process, Ruaridh said: 'It seemed to go really well and I showed I was very keen to get involved as I love learning something new and wanted to accept the challenge.'

He described finding out he had made it through to be on the show as 'unbelievable' and added he never expected to be on TV.

The show will have an elimination-style format, with the artists being set challenges in different locations and one leaving each week, until one champion is crowned.

Despite the competitive nature of the show, Ruaridh enjoyed socialising with his fellow contestants after long days of filming, some of which took place in and around Roybridge, and they still keep in touch and show each other their works.

The contestants were mentored throughout the process, another aspect of the experience Ruaridh enjoyed.

He said: 'My mentor, Pascal Anson, is fantastic, not only helping me with my painting, he was also very keen to learn sign language.'

Rather than setting him back, Ruaridh believes that being deaf helps him with his art. He said: 'I believe my highly visual perception gives me an advantage.'



Steve Sharpe, right, from Forres-based Drumfun provided an educational and fun event for the pupils at St Columba's Primary School in Fort William, left and above.



## Drumfun delights primary pupils

A LOCHABER school was alive with the sound of music last week.

Pupils from St Columba's Primary School in Fort William took part in 'Drumfun' which provides hands on, interactive drumming programmes and workshops.

By making use of a range of drums and percussion instruments from around the world, the workshops aim to highlight the power rhythm has to

unite, engage and motivate people and organisations to be the best they can.

Violet Smith, head teacher, said: 'The Drumfun day really was full of fun. Steve Sharpe came down from Forres and ran the workshops last Wednesday February 1.

'It is an annual event we have at the school which the children absolutely love.'

'It really is the highlight of the year

for them. The whole school takes part, from the nursery youngsters aged just three and four, right up to primary seven.

'They learn lots about rhythm and African culture and Steve does it in such a fun way that the children hardly even know they are learning. It was another great success, very noisy but great fun and we were delighted to have Steve back again.'

## At your service

THE OBAN TIMES, together with NHS Highland, is running a series of articles putting the spotlight on people who work in healthcare across the area.

Answering the questions this week is Maryann Ness, a mental health practitioner with the newly-established supporting self-management service.

### Q. What is your background?

A. I trained as a mental health nurse at the University of Stirling's Highland campus and qualified in 1999. I've worked in various departments in New Craigs Hospital over the years, including the rehabilitation service and crisis services.

I've also been involved in the personality disorder service for the last four years.

I've completed my dialectical behaviour therapy and for six years have been teaching nursing at the University of Stirling two days a week.

### Q. What do you enjoy the most about your teaching role?

A. I like the autonomy it provides and it's great when you see things



Maryann Ness.

clicking for people. I enjoy giving people the opportunity to think and develop their own ideas and that is the same for the patients I work with in the supporting self-management service.

### Q. What is the supporting self management service?

A. We're a new service based at New Craigs Hospital, Inverness, that delivers short, time-limited interventions for people with any mental health diagnosis. We deliver four skills-based groups over a two-week period. These are focused on learning and developing life and self-management skills including activities of daily living, stress responses and a range of skills designed to help people lead a less impulsive life. Individuals who use the service will also create a self-management plan, including a crisis plan to use in future.

### Q. What is self management?

A. It's about managing your own mental health instead of relying on professionals and therapies that, in terms of time, can be limited and restrictive. We try and put across the message that what people can't do for you, you need to do for yourself. A lot of people don't realise what they can do for themselves and we encourage them to believe in their own abilities and to take control of their health.

### Q. What are your favourite elements of your role in this service?

A. Being able to create new things and offer something differently. As we're a new service, we have been able to create it ourselves and think creatively rather than being restricted by the ways things have always been done.

We hope this has a positive impact on our patients, as a fresh approach can sometimes work best.

### Q. How receptive have your patients been in the early stages of the service?

A. They have been very responsive, which is interesting as you never know how people will respond. I suppose this is because we're not teaching people anything they didn't already know about, but giving them support and guidance to manage their mental health.

### Q. How do you relax away from your work?

A. I have two teenage sons, so I never get to relax! I love to do yoga and I love playing the guitar. I love to travel and see new places whenever I get the chance.

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# New forest bridge unveiled in memory of outdoor stalwart

**KATIE CARABINE**

kcarabine@obantimes.co.uk

A NEW cycle bridge in Leanachan Forest has been unveiled in memory of a central figure in the Fort William outdoors and biking scene.

Emmy's Bridge, which connects the Blue Crane cycle path with other trails in the forest, was named after Emmy Dam Donaldson, who died in October, aged 51.

The mother-of-two, who ran Off Beat Bikes on Fort William High Street, was involved with the Nevis Range mountain bike tracks since they were first built, having designed the logo for the Witches Trails.

Emmy's sister Nicky Sharrat said: 'We both worked at Off-beat bikes - with Emmy's husband Martin - and she had connections with No Fuss Events. She also designed the logo for the witches trail when it first opened.'

'It was really lots of friends coming together to make the bike trails happen and we used to ride bikes a lot too.'

The new eight-metre long bridge was unveiled on Thursday February 2 as a symbol of the



Emmy Dam Donaldson.

successful partnership between No Fuss Events, Nevis Range, West Highland Wheelers and local trail builders and forest managers, which aims to identify existing trails and develop new ones for use in Enduro events.

The original bridge on the Blue Crane route had to be removed two years ago because it was structurally unsafe, resulting in the track being closed for that period.

However, this did not stop avid mountain bikers using the trails, which have been in use since

2003 and have featured in the UCI world cup and other world championship races, as they carried their bikes across the river.

At the unveiling event, No Fuss Events partner Frazer Coupland gave a touching explanation for the naming of the bridge.

He said: 'All the parties involved realised we had one thing in common, we'd all lost a friend last year.'

He explained the striking design on the bridge was one which they all believed to be fitting as 'she loved red and white, and love hearts'.

He added he felt it was important Emmy was remembered in this way and that it was nice she could be involved in the project and the bike trails in this way.

This sentiment was echoed by Emmy's family. Nicky said: 'It's a beautiful gesture and I think Emmy would have been very honoured and quite taken aback. I'm not surprised though, because she was very well thought of and everyone was really fond of her.'

Speaking about what it means to the family, she added: 'We all still ride bikes so it will be lovely to go up and ride over Emmy's bridge.'



Emmy's Bridge reconnects the popular Blue Crane trail with the rest of the Leanachan Forest bike tracks. Photograph: A Brightside Photography.

## Sergeant guilty of drink driving

AN ARMY sergeant major has been fined £2,000 and had his driving licence endorsed with 10 penalty points after pleading guilty to drink driving.

Matthew William John McHale, 41, from Glossop, appeared in Fort William Sheriff Court last Thursday, February 2.

The court heard McHale appeared 'drunk' when he was seen leaving the Clachaig Inn, Glencoe, on March 26, 2016. The police were contacted and arrived just before 1am.

McHale was found to have 237mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood, exceeding the limit of 50mg in 100ml of blood - more than four times over the limit.

The court heard McHale had come to the area with his brother to go climbing.

It was claimed in court that McHale 'would not be able to maintain his job' if he lost his licence.

Sheriff William Taylor handed out the fine and points but added McHale's character references had been 'extremely glowing'.

## Caol man drove over the limit

A 41-YEAR-OLD man from Caol has been found guilty of drink driving.

Bryan Watson Colbecki appeared at Fort William Sheriff court last Thursday and plead guilty to driving with 45mg of alcohol in 100ml of breath, 10mg over the legal limit, in May 2016.

The court heard the accused was driving outside the Co-op on Kilmallie Road at 8am on May 21, 2016, when he was reported to the police.

His solicitor said Colbecki drove from his house in Caol to the shop after consuming 'a fair amount of alcohol the night before'.

Sheriff William Taylor disqualified Colbecki for three years and ordered him to carry out 40 hours of unpaid work in six months.



## Strontian school project on target

STRONTIAN Community School Building (SCSB) Limited is nearing the first financial target that will see a new primary school near Ardnamurchan receive the go-ahead.

SCSB is aiming to raise £600,000 to complete the first community-owned school project in Scotland but calculated a minimum of £100,000 was required to allow it to proceed. Subsequently, the company invited the community to invest in shares which were launched late last year. The share offer will close on February 28 and to date more than £70,000 has been raised.

Donald McCorkindale told *The Oban Times* he is reasonably confident the target will be reached. 'There are lots of fine details still to be ironed out,' he said 'but there are four

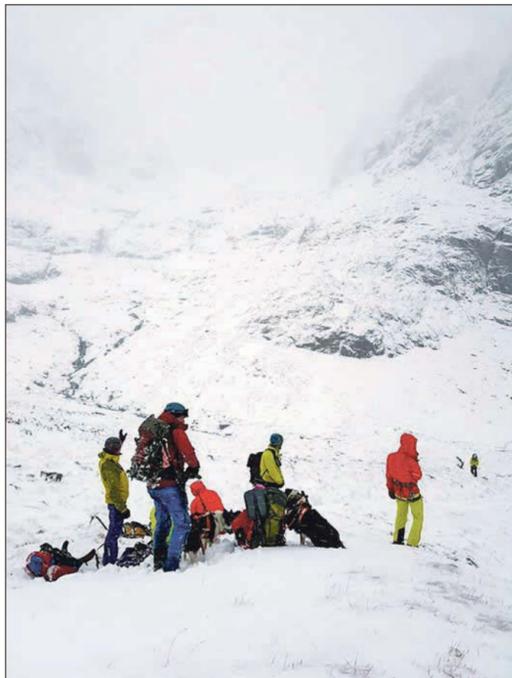
or five semi local construction companies tendering for the job which is encouraging.'

SCSB has received the backing of various partners.

The Rotary Club of Lochaber has recently announced it is considering making a donation after a presentation about the project was delivered at the January meeting.

Reverend McCorkindale said: 'The Rotary will have its next meeting at the end of the month. The share offer will close at the end of the month. So the threads are all coming together. We hope that in early March things will really start moving ahead.'

To boost funds, a 'Posh Tea' will be held at Strontian Primary School on Saturday March 11 from 3pm where an update on the project will be available.



John Stevenson from Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team said the three climbers had a lucky escape.

## Climbers lucky to survive Ben Nevis avalanche

RESCUE teams were scrambled in Lochaber last Saturday following an avalanche on Ben Nevis.

Police received a call about an incident around midday on February 4 which was answered by rescue helicopters from HM Coastguard and Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team (LMRT).

Together, the teams rescued three injured climbers who were then taken to the Belford Hospital in Fort William.

Lochaber Police confirmed the climbers, who are not local, sustained cuts, bruises and injured ribs, but John Stevenson, from LMRT said they were unbelievably lucky.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'Anyone who walks away from this kind of incident is beyond lucky. It's the rocks which do

the damage, the ones which are uncovered. I think they bounced down the hill quite some way. The fact that there had been some fresh snow is probably what saved them.'

With more snow and difficult weather conditions forecast, Mr Stevenson says he would strongly advise people to have a good think before heading out on a climb this weekend.

He added: 'It's probably about the worst conditions up there right now. Looking forward, there is going to be a lot of fresh snow, meaning poor snow and poor visibility.'

'Checking the forecasts and planning routes accordingly is always key, but I would say people should maybe plan alternate routes if they are heading up and only do so if they really know what they are doing.'

## Countryside ranger service told to 'prepare for staffing cuts'

A MOUNTAINEERING organisation has raised fresh fears about how possible cuts to staff could impact the nation's health.

In recent weeks the Highland Council ranger service has been told to prepare for staffing cuts.

And in a letter to Mountaineering Scotland last week, the Highland Council indicated cuts in staff are possible.

The council's budget leader Bill Fernie revealed last week that there were now plans to 'reduce rather than delete the Rangers budget and to examine the potential for moving this service to High Life Highland'.

But Mountaineering Scotland has expressed concerns about the impact this

could have on people's health and the possible cost to the NHS.

David Gibson, chief executive officer with the mountaineering body, said: 'We appreciate councils have to operate within financial constraints and that difficult choices must be made, but we wonder how many more council-provided or funded services are at risk right now, being dismantled with no overview of what we are losing.'

'These services have introduced thousands of children to the outdoors over the years. That fine tradition and its infrastructure is under serious threat.'

'These services encourage and enable people to experience positive, life-changing opportunities. We're constantly told of

the importance of getting off the sofa and the benefits to physical and mental health which come from outdoor pursuits are well-attested.'

'A forward-looking, joined-up policy should be looking to expand such services rather than reduce them.'

'The cost of cuts to these services will result in additional pressure on the National Health Service and other social services from an increasingly unhealthy population.'

'We appeal to both councils and the Scottish Government to take a long hard look at this issue, to avoid cuts in the short-term and develop a coherent and forward-looking policy which protects and promotes such essential services as these.'

## Dangerous driver banned and fined after near miss with off-duty officer

A DANGEROUS driver has been banned from the roads for a year and fined £1,000 after almost crashing into an off-duty police officer on a motorbike.

Cesidio Martin Di Ciacca, 63, from Strathclyde, appeared in Fort William Sheriff Court last Friday charged with dangerous driving after overtaking a line of vehicles in the path of oncoming cars, forcing the motorists to take evasive action to avoid collision.

An off-duty police officer travelling south on the A82 to Tyndrum on June 7 2016 had to perform an emergency stop and pull onto the verge when he saw a burgundy Range Rover coming straight towards him on the Achtriochtan straight near Glencoe.

The court heard how Di Ciacca, who was travelling north to Skye, overtook a car and a high-sided vehicle when he entered the south bound carriageway, before seeing the police officer on his motorbike and attempting to pull back into his lane in front of an HGV.

The officer said: 'I thought I was going to crash straight into the oncoming Range Rover.' He added the Range Rover was so close to him when he passed in the south bound lane he could have 'reached his arm out and touched the car'.

But the retired business man, who is involved with three charities in the UK and Italy, said when he pulled out to overtake he had felt it was safe to do so on the straight stretch of road and had not

seen the motorcyclist when he began the manoeuvre. Di Ciacca said he had made an 'error in judgment' but pleaded not guilty to dangerous driving.

Sheriff William Taylor found Di Ciacca guilty and said: 'I have no doubt the crown have proven their case that this manoeuvre was a very dangerous one.' He added that the motorcyclist 'could have been killed had he not taken action'.

The court heard how a disqualification for Di Ciacca would have a 'significant impact on him and his family' and would effect his charity work across the UK and in Italy.

As well as the ban and fine, Di Ciacca will also be required to re-sit an extended driving test to re-obtain his licence.



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## Ballachulish

ABBEYFIELD Ballachulish nursing home has again achieved top marks in a recent Care Inspectorate visit.

The highest grading means the home is considered to provide 'excellent' care services in the following areas: care and support, environment, staffing and management and leadership.

It has also recently attained Abbeyfield UK's Core Standards Certificate which recognises those within the society who achieve and maintain exceptional levels of quality and care.

Abbeyfield is looking for volunteers to take part in the Highland Cross 50-mile duathlon on Saturday June 17 to raise money for a new mini bus to enable the home to continue running day care and lunch club activities and for these to grow.

The duathlon will be a 20-mile walk/jog/run from Morvich over the Five Sisters of Kintail to Glen Affric, where the participants will collect their bicycles and ride 30 miles to Beaulie.

Abbeyfield is one of four charities to benefit from the duathlon. More than £300 was raised by the daughter of one of the residents and her son by taking part in Helsby half marathon. This will go towards the residents fund for 2017.

## Mallaig

MALLAIG Pool and Leisure Club said goodbye to its old, time-served gym equipment yesterday (February 8) and to make way for new TechnoGym items.

The gym is scheduled to be closed until Monday February 20 while the new equipment is installed and the gym gets a make-over, but it is hoped it will reopen sooner if everything goes well. Updates will be posted on the centre's Facebook and Twitter pages throughout February. Anyone wishing to participate in this year's Road to the Isles half marathon on Saturday April 29 should book their place on the Road to the Isles Facebook page or Mallaig Leisure Centre's website. All proceeds from entry fees will go towards refurbishing the centre.

A total of £423.50 was raised towards the refurbishment over January, with £353.50 coming from the Cub Post and £70 collected in the donation pot at the centre's reception desk. Centre staff thank everyone who contributed.

## Fort William/Oban

THREE students from Fort William, Alasdair Davidson, Jack Fraser and Matt Lingard, and Kati Michalek from Oban, have been shortlisted for Lantra, Scotland's Land-based and Aquaculture Learner of the Year award.

Alasdair Davidson, 18, from Ardgour, is doing a Modern Apprenticeship SVQ Level 2 in Gamekeeping through North Highland College UHI, while working as an apprentice gamekeeper at Conaglen Estate. He is a well-respected student representative and takes an active role in course team meetings.

Jack Fraser, 22, from Caol is doing a Modern Apprenticeship SVQ Level 2 and 3 in Aquaculture through Inverness College UHI, while working as an assistant manager at Marine Harvest (Scotland) Limited in Fort William. He has also taken on an ambassadorial role, working with young people and promoting career opportunities in the aquaculture sector.

Matt Lingard, aged 20, from Inverloch, is doing an SVQ Level 2 in Trees and Timber with Forest Enterprise Scotland, while working as a forest craftsman. One of Matt's greatest achievements to date was being the first apprentice to undertake a hedge-laying project, which received warm praise from the local community.

The students will find out if they have won at a ceremony in the Dunblane Hydro on Thursday March 2.

## Portree

AFTER wowing audiences at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe last year, *A Life With The Beatles* is to be staged at the Aros Centre in Portree.

The play tells the story of 19-year-old Neil Aspinall who joined the Beatles as their driver in 1961. He served the 'Fab Four' for 46 years before stepping down as chief executive officer of Apple Corps, the band's corporate conglomerate. In *A Life With The Beatles*, audiences will hear his unique story through this 'energetic and intimate solo drama'.

The production will be in Portree on Tuesday March 14 at 7.30pm.

## Kinlochleven girls in film final

FOUR Kinlochleven High School pupils have been selected as finalists in the Bank of England's film competition 'Bank, Camera, Action'.

Second year pupils Sophie MacKinnon, Fiona Janzen, Marley Alston and Emma Vind directed, filmed and starred in a 95-second film telling the story of 'A day in the life of a new Fiver'.

The competition coincided with the Bank of England releasing its new plastic £5 notes last year.

The girls, aged 12 and 13, found out they would be finalists on January 13.

Marley said: 'It's very exciting.' Fiona added: 'We didn't expect to be finalists.'

Head teacher Rebecca Machin said: 'The fact we're in the final is really cool, in a UK-wide competition I think it's fab.'

If the girls are judged overall winners, their prize will be a trip to London.

To see their film, head to *The Oban Times* Facebook page.



Emma Vind and Marley Alston, left, and Sophie MacKinnon and Fiona Janzen are excited to be in the finals of the Bank Of England film competition.



Some of the group at Claggan Park, the home of Fort William Football Club.

## Group celebrate 21 years of Fort visits

A GROUP of Fort William enthusiasts is celebrating more than 20 years of visiting the town.

The group of about 10, from all over the UK, have been coming to Fort William every February for the last 21 years.

Speaking to *The Oban Times* about this year's visit, Elspeth Edwards, whose parents were Scottish, said she has always had a 'great love' of the country.

She said: 'We are all friends who

have a shared interest in walking, which we do a lot of when we are here. We do the Cow Hill walk and usually take the train to Mallaig for a day. Sometimes we visit Knoydart.'

Elspeth said the group prefer to come off season when the town is quieter, saying: 'We just love it at this time of the year when it's quiet. There is something for everyone here and just so much for us to do.'

And that's not the only reason they choose a weekend in February for

their annual visit. Elspeth said the group like to tie in their trip with a Fort William FC home game.

She said: 'My husband and his friend are football fanatics and we are huge Fort William supporters. The pitch is amazingly beautiful so we always like to try and come up when they have a home game.'

Sadly the game at the weekend was called off, but some of the group still went down to the pitch to take a photograph.

## Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club

SKYE Accordion and Fiddle club welcomed a good turnout at its February meeting in Portree's Royal Hotel.

Musicians were Ally 'K' MacPherson and Emily Matheson on piano accordions and Hamish MacDougall of Muir of Ord and Calum MacColl of Fort William on button-key accordions.

On piano was John Cameron, on drums Hamish Mackenzie, while fiddle contributions were from Caerina Campbell, Ellie MacPherson and Wendy Riva.

There was a special welcome for three young fiddlers, members of the popular local group Skye Strings, making their solo debuts at the Skye club. Maili MacKenzie, 10, Rhibhinn Dick, 12, and Seumas Tinney, 13, all played superbly in

front of a large and appreciative audience.

Highlight of the evening was the performance of special guests, the five-piece Iain Joseph MacDonald Band who raised the roof of the function room with their varied and entertaining programme. They were led by Iain Joseph on piano accordion, who also contributed fine vocals and humorous anecdotes. Ali MacKenzie was on second box, on fiddle was Deirdre Beck, on piano was Jacqui MacDonald and on drums it was club chairman Ally 'K' MacPherson. The audience was treated to a superb fiddle solo by Deirdre, accompanied on piano by Jacqui.

The next meeting will be on Thursday March 2 when special guests will be The Graeme MacKay Trio.

## £3 billion investment in tourism

THE HIGHLANDS' tourism industry stands to benefit from investment of more than £3 billion over the next three years, a joint initiative between VisitScotland and its key local and national partners has revealed.

The updated Tourism Development Framework, first published in 2013, aims to highlight the importance of the visitor economy within the wider investment and infrastructure plans of local and national agencies.

The £3 billion figure for the Highlands represents overall public and private sector investment in major infrastructure projects being delivered across the region

that is expected to have an impact on the visitor economy and support tourism growth.

The Glen Nevis heritage/conservation project is to benefit from the investment, as well as hotel and other accommodation improvements on Skye.

Scott Armstrong, VisitScotland Regional Partnerships Director, said: 'The visitor economy in the Highlands causes a ripple effect that touches every industry, business and community in the region. Realising its growth potential to 2020 through the planning system is an important opportunity to grasp, especially in our challenging economic climate.'

MORVERN  
lines

## Important that people speak out

'POWER to the people' is an expression we have heard a lot since President Donald Trump's inaugural speech on January 20 and again during Prime Minister May's recent visit to Washington.

Excuse me, but people power is not new. It's been around since the 5th century BC. It's called democracy and, when it fails, it is usually the people themselves who are to blame.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the Highlands and Islands where there is a tendency to sit back, criticise and think it is someone else's duty to speak up. For example, never in the recorded social history of this area has there been such a lack of interest in the way we are governed.

As a result, councils are being led, not by elected members, but by salaried officials who don't have to go near a ballot box. Worse still, many electors won't even bother to vote.

Little wonder there is now a culture, unknown a generation ago, that doesn't encourage people to put their heads above the battlements or even ask questions for fear of being labelled troublemakers.

The Roman government of old kept the populace happy by distributing free food and staging huge spectacles known as 'bread and circuses'. Today we might call it 'dumbing-down'.

There are exceptions, particularly in some parts of the Inner and Outer Hebrides, where the martial spirit hasn't quite fled yet.

John Lorne Campbell of Canna used a three-pronged process to good effect when he was dealing with officialdom. Firstly, state the problem; secondly, provide the solution; and, thirdly, say what you will do if it isn't remedied.

Nearer home there is a battle to keep a quarry out of Glen Ceran. Whether you approve of the quarrying industry or not, it has been refreshing to watch such a highly-organised campaign unfold through a series of informative advertisements in the pages of *The Oban Times*. It is a pity more local communities with genuine grievances don't follow suit instead of sitting on their hands.

Every parish has its problems and frustrations. In Appin there is outrage about cattle rampaging through a new woodland scheme causing untold damage to one of Argyll's most important medieval church sites.

It should have been protected by Forest Enterprise and Historic Scotland during the planning process but it wasn't and not a hand is being raised against it locally.

A few weeks before Christmas a representative from NHS Highland visited Lochaline to tell us that for the first time in 150 years, we should no longer expect to have the services of a full-time doctor.

We were informed there was no money to pay for locums and out-of-office hour cover, no dedicated accommodation for a new doctor and that the 350-patient practice would prove too stressful for any future single-handed GP.

We were assured our needs would be covered by voluntary first responders and that NHS 24 would handle emergencies. As the staff in NHS 24's distant control centre often misdirect casualties to Oban or Campbelltown hospitals because they think their accident and emergency wards are the nearest to Morvern and not Fort William, we were as unconvinced as we were puzzled why the health board had recently sold their GPs' houses in Lochaline and Salen, Sunart.

Despite the magnitude of the proposals they were accepted with humour and without demur by the few who bothered to turn up – although rather less so when it had sunk in.

Other Morvern grievances which would be helped with a bit of public lobbying include lack of progress in upgrading BT's broadband system; urgent repairs to sections of the only public road into Lochaline which has been damaged during the construction of several private hydro schemes; free vehicle crossings on the Corran ferry for residents and council tax payers on the peninsula; a more reliable and constant mail delivery service routed through Fort William instead of Oban; and, more urgently, a massive and unprecedented cull of an ancient strain of wild red deer in favour of a proposed rewilding scheme. There are many more.



Wild deer should not be destroyed for maverick rewilding schemes. Photograph Jessica Creighton.

It is refreshing to read that Scotland is to be exempt from Section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013 contained in the Leveson Enquiry that is being proposed south of the border.

Press regulation is devolved to Scotland and Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop has confirmed the Scottish Government has no plans to introduce statutory measures to persuade Scottish print media to sign up to a state-approved regulator.

If Section 40 is voted through by Westminster and eventually finds its way into Scotland, it will threaten investigative journalism and freedom of the independent press with local newspapers, such as *The Oban Times*, having to bear the costs of a court case whether they are in the wrong or not.

In the words of Martin Luther King Junior: 'History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamour of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.'

Iain Thornber  
iain.thornber@btinternet.com

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# Soroba residents' rat surprise

**DAVID MCPHEE**  
dmcphoe@obantimes.co.uk

A SOROBA couple were surprised last week after their dog captured a rat outside their close in Colonsay Terrace.

However, this was not the only shock Sheila and Andy Brown received.

Upon going on to Argyll and Bute Council's website, Mrs Brown discovered that it would cost them £76.35 to call out a pest control officer.

She labelled this charge 'ridiculous' and said: 'If I did not have dogs, I would want them to check out my house and I imagine everyone else [in the block of flats] would too. That would be more than £600. It is ludicrous.'

'If they had not mucked up things with the bins and created this rat paradise there would not be rats there. There never was before and there have been bins there for years.'

'I hope the councillors do what they said to me they would do and get something done about it quickly because it is a health hazard.'

The couple share two large general waste bins and one recycling bin with seven other households.

The general, grey, bins are emptied every three weeks following the changes to the refuse collections in November last year.

Mrs Brown and her husband have two dogs and it was their Staffordshire bull terrier who was quick enough to catch the rodent.

Sheila added: '[Mr Brown] just let the dogs out for a pee and the younger dog's nose went up and she shot off and growled.'

'She normally leaves some-

thing alone if you shout her, but she wouldn't and she came back with a rat in her mouth.'

The couple's neighbour has also had an encounter with a rat.

'The girl upstairs has three children under five,' Mrs Brown added. 'She said she could hear something in her cupboard and my neighbour, who has a small terrier dog, went to look and they found a rat.'

'It is unlikely I will get a rat in the house because I have the dogs, but my neighbour upstairs is terrified.'

'It is only going to get worse because it is going to get warmer. The smell is going to travel further and it is going to attract more rats and they will breed.'

'They have a very good source of food; it is not going to get better until someone does something about the bins situation.'

Community councillor and former Soroba resident Sean MacIntyre said: 'I would hope the council would look at the schedule again for Soroba.'

'The problem needs addressed. It is ludicrous. The schedule needs updated to two-weekly uplifts.'

'I know that there are rats about, but I am getting reports about people seeing them during the day.'

'They contacted the council and were told they would have to pay around £76 [to have pest control come out].'

'Some families can't afford that. I know nothing comes free in this world, but this is caused by the lack of uplifts. It needs to be addressed.'

'I was up there on Saturday and the bins were emptied on Wednesday and two out of six were full. I really do think Soroba is unlike anywhere else in the town.'



This rat was caught in their garden by the Brown's Staffordshire bull terrier.

Councillor for Oban South and the Isles Neil MacIntyre said: 'We know it is a mess. You have to put your hands up. I take full responsibility. I voted for it and we are going to have to fix it.'

Fellow area councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'We did receive complaints. The pest control officer did visit the area and

took the appropriate actions.

'I fully understand this problem could get worse. At present we are working with Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) to see about additional uplifts. Until that work is completed we will be monitoring the area weekly and prevent this happening again. I have sympathy

with the residents of Soroba.

'The pest control officer visited the area at my request, I would ask other residents if they are concerned about rats to contact me directly on 01546 604305.'

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'We introduced the new refuse and recycling service to 47,000

properties across Argyll and Bute, which has been a huge change for our communities.'

'It is working well in most areas and we would like to thank people for their patience and for working with us to help increase recycling.'

'We will arrange for additional uplifts to deal with overflowing bins and apologise for any inconvenience.'

'We are grateful to residents for their patience.'

'The total volume of the large general waste bins exceeds the volume of storage when compared to a standard green bin being provided to each individual property.'

'We are working with ACHA to resolve the issues being experienced and identify areas where additional bins can be stored. There is limited space on the street without compromising safety.'

'We sought public health advice from the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency when we were thinking about a three-weekly model.'

'We were advised that there should not be any increased risk to public health as long as existing common sense standards are followed such as wrapping waste and keeping the lids of bins firmly closed.'

'Anyone who is concerned should contact the property owner or their landlord in the first instance. The council can provide eradication services, for which a fee is payable.'

Oban's councillors and community councillors are due to discuss Soroba's overflowing bins at a meeting with Argyll and Bute Council's head of service on Thursday February 9 at 10.30am in ACHA offices. The meeting is not open to the public, but the press are invited to attend.

## TIMESLINE



Magnus MacFarlane Barrow with Brendan O'Hara MP.

## Charity founder honoured

THE EXTRAORDINARY work of Argyll man Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, founder of Mary's Meals, was recognised at an award ceremony in the Palace of Westminster on Tuesday February 7.

The 'Westminster Award for Human Life, Human Rights and Human Dignity' recognises outstanding contribution and achievements of individuals that safeguard the dignity and right to life of human beings.

## Oban Times' team's fundraiser update

A TEAM of 10 Oban Times staff walking one million steps this month to raise money for Cancer Research UK have already raised £690 of their £1,000 target and are 6,183 steps ahead of schedule.

The challenge is being measured by step-counter devices such as Fitbits, which showed team member Louise Steele walked 13,032 steps on Monday alone. To donate, visit OTmillion steps at [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com).



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10 - 14/04/17

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- Flute & Whistle with Hamish Napier
- Media Course in Skye Space Studio
- Advanced Gaelic Conversation with Iain & Muriel Urquhart

17 - 21/04/17

- Fiddle Course with Ewen Henderson
- Gaelic in the Landscape with Roddy MacLean
- Aspects of Highland Material Culture with Margaret Stewart

## SAMHRADH SUMMER

19 - 23/06/17

- Gaelic for Beginners in the Quiraing Lodge
- Learning through Living Culture (Gaelic in Flodigarry)

26 - 30/06/17

- Gaelic on the Island hosted by Muriel Fisher (Intermediate Learners)

03 - 08/07/17

- Piping & Drumming for under 18s
- Family Learning Week

17 - 21/07/17

- Gaelic Conversation Course with Muriel Fisher
- Beartais Cainnt with Iain & Muriel Urquhart
- Gaelic Song with Christine Primrose
- Piano Accordion with Addie Harper Jr
- Button Box with Robert Nairn & Fergie MacDonald
- Gaelic for Irish Speakers (Beginners)

22 - 28/07/17

- Fiddle course with Alasdair Fraser
- Cello course with Natalie Haas

24 - 28/07/17

- Exploring Skye with Gaelic hosted by Muriel Fisher (Beginners)

31/07 - 04/08/17

- Gaelic Pronunciation with Iain & Muriel Urquhart (Advanced Learners)
- Gaelic for Irish Speakers (Advanced Learners)
- Gaelic Conversation Course with Joy Dunlop

07 - 11/08/17

- Clarsach with Ingrid Henderson
- 'The Music in the Fiddle' with Charlie Mckerron
- 'A Seascape of Gaelic Song' with Margaret Stewart

14 - 18/08/17

- Digital Photography
- Gaelic Creative Writing with Alison Lang
- Skye Piping School

21 - 25/08/17

- Adam Sutherland School of Fiddle Summer Camp
- Learning through Living Culture (Gaelic in Flodigarry)
- Accordion Course with Mairead Green

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## Viewpoint



Write to us: send your letters to [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk) or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB

## The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

East Lochaber and Laggan Community Trust (ELLCT) received a huge boost to its efforts this week.

Last month, Liberty House and SIMEC (members of the GFG Alliance) completed a £330million deal with Rio Tinto to buy the aluminium smelter, together with the hydro-power plants at Fort William and Kinlochleven along with the associated estate lands.

And on Monday night members of the public heard that the multi-national company said it would consider 'sensible proposals' for the land buyout.

While there is obviously still a long way to go, the

opportunity this opens up for the community is huge. The trust has already commissioned a feasibility study and the proposal set out by ELLCT could see it at least breaking even in just a few years through holiday letting and other potential sources of income. Were a hydro scheme to be established, that would be the icing on a very tempting cake.

ELLCT now has to try to get a piece of the £10million per year from the Scottish Land Fund which will help finance the proposals.

With the community behind them, we believe the trust can do this and wish them all the best in the venture.



## Days gone by – Lochavullin view

Reader Iain Macdonald emailed *The Oban Times* last week with this photograph and note saying: 'You have previously printed a photo I took from the top of the parish church spire which showed Soroba Road. This wasn't the only picture I took when I was up there that day. Here is a photograph I took of the view over to Lochavullin. The place then has no resemblance whatsoever to what it's like today.'

### Macphail

ANGUS MACPHAIL  
[angusmacphail@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:angusmacphail@yahoo.co.uk)



LAST week I was back on Tìree for the funeral of an old family friend.

Over the course of the otherwise very sad trip, there were three unrelated positive threads that added to the experience of being home.

#### Skerryvore single

Last Tuesday, January 31, Skerryvore released their new single, *Live Forever*, and the next day my mother and I were hooked on iTunes, monitoring its ascent up the charts. It very quickly hit number one in the World Music chart and shortly after, burst into the top 100 of the mainstream charts and continued up all day.

Recorded in the USA, the subject matter and the feel of the song are very much in the style that Skerryvore have created and the prevalent electric guitar chord sequences and riffs give a strong rock effect. The lyrics of the chorus have been crafted perfectly to bring an audience to life by singing the repeated words at the end of each

line. This song is going to be a new highlight of their live shows.

#### A new boat for the Acairsaid

As I always do when I'm home, I took a drive down to the harbour at Caolas and then on to the houses at Milton. This is my favourite part of Tìree. Seeing the Acairsaid full of boats is a heartening sight and it is more heartening to know a new addition to the fleet is coming soon.

Coinneach MacKinnon from Hillcrest is upgrading from his 26-foot creel boat to a multi-purpose 37-foot vessel which as well as being rigged for creels, can be easily switched to dredge for scallops or trawl for fish and prawns. Fishing is a stand-out success story in Tìree in recent years and this type of advancement and diversification represents the continued development of this vital industry.

You can have all the music in the world coming off an island but it is young people working and living at

home and having families that will keep it alive.

So until all us dandy musician types can work out a way of conquering the logistics of island travel, it is up to the fishermen, crofters and other year-round residents to keep the population up, and Coinneach is certainly doing a good job of that.

#### Alastair Campbell

At the risk of a flurry of complaints, I admit to having been a fan of Alastair Campbell for many years, so it was nice to meet him twice in the course of the last two weeks, once in Glasgow and then at his Auntie Mairi's funeral on Tìree.

On the way to Milton, I was listening to Radio Four's *Media Show* on which he was a guest. His humour and agility in conversation, his concise style and his clarity of message were, as always, refreshing to hear and completed the trilogy of Tìrisdeach tidings of the week.



### Social media

Our article highlighting details of a Trump rally held in Oban last Thursday evening attracted a lot of comment for and against...

**James McCulloch did not think much of the move:** How about protesting something that concerns Oban, like the bin collections for crying out loud. what a waste of time. Oban Times, it's not a 'Muslim Ban', if it was do you not think Indonesia would be on the list as well as a few other countries?

**And John DM Kerr agreed:** Unbelievable that the people in oban can

organise a protest in Oban about an American non issue but our streets are in darkness and our bins are overflowing and they do nothing??

**Vincent Thomas Muir said:** What in the name of the wee man!!! Don't we all have enough to do taking care of your OWN problems? It's not like we are part of the United States. Live our own lives and deal with our own country's problems before involving ourselves in theirs!

**Donald Morris replied to him:** You may have noticed that the actions in

other countries affect this one. For example, when the UK went into Iraq and caused nothing but death and destruction, there was another nation involved. Do you remember?

**Jo Pagan said:** I can't believe a lot of these comments!! So sad that the bigger picture can't be seen. Wow, let's all worry about our litter and just be grateful that we are not being threatened with murder and rape on a daily basis and can't actually escape. Oh to be white and born in Oban, let's forget the rest of the world.

Crannog Lane, Lochavullin estate, Oban, PA34 4HB.

We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO, which will investigate the matter. You can

either telephone IPSO on 0300 123 2220 or email [inquiries@ipso.co.uk](mailto:inquiries@ipso.co.uk). IPSO is an independent body which deals with complaints from the public about the editorial content of newspapers and magazines.

We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

### A big thank you to generous supporters

Sir, We would like to say thank you to the whole community of Oban and beyond who supported Hope Kitchen at Christmas.

We were overwhelmed once again by the kindness and generosity shown to us by local people, schools, businesses and churches.

There are too many to mention individually but we would like to express our gratitude through this page to each and every one of you from the bottom of our hearts.

As an expression of our gratitude, we plan to undertake weekly beach cleans and town tidy ups to give a small something back to the community which has supported us so kindly over the past eight years.

We would also like to invite the whole community to pop in for a cup of tea and a warm welcome when we move to our new community cafe on Soroba Road in the coming months.

Lorraine MacCormick,  
Service Manager, Hope Kitchen,  
Oban.

### Tribute to a great hill man – Donnie Ross

Sir, It was with great sadness we recently heard of the passing of Donnie Ross, who will be a huge loss to the whole rural community of the Highlands.

However, I think we gave him a really good send-off in a unique but fitting funeral service. I can honestly say I have never carried a coffin out on a hill before, but if anyone deserved this, it was big Donnie.

The family and the funeral directors are to be commended for organising such a special service for him and many well respected people and personalities from many walks of life were there to see him off. Hundreds of them were on the hillside above his home at Lealt Farm.

Everyone I know loved and respected this great hill man.

He always had time to talk to people and his stories were amazing and so educational. He was a great mentor to me and many others interested in the hills and grazing of traditional livestock.

The one thing I will really miss is looking forward to the next letter in the press from DW Ross of Lealt. His letters were from the heart and as honest as anything I have read in print.

His passion for a way of life that sadly seems to be disappearing and respect and enthusiasm for the cultural heritage of the hill men of the Highlands were well appreciated in many circles.

I just wish more people in conservation, environmental and agricultural bodies would come out from behind their desks and talk more to people like Donnie, although they will need to be quick as they are getting thinner on the ground.

Then they might learn, first, what

### Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL  
[ailean@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:ailean@obantimes.co.uk)



A E DOIRBH A THUIGSINN carson a tha uimhir a ghainne luchd-teagaisg air nochdadh feadh na dùthcha, ach tha cùisean air ìre a ruigheachd aig cuid a Chomhairlean is gum bheil cunnart ann nach tèid aca air an dleastanas foghlaim a chòileanadh.

Dè th' air tachairt dha ìomhaigh obair a bha cho tarraingeach uaireigin? Gun teagamh chan eil an saoghal idir cho mothail am measg chloinne neo an cuid phàrantan 's a bha agus tha sgeulachdan air a bhith a' nochdadh fad bhliadhnaichean a-nise a thaobh an seòrsa mì-rian ris am feum mòran luchd-teagaisg dèiligeadh anns na sgoiltean.

Tha e follaiseach gum bheil an t-uallach seo a' toirt droch bhuaidh air slàinte chuid anns an dreuchd ach tha fhios nach eil sin fìor ach ann an cuid de sgoiltean, agus tha e doirbh a chreidsinn gun tionndaidheadh e mòran dhaoine òga air falbh bho theagaisg a thaghadh mar dhreuchd.

Dè 's coireach ma-thà? An e gum bheil barrachd chloinne ann na bh' ann agus gum bheil feum air barrachd luchd-teagaisg? An e gum bheil laghan

is practical and what works and how it can be achieved but, secondly, to look at our historic use of the hills and the numbers of people who lived there and remember it was a highly managed landscape that has created what we have today.

We do not want the use of our hills to change too much from the way they used to be, especially for the production of beef, mutton and venison.

The day will come with global populations and greenhouse gases and carbon footprints when we will be looking to our hills again to feed us - when we suddenly realise that we can't buy lamb in New Zealand and ship it to the other side of the world. It is, after all, morally wrong to burn all those hydrocarbons.

E Ruairidh Ormiston,  
Croila Croft, Kingussie.

### Appeal for cancer charity volunteers

Sir, There are 672 hours in February and 744 in March – but could you spare us just two?

Marie Curie is collecting at Tesco in Oban on Friday February 24 and at Superdrug in Oban on Saturday March 4.

We really need your help to make the most of these collections and to make every daffodil count. Together, we can help Marie Curie nurses provide vital hands-on care and emotional support to people living with a terminal illness and their loved ones. Every £20 we raise will provide one hour of nursing care. Last year in Argyll and Bute alone we provided 7,100 hours of care to local patients.

If you can give us a couple of hours of your time, we would really appreciate it. Please go to [www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil) to sign up online or phone or text me, Lynsey, your local community fundraiser, on 07771 963622.

Lynsey Neilson,  
Community fundraiser,  
Argyll and Bute.

### Candidates proposed for Useless Island

Sir, There are three islands in the bay opposite Craighouse, Jura, called Rabbit, Goat and Useless Island.

In my opinion, all the current Argyll and Bute councillors, many of whom are past their sell-by date should be sent to live permanently on Useless Island.

The Argyll and Bute Council officials who drew up the timetables for the three-weekly uplift of general waste bins should be deported immediately to Useless Island, along with a couple of football referees.

I am sure readers of *The Oban Times*

can think of many more people who would qualify for residence on Useless Island, which ultimately would lead to Useless Island being the most over-crowded island in the world.

Douglas W Tott,  
Stoneyburn, Bruichladdich,  
Isle of Islay.

### Scotland's strength in the European Union

Sir, There is more than a hint of irony that as Scotland, along with the UK, prepares to leave the EU, the island of Malta, with a population less than that of Edinburgh has just taken over the Presidency of the EU.

This is the first time the island has held the presidency and during the next six months will focus on six key areas: migration, single market, security, social inclusion, Europe's neighbourhood and maritime sector. Leading the EU.

Interestingly Estonia, with a population of less than 1.4 million people, around a quarter that of Scotland, will take over the EU presidency in July.

During the independence referendum, the Better Together camp claimed that the only way to guarantee Scotland's place in the EU was to vote to remain in the UK. Indeed, Scotland was to 'lead the UK' not 'leave the UK'. Times have indeed changed since September 2014 and we are, despite these assurances, heading for the EU exit. Of course, we could have the best of both worlds, part of a single market with the rest of the UK – as promised to Northern Ireland in its relations with the Republic of Ireland – and still members of the EU.

For that to happen of course requires the confidence, as Malta and Estonia have demonstrated, to take full control of our own affairs and be the masters of our own destiny, leading not leaving the EU.

Alex Orr,  
Edinburgh.

### Sturgeon's strange attitude

Sir, Nicola Sturgeon and the SNP insist Scotland must remain in the EU single market and will hold another referendum if it is dragged out against her wishes.

It is a strange attitude to take since Scotland does four times more trade with the rest of the UK than it does with all of the other 27 countries in the EU together.

Furthermore, although goods are sold tariff-free, if our net contribution to the EU paid by taxpayers was imposed on traders it would amount to a tariff of more than seven per cent.

William W Scott,  
St Baldred's Road, North Berwick.



Ailean Caimbeul

ùra agus còraichean chloinne a' dèanamh na h-obrach nas dorra? Neo an e dìreach nam bheil de dh'obair rianachd an lùib na h-obrach?

'S dòcha gur e aon rud a tha a' toirt tlachd air falbh bhon obair an ìre, agus cho tric, 's a tha poileasaidhean foghlaim gan atharrachadh agus an cuideam a tha sin a' cur air an fheadhainn a dh'fheumas innleachdan ùra a chur an gnìomh.

Chunnacas cuideachd thar nam bliadhnaichean mar a bha cothrom ann an gnìomhachas a' tàladh dhaoine le sgilean teagaisg air falbh gu tuarastail nas motha ann an leithid obair na h-ola neo obair-craolaidh, mar a th' air a bhith fìor a thaobh dhaoine le comasan Gàidhlig.

Thar beagan bhliadhnaichean a-nise tha Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd air a bhith a' rannsachadh ach an gabh bagaid sgoiltean beaga a chur an urra ri aon cheannard, agus a rèir choltais tha cùisean air obrachadh cho math is gum bheil a' Chomhairle airson sin a' sgoileadh a-mach feadh an cuid sgoiltean.

Tha dòchas aig a' Chomhairle air caomhnadh ann am buidseat

an fhoghlaim agus cuideachd leasachadh air na th' aige de dhreuchdan cheannardan bànn. Ach mar a bhiodh dùil, chan eil cuid idir ag aontachadh leis a' ghluasad seo. Tuigear na duilgheadasan a bhiodh a' nochdadh a thaobh siubhal eadar sgoiltean dùthchail, ach tha cuideachd ceist mhòr aig feadhainn a thaobh èifeachdas a bhith a' càrnadh tuilleadh rianachd air cheannardan ann an leithid de dhòigh. Feumar an duilgheadas a thaobh a bhith a' tàladh dhaoine gu ruige obair-teagaisg a leasachadh, agus theagamh nach e a bhith a' cruthachadh tuilleadh uallaich rianachd dha cheannardan an dòigh as fheàrr sin a dhèanamh.

AS COUNCILS across Scotland struggle to fill vacant teaching posts, many wonder why teaching appears to have become less popular. While Highland Council's 'clustering' solution for head teachers is understandable, some argue this will not help reinstate the profession as an attractive career.

Ailean Caimbeul (Allan Campbell) [ailean@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:ailean@obantimes.co.uk)

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If you think we have made a significant mistake and you wish to discuss this with us, please let us know as soon as possible by any of the three methods: emailing [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk); telephoning the editor on 01631 568046; writing to the Editor at The Oban Times,

Crannog Lane, Lochavullin estate, Oban, PA34 4HB.

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We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

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must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not

be printed. Please write or fax to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Fax: 01631 568001. Email [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk).

## Former soldier jailed for assault

AN OBAN ex-soldier has been jailed for punching a man who asked for his partner's phone number. Ross Steven MacLellan, 26, of 8c Corran Brae, Oban, pleaded guilty to assaulting the man on January 22 by punching him on the head. Procurator Alasdair Shaw told Oban Sheriff Court last Wednesday the incident followed a remark to MacLellan's partner at a public house in Oban.

'The accused took umbrage and challenged [the complainer] to a fight,' said Mr Shaw. '[The complainer] sensibly refused and left the pub.'

'He goes across the road to [another bar], where, 15 minutes later, the accused entered and immediately went up to the complainer and punched him on the head.'

Defence agent Jane McLaren said: 'The remark was that he wanted to go up the road with her and that her phone number was asked for. He accepts he went back to the bar to punch [him].'

Sheriff Ruth Anderson asked: 'He asked someone where he was? It is getting worse, Ms McLaren.'

Ms McLaren acknowledged the accused's 'lengthy and appalling record': 'He has clearly had his own drug issues. Up until 2011, they have been all drug related. Further back he does have breaches of the peace and assault charges.'

She said MacLellan had served in the army for three and a half years from 2006, including six months in Afghanistan in 2008.

'He is on medication for mental health issues,' she added, 'for post traumatic stress disorder. It seems recently he has been doing relatively well dealing with his drug problem, now he is in a relationship with his partner.'

Sentencing, Ruth Anderson said: 'He is going to prison today.'

'You have a lengthy and appalling record. This is another example. The sentence would have been six months. I am reducing it to four months, because of your plea at the first opportunity.'

## Former instructor fell asleep at the wheel

A FORMER driving instructor who fell asleep at the wheel after an appointment to fit a new leg has been fined £300.

Gordon Cowan Cruikshank, 68, of 35 Lochneil Road, Dunbeg, admitted driving carelessly on August 10, when he fell asleep while driving his vehicle on the A85 near Taynuilt, causing it to enter a ditch.

Procurator fiscal Alasdair Shaw told Oban Sheriff Court on Wednesday February 1 that 'the accused was driving at 30 to 35mph [and] was not injured'.

Defence agent Edward Thornton said Cruikshank had 'an excellent driving history' since 1968, and had worked as a driving instructor. 'He lost his leg in an accident where he was the innocent victim,' he added.

Mr Thornton explained Cruikshank was due to get a new leg and was driving back from an appointment at a hospital in Glasgow when he began to feel tired at Bridge of Awe, and intended to pull in.

'The next recollection he had was he was in the ditch,' said Mr Thornton.

Sentencing, Sheriff Ruth Anderson said: 'It is an unfortunate incident against an exemplary driving licence.'

She fined Cruikshank £300 and imposed six penalty points.

# Councillor apologises over 'disused scrap yard' row

SANDY NEIL

sneil@obantimes.co.uk

AN OBAN councillor has apologised after neighbours objected to his 'despicable' plans to keep a 'dangerous', 'shambolic heap of junk' next to their homes.

In January, Oban North and Lorn councillor Iain MacLean applied to Argyll and Bute Council for a certificate of lawfulness to use his land by Falls View Apartments in North Connel for 'general storage purposes'.

Since then the application has drawn many objections, including from his fellow councillor Kieron Green who argued residents 'are extremely disappointed by the failure of the applicant to comply with polite requests, and more recently a voluntary arrangement, with the council to tidy the site.'

'This situation has been ongoing for many years now, with residents trusting the applicant would be true to his word. The impression now given, that the applicant will do anything to shirk responsibility and claiming that this has been tolerated as ground used for general storage, reflects badly both on him, and unfortunately by extension on the council as a whole due to his connection.'

'This cannot be tolerated any longer and a firm signal must be sent that the planning system



Neighbours have objected to Iain MacLean's plans to keep a 'shambolic heap of junk' next to their homes in North Connel.



cannot be abused in this manner.'

Immediate neighbours have also lodged objections, with one arguing: 'We have had to put up with views of decaying caravans, a portacabin, dead cars and junk which would make Steptoe's yard look organised. Please Mr MacLean start being respectful of your neighbours.'

Another added: 'This shambolic heap of junk should never have been allowed to accumulate in an established residential area.'

Others said: 'The area is already full of scrap and the

council has already asked the owner to tidy up this and nearby scrap cars. So far the order has not been complied with.'

'Making this a legal piece of ground for further storage is a disgrace,' another neighbour agreed: 'Not only does it devalue my and neighbouring properties, it is also a hazard for my children to play in locally and an eye-sore.'

One neighbour 100m away deemed the site 'full of debris likely to cause vermin infestation and disease': 'I am friends of people who are living in the flats and know first hand how their lives are affected by the inconsideration of this man. For a councillor to act in this roughshod way is despicable. What he is storing is dangerous and a health hazard and envi-

ronmental hazard and [I] do not want this to spread to other land which he owns.'

Another nearby called it a 'disused scrap yard' and a 'blight on the local amenity', 'clearly visible from both Connel and North Connel, adding: 'If this application is supported then you will be opening the flood gates for others and encouraging what is no better than fly tipping.'

'I think it is a disgrace that an elected official, paid from the public purse, has such disregard for the area in which we all live.'

'At a time of cuts to refuse collections and the increasing problem of fly-tipping, surely this application must be refused and an enforcement order put in place to have all the rubbish removed without further delay.'

Ardchattan community councillor Breege Smyth said: 'It would be an abuse of the planning system to make legal what is in practise a rubbish dump and scrap yard.'

Responding to these objections, Mr MacLean told *The Oban Times*: 'I am acutely aware of neighbouring concerns and wish to publicly profusely apologise to everyone for the delays in the regularising process to achieve tidy storage, in an area used as such for many, many years.'

'This has been, in the main, due to circumstances which I have been unable to control.'

## Sentence deferred on Oban teenager

AN OBAN teenager has admitted drug dealing after being caught with £1,000 worth of cannabis in his bedroom.

John Samuel Scott, 18, of 10 Hazeldean Crescent, Oban, pleaded guilty to being concerned in the supply of herbal cannabis, a controlled drug, on January 18.

Procurator fiscal Alasdair Shaw told Oban Sheriff Court on Wednesday February 1 that 'police attended the home address of the accused,' and 'within the bedroom they found 12 wraps and £100 within a plastic bag.'

Mr Shaw said officers also found £1,390 in cash and 'a set of digital scales with green herbal matter on it, and a tick list'. He added that 'the combined total was 71.79g, with an approximate street value of £1,000.'

Defending, Jane McLaren said: 'Mr Scott made a full and frank admission to police. He tells me he is himself a cannabis user and he would sell it to friends. He was funding his own habit.'

Sheriff Ruth Anderson said: 'This is a serious matter. I shall call for a criminal justice social work report.'

Sentencing was deferred until February 28.

Call us on 01631 568000

## Top dog Lonan generously gifts whisky to owner

Lonan the Spaniel was celebrating this week after winning the *West Coast Review* magazine's sudoku competition. The top dog was presented with bottle of Oban whisky.

Lonan's owner, Martin Wilson of Oban, who completed the puzzle but filled in his dog's name on the entry form, will do his part drinking the single malt, while four-year-old Lonan, named after Glen Lonan, continues to enjoy chasing balls in the mud. Collecting his prize at *The Oban Times* office, the 62-year-old former teacher apologised for



THE OBAN TIMES

Lonan's muddy paws and explained that, since he [Martin] won the fendishly difficult sudoku challenge a year ago, he's been generously entering Lonan instead - and putting his brother's dog on raffle tickets.



## Council launches new procurement strategy to support changes

ARGYLL and Bute Council has launched its new procurement strategy which will guide the way it buys goods and services over the next year, supporting change and innovation as the council continues with its ambitious transformation agenda.

Councillor Dick Walsh, Policy Lead for Customer Services, said: 'The new strategy puts people in Argyll and Bute first. They are at the heart of what we do. This is a time of unprecedented challenge for local government finances.'

'As we move forward, effective procurement will become even more important, making sure we can get the very best value for the goods and services we buy in so that we can continue to support the services our communities have told us matter most to them.'

'The document covers the rest of this financial year and the next one. Thereafter we will be updating it annually, with feedback from our customers being crucial to that process.'

'Our procurement team has and continues to save the council money wherever possible, money that can then be used for frontline services.'

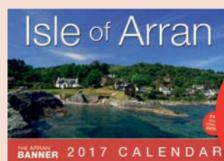
'The team also works hard to support the local economy, awarding over a third of council contracts to local businesses last year, amounting to 67 individual contract awards, and there are now more than 100 businesses on our supplier development programme.'

The strategy is available to view at: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-and-government/plans-policies-and-key-documents](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-and-government/plans-policies-and-key-documents)

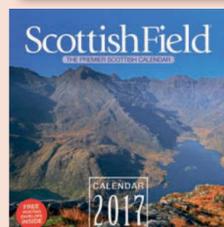
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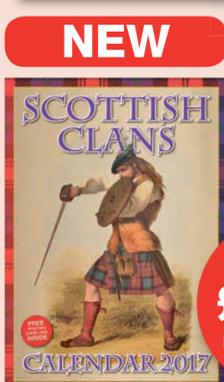
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### Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland: Area Based Scheme (HEEPS:ABS)

Are you a private homeowner or private tenant? Council Tax Band A-D\*?

\*Band D must also have a household income below £20,000 and a poor services energy rating

If yes to the above you could be eligible for funded insulation measures including loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, internal and external wall insulation and underfloor insulation.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to benefit from funded insulation measures.

Funding is limited and we advise that you register for the scheme as soon as possible.

To register call ALIenergy: 01631 565 183

Or contact Home Energy Scotland: 0808 808 2282

Email: [heepsabs@alienergy.org.uk](mailto:heepsabs@alienergy.org.uk)

Website: [www.alienergy.org.uk](http://www.alienergy.org.uk)

## Finlay Wild's in the loop

SOME 40 runners finished the new Blamafuldiach Loop Race last Sunday.

The race, which is 9.7 miles long, started at the Lochaber Leisure Centre swimming pool, covering Glen Nevis forestry trails and some steep climbs.

It was the eighth race out of 10 in Lochaber Athletic Club's winter league calendar 2016/2017.

### Ideal day

A long category race in which all runners must wear or carry full body cover – waterproofs top and bottoms, hat and gloves – it was an ideal day and everyone had a good race.

The men's category was won by Finlay Wild LAC in 01:05:00,

### Athletics

in second place was John Yells LAC in 01:07:15, and third was Denis Prikulis, Vegan Runners in 01:12:00.

In the women's category, first to cross the line was Lisette Walter in 01:22:26, Amanda Blackhall LAC in 01:24:22 was second and in third place was Helen Leggett LAC in 01:26:14.

A spokesperson for LAC said: 'Well done to all who took part and massive thanks to organisers, marshal's and timekeepers, Corrina, Pamela, Aileen, Aileen Ellen, Elizabeth, Cammy and Robert, and any others I may have missed.'



Finlay Wild on his way to winning the Blamafuldiach Loop Race. Photos: Abridge Photography



The 9.7 mile course went through Glen Nevis and up some steep climbs



Forty runners finished the race



This competitor seems to be enjoying himself.



Runners battle their way up a steep incline

## Whitelocke has best game of the week

### 10-pin bowling

AFTER week 11 of the Lochaber Building Supplies 10-pin bowling leagues, Alleycats continue to lead the scratch division with 45 points.

The leaders are followed by British Legion Fort William with 36 points, Don't Give A Split and The Shambowls both on 30 points.

But the handicap division is much tighter where British Legion Fort William stay on top with 34 points, closely followed by Don't Give A Split on 33 points and The Shambowls on 31 points.

Individually, the best game of the week was 181 from Tony Whitelocke (Alleycats). Other good games included Alan Struthers (Don't Give A Split) with 178, Pam Weller (Alleycats) with 177 and Cary Cowan (Don't Give A Split) with 173. Weller also had the top two game scratch series of 340, while Struthers had the top handicap game of 238 and the top two game handicap series of 456.

The best team scores of the week came from Alleycats who had the top scratch game of 607 and the top two-game scratch series of 1,198, while The Shambowls had the top handicap game of 801 and the top two-game handicap series of 1553.

The top scratch averages are currently held by Weller (Alleycats) with 165 followed by Whitelocke (Alleycats) with 160 and Ben Weller (Don't Give A Split) on 151.

### Club lottery numbers

#### Lotto

WINNING numbers for the Ballachulish shinty lottery were 5, 7 and 11. Catherine Stewart in Ballachulish won the £200 on offer. There will be another £200 up for grabs next week.

Numbers for the Caol Community Centre bingo for last week's draw (January 29) were 5, 16 and 17. There were no winners so the jackpot goes up to £600. The numbers for Sunday's draw (February 5) were 2, 13 and 16.

The Fort William Golf Club's lotto jackpot is up to £1,100 for the draw today, February 9. Last Thursday's numbers were 11, 13 and 14 with no winner.

The Caol Regeneration lotto jackpot of £300 was won by Sarah Donaldson. Winning numbers for February 2 were 8, 12 and 17. The next draw will be today (February 9), with a £100 jackpot.

### Fort William match called off

#### Football

FORT WILLIAM'S weekend home game against Rothes was called off after a week of poor weather led to a waterlogged surface at Claggan Park.

The Fort will travel to play Clachnacuddin in Inverness on Saturday.

## Lochaber Ladies win local derby

Fort William Ladies	3
Lochaber Ladies	4
Friendly match	

### Women's shinty

FORT WILLIAM were host to Lochaber Ladies in a pre-arranged friendly at the weekend and what an entertaining game of shinty ensued.

Lochaber, from the whistle, piled on the pressure in front of the Fort goal and keeper Kayleigh Woods pulled off all kinds of saves to keep the Fort level-pegging. However, Lochaber eventually broke through to make it 1-0 to the visitors.

The game raged from end to end with Fort finding their form and they soon drew level. They continued to push forward with Woods pulling off some outstanding saves, but it was Lochaber who scored next which saw the teams go into the interval at 2-1 to the visitors.

As referee Ron Campbell sounded the blast for the start of the second half, Fort got about

their business and Ashleigh Fraser fired in a cracking goal to make it all square. The game then turned with Fort looking to kill it off and Lochaber's defence and keeper were at full alert. Then a pass to Zoe Smith saw her rifle a beauty into Lochaber's net.

With barely nine minutes to go, Fort must have thought about bolstering their defence and seeing the game out but rivals Lochaber had other ideas. Continuous attacks saw the Lochaber Ladies reap their rewards with a beautiful goal and with minutes remaining it looked like a draw was on the cards.

However, from the throw-up Lochaber were quicker off the mark which took the Fort defence by surprise and sealed their win to make it 4-3 in Lochaber's favour.



Forts Elaine Wink takes on Lochaber's Amy Disher.

Photos: Abridge Photography.



Lochaber's Claire Delaney head to head with Fort's Elaine Wink.

Photo: Abridge Photography.

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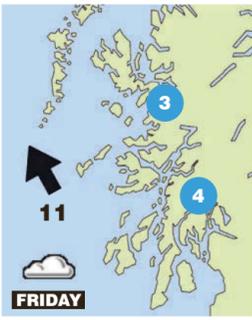
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**WEATHER**

Thursday Cloudy with sunny intervals  
Winds moderate south easterly  
Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.

Friday Cloudy  
Winds moderate east south easterly  
Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.

Weekend Cloudy on Saturday  
Cloudy on Sunday  
Winds light south easterly  
Temperatures 2°C to 4°C.



**Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd**

**TIDAL INFORMATION**  
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday February 9, 2017 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour) BST)

Date	am	pm		
Thur	04.28 3.7 10.59 1.0 17.07 3.7 22.59 0.8	Ardershaig -5.35 Mallaig +0.25		
Fri	05.10 3.9 11.46 0.8 17.44 3.9 23.45 0.6	Campbeltown -5.30 Portree +0.55		
Sat	05.49 4.1 12.28 0.7 18.19 4.0 *** **	Crinan -0.47 Tobermory +0.16		
Sun	00.27 0.5 06.25 4.1 13.08 0.7 18.52 4.0	Islay Port Ellen 2.00 Dover +5.30		
Mon	01.07 0.5 07.01 4.1 13.45 0.8 19.25 3.9	Lochboisdale +0.30		
Tues	01.45 0.6 07.35 4.0 14.20 1.0 19.57 3.8	<b>Ferry Crossings/Sea States</b>		
Wed	02.21 0.8 08.07 3.9 14.54 1.2 20.27 3.7	Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate		
Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)			Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate	
			Kennacraig to Islay Moderate	