

# The Oban Times

## & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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### Contractors abandon house after starting renovation work

# Appin couple left amid debris of their home

#### Tenants voice fears over asbestos

RENOVATION contractors pulled a kitchen and bathroom out of a home in Appin before being told they had started work on the wrong day.

Connaught contractors left the stunned householders without water, toilets or heating in their home.

Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) tenants Ian and Diane Light found themselves sitting in a building site within their home at Kirkton, Appin.

Mrs Light said: 'The work was meant to start two weeks ago. So when contractors finally arrived on Monday morning we were delighted. They came into the house, stripped out the kitchen and removed the bathroom fittings.'

'At that point an official from ACHA arrived and said that the workmen were not meant to be in my house.'

'So they left - leaving us without any water, heating or toilet facilities.'

**EXCLUSIVE REPORT by LOUISE LEE**  
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'Eventually someone came back, fitted a toilet and re-connected the water.'

'But what is more worrying is that we believe we have asbestos in our bathroom and it should have been removed by a specialist.'

'We were promised that ACHA would be back in touch with us on Monday. We were told the same thing again on Tuesday - but we still haven't heard a thing.'

A spokesman for contractors Connaught said: 'We can confirm that on Monday morning Connaught operatives attended a property to commence a planned 10-day kitchen and bathroom improvement programme.'

'Upon further discussion with ACHA it emerged that there had been a misunderstanding regarding improvements scheduled for this property and Connaught is now working to resolve this issue as a matter of urgency.'

'We would like to apologise

to the tenant for any inconvenience caused as a result of this misunderstanding.'

Chief executive of ACHA Alastair MacGregor confirmed that his association called a sudden halt to the Appin renovation work.

He said: 'The association was due to start work on kitchens and bathrooms in two properties in Appin on Monday of this week.'

'The association has delayed the start of this work by a week in order to ensure that the necessary resources are in place to meet our standards for quality with respect to the improvement of our tenants' homes.'

He added: 'Asbestos exists in many houses and the association, and its contractors, follow established procedures for its removal and disposal.'

The spokesman for Connaught said: 'Connaught can confirm that the operatives who removed the kitchen and bathroom were qualified to recognise, handle and safely dispose of any asbestos identified within the property and all procedures were fully adhered to with no risk posed to the tenant.'



Shane Stewart, Tom Campbell-Paine and Kara Willis are among the pupils who will display their work at the Kelvingrove Art Gallery in Glasgow. 07\_08head03

## Lismore primary art takes its place in Kelvingrove gallery

PUPILS from an island primary school will have their art displayed alongside names such as Van Gogh and Salvador Dali at Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery.

Inspired by the expression heads that are displayed at the museum and art gallery, pupils from Lismore Primary School, which has a school roll of 10, sculpted heads as part of their study on 'character'.

Such was the success of the school project the pupils encouraged head teacher

Jennifer Kirkwood to ask the museum if the pieces could be displayed.

The response was a positive one and the pupils' head sculptures will be shown alongside the famous expression heads at the gallery from May 8 to July 4 in the Community Exhibition Area.

Ms Kirkwood said: 'The work became a source of great pride for the children to the extent that one of them asked if we could display them in the Kelvingrove.'

**EXCLUSIVE REPORT by EUAN PATERSON**  
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'You know what they say: If you don't ask, you don't get!'

'We have been to the gallery on school trips before so the children know how important this is. They couldn't believe it when I told them the museum had said yes.'

A spokesman for the art gallery said: 'We have the Community Exhibition Area for community groups but it is unusual for a school to have its work displayed there.'

'However, we felt that Lismore school could be an exception because the subject matter was a bit different.'

Kelvingrove Art Gallery is Scotland's most visited attraction with around 1.4 million visitors coming through the doors last year.

### Local family firm recognised in national wholesalers award

OBAN-based wholesaler Forteith Foodservice has been recognised for its excellence in the Scottish Wholesaler Association (SWA) annual awards.

The Oban company was runner-up in the Best Foodservice - Delivered category, coming second only to their long associated partners 3663.

John Forteith, senior partner, said:

'This is a tremendous achievement for all our staff, all of whom have worked very hard over the last few years.'

'Despite Forteith's being a private, family business, we have taken on the largest wholesalers in the UK and excelled.'

He added: 'For the last 55 years Forteith's has been totally committed

to service excellence to customers within the West Highlands and islands. We continue to keep this focus and for the 2010 season we are working on some very exciting local initiatives with local producers.'

The SWA awards are based on a series of rigorous independent audits that took place over six months.

### Lismore death stuns island

LISMORE residents are still in shock this week following the death of the island's popular postwoman.

Alison MacLean, aged 54, died on Saturday evening in Hairmyres Hospital, East Kilbride, after suffering a stroke. She had left the island on Wednesday to take her youngest daughter, Flora, to Yorkhill Children's Hospital.

Having lived on Lismore all her life, Alison was an integral part of the community.

Her sister, Anna, said on Tuesday: 'She was a happy-go-lucky person who liked to help get things up and running. I don't think islanders have come to terms with her death yet; it's hit everyone hard.'

Alison, who was married to the late Donald 'Tiree' MacLean, had two other children, Carol and Duncan, and one granddaughter.

The funeral will be held in Lismore Parish Church tomorrow (Friday) 1pm. There has been a request for family flowers only and there will be a collection for a heart and stroke charity.

### Mull rally future in doubt after course concerns

AN ANNUAL island car rally may be cancelled due to a split in public support, wiping £1 million from the local economy and leading to a call for talks to discuss some islanders' concerns.

'Concerns have arisen after last year's event that needs to be resolved'

Organisers of the Tour of Mull Rally, The 2300 Club, are considering cancelling the event and are asking islanders if it is time to call it a day. It is understood that after last year's rally real questions were raised regarding the management of the course.

Rally director Neil Molyneux said: 'I just don't know if the rally will happen this year. If islanders say they don't want it, then we will stop doing it.'

The rally, held each October, is now in its 41st year and is thought to boost the economy of the island to the tune of £1 million during the difficult autumn season.

Rebecca Gallagher owner of Park Lodge Hotel in Tobermory said: 'It would be an absolute sin

if the rally was cancelled. It is a unique and exciting event that takes place on the island late in the season and there is no doubt in my mind that it brings much to the local economy and spirit of the island.'

'We would lose something very special if it is cancelled.'

However, another islander who didn't wish to be named said: 'Perhaps if people who benefit from the rally were willing to get together and find a way forward then the rally could go ahead.'

'But as it stands there are a number of people who have outstanding concerns and perhaps they need to get around the table to talk. I am sure that things could be sorted out.'

Mull councillor Mary-Jean Devon said: 'The community council has invited Neil Molyneux to the next meeting and we hope to sort out any problems.'

'We have 40 fantastic years with the rally - with a few hiccups. Concerns have arisen after last year's event that need to be resolved. It is a fantastic event that everyone on the island can be proud of.'

### Benderloch girl admits supply

A BENDERLOCH teenager has admitted supplying methadone to a man.

Ailsa McNaughton, 4 Ach-an-Duin, appeared at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday, where she admitted supplying methadone to Robert MacDonald, now deceased, on October 10 or 11 2008 in a house in Albany Terrace in Oban.

McNaughton, aged 19, had her sentence deferred until March 9 for background reports.

### Clan chief dies

THE 46TH chief of the Clan MacNeil of Barra, who once taught law to a young Barack Obama, has died.

Ian Roderick MacNeil died in Edinburgh on Tuesday, aged 80. He had been suffering from lymphoma.

He ran the 9,000-acre crofting estate for nearly 35 years, splitting his time between the island, Edinburgh and his native America, where he taught law at Northwestern University in Chicago, including to Barack Obama, who he predicted would one day be president of the United States.

Western Isles MP Angus MacNeil and MSP Alasdair Allan both said he would be greatly missed.

### Oban Bay island finds new owners

ACOUPLE who have bought a small island off Kerrera for £426,000 has already lodged plans for a new house there.

Haulage firm boss David Hamilton and his wife Grace, from Larkhall, Lanarkshire, plan to fly to the four-acre Rubh a' Chruidh in their helicopter for weekend breaks and are currently installing a pontoon for their boat.

The sale took more than a year to complete after the seller, Kenny Dunn, who had lived on the island for 14 years, died just after the Hamiltons' offer was accepted.

Mr Hamilton, a keen sailor, said: 'We had been looking to buy a coastal house in the Oban area and saw an advert for the island and were just blown away.'

'It really is something unique and ticked all the boxes for us.'

The 52-year-old added: 'It is a good project at this stage in our lives and because our business operates from the farm where we live, it's nice to have somewhere to escape to.'

Mr Hamilton flew to the island on the same day he saw the advert and made an offer two days later.

Surveying company Bell Ingram, which handled the sale, said there was a huge amount of interest in the tidal island because of its accessibility.

There is already a house on the island, which was built by lobster fisherman Ross McMahon in 1963. His daughter Kathleen, a lawyer in Oban, said: 'The house was built in sections, which my father brought over on his own fishing boat.'

'We loved living there but I think my father would be amazed that four acres could make that amount of money. It shows the value people place on something unique.'

People can and do recover from mental health problems — an invitation

Oban Caledonian Hotel, 24 February

A public event to look at how to better support recovery for people in Argyll & Bute  
Open to people with experience of mental health problems, friends, family and professionals

To book a free place, or for more information, visit [www.scottishrecovery.net](http://www.scottishrecovery.net), or call 0141 240 7790.



Hosted by the Scottish Recovery Network, which is supported by the Scottish Government's Mental Health Division



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### Beachd Ailein

Ged nach eil mi ag aontachadh leis na poileataigs aice tha mi air a bhith mothachail air Nicola Sturgeon mar neach comasach agus deas-bhriathrach taobh a-staigh is taobh a-muigh na Pàrlamaid. B' i seo tè a bha cinnteach aiste fhèin agus fìor sgiobalta ann an deasbad sam bith; tè a bha mise an dùil a sheachnadh mearachd.

Carson bho shealbh ma tha a ghabh i oirre fhèin litir-taice a sgrìobhadh dha fear a bha air a dhearbhadh ciontach air cealgaireachd airson an dàrna turas? Gun teagamh cha robh an litir ag àicheadh cionta an duine a bh' ann ach bha i a' sireadh lasachadh as an seòrsa binn a rachadh a chur air. Cionnas nach do thuig Sturgeon gun robh leithid seo gu bhith na thiodhlac as na speuran dha na partaidhean eile, gu h-àraid is taghadh nàiseanta air faire agus na spuirean poiliteigeach gan geurachadh.

Cha b' annas gun robh Ailig Salmund a' cur taice rithe, d' eile a b' urrainn dha a dhèanamh san t-suidheachadh; nach b' e a dhleastanas a bh' ann? Ach an robh e ceart nuair a thuir e gun robh e mar dhleastanas air Sturgeon cuideachadh a thoirt dha ball den roinn aice, fìu 's fear a bha ri fòill? Ma tha sin ceart cha bheag an t-uallach a th' aig Buill Pàrlamaid Albanach, agus feadhainn Lunnainn, ri a choilionadh fhathast.

Bheil dleastanas orra na rathaidean a chàradh ceart; seirbheis fòghlaim choilionta a dhearbhadh dhan a h-uile coimhearsnachd; seirbheis slàinte agus cùraim a thoirt dhan a h-uile duine aig an bheil feum air sin? Gun teagamh sam bith tha na dleastanasan sin orra uile, ach chan eil iad gan coilionadh gu h-iomlan. Tha gainnead airgid na leisgeul agus glè thric tha luidseachd phoileataigs eadar-phartaidh a' tighinn as an rathad air leasachadh. Cluinnear searmoin air dleastanas nuair a tha cothrom buille air partaidh eile, neo ma tha co-obrach ri dhion, ach chan fhaicear cus dleastanas gus math an t-sluaigh.

Bha dleastanas ann cuideachadh a thoirt dha muinntir nan Eileanan Siar le cosgaisean aiseig, ach nach eil an aon dleastanas ann dha eileanan eile? Agus tha fhios gum bheil an aon argamaid ann ruideigin a dhèanamh le cosgais conaidh as na h-eileanan.

Nach biodh e fìor mhath barrachd aonta agus co-obrachaidh fhaicinn eadar phartaidhean air dleastanasan den t-seòrsa sin!

*Irrespective of all the bluster and argument which is given in her defence I have no doubt that Nicola Sturgeon will live to regret her letter of support for a constituent found guilty of fraud for a second time. Naturally Alex Salmund defended her robustly, and said she had a duty of care for her constituent.*

*How much better all our lives would be if all MSPs and MPs exercised such a conscientious duty of care! Cross party point scoring replaced by collaborative working for the voters! Ferry fare subsidies applied to all island communities and fuel subsidies as a natural progression. It might renew faith in politics and democracy!*

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

## Tiree identifies 'plenty' of parking for visitors

ISLANDERS on Tiree have identified more than 30 parking places for overnight visitors.

And proposals will see holiday-makers pre-book a spot on the island before they travel.

After a huge 154 percent increase in campervans and

motor homes holidaying on Tiree and Coll in 2009, islanders decided to take matters into their own hands and come up with a solution to the overcrowding at beauty spots on the island.

Alison Spence, Tiree access officer said that many travellers were being asked to move

on from certain areas. She said: 'It was felt by visitors and islanders alike that this was detrimental to the visitor experience and a solution had to be found in time for 2010.'

'After public consultation the community of Tiree has decided to limit the number of motor homes, campervans

or caravans coming to Tiree to the number of designated overnight parking spaces available.

'Crofters around the island are supplying small informal areas of fenced ground, for up to three vehicles.'

'Most offer great views and charges are set at an afford-

able price of £10 per vehicle per night.

'These sites can be pre-booked by contacting the Caledonian MacBrayne (Cal-Mac) office on the island.'

'These sites are only suitable for vehicles with onboard toilet facilities, as toilets are not provided.'

## Planners asked to get behind Easdale's 'green' efforts

ISLANDERS on Easdale want planners to get behind measures to improve the sustainability of its community – or at the very least, attend meetings that they are invited to.

Easdale islanders want to bring their 19th Century houses up to 21st Century standards by getting the best advice from energy advisors, as part of a Green Streets Award worth £130,000.

But ideas about fitting solar panels to the listed buildings on the island and a 15kw wind turbine to eco power homes were unable to be discussed because planners have, so far, failed to engage with islanders.

### 'Real people'

At a meeting held on the island recently one woman said: 'It is all very well limiting what we do here on the island through area plans and so on. But unless planners want us to be like St Kilda and become abandoned – through lack of ability to pay heating costs – planners must let us be real people, living on a real, thriving island and accept we need new technologies.'

Jack Walsh from Scottish Gas said: 'We can make meaningful improvements to many of the household fuel bills on the island by simple means, such as good insulation and ensuring people are on the correct tariffs.'

'It will be really good to chart the progress of individual homes and see the real difference eco measures can make.'

### 'Discussions'

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'The council regrets that no-one from the planning team was able to attend last month's meeting. This was due to a combination of illness and other staff commitments.'

'The authority is always keen to conduct pre-application discussions with potential applicants.'

'Indeed, the planning section recommends such discussions take place prior to the submission of any planning application.'

'This is viewed as a fundamental part of the development cycle, and can be of great benefit to both the applicant and the council in order to establish key principles and set the direction of the application process.'

'With regard to the specific Easdale Island plans, the planning team will contact the community directly to start the engagement process and guide the proposal through the planning system.'

'As a general principle, the council is keen to support the development of renewable energy technologies in appropriate locations and forms.'

## Bute backs forest buyout

A BUTE community group has won islanders' backing to buy almost 2,000 acres of woodland from film director Richard Attenborough.

Bute Community Land Company, which was created to acquire the forest on behalf of the community, proposed transforming the forest into an eco-tourism destination and develop sustainable fuel to heat island homes.

The site occupies around six percent of the island's area and made up of commercial forestry and an area of moorland with special scientific interest status.

John McGhee, the chairman of the Bute Community Land Company, said: 'It provides a strong message that the community is behind the purchase of the forest and is ready to take this first important step towards the revitalisation of the economy of Bute and the marketing of the island as a popular tourism destination again.'

The buy-out is seen by supporters as potentially the only opportunity the population will get to own a significant part of their island, which is almost entirely owned by the Marquis of Bute.

Argyll and Bute MSP Jim Mather welcomed the news: 'This is not an end in itself but rather the start of a huge project because there is valuable work to be done now to bring this to fruition.'

Argyll and Bute MP Alan Reid said: 'I congratulate the islanders of Bute and Bute Community Land Company on a decisive vote in favour of the community purchase of Rhubodach Forest. There is still a great deal of work to be done and I offer my full support to BCLC in their efforts to raise the remainder of the cash required to buy the forest. They will be able to create jobs for local people, recreational facilities for tourists and educational facilities for children.'



The pupils are, left to right, Sherylyn Jackson, Christianne MacGregor, Alice Hathaway, Tristan Rosier-Tucker, and Gillian McGregor. The people in the back row are teacher Andy Willis, centre, and Fiona MacKenzie and Calum MacAuley, who are presenters on BBC Alba.

## Gaelic film 'Oscars' for Islay High students

STUDENTS from Islay High School have struck gold with a film they have made in Gaelic.

An Tur won the best production prize in the young people's category at the FilmG Awards ceremony, which honours the best in Gaelic film. The island-produced film then

went forward to win the People's Choice Award category against stiff competition from other young people's films and all the adult entries.

The awards are organised by MGAAlba, which is in turn linked to BBC Alba.

The Islay pupils and their teacher Andy Willis, who

teaches English and media studies in addition to running the school's film group, attended the awards ceremony in Inverness.

Mr Willis said: 'The event also motivated and inspired the pupils to continue to make films and really boosted their self-confidence and belief.'

'I am extremely proud of them all; not only for what they have achieved but also for how they conducted themselves.'

The ambitious pupils are now planning to re-shoot the film in English and the school group also has another film in production.

## Policemen move to fill island posts

TWO NEW additions to Strathclyde Police on Tiree and Mull are looking forward to the challenge of island life.

Both new island constables say they are excited about the prospect of living and working within an island community.

Stephen Tanner, 39, originally from Ayrshire, has been appointed to Tiree and Coll and will be based at Searmish on Tiree.



PC Stephen Tanner has moved to Tiree

With more than 17 years experience, spending the last 10 years with the surveillance unit of Strathclyde Police in Glasgow and seven years before that 'on the beat' in Paisley, Constable Tanner said he is looking forward to meeting everyone on the island and helping out in any way that he can.

PC Tanner sees one of his biggest challenges as going from an anonymous police officer within the surveillance unit to being one of the better-known members of the island's community.

Stephen has moved to Tiree with his partner Lorna MacArthur whose family already live on the island.

Mull's most recent recruit has made his holiday destination his home.

Constable Stephen Brown has moved to Mull full-time after years of holidaying on the island.



No stranger to the Isle of Mull, PC Stephen Brown, his wife and three young daughters will be based at Salen

Based in Salen, PC Brown is joining a team of one sergeant and four police constables

on the island and has been a police officer for almost 15 years.

He started his career in Johnston and then moved onto the surveillance unit in Glasgow. Whilst there he worked in the armed response vehicle division and most recently with the marine unit.

Originally from Glasgow, he lived with his wife and children in Ayrshire prior to moving to Mull.

The couple have three young daughters aged 6-years 4-years and 5 months old.

He said: 'We are fortunate in the sense that the girls are at an age where they can adapt easily. It has not been hard to uproot them and the move has been absolutely fantastic for them.'

He added: 'I consider myself very fortunate to be here and I look forward to meeting the people who I haven't met already.'

## South Uist Robin Hood launches aid agencies' tax proposals in Edinburgh

A SOUTH Uist woman was at the forefront of aid agency Oxfam Scotland's support for the Robin Hood Tax proposals.

Caluna Campbell, aged 34, who works for Oxfam Scotland in Glasgow, was in Edinburgh's St Andrews Square last week dressed as Robin Hood.

Caluna said: 'A Robin Hood Tax on banks' financial transactions could raise hundreds of billions of pounds to fight poverty, protect public

services and tackle climate change both abroad and here in the UK.

'The idea is to tax a tiny proportion, just 0.05 per cent, of every major financial transaction made by banks.'

'This could raise around £250 billion every year and would not affect the banks' high street customers.'

She added: 'It was good fun and obviously there is a very important message to it.'

'When I started working with Oxfam I never imag-

ined I'd be hanging about with Maid Marion outside the headquarters of the Royal Bank of Scotland wearing a Robin Hood outfit.'

The campaign is calling for countries which levy the tax to keep half the proceeds domestically and for the rest to be split 50-50 between poverty reduction and tackling climate change.

Proposers claim that the UK's share of the tax could amount to tens of billions of pounds.



Caluna Campbell from South Uist became Robin Hood for the day in Edinburgh's St Andrews Square as Oxfam Scotland promoted ban tax proposals

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# Royal National Mòd survey flags up Oban event as 'undoubtedly one of the most successful National Mòds ever held'



John Morrison

ORGANISERS of the annual Royal National Mòd have declared last year's event in Oban as one of the best ever after completing the evaluation of October's festival.

An Comunn Gàidhealach proved early estimates that the event had generated more than £2 million of expenditure in the town were

accurate – the updated figure is £2.3 million.

With around 8,500 people visiting the town during the Mòd, the average spend of an overnight visitor was £284.30 and there was a public sector return of £14 on every £1 invested.

The visitor survey proved that Oban as a destination was a success, too.

Satisfaction rates were consistently high with 92 per cent of those surveyed saying they were very satisfied with Oban as the host venue for the Mòd.

In addition, 89 per cent of those surveyed confirmed they had travelled to Oban for the Mòd and would be staying in the host town during the event.

The Mòd fringe was rated good or excellent by 97 per cent of those surveyed whilst 51 per cent stated that they would definitely return to Oban for a future holiday.

Over three quarters of those surveyed felt that the Mòd enhanced the status of the Gaelic language 'a great deal' and 67 per cent of respondents were fluent Gaelic

speakers, the remainder being learners or having an interest in the language and/or culture.

An Comunn Gàidhealach chief executive John Morrison said 'We are delighted with the results of the evaluation.'

'The Gaelic language is a strong economic lever. In the midst of a severe recession

this performance is hugely impressive.

'We are indebted to everyone who helped us stage what was undoubtedly one of the most successful National Mòds ever held.'

The AGM of An Comunn Gàidhealach will take place at Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis tomorrow (Friday) at 7.30pm.

# Relief as council saves some services

Tears and applause greet council decision

AN impassioned plea to councillors has saved two learning disability projects threatened with closure.

There were tears and applause as people who use Neighbourhood Networks and Local Area Co-ordination services addressed Argyll and Bute Council's budget setting meeting last week, urging members not to back a proposal to remove their funding.

**'Listening council'**

In a last minute addition, council leader Councillor Dick Walsh proposed funding for Neighbourhood Networks should continue for the time being. Local area co-ordinators will retain half their funding.

He said: 'I make no apologies, having heard the representations this morning, for changing my mind on Neighbourhood Networks. We had fairly detailed information but this morning we heard things like a lack of consultation. We are not taking this savings option at this time.' He added the move made it clear the budget was not a 'done deal' and demonstrated they were a 'listening council'.

John Dalrymple, director of Neighbourhood Networks, said they were delighted at the last minute change of heart: 'I don't think we expected it and I think we should commend the council for being responsive.'

'The irony for us is that we know we are a low-cost, high-impact service; we know that we are part of the solution for the council, not part of the problem. Now we have the chance to prove the efficiency of our service.'

Councillors unanimously backed the proposed budget, with extra cash for roads, social work and amendments to a number of controversial proposals. Organisations spared cuts include Homestart, Soroba Young Families Project, the Red Cross transport scheme, Stramash and groups supporting disabled children.

Funding for service points

on Jura, Colonsay and at Cairndow will continue for now, with talks about how to provide the service in the future.

**Road repairs**

The council leader announced more than £1 million of roads money would be brought forward and spent in the next two months, allowing urgent repairs to take place on routes battered by snow and ice. A sum of £10,000 from reserves has also been set aside as a safety net for Mid Argyll Swimming Pool. It means the council can cover a one-off operating loss at the pool, putting it on a more stable financial footing and allowing directors to seek grants from other funders.

Council tax will remain frozen for another year. But millions of pounds worth of efficiency savings and cuts will go ahead. Fewer children will get free school transport from April 2010 and the council will no longer fund respite care at the popular Fyne View facility in Lochgilphead.

Despite petitions from Cairndow Community Childcare and Campbelltown's Castlehill After School Club, there will be less funding for childcare projects.

In order to find more money to balance the books, the sum set aside for the forthcoming local government staff pay award was reduced. Mr Walsh said: 'Should the national negotiations outcome require a provision greater than this allowance, then the balance will require to come from reductions in staffing.'

Councillor John Semple, third sector spokesman, said he knew the budget would be very tough for voluntary groups. Following the budget debate, he said: 'I feel there is recognition in this council now that prevention is better, and that perhaps in our next budget we will be considering investment in such organisations as a means of saving the council money as well as helping our communities.'



The special medal is returned to the son of its original owner – 85 years after it was lost on Oban's Dunollie Raod. 16\_08medal01

# Piping gold unearthed after more than 85 years

## Son gets to touch a little piece of his father's history

A GOLD medal buried in a roadway for more than 85 years has been returned to a delighted son of its original owner.

But had the 85-year-old buried treasure not been discovered for another week, the outcome could have been very different.

Eagle-eyed Oban woman Morag Brown saw something 'glistening' on top of disturbed soil on Dunollie Road, Oban. She first thought it might have been an old coin. But after cleaning it she discovered it was a small ¼ inch (3cm) pendant engraved with the name A McCalman (sic) on one side and on the reverse

it read special award, Salen Games 1924.

Mrs Brown took the find to The Oban Times to seek help in identifying an owner and a search in the August 23, 1924 edition of The Oban Times revealed that it was presented for piping to an Archie MacCalman at Mull and Iona Games. Mr MacCalman was awarded the medal as the best 'native of Mull and Iona' at Salen games.

But it appears that not long after it was awarded the coveted prize was lost – and somehow became buried underneath the public pathway on Oban's Dunollie Road.

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

General Cheape of Tiroran. My father worked with him as a stalker, as did his brother and father who was the estate manager.

'Our family were born and brought up on Mull, in and around Carsaig and Tiroran.'

Alistair added: 'In the 1920s my father took up employment in the Western Garage where he and his brother worked for a number of years.'

'As the garage was on Dunollie Road, where Farmfoods is now, I assume that is when he lost the medal – back in the 1920s.'

'My father went to work for the General Post Office

(GPO) where he worked for 35 years.

'He died in 1985 at the age of 82.'

'Holding this medal is like touching a piece of history that links me with my father. I am delighted to have it back.'

'I have contacted my brother, who lives in Crete, and told him about the medal.'

'I would like to thank Mrs Brown – what a kind thing to do.'

'It was good that you caught me as we are soon to move away to the north Highlands and I may never have been reunited with my father's pendant.'



# Chief Inspector aims for a safer night time in Oban

OBAN'S newly appointed chief inspector Glen Bland led by example on Friday night as he patrolled the town with Inspector Julie Edward.

Now two weeks into his new post, Chief Inspector Bland said he was keen that his officers maintained a highly visible presence in the town, especially at weekends, and has wasted no time in learning the lie of the land. He said: 'In my short time in Oban it has become clear that a healthy night time economy is vital to the area.'

'Supporting that economy, and by extension the wider community, throughout the year will be one of my main

priorities. The people of Oban have told the police they want to be able to enjoy the pubs and clubs of Oban without being concerned about drunken violent behaviour or drug use and my officers will aim to make sure that is the case.'

'Oban is a great place to be. I am getting around as much as I can and am working day and night to get to see as many communities as possible.'

'The people of Oban and the district have been very welcoming and I am looking forward to working with all our extended partners, councillors and community to really make a positive difference to the area.'

# Drunk man threatened to shoot police officers

A PERSISTENT offender has been sent to jail for two months and 30 days after admitting threatening to shoot two police officers and being drunk and incapable.

Alexander Barr, aged 48, whose address was given as Solas Homeless Centre, Albany Street, Oban admitted at Oban Sheriff Court being drunk and incapable on September 1 last year, breaching bail by being drunk and incapable on the streets of Oban on September 14 2009 and February 9 2010 and threatening officers on February 9.

The court heard on Monday that police had received a call on February 9 to say Barr was causing a disturbance and when he was arrested in Soroba Road told the officers: 'I don't give a \*\*\*\*, I will shoot the two of you.'

He continued to be abusive in the police car and in Oban police office, demanded to be taken home, shouting: 'Money for nothing and your chicks for free, that's how we do it in the IRA.'

Defending, Duncan Durbin said that Barr had been appearing in court on and off for 20 years and despite trying to get help with his alcohol problem had always 'fallen off the wagon'.

Barr, who was admonished for breaching bail on September 14 last year, had his jail sentence back-dated to February 10 when he was remanded in custody.

# Mental health recovery programme to host Oban event

THINKING positively about the ups and downs of mental health problems is on the agenda of a ground-breaking recovery programme that will be unveiled in Oban on Wednesday, February 24.

The event, hosted by Scottish Recovery Network in the

Caledonian Hotel, will give people a chance to learn what helps and hinders recovery from mental health issues and will encourage local action to support people in Argyll and Bute.

Network director Simon Bradstreet said: 'It is impor-

tant to stay hopeful when you are suffering from mental health issues even when things have been difficult for a long period of time. Appropriate support, from both loved ones and professionals, can really help someone to turn their life around. It's important to re-

member that everyone's experience is unique. For some people, recovery is about returning to the way life was before they became unwell. For others it means enjoying a satisfying life, even though they may still have symptoms.

'Our Making Recovery Real event in Oban is about promoting hope, and anyone interested in mental health – be it from a personal or professional point of view – is welcome.'

Contact Scottish Recovery Network on 0141 240 7790 or visit www.scottishrecovery.net.

# Buses to replace trains during strike action

TRAINS on the West Highland line will be replaced by buses this Saturday after members of a major transport union voted to strike.

It will be the first of three one-day stoppages by RMT conductors and drivers concerned at the extension of driver-only operations on the new Airdrie-Bathgate line.

Train operator ScotRail said its plans would ensure nine out of 10 trains ran as normal across Scotland – but none between Oban, Fort William and Glasgow.

A ScotRail spokesman said they had allocated resources to disrupt as few people as possible. He said: 'Tough choices have had to be taken to ensure that as many people as possible are unaffected on the strike days, including Scotland v England at Murrayfield, one of the biggest rugby events in the sporting calendar.'

Sleeper train managers are expected to strike on Sunday, February 21. ScotRail's spokesman added: 'ScotRail is reviewing the position and is confident that sleeper services will run.'

The RMT union believes driver-only services could be extended to other existing lines if their introduction goes ahead.

Regional organiser Ian Macintyre said ensuring trains were adequately staffed was even more critical in the western Highlands, where most stations are unstaffed.

'It's compromising safety. It would be even more unsafe on the West Highland Line because of the distance from help if a train was derailed or there was an incident.'

He apologised for the likely disruption to local passengers from the strike this Saturday and on subsequent strike days, March 1 and 13.

'We are sorry for the inconvenience it will cause to customers on the islands as well as the mainland.'

'We do appreciate the difficult journeys they have to make.'

Oban Times NEWS DESK 01631 568060

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Mull Lines



CHILDREN at Ulva school hosted a fantastic Burns lunch in February. A bit late, but it was the first day everyone could make the event.

The classroom was decorated with tartan and paintings of Burns songs and the children had designed mats and name places in tartan. The classroom looked fantastic. Children and invited guests enjoyed dancing, including the Gay Gordons, Dashing White Sergeant and Strip The Willow.

Lunch was soup, champit tatties, neeps and two types of haggis, followed by tea, coffee, hot chocolate and shortbread. Head teacher Mrs Waller addressed the haggis and Mrs Whyte said the immortal memory.

The lads toasted the lassies and the lassies replied. The children recited poems they had learned in Scots and challenged everyone with riddles.



MULL'S progressive care centre (PCC) got a further boost this week as NHS bosses backed plans to fund the building.

Replacing the current Salen Hospital and care centre, the PCC at Java, Craignure, will be capable of hosting a wide range of traditional and holistic therapies on one site.

The NHS funding of almost £5 million will be in place for contractors to start work in late 2010. Argyll and Bute Council has already given the go-ahead for its share of the £8.4 million project.

Fundraisers on the island have donated both the land and a sizeable amount of cash to fund the early stages of development.



MULL lay preacher Jan Sutch-Pickard took part in a Women in Black demonstration in Gaza on the West Bank in Israel/Palestine while acting as a border peace observer in the disputed territory.

The demonstration campaigns for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories. Ms Sutch-Pickard will remain in the country for three months.



THEATRE company Birds of Paradise is set to tour the Highland and Islands with a bittersweet comedy/thriller, Clutter Keeps Company by Davey Anderson.

It will be performed by a stellar cast that includes: Jo Freer (NTS's House of Bernarda Alba), Keith MacPherson (Sweetscar's 4.48 Psychosis), Scott Fletcher (BBC/Comedy Unit's Gary: Tank Commander) and Nicola Miles-Wildin (Grace's Just Me Bell).

All performances are subtitled and audio description is embedded within the text.

The play will come to Mull Theatre at Druimfin Tobermory on February 23, Taynuilt Village Hall the following night, An Lanntair Stornoway on the February 26 and Dornie Hall near Eilean Donan on March 4.



To sponsor Mull Lines please contact Isla at 01631-568000

# Top loo awards for two west tourist centres



Cruachan Visitor Centre staff, from left: Libby Cattanaich, Ian Steel and Ishbel MacFarlane. 07\_t07cru01

TWO TOURIST attractions on the A85 have won their own Royal flush after both being named Loo of the Year in their categories, nationally.

Tyndrum's Green Welly Stop won the service station category for the whole of the UK and Cruachan Visitor Centre, near Taynuilt, won the visitor attraction category for Scotland.

This is the fifth year in a row that the Green Welly Stop has won the award and it has also maintained its five-star toilet rating in its Snack Stop cafe.

Maintenance manager Glenn Moore says his team took great pride in winning the award.

'Some people might laugh and have a bit of fun with an award like that but at the end of the day we have won an award for our hard work.

'People always comment on how clean the toilets are so it must be important to people.

'I think cleanliness helps to form people's opinion of the place and they are more



Pictured in their prize-winning loo are Green Welly Stop's maintenance team, from left: Alastair McDonald, Alistair Gibson and Glenn Moore. 07\_t05loo01

likely to come back if it is clean. Because we have been successful in these awards for a number of years, we have a reputation that encourages people to stop off here.'

Cruachan Visitor Centre has also maintained its five-star toilet status. The toilets

are so clean, that staff have been nicknamed 'Toilet Tigers', so called after the Irish 'Tunnel Tigers' who helped dig out the hollow mountain for Cruachan Power Station.

Visitor centre manager Sarah Baird said: 'This

award is down to our hard-working and dedicated staff, who take a great pride in their work.

'Their efforts help to give our customers the best service possible, which is the most important thing in our industry.'

# Oban house fire was a 'cry for help'

A WOMAN who set fire to soft furnishings in her own home was making 'a cry for help', Oban Sheriff Court heard last week.

Anne Valerie Buchanan, aged 43, admitted wilfully lighting two cushions at 24 Kerrera Terrace on December 26 2009.

The court heard the fire spread to a carpet and door curtain before her estranged husband arrived and extinguished it.

Defending, Edward Thornton said the accused was unwell, struggling with alcohol and had recently separated from her husband. He said: 'She can give

no explanation as to why she started the fire; it was effectively a cry for help of some type.

'Certainly, she had no intention that she was going to harm anyone, except possibly herself.'

Deferring sentence on Buchanan for two weeks, Sheriff Douglas Small called for a report on whether she could perform community service.

Sheriff Small added: 'This was a serious offence.

'It was a house in a terrace; it potentially could have set other houses on fire and endangered people living there.'

# Silver celebration for Oban's Oxfam Shop

BRINGING in millions of pounds in 25 years is a great record for an Oban charity shop, marking its silver jubilee this year.

Oxfam took the lease of its store in George Street in February 1985 and opened its doors a few months later.

Two of the original volunteers are still helping out each week. Gordon MacIntyre said the shop has grown over the years. 'Where you see the two doors today, initially it was just the one. The other segment was used as a storeroom,' he said.

'My earliest memory of being in the shop is the day of Live Aid. I was here on the Saturday morning, listening to it on the radio. Then I went home and watched the whole thing through.'

Olwen Rowlands has managed the shop for the past 18 months and loves the job. 'It's never boring,' she said.

'With donations that come over the door, you never know what you are going to get. We had a picture in last year and had it valued - it sold for £200. A Rolex watch was also donated, which raised another £200.'

While the occasional treasure turning up in a bag of donations is very welcome,

Olwen said the dedication of volunteers, day in day out, is just as important to reaching the impressive total. 'You could not do it without the volunteers,' she said. 'They put in all the hard work. There are around 30 people, but we could do with some more.'

The Oban branch is one of the charity's top stores in the Glasgow region, and all the profits are directed to international development projects in the world's most impoverished countries.

For volunteer Mary Lindsay, that's what makes it all worthwhile. 'I wouldn't be doing it otherwise,' she said. Mary sorts and prices the donated books, an increasingly important part of the shop's income since its new book room opened.

'When I came, we made £100 a week in books, now its up to £1,000 a week, or £1,600 in the summer. I have a huge sense of satisfaction that I have helped bring that up from small beginnings.'

Staff, volunteers and customers will be celebrating the shop's birthday at a ceilidh in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls on February 20, also marking the start of Fair Trade Fortnight.



From small beginnings, Oban's Oxfam shop has grown in its 25 years. Olwen Rowlands, left, and Oxfam volunteers enjoy the book room which opened last year. 07\_t08oxfam01

# Argyll artists host exhibition in support of Haiti islanders

ARGYLL artists have come together to raise money to relieve the suffering of people on the island of Haiti.

A sale of art will be held on Saturday February 27 in the Regent Hotel, Oban between 2pm and 7 pm.

Organiser and ex-gallery shop owner

Jean Thompson said: 'Many Scottish artists will take part in the exhibition to make a truly eclectic collection of works. Art from Elizabeth Bruce, Sue Challis, Calum MacFarlane-Barrow and Keith Salmon, amongst others, will be sold to raise money for the

earthquake stricken area. All profits will go to Mary's Meals for their ongoing work in Haiti.'

'Many artists donate full sale price to the appeal. One is Calum MacFarlane-Barrow whose son Magnus runs Mary's Meals from Dalmailly.'

# Cycle path begins third phase

THE THIRD phase in building a cycle route all the way from Oban to Ballachulish is underway.

Part of the National Cycle Network Route 78, this three-mile section will link Portnacroish and Inverfolla and create a circular route to Port Appin.

Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity, has appointed Ennstone Thistle as its main contractor.

It is hoped work will be complete by spring and it will bring the total mileage to 17.

Sustrans Scotland hopes to complete the whole route by 2013.

Clary Elliott, engineering manager at Sustrans, said: 'Phase 3 is an important milestone in the development of this project as it brings the

route to its halfway point between Oban and Ballachulish.'

Malcolm Cullen, site engineer from Ennstone Thistle, said: 'The whole team at Ennstone is proud to be delivering this project which, when completed, will provide a mostly traffic-free route which is an excellent facility for the benefit of walkers and cyclists in the area.'

The project is a joint partnership between Sustrans, the Scottish government, local landowners, Transport Scotland, Highland and Argyll and Bute councils, Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage, which is funding the installation artworks along the path.



Effie Cruden and Derek Crook have been serving the people of the Ross of Mull for six years at the MESS charity shop. 16\_t08mess01

# Recycling business continues to grow

VOLUNTEERS at a Mull charity shop are celebrating six years in the recycling business.

Effie Cruden of Bunnessan and Derek Crook of Fionnphort joined Mull and Iona Environmentally Sensitive Solutions (MESS) and helped to establish the recycling shop in Bunnessan. Effie said: 'We have seen the size of the shop double over the years. And we are

always amazed by the good quality items that people give away. We can recycle almost any item.'

Hazel Cowe, shop manager, commended the volunteers, she said: 'Effie and Derek have shown great commitment to the shop.

'We are always looking for more volunteers who can have a day in the Bunnessan or Craignure MESS shop.'

# HIE chief stands down

THE HEAD of Highlands and Islands Enterprise is leaving to promote green energy in the public sector.

Sandy Cumming, 57, has been chief executive at the development agency for nine and half years.

He will be seconded for a year to lead a Scottish government project developing offshore renewable energy.

Mr Cumming said: 'I genuinely believe that being chief executive of Highlands and Islands Enterprise is one of the best jobs in Scotland.'

The news of his departure comes a week after HIE announced it would shed at least 30 jobs through re-organisation.

Finance Secretary John Swinney said Mr Cumming had made an 'outstanding contribution' to the economy of the Highlands and Islands.

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Lorn Lines



A SINGLE anonymous donation of £1,000 helped to boost the overall total raised at a coffee morning in aid of the Haiti Appeal.

Members of Oban's St John's Cathedral held a coffee morning in the church on February 5 and raised £1,450, which was over and above a church collection for the same cause the previous Sunday.

Church members Sarah Campbell and Irene Main came up with the idea of running a coffee morning.

Ms Campbell said: 'We were all shattered and shocked by what the Haitian people were going through.'

'I would like to thank everyone who donated and, in particular, to the donor of the £1,000; it was an extremely generous donation.'

The money will be distributed between various charities involved in the aid effort in Haiti.



MEMBERS of Oban Photographic Club and several members of the public came to the club's weekly meeting in the Regent Hotel, Oban on Monday, February 8 for a popular 'Question Time'.

People were first shown a short audio visual prepared by club member Peter Cleave which showed entries from the four Argyll camera clubs for a recent Frank Walton Argyll Trophy competition.

The four members of the panel, comprising Cameron Harris, Steve Cross, Tim Haynes and Jim Kirkpatrick, then answered the many questions, some quite controversial, put to them.

There was an excellent spread of home baking at half time brought in by the members.



LORN Garden Club was treated to a fascinating talk on the evening of Tuesday January 19 at Lorn Resource Centre, Soroba Road, Oban

Dave Croucher, club secretary, brought a colourful selection of slides and reminiscences of his three years employed at the renowned Royal Horticultural Society Headquarters, Wisley.

Wisley gardens are filled with some of the world's most desirable plants and are open to the public throughout the year. The gardens, situated in Surrey, provide training and courses in a variety of garden related subjects.

The next talk is on Tuesday February 16 on the propagation of plants by Peter McDonald. Non members are always welcome. For more information call: Dave Croucher on 01852 300563.



A book fair held on Seil Island raised £588.70 for the Royal British Legion Scotland, Easdale Branch.



PAST members of Benderloch's Scottish Women's Rural Institute (SWRI) are being asked to join the current members in celebrating the group's 90th anniversary.

The group will mark the anniversary with a luncheon at the Lochnell Arms Hotel on March 12.

Treasurer Eileen Hill said: 'We would be keen to hear from any past members, particularly those who may have moved away from the area.'

Anyone who would like to attend can contact Ann Cameron on 01631 720 237.



SPONSOR forms for George Berry's Man versus Mountain climb up Ben Nevis are now available.

The forms are available from the MacQueen Bros Charitable Trust shop on the North Pier, Energie Fitness Club, the Oban Express Office and The Oban Times offices and donors are asked to make a one-off payment or pledge a donation per kilo in weight.

George is continuing with his training, spending one to two hours almost every day in the gym.

Robin Morton, owner of Energie Fitness, said: 'George is doing a workout for the biggest muscles in his body. And this will have the biggest effect on him.'

'His programme includes leg presses and upper body workouts. This will strengthen his quads and gluts and in turn boost his metabolism and burn off fat giving him more energy.'

'He has lost 20lbs in weight so far - he is really feeling the difference.'



MUSIC and dancing tutor Toni Russell will showcase her pupils' talent at a special concert in the Corran Halls next month.

The Oban music teacher started the clarsach group, Na Caileagan Phinc (The Pink Ladies), 10 years ago and they have become well known on the traditional music scene, particularly at both local and national Mòds, where their pink t-shirts help them stand out from the crowd.

The Corran Halls' concert will include celebratory performances from the clarsach group, the Toni Russell Highland Dance School and special guests Oban High School Gaelic Choir.

The concert will take place on March 6 and all proceeds will be donated to the Yorkhill Children's Hospital, Glasgow

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# Kilmelford meeting gives Raera wind farm thumbs down

## Proposals for 15, 125-metre high wind turbines in the forest and a 'permanent' 50-metre long pier on Loch Melfort are rejected by majority at public meeting

BIGGER than Big Ben in London, a sky-scraping 125 metre high wind turbine at Raera Forest may never see the light of day - after a militant crowd delivered a resounding 'no' vote at a community council meeting.

RWE Npower Renewables lodged a planning application with Argyll and Bute Council for 15 of the turbines on a site between Kilniver and Kilmelford close to the A816 road.

On a proposed site of 668 hectares the massive structures would require up to 52 heavy goods vehicle movements per day during the 18-month construction period. The plan is also to cut through an area of ancient woodland.

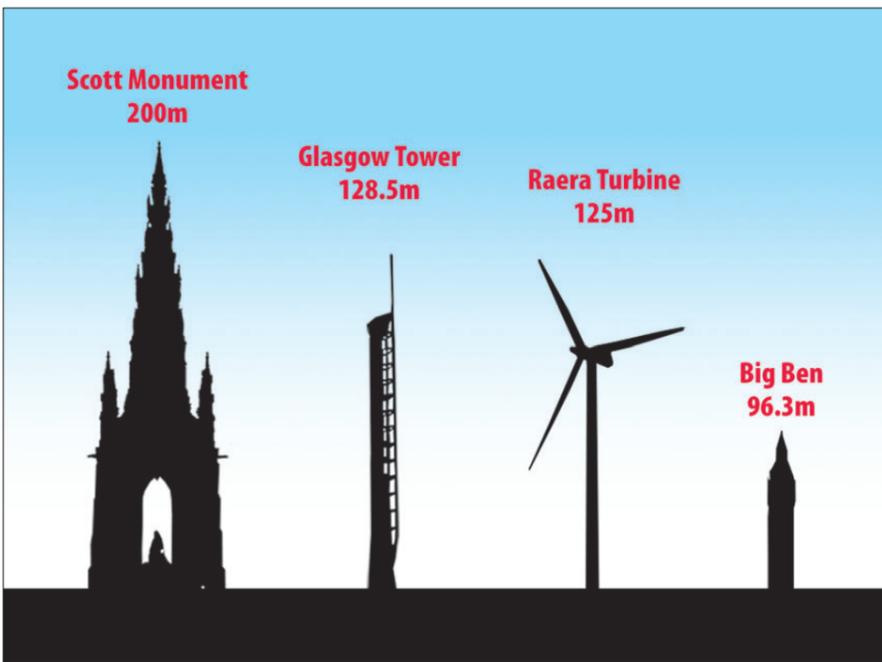
The company says it has met obligations in terms of environmental impact surveys and used statistical data to predict that there will be a negligible impact on the local community.

Kilmelford and Kilniver Community Council also took the decision very seriously and conducted a 'straw pole' by telephone of more than 50 per cent of the local community. The outcome proved nothing as the community was split with 63 residents for the wind farm and 74 against, with 31 undecided.

But, it was not until an almost unanimous 'no' vote at the public meeting that plans were finally scuppered for public backing for the industry giant.

One man said RWE Npower Renewables had 'simply not joined up its thinking about its plan.'

Another said: 'If, and it is



An artists impression of the height of the proposed Raera Forest wind turbines

a big if, the local community are to back this plan then it will come back for the planning for a pier and then again it will come back with an application for removing the energy.

'It is a drip, drip mentality. And we, the community, never see the full picture.'

In response, Npower's project manager Karen Fox produced a further planning application - this time for a pier.

The meeting was shocked to hear that the German owned company plans to construct

a 25-metre wide by 50-metre long 'permanent' pier on Loch Melfort.

### No guarantees

Asked specifically about the effects on tourism, Ms Fox said: 'Whilst no guarantees can be provided, the balance of evidence leads to the conclusion that the overall impact of the wind farm on the tourism industry in Argyll will not be significant.'

After the meeting Calum Ross, of Loch Melfort Hotel, said: 'As a business we recently won an award for sustainability and we pride

ourselves on making green choices for the business so we are active in looking for cleaner ways to power the earth. But the major selling point of this area is its outstanding natural beauty and peace - the installation of these turbines will no doubt have a direct effect on that.'

'It would be wise to caution the building of any wind farms with balance. The benefits/gains from the production of green energy, cannot and must not be allowed to have a detrimental impact on our existing industries,

upon which our local communities are dependant. I do not know anyone who would want that.'

Community councillor Antoinette Mitchell, who has responsibility for planning applications in the area, said: 'We shall send a letter to the council and tell it the outcomes of the straw pole and the vote of hands here tonight. We shall also raise with it the many concerns that local people have, not only about the wind farm but the extra planning applications and infrastructure issues.'

## 'Frog' looks for new tenants

THE LEASE of Dunstaffnage Marina's Wide Mouthed Frog restaurant, bar and hotel has become available after the current manager decided to move on.

Property agent Colliers Robert Barry said it was keen to have a tenant as soon as possible but claimed there was no immediate risk to jobs at the restaurant.

The marina has run the restaurant for the past two years but now hopes to pass on the responsibility to a private entity.

Adam Lansdown of Colliers said: 'The restaurant will re-open for the season at the end of March so we are keen to get a lease holder in as soon as possible.'

'Tenancies such as this one can be very useful for people starting out in the industry.'

'It's an established business that will flourish with a tenant that pays the rent and looks after it.'

The bistro, bar and hotel is popular with sailors using the marina, as well as locals.

## Council to review parking charges

THE cost of parking on Argyll's streets and car parks could be revised.

A meeting of Argyll and Bute Council heard last week roads officials are working on a review of the area's parking policies, to be considered in April.

The council's director of roads and amenities, Andy Law, said: 'I can confirm that we intend to bring a report to the April Executive about the council's overall policy.'

'It will review our policy towards the rates we charge on-street for car parking and what goes back to individual areas for the roads of that area.'

Councillors also agreed last week to extend parking charges in Inveraray, Tobermory and Luss, as part of the annual budget settlement.

## Fisherman dies in A85 accident

A THREE fisherman has died after his vehicle collided with another car containing two Swiss tourists on the A85 near the village of Taynuilt.

Alexander MacCallum, aged 40, who moved to mainland Argyll from Tisee, was driving a silver Renault Megane when it was in collision with a black Vauxhall Corsa, driven by the two young tourists between Dalnamac and Muckairn last Thursday at 7.50pm.

Mr MacCallum died at the scene and leaves behind a wife and two children.

The 22-year-old man and the 25-year-old woman in the Corsa were taken to the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley and the Southern General Hospital in Glasgow, respectively.

Both were deemed to be in a critical condition on arrival at hospital - the woman, who was cut from the wreckage by fire and rescue officers, had suspected abdominal, head and spinal injuries - but police said both were flown home to Switzerland on Sunday.

Police enquiries are continuing into the cause of the crash and a report has been sent to the procurator fiscal. Anyone with any information is asked to contact Oban Police Station on 01631 510500.

## Councillor warns against losing 'wish list'

A COUNCILLOR has warned officials in Oban, Lorn and the Isles against sacrificing a 'wish list' of projects as budget cuts come into force.

Councillor Neil Mackay was speaking at the area committee meeting in the Corran Halls last Wednesday when councillors voted to approve the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Draft Plan.

Because of budget cuts, councillors were told that the area plan should be used to 'deliver priorities' rather than be an 'aspirational document'.

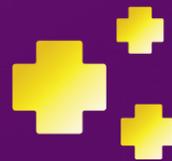
The document explained: 'The content [of the plan] should be restricted only to those items which are fully developed, costed and focused.'

'All actions must have clear success measures associated with them.'

Councillor Mackay told the meeting: 'Our Oban, Lorn and the Isles plan, in my opinion, needs to be constantly worked on. I would like to move it ahead because some other areas within the authority seem to be doing better than us. I realise that we need to keep the budget down by using performance indicators but there must be a way of keeping parts of the aspirational 'wish list'.'

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## Policeman in serious condition after cycle crash

A LOCHGILPHEAD police officer is in a serious condition after being knocked off his pushbike on the A816 Lochgilphead to Oban road. Police constable David Henderson was cycling home after finishing his shift on Sunday night when he was struck by a Vauxhall Corsa travelling northbound. The 41-year-old policeman was thrown into a ditch while the Corsa, which was being driven by a local man, collided with a Ford Focus being driven southbound. Mr Henderson was taken to Mid Argyll Hospital in Lochgilphead but was later transferred to the Southern General Hospital in Glasgow. He is being treated for substantial facial fractures; hospital staff described his condition as serious but stable. The two other men involved in the crash were uninjured. Sergeant David Ferguson of the road policing department in Lochgilphead is appealing for witnesses, or information, to come forward. He can be contacted on 01546 702200.

## Man found after search

A SEARCH involving police, coastguard, Oban Lifeboat and a Strathclyde Police helicopter was launched after a 26-year-old man was reported missing near Oban. Police were contacted at 3pm on Sunday by the man's family, who were said to be extremely concerned for his welfare. The police and coastguard responded by carrying out a shoreline search between Dunollie and Dunstaffnage. The lifeboat was also launched to assist but the man was found by a member of the public at 5pm. He was treated in Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, for minor injuries.

## Oban sheriff urges teenage girl to make the right choice at a cross-roads in her life

AN EIGHTEEN-year-old Oban youth has been told that she is at a cross-roads in her life and has been urged to make the right choice or end up in Cornton Vale prison.

Stephanie Duffy, 9F Colonsay Terrace, appeared on Monday at Oban Sheriff Court and admitted attempting to stop another person being arrested and assaulting

a police officer on December 12 in Soroba Road, Oban. The court heard a scuffle between Duffy and another had been seen by officers in the early hours of the morn-

ing and when they went to arrest the other person, Duffy had intervened. Defending, Edward Thornton said Duffy had moved on since that incident and was

now doing well in supported accommodation. Sheriff Douglas Small commented that this was Duffy's second such offence and told her: 'You are very

much at a cross-roads in your life; you can go down one way and lead a successful life and have a job and keep out of trouble or keep appearing in front of myself

and eventually get sent to Cornton Vale.' Sentence was deferred, to prove she could be of good behaviour, until November this year.



Stewart Carmichael, builder, Donald Black retired chairman of Comann Eachdraidh Lios Mor, Shauna Cameron, architect, Councillor Ron Simon, Margaret MacDonald, current chairwoman of Comann Eachdraidh Lios Mor and Tony Perkins, project manager. 15\_t08design02

## Lismore centre wins sustainable design award

LISMORE Heritage Centre and Museum is the first and only development to be a winner of an Argyll and Bute Sustainable Design Award. Representatives of the project were in Oban last week to receive the award, along with Benderloch-based architect Shauna Cameron who picked up the award from chairman of the Argyll and Bute Sustainable Design Forum. Three other developments were given commendations by the judges, including Keith Geddes, Stewart Associates, architect of Portavadie Marina, which was nominated in the same Non-

Residential Category as Lismore. Proud parents Peter and Jane Brown were on hand to pick up a commendation in the Small Scale Residential category for their son Andrew's design of their house Alt-an-Duin at Kilmory Knap in Mid Argyll. And architect Tom McCordell also picked up a commendation in the same category for his design of Tir-nan-Og on Islay. Certificates for the People's Choice awards, which saw 663 people voting on-line, were given to Alt-an-Duin; Silverhills Cottages, Rosneath in the large scale

residential category; and St Moluag's Heritage Museum in Lismore. Shauna Cameron said she was delighted to win the award: 'The issues are that any client, be they an individual or a community group, gets the building they deserve, suits them, that they can afford and suits the landscape and doesn't stand out like a sore thumb.' Fergus Murray, development policy manager at Argyll and Bute Council, told the small gathering of architects, clients, judges and councillors that design was an increasingly important part of everyone's lives.

'It impacts on our way of life and the economic production of the area and a whole range of socio-economic factors,' he said. In two categories, large scale residential and conservation, no awards were given and chairman of the judging panel Councillor Ron Simon explained that the judges didn't feel any of the nominations were worthy enough. 'We want the awards to have credibility and don't want to give out an award just because we have one to give.' He thanked the forum members and the voluntary

judging panel for their time in attending meetings and visiting sites during the judging period. He said when it came to the sustainable design of a building it was not just about how it looked or fitted into the landscape, but also about the materials used and it fitting the needs of those who used it and Lismore's heritage centre and museum combined them all. 'It quite simply ticked all the boxes,' he added. The design awards will be held every two years and their main aim is to encourage and promote sustainable design.

# Tiree gets tough on sand raiders

Builders accused of abusing crofters' rights

THE THREAT of prosecution and an awareness of environmental degradation are believed to have stopped building firms pillaging Tiree's beaches for materials. Renowned for its white sandy beaches, Tiree is predominately owned by the Duke of Argyll and is one of the few remaining Hebridean islands that still depends on crofting for the majority of its economy. 'Outraged' Environmentalists and estate managers were outraged to hear that lorry loads of sand were being taken from the beaches to support the island's recent housing boom. By taking tonnes of sand from the beaches, building firms were seen to be abusing a legal right that crofters can take small amounts of sand for general agricultural use. And Scottish Natural Heritage expressed concern that the removal of large quantities of sand reduces the sand dunes, leaving parts of the low-lying island

at risk from the sea. Inveraray-based Argyll Estates factor Andrew Montgomery has written a letter to the island newsletter An Tirisdeach stating that the large-scale removal of sand must stop. He told The Oban Times: 'I am hopeful that everyone has adhered to my request but I am going back out next week to ensure it has stopped. 'I said in the letter that this was a final warning and if it happened again I would prosecute.' Mr Montgomery accepts that crofters will continue to take 'diminuous' amounts of sand to repair croft roads and other agricultural uses and only objects to the sand being removed for commercial reasons. He added: 'There may be people who are unhappy with my hard-line approach but it is the equivalent of someone coming to Inveraray and felling trees in a wood because they want some timber.'

## Public notice on-line proposals fail to find favour

LOCAL authority public notices will remain available to the public via newspapers for the time being— after a vote in the Scottish Parliament refused to back plans to remove them. Defeated An SNP-lead proposal to remove the legal obligation on local authorities to publish public notices in newspapers, on issues such as planning, road closures and other important public information, was defeated by 76 votes to 48. The SNP had proposed that notices could be published on-line. This would have saved local authorities more than £9

million nationwide, they claimed. Argyll and Bute MP Alan Reid said: 'I am delighted that the SNP's proposal to restrict public information notices to the internet was defeated in the Scottish Parliament. 'I hope that the SNP government will accept this defeat and abandon their plans to restrict public information notices to the internet. 'The purpose of a public notice is that it is something the public will notice. The public are unlikely to stumble across a notice on the internet. People do not browse the internet like they turn the pages of a newspaper.

'If the SNP ignore the will of parliament and go ahead with their proposals, they will sound the death knell for many newspapers in remote and rural communities across Scotland.' Newspaper readers were also delighted by the news. Mrs Nelly Carsons of Tarbert said: 'I don't have the internet. I am not in an area where I can receive it easily. The library opens and closes at such awkward times that it is just impossible to use it. 'Public notices simply have to appear in the newspaper otherwise we will not be kept up to date with all that is going on.'

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Monday 1 March - Scottish Association Marine Science, Dunstaffnage - 10.30am - 4pm  
Tuesday 2 March - Hunters Quay Hotel, Dunoon - 10am - 3.30pm  
Tuesday 30 March - The Argyll Hotel, Inveraray - 10am - 3.30pm  
To book your place please call 01546 605459 or email business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk Places are strictly limited to 12 so we advise you to book early.

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Tuesday 23 March - Scottish Association for Marine Science, Dunstaffnage - 10.30am - 4pm  
Wednesday 24 March - Hunters Quay Hotel, Dunoon - 10am - 3.30pm  
Wednesday 31 March - The Argyll Hotel, Inveraray - 10am - 3.30pm  
To book your place please call 01546 605459 or email business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk no later than 8th March. Places are strictly limited to 12 so we advise you to book early.

### Shoplifter fined £370 at Oban Sheriff Court

AN OBAN man who had no financial reason to carry out two acts of theft by shoplifting has been fined a total of £370 at Oban Sheriff Court. Self-employed boat builder Lewis MacLaughlin, aged 28, admitted taking four bottles of aftershave worth £130.32 and a top worth £65 from two different shops in Oban on July 7 2009. The court heard that he had been on holiday during that week and had been drinking heavily, a problem he had since received counselling and help for, when in a moment of 'madness' he had walked into the two shops and left with the items, making no attempt to conceal them. All the items were recovered and MacLaughlin, 1E Longdale Terrace, had since apologised for his behaviour, the court heard.

### Mother threatened to stab son

A WOMAN who had an argument with her 19-year-old son threatened to stab him in front of police officers she had called to the house. Oban Sheriff Court heard on Monday that Patricia Cameron, aged 47, had been bickering with her son most of the day on January 17, after consuming alcohol and on a second occasion after she called police to her address at 19 Lunga Road, Oban, she shouted at her son, threatening to stab him. She admitted breaching the peace and was placed on probation for a year.

### Police seek help after van set alight

POLICE are seeking information from the public after a van was set on fire behind the Old Tweedmill, off Soroba Road, Oban. There was no damage to any other property during the incident, which occurred on Saturday.



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# Musicians flock to friendly feis

A RECORD 55 musicians from Tain to Devon flocked to Fort Augustus last weekend for the fifth Adult Feis Gleann Albainn to learn traditional music and celebrate it by playing it in sessions at venues throughout the village.

The popular event, based at Kilchuimen Academy, got off to a flying start on Friday night with a music session in the Caledonian Hotel that lasted well into the wee small hours.

Saturday featured a full day's classes in rooms throughout the school followed by a show with a difference in the evening with magician and mentalist Jan Culshaw.

More entertainment followed on Sunday night with a tutors' concert

that sparked with talent, followed by yet another late night session at the Caledonian Hotel which for the duration acted as Feis Club.

Monday was wound down after morning classes with a buffet lunch and an afternoon 'survivors' session' that lasted into the evening.

### Skills

Fiddle tutors again included Session A9's Charlie McKerron, Wolfstone's Duncan Chisholm and Shetland fiddler Jenna Reid with Jonny Hardie from Old Blind Dogs also lending his skills this year.

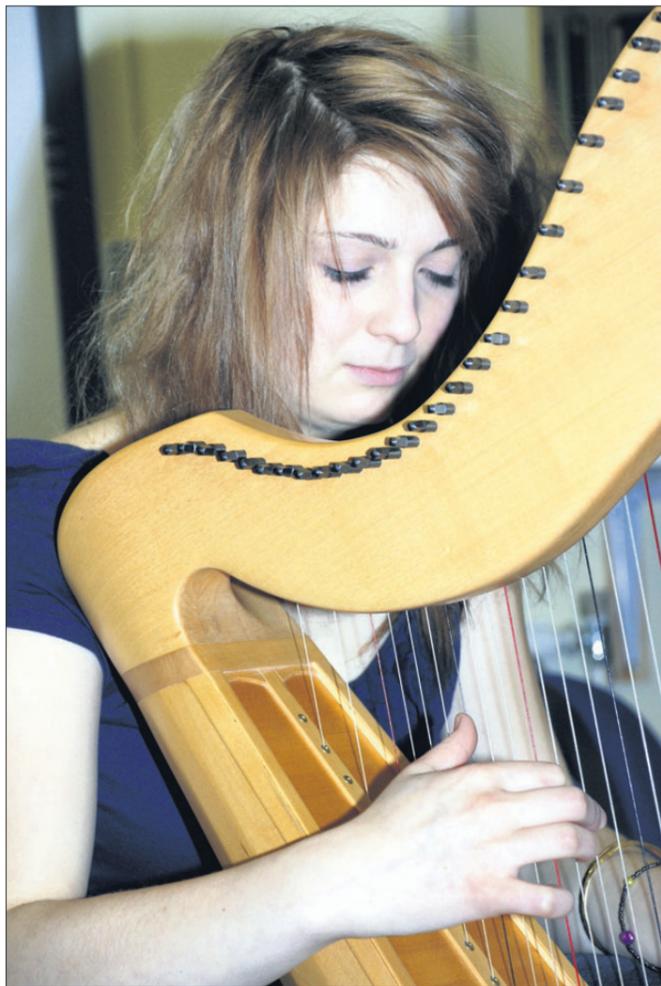
Another regular, Dagger Gordon, tutored mandolin and Marc Clement did guitar with Sandy Brechin for

accordion. Clarsach was introduced for the first time at this event with the very accomplished Catriona MacKay and Nuala Kennedy from Dundalk took the flute classes.

Feis Gleann Albainn organisers pride themselves on keeping the over-subscribed festival small and friendly - and want to keep it that way.

Feis secretary Tracey MacCallum said: 'Many of our participants come back year after year. We've got to know them quite well now and it's like putting on a party for your friends.'

Feis volunteer Maria Macrae added: 'We are encouraged by the number of participants that have vowed to return again next year.'



Sweet notes: Becca Skeoch from Fort Augustus in Catriona MacKay's clarsach class. 10\_f08feis01

## Teenage climber killed in mountain fall

A YOUNG English climber was killed in a fall on a 3,700ft mountain near Roy Bridge on Monday during a Scout Association trip to the Highlands.

Stephen James Young, aged 18, from the Kent area, was in an all-adult group which included his mother and uncle when he fell through a snow cornice - a snow shelf over a steep drop - on Creag Meagaidh.

An RAF helicopter and Lochaber and Kinloss mountain rescue teams located Mr Young in the snow, but he was pronounced dead on arrival at Belford Hospital, Fort William.

A police spokesman said on Monday: 'Police can confirm that in relation to the rescue ongoing in Creag Meagaidh, a casualty has been located by mountain rescue personnel and airlifted by an RAF search and rescue helicopter to Fort William, where unfortunately, the casualty was pronounced dead.'

## Search on for top citizens

EILEAN a' Cheò councillors are inviting Skye and Raasay residents to nominate local community representatives for a Highland Council civic recognition award.

The new honours will recognise outstanding ability or significant contribution by a group or individual across several categories including the environment, community, enterprise, young people, sports and artistic or musical achievement.

Councillor John Laing said the awards were a chance to say 'a big thank you' to people who are the backbone of their communities.

He said: 'We welcome entries for people of all ages and from all walks of life.'

Closing date for entries is Thursday April 1 and winners will be announced at a ceremony at the ward forum meeting in May.

## Portree lifeboat helps fishing boat

PORTREE RNLI Lifeboat was called out on Saturday morning to go to the assistance of a fishing vessel.

The lifeboat launched at 10.15 with five crew aboard and made for the Paulona, which had broken down one mile north of Holm Island off the east coast of Skye.

The two-crew fishing boat had problems which prevented the intake of water to cool its engine.

The Paulona was taken under tow in calm weather conditions and brought back to Portree without further incident.

## Museum in nation's top six

THE HIGHLAND Folk Museum in Newtonmore is one of six UK museums shortlisted by the public for the Guardian Family Friendly Museum Award 2010.

The public will choose the final winner in April.

Highland Council education, culture and sport committee chairman Bill Fernie said: 'Being the only Scottish museum shortlisted in a national award which is nominated by visitors is a tremendous achievement as it is our customers' opinions at the end of the day that truly count.'

## Police appeal after man assaulted at Kinlochleven telephone box

POLICE in Fort William are making enquiries after a man was assaulted at a telephone box in Kinlochleven.

The assault took place near the Post Office in Leven Road around 1.10 am on Saturday.

They are keen to speak to anybody who was in the area between 12.30am and 1.30am and any patrons of the Tailrace Inn, Kinlochleven, around these times.

Elsewhere, a car was damaged at Ross Place, Fort William, sometime overnight on Monday February 1 and Tuesday February 2; a mountain bike was stolen in the Lochyside

area of Fort William sometime between 11pm on Thursday February 4 and 5.30am on Friday February 5 and a BMX bike was stolen from the Lundavra area of Fort William during the first week of February.

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

Members of the public may also report any crime/offence or anything suspicious by telephoning Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.



Michelle Melville, left, from Ballachulish, takes her lead from Nuala Kennedy. 10\_f08feis05

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## Workshop hears bleak prognosis as budget cuts bite

# New Skye hospital years away admit health chiefs

By STEPHEN NORRIS

BUDGET cuts mean a new hospital for Skye is years away, health chiefs have admitted.

The bleak prognosis was given at a health services workshop at the Dunollie Hotel in Broadford on Friday to discuss future health services in Skye and Lochalsh.

Delegates at the all-day event agreed the new hospital was a top priority, but Mid Highland Community Health Partnership (MHCHP) general manager Gill McVicar warned this would not be possible for many years because of funding constraints.

MHCHP finance chief Tom Slavin told the assembled community councillors, Highland councillors, MPs and MSPs, locality and clinical staff,

managers and partner organisations the £11.7million Skye and Lochalsh budget would drop to £11.5million next year, while almost £2million savings had to be found from the partnership's £71million total budget.

Delegates nevertheless urged that planning for new hospital should continue so it would be ready to go ahead when funding was available.

Mrs McVicar ruled out closing either the Dr MacKinnon Memorial Hospital in Broadford or Portree Hospital, which had become the focus of a campaign to keep it open - but explained the need to shift some healthcare from hospital-based services to as close to patients' home as possible when funding became available.

'We are retaining two hospitals on

the island as neither hospital is able to pick up the full role of both. They need to work together to make sure we have the services you want on Skye,' she said.

Cost-cutting ideas mooted included using telehealth to save patients travelling long distances for follow up appointments, a focus on early intervention and preventative services and more support for patients and their families to help them manage their conditions themselves.

Transport issues, including nurses from north Skye having to travel more than 50 miles to Broadford Hospital for shifts, better integration between health and social care and improved communication to local communities featured among other main issues.

Speaking after the event, Mrs McVicar said: 'We need to look at all the services we have to ensure that we make the most effective use of them and get the best possible value for money.'

'The dialogue with local people will continue. We are going to have to make some difficult decisions and we want their help in making these decisions.'

Broadford and Strath Community Council chairman Tony Moore, from Elgol, told *The Oban Times* the new hospital was 'the elephant in the room', as it was not going to happen for four or five years.

'There's no funding for capital building at all,' he said. 'But it was a very popular day in that it defused a lot of concerns.'

## New man at helm of agricultural society

LOCHABER Agricultural Society elected a new chairman at the Lochaber RFC clubhouse at Banavie at its AGM last Tuesday.

New man at the helm is Paolo Berardelli of Great Glen Cattle Ranch, who takes over from Malcolm Cameron of Strone Farm.

Mr Berardelli said he was 'very enthusiastic' about the year ahead after a successful 2009, when strong support was received from local communities and businesses.

He hoped to build on progress made under Mr Cameron's chairmanship by encouraging more young people and families to get involved in the society.

### Pleased

Mr Cameron said he had enjoyed being in the chair and was particularly pleased at how well the 2009 show had gone after such poor weather in the preceding week.

The support from local people and visitors was 'really great', he said.

The 2010 show will be held at Inverloch Castle Farm, Torlundy, on Saturday August 28, courtesy of David MacLeod.

Pam Weller continues as show and events secretary. She can be contacted on 01397 708508.

Next event is a stockjudging competition at the Rural Complex, Torlundy, on the evening of Saturday May 29.

## Skye stunt cyclist up for world award



World award bid: Danny MacAskill.

ISLE OF Skye daredevil Danny MacAskill has joined a stellar cast of international sporting heroes after being nominated for a prestigious international award.

The stunt cycling ace has been shortlisted for the Action Sports person of the Year category of the Laureus World Sports Awards 2010 alongside other category nominees, seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong, Formula 1 champion Jenson Button, tennis star Roger Federer and world motorcycling champion Valentino Rossi.

The televised awards ceremony will be held on March 10 in Abu Dhabi.

Danny, aged 24, gained fame almost overnight after his stunt cycling video through Edinburgh's streets and parks was posted on YouTube, attracting 15 million viewers in a matter of weeks.

### Performing

He has been riding bikes for 20 years and in 2008 formed stunt-cycling team The Clan with friend Iain Withers, performing all over Scotland at shows, events and schools.

Danny said this week: 'It's crazy being nominated for the Laureus Awards. I mean there are many amazing other athletes that won the biggest competitions in their sport, and I was just doing what I love, riding my bike and a bit of filming.'

'I am also looking forward to visiting Abu Dhabi, a place I would have never thought to visit.'

Danny, from Dunvegan but now resident in the capital, is up against champion surfers Mick Fanning, Stephanie Gilmore and Greg Long, skateboarder Chris Cole and windsurfer Antoine Albeau.

The Laureus World Sports Awards are recognised as the premier honours on the international sporting calendar.

## New programmes hit all the right notes

A NEW series of programmes is being made to celebrate the burgeoning role of young people in developing traditional music in Scotland.

Stornoway-based mactv Music will make four iTRAD programmes, featuring eight young groups comprised of senior high school pupils. The bands are drawn from Fèis an Earraich, Fèis Rois, Caledonian Canal Ceilidh Trails,

the Traditional Music School of Excellence at Plockton High School, Glasgow Gaelic-medium school, Fèis Eilean an Fhraich and Benbecula College.

Filming of the live music sets takes place in Ullapool Village Hall tonight (Thursday) from 6 - 10pm and on Friday February 19 from 4.30 - 8.30pm. Members of the public are asked to arrive 15 minutes before filming begins.



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Group told mothballed building is worth £450,000

# Glencoe Hospital price tag shock

By STEPHEN NORRIS

ALOHABER group hoping to transform the mothballed Glencoe Hospital into a cultural and business hub has been told it will have to find £450,000 to purchase the boarded-up building.

Scottish Government-appointed valuers CKD Galbraith informed would-be buyers South Lochaber Community Company (SLCC) of the price tag last week after a survey of the premises.

The huge sum came as a shock to the group, which had hoped for a much lower estimate to factor in to its business plan.

SLCC has already lodged an interest in the NHS-Highland-owned property under community right to buy legislation and is inviting all South Lochaber residents to an open day at the hospital on Saturday for an update on the project.

Two days later Highland Council will send out ballot papers to all 2,100 South Lochaber residents inviting them to vote yes or no to SLCC's plans to purchase and develop the building for community use.

**Plans**

The reverse side of the voting form will detail plans to use the building and the former ambulance station beside it.

Ballot papers must be returned to Lochaber House by midday on March 5 and the count, under the supervision of ward manager Dot Ferguson, would start two hours later, SLCC interim trustee Donald Stewart told *The Oban Times*.

Depending on the result, the Scottish Government will rule in April on whether there is enough community support to progress the bid.

Mr Stewart, from Glencoe, said the building and the adjacent former ambulance station would be called The Strathcona Centre, after its creator Lord Strathcona, and could accommodate exhibitions of artefacts, offices, small businesses, medical services, workshops for local tradesmen, a conference centre, a youth club and social functions.

Possible funding sources

'We have a first draft business plan and I believe the project is viable, but only if the acquisition cost is reduced.' - SLCC interim trustee David Stewart.

could include the Heritage Lottery Fund, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and private foundations, he said.

The plan received mixed reviews in South Lochaber last year when first mooted, with some community representatives describing the proposal to develop the decaying building as 'a money pit'.

Mr Stewart insisted the scheme was achievable - but depended on efforts to bring down the asking price.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'We have a first draft business plan and I believe the project is viable, but only if the acquisition cost is reduced.'

'The district valuer valued the building at £500,000 three years ago. How can it be worth only £50,000 less when we are in the depths of a recession and it's been left to deteriorate for a year? We will be looking to raise money for the cost of acquisition, refurbishment and running costs for the first few years until we break even. There is asbestos in the plasterwork, but since we would not want to knock any of it down, asbestos will not be a problem.'

'The work that is required is mainly decorative. It is not currently watertight, but that's down to minor things like a loose slate or a bit of lead flashing that need attending to. A survey in 2008 found there was no dry rot, wet rot or woodworm. We know what we are doing. We have experience in the refurbishment and restoration of buildings.'

**Support**

Asked if there was widespread community support, Mr Stewart said a recent community questionnaire attracted a response from five per cent of local residents and showed a strong desire to see the building used 'by the community for the community'.

He added: 'Please vote and take advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity.'

South Lochaber Community Company has a membership of between 25 and 30, Mr Stewart said.



Piper John MacCallum leads Clan MacDonald members up to the Celtic Cross monument at Upper Carnoch. 10\_f08glencoe01

## Local people rally round to remember Glencoe Massacre

THE ANNUAL commemoration of the Massacre of Glencoe was as well supported as ever on Saturday - despite earlier confusion over whether it would go ahead at all.

By tradition, the Clan Donald Society of Edinburgh run the February 13 event, but this year it called it off in January because of severe weather.

However, the snow soon lifted and Glencoe Heritage Trust decided the commemoration was too important to let slip.

Other clan members spread the word that the commemoration was going ahead and their efforts were rewarded when around 70 people gathered in Glencoe for the traditional short procession to the Celtic cross monument at Upper Carnoch.

There, clan members and adherents gathered round for the open air service led by the Rev Adrian Fallows, rector of St Mary's Episcopal Church, and Canon Mel Langille from Fortrose.

John MacFarlane from Taynuilt gave a reading in Gaelic and a two-minute silence was held before piper John MacCallum played the lament.

Wreaths were laid on behalf of Clan Donald Skye, Glencoe Heritage Trust and the National Trust for Scotland visitor centre in Glencoe. Members from Canada and Nigeria were among the company at the solemn ceremony.

Morvern Community Council chairman Iain Thornber praised organisers the Glencoe Heritage Trust.

He said: 'It was refreshing to see so many local people there. It was a pity nobody came up from Edinburgh. It just shows you the power of local people to keep something like this going.'

## Community steps out in memory of Caleb

A COMMUNITY left bereft at the tragic death of a little boy are stepping up fund-raising efforts to build a playpark containing a special area dedicated to his memory.

Kilchoan four-year-old Caleb Cameron died in hospital last September after being struck by an out-of-control jet-ski on the village slipway near his home.

The tragedy hit the tight-knit Ardnamurchan community hard - Kilchoan Primary School and nursery has a roll of under 20 - but now family, workmates and friends of Caleb's parents Bert and Gael have resolved to redouble efforts to raise £80,000 to build the park on land behind Kilchoan Community Centre. The community has banked more than £6,000 so far since 2007.

Four local dads - Mr Cameron himself, David Curtis, Martin Ellis and John Crosbie - local 11-year-old lad Jordan MacLachlan and five of Mr Cameron's friends and workmates are to walk the 96-mile West Highland Way from Milngavie to Fort William over five days from April 1 in Caleb's memory and to raise cash for the playpark.

Caleb's mum Gael, aged 34, from Lochan Gorm, told *The Oban Times*: 'The community has been really supportive to us.'

'They are just amazing friends. Everybody knew Caleb and I'm just so grateful to them for doing this. Hopefully there will be a great outcome for the local children and for our daughter Holly as well.'

West Ardnamurchan chairperson Rosie Curtis, from Car na Fearsa, told *The Oban Times* a 'memorial area' dedicated to Caleb would form part of the playpark.

Mr Curtis said sponsorship forms distributed round local hotels, shops and Kilchoan Community Centre had met with an incredible response, with donations already running 'in the thousands'.

Rosie's husband David, 44, is busy training for the marathon walk.

He said: 'It's going to be pretty hard. But we are a pretty close knit community and it's all about bringing Caleb's memory to the fore.'

Rosie added: 'If people want to make pledges by e-mail, they can do so by contacting me at rosiepierrd@hotmail.com.'

## Mountain festival poetry winners

LOCHABER children featured among the winners at an awards ceremony at the Fort William Mountain Festival event on Saturday.

Heading the field at the John Muir Trust Wild Land Writing and Children's Poetry competition presentation in the Nevis Centre was Invergarry Primary School with three successes, while Ardgour pupils scooped two prizes and Banavie one.

**Legendary**

The festival highlight was Lochaber climbing ace Dave MacLeod, from Letterfinlay and Andy Turner, from Gairloch, matching legendary Scottish climber Jimmy Marshall's February 1960 feat of ice-climbing Ben Nevis via its

notorious north face on six consecutive days. Mr Marshall was presented with the Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture on Sunday.

Local winners: P1-P3 Poetry: 1 Craig McCowan, Ardgour Primary School - Sunshine; 2 Iona Cameron, Ardgour Primary School - The Horse; 3 Rhianna MacCallum, Invergarry Primary School - Snow on the Trees; P4-P7 Poetry: 1 Grant MacCallum, Invergarry Primary School - Mountain; 2 Stuart MacArthur, Invergarry Primary School - The Red Fox; 3 Jane Mustarde, Banavie Primary School - The Iona Cliffe Prize. Adult poetry winner was Iain Dubh and Gaelic winner was Neil McRae with Fada air Chùl.



Judge Margaret Bennett with the competition winners.

## Callous thieves put Ardnamurchan lives at risk

By STEPHEN NORRIS

CALLOUS thieves put lives lives at risk in Ardnamurchan earlier this week when they removed 150 metres of copper telephone cable along the main A861 between Strontian and Salen.

The theft brought down all telephone services in the western peninsula, including emergency calls. The remote area is particularly vulnerable to any break in the landline link because mobile phone reception is either patchy or absent altogether.

Police say the gang climbed telegraph poles along the main road at Ardyre to steal three spans of 15mm plastic-sheathed cable at around 6.30pm on Sunday night.

BT alarms immediately went off, but by the time police arrived on the scene there was no trace of the thieves.

The gang also cut through the fibre optic cable strung beside the phone line then left it lying because it was of no value.

Engineers from Oban and Inverness worked through the night to repair the damage and phone services were back up by 10am on Monday morning.

Constable Andrew Irvine of Strontian police said the crime almost certainly involved more than one person using a transit van, pickup, vehicle with trailer or light lorry.

**Shock**

PC Irvine expressed his shock at the callous nature of the theft and urged local people to come forward with any information that could help bring the perpetrators to justice.

He told *The Oban Times* on Monday: 'There was no 999 facility for the duration of the fault, which put people's lives at

risk. It was completely reckless and could have cost somebody their life today. Also, the cost of repair will run into several thousands of pounds.

'Someone must have seen something along the road.'

'If anybody happened to see any vehicles, or persons acting in a suspicious manner in that general area between 5pm or 8pm I would urge them to contact Strontian police station on 01967 402022.'

He added: 'Unfortunately, this type of crime is an ever increasing problem in Scotland and is a reminder to people living in remote rural areas such as Ardnamurchan that even here they are not immune to being the victims of such thefts.'

'People are to be encouraged to ensure their property is made secure and to be vigilant of all suspicious activity.'

## Work starts on A82 Inverloch lights

WORK to replace traffic signals at the Inverloch junction on the A82 in Fort William will start at 8pm on Monday.

After traffic mayhem during a previous attempt to upgrade the busy junction, contractors will restrict traffic lane closures to between 8pm and 7am to minimise disruption during the £50,000 works. Access to and from all routes will be maintained at all times.

A Transv spokesperson said temporary signals would be under manual control during peak hours, with spotters observing queue lengths and altering light timings to minimise delays.

**Care**

Motorists are requested to allow more time for their journeys and exercise care when driving through the works area.

Scotland Transv anticipates the work will take around a week and the improved signals will be in operation from Monday March 1.

The new lights will allow more efficient timings to improve traffic flows.

**THIS MONTH IN SCOTTISH FIELD... NOW ON SALE**

**READ... HOME INTERIORS SPECIAL**  
Decorating inspiration from a designer's Edinburgh townhouse. Get the Look, Meet the Designers, Interiors News, Creative Kitchens

**TURN OF THE CENTURY** Up close and personal with rugby's record breaker, Chris Paterson

**SOUTHDOWN THE DECADES** Photographs bring a Kintyre village's history vividly to life

**RAINBOW ORCHIDS** Lord Mansfield's collection of exotic plants at Scone Palace, Perthshire

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# New Inverness DFS sofa store brings home comforts closer

By GAVIN CAMPBELL

Great news for sofa shoppers of the Highlands and Islands, the brand new DFS store on Millburn Road, Inverness, opens on Saturday 20th February.

DFS, Europe's No.1 sofa specialist, has become famous over 40 years for its sofas, savings and outstanding customer service. And now after 10 years in Scotland, the furniture giant is at last coming to Inverness.

The huge new store, constructed by Robertson Highland Ltd, is easy to get to and makes finding a sofa much easier. Now everyone in the region looking to transform their home with a brand new DFS sofa can take hours off their travelling time. Which is great news for those who prefer to spend quality time

on their sofa, rather than travelling around looking for one.

Inverness is the 5th DFS store in Scotland, and it offers a huge range of exclusively designed furniture in a wide choice of styles, shapes and colours. With three UK factories, DFS don't just sell sofas, they make them too. In fact, DFS sofas are built to such high standards, they give you a ten-year guarantee on everything they make. Also, as your sofa is handmade to order, you can be sure to get exactly what you want.

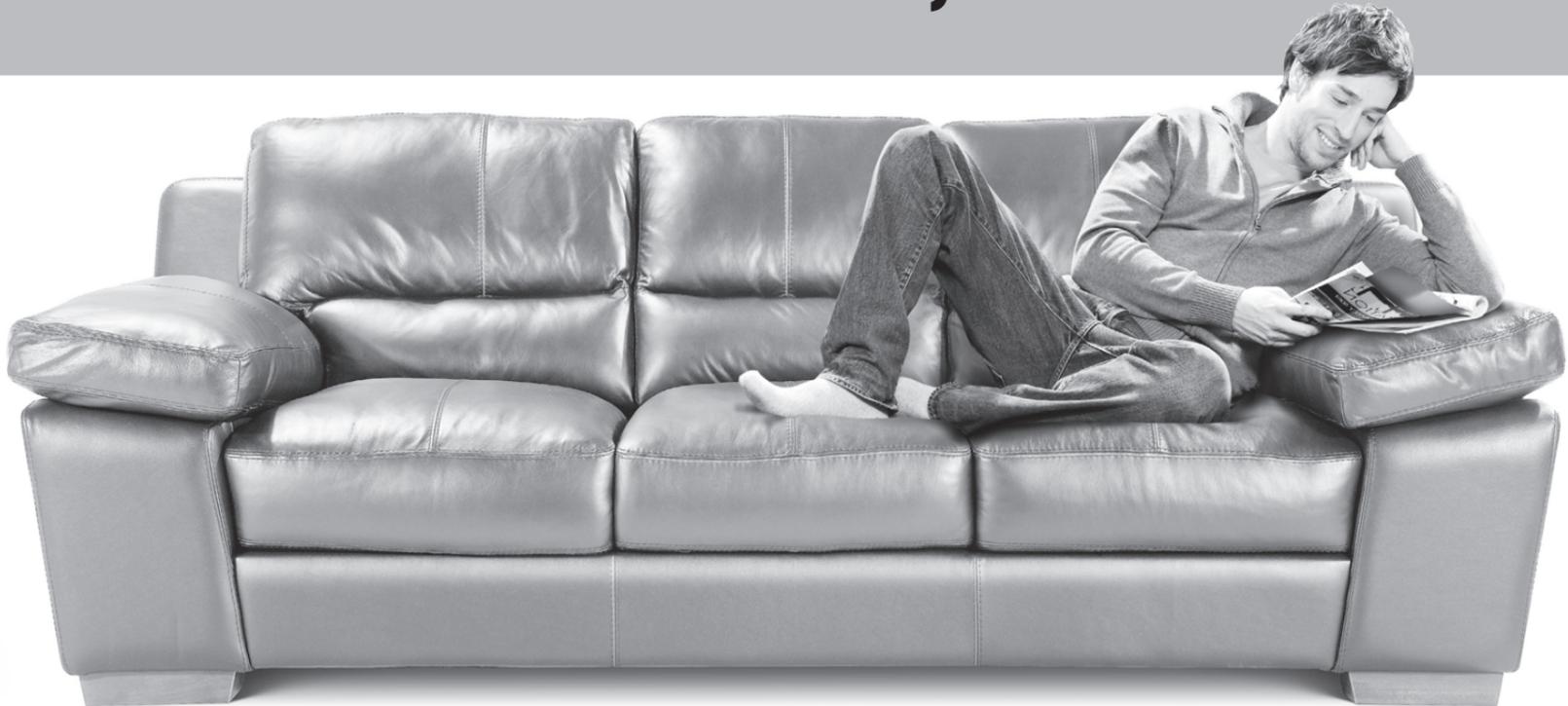


**The Katrina** 4 seater sofa. Was ~~£998~~. Save £499. **HALF PRICE £499**



**The Houston** 3 seater sofa. 2 accent cushions FREE. Was ~~£798~~. Save £399. **HALF PRICE £399**

## New DFS sofa store GRAND OPENING SALE at Millburn Road, Inverness



100%  **HALF PRICE £599**  
LEATHER Was ~~£1199~~. Save £600.

**The Cantello** 3 seater leather sofa, in a choice of 43 colours at no extra cost. Matching 2 seater sofa, chair and storage footstool all with half price savings too.

**4 YEARS INTEREST FREE CREDIT WITH NOTHING TO PAY FOR THE FIRST YEAR ON EVERYTHING!**

TYPICAL **0% APR** All finance is free at DFS

The Nolan 3 seater sofa £299. Or take 4 years interest free credit with nothing to pay for the first year. No deposit and 36 equal monthly payments of £8.30 starting 12 months from date of order. Total £299. 0% APR. Credit subject to acceptance. Redhouse Interchange, Doncaster DN6 7NA. DFS may alter or extend promotions at any time. Higher prices offered at all other DFS stores. \*Mobile charges may apply when calling 0800 110 5000.

Save time – order direct at **www.dfs.co.uk** or call **FREE\*** on **0800 110 5000**

Save on time, save on price. Special Grand Opening offers start Saturday 20th February.

DFS founder Graham Kirkham commented on the latest store, "It's an exciting time for us. This is our most northerly store in Scotland and it means from Saturday 20th February the famous DFS quality, choice and value is so much closer to the people of the Highlands and Islands.

The new store looks amazing and, as we're still a family-owned business with no big city shareholders, we can always put our customers first. And our opening day offers in Inverness will prove that."

DFS are celebrating the opening of the new store with a red carpet and champagne welcome for all customers. The Grand Opening event starts at 9am on Saturday 20th February and with their reputation for marking new store openings with huge savings, it's one that's not to be missed.



I am Richie Cunningham, the Store Manager at DFS Inverness. I can't wait to show you my new store. It is beautiful and has been designed to make shopping both easy and a pleasure. I know you will like it.

DFS have been helping people find their perfect sofa for 40 years and have built a business on making offers others can't make.

I believe we've something for every taste, home and budget. And with everything we sell available on the famous DFS 4 years interest free credit with nothing to pay for the first year it is so easy to buy.

I look forward to seeing you and I guarantee a warm highland welcome.



The new purpose-built DFS Store, designed to make shopping easy.



**100% LEATHER** The Oslo leather corner sofa. Was £1699. Save £702. **SALE PRICE £997**

**JOIN THE GRAND OPENING CELEBRATIONS AND ENJOY A GLASS OF CHAMPAGNE AT DFS INVERNESS.**

You'll find a massive choice of exclusive designer sofas, from modern to traditional, at the new DFS sofa store in Inverness. **Everything in the Grand Opening Sale is reduced in price** and there's also **4 years free credit** and **nothing to pay for the first year** on everything in store. So make sure you don't miss out on Saturday 20th!

**4 YEARS INTEREST FREE CREDIT WITH NOTHING TO PAY FOR THE FIRST YEAR**

*No deposit - ever. No interest - ever. No finance charges - ever*



**YOU SIMPLY CAN'T BUY BETTER**

Everything in the Grand Opening Sale is reduced in price

Everything is **handmade to your order**

Over **40 years' experience** of helping people find their perfect sofa

All DFS leather sofas are **100% real leather all over**, no imitation or leather match

3 of their own UK factories, with a **free 10 year guarantee** on everything DFS make

**Designer sofas** - including Linda Barker's exclusive range

**Choose any colour in the range at no extra cost**



**HALF PRICE £299**

Was £599. £449. Save £300.

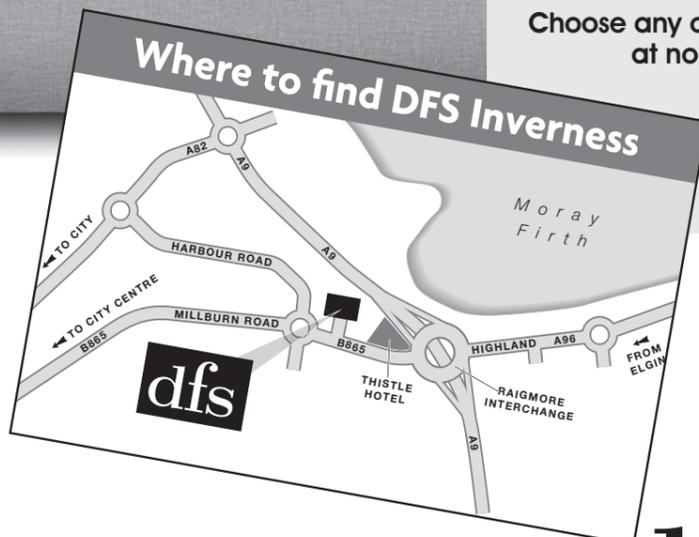
**The Nolan** 3 seater sofa, in a choice of colours at no extra cost. Matching 2 seater sofa, sofabed, choice of chairs and storage footstool all with half price savings too.

**DFS Inverness (01463) 701290**

Millburn Road, Inverness IV2 3TR

Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 9am to 8pm. Sat 9am to 6pm. Sun 10am to 6pm.

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



think sofas, think **dfs**

**The New DFS sofa store is next to the Thistle Hotel on Millburn Road, Inverness, just off the A9.**

## Treasure Island comes singing and dancing to Luing

AFTER months of practising Luing Amateur Dramatic Society (LADS) is almost ready to perform its community pantomime Treasure Island written by Chris Liversidge.

The Saturday matinee and evening performances on Thursday February 25, Friday February 26 and Saturday February 27 in Cullipool Hall hope to see a good turnout of islanders and others to see the all-singing all-dancing production.

With songs including *Don't Stop Me Now*, *You're the One That I Want* and *What Do You Want to Make Those Eyes at Me For* it should be a good night for a sing-a-long.

The Saturday evening performance is already sold out but tickets for other performances can be bought from Joan Morgan on 01852 314212.

## Help - it's Abbamania in Oban



Mamma Mia! These ladies from Appin certainly knew how to dress for an Abba tribute night in the Corran Halls last Friday. An audience of more than 400 dancing queens boogied to a string of their favourite hits, courtesy of tribute band Abbamania.

## England's Coast comes to West Highland coast

A SOUTHAMPTON-based band is out to prove that southerners know about Celtic music during a mini-tour of Scotland, including a date in Oban.

Coast, which recently played at Celtic Connections, is coming to the Skipinnish Ceilidh House on February 26.

Although the band members hail from Wales and England, lead singer Paul Eastham and his percussionist brother, Chris Barnes, spent time growing up in the Western Isles and bass guitarist Adam Bowden spent many childhood holidays on North Uist.

Paul, in particular, lists Runrig as one of his main influences.

The mini-tour will also include dates in Inverness and Melrose.

## Top line up at Taynuilt

TOP local musicians help to make up the line-up for the next winter ceilidh run by An Comunn Gaidhealach Meur Chruachain (Cruachan Branch) in Taynuilt's village hall on Saturday, February 20.

Among the artists are Oban Pipe Band's pipe major Euan Dewar; Connel's Sileas Sinclair and her group of seven musicians; Oban's Eilidh MacInnes dancers and fear an taighe for the evening is Taynuilt's own Rev Brian Wilkinson.

**Oban and Loan Tourism Association**

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### YOUR STARS WITH PATRICK ARUNDEL

**ARIES Mar 21st - Apr 20th 090 6612 4520**  
 Whilst you often project a hustle-bustle image, you have insecurities like the rest of us. And the goodness of those people who are reliable, faithful and trustworthy, really can strike home. However, equally, you may need to become more aware of any outstanding emotional debris that may be floating around inside of you. Give this some priority. Call me for your in-depth forecast...

**TAURUS Apr 21st - May 21st 090 6612 4521**  
 If you are someone who loves to social network, then the next month can be a particularly positive time, one where many new contacts can be made. But equally you can get to know the new people down the street or join a local business club or spend more time going out, having fun. It really is a case of the more the merrier. Seize the chance Taurus. Call your prediction line for more advice...

**GEMINI May 22nd - Jun 21st 090 6612 4522**  
 Business, financial and career issues come to the fore. If you want to make progress, your desire to enjoy a breakthrough can be high. This can also see you go that extra mile in competitive situations. Don't be a shrinking violet, for there will be others chasing the same opportunities. Show what you are made of. Polish your CV and interview techniques. Call now for more news...

**CANCER Jun 22nd - Jul 23rd 090 6612 4523**  
 You have a reputation of being a home lover. While this can be true of you, there is very many more dimensions to you and these interests and skills are ripe for exploring. Talking of which you can find yourself keen to travel or actually on the move. A partnership which is enriching can also grow in importance. Yet ordinary routines may seem a little dull. Call for your love scope in full...

**LEO Jul 24th - Aug 23rd 090 6612 4524**  
 It may not be like you, at least generally, to make snap decisions, but you may make a few over the coming weeks. This is because the stars are encouraging you to follow your hunches, rather than use quite as much logic. That more fiery side of your nature has a chance to flourish, but some of your moves may amaze yourself, let alone anyone else. Call for more news and astral advice...

**VIRGO Aug 24th - Sep 23rd 090 6612 4525**  
 Been engaged in a stubborn stand-off or finding one person hard to get along with? Hope beckons. However, this doesn't mean that all the concessions will be made by them - you may need to compromise too. This may also require someone to make the first move. Will you have the courage? Don't expect instant results, but things can improve. Call now for more astral advice...

**LIBRA Sep 24th - Oct 23rd 090 6612 4526**  
 A change of emphasis has been quietly but powerfully building up in the background of your situation, now it really takes root. This can see you grappling with practical issues, such as where to live, how to live there and who with. Creating extra space or getting a little trimmer can also feature. A chance of a new job or better relations can also develop. Call me for more advice...

**SCORPIO Oct 24th - Nov 22nd 090 6612 4527**  
 If you've been feeling becalmed or completely washed out, a welcome return to form presents itself this week. In fact you could surprise yourself how quickly you switch gear and feel more outgoing and sociable. As much as you may have desired this of late, finding the energy may have been harder going. Wherever possible, now look to enjoy yourself. Call for more astral advice...

**SAGITTARIUS Nov 23rd - Dec 21st 090 6612 4528**  
 Sometimes we need to rest up and take stock. Finding our bearings like this can be very positive. Life can be helter-skelter busy and if you have been running to stand still, now is your turn to have a breather. This may mean turning down a few invites, spending time with close family and friends or alone, but this can prove to be worthwhile Archer. Call your prediction line for more news...

**CAPRICORN Dec 22nd - Jan 20th 090 6612 4529**  
 You can sparkle in any social situation. Your quick wits and sharp mind can make you seriously stimulating company to be with. Okay, I know, what's new? But all your natural qualities are ramped up to a new high. Yet you may not suffer fools gladly, and may have to guard against making superficial judgements but you can be awesomely persuasive. Call me now for more...

**AQUARIUS Jan 21st - Feb 19th 090 6612 4530**  
 You can be fiercely tenacious, a quality driven by Saturn. And when you are in for the long haul, you can be a real 'stickler', way beyond when others would have quit at the first hurdle. And something you've been beavering away towards for many, many Moons can finally show real signs of improvement this week. Such rewards can prove so satisfying. Call now for more news...

**PISCES Feb 20th - Mar 20th 090 6612 4531**  
 This is a powerful week. A time when you get the cosmic green-light to power your hopes and plans forwards. You will be feeling much more self-willed and determined, which is sometimes important. Whilst that doesn't mean you should ignore others, don't expect everybody to automatically fall-in behind you. No-one is an island, and especially not you. Call for more...

SP: Pronto Ltd, PO Box 52785 EC1P 1TY  
 Calls cost 60p per minute from standard landline  
 For entertainment purposes only

## Charity chief to talk of first hand experience as local talent lines up to raise funds for Haiti

A CONCERT in Oban to raise funds for the victims of the disastrous earthquake in Haiti in January will include an up-date from one of the recipient charities working on the Caribbean island.

Tomorrow (Friday) will see Oban High School pupils and youngsters from Dunbeg and Strath of Appin primary schools come together at the Corran Halls for two performances, one in the afternoon and one in the evening, to raise funds for Mary's Meals and Rotary's Shelter Box Appeal.

The chief executive of Dalmally-based Mary's Meals, Magnus MacFarlane Barrow, has agreed to talk to the audience about his recent first hand experience of the aftermath of the disaster that hit the island.

Meantime the performance art practise rooms at Oban High School have been buzzing with activity as the area's young performers gear up for the event.

Many businesses from the area have also chipped in with financial and practical help.

David Mitchell, of Oban Rotary Club, which has organised the event along with Oban High School, said: 'There is no more awesome sight than young people with the bit between their teeth in pursuit of a cause they believe in and with a firm and justified confidence in their own ability to help.

'They make us very proud to be able to assist, as Oban High School and the Rotary Club of Oban are doing on this occasion.'

# COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

**Meur Lochabair SKYE CEILIDH DANCE**  
 West End Hotel, Fort William  
 Saturday, February, 20th @ 7.30pm  
 Singers: Catriona Fair,  
 Maggie MacDonald, Calum Ross,  
 Donald Murray,  
 Rebecca MacDonald,  
 Piper Bridget Campbell.  
 Music by Lochaber Ceilidh Band  
 Admission £10 includes Buffet.

**Exhibition of Quilts**  
 By Lorn Quilters  
 Connel Village Hall  
**Saturday 20th February 2010**  
 10am-4pm  
 Sales Table  
 Admission £2  
 (Includes tea, coffee, home baking)

**Benderloch and District SWRI**  
 Invite past members to our **90th Birthday Celebrations** on 12th March 2010.  
 Anyone interested please contact Ann Cameron at 01631 720237 before 1st March 2010.

**APPIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**SCOTLAND'S RURAL PAST:**  
 Dr Tertia Barnett  
**Saturday 20 February 2.30pm**  
 Port Appin Hall  
[www.appinhistoricalsociety.co.uk](http://www.appinhistoricalsociety.co.uk)  
 SRC No. SC029411

An Comunn Gaidhealach Meur Chruachain (Cruachan Branch)  
**Winter Ceilidh**  
**Saturday, February 20 in Taynuilt Village Hall at 7.45pm**  
 Piper Euan Dewar, Margaret MacLellan (double Gold Medalist)  
 Donnie MacLeod (Traditional Gold Medalist)  
 Maurice Duncan (Fiddle)  
 Sileas Sinclair Group of Seven Musicians  
 Eilidh MacInnes Dancers  
 Fear an Taighe The Rev Brian Wilkinson  
 Admission £3 (£2 for members & Children 5-16yrs) Inc. Tea  
 Warm Welcome Extended to All  
 (Funds collected promote The Gaelic Language, Music and Culture)

OHS and The Rotary Club of Oban Presents  
**Oban Haiti Appeal Charity Concerts**  
 Corran Halls  
**Friday 19th February**  
 1pm Matinee and 7pm  
 Cast of over a Hundred  
 Tickets available from Box Office  
 £5 Adult £3 Under 16 £12 Family Ticket (2adults+2under16)  
 All proceeds to Mary's Meals and Shelter Boxes.

Netherform Piping Society  
 Performance by **Cameron Drummond**  
 (Double Silver Medalist 2009)  
 supported by Oban High School Pipe Band Quartets  
 Argyllshire Gathering Halls  
 Wednesday 24th February 2010  
 7.30pm  
 Admission: Adults £3 Children: Free

**HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS MUSIC & DANCE FESTIVAL**  
**Soup Lunch**  
 12 noon - 2pm  
 Saturday, February, 20  
 Kilmore Hall,  
 £2 per person,  
 Live Music, Raffle,  
 Bottle & Baking Stall

**Oban and District Provincial Mod**  
**Saturday 5th June 2010**  
 Contact [seccganobain@aol.com](mailto:seccganobain@aol.com)

**Oxfam Ceilidh**  
 Argyllshire Gathering Halls  
 8pm  
**Saturday 20th February**  
 Tickets £4 available from Oxfam and House and Home with Style

Luing Amateur Dramatic Society (LADS)  
 Pantomime **'Treasure Island'**  
 by Chris Liversidge,  
 Cullipool Hall  
**Thursday 25, Friday 26 and Saturday 27 February 2010**  
 Doors open at 6.30pm  
 Saturday 27 Matinee - Doors open at 1.30pm  
**SATURDAY NIGHT SOLD OUT**  
 Tickets £4 including programme, choc ice and juice.  
 Tickets: Joan Morgan on 01852 314212

**Advertise in the Community Notice Board for just £14.00 (plus VAT)**  
 This section is available to charitable organisations with a charity number.  
 All AGM's will be placed on the Public Notice Page  
 Please ask for details

**Local Producers Markets**  
**Thursday 4th March**  
 Kintaline Farm, Benderloch  
 1 mile along the Tralee road  
 10am to 3pm  
 Lots to eat and do  
 Every first / third Thursday  
 Interested Producers contact  
 01631 720223  
 Local Origins Rural Network  
[www.lorn.org.uk](http://www.lorn.org.uk)

### Oban Times LEISURE TIMES

**The Scottish Sealife Sanctuary has teamed up with The Oban Times for their new passes**

Collect all three tokens per person and bring them along, with a passport photo to: The Sealife Centre on or before Sunday 7th March

**The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES TOKEN 3**

**seal rescue centre** **SCOTTISH SEA LIFE SANCTUARY**

**TIMESFORUM**  
 Have your say on the forum at [WWW.OBANTIMES.CO.UK](http://WWW.OBANTIMES.CO.UK)

## Piping and drumming

A WEEK of piping and drumming workshops will take place at the Achiltiebuie Piping College, Ullapool, between March 28 and April 2.

Students will be assigned to small groups according to ability and tutors will include Robert Wallace (principal of the College of Piping), Barry Donaldson (ex-Strathclyde Police Pipe Band), Bruce Hitchings (former chief instructor, Army School of Piping) and Jim Clark (drumming instructor, George Watson's College, Edinburgh).

For more information contact Alison Hitchings at Highland Reeds on 01854 622 303 or email [alison@highlandreeds.com](mailto:alison@highlandreeds.com).

**what's on**

**CINEMA LISTINGS >** Highland Theatre  
 THE WOLFMAN Cert 15, 102min  
 DAILY 7.00 SAT/SUN MATINEE 2.00  
 PERCY JACKSON & THE OLYMPIANS Cert PG, 118min  
 DAILY 6.15, 9.00 SAT/SUN MATINEE 1.30, 4.00  
 THE ROAD Cert 15, 111min  
 DAILY 8.30 SAT, SUN, THUR MATINEE 4.15

**Saturdays >** Junior Ski Training  
 Glencoe Mountain Ltd 10.30am - 2.30pm  
 Tel 07854 688408

**Saturdays & Sundays >** Glencoe Discovery  
 Glencoe Mountain Ltd Guiding service for  
 Tel 01855 851226 intermediate skiers

**Tuesday 23 February >** Clutter Keeps Company  
 Mull Theatre

**Wednesday 24 February >** Clutter Keeps Company  
 Taynuilt Village Hall

**Saturday 27 February >** Soup Lunch  
 Connel Village Hall 12-2pm

**Thursday 4 March >** Producers Market  
 Kintaline Farm, Benderloch

**WHAT'S ON**  
 in association with the Highland Cinema,  
 George Street, Oban Tel: 01631 562444

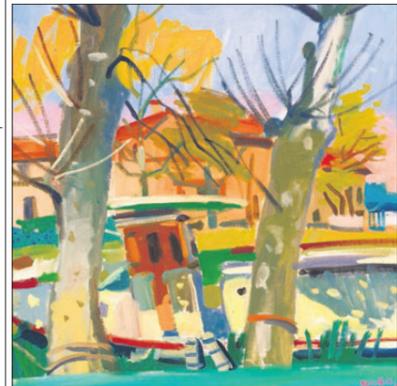
**gig argyll** your essential guide to live music in argyll

**Friday 26th February >** Filthy Kinky  
 The Woody

**Saturday 27th February >** Shananigans  
 The Woody

**Saturday 27th February >** Crooked Reel  
 Markie Dans 9.30pm start

**Sunday 28th February >** Crooked Reel  
 The Woody 4pm - 7pm



Trees and Barge, Le Somail by Glen Scouller RSW. RGI is just one of the works on show at Crinan Gallery.

## From the artists' studios

THE PRIVATE view of the first Crinan Gallery exhibition of the season was held last Saturday (February 6).

Running until March 5, the exhibition includes works by Rob Walker, Ethel Walker, plus the Crinan sculptress Melanie Chmielewska.

The private viewing at the weekend was well attended, with the wine supplied by Inverarity One to One fine wines.

Exhibitions at Crinan will be changed on a monthly basis. The Gallery is also hosting the Royal Glasgow Institute of Fine Art - RGI exhibition on the June 5, 2010.

This will be the fifth year they have been exhibited with local artists at Crinan.

Birds of Paradise Theatre Company presents

**Clutter Keeps Company**

**Tue 23 Feb MULL THEATRE @ DRUMFIN (Tobermory)**  
 8pm £10/£8 01688 302626 / [www.mulltheatre.com](http://www.mulltheatre.com)

**Wed 24 Feb TAYNUILT VILLAGE HALL**  
 8pm £6/£3 Tickets can be bought on the door

All performances are subtitled and audio description is embedded within the text. [www.birdsofparadisetheatre.co.uk](http://www.birdsofparadisetheatre.co.uk)

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 email: [expertise@gowestravel.co.uk](mailto:expertise@gowestravel.co.uk)

# My Village Connel

Harry Powell has lived in Connel for over 40 years. The Welshman has made quite an impact on the village. As chairman of Connel Village Hall Committee, he led the community effort to get the new hall built in the 1990s. He was also the founder chairman of Connel Community Council in 1977 and later served as secretary up to 2009. He is an active member of the Scottish Wildlife Trust.



**How would you describe Connel?** Connel is a fairly small, rural village community of around 600 people.

It has a primary school, beautiful St Oran's church, an excellent village store and post office, medical surgery and several hotels and guesthouses, which are the main economic activity of the village.

Other facilities include a large, modern village hall, which opened in 1994, and a millennium sports field, community-owned and operated, that we opened in 2002.

The village has a beautiful setting on the south shore of Loch Etive, with its famous tidal race known as the 'Falls of Lora'. It faces north towards North Connel and the airport, backed by the 1000ft Beinn Lora ridge.



Harry Powell has been a stalwart of Connel's community council and village life for 40 years.

**How did you come to live in the village?**

I was born in Abergavenny in Wales and moved here in 1967.

I was a marine scientist and after training at the University College of Wales, I spent a 41-year career employed by the Scottish Marine Biological Association (SMBA), based first at Millport on the Isle of Cumbrae.

In the 1960s, the SMBA moved to this area. I was one of the first three staff to establish an office in Oban to begin the construction of the new marine laboratory at Dunstaffnage, on a site that had been a military base during the war. The labs were built in several phases and completed by 1971, with the staff growing to about 80.

My wife Grace and I came to live in Connel, just three miles from the laboratory site, because we were lucky enough to buy a modern house here which we named 'Cumbrae'.

This was in the group of

nine houses in Grosvenor Crescent that had been built in the early 1960s by Nuttall's - the huge engineering firm that built the brilliant Cruachan Dam scheme.

We raised our family here. Our two children attended Achaleven Primary School in Connel and went on to Oban

High School. **Can you describe village life?**

The social activities of the village community mainly revolve around clubs and organisations that use the village hall, the church hall and the sports field and cater for all ages groups - bowl-



St Oran's church, in Connel

ing, badminton, arts and crafts, music and children's groups.

Altogether, there is a rich and varied mixture of welcoming activities that, added to the amenities already mentioned, contribute to a very pleasant quality of life in Connel.

We also live near enough to our hub town of Oban to participate in organisations and events there.

**Does Connel have an interesting history?** Yes, with the arrival of the railway in the 1880s and of course the famous iconic Connel Bridge, an important early cantilever structure spanning the turbulent, tidal Falls of Lora.

It opened in 1903 to carry a branch railway line from Connel north to Ballachulish.

Engineers greatly admire this early classic bridge. The branch line closed in 1963 as part of the Beeching Plan, which saw the closure of many rural train lines. Fortunately all passenger trains between Oban and Glasgow still halt at Connel.

Also in the late 1800s, there

was a large woollen mill in Connel driven by waterpower from the Lusragan Burn, which flows through the centre of Connel into Loch Etive.

The old two-storey mill building was demolished in 1993 and the new village hall built on the same site.

**Has Connel changed much since you came to live here?** Significantly more houses have been built here, including two quite large schemes. Argyll County Council built a group of 24 council houses at Achaleven and Taylor Woodrow built 22 private houses at Ferryfield.

At least 30 other houses have been built on 'in-fill' sites within the village and the two largest hotels and some guesthouses have extended their premises. An oil and gas depot is now located beside the railway platform and a fine new surgery is our latest much-appreciated asset.

Connel Community Council has been much involved with achieving speed limits, successfully arguing for the retention of our primary school and getting public benches and bus shelters for the first time. More recently, we gained 'open space protected areas' and 'TPO' designation for several areas of high public amenity value within the village.

Connel has thus far remained largely unspoiled and, although the very busy trunk road to Oban runs through it, has kept its attractive village quality.

There is a new housing development (20 units) proposed and approved to be built near the start of the back road inland to Oban which is 'on hold' at present.

We hope that this development may bring a welcome influx of some young families to balance the age structure and maintain pupil numbers



Harry is proud of the new village hall for which he helped to raise funds. Its doors opened in 1994.

at the primary school. **Is there anything you would like to see change or improve in the village?**

The future prosperity of Connel depends upon it remaining an attractive rural village beside the sea, with superb landscape views all around and seascape views over Loch Etive to the north and north-west (Mull), and with excellent facilities to attract visitors to stay and thus contribute to the tourist economy of the whole area.

For the same reasons, Connel Community Council has always welcomed the recent modernisation of the Oban Airport at nearby North Connel, and the proposed new golf course and associated housing development at Saul-

more just west of Connel. **What is it you like most about Connel?**

We greatly appreciate all of the amenities of Connel and the great community spirit here.

It is also an ideal base for exploring and enjoying the whole beautiful area of Lorn.

Nearby, we visit every year, in spring and summer, the superb open gardens at Achnacloch, Ardchattan Priory and Arduaine, and there are many and varied woodland walks.

Just inland from Connel is a great walk around the attractive Black Lochs, a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its 20 species of dragonflies - the best such site in Scotland.

## Achaleven goes cycling-mad

A LORN school has got its pupils on their bikes in a big way, with new racks, helmets and a cycling fun day planned.

Achaleven Primary has just received its official Cycling School Award after it was judged a cycle friendly school, one of the first in Argyll to be granted this status.

Headteacher Sharon Burt said most of the children cycled to school in good weather and all the primary six pupils who had taken their cycling proficiency test had passed.

A grant from Sustrans paid for new cycle racks and by making eco-pledges through the Green Generation website, the children have earned enough points to buy new bikes and helmets.

A cycling fun day is planned for next month to promote new cycle paths in the area and the pupils asked that money raised on the day goes to support children affected by the Haiti earthquake.

## 40mph ahead

MOVES are afoot to introduce a 40mph limit on the east side of Connel.

Connel Community Council had lobbied Scotland Transerv to extend the current 30mph limit to Dunfunny corner but the trunk roads authority refused.

It was agreed instead to slow traffic by introducing a 40mph before the 30mph, which should be in place before the end of this month.

OBAN AIRPORT IS AN ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL FACILITY  
 - CONFERENCE FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE ON SITE BY PRIOR ARRANGEMENT - LUNCHES AVAILABLE AT THE AIRPORT ON REQUEST - SCHEDULED FLIGHTS TO COLL, COLONSAY AND TIREE - BUSINESS AND GENERAL AVIATION TRAFFIC WELCOMED (PRIOR PERMISSION REQUIRED)  
 - AVIATION FUEL AVAILABLE ON REQUEST (AVGAS AND JET1) - CAR HIRE CAN BE ARRANGED - LINKS BY RAIL AND ROAD - AIRCRAFT CHARTERS & SCENIC FLIGHTS AVAILABLE BY PRIOR ARRANGEMENT  
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## Lochaber hears of a remarkable woman who captured the Highlands on film

AROUND 40 Lochaber U3A (University of the Third Age) members gathered in the St Andrew's Hall, Fort William to hear how a remarkable Lochaber woman captured Lochaber and its people on film.

Morvern author and historian Iain Thornber told the tale of Christian Cameron of Lochailort (1859-1941), whose photographs

of Lochaber represent one of the finest collections of Highland landscapes and people.

Mr Thornber has written a book, The Cameron Collection, which features dozens of 19th and very early 20th century scenes from Moidart and Arisaig.

One photo shows Christian Cameron pictured beside her 12-15 horsepower Arrol Johnston

motorcar in 1907 at Loch Eilt on what is now the main A830.

The vehicle had a remarkable history, being the first car to reach the Antarctic, taken there by Ernest Shackleton on his famous 1907-09 Nimrod Expedition.

'Motor cars were uncommon at the time and any that did venture forth were worthy of comment,'

Mr Thornber said. 'An entry in the Inverailort visitors' book for September 8, 1902 records, 'This day Mr Charles Forester courageously conducted his wife, Mrs Head and Mrs MacLaren in his 10hp Wolsley motor car to Mallaig and back to the wild amazement of the natives of the district and terror of the animal world.'

## Lochaline

Your correspondent is Alistair Scoular: 01967 421285

## Homecoming Village Hall Tour

LOCHALINE Hall hosted an appreciative audience which was entertained to a show that for unfortunate circumstances had to be delayed from November.

On stage were 11 students from Ardnamurchan High School in Strontian taking part in their Winter 2010 Homecoming Village Hall Tour, with Lochaline and Kilchoan being this year's venues.

The compere was the school's head teacher Chris Millar-Craig and leading the largely instrumental programme was the Bluegrass Band comprising Reece Mackay from Ardgour, mandolin; with Douglas Taylor, Lochaline, and Sam Lock, Acharacle, on acoustic guitars. Vocalist Rhona Maitland, Ardgour, sang to her own accompaniment followed by Strontian's Harry

Barber performing a series of conjuring tricks.

The first half closed with loud and sustained applause following Rory Malcolm from Lochaline's amazing Michael Jackson break-dancing with moon walking routine. Rory has already appeared on YouTube demonstrating his talent as a dancer.

Acoustic guitarist Alasdair Begg, Glenuig, opened the second half. He has also gained recognition as an actor playing the lead role in a Gaelic film award from BBC Alba with the Ardnamurchan High School entry winning a place on the final short list of four from a total of more than 30 contesting groups.

Rhona Maitland returned with another song, this time joined by Holly Davidson, Ardgour, to be followed by the ceilidh band of Jacob Green, Strontian, accordion; Joe Denham, Lismore, fiddle, and Alasdair Begg, who then, joined by Seamus Lock, Glenuig, on acoustic guitar, closed a most enjoyable programme with a song.

## Morvern Heritage Society

The horrors, deprivations and

mass executions at the Auschwitz concentration camp near Krakow, in then German occupied Poland, that took place from 1941 until 1945, were graphically illustrated and related at the first part of Morvern Heritage Society's January meeting.

Recalling and illustrating their visit to the former camp as part of The Holocaust Educational Trust's Lessons from Auschwitz project, were Morvern sixth-year students at Ardnamurchan High School, Jade Shaw from Drimmin and Sian Taylor from Lochaline.

They related how the Nazi Party came to power in Germany following World War One and the subsequent rise of the dreaded SS which was largely responsible for the persecution of all the Jews in Germany and occupied countries and their eventual transfer to Auschwitz where the greatest number that were seized, regardless of age or gender, faced mass execution, mainly in gas chambers, then to be tossed into huge communal graves containing thousands of bodies.

Following that very interesting but extremely harrowing account and a series of

questions with answers that reflected just how completely the speakers had observed and researched their experience, it was back to the west winds and the marine labyrinth of highways that were a feature of Scotland's west coast in former centuries.

## Illustrated talk

These were featured in an illustrated talk given by marine archaeologist and Morvern Heritage Society member Dr Colin Martin as he recalled Viking ships and whatever craft sailed these waters with much attention paid to the Rubh' an Dunain area in south west Skye.

Here he and his team sought as much information as they could about the small loch there, Loch na Airde, with its small stone lined canal leading out to sea which could have been some form of naval base with facilities and materials for the maintenance and perhaps for the building of ships.

He also referred to the importance of ships on medieval grave markers illustrated by one such stone that had been unearthed by local historian Iain Thornber by the shores of Loch Spelve in Mull.

## Scalpay

Your correspondent is Donald Morrison: 01859 540217

## Backward glance

WHEN herring was much on the calendar during the 'ring net days' fishermen told of how plentiful it was then.

Recently, it was rumoured that the appearance of herring was observed off the west shore of Harris, Sillock were also once a plentiful fish to catch with rod, line and fly hook. These fish can still be caught generally in the Hebrides.

## Fishing

SHELLFISH catches are down at the moment and market supplies are not so encouraging for local fishermen or creelers. However, one of the local creel boats recently had a good haul of pollock, suggesting it has become more plentiful from now on.

## Hill climbers

HILL climbing on Scalpay is less popular at the moment, except for those who prefer a 'tough experience'.

We expect climbers will find it more enjoyable when the warmer weather comes. Anyway, we leave it to the climbers to decide.

## Delivery bus

WE FIND it convenient that the Munro's delivery bus calls locally once a week at the moment. We also wish the bus project from Tarbert every success.

# 2010 Calendars

Scottish Field - £6.65 <b>£3.32*</b>	The Oban Times - £5.25 <b>£2.62*</b>	Scottish Field Mini - £5.25 <b>£2.62*</b>

# 1/2 price sale!

East Coast Scenes - £5.25 <b>£2.62*</b>	Isle of Arran - £5.25 <b>£2.62*</b>	West Coast Scenes - £5.25 <b>£2.62*</b>

Only available via our office at The Oban Times, Lochavullin, Oban, Argyll or by calling us on 01631 568000  
 Order online at: www.scottishcalendars.co.uk  
\*All prices exclude worldwide postage and packaging, which is an extra £2.

# The Oban Times

& West Highland Times

## Still to roam? Or coming home?

STATISTICS from An Comunn Gàidhealach this week confirm that the 2009 Royal National Mòd held in Oban was one of the most successful in the history of the Gaelic cultural festival.

Many Mòd followers will have forecast the figures, many more would have scoffed had the figures failed to match commonly-held beliefs that Oban, as oft times before, had risen spectacularly to the occasion. But will these survey results now encourage An Comunn Gàidhealach to face their fears and settle on a regular venue circuit for this annual Gael-fest?

## Glasgow Letter

### Mull and Iona success

A COUPLE of years ago the enthusiastic committee of the Mull and Iona Association in Glasgow wrestled with the decline in popularity of its Annual Gathering.

The answer was simple, change or go out of existence. Fortunately last year it chose the former and after its success it decided to continue with the informal format for this year's Gathering in Glasgow University Union.

Out went the rows of seats, to be replaced by the audience sitting at tables, and it even dispensed with the traditional platform party which, in my opinion, was only relevant in days of Gatherings being attended by huge numbers.

Prior to the concert, there was a friendliness in the hall and this set the scene for the evening.

President Charlie Kirkpatrick welcomed everyone and introduced the chairperson for the evening, Janet MacDonald.

A former winner of the Mod Gold Medal Janet, until she retired, spent most of her teaching career in Tobermory so was well known to most of the sizeable audience.

After amusing the audience with her stories of how she managed to return to Tobermory via the rigours of education at Oban High School, Janet was presented with a memento of the occasion by Leila MacFadyen and husband Archie received a gift.

It was then the turn of piper Callum McDougall to open the proceedings in the presence of recently born son John, the first baby in the Ross of Mull in 27 years.

Congratulations to Callum and his wife Johanne and to young John who must surely be one of the youngest ever to attend an annual gathering.

Gaelic singers for the evening were Mary Catherine MacNeil, from Oban, and Arthur Cormack from Skye.

I recently stated in this column that Fiona 'Happy' would be singing when, of course, it should have been Fiona Jappy but perhaps I did get it right as she certainly was happy as she sang her Scot's songs.

Instrumental music was provided by Anda Campbell and Friends - nephews Ross Wilson and Iain Donaldson. Duncan MacDonald proposed the vote of thanks and after a cup of tea the crowd were ready to be joined by the younger element to dance the night away to the music of *Gumna Sound*.

### Marag supper

ALTHOUGH its syllabus has reduced over the years, Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association still manages to provide its supporters with traditional evenings and this year's Marag Supper was one which the large attendance of about 80 thoroughly enjoyed.

It was also encouraging

that the ceilidh part of the evening gave a young group of musicians called Hum Drum - Ross MacKay, Alistair Paton and Steven Birnie - and some youngsters from the Gaelic School - James McManus, Andrew Grufart, Rory MacDiasmid, Catriona Mairi Cuthbert and Eilidh Jenkins - the chance to show how well off our culture is for talented musicians. Alasdair Whyte and Mary MacLean were the adult performers and with a talk from team manager of Glasgow Island Murdo John Graham also on the programme this was a night of varied entertainment and enjoyment.

Glasgow Skye Association will be continuing the theme of traditional entertainment at its Buntata's Sgadan this Saturday in Partick Burgh Halls.

### Choir concert

THE ANNUAL concert of the Glasgow Islay Senior and Junior Gaelic Choirs will take place in Kessington Hall on Friday February 26 at 7.30pm.

Tickets are available from choir members or at the door on the night.

### Shinty

GLASGOW Mid Argyll Shinty Club starts the season at home this coming Saturday when it plays Skye Camanachd in a pre-season friendly with a 1.30pm throw-up.

### Diary dates

**Thursday February 18:** Live at the Star, St Andrew's in the Square, 8pm. Sara Gray and Kieron Mears.

**Saturday February 20:** Glasgow Skye Association, Buntata's Sgadan, Partick Burgh (Lesser) Hall, 7.30pm. Clydebank and District Highlander's Association Dinner Dance, Town Hall, 5pm.

**Thursday February 25:** Live at the Star, St Andrew's in the Square, 8pm. Wendy Arrowsmith.

**Friday February 26:** Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choirs Annual Concert - see above. Glasgow Uist and Barra Association ceilidh dance, Crawford Hall, 110 Beith Street, Partick, 9pm to 1am. Helensburgh and District Highlander's Association ceilidh dance, Commodore Hotel, 7.30pm.

**Saturday February 27:** Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association buffet ceilidh dance, Partick Bowling Club, 7.45pm. Motherwell and Wishaw Highlander's Association ceilidh dance, Dalziel St Andrew's Church Hall, 7.30pm.

### Pub scene

MUSIC in the Islay Inn this weekend will be provided by Pneumatic Drills on Friday and Scunner Daft on Saturday while in the Park Bar it will be Eriskay Lilt on Friday, Deoch'n Dorus on Saturday and on Sunday it will be Campbell Brown. **Neil Murray, Tel: 0141 954 8105. Email: neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk.**



## Fort William Football Club - 1992

This week's flashback photograph comes from the archives of *The Oban Times* and shows Fort William Football Club's team from 1992. Back row, left to right: D Donnelly, assistant manager; L Murray; P Murphy; M McEachan; R MacPherson; I Jackson; P MacLellan; F Shearer and D Conlon, manager. Front: A Murdoch; J MacPhee; G Cairns; B Davidson; F Beaton; J Flanagan and T Drummond. We would like readers to send in flashback photographs. Please send prints to *The Oban Times*, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing their prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

## Letters to the editor

PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB  
email: editor@obantimes.co.uk

Telephone: 01631 568000  
Fax: 01631 568001

### Wet weather caused deer deaths

Sir, Andrew Campbell's statement about the deer that died in the Knoydart Deer Management Group (KDMG) area following the winter of 2006/7 is correct, but fails to mention the main cause, which was extremely wet weather during that period, latterly sleet and snow.

A total of 100.25 inches of rain fell in the six months from October 1 2006 to March 31 2007, which is around the expected average for 12 months in this area.

Few animals can withstand having permanently wet backs for this length of time. Obviously the deer that died as the result of this act of nature were not taken off the hill.

This hardly compares with wasting substantial numbers of deer that had been shot, and should have entered the food chain.

As a matter of interest, deer numbers within the KDMG area at the time of this natural mortality were more than 3,000 less than they had been 10 years previously and would not be considered to be at a high density.

At least 10,000 sheep, possibly many more, have been taken off the area since circa 1970, so there are considerably fewer mouths on the ground now than in the past.

**John Cameron, Kingie, Invergarry.**

### Too expensive

Sir, Surely it is most unreasonable for Luing islanders to consider that the public purse should provide them with a very costly fixed link?

**Stephen Thomas, Connel.**

### Tidal power

Sir, As a west coast sailing man I have transited Cuan Sound multitudes of times and know well the power of the tide in this narrow passage.

I also would not miss this passage much if it were closed to through traffic.

It may take a bit longer to get where you are going if the sound is closed off but the timing of tides will be broadly similar by way of the Sound of Luing.

If the Sound was to be closed off it could be sealed to the passage of water or as Mark Carter says it could have voluminous pipes to let the tide run under the road and so allow wildlife to pass. This would be my preference.

Having also sailed the tidal waters of Orkney I have seen numerous tidal flow generators being tested. Cuan Sound would be a great place for such a venture as it is small in engineering terms, has a rapid water flow and the national grid very close by. Maybe the council should be looking at a joint venture with one of the big generation companies which could maybe pay into the local community for this feature.

A number of people have been talking of the likes

of Corryvreckan as having huge amounts of energy, which is true, but the scale of engineering in that wild environment is a very long way off at present. Small and shallow is where to start so Cuan is an obvious start point.

**Robert Kincaid, Oban.**

### Keep public notices in newspapers

Sir, May I support Alan Reid in his article where he points out that if public notices are only announced on the internet they will only reach a fraction of the people they reach now.

Many people would not be interested enough in public notices to deliberately call them up on their computers, quite apart from the large numbers of people who do not use a computer.

If the present practice of publishing these facts continues, the newspaper is an item which lies on the table, or wherever, for each member of the family to peruse from cover to cover at will. It is a question of people's habits, more than anything else, which will determine how many people will see public notices from either of these two media.

As for councils slipping in such controversial issues as planning applications and parking tickets unnoticed on the net, of course this will happen. The reason will be that probably only a small and select section of the population will get to read

these notices. It could be a disastrous move to keep public notices out of local papers such as *The Oban Times*.

If councils are looking to save money, they should reduce their exorbitant cost of planning applications. I was recently quoted £440 for a planning application. **Jill Galbraith, Dervaig, Isle of Mull.**

### Against school closures

Sir, I am astonished that Argyll and Bute Council's SNP/Independent Administration is even considering closing an excellent school like Tarbert Academy's secondary department.

The parents and pupils have my full support in their campaign against this closure.

Council papers tell us there are other unnamed primary and secondary schools on the council's hit list of schools being considered for closure. I have submitted a Freedom of Information request to find out the other schools on the secret hit list.

Under the coalition arrangements on the council, an SNP councillor is in charge of the education department. The SNP claim it is opposed to school closures.

In this case why don't they tell the councillor they've put in charge of education to stop these closures immediately? That would put parents' and pupils' minds at rest that their local school is safe. **Alan Reid MP, 95 Alexander Parade, Dunoon, Argyll.**

Councillor Robin Currie, chairman of the Columba Centre, welcomed the new appointment, adding: 'We are delighted to have someone of Rita's experience and drive who will take the project forward and create a solid base from which we can move the organisation onwards and upwards at a much faster pace.'

### Film successes

A GROUP of filmmaking students from the local high school covered themselves in glory at the FilmG awards ceremony in Inverness.

Their film 'An Tur', complete with eerie storyline, won the top award in the best production category as well as the People's Choice accolade.

The students were particularly pleased with the latter award, publicly voted for online, as this class included adult entries.

Heartiest congratulations to the embryonic Iealach Tarantinos, Loachs and Leighs! **Hugh Smith, 4 Flora Street, Bowmore, Islay, PA43 7JX.**

## A VIEW FROM THE TOWER

By McCAIG

### Britain and European Union still in recession

REMEMBER a week or two ago there were blasts from muted trumpets that Britain was officially out of recession, by some miniscule percentage.

Some politicians, mostly of Labour persuasion, shouted so loudly, but patently with little sincerity, that 'we had turned the corner', those of a 'gloomy persuasion' could smile again and be confident about about a prosperous future and 'the garden would soon be all lovely again'.

Strange to say, those who failed to believe all this false brouhaha kept their heads down and their counsel to themselves.

Of course, they have been proven right. At home and in the European Union the recession most certainly is not over.

Currently, the cradle of democracy in the Western world Greece is to all intents and purposes 'broke', Portugal, Spain and the Irish Republic are not far behind and no-one really wants to do anything very positive about it lest they destabilise the whole of European Community and every member has to contribute to rescuing Greece, and the other members that are on the brink of bankruptcy.

Britain, so often described as: 'the sick man of Europe', looks anxiously on. If we were unable to meet our debts it would be the final straw that should make absolutely certain that Gordon Brown and his Labour colleagues will not be in government but forming a potentially embarrassing opposition in the House of Commons.

Having said all that, David Cameron and his Conservative colleagues are not yet leaping ahead to a potential landslide victory as the polling of the parties seems to come closer not further away.

Mind you, there is absolutely no charisma showing from the leadership of the Liberal Democrats - come back Charlie Kennedy, all is forgiven!

'There's nothing we can do!'

TOO MANY people still say: 'I can't do anything about it, so why should I bother?'

This reminds me of a philosophy lecturer at Edinburgh University who pointed out that if one person stole a hat from Marks & Spencer it made no impact on its profits. However, if 2,000 hats a week were whisked out the door with no cash changing hands, the situation for the store was a distinct concern not only to the owners, but to the police and the government of the day.

It is a well-known fact that when cash gets tight and unemployment is rising rapidly the shop-lifter will have a field day. Maybe this won't be on the spectacular scale of the recently concluded TV series 'Hustle' where light-fingered professionals got away with millions of pounds and are never caught.

Perhaps, Holyrood should look to see if the Western Isles has a sufficiently large population to stand alone or whether it needs to be linked to a mainland authority, or become a matter for national government and taken away from local government.

I can already hear the screams of protest about taking the 'local' out of education.

This need not necessarily be so. What is Education Minister Mike Russell about to introduce: 'A National Curriculum for Excellence'. It is there already as a framework with provision for local variations.

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### Now on our doorsteps

NOW THE local government budgets have been published for the next 12 months and we are shocked at the painful ingenuity that finance conveners have had to adopt to shrink the cash that they need but can't have because it isn't there.

Alex Salmond will, of course, tell us that it is all the fault of the Westminster administration that has deprived the Scottish Government of £500 million which is Scotland's by right.

Many will say that he is right but I say he is right up to a point, and that is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer doesn't have this vast sum because it isn't there and it is as much, if not more, Mr Salmond's fault.

I have commented in this column before that immaterial of warnings issued across the world about the lack of cash despite oil, gas and gold bullion, Mr Salmond has authorised far too much expenditure when we can only pay for it by borrowing, making the situation worse.

Can the Western Isles afford to be an education authority?

IT HAS always been a matter of grave concern that financial pressures cause small schools to close, but when it comes to secondary schools it is a matter of deep concern as merged schools and merged classes mean precious little time to help pupils on a one-to-one basis at a time when it is particularly necessary to do so.

I well remember in my first year class in Oban High School there were 42 pupils. Five years later, there were just a dozen of the original 42 while many, for lack of some individual help, were consigned to have supply teachers who did little but prevent mayhem breaking out. The pupils just passed time until they were able to leave to find a niche in life which could have been so much more enhancing had there have been well-trained and imaginative teachers backed by eager classroom assistants and reasonable discipline.

Perhaps, Holyrood should look to see if the Western Isles has a sufficiently large population to stand alone or whether it needs to be linked to a mainland authority, or become a matter for national government and taken away from local government.

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McCaig

## PRESS POLICY

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

It is the policy of *The Oban Times* Group to correct any errors in print. If you find an error of fact on our pages please write to The Editor, *The Oban Times*, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB giving your day-time telephone number where possible. This statement of policy will appear on this page every week along with any corrections or clarifications.

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

# 'Adventure in the priesthood'

It was 25 years ago that a young Uist priest headed off to Ecuador. Fr Colin MacInnes has been there ever since, tending not just to the spiritual needs of his flock, but the practical challenges of slum life



Fr Colin loves the enthusiasm and friendly nature of his parishioners

COLIN MacInnes did not exactly plan to dedicate his life to Ecuador.

For 15 years, he served as a priest in the diocese of Argyll and the Isles, but was always drawn to those who faced extreme poverty.

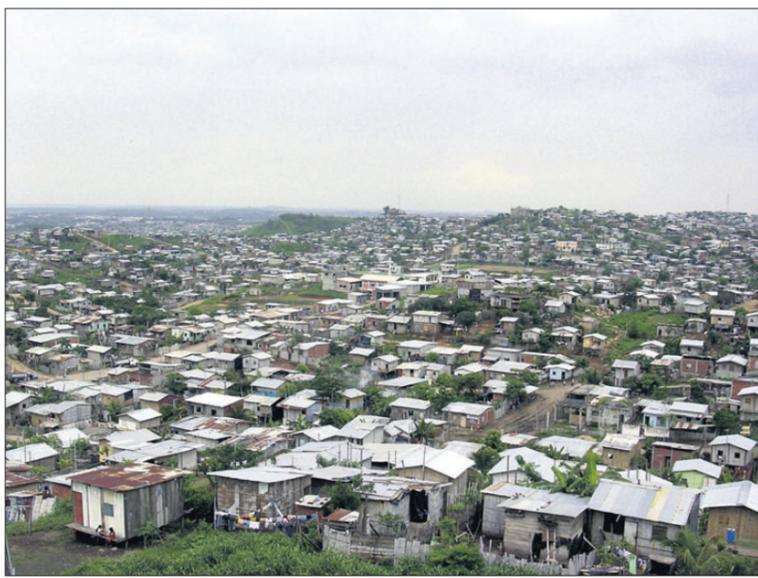
'I always had kind feelings for Latin America and considered that the developed world treated developing countries very unjustly. I now know that is the case,' he told The Oban Times.

'It is interesting that while I was in the seminary in Spain my sister Margaret Joan sent me a book about Latin America. Different events contrived to help me decide to offer some years of my life to the people here in Latin America.'

Colin was born in Bornish, South Uist in 1945. After attending seminary in Aberdeen and Spain, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1970 and has fond memories of his time in parishes in Barra, Oban and South Uist.

'They were happy years and years when I became involved in the life of the community,' he recalled.

In January 1985, when he arrived in the Ecuadorian capital Quito with the St James Mission



Poverty and a lack of services are major challenges in the two Ecuadorian parishes Fr Colin has served over the past 25 years

Society, it was the first time he had stepped foot in a shantytown. 'A more experienced priest was to accompany me but he was taken ill and so I started my

missionary journey on my own,' said Fr Colin.

But his new parish of St Joseph the Worker, to be his home for the next two decades, was a long

way from Argyll. People lived in bamboo huts on stilts; even the chapels were made of bamboo with dirt floors that turned to mud in the rainy season. There was

no running water or electricity, few permanent jobs and his parishioners faced a corrupt administration and intimidation from overlords seeking to control the barrios.

But Fr Colin describes them as years of 'adventure in the priesthood' and it was a challenge he relished. 'What I most appreciate are the loving, friendly people, their life of faith, their undying hope,' he said. They grew to know and trust him and he spoke up on their behalf in the national parliament and helped form a new, democratic 'comité'.

*'I have to adapt to them and not them to me.'*

As well as attending to the spiritual needs of the community, re-building churches and establishing parish groups, Fr Colin was able to use donations from Argyll and elsewhere to bring drinking water to 80,000 people for the first time.

'The other contribution was to be able to free the town from a corrupt, exploiting supposedly

communist administration,' he said, 'and bring peace and freedom to an oppressed people along with other benefits such as electricity, hospital, medical centres, paved streets, parks, sewage and rubbish collection system.'

The barrio was transformed and four years ago he moved to a new parish in need, on the edge of Ecuador's main port Guayaquil. 'We have no roads, no streets, no potable water, no electricity, no telephones and no public facilities. What we have is the hope that things will get better.'

'I have been in my present parish for four years and illness has taken up a major part of the time. However we now have a specialist clinic and two medical centres, four nurseries and five rotting bamboo cane chapels have been replaced. A parish church has also been built. At the same time it is the work with people which is of greater transcendence but it does not sound so dramatic on paper.'

By now, he has served as a priest in Ecuador longer than he did in Argyll, though he is still a priest of the diocese and a part of his heart remains here. Naturally, there are huge differences, he

said: 'I have to get out of the mould of thinking that I am a Scottish parish priest who happens to be working abroad. The language and the culture are totally different and I have to adapt to them and not them to me.'

'Yesterday we celebrated confirmations in one of the churches of the parish. (I have six churches to serve and the population is around 60,000). When it came to the sign of peace some sixty teenagers came floating on to the altar to give me a hug and a kiss as an expression of their joy on being confirmed!'

'I was not too accustomed to such scenes in Bornish nor in Iochdar.'

'Last Sunday I had to say Mass in my stocking soles as my shoes got stuck in the mud on the way to the church.'

'This Christmas I was able to distribute some 800 or 900 food hampers to the poor through donations I had received.'

'As you see there are more than a few differences although our priority, whether in be Uist or Ecuador, is always to bring the living message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people. In that our mission is identical.'

## Special Constable of the Year 2009 award for long-serving officer

ONE of Argyll's longest serving special constables has been recognised for his dedication to duty.

Oban's Andy Buchanan, aged 48, has received Strathclyde Police's top accolade for special constables - Special Constable of the Year 2009 - in the force's excellence awards for 2009.

Chief Constable Stephen House paid a visit to Oban police station last week to present Andy personally with his framed certificate after the special constable was unable to attend the official ceremony in Glasgow.

Andy, originally from East Kilbride, has been a special constable since 1989, when he was working in Tarbert. He moved to Oban in 1992 and has worked as manager of MGM Timber for the last two years.

'I changed jobs and found I had a bit more time on my hands,' Andy explained, 'and it was going to be volunteering either for the fire, police or coastguard. I didn't join for the money but to use up my time usefully.'

'My wife, Mary, has supported me throughout the whole time I have been involved.'

In those days it was unpaid but special constables are now paid a retainer as long as they work at least 180 hours a year.

Andy, however, is a regular, welcome face on the weekend night shifts and has seen it all in his 16 years in Oban.

'When I came up in '92, Oban had a disco on a Friday and Saturday night and people could afford to go out for two-three nights in a row but now you are lucky to see the same person out on a Friday and a Saturday night.'

That's not all that has changed; when Andy started he was given a uniform, a rubber torch, wooden baton and told 'away you go'.

Now the specials go through the same training courses as the regular force, have to complete 14 weekends of training before being allowed out and have the same uniform and equipment from CS spray to body armour.

'It is something to switch off

from the ordinary job - it's a change,' he said.

The camaraderie with the Oban police staff and officers is one of the reasons he enjoys it so much and he has worked with them all on all types of incidents, from road accidents to domestic abuse.

The diversity is one of the reasons Andy loves it: 'If you speak to specials in other areas, they don't get involved in half the things we do.'

Sergeant Mike Woods nominated Andy, a grandfather of one with another grandchild on the way, for the award to show the station's appreciation for his contribution of between 180 and 250 hours a year.

Being a special constable runs in the family as Andy's twin sister, Heather Robertson, who works at Matheson's in Oban, is also a special constable.

The other two specials in Oban are also brother and sister, Kenny Gray and Flo McBurnie, and the four know each other through teaching and practising karate in

the town. Chief Constable Stephen House was delighted to hand over Andy his certificate personally last week during a visit to the station.

'Special constables are particularly important in a place like Oban where they are a link in the community and they keep us grounded in the community,' he said.

'Strathclyde Police has more than 400 special constables and

they help us to put more officers on the streets. We are very keen to encourage more specials - and regular officers - to join the force.'

'It's good to be up in Oban talking to the officers, talking to them about their issues,' he added.

Accompanying the chief constable on his visit were L Division Commander John Thomson and soon-to-retire Assistant Chief Constable John Neilson.



Andy Buchanan at his day job in MGM Timber in Oban.



Special constable Andy Buchanan with Strathclyde Police Chief Constable Stephen House.

30 Years Ago

Those Were The Days  
The Oban Times

Thursday February 14 1980

### Kinlochleven holiday village plan scrapped

PLANS to develop a holiday village at Kinlochleven have been abandoned by British Aluminium and Trust House Forte.

After examining more detailed estimates of the capital required for the project it was agreed that escalating costs would make the proposed holiday village unviable.

Mr D J Mackay, external affairs manager at British Aluminium said: 'The plan was cancelled simply because of rising costs. Originally it was going to cost around £1m. I cannot say what the latest estimate was. All I can say is that it was thought unacceptably high.'

### No weighbridge for Isle of Tiree pier

THE TIREE Branch of the National Farmers Union held a general meeting in the Lodge Hotel when amongst points raised was the cost of providing a weighbridge at Gott Pier.

An estimated £5,000 for a reconditioned weighbridge without installation or delivery was considered

out of the question at the present time.

### Duror fox farm inquiry

A LOCAL inquiry into the Argyll mink farm's planning application for a fox farm at Duror is to start on April 8.

A decision to hold an inquiry was made by the Secretary of State for Scotland.

### Ice rink plan for Oban

A LANARKSHIRE firm has applied to Argyll and Bute District Council for permission to build an ice rink and indoor bowling complex in Oban.

The district's tourism, leisure and recreation committee decided that a delegation should meet BA Leisure from Bellshill, to find out more about their proposals.

### Oban traders search for new site

THERE was reassurance this week for nine small traders who fear that they would be pushed out to make way for a proposed superstore in Oban.

Mr Michael Oliver, director of planning, told a meeting of the district council development committee at Kilmory that his department was

already seeking to identify alternative sites in the Lochavullin redevelopment area.

He added that it would be some months before the planning committee was in a position to determine the application from Wm Low and Co and nothing was likely to happen on the ground until after the turn of the year.

The concern of the small traders, all of whom have short-term leases from British Rail, was expressed in a letter from Councillor William Hunter, who asked that sites be found for them if up to 40 jobs were not to disappear.

### Red face over haggis licence

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture in Northern Ireland has severely reprimanded Argyll and Bute District Council for contravening import control regulations by importing a haggis without a licence.

The haggis was presented to the Mayor of Newtonards on Burns Day by Councillor William Hunter during a tourism exhibition in the Irish town.

However, the haggis was, in fact, bought from a local butcher's shop in Newtonards.

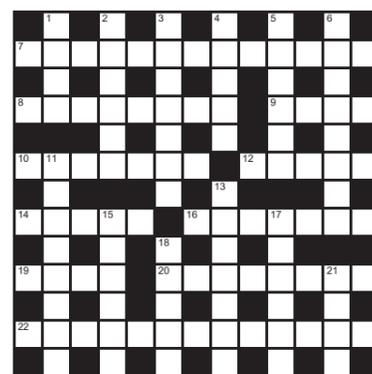
## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

Across

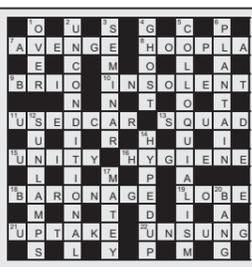
- 7 Told to be erect for the debit payment (8,5)
- 8 Not necessarily a union of choice (4,4)
- 9 Crazy bird (4)
- 10 Binge (7)
- 12 Speech in music (5)
- 14 Father of your parents nephew (5)
- 16 Frog's offspring (7)
- 19 Soldering need (4)
- 20 Uncertainty (8)
- 22 Making many (4-9)

Down

- 1 Above (4)
- 2 Nonsensical (6)
- 3 The place to be on when travelling stateside (7)
- 4 Obviously surprised (5)
- 5 Inconsequential (6)
- 6 Monument (8)
- 11 Grape plant growth (4-4)
- 13 Land by the road (7)
- 15 Most negligent (6)
- 17 Spout (6)
- 18 Appropriate (5)
- 21 Of sound mind (4)



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If you have the drive, commitment and enthusiastic personality that is required for this senior role, coupled with significant experience and would like to be considered, please apply in writing, no later than Friday 5th March 2010, stating your reasons for applying and your relevant skills and experiences to: Vicky Ferguson, HR Manager, Business Resource Centre, Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 7PT.

Informal enquires can be addressed to Gideon Pringle, Freshwater Manager, Farms Office, Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 7PT. Mobile 07747 487232 e-mail gideon.pringle@marineharvest.com

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#### Yardman - (Ref: SRYMAN10)

The candidate will be enthusiastic; self-motivated and will be able to work under their own initiative as well as working within a small team. The candidate should have a flexible attitude to their role; main duties are to assist with the day-to-day operations of the servicing of the yard area but maybe required to work at other shore bases. The successful candidate will also be required to assist with the husbandry duties as and when necessary at marine sites within the South Region and will be required to participate in the existing weekend rota for these sea-sites.

It is essential that the candidate is an experienced telescopic handler forklift driver with relevant certificates and be able to undertake any required training. A full, clean driver's licence is also a prerequisite for this position.

Other relevant training will be given to the successful candidate to allow them to develop within this role.

In return, the company will offer a comprehensive pay and benefits package.

To apply and receive a Job description and application form, please contact HR Department, Lighthouse Caledonia Ltd, Arlinkinglas Estate, Cairndow, Argyll, PA26 8BH

Tel: 01499 600 415 or e-mail [cairndowhr@lighthousecaledonia.com](mailto:cairndowhr@lighthousecaledonia.com)

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### 2005 05 FORD MONDEO ZETEC TDCI 130 6 SPEED

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## Cattle and sheep prime prices back slightly at Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts Ltd sold 101 prime cattle and 1,207 prime sheep at Dingwall last Tuesday when trade for both sheep and cattle was back slightly on the week.

Prime bullocks averaged 166.7p (-0.2p) and sold to 180p per kg twice for a 465kg Limousin cross and a 535kg Limousin cross, both from Castle Craig Farms, Nigg, and £1,242.15 for a 735kg South Devon cross from Drummond Farm, Evanton.

Prime heifers averaged 164.6p (-3.9p) and sold to 175p per kg for a 590kg Limousin cross from Drummond Farm, and £1,148.40 for a 660kg Charolais cross from Mountrich Farm, Dingwall.

Old season lambs averaged 189.3p (-5.5p) and sold to 198.8p per kg for 41kg Texel crosses from Wester Moy, Urray, and £87.00 twice for 45kg Texel crosses and 44kg Beltex crosses from Torgorm, Conon Bridge, to John M. Munro Ltd., Dingwall.

## Stirling prime sale sees trade ease on the week

UNITED Auctions sold 4,212 prime sheep including 3197 hogs averaging 183.3p (-9.9p) and 1,015 ewes and rams at Stirling last Thursday when Beltex hogs from Guardswell sold to £105.50 and 234p per kilo, with Texels from Auchnaolich to £99.50.

Cadogan Estates sold Blackfaces to £77.

Texel ewes from Woodhouselee sold to £92 with Suffolk rams from Barnhill to £138 and Blackfaces from Ballybrennan to £75.



Competitors cast their eye over the Blackface ewes at Dalmally. Picture - Kevin McGlynn

## Blackface breeders host stockjudging at Dalmally

NORTH Argyll Blackface Sheep Breeders held their annual stockjudging competition at Dalmally Auction Mart last Friday night when 147 competitors took part across the various classes.

Judge for the evening was Robert Kay of Gass, Straiton, Ayrshire.

### Results

#### Individual and North Eastern Trophy:

- 1 Andrew Reid 358
- 2 Robbie MacKay, Snr 357
- 3 Willie Nicol 355
- 4 Andrew Kay Jnr 351

#### Team:

- 1 Bill Brady, D. Nicol and R. Campbell 977
- 2 R i c h a r d Christie, Andrew and Willie Walker 973
- 3 Grant, Alex and John MacPherson 963

#### Young Farmers' Class and Sue Lodge Cup:

- 1 Grant MacPherson 327
- 2 Jimmy Wright 320
- 3 Matthew Kerr 320

#### Ladies and Youngs Ani-

#### mal Health Shield:

- 1 Katie Fairley 335
- 2 Gillian MacNeil 328
- 3 Claire MacGill 316

#### Under 16s:

- 1 Craig Handley 345
- 2 Allan MacKenzie 340
- 3 Blair Menzie 299

#### Primary:

- 1 Ruari Cameron 298
- 2 Miss Shaw 294
- 3 Erin Cameron 268

#### Local Top Hogg home-bred class and Bill Black Shield:

- 1 Ian and David MacArthur
- 2 Grant MacPherson
- 3 Ian Shaw

#### Open Top Hogg home-bred class:

- 1 Andrew Walker
- 2 Duncan MacNicol, Robert Mackay and Donald Dempster
- 3 Andrew Walker, D & M Simpson, J. Fairlie

#### Winner overall championship - bottle of whisky:

- 1 Malcolm MacDonald, Lochgilphead



Norman Leask of the Scottish Crofting Federation

## Crofters fear bull scheme will become unworkable

THE SCOTTISH Crofting Federation (SCF) has voiced concern that if the bull hire scheme becomes too expensive, crofters will leave the scheme and the cattle improvement programme, which has operated for more than 100 years, will become unworkable.

However, the SCF welcomed the announcement

by Environment Minister Roseanna Cunningham that the Government's bull hire scheme for crofters is to continue, albeit in a reduced and temporary form, and that the stud farm at Balrobert is to be improved.

SCF parliamentary spokesman Norman Leask said: 'The reprieve of this essential and valued scheme

is welcome, as is the news of improvements at Balrobert, which will benefit the staff there, the animals and the users of the scheme.'

'There is a real danger, however, that a reduction in the scheme will lead to the cost per bull becoming prohibitive and so lead to further decline.'

Mr Leask went on to praise

the work of the Bull Scheme Review Group chaired by Sarah Allen.

'The review group went out and listened to crofters.'

'Their report is thorough and comprehensive. They have once and for all debunked the suggestion that the support was in breach of EU rules, and they have set out irrefutably the scale

of the social, economic and environmental losses that would have ensued had the scheme been scrapped.'

'Yet despite this the stay of execution is only temporary.'

'I doubt that this is the last we will hear of moves to undermine and ultimately destroy this support for cattle rearing in Scotland's most fragile and remote areas.'

## Highlanders meet 'a good steady trade' at Oban

### Supreme male champion sells to 5,800gns

MONDAY'S Highland Cattle Society Spring sale at Oban met with 'a good steady trade' and pleased breed secretary Hazel Baxter who watched as the majority of the 89 stock sold remained within the UK.

Overseas buyers also played their part however with 13 cattle heading for Denmark, while another two go to Germany.

Show judge Donald MacGillivray of Pennygown, Mull felt that some of the bidding for the in-calf heifers was too cautious but overall buyers, particularly from Denmark and Germany, were buying very sensibly.

'Anyone who bought can definitely say it was money well spent,' he said.

Top prices never looked likely to reach last years apex of 14,000gns and peaked on Monday when the hammer fell at 5,800gns for Sunday's show supreme male champion Callum 2nd of Goldenberry, a two-year old red bull by Calum of Cir Mhòr and out of Cannach of West Merklund.

Owner, retired engineer Alan Kennedy, West Kilbride sold the bull to Sir William Lithgow's Ormsary Fold from Lochgilphead.

Reserve supreme champion, the 21-month old Adhamh 2nd of Lagb bred by the late Connie Lawrie, Saval Beg, Lairg was purchased at 5,400gns by her son Iain MacKay, Cnoc Cottage, Appin.

While overall numbers were slightly up on last year, Donald MacGillivray highlighted the standard at Sunday's pre-sale show.

'I really enjoyed the show,' he enthused.

'The top end of both male and female entrants was very pleasing,' he added. 'They were good well-proportioned west coast Highland cattle. In my mind they were true Highland cattle characteristics, not over or under-fleshed.'



Male champion Callum 2nd of Goldenberry, from Alan Kennedy, West Kilbride

'The champion was a good red bull. Not over-fleshed, perfect on the leg - and I was proved right, as he was the dearest in the ring.'

'The female champion from Mr and Mrs R D Schuster, Dalmally, was beautifully shown by Donald Dempster. She was a right sweet female with a wonderful red colour.'

'All classes were superb but particularly the nine pairs of female animals.'

Commenting on Monday's sale, the experienced and popular stockman said: 'It was a realistic sale with no silly big prices.'

'The average price was in the region of £1,600 and that is all that is needed.'

The female supreme champion, Neoinean Ial 6th of Glenkinglass, a five-year old by Seamus of Carsaig, out of Neoinean Og 8th of Glenkinglass, and sold in-calf to Angus of Garthozzie, was purchased at 2,000gns



Female champion from Mr and Mrs R D Schuster, Dalmally, shown by Donald Dempster

by Otter Estate, Kilfinan. Glasgow City Council sold the highest priced female with their reserve champion Una Ruadh 39th of Pollock

which found a new home on Islay, when Hamish Porter, Carrabus paid 2,100gns for this 35-month old by Seamus 5th of Wellburn. The same price was paid by Roy Tyden-Wright, Lagganbridge for Lynsey

1st of West Merklund from John and Dawn Mackie, Strathaven.

### Sale averages

Bulls - Seniors: £2,500 (-£697); 2-yr olds: £1,965 (-£287); Yearlings: £595 (-£287)

Heifers - Seniors: £1,617 (+£294); 3-yr olds: £1,100 (-£39); 2-yr olds: £729 (-£300); Yearlings: £484 (-£149)

## Market reports

### TIREE

#### United Auctions

##### Bullocks

Aberdeen Angus X: £780 Hillcrest £775(4) and £765(4) 13 Moss £730, £720, £715 and £700 Hillcrest.

CharolaisX: £935, £905(2), £895(4), £860, £855(4), £850(6), £845(2), £840(2), £825(5) and £820(5) Heylipol Farm £800 Hillcrest

£775(2), £745 and £715 Heylipol Farm £710, £695 and £675 Hillcrest £635 Ardmay and Hillcrest(2).

Limousin X: £945 2 Kenovay £905 and £895 3 Kenovay £850 Heylipol Farm £820(4), £805, £795(2) and £780 3 Kenovay £775(2) Heylipol Farm £770 3 Kenovay £750 Heylipol Farm(3) and Hillcrest

£730 and £725(2) Heylipol Farm £715 3 Kenovay £710 Middleton Farm £700(2) Hillcrest £685 Hillcrest(3) and Heylipol Farm £675 Middleton Farm £655 3 Kenovay £650, £615 and £610(2) Middleton Farm.

SalerX: £805(2) 3 Kenovay £615 Lochphuil House. ShorthornX: £650 and £610(5) Middleton Farm.

Simmental X: £890 Heylipol Farm £860(2) 3 Kenovay £850(2) Heylipol Farm £835 3 Kenovay £825(2), £820(4), £805, £745 and £740(3) Heylipol Farm £635(2) and £615(2) Lochphuil.

##### Heifers

Blonde D'AquataineX: £570 Ardmay CharolaisX: £835, £815, £785(3), £775 and £685(2) Heylipol Farm £685(3) Hillcrest £675 and £655(2) Heylipol Farm £640(2) and

£600(2) Hillcrest.

Limousin X: £885 2 Kenovay £675(3), £650(2) and £645(3) Hillcrest £565 1 Kenovay £545(4) Middleton Farm.

SalerX: £580 and £570 Lochphuil. Simmental X: £675 Heylipol Farm £555(4) Lochphuil.

Over 30 Months cows £755 Heylipol Farm £715 Lochphuil £655 Heylipol Farm.

In-calf cows £840 Lochphuil £790 Heylipol Farm £780 Lochphuil £750 Croish and Lochphuil.

Prices per kilo Bullocks Aberdeen Angus X: 205p(2), 202p and 196p Hillcrest 196p(4) and 195p(4) 13 Moss.

CharolaisX: 237p Ardmay 233p(2), 221p and 218p Hillcrest 214p(5) Heylipol Farm 209p Hillcrest 206p Ardmay 204p, 203p(5) and 197p(2) Heylipol Farm 197p Hillcrest 195p(4) - Heylipol Farm.

Limousin X: 262p 8 Barrapoll 247p Mainroad 241p(2) Hillcrest 234p(2) and 228p 8 Barrapoll 223p 1 Kenovay 222p Middleton Farm 221p(2) 8 Barrapoll 214p 1 Kenovay 213p Hillcrest(3) and Skipinnis 208p 1 Kenovay 207p Hillcrest 206p Middleton Farm and Carnan 205p Carnan 204p 8 Barrapoll 203p(2) Heylipol Farm 202p and 201p(2) 1 Kenovay 201p 3 Kenovay 198p Middleton Farm and 3 Kenovay 197p Middleton Farm and Carnan 195p Middleton Farm.

SalerX: 219p and 217p Lochphuil ShorthornX: 222p(5), 212p

and 196p(2) Middleton Farm.

Simmental X: 226p 17 Balevullin 214p Lochphuil 211p 17 Balevullin 207p(2) and 204p(2) Lochphuil 198p(2) and 197p Heylipol Farm 197p(3) 3 Kenovay.

Heifers CharolaisX: 215p Ardmay 212p(2) and 202p(5) Hillcrest 195p and 185p(4) Heylipol Farm.

Limousin X: 232p(2) 9 Barrapoll 231p Mainroad 227p, 222p(3) and 221p 9 Barrapoll 220p(3) Hillcrest 219p(2), 217p(2) and 213p(2) 9 Barrapoll 211p 9 Barrapoll 208p(4) Middleton Farm 207p 1 Kenovay 201p Hillcrest (3) and 1 Kenovay 198p Skipinnis 197p, 196p and 195p 1 Kenovay 193p(2) Skipinnis 192p(2) Hillcrest.

SalerX: 195p(2), 193p and 192p Lochphuil. SimmentalX: 203p(4) Lochphuil 202p(2) and 200p 17 Balevullin 194p Lochphuil.

DINGWALL Dingwall and Highland Marts

Lambs: SuffolkX: Balmacaan, Drumadrochit, £84; Cheviot: Woodlands, Dingwall, £78.50; Blackface: Balmacaan, £76; Cross Killminster Mains, Wick, £74;

TexelX: Achvaneran Farm, Farr, and Dell Farm, Whitebridge, £71.50. Ewes: Suffolk: Galcantray Farm, Cawdor, £120; TexelX Brae of Coulmore, North Kessock, (Matheson), £89;

Charmoise: Druid Temple Farm, Inverness, £88;

BeltexX: 25 Camult Muir, Kiltarlity, £86; Mule: 3 Milton of Culloden, Inverness, £84;

TexelX: 3 Milton of Culloden, £81; Charollais: Greenlands Farm, £76;

Cheviot: Hedgefield, Beauty, Viewbay, Munloch, and Rhi-fail Farms, Strathnaver, £76; Cross Bunchrew Farm, Inverness, £73;

Lley: Corrimony, Glen Urquhart, £71; Blackface: Dalmagarry Farms, Tomatin, £65.

Rams: Cheviot: 250 Rearquhar, Dornoch, and 25 Achfrish, Lairg, £93; Suffolk: Woodside Cottage, Aberarder, £92; Charollais: Greenlands Farm, £70;

Texel: 124 West Langwell, Rogart, £66; Rouge: Dell Farm, £66; Cross: Woodleigh, Croy, £63;

Blackface: Unakille Sheep Stock Club, Isle of Skye, £60. In lamb ewes: Blackface: Acheillach, £92; Cheviot: Blackmuir, Heights of Docharty, £80.

In lamb gimmers: Cheviot: Acheillach, £122. Feeding sheep: Cross Woodleigh, £58; SuffolkX: Woodlands, £58; Blackface: Dalmagarry Farms, £57; Cheviot: Woodlands, £51.

### STIRLING

#### United Auctions

Bullocks:

## Demand for quality cattle ensures brisk trade on Tiree

UNITED Auctions held their annual February sale of all classes cattle at Tiree Auction Mart when there was a catalogued entry of 317 head.

A large attendance of mainland buyers ensured all stock was cleared at very satisfactory rates.

Charolais bullock calves from Heylipol Farm sold to £935 while Limousin bullocks from No2 Kenovay sold to £945 and Limousin heifers from the same home sold to £885.

Leading the prices per kilo for bullocks was No8 Barrapoll when their Limousins sold to 262pence and No9 Barrapoll led the way for heifers per kilo at 232pence, also Limousin crosses.

## Grit ewes and gimmers to £153 at Stirling

UNITED Auctions sold 1,507 store cattle and young bulls, 174 cast cows, 58 breeding cattle and 3085 store sheep at Stirling last Wednesday when grit ewes and gimmers attracted a good trade, while cattle eased on the week.

Mule grit gimmers from Ashfield, Smithston and Knocknaha sold to £153, £145 and £141 respectively while Mule grit ewes from Ashfield sold to £144 for one crop, £140 for two crop and £125 for three crop.

Bullocks averaged 175.08p (-0.1p) to 220.5p per kg for a 263kg Limousin cross from Meikle Ittington and £1160 for a 726kg Charolais cross from Holehouse.

Heifers averaged 170.76p (-0.14p) to 206.9p per kg for a 232kg Charolais cross from Meikle Ittington and £975 for a 580kg Charolais cross from Kerelaw Mains.

Young bulls averaged 163.4p to 205.1p per kg for a 351kg Simmental cross from Altewan and £870 for a 620kg Simmental cross from Aberdonia Mains.

Cast cows averaged 104.38p to 151.5p for a Limousin cross from Herries and £1,200 for a Charolais cross from Bannaty.

## Store sheep maintain high rates at Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 2,217 store and feeding sheep at Dingwall last Wednesday when all classes of store lambs fully maintained the keen demand of the last sale with prime ewes and rams slightly dearer.

Lambs averaged £60.89 and sold to £84.50 for Cross lambs from Teanluick Croft, Muir of Ord.

Ewes averaged £54.99 and sold to £126 for Suffolks from Katewell, Evanton. Rams averaged £60.39 and sold to £94 for a Cheviot from Ardrachronie, Ardgay.

In-lamb ewes averaged £115.85 and sold to £145 for Cheviots from the dispersal of the Acheillach flock, Rogart while in-lamb gimmers averaged £122.83 and sold to £142 for Cheviots from Acheillach.

Feeding sheep averaged £43.23 and sold to £59 for a Cross from Greenlands Farm, Arabella.

## Skye crofters' township meeting

THE NEXT in a series of meetings held by the Slye and Lochalsh Monitor Township takes place at Portree Shinty Club tonight (Thursday) when guest speaker Siobhan Macdonald, senior consultant with the Scottish Agricultural College will talk to crofters and farmers about the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) for crofts and common grazings.

Up to 250kg Danna £480, 217.2p;

251-300kgs - Muirpark £610, Meikle Ittington 220.5p;

301-350kgs - Westerhall £740, Hillridge 217.5p;

351-400kgs - Nether Dalkeith £810, Hill 210.8p;

401-450kgs - Westerhall £860, Dalhanna 200.2p;

451-500kgs - Hill £935, 203.3p;

501-550kgs - Acrefield £935, Dykes 183.3p;

551-600kgs - Whitfield £1055, 178.2p;

601-650kgs - Whitfield £1075, 169.1p;

651-700kgs - Holehouse £1100, 163.7p;

701kgs+ Holehouse £1160, 159.8p. Heifers: Suffolk: Meikle Ittington £480, 206.9p;

251-300kg - Hillridge £595, 205.9p;

301-350kgs - Dalhanna £660, 191.3p;

451-500kgs - Aberdonia Mains £750, 150.6p;

601-650kgs - Aberdonia Mains £870.

OTM bulls: Netherthorn (Cha) £1020, 94.6p; Herries (Lim) £1090, 129.8p; Loanleven (HB) £1000, 95.4p.

OTM cows: Bannaty (Cha) £1200, 127.4p; Craig (BB) £1065, 127.1p; Herries (Lim) £1055, 151.5p; Whitsome Laws (SD) £995, 129.6p; Nairn Farms (AA) £950, 126.6p.

Breeding cattle Bulling Hfrs; Whitehill (Lim) £920; Millands (BBX) £900; Balquhatson (ShoX) £750.

Heifer and Calves; Overton (Sim hfr & lim bcf) £1580; Hill of Armore (Sim hfr & lim hcf) £1480; Ashfield (Lim hfr & lim bcf) £1350.

In-calf hfrs; Innerhadden (LuiX) £1220 and £980.

In-calf cow; Percival (Lim) £980.

Sheep Hogs Dyke (Suf) £80; Chapelton (TexX) £77.50; Dullator (Che) £76.50; Drummaghina (SuffX) £73.50; Muirland (SuffX) £71.50; Haigh of Grandtully (TexX) £70.50; Glenlochay (BF) £70; Tulloch (BF) £67; Craigend (BF) £61.50.

Grit gimmers; Ashfield (Mule) £153; Smithston (Mule) £145; Knocknaha (Mule) £141.

Grit ewes; Ashfield (Mule 1crop) £144, (Mule 2

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## COMMERCIAL

**Bell Ingram** **dm** **01631 566 122**  
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**For Sale Former Community Centre**  
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**Offers in excess of £70,000**  
 An opportunity to acquire a centrally located building suitable for a number of uses (subject to planning). Prominent site located in the industrial/retail park area of Oban. Historic uses as childrens day nursery and community centre.

**To Let Retail Unit**  
 3 Stafford Street, Oban  
 Prominent retail unit located within town centre of Oban extending to approximately 29.9 sq.m. (321.75 sq.ft.) Highly visible retail unit. New lease offered.

**To Let Glenshellach House**  
 Glengallan Road, Oban  
 High quality modern office accommodation 1,500 sq.ft. with car parking. Versatile accommodation on two floors. Ground Floor - 54.42 sq.m. (586 sq.ft.) First Floor - 82.28 sq.m. (886 sq.ft.)

**To Let Retail Unit**  
 Albany Terrace, Oban  
 Extending to approx 52.08 sq.m. (560.43 sq.ft.)  
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## PUBLIC NOTICES

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**Argyll & Bute COUNCIL**

**OPERATIONAL SERVICES**  
 (DRUMMORRE ROAD, OBAN) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2010  
 On Monday 15th February 2010, Argyll and Bute Council made the above named Order under Section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended, which will make it unlawful for any person to drive or cause or permit to be driven any vehicle, with the exception of vehicles engaged in the works on that section of Drummorre Road, Oban extending from the property known as "Hilcrest" in an easterly direction for a distance of 65 metres or thereby.  
 This section of road is required to be closed whilst the existing Soroba Road footbridge is dismantled and a new one erected. Access for residents will be maintained wherever possible.  
 This Order will be effective, when indicated by signs, from 2300 hours on the 27th February until 1100 hours on 28th February 2010 and 2300 hours on 20th March until 0600 hours on 22nd March 2010.  
 Andrew R Law, Director of Operational Service, Manse Brae, Lochgilphead Argyll PA31 8RD

**PLANNING**  
 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997  
 Take notice that the applications in the following schedule may be inspected during normal office hours at Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR, the location detailed below and by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications. Anyone wishing to make representations should do so in writing to the undersigned within 21 days of the appearance of this notice, whichever is applicable as indicated below. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

**SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION PLANS**  
 • Ref No: 09/01692/PP  
 Applicant: Mrs Fiona Morrison  
 Proposal: Replacement of front windows with double glazed windows  
 Site Address: Flat 3, Oban Times Buildings, Corran Esplanade, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 5PX  
 Location of Plans: Oban Area Office  
 Listed Building/Conservation Advert  
 • Ref No: 09/01693/LIB  
 Applicant: Mrs Fiona Morrison  
 Proposal: Replacement of front windows with double glazed windows  
 Site Address: Flat 3, Oban Times Buildings, Corran Esplanade, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 5PX  
 Location of Plans: Oban Area Office  
 Listed Building/Conservation

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT**  
 Applications for planning permission listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be examined at Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR, the location details below between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and by logging to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications.

Written comments for the following list of applications may be made to Planning Services Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR by the 11/03/2010  
 • Ref No: 09/01514/PP  
 Applicant: Mr And Mrs Robert Allan  
 Proposal: Erection of single storey rear extension to include a new vehicular access.  
 Site Address: Glentworth, Mossfield Drive, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4EN  
 Location of Plans: Oban Area Office  
 • Ref No: 10/00077/PP  
 Applicant: Mr And Mrs D Hamilton  
 Proposal: Demolition of dwellinghouse, erection of dwellinghouse and erection of 6kw wind turbine  
 Site Address: Rudna A Chruaidh, Kerrera, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4SX  
 Location of Plans: Oban Area Office  
 • Ref No: 10/00174/AMSC  
 Applicant: Mr And Mrs L McIntyre  
 Proposal: Approval of conditions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 relative to outline planning permission reference 08/01766/OUT.  
 Site Address: Site North Of Sithean House, Isle Of Iona, Argyll And Bute  
 Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Isle of Iona  
 • Ref No: 10/00185/PPP  
 Applicant: Norman Black  
 Proposal: Demolition of dwellinghouse and ancillary buildings and Site for the erection of 2 dwellinghouses  
 Site Address: An Gleannan, North Connel, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA37 1RW  
 Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Ledaig  
 • Ref No: 10/00237/PPP  
 Applicant: Mr Alec MacArthur  
 Proposal: Site for the erection of a dwelling house and associated works.  
 Site Address: 3 Heilypoll, Isle Of Tiree, Argyll And Bute, PA77 6TY  
 Location of Plans: Tiree Area Office  
 • Ref No: 10/00240/PPP  
 Applicant: Mr A Sutherland  
 Proposal: Site for the erection of 2 no dwelling houses and associated works.  
 Site Address: Land South Of Taynuilt Railway, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute, PA35 1JE  
 Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

Argyll and Bute Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed between 9 am. and 5 p.m. at Planning Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST.  
 An extant list of planning applications which can be viewed on the Councils website www.argyll-bute.gov.uk  
 A weekly list of applications which can be viewed at Planning Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST and Argyll and Bute Council Libraries.  
 Any letter of representation the council receives about a planning application is considered a public document. Please therefore note that representations will be made available for public inspection and, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, will be copied on request. They will also be published on the council's web site.  
 The author of such a representation is solely responsible for its content and accuracy.  
 Anonymous representations will be "shredded" and those marked confidential will be returned to the sender. Neither will be taken into account when the application is being considered.  
 Details of representations we receive on planning applications can be viewed on the council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/publicaccess

**COUNCIL TAX 2010/2011**  
 As required by Section 96 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, notice is hereby given that the Council Tax has been set by Argyll and Bute Council in terms of Section 93 of that Act and the amounts payable in respect of chargeable dwellings in each valuation band are as follows:-

Valuation Band	Property Values	Council Tax
A	Up to £27,000	785.33
B	£27,001 to £35,000	916.22
C	£35,001 to £45,000	1047.11
D	£45,001 to £58,000	1178.00
E	£58,001 to £80,000	1439.78
F	£80,001 to £106,000	1701.56
G	£106,001 to £212,000	1963.33
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Sally Loudon, Chief Executive, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT  
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## TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS OFFICE, FULTON HOUSE, GORDON SQUARE, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6XY and, where given, the alternative location(s).  
 Written comments should be made to the Area Planning and Building Standards Manager at this office within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.  
 \* Written comments on 10/00028/FULLO should be made to James Bromham, Highland Council, Planning and Development Service, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description	Alternative locations where application may be inspected and time period for comments
10/00002/FULLO	Land 80m North West of Birch Cottage, Kentallen	Installation of display pillar	Ballochulish Post Office (14 days)
10/00027/FULLO	McIsaac's Cottage, Isle of Canna	Renovation and extension to existing cottage	Canna Post Office (14 days)
10/00028/FULLO *	Mussel Farm Carnes A Chuilinn, Loch Linnhe, Connelgan, Ardgar	Installation of a mussel farm consisting of 6 x 200m longlines	Kinlochell Post Office & Ardour Post Office (14 days)
10/00030/MSCLO	Land 250m North West of Oakwood Cottage, Stronath	Erection of house & garage	Stronath Post Office (14 days)
10/00031/MSCLO	Land 180m North of Ardloch House, Gairloch, Spean Bridge	Erection of house & garage (Plot 4) - Amended Design to 09/00236/REML	Spean Bridge Post Office (14 days)
10/00035/FULLO	16 Glenkingie Terrace, Cool, Fort William	Installation of dormer	Cool Post Office (14 days)
10/00037/FULLO	Land at Croft 18 North, Ballochulish, Highland	Erection of house	Erection of house

Area Planning and Building Standards Manager, Ross, Skye & Lochaber:  
 Dafydd Jones, Highland Council, Fulton House, Gordon Square, Fort William, PH33 6XY  
 Tel: (01397) 707015 Fax: (01397) 707022 e-mail: planning.lochaber@highland.gov.uk

**TAKE NOTICE that Morbaine Limited will shortly be applying for planning permission for a foodstore development and also for renewal of an existing non-food retail permission in respect of land at North Road, Fort William. The public is cordially invited to visit the Meeting Room at the Ben Nevis Hotel, North Road, Fort William between 10.00am and 3.00pm on Thursday 25th February 2010 to view and comment on the proposals and to discuss the schemes with a Morbaine Director.**

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 Entry for Scholarship should be made on or before 19th March, 2010.  
**Anne F Wilson**  
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## Website brings village groups together

DUROR and Kentallen have launched a new joint community website [www.durorandkentallen.co.uk](http://www.durorandkentallen.co.uk) to act as a focus for local groups and activities. The site, which has taken a year to develop, has now been up and running for just over a month and is already being very well used by local people.

Co-founder Jane Blanchard said: 'Duror and Kentallen are not only in a kind of no man's land in terms of services, they have no pub or informal meeting place which means that it takes a lot of effort for people to meet up, share interests or know when someone needs help. The Duror Women's Group has been a fantastic success in bringing together women of all ages, from young mothers to retired teachers, for anything from coffee mornings to badminton sessions, and the website is proving a great way of arranging events and putting forward new ideas. The care in the community page came about because so few people seemed to know what services are available in the area and how to go about getting them. It is full of useful names and numbers, as well as links to national help organisations.'

The calendar is kept up to date with events in the village and there are links to neighbouring community websites so that they will always know what's on in Kinlochleven and Ballachulish.

The primary school has its own page so that they can share what they are up to with the community.

The history pages are growing and there is already a fascinating history of Cuil Bay written by Niall Malcolm, together with some wonderful old photographs in the gallery.

# Signal box campaign steps up



Gerald Rivett reckons Network Rail are way off track with their plans to demolish the signal box.

A CAMPAIGN to save an historic Lochaber signal box on the main Fort William to Glasgow line is gathering force after a tourism forum called for its preservation.

Spean Bridge man and railway enthusiast Gerald Rivett is leading efforts to preserve the building after finding out by chance Network Rail plan to demolish the signal box.

Now his crusade has received a boost after Glen Spean and Great Glen Marketing Group agreed to write to Network Rail objecting to the demolition and seeking to have the brick structure used for community purposes.

Spokesperson Peter Wilson told *The Oban Times*: 'We think it's a great asset to the area having an icon like that and we are going to take it up with Network Rail.

'Overwhelmingly the group is quite

shocked at this arbitrary action of Network Rail, who could move in with the bulldozers tomorrow if they wanted. They are very concerned that there has been no consideration taken of the feelings of local people.'

Mr Rivett, a director of Glenfinnan Station Museum, is furious demolition could be contemplated at one of the Highland's best-kept stations and has written to Historic Scotland asking them to place a preservation order on the signal box.

### Award

He led years of hard work to improve the station which culminated in Spean Bridge winning the Highland Rail Partnership 'Best Kept Station' award in 2008.

Ben and Vanessa Martin, who run the Old Station Restaurant in the former station offices and waiting room area,

have offered to clean the signal box and maintain it.

Objectors have lobbied Highland Council planners who have been notified by Network Rail of their plans. They have been told the proposed demolition does not require planning permission, only a demolition warrant, which does not need public consultation. The box has been unmanned since 1988 when modernisation of the line made it redundant.

Mr Rivett said: 'I would like to see the signal box become part of Glenfinnan Museum and would hope that Network Rail could pass ownership of the box to ScotRail, the line operators, so that we could do this.'

He added: 'The signal box is a rare example on such an historic line and visitors photograph it together with the gardens and Swiss-chalet style station

building. 'It is a wonderful typical West Highland station and a photographers' dream.'

A spokesperson for Network Rail said: 'It does sound like there's a lot of strong local feeling for the station. But it is not something we are able to offer to private parties to run themselves to turn into a coffee shop or something like that. Rather than have a long-term drain on railway funds, the decision has been taken to remove the box from the network.'

The spokesperson added it was 'unlikely' Network Rail Director Scotland Ron McAulay and chief executive Iain Croucher were aware the signal box was in line for demolition because of their workload.

One option open to campaigners would be to write to Mr MacAulay and Mr Croucher 'with immediate effect'.



Pennies for Haiti: Fort William Primary School pupils with their money map of the world. 10\_f08fw01

## World money map helps Haiti Disaster Appeal

FORT William Primary School pupils have come up with an unusual way to raise money for the Haiti Disaster Appeal - a money map of the world.

The children asked mums, dads and pals for

loose coins then began covering a giant global map they had drawn with the money, coppers covering the oceans and silver coins going on the continents.

Understandably, the silver part of the collection

is taking a bit longer but the collection is going well. Head teacher Sue Commander said: 'We just thought that people would have spare change lying about and that this would be a novel way to raise some money for what is a worthy cause.'

## Sunart Media's Canadian film award double

A PRODUCTION company based on the Ardnamurchan peninsula has been awarded 'Best Instructional Film' at two separate film festivals in Canada - on the same day.

Sunart Media won the honours with its first full-length production 'Sea Kayak - An Instructional Journey along the coast of Skye' at the fifth annual Reel Paddling Film Festival in Toronto and Paddle

Canada's Waterwalker Film Festival in Ontario last Friday. The Strontian-based company is owned by former BBC Newsnight correspondent Simon Willis. The DVD features instructor Gordon Brown on a four-day kayak voyage along the west coast of the Isle of Skye.

Mr Brown runs Skyak Adventures from Lower Breakish.

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## Oban Times on tour of Far East

LOCHABER Onstage! secretary Jasmine Adams recently toured the Far East to visit exotic locations such as Singapore, Guangzhou in China, Hong Kong Kuala Lumpur.

Jasmine is pictured left in the Malaysian capital with some essential reading she took with her to while away the time on long journeys.

Jasmine produced and co-directed the theatre group's 'Burke and Hare - A Musical Play', which Lochaber Onstage! and its young Lochaber High School cast performed to sell-out crowds at last year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

The group holds its annual meeting on Thursday February 25 at 7pm in the Alexandra Hotel, Fort William, and as always welcomes new members.

## Earthquake appeal fund-raiser

A BIG effort to raise funds for the Haiti earthquake appeal is being organised by Roy Bridge and Spean Bridge communities.

A special event is planned at Roy Bridge Hall on Saturday February 27 from 11am to 2pm. Soup and rolls and other snacks will be provided and there will be a baking stall, a bottle draw and raffles. Further donations for prizes and items for the baking stall would be welcome. Contact 01397 712546 or 712398.

## Council leader speaks of anguish at swingeing budget cuts

By STEPHEN NORRIS

LOCHABER councillor and Highland Council leader Michael Foxley has spoken of his anguish at projects he himself helped develop being hit hard by swingeing budget cuts.

At a special full council meeting in Inverness, councillors trimmed spending in the three biggest departments, education, culture and sport, social work, and transport environmental and community services, completing a £12.1million savings drive to balance next year's books. Children and young people's services will also be reduced. Other departmental savings were made in December.

Highland Council's budget has risen 1.6 percent to £607.2 million for 2010-2011, but inflation and punitive loan charges imposed by banks following their bailout mean a cut in real terms.

Around 70 jobs - mostly in education - will go, including some at local schools and Gaelic units, which Councillor Foxley helped establish.

Councillor Foxley told *The Oban Times*: 'When I saw the full education and community and sport budget, I almost cried.'

'There are cuts in some rural schools and in our high schools, which I was part of putting in place 20 years ago. There are substantial cuts in the voluntary sector and in teachers in Gaelic units and within Gaelic organisations.'

'A significant number of these I have been personally involved with and some I have started, so this is the start of a very painful process at both a personal and collective level.

Between 2010 and 2013 we need to cut £60million from the budget. There is likely to be worse to come - and it could be much worse. But as an administration we are determined that the council is in a solid position over the next few years of serious

Finance chiefs have identified only £11million of savings of the £47million needed to be made in 2011-12 and 2012-13.

Council budget leader David Alston said the council would consult widely before agreeing budgets for 2011-12, 2012-13 in the autumn of this year. A citizens' panel is to be established which, it is hoped, will comprise more than 2,000 people. The budget options will also be aired at ward forums.

SNP opposition leader John Finnie condemned the budget as 'cowardly'. He said: Highland Council has almost 900 employees who receive £40,000 a year yet they could only find one such post to delete.'

Council tax will remain frozen for the third year in succession. Rates for 2010-11 are: Band A: £775.33; Band B: £904.56; C: £1,033.78; Band D: £1,163; Band E: £1,421.44; Band F: £1,679.89; Band G: £1,938.33; Band H: £2,326.

Average council house rents will go up from £63.92 per week to £64.75 over 48 weekly charges.



Michael Foxley.

cuts in public sector finances. We are working very hard to make savings where we can, but some of these will be very painful. But there's a need to maintain a base level of these services until they can be rebuilt when the banks pay us our money back.'

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## Local landscapes set to be grant fund-raiser

NETHER Lochaber Community Council (NLCC) is planning to produce a calendar of local views for 2011 to boost its grant awards pot for local groups and charities.

It is hoped the calendar will be available for sale in a variety of local hotels, guesthouses and other outlets.

Local amateur photographers are invited to donate scenic images of local landscapes for the community council to consider for inclusion.

NLCC's Ann Marie Cameron said: 'We are looking for pictures taken in the area from Corran Ferry to Ballachulish Bridge and up to Kinlochmore and Callart. If you can help us with pictures, please contact Lawson Taylor at Onich Store, Ann Marie Cameron or Colin Campbell with your suggestions.'

Colin and Ann Marie can also be contacted through the Nether Lochaber Community Council website [www.netherlochabercc.org](http://www.netherlochabercc.org).

Kinlochleven Community Trust launched a similar initiative in 2008 for the Loch Leven area.

## Fort man fined for three assaults

A FORT William man has been fined a total of £380 at Fort William Sheriff court for committing three assaults at his home.

Paul Archibald, aged 42, of 4 Brown Court, admitted assaulting a man by repeatedly grabbing him by his private parts, assaulting a woman by lying on top of her and assaulting a special constable by spitting on him in the execution of his duties, all on December 11 last year.

## Publican in court over vodka

A FORT William publican sold vodka from a Smirnoff bottle that was a different make from that on the label, it is alleged.

Station Bar licensee Alasdair John Fraser, of 1 Fife Place, is also accused of breaking the Food Safety Act and trademark laws by selling vodka from the bottle on display in the bar on November 6.

Mr Fraser denies the charges. The case will continue at Fort William Sheriff Court on March 4.

## New way to browse at library

READERS in the Highlands can now browse a new library catalogue system provided by Highland Council.

Talis Prism 3, known as High-CAT, has been launched by the library service and is an interactive user-friendly way for people to browse collections in their local libraries.



Leigh MacGillivray, front, and her Smile team show off their t-shirts, soon to become surgical gowns for needy children. 10\_f08smile01

## Pupils take to catwalk with a smile

GAELIC Primary 6/7 at Fort William RC Primary School chose Operation Smile for their enterprise project – and took to the catwalk at the same time.

The global charity, which works in 42 of the world's poorest countries to fund operations on children born with a cleft palate, worked with Blue Peter to appeal for old t-shirts to be remodelled into surgical gowns.

The Gaelic pupils last week staged an impromptu fashion show for parents to show off their imaginatively designed gowns to be worn by children during their operation, saving the charity around £3, the cost of a new surgical gown. T-shirts were donated by parents, teachers and pupils, who used fabric paint to create designs to cheer up the children before their operations.

A retiring collection after the show will go to Operation Smile and the Haiti appeal.

P7 pupil Leigh MacGillivray, managing director of Smile at the school, said: 'We have all enjoyed helping such a good cause. The stories about the children were very touching and we are glad that they are getting help.'

## Tiny Spanish village welcomes back Gaelic festival singers and actors

A TINY village in Spain is to play host to Gaelic singers, tutors and actors from April 28 to May 2.

Juzcar, near Malaga in Andalucia, will welcome a team from 'Gaidhlig Thall Thairis' - 'Gaelic Abroad', which will give current or would be students of Gaelic language, song and acting the chance to learn under the lemon trees on the terrace of a small boutique hotel in the village.

Course co-ordinator, Gaelic singer Fiona J Mackenzie, from Dingwall, and well-known Gaelic singer and tutor Gillebride Macmillan, from South Uist, held the first course in Juzcar last year.

Such was its success that the Gaelic festival

is being expanded and this year will comprise three disciplines, including acting.

The course is largely being advertised through the use of social media including Twitter.

### Similar

Ms Mackenzie said: 'We decided on the village of Juzcar as it is very similar in many ways, climate excepting, to traditional Gaelic speaking villages in the Hebrides - small knit communities, little English, social lives centring around the church and hotel.'

'The local residents of Juzcar were certainly very curious about the saltires flying outside the hotel and the strange singing emanating from the lemon grove!'

# Fort man not guilty of assault

A FORT William mechanic has been cleared of assaulting his partner of six years after an alcohol-fuelled row during their Hogmanay pub crawl.

Ross William Hunter, aged 24, of 3 The Corries, Claggan, was accused of assaulting Nina Walker by grabbing her by the arms and pushing her against a kitchen unit at her mother's home in Inverlochty early on New Year's Day after he had battered on the door to get in.

Fort William Sheriff Court heard Hunter and Nina Walker went into town on Hogmanay evening but fell out when Ms Walker allegedly made an inflammatory remark concerning the family.

A distressed and inebriated Ms Walker arrived at her mother Jessie McAndrew's home around 2.20am on January 1, followed by a still drunk and furious Hunter six

hours later. Ms McAndrew told the court: 'I heard Nina screaming in the kitchen. She was being held down on the table top and he had his face close to her and was shouting 'Why did you say it?' I kept asking him to leave. I did not want him in the house.'

But a letter was produced from Ms Walker to the court stating that 'at no point' did she feel threatened during the altercation.

'He was only holding me to stop me from pushing him. I have been with Ross for six years and I know that he would never hurt me in any way,' the letter said.

Giving evidence, Ms Walker, 24, said she couldn't remember making the remark Mr Hunter accused her of, but was 'quite capable' of saying it. Under cross-examination

she denied being frightened at any time during the row in the house.

'My mum told Ross she had called the police and he left,' she said.

Prosecuting, Simon Crabb argued there was sufficient corroboration to convict Hunter of assault, but Sheriff Douglas Small ruled Nina Walker's evidence suggested otherwise. 'Where is the assault?' he asked and found Hunter not guilty.

Hunter admitted a second charge of breaching of the peace by swearing, repeatedly kicking and banging a door, refusing to leave the house when asked to do so and placing the occupants in a state of fear and alarm.

Fining him £300, Sheriff Small told him: 'Your conduct on this occasion was quite unacceptable. Please don't get into this sort of situation again.'



## Kyleakin primary SOS day boosts RNLI

Kyleakin Primary School held an SOS - soup or scones - afternoon to raise money for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution last Friday. Pupils served up homemade fare to family and the local community and took in £120.10 for the charity. Teacher Gayle Morison said: 'We had quite a good turnout. We only have 26 pupils in the school, so to make that amount of money was quite good.'

## New group gets to work on St Kilda Centre plans

A NEW organisation has been set up to co-ordinate efforts to build a St Kilda Centre on a cliff top location on Lewis' Atlantic seaboard.

The initiative follows the selection of Mangurstadh, Uig, as the preferred location for the centre after a keenly contested competition involving several Western Isles communities.

Membership of The St Kilda Centre Development Group/

Buidheann Leasachaidh Ionad is open to all residents of Uig over 16 and associate membership to those who wish to support the group's aims. A 12-strong committee was formed with Sarah Egan as secretary and Catriona MacLean as treasurer.

Chairman and Mangurstadh man Iain Buchanan said: 'The next step is to engage with all the lead partners to set up a management committee of a St Kilda Trust or

Foundation which will be tasked with delivering a world class visitor centre. We want to work in conjunction with both Harris and Uist groups to the mutual benefit of all concerned.'

Membership forms are available at Uig shop and a new website will be launched soon. Funding sources have yet to be identified for the new centre, which could provide a major tourism boost to the remote area.

## Gaelic place name study cash boost

LOCHS Archaeological Group on Lewis has been awarded £5,100 for a study of local Gaelic place names, historical sites and buildings.

The cash will also fund a study into the Seaforth Papers, the relationship between the land, people and culture of Lochs and the effects of the Jacobite Rebellion.

The Gaelic plan implementation

committee also gave £2,100 to Gaelic media production and training company 'Sealladh' for a series of workshops where youngsters 11 to 14 can develop their drama skills and those between 18 and 25 can progress their Gaelic writing. Members welcomed the new Hebridean Archive Service, which will begin in April 2010.

Got a story for The Oban Times? Call 01631 568000

# Push to make Argyll Fairtrade zone

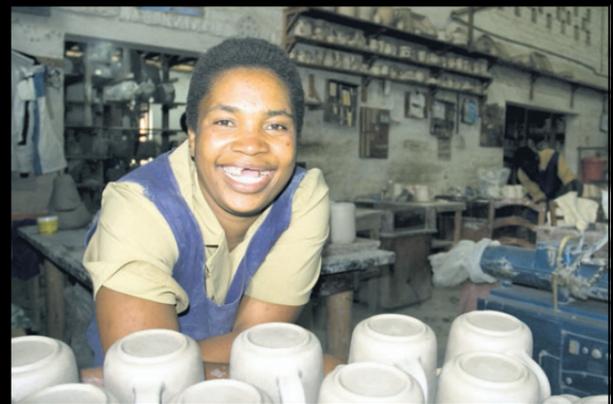


THERE are few better excuses for eating chocolate than Fairtrade Fortnight, starting this weekend. Oban has been a fairtrade town since 2006 and 67 businesses and groups in the town are signed up to stock fairly traded products, ensuring workers are not exploited.

As shops and organisations prepare to mark Fairtrade Fortnight, Murdoch Mackenzie, of Oban's fairtrade committee, said the push is on to make all of Argyll and Bute a fairtrade zone. There are groups promoting fair trade in Taynuilt, Appin and on the Isle of Lismore, while Campbeltown is hoping to get official fairtrade status this spring.

'We have to have a certain percentage of businesses and towns going fair trade,' explained Murdoch. 'We've had good support from people in the council. More and more people are using fair trade. It will increase because there is a good momentum.'

Simon Hess, an Oban-based director with development organisation Imani, said choosing fair trade products here can make



Dedza pottery is just one of a host of fairly traded products on sale in Oban. 108fair1no

a huge difference to communities overseas. 'There is a group we have worked with in Tanzania, they have built 100 schools and 21 water projects,' he said. 'The biggest thing to me about fair trade is it's something that works through the market. It's not aid, it's just reward for people's own hard work.'

One example is Dedza pottery, made in rural Malawi and sold in Oban. Thanks to orders from Scotland, the small enterprise has been spared harsh job cuts, despite the tough economic climate.

On Saturday evening, Oxfam are hosting a ceilidh celebrating the

fortnight and the 25th anniversary of their Oban shop.

Staff at the Co-operative will be dancing down the aisles in costume next Monday morning, encouraging customers to switch from their usual brands to fairtrade. There will also be offers in store and a stall with free samples in store all week. The following week, the stall moves

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PERSONALS

Happy 30th Birthday ROSS



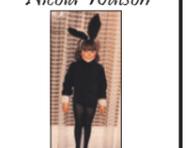
Love from all the family xx

Happy 60th Lachie John MacLean 20th February 1950



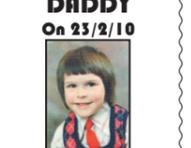
Lots of love Laura xx

Happy 30th Nicola Watson



Love from Marcus, Joshua and all the family xx

HAPPY 40TH DADDY On 23/2/10



Lots of love Hannah xx and Ruari xx

Michael Beckett born 60 years ago and still going strong likes Johnny Walker.

PERSONALS

Happy 21st Josh



Love from Mum, Dad, Becc, Matt, Louis and Bridget x

February 19 1970



Lots of love all the family

Malcolm MacDougall 18 TODAY



from Mum, Dad, Ian and Stewart xx

Agnes Currie Thank you to all my friends and family for gifts, flowers and the lovely surprise party for my 60th Birthday Party.

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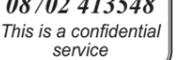
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**BIRTHS**

**GRIFFIN - SHAW** - Bobby and Janice, Inveraray, are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their first grandchild Bryce Robert, born on February 15, 2010, to Ross and Laura at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley. Second grandson for Donald and Morna, Ardfern.

**HAMPSON**

Clare Hampson and Jamie MacKinnon are delighted to announce the birth of their beautiful daughter, Kayla Jamie Hampson on January 24, 2010. First grandchild for Jim and Rosie Hampson and Gregor and Heather MacKinnon.

**SELF** - On February 7, 2010 in Tayvallich to Celia (née Cooke-Hurle) and Charlie, a daughter, Hazel Breagha, a sister for Rufus.

**GOLDEN WEDDING**

**MACINTYRE CAMPBELL** - At St Columba's Cathedral on February 15, 1960 by the late Canon Ewen MacInnes Catherine to Willie. Present address: 88 Nant Drive, Soroba, Oban.

**DEATHS**

**CAMPBELL** - Suddenly, on February 15, 2010, at the Mid Argyll Hospital, after a long illness, borne bravely, John G. Campbell, aged 55 years of Carmarcess Farm, Kilmartin. Beloved son of Jenny and the late Jack, dear brother of Rosemary and much loved uncle of Gregg, Graeme and James. A dear friend and work colleague to many. Former Police Mechanic, Lochgilphead. Following John's request, a private funeral service will be held at Cardross Crematorium, no flowers or letters of sympathy. He asked you to remember him as you best knew him. Thank you.

**CULL** - Very suddenly on Friday, February 12, 2010, at his home in Crianlarich, George Cull, beloved husband of the late Helen, a dear father to George, Alan, Angela, Barbara and Sonia, a dear grandad and great-granddad to the family. Funeral service private, at his own request.

**MACKINNON** - Janet passed away on February 9, 2010 at the Lorn and Isles Hospital, wife of the late John Hector MacKinnon, Balphetrish. Three a much loved mum, mother-in-law, granny and great-granny now free from pain. Funeral on Thursday, February 18, 2010 in Tiree.

**MACLEAN** - (née Stewart). Suddenly but peacefully at Hairmyres Hospital, East Kilbride on Saturday, February 13, 2010, Alison Jane, beloved wife of the late Donald and loving mother of Carol, Duncan and Flora, a much loved daughter, sister, auntie, granny and friend, who will be sorely missed. Funeral will take place in Lismore Parish Church on

Friday, February 19, 2010 at 1pm. Donations in lieu of flowers.

**MACLEAN** - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on February 8, 2010, Kate Effie (formerly of Cleat Barra) beloved sister of Lachie and Annag and the late Eoin devoted auntie and grand-auntie. Will be sorely missed R.I.P. Katie.

**McDONALD** - Natalie (née McCowan) aged 71 years. Husband Jim and daughters Lynne and Karen wish to announce the passing of Natalie on February 11, 2010 after a year long battle with cancer. Service at Falkirk Crematorium on Friday, February 19 at 12.30pm. Family flowers only, donations to Strathcarron Hospice welcome.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**CRAIG** - The family of the late David Craig wish to thank all friends for their help during David's illness. Thanks to Hamish Hoey and Son for all their kindness, also to all who attended at the church and for donations for Glencoe Mountain Rescue to the sum of £428.67.

**MACBAIN** - John, Donald and Sine would like to sincerely thank all family, friends and neighbours, for their loving support and many kind expressions of sympathy received in their recent very sad loss of their mum, Morag. Grateful thanks to Rev Fergus MacBain, Rev John Smith and Rev Christopher MacRae, all elders, presenters and helpers at Kilmuir Parish Church, Mike McFall, Undertaker and Alastair MacDonald, Undertaker, for their care and compassion and all who attended the evening service and came to pay their last respects at the church and graveside. Special thanks to Auntie Morag and family for so generously opening up their homes to us. Also special thanks to Uncle Iain and Aunt Margaret for their support and help while Mum was in hospital in Edinburgh. We would also like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to the Ladies Fellowship for their hospitality at Hosta Hall and to all those who contributed. Grateful thanks also to all who donated so generously to the retiring collection after the funeral service which collected £789.00, the proceeds of which will be divided between the Primary Biliary Cirrhosis Foundation for research into the cause of this chronic liver disease and the Scottish Liver Transplant Unit at the New Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, where Mum received such wonderful care from the medical teams.

**RUSSELL** - Ian Russell and family would like to thank friends and relations for the many cards and calls received since Mary's death which have been a great source of comfort and support. Thanks to Rev Dugald Cameron, organist and piper for a most sincere and loving service. Thanks to Lorn Medical Centre, Ward B, Lorn and Islands Hospital, Medico, Dunarros Mull, Oban Hospice and Macmillan and Marie Curie nurses for their care, kindness and attention during Mary's illness. Thanks to D and A Munn and the Rowantree Hotel for funeral arrangements and catering. Thank you to all who came to church and graveside to say goodbye to Mary. Retiring donations raised £785 for Marie Curie and Macmillan Nurses.

**WILSON** - The family of late John (Ian), thank all for their cards and kind wishes on the bereavement. Thanks to Dr Ellis, Mr Sedgwick and A&E staff at Belford Hospital, Helen and Douglas MacIntyre, Morag Muirhead for funeral service and a special thanks to Kate and Hugh.

**IN MEMORIAMS**

**CAMPBELL** - Remembering with love our devoted dad, John, who passed away February 20, 1986. Memories most precious. - Avril and John.

**CHISHOLM** - Remembering Auntie Marnie, who passed away on February 22, 2009. Deeply missed. - From her boys and their families.

**COOPER** - In loving memory of Billy, husband, dad and granddad who died on February 17, 2009. Sadly missed. - Kathryn and family.

**FORBES** - My darling mother, Rosina, died February 20, 1991, also my beloved father, Albert Francis, died October 25, 1991. Both loved and remembered every day. - By their loving daughter Annette.

**JOHNSTONE** - Precious memories of my dearly loved daughter, Catherine, who died on February 18, 2005. Missing you and loving you always. - Love Mum. Treasured memories. - Neil and Daniel. Loved and remembered every day. - Raema, Graham, Jamie and Paul.

**JOHNSTONE** - Precious memories of our dear mum and granny, Catherine, who passed away February 18, 2005. Always in our thoughts Forever in our hearts. - Catriona, Trevor, James and Natalie.

**JOHNSTONE** - Treasured memories of our dear mum and granny, Catherine. Forever in our thoughts today and always. - Gemma, and Simon. - Claire and Jamie

Sleep tight granny Breagha - Cara and Ryan x - Jamie, Rebecca, Emma and Amy x

**LAMONT** - In loving memory of my dear sister, Joanne, who passed away on February 17, 2009. - Loved and remembered always. - Ann.

**LAMONT** - Many happy memories of a much missed mum and granny, Joanne, died February 17, 2009. - John, Lisa and family.

**MACDONALD** - In loving memory of Alexander and Ian MacDonald, Uisken, Isle of Mull. Quietly today your memory we'll treasure Missing you always forgetting you never. - Inserted by loving family Mull and Oban.

**MACDONALD** - Treasured memories of our beloved mother, gran and great gran, Margaret MacDonald who passed away on February 21, 2005. Five years have passed since that sad day The mum we loved was called away A wonderful mum, so very rare Content in her home and always there She guided our paths and helped us along If we walk in her footsteps we'll never go wrong A smile for all, a heart of gold The best the world could ever hold Never selfish, always kind These are the memories she left behind Sorely missed, Remembering loved ones gone before - May, Margaret and Tearlach Main Road Farm, Balesphuil, Tiree

C'arson ma ta bhios sibh ri bron Mar dhream gun dochas mor Am bheil sa' bhas ach teachdair sith 'Gan gairm gu rioghachd na gloir Forever in our thoughts Mary Flora, Sandra and families.

**MACGILL** - In loving memory of Donald MacGill, a loving husband and father who passed away February 23, 1991. Always in our thoughts. - Nancy, Anne and Neil.

**MACKINNON** - In loving memory of Mary, a much loved wife, mum, mother-in-law and granny who passed away on February 20, 2007. Forever in our hearts - Willie, Fiona, Robert, Janet and families.

**McCLOUNNAN** - Precious memories of my dear dad, father-in-law, grandpa, David, who sadly passed away on February 17, 2006. Although we cannot see you You are with us all each day The love you gave us all in life Death cannot take away It broke our hearts to lose you But you did not go alone For part of us went with you The day God called you home We miss you Dad - we always will. - Christine, Lachie, David, Karen and Joe, South Uist.

**McKICHAN** - In memory of Annie, who passed away February 16, 2002. Never forgotten. - Cath, Annie, Robert and the kids.

**McKICHAN** - In memory of Don, who passed away February 15, 1998. Always in our thoughts Love always - Cath, Annie, Robert and the kids.

**McLENNAN** - In loving memory of our brother Willie who died February 24, 2008. Always on our minds Forever in our hearts. - Margaret, Elsie and families.

**SLOSS** - In loving memory of my dear dad, Davie, who died February 15, 2003. Miss you always. - Your loving son, Davie.

**ECCLESIASTICAL NOTICES**

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St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona  
Holy Eucharist..... 10:00

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**DEATHS**



Mary Cooke (née MacDougall)

Passed away suddenly and very peacefully at her home in Burnaby B.C. Canada on February 7, in her 97th year. Mary is survived by her adoring family, sons Michael (Terry) and Graham (Gayle) and grandchildren Marnie (Dave) and David all of Vancouver, Canada. She is also survived by her sister-in-law Anne MacDougall and nephew Fraser of New Westminster, Canada, brother Jim MacDougall of Fort William (Claggan) and a loving array of nieces and nephews in Scotland and England. She is predeceased by husband Wallace Cooke in 1986, originally of St Helens, Merseyside. She is also predeceased by sisters Bessie Livingstone and Jessie Melny, and brothers Jack, Eck, Hugh, Ken and Peter.

Mary was born in Kinlochleven on July 31, 1912, second child and eldest daughter of nine children born to Hugh and Barbara MacDougall. She married Wallace in Fort William in May 1944, and following the birth of their two sons, emigrated to Toronto, Canada in 1954, joining sister Jessie and brother Peter in Vancouver in 1956.

Mary was an uncommonly kind person all her life. She touched everyone she knew with her warmth, humour, cheerfulness and generosity. She was a wonderful listener and seemed to view all situations in life with a selfless compassion that became her trademark. She enjoyed exceptionally good health throughout her life and was able to return many times to Scotland for visits with family and friends. In 2002 she was honoured with a family celebration in Fort William marking her 90th birthday, accompanied by Graham and Gayle. She and granddaughter Marnie later returned to Scotland on holiday, which was another highlight of her long, happy life.

The Cooke family in Canada wishes to give special thanks to three dear Scottish Cousins who had remained exceptionally close to their "Auntie Mary" over the years - Gillian MacKinnon and her brother Allan Livingstone of Fort William and Carol Morrison of Edinburgh. Auntie Mary loved them as if they were her own children and their kindness and attentiveness were always a special joy to her.

A private celebration of Mary's life for family and friends who knew and loved her will be held in Vancouver later this week. In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory to the Scottish SPCA will be gratefully appreciated.

**Obituary**

**Joan Finlayson**

The passing of Joan Finlayson, 2 Heathmount Road, Kyle, at Broadford Hospital on January 12 followed a spell of illness dating back to last May. Joan was born in Lincoln in 1926. After leaving school she began work in the local sugar beet factory. She met Murdo, who was stationed near Lincoln with 617 Squadron (The Dambusters). They kept in touch after the war and were married in Lincoln in 1947.

They moved to Drumbuie where they had four children and then moved to Heathmount, Kyle, where Kenny completed their family. Like many families they supplemented their income by doing bed and breakfast and Joan had a brief stint of seasonal work at Kyle telephone exchange.

She had various interests, such as whist drives, painting and knitting, but her main pleasures were her garden and her dogs.

The loss of Murdo just over a year ago was a terrible blow to Joan. She had been devoted to him and had nursed him through many bouts of ill health.

Joan bore the pain and debility associated with her illness without complaint and was looked after by her family as well as various carers which enabled Joan to remain at home throughout most of the course of her illness.

Her funeral service in Kyle free Church was conducted by the Rev Roddie Rankin, assisted by the Rev J M MacDonald. Burial took place at Balmacara New Cemetery. A collection was made for Highland Hospice funds.

Sympathy is expressed to sons Vincent in Drumbuie; Kevin in Kyle; Kenny in Ose, Skye, and daughters Mrs Ann Black in Kirkhill and Mrs Murdina Wooley in Kyle.

**Obituary**

**Jim Nixon, Duirinish**

THE VILLAGERS of Duirinish were sorry to hear of the death of Jim Nixon in Stornoway. Jim lived for many years at Duirinish Station.

**Thought for week**

It all turned to . . .

WHEN something goes wrong, people sometimes say: 'It all turned to dust and ashes'. In other words, everything became a complete destructive disaster. It is true that all things, even things of beauty, pass and come to an end. As the poet TS Eliot once said: *Ash on an old man's sleeve Is all the ash the burnt roses leave Dust in the air suspended Marks the place where the story ended*

But the story does not actually end. Dust is where things come from and to which things eventually return. Those who study the 'Big Bang' theory about the creation of our Universe tell us that there is not one ounce of material more - or less, in the Universe now, than there was at the moment of creation. It is all still there and it is continually re-cycling. So, if you like, we are dust, we come from dust and we return to the dust.

But there is more to the story than just a re-cycling operation, wonderful symbol of eternal existence though that may be!

The Christmas story tell us that God, the Creator of the Universe, joined us in that dust as a helpless child in Bethlehem. He rejoiced to live a perfect human life among us in that dust. He spoke with us, lived and worked with us. He shared our joys. He suffered and wept with us and knew death just as we do. As the Man/God, he understood us in every aspect of our humanity. By being with us, he hallowed our dust.

Yesterday was Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. This is the period in the Christian year, in which we remember the last weeks of Jesus' life

Yesterday, as a symbol of repentance or 'turning to God', many Christians knelt in churches throughout the world to receive on their foreheads a grey cross of ash and to hear the priest say:

'Remember that Thou art dust and unto dust Thou shalt return'

These are sobering words, were it not for the Cross and Empty Tomb.

But we can thank God that, on Easter Morning, by rising from death, Jesus turned our dust to gold. He overcame death and all that separates us from God so that, if we wish to do so, each one of us can share every part of our human lives from birth to death and beyond death with him. Because of him, our lives in the dust are precious and there is nothing to fear.

J.M.M. Cathedral of St John The Divine, Oban

**Obituary**

**Jean Ellice - Lady Laird of Glengarry**

Born: October 16, 1933 Died: January 13, 2010

JEAN Ellice, who has died aged 76, was the Lady Laird of Glengarry who lived the life of a pre-war country gentlewoman, defying the encroachment of the 21st century.

An excellent horsewoman and dog lover, she relished country pursuits and conformed to the traditional role of benevolent Laird, just as generations of her family had done before her as the area's main landowners since 1840.

She became the Lady Laird by agreement with the estate trustees after the death of her father in the late 1980s. His heir, her brother Sandy, had died in his teens and by rights the title should have passed down the male line then to her cousin Christopher Ellice. He now inherits the estate which encompasses some of Scotland's most iconic scenery.

Born in Kensington, London, to Russell and Christina Ellice, she was tutored at home at Aberchaldar Lodge on the family's estate, close to Loch Ness where, as a teenager, she said she had a sighting of the monster as she walked the lochside with her mother in 1948. After coming out and doing the season, she went down to Winterbourne Gunner in Wiltshire where she became an accomplished dressage competitor, winning numerous local competitions.

She moved to Moulin in Perthshire, renting a cottage until her mother died and she returned to Aberchaldar to help her ailing father run the estate. A bungalow was built for her in the grounds of Aberchaldar Lodge, where Bonnie Prince Charlie assembled his army in 1745, where she lived the rest of her life.

The estate is steeped in history and Ellice, who never married, viewed it as her duty to ensure she maintained the Laird's responsibilities to the land and the local community.

Her forebears came from Aberdeenshire and made a fortune trading in America and Canada, mostly in fur. In the 19th century the Rt Hon

Edward Ellice, known as The Bear thanks to his fur connections, bought first the Glenquoich Estate and then Glengarry, creating the Ellice Estate Village to help improve the lives of locals.

Much of Invergarry village, including the school, church, hospital and timber works, was built by the family.

Her father gifted the village shinty field to the community where the Invergarry Highland Games are held each July. It was there the Lady Laird held her annual dog show, to greater success than she achieved at Crufts, one of the highlights of her year, where she showed her Border terriers - her great love, along with her Highland ponies.

She was a no-nonsense, stickler for tradition and looking after the community where she sat on the village hall committee. She also held an annual thank you party for her staff at Christmas, keeping up the Victorian estate tradition.

'She had a heart of gold in some respects,' said her cousin Christopher. 'She had very much a pre-Second World War attitude to life which is what her parents had.'

She also supported the retention of the countryside in its original state, resisting afforestation but taking care of the land and its lochs. And she was enthusiastic about traditional country pursuits especially fishing although, while her mother had been a deerstalker capable of coming off the hill looking immaculate in soaking plus fours, Ellice did not inherit her panache and was happier in thick stockings and tweed skirts.

She also loved gardening and opened Aberchaldar Lodge gardens to the public each summer.

'She was devoted to the cause of the village and the community,' said her cousin Joan Whitmore, 'that was her main purpose in life; to carry on, as it were, in the old days when people looked after the community.'

**Obituary**

**Jeremy Smith**

Born : September 12, 1974 Died : February 8, 2010.

Jeremy Peter Smith died, aged 35 years, unexpectedly and peacefully in his sleep at his home in Stonegate, West Sussex, on Monday, February 8. He was the proprietor of Silver Sea Press and editor of its magazine, Scottish Islands Explorer. The publication had been started on Fair Isle in January 2000 and he purchased the title in December 2006.

He grew up in Felpham, Bognor Regis, attended Felpham Community College and took a First Class Honours degree in History at University College London. Musical talents, which he shared with his twin-sister, Rachael, were evident from their early childhood. He played the violin in the National Children's Orchestra and also gained top distinctions for both piano and saxophone.

Another childhood passion involved rocks and minerals and this developed into a love of the countryside. However, after graduation he was drawn to publishing and eventually joined the Tunbridge Wells based Tick Tock Books Ltd. Here his skills as a writer and editor became evident with responsibility for numerous publications connected with the children's highly-illustrated, non-fiction market.

He was promoted to Managing Editor at Tick Tock, but missed the demands and creativity of writing. In June 2006 he joined Franklin Watts, the imprint of Hachette Children's Books, as an editor working at their offices in the Euston Road, London. This led to his resourcing and commissioning over a hundred titles spread over a number of series.

Jeremy and his wife, Jo, enjoyed the Scottish islands and chose to marry on Rousay in Orkney. An intention was to move to Jura in the Inner Hebrides, where they acquired a plot of land and where eventually Scottish Islands Explorer could have been based. The publication, a 52-page full-colour bi-monthly, grew in circulation for he had, as with his numerous books, an eye for what appealed.

Although a team-player at work, he was not a person to promote either himself or his achievements. His senses of humour and perspective often involved keeping others guessing. The profound sense of shock and sorrow about his early death was accompanied by a feeling of astonishment as to what he had achieved during a short lifetime. He leaves a wife, both parents and three sisters.

John Humphries

### New players join league

#### Ten-pin bowling

AFTER the second week of the ten-pin bowling singles leagues at the Nevis Centre five new players have joined, making a total of 41.

The points from the first week have been reset to accommodate this.

Chasing trophies, provided by Robert Cairns, in the handicap division Hazel White the leader after week two with 70 points followed by Robert Cairns on 67.

Top handicap score came from Gus Fraser with games of 150 and 166 giving him a total with handicap of 457 - the highest two game series so far this season moving him sharply up the table from 27th to 9th.

In the scratch league, now sponsored by Nevis Radio, the leader is Tony Whitelocke with a maximum 82 points followed by Colin Pinkett with 73.

Top scratch game (190) and two game series (326) went to Tony Whitelocke - both season highs so far.

One other score of note was Pam Weller's 175.



Above: Davie MacLean loses out to Stornoway's Ryan MacKenzie in the line out. 10\_f08rugby02



Left: Lochaber's Kenny Turnbull takes a step to deceive his opponent. 10\_f08rugby01

# Points shared in nail-biting draw

#### Lochaber RFC 25 Stornoway 25

LOCHABER shared the points with visitors Stornoway in a nail-biting 25-all draw at Banavie on Saturday.

Lochaber were bolstered by strength of Findlay Taylor in the front row and the return of the injured Ross Wallace at scrum half. The home side missed the penetrating running of Neil MacPhee in midfield but Rory Mackay did a sterling job as his replacement.

Youngster Mark Ball made his debut for Lochaber at centre in the second half.

Stornoway travelled with a strong team for their last away match of the season - perhaps something to do with a night out on the mainland!

They had a simple but effective game plan - hit up the middle through the big forwards and then spin it

#### Rugby

wide to the wings. Lochaber started brightly threatening the visitors try-line on several occasions in the first 10 minutes.

However, they failed to turn this early pressure into points and Stornoway were first on the scoreboard with a well-aimed penalty kick at goal. Lochaber levelled with a penalty, but then were caught napping by a change in tactics. Stornoway moved the ball quickly from the scrum for a simple switch in mid-field and the centre was scampering in under the posts.

Lochaber rallied and fought back with two tries before half time.

The first was scored by Kenny Turnbull making a break down the narrow side with captain Ally Rivett screaming for the ball

outside him drawing the defence. The captain scored his try a few minutes later crashing over near the posts. David Maclean converted to give the home side a 15 - 10 lead at half time.

Lochaber's ill discipline at the ruck cost them the lead in the second half. First, Stornoway kicked a penalty then they scored a push over try when Lochaber had a man in the sin-bin for 10 minutes. Lochaber fought back to level the scores with a try for scrum-half Ross Wallace from a catch and drive at the line-out. Maclean kicked the conversion to put the home side's nose in front.

He stretched the lead to 25 - 20 with a penalty kick in the dying minutes of the game. However, with seconds left on the clock Stornoway fought their way back up

field from the re-start and finished with a try in the corner for their winger. A draw was a fair result at the end of a very evenly matched encounter.

Lochaber have another home match next Saturday against RAF Kinloss.

This fixture has been postponed twice already because of the weather but the rugby club committee are hopeful that this weekend will be third time lucky. Kick-off is at 3pm. Scotland's Six Nations match against Italy will be shown in the clubhouse after the match.

Lochaber squad: I Smith; C Moorhouse; F Taylor; A Revitt; W Stewart; C Mercer; S Whitaker; A Mercer; R Wallace; K Turnbull; D Duncan; B Macraill; R Mackay; K Garrick; G Hendrie; E Jamieson; M Ball; D Maclean.



The charity fundraisers from Ayr Sea Angling Club. 16\_006sh01

## Charity fundraisers hope to hook in £1,500

KIND-hearted anglers from Ayr Sea Angling Club will host a boat fishing competition on Loch Etive this Saturday in aid of the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI).

The group aims to raise in excess of £1,500 and is preparing to welcome around 20 small boats and kayaks from as far afield as Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Troon.

Organiser Gordon Goldie said: 'Hopefully a representative from the RNLI will be attending to

#### Angling

receive the cheque.

#### Fun

'We are not imposing too many rules on people but silly hats are compulsory - we want this to be a fun event!

There will be lots of prizes and a trophy has been donated, as well as goody bags and prizes for all the kids that take part.'

The event was scheduled to go ahead on January 16 but it was postponed because of the icy conditions.



Young skiers from Lady Lovat Primary School at Nevis range. 10\_f08ski01

## Pupils enjoy Snowsports School fun

NEVIS Range has been running a Snowsports School for children from Lochaber primary schools for the past five weeks, as some of the best ski-ing conditions for years continue.

Lady Lovat Primary School, Morar were the latest group of youngsters to enjoy their ski sessions, joining Ardgor and Invergarry pupils for a day on the slopes at the popular winter sports centre.

Around 300 primary six and seven pupils from 15 local schools have been given a day's tuition as part of the ski centre's plan to boost the number of young skiers locally.

Nevis Range marketing manager Heather Negus said: 'The children all have a great time and love getting out of lessons for a day, and many drag their parents back at weekends. Kids write thank you letters to the instructors at the end of their block.'



Lochaber Phoenix boxers and coaches Vince Lopez, Charlie Anderson and Niall Clark team up with Peter Harrison, front right. 10\_f08box01

## Club packs a punch with coach

PETER Harrison ABS LTD Scottish development coach paid a visit to Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club last week to praise progress made by the club as it enters the latter half of its second season in competition.

Peter has just moved premises to a brand new £300,000 state-of-the-art gym in the east end of Glasgow and it is from this base that his remit as a coach with over 30 years experience is to spot and help

#### Boxing

nurture any potential talent for the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

With this in mind, the Lochaber coaches were delighted that he highlighted the progress of the rapidly improving 13 year-old Chris Bradley amongst many of the other boxers at the club.

As a multi-titled amateur boxer himself, who also

boxed at a Commonwealth Games, Peter is in a highly qualified position for this job as he has coached more champions than any other current Scottish coach.

Lochaber Phoenix coach Niall Clark told The Oban Times: 'The local club can take great heart from the praise lavished upon them from such an esteemed source and it bodes well for the future of the club and its enthusiastic boxers.'

## Fort getting their act together slowly

#### Football

FURTHER evidence that Fort William FC are slowly getting their act together came at Wick on Saturday as the Lochaber men sought to spring clear of the bottom three in the Highland League.

Fort kept a slick Wick side at bay for a full 75 minutes, despite losing defender and captain Andy 'Zoomer' Martin inside two minutes.

Sixteen-year-old Ian Foggo replaced the injured skipper and went onto have a good first half.

Both teams passed up chances to open the scoring. Fort's Michael Gillespie coming closest with a fine header which clattered the bar.

Wick's Farquhar headed narrowly over, but back came Fort and Sam Urquhart was desperately unlucky to

see his 25-yarder flash just over.

Seconds before the break Wick's forwards dithered in front of goal when it looked easier to score then Jonathan Hewitt brought the best out of keeper Bokas at the other end.

Fort keeper Campbell somehow clawed away a downward Shearer header on 60 minutes to keep Fort in the hunt, but Wick broke through with 15 minutes left when Weir fired home.

#### Quick

The North men made it two in quick time when Gunn drilled home, then Allan made it three near the end despite Campbell's gallant effort.

Fort were due to host Nairn County last night and face

Inverurie Locos at Claggan Park on Saturday.

Fort boss Calum MacLean told *The Oban Times* Andy Martin's injury could keep him sidelined for a while.

#### Damage

'He may have cartilage damage to his knee and we will have to get him looked at,' said MacLean.

'Simon Shields played with the reserves on Saturday and we may be looking at bringing him back in.'

Fort team against Wick: John Campbell, Michael Ellis, Richard Finnis, Sam Urquhart, Michael Gillespie, Jonathan Hewitt, Martin Kerr, Darren Quigg, Andy Martin, Graeme Bamber, Stephen Hendry.

Subs: Ian Foggo, Andy Maclean, Drew Ferguson.

## Polevaulter a step closer to Games

A FORMER Lochaber High School pupil and Lochaber Athletic Club runner is a step closer to fulfilling his dream of representing Scotland at the 2010 Commonwealth games in Delhi.

Polevaulter Alasdair Strange broke the Scottish indoor record and set a native best to win the at the recent indoor Scottish Championships at the Kelvin Hall, clearing 5.16 metres to put him within touching distance of the Games' qualifying mark of 5.20metres.

Although selection is primarily based on outdoor performances, selectors use indoor marks as valuable supplementary evidence in deciding whether to pick an athlete for the Commonwealth Games team.

Speaking after his triumph, Alasdair, aged 26, said: 'I really wanted 5.21 but I think I got a bit too excited, I just wasn't connecting at that height.'

'I've got the UK Championships next weekend and my training suggest I can do it. I have just moved up to a longer pole and this takes some getting used to with different timing and I have had to take time out of training to do exams at university.'

The 5.16 metre clearance is the third highest height



Scaling the heights: polevaulter Alasdair Strange.

ever by a Scottish athlete and only 5cm below the all time Scottish record set by Graham Eggleton in 1982.

#### Training

Alasdair, from Fort William, is currently training at Loughborough in England with coach Alan Richardson, the England Athletics national mentor for pole vault and jumps. He needs two clearances of 5.20 metres outdoors to qualify him for the Delhi games, which run from October 3 to 14.

Alasdair followed up his Scottish success with a highly creditable fifth at the Aviva World Trials and UK Championships at Sheffield on Sunday, again clearing 5.16 metre.

## Get involved in 'It's a Knockout'

SPORTLOCHABER is calling on all clubs to enter at least one team in an inter-club It's a Knockout competition at the BA Club park, Fort William, on Saturday May 29 from 12pm.

The event has space for up to 36 teams, each numbering between six and ten of mixed ages, although there is a minimum height restriction of one metre. All entry forms and fees must be returned by Monday March 1.

Participating clubs can also book a free designated area to promote their sport and/or club and should indicate on the entry form if they need a plot so organisers can plan out the ground. All team participants will get a free ticket to the fun evening event in the Nevis Centre at 7pm the same day.

All clubs affiliated to Sportlochaber will get free entry into the Sportlochaber 'Ready, Get Fit, Get Healthy!' booklet, will be distributed on the Gala Day and thereafter through schools, leisure centres, sports shops and tourist information centres.

Sportlochaber will host an awards ceremony at the fun night to honour sporting effort and achievement throughout Lochaber.

For details visit www.itsaknockout.com and fill out the attached entry form.

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Squash league

Squash

THE RIO Tinto Alcan Squash League has a new leader after Building Restoration Co. beat B&H 10-8 in the head to head last Wednesday, giving them a two point lead.

BRC's Gary Davidson was out for revenge on B&H's Bryan Wilson after Bryan beat him 3-0 in the last encounter keeping the only 100 per cent winning record going.

The game started tensely with both players making mistakes in the opening exchanges before Gary took the initiative, eventually taking the match 3-1.

In the Oban derby Simmers & Co ran out easy winners with Oban Filling Station again missing Alan Moore.

Simmers & Co player Neil Fraser beat Colin Macniven 13-11.

Islay Golf Club

Golf

WINTER League Week 8: 1 Ruairidh MacIntyre 36pts; 2 Kenny Gillies 33pts; 3 John Campbell 32pts. Css 70.

Magic 2s - Ruairidh MacIntyre.



## Fort fill the trophy cabinet - at the double

Fort William beat local rivals Lochaber Camanachd 3-0 to win the Torlundy Shield at An Aird on Sunday. Goals from Josh McGee, Ryan Campbell and captain Donald Wilson ensured victory in the competitive and enjoyable match between the clubs' reserve sides. Manager Davie Stafford said: 'It was a good game and both young teams showed a great deal of promise.' The victory completed a double for Fort after the first team beat Kilmallie 4-1 the day before at Canal Parks. Fort scorers were Gary Innes (2), Gordy MacKinnon and James Clark. Kilmallie's counter from Peter MacIntyre raised a few cheers - he is the son of Fort's first team coach, also Peter!

## Top shinty job up for grabs

Shinty

APPLICATIONS are being taken for the top shinty coaching post in Scotland.

The Camanachd Association invited applications for the position of head coach of the Senior National Squad last week, following former Head Coach Fraser Mackenzie's departure at the end of last season.

The coach will be responsible for the selection and preparation of the Senior National Squad for the annual Shinty/Hurling International against Ireland, which this year takes place on Saturday October 30 at Croke Park, Dublin.

The successful candidate will also be in charge of the proposed home leg of the International series, to take place in Inverness.

It is anticipated that this appointment will be for two years to bring it into line with appointed assistant coach positions.

If appropriate, candidates will be invited for a short interview. Closing date for applicants is February 26 at noon.

# Teams get tough on Valentine's Day

THERE was plenty love lost between the teams in the Oban Express Primary Football Senior League on Valentine's Sunday.

Some tough tackling and mean defending made for compelling fixtures, which also had their fair share of goals.

Cobras started off the day in a commanding position in the league and enhanced their standing with 2-0 victories over both Spartans and Oban Saints, with Zak Straub scoring in each game.

Battling

But they lost their 100 per cent record when they came unstuck to a battling young Saints Boys side who put in an excellent defensive display to keep out the free scoring Cobras and record a draw.

Match of the day was between the Saints Boys and the Warriors from Lochgilhead with the sides sitting second and third in the league table respectively.

It was a single goal that settled the game with Craig



Saints Boys (blue and white) gained a draw against the bigger Cobras team.

Young of the Warriors rising unchallenged at the back post to nod home the only goal of the game to see the Warriors leapfrog the Saints Boys into second position.

The Warriors also found the going tough against Spartans who had goalkeeper James McKenzie inspired form but even he couldn't

keep out Ciaran McPhee's winner in the second half.

Rout

A four-goal rout of Oban Saints completed a good day for the Warriors but the young Saints Boys kept on their shirt tails with a win at Tralee.

Player of the day was the Lochnell goalkeeper Eion

Smith who went through three games without conceding a single goal but in their match against Stoddarts his oppsite number Jack Strachan kept out the Lochnell forwards for a share of the spoils.

Lochnell got the result against Spartans thanks to a Euan Gibb double but again

failed to score at Stoddy Boys for another goalless draw.

Stoddy Boys also never lost a goal on the day but failed to find the net against Appin who had Conner Kerr to thank in between the sticks to keep them at bay.

Appin did go down 2-0 to Stoddarts who also recorded a 3-0 win over Tralee to complete the day.

Next week the juniors turn out at the high school pitch in the league.

Request

A request for players has been made by Oban Galaxy, who find themselves short of numbers with some players having left.

The Galaxy are predominantly a primary two side but would welcome any players in the age group of primary one to primary four to help keep them going.

Anyone who is interested should turn up on Sunday at 9.45am ready to play and ask for either Stuart, the Galaxy manager, or Brian Forgivevie the junior league co-ordinator.



## Oban Celtic are up for the cup

The victorious Oban Celtic team are pictured after retaining the Robert Wylie Memorial Cup. Celtic defeated Strachur 5-1 to keep the trophy. 07\_07shinty05

## Primary indoor league winners decided

TWO primary shinty teams will represent Oban at a national competition next month.

St Columba and Rockfield, who are in the top two places in the First Shinty

Shinty

'A' League, will travel to Inverness on March 20 to take part in the National First Shinty contest. After three rounds,

Lochnell lie top of the 'B' League with 12 wins, while Taynuilt and Dunollie are tied second with eight wins apiece. Rock Rovers lead the 'C' league with 71 points.

The local outdoor sixes competition has been scheduled for Mossfield on Sunday, May 16.



League A winners St Columba's. 17\_07indoor 03



League B winners Lochnell. 17\_07indoor 02

# Spot the

# SHINTY BALL

## Competition

**WIN £1100**

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...

**All you have to do**

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void. Prizes will be shared between those submitting correct entries.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

**Easy to enter**

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to reach 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

**Competition Rules**

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery. The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.

The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.

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I enclose £1 (note) for 20 crosses (tick box)  The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules.

How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1.

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Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

## Argyll prop gets Les Bleus

Debutant insists defeat was valuable lesson

AN ARGYLL student made his international debut when he turned out for Scottish Universities against France.

As the senior side went down 18-9 to Les Bleus, Ardcattan's Michael MacDonald and his fellow Scottish students were simply outclassed in a 47-0 defeat.

But the prop said he enjoyed the experience and learnt a lot from the game.

'It was pretty bruising up front and the French were very slick,' said Michael.

'Every one of their players was attached to a professional club and some had playing experience in the French top 14 league - so we were basically taking on a team of professionals!'

Michael, who studies journalism and sports studies at Stirling University, had to go through four different trials to get through to the



Michael MacDonald

team and from 120 trialists, the players were whittled down to a squad of 22.

The match was played at Watsonians' ground, Myreside, in Edinburgh and the Scottish players wore shirts presented by former Scotland international and British Lion, Ian McLauchlan.

Michael explained that

the Scots were in the game for the first half-hour of the match before the superior fitness of the French squad became a factor.

'In the first half we were right in the game for about half an hour at 8-0, we then missed three kicks in front of goal.

They scored a breakaway try and led 16-0 at half time and after the break they turned the screw and scored a further five tries but it was a fantastic opportunity and I learnt a lot from our far superior opponents.'

Michael, who has played for Oban Lorne on numerous occasions, played for Scottish Exiles under-16 and under-19 team and was named in the Scotland under-18 squad, but never won a cap because of injury.

He currently plays for Stirling County, who are top of Premier Division Two and are looking good for promotion.



## Saints Ladies feel the full force of Falkirk

THE newly-formed Oban Saints Ladies team played host to Falkirk Ladies in a challenge match last Sunday. The game, which was the Oban ladies' second competitive fixture since forming, took place on the 3g community pitch at Oban High School. Unfortunately the local side were soundly beaten by a well organised Falkirk team, who boasted a Scottish under-19 international on their team sheet. Falkirk, who are attached to the SPL side and who play in the Scottish Women's Football League first division run a number of female teams from under-11 right up to the senior ladies. Oban Saints coach Chris Picken knows he has a lot of work to do to get his team up to the standard required to play at that level, but is confident that the team will improve as long as the girls keep turning up for training on a weekly basis. He said he is still looking to strengthen his squad before the start of the league programme in March. All games will be played on a Sunday, so if you are interested in joining the club please come along to one of the Wednesday evening training sessions. 07\_08ladies01

## Tides

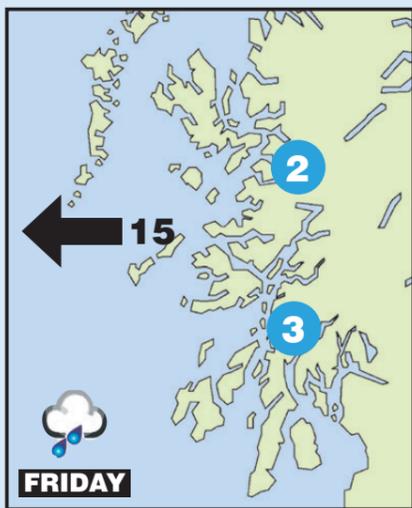
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday, February 18, 2010 are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	01.54 1.1 07.57 3.8 14.14 1.2 19.58 3.7	
Fri	02.15 1.2 08.23 3.7 14.40 1.3 20.27 3.6	
Sat	02.44 1.3 08.54 3.5 15.16 1.5 21.02 3.4	
Sun	03.22 1.5 09.33 3.3 16.06 1.7 21.45 3.2	
Mon	04.16 1.7 10.30 3.0 17.18 1.8 22.47 3.0	
Tues	05.53 1.9 12.30 2.8 18.48 1.8 *** **	
Wed	00.56 2.9 07.46 1.8 14.59 3.0 20.10 1.6	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrihaig	-5.35	Lochboisdale	+0.30
Campbeltown	-5.30	Mallaig	+0.25
Crinan	-0.47	Portree	+0.55
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Tobermory	+0.16
		Dover	+5.30

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## the weather

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**Thursday**  
Grey cloud during the day, which should partly clear by the evening. Winds light easterly. Temperatures 0°C to 4°C

**Friday**  
Argyll can expect light rain throughout the day with wind speed picking up, while the Highlands will be cold but bright. Temperatures 2°C to 4°C.

**Saturday**  
Sunny intervals at the start of the weekend will make way for sleet showers and rain on Saturday night and into Sunday. Winds moderate easterly. Temperatures 1°C to 4°C.

### Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist - Calm to moderate  
Oban to Coll/Tiree - As above  
Kennacraig to Islay - As above

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## The kings of the castle

Scottish Amateur League  
Premier Division  
Castlemilk 1  
Oban Saints 4

BURNHILL Sports Centre, Rutherglen, was the venue for this premier division league match and the teams could have no complaints as the playing surface was in excellent condition after the recent bad weather.

The game started at a cracking pace and it was the home side who had the better of the early exchanges. The Oban side gradually came into the game and took the lead in the 14th minute when Donald Campbell made progress up the left flank before crossing a dangerous ball into the box for Craig MacEwan who should have scored, but the home keeper Jim McKenna made a fine save with his legs. Fortunately for Saints the ball broke kindly for Sean Ford and he stroked it into the net from close range to make the score 1-0.

The visitors created a great chance in the 36th minute when Myles McAuley and Asen Gaydardzhiev combined to set up Donald Campbell and his superbly

curled right foot effort went inches wide of the post.

Donald had another similar effort a few minutes later, but he might have been better squaring the ball to Sean Ford who looked to be in a good goalscoring position.

Just on the half time whistle Saints keeper Graham Douglas was relieved to see a fine effort from home striker Ross Nicol go inches wide of his left hand post.

The half time interval arrived with Saints holding on to a slender 1-0 lead.

Castlemilk drew level in the 52nd minute when Saints got caught napping at a short corner. The ball was crossed into the box and wasn't cleared properly and it fell kindly for Thomas Finnegan who thumped it home off the underside of the bar to make the score 1-1.

The visitors were shocked at this reversal, but they never panicked and kept knocking the ball about and in the 59th minute they retook the lead when Sean Ford sent a great pass through the middle for Craig MacEwan who raced goalwards before sliding the ball past the helpless Jim

McKenna to make the score 2-1.

Four minutes later the visitors had increased their lead to 3-1 after some good play in midfield from Sean Ford and Myles McAuley. The ball was fed out to Asen,



Sean Ford

on the right wing and the Bulgarian, who had a quiet game by his standards, fired over a superb cross for his strike partner Allan MacKay to head the ball into the net.

Any chance the home side had of staging a comeback ended with 10 minutes remaining when midfielder Derek Hewitt was shown his second yellow card of the

game reducing his team to 10 men.

With three minutes left the icing was put on the cake as far as Saints were concerned when young Mattie Rippon, who had come on earlier along with Ross Maitland, raced from the half way line leaving three Castlemilk defenders in his wake before thumping a tremendous right foot drive past the helpless Jim McKenna to make the final score 4-1.

Manager Iain Jackson was delighted with the result and performance of his team. He said: 'I thought we played well against a good Castlemilk team and to score four goals away from home will do our confidence the world of good.'

'We defended well when we had to and unlike last week against Cambria, when the chances came along we took them.'

This Saturday Saints play host to Postal United in a league game. The match will be played at Glencruitten with a 2pm kick-off.

If Glencruitten is unplayable the game may get transferred to the 3g community pitch at Oban High School.

## Early try wins Argyll derby

Friendly  
Oban Lorne 19  
Helensburgh 10

A TRY within the first minute set the tone for an Oban Lorne victory over Helensburgh on Saturday at Glencruitten.

From the kick-off the ball was fed to Lorne's Alex Cadzow and he ran in the first of his side's three tries.

Oban's dominance continued throughout the half and there was no surprise when the second try came.

It was a try made in Taynuilt; Mark McTighe broke from a ruck, through a maze of players, before feeding the pacy Allan Beaton, who left the full-back in his wake for the score.

Beaton, who was playing in his first game of the season, converted his own try.

The winger scored another try on the stroke of half-time. Alex Cadzow side-stepped his man before feeding Beaton and his chip-and-chase gave him acres of space to touch down for Oban's third try.

Rugby

Again, Beaton converted to give Oban a 19-0 lead at half time.

However, if Oban found the first half easy, they were in for a rude awakening in the second half.

Some scrappy play allowed the visitors into the game and Helensburgh scored a try after stealing lineout ball on Oban's five-metre line.

On the hour mark Helensburgh scored again; a charged down clearance resulted in a series of rucks that Oban tried to defend but to no avail.

By this point Helensburgh had gone down to 14 men after one of their wingers broke his nose.

With the Helensburgh side low on numbers and with the Wales versus Scotland match about to kick off, both sides agreed to finish the match early, taking advantage of the 'friendly' nature of the fixture.

Oban Lorne return to competitive action away to Strathclyde Police on Saturday at Lochinch.



Proud Ryan Morrison (back right) from Oban was delighted to be a flag bearer for his beloved Rangers as they beat St Johnstone in the CIS Cup semi-final at Hampden. Ryan's cousin, Kieran, was also on duty at the game as a mascot for the 'Gers.

## Old Anniesland awaits Argyll schoolboys

OBERMORY U-15s are looking forward to their Brewin Dolphin Schools Bowl quarter-final against Langholm tomorrow (Friday).

This match has been delayed due to the winter weather and will be played at the neutral ground of Old Anniesland in Glasgow, kick off 1pm.

The club held a very successful auction night with

Rugby

over £1,200 being raised for club funds.

The club would like to thank the many local businesses and club members who generously donated items for the auction. The event was well supported and equally well run by club members Laura Monsalve, Audrey Barr and Sandy Rokitta.

## Oban Saints youth results

Football

LAST Saturday's results: Blair Thistle 0, Under 13s 9. Saints goalscorers were Jamie Easton (3), Conor Howe (2), Douglas Tyrrell-Bunge (2), Adam MacIntyre and Ryan Gillies. The Renton Youth v Under 15s game was postponed due to a frozen pitch.

This Saturday the Under 13s travel to take Blantyre to take on Mill United in the last 32 of the Regional Cup. The Under 15s travel to take on Helensburgh.