

# The Oban Times

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### Surgeon's hearing postponed

A FITNESS to practice hearing into a surgeon who left swabs inside an Oban patient following an appendectomy has been postponed.

Mr Ahmed Abd El Nasser Hassan Khattab was due to attend a Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (MPTS) hearing last week, after being accused of two incidents in Argyll in July 2011. A request to postpone the hearing was accepted by MPTS, with a hearing date to be confirmed in the near future.

Currently suspended, Khattab was accused of failing to provide good clinical care between July 3 and July 22 2011, while working as a locum consultant surgeon for NHS Highland.

The *Oban Times* has learned that one of the incidents in that period, when a swab was left inside a patient, occurred at Oban, Lorn and Islands Hospital. He is further accused of failing to get proper consent for an endoscopy for another patient.

Khattab further faces charges that in 2008, while working in the same role in Whiteabbey Hospital, Newtownabbey, he neglected colonoscopy patients.

### Craft brewery's £2m boost

A CRAFT brewery in Argyll has secured £2 million worth of investment as it seeks to build a new factory and boost production.

Fyne Ales, in Cairndow, will convert a sheep shed into a state-of-the-art brewery as it embarks on an expansion plan designed to increase productivity and profits.

The company's current £1.6m annual turnover is expected to more than double in the next few years to more than £5m, while 12 new full time jobs are to be created.

An award-winning brewery that can produce up to 30 varieties of beer, Fyne Ales currently produces 90 barrels of beer a week, which will grow to 120 barrels a day in five years.

This will allow Fyne Ales to meet growing demand in Scotland, as well as international markets.

Glasgow firm CBES got the brewery build underway this month, though local contractors will be used.



James Wylie is the new head teacher at Rockfield Primary School. 16\_08wylie01

## New head teacher heads home to Rockfield

THE NEW head teacher at one of Argyll's largest primary schools said the appeal of coming 'home' to Oban was a major factor in his move.

James Wylie took the helm at Rockfield Primary School earlier this month, succeeding Jack Degnan. He comes to Oban from Kirn Primary School, near Dunoon, and said he was thrilled to be at the school his parents attended.

The 38-year-old said: 'All my family are from Oban and I went to Park Primary School before moving to Ardfern. It's nice to be back.'

'The homecoming was part of the appeal of the job - generations of my family went to Rockfield - but the school has such a strong

tradition too. I was elated when I was told I had got the job. I had a strong allegiance to Kirn Primary but there was also a lot of excitement about a new chapter in my life.'

'The Rockfield staff and parents have been very welcoming and I feel there is a real buzz about the place.'

#### Ethos

One of Mr Wylie's first tasks will be to carry out an audit to create a clear 'ethos' within the school, something that will require consultation with staff and parents.

'We need to find out what we want the school to stand for,' Mr Wylie said. 'Rockfield already has values and aims but we want to be clear about what Oban wants Rockfield to be.'

'If you get that right, and everyone is buying into it, the school has a clear direction.'

After teaching in Stoneyburn and Lintithgow, Mr Wylie took up the head teacher's post at Craignish at the age of 28.

As a young head teacher he often sought advice from his predecessor.

'Jack Degnan was someone people looked up to and he was very successful here. To follow in his footsteps is an honour.'

Argyll and Bute Council's lead councillor for Education Aileen Morton said: 'I'm delighted that James Wylie will be staying in Argyll and Bute and bringing his considerable enthusiasm and commitment to the pupils of Rockfield Primary School in Oban.'

## Council refutes high school teacher shortage figures

ARGYLL and Bute Council has refuted leaked figures showing a teaching post at Oban High School (OHS) has been vacant for more than two years.

Figures obtained by *The Oban Times* from a council source show that the school had eight vacancies as of the middle of January, three of which were as a result of secondments.

One post has been available for more than 25 months and another for 13 as the problems

attracting teachers to the school continue.

The leaked table also shows that with eight vacancies, OHS has more posts requiring to be filled than any other in Argyll and Bute.

However, the local authority says the table is inaccurate.

A spokesman said: 'No position has been vacant for two years. All vacancies for the current session at OHS were filled before August. Since then

some staff have moved on and these vacated positions have been advertised.'

'OHS has no teacher secondments outwith the school.'

He added: 'OHS has the highest number of teacher vacancies due to the council approving an increase in staffing in November 2013. This does not affect the current timetable - these are extra staff to increase pupil choice for next session.'

Councillor Louise Glen-Lee, who has said a lack of housing is the main cause for teacher shortages, said: 'The parent council has been excellent at holding the local authority to account on this and they have support throughout politics, all the way up to Michael Russell MSP.'

'The local authority has to look holistically into how to bring people here to get them to live and work in the area.'

# More families speak out over hospital care failings

## NHS reassurances still lacking

AN OBAN family who watched their mother go through 'horrendous and unnecessary pain' during her final days say they're still waiting on assurances from NHS Highland.

Meanwhile, more families have come forward to express concerns they had with palliative care in Argyll after being inspired by the Braidwood family to speak out.

Siblings Dawn, Zoe and Matt watched in horror last year as their mother, Mabel Braidwood, was left screaming in agony because doctors at Oban, Lorn and Islands Hospital botched her pain medication following her move into palliative care.

She passed away a year ago next week after eventually being sedated to cope with the pain of the pancreatic cancer she was suffering from.

The family chose to speak to *The Oban Times* last month after struggling to get answers from the health board about how they were going to prevent such incidents happening again. Despite some progress, they are still waiting for answers.

Dawn said: 'We were sent an action plan regarding palliative and cancer care, which was only sent to the family after *The Oban Times* had printed our story. Most of these actions were completed in August last year.'

'We haven't heard anything else. We were promised a meeting with Veronica Kennedy [locality manager]. I spoke to her secretary but I've had no word back and no arrangements for a meeting.'

But the family has received 'amazing support' from the community.

Dawn, of Coe Gardens, said: 'I've had a lot of good feedback from people - doctors have even said it was really brave to tell the story.'

'Everyone said it was the right thing to do. I think people feel frightened to speak up but I just feel you have to. The situation with my mum should never have happened and shouldn't happen again.'

'I read the letter in last week's *Oban Times* about the good care received at the hospital and maybe [speaking out] has already helped people.'

#### Action

NHS Highland's action plan in response to the Braidwoods' complaint set out six action points, with all marked complete except adequate staffing levels, marked as under 'ongoing continued review'.

However, a spokesman for NHS Highland said this was normal to ensure wards cope with fluctuating periods of activity.

Andrene Messersmith of Dunoon wrote to *The Oban Times* after reading the Braidwoods story, expressing concerns over palliative care delivered in Cowal Community Hospital. Her 94-year-old mother was left 'rolling in agony' with an untreated bladder infection, while another Oban woman said her husband was left with stitches after falling out of bed three times. She said: 'Accidents happen, but three

times is just not acceptable.' NHS Highland's spokesman said anyone with complaints should call its feedback team on 01463 705997 or email nhshighland.feedback@nhs.net, adding: 'We are continually looking at ways of improving our services and feedback from those who use our services. The results of any investigations carried out can help with this improvement.'

Palliative care services in Cowal have been 'significantly developed' in recent years 'to ensure we continue to provide the highest quality palliative care,' he added.

### Drive to save St Conan's Kirk

A DRIVE to save St Conan's Kirk from falling into disrepair will take a crucial step this weekend, with the intended formation of a Friends of St Conan's group and committee.

An open day at the kirk last November laid out the task involved in saving the unique Lochawe church and supporters have so far been keen to come forward to help.

A special meeting this Saturday from 2pm in the kirk will be hosted by trustees who hope to determine the purpose and clear role of the Friends of St Conan's.



## Miller Stewart

ESTATE AGENTS & PROPERTY MANAGERS SOLICITORS & NOTARIES

### Properties of the week

CONNEL 6 bed detached 0/0 £349,995

Scotholm is a spacious detached property situated in a 2/3 of an acre elevated plot enjoying views of Loch Etive. The accommodation is laid out over 2 floors and consists of 6 bedrooms (2 en-suite), 2 lounges, family kitchen, breakfast room, dining room, 2 bathrooms and downstairs W.C.

CLADICH 4 bed semi-detached 0/0 £239,995

Cladich House is a fantastic 19th century family home presented in superb condition. Located in the picturesque hamlet of Cladich by Loch Awe. The property consists of 4 bedrooms, family lounge, dining room, study, newly installed breakfast kitchen, utility, WC and two bathrooms.

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## Argyll Array development still possible even if marine protected status granted

POSSIBLE marine protected status for the site of the ill-fated Argyll Array won't prevent future development of the site near Tiree, it was confirmed this week.

ScottishPower Renewables (SPR) told the Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee last week that it has now formally handed back the lease of the site near the Skerryvore lighthouse after several studies demonstrated that developing the site would be fiscally impossible using current technology.

As well as an extensive amount of hard rock on the seabed, the area was found to be an important habitat for basking sharks and the Great Northern Diver bird - both protected species.

After handing the lease for the site back to Crown Estates, SPR then handed the environmental research it carried out to Scottish Natural

Heritage (SNH), which is working to have the area designated a Marine Protected Area (MPA). But such a designation would have no bearing on any future application to develop the site.

A spokeswoman for Crown Estates confirmed this week: 'We currently have no plans to undertake further work on the site. However, the area has a good wind resource and future developments in the energy market or foundation technologies could, in the longer term, allow a project on this site. If MPA status is designated, this would be one of number of factors a potential developer would have to take into account as part of the development process.' Robert Trythall, who led the No Tiree Array (NTA) campaign said: 'An MPA is basically a permissive document. It does not prevent development. A Special Area of Conservation (SAC) status would, but whether

the Scottish Government would progress an SAC for basking sharks and birds is another thing.'

Speaking during last week's meeting of the Oban, Lorn and Isles area committee, Rachel Furlong, SPR's offshore and marine policy manager, said: 'We have now formally handed the lease back to Crown Estates and informed them we will not be progressing.'

'Crown Estates has stated it won't be sold on because other developers may experience similar issues. However, they've said they will work with Marine Scotland on future offshore wind developments. We have also passed all the details we gathered on basking sharks to SNH to use for their work towards the protected designation.'

Several sites around the west coast were still being looked at for possible future development, she added.

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**Top marks for Port Ellen Primary School**

PORT Ellen Primary School on the Isle of Islay has been graded as 'very good' in each of the eight categories inspected. HM Inspector last week published the glowing report card and announced that the school's 'innovative practices' would be shared more widely. The school's Endeavour Project, the Gaelic choir's successes at the Royal National Mod, their involvement in a community musical project which was aired on BBC Radio Nan Gaidheal, the children's use of technology and the nursery class wormery - all received mention in the report. The inspector said: 'The people of Islay are very proud of their (the school's) achievements, and offer many high profile events at which to be ambassadors for their school.' Argyll and Bute Council's lead councillor for education, Aileen Morton, said: 'This is a great inspection report for Port Ellen Primary School and is testimony to the leadership of the head teacher, the skills and dedication of the staff, the support of parents and the willingness of the pupils to learn.' Head teacher Maureen MacDonald, said the school would continue to be ambitious, have high expectations and strive for excellence.

**Post Office to deliver on South Uist plan**

PLANS to open a post office in Carnan, South Uist, will go ahead, despite delays as a result of technical issues. The service will be moved from its current location in Craggory to Lovat's convenience store on the isle. An original opening date for the post office was set for January 23 but was delayed due to a phone line problem. The new office was then due to open last Friday (February 14) but has been delayed further as the issue hasn't been resolved. A new opening date is still to be set. Post Office Ltd is working to resolve the problems, said Na h-Eileanan an Iar MP, Angus MacNeil. He said: 'It will be good for the community to continue to keep a post office in the area, this has been quite a long process but worth it in the end and whilst we are waiting for an exact opening date, I am sure customers will welcome the extended opening hours.' Carnan post office will be open from 8am-6pm Monday to Saturday and 2pm-4pm on a Sunday.

**Mill spins with delight at grant award**

UIST Wool no longer has to make do and mend after securing a £23,500 grant to build a new woolshed. The spinning mill on Grimsey, between Benbecula and North Uist, received the cash after applying for the Enterprise Ready Fund, through the Scottish Government. The welcome news comes after the community enterprise had to use huts on neighbouring crofts for storage on a short term basis since the mill opened in June last year. A delighted Dana MacPhee, team leader at Uist Wool said: 'We are overjoyed, I mean absolutely thrilled. It will make life so much easier when we have our own woolshed. Storing the fleece in borrowed sheds was fine in the short term but just no use permanently.' Work will start on the new purpose-built shed, which will be adjacent to the mill and be used for storing, sorting and grading wool, next week. The mill uses heritage spinning machinery to turn locally produced wool into high-grade yarns. Some of the plant - originally from Hunters of Brora and Crombie's of Aberdeen - dates back to the 1860s.



The seaplane will offer aerial tours around Skye from April to October.

**Sightseeing flights ready for take-off**

SIGHTSEEING flights around Skye will be available this spring under a new business venture by Scottish seaplane company. A plane will be based at Ashaig airstrip near Broadford from April to October to provide aerial tours around the island and surrounding areas. The 10-seat Cessna 208 will be run by Loch Lomond Seaplanes, who have launched Skye Seaplanes for the first time this year.

The company operates a similar tours over west central Scotland from its base on the loch. Managing director David West said: 'We have been looking into this for about 10 years and with a slight change in the economy we decided now would be a good time. To say the interest has been overwhelming would be an understatement, the website traffic has quadrupled since we announced the Skye plane. It has been spectacular really.'

Shirley Spear of FlySkye, who are campaigning for the resumption of commercial flights to and from the island, said: 'We see this type of activity as something that will contribute significantly to the future development and success of the airfield.'

**Lifeboat escorts stricken trawler in force eight gale**

IN FORCE eight gales and sea swells in excess of seven metres Tobermory Lifeboat helped to save a stricken trawler from sinking off Ardnamurchan Point. The volunteer lifeboat crew went to the rescue of the 20-metre fishing vessel last Thursday after receiving a distress call from the trawler that it was taking on water.

Stornoway Coastguard's search and rescue helicopter attend the scene to assist with the transfer of the lifeboat's salvage pump. But prior to the arrival of the helicopter, the trawler's second water pump began working again and was clearing the engine room of water.

Tobermory Lifeboat, the Elizabeth Fairlie Ramsey, arrived at Ardnamurchan Point, the most westerly point on the British mainland, within 40 minutes and discovered one of the fishing boat's pumps had mechanical difficulties. The swell made it difficult for the lifeboat to safely come alongside the fishing boat without the risk of both vessels sustaining damage, so the lifeboat crew requested

Leak Tobermory lifeboat escorted the fishing vessel into the calmer waters of the Sound of Mull, where the trawler's crew was able to repair the leak before proceeding on their passage to Northern Ireland. Tobermory coxswain Andrew McHaffie said: 'This was a challenging shout in very rough sea conditions. The outcome could have been very different but we're all pleased that the fishing vessel crew was able to effect repairs and continue with its passage.'



Eigg Primary School pupils: celebrating after winning their third Eco-schools Green Flag.

**Green flag treble for Eigg pupils**

EIGG Primary School is celebrating after being awarded its third Eco-schools Green Flag for completing the required activities and action plans to gain the accolade.

P5 pupil Dylan Bull reports: 'For food and the environment we had a twilight session in the forest school because we might see some different animals and birds. We also cooked and ate baked potatoes. We planted apple and plum trees in the local orchard.'

Clean-up 'For our litter action plan, the school has done a verge clean-up and produced a graph showing the different types of rubbish. We designed and sold cloth bags to reduce the use of plastic

bags. They sold well and we won a Social Enterprise Award. For transport we produced leaflets on safe cycling and took part in the Big Pedal, a competition run by Sustrans. And for our biodiversity topic we studied biodiversity in science and did activities towards the Woodland Trust Platinum Award.'

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**Argyll firm takes lead in fight against farmed fish disease**

PIONEERING scientific work involving an Argyll aquaculture company has made a significant breakthrough on farmed fish disease. Landcatch, based in Ormsary, near Lochgilphead, has been developing technology to help develop disease-free farmed salmon through selective breeding. The work will mean egg producers worldwide can now access a scientific tool to breed disease-resistant fish in a natural

and sustainable way, while reducing the need for therapeutic chemicals. Dr Alan Tinch, director of genetics at Landcatch, said: 'This development takes selective breeding programmes to a whole new level. It is an extension to the selective breeding of salmon allowing more accurate identification of the best fish to create healthier and more robust offspring.' The company has helped develop glass slides used to analyse

variations in DNA sequences, otherwise known as single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), which act as biological markers. Known as SNP chips, they allow scientists to predict which fish will have the best performance by looking at their DNA sequence. Until now studies on the genetic make-up of salmon and efforts to improve the accuracy of selection in breeding programmes have been hampered by the relatively small number of markers that

could be investigated to identify certain traits in individual fish. The technology is already commonly applied in crops, cattle, pigs and chickens, but Landcatch is the first company to apply the technique to salmon. It is another landmark for Landcatch, which in 2007 was the first aquaculture company to pinpoint a gene controlling resistance to Infectious Pancreatic Necrosis (IPN) which poses a major threat to Atlantic salmon. The company later also proved that sea lice resistance is inherited, subsequently producing juvenile fish which were less susceptible to sea lice. Landcatch worked with the University of Edinburgh's Roslin Institute and Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies; Edinburgh Genomics; the Institute of Aquaculture, at Stirling University; University of Glasgow and genomics analysis company Affymetrix UK Ltd in creating the new SNP chips.

**Roads cash switch 'false economy'**

**Money for Lorn overspend taken from Mull budget**

CANCELLING road works in Mull to pay for an overspend in the Lorn area is a 'false economy', a councillor from the island has warned. Mary Jean Devon said she had 'great concerns' after figures presented to the Oban, Lorn and Isles area committee revealed a £39,000 overspend in the Lorn area for the current financial year was taken entirely out of Mull's budget. The island's road markings budget for the year was reduced from £10,000 to zero as a result of the changes, while the gully clearance budget was taken down to just £3,800 for the year from

£16,800. A cycling proficiency test on the island has been cancelled as a result of non-existent line markings near a school, she said, adding her belief that the move was a 'false economy'. She said: 'Our budget was £10,000, but no money was ever spent. I was given assurances they'd be done previously and I was told the same thing last week. This practice of cutting in one area for the benefit of another concerns me. The gullies we have to clear are needing more done because of the bad weather - yet we've had to cut back on that as well.'

She said a failure to clear gullies could result in more problems than the initial budget saving would solve - and greater spend in the long run. She said: 'When you break that down and you're making amendments to things like road markings and gully unblocking, maybe it's a false economy? We still have to do this work.' Stewart Clark, Argyll and Bute Council's roads performance manager, said: 'The answer to that question is, if there's an increase we have to make reductions elsewhere. But if there are concerns we are happy to look at these as well.'

**Lewis residents await ownership vote result**

A CROFTING community on Lewis will find out on Monday if they are to become the new owners of the land they live on.

Carloway Estate residents are currently voting by postal ballot on whether Urras Oighreachd Chàrlabhaigh (Carloway Estate Trust) should buy the 11,400-acre estate, together with sporting and mineral rights, on their behalf. Present owner Ken Galloway and the trust have mutually agreed a sale price of £180,000. Electors must return their ballot papers by 4pm on Monday ahead of the count in Bressclete Community Hall at 7.30pm. The result is expected to be declared shortly after. In the event of a 'yes' vote, the trust will lodge funding bids with the Scottish Land Fund for up to 95 per cent of the estimated £250,000 required.

The figure includes the purchase price, legal fees and wages for a development officer for two years. Financial support will also be sought from HIE and the comhairle's community capital grant fund, topped up by local fundraising. Jobs If it becomes Scotland's newest community landowner, priorities for the trust would be jobs for young people, housing, community regeneration projects and renewable energy. Secretary Noreen MacDonald said: 'We have put a lot of work into it so we are hoping for a yes vote.' The 12-strong trust steering group has representation from Bressclete, Carloway, Tolsta Chaolais, Doune, Kirivik and Knock - the main settlements on the estate.

**Glendale hostel jobs hope**

A MOTHBALLED school in northwest Skye could be converted into a £1.2m hostel, bar and restaurant, bringing at least five jobs to the area.

The Glendale Trust will take forward the plan, provided the local community continues to support the idea and funding is granted. Members approved the proposition to buy Borrodale Primary School from Highland Council at a board meeting in Glendale Community Hall last week. It is envisaged the building, which was closed in 2007, will house a 16-bedroom bunkhouse, bar, restaurant, laundry services and a heritage centre. Joy Talbot, trust chairwoman, hoped at least five jobs could be created if the project becomes reality. She said: 'This would be great for Glendale, we have a lot of tourists passing through so

hopefully these new facilities will encourage them to hang around. The restaurant is well needed because there's currently no dining facilities open after 6pm in the village.' It is also hoped the neighbouring schoolhouse will be converted into affordable housing as part of the project. The trust will now conduct phone surveys with local residents to gauge public interest in the development. The trust will now apply for funding through Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and various other bodies. Mairi Bertram from HIE said: 'It's potentially a good project and could provide many opportunities to local people. We are supportive in principle, although we are waiting on further details at the moment as it is still in very early stages.'



Eye-catching: Scottish Canals are building camping pods along the Caledonian Canal. f08bothy01

**Green light for first batch of Caledonian Canal camping pods**

THE FIRST batch of Alpine-style camping pods along the Caledonian Canal have been granted permission by Highland Council. Scottish Canals will build eight of the distinctive wooden bothies at Fort Augustus and a further six at nearby Kytra Locks. Dozens more are planned along the route to provide walkers, canoeists and cyclists with convenient accommodation and reduce problems caused by people wild camping.

In its planning statement in its application to the council, Scottish Canals said more accommodation was needed for outdoor pursuits enthusiasts closer to the canal. The 'snug' buildings are based on box beds used in Highland croft houses and are designed and positioned 'to sit neatly in the landscape'. The Scottish larch-clad pods each have a small wood-burning stove with fold-down beds to create extra living space. Similar groups of small structures

have been successful at tourist hot-spots in Norway and Austria, Scottish Canals said. Applications for six pods at Laggan Locks and a further six at Gairloch are still being considered by Highland Council officials. More are planned at other sites between Inverness and Banavie. The Gairloch plan has attracted strong local opposition, with Spear Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council describing it as 'an unregulated campsite'.

Keith Mackie, development surveyor at Scottish Canals, said: 'The bothies have been designed to complement the attractions and beauty of the surrounding areas by offering a sustainable, managed, fully-equipped and more upmarket camping experience. They'll provide something different and unique, that isn't already offered by the current market, in order to encourage more people tackling the Great Glen to stay in these areas and provide a boost to the local economies.'

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YOUR TOP SIX FINALISTS IN NEXT WEEK'S EDITION  
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Lorn Lines

OBAN Camera Club's fifth competition of the season was entitled 'People' and attracted 40 digital and five print images. It was down to judge Andrew Daw from Cowal Camera Club to mark the scores and pick the winners. Prints - 1st, 2nd and 3rd - Nina Robertson. Digital - 1st and 2nd - David Williams, 3rd - Peter Cleave. Overall winner of the Frank Walton [local] trophy - David Williams. Next Monday meeting, The Argyll Cup Challenge, is for Oban Street Scenes.

JANUARY'S meeting of Oban SWRI welcomed new members and guests for Carol Olsen's silk painting workshop. Carol, a regular at the Benderloch market, demonstrated different techniques for painting on silk, using water, salt and sugar to diffuse the paint and create dramatic results. Two colourful scarves were painted by the Oban ladies who appreciated just how tricky silk painting is. Mother and daughter Jenny Miller and Ruth Russell won silver and gold respectively, for their apple jelly. Guests are invited to attend the February 25 meeting, where Sally Weaser of Boafrosh and Argyll Under-35 SWRI champion, will be running a polymer clay jewellery workshop.



Oban and Lorne Strathspey and Reel Society members struck up a few tunes at the Manor House in Oban after their 70th anniversary dinner.

LORN Archaeological and Historical Society will welcome the well known archaeologist Tony Pollard to its meeting on Friday. Tony specialises in the archaeology of conflict. He is director of the Centre for Battlefield Archaeology at Glasgow University, the co-presenter of the BBC series Two Men in a Trench and co-founder of the Journal of Conflict Archaeology. He has written numerous papers and articles on archaeology and military history and edited several books on subjects as diverse as the early prehistory of Scotland and the archaeology of death. Along with Neil Oliver, he wrote the two books accompanying the Two Men in a Trench programmes. In 2008 his first novel, The Minutes of the Lazarus Club, a thriller based on the life of the famous engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel, was published by Michael Joseph.



Tony Pollard, who will give a talk at the Lorn Archaeological and Historical Society tomorrow (Friday).

It was published in 2009 by Penguin under the title of The Secrets of the Lazarus Club. The meeting will be held in St Columba's Cathedral Hall at 7.30pm. The title of the talk is The Archaeology of the Western Front in WWI.

Work starts on new footbridge

A NEW footbridge will be built first as part of a £425,000 plan to replace Soroba Lane Bridge in Oban. Starting on March 3 and lasting 12 weeks, the work will see the current bridge replaced. Sections of the existing steel support are rusted and unserviceable. Pedestrian access will be blocked for a period until the pre-fabricated, new pedestrian footbridge is lowered into place by crane. Any full closures of the route, meanwhile, will be restricted until after 2pm so as to minimise disruption to local businesses. Kintyre-based firm MacFadyens will carry out the work. Diverted Buses and taxis that currently use the bridge will be diverted along Lochside Street, Market Street, Soroba Road and Lynn Road for the duration of the work, however, and there will be a temporary bus stop on Lochavullin Road.

Publisher defends 'derisory' bid for Oban listed building

Company claims offer would have led to £4.5m boost to economy

A PUBLISHING business that hoped to buy Kilbowie House in Oban bid just £2,080 for the property valued at £450,000 - but said the value it would have brought to the community meant it was a good deal. Bombadil Publishing was informed last week that its offer for the Grade B listed building had been refused after consideration by the Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee, which felt the

cash offer for 0.4 per cent of the asking price was 'derisory'. However, Marianne Rugard Jarvstrat, chief executive of Bombadil, said the offer did represent good value, as it would have led to a £4.5million boost to the local economy over the course of the next five years.

Jobs She said: 'The council is only a warden of properties; it is not like a normal

house sale and it is therefore the total package which should be looked at. We came with 12 permanent jobs - with the aim of increasing this over time.

'The cash reimbursement is low, but has to be seen in context - and it was still a lot higher than we were recommended to offer.

'The whole package was very high and had been substantiated. We provided letters of intent and back-up

information for everything we said.' She added that the company would have considered bidding £200,000 last year, before storms caused extensive water damage throughout the building, undermining masonry and the roof.

Grant Bombadil has also been given a £100,000 grant from Scottish Enterprise for the development, but says it could now look elsewhere unless there is

movement on Kilbowie House. The Oban Times has learned one councillor proposed to accept the bid from Bombadil, on the condition the building was not sold again for 10 years and on the basis the valuation of the building was unrealistic, given the deterioration. This was rejected.

A study will be carried out to determine how the property should be marketed in future.

Red tape stalls toddler group

PLANS to establish a new under five parent and toddler group in St Columba's Primary School have been delayed due to red tape.

It had been hoped that the group, which would meet in the spare classroom, would start on February 26.

One of the mums running the club, Helen McGuigan, said: 'The starting date has been delayed due to paperwork.'

Meanwhile, a new bus shelter will be put up at the Primary Campus' designated bus stop after parents made a request to the council. Helen McGuigan said: 'No date as of yet but can quote the wheels are in motion.'

More music and dance

MORE assistance is now available for local people across Argyll and Bute to bring more professional music, dance and theatre into the region.

John Saich has been appointed membership officer for the Touring Network in the Highlands and Islands region. Over the next 12 months, he will be available to help individuals or groups seeking to bring cultural opportunities into their community. He said: 'I am keen to hear from anyone who wants to see performing arts events in their local community spaces and look forward to meeting promoters already making things like this happen.'

Annual Sportsman's Dinner

FORMER Rangers and Scotland footballer Willie Henderson and ex-referee John Rowbotham will be the guest speakers at this year's Sportsman's Dinner in Oban's Argyllshire Gathering Halls.

This year's dinner will be held on March 15.

The annual event is the main fundraiser for the Oban-based Ryan MacPhail Memorial Fund, which mainly supports charities to the benefit of young people and sports.



Heavy plant lorry slip blocks A828 at Appin

A lorry carrying heavy plant slipped off the road at Appin on Tuesday morning after struggling to negotiate a convoy system. Roadworks are currently taking place there, with traffic guided along a single-lane stretch of road for safety. However, the Scania articulated lorry lost control of its trailer just before 10am after it caught the verge, causing the vehicle to block the road for a short time. No other vehicle was involved in the incident.

Ongoing Mull care home concerns a 'nightmare' claims councillor

ONGOING concerns about occupancy restrictions at a Tobermory care facility have been described as 'a nightmare' by a local councillor.

Mary Jean Devon made the comment about Bowman Court after meeting Mull Community Council to discuss ongoing uncertainty over the flats, which replaced the Dunaros care home.

The accommodation is owned and operated by West Highland Housing Association (WHHA), which leases the flats to those in need of care through Argyll and Bute Council. However, tenancy agreements are the same as those for normal dwellings, leading to concerns that people with no

health issues could 'inherit' the flats when their partners pass away. This would mean fewer units for those needing specialist care.

Some rooms at the progressive care facility are already occupied by residents requiring no services from health or social work.

WHHA has previously admitted it would lease out flats to individuals with no care needs if the council didn't use them because it had to finance loans taken to pay for construction costs.

An external agency started a review of Bowman Court last year to provide independent appraisal of options for the facility.

Hopes are high in the community that the council will take over leasing the flats, but councillor Devon says the situation is still a concern.

She told Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee: 'It is a nightmare, but we had a good meeting on the island last week. [Occupancy] was one of the main issues that came up. We don't have the surplus housing on Mull to move people on if we need to. It is a concern and this situation is being seriously looked at.'

Speaking this week, Mull Community Council chairman Mike Shilson said he hoped common sense would prevail. He said: 'There is no realistic

chance Argyll and Bute Council will buy the building from WHHA. But WHHA has no objection to leasing the flats.'

BBC news presenter Sally Magnusson was on the island last week and gave a talk on care for people with dementia, on which she has written a book.

Mr Shilson added: 'Sally was fortunate in that she was able to look after her mother in her home, but there are situations where it's impossible to keep someone at home.'

Representatives of the local authority, NHS Highland and WHHA are due to meet with the community council next week to discuss the review of the facility's arrangements.

NHS moves to allay scam call fears

NHS Highland has moved to allay concerns about a new telephone system that reminds patients when their appointments are due after one patient thought their call was a scam.

The new Patient Reminder System, which launched at the beginning of February, ensures patients are contacted around one week before their hospital appointment.

The system was set up after NHS Highland revealed around 10 per cent of hospital patients do not turn up for appointments.

But one Lorn and Islands Hospital patient contacted The Oban Times after receiving a call from NHS 24 on Sunday, as they feared the call was a scam after the caller began asking personal details.

The patient, who did not want to be named, said: 'We received a call purporting to be from 'the NHS' asking for my husband's date of birth.'

Refused The lady who called said she would be unable to confirm the appointment unless we gave her this information. We refused, as this felt suspiciously like a 'phishing' call.'

A spokesman for NHS Highland confirmed the call was genuine, adding: 'The call handler will ask the person with the appointment to confirm their date of birth so that they can be sure they are speaking to the right person, however no other personal information is requested.'

Reminder 'Currently 10 per cent of patients don't turn up for their appointment and we hope that the introduction of this reminder system will significantly reduce this percentage and help our clinics run as efficiently as possible and ensure our waiting times are kept to a minimum.'

Anyone who does not want to receive a telephone reminder can contact their hospital outpatient department to be removed from the Patient Reminder System.

Owner praises staff as chip shop re-opens after flood

A CHIP shop owner, who this week re-opened his business following major flooding in Oban town centre, has praised his staff for helping to keep his business alive. Renato Di Ciacca's Oban Bay Fish and Chip Shop was flooded in December during storms and high tides and his restaurant floor was completely submerged. Staff set about clearing the water with brushes in an attempt to minimise the damage. On Monday, a month after the restaurant

closed for repairs, the same staff were delighted to get back to the day job. Renato said: 'I have the same staff now as I had before the flood and we are all just glad to be open again. 'We tried to stay open after the floor dried out but there was just too much damage and there was a smell of sea water. The day of the flood was terrible but I'm really proud of my staff who have been very patient and helped me through a difficult time.'



Left: The chip shop staff set to work clearing floodwater last December. 16\_t08storm01



Renato Di Ciacca and staff, from left, Adele MacIntyre, Jenny Pyper and Danica Fleming are glad to be open again. 16\_t08renato01

Man, 64, denies indecent assault

A GIRL wrote a letter to her father telling him how she had been indecently assaulted, members of a jury sitting at Oban Sheriff Court heard this week.

The 64-year-old accused has denied three charges of indecent conduct, two of indecent assault and one of attempting to defeat the ends of justice.

Reporting restrictions put in place to protect the identity of the four women who are the subject of the allegations dictate that the man and the two locations in the Lorn area where the incidents are said to have occurred cannot be named.

The events are said to have happened between January 1, 2003 and December 6, 2010.

The girl's father told the court that when he went to bed after his daughter had told him

about the alleged incidents, he discovered a letter which she had written and left on the stairs to tell him what had happened. 'I never want to read or hear anything like that again in my life,' he said.

His daughter was part way through giving her evidence for the prosecution when The Oban Times went to press.

The court had already heard from two of the other women; one said she had been given an 'inappropriate' kiss by the man and then denied, when cross examined by the man's defence agent, that she was 'making this up out of animosity'.

The other said she always tried to avoid the man: 'If I was quick and ran he wouldn't be able to give me one of those manky kisses.'

The trial, under Sheriff Douglas Small, continues.

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# Glencoe Massacre road sign returned to village

A ROAD sign marking the location of the Massacre of Glencoe has been presented to the local community at an anniversary service to remember the MacDonald victims of the notorious deed.

The cast-iron sign mysteriously went missing from the roadside near Glencoe village 40 years ago after being put up by the old Scottish Automobile Club some years previously.

Antique dealer George Pirie bought it privately last September and after realising its significance decided to gift the artefact to Glencoe Heritage Trust.

The trust invited Mr Pirie to attend last Thursday's memorial event and he travelled up from Edinburgh with colleague Euan Emslie to deliver the 50-kilogramme sign in person to St Mary's Episcopal Church just before the 11am service.

He told the congregation: 'It was a MacDonald woman who noticed it in our shop and it is pretty nice to know that it is back here on this day.'

Trust director George Grant thanked Mr Pirie for his generous before worshippers made their way up Glencoe main street to the River Coe bridge for the traditional procession to the Celtic cross memorial monument at Upper Carnoch.

In driving sleet and rain, Rector of St Mary's, the Rev Adrian Fallows, led a second service in memory of the 38 Glencoe MacDonalds murdered by government troops under Robert Campbell of Glenlyon acting on orders of King William III.

He said: 'Let us remember before God, and commend to his sure keeping those who

By STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

died on February 13 1692, whose memory we will treasure and whose betrayal, pain and suffering shall never be forgotten.'

Wreaths were laid on behalf of Glencoe Heritage Trust, the National Trust for Scotland, the Highlands and Islands Clan Donald Society and The Clan Donald Lands Trust on the Isle of Skye.

Wreath sponsors included MacDonald descendants the Littrell family from Chatham, Illinois, USA, and the Clan Donald Society of Australia.

Taynuilt man John MacFarlane gave readings in Gaelic and local piper John MacCallum played a lament. A two-minute silence was held in memory of the massacre victims.

Children from St Bride's and Glencoe primary schools were among the 70 people present.

Jamie MacDonald, chairman of the executive committee of the Clan Donald Lands Trust, told The Oban Times: 'We could not let a day like this go by without representing Clan Donald at Armadale.'

'We are just a small part of a great clan and it is important we recognise that. Our thoughts on this solemn occasion are with the MacDonalds of Glencoe.'

Highlands and Islands Clan Donald Society secretary Lois MacDonnell of Glengarry, widow of the 22nd Chief, said: 'It is important we remember the history as Clan Donald and we should remember the lost MacDonalds. It is also a chance for us to gather together on this day of commemoration.'



Antiques dealer George Pirie, right, and assistant Euan Emslie carry the sign into St Mary's Episcopal Church before the service. 20\_f08glencoe10

Right: Solemn moment: From left: Glencoe Heritage Trust secretary Ros MacDonald, Highlands and Islands Clan Donald Society president Alan Ranald MacDonald, Highlands and Islands Clan Donald Society secretary Lois MacDonnell, Clan Donald Lands Trust executive committee chairman Jamie MacDonald and Clan Donald Lands Trust general manager Steven McKeown. 20\_f08glencoe08



Jamie MacDonald announces the Clan Donald Lands Trust wreath. 20\_f08glencoe03



Ros MacDonald prepares to lay on wreath on behalf of the Glencoe Heritage Trust. 20\_f08glencoe05



Taynuilt Gael John MacFarlane remembers the massacre victims. 20\_f08glencoe02



Local children from Glencoe and St Bride's primary schools with Clan Donald Highlands and Islands bard Greg Allen. 20\_f08glencoe01



Local piper John MacCallum leads the procession up to the monument in the driving sleet. 20\_f08glencoe14



Rector of St Mary's Church in Glencoe, the Rev Adrian Fallows, third left, leads the service. 20\_f08glencoe12

## Morvern Lines

THE RECENT announcement that another attempt is to be made to find the Spanish galleon and its fabled and elusive multi-million pound treasure lying at the bottom of Tobermory Bay, is a welcome boost to Mull and Morvern. It reminds us too of Morvern's association with this famous sinking.

The story of how and why a Spanish galleon arrived in Tobermory Bay with a cargo of gold bullion is too well known to be repeated here in any detail.

In the past she was called the *Florencia*, however, recent research amongst Spain's national archives, reveals that she was the *San Juan de Sicilia*, an 800-ton vessel from Ragusa, a maritime republic centred on the city of Dubrovnik, whose motto, coincidentally, was 'Liberty is not sold for all the gold in the world.'

The *San Juan* carried 26 guns, 63 sailors and 279 marines and was one of 30 Spanish ships lost off the western coasts of Scotland and Ireland following the great sea battle in the English Channel in July 1588.

The coming of the *San Juan* under the command of Don Diego Tellez Enriquez, must have excited the locals in 1588 just as much as the arrival of Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, did when he 'slung the hook' of his billion dollar super yacht (complete with helicopter) in front of Mull's now famous multi-coloured water-front, 420 years later.

According to local tradition, when the Spanish ship settled on the bottom, her masts could be seen above the surface of the bay.

Any large man-of-war foundering off Mull in these days was a godsend for its guns, timber and fittings alone never mind what was in its hold, so it cannot have been long before the *Wyl Macleans* set about stripping her.

But did they find any gold? Judging by the number of salvage operations which have taken place since, it would seem not and that someone somewhere has good reasons to believe it is still there, buried in deep silt under the seabed.

In much the same way as Tutankhamen's tomb brought archaeologists and tourists flocking to Luxor, Tobermory has benefited from an influx of curious visitors and salvagers in search of its famous wreck from the day it vanished below the waves.

Tales abound of local hoteliers and shopkeepers going to great lengths to keep them there when some of the big salvage attempts were coming to an end.

The late Angus Henderson, Tobermory's well known blacksmith and raconteur, told me a story of a party of men crossing the Sound by boat one night and carrying off an old ship's gun from a knoll above Drimmin House.

They surreptitiously dumped it over the wreck site; its discovery by divers the following morning resulted in the salvage company remaining on site for several more weeks.

On another occasion a local wag caught a large toad and took it out to the barge where silt and debris from the bottom was being sieved.

When no one was looking he pushed it deep into the spoil. When it was found it caused such a sensation that the salvagers decided to stay on.

An expert from Edinburgh University was summoned to examine the toad and to explain how it could survive in salt water mud, sixty feet below the surface.

He could throw no light on the matter and the toad was despatched to the Natural History Museum in London in a specially-built wooden crate. It was not long before the salvage officer was told that he had obviously had his leg-pulled but the ruse worked!

WHERE does Morvern come into the saga? It was a Donald Glas Maclean of Kinlochline who sent the *San Juan* to the bottom when he set fire to her powder magazine to prevent her sailing back to Spain.

In the explosion a lady onboard, said to have been the daughter of the King of Spain, was killed. Her body was carried by the tide down the Sound to Ardness Point from where it was taken up to Kiel and buried underneath the medieval church arch in a spot still pointed out as 'the Grave of the Spanish Princess'.

The Duke of Argyll, whose family were granted exclusive rights to the site by royal charter in 1641, is heading up the latest salvage operation. Good luck to His Grace.

His conviction that there is still something left of the Spanish ship is commendable. If his divers find even part of a Spanish vessel it will become one of Scotland's leading underwater tourist attractions and bring enormous wealth and huge opportunities to the entire west coast of Scotland.



Ian, Marquess of Lorne, later the 9th Duke of Argyll, lying on top of a cannon salvaged from the Spanish ship in Tobermory Bay.

Iain Thornber iain.thornber@btinternet.com

## Minister to open Jubilee Bridge

THE MINISTER for Commonwealth Games and Sport, Shona Robison MSP, will visit Lorn on February 24.

Ms Robison will officially open the newly refurbished Jubilee Bridge in Appin and will also pay a visit to the successful social enterprise, Stramash.

## Fairtrade coffee morning

LOCHYSIDE RC Primary School is holding a Fairtrade Coffee Morning next Friday in aid of the children's charity Mary's Meals.

Coffee, tea, home baking, Fairtrade rice, Easter eggs and gifts will be on sale from 10am to 12pm.

# Council planning rules on rural homes come under fire

ARGYLL and Bute's economic success is being limited by an overly restrictive planning system which blocks rural development, Oban Lorn and Isles Area Committee has heard.

Councillors Fred Hall and Iain Angus MacDonald said there needed to be a closer look at how planners decide on applications for small developments in rural areas, saying it is easier to get permission to build a block of 30 houses as opposed to a single dwelling.

Their concerns have arisen

as a result of an application by Stephen Sloss, of Benderloch, who wants to build a home in space not zoned for housing near Creran Cottage.

He argues that the development would aid him with his job for the Forestry Commission, which often involves him working during unsociable hours and keeping dogs to help with managing the forest estate.

While the council has recommended approval for the application in the wake of overwhelming local support, it has done so on the condition

the house is only occupied by someone employed by the Forestry Commission to manage deer, or their immediate family, including a widow.

Lenders have since told the council the condition would prevent them granting a mortgage.

### Decision

The application will go before the council's planning committee this week for a final decision.

Speaking at last week's area committee meeting, Mr Hall said: 'We want a development plan that allows people to live

in this area. I'm just back from Mull, where people of a working age are on lower incomes. There are some with high incomes, but they tend to be retired or moved to the area after a successful career.'

'In order for a worker to afford a house, they have to build a small home and sell it to give them the capital for a family home.'

'But we have a presumption against small scale rural developments in Argyll and Bute.'

'We have to go to planning and get them off people's backs.'

'If people can't afford to buy a home they can't afford to live and work here.'

'This isn't so much a complaint about the staff, more about the systems and policies we have.'

Iain Angus MacDonald added: 'As soon as we start to build houses we start to create additional trade for builders, merchants and service industries.'

'There seems to be a presumption against development throughout most of rural Argyll. We need housing in rural areas.'

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## Talented film trio in spotlight

TWO FILMS from Lorn and the islands have been joined by an Ardnamurchan filmmaker in being shortlisted for awards at this year's FilmG competition.

Mull movie-maker Shannon MacLean's documentary, *Gael Nan Eilean* (Love of the Island) asked Gaelic speakers on the island to tell her what was special about the place, the result being a heart-warming, descriptive film about her home.

It was shortlisted in the Best Film in the youth category, alongside Oban High School's thriller, *Thoir an Aire* (Take Care), in which a young woman is tired after a busy day and is offered help by a man who turns out to be suspicious. The lead role in this film is brought to life by Oban High School pupil Alison Piper who has also been shortlisted for her performance.

### Production

Ardnamurchan High School's hard work has not gone unnoticed by the judges either. Their film *O Mo Dhuthaich* (Oh My Country), has been shortlisted for Best Production for their ambitious use of props and locations - including using a horse on set in their period drama about a young woman being evicted from her croft.

MG ALBA's Gaelic short film competition will announce its winners at an event in the Old Fruitmarket in Glasgow on Friday, March 14.

Previous FilmG winner and judge this year, Elly Welsh, said: 'It was a great experience judging this year's batch of films. Having gone through this process myself I understand how important it is to encourage and recognise new talent, and there was certainly a lot to be excited about this year.'



Roddy McCuish presents a quach to David 'Skinny' MacInnes. 15\_f08skinny1

## Oban man's charity effort recognised

OBAN'S David 'Skinny' MacInnes was presented with a commemorative quach last week to congratulate him on his Herculean effort of running from Glasgow to Oban for charity.

The Rangers fan, who started his effort at Ibrox last September, was handed the quach by Celtic-draft Oban councillor Roddy McCuish on behalf of the Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee - with Roddy heralding Skinny's

efforts as 'fantastic'. Skinny completed his 100 mile run in 22 hours and two minutes, raising £6,000 for Macmillan Cancer Care in the process.

Presenting the quach, Mr McCuish said: 'I know you started from Ibrox.'

'I've run past Ibrox myself a few times so I know what that's like.'

'In all seriousness, it's a tremendous achievement and to

raise £6,000 for charity at the same time is absolutely fantastic. To do it in just 22 hours - and not forgetting those two minutes - is a terrific feat and we, as an area committee, would like to recognise that.'

'As an Oban Camanachd player, you'll not be used to silverware or trophies but - again, in all seriousness - we would like to present this quach to you to mark that achievement.'

## Lochaber wedding firms shortlisted for national award

WEDDING companies in Lochaber are being recognised after being shortlisted for a national award.

Businesses and individuals in Fort William, Caol and Arisaig were picked out as nominees in their respective categories for the north west region of The Scottish Wedding Awards.

The finalists are Highland Weddings and Events, Fort William, for Event Decorator of the Year; Anne Widdop, Arisaig, for Wedding Coordinator of the Year; House of Scotland, Fort William, for Groomsweaver of the Year; Marina's Bridal, Caol, for Wedding Boutique of the Year and Fairytale Productions, Fort William, for Videographer of the Year.

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**Pupils pen poetry for John Muir Trust competition**

LOCHABER primary school pupils have been hard at work writing poetry about wildlife for a competition in the area.

The John Muir Trust set up the contest in line with the Fort William Mountain Festival and announced the winners from over 300 entries.

Alison Austin of the John Muir Trust said: 'This was a fantastic show of wonderful wild poems in English and in Gaelic from Lochaber primary schools. It's been a real treat for us to find out how pupils in Lochaber think about all sorts of wildlife from eagles and otters to deer, foxes, squirrels, salmon and much more.'

The winners are: English P1-4 Josef Briggs, Invergarry Primary School; English P5-7 Janie Patterson, Acharacle Primary School; Gaelic P1-4 Maighsi Rough, Acharacle Primary School; Gaelic P5-7 Maryann MacPherson, Acharacle Primary School.

**Documentary on Oban's big screen**

A HIGHLY-acclaimed documentary on the military occupation of Palestine will be screened at Oban Phoenix Cinema.

Children in Chains will be presented by the film's director, John Pullman, who will then join a discussion on issues raised. The evening, to be held next Thursday, is being hosted by the Oban Concern For Palestine group.



Linda Penrose, centre, offers up the keys with shop manager Lorna Taylor, right, and assistant June MacLeod. 15\_108soroba1

**Soroba shop owner calls it a day after 22 years**

AFTER 22 years of hard graft, Linda Penrose, the owner of Soroba Stores, is selling up.

The popular shopkeeper has decided the time is right to hand over the reins to someone else after working her way up from an ice-cream van to taking over the only retailer in the scheme.

Now Linda, who also runs a popular holiday bingo club for the community on Friday nights, says she's hopeful someone from the local area will take over the store, which has become the hub of the community.

'I've been thinking about this for two or three years now,' she said, after putting the

shop on the market. 'I'm not really in the shop that much anymore, I've got brilliant staff that run the shop for me. I think it'd be better if it was someone local who took it on though.'

**Stories**

Being the only shop in the community means people often come in for reasons not at all related to the business - while more than a few funny stories can be had from the close-knit bunch at the shop.

'We know everyone in the area,' she said. 'People come in for all sorts. We've had people coming in who locked themselves out asking what they should do.'

'There's been a few strange things too. A while ago a company phoned us up asking if we'd like to take advertising for a magazine targeted at Japanese tourists. That would have been interesting.'

Offers of at least £150,000 are sought for the property, although if it does sell, Linda admits she doesn't know what she'll do.

'My son is in Australia but my dad is in Inverness,' Linda, who is originally from Furnace, said. 'My son's always asking me to go over there.'

'I'll probably continue to run the bingo for a year or so, but it'd be good for someone else to take that over too.'

**Investing in the future**

**Council to spend £90m attracting businesses and families to area**

MORE than £90 million will be invested in Argyll and Bute over the next two years as the local authority aims to make the region more attractive to businesses and families.

Argyll and Bute councillors last Thursday unanimously agreed the budget for 2014/16, which they say will address the area's biggest challenges: growing the population and attracting business.

£80m has been set aside to support growth in the local economy, with £40 million of that dedicated to improving roads and infrastructure. A further £11.8 million in the council's Reserve Fund has also been earmarked for economic development.

Much of the detail surrounding this capital investment is still to be made clear.

It is however understood that funds will be split between the four administrative areas of the council, with area committees taking a much more active role in driving economic regeneration within their respective towns and villages.

Council leader Dick Walsh said: 'Our overall challenge in securing a prosperous future for Argyll and Bute is attracting more jobs and more people who contribute to the prosperity of the area.'

'It is people who keep communities thriving and our population is falling.'

'We recognise that growing our economy is not a one size fits all approach and we will require to review our Economic Action Development Plans ... to ensure that their development is populated with the most up

to date research and advice and, when agreed, are relevant not only to our purpose, but for each of our areas to grow their economy and population.'

Sally Loudon, chief executive of Argyll and Bute Council, said these economic projects and actions plans for their delivery would be 'firmed up' in the next year.

However, former council leader, SNP councillor James Robb described this year's budget as a 'charade'.

He said: 'Councillors have already passed the responsibility for £3.65m of service cuts to management but none have yet been made public.'

'The absence of political leadership is a concern for Audit Scotland but the rest of us are wondering why we have councillors at all.'

- There will be no rise in council tax
- The cost of school meals, Meals on Wheels, blue badges, car parking, planning service administration fees and community-based care services will remain the same
- Fees for other services, such

**The budget at a glance**

as leisure facilities, will increase by between three and four per cent, slightly higher than the rate of inflation.

An additional £536,000 will

- be spent on adult and elderly care this year
- There will be efficiency savings of one per cent across all council departments
- £607,000 will be invested in street lighting as part of the council's 'feeling safe' campaign.

**Latest phase of work to prevent A83 landslides gets underway**

ELEVEN weeks of roadworks started on the Rest and Be Thankful on Monday as efforts to prevent landslides on the route enters the final phases.

Transport Scotland approved the 'red option' of preventative work last year following a series of slips on the A83 in recent years. The latest work will see additional debris netting erected

on the hillside. To allow traffic to pass safely, two-way traffic signals will be in operation for the duration of the project.

During daytime hours, the traffic levels will be monitored and if necessary, the signals will be manually operated to minimise delays.

BEAR Scotland's spokesman, Eddie Ross said: 'These works

underline Transport Scotland's commitment to reducing the impact of landslides on the A83, bringing the total expenditure on landslide mitigation at the Rest and Be Thankful since 2009 to £4.9m. The measures will help reduce the risk of delays and road closures due to landslides at the Rest and Be Thankful and help support the local economy

as a result. We would like to thank motorists in advance for their patience when the work is being carried out and would ask them to allow extra time for travel. They can plan ahead by checking for up to date travel information from the Traffic Scotland website.'

Since it was approved, £3.7million has been spent

implementing the programme set out in the 'red option', which included upgrading drainage, enhancements to slope/vegetation and culvert improvements.

A further £2.55million was also spent on the Old Military Road, which was upgraded to be used as a diversion route should a landslide close the main A83 route.

**Only worst hit will get 'bedroom tax' help**

ONLY people experiencing 'real hardship' in Argyll and Bute as a result of the so-called bedroom tax will have the levy paid for them by the local authority.

Argyll and Bute councillors last Thursday agreed to provide Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to people in high and medium levels of hardship, despite receiving enough money from the Scottish Government to negate the effects of the spare room subsidy cut completely.

Council leader Dick Walsh, said: 'We have taken a prudent decision which is all about ensuring that those in Argyll and

Bute who truly need help are able to get it.'

But not all councillors backed the proposal.

James Robb said: 'With the additional funding from the Scottish Government the SNP group proposed taking all residents in Argyll and Bute out of the bedroom tax. We also proposed enhancing a tenants right-sizing incentive [a scheme which offers tenants a cash sum encouraging them to move to a smaller property] as requested by our registered social landlords.'

Instead the council will use the remainder of the money, about

£550,000, to pay for a six point plan that aims to lift people out of poverty and mounting debt.

The plan includes: Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to all people experiencing medium and high levels of hardship, a tenants incentive scheme, where £500 is given to a person who moves to a smaller property; setting up a credit union for better lending to those on low incomes; leaflets outlining how people in financial difficulty can seek support; IT classes to improve computer literacy; and more care workers to intervene when families are in financial crisis.



Oban Community Fire Station Commander Martin Hill and Oban Police Inspector Julie McLeish are issuing guidance on The Muirburn Code. 16\_108muirburn01

**Spring campaign on heath fire prevention**

EMERGENCY services are seeking to prevent a repeat of the numerous heath and grass fires that spread through the Oban and Lorn area last year by issuing advice to landowners.

As part of a joint spring campaign, the police and fire service in Oban have published guidance on the Muirburn Code. Although the burning season began last October, the fires last year were at their worst in March.

Oban Community Fire Station

Commander Martin Hill said: 'People may remember the fire service attended grass and heath fires in places like Bonawe, Saulmore, Colonsay and Mull and it required a lot of resources.'

'We want to be pro-active by issuing advice on best practice to landowners and others who use fire for land management.'

Commander Hill accepted the risk was lower this year because of the recent wet weather but warned against complacency.

Oban Police Inspector Julie McLeish said: 'Last year we gave out a number of warnings as a result of fires and one person was charged with Section 25B of the Hill Farming Act 1946. I hope people take this opportunity to remind themselves of the requirements of The Muirburn Code.'

Guidance information can be obtained from the police or fire station in Oban, or at www.scotland.gov.uk, under 'Publications'.

**Man admits heroin charge**

A 47-YEAR-OLD man had come to drugs 'later in life', Oban Sheriff Court was told Monday.

Ian James Smith, of 8 St Valery Place, Campbell Street, Oban, appeared before Sheriff Douglas Small to admit supplying diamorphine (heroin) to a woman at his home address on February 15.

Edward Thornton, defence agent for Smith, said: 'His drug problem has come to him later in life and he accepts that he has a serious problem.'

Sheriff Small deferred sentence until April 1 for social work reports to be prepared.

**Learning support cash plea**

A MID-ARGYLL mum is backing a plea to the Scottish Government calling for funding for additional learning support in schools to be ring-fenced.

Lucy Sumison is supporting the petition lodged by the Scottish Children's Services Coalition and Kindred (SCSCK) to ensure local authorities fulfil their statutory duty to deliver the service as budget cuts bite.

Lucy said: 'Children, like my son with severe dyslexia, need this vital support and without adequate funding his education, and thousands of children like him, will suffer.'

'At the moment my son is in S1 at Lochgilphead High and he seems to be getting good learning support in classes because there is a teaching assistant who can read and scribe for him. My concern is for the future and whether this level of support will continue.'

Funding for councils will see a real terms reduction of £624million by 2015-16 according to SCSCK, with demand for children's services at its highest since 1981.

The petition can be found at www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/ASN-funding.

**Enterprising Argyll groups awarded £75,000**

ORGANISATIONS across Argyll have been awarded more than £75,000 by the Scottish Government's Enterprise Ready Fund.

The county's third sector groups have been granted £75,585 from the total £2.3million confirmed by finance secretary John Swinney last week.

Fyne Futures secured £24,821, while the Ross of Mull and Iona Community Transport Scheme gained £22,014.

Elsewhere, the Kintyre Recycling group was granted £15,000 and Mull and Iona Community Trust successfully applied for £13,750.

The £6million Enterprise Ready Fund, which opened to applications in September, builds on a number of current initiatives the Scottish Government has in place to continue to support a sustainable, capable and enterprising third sector.

**Council stumps up Argyll tourism funding**

A NATIONALLY-recognised tourism initiative promoting Argyll and the Isles to the wider world has received backing from the local authority.

Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative (AITC) were last week given £50,000 for each of the next three years to continue promoting the region and champion growth in the tourism sector.

The news, confirmed by Argyll and Bute Council at last week's budget meeting, was welcomed by AITC chairwoman Connie Lovel. She said: 'It's exciting to know we now have

the core funding in place to allow us to continue to build on the 'Stronger Together' initiative we have been running since AITC's inception in 2012. Argyll and Bute Council's decision is a tremendous vote of confidence not only in our ability to effectively market and promote this beautiful region, but also to attract additional funding from other bodies. That way, we can continue to ensure that every pound of public money invested has the biggest possible return for our local associations and their members.'

Announcing the funding,

council leader Dick Walsh said: 'The more we work together to overcome challenges and to highlight to potential new residents and investors the attractions of Argyll and Bute, the more we will achieve.'

AITC was set up in 2012 with the aim of providing an overall regional approach to raising awareness of Argyll and the Isles as a high quality visitor destination. It supports the local individual marketing associations throughout Argyll and the Isles in their efforts to increase visitor numbers and visitor spend across the area.

**Community cash buys Plockton defibrillator**

PLOCKTON is to have its own heart defibrillator after a huge community effort raised £1,600 to buy the lifesaving equipment.

The device will be located in a central position in the Lochalsh village and will be accessible for everyone to use in an emergency. Retired community nurse Jane

Mackenzie, whose daughter Fiona raised £300 towards the total at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, told The Oban Times: 'We did have somebody who died here suddenly from a massive heart attack. It is just the fact that the ambulance in Kyle is a minimum of 20 minutes away and if we have a defibrillator here it here gives people

an extra chance.' Efforts now will concentrate on training as many local people as possible to use the machine, which works by giving cardiac arrest victims an electric shock to restart the heart.

West Yorkshire Medical Service director of training Mike Shucksmith, a regular visitor to

Plockton for holidays, has offered to provide free first aid and defibrillator classes on four days next week, starting on Sunday.

The device is being purchased through Lucky2Bhere, a charity established in 2007 by Portree man Ross Cowie to raise funds to place defibrillators in remote rural areas.

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**ISLE OF CANNA**

ISLE OF Canna residents are hoping better weather accompanies the switch from winter to summer timetables on CalMac ferries from Mallaig. A succession of Atlantic storms have been battering the west coast for months and sailings to Canna have been badly disrupted. Islander Stewart Connor said: 'The weather has been terrible. We had nine consecutive days without a sailing just before Christmas and did not get a ferry until Boxing Day. But CalMac have done an amazing job in difficult circumstances in one of the worst winters anyone can remember. They are our lifeline.' He added: 'We are hoping the weather changes for the better when the summer timetables kick in at the end of March.'

**GLENGARRY**

GLENGARRY History Society is looking for former soldiers to relate their wartime memories at its next meeting in Glengarry Community Hall on February 26. The meeting starts at 7.30pm.



The homebaking stall was a popular port of call for Lochside RC pupils at their UNICEF Day for Change. 20\_08lochy01

**Big-hearted Lochside pupils extend helping hand to Uganda**

BIG-HEARTED Lochside RC Primary School pupils have extended a helping hand to schoolchildren in Uganda. The UNICEF Day for Change Schools for All fundraiser aimed to raise £150 to buy a 'school in a box' containing everything for an entire classroom. Each box helps at least 40 children continue their education after an emergency such as an earthquake or flood. Activities including covering a 'money snake' with loose change, a homebaking stall, and paying £1 to dress in the yellow, red or black of the Ugandan flag raised the grand total of £270.

**BARRA**

BARRA'S first community-owned wind turbine will finally be commissioned at the end of the month - but it'll be a close-run thing. Bad luck meant the £2.45million turbine couldn't be commissioned by the end of last year despite having been erected, with the injury to an engineer from commissioning company Enercon then bad weather conspiring to halt progress. With a deadline of getting the turbine up to speed by the end of March to take advantage of existing Feed in Tariffs (FIT), it is hoped next week will be the final step in getting the blades turning. Euan Scott, project lead, said: 'It's going to be a close run affair to ensure the turbine is commissioned for the opening on February 28, but that's

nothing new for this project. 'Enercon will be arriving on February 24 to complete the outstanding one-and-a-half to two days' commissioning work.' The Barra and Vatersay Community Company hope to generate around £50,000-£100,000 for the community, although Euan said previously that this was a conservative estimate. Funds generated from the 65m Barra turbine at Eoligarry will go into a fund similar to Tires's Windfall Fund, which allows local groups to apply on a case-by-case basis for community projects. There is also likely to be an investment fund to support larger, more ambitious projects in future.



Barra's new community turbine could be up and running this month.

**TIREE**

SUBMISSIONS are being sought by the Gaelic Book Council for this year's Donald Meek Award. Established in 2010 with financial assistance from Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Creative Scotland, the award, named after the Tires historian, aims to encourage and support Gaelic writers in their craft. Rosemary Ward, director of the Gaelic Books Council said: 'The Donald Meek Award is an annual competition which seeks to encourage new and creative Gaelic writing and we are seeking new works in a variety of genre from emerging and established Gaelic writers. 'We are interested in receiving new Gaelic creative works - poetry, short stories, novels or drama - which are as yet, unpublished, but are nearing completion, and could be progressed to publication. 'We will also accept academic works and research studies which, though not necessarily written in Gaelic, have a Gaelic subject matter, as long as they have not been published before the closing date.' Applications must be submitted by Friday April 25.



**Invergarry youngsters step back in time**

Invergarry Primary School pupils have been re-enacting life as children of World War II as part of a history project. The primary four to sevens dressed up, listened to radio programmes from the war era and learned how to cook and bake, based on war time rations.



Ballachulish Primary School's eco committee received a generous donation from Stewart Borland of Highland Titles Charitable Trust for Scotland.

**BALLACHULISH**

BALLACHULISH Primary School received a £1,000 donation to build an outdoor classroom and play area. The school's eco committee is fundraising for the project as the current playground is on a slope with rocks, making it too dangerous for the infants to play in. Highland Titles Charitable Trust for Scotland donated the money after hearing about the current play area's poor conditions. Teacher and eco coordinator Morag Milne said: 'The new area will give a safe area for all ages to play and will also be used as a classroom in sunny weather.'



Inverinan Community Group's litter pickers gathered 17 bags of rubbish following their recent clean-up of the road. Pictured are, from left, John Rea, Averil Wilson and Andy Cunningham.

**Volunteers hit the road on litter pick**

LITTER picks were at the ready as members of the Inverinan Community Group took to the streets - and cleaned them. Hitting the road recently, the group gathered a significant amount of litter in the village, returning the area to its former glory. Much of the area has been thrown from passing vehicles and the group gathered 17 large bags from a five-mile stretch along the roadside. Ignoring pouring rain, hailstones and chilly temperatures during the February 2 pick, the hardy band of volunteers were delighted with the outcome. However, the group's Fiona Cunningham said: 'Significant amounts of litter had gathered, causing an eyesore in what is otherwise a beautiful area. Much of this litter is likely thrown from passing vehicles. The weather was appalling, and we were battered by hailstones, but persevered and are pleased that the roadside around Inverinan is now litter free - we hope it will stay that way.'

**INVERINAN**

**LISMORE**

THE BIRTH of a new Liosach is always something to celebrate. So the birth of two in one week in February is momentous. A very big welcome to Esme Grace Layton and Innes Maclean. Esme was born to Jane and David Layton, a sister for Beth and Josh, and Innes to Carol Maclean, a brother for Shannon.

**GLENMORISTON**

WEST Glenmoriston Community Company (WGCC) has received £95,360 from the Scottish Land Fund to buy the former school in Dalchreichtart from Highland Council. The stone building, midway between Invermoriston and Cluanie on the A87, has been lying empty for around nine years. Now WGCC can progress plans to transform it into a social and economic hub for the scattered community of around 120 in the remote upper glen. Chairman, 76-year-old retired engineer Adam Philip, said the money would pay for a project manager for two years as well as the purchase of the building, which the company currently leases from the council Highland Council for a peppercorn rent. Further grant applications

will now be made to fund the revamp, which could see the main classroom become a small hall and a computer room created. Mr Philip told *The Oban Times*: 'It will also need disabled toilets and a ramp. Everyone will see the benefits once it is up and running. 'It's hopefully going to be a nice centre for the local community. Once you provide something it's amazing how many people come out of the woodwork.' The Scottish Land Fund is funded by £9 million Scottish Government cash and is administered by the Big Lottery Fund in partnership with Highlands and Islands Enterprise.



The old Dalchreichtart school in Glenmoriston: plans to transform it into a community hub.

**GLENDALE**

THE GLENDALE Trust is taking steps to arrange a public minibus for the village. It is hoped this will fix the severe lack of public transport in the area, as the only service currently in place is the school bus. The bus would travel through Glendale and potentially to Dunvegan and Struan, said trust chairwoman Joy Talbot.

She added: 'It's a badly needed service as we have no public transport at all, not even a private taxi. If we were to coincide the bus with school hours it's easily viable but arranging these things always takes quite a while.'

**EIGG**

THE ISLE of Eigg is to host around 350 people at a music festival this summer. Some 60 bands are expected to descend on the tiny island to play at the event, 'Howlin' Fling' in July. Tickets sold out in one day and music fans from America, Austria and Sweden are set to attend the festival. Folk, pop and indie artists still to be announced will perform at the festival, organised by record label owner Johnny Lynch who moved to the isle from Fife in 2010. Eigg resident Sarah Boden said: 'It really is something special that 60 bands are coming to an island with a population of 80 or 90 people. A lot of people will be camping but we've booked out every holiday cottage and bothy on the island for the festival.'

**SKYE**

SKYE is set for big-screen stardom as filming on the island starts for a remake of *Macbeth*. Hundreds of extras from Skye and nearby are being sought for the film adaptation of the Shakespeare play. Shooting in Portree started this month and is thought to last around seven weeks. Michael Fassbender, featured in recent blockbuster *12 Years A Slave*, is set to star in the movie, although it is not known if he will be filmed in Skye.

**Spean Bridge Community Council**

SPEAN Bridge Community Council held its monthly meeting Spean Bridge Primary School on February 4. Abridged minutes: Transport Scotland - the last month had seen some successes with the installation of the flashing warning light to the east of Roy Bridge, the repair to the carrier pipe on the drain on the Roy Bridge and the footpath reinstatement, but these had been short lived before the warning light once again malfunctioned and the flood returned. The council is still seeking sight of the Route Accident Reduction Plan for the A82 between Spean Bridge and Fort William. Despite Bear Scotland's promises it was noted that they failed to alert the community council to five weeks of ground investigation work impacting

on the A82 at Glen Gloy. It was agreed that if Transport Scotland was unable to secure guarantees from the roads contractor over outstanding issues, the secretary should write to the Transport Minister. Killiechonate Woodlands - timber lorries were still using the Corriechoille Road so the volunteers have been unable to start strimming. However Highland Council TEC services intended to lodge an enforcement notice to prohibit such traffic, so action could start shortly. Spean Bridge toilets - as requested the secretary had contacted the Woolen Mill which was unwilling to extend its opening hours. Kinlochleven and Arisaig community trusts both had existing toilets and available funding, and we have neither. It was agreed to refer this matter back to the business community with the suggestion that they may like to brief the local media about the unfairness of the distribution of comfort grant cash in the Highlands. Co-operative purchases of fuel - Although everyone agreed it was an excellent idea, in the absence of someone to administer it is unlikely the community council could proceed. However the community council will advertise for a suitable applicant. The chairman thanked Highland Councillor Eddie Hunter who had recently decided to resign his seat for his support, counsel, and advice over the years and wished him and his family every happiness for the future. Next meeting: Tuesday March 4, Spean Bridge Primary School.



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**Fury as axe falls on council service points**

WEST Highland councillors have reacted with fury to proposals to shut six rural council service points across the area under a cost-cutting drive.

If Highland Council's finance committee agrees the controversial move next Wednesday, people in Kyle, Fort Augustus, Broadford, Lochcarron, Mallaig and Acharacle will no longer be able to talk to staff or pay bills face to face.

The village service points are among 23 being recommended for closure across the region under plans to cut the network from 35 to 12.

Staff from the affected branches were briefed about the changes in Inverness on Tuesday. No compulsory redundancies are envisaged.

The council says a review found falling demand at the service points with many customers preferring online access.

Caol and Mallaig Councillor Allan Henderson said closing Mallaig would be 'folly' because rural centres should not be compared with Inverness.

He said: 'While the footfall will be high in Inverness it will be low in Mallaig but the man hours travelled will be much higher in Mallaig.'

'If Highland Council want to offer a stronger fairer Highlands then they have to think of the islands and Knoydart residents who would not only have a ferry trip but an 84 mile round road, bus or rail journey.'

Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh councillor Audrey Sinclair described the proposals as 'criminal'. She said: 'It is going to affect the old and the vulnerable who need that reassurance of speaking to someone.'

'Kyle service point is such an important asset not just to Kyle, but to all of Lochalsh. It would leave Lochalsh without a registrar and people would have to go to Portree - that's a 70-mile round trip from Kyle and 120 from Glenelg.'

'I just hope they have a change of heart.'

A council spokesperson said only two people at Mallaig and one at Acharacle were using the service points each week. He told *The Oban Times*: 'The council has noted that people do business now principally online, on their phones or by email.'

If agreed, the closures would be implemented before June 2015.



**Ceilidh on song with 80th birthday celebration**

The annual Skye Ceilidh in Fort William is always a cause for celebration - but the occasion was even more special on Saturday night when ceilidh organiser Charlie MacColl, right, presented singer and four-time m6d gold medallist Calum Ross with a cake to celebrate his 80th birthday. Also pictured are Charlie's wife Mairi and Calum's daughter Fiona. The event, held in the West End Hotel, drew an attendance of more than 100 people, mostly from the Isle of Skye. See full story and photos on page 13. 20\_108skye01

**Woman injured after sledge plunges into Glencoe crevasse**

A WOMAN was injured after falling into a crevasse while sledging at Glencoe Mountain ski centre on Tuesday afternoon.

The holidaymaker, believed to be about 60, was pulled out by members of the resort's ski patrol and taken down the hill for medical attention. It is believed she had been sledging just below the first station when the accident happened.

One eye-witness told *The Oban Times*: 'We were coming down the lift and there was a bit of commotion where we had all been sledging. There was a crevasse further down and we think she's gone down there. There were three or four men trying to get her out and her family were trying to get to her as well but they were being warned off. They thought she was in the water.'

'The visibility is very, very poor. Once you are up at the first station you can see 30 or 40 yards but then you start to lose it.'

'There is a heck of a lot of snow and all the fences are buried.' Glencoe Mountain owner Andy Meldrum said: 'She fell into the gully at the top and came off the sledge.'

'She's bashed up a wee bit and the ambulance has just arrived to have a wee look at her. We think she might have hurt her shoulder.'

The incident came as Lochaber's ski centres report an incred-

ible week as locals and visitors descended on the slopes.

Nevis Range reported Sunday as the busiest day in the last 10 years as almost 1,700 people came to enjoy snow that has been falling consistently since before Christmas.

The rest of the week has continued to be busy as keen skiers and snowboarders made the most of the school half term break.

Not all of the lifts have been in operation as they are buried in snow, with average depths of four and a half metres on the upper slopes.

Managing director Marian Austin said: 'We knew Sunday was going to be an incredible day on the slopes as we already had unprecedented levels of snow

and the forecast was for sunny spells and favourable winds.'

'All of our staff have been working very hard in difficult conditions and the hill team have been digging out the lifts on the upper mountain almost on a daily basis.'

At Glencoe Mountain, the ski school has been fully booked every day and 700 people were on the slopes on Tuesday. Such was the demand, most had to do without ski hire.

Angela Dingwall, Glencoe resort manager said: 'We've been really busy, maybe not the busiest we have ever been but there's been plenty of visitors. Skiing conditions have been really good too, we have plenty of snow and not too much wind.'

**New lease of life for Fort's BA Club**

FORT William's BA Club is to get a new lease of life as a branch of an Oban-based outdoor education charity.

It was announced last month that the popular music and social venue, which is also used by local sports groups, will close at the end of February.

But now social enterprise group Stramash will redevelop the building with owners Rio Tinto Alcan.

The new facility will feature a nursery and provide training to professionals who work with children and young people. The charity also offers outdoor skills training for youths and adults as well as adventure clubs and team development.

The nursery will open in August and will provide four practitioner jobs and three modern apprenticeships.

Stramash boss Niall Urquhart said: 'We're hoping the rest of the centre will develop pretty quickly after that and more jobs will open up. We would like it to be similar to our facility in Oban and we currently have 17 staff there.'

'The centre will enhance the status of Fort William as the outdoor capital of the UK and will bring a new dimension to the area.'

By EMMA CRICHTON fort@obantimes.co.uk

'We are pleased to be working with Rio Tinto Alcan to ensure that the former BA Club remains an asset for local people.'

The club was opened in the 1960s to serve the then British Aluminium factory and regularly held concerts, fundraisers, wedding receptions and other celebrations.

Franz Ferdinand, Athlete and Mumford and Sons have played in the venue in recent years and the connecting sports grounds are used by Lochaber Bowling Club, Fort William Cricket Club and Lochaber Welfare Football League.

Mr Urquhart assured sports teams that the new facility will still be able to accommodate their needs.

He said: 'It's really important to us that the facility remains a community hub. We're going to be meeting with the sport clubs in the next couple of weeks but I definitely don't see us digging up the grounds or making any drastic change to costs.'

Jim Beattie of Rio Tinto Alcan said: 'With several different proposals from different parties we eventually decided to negotiate with Stramash.'

'This social enterprise company came with completely fresh ideas which will bring clear benefits to the communities of Fort William and broader Lochaber, while at the same time accommodating the existing sporting clubs that use the facility.'

'I believe this centre will bring great social benefits, a centre of learning, employment and re-invigorate what was the BA Club, to ensure a new exciting long term future.'

Local Brian Murphy said: 'I'm sad to see the BA Club closing, it was a facility that many people used for many years and it will be sorely missed by a lot of people.'

'However, as we must move on and look to the future, I'm interested in the prospect of an outdoor nursery as these have had growing popularity in recent years. I'm also very pleased to see that it will be bringing jobs to the area, particularly modern apprenticeships for our young people.'

'I'm glad to hear that the old club grounds will still be available to our local sport teams and I hope that whatever agreement they come to is sustainable for the teams as the grounds are very important for our local community.'

**Single vote seals community forest bid**

A LOCHABER community has said 'yes' to a proposal which could see them buy two local woodlands - by a single vote.

Residents of Achmarry, Burnakaig and Clunes voted 15-14 in a postal ballot of 40 eligible electors to pursue its ambitious £500,000 plan to buy Forestry Commission Scotland woodlands on the south side of Loch Arkraig, near Spean Bridge.

The commission has decided they are surplus to requirements and last autumn notified the community of their intention to sell them.

Under the National Forest Land Scheme (NFLS), community groups have 'first refusal' on woodlands for sale if they can show their purchase will bring increased public benefits.

The rules state a bid will go forward for consideration only if more than half the community supports it and the turnout is more than 50 per cent.

Following the vote, the ABC Forestry/Renewables steering group submitted its application to the NFLS yesterday (Wednesday). ABC group spokesperson Gary Servant said: 'This is

a unique opportunity for our remote community to achieve sustainable rural development gains through the restoration and management of a biologically, historically- and culturally-rich native pinewood site.'

He added: 'Raising the funds will be a challenge but one which many other communities have overcome in the past.'

**NEWSEK 01631 568000**

**Chaos on Coll's roads**



Traffic was brought to a standstill on the island after an HGV got stuck there on Monday.

A COLL wind turbine developer has blamed 'obstructors' for creating chaos on the island's narrow roads on Monday as a 20-metre trailer blocked traffic.

However, locals have hit out at Neil Smith of Galanach Green Generation Ltd for making the claim, saying the lorry's visit - arranged as part of a trial run to see if the parts for a 77m wind turbine could be safely transported along the island's roads - was a 'serious safety concern'.

Residents have now called on the council to reconsider the permission it gave for the planned 750Kw turbine at the north west of the island, or else risk a serious accident.

As well as getting stuck between Arinagour and Arnabost, the lorry took several hours to get from the ferry terminal to Galanach.

Terry Shirvington, secretary of Coll Community Council, said: 'It was a disaster. There's one road and one route in Coll and there was no way to get past.'

'One elderly lady was trying to get to her shopping in Arinagour and she tried to pull over into the side of the road. She couldn't go any further though because it was so boggy - she was literally trembling she was so distressed.'

'The driver of the vehicle said if it hadn't been for all

the people causing obstructions, the lorry would have got through fine.'

'These 'obstructors' were people going to get their shopping or going to the doctor. Neil will say they're objectors. They weren't.'

She added: 'Also, we had a fire on the island last week - what if there was a fire at one end of the island while this lorry was there? There was no serious risk assessment done and this would never happen on the mainland.'

Islander Colin Kennedy said: 'If one of these lorries goes off the road, how do you get a hard-standing for a recovery vehicle?'

'If anything like that goes

wrong, it will be on a par with the Costa Concordia hitting the rocks. We couldn't get anything to lift it.'

Mr Smith, however, said the trial run went well.

He added: 'We had people who objected to the turbine come out and block the road - they came out in front and refused to reverse. The council in their wisdom decided to tell the objecting group this was happening in advance.'

'It was all videoed by the roads department though and they'll see it.'

Councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'I'm aware of the situation and it does concern me, but I'd like to see the results of any tests.'

**'It's 'Snow' Unusual' as bus slips**

TOM Jones came to the rescue after a bus came to a halt on the Bealach an Rìgh last week because of snow and ice, blocking the road.

So slippery had the top of Dunollie Road become last Tuesday evening that the gridlock was only alleviated when the man named after the Welsh singer and friend Sean McMahon grabbed shovels from their own cars and used grit from

a roadside bin to get traffic moving.

Motorist Elaine Walton, from Benderloch, praised the helpers' efforts, but asked why the surface was in such a treacherous condition in the first place. Others felt the constantly leaking drain on the road contributed to the hazard as temperatures continued to plunge.

Oban Police said other vehicles were also struggling to get out of the town because of a lack of traction on the road. The bus remained stuck until a gritter arrived.

But BEAR Scotland, which maintains the route as part of the A85 trunk road, say the area was gritted in advance of the jam.

A spokeswoman said: 'This section of the A85 was treated just after 3pm last Tuesday afternoon. After

the route was completed at 5pm our winter maintenance vehicle patrolled for snow along the length of the route from 6pm until after 2am on Wednesday morning, ploughing and salting as required.'

'This incident was not reported to BEAR Scotland or Traffic Scotland.'

The leaking drain was to be investigated 'as soon as possible', she added.

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**ARGYLL ANIMAL AID**, a registered Scottish Charity for 24 years, is a well known face in Argyll and the Isles. We rehome primarily both cats and dogs, although try to point people in the direction of help for other animals if we can't help ourselves.

We are going through a bit of a crisis at the moment in the shape of **CATS!** We need your help please. We find ourselves with a large number of cats, some would make pets but others are timid and need a bit of special attention. These cats need a reasonably quiet home with someone who would be prepared to be patient and let them come round to trusting and feeling safe in time. We know its a tall order but we are also sure there must be folk out there who like a challenge! Other cats would be better placed in an outside home, ie stables, farm, croft, garden centre, or rural garden.

Its really important that we find homes for some of these cats as we are having to stop taking in needy cases simply because we need to concentrate all our energies on the cats we have.

The other reason we need to find homes is that our circumstances are changing. Pat Blunsden who has been in charge of our cats over many years is resigning from the charity and we would like to take this opportunity to thank her for all her past work. This means that we will have to move our cats to new premises but in the meantime they will stay at Pat's and we will fund their upkeep. We have planning permission in place for a new cattery with Building Warrant applied for at Lochandubh Kennels where we keep our dogs, and hopefully we can fundraise enough to make this new cattery a reality very soon. It will mean that with your support and help we have a Rehoming Centre at Barcaldine which will assure Argyll Animal Aid's continued presence well into the future.



We have a new website [www.argyllanimalaid.org.uk](http://www.argyllanimalaid.org.uk) and of course our Facebook page. Keep in touch with us and if you can, please offer one of our cats a chance.

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**Medication lost**

A QUANTITY of medication was lost in the Fort William area sometime on Monday. Police are warning that the missing medication could be harmful if taken by persons other than those for whom it was prescribed. Anyone who finds any medication can contact local police in Fort William on the 101 non-emergency number.

**Waste collection**

HIGHLAND Council will resume its fortnightly brown bin garden waste collections on March 3 after suspending the service for three months over the winter to save money. New collection calendars for bins will be put through residents letterboxes in the coming weeks.

# Community developers power ahead with Skye hydro plans

COMMUNITY developers behind a small hydropower project at a remote Isle of Skye village are planning to launch a public share offer by the end of the year. Strathaird Hydro Limited (SHL) hopes proceeds will fund much of the estimated £420,000 required to build the scheme at Elgol on land owned by the John Muir Trust. But first the company must work up a prospectus for shareholders explaining how much they can expect back from their investment annually.

By STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

It also needs to find £10,000 for a grid connection from SSE and negotiate a legal agreement with the trust to build on Strathaird Estate. SHL secretary Mark Perrett told *The Oban Times*: 'We are in a position where we are getting serious about fundraising. The share offer will be open to anyone and is likely to provide an annual return to investors.'

'Clearly shares will appeal to anyone who wants to support a small, sustainable renewable energy scheme in a remote area. We are in negotiations with the John Muir Trust who already provided £2,000 towards the feasibility study, which we have taken to be a very clear indication of their support for the scheme. However, it is fair to say that we don't have a legal agreement with them yet and that is the next thing we want to do. The agreement is likely to be some kind of lease but at this stage we don't know. We need legal advice on that.' Mike Daniels, John Muir Trust head of land management, said: 'We will be very supportive in terms of trying to work out a lease or whatever arrangement they wish to pursue. It is the kind of small scale scheme we are very supportive of.'

The hydro plant, once up and running, could provide around £60,000 for community projects such as maintaining and improving the Elgol Village Hall, supporting the primary school, local environmental works and developing local amenities, Mr Perrett said. It would also cut carbon emissions by around 130 tonnes per year and directly supply the village hall and Elgol Primary School with electricity. Planning permission was granted last autumn by Highland Council and the company was officially registered as an industrial and providential society in December. That status means any profits generated by the scheme go to the community and not any one individual.



Moidart Memorial: Angus McLean, left, and Donald Monro at the potential site of the new war memorial.

## Moidart war memorial plans progressing well

PLANS to construct the first memorial to the Moidart men who lost their lives in the both world wars are making good progress, according to a local organiser.

By EMMA CRICHTON  
fort@obantimes.co.uk

The structure will be placed at the summit known as Bealach Carach, between Loch Moidart and Glenuig.

A date has been set for the memorial dedication, to be on August 17, the day after the Glenfinnan Games. August also marks the centenary of the opening of hostilities in the First World War.

Lord Lieutenant of Inverness Donald Cameron and Bishop of Argyll and the Isles for the Scottish Episcopal Church Kevin Pearson will attend the service.

Donald Monro and Angus McLean of Kinlochmoidart, set up the 'Moidart War Memorial Fund' late last year and have raised £3,000 of the £4,000 needed to construct the monument.

Mr Monro, 71, said: 'Local landowners have been very

generous, as have all the other local people who have donated. The response has been very heartening.'

The memorial will be a cairn of local stone with the phrase 'for your tomorrow we gave our today' carved on to the face.

Mr Monro served in the Queen's Own Highlanders regiment of the British Army from 1962 until 1970, following his father who served in the 5th battalion of the Queen's own Cameron Highlanders - and said that was why remembering soldiers why so important to him.

It was originally planned to list names of the fallen on the memorial but Mr Monro and other organisers decided against it.

He said: 'There's nobody left alive who remembers these men so there's a danger of getting it wrong. Missing people out or putting someone there who shouldn't be are mistakes we are not prepared to make.'

## Lochaber Music School charity concert

LOCHABER Music School will hold a charity concert in Roy Bridge on Friday night.

The senior traditional group will be joined by a high school 24-piece swing band from

Lancashire in the village hall from 7.30pm.

All donations go to Mary's Meals, a charity that provides food to children in the world's poorest communities.

## New art competition

A NEW art competition has been launched for creative young people in Lochaber.

Those aged between seven and 17 can enter the Young Artist of the Year contest, aimed at showcasing the talent of the area's youth.

The Rotary Club of Lochaber set up the competition with Room 13, a network of pupil-run art studios that began in Caol 20 years ago.

The winning entrants will receive the club's trophy and will have their work framed and displayed at several venues across Lochaber beginning with Lochaber Art Club's annual exhibition in June. To take part or nominate an artist request an application pack by emailing info@room13international.org.

## Campaigner makes case for 'yes' vote

VETERAN socialist and independence campaigner Jim Sillars will make the case for a 'yes' vote in Fort William tomorrow night.

The 75-year-old former MP will call for an independent, democratic and socialist Scotland.

Mr Sillars will also have copies of his new book, *In Place of Fear II*, in which he argues that Scots have the opportunity, through the referendum, to build a new country. Tea, coffee and home baking will be available before the meeting begins in the Innseagan House Hotel at 7.30pm.



Charlie Donaldson pours a dram onto the water as Sandy Walker casts the first fly of the season, with other club members looking on.

## Inverlochly Angling Club casts first fly of season

HONORARY life member and former chairman Sandy Walker had the honour of casting the first fly to open Inverlochly Angling Club's season on Saturday afternoon.

The canny fisherman won the Malloch Trophy for the heaviest salmon caught on the

fly in Scotland in 2009 when he landed a 35-pound fish from the river. Club committee member Charlie Donaldson poured a measure of local malt whisky Dew of Ben Nevis from a silver quaich into the water in the hope of a healthy season ahead.

Mr Donaldson said: 'We don't really catch

fish here until May because of the height of the water. They don't tend to hang around here much just now and our main months are May to September. We get the big spring salmon in May time then the grilse in June and July. We have the best of fishing here for six days a week for not a lot of money.'

## Council blocks Barra-Benbecula air link plan

WESTERN Isles Council has blocked a proposal to reinstate the Barra-Benbecula air service.

A group of councillors have fought to re-instate the flights since they were axed under budget cuts last April but the plan was rejected at last week's transportation and infrastructure committee meeting.

Furious Comhairle nan Eilean Siar councillor Donald Manford was one of just 10 members to support the reinstatement.

He said: 'I think it's absolutely

appalling, it seems that the council has little or no regard for the inconvenience and disturbance that this causes members of the public, particularly those who are required to travel for medical reasons.'

'We can get to our national parliament in two hours but it takes six to get from Barra to our local council. Western Isles Council claims to be a local authority but that raises serious questions.'

Karen MacLean, chairwoman

of Castlebay Community Council on Barra said: 'I'm bitterly disappointed, it's having such a detrimental affect on all of our lives.'

**Disheartening**

'When it comes to things like this you wonder why we are attached to the Western Isles Council because they're not helping us and they're cutting us off from the rest of the isles. It's very disheartening.'

Angry Barra residents were unhappy to hear that

the Stornoway-Benbecula air service would be increased from three days to five, despite their flights not being reinstated.

Ms MacLean said: 'It's a very big slap in the face but we all knew it was going to happen.'

'When they reduced the service it was only so they could say "oh look it's happening to Stornoway as well".'

'We knew it was only happening to keep us quiet.'

A comhairle spokesperson said: 'This was an under-used

service. There was extensive consultation taken in the run up to setting the budget last year and the Barra air service did not feature heavily in that consultation.'

'It was heavily subsidised and people made it clear that their priorities lay elsewhere.'

Council leader Angus Campbell said there was no evidence to show that the absence of the planes had any effect on the Barra economy or affected the welfare of patients.

## Castle chamber reveals new secrets

ANCIENT graffiti and a shattered cannonball are among the latest discoveries made by archaeologists at a 700 year-old Lochaber castle.

The crude scrawlings, resembling letters and a ship, were revealed after rubble was cleared from a previously sealed-up chamber in the 10-foot thick walls Mingary Castle on the Ardnamurchan peninsula.

Archaeologists believe the graffiti scratched into the plastered walls of the chamber, which could have served as a chapel, date back to the when the castle was built.

And the broken iron cannonball was likely to have been fired by besiegers, possibly in the 16th century.

Lead archaeologist Tom Addyman said: 'It's pretty simple stuff but it's exciting because the graffiti seems to date to the time of the original construction of the castle in the 13th century.'

'Part of the chamber seems to have been rapidly filled in, with rubble and domestic refuse, mainly animal bones - with the leather heel of a shoe also thrown in.'

**Fragments**  
'This may have occurred during a siege. In the same area two cannonball fragments were found.'

'Later, in more peaceful times, most the rest of the room was filled in, but this was done much more neatly. One area was left open, probably for use as a bed-chamber.'

The finds were unveiled as the Mingary Castle Preservation and Restoration Trust begins work to restore the castle, which was once one of a chain of coastal strongholds under the MacDonald Lordship of the Isles.

The castle has been unoccupied for over 150 years and renovating the imposing landmark is expected to cost almost £2.5m. Excavation work and the beginning of the restoration process has already cost £700,000.



Archaeologist Lynn Fraser records her findings next to the monument's base. f08monument2no

## Town square works reveal remains of old monument



An old postcard of Kennedy Monument in Fort William.

THE REMAINS of an old monument have been dug up during redevelopment work in Fort William.

The base of the Kennedy Monument was revealed during groundworks at Cameron Square, just off the High Street.

Above it once stood an impressive 50ft tall edifice built to commemorate local doctor William Kennedy, who treated the people of Fort William for typhus.

The monument was erected by his wife Margaret in 1865 when Dr Kennedy died of the same illness. The structure stood in the square until it was demolished to build a car park in 1975.

Now, thanks to a Highland Council regeneration project to level the square and fit new street furniture, archaeologists have been able to measure, examine and record the stone base.

Robert Cairns, chairman of the Lochaber Archaeological Society, attended the dig. He said: 'Anything that is dug up in Fort William is important, it's part of our history. It's by digging up buildings and the ground that we find out what happened in the town two or three hundred years ago or even longer.'

## Blizzard hampers search for climber

GLENCOE Mountain Rescue Team spent more than 12 hours looking for a man who had fallen 800ft in blizzard conditions.

Much of the search was carried out in heavy snow and darkness, and was hampered by rescuers' fears of starting an avalanche and burying the casualty.

After hours of searching in what team leader John Grieve described as 'horrendous' conditions, the man was found with facial injuries on the west side of Aonach Dubh at around 2am on Saturday morning.

Mr Grieve said: 'Normally we could have

got down to him in half an hour but because of the avalanche risk we had to go across the gully and it turned into a much longer process.'

'He was lucky not to have sustained more serious injuries, in fact he is very lucky to be alive because his fall could easily have caused an avalanche.'

As the weather cleared a Rescue 137 Navy helicopter airlifted the casualty to the Bedford Hospital. He has since been transferred to a hospital in Glasgow to undergo surgery on his jaw.

## Chamber debates Scottish independence

FORT William Chamber of Commerce will hold the latest in its series of debates on Scottish independence at the Moorings Hotel in Banavie tonight (Thursday).

Guest speaker will be Business for Scotland founder member and chief executive Gordon MacIntyre-Kemp, who will argue the case for a 'yes' vote in the referendum on September 18.

His theme will be 'the economics of in-

dependence - how will independence affect you, your family and your business?'

Mr MacIntyre-Kemp, the owner of social media and sales and marketing consultancy Intelligise, has made the case for independence in several TV debates. The 7pm to 9pm event is open to the wider business community. For further details contact secretary@fortwilliamchamber.co.uk or call 01397 874402.

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# The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

SOMETIMES, it takes the bravery of one to inspire others to take the same bold step.

In airing their grievances over the needless pain suffered by mother Mabel Braidwood during her final days, her children Dawn, Zoe and Matt have encouraged others to speak up about the poor standard of palliative care received.

Palliative care is, without question, something that should always be of the highest standard and the care received by Mabel Braidwood fell far short of the level any of us would deem acceptable.

It was painful for Dawn to relive the events of last year, but in doing so she encouraged others to step forward and demand such incidents should never happen again.

Sadly, it is sometimes only by speaking out such issues are resolved and those who have that courage should be applauded - they are not just looking out for themselves, but all of us.

## GLASGOW LETTER

### Mull and Iona Association

THE MULL and Iona Association continued with the format it has adopted for the past few years for its 2014 Annual Gathering held in the Piping Centre on St Valentine's Day with Jack Degnan from Bunessan in the chair.

The attendance was similar to last year and in the first part of the evening the audience enjoyed the singing of Ainsley Hamill, Robert Robertson and the 'Twa Dugs' and the fiddle playing of Kirsten Hendry, yet another wonderful youngster from Shetland, as well as the association pipers.

In the later part of the evening Deoch 'n Dorus showed once more why they are one of the most popular dance bands on the scene with the other entertainers providing short respite between the dances.

In keeping with the romantic nature of the date, CalMac provided the opportunity to win free travel to the island while there was also free accommodation in the Isle of Mull Hotel up for grabs.

The committee will be delighted that once again this was a most enjoyable social event.

### Cottier's concert

WE HAVE all heard about the Scotsman, the Englishman and the Irishman and I am delighted to inform you that they are now on tour, having already performed as part of Transatlantic Sessions, providing wonderful traditional music.

Yes, John McCusker, Mike McGolrick and John Doyle were on top form, despite the rather chilly conditions inside Cottier's Theatre, and showcased the best of traditional music with fast instrumentals interspersed with the wonderful singing of John Doyle.

From the outset, John McCusker assured an informal friendly connection with the audience as all three exhibited an amazing level of brilliance on a variety of instruments.

PM music is to be congratulated on promoting such an event.

Prior to heading south to England, there is still opportunity to catch up with the trio at the Tolbooth, Stirling, this evening (Thursday) and at Eastgate in Peebles tomorrow evening.

### Clydebank and District Highlanders

DESPITE the inclement weather, there was a good turnout at the recent 'Bankies' ceilidh with George Paul in the chair.

Providing the enjoyable entertainment were Gaelic singers Gillebride MacMillan and Kim Carrie with Rock Salt providing the Scots songs. In addition, accompanist Kirsteen Grant played for some enjoyable community singing while Robert Wood was the piper and Ryan Young played fiddle selections.

Tickets for the Supper Dance in Napier Hall on Saturday March 1, with music by Nicky McMichan, cost £16 and are available from committee members or by phoning 01389 879749.

### Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choirs

THE ANNUAL concert of the Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choirs

(Senior and Junior) will take place in Milngavie Town Hall on Friday February 28 at 7.30pm.

The choir is delighted it will be sharing the platform with Rhayader Male Voice Choir from Central Wales which has performed at many different venues since its formation in 1957.

Alistair Carmichael, Secretary of State for Scotland, will chair the concert.

Tickets, £8, are available from choir members or at the door. Please note the change of venue for this year's concert.

### Gaelic Day

PAISLEY Grammar School is the venue from 9.30am on Saturday February 22 when there will be classes, with emphasis on conversation, for beginners, intermediate and advanced participants.

There will also be singing workshops for which no experience of Gaelic is necessary. For further information telephone Alasdair 07972735413 or email clannaidhig@hotmail.com.

### National Piping Centre

AT THE first of a series of concerts it will be Ladies' Night at the National Piping Centre tomorrow evening (Friday) when Margaret Dunn, Claire Lynas, Caitlin MacDonald and Sarah Muir will be showcasing the high quality of female pipers.

The concert starts at 7.30pm with tickets £10 and £8 concessions.

### Ceol's Craic

NEXT month's Ceol's Craic on March 1, in association with Glasgow Film Festival, will celebrate the traditional and contemporary through live and improvised performances featuring new compositions, moving images and song. Full details next week.

### Diary dates

**Friday February 21:** National Piping Centre, Ladies' Night - see above

**Saturday February 22:** Glasgow Skye Association Buntata's Sgadan, Crawford Hall, 7.30pm. Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association Buffet Ceilidh Dance, Partick Bowling Club, 7.45pm. Gaelic Day, Paisley Grammar School - see above.

**Tuesday February 25:** Live at the Star, Admiral Bar, 72 Waterloo Street, 8pm - Live at the Star Young'uns.

**Friday February 28:** Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choirs Annual Concert, Milngavie Town Hall - see above. Uist and Barra Association Ceilidh Dance, Crawford Hall, 9pm-1am.

**Saturday March 1:** Clydebank and District Association Highlander's Association Supper Dance, Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick, 7.30pm to 11.30pm.

### Pub scene

CALUM Iain MacCorquade and Martin Jones will be playing in the Park Bar on Friday, Ceol an Aire on Saturday and Scott Harvey on Sunday while in the Islay Inn it will be Trail West on Friday and Penny Dogs on Saturday.

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

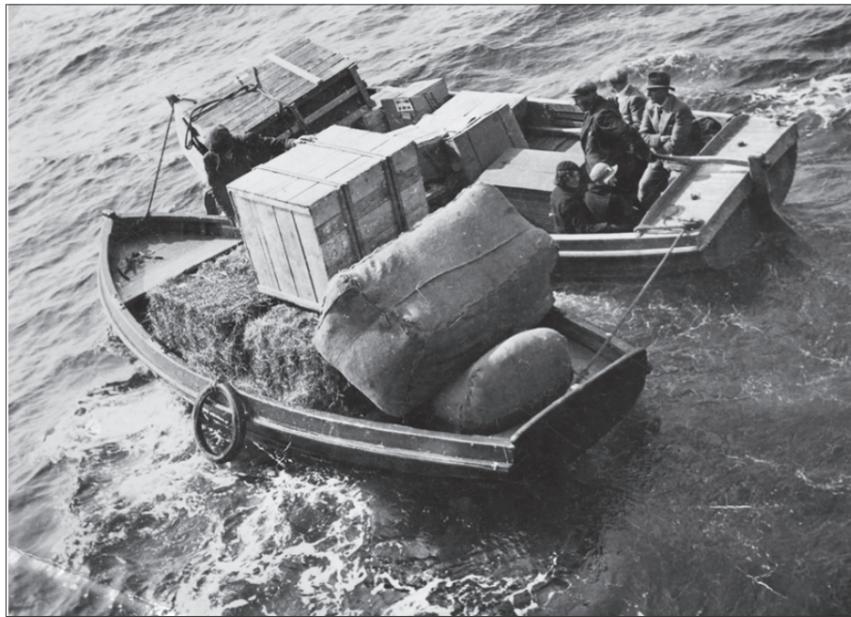
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The views expressed in The Oban Times are not necessarily those of this newspaper.



## Kilchoan ferry boats in days gone by

This week's flashback photograph from The Oban Times' archives features Kilchoan ferry boats in days gone by. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

# Letters to the editor

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

www.obantimes.co.uk

Telephone: 01631 568000  
Fax: 01631 568001

### Trunk road winter maintenance

Sir,  
It was only a matter of time but winter is here and BEAR has gone into hibernation.

Not a snow plough to be seen. I refer, maybe a bit tongue in cheek, to my recent journey.

I had the misfortune of driving the A82 and got stuck at Blackmount as a result of snow which had caused lorries to spin out.

Normally I would not mind, it is winter and, having driven the road for a number of years, these conditions are expected.

What annoyed me however was that it took more than two and a half hours before a plough arrived to clear the road.

In the past the road was always cleared from a depot in Balachulish, however, because of cost cutting and rationalisation - one presumes - this is now closed.

I'd love to know the logic behind this, after all the Balachulish depot was placed there for a reason!

The A82 through Glencoe reaches a height of more than 1,000 feet and is often subject to snow during the winter.

Readers may not know this but the route is now cleared by ploughs that are based in Corpach and Oban. From their base these ploughs are now at least two hours, in favorable conditions, from Rannoch moor summit opposed to what used to be half an hour from Ballachulish.

Their ability to respond to adverse weather is therefore greatly diminished particularly if they have to negotiate rush hour traffic or delays in both towns.

I would suggest that BEAR and Transport Scotland need to take a serious look at their winter maintenance operations and stop playing with motorists' lives.

**John G, by email.**

### The £8m question

Sir,  
Another month passes another financial scandal involving Ar-

gyll and Bute Council comes to light.

After *The Oban Times'* latest freedom of information request, we, the public, now know that our council has had, for years and years, more than eight million pounds of council tax payers' money tied up in vacant properties.

All this has been and still is happening while incumbent councillors of all political persuasions and across different administrations are cutting time and time again essential front line services.

How was this allowed to happen when we continue to be told there is no money left?

It is clear the culture of incumbency in some of our councillors has led to an institutional incompetence in the management of our council's finances.

**Alastair Redman, Portnahaven, Isle of Islay.**

### Ferry fares concession vital

Sir,  
If the Highland Council's TEC services committee doesn't want to be responsible for emptying the remote peninsulas of Morvern, Sunart and Ardnamurchan by further increasing the Corran Ferry fares, it needs to concede something - *The Oban Times*, February 13.

At the last TEC Services Committee, Councillors Andrew Baxter and Brian Murphy voiced their concerns about the impact any further increases would have on everyone who uses the ferry.

So too did their colleague, Councillor Roddy Balfour, who came up with the excellent suggestion that motorists who are pensioners and resident in the area, should get free passes or cross at a greatly reduced rate.

This proposal would help the most vulnerable and go some way towards restoring the public's faith in the Highland Council which is committed to providing service excellence no matter how remote the community.

Argdour, Morvern, West Ardnamurchan, Acharacle and

Sunart Community Councils are to be consulted. They should grasp this proposal on the grounds that it is surely better to have something now than everything never.

**Iain Thornber, Knock House, Morvern.**

### Leave village stag alone

Sir,  
I fail to understand why anyone can be in favour of a plan, if one exists, to kill this lovely stag which causes no threat to anyone at the back pier.

Stags are only slightly dangerous during the rutting season several months away.

Regards the injury to Dr Kate Stone, the circumstances here were vastly different to a wild beast roaming the country side bothering no one.

I fully endorse the remarks by Lorna Scott - it is a wild animal causing no problems.

I do not know who is in favour of shooting this beautiful animal - no names have been mentioned.

I have walked my dog daily in this area for more than four years but have never seen this illusive animal.

I have seen stray dogs and cats and swans. They all have the potential to attack people. Should we shoot them all?

Please leave this indigenous animal alone and stop creating a ridiculous panic reaction over this lovely animal.

There are a lot more potential dangerous goings on in Ballachulish other than a wild stag.

**Tom Kirsop, North Ballachulish.**

### Get with the Independence Programme Oban Times

Sir  
I was very disappointed in the position and shallow content of your report on the Independence debate/question time held in Oban on Friday February 7.

To consign the reporting of this event to the bottom left hand corner of page seven seems to me to completely under represent the importance of the Referendum and the opportunity for local people to become more informed and share thoughts and ideas in the coming months.

I believe the attendance and quality of the afternoon was to some extent heartening as a beginning to relevant and accessible local discussion.

The young people attending from Oban High School and the two young panel members were impressive and their contributions were to the point.

As your brief report says, this Argyll Voluntary Action hosted event was the first in a series.

It gave us the chance to raise the profile of the referendum in Argyll.

Come on *Oban Times* - do this area and the people of Argyll justice by giving September's crucial event the profile it deserves.

**Name and address supplied.**

**The Oban Times is planning a series of special features in the lead up to the September referendum - Ed.**

## YOUR LETTERS

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 200 words in length for publication on this page.

The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification.

Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not be printed.

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

## ISLAY LETTER

keeping all on the hop were musicians Donnie MacKinnon and David Adams.

### Water works

Traffic disruption will be kept to a minimum when Scottish Water begins environmental improvements in Bowmore's main street and village square on February 24.

The work will be carried out by Corrie Construction and will involve installing 21m of sewer diversionary pipe work and manholes. This will assist in the reduction of debris spilling from the waste water network.

Some local disruption to traffic movements are inevitable and a traffic management plan will be in place during the construction period which is likely to last for approximately five weeks.

Every effort will be made to minimise the impact of the disruption and when the work is completed the area will be reinstated to the original standard.

### Community singers

ISLAY Singers, the community choral group established and helmed by local music teacher Craig Weatherhogg, will recommence practises in the island high school's main hall on Wednesday February 26 at 7pm.

The choristers have been resting on their treble clefs since their highly successful Christmas concert and are now eager to resume their singing activities.

New members are most welcome and budding choristers should contact Craig or make their way to the high school for the first rehearsal of the new session.

### Finlaggan success

FINLAGGAN, the ancient seat of the Lords of the Isles, has had its busiest season to date with in excess of five and a half thousand visitors passing through the information centre.

They included cruise ship passengers, bus parties, school groups and a large percentage of visitors from overseas.

The historic site's Eilean Mòr has also proved popular as a wedding venue and among those recently tying the knot there was a couple from Singapore.

Five new members have joined the Finlaggan management committee and the 2014 activities kick off with a venison supper in Ballygrant Hall on Saturday February 22 at 7pm.

### Locum minister

The Rev Pat Lang is the new locum minister for the currently vacant linked charges of Kilarrow, Kildalton and Oa, and the isle of Jura.

The former minister of the High Kirk at Dunoon is now resident in the Bowmore manse and she can be contacted on 01496 810 271.

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

## Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

BHIDH e doirbh dhuinne mu thath gearain mu dhroch thide is sinn a' faicinn na tha daoine bochda ann an ceann a deas na dùthcha a' fulang! Chan e fù 's gum bheil tuiltean air tighinn orra ach chan eil coltas gum bheil faochadh air faire is ionnsaighean gaillinn is uisge a' tighinn air muin a chèile.

Smaoinich air suidheachadh far nach eil fù 's goireasan ionnlaid neo taigh-beag air a bhith aig mòran dhaoine fad sheachdainean, gun ghuth air rudan àbhaisteach eile, is na dachannan aca a' dol nan lagaisean le uisge nach gabh tilleadh! Chan eil teagamh nach eil cuid den choire air an fhàsghadh aig an Rìghaltas air maoin bhuidhean poblach agus 's e cuis-bhùirt a th' ann a-nise a bhith a' faicinn Mhinistearan, is an Camshronach fhèin air an ceann, a' gealltainn taic gun chric gus cùisean a leasachadh!

Tha amharas gun tig dìoghaltas poilitigeach an cois seo agus 's math an airidh air sin oir a rèir fianais bho mhuintir mòran de na sgìrean a tha fo uisge cha deach cus aire a ghabhail, neo beachdachadh air taic shusbainteach a thoirt, chun an do thadhail am Prionnsa Teàrlach air cuid aca. Thug esan buaidh an turas seo!

Ach a dh'aindeoin gach cobhair a thig chun na sgìrean sin a-nise, 's e firinn na cùise gun toir e miosan, 's dòcha bliadhnaichean mus tèid an damaiste a chàradh. Agus chan eil an càradh sin idir dol a chiallachadh nach fhadadh tuiltean bualadh a-rithist agus ma tha dìon mhaireann gu bhith ann dh'fheumte billeannan a chosg air innleachdan gun an t-uisge a bhacadh.

Ach mar a tha cùisean an-dràsta, tha e cho fliuch is gum bheil an t-uisge a' brùchdadh tron talamh is chan eil innleachd dìon sam bith a dhèiligeas ri leithid sin!

Dhan fheadhainn aig am bheil àrachas thig cuid de chosgais càraidh a sin, ach 's e an sporan poblach a-mhàin a dh'fheumas bacaidhean dìon an aghaidh tuiltean a thoigal, agus le aire an riaghaltas air a chumseachadh air caomhnadh, cò as a thig an t-airgead?

Ged nach eil an seòrsa dùbhlain sin againn mu thath, tha rathaidean Alba ann am fìor dhroch staid 's gun ach tuthagan tarraidh air a bhith a' dol orra bho chionn bhliadhnaichean. Le buaidh na h-aimsire agus còmhdaid a tha a sior fhàs nas truime, thathas a' dèanamh dheth gum bheil feum billeannan a chosg gus an càradh a-nise!

Dileab dhaor a dh'fhadhadh tighinn air Alba neo-eisimeileach!

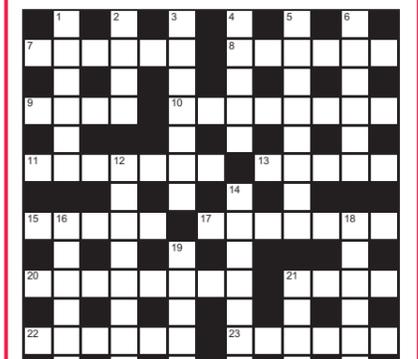
WELCOME help for flood victims, but where does a government so focussed on reducing national debt find apparently unlimited funds to help rebuild stricken communities? More importantly, how will the massive flood prevention systems essential to avoid similar future disasters be funded?

In Scotland a policy of 'patching' our roads over many years is now costing substantial sums in compensation for damaged cars, and essential national roads network repairs will cost billions. A worrying inheritance for an independent Scotland!

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

**SCOTS**  
Heritage Magazine  
SPONSORS

## THE OBAN TIMES GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD



**Across**

- 7 Study (4,2)
- 8 Kind of monkey (6)
- 9 A division of time (4)
- 10 Americas (3,5)
- 11 Hot battered food (7)
- 13 Milky coffee (5)
- 15 Result of a snap... (5)
- 17 ...point at (4,3)
- 20 Blue flower (8)
- 21 Bubbly (4)
- 22 Tricky (6)
- 23 Loathsome (6)

**Down**

- 1 Pigment (6)
- 2 Brand (4)
- 3 Working dog (7)
- 4 Tan (5)
- 5 Citrus beverage (8)
- 6 When fired it can cause damage (6)
- 12 Ripped look (8)
- 14 Rowing fulcrum (7)
- 16 One who listens (6)
- 18 Enter uninvited (6)
- 19 Minor (5)
- 21 Masterstroke (4)

**LAST week's SOLUTION**

H I P S T E R C A P R I  
 C A H E O U G O N  
 H O T H E A D E D N E S S  
 U E R E A D E R S T I  
 M E N T E N O B L I N G  
 T U T I T I C H E T  
 T E T I G W I  
 T H A N D G O B L E T  
 T E T I G W I  
 U N F O R G A T E S U P  
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 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:  
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 We are urging members of the public to become involved in making communities fire-safe by referring family members, friends or neighbours for **FREE** Home Fire Safety Visits

**BE PROUD TO BE CARING**  
 THERE are many things about the Highlands and Islands that people would like to change. But there is one aspect of our make-up and character that we wouldn't change for the world - our care and compassion. Whether it is caring for a relative, or doing your bit at a village hall fundraiser, there is a strong desire within the area to help others. Perhaps it is the number of small and closely-knit communities in the area, in which young and old are regularly in contact and learn from each other. They strike up a respect that lasts and sets morals and values that help sustain a strong community. But outside of this idyllic model of care in the community, we have others who can help, organised groups, clubs and health and social work services that we can also be proud of. Places such as the North Argyll Carers Centre are a hub for people to seek advice and support and gain access to a number of supportive agencies. If you think you can help others, or feel you need more support yourself, take a look at our Celtic Care feature to see how you can change a life for the better.

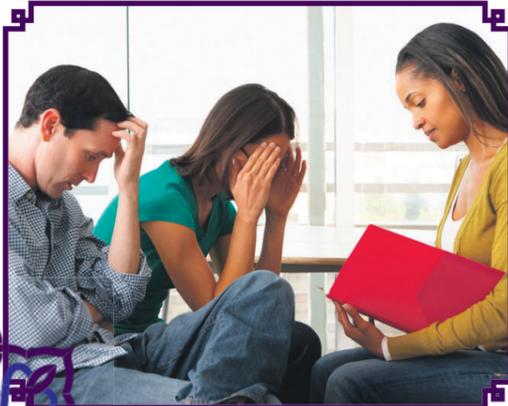
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**OBAN MS THERAPY CENTRE**  
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In Oban we have a Hyperbaric Oxygen Centre for treating and supporting people with Multiple Sclerosis. The aim of oxygen treatment in M.S. is to minimize the amount of damage being caused, promote rapid healing and to limit the scar formation which can prevent nerve function being restored. It is more beneficial to start treatment as soon as the diagnosis has been made. Please telephone Sandra for more information 01631 566602

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**Fostering**  
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 We need foster carers who can look after a child or children either for a temporary period while plans are made for their future or for an extended period if they are unable to go back to their families. We are particularly looking for families for teenagers and for sibling groups who need a temporary home where they can all live together until a decision is made regarding their future.  
 We need respite carers who can take children for brief, time-limited periods to support full time carers.  
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 Please phone Family Placement Duty Worker on 01546 605517 or email them on [fpduty@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:fpduty@argyll-bute.gov.uk)



# what's on

THE OBAN TIMES  
FREE EVENT LISTING

- FRIDAY - February 21**  
Noon, Lorn Archaeological and Historical Society, St Columba's Cathedral Hall, Oban  
8pm, Theatre - Rough Island, Appin Hall
- SATURDAY - February 22**  
2pm, Friends of St Conan's Kirk first meeting, St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe.  
2pm, Astronomy exhibition, An Clachan, Fort William.  
7.30pm, Uist and Barra Ceilidh, Skipinnish Ceilidh House, Oban.
- SUNDAY - February 23**  
12.30pm, North Connell Guides Soup Lunch, Victory Hall, Benderloch
- TUESDAY - February 25**  
7.30pm, Whist Drive, Glencruitten Golf Club, Oban
- THURSDAY - February 27**  
Scottish Opera, Craignish Village Hall, Ardfern
- FRIDAY - February 28**  
7.30pm, Oban Art Society talk on designing jewellery, Lorn Resource Centre, Oban

Advertising here is FREE  
Simply email details of your event to  
whatson@obantimes.co.uk.

## Dazzling pianist performance at St John's Cathedral



William Howard, who put on a stunning performance at Oban Music Society's concert in St John's Cathedral on Sunday.

INTERNATIONALLY renowned concert pianist and the founder of the Schubert Ensemble, William Howard, demonstrated his dazzling mastery of the instrument in Oban on Sunday.

Those in St John's Cathedral heard him offer a contrasting programme of classical greats, together with a newly commissioned piece by David Matthews.

Starting with nine pieces from Schumann's lesser known Bunte-Blatte, he skilfully painted the swings in Schumann's moods in these pieces which preceded his marriage to Clara.

More bold emotions were

revealed in Schubert's Wanderer fantasy, a large one-movement piece that swung from gloom to elation with hardly a pause for breath.

William transformed the concert grand into an instrument of Schubert's time as the force of this great work swept across the audience.

After the interval William Howard gave the audience David Matthews' new piece, written in 2012, which was dedicated to the pianist.

The first of his Four Portraits showed William in slow Waltz time and accurately foreshadowed

his beautifully voiced and paced performance in three contrasting Chopin pieces that concluded the concert.

Oban Music Society's Graham Moore said: 'It is great to hear a modern piece to which the audience can so readily relate and which explains why David Matthews is one of the most performed of modern composers.'

After the Chopin, William tickled the audiences' ear with an encore, the lovely Romance by Faure.

This was fine piano playing by a modest man who clearly puts the composer first - and the audience were enchanted.



Marie Curie Cancer Care volunteers were out in force last Saturday as they hosted an afternoon tea at the Masonic Lodge, Oban. Delicious home baking helped to raise the sum of £511. The Oban and Lorn branch of the charity will be out again on March 21 and 22 at Tesco for the annual Daffodil Appeal. 16\_108mariecurie01

## Sailing season opens with opera at Craignish

CRAIGNISH Village Hall opens the new sailing season in style next week with a marine and opera double.

At 4pm, the Craignish Boat Club invites everyone, from novices to 'salty dogs', to come and talk sailing at the launch of a new sailing season and a new location.

This will be followed at 5.30pm with a presentation by Dr John Howe and Dr Andy Dale of the Scottish Association of Marine Science (SAMS) on the discoveries of new wrecks and the mysteries of the Corryvreckan, all made

during the 2013 survey of the Firth of Lorn and Corryvreckan.

After the presentation, visitors can have a meal of delicious pasta to get in the mood for the opera.

At 7.30pm, four singers and a pianist from Scottish Opera will perform a series of entertaining arias and excerpts, ranging from old favourites to undiscovered gems. The boat club drop-in and SAMS talk are free; for the pasta meal and 'Opera Cabaret' booking will be essential. To book, call 01852 500746 or email cvhartsevents@gmail.com.

## Appin's annual quiz night

A LARGE crowd attended Appin SWR's annual quiz night. Held on February 7 in Appin Village Hall, teams answered a wide variety of questions. Winners were Richard Bourne, Sheila Lawrie, Marianne Steeman and Agnes Thomson. Runners up were Helen Downie,

Catriona MacKenzie, Jessie MacKenzie and Pat Wyth Webb. Consolation prizes went to Alan Colthart, Ross MacDonald, Darius Scorgie and Douglas Tyrell Bunge. President Linda MacLeod thanked Doreen Evans for compiling and hosting the quiz.

## Hesperus model given to Oban War and Peace Museum

A 118-YEAR-old model of the Hesperus steel twin-screw steamer will have its permanent home in Oban's War and Peace Museum.

The model was donated by the Commissioners of the Northern Lighthouse to Argyll and Bute Council in 1995 and was originally stored in the Corran Halls, Oban.

It was also displayed at the Easdale Island Folk Museum from 1998 until 2011.

Kept in a Perspex case, the model has been on loan to the Oban War and Peace Museum since 2011, and now, given the steamer's connection to Oban and the town's maritime history, the model is to be formally transferred into the ownership of the museum.

The move was confirmed at last week's meeting of the Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee.

Lead councillor for community and culture, Robin Currie, said: 'The steamer Hesperus has strong Oban connections - she was often seen in Oban Bay and many of her crew were from Oban. It is fitting that she should be on permanent display in Oban and I am pleased the War and Peace Museum has asked formally to give her a home and that this has been endorsed by councillors.'

'It emphasises, too, the close working relationship between the council and privately run museums.'

Hesperus was built by Gourlay Bros and Co, Dundee, and based at Oban. She was broken up in Dunston-on-Tyne in 1940.

Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses have been consulted and have agreed the transfer and are 'delighted to support the Oban War and Peace Museum in this way'.



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[ NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND ]

THE ARCHES

# RANTIN

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**DRUIMFIN, TOBERMORY**

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Thur 27 Feb 2014, 7.30pm

Ticket Prices: £10 / £8

Box Office: 01631 567333

argyll-bute.gov.uk



An age guide of 12+ is suggested for this production. Please note that booking fees may apply on tickets, check with the box office when booking. The National Theatre of Scotland reserves the right to alter casts, performances, seating or ticket arrangements and latecomers may not be admitted. National Theatre of Scotland, a company limited by guarantee and registered in Scotland (SC234270) is a registered Scottish charity (SC033377). Photo by Eoin Carey, nationaltheatrescotland.com @NtSOnline





Neil Beaton celebrates his whisky bottle win with his wife, Jacqueline. 16\_t08ceildh02



Dancers line up for a Strip the Willow at the HCPT ceilidh in the Oban Distillery cask room. 16\_t08ceildh01

# Annual Skye Ceilidh gets into full swing

LOCHABER Gaels welcomed a large contingent of their counterparts from the Isle of Skye to the 10th annual Skye Ceilidh at the West End Hotel in Fort William on Saturday night. With Ailean Caimbeul as fear an taigh [compere], more than 100 people enjoyed a great evening of music, Gaelic song, dancing and craic at the popular event, which saw four-time mod gold medallist Calum

Ross presented with a cake in yet another celebration of his 80th birthday. Glasgow-born Sgitheanach Mr Ross, whose mother was from Uig and his father from Staffin, and daughter Fiona were among the Gaelic performers on the programme. Catriona Fair, originally from Kyleera on Skye but now of Cairnbaan in Argyll, Donald Murray from Inshch in Aberdeenshire, and Ann

Michie and her daughter Maggie MacDonald of the Skye singing family the Campbells of Greepe, also delighted the gathering with Gaelic songs. House band for the night, Argyll duo Ross MacPherson and Calum MacPhail provided the music for the dancing. Tribute was paid to the late John Farquhar Munro MSP for his contribution to Gaelic music, song and

culture over the years. Ceilidh organiser Charlie MacColl, who also sang in Gaelic, told *The Oban Times* at the interval: 'He supported the meur [local branch of the An Comunn Gàidhealach] very much and was our fear an taigh [compere] for many years.' Ailean Caimbeul added: 'John Farquhar was a great supporter of Gaelic and of everything Charlie was doing down here.'



The North End of Skye was well represented at the Skye ceilidh. Standing, Ogilvie Ross, Brian Elder and Flora Lawrie enjoy their night with Margaret Elder, Fiona MacDonald, Morag Nall and Christine Morrison. 20\_f08skye02



Catriona Fair entertains at the Skye Ceilidh. 20\_f08skye03



From left, Ewen Nicolson, Ailean Caimbeul, Ann Michie, Maggie MacDonald, Catriona Fair, Fiona Ross, Doald Murray, Calum Ross, Mairi Murray and Charlie MacColl line up at the Skye Ceilidh. 20\_f08skye04

## Distillery cask room hosts children's charity ceilidh

A CASK room, turned ceilidh venue, hosted a ceilidh to raise money for children with special needs. The Handicapped Children's Pilgrimage Trust (HCPT) takes children on an annual trip to Lourdes, France and the Oban-based HCPT Group 43 held a fundraising ceilidh at Oban Distillery, raising more than £1,200. It was the first time the

charity had used the new venue, having previously held a ceilidh in the Royal Hotel, and around 150 people attended and danced to the tunes of Ceol an Aire. A competition to get a pound coin nearest the whisky bottle was won by Oban's Neil Beaton. The Oban volunteers going to Lourdes will be responsible for six of the children, one of whom is from the town.



Fu, a musical group comprising, from left: Eric Linklater, Kim Carnie and Innes White.

## Great variety of musicians at Taynuilt's Winter Ceilidh

SOUTH African piper Grant Cooper, presently residing in Taynuilt, started off the proceedings at last week's Taynuilt Winter Ceilidh with a good selection of pipe tunes. As always, the Eilidh MacInnes Dancers (Kayla Baxter, Daniel Craik and Katie MacPherson) produced impressive displays. Excellent music was provided throughout the evening from Fu, a young group comprising singer Kim Carnie, fiddler Eric Linklater and guitarist/singer Innes White. Inverary's well known

musical duet of Jake MacKay (mouth organ) and Agnes Liddell (keyboard) also had toes tapping in the audience. Mod medalists Joy Dunlop, Audrey Paterson and Freddy MacKenzie, accompanied by accordionist Alasdair MacDonald, treated the audience to some enjoyable songs while Taynuilt's Helen Watt and Davy Paterson also gave fine singing performances. Fear an Taighe for the evening was Eric Smith, who kept proceedings flowing smoothly.

## Rotary Club receives update on Lochaber Food Bank

ROTARY Club of Lochaber president John Rosie welcomed nearly 50 Rotarians, partners and friends for lunch in the dining room of the Alexandra Hotel in Fort William to hear invited guest speaker Pat MacQuarrie give an update on Lochaber Food Bank. Since its initial conception a year ago, the food bank is now a securely funded operation housed in the former Scottish Hydro shop at Airds Crossing and supporting local people struggling with their finances, particularly food finances.

Pat, a food bank trustee, explained how the food bank movement began in 1999 when the Trussell Trust, which was assisting homeless people in Bulgaria, started to support UK residents in need. In its first year the trust fed 600 people from a garden shed. Since then, 15 years on, it has expanded rapidly and fed 500,000 last year. In a very emotional talk, Pat explained that her involvement with the movement came through her membership of 'Christians against

Poverty' which made her aware of the number of local families who couldn't make ends meet. Pat said: 'I then met with John Penny of the Hub, we acquired the Trussell Trust's manual, obtained local business support, enlisted six trustees and took it from there. 'Now we are open from 12 to 2 on Mondays and Fridays, we give families a three-day food package, and we hope to open sub centres in Caol, [in the Free Church], Kinlochleven, Mallaig and Ardnamurchan in the near future.'

Support from the food bank is based purely on need. People can be referred by their local GP, social care, their district nurse, Women's Aid, the Glengarry Centre, the Lifestyles Project and the Shirley Project. Referrals, in the form of vouchers, can be made by 17 different organisations. After responding to a wide range of questions, President John thanked Pat for her 'very touching talk on this extremely worthwhile project' and members warmly applauded her update on this valuable local initiative.



Pat MacQuarrie, third left seated, President John Rosie, centre seated, with other club members and guests in the Alexandra Hotel.

Oban Phoenix Cinema	<b>RoboCop</b>	Fri 21st 18.00 (screen 2)	Sat 22nd 20.30
		Sun 23rd 18.30	Mon 24th 19.00 (screen 2)
		Tues 25th 20.30	Wed 26th 18.00
		Thurs 27th 19.00 (screen 2)	
	<b>Out of the Furnace</b>	Fri 21st 21.00 (screen 2)	Sat 22nd 15.30
		Sun 23rd 21.00	Mon 24th 20.30
		Tues 25th 18.00	Wed 26th 21.00
		Thurs 27th 20.30	
	<b>Project Wild Thing</b>	Sat 22nd 18.30	
	<b>Peter Grimes - Opera</b>	Sun 23rd 15.00	
	<b>Girl Rising</b>	Mon 24th 15.00	
	<b>We Are Wisconsin</b>	Mon 24th 18.00	
	<b>Mr. Peabody &amp; Sherman</b>	Sat 22nd 13.00 3D	Sun 23rd 12.30 3D
	<b>Batman Trilogy</b>	Fri 21st 18.30	
	<b>Child In Chains</b>	Thurs 27th 18.00	

**RoboCop (12A)**  
In 2028 Detroit, when Alex Murphy (Keanu Reeves) - a loving husband, father and good cop - is critically injured in the line of duty, the multinational conglomerate OmniCorp sees their chance for a part-man, part-robot police officer.

**Out of the Furnace (15)**  
When Rodney Baze mysteriously disappears and law enforcement doesn't follow through fast enough, his older brother, Russell, takes matters into his own hands to find justice. Russell Baze (Bale) and his younger brother Rodney Jr. (Alek) live in the economically-depressed Rust Belt, and have always dreamed of escaping and finding better lives. But when a cruel twist of fate lands Russell in prison, his brother is lured into one of the most violent and ruthless crime rings in the Northeast - a mistake that will cost him everything.

**Stramash - Project Wild Thing**  
'Project Wild Thing' - an award winning full length documentary tackling the issue of children and outdoor play, directed by David Bond. A film led movement to get more kids (and their folks) outside and reconnecting with nature. Tickets £5/£3 - all proceeds to Stramash.

**Peter Grimes - Opera**  
Join us for our first ever live-streaming event here at Oban Phoenix!

**EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT**  
ENO (English National Opera) presents Benjamin Britten's hard-hitting Opera 'Peter Grimes'. Experience this huge, exciting event in HD, streamed live from The London Coliseum to us here at the Oban Phoenix! With one show only this is an event not to be missed!

**Girl Rising**  
With voiceover from Selena Gomez, Alicia Keys, Meryl Streep and Liam Neeson, this spirited, colourful and moving film pairs nine extraordinary girls from all corners of the globe with acclaimed writers and actors to tell how they faced down and overcame all-too-common barriers to education for girls. (Free Entry to school children 53 plus - standard entry £5)

**We Are Wisconsin (12)**  
When new laws threaten to wipe away basic workers' rights and lock out public debate, six (extraordinary) citizens force their way into the Wisconsin State Capitol with thousands more to launch a popular uprising that will not only challenge the lawmakers, but the soul of a nation. (£5 entry)

**Mr. Peabody & Sherman (U)**  
Using his most ingenious invention, the WABAC machine, Mr. Peabody and his adopted boy Sherman hurtle back in time to experience world-changing events first-hand and interact with some of the greatest characters of all time. They find themselves in a race to repair history and save the future.

**Batman Trilogy (12A)**  
Batman: Begins. The Dark Knight and The Dark Knight Rises. The Dark Knight Rises. Oban High School Enterprise Group in conjunction with Oban Phoenix Cinema is doing a one night only showing of the Dark Knight Trilogy. All proceeds from this event will be shared equally between the Youth Enterprise venture and Oban Phoenix Cinema. Tickets - Adult £15.00, Concession £12.00, VIP £20.00

**Child In Chains - Documentary by Jon Pullman**  
In his documentary, Jon Pullman documents the abuse of Palestinian children in the Israeli Military Court System. 18.00 Doors open, 18.30 Brief introductions by 'our' Jon S-P and Jon Pullman himself, 18.45 Screening of 'Children in Chains' followed by audience questions and discussion. All takings will be divided equally between the Community Cinema Company and the Palestinian cause.

## COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Stramash presents  
Tickets: Adults £5; Children £3  
**Project Wild Thing**  
An ambitious film that takes a funny and revealing look at the increasingly disparate connection between children and nature!  
Saturday the 22nd of February at Oban Phoenix Cinema, 6:30pm  
www.projectwildthing.com

Interested in ASTRONOMY?  
Interested in forming a local astronomy group in LOCHABER?  
Prof Alec MacKinnon will be exhibiting a SOLAR TELESCOPE  
at An Clachan (next to Farmfood shop on road to Nevis Range) on Saturday, 22nd February at 2.00pm for further details, and to register support, please contact Don Michie  
e: don@onich.co.uk h: 01855 821900 w: 01855 821202 m: 07768 655006

OBAN ART SOCIETY  
TALK / DEMONSTRATION  
with Ann McCintock  
on Designing Jewellery  
on Friday 28th February  
in The Lorn Resource Centre,  
Soroba Road, Oban  
7.30pm to 9.30pm  
Visitors Welcome

North Connell Lunch  
**SOUP LUNCH**  
In the Victory Hall, Benderloch  
On Sunday 23rd February  
From 12:30 - 2:30pm  
Adults £3, Children £2  
Baking Stall  
All proceeds will go to the WAGGGS Thinking Day Appeal which supports primary education for girls worldwide.

FRIENDS OF ST CONAN'S KIRK  
Open invitation to inaugural meeting  
Sat 22nd February  
14:00  
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Craignish Village Hall, Ardfern  
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Saturday 22nd February 2014 at 7:30pm  
Fear an Taighe - Duncan MacNeil  
Piper: Alasdair MacLean  
Artistes: Gillebride MacIlleMhaoil, Alison MacVicar, Morag MacNeil, Murdo MacDonald, Iain MacLean  
£6 admission

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To reserve your place: 01866 833 333 | weddings@ardanaiseig.com

# Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club lifts spirits on a gloomy February evening



The Andy Kain Trio in full flow at the Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club.

A GLOOMY February evening was brightened for members and friends of the Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club who assembled for their monthly meeting in the Royal Hotel, Portree to be entertained by local and visiting musicians.

First to be invited on stage by club MC Jim Campbell, was Sandy Ross of Lochcarron with his three-row button-box, accompanied on keyboard by John Cameron and on drums by Donald John Campbell.

It was a welcome return to Sandy who has not been able to attend the club for some time and he entertained with some fine steady march and waltz sets.

Regular solo fiddler Wendy Riva gave her usual polished performance, to be followed on stage by first time player, 11-year-old Isla Macleod of Staffin.

Isla, on piano accordion, enthralled the audience with her accurate, confident playing and has the potential to be a star of the future.

Music continued with sets from some of the club's own band comprising of fiddlers Caerina Campbell, Ellie MacPherson and Chloe Urquhart, accordionist John MacGilvary and pianist John Cameron.

Final local musicians on stage were Aly 'K' MacPherson on piano accordion with Donald MacRae on drums and, on keyboard once again, John Cameron.

The guest artists for the evening were The Andy Kain Trio who had made the long journey from Newcastle to Skye and, despite their lengthy day of travelling, were on sparkling form.

Andy, leading on fiddle, was accompanied by Robert Whitehead on piano accordion and David Ashbridge on drums.

The top class musicians went on to wow the audience with a superb and varied programme which included much hilarity, not least when Andy 'persuaded' two unfortunate ladies from the audience and an equally unfortunate hotel barmaid on to the stage to impersonate animal noises while he played an impromptu version of *The Hens March!* A great night of music and fun.

The next club night will be on March 6 when guests will be champion accordionist Leonard Brown and drummer Malcolm Ross.

- John Grundy

# Artist Su Grierson to present cutting edge exhibition at spring ATLAS Arts event

ATLAS Arts will open its spring 'Talking Art' series with Perthshire-based artist Su Grierson in the Council Chamber, Portree on Saturday.

Working with video, image and sound to present land and landscape from differing non-traditional perspectives, Grierson's exhibitions and residencies have been in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Denmark, Japan and Lithuania.

Last year her exhibition 'Intersections' investigated land, art and politics following a 10-week residency in Fukushima Japan where she was able to visit the nuclear, earthquake and tsunami disaster areas and meet with the still displaced refugees.

Grierson is actively involved in developing contemporary art and supporting artists living outside urban centres and is organiser of the LookLook project, which brings international artists to Scotland to promote connections with Scottish artists.

Rosie Somerville, ATLAS project coordinator, said: 'The spring series starts with Su Grierson and promises to be informative and fascinating.'

'A number of local artists now working at a national level have benefited from the initiatives Su has been involved in particularly the established Perth Visual Arts forum.'

The free event runs from 2pm to 3pm. Booking is advisable.



Cutting edge: Su Grierson's exhibition 'Glacier Story' in Yokohama art museum. f08atlas

# Soup and a song go down a treat at Glencruitten Church Centre



Lorn choir Sequence had a novel way of raising money by offering a soup and a song at Glencruitten Church Centre last Saturday. The ladies of the choir served up soup, teas and home baking in between providing entertainment for the guests. The sum of £200 was raised to help towards the choir's travel costs. 16\_108sequence01

ADVERTISING FEATURE

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**NEVIS CENTRE · FORT WILLIAM**

THE LOCHABER Food and Drink Tradeshow is coming to Fort William in early March, an event not to be missed for caterers in the west highlands and islands.

Whether you are looking for high quality meats, beverages or desserts there will be something for everyone at the two day event in the Nevis Centre.

Forteith Foodservice is running the show on March 4 and 5 and will host 60 exhibitors from Lochaber and beyond, from local companies to national brands.

Free entry and parking is on offer, with exclusive access to traders so be sure to pop in and see what the fuss is about.

The show is open from 10am-5pm on March 4

and 12pm-5pm on March 5 with exhibitions for grocery, chilled and frozen products as well as licensed wines, beers and spirits.

Not only that, refrigeration services, catering equipment and work wear will all be available from suppliers.

Forteith Foodservice recognises the frustration of businesses in the west highlands and islands. Often catering companies have to travel hundreds of miles to attend national trade shows to find that many products are difficult or even impossible to obtain in this area. At this event, suppliers are carefully selected for their ability to offer quality products all year round through Forteith Foodservice.

David Forteith, general manager for Oban and

Inverness at Forteith Foodservice said: 'This year we're holding the show for two days instead of one due to the success of previous shows. It's an ideal opportunity for companies to come and pick up ideas for the coming season. Come along to see and taste the produce and take advantage of the fantastic offers available over the two days.'

Forteith Foodservice was founded by Mr Forteith's grandfather Jack Forteith in 1955 and has been trading in the west highlands and islands ever since.

Download an invitation for the event at www.forteith.co.uk/tradeshow.

Remember, Forteith's food and drink show only visits Lochaber once every two years so don't miss out!



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# Business

**Business reporter:**

**Steven Flanagan**  
sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk  
01631 568021

## Oban entrepreneur wows scholarship judges with talent

AN OBAN entrepreneur has been picked for a special scholarship in Switzerland after wowing judges with her talents.

Gemma Hegarty, now of Fort William, is one of only 11 people from Scotland picked for a senior management course held in the Ecole Hoteliere de Lausanne, the oldest hotel school in the world.

Offered by the Hospitality Industry Trust (HIT) Scotland, Gemma - a digital marketing officer - discovered she had been picked for the course at the HIT Emerging Talent Conference in the Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow.

Gemma said: 'It was such an amazing day.

'There must have been 500 people applying for the course, and that was down to 130 for the conference.

'The course is for the top hotels in the country, but I applied on the marketing side, which is now really important.

'I didn't think I was going to get it, but I did - and now I'm off to Switzerland.' At the conference she met celebrity chef Raymond Blanc, who was the keynote speaker at the event and presented Gemma with a certificate to mark her achievement.

Gemma said: 'For me, it means I'll be able to bring back new skills and expertise and I'm really looking forward to it.'

David Cochran, chief executive of HIT Scotland, said: 'Gemma has been successful with a senior management scholarship to the Ecole Hoteliere de Lausanne, where she will go on the 'art of leadership' programme with other senior managers within Scottish hospitality and tourism.

**Motivate**

'The much sought-after scholarships are designed to inform and motivate the scholars who will then hopefully bring the learning back to implement, as appropriate, to their business which will help performance and ideally provide an improved offer to the consumer.'



Gemma Hegarty with Raymond Blanc at the HIT Scotland Emerging Talent Conference.

# Creagan Inn revamp into café-bistro and craft shops

A LOCH Creran-side pub is set for a transformation into a café-bistro with craft shops.

Liz Crichton is likely to re-brand the Creagan Inn, between Appin and Barcaldine, in the coming months, having previously considered selling the business she bought in 2011.

Having decided instead to re-imagine the business which welcomed 30,000 customers last year, she's hopeful the plan will capture the imagination of both locals and visitors.

She said: 'Firstly, I'm not going to stop evening meals, but during the day I'd like to do something similar to Brodie's Country Fair, but not on that scale.

'We want to give local producers an outlet in a prime location, who can benefit from selling directly to the customer.

'The outside areas will also play a part of that, and we think the venue lends itself perfectly to this.'

Liz decided to rework the business after a hectic year which saw her run off her feet. She hopes taking a different approach will give her more time to concentrate on developing the business and living her life.

One of the biggest challenges that the business has to contend with is the lack of near neighbours, limiting pub trade.

And while the redesign will see the pub continue to serve alcoholic drinks and meals, she hopes the café culture during the day will be more appealing to passers by.

'People don't always want a steak pie during the day when they're driving by, so hopefully the offer of a bowl of soup or sandwich by the loch will be more appealing.'

'We think the shops will be a real draw and this is a terrific venue for local producers. We've already had a few enquiries from people keen to see if they can do something with us. We already give some of our wall space to local artists to sell their pictures, which has been really well received, so I think it will be a real draw.'

Anyone interested in opening a shop within the Creagan Inn should email Liz on [liz@creaganinn.co.uk](mailto:liz@creaganinn.co.uk).

## University gets down to business of showcasing support options

THE UNIVERSITY of the Highlands and Islands will host a series of free business seminars from next month, starting in Oban.

Entitled Let's Do Business, the series aims to show the full range of business and training support available in the area.

Jointly arranged with Business Gateway, each of the university's academic partners will host an event featuring a comprehensive group of business support agencies and organisations.

Gary Campbell, the university's key account director, said: 'We want to show that the university is open for business in more ways than you would expect. As such, we've joined forces with Business Gateway, HIE, Enterprise Europe, the Federation of Small Businesses and others to showcase what help and assistance there is for all businesses and other employers in our area.'

'It's important to us that we listen to those who will ultimately employ our graduates and we feel this is the ideal way to gather the thoughts of those that matter.'

How to secure business investment is the subject for the inaugural seminar in the 10-date programme, the first of which will be held in the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Dunbeg on March 5 from 4pm-7pm.

The panel will be hosted by Alan Campbell and includes Robin Jackson, an expert in raising money for your business.

A day later and at the same times, Fort William's West Highland College will be the venue for a seminar on employing the right staff. On the panel this time will be Nevis Radio's David Ogg and recruiting expert, Emma Lawson.

**Seminars**

Delegates attending the free seminars will have a chance to speak to UHI staff from Argyll College, SAMS and West Highland College, as well as the university's business enterprise solutions and training, careers service, development department, research department and management school to see what your local university can do for you.

Also attending the events will be representatives from Business Gateway, Enterprise Europe, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Manufacturing Advisory Service, Chambers of Commerce Business Mentoring and Skills Development Scotland.



Stuart Campbell, who is hoping his Fyne Wines business will benefit from his new online presence.

## Fyne Wines goes online with tips

A NEW website with tips and recommendations on buying wine has been launched by Lochgilphead's independent wine retailer, Fyne Wines.

Stuart Campbell, 29, opened Fyne Wines in November last year and after receiving advice and support from Argyll and Bute Council's Business Gateway. On his website, he not only shares his personal recommendations, but also highlights the shop's deals of the week.

Stuart said: 'I attended a Business Gateway workshop on building your own website which has allowed me to have an online presence.

'I picked up valuable skills in website development and also in social media, which I hope will have a long term, positive effect on my business. Eventually, I hope to sell online which will increase my customer base and allow me to expand.'

Barbara Halliday, a business advisor with Business Gateway, said: 'Stuart has taken advantage of a variety of our services including one-to-one advisory support and attending our free workshops. I look forward to supporting him as he develops his business further.'

To find out more about how Business Gateway can help you set up and develop your own business call 01546 605 459 or visit [www.bgateway.com](http://www.bgateway.com).

## New face at West Highland solicitors

WEST Highland solicitors and estate agents MacPhee and Partners have secured the services of a new senior associate solicitor.

Christine MacKay, from Acharacle, was an equity partner of a Central Belt firm and has more than 20 years experience as a commercial property solicitor.

Mrs MacKay has acted for a number of Scotland's largest land developers in the acquisition, development and sale of large scale housing and mixed/residential commercial sites and has a strong track record in the purchase, sale and leasing of industrial and retail developments.

Experienced in the sale and disposal of hotels and other licensed premises, she has also acted for small locally owned businesses and larger companies and in her spare time has been a board member of a local housing association. Before her move back to the Highlands, Mrs MacKay was an in-house solicitor and manager for a commercial leasing company for four years.

Both Mrs MacKay and her husband, a teacher, grew up in the Highlands and Islands and moved to Lochaber three years ago with their young family.

She said: 'We were both keen to raise our children in a setting similar to our own upbringing and when my husband was offered a teaching post at a local primary school in Ardnarmurchan we recognised that the area was just what we were looking for. It's a fantastic place to be living in and having settled well I'm now really looking forward to joining MacPhee and Partners and working here.'



Christine MacKay.

## Doors open on new store Salmon firm experts dive in with advice for students



Ballachulish Primary School children were given the honour of formally opening the new Co-op store in the village last Thursday. The outlet near Ballachulish Visitor Centre was built after the company decided a replacement was needed for its shop at Loanfern. The village post office has also transferred to the new store.

STUDENTS on an aquaculture course in Campbeltown were given an extra boost last week, with help from experts from the Scottish Salmon Company (SSC).

The course, which is run by Argyll College UHI in association with the school, is the first in the region to run as part of the Curriculum for Excellence and Skills for Work programme.

Students were given the chance to attend presentations from the biology, production and HR departments at SSC.

Biologist Camilla MacDonald, Tarbert South Site Manager Donnie Sinclair, South Production Manager Iain MacIntyre and HR Director Debra Nichol-Storie hosted the workshops.

Darlene Russell, curriculum manager at Argyll College, said: 'We have been hoping to offer the NPA Aquaculture course in Argyll for several years. The course is very practical and demands great commitment from those students who embark upon it.'

'We are most grateful to our partners SSC for the invaluable practical support they are offering our students over the next year.'

SSC's HR director, Debra Nichol-Storie, has been involved in developing the links with the college and school and organising input from the company. She said: 'It's really important to us that young people feel there are local, sustainable employment opportunities available and that they can find opportunities which will keep them close to home.'

'This qualification has been developed to offer a balance between studying the skills required by industry and real work experience, leaving candidates in a better position for a career in the sector.'

## Gateway grant boost for Argyll businesses

THREE businesses from across Argyll and Bute have already secured funding from the new Business Gateway Plus grant programme, launched at the end of last year.

Argyll and Bute Council's Business Gateway administers the grant and is keen to hear from more businesses based in Argyll and Bute with a growth project in mind.

'This new grant provides support to growing businesses to help them deliver the projects that will drive further growth,' explains councillor Duncan MacIntyre, Argyll and Bute Council Policy Lead for European Affairs, Sustainable Economic Growth and Strategic Transportation.

'It's encouraging that so soon after the grant became available we have already had several successful applications and the resources are there to support more than 20 further businesses, thanks to the council leveraging European funding for this.'

The Business Gateway Plus grant can provide a discretionary grant towards capital equipment, marketing costs or other costs directly supporting business growth.

Statutory costs, wage subsidies, training, property development and the purchase of stock or vehicles are excluded.

A restriction applied with the European funding means that retail businesses are not eligible for support.

The grant can provide 50 per cent of project costs up to a maximum of £3,000.

To be eligible for support, existing businesses - over six months old - must be actively trading with a turnover above £70,000 and be projecting turnover growth within the next three years. Start-up businesses can apply for support only where they have been actively trading for at least three months and are able to demonstrate clear potential to achieve an annual turnover of at least £70,000 within their first 18 months of trading and further growth beyond.

Anyone looking to apply should contact the local Business Gateway team in the first instance to confirm their eligibility and request an application form which also contains the terms and conditions.

Business Gateway has a team of local business advisers on hand to answer questions and to help interested parties progress their application.

The grant scheme will close in March 2015 or sooner if funds are fully allocated.

Anyone looking for support should contact the local Business Gateway team to find out more on 01546 605 459 or visit [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/business-gateway-plus](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/business-gateway-plus) to download an application form.

The project is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and can provide financial support for up to 26 businesses.

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# Farming

## Argyll Highlander folds take show's top honours

Quality shines through as judges praise efforts of owners and estate managers

ARGYLL breeders once again proved the quality of the area's Highland cattle at this year's Highland Cattle Society Show. The 123rd show and sale, held on Sunday and Monday, attracted a number of foreign buyers but the eventual prices did not reflect the collective optimism pre-sale. Although they didn't all leave with top dollar, Argyll's owners and estate managers at least took pride in their efforts being recognised by the judges. Male champion winner of W Pearson Brown Memorial Trophy for the best two year old bull was Eoin Ruadh 2nd of Glengorm, by Eoin Mhor of Miungairigh and out of Ailsa 1st of Glengorm. It sold to Strathmore Farming Company, Glamis, Forfar for 5,000 gns. The bull gave Glengorm its first male championship at the show, much to the delight of owner Tom Nelson. 'It feels fantastic,' said Mr Nelson. 'We knew he was a good bull but it's his first time out, so we didn't expect anything.' Winner of Roy Cruickshank Goblet for stockperson bringing out champion animal was Angus MacColl, Miungairigh. The award would have eased the pain of a broken leg Angus suffered while playing rugby last month. Reserve male champion and champion senior bull was Allt Ruadh of Cranich by Ruairidh of Hyndford and out of Agnes A'Ghorm 3rd of the Wellburn. From Mr A Fitzsimon and bred by Mr Robin Sedgwick, it sold



Male champion was Eoin Ruadh 2nd of Glengorm. 16\_108highland01



Female champion was Susan 13th of Ormsary. 16\_108highland02

### Results

Section One, Senior Bull, Class One: 1st Champion senior, reserve overall champion and winner of the Caledonian Marts (Stirling) Trophy Allt Ruadh of Cranich from Mr A Fitzsimon sold to C Cuthbertson, Peebles for 2000 gns; 2nd Balach Dun of Clach Na Gruagach from Mr AA Smith. Section Two, Two Year Old, Class Two: 1st and reserve champion two year old Nelson of Knockendon from R & F Fergie sold to Mr J Ayres, Thetford, Norfolk for 2400 gns; 2nd Uallach Dubh of Cloan from Mr RW Haldane MBE sold to Sir James Paice, Ely, Cambridgeshire for 2000 gns; 3rd Callum 7th of Goldenberry from Mr Alan Kennedy; 4th Angus 1st of Walton from Mrs Suzanne Hill. Class Three: 1st Julian 3rd of Walton from Mrs Suzanne Hill; 2nd Jacob 2nd of Benmore from Mrs Emma Paterson sold to Mr J McConachie, Grantown on Spey for 3800 gns; 3rd Ewan Ruadh of Callachally from Mr Hugh MacPhail; 4th Scott 2nd of Miungairigh from Mr AJ MacColl. Class Four: 1st Overall Male Champion, Winner of the Craig Sellar Trophy and Winner of W Pearson Brown Eoin Ruadh 2nd of Glengorm from Glengorm sold to Strathmore Farming Company, Glamis, Forfar for 5000 gns; 2nd Callum of Inveraton from Andrew Clotworthy sold to Falko Steinberg, Germany for 3600 gns; 3rd Connor 2nd of Lagg from Mrs Connie Lawrie; 4th Daibhidh of Ardara from Ardara Estate sold to Mr AA Smith, Isle of Mull for 3400 gns. Other Prizes: Callum of Corntown from Mr Ron MacLean sold to Ardoran Marine for 2400 gns. Donnachd 2nd of Miungairigh from Mr AJ MacColl sold to WGC Farming Inverness for 1400 gns. Yearling Bulls, Section Three, Class Five: 1st Troy Dubh of Ceannacroic from Dunlossit (Farming) Ltd sold to Germany for 500 gns; 2nd Seamus Broghach of Bailemarte from Mark Armstrong sold to J Fraser Tibouries for 320 gns. Aged Bulls, Section Four, Class Six: 1st Uallach Dubh 6th of Pollok from Mr RW Haldane MBE sold to Mr J Singer, Kincardine for 2000 gns; 2nd Angus Dubh of Savalmhor from R & S Strachan sold to Mr H Irvine, Craighuscar, Dunfermline for 6900 gns; 3rd Victor 3rd of Earn from Mrs H Corrigall sold to Mr D MacNaughton, Kelty for 2000 gns; 4th Uther Dubh Chanaidh of Headland from Sally & Stephen Leighton; 5th Ciaran of Redrullion from J & J Singer sold to Mr J Smith, Lochgilphead for 800 gns. Females: Female Champion, Senior Heifer Champion and winner of DM Stewart Memorial Trophy: Susan 13th of Ormsary by Oskar of Hyndford out of Susan 5th of Ormsary from Sir William Lithgow, Bt& Son (Ormsary) and sold to Highland Wagyu, Blackford for 6000 gns. Reserve Female Champion: Diorbhail 2nd of Knockendon James Beusach of An Siadhan and out of Diorbhail of Oliver from R & F Fergie sold to Mr K Brown, Craigmowmill, Kinross for 3000 gns. Section Five, Class Seven, 1st Female Champion & senior heifer champion and winner of DM Stewart Memorial Trophy: Susan 13th of Ormsary from Sir William Lithgow, Bt& Son (Ormsary) to Highland Wagyu for 6000 gns; 2nd Susan 14th of Ormsary from Sir William Lithgow, Bt & Son (Ormsary) sold to Highland Wagyu, Blackford for 2400 gns; 3rd Lady 45th of Callachally from Mr HM MacPhail sold to Highland Wagyu, Blackford for 1200 gns; 4th Heather 8th of Tordarroch from Tordarroch Estates sold to Mr Thomson Maud for 1800 gns. Class Eight: 1st and reserve Senior champion - Elliot 2nd of Pennygown from Mr DJ MacGillivray sold to Highland Wagyu for 2400 gns; 2nd Neolain Lochach 4th of Glenkilg from Mr RD Schuster; 3rd Corinna 4th of Killochries from Killochries Fold; 4th Auchnacraig Dubh 5th of Borland from Mr K Howman. Section 6, Three year old heifers, Class 9: 1st and reserve three year old champion Fiosaiche of Glengarnock from A & H Kirkpatrick sold to A Clotworthy, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire for 1000 gns; 2nd Una 2nd of Merland from Mr & Mrs JS McKechnie sold to M Koch Germany for 1000 gns; 3rd Lizzie 8th of Knockendon from R & F Fergie; 4th Albanach Suidaird 5th of Glenkilg from Mr RD Schuster. Class 10: 1st Champion three year old & reserve overall champion Diorbhail 2nd of Knockendon from R & F Fergie sold to Mr K Brown, Craigmowmill, Kinross for 3000 gns; 2nd Dossan Ruadh of Glengowrie from Mr E Mackay; 3rd Peigi Molach 20th of Ashmore from Ashmore & Strone Estate; 4th Crystal 4th of Bien Esk from Patricia Smith & Paul Burns. Class 11: 1st Milly 11th of Benneach from Mr A Fitzsimon; 2nd Hazel 9th of Knockendon from R & F Fergie sold to Taylor for 700 gns; 3rd Bhoideach of Stair from Mr & Mrs AA McIntyre. Other Prizes: Mairi Bhuidhe 4th of Drimmin from DC Lewis sold to MacLean for 500 gns. Two Year Old, Section 7, Class 12: 1st Champion two year old Elit Dubh Vallay 1st of Walton from Mrs Suzanne Hill; 2nd Cuailean 119th of Achnacloch from TL Nelson 1992 Trust sold to J Fraser Tibouries for 450 gns; 3rd Seonaidh Buidhe 4th of Ashmore from Ashmore & Strone Estate Ltd; 4th Maisie Ruadh of Ceannacroic from Dunlossit Estate. Class 13, 1st and Reserve Champion Jarca Ola Odhar Eilean of Killochries from Killochries Fold; 2nd Aimee Ruadh of Drimmin from DC Lewis; 3rd Effie 4th of Bien Esk from Patricia Smith & Paul Burns; 4th April Ruadh 6th of Glengarnock from A & H Kirkpatrick. Yearling Heifers, Section 8, Class 14: 1st Champion yearling and winner of YW Mok Trophy - Cassie Buidhe 4th of Cladich from Mrs JH Strickland; 2nd Reserve Champion yearling - Clagorm 35th of Glengarnock from A & H Kirkpatrick sold to Koch, Germany; 3rd Hannah Dubh of Ceannacroic from Dunlossit (Farming) Ltd; 4th Aimee Ruadh 2nd of Drimmin from DC Lewis sold to Angus MacGillivray, Dalmaily. Class 15: 1st Istalairial 8th of Glenkilg from Mr RD Schuster; 2nd Kirsty Alba of Ubbaidh from Donald, Mhairi & Robert Dempster; 3rd Lucy 10th of Benneach from Mrs A Taylor sold to Mr J Fraser, Tibouries for 250 gns; 4th Cuailean 121st of Achnacloch from TL Nelson 1992 Trust sold to Germany for 360 gns. Class 16: 1st Albanach Suidaird 7th of Glenkilg from Mr RD Schuster; 2nd Mullaich 6th of Gray Brae from Douglas & Hilary Crane sold to G Spawton, Lampeter for 500 gns; 3rd Lady White of Gray Brae from Douglas & Hilary Crane; 4th Nighean Sean 2nd of Killochries from Killochries Fold. Class 17: 1st Fraoch 1st of Gartoch from Mr & Mrs JS McKechnie; 2nd Eilidh 2nd of Edgerston from Edgerston Trading (2006) Ltd sold to Thomson for 400 gns; 3rd Clagorm 38th of Glengarnock from A & H Kirkpatrick; 4th Heather 2nd of Edgerston from Edgerston Trading (2006) Ltd sold to Campbell for 480 gns. Other Prizes: Proisag Dubh 23rd of Achnacloch from TL Nelson 1992 Trust sold to G Bedurftig, Germany for 520 gns; Malda 114th of Achnacloch from TL Nelson 1992 Trust sold to M Ruse Germany for 420 gns; Heather of Ardoran from Ardoran Marine sold to G Spawton, Lampeter for 420 gns; Flora 1st of Edgerston from Edgerston Trading (2006) Ltd sold to M Ruse, Germany for 380 gns; Princess Sobhrach 2nd of Achnacloch from TL Nelson 1992 Trust sold to M Ruse for 360 gns; Solas Fiona of Bennlatha Ur from J & J Singer sold to G Spawton, Lampeter for 350 gns; Milly 13th of Benneach from Mrs A Taylor sold to M Ruse, Germany for 340 gns; Proisag Ruadh of Bailemarte from Mark Armstrong sold to E Campbell for 340 gns; Amelia 1st of Culloden from the Culloden Fold sold to JW Murdoch, Castle Douglas for 320 gns; Kylie of Achnaduan from Anastasia Delap sold to M Ruse, Germany for 300 gns; Stuaimeig 7th of Benneach from Mrs A Taylor sold to J Fraser for 300 gns; Morag of Bailemarte from Mark Armstrong sold to JW Murdoch for 280 gns; Megan of Benneach from Mrs A Taylor sold to Manfred Ruse, Germany for 260 gns; Beusach Dubh 2nd of Ardoran from Ardoran Marine sold to M Ruse, Germany for 240 gns; Surdail Odhar of Ardoran from Ardoran Marine sold to A Garick for 220 gns. Cows: 1st Malda 3rd of Knockendon from Mr & Mrs Simon Haley sold to M Koch, Germany for 1700 gns; 2nd Caorach of Southair from Sally & Stephen Leighton; 3rd Lizzie of Kynedor from Sally & Stephen Leighton. Young Handlers: 1st Dexter Logan; 2nd Ruairidh MacKinnon; 3rd Robert Dempster; 4th Murn Cameron; 5th Jade Brown; 6th Ross Shaw. Averages Two year old bulls - 2889 gns 9 forward; Aged Bulls - 2925 gns - 4 forward; Senior Heifers - 3000 gns - 4 forward; Three year old heifers - 1240 gns - 5 forward; Yearling Heifers - 375 gns - 22 forward.



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### Rural college spotlight on farming changes

FARMING is facing change, not only from the climate, as recent events have shown, but next year the way the Common Agricultural Policy works in Scotland will also be very different. An event on Friday February 21 at the Kirkton and Auchtertyre farms, Crianlarich, of Scotland's Rural College offers sheep farmers a chance to hear some of the latest thinking about improving the performance of their flocks to face those challenges. Beginning at noon and ending at 3pm, the meeting will cover a range of topics founded on research carried out by SRUC. In a changing and challenging world, there is a role for new technology and new ways to use existing methods. However, underpinning that are the age old skills of flock management. Meanwhile research is showing that ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions can improve efficiency and cut costs. The event opens with an introduction from farm manager Ewan Campbell, a local man. He will review the work going on at Kirkton/Auchtertyre and reflect on the way research informs his own management on the two hill farms. Ewan will then be joined by researcher, Dr Tony Waterhouse, to explain the unit's new ewe feeding policy. The issue of electronic identification of sheep, as required by Brussels, has been a contentious one. However it is happening and SRUC researchers have been exploring how, through the use of new computerised technology, sheep handling operations and recording can be made easier. Ambitious targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions have been set for Scotland and farming is not immune, especially the livestock sector. To register for the free event, phone SAC Consulting on 01631 563 093 or email frsoban@sac.co.uk.

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### Farming Focus with Ewan Campbell, SRUC farm manager for Kirkton and Auchtertyre

FEBRUARY has so far been a busy month for us at SRUC's Kirkton and Auchtertyre farms. The ewes are now half-way through their pregnancy and so we like to check their weights, assess what condition they are in and find out how many of them are carrying lambs. It is well worth doing this because the results of the weighing and pregnancy scanning help us target extra feeding to those that need it the most. Changes in weight and condition since November will be used to identify those that have lost more body reserves than we would like to see, while the scanning results will help us separate out those that are carrying twin lambs - and in a few cases even triplets. We are having a farmers' meeting on the farm on February, 21, where we will explain how the ewes on the different feeding strategies that we are investigating have done over the winter. Full details of the event are available from the SAC Consulting in Oban. Our Aberdeen Angus cross heifers are also due to start calving anytime now. We took the decision last year to bring breeding beef cattle back on to the farm for the first time since the late 1990s. There was a lot of discussion and debate about what breed type to go for. In the end, I chose 21 Aberdeen Angus crossbred heifers because our farm advisory group had expressed an interest in cattle with high breeding potential, while not wanting purebred pedigree cattle. I had an idea of where I could source high health heifers of this type and brought in some young heifers, with the stronger ones put to the bull and the remaining younger ones left to grow further until this spring. Modern Angus cattle have high quality carcasses and meat - and are also noted for their high growth rate, quiet temperament and ease of calving. I hope the latter proves to be true. They settled in well last year and spent most of the time away out on the hill grazings through the summer, autumn and early part of the winter. Having both cattle and sheep can make a big difference to the look of the hill. Cattle are happy to eat longer and coarser grass and therefore help create the lower swards that are preferred by sheep. Those that are not yet in-calf are still out on the lower parts of the hill. They are happy, look good and are appreciating the silage that we were able to make last summer because of the relatively dry soil conditions in the in-bye fields. Those that are due to calve have been brought down into a shed where we can keep an eye on them - I'll end there for now since I better go and check on them!



Ewan Campbell with some of the Aberdeen Angus cross heifers brought onto the monitor farm.

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in touch with developing technology.

As input costs rapidly rise in tandem with this technology, many farmers have turned to second hand machinery for much of their everyday requirements. This in turn has increased the importance and therefore the demand for regular and spe-

cialist maintenance from highly skilled agricultural mechanics. Throughout the country, numerous firms have developed to sell, maintain and advise on what is both available and affordable to the crofting and farming community.

This important service industry, much of which specializes in the ATV and small tractor market, has increased to the extent that outlets are available within easy reach of most west coast mainland and island farms - this in turn means that these service providers must remain both competitive

and trained to a high standard if they are to retain business.

Livestock farming remains dominant on the west coast, while the majority of cereal production is targeted at winter feed for stock. Because of this, there is not the same degree of investment in the very large and heavy machinery that has revolutionised cereal production in other areas. Nor has there

been the environmental problems that accompany the extremes of ever-bigger machines.

A 2011 report claimed that Scotland's soils support agricultural businesses worth £700million to the Scottish economy however the report also highlighted that the use of increasingly heavy farm machinery and how they compact soils posed a potential

threat that was not fully understood in Scotland.

Some machines used for harvesting crops can weigh up to 40 tonnes and those used in forestry up to 20 tonnes, the

report said.

Citing research from Germany and Denmark, the study also said heavy equipment was compacting soils at increasingly deeper levels.

The report, The State of Scotland's Soils, which was put together from research by the British Geological Survey, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Macaulay Institute, Scottish Agricultural

College and University of Glasgow, has also highlighted that some earths have a 'strong regional identity' and were culturally and historically important - such as the machair of the Western Isles.



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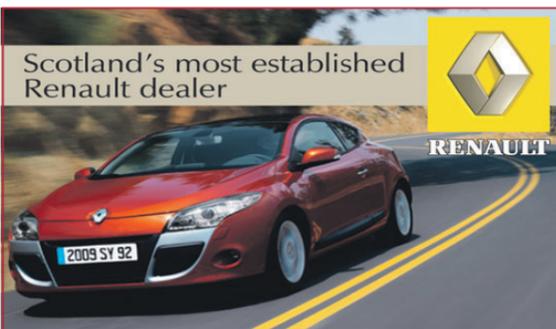
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# Used vehicle values continue to mirror new car sales

According to the latest data from the UK's leading vehicle remarketing business, British Car Auctions (BCA), the upward trend in used car values of the last 24 months was maintained in January 2014.

BCA's latest Pulse report for January 2014 showed that average used car values increased by £244 or 3.4 per cent compared to the same month last year. Average age rose slightly over the month.

The average car sold at BCA in January was valued at £7,381, the third highest monthly value on record.

Tim Naylor, Editor of BCA's annual used car market report explained 'The longer term trends show that used car values continue to rise and January was exceptionally busy in the wholesale markets. BCA achieved record results in the first weeks of 2014, offering and

selling more vehicles than at any time in our history.

'This reflects the general upturn in consumer confidence, as has already been seen in the new car market. As economic conditions continue to improve, we expect to see more motorists looking to change their current vehicle, with many likely to opt for a good quality used car.'



Year-on-year table: All cars

All cars	Avg Age	Avg Mileage	Avg Value	Sale vs CAP
Jan 2013	59.03	56,858	£7,137	98.21%
Jan 2014	61.76	56,861	£7,381	97.98%



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## Demand for homes in Scotland continues to outstrip supply

During January, the number of houses coming onto the market for sale in Scotland remained steady, says the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) January residential market survey.

Last month a net balance of 27 per cent more chartered surveyors reported an increase in new instructions. Despite this, the amount of potential buyers continued to surge ahead of supply for the ninth consecutive month, with a net balance of 37 per cent of respondents reporting a growth in demand. However, some surveyors note that supply is expected to increase as we enter the traditional 'spring bounce'.

With the gap between steady supply and rising demand not seeing any considerable change, house prices continued to grow. During January, a net balance of 38 per cent more respondents across Scotland reported an increase in prices, with the cost of a home now rising since May 2013.

Chartered surveyors also noted the continued positive impact of the Home Report on the housing market in Scotland, with 78 per cent of respondents reporting that it has reduced the need for multiple surveys.

Prices are on the up in Scotland and this is driven largely by a lack of properties coming onto the market. With a

growing number of people now in a position to buy a home, there are simply not enough properties to satisfy demand. The upshot of this is that prices are increasing in many areas. However, RICS members do expect an increase in supply in the coming months as the traditional spring bounce begins to take effect.

Sarah Speirs, Director RICS Scotland, said: 'RICS Scotland continues to work closely with the Scottish Housing Commission to address the issues of housing supply and demand in Scotland. The Commission's findings will be published in April 2014.'

Looking ahead, the more positive outlook continues with a net balance of 49 per cent more chartered surveyors predicting transaction numbers in Scotland to increase over the coming three months, while expectations for future prices are also strongly positive.



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Candidates for this post will be required to work a continental shift pattern. As this position involves travelling a current clean driving license is essential.

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Candidates will be enthusiastic, self-motivated and be able to demonstrate prior experience in working within small, focused teams. Day to day duties will include net washing, net changing and boat handling. Previous aquaculture experience is essential for this post. Preference will also be given to those candidates who can offer transferable, related skills and qualifications. Candidates for this post will be required to work a continental shift pattern. As this position involves travelling a current clean driving license is essential. In return, the Company offers a comprehensive pay and benefits package including entry into the Company pension scheme.

For an application form and job description, please contact: Angela Gibson HR Officer, The Scottish Salmon Company, Ardkinglas Estate, Cairndow, Argyll, PA26 8BH. Tel. No. 01499 600 430 Email: angela.gibson@scottishsalmon.com Closing date for applications: 5pm Friday 14th March 2014 Visit our website at www.scottishsalmon.com

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www.enercon.de



### Mull and Iona Community Trust

#### VACANCY - Ulva Ferry, Isle of Mull

#### Housing Project Manager

(0.6 full-time equivalent)

Salary £23,000 per annum (pro rata)

Mull and Iona Community Trust is looking to recruit a Project Manager to oversee development of an exciting new housing development at Ulva Ferry on the Isle of Mull. Reporting to the General Manager, the Housing Project Manager will work closely with a local steering group and with the community as a whole.

The project will involve securing the funding package for construction of two houses, finalising the design and obtaining all necessary consents and the establishment of governance structure under which the two houses will be offered at an affordable rent to local families.

The applicant will have a good understanding of project planning and budgetary control as well as the issues affecting fragile rural areas. Strong computer skills are desirable.

A relevant qualification or prior experience would be advantageous as would a knowledge and affinity for the locality. Support and training is available for the right person. The position will be part-time for 3 days per week (with flexibility).

The contract will run for two years. To view the job description visit [www.mict.co.uk](http://www.mict.co.uk), then contact Moray Finch, General Manager of the Community Trust ([enquiries@mict.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@mict.co.uk)) for an application pack;

Closing date for applications: 10th March 2014

### Mull and Iona Community Trust

#### VACANCY - Ulva Ferry, Isle of Mull

#### Local Development Officer

(0.5 full-time equivalent)

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Specific projects include affordable housing, play-park and community facilities; community transport, renewables and communications and assisting local groups.

The applicant will have a good understanding of the issues affecting fragile rural areas. Strong computer skills are desirable, as are strong diplomacy and communications skills.

A relevant qualification or prior experience in community-led development would be advantageous as would a knowledge and affinity for the locality. Support and training is available for the right person. The position will be a job share for 2.5 days per week.

The contract will run until March 2015 with the possibility of two further years subject to funding.

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# Torchlight descent start to festival

FORT WILLIAM Mountain Festival launched last night (Wednesday) with a torchlight descent down Aonach Mor.

Local athletes took to the hill on foot, mountain bikes and travelled down into the High Street, arriving to fireworks and a celebration at The Grog and Gruel. Snow from the mountain was carried down to the pub and used to make cocktails, as part of the fun.

Festival chairman Mike Pescod said: 'It's all very poetic, drinking mojitos made from our mountain snow. It's a great way to celebrate.'

Meanwhile, Pinemarten Cafe and Bar at Nevis Range

hosted a launch dinner, offering a four course meal of local sourced food. Ian 'Spike' Syke, founder of the range, provided entertainment by playing his banjo and a song he wrote in honour of the festival.

Entries for a film competition run by festival organisers were screened in the cafe later in the evening.

**Looking ahead**

Looking ahead to the rest of the festival, Mr Pescod said: 'I'm really looking forward to it, this year is the biggest programme we've had since 2007 and ticket sales have been great.'

'We're hoping for a really good audience to come along

and share our passion for the mountains.' Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team also held a fundraiser on the night as a fringe event of the festival at The Ben Nevis Inn.

The event featured a talk from Joe Beaumont, who embarked on a journey from the lowest point of the UK, -4m below sea-level in Cambridgeshire, to the highest at the summit of Ben Nevis. Not only this, he did so after breaking every bone on the right side of his body when he fell off of a cliff in the Lake District in 2011.

Mr Beaumont told the audience about his experience and how Mountain Rescue saved his life.

## Councillors agree Corran Halls will be free of charge for Rural Parliament

THE CORRAN Halls will be given to Scotland's first Rural Parliament for free, following a decision by the Oban, Lorn and Isles area committee.

It was confirmed last month that the event, expected to attract 400 delegates, would be held in Oban for its inaugural gathering in the town between November 6-8.

News of its visit was welcomed by the area committee, which said it would do everything it could to support the event.

Member Duncan Mac-

Intyre said: 'This is a tremendous step forward and a huge opportunity for Oban. What we've been asked is if we'll support the event and get the first parliament off to a good start.'

'These are exciting times for Oban in particular and we want people to see what can be done.'

He added his hope that roadworks, planned for the redesign of Stafford Street as a pedestrian area, would be complete prior to the Rural Parliament's convening.

Fellow councillor Roddy

McCuish said: 'I'm absolutely delighted you've chosen Oban and we're especially delighted to have you here in November, which is seen as one of our quieter months.'

'I think this is a tremendous and unique opportunity and this will also be a good opportunity to see what the real issues are in rural area.'

Emma Cooper, Rural Parliament coordinator, said: 'This is a great opportunity to share the challenges the community faces and for Oban to showcase itself.'

## Better Together campaigner claims 'scare tactics' on Islay

A SUPPORTER of the Better Together campaign on Islay claims independence campaigners are using 'scare tactics' to deter No voters on the Hebridean island.

But the claims by community councillor and prospective Conservative Party candidate Alastair Redman have been dismissed by the Yes Islay group.

Mr Redman, who runs the Post Office in Portmahaven, says he is being threatened on social media and has had dog faeces put on the step of his shop daily. He also

claims young 'No' voters on the island are too afraid to speak out.

The Oban Times has seen a video posted to Facebook of a young independence supporter, dressed in just a Saltire, socks and shoes, going into Mr Redman's shop and trying to drink a jug of alcohol, as part of the Nekominate craze.

He obliges when told to stand outside but as they leave, the cameraman shouts to Mr Redman, 'Hope to see you vote yes, pal.'

But a member of the Yes

Islay Group has rubbished Mr Redman's claims, adding that the young nationalist in the video was not part of its fold.

He said: 'I haven't heard about any of these claims but that is not what our group is about. Everyone in our group would condemn that type of behaviour.'

He said the group's campaigning had been by traditional means of leafleting and community events and that there had been strong support for independence on Islay.



## Caol kids celebrate gaining third Eco Schools Green Flag

Caol Primary School has received its third eco flag. Pupils have been working hard for the honour by recycling and tending to their school garden. Rachel Avery, the lead assessor of Eco Schools Highland was impressed by the work and whole school involvement when she visited Caol to present the flag.

## Comhairle sets £110m budget as it seeks £9m of savings

COMHAIRLE nan Eilean Siar has set a budget of £110m for the forthcoming financial year.

The financial package sees the retention of itinerant teachers for P4-P7 pupils in art, music and P.E. despite financial pressures.

Council tax for a Band D properties will the lowest in Scotland at £1024.

The comhairle anticipates needing to make around £9m more savings over the next three years.

Cllr Angus Campbell, leader of the comhairle, said: 'Despite facing major financial challenges we have

continued to protect services and we continue to invest across the Islands.

We have managed to achieve this without having to implement job cuts and we retain a policy of no compulsory redundancies wherever possible.

'In addition we are seeking to implement the living wage as a minimum for all comhairle employees.'

Opposition SNP group leader hit out at what he saw as a failure to support inter-island transport links.

He said: 'The attitude of the Labour-Independent administration that relegates

internal transport to the lowest two per cent of priorities, which the Barra air service falls into, is despicable.'

Over £70m in capital works over the next five years include road, pavement and bridge improvements throughout the Western Isles. Also planned is the development of Lewis Castle and Museum nan Eilean, coast protection at Balivanich, new care and respite facilities to replace Ardsleach, the harbour development at Ardevenish in Barra, school improvements across the Islands and a new school in North Uist.

# Band benefits to the tune of £3,500



Some of the members of Oban High School Pipe Band get ready to board the bus.

OBAN Youth Pipe Band Association has been given a £3,500 boost by the Scottish Sea Farms Heart of the Community Trust to help with running costs.

The organisation raises money for the Oban Youth Pipe Band, the membership of which has been growing, with more than 70 pipers and drummers under the age of 18 on its roster.

**Thank**

Alastair MacGregor, chairman of the Oban Youth Pipe Band Association, said: 'I would like to thank Scottish Sea Farms for this tremendous support for our pipers.'

'This significant contribution will allow our young people to compete at the highest level in this year's competition season and we are truly grateful.'

Jim Gallagher, managing director of Scottish Sea Farms, said: 'This is what the Heart of the Community Trust is all about, encouraging youngsters to be the very best they can be.'

'The Oban High School Pipe Band gives the whole area something to be proud of and we are delighted to be able to help them go on to achieve further success.'

Application forms for the Heart of The Community can be found on the Scottish Sea Farms website at www.scottishseafarms.com.

## public notices

www.highland.gov.uk

The Highland Council Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

**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 9.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the SERVICE POINT, LOCHABER HOUSE, HIGH STREET, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6EL and online at <http://www.highland.gov.uk>

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
14/00357/FUL	Dragons Tooth Golf Course Ballachulish	Siting of 8 pods
14/00428/PIP	Land West of West Lodge Roshven, Glenuig	Erection of house (renewal of planning permission in principle 09/00150/OUTLO)
14/00498/PIP	Meall-Mhor Brecklet Road Ballachulish	Erection of a detached dwelling house in the garden ground
14/00504/FUL	4 - 5 Drimarben Fort William	Demolition of existing house and outbuilding. Erection of replacement house and garage/store
14/00543/FUL	Land 90m South East of Fort William Health Centre Camaghael, Fort William	Erection of house
14/00565/FUL	Strontian Hotel, Strontian, Acharacle	Erection of house (Renewal of Consent 10/02774/FUL)

Time period for comments is 14 days  
 ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX  
 Email: [eplanning@highland.gov.uk](mailto:eplanning@highland.gov.uk)

**DUNBARTONSHIRE AND ARGYLL AND BUTE VALUATION JOINT BOARD**

**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2012/13**

**Regulation 6(2) Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 1985**

Notice is hereby given that copies of the certified Abstract of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2013 together with the Auditor's Report thereon have been deposited in the offices of the Treasurer, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton. It may be inspected free of charge from 9.15a.m. to 1.00p.m. and 2.00p.m. to 4.00p.m. Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays. Any person who is unable to attend at the times stated should make a written application to the Treasurer and alternative arrangements will be made.

Copies of the Abstract of Accounts can be purchased at a cost of £10.00 per copy.

Stephen West, Treasurer Council Offices, Garshake Road, DUMBARTON, G82 3PU

**CROFTING COMMISSION COMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATIONS**

Applicant, Croft, Extent/Purpose, Case number

\*T & H Glenn Whitestone, Saddell & Skipness 40.470 ha - Amenity ground 4.86.46618

Comments can be made to the Crofting Commission by any member of the crofting community within the locality of the land, within 28 days of the date of this newspaper. Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW or [info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk](mailto:info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk)

Applications marked with an asterisk - Interest can be expressed in obtaining the tenancy of the area subject to the application.

**North Argyll Stroke Association AGM**

25th February 2014 1.30pm Dunmar Court

**First Registration of a Croft**

James J Munro has registered his crofts 2 and 3 Clovulin, Ardgour, Kingairloch on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by October 31, 2014.

Details of the registration can be found at [www.crofts.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.gov.uk/register/home)

The crofts registration numbers are C43 and C44

**Ormsaigmore Common Grazings**

Notice of a meeting to be held at Millburn, Kilchoan on 27th February at 3pm.

**Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES**

To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)

**Argyll & Bute COUNCIL**

**PLANNING**

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW Monday to Friday 9am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm. On Wednesdays, the Customer Service Points will open at 10am. At the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk). Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT**

Ref No	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
13/02403/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Land Adjacent to Rowanbank Dalmally Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Dalmally
13/02849/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and heat source pump. Formation of new vehicular access	Kintira Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA66 6BT	Sub Post Office Fionnphort
13/02889/PP	Installation of run of river hydro scheme	Allt Na Dail Fearna West Of Portsonachan East Lochaweside Dalmally Argyll And Bute PA33 1BW	Sub Post Office Dalmally
13/02891/PP	Installation of run of river hydro scheme	Allt Mor Land North Of Balliameanoch Farm East Lochaweside Dalmally Argyll And Bute PA33 1BW	Sub Post Office Dalmally
13/02892/PP	Installation of run of river hydro scheme	Allt A Chrossaid Land South Of Balliameanoch Farm East Lochaweside Dalmally Argyll And Bute PA33 1BW	Sub Post Office Dalmally
13/02931/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse, installation of biotic treatment plant with soakaway and formation of new vehicular access	Land South West Of East Kames Kilmelford Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4XA	Sub Post Office Kilmelford
14/00074/PP	Erection of 3 dwellinghouses with attached garages and formation of vehicular access	Land Adjacent To Old School House Appin Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Leidaig
14/00082/PP	Erection of 60kW wind turbine (26.6m high to blade tip) and erection of control cabinet - amended proposal relative to planning reference 13/01661/PP	Land South Of Beinn Chaoirach Ardluarine Farm Kilmelford Oban PA34 4XQ	Sub Post Office Kilmelford
14/00169/MFF	Re-positioning of fish farm to enable relocation of feed barge from north to south end of cage group	Shuna Island Fish Farm Shuna Sound Appin Argyll Bute	Sub Post Office Leidaig
14/00191/PP	Erection of garage/workshop for the purpose of servicing lorries, incorporating office accommodation	Yard North Connel Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Leidaig
14/00291/PP	Installation of electric vehicle charging point	Am Birrinn Penmore Dervaig Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA75 6QS	Sub Post Office Dervaig
14/00336/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference: 11/00146/PPP - Site for the erection of a dwellinghouse	Land At Kilvaree Connel Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Connel
14/00338/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference: 11/00036/PPP - Site for the erection of a dwellinghouse	Land North Of Croft 5 Kilvaree Connel Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Connel
14/00368/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land East Of Alaval Benderloch Oban Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Leidaig
14/00369/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land East Of Ar Dachaigh Benderloch Oban Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Leidaig

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
13/02811/PP	Erection of Monastery building and installation of bio-disc treatment plant	Land North East Of Kilninan Parish Church Torloisk Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA74 6NH	Sub Post Office Dervaig

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09.00 - 17.00hrs Monday to Friday at 67 Chalmers Street Ardrihsaig PA30 8DX, at the alternative locations detailed below during their normal opening times or by logging on to the Council's website at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk). Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT**

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
14/00377/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land North East Of 2 Claddach Portmahaven Isle Of Bly Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Portmahaven

Argyll and Bute council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: <https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk>

The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Whitegates Office Whitegates Road Lochgilphead PA31 8SY.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at the above address and at all Council Libraries.

Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered.

**DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

**THE ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL (SOROBA LANE, OBAN) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2014**

On Monday 17th February 2014, 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 in relation to the works), on that length of Soroba Lane, Oban, which extends from its junction with Lochside Street in an easterly direction for a distance of 30 metres or thereby. This closure is required to facilitate the construction of a new foot bridge and the replacement of the existing road bridge. This closure which will be effective when indicated by signs will be in operation from 0800 hours on Monday 3rd March 2014 until 2359 hours on Sunday 25th May 2014 or until such time as the works are complete, whichever is the earlier. Alternative routes will be via Lochside Street, Market Street, Soroba Road and Lynn Road.

Jim Smith, Head of Roads & Amenity Services, 1A Manse Brae, lochgilphead PA31 8RD

Source: GP 100 2008 to April 2008 - March 2009  
 \*Source: The Scottish Labour Party 2008 - 2010



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**PERSONAL NOTICES**



**Khayla May Healey**  
 Born 6th January, 2014



Kieran and Jessica Healey are delighted to announce the safe arrival of a beautiful daughter Khayla May born on January 6, 2014 at R.A.H.

**GRAY - LEACH**



Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Kirsten Deirdre, eldest daughter of David and Pamela, and Andrew Stewart, eldest son of Andrew and Helen.  
 - Love and Congratulations from both families.



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DEATHS

ABERNETHY - Peter Cameron. At the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley, on Saturday February 15, 2014, Peter, aged 57 years, (late of Lochgilphead), father of John, dear son of the late John and the late Kitty, brother of Duncan and brother-in-law of Caroline. Funeral service to take place at Clydebank Crematorium, North Dalnottar, on Thursday February 27, at 11.30 am. Family flowers only, please. The family express their sincere gratitude to all health care workers who looked after Peter.

GRANT - Christina Cameron (nee Maclean). Recently passed away at the Western Infirmary Glasgow, Chrissie beloved wife of Tommy, much loved mum of Catherine and Alasdair, loving granny, mother-in-law, sister, aunt and friend. Will be sorely missed.

HOWARD - Suddenly at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on February 13, 2014, Jean, aged 91 years, of The Old Manse, Isle of Ulva. Beloved mother of Rose, Jamie, and Johnny, adored grandmother of William and Kiloran. Funeral Service will take place on February 20, 2014 at 12 noon at Dervaig Church, Isle of Mull. Family flowers only please.

MACCORMICK - Peacefully at Mull and Iona Community Hospital on February 11, 2014. John, aged 89 years, Heathervale, Fionnphort, Husband of Iona, dad of Catriona and Donna and much loved grampa to his five grandchildren. Sadly missed by all his family.

MACFARLANE - Peacefully at home after a short illness bravely borne, aged 76 years, Emma, beloved wife of the late Archie, dearly loved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and sister. Sadly missed. Funeral will be held at Kilchattan Cemetery, Isle of Luing on Friday February 21, 2014 at 12.30 pm. Flowers welcome, but NO WREATHS please. Refreshments at Toberonochy Hall where there will be a collection for Easdale Medical Practice.

MAGGILLIVRAY - Peacefully at Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley on February 15, 2014, in her 88th year, Jean, beloved wife of the late Dougie, loving mother of David, Dougie and Edith-Anne, dear granny of Graeme, Elaine and Joanna and a great-granny.

MACLEOD - Peacefully, after a long illness at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, on February 11, 2014, Sheila MacKay (nee Douglas), beloved wife of the late David, mother of Patricia, David and Morven, an adored nana to her grandchildren and great-grandsons. Memorial Service held on February 16, at the Oban Parish Church followed by cremation at Clydebank Crematorium.

STEWART - Peacefully at Gortanvogie Care Home, Bowmore, Islay on February 15, 2014, John, age 95 years, beloved husband of the late Annie Logan, much loved dad to Catherine, Douglas, Joannie and the late Marion. A dear father-in-law, grampa and great-grampa. Sadly missed.

WATSON - Elizabeth Mary. At Adams House Care Home, Elderslie, on Saturday February 15, 2014. Elizabeth Mary, late of Loch Leven Hotel, North Ballachulish, beloved wife of Ronald Eglinton Watson, a dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Will be sadly missed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS BANKS - Ishbel wishes to thank the following for their kind support in the recent great loss of her husband Robin. Firstly, grateful thanks to the staff at the 'A&E' department of the Oban Hospital. To the Reverend Dugald Cameron and the Rev Bill Gray for the comforting service at the church and graveside and to Ken Moncrieff for the wonderful music, to D and A Munn Ltd, Undertakers, for their considerate and efficient funeral arrangements. To her many friends and neighbours, in particular Mrs Nan Black, for their help and support and for their gifts of flowers and baking which were much appreciated. Many thanks are also due to the senders of numerous letters, cards and telephone calls and to all who contributed to the collection for 'Cancer Research' which raised £1,516. Finally, a big 'thank you' to the Royal Hotel for their excellent buffet.

CAMPBELL - Sylvia and Iain, family of the late John Campbell would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for all their expressions of sympathy, kindness and support on their sad loss. Special thanks to all the doctors, nurses and staff of the Connel / Taynait Medical Practice for the wonderful care they gave John and support to Iain and I. Thanks also to the Rev J McCormick for a beautiful service which touched all our hearts. Our appreciation to Catriona and staff of H. Hoey & Sons and the staff of Lochneil Arms Hotel. Heartfelt thanks to those who paid their last respects at St Modans Church. A retiring collection of £513.44 was shared between the RNLI and Oban Mountain Rescue Team.

HARRIS - The family of Margaret Harris wish to thank all the many friends who attended her recent funeral. The retiring collection for Hope2Oban raised £389.

JOHN - Mary, Lorna, Brian and Andrew wish to thank everyone for their kind expressions of sympathy, flowers and support shown to them following the sad loss of Brian. Our grateful thanks to Dr Phillips, district nurses and Marie Curie and Macmillan nurses for their professional care and support. Our thanks also to Roddy and Fiona of Donald MacDonald Funeral Directors for their professional services and support throughout. Further thanks to Cairnbaan Hotel for their kind hospitality. The retiring collection for Marie Curie and Macmillan nurses raised in excess of £675.

LAUDER - Genna, Shauna and family would like to thank all relatives and friends for their expressions of sympathy following the loss of our dear dad Stephen tragically as the result of a road traffic accident on January 4, 2014. Our heartfelt thanks to all Emergency Services who attended at the scene, to Inspector Donald Campbell and Fort William Police for all their guidance and support, to Mr Scott Greenlees and Mr John Flannigan of John McLellan Undertakers, for their care and efficiency in the funeral arrangements, to Colin, Shiona and Serena of MacDonald Bros for the beautiful floral tributes, to Fr Roderick McAuley, Rev Christopher MacRae and Rev Gordon Mair for their spiritual comfort and prayers, to Caol Community Centre for providing refreshments, to all who paid their respects at the church and graveside and to all who graciously donated £1,019.26 to Macmillan Nurses and Diabetes UK. We are blessed to still be surrounded by love and support at the loss of our much loved and devoted dad, father-in-law, step-dad, son, brother, papa and friend to so many and who will always be loved and remembered by us all. God Bless.

Genna, Billy, Shauna, Gary, Kerry, Mum, Dad, Billy, Kevin, Gillian, Aidan and Cian.x

MACLEAN - The family of the late John MacLean would like to thank all relatives and friends for their support and many thoughtful expressions of sympathy following their sad loss. Special thanks to Drs and staff at the Salen Surgery, The Beatson, Lorn and Islands Hospital, Mull and Iona Community Hospital, Community Nurses, ambulance staff and all his home carers for their kind and unfailing attention. Thanks also to Billy McClymont for his personal and efficient funeral arrangements. A final thank to all who paid their last respects at the church and graveside and all who kindly donated to Macmillan Cancer support and Bowman Court. The sum of £1,200 was raised.

MCKEOWN - The family of the late Margaret McKeown would like to thank all friends, relatives and neighbours for their kindness following the loss of their mum. Special thanks to Father MacKinnon for spiritual comfort, Connal MacBride for piping, doctors and staff of Tweeddale Surgery and Ward 1 Belford Hospital for their care and Scott Greenlees at John McLellans for his support and assistance with funeral arrangements. Heartfelt thanks to all the staff at Moss Park Nursing Home for their devoted care of Mum during her final weeks and the support given to us. Finally thanks to all who attended the church and cemetery, donations of £476 will be shared between Mary's Meals and Moss Park Residents Fund.

MCDONALD - In loving memory of my dear wife Marybell, who died February 23, 1987. Always remembered. - Jimmy.

FORBES - My darling mother Rosina, died February 20, 1991 also my beloved father, Francis, died October 25, 1991. Both loved and remembered everyday. - Their loving daughter Annette.

GIBSON - In loving memory of my dear wife Marybell, who died February 23, 1987. Always remembered. - Jimmy.

GIBSON - In loving memory of our dear mum Marybell, who died February 23, 1987. Loved and remembered every day. - Iain and family, Dalmally - Margaret and family, Canada.

LAMONT - In loving memory of my dear sister Joanne, who passed away on February 17, 2009. Quietly remembered every day. - Ann

LOCKHART - In loving memory of Violet, who died February 18, 2013. A very much loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, and wife of the late Louis. Always in our hearts and greatly missed. - From family at home and away.

LOCKHART - Violet. Always in our thoughts. - Love from Reg, Phyllis, Ryan and Hayley.

MACARTHUR - In fond memory of John, died February 21, 2010 and his son John who died March 25, 2010. - From all the family at Middleton, Tیره.

MACAULAY - Precious memories of Ian, a loving husband, dad and grampa who passed away on February 20, 2013. You always had a smile to share. A laugh, a joke and time to care. A wonderful nature warm and true. Are the many memories we have of you. - Mary, Neil, John and Ginah, Oban, Bulgaria and Dubai. We will always love you Grampa - Emma, Callum and Jay xxx

MCDONALD - Treasured memories of our beloved mother, gran and great-gran, Margaret MacDonald, who passed away on February 21, 2005. Sorely missed. Also remembering loved ones gone before. Carson ma ta bhios sibh ir bron Mar d'heam gun dochas mòr Am bheil sa 'bhas ach teachdair sith 'Gan gairm gu rioghachd na glòir. Dear mam give our love to da. - Inserted by her loving daughters Mary Flora, Sandra, May Margaret and families.

MCDONALD - In loving memory of Ewen MacDougall on the fourth anniversary of his death: February 25. Let perpetual light shine upon him. - From Ewena, Pat and family Glasgow.

MCDONALD - Ewen. Gur cuimhneachadh, Gur n-ionndrainn - Eleanor

MACFARLANE - In loving memory of a dear sister and aunt, Cathie, who was tragically knocked down and killed while crossing the road in Oban on February 19, 1991. Forever in our thoughts and always in our hearts. - Corinne and Alan Barrie and Flora MacGillivray (sister).

MCKEOWN - The family of the late Margaret McKeown would like to thank all friends, relatives and neighbours for their kindness following the loss of their mum. Special thanks to Father MacKinnon for spiritual comfort, Connal MacBride for piping, doctors and staff of Tweeddale Surgery and Ward 1 Belford Hospital for their care and Scott Greenlees at John McLellans for his support and assistance with funeral arrangements. Heartfelt thanks to all the staff at Moss Park Nursing Home for their devoted care of Mum during her final weeks and the support given to us. Finally thanks to all who attended the church and cemetery, donations of £476 will be shared between Mary's Meals and Moss Park Residents Fund.

MCDONALD - In loving memory of my dear husband Alasdair, who died February 25, 2005, also remembering my brother-in-law Hector, who died on March 24, 2004, also remembering all loved ones gone before and since. Never more than a thought away. Loved and remembered every day. Gar caoidh s gar ionndrainn. - Seonaid, 11 Balephuil, Tیره.

CAMPBELL - Remembering with love our devoted dad, John, who passed away on February 20, 1986. Memories most precious. - Avril and John

CHISHOLM - In loving memory of James Stewart Chisholm (Chubby), who was suddenly taken from us on February 24, 2012, much too soon. A much loved husband. Lonely is my home without you Life to me is not the same All this world would be like heaven Just to have you back again 'Til we meet again. - Love Derina x

A dear beloved father and grandfather, missed so much. When your beautiful heart stopped beating My heart just broke in two Knowing that here on earth There will never be another like you. - Love Natalie, Morgan, Owen and Brione x

CHISHOLM - James Stewart (Chubby) 24-02-12. Remembering a special friend. - Love Jim and Freda.

CLARK - In loving memory of Gary, died February 24, 2012. Our love lives on in precious memories. - Gran.

MACGILL - In loving memory of Donald MacGill, a loving husband and father who passed away on 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

McLENNAN - In loving memory of our brother Willie who passed away on February 24, 2008. Gone from our sight But never our memory Gone from our touch But never our hearts Lovingly remembered. - From Elsie, Margaret and families.

RILEY - Cherished memories of my dear brothers, Alan who died February 22, 2011, also wee Frankie who died October 23, 2013, not forgetting our dear mother Margaret and father Frank. We miss you now our hearts are sore As time goes by we miss you more Your loving smiles, your gentle faces No one can fill your vacant places. - Love Irene, David, Craig, Linzi and Amie.

ROBERTSON - In memory of my husband Tom, who passed away February 18, 2011. Always remembered. - Jean.

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Thought for the week

Walking along the shores of Loch Etive with my dog the other day, I saw a small flock of Teal ducks treading the water a few feet offshore. Suddenly, en masse, they took off down the loch leaving one duck flapping terrified in the grip of a seal which had struck from below. The dog rushed to the loch edge and barked at this commotion resulting in the duck being released by a somewhat startled seal. Disasters may suddenly strike us at times, appearing without warning from unexpected sources. We are paralysed with fear not knowing where to turn. Help may not be at hand. There is One, however, who promises to be with us through thick and thin. Our Heavenly Father said 'Do not fear, I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you; when you walk through the fire, you will not be burned - I will never leave you nor forsake you'. This is the help available to us all who call upon His name. You'll never walk alone!

The Oban Times

& West Highland Times THE REGIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE WEST HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS AND ARGYLL

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Obituary

Jacky Shaw Stewart: 1929 - 2013

THE DEATH of Jacky Shaw Stewart on December 27 has deprived not only his family and scattered friends but also Arisaig and Morar of a much loved, kind and generous friend whose enthusiasm and support, moral and financial, for local affairs and enterprises was discreet but valuable, and highly valued by all those who knew of it. He grew up at Morar lodge, the younger son of Colonel Basil and Vera Shaw Stewart. His father died in 1939, but many local people will have vivid memories of Vera, her unconventional and unbounded hospitality at Traigh House, which she bought in 1945, and her management of the Traigh Farm.

He was educated in England at Summer Fields, Eton (where he was a King's scholar in a distinguished Election) and King's College, Cambridge, and also at Harvard Business School, but holidays were spent at Traigh, where he had local friends and a happy time messing about in boats, thus combining a formal upper class education with his Scottish roots. In 1955 he married Vora Mackintosh, and they had four children. His working life was mostly spent near Edinburgh where he founded a very successful firm of investment managers, Stewart Fund Managers, later Stewart Ivory, but he, Vora and the children (David, Patrick, Alec and Mairi, and later their spouses and their children) came frequently to Traigh, filling the house with young people.

His heart was in the Highlands, and especially at Traigh. In 1989 he retired, and he and Vora settled at Traigh, with his mother in a granny flat. They improved the house and the garden and took over the farm, with Bill Henderson continuing to manage it. Vora opened a very attractive and enterprising knitwear shop adjoining Morar Motors. From then on Jacky was an active member of the community, promoting a chamber of commerce, redesigning the golf course and building the club house, supporting Morar Motors of which he had been a founding director in 1959, fighting for the new road, hosting the Arisaig Games, and much more. He was a trustee of the Gower Trust, which gives charitable grants to deserving causes, especially in the West Highlands. Many local organisations and societies benefited from this unobtrusive help. He was also for a time a member of the Highlands and Islands Development Board, a JP and a Deputy Lieutenant for Inverness-shire.

With Jacky and Vora permanently at Traigh the house was again filled with visitors, not only family, but friends old and new. This could be complicated, as when Douglas Hurd (an Eton contemporary and close friend) and his family came with a retinue of security men. Vora died in 1998, leaving Jacky lonely and often away. This changed in 2000 with a happy marriage to Diana Young (known at Cambridge and long widowed). Although his life was thereafter divided between Diana's home in Bradford on Avon and Traigh, they were here as often as possible. Yet again the house came to life, filled with visitors,

including now grandchildren and their friends and Diana's family, as well as old and new friends.

It was Highland hospitality in the old style, made possible by the devoted help of Cathy and Catriona who had originally helped Jacky's mother and have seen generations come and go for decades. It was a very happy marriage, cut short too soon. Diana gave Jacky new family, new friends, new interests, and threw herself into life at Traigh with enthusiasm. She improved the walled garden and together they planned and planted rhododendrons in the woodland beyond it. She introduced him to new literary interests too, and entered into his existing ones. He had not been well for some time, but when the end came it was sudden and shocked and surprised the local community. We have lost a good friend, a man of great intelligence and wide interests, of humanity and good humour and generosity, and all our thoughts will be with his family. We shall not look upon his like again.

Dr Stuart Chalmers (Oban Baptist Church)

Obituary

Robin Banks: 1932 - 2014

THERE can be few men in Oban, and indeed in Argyll, who have been more respected than Robin Banks, whose recent sudden death when he was on the point of making a recovery from a serious illness has shocked the community. His was a full and busy life, during which he came into contact with so many people who were the richer for their acquaintance with him. He was an Oban boy, an alumnus of Oban High School, who grew up to make a huge contribution to the town to which he was proud to belong, and in which he made many lasting friendships. After school and his army service, he went on to complete his education at Edinburgh University, where he graduated in law, and when he had completed his apprenticeship with an eminent Edinburgh firm, he returned to the town to join the legal practice which his father had established. He quickly made his mark in the profession, and throughout his years in practice he was held in high regard by his colleagues for his integrity as well as for his ability. He was Dean of the local faculty in its centenary year, and appointed an Honorary Sheriff. One colleague, who came to the town as a stranger, remembers with gratitude the way Robin

welcomed him to the local legal fraternity. Robin had wider interests than the law, and took a full part in the life of the town. An easy life in retirement was not for him, and he occupied his years of retirement by serving as a member of Argyll and Bute Council for many years. He took the view that he was answerable to the electors, and he was not a foot soldier in any political party. It is a tribute to his worth that he was regularly returned at each election, and he rose to be deputy leader of the council. He was an active worker in support of the Gaelic language and culture, and it gave his many friends great pleasure to learn that his work had been rewarded by the presentation of a gold medal from An Comunn Gaidhealach in recognition of his lifelong work in its support. Another activity which absorbed his interest was drama, and he was a founder member of the Benderloch and North Connel Dramatic Club, and an organiser of the local drama festival. He was for many years secretary of the committee of the Lorn Agricultural Show, and served for many years as local secretary of the charity now known as Children First. But above all, he was a devoted supporter of Glasgow Rangers Football Club, whose home games he rarely missed. His cars were always blue: so too were the walls of his office. One was left in no doubt about where his loyalties lay. A proud Scot, his daily garb was the kilt, except only on the day of the Oban Games when his trousers made their annual appearance. He did not want to be mistaken on that day for an English laird. In all of this, though perhaps not at Ibrox, he was able and loyally supported by his wife Ishbel, to whom the heartfelt sympathy of the whole community is extended.

GHP and LF

Photograph by Perfect Images

CHURCH NOTICES

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION Sunday 23 February 2014 Sexagesima St John's Cathedral, Oban Holy Communion 08:00 Sung Eucharist 10:15 Children's Corner Loop System Large Print Hymn Books All Welcome Nicki McNelly, Provost (01631) 562323 St Columba, Gruline, Mull Mattins 11:00 St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona Holy Eucharist 09:30

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MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE Oban & Lorn Fundraising Branch Donations always gratefully accepted Please contact Mrs Lillian Kermode Tynwald, Glenburn, Soroba Road, Oban 01631 571009

WE ARE MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT Working towards a time when every person in Scotland has equal and ready access to the best information, treatment and care for cancer West of Scotland Fundraising Office 1st Floor, Erskine House North Avenue, Clydebank Business Park, Clydebank G81 2DR Tel 0808 100 6000 In memory of Dawn Joyce

GRADUATIONS

Congratulations to Eilidh Fyfe who recently graduated with a Bsc Degree in Nursing (Mental Health) from the University of Stirling. Eilidh is the daughter of Gillies and Fiona Fyfe, Inveraray and granddaughter of Elizabeth and the late Joe Fyfe, Inveraray and James and Annie Middleton, Furnace. Eilidh is currently working as a Staff Nurse for NHS Highland.

WEDDING Kirsty Waltho, Oban, married Bradley Bell, New York State, in Franklin, NY State. The couple then had a wedding blessing in St Arnan's Church, Connel followed by a reception in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls. Two very happy days to remember. Photograph by Perfect Images

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# New-look Camanachd raring to go

## Stylish victory over Lovat boosts confidence ahead of new season

THE FACES were familiar, but Oban Camanachd fielded a new-look team of sorts at Oban's Mossfield last Saturday, as manager Angus 'Gussie' Campbell tinkered with players' positions to mastermind a morale-boosting win over Lovat.

Camanachd, who will play in the newly-formed National Division One this season, faced a stern test from their premier-ship opponents but Iain 'Scally' MacMillan pounced to put the home side ahead in the first half.

Andrew 'Papa' MacCuish converted a well-worked goal at the beginning of the second half to secure the win.

'I was more pleased with the team performance than any one individual today,' said Campbell, who is this season assisted

### SHINTY

game set up promising attacks. Campbell said: 'We felt last year in the premier league that we had to consolidate and build from the back but this season I want to go and attack teams.'

'There are places up for grabs this season and I have four young boys from Lochside Rovers who are pushing the more established players for a starting place.'

'We've been training hard since November and now we just want to get the season started.'

In a positional reshuffle on Saturday, last season's wingers Ian 'Gussie' Campbell and Andrew MacCuish were moved to the forward line, while Malcolm Clark was moved to the wide position.

Influential defender Daniel Cameron was moved into the centre, where his reading of the

by Fraser Inglis and Ian Hay.

'In a friendly the result is not as important but that was a really good performance against an excellent team.'

'We have been working hard in training on finding space and movement off the ball and that was something that we did well on Saturday.'

Camanachd goalscorer Iain 'Scally' MacMillan controls the ball, despite the close attention of a Lovat defender.



Photo: Kevin McGlynn

## Sports Hall comes to Tobermory

### ATHLETICS

SPORTS Hall Athletics comes to Tobermory this Saturday, when the contest for the Mull and Morvern area takes place in Tobermory High School.

The competition, funded by a Communities 2014 Lottery Grant, is the third of four local area events promoted by Mid Argyll Athletic Club this winter and supported by all the athletic clubs in Argyll.

Specialist equipment is used for various running, jumping and throwing events in small arenas and this indoor version of athletics brings the skills and excitement of track and field into sports halls.

Competitors are reminded that the Mull contest starts at 10.30am for the Under-7, under-9 and under-11 age groups and entries will be taken on the day from 10am in the high school gymnasium.

Competition for the under-13, under-15 and under-17 age groups will start at 2.30pm with entries from 2pm.

For all age groups the age is taken as on September 1.

There will be trophies for the overall winners in each age group and all competitors will receive an award. An annual trophy will be awarded to the best primary school and Salen Primary will be out to retain the trophy they won last year.

Successful athletes can compete in the Argyll Final at Atlantis Leisure in Oban on Saturday, March 29.

# Dominant Lochaber win again

### RUGBY

RBS North Caledonia Division 2  
Lochaber RFC 19  
Aberdeenshire 2nds 7

LOCHABER comprehensively defeated Aberdeenshire to record their most impressive win of the season against a side who came into the match with only three defeats so far this season.

Volunteers worked throughout the morning to drain Black Parks of surface water to allow the game to go ahead but conditions were still far from ideal.

In heavy rain the visiting stand-off mis-timed his kick-off to give Lochaber early momentum and the first half was played almost entirely in the Shire half, with the home side constantly probing the try-line.

Craig Macpherson went over for the first try of the match after a great driving maul from a lineout five metres out and Rory Mackay converted with a superb



Connor Taylor takes on two Aberdeenshire defenders as he drives for the line. 20\_108rugby02

kick from out wide to make it 7-0. Lochaber were unlucky to not add to their tally in the first

half and again took the initiative after the break, not allowing Shire anytime in possession and

keeping them pegged back in their own 22. Lochaber's pressure was finally rewarded when

Conor Taylor crashed over and Mackay again was spot on with his kick from out wide, increasing the score to 14-0. Shire fought back immediately, and after poor decision making from the home side, scored a try from close range. The conversion was successful which reduced the deficit to seven points.

There would be no comeback, however, as Lochaber again kept territory deep in the visiting half.

With the last play of the game, Lochaber crashed over again to extend their lead and prevent Shire from gaining a losing bonus point.

Captain Mike McLeish said: 'The result was arguably the best of the season. The whole team put in a great effort and never looked like being beaten.'

'Thanks also to the volunteers who helped to drain the pitch so that the game could go ahead, and also to Fort William football club for giving us their roller.'

Lochaber's next game is away to Shetland on March 1.



Inverlochty's victorious players. 20\_108inverlochty01

# Inverlochty Primary teams win through to nationals at First Shinty tournament

### SHINTY

INVERLOCHTY Primary School took the top spots at the recent First Shinty BP Qualifying Cup tournament at the Nevis Centre in Fort William when both their teams won through to the national finals.

In the P5 and under group the team won all their matches and played some great shinty with excellent teamwork from defence to attack.

Struan Steven played steady in goals with Ryan Cairns and Gordon Stevenson keeping the opposing forwards at bay.

Cameron Steven played well in the centre while captain Craig MacDonald and Alex Morrison caused all sorts of problems with

their brilliant forward link-up play. Archie MacKinnon and Leah Maxstone did well when coming on from the bench.

A spirited Ballachulish team were the surprise packet on the day with only one defeat to Inverlochty.

In the P6-7 competition Lochaber started very strongly with a convincing win over Ballachulish.

Inverlochty beat Caol in their first match to set up an exciting match with Lochaber. Early exchanges were even but Inverlochty scored two quick

goals and went on win convincingly. Stuart MacQueen had an excellent match in goals with Jamie McConnell outstanding in defence, ably assisted by Johnny Foster.

Paul Paterson played a true captain's role in the centre with Ryan Fender and Evan Atkinson on form up front. Ellis Blackmore played well when asked with Craig MacDonald contributing in his second competition of the day.

In the First Shinty BP Cup finals in Fort William on March 1, Lochaber High School will host the P5 and under competition. The Nevis Centre will be the venue for the P6-7 event.

# Oban's badminton boys serve up the silverware

## Under-19s sweep the board as under-14 titles go to Campbeltown

### BADMINTON

OBAN'S under-19 boys had a clean sweep at this year's Argyll and Bute Schools Badminton Championships.

Gregor Brydon defended his under-19 singles title, defeating fellow Oban High School pupil Stewart Mobey in the final.

However, Stewart avenged this defeat by teaming up with Iain MacFarlane to win the boys' doubles over Gregor and partner Craig Livingstone.

The recent competition, which was moved to Lochgilphead Joint Campus because of the flooding at Oban's Atlantis Leisure, featured only the top talent from each school; entrants had already won through heats at

their respective schools.

Campbeltown pupils dominated the under-14 section, winning every title and Lochgilphead's Josh Coates had a superb day, winning the boys' under-16 title and teaming up with Aaron Whitefield to take the boys' doubles crown.

All the Argyll winners have qualified to take part in the national schools championships in Perth.

Oban's senior badminton boys, from left: Stewart Mobey, Craig Livingstone, Iain MacFarlane and Gregor Brydon.

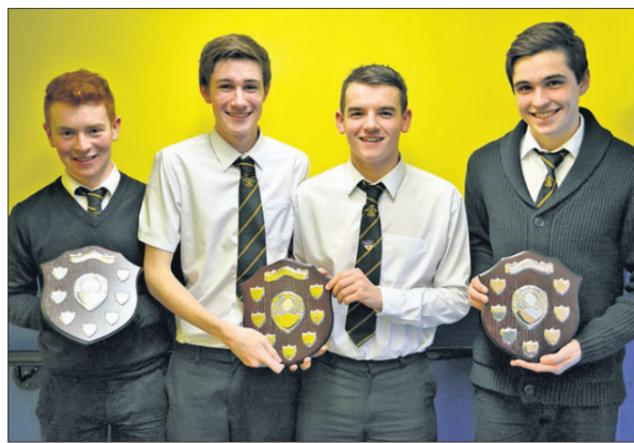


Photo: Murray Hamilton.

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**Competition rules**

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## Golden boy Ben at the double

### Young hurdler eyes third national title

By EUAN PATERSON  
epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

#### ATHLETICS

SPRINT hurdler Ben Coates is aiming for a hat trick of Scottish titles this summer after claiming his second indoor gold in 10 days at the weekend.

The 15-year-old followed up his recent victory at the Scottish Secondary Schools Indoor Athletics Championships with another under-16 title last weekend at the Scottish Indoor Age Group Championships Emirates Arena, Glasgow.



Double Scottish champion Ben Coates, 16, 108ben01

And there was further Argyll success at the Emirates when Archie Spencer, from Craobh Haven, won the under-14 shot putt, throwing a distance of 8.58 metres.

At least 15 young athletes from Argyll travelled to compete last weekend but none had the same pressure of expectation as Ben, who was favourite for the 60-metre hurdles.

He won the gold medal by a distance in a new personal best time of 8.66 seconds to retain his title from last year and become the number one ranked hurdler for his age in the country.

Ben also qualified for the 60 metres final, recording 7.65 seconds for fifth place in a high quality field.

The Kilmore youngster, who

was representing Mid Argyll Athletics Club at the competition, said: 'My hurdles coach Brian Winning has made a real difference to my technique this season and I keeping setting new personal bests.'

'It was in my plan to win these events, so hopefully I can now train well for the summer and win some outdoor races.'

Ben's outdoor season begins in May, with a view to challenging for another Scottish title in August, despite the competition being set at under-17 level.

The youngster is also looking forward to competing overseas after being selected by his coach to join his team at the Gothenburg Youth Games, from June 26 - July 1.

Ben travels through to train in Pitreavie every Sunday to work on hurdling technique but with no athletics track in Argyll he is forced to improvise by taking to grass and astroturf pitches around Oban and training with the help of his father, Iain.

Councillor Roddy McCuish, who has been following the athlete's development, says Argyll and Bute Council must do all it can to help Ben and allow access to high-quality surfaces such as Mossfield Stadium.

He said: 'Ben's achievements are fantastic news for the Oban area.'

'We as a council need to do all we can to help facilitate his training and help him reach his full potential.'

'We should be helping this young man as much as possible, whether it is use of council facilities free of charge or some other way in-kind.'

Other Mid Argyll Athletics Club members gaining a top six placing at the Scottish Indoor Age Group Championships last weekend were Chloe Fairman in the under-16 triple jump, Gregor McGeachy in the under-14 high jump and Shaun Doy in the under-14 shot putt.

### Oban Sports Hall Athletics rescheduled

THE OBAN area Sports Hall Athletics competition, which was originally planned for the January 25 at Atlantis Leisure, will now take place at Oban High School on Saturday, March 8.

The competition will start at

12.30pm with all entries on the day from noon.

For the first time at Oban there will be events for under-7s and there will be six age categories up to under 17 with age as on September 1, 2013.



Hat-trick heroine Kelly Lamont bursts through the Kirkcaldy defence. Photo: Stephen Lawson

## Kirkcaldy too strong battling Green Army

RBS Women's National League  
Division 1

Oban Lorne 29  
Kirkcaldy 36

AN UNDER-strength Oban Lorne gave the league leaders a real scare at Glencairn on Sunday but their endeavour was not enough to secure victory.

#### RUGBY

Lorne's Kelly Lamont, who would go on to score a hat trick of tries, surprised the visitors by opening the scoring.

After a shaky start, Kirkcaldy settled into their stride and kept the scoreboard ticking over. But Oban Lorne, also known

as the Green Army, scored further tries through Rebecca Sims and Julie Campbell, adding to a fiercely competitive tie. Donna Smith kicked the extras.

Oban Lorne coach Andy MacDougall said after the match: 'I'm really proud of the Green Army today. A very spirited performance gave us two bonus points

against the top team in the league. Let's all get to training and build on this for next week.'

The Green Army travel to Edinburgh next weekend to take on Broughton.

The team trains every Wednesday at the rugby club from 6pm and would welcome new players, regardless of experience.

## Saints are flying high

#### YOUTH FOOTBALL

OBAN Saints Under 13s hit 10 goals on Saturday as they hammered Dumbarton Riverside.

The Under 14s also did their goal difference no harm with a 9-1 win over Milngavie BC.

Youth results for last weekend: Under 13s 10, Dumbarton Riverside 1. Scorers for Saints were Scott Mossman (4), Keir MacLean (3), Rory Dowd, Cameron Hill and Sol Smith; Under 14s 9, Milngavie BC 1.

Scoring for Saints were Craig MacMillan (4), Martin Rennie (3), Kenny MacDonald and Lewis Buchanan. Under 17s 2, Allander 5. On target for Saints was Duggie MacLeod with a double.

This weekend's fixtures: Ardencaple v Under 13s; Under 14s v Renton; Under 15s v Goldenhill; Under 17s v Westerton.



Oban Saints Under 14s' Craig Easton gets to the ball before his Milngavie opponent on Saturday. Photo: Kevin McGlynn

## No game for a month leaves Oban Lorne coach Corrie fuming

#### RUGBY

OBAN Lorne's head coach, Corrie Louw, has expressed his frustration at another cancelled fixture last Saturday, which means his team has not played for more than a month.

The Green Machine has now gone without a game since its 55-17 win over Strathendrick on January 18.

Although the wet weather across the country has played its part, Cambuslang, who were due to visit Glencairn last Saturday, called off the West Division 2 clash on Friday because of a lack of front row players.

Speaking after the latest cancellation, Louw said: 'It is difficult because the guys can get disheartened if there are long breaks in the season and they obviously lose a bit of match

sharpness that you can't get from training.'

'But my main concern is that the season will go into the summer when a lot of our key players, who work in the tourism industry, will be too busy to turn out on Saturdays.'

Oban Lorne will hopefully get back to competitive action this Saturday as they travel to play mid-table Cumbernauld.

The match could see the debut of new stand-off Dave McCabe, a personal trainer who has moved to Oban from Sheffield.

The 34-year-old is former semi-pro rugby player and will double up as a coach for Oban Lorne's backs.

## Saints on Scottish Cup replay duty this weekend

#### FOOTBALL

OBAN Saints senior team are on Scottish Cup 6th round replay duty this Saturday when they travel to the 3G pitch at Johnstone Sports Hub to take on Thorn Athletic.

The game will have a 3pm kick-off with extra time and penalties, if required, to see who meets Eastfield for a place in the quarter finals of the national tournament, which started with nearly 700 teams.

The teams played in Oban two weeks ago with Thorn grabbing a last minute equaliser to deny Saints a passage into the last 16 of the competition.

The replay was due to be played last weekend, but the grass park at the MacMaster Sports Centre in Johnstone was declared unplayable after a pitch inspection on Friday afternoon.

Saints have done well in the Scottish Amateur Cup in recent years reaching the last eight in both 2006/07 and 2008/09.

## Father and son win Connel doubles

#### BOWLS

A FATHER and son pairing won the Falls of Lora Shield at the annual open doubles competition, hosted by Connel Carpet Bowling Club.

Ivor and Stuart MacLean from Kilmore beat Cairnbaan pair Robert Scott and Lachie MacLean in the final at Connel village hall on Saturday.

The round robin competition attracted bowlers from all the Lorn League clubs.

In the first semi final Douglas MacCallum and Sandy MacFarlane from Taynuilt played Robert and Lachie, from Cairnbaan, with the latter pair winning through to the final.

Next up was Hugh MacLeod and Mike Kelly, North Connel, against Ivor and Stuart MacLean.

Ivor and Stuart joined the Cairnbaan pair in the final and went on to win a thrilling match.



Ivor and Stuart MacLean with the Falls of Lora Shield.

## Midnight League

#### FOOTBALL

THE BANK of Scotland Midnight League has started at Oban High School and is held every Friday evening from 8pm - 9.30pm.

The sessions are free and for children aged 12 - 16, who are welcome to come along.

## Weather

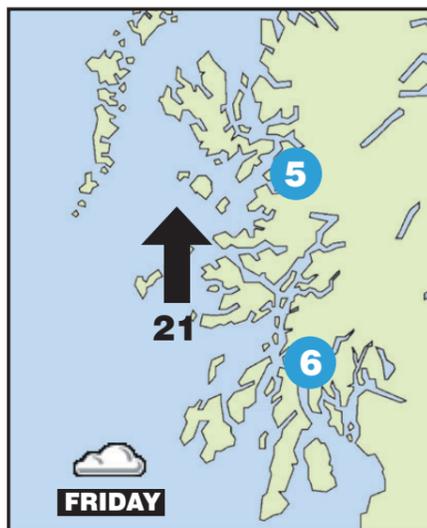
**Thursday** Cloudy with outbreaks of rain  
Winds moderate west south westerly  
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C

**Friday** Cloudy with rain, heavy at times  
Winds strong southerly  
Temperatures 5°C to 6°C.

**Weekend Outlook** Cloudy with rain, some bright spells  
Winds medium north north westerly  
Temperatures 6°C to 8°C.

### Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate  
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate  
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate to rough



## Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, February 20, 2014** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur 02.29	1.1 08.25 3.7 14.47	1.4 20.50 3.5
Fri 03.09	1.2 09.02 3.5 15.30	1.5 21.32 3.3
Sat 03.58	1.4 09.48 3.3 16.29	1.7 22.28 3.1
Sun 05.06	1.6 10.55 3.0 17.57	1.7 23.57 3.0
Mon 06.34	1.6 12.57 2.9 19.28	1.7 ** **
Tues 02.16	3.1 08.03 1.5 15.00	3.1 20.48 1.4
Wed 03.27	3.4 09.23 1.2 15.58	3.4 21.53 1.1

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

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# The Oban Times

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### Fury as axe falls on council service points

WEST Highland councillors have reacted with fury to proposals to shut six rural council service points across the area under a cost-cutting drive.

If Highland Council's finance committee agrees the controversial move next Wednesday, people in Kyle, Fort Augustus, Broadford, Lochcarron, Mallaig and Acharacle will no longer be able to talk to staff or pay bills face to face.

The village service points are among 23 being recommended for closure across the region under plans to cut the network from 35 to 12.

Staff from the affected branches were briefed about the changes in Inverness on Tuesday. No compulsory redundancies are envisaged.

The council says a review found falling demand at the service points with many customers preferring online access.

Caol and Mallaig Councillor Allan Henderson said closing Mallaig would be 'folly' because rural centres should not be compared with Inverness.

He said: 'While the footfall will be high in Inverness it will be low in Mallaig but the man hours travelled will be much higher in Mallaig.'

'If Highland Council want to offer a stronger fairer Highlands then they have to think of the islands and Knoydart residents who would not only have a ferry trip but an 84 mile round road, bus or rail journey.'

Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh councillor Audrey Sinclair described the proposals as 'criminal'. She said: 'It is going to affect the old and the vulnerable who need that reassurance of speaking to someone.'

'Kyle service point is such an important asset not just to Kyle, but to all of Lochalsh. It would leave Lochalsh without a registrar and people would have to go to Portree - that's a 70-mile round trip from Kyle and 120 from Glenelg.'

'I just hope they have a change of heart.'

A council spokesperson said only two people at Mallaig and one at Acharacle were using the service points each week.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'The council has noted that people do business now principally online, on their phones or by email.'

If agreed, the closures would be implemented before June 2015.



### Ceilidh on song with 80th birthday celebration

The annual Skye Ceilidh in Fort William is always a cause for celebration - but the occasion was even more special on Saturday night when ceilidh organiser Charlie MacColl, right, presented singer and four-time mòd gold medallist Calum Ross with a cake to celebrate his 80th birthday. Also pictured are Charlie's wife Mairi and Calum's daughter Fiona. The event, held in the West End Hotel, drew an attendance of more than 100 people, mostly from the Isle of Skye. See full story and photos on page 13. 20\_f08skye01

### Woman injured after sledge plunges into Glencoe crevasse

A WOMAN was injured after falling into a crevasse while sledging at Glencoe Mountain ski centre on Tuesday afternoon.

The holidaymaker, believed to be about 60, was pulled out by members of the resort's ski patrol and taken down the hill for medical attention.

It is believed she had been sledging just below the first station when the accident happened.

One eye-witness told *The Oban Times*: 'We were coming down the lift and there was a bit of commotion where we had all been sledging. There was a crevasse further down and we think she's gone down there.'

'There were three or four men trying to get her out and her family were trying to get to her as well but they were being warned off. They thought she was in the water.'

'The visibility is very, very poor. Once you are up at the first station you can see 30 or 40 yards but then you start to lose it. There is a heck of a lot of snow and all the fences are buried.'

Glencoe Mountain owner Andy Meldrum said: 'She fell into the gully at the top and came off the sledge.'

'She's bashed up a wee bit and the ambulance has just arrived to have a wee look at her. We think she might have hurt her shoulder.'

The incident came at Lochaber's ski centres report an incredible week as locals and visitors descended on the slopes.

Nevis Range reported Sunday as the busiest day in the last 10 years as almost 1,700 people came to enjoy snow that has been falling consistently since before Christmas.

The rest of the week has continued to be busy as keen skiers and snowboarders made the most of the school half term break.

Not all of the lifts have been in operation as they are buried in snow, with average depths of four and a half metres on the upper slopes.

Managing director Marian Austin said: 'We knew Sunday was going to be an incredible day on the slopes as we already had unprecedented levels of snow and the forecast was for sunny spells and favourable winds.'

'All of our staff have been working very hard in difficult conditions and the hill team have been digging out the lifts on the upper mountain almost on a daily basis.'

At Glencoe Mountain, the ski school has been fully booked every day and 700 people were on the slopes on Tuesday. Such was the demand, most had to do without ski hire.

Angela Dingwall, Glencoe resort manager said: 'We've been really busy, maybe not the busiest we have ever been but there's been plenty of visitors. Skiing conditions have been really good too, we have plenty of snow and not too much wind.'

## New lease of life for Fort's BA Club

FORT William's BA Club is to get a new lease of life as a branch of an Oban-based outdoor education charity.

It was announced last month that the popular music and social venue, which is also used by local sports groups, will close at the end of February.

But now social enterprise group Stramash will redevelop the building with owners Rio Tinto Alcan.

The new facility will feature a nursery and provide training to professionals who work with children and young people. The charity also offers outdoor skills training for youths and adults as well as adventure clubs and team development.

The nursery will open in August and will provide four practitioner jobs and three modern apprenticeships.

Stramash boss Niall Urquhart said: 'We're hoping the rest of the centre will develop pretty quickly after that and more jobs will open up. We would like it to be similar to our facility in Oban and we currently have 17 staff there.'

'The centre will enhance the status of Fort William as the outdoor capital of the UK and will bring a new dimension to the area.'

By EMMA CRICHTON  
fort@obantimes.co.uk

'We are pleased to be working with Rio Tinto Alcan to ensure that the former BA Club remains an asset for local people.'

The club was opened in the 1960s to serve the then British Aluminium factory and regularly held concerts, fundraisers, wedding receptions and other celebrations.

Franz Ferdinand, Athlete and Mumford and Sons have played in the venue in recent years and the connecting sports grounds are used by Lochaber Bowling Club, Fort William Cricket Club and Lochaber Welfare Football League.

Mr Urquhart assured sports teams that the new facility will still be able to accommodate their needs.

He said: 'It's really important to us that the facility remains a community hub. We're going to be meeting with the sport clubs in the next couple of weeks but I definitely don't see us digging up the grounds or making any drastic change to costs.'

Jim Beattie of Rio Tinto Alcan said: 'With several different proposals from different parties we eventually decided to negotiate with Stramash.'

'This social enterprise company came with completely fresh ideas which will bring clear benefits to the communities of Fort William and broader Lochaber, while at the same time accommodating the existing sporting clubs that use the facility.'

'I believe this centre will bring great social benefits, a centre of learning, employment and re-invigorate what was the BA Club, to ensure a new exciting long term future.'

Local Brian Murphy said: 'I'm sad to see the BA Club closing, it was a facility that many people used for many years and it will be sorely missed by a lot of people.'

'However, as we must move on and look to the future, I'm interested in the prospect of an outdoor nursery as these have had growing popularity in recent years. I'm also very pleased to see that it will be bringing jobs to the area, particularly modern apprenticeships for our young people.'

I'm glad to hear that the old club grounds will still be available to our local sport teams and I hope that whatever agreement they come to is sustainable for the teams as the grounds are very important for our local community.'

### Single vote seals community forest bid

A LOCHABER community has said 'yes' to a proposal which could see them buy two local woodlands - by a single vote.

Residents of Achnacarry, Bunnaharra and Clunes voted 15-14 in a postal ballot of 40 eligible electors to pursue its ambitious £500,000 plan to buy Forestry Commission Scotland woodlands on the south side of Loch Arkraig, near Spean Bridge.

The commission has decided they are surplus to requirements and last autumn notified the community of their intention to sell them.

Under the National Forest Land Scheme (NFLS), community groups have 'first refusal' on woodlands for sale if they can show their purchase will bring increased public benefits.

The rules state a bid will go forward for consideration only if more than half the community supports it and the turnout is more than 50 per cent.

Following the vote, the ABC Forestry/Renewables steering group submitted its application to the NFLS yesterday (Wednesday). ABC group spokesperson Gary Servant said: 'This is

a unique opportunity for our remote community to achieve sustainable rural development gains through the restoration and management of a biologically, historically- and culturally-rich native pinewood site.'

He added: 'Raising the funds will be a challenge but one which many other communities have overcome in the past.'



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### Long-lost piece of Glencoe history returned after 40 years

A LONG-lost piece of Glencoe's history has returned home 40 years after disappearing from the glen.

The old Scottish Automobile Club sign marking the Massacre of Glencoe was stolen in the early 1970s and was feared lost forever.

But is now in the safe keeping of the Glencoe Heritage Trust thanks to Edinburgh antique shop owner George Pirie.

Mr Pirie bought the sign privately and when he realised its significance gifted it to the trust. After delivering the cast-iron sign to trust founder member Alastair MacDonald at his Glencoe home last Thursday, Mr Pirie presented it to the community a memorial service in St Mary's Church to the massacre victims.

Mr MacDonald told *The Oban Times*: 'It was a famous icon in Glencoe. It used to stand near the

Clachaig Hotel on the old road. But not many folk remember it now after the 40 years it's been missing.

'We are undecided where we will put it. The general opinion is that people would like it to be in the church but we will see. Theft is always a worry so we could get a replacement sign and put it at the bottom of the village.' He added: 'It is hard to believe it has been found. We have long since thought it had been melted down. We are very grateful to Mr Pirie that he realised its significance and brought it back.'

Mr Pirie said: 'We wanted to give this back to the people of Glencoe because that is where it belongs. We hope they will look after it and not lose it this time!'

Full story and photos on the Massacre of Glencoe commemoration, page 4.



George Pirie presents the old Scottish Automobile Club sign to Glencoe Heritage Trust founding member Alastair MacDonald. 20\_f08glencoe11

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**Medication lost**

A QUANTITY of medication was lost in the Fort William area sometime on Monday. Police are warning that the missing medication could be harmful if taken by persons other than those for whom it was prescribed. Anyone who finds any medication can contact local police in Fort William on the 101 non-emergency number.

**Waste collection**

HIGHLAND Council will resume its fortnightly brown bin garden waste collections on March 3 after suspending the service for three months over the winter to save money. New collection calendars for bins will be put through residents letterboxes in the coming weeks.

# Community developers power ahead with Skye hydro plans

COMMUNITY developers behind a small hydropower project at a remote Isle of Skye village are planning to launch a public share offer by the end of the year. Strathaird Hydro Limited (SHL) hopes proceeds will fund much of the estimated £420,000 required to build the scheme at Elgol on land owned by the John Muir Trust. But first the company must work up a prospectus for shareholders explaining how much they can expect back from their investment annually.

By STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

It also needs to find £10,000 for a grid connection from SSE and negotiate a legal agreement with the trust to build on Strathaird Estate. SHL secretary Mark Perrett told *The Oban Times*: 'We are in a position where we are getting serious about fundraising. The share offer will be open to anyone and is likely to provide an annual return to investors.'

'Clearly shares will appeal to anyone who wants to support a small, sustainable renewable energy scheme in a remote area. We are in negotiations with the John Muir Trust who already provided £2,000 towards the feasibility study, which we have taken to be a very clear indication of their support for the scheme. However, it is fair to say that we don't have a legal agreement with them yet and that is the next thing we want to do. The agreement is likely to be some kind of lease but at this stage we don't know. We need legal advice on that.' Mike Daniels, John Muir Trust head of land management, said: 'We will be very supportive in terms of trying to work out a lease or whatever arrangement they wish to pursue. It is the kind of small scale scheme we are very supportive of.'

The hydro plant, once up and running, could provide around £60,000 for community projects such as maintaining and improving the Elgol Village Hall, supporting the primary school, local environmental works and developing local amenities, Mr Perrett said. It would also cut carbon emissions by around 130 tonnes per year and directly supply the village hall and Elgol Primary School with electricity. Planning permission was granted last autumn by Highland Council and the company was officially registered as an industrial and providential society in December. That status means any profits generated by the scheme go to the community and not any one individual.



Moidart Memorial: Angus McLean, left, and Donald Monro at the potential site of the new war memorial.

## Moidart war memorial plans progressing well

PLANS to construct the first memorial to the Moidart men who lost their lives in the both world wars are making good progress, according to a local organiser.

By EMMA CRICHTON  
fort@obantimes.co.uk

The structure will be placed at the summit known as Bealach Carach, between Loch Moidart and Glenuig. A date has been set for the memorial dedication, to be on August 17, the day after the Glenfinnan Games. August also marks the centenary of the opening of hostilities in the First World War.

Lord Lieutenant of Inverness Donald Cameron and Bishop of Argyll and the Isles for the Scottish Episcopal Church Kevin Pearson will attend the service.

Donald Monro and Angus McLean of Kinlochmoidart, set up the 'Moidart War Memorial Fund' late last year and have raised £3,000 of the £4,000 needed to construct the monument.

Mr Monro, 71, said: 'Local landowners have been very generous, as have all the other local people who have donated. The response has been very heartening.' The memorial will be a cairn of local stone with the phrase 'for your tomorrow we gave our today' carved on to the face. Mr Monro served in the Queen's Own Highlanders regiment of the British Army from 1962 until 1970, following his father who served in the 5th battalion of the Queen's own Cameron Highlanders - and said that was why remembering soldiers why so important to him. It was originally planned to list names of the fallen on the memorial but Mr Monro and other organisers decided against it.

He said: 'There's nobody left alive who remembers these men so there's a danger of getting it wrong. Missing people out or putting someone there who shouldn't be are mistakes we are not prepared to make.'

## Lochaber Music School charity concert

LOCHABER Music School will hold a charity concert in Roy Bridge on Friday night. The senior traditional group will be joined by a high school 24-piece swing band from Lancashire in the village hall from 7.30pm. All donations go to Mary's Meals, a charity that provides food to children in the world's poorest communities.

## New art competition

A NEW art competition has been launched for creative young people in Lochaber. Those aged between seven and 17 can enter the Young Artist of the Year contest, aimed at showcasing the talent of the area's youth. The Rotary Club of Lochaber set up the competition with Room 13, a network of pupil-run art studios that began in Caol 20 years ago. The winning entrants will receive the club's trophy and will have their work framed and displayed at several venues across Lochaber beginning with Lochaber Art Club's annual exhibition in June. To take part or nominate an artist request an application pack by emailing info@room13international.org.

## Campaigner makes case for 'yes' vote

VETERAN socialist and independence campaigner Jim Sillars will make the case for a 'yes' vote in Fort William tomorrow night.

The 75-year-old former MP will call for in independent, democratic and socialist Scotland.

Mr Sillars will also have copies of his new book, *In Place of Fear II*, in which he argues that Scots have the opportunity, through the referendum, to build a new country. Tea, coffee and home baking will be available before the meeting begins in the Innseagan House Hotel at 7.30pm.



Charlie Donaldson pours a dram onto the water as Sandy Walker casts the first fly of the season, with other club members looking on.

## Inverlochly Angling Club casts first fly of season

HONORARY life member and former chairman Sandy Walker had the honour of casting the first fly to open Inverlochly Angling Club's season on Saturday afternoon. The canny fisherman won the Malloch Trophy for the heaviest salmon caught on the

fly in Scotland in 2009 when he landed a 35-pound fish from the river. Club committee member Charlie Donaldson poured a measure of local malt whisky Dew of Ben Nevis from a silver quaich into the water in the hope of a healthy season ahead. Mr Donaldson said: 'We don't really catch

fish here until May because of the height of the water. They don't tend to hang around here much just now and our main months are May to September. We get the big spring salmon in May then the grise in June and July. We have the best of fishing here for six days a week for not a lot of money.'

## Council blocks Barra-Benbecula air link plan

WESTERN Isles Council has blocked a proposal to reinstate the Barra-Benbecula air service. A group of councillors have fought to re-instate the flights since they were axed under budget cuts last April but the plan was rejected at last week's transportation and infrastructure committee meeting.

Furious Comhairle nan Eilean Siar councillor Donald Manford was one of just 10 members to support the reinstatement. He said: 'I think it's absolutely

appalling, it seems that the council has little or no regard for the inconvenience and disturbance that this causes members of the public, particularly those who are required to travel for medical reasons. We can get to our national parliament in two hours but it takes six to get from Barra to our local council. Western Isles Council claims to be a local authority but that raises serious questions.'

Karen MacLean, chairwoman of Castlebay Community Council on Barra said: 'I'm bitterly disappointed, it's having such a detrimental affect on all of our lives. Disheartening. When it comes to things like this you wonder why we are attached to the Western Isles Council because they're not helping us and they're cutting us off from the rest of the isles. It's very disheartening. Angry Barra residents were unhappy to hear that

the Stornoway-Benbecula air service would be increased from three days to five, despite their flights not being reinstated. Ms MacLean said: 'It's a very big slap in the face but we all knew it was going to happen. When they reduced the service it was only so they could say "oh look it's happening to Stornoway as well". We knew it was only happening to keep us quiet.'

A comhairle spokesperson said: 'This was an under-used service. There was extensive consultation taken in the run up to setting the budget last year and the Barra air service did not feature heavily in that consultation. It was heavily subsidised and people made it clear that their priorities lay elsewhere.'

Council leader Angus Campbell said there was no evidence to show that the absence of the planes had any effect on the Barra economy or affected the welfare of patients.

'Later, in more peaceful times, most the rest of the room was filled in, but this was done much more neatly. One area was left open, probably for use as a left-chamber.'

The finds were unveiled as the Mingary Castle Preservation and Restoration Trust begins work to restore the castle, which was once one of a chain of coastal strongholds under the MacDonald Lordship of the Isles. The castle has been unoccupied for over 150 years and renovating the imposing landmark is expected to cost almost £2.5m. Excavation work and the beginning of the restoration process has already cost £700,000.

## Castle chamber reveals new secrets

ANCIENT graffiti and a shattered cannonball are among the latest discoveries made by archaeologists at a 700 year-old Lochaber castle.

The crude scrawlings, resembling letters and a ship, were revealed after rubble was cleared from a previously sealed-up chamber in the 10-foot thick walls Mingary Castle on the Ardnamurchan peninsula. Archaeologists believe the graffiti scratched into the plastered walls of the chamber, which could have served as a chapel, date back to the when the castle was built.

And the broken iron cannonball was likely to have been fired by besiegers, possibly in the 16th century. Lead archaeologist Tom Addyman said: 'It's pretty simple stuff but it's exciting because the graffiti seems to date to the time of the original construction of the castle in the 13th century.'

'Part of the chamber seems to have been rapidly filled in, with rubble and domestic refuse, mainly animal bones - with the leather heel of a shoe also thrown in.'

**Fragments**  
'This may have occurred during a siege. In the same area two cannonball fragments were found.'



Archaeologist Lynn Fraser records her findings next to the monument's base. f08monument2no

## Town square works reveal remains of old monument



An old postcard of Kennedy Monument in Fort William.

THE REMAINS of an old monument have been dug up during redevelopment work in Fort William.

The base of the Kennedy Monument was revealed during groundworks at Cameron Square, just off the High Street.

Above it once stood an impressive 50ft tall edifice built to commemorate local doctor William Kennedy, who treated the people of Fort William for typhus. The monument was erected by his wife Margaret in 1865 when Dr Kennedy died of the same illness. The structure stood in the square until it was demolished to build a car park in 1975.

Now, thanks to a Highland Council regeneration project to level the square and fit new street furniture, archaeologists have been able to measure, examine and record the stone base.

Robert Cairns, chairman of the Lochaber Archaeological Society, attended the dig. He said: 'Anything that is dug up in Fort William is important, it's part of our history. It's by digging up buildings and the ground that we find out what happened in the town two or three hundred years ago or even longer.'

## Blizzard hampers search for climber

GLENCOE Mountain Rescue Team spent more than 12 hours looking for a man who had fallen 800ft in blizzard conditions. Much of the search was carried out in heavy snow and darkness, and was hampered by rescuers' fears of starting an avalanche and burying the casualty.

After hours of searching in what team leader John Grieve described as 'horrendous' conditions, the man was found with facial injuries on the west side of Aonach Dubh at around 2am on Saturday morning. Mr Grieve said: 'Normally we could have

got down to him in half an hour but because of the avalanche risk we had to go across the gully and it turned into a much longer process. He was lucky not to have sustained more serious injuries, in fact he is very lucky to be alive because his fall could easily have caused an avalanche.'

As the weather cleared a Rescue 137 Navy helicopter airlifted the casualty to the Bedford Hospital. He has since been transferred to a hospital in Glasgow to undergo surgery on his jaw.

## Chamber debates Scottish independence

FORT William Chamber of Commerce will hold the latest in its series of debates on Scottish independence at the Moorings Hotel in Banavie tonight (Thursday). Guest speaker will be Business for Scotland founder member and chief executive Gordon MacIntyre-Kemp, who will argue the case for a 'yes' vote in the referendum on September 18. His theme will be 'the economics of in-

dependence - how will independence affect you, your family and your business?'

Mr MacIntyre-Kemp, the owner of social media and sales and marketing consultancy Intelligise, has made the case for independence in several TV debates. The 7pm to 9pm event is open to the wider business community. For further details contact secretary@fortwilliamchamber.co.uk or call 01397 874402.

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**Surgeon's hearing postponed**

A FITNESS to practice hearing into a surgeon who left swabs inside an Oban patient following an appendectomy has been postponed.

Mr Ahmed Abd El Nasser Hassan Khattab was due to attend a Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (MPTS) hearing last week, after being accused of two incidents in Argyll in July 2011. A request to postpone the hearing was accepted by MPTS, with a hearing date to be confirmed in the near future.

Currently suspended, Khattab was accused of failing to provide good clinical care between July 3 and July 22 2011, while working as a locum consultant surgeon for NHS Highland.

The Oban Times has learned that one of the incidents in that period, when a swab was left inside a patient, occurred at Oban, Lorn and Islands Hospital. He is further accused of failing to get proper consent for an endoscopy for another patient.

Khattab further faces charges that in 2008, while working in the same role in Whiteabbey Hospital, Newtownabbey, he neglected colonoscopy patients.

**Craft brewery's £2m boost**

A CRAFT brewery in Argyll has secured £2 million worth of investment as it seeks to build a new factory and boost production.

Fyne Ales, in Cairndow, will convert a sheep shed into a state-of-the-art brewery as it embarks on an expansion plan designed to increase productivity and profits.

The company's current £1.6m annual turnover is expected to more than double in the next few years to more than £5m, while 12 new full time jobs are to be created.

An award-winning brewery that can produce up to 30 varieties of beer, Fyne Ales currently produces 90 barrels of beer a week, which will grow to 120 barrels a day in five years.

This will allow Fyne Ales to meet growing demand in Scotland, as well as international markets.

Glasgow firm CBES got the brewery build underway this month, though local contractors will be used.



James Wylie is the new head teacher at Rockfield Primary School. 16\_t08wylie01

**New head teacher heads home to Rockfield**

THE NEW head teacher at one of Argyll's largest primary schools said the appeal of coming 'home' to Oban was a major factor in his move.

James Wylie took the helm at Rockfield Primary School earlier this month, succeeding Jack Degnan. He comes to Oban from Kirn Primary School, near Dunoon, and said he was thrilled to be at the school his parents attended.

The 38-year-old said: 'All my family are from Oban and I went to Park Primary School before moving to Ardfern. It's nice to be back.'

'The homecoming was part of the appeal of the job - generations of my family went to Rockfield - but the school has such a strong

tradition too. I was elated when I was told I had got the job. I had a strong allegiance to Kirn Primary but there was also a lot of excitement about a new chapter in my life.'

'The Rockfield staff and parents have been very welcoming and I feel there is a real buzz about the place.'

**Ethos**

One of Mr Wylie's first tasks will be to carry out an audit to create a clear 'ethos' within the school, something that will require consultation with staff and parents.

'We need to find out what we want the school to stand for,' Mr Wylie said. 'Rockfield already has values and aims but we want to be clear about what Oban wants Rockfield to be.'

'If you get that right, and everyone is buying into it, the school has a clear direction.'

After teaching in Stoneyburn and Linlithgow, Mr Wylie took up the head teacher's post at Craignish at the age of 28.

As a young head teacher he often sought advice from his predecessor.

'Jack Degnan was someone people looked up to and he was very successful here. To follow in his footsteps is an honour.'

Argyll and Bute Council's lead councillor for Education Aileen Morton said: 'I'm delighted that James Wylie will be staying in Argyll and Bute and bringing his considerable enthusiasm and commitment to the pupils of Rockfield Primary School in Oban.'

**Council refutes high school teacher shortage figures**

ARGYLL and Bute Council has refuted leaked figures showing a teaching post at Oban High School (OHS) has more posts requiring to be filled than any other in Argyll and Bute.

Figures obtained by The Oban Times from a council source show that the school had eight vacancies as of the middle of January, three of which were a result of secondments.

One post has been available for more than 25 months and another for 13 as the problems

attracting teachers to the school continue.

The leaked table also shows that with eight vacancies, OHS has more posts requiring to be filled than any other in Argyll and Bute.

However, the local authority says the table is inaccurate.

A spokesman said: 'No position has been vacant for two years. All vacancies for the current session at OHS were filled before August. Since then

some staff have moved on and these vacated positions have been advertised.'

'OHS has no teacher secondments outwith the school.'

He added: 'OHS has the highest number of teacher vacancies due to the council approving an increase in staffing in November 2013. This does not affect the current timetable - these are extra staff to increase pupil choice for next session.'

Councillor Louise Glen-Lee, who has said a lack of housing is the main cause for teacher shortages, said: 'The parent council has been excellent at holding the local authority to account on this and they have support throughout politics, all the way up to Michael Russell MSP.'

'The local authority has to look holistically into how to bring people here to get them to live and work in the area.'

**More families speak out over hospital care failings**

**NHS reassurances still lacking**

AN OBAN family who watched their mother go through 'horrendous and unnecessary pain' during her final days say they're still waiting on assurances from NHS Highland.

Meanwhile, more families have come forward to express concerns they had with palliative care in Argyll after being inspired by the Braidwood family to speak out.

Siblings Dawn, Zoe and Matt watched in horror last year as their mother, Mabel Braidwood, was left screaming in agony because doctors at Oban, Lorn and Islands Hospital botched her pain medication following her move into palliative care.

She passed away a year ago next week after eventually being sedated to cope with the pain of the pancreatic cancer she was suffering from.

The family chose to speak to The Oban Times last month after struggling to get answers from the health board about how they were going to prevent such incidents happening again. Despite some progress, they are still waiting for answers.

Dawn said: 'We were sent an action plan regarding palliative and cancer care, which was only sent to the family after The Oban Times had printed our story. Most of these actions were completed in August last year.'

'We haven't heard anything else. We were promised a meeting with Veronica Kennedy [locality manager]. I spoke to her secretary but I've had no word back and no arrangements for a meeting.'

But the family has received 'amazing support' from the community.

Dawn, of Coe Gardens, said: 'I've had a lot of good feedback from people - doctors have even said it was really brave to tell the story.'

'Everyone said it was the right thing to do. I think people feel frightened to speak up but I just feel you have to. The situation with my mum should never have happened and shouldn't happen again.'

'I read the letter in last week's Oban Times about the good care received at the hospital and maybe [speaking out] has already helped people.'

**Action**

NHS Highland's action plan in response to the Braidwoods' complaint set out six action points, with all marked complete except adequate staffing levels, marked as under 'ongoing continued review'.

However, a spokesman for NHS Highland said this was normal to ensure wards cope with fluctuating periods of activity.

Andrene Messersmith of Dunoon wrote to The Oban Times after reading the Braidwoods story, expressing concerns over palliative care delivered in Cowal Community Hospital. Her 94-year-old mother was left 'rolling in agony' with an untreated bladder infection, while another Oban woman said her husband was left with stitches after falling out of bed three times. She said: 'Accidents happen, but three

times is just not acceptable.' NHS Highland's spokesman said anyone with complaints should call its feedback team on 01463 705997 or email nhshighland.feedback@nhs.net, adding: 'We are continually looking at ways of improving our services and feedback from those who use our services. The results of any investigations carried out can help with this improvement.'

Palliative care services in Cowal have been 'significantly developed' in recent years 'to ensure we continue to provide the highest quality palliative care,' he added.

**Drive to save St Conan's Kirk**

A DRIVE to save St Conan's Kirk from falling into disrepair will take a crucial step this weekend, with the intended formation of a Friends of St Conan's group and committee.

An open day at the kirk last November laid out the task involved in saving the unique Lochawe church and supporters have so far been keen to come forward to help.

A special meeting this Saturday from 2pm in the kirk will be hosted by trustees who hope to determine the purpose and clear role of the Friends of St Conan's.

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**Chaos on Coll's roads**



Traffic was brought to a standstill on the island after an HGV got stuck there on Monday.

A COLL wind turbine developer has blamed 'obstructors' for creating chaos on the island's narrow roads on Monday as a 20-metre trailer blocked traffic.

However, locals have hit out at Neil Smith of Galanach Green Generation Ltd for making the claim, saying the lorry's visit - arranged as part of a trial run to see if the parts for a 77m wind turbine could be safely transported along the island's roads - was a 'serious safety concern'.

Residents have now called on the council to reconsider the permission it gave for the planned 750Kw turbine at the north west of the island, or else risk a serious accident.

As well as getting stuck between Arinagour and Arnabost, the lorry took several hours to get from the ferry terminal to Galanach.

Terry Shirvington, secretary of Coll Community Council, said: 'It was a disaster. There's one road and one route in Coll and there was no way to get past.'

'One elderly lady was trying to get to her shopping in Arinagour and she tried to pull over into the side of the road. She couldn't go any further though because it was so boggy - she was literally trembling she was so distressed.'

'The driver of the vehicle said if it hadn't been for all

the people causing obstructions, the lorry would have got through fine.'

'These 'obstructors' were people going to get their shopping or going to the doctor. Neil will say they're objectors. They weren't.'

She added: 'Also, we had a fire on the island last week - what if there was a fire at one end of the island while this lorry was there? There was no serious risk assessment done and this would never happen on the mainland.'

Islander Colin Kennedy said: 'If one of these lorries goes off the road, how do you get a hard-standing for a recovery vehicle?'

'If anything like that goes

wrong, it will be on a par with the Costa Concordia hitting the rocks. We couldn't get anything to lift it.'

Mr Smith, however, said the trial run went well.

He added: 'We had people who objected to the turbine come out and block the road - they came out in front and refused to reverse. The council in their wisdom decided to tell the objecting group this was happening in advance.'

'It was all videoed by the roads department though and they'll see it.'

Councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'I'm aware of the situation and it does concern me, but I'd like to see the results of any tests.'

**'It's 'Snow' Unusual' as bus slips**

TOM Jones came to the rescue after a bus came to a halt on the Bealach an Rìgh last week because of snow and ice, blocking the road.

So slippery had the top of Dunollie Road become last Tuesday evening that the gridlock was only alleviated when the man named after the Welsh singer and friend Sean McMahon grabbed shovels from their own cars and used grit from

a roadside bin to get traffic moving.

Motorist Elaine Walton, from Benderloch, praised the helpers' efforts, but asked why the surface was in such a treacherous condition in the first place. Others felt the constantly leaking drain on the road contributed to the hazard as temperatures continued to plunge.

Oban Police said other vehicles were also struggling

to get out of the town because of a lack of traction on the road. The bus remained stuck until a gritter arrived.

But BEAR Scotland, which maintains the route as part of the A85 trunk road, say the area was gritted in advance of the jam.

A spokeswoman said: 'This section of the A85 was treated just after 3pm last Tuesday afternoon. After

the route was completed at 5pm our winter maintenance vehicle patrolled for snow along the length of the route from 6pm until after 2am on Wednesday morning, ploughing and salting as required.'

'This incident was not reported to BEAR Scotland or Traffic Scotland.'

The leaking drain was to be investigated 'as soon as possible', she added.

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Lorn Lines

OBAN Camera Club's fifth competition of the season was entitled 'People' and attracted 40 digital and five print images. It was down to judge Andrew Daw from Cowal Camera Club to mark the scores and pick the winners. Prints - 1st, 2nd and 3rd - Nina Robertson. Digital - 1st and 2nd - David Williams, 3rd - Peter Cleave. Overall winner of the Frank Walton [local] trophy - David Williams. Next Monday meeting, The Argyll Cup Challenge, is for Oban Street Scenes.

JANUARY'S meeting of Oban SWRI welcomed new members and guests for Carol Olsen's silk painting workshop. Carol, a regular at the Benderloch market, demonstrated different techniques for painting on silk, using water, salt and sugar to diffuse the paint and create dramatic results. Two colourful scarves were painted by the Oban ladies who appreciated just how tricky silk painting is. Mother and daughter Jenny Miller and Ruth Russell won silver and gold respectively, for their apple jelly. Guests are invited to attend the February 25 meeting, where Sally Weaser of Boafrosh and Argyll Under-35 SWRI champion, will be running a polymer clay jewellery workshop.



Oban and Lorne Strathspey and Reel Society members struck up a few tunes at the Manor House in Oban after their 70th anniversary dinner.

LORN Archaeological and Historical Society will welcome the well known archaeologist Tony Pollard to its meeting on Friday. Tony specialises in the archaeology of conflict. He is director of the Centre for Battlefield Archaeology at Glasgow University, the co-presenter of the BBC series Two Men in a Trench and co-founder of the Journal of Conflict Archaeology. He has written numerous papers and articles on archaeology and military history and edited several books on subjects as diverse as the early prehistory of Scotland and the archaeology of death. Along with Neil Oliver, he wrote the two books accompanying the Two Men in a Trench programmes. In 2008 his first novel, The Minutes of the Lazarus Club, a thriller based on the life of the famous engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel, was published by Michael Joseph.



Tony Pollard, who will give a talk at the Lorn Archaeological and Historical Society tomorrow (Friday).

It was published in 2009 by Penguin under the title of The Secrets of the Lazarus Club. The meeting will be held in St Columba's Cathedral Hall at 7.30pm. The title of the talk is The Archaeology of the Western Front in WWI.

# Publisher defends 'derisory' bid for Oban listed building

Company claims offer would have led to £4.5m boost to economy

A PUBLISHING business that hoped to buy Kilbowie House in Oban bid just £2,080 for the property valued at £450,000 - but said the value it would have brought to the community meant it was a good deal. Bombadil Publishing was informed last week that its offer for the Grade B listed building had been refused after consideration by the Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee, which felt the

cash offer for 0.4 per cent of the asking price was 'derisory'. However, Marianne Rugard Jarvstrat, chief executive of Bombadil, said the offer did represent good value, as it would have led to a £4.5million boost to the local economy over the course of the next five years.

Jobs She said: 'The council is only a warden of properties; it is not like a normal

house sale and it is therefore the total package which should be looked at. We came with 12 permanent jobs - with the aim of increasing this over time.

'The cash reimbursement is low, but has to be seen in context - and it was still a lot higher than we were recommended to offer.

'The whole package was very high and had been substantiated. We provided letters of intent and back-up

information for everything we said.' She added that the company would have considered bidding £200,000 last year, before storms caused extensive water damage throughout the building, undermining masonry and the roof.

Grant Bombadil has also been given a £100,000 grant from Scottish Enterprise for the development, but says it could now look elsewhere unless there is

movement on Kilbowie House. The Oban Times has learned one councillor proposed to accept the bid from Bombadil, on the condition the building was not sold again for 10 years and on the basis the valuation of the building was unrealistic, given the deterioration. This was rejected.

A study will be carried out to determine how the property should be marketed in future.

## Red tape stalls toddler group

PLANS to establish a new under five parent and toddler group in St Columba's Primary School have been delayed due to red tape.

It had been hoped that the group, which would meet in the spare classroom, would start on February 26.

One of the mums running the club, Helen McGuigan, said: 'The starting date has been delayed due to paperwork.'

Meanwhile, a new bus shelter will be put up at the Primary Campus' designated bus stop after parents made a request to the council. Helen McGuigan said: 'No date as of yet but can quote the wheels are in motion.'

## More music and dance

MORE assistance is now available for local people across Argyll and Bute to bring more professional music, dance and theatre into the region.

John Saich has been appointed membership officer for the Touring Network in the Highlands and Islands region. Over the next 12 months, he will be available to help individuals or groups seeking to bring cultural opportunities into their community. He said: 'I am keen to hear from anyone who wants to see performing arts events in their local community spaces and look forward to meeting promoters already making things like this happen.'

## Annual Sportsman's Dinner

FORMER Rangers and Scotland footballer Willie Henderson and ex-referee John Rowbotham will be the guest speakers at this year's Sportsman's Dinner in Oban's Argyllshire Gathering Halls.

This year's dinner will be held on March 15.

The annual event is the main fundraiser for the Oban-based Ryan MacPhail Memorial Fund, which mainly supports charities to the benefit of young people and sports.



## Heavy plant lorry slip blocks A828 at Appin

A lorry carrying heavy plant slipped off the road at Appin on Tuesday morning after struggling to negotiate a convoy system. Roadworks are currently taking place there, with traffic guided along a single-lane stretch of road for safety. However, the Scania articulated lorry lost control of its trailer just before 10am after it caught the verge, causing the vehicle to block the road for a short time. No other vehicle was involved in the incident.

## Ongoing Mull care home concerns a 'nightmare' claims councillor

ONGOING concerns about occupancy restrictions at a Tobermory care facility have been described as 'a nightmare' by a local councillor.

Mary Jean Devon made the comment about Bowman Court after meeting Mull Community Council to discuss ongoing uncertainty over the flats, which replaced the Dunaros care home.

The accommodation is owned and operated by West Highland Housing Association (WHHA), which leases the flats to those in need of care through Argyll and Bute Council. However, tenancy agreements are the same as those for normal dwellings, leading to concerns that people with no

health issues could 'inherit' the flats when their partners pass away. This would mean fewer units for those needing specialist care.

Some rooms at the progressive care facility are already occupied by residents requiring no services from health or social work.

WHHA has previously admitted it would lease out flats to individuals with no care needs if the council didn't use them because it had to finance loans taken to pay for construction costs.

An external agency started a review of Bowman Court last year to provide independent appraisal of options for the facility.

Hopes are high in the community that the council will take over leasing the flats, but councillor Devon says the situation is still a concern.

She told Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee: 'It is a nightmare, but we had a good meeting on the island last week. [Occupancy] was one of the main issues that came up. We don't have the surplus housing on Mull to move people on if we need to. It is a concern and this situation is being seriously looked at.'

Speaking this week, Mull Community Council chairman Mike Shilson said he hoped common sense would prevail. He said: 'There is no realistic

chance Argyll and Bute Council will buy the building from WHHA. But WHHA have no objection to leasing the flats.'

BBC news presenter Sally Magnusson was on the island last week and gave a talk on care for people with dementia, on which she has written a book.

Mr Shilson added: 'Sally was fortunate in that she was able to look after her mother in her home, but there are situations where it's impossible to keep someone at home.'

Representatives of the local authority, NHS Highland and WHHA are due to meet with the community council next week to discuss the review of the facility's arrangements.

## NHS moves to allay scam call fears

NHS Highland has moved to allay concerns about a new telephone system that reminds patients when their appointments are due after one patient thought their call was a scam.

The new Patient Reminder System, which launched at the beginning of February, ensures patients are contacted around one week before their hospital appointment.

The system was set up after NHS Highland revealed around 10 per cent of hospital patients do not turn up for appointments.

But one Lorn and Islands Hospital patient contacted The Oban Times after receiving a call from NHS 24 on Sunday, as they feared the call was a scam after the caller began asking personal details.

The patient, who did not want to be named, said: 'We received a call purporting to be from 'the NHS' asking for my husband's date of birth.'

Refused A spokesman for NHS Highland confirmed the call was genuine, adding: 'The call handler will ask the person with the appointment to confirm their date of birth so that they can be sure they are speaking to the right person, however no other personal information is requested.'

Reminder 'Currently 10 per cent of patients don't turn up for their appointment and we hope that the introduction of this reminder system will significantly reduce this percentage and help our clinics run as efficiently as possible and ensure our waiting times are kept to a minimum.'

Anyone who does not want to receive a telephone reminder can contact their hospital outpatient department to be removed from the Patient Reminder System.

## Work starts on new footbridge

A NEW footbridge will be built first as part of a £425,000 plan to replace Soroba Lane Bridge in Oban.

Starting on March 3 and lasting 12 weeks, the work will see the current bridge replaced.

Sections of the existing steel support are rusted and unserviceable.

Pedestrian access will be blocked for a period until the pre-fabricated, new pedestrian footbridge is lowered into place by crane.

Any full closures of the

route, meanwhile, will be restricted until after 2pm so as to minimise disruption to local businesses.

Kintyre-based firm MacFadyens will carry out the work.

Diverted Buses and taxis that currently use the bridge will be diverted along Lochside Street, Market Street, Soroba Road and Lynn Road for the duration of the work, however, and there will be a temporary bus stop on Lochavullin Road.

## Owner praises staff as chip shop re-opens after flood

A CHIP shop owner, who this week re-opened his business following major flooding in Oban town centre, has praised his staff for helping to keep his business alive.

Renato Di Ciacca's Oban Bay Fish and Chip Shop was flooded in December during storms and high tides and his restaurant floor was completely submerged. Staff set about clearing the water with brushes in an attempt to minimise the damage.

On Monday, a month after the restaurant

closed for repairs, the same staff were delighted to get back to the day job.

Renato said: 'I have the same staff now as I had before the flood and we are all just glad to be open again.'

'We tried to stay open after the floor dried out but there was just too much damage and there was a smell of sea water. The day of the flood was terrible but I'm really proud of my staff who have been very patient and helped me through a difficult time.'



Left: The chip shop staff set to work clearing floodwater last December. 16\_t08storm01



Renato Di Ciacca and staff, from left, Adele MacIntyre, Jenny Pyper and Danica Fleming are glad to be open again. 16\_t08renato01

## Man, 64, denies indecent assault

A GIRL wrote a letter to her father telling him how she had been indecently assaulted, members of a jury sitting at Oban Sheriff Court heard this week.

The 64-year-old accused has denied three charges of indecent conduct, two of indecent assault and one of attempting to defeat the ends of justice.

Reporting restrictions put in place to protect the identity of the four women who are the subject of the allegations dictate that the man and the two locations in the Lorn area where the incidents are said to have occurred cannot be named.

The events are said to have happened between January 1, 2003 and December 6, 2010.

The girl's father told the court that when he went to bed after his daughter had told him

about the alleged incidents, he discovered a letter which she had written and left on the stairs to tell him what had happened.

'I never want to read or hear anything like that again in my life,' he said.

His daughter was part way through giving her evidence for the prosecution when The Oban Times went to press.

The court had already heard from two of the other women; one said she had been given an 'inappropriate' kiss by the man and then denied, when cross examined by the man's defence agent, that she was 'making this up out of animosity'.

The other said she always tried to avoid the man: 'If I was quick and ran he wouldn't be able to give me one of those manky kisses.'

The trial, under Sheriff Douglas Small, continues.

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## Tough going in Blackwater Dam Race

SNOW and icy conditions at the higher levels greeted runners in Lochaber Athletic Club's Blackwater Dam race on Sunday.

Going was tough for the 32-strong field and it was Finlay Wild who took first place in a time of 1hr 18min 9secs - a good time considering the conditions and that the Lochaber AC man came second in the Carnethy 5 only the day before.

Finlay was followed by a new boy to the winter league, Tain man Matthew Sutherland of North Highland Harriers, who took second in 1:21:25 with Craig Mattocks (Carnethy) claiming third in 1:25:18.

First female was Lochaber AC's own Diane Baum, in a time of 1:35:19, followed by Carnethy's Kate Jenkins in 1:38:02 and Helen Leggett of Lochaber AC third in 1:43:28.

Thanks go to No Fuss officials Fraser and Spook for their demonstration of the timing system and to marshals Ian

### ATHLETICS

Adams, Ernie, Nancy Kennedy, Aileen Duncan and Pamela Hamilton.

Top 20 (Lochaber AC unless otherwise stated):

1 Finlay Wild 1:18:09; 2 Matthew Sutherland (North Highland Harriers) 1:21:25; 3 Craig

Mattocks (Carnethy) 1:25:18; 4 Allan Ross 1:27:52; 5 Alan Smith (Deeside Runners) 1:31:53; 6 Stephen MacTavish 1:32:13; 7 Jon Gay 1:33:46; 8 Ali Kennedy 1:35:12; 9

Diane Baum 1:35:19; 10 Barrie MacKinnon 1:36:52; 11 Niall Macbeath 1:37:52; 12 Kate Jenkins (Carnethy) 1:38:02; 13 Helen Leggett 1:43:28; 14 Ronnie Turner 1:45:51; 15 Allan Lamont 1:47:48; 16 Jim Treasurer 1:48:20; 17 Nick Mardell 1:54:05; 18 Elaine Liddell 1:54:16; 19 Richie Collins 1:58:11; 20 Vikki MacKinnon 2:01:18.



Jamie Cruickshank, left, and opposite number Peter MacIntyre had a close tussle all afternoon. 20\_f08shinty04

## Fort face away league clash

### FOOTBALL

NOT KICKING a ball for almost a month is hardly ideal preparation - but that is the unfortunate position in which Fort William find themselves ahead of the away league clash with Forres on Saturday.

The Fort last took the field on January 25 in the 9-0 loss at Fraserburgh and since then have had to rely on twice-weekly training sessions to retain a measure of match sharpness.

Now manager Danny Conlon must hope his ring-rusty team can conjure up a performance against a Forres side who earned a 2-2 draw against Wick last time out.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'Forres were champions two years ago and were a big, strong physical side and very direct.'

'Charlie Rowley has brought in smaller, more technically gifted players which has not quite worked out for them but it is still a very difficult place to go to, especially as we have not played for three or four weeks.'

'As always we know a win would give us confidence as we have a run of home games coming up, starting with Wick next Saturday.'

'We must try not to give the ball away cheaply and not concede early because it is so important to get off to a good start and be up with the tempo of the game.'

The Fort will be without Darren Quigg and Barna Tot for the trip to Aberdeenshire.

## Pam out in front

### TEN PIN BOWLING

AFTER week one of the 10-pin bowling singles leagues in the Nevis Centre, Fort William, Pam Weller leads the scratch league with 24 points followed by Brian Johnstone with 23 points with Rossamy Wareing in third place with 22 points.

The handicap league is led by Brian Johnstone on 24 points followed by Rossamy Wareing on 23 points and Pam Weller on 22 points.

Pam Weller leads the chase for the Nevis Radio High Pin Trophy with 515 pins followed by Brian Johnstone in second with 492 and Rossamy Wareing in third with 468 pins.

The top individual scratch games this week came from Pam Weller with 181 and 180. Brian Johnstone and Rossamy Wareing both rolled a 175.

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# Hat-trick helps Fort to morale-boosting win



Arran MacPhee: outstanding. 20\_f08shinty05

**Fort William 4, Inveraray 0**  
A GARY Innes hat-trick helped Fort William earn a morale-boosting pre-season win over premier division Inveraray at An Aird on Saturday.

The match may only have been a friendly, but on this evidence the Fort's stay in the National Division could be a short one as they seek a fast return to shinty's top flight. At no time did they cede control to the visitors with Arran MacPhee in midfield the main architect of a performance full of flair and vigour.

Innes scored his first in 10 minutes with a low drive from 12 yards and doubled his tally just before the break.

Inveraray, with Peter Mac-

Intyre well-marshalled by the impressive Jamie Cruickshank at wing-back, continued to be outfought on the second half and it was no surprise when Niall MacPhee, another star performer on the day, drilled home the third on 52 minutes.

Innes made it 4-0 on 62 minutes to round off an impressive display by the An Aird men, who look like a team reborn after being relegated last season.

Co-manager Victor Smith had no doubts the team would perform on the day following the commitment shown in pre-season training. He told *The Oban Times*: 'The boys were very confident before the start. I thought Arran MacPhee was

outstanding playing at wing forward - he was always on his toes and always tried to second guess where the ball would be.'

'He was behind much of the build-up work and started most of the moves. He has a great attitude, never misses training and now all that hard work is paying off for him.'

He added: 'Neil Robertson and Stevie Stewart were fantastic in defence as were Jamie Cruickshank and Lewis Smith at half-back. The whole team played well and it was great to score goals while keeping a clean sheet.'

### SHINTY

Inveraray coach Gary MacPherson said: 'It was a good warm up for the start of the season. Fort William already had a game and you could see the difference - match fitness was the main thing. We also tried a few players in different positions. I thought 4-0 was a bit harsh as we had some real good chances ourselves but I thought after they scored they started to press us.'

Fort William first and second teams are in action at An Aird this Saturday against local rivals Lochaber in the Torlundy Cup. Meanwhile, the Fort William under-14 team travel to Aviemore to take part in a five-a-side shinty tournament.



Stephen Burns, second right, on his way to winning duathlon at Arisaig.

FORT William roofer Stephen Burns won the second No Fuss Events Winter Feast Duathlon Series in Arisaig on Saturday, February 15.

Burns, a member of the Nevis Cycles Race Team, finished the Sunnyside Croft race in 1hr 44mins and 25secs, almost four minutes ahead of Lochaber Athletic Club member Graeme Bamber who crossed the finish line in 1:48:11.

Third was Gordon Dickson in 1:49:36 whilst Lochaber's Marie Meldrum was the first lady to finish with a time of 1:58:33.

The duathlon, comprising an 8km trail road and beach race, a 25km cycle and a second trail road and beach

### DUATHLON

race of 5km, drew a field of 46 athletes. A delighted Mr Burns said: 'I was really chuffed.'

'It's a hard course because you're running on the beach but we also had a strong wind and a hail shower to deal with but it was a really good day.'

Top 10 finishers: 1 Stephen Burns 1:44:25; 2 Graeme Bamber 1:48:11; 3 Gordon Dickson 1:49:36; 4 Stephen Whitson 1:49:36; 5 Graham Whyte 1:50:57; 6 Paul Crowther 1:51:13; 7 Ralph Torr 1:53:41; 8 Graeme Smith 1:54:23; 9 John Anderson 1:54:38; 10 Niall Campbell 1:56:50.



## Bowling club presentation

Lochaber Bowling Club members received their trophies at a presentation in the BA Club on Sunday afternoon. This could be the group's last annual general meeting because of the closure of the popular Fort William venue. From left: Helen Ross, Bobby Lawson, Agnes Boyle, Tina Abberley, Christine Kane, Alan Robinson, Agnes Thain, Wilson Thain, Bill Gibbons and Jim Bell.



### NETBALL

## Junior team net first win

LOCHABER High School's junior netball team won their first game in a newly established league.

Tough opposition from Grantown on Spey meant close scores throughout the match but the S2 girls achieved a narrow success finishing 17-14.

Carla Berardelli was awarded player of the match for her impressive goal keeping.

Left: Lochaber High School juniors (red) secured a win against Grantown on Spey.

## Weather

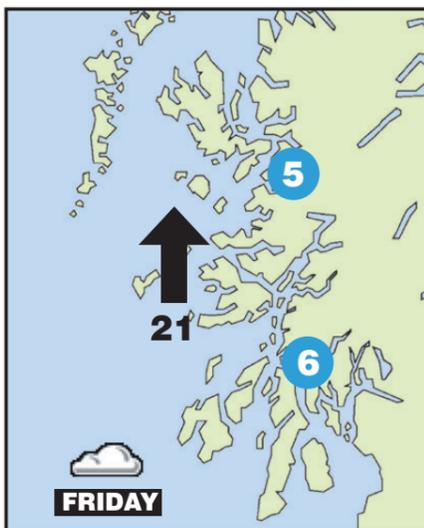
**Thursday** Cloudy with outbreaks of rain  
Winds moderate west south westerly  
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C

**Friday** Cloudy with rain, heavy at times  
Winds strong southerly  
Temperatures 5°C to 6°C.

**Weekend Outlook** Cloudy with rain, some bright spells  
Winds medium north north westerly  
Temperatures 6°C to 8°C.

### Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate  
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate  
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate to rough



## Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, February 20, 2014** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur 02.29	1.1 08.25 3.7 14.47	1.4 20.50 3.5
Fri 03.09	1.2 09.02 3.5 15.30	1.5 21.32 3.3
Sat 03.58	1.4 09.48 3.3 16.29	1.7 22.28 3.1
Sun 05.06	1.6 10.55 3.0 17.57	1.7 23.57 3.0
Mon 06.34	1.6 12.57 2.9 19.28	1.7 ** **
Tues 02.16	3.1 08.03 1.5 15.00	3.1 20.48 1.4
Wed 03.27	3.4 09.23 1.2 15.58	3.4 21.53 1.1

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardnishraig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

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