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& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Established 1861 No 8084

Thursday 1 March, 2012

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ALSO INSIDE THIS WEEK: Bonnie Babies • Driving Force • BID4Oban • Farm builds for the future

Rural education meeting to be held in Lochgilphead

A PUBLIC meeting to discuss the future of rural education in Argyll will be held in Lochgilphead next Tuesday.

The Scottish Government's Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education is to host the meeting at the town's joint campus at 6.30pm.

Helensburgh councillor dies

A LOCAL councillor known for his honesty and integrity has passed away at the age of 74.

Tributes have been paid to Al Reay, who represented the Helensburgh ward since being elected to Argyll and Bute Council in 2003.

Depute leader of the council Ellen Morton said: 'Al was both a respected colleague and a trusted friend. I always knew that I could rely on Al to speak the truth and to offer me unstinting support.'

'He never worried about promoting himself - only about doing the right thing both for his ward and for the people of Argyll and Bute. He is an enormous loss to his family and friends to whom I send my deepest sympathies.'

Councillor Reay is survived by his wife Liz, three sons, one daughter and three grandsons.

BIDS group presentation date

BIDS4Oban will hold a presentation in the Corran Halls, Oban, next Thursday, March 8.

Steering group chairman Graham MacQueen encouraged every Oban business to attend.

'We are giving the business community one more opportunity to turn up and recognise the effort the steering committee members have made for the benefit of the whole of Oban, not just the business community,' said Mr MacQueen. A BID scheme would see all 388 businesses within Oban's 30mph speed zone contribute a small percentage of their rateable value to a core fund, generating more than £150,000 to improve the town and organise events to attract visitors.



Steve kicks back during his recent trip around the Antarctic - helped by this conveniently shaped iceberg in Brown Bluff on the Antarctic Peninsula.

Adventurer Steve considers retiring - again - aged 76

AFTER 22 years at the helm of adventure company Hebridean Pursuits, Connel's Steve Thomas is finally putting his feet up at the age of 76.

As founder and patron of the

Roses Charitable Trust, which runs alongside the commercial arm, Steve has helped more than 10,000 children and young adults in his time in Scotland.

Pictured relaxing at Brown

Bluff on the Antarctic Peninsula during last month's voyage to celebrate his retirement, he will now hand over running of both organisations to fellow Hebridean Pursuits founder,

Andy Spink, and successor Jane Sayer, who has been shadowing the adventurer for the past 18 months.

While he admits he will miss the day-to-day running of both

organisations, he has no intention of giving up venturing into the unknown.

Read more about Steve Thomas's unique story on Page 25 this week.

Glasgow Islay Association marks 150-year anniversary

GLASGOW Islay Association will mark its 150th anniversary tomorrow (Friday) with a special concert, chaired by Lord Robertson of Port Ellen.

Around 400 Ileachs are expected to attend the event in the Mitchell Theatre, Glasgow, which will feature some of Islay's best musicians and singers, including Bette Bell, Iseabail Mactaggart, Nina MacKellar, Ian Carmichael, Dougal Gillespie, Isle of Islay Pipe Band, Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir and Glasgow Islay Junior Gaelic Choir.

Association president Malcolm Campbell said this year's special

annual gathering had been 10 years in the planning.

'We have been fundraising for this night for a long time and there is quite a buzz about this around Glasgow and on Islay. We are hoping to fill the theatre on the night.'

Merchandise will be on sale on the night, including a book by former president Roy Cameron on the history of the Association.

Glasgow Islay Association has commissioned a new tartan for the 150th anniversary and will be given a civic reception at Glasgow City Council in September.

Police responding to community concerns, claims chief inspector

OBAN and Lorn's top policeman says he is responding to community feedback by planning to allocate specific police officers to specific local areas.

Chief inspector Brian Auld has recently received feedback from a community consultation for the council wards of Oban North and Lorn and Oban South and the Isles. Within the initial feedback from the November consultation, were concerns over speeding motorists, anti-social behaviour and violence.

However, a more concerning statistic was a drop of around 10 per cent on the previous year of

residents who knew who their community police officer was.

As a result, chief inspector Auld has drawn up proposals to allocate a designated officer to each of the following five areas:

- ☐ North Connel, Appin
- ☐ Connel, Taynuilt, Kilchrean and Dalavich
- ☐ Lochawe, Dalmally and Bridge of Orchy
- ☐ Oban town centre, Dunbeg, Dunollie and Soroba,
- ☐ Oban south - Kilmore, Seil, Luig, Kilniver, Kilmelford

Chief inspector Auld said: 'I want the officers in these areas to be identifiable, public facing

and to address areas of public concern. Only 83 per cent of those surveyed could identify their local officer, which is a drop from 92 per cent last year. There is room for improvement and that is why I propose to make these changes.'

He said the community officers would be trained in the use of social media, such as Twitter, as a means of communication with locals. The community survey received 160 responses from each of the two wards.

Surveys were made available at community meetings and community council meetings.

South Lorn says 'no' to windfarm

Kilmelford meeting votes against proposed Clachan development

SOUTH Lorn communities have given a proposed windfarm at Clachan, near Kilniver, a resounding 'no' vote.

A busy public meeting in Kilmelford Village Hall, hosted by Kilniver and Kilmelford Community Council, allowed various speakers opposed to the plan to challenge landowner and developer, farmer Rory Young. By the end of the night it was clear the vast majority of residents objected to Mr Young's plan.

The developer has applied for permission to erect nine 77-metre turbines on land near Clachan Seil. The proposal is on land within the Kilniver and Kilmelford Community Council boundary but will also be seen by the communities of Seil, Easdale and Luig.

The main opposition came from the People Against Clachan Turbines (PACT) group, which has collected 550 postcards from tourists who said they wouldn't come back to the area if a windfarm was erected, as well as considerable local support.

Sarah Henderson, who lives at Clachan Seil, around one kilometre from the proposed development, said the planning application had already caused divisions between the communities affected. She added: 'Partly because of our primary schools co-operative, people in this area feel part of a wider community but they have been forced to become enemies.'

PACT stated the development was in an area categorised in the Argyll and Bute Local Plan as 'sensitive countryside'; would have a negative affect on wildlife; and, with the nearest home around 800 metres from the windfarm, it would 'unacceptably affect' living conditions of Clachan Seil residents.

At the meeting, issues over

"We think we have a good opportunity for planning permission."
developer Rory Young

access were also brought up and there was much concern about heavy machinery and turbines crossing the fragile Kilniver Bridge.

Addressing Mr Young, Clachan Seil resident Phil Moss said: 'If Kilniver Bridge goes, it would be a disaster for everyone in Clachan Seil and that can't happen. There would have to be a complete contingency plan and you would be responsible for getting people to their work.'

PACT member George Stewart also noted comparisons with the nearby Raera Windfarm proposal, which was rejected by Argyll and Bute councillors on the planning committee. He asked Mr Young: 'Raera was turned down and your proposal is only four miles away and in the wrong place. Why are you persisting with this?'

Explaining his aim was to make his Clachan Farm into a viable business, Mr Young addressed most of the concerns presented to him, adding: 'We think we have a good opportunity for planning permission. We have taken good advice and I think this is a very different prospect to Raera.'

Following a show of hands at the meeting, which showed an overwhelming majority were opposed to the plan, Kilniver and Kilmelford community councillors voted six to one against the proposed windfarm and were due to submit their objection yesterday (Wednesday).

Crofting Commission

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Weather delays Port Ellen pier

BAD WEATHER has been blamed for a delay on work at Port Ellen pier on Islay.

The upgrade of the pier was expected to be completed by the end of March this year but will now end on June 8.

Islay-based councillor Robin Currie said the delay was 'annoying' but looked forward to seeing the pier upgraded, as it would strengthen the village's case to retain ferry services.

The completion of the work requires the installation of steel sheet piles with the large crawler crane, which would be unsafe to do in high winds.

A public meeting about the work will take place in the Columba Hall, Port Ellen, on Tuesday March 13.

Young pipers showcase wealth of talent in sell-out concert



Mary Catherine MacNeil was amongst many performers who joined the young pipers on stage. Photograph by Kevin McGlynn.

A CAPACITY crowd at the Corran Halls, Oban, was treated to an evening of music courtesy of Oban High School Pipe Band last Friday.

The evening provided a virtuoso performance of piping with additional guitar music, singing and dancing in a night organised by renowned high school piping instructor Angus MacColl.

Angus said: 'The concert went really well and I was pleased with the way the kids all performed. It feels good playing to a full crowd.'

Angus had been considering putting on such a variety concert for some time, but in November he decided on a date and 'went for it.'

Alastair Dewar, President of the Netherlorn Piping Society, said: 'It's been Angus' idea to put together a concert to showcase the youngsters and the skills they've learned over the years. I think the audience enjoyed it immensely - it was a whole new dimension for them.'

The event brought together some of the finest musical talent, including Finlay Wells, Mary Catherine MacNeil, Peter and Sileas Sinclair, Danny Grant, Stevie Kilbride and the Oban High School dancers.

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Please phone Toril Frantzen on 01631 563068, e-mail her at toril.frantzen@argyll-bute.gov.uk or write to her at Argyll and Bute Council, Community Services, Soroba Road, Oban, PA34 4JA.

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The Oban Times is the best-selling weekly newspaper in the Highlands and is distributed via 1742 newsagents every week

Lochavullin Industrial Estate,
Crannog Lane, Oban,
PA34 4HB
Tel: 01631 568000
www.obantimes.co.uk

Editorial

Editorial Director
Stewart MacKenzie
editor@obantimes.co.uk



Northern Editor
Stephen Norris
snorris@obantimes.co.uk



Chief Reporter
Euan Paterson
epaterson@obantimes.co.uk



Senior Reporter
Steven Flanagan
sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk



Reporter
Richard Haddock
rhaddock@obantimes.co.uk



Web Co-ordinator
Marian Miller
mmiller@obantimes.co.uk



Newsdesk
01631 568060
editor@obantimes.co.uk

Advertising

Advertising Sales Manager
Fiona Madnes
fmadnes@obantimes.co.uk



Advertising Sales Person
Rhona McKillop
advtrts@obantimes.co.uk



Advertising Sales Person
Fiona Bennett
fbennett@obantimes.co.uk



Advertising Sales Person
Margaret Freytag
advtrts@obantimes.co.uk



Advertising Sales Person
Claire Firth
cfirth@wyvexmedia.co.uk



Advertising Sales Person
Isobel Brown
ibrown@obantimes.co.uk



Branch Offices

Fort William
Tel 01397 703003
Fax 01397 702495

Lochgilthead
Tel 01546 602345
Fax 01546 602661

Campbeltown
Tel 01586 554646
Fax 01586 553006

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Tel 01770 302142
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Mull concern for longer-term care provision

CONCERNS have been raised by islanders that a new care centre on Mull will – in the end – leave the island with no publicly funded residential care facility.

The new Mull and Iona Progressive Care Centre (PCC) in Craignure is being built to replace the existing Dunaros Centre in Salen. The current

residents of Dunaros will be transferred to the new building.

But Alistair Scarlett, from Dervaig, said: ‘When the residents move on or pass away, the carers will be made redundant and the facility to have residential care for senior citizens who are not capable of looking after themselves will be gone for good.’

These are concerns not entirely denied by Argyll and Bute council. A spokesperson said: ‘If and when there is no further requirement for dedicated residential care workers, the council would consult with staff regarding their employment options.’

They added: ‘There are potential changes in the model

of care for older people that meets the national direction on looking after people for longer in their own homes and this ensures these residents enjoy a much higher quality of life than has been available through traditional forms of residential care.’

The council also said that ‘funding is allocated according

to service user needs irrespective of where they stay.’

Councillor Mary-Jean Devon said: ‘It is a fantastic facility as long as it meets every need of the people of Mull.’

There will be open days in the near future on Mull and Iona in various locations to give people a clearer understanding of the PCC.

Oban man driving on punctured tyre fined and banned

AN OBAN man stopped by police for driving with a punctured tyre was found to be almost three times the legal drink drive limit.

John Hill, aged 31, was stopped on the A85 near Dunollie on February 4 after being at a party with friends.

He had tried to drive home to 21C Corran Brae, Dunollie, after feeling unwell but when breathalysed was found to have 90mcgs of alcohol per 100mls of breath. The legal limit is 35mcgs. Sheriff MacTaggart fined him £350 and banned him from driving for 12 months at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

Oban music and dance festival entry deadline

HIGHLANDS and Islands Music and Dance Festival competitors are being reminded of the deadline for entries is March 12.

The competition syllabus is also available for the 29th annual event, which takes place from May 3 to May 6.

Further information is available at www.obanfestival.org or from festival secretary Joy McAllister on 01631 710787.

Rumour suggests Transerv is out

RUMOURS are circulating that Scotland Transerv has already been ruled out of maintaining the west coast’s trunk roads for the next five years.

Strathfillan Community Council raised the issue at its meeting last week, saying it understood Scotland Transerv – a Balfour Beattie and Mouchel joint venture – had already been ruled out. An as yet unidentified Irish firm is said to be favourite to win the contract.

Tenders are currently being considered by Transport Scotland. While it says no decision has yet been taken, an award is expected to be made late spring.

A spokesperson said: ‘New contracts will commence in September 1 this year.’

‘We’re not able to say at this stage who is competing.’

Scotland Transerv confirmed bids for contracts to maintain trunk roads on both north and south west units, but did not comment on their success or otherwise.

Planners and developers like SNH claims survey

SCOTTISH Natural Heritage (SNH) has received positive reactions to their work by 95 per cent of planners and 83 per cent of developers, a recent study has revealed.

The online survey, carried out by WHY Research, also showed that overall SNH’s advice is clear and concise but they ‘could do better’ in some areas.

SNH’s board agreed that the organisation should seek to further improve its performance in the planning system by becoming more strategic, giving clearer advice and looking at how it communicates with wider stakeholders.

Andrew Thin, SNH chairman, said: ‘It’s a crucial part of our work to ensure that those taking key decisions are able to balance economic, social and environmental interests – making good development happen in the right places. So it’s particularly important we provide the best service we can.’

Old Fruitmarket to host Gaelic short film awards

THE GAELIC short film awards ceremony organised by FilmG will take place on Friday March 9 at The Old Fruitmarket in Glasgow.

Those in the running include submissions from Islay High School and Ardnamurchan High School. The event will be hosted by Fiona MacKenzie of BBC Alba and Sarah Cruickshank of BBC Birmingham, as well as an array of special guests including singer Michelle McManus who recently performed at the Corran Halls, Oban.

Awards are issued in categories such as Best Drama Short, Best Factual Short and Best Student Film, with separate categories for adults and 12 to 17-year-olds.



Cara Nicholson tells island constable Mike Gallie how much she likes Barra Children’s Centre’s new look during last week’s colourful party.

Celebrations follow renovation of children’s centre on Barra

BARRA Children’s Centre celebrated the completion of £5,000 renovations by holding a lively party for children and parents.

The new-look café and playroom – installed on what is the centre’s tenth anniversary – is thanks to a grant from the Marie Claire magazine’s P and G Champion Mums Foundation bursary, with Altro Ltd donating a new floor.

Donations from James Thin

Charitable Trust, local donors and ward funding from councillors Peter Carlin, Donald Manford, David Blaney and Murdo Macleod financed the installation of the floor, by Macgillivray, which agreed to lay a special inlaid design at no extra charge.

The new look certainly went down well with parents and children. One of the centre’s committee members, Abigail Treffry, said: ‘Everyone is

overjoyed with it. One of the most fantastic things about this is that the community has come out to support us – as it has done for the past 10 years. Hopefully this will keep us going for the next 10 years.’

‘This is a really special place for both the kids and the families – it’s somewhere they can feel in their place.’

Last week’s party came as the Children’s Centre secured funding from LEADER Innse

Gall and the Robertson Trust for a two year family co-ordinator post and from Bòrd na Gàidhlig for a playleader post.

Mrs Treffry added she hopes the local authority, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, takes account of the support when considering its proposals to move pre-school provision to Castlebay Primary School.

‘In light of this success it seems nonsensical that the council want to take the heart out of this.’

Tiree crofter vows to modernise commission

TIREE crofter Donnie Campbell is promising to modernise the Crofting Commission if he is elected on to the board in the March elections.

Donnie is the fifth generation of his family to run his croft at Cornaigbeg, which carries 100 ewes and 15 suckler cows. He works the croft in partnership with his mother and daughter.

A previous councillor for Tiree and Coll, he has previously served on the Regional Board of SEPA and the board of West of Scotland Water Authority.

He currently works part time as information officer for Scottish Power Renewables and as a law tutor for Strathclyde University.

He believes his background in crofting, law and the unique field of crofting law makes him the ideal candidate for the commission.

He said: ‘All candidates say our new commission must change its ways and be more responsive. That’s easy to say – but how does a commissioner ensure that?’

‘First of all we must be clear what commissioners actually do. They will be like directors on the board of a medium-sized company. They will not deal with most applications to our new commission. So commissioners can’t create a

more responsive commission on their own. Their job is to lead, inspire and equip the staff to do that. Make no mistake; the staff of the old commission will have low morale.’

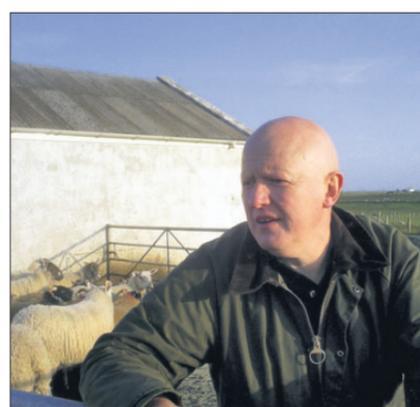
‘The commission has, rightly, been roundly criticised for years – after all there’s no greater criticism than being abolished.’

Top priorities include using staff resources better and ensuring they are closer to the communities they serve and to prioritise legal expertise to ensure decisions are taken by the right people.

Modernisation must be to the benefit of crofters, he added, while legal powers must be used purposefully. Lastly, and maybe most importantly, I would take the hard decisions needed to make all that happen.

‘The change has to come from leadership that doesn’t demoralise the new organisation, doesn’t shrink from hard decisions, has a clear vision of the way forward and has confidence in itself, in crofting and in crofters.’

‘I have a positive vision for our new commission and if elected I will bring my energy and my experience as a director, councillor, community activist and academic lawyer to the role of commissioner.’



Tiree crofter Donnie Campbell who is standing for election to the Crofting Commission.

Islay crofter makes his stand on ‘continuity and experience’

I LEACH Robin Currie says he is standing as the voice of ‘continuity and experience’ in the upcoming election to find a representative for the south west Highlands area on the new Crofting Commission.

The new body is replacing the unelected Crofters Commission, on which Mr Currie is the only one of the five candidates to have served as an area commissioner.

He is currently an elected member of Argyll and Bute Council, in the role of spokesman for rural affairs, housing and Gaelic.

Mr Currie agrees with other candidates who say tackling absenteeism must be a priority, but rebuts claims from opponents that the old body was afraid to take tough decisions in doing so.

‘In the last year before I left the Commission I was dealing with absentee cases which were more than 10 years old,’ said Mr Currie. ‘We had to make difficult decisions which often meant the termination of the croft’s tenancy.’

‘Some people even called me the ‘Terminator’, he joked.

He is proud of his own past record as a commissioner, ‘assisting in creating over 30 new crofts in Argyll over the

last few years’, but points out the different remit of the new body, ‘now much more focused on regulation’.

‘He feels his experience will be essential to ensure there is no confusion in the move from the old body to the new one.’

He said: ‘I think it would be really difficult if the new Commission consisted of entirely new members.’

‘It is very important for our area to have an experienced person who knows about the new Crofting Act, the policies and procedures.’

Where some call for the regulations to be applied more uniformly across Scotland, Mr Currie feels one of the benefits of the new body is its potential to be flexible in its approach.

‘Crofting on Islay is not the same as crofting in Glencoe.’

‘I think the regulations should be applied differently in different parts of the country.’

‘Knowledge of the different areas is really important.’

Undoubtedly Mr Currie is setting his stall out as the ‘safe pairs of hands’ in this election.

But he also wishes to underline his willingness to make difficult decisions when crofters are absent from their land for too long.

Mull Lines

SCOTTISH Ballet will visit Mull in early March for an information evening on its upcoming project on the island.

A four-day programme of events – dubbed Find Your Feet – will be held in the autumn and the company wants to hear the thoughts of local groups and interested members of the public on what should be included.

The meeting will be held in Mull Theatre, Tobermory, at 7.30pm on Wednesday March 7. A final programme for autumn will be created later.

CLASSIC car enthusiasts are to descend on Mull near the end of May for a weekend of touring and activities.

Scottish Riley Enthusiasts is to hold its National Weekend at the Isle of Mull Hotel, Craignure.

One of the organisers, Gordon McAllan, said: ‘It is very much a relaxed social occasion as well as a journey of discovery for many of those going along who have never been to Mull.’

Unlike other car events – which are competitive – the cars will simply be touring with their crews enjoying the traditional roads, beauty and interest of Mull.

Around 60 Riley motor cars, dating from 1927 to 1969, are expected to travel from all over the UK, Ireland and mainland Europe for the event on May 25 - 27.

There will be opportunities for locals and visitors to see the cars and chat about them with their owners.

The historic car club weekend will culminate in a gathering at Duart Castle on the Sunday.



The car club at a previous event on Mull.

MULL Theatre will travel round the West of Scotland as part of its Spring tour – concluding with a four-night stretch in Glasgow.

The group will be pulling off a double-bill each night, performing comedy dramas ‘Waterproof’ and ‘From Paisley to Paolo’.

Sheena Miller of Mull Theatre said: ‘We have got three young actors from Paisley and this is the first time on a Scottish tour for all of them. They are very excited and looking forward to it.’

‘It is going to be a very funny show.’

She added: ‘It is a ‘pop up’ theatre tour. Most of the venues are village halls and we are taking seating along with us so that everyone who comes to see the show gets the full theatre experience – and a clear view.’

The tour will start on March 1 at Mull Theatre, Tobermory, and take in venues including Oban, Ullapool and the Isle of Skye before finishing at the Tron Theatre, Glasgow, on April 21.

You can read a review of the opening night in the next issue of Mull and Iona Life magazine.

A MULL woman is to trek across Jordan to raise funds for Help for Heroes – the charity that looked after her son when he was injured in Afghanistan.

Wyn Austin, 23, is a Lance Corporal in the Royal Dragoon Guards. He was in a vehicle that was hit by a roadside bomb near Camp Bastion on July 5 2010.

He sustained horrific injuries – losing the whole of his left leg and part of his right foot – but is lucky to be alive. His colleague in the vehicle was killed instantly.

Now his mother, Belinda Hale, 56, is to take on the arduous journey across Jordan in aid of the charity.

She said: ‘I want to do something right outside my comfort zone, a real challenge, to honour my son who has risen to and overcome every challenge since he was injured.’

‘I know I don’t have even a fraction of his courage, and my challenge will be over in less than a fortnight. Wyn has to go on being strong and courageous for the rest of his life and I am very very proud of him.’

She added: ‘Help for Heroes starting helping Wyn right from the moment he arrived back in the UK, with essential items and a variety of support.’

‘He has benefited greatly from the new rehab unit at Headley Court and will be able to use its ongoing care units for the rest of his life, even if he leaves the Army.’

Belinda, who lives near Dervaig, will take on the challenge in October, after first overcoming her fear of flying for the five hour journey to Jordan.

She is aiming to raise £3,000 for Help for Heroes and those who wish to donate can visit www.bmycharity.com/belindatojordanh4h.



Wyn in Mull in 2010 just before being deployed to Afghanistan.

A TOBERMORY High School pupil will be the first runner in The One Show’s nationwide Sport Relief challenge.

It was announced live on BBC One in Tobermory that David Black, 17, will be the first participant in the 1,000 mile relay from Mull to London.

The teenager is from Salen and a member of Mull Rugby Club. He is looking forward to kicking off the relay in Tobermory on March 16.

David narrowly edged out another, rather unusual, would be runner – the Tobermory Womble, also known as RNLI volunteer Sam Jones.

A MOBILE cinema will be visiting Tobermory this week, situated in Ledaig car park and showing films for all the family.

The Screen Machine will be playing Puss in Boots, The War Horse, The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo and Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows.

Send all your news from the Isle of Mull to Faith Orr at The Oban Times email: fforr@obantimes.co.uk or telephone Faith on 01631 568000

Lorn Lines

THERE was a good turnout of members to Oban Photographic Club's weekly meeting, in the Regent Hotel, on Monday February 20 to hear the results of the 'Mellow Yellow' competition. The judge was well known local expert Frank Walton who gave a constructive and informative assessment of the varied entries. First prize went to Ronnie MacKillop for a stunning close-up of a yellow flower. Stephen Lawson gained second with an image of a pallet of Mellow Yellow oil paint and third with a yellow sports car. Ronnie received the Laird Parker Trophy as well as a voucher from Oban Photographic Centre. The next meeting of the club is an Open night on Monday, March 5 at 7.15pm for 7.30pm when the Royal Navy Photographic department will give a presentation. This should be an interesting evening and everyone is welcome.



A RAPT gathering of Oban Art Society in the Lorn Resource Centre watched and listened to professional artist Kirstie Cohen recently. Kirstie, a graduate of Glasgow School of Art, lives and works outside Inverness. She outlined her career to date and described her painting techniques with many illustrations. So impressed were the members, that the society hopes to book Kirstie for a workshop in the near future.

OBAN Concern for Palestine Group recently organised another successful public meeting which attracted a good turnout with more supporters signing up. The main purpose of the evening was the showing of two DVD films depicting the realities of the situation in Palestine's West Bank and elsewhere. The meeting was led by David Mitchell of Oban who has personal experience of that area and he dealt with the many questions and comments which followed the showing of the films. The main reason for the existence of the Oban group is to ensure a better understanding of the true situation in Israel and Palestine there being a great deal of misunderstanding and much misinformation. Co-founder of the group Graeme Pagan said that we must do everything we can to bring people together in peace and justice. To borrow words from someone else: 'We may just be a drop in the ocean but then the ocean is made up of drops'. Anyone wanting further information or wishing to join the group should contact Graeme Pagan, Neaveton, Oban, telephone 01631 563737 or email neaveton@tiscali.co.uk.

A SMALLER attendance than usual meant that some Oban Speakers Club members had to undertake extra duties at their meeting last week. In the first half of the programme Iain Fullerton introduced speakers Jim Fraser who, although he spoke quite well, made little mention of his allocated subject 'A Wealth of Nations', Guido Facenda who talked on 'Let there be Light' and Alec Clark who talked on 'The Abominable Snowman'. Their immediate critics were Ian Crawford, Bill Leech and Donnie Graham. In the second half of the programme, topics chairman Tom Clegg gave subjects ranging from the problems of Rangers Football Club to supermarkets to John Maclean, Ian Crawford, Bill Leech, Roy Wood, Iain Fullerton and Frank Walton. Timekeeper for the evening was Roy Wood and a fair and comprehensive general evaluation was given by Eamonn Arthur. The next meeting will be in Soroba House Hotel on March 8 at 8pm.

MEMBERS of Lorn Garden Club were treated to a fascinating insight into the realities of staging a garden at the Chelsea Flower Show at the recent February meeting, when Caroline De Lane Lea spoke on 'Garden design, Chelsea style'. Caroline, along with her colleague Louise Cummins, won a silver medal for her 'Suber Garden' at the show in 2007, a design based around the theme of the Cork Oak. The next meeting of Lorn Garden Club is on Tuesday March 20 in St John's Cathedral Hall when Douglas Boatman, of Scotplants in Ayrshire will give members some 'Heather Blether' and bring plants for sale. Everyone welcome.

OBAN and District Beekeepers Association will host a beekeeping course in Glencruitten Church Centre today (Thursday). This limited-number event, which includes lunch and coffee, will be opened by Phil McAnespie, President of the Scottish Beekeepers Association (SBA), and the indoor course will be given by Graeme Sharpe, apiculture specialist at the Scottish Agricultural College, Auchincruive.



TWO SENIOR cadets of the Air Cadet Organisation are hoping to become radio instructors following the completion of their VHF and UHF training at RAF Leuchars. Corporal Ryan Cook, left, and Sergeant JD Cameron will begin their instructors' course in March. Ryan said: 'This is the first time the squadron has used them. We use them a lot of the time on exercise.'

Businesses fear 14-week closure for A82 road works

BUSINESSES along the A82 have warned of dire consequences if the Scottish Government does nothing to help them during improvement works at Pulpit Rock. After more than a year of discussions, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Board has withdrawn its objection to Transport Scotland's plan to spend £11million removing the road's bottleneck. Very little about the plan - which would see the creation of a new quarter mile stretch of two-lane carriageway, a new viaduct to run parallel to the loch shoreline and widening of the existing carriageway to the north of the proposed structure - has changed in that time though, meaning a previously criticised 14-week closure remains part of the year of works. While there is broad acceptance from communities on both sides of the Pulpit Rock stretch that the work is required, the lack of clarity or assistance for businesses in the vicinity is causing concern - with some warning jobs could be at risk if no cash assistance is on the table. One business directly in the line of fire is the successful Ardlui Hotel. Owner, Brian Squires, has been there since 1959 - before the Pulpit Rock traffic lights were installed. He said: 'I have been in correspondence with Transport Scotland but they tell me there's no room for compensation within

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

John Riley said: 'I think we have to try and be pragmatic because we need the upgrade. This has been our single biggest objective in the past 30 years. While we don't want to be standing in the way of it, the road will be closed for 14 weeks and there needs to be some sort of compensation for the businesses affected. Transport Scotland have said it's outside their jurisdiction but if you look further into it there is a process open to them to offer compensation.' National Park board member Owen McKee doesn't think any closure will last 14 weeks, saying that is just a top-line figure. He added: 'The 14 weeks of closure is always a concern. It's a

problem we're still trying to find a solution for and if anything can be done in the meantime it will be. 'The fact is this work needs done. The National Park has now withdrawn its objection and I think it's fairly safe to say things will go ahead now.' Announcing the measures, which include £2.5million towards surveying and design of the next stage of design work on the A82, transport minister Keith Brown said: 'Meaningful engagement with directly affected communities is at the heart of all our major infrastructure projects and we will seek public feedback on this scheme at key stages of the project.'



Winner of this year's international piobaireachd competition for the Metro Cup - Benderloch's Angus MacColl.

USA Metro success for Benderloch pipe master

A PIPER and piping tutor from Benderloch has won the prestigious international piping trophy the Metro Cup in the USA. Angus MacColl won the international piobaireachd competition but downplayed his victory, describing it as 'fine', and was quick to pay tribute to the opposition. He said: 'There's a lot of good players over there - they work really hard. Bagpiping is really growing abroad.' Angus gained victory at the event in Newark, New Jersey, which saw him collect \$1,000, a custom-made kilt and a double-eagle gold coin. Already considered as one of the world's greatest pipers, Angus has amassed a considerable haul of awards including numerous gold medals, the Glenfiddich Invitational, the GS MacLennan award in San Diego, and the Donald MacLeod Invitational on Lewis.

Wet weather affects North Lorn roadworks plan

ROADWORKS on the A828 near Oban Airport started this week - one week after they were supposed to begin. Scotland Transerv say weather problems meant contractors working on the A85 at Strone Hill near Dalmladdy were forced to reschedule. Work on the A828 Ledaig stretch eventually started on Tuesday this week. Eleven days of roadworks at the north end of Benderloch are unaffected by the delay and will start as scheduled on March 12, weather permitting. Meanwhile, engineers are investigating the cause of a faulty drain on the A85 at Pennyfuir. Since the road was resurfaced last year, heavy rain has resulted in a section of the road lifting. It has been cordoned off by police a number of times to prevent a potential accident.

Kilniver speeding crackdown

POLICE caught 19 people speeding through the village of Kilniver on the A816 in only two days last week during a crackdown on speeding motorists. Among them was a 40-year-old man who has been charged with dangerous driving after overtaking a HGV outside Kilniver Primary School. Last Wednesday a 32-year-old woman was charged with speeding after being clocked travelling at 50 mph in the 30mph zone through the village and a 53-year-old man was caught driving at 52mph. A further 11 people were issued fixed penalty notices for speeding. The following day a further five people were caught speeding. Oban Police chief inspector Brian Auld said his officers would be monitoring the speed of motorists outside Kilniver Primary School, Oban Primary Campus and Croft Road.

Peacocks buyout

SEVERAL jobs in Oban and Stornoway have been saved after the Edinburgh Woollen Mill bought clothing chain, Peacocks. The stores are two of only a handful to remain open in Scotland following the successful sale of the business by administrators KPMG. One member of staff in Oban said: 'I'm delighted. We're all happy the company has been saved.'



Marie Curie Oban branch member Irene Main launches the charity's fundraising month with fellow volunteers, from left, Lilian Kermede, Catriona Maitland and June Henderson, alongside Oban Fire Station commander Alex Purdie. 16_109curie01

Oban's Field of Hope comes into bloom

AS THE daffodils in Oban's Field of Hope came into bloom, members of the Oban branch of Marie Curie Cancer Care met there to launch the charity's fundraising month. Lilian Kermede, June Henderson, Irene Main and Catriona Maitland were joined by Oban Fire Station commander Alex Purdie to launch the fundraising month in March, which will see collection boxes placed in shops and offices throughout the town. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue donated the ground used to plant the Field of Hope last September. It was created to give time for reflection to those who have lost a loved one through a terminal illness. Station commander Purdie said: 'We are proud to support Marie Curie Cancer Care. By working with them we can ensure some of the most vulnerable people in our community receive home fire safety visits. Daffodil pins, which are worn in support of the charity, will be on sale at Oban's Tesco store on March 8 and 9 and in the Scottish Co-op store on March 17.'

Colonsay doctor travels four days for three-hour surgery

AN ISLAND doctor made a four-day journey by air, land and sea to cover a three and a half hour surgery - just 18 miles from her home. Dr Jan Brooks, from the Isle of Colonsay, was tasked to cover the Monday surgery on the neighbouring island of Jura. But Jura and Colonsay are not directly linked, so Dr Brooks left

home on the Saturday starting a round trip that some estimates have put at £1,500. Argyll and Bute Councillor Robin Currie, who lives on neighbouring Isle of Islay, said: 'Looking at a map it seems a sensible thing to do but anyone who knows the area knows better. 'It makes you wonder, for three

hours cover, surely a doctor on Islay could have made the short hop to Jura. 'It would be much less cost to the NHS - and the taxpayer.' To get to Jura, Dr Brooks flew approximately 60 miles north to Oban, where she spent the night before hiring a car to drive the 54 miles south to the ferry port of Kennacraig. From there she took the ferry to Islay followed by a further ferry crossing to Jura. A spokesman for NHS Highland said: 'We were aware that there was a gap in the service on the day in question and we had arranged well in advance for another GP to cover that gap. 'However this GP was at very short notice unable to provide that cover due to circumstances beyond their control and we had to find a replacement and this we did.' He added: 'Our priority was our patients on Jura and our staff pulled out all the stops to find a GP at short notice and we would like to thank the GP in question for their help.'

Road crew sets sparks flying with 4am town street drilling

ROAD workers in Oban were really enthusiastic about filling in potholes lately - so much so they tackled one at 4am. Staff at TranservScotland, which manages the A85, noticed a hole on the road outside the Regent Hotel in the early hours of Tuesday morning. The ever-industrious workforce decided it needed fixed - to the dismay of local residents trying to get some sleep. One angry householder who was woken by the noise said: 'I couldn't believe my ears when I heard the drilling start at 4.20am. I would have understood if there was some kind of emergency but I can't understand the logic behind filling in a pothole at that time of night. 'The workmen will say they are just doing their job but using a pneumatic drill at that time of day is just ludicrous.' A spokesman for TranservScotland explained the work: 'It was an unplanned spontaneous reaction to address carriageway failure. 'It should not have happened and we will apologise to all those affected. 'We will also reaffirm to all our staff our procedures in relation to night time working.'

EU offshore wind and marine energy seminar comes to Dunstaffnage

RENEWABLE energy will be up for discussion at an 'influential gathering' in Dunstaffnage at the weekend. The Scottish Marine Institute will host the EU offshore Wind and Marine Energy Seminar tomorrow (Friday). European policy, funding and the renewables potential of the west coast of the Highlands and Islands will be among the topics up for debate at the meeting organised by Argyll and Bute Council. Council Leader Dick Walsh said: 'A quarter of Europe's potential offshore wind and tidal energy resource and a tenth of Europe's wave capacity is found in Scotland. Argyll and Bute Council has a vision to be at the heart of renewable energy development in Scotland.'

Argyll-wide community councillors invited to wind energy debate

COMMUNITY councillors from throughout Argyll have been invited to Oban this month for a meeting to unveil the pros and cons of wind energy. Members of Connel and Ardrachattan community councils noticed they were at risk of being inundated with applications for either single turbines or farms, with the number of proposals rising rapidly. However, they felt ill-equipped to adequately hold opinion on the validity or otherwise of an application and decided they needed to find out more. Recognising other community councils might feel the same way, they've invited counterparts from across the county to convene in Oban and hear from impartial experts and planning officers about everything from planning considerations to the potential benefits of the so-called 'green' energy source. Secretary of Connel Community Council Les Stewart said: 'We've noticed a large number of applications for wind farms from Ardrishaig to Appin and we thought it would be a good idea to inform ourselves about them as much as possible. 'For example, do they produce the goods? What are reasonable planning objections and considerations?'

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FAMILY GUYS!

Argyll & Bute Council
business gateway
slighe gnothachais

what every family business needs to know...

Business Gateway is calling all family business owners to join an upcoming event exploring what every family business needs to know. Listen and learn from the story of one of Scotland's best known family business owners: Martin Stepek, Chief Executive of Scottish Family Business Association and Ex-Managing Director of J. Stepek Ltd. Martin will deliver his own story of the ups and downs of owning and running a family business, and share the globally-recognised ways family businesses should be run and governed. This is a rare opportunity to learn from a major figure in family business, who combines lifelong business experience and world-leading thinking on such an important subject. Details are as follows set out below.

Date: 30th March, 2012
Time: 11am - 1.30pm
Venue: Argyll Hotel, Inveraray
Cost: FREE

Please call or email to book a place
T: 01546 605459
E: business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk

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Fergie's Folk
with Fergie MacDonald

Lochaber Gold – Celtic Connections

THE LOCHABER Gold Traditional Music Production was first performed in September 2011 at the Nevis Centre, Fort William.

Attended by a local audience of more than 700, it was voted top traditional music event of the year in Lochaber. The production is based on former pupils who attended Lochaber High and made it big time in the music industry. Their talents have put Lochaber in the forefront of traditional music, indeed throughout the world.

The success of this show was recognised by no other than Donald Shaw, musical director of the world's most famous traditional music festival – Celtic Connections. He gave Lochaber Gold a top billing and the show was a sell-out in Glasgow.

What a night it was; the place erupted by the display of talent on show.

Performing at the highest level possible, everyone concerned gave their all. If Lochaber wasn't on the radar in musical terms before, it certainly is now. Apart from the cream of Lochaber's musicians performing their various acts, some of the supporting acts were even more impressive.

BBC Alba's shinty pundit Hugh Dan MacLennan interviewing the world famous fiddler and composer Angus Grant, who co-incidentally was celebrating his 80th birthday.

John Hartson the Celtic and Wales football internationalist recovering from life threatening brain surgery, who has now devoted his life to cancer research. The John Hartson Foundation is organising a cancer research funding event on Ben Nevis in July of this year.

Finally Annie Grace, Lochaber's link with Westminster on the political scene, was a class act.

Have I forgotten to mention someone? Indeed I have. Lochaber Gold would not have been possible were it not for this great guy from Lochaber whose emergence to a high profile public lifestyle has captivated the imagination of young and old – who else but Gary Innes.

A star on the world accordion music circuit, Scotland shinty internationalist, BBC sport reporter and pundit, Gary directed and produced this wonderful show, ensuring Lochaber is right up there with the cream of front line traditional musicians.

How about this for a cast? It's enough to make the mind boggle. Gary Innes, Alan Henderson, Duncan Nicolson, Annie Grace, Andrew Stevenson, John Hartson, Angus Grant, Iain MacFarlane, Megan Henderson, Kaela Rowan, Ingrid Henderson, James MacIntosh, Ross Martin, Malcolm Stitt, James Bremner, Angus Grant Jr, Hugh Dan MacLennan and Fergie. It was an honour and privilege to share a stage with all these stars – all from Lochaber.

Fergie Domhnallach.



Gary Innes.



Bands hit the high notes at Fort William concert

Lochaber High School's big band held its second annual joint concert with St Augustine's RC High from Blackburn to a packed crowd in Fort William last week. More than 40 students performed together throughout the show, performing all styles from Duke Ellington through to The Beatles. Brass band instructor Mark Reynolds said: 'It was a tremendously successful concert which was enthusiastically received by the large audience.' The Lochaber band set off today (Thursday) for a tour of Lancashire to play four concerts, including its first performance at St Augustine's.

Villagers demand speed limit cut in Tyndrum

Large number of near misses on road prompts community council call for urgent review

VILLAGERS in Tyndrum are to press for a reduced speed limit after witnessing a large number of near misses on the road in recent months.

A 40mph limit is currently in effect in the village, but it has not stopped some motorists speeding along the road at speeds up to and sometimes in excess of 60mph.

At last week's meeting of Strathfillan Community Council, residents said they had seen a number of near misses in recent weeks, the most worrying of which

involved an articulated lorry sliding into a lay-by because it was travelling too fast.

With the village becoming busier and a gold mine to be developed at Cononish, bringing new investment and jobs into the area, there are increasing concerns someone could be hurt or even killed if something isn't done to reduce the speed of passing traffic.

Community councillor Angela Sclater said: 'I recently watched a lorry fly along the road and he had swooped past Brodies before swerving to the right, down into

the lay-by opposite the Green Welly – he just landed there. It was really scary, someone could have been badly hurt.'

'There is a huge problem with speeders driving through Tyndrum. Is there anything we can do about it?'

Members said the worst offenders tended to be hauliers, with lorries most often seen travelling through the village at motorway speeds. Chairman of the community council John Riley said: 'It's something we've been on about for a long time. We got the powers that be to

agree to the 30mph limit years ago, but then they moved the goalposts and it was effectively scrapped.'

The area's MSP, Bruce Crawford, had made an attempt in the past to have a new limit imposed, but Mr Riley said his understanding was the road was too wide for a 30mph limit to be imposed.

He said: 'I don't see why we shouldn't try again.'

The community council is to write to Stirling Council to ask for the limit to be reviewed.

Dead climber named

THE CLIMBER who died after falling 1,000-feet on Ben Nevis on Sunday morning has been named as 32-year-old Paul Guest of Kidderminster.

Mr Guest and his climbing partner David Warden, aged 46, from Perth, fell while climbing in Zero Gulley. Mr Warden was airlifted to Belford Hospital, Fort William, before being transferred to Ninewells Hospital in Dundee with serious injuries. Mr Guest was pronounced dead at the scene.

The pair were believed to be roped together near the summit of the mountain when they fell.

Campbeltown Museum closed for improvements

CAMPBELTOWN Museum will be closed until March 12 while its heating and lighting is improved.

After the museum achieved Full Museum Accreditation through Museums Gallery Scotland in 2011, Argyll and Bute Council carried out a review of the museum and found that a number of areas needed improvement; high on that list was heating and lighting.

The museum closed last Tuesday to allow the work to be carried out.

Argyll and Bute Council secured a grant of £20,000 from Museums Galleries Scotland towards the cost of the work with the remainder coming from the council's capital programme for 2011-12.

Council election briefing

A BRIEFING session for potential candidates for this summer's council elections will be held at the Council Chamber, Fort William at noon tomorrow (Friday).

Returning officer Alistair Dodds will inform the prospective applicants about the nomination procedure, the election timetable, issuing of poll cards, postal ballot packs, candidate's spending limits, and what is involved in being a councillor.

Candidates have until 4pm on Thursday March 29 to lodge their nominations, with the election due to be held on May 3.

Waitrose to open Helensburgh store

WAITROSE will build a new supermarket in Helensburgh after plans for a store next to Hermitage Academy were approved.

Argyll and Bute Council planners had recommended refusal of the development of a food and petrol store at Cardross Road, but a decision to approve the development was made after a public meeting attended by more than 260 people.

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Duke of Edinburgh Award success

A total of 28 youngsters received their Duke of Edinburgh Awards during a presentation at the Oban Sailing Club last Wednesday. Adam Richards of the Open Lorn Group, a voluntary organisation which works with the Award, described it as 'possibly the largest and most achieved' by the Group. 15_109duke02

Rural housing association to change points policy

RURAL Stirling Housing Association (RSHA) is to change the way it awards points as it reviews its allocations policy.

While a number of the policies are fixed by law, the aspects it can affect to some degree is the strength of connection to the locality they are applying to.

They will also look at reducing the instances of owner/occupiers successfully applying for association housing for medical reasons, pointing out that full grants are available to modify a dwelling to take such life changes into account.

Those who have a genuine need where modifications cannot be made will still be considered, however.

The association also sees homelessness as a serious problem and one it hopes to address in the near future.

Elaine Whyte, of RSHA, told last week's meeting of Strathfillan Community Council that they face a number of challenges.

She said: 'To give you an idea, we have 732 people or households on our waiting list. We have let 47 houses since April. We're not going to be able to house everyone we need to, so there's always winners and losers.'

'However, we actually house more transfer applications than other housing associations. Most manage five per cent, we're up to about 20.'

'Because people in Rural Stirling don't have much of

an option we think it's really important to help our existing tenants.'

Referring to the need for change, she said: 'The current law is 45 years old. The government have just put out a consultation paper about bringing it up to date, but we've waited long enough for that and that's looking at what we can change.'

'There are things we can't take into account, such as age or earnings, but there are things we can look at.'

'One of the major issues we want to look at is those who already have a house and that is likely to be addressed.'

The types of health conditions that can currently qualify someone for a house will also be reviewed.

'One of the other big issues is homelessness in rural Stirling. It doesn't necessarily appear as though there is a problem, as people here don't want to present as homeless. If, for example, someone is thrown out of their home in Tyndrum, maybe they've got a job and don't want to apply to an association in case they're moved into Stirling, losing them their job.'

'Instead, they get an expensive insecure lease with a friend – it's what we call hidden homelessness. It's something we really want to look at.'

The system used by Argyll and Bute Council's model for rural homeless is one being considered for adoption by RSHA.

auchrannie resort

Win a family weekend at Auchrannie Resort

The multi-award winning Auchrannie Resort, located on the beautiful Isle of Arran is one of Scotland's leading family destinations. Auchrannie consists of two four star hotels, the traditional 'House Hotel' and the more contemporary 'Spa Resort'. In addition, the resort features 30 five star self-catering lodges, three outstanding restaurants and bars, a play barn for children and two leisure centres offering pools, saunas and a wide range of ESPA beauty treatments. Visit www.auchrannie.co.uk.

We have teamed up with Auchrannie to give readers the chance to win a two night stay, bed and breakfast, for a family of four at the Spa Resort.

To enter, simply cut out token two printed below and find token one that you kept from last week's paper. Then simply answer this easy question, complete the entry form below and, along with your two tokens, post to The Oban Times, Arran Comp, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Entries must be received by Monday, March 12, 2012.

Question: How many 5 star self catering lodges will you find at Auchrannie Resort

a) 30 b) 20 c) 10

Answer
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Email

Tick here to receive more information from Auchrannie Resort I have enclosed my 2 tokens

TOKEN TWO

Terms and conditions: The prize package consists of Bed & Breakfast only in the Spa Resort for a family of four (up to two adults and two children). The prize excludes travel and transfers, travel insurance and spending money. The winner will be responsible for making their own travel and meal arrangements. The prize package can be used anytime during 2012, excluding school and public holidays. Subject to availability. Entrants must be 18 years or over. The prize is as stated. No cash alternative. The Editor's decision is final. Photocopied entries will not be accepted. The winner may be asked to take part in publicity and may appear in a Wyvex Media publication and website. This competition is open to readers of other Wyvex Media publications and their families. This competition is not open to readers of other Wyvex Media publications.

Famous shoe show steps in to help charity

A CHARITY exhibition showcasing the shoes of famous Scots women such as Annie Lennox, Sharleen Spiteri and Edith Bowman, aimed at highlighting the problem of domestic abuse, is to visit Fort William for two days next week.

The event, organised by Lochaber Women's Aid (LWA), is designed to highlight the 104 women who die at the hands of their abusive partners each year in Britain and will coincide with International Women's Day. The exhibition was originally put together by YWCA Scotland in 2002 has been updated with shoes from new donors.

An LWA spokeswoman said: 'Shoes have been donated by many famous women, including singers, actors, politicians and sportswomen. We hope this will help, not only to raise awareness of domestic abuse, but to encourage people to make a stand against domestic abuse.'

The exhibition will be open from 11am-4pm and 6pm-8pm on Thursday March 8 and 11am-4pm on Friday March 9 in the Alexandra Hotel, Fort William.

Long distance cyclist bikes back to Oban to give talk on world-wide adventures

ADVENTURER Mark Beaumont will return to the place where he enjoyed his first success as a long-distance cyclist when he gives a talk at the Corran Halls on March 15.

Mark is better known as the man who broke the world record for the fastest circumnavigation of the world on bicycle, as well as cycling the length of the Americas.

But it was a very young age that he completed the first of many epic rides when he cycled from Dundee to Oban.

Mark said: 'When I was 11 I read a local newspaper about a man who rode from John O'Groats to Land's End.'

Mark decided that this was

something he wanted to do – however, his mother decided that this was perhaps not suitable for one as young as Mark so he was persuaded to undertake the slightly less daunting distance between Dundee and Oban.

This was the forerunner to a series of punishing rides, including the John O'Groats to Land's End route at the age of just 15.

The culmination of Mark's achievements came when he crossed the finishing line in France at the end of an arduous round-the-world trek.

He said: 'Coming back and being greeted by so many people, it was just amazing – I went from being a student with a dream and no money

and I don't think anything will ever match that first moment when I got to Paris and broke the world record.'

Mark has also completed a number of events away from the saddle, including rowing the Arctic to highlight climate change and as a result of his endeavours has raised a huge amount of money for charity.

Mark has also spoken positively of the Oban to Fort William cycle track which is still under construction.

He said: 'There's so much happening in the west coast – I've always supported the track at Fort William.'

'That whole area offers phenomenal riding.'

Mark's achievements have not

been without setback – earlier this year his attempt to cross the Atlantic with five others ended prematurely when the vessel they were travelling in capsized.

However, after a harrowing ordeal which ended in all six being rescued, Mark is choosing to look on the bright side.

He said: 'There's disappointment, but I reflect on what we went through out there and we're lucky to be alive. We lost our possessions but none of that matters.'

For now, Mark is taking a break from his endeavours, but there is one important event that he will soon undertake when he gets married in just over a month's time.

Oban needs to make greater use of events if it is to thrive, claims councillor

OBAN needs to better publicise its events calendar if it is to flourish as a tourist destination. It is also imperative the town reaches out to its neighbours if it is to thrive and grow, as at the moment it is not making full use

of successful events such as the Oban Winter Festival. Local councillor and tourism spokesperson Neil Mackay made the claims while hosting a meeting of local professionals at the town's Corran Halls.

Flanked by colourful banners bearing the slogan 'Oban - It's closer than you think', he said: **Surprised** 'People are actually surprised how close we are, particularly from Glasgow.

'We've really got to promote ourselves better. We have to grab every opportunity and it's a case of realising our potential.' Suggestions to increase publicity for the town included publishing a leaflet which

could be distributed across the country. The online town diary came under scrutiny - namely because many were not aware of its existence. Neil Matheson of Atlantis Leisure pointed out the number

of town events on the calendar that clashed. He said: 'It's simple - we need somewhere to go where we can find out what is on.'

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre expressed optimism at the turnout of the meeting. Speaking after the meeting, he said: 'All these people, they're enthusiastic and energetic. They can help out with these events, as we are stronger together.'

BID4Oban to present survey results

THE RESULTS of a survey by the BID4Oban steering group, outlining how business in Oban could thrive in the future, have been presented to the business community - but not many were there to see them. The steering group, made up of leading businessmen and women, alongside project manager Pauline Cameron and Councillor Louise Glen Lee, recently presented the findings of a survey into the positives and negatives of business in Oban. The meeting in Cuan Mor on February 16 outlined how the Business Improvement District (BID) process would work and highlighted the top issues for business people, including access to the town, traffic congestion and parking. **Opportunity** But a poor turnout of business representatives has forced the steering group to make an additional date to make the presentation again. Announcing a repeat presentation would be held in the Corran Halls next Thursday, March 8, steering group

chairman Graham MacQueen encouraged every Oban business to attend, adding: 'We are giving the business community one more opportunity to turn up and recognise the effort the steering committee members have made for the benefit of the whole of Oban, not just the business community.' A BID scheme would see all 388 businesses within Oban's 30mph speed zone contribute a small percentage of their rateable value to a core fund, generating more than £150,000 to improve the town and organise events to attract visitors. BID4Oban has already received the backing of councillors Louise Glen Lee, Elaine Robertson, Roddy McCuish, Duncan MacIntyre, Neil Mackay and Mary Jean Devon. Speaking at the Cuan Mor presentation Councillor MacIntyre said: 'There are not as many people here as I would have expected but if we miss out on BIDS, it would have a catastrophic effect on the town. This is the best opportunity we've had in 100 years. The

population of Oban is set to increase by 2,000 in the next 10 years; we can't just sit around and wait for things to happen.' A ballot on whether businesses would like the town to be involved in a BID is scheduled to take place on September 3 this year, following the formation of a steering group business plan in May. The steering group has given examples of what each business could expect to pay: A small business with a rateable value of between £3,000 - £8,300 would pay £150 per year towards BIDS, while businesses with a rateable value between £180,000 - £499,000 would contribute £2,300 per annum. Responding to concerns about the cost of BID contributions, Mr MacQueen added: 'Many town centre businesses are suffering at the moment but this is an opportunity to improve business. The amount businesses have to pay in is relatively small, but collectively goes into a pot to benefit everyone. It's not about costing money; it's about making money.'



Arisaig youngsters are planning another beach clean up before this year's tourist season begins.

Arisaig hits back at 'shocking rubbish' claims

ARISAIG residents have hit back at claims by a Scottish Government reporter that there was 'shocking amount of rubbish' on local beaches. The report was put together in response to an appeal from Julie Ann Bryce after Highland Council blocked her plan to install three wind turbines at Sunnyside Croft, Bunacaimbe, on visual amenity and noise pollution grounds. The reporter said the rubbish could be a deterrent to tourists visiting the area and recommended locals should hold clean-up campaigns during the

tourist season. But local woman Joyce Wilkinson told *The Oban Times* litter gets washed onto the shoreline every winter, and locals already hold regular clean-ups on the beaches before the summer. She said the large amount of rubbish on the beach had mainly been washed ashore during a recent series of heavy storms. 'Most of the large pieces of plastic and litter appeared during the relentless storms faced by locals this winter,' she said. 'Three months where the wind rarely eased below a force eight, and clean up campaigns began

as soon as the wind eased. These started at home where most residents lost sheds, fences, byres and caravans. Local school children from Arisaig Primary have organised a beach clean up as part of their Eco Schools project, with a date to be confirmed, but before the tourists arrive. 'To have their efforts dismissed by the Government reporter who was appointed to give a verdict on the siting of three wind turbines, and who had no awareness of the situation regarding the storm borne litter, is damaging and confidence sapping to the children and residents who gen-

erously supported them through sponsorship.' Arisaig Community Council has written a 'strongly worded' letter to the reporter asking for an apology. Secretary Maureen McCall said: 'He's come to Arisaig, maybe for the first time, and immediately assumed that is the way it is all year round. It happens every winter and every year it gets cleared up. To make that remark in a public paper is running the place down for no reason.' Arisaig Primary School said it planned to have its litter pick before the Easter break.

Farrier cleared of indecency charges

AN OBAN farrier was acquitted of nine charges when the case against him collapsed in a trial at Oban Sheriff Court last week. Malcolm Sloss, 59, was cleared of indecent assault on four females. He was also cleared of five charges of making remarks of a sexually inappropriate or explicit nature. Sloss, of Burnside Cottage, Glencruitten, was found not guilty last week after the Procurator Fiscal Depute, Scott Simpson, failed to prove the victims' evidence fell within an alleged timeframe. Witness claimed that Sloss used his role as a farrier to behave inappropriately around females. However, the trial faltered and Sheriff MacTaggart said: 'Not guilty verdicts will now be returned for the remaining charges.'

Win for budding bard Daniel

NEARLY 400 budding bards from across Lochaber took part in an English and Gaelic poetry competition in Fort William recently, with the winning entries going on display in the Nevis Centre. John Muir Trust's Wild Poetry Competition asked for primary school pupils to submit poems based on local wildlife and landscapes. Inverloch primary youngster Daniel Parfitt, P1, was awarded first place in the English P1-4 category for his poem 'Nevis Range'. He said, 'I like Nevis Range because you can go skiing and biking there. I really like going downhill fast!' Strontian Primary's Alasdair Cameron took first place in the English P4-7 competition with a poem titled 'Pine Martin', while P4 pupil Rachel Ford of Acharacle Primary won the Gaelic competition with 'The Dolphin'. John Muir Trust chairman John Hutchison presented the children with their certificates. He said: 'This is a super competition. We look forward to seeing the entries every year. As ever there was a very high standard of entries with good descriptive writing. A love of local wild places really comes



Prize winning poet Daniel Parfitt, of Inverloch Primary School, receives his certificate from John Muir Trust chairman John Hutchison.

through in the poems.' Prizes were sponsored by Lochaber Gaelic Development Group, WH Smith, Glen Nevis Visitor Centre, Nevis Range, the Ice Factor, Ellis Brigham and Nevisport. Results: English P1-3, Daniel Parfitt, P1, Inverloch Primary School - 'Nevis Range'; 2, Archie Clark, P3, Spean Bridge Primary - 'The Mountain Poem'; 3, Rhianna MacCallum, P3, Invergarry Primary - 'The Robin'. English P4-7 - 1, Alasdair Cameron, P6, Strontian Primary - 'Pine Martin'; 2, Jean Campbell, P5, Strontian Primary - 'Mouse'; 3, Ruairidh Flux, P4, Roy Bridge Primary - 'A Wild Train Journey'. Gaelic P1-7 - 1-Rachel Ford, P4, Acharacle Primary - 'The Dolphin'; 1-Eoghan McArthur, P6, Fort William RC Primary - 'The Red Squirrel'; 2-Leah Howley, P4, FWRC Primary - 'Mountains'; 2-Mairi Duncan, P7, Acharacle Primary - 'The Beast'. English highly commended - Rachael Ford (Acharacle Primary); Robbie Sangster Isla Maceachan, Orla McDougall (Banavie Primary); Callie Rodgers, Josef Kocjan-Briggs (Invergarry Primary); Daniel Menzies, Asha Macneil, Ally Smith (Inverloch Primary); Briony Melrose, Tommy Chisholm, Corran-Mae Wineberg Methold (Lochyside Primary); Jasmine Webb, Ben Campbell, Carla Bererdelli, Dawn MacIntosh (Spean Bridge Primary); Ben Gregg, Colin Macdonald, Angus Dunn, Chloe Niven, Finn McLaughlin, Eilidh MacArthur, Ewan Macdonald (Strontian Primary). Gaelic highly commended - Jessie Macpherson (Acharacle); Amber Macdonald, Iain Gillies, Liam McCrimmon, Morvern Gillies (Fort William RC Primary).



Representatives from Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease (ABCD) and Anthony Nolan Trust accepted cheques for £2,268 each from the fundraising charity Oban 365. The money was raised at a family Hogmanay ceilidh in the Argyllshire Halls and Ian MacInnes junior of Oban 365, pictured far right holding his son Daniel, gave a special thanks to the businesses who supported the event by covering the costs of the ceilidh. Also pictured are, from left: Ian MacInnes and Alfie MacKenzie of ABCD, Oban 365 members Donna MacInnes, holding daughter Riona, John Sweeney and Nicky Willis; and Lindsay MacCallum of Anthony Nolan Trust. 16_109cheque01

Groups encouraged to find funding sources

CHARITIES and social groups are invited to attend an Argyll and Bute Council-run event on increasing income at the council chambers, Kilmory, on Saturday March 17. 'There's More to Fundraising than Grants' aims to provide groups with information on finding new sources of revenue rather than relying on grants. Council community develop-

ment officer Laura Macdonald said: 'Grants can be a lifeline to many community groups and organisations, however, there are many more ways of generating income and more organisations are looking at funding strategies that pull in money from a variety of sources. In response to comments from communities, a free event has been organised which aims

to provide charities, social enterprises and community groups with information to help them explore income-generating opportunities.' The event will feature a number of speakers and workshops - lunch and refreshments will be provided. Those interested can contact Eileen Bellshaw on 01546 604 189 or email eileen.bellshaw@argyll-bute.gov.uk.

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bonnie babies

competition 2012

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ENTRY FORM

Child's name.....

Child's date of birth.....

Tel:

Address:

Name of parent/guardian.....

Signature of parent/guardian.....

I agree to all terms and conditions applied to this competition.....

Please post to The Oban Times, Bonnie Babies Entry, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

Terms & conditions: The Oban Times Bonnie Babies 2012 competition is open to babies and toddlers born on or after April 12, 2009. Only one entry per child. By entering the competition and by filling in the general consent form that is provided with your entry, you - the parent or guardian - consent to the reproduction of your child's photograph in The Oban Times Bonnie Babies feature in the paper and online and in any other related Oban Times Bonnie Babies promotions. If you do not wish for your child's photo to appear in the newspaper or online then you should not enter the competition. The Oban Times cannot take responsibility for the safe delivery and safe return of the entrant's photograph. Photos posted in without an enclosed stamped addressed envelope will not be returned. Poor quality photographs, which are out of focus, difficult to see the child's face, ripped, torn or folded, will not be accepted as an entry and will be returned to the sender providing a stamped addressed envelope is supplied by the entrant. By sending us your photograph, you agree that Wyvies Media Ltd and The Oban Times have the right to publish the image and details of the entrant without payment for the purpose of promoting The Oban Times Bonnie Babies campaign (B). The entrant must be willing to see their photo in public. Employees of Wyvies Media Ltd and their immediate family are not eligible to enter. Photocopied entry forms will not be accepted. Full terms and conditions at www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies.

Enter your baby today!

Enter online or by post

We are now open for entries! Bonnie Babies 2012 is open to babies and toddlers born on or after April 12, 2009. To enter by post please send us a photograph along with a signed entry coupon (see left) to The Oban Times, Bonnie Babies Entry, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Please make sure you write the name of the child, date of birth and a contact telephone number on the back of the photo. Should you wish for your photo to be returned, please also enclose a stamped addressed envelope. We will do our best to return your photo but please make a copy just in case. To enter online visit www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies.

After you have entered your child into the competition, look out every week in The Oban Times to see when your baby appears. You can find all the competition rules and terms and conditions online at www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies or call 01631 568000. More details on page 10.

The closing date for entries will be announced in a future issue.

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Fort drink driver jailed for seven months

A FORT William man has been jailed for seven months and 15 days and disqualified from driving for four years after stealing a friend's car to drive home following a night of drinking in the town.

Appearing from custody, Michael MacDonald, of Dalriada, 71 Camaghael, pled guilty to stealing the car from outside Linthe Buildings, Fort William, and driving into Glen Nevis while more than twice the alcohol limit. Fort William Sheriff Court heard the 22-year-old was disqualified from driving and not insured when the incidents took place on February 27.

Window smashed accidentally

A PASSENGER onboard an Oban Camanachd bus accidentally smashed a window on the vehicle in Ballachulish on Saturday night.

Munro climber praises rescuers after first accident

A MOUNTAINEER who conquered all Lochaber's 24 Munros in under 24 hours has paid tribute to Oban's Mountain Rescue team after his first accident in 50 years of climbing.

Edinburgh athlete, Charlie Ramsay, was part of a three man walking party taking on the challenging peak when he fell over 160 feet down a steep snow slope just after 2pm, breaking three ribs.

Oban Mountain Rescue managed to locate the stricken 68-year old on the north side of the Cruachan ridge - thanks to a new smartphone app the team is testing.



Lochaber win national shinty title

Lochaber captain Calum Neil proudly lifts the RBS National First Shinty trophy after his Primary 5 and under team defeated Dingwall 5-3 in the finals at Lochaber High School on Saturday to become Scottish champions. In the Primary 6/7 finals at the Nevis Centre, which ran concurrently, Kingussie edged out a spirited Portree side 3-2. More than 200 children took part, cheered on by their families and friends. See full report and photos on back page. 20_09shinty02

Football club faces crisis as pitch pressure mounts

FORT William Football Club faces being thrown out of the Highland League unless a new all-weather pitch is built at Claggan Park, club chairman John Wattssman said this week.

The stark warning follows a fact-finding visit to the ground by Scottish Football Association chiefs Peter Budge and Graham Sutherland.

The club has already received two warning letters from the Highland Football League about its inability to fulfill home fixtures. Since the season started last July, Fort William have played only six times at home. Ten matches have been postponed because of the weather in that time.

By STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

Centre. As well as the annual Ben Nevis Race, Claggan also hosts school sports days, the Coast to Coast and a Rat Race event.

Other users include the street league, athletics club, Inverness Caledonian Thistle, and in the past it has hosted the Highland Games.

Celebrations as West Ardnamurchan secures nurse deal

WEST Ardnamurchan residents are celebrating after winning the battle to retain out-of-hours 999 cover for the remote peninsula.

Secretary Nicola Sturgeon last Wednesday to reach a deal. A new scheme was agreed which will see a retained emergency responder team made up of six qualified medical professionals providing 24-hour cover for the area.

be part of the team, as will a recently recruited ambulance technician who is due to start work next week.

local reaction had been 'pretty positive'. 'People are just glad there is actually something in place,' she said.

Following a 20-minute presentation from WACC about the problems they have encountered during 14 months of negotiations with NHS Highland and Scottish Ambulance Service, Ms Sturgeon apologised for the way the consultation process was handled.

'Other Highland communities might have to go through the same thing in the next few years and we want to make sure lessons are learnt.'

Cautious stance on A83 damaging economy say business leaders

ARGYLL business leaders say being overly cautious is harming the region's economy after the latest closure of the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful.

opening two days later after it was declared safe. While the slippage of 30-50 tonnes of material did not block the road, monitoring equipment indicated further slides were likely.

Some hauliers have called for measures that would allow drivers to progress through the route after landslides at their own risk.

Alternative route A diversion was put in place for the duration of the closure, taking northbound motorists via Tarbet, Tyndrum and Dalmlally to rejoin the A83 at Inveraray,

with the reverse route in the southbound direction. Last month, transport minister Keith Brown announced a £1million plan to upgrade a forest track into an alternative route through the pass by the end of summer.

price watch

	Petrol	Diesel
Glencoe	139.9	146.9
Invergarry	140.9	148.9
Fort William	137.9	144.9
Portree	141.9	149.9
Newtonmore	139.9	144.9
Locharron	140.9	148.9
Lochaline	149.9	149.9
Sleat	149.2	156.0
Stornoway	144.9	153.9
Oban	139.9	146.9
Campbeltown	141.0	147.0
Lochgilphead	137.9	144.9
Tiree	157.0	162.0
Coll	171.0	171.0
Arran	146.5	156.0
Benbecula	151.9	159.9

Argyll and Bute Shanks' staff warn more strike action is likely

'TERRIFIC' support from locals boosted Shanks staff during this week's strike action, but they have warned more walkouts could be on the cards.

Members of the Unite and GMB unions from Oban were joined by colleagues across Argyll and Bute in walking out on Friday and Monday in protest against Shanks in a row over pay and conditions.

in Oban, for example, they took it to Lochgilphead. That's an 80 mile round trip in place of a four mile return journey from Oban itself.

Glasgow colleagues. A four per cent pay increase offer over three years - backdated to the 2010/11 financial year, has been rejected while the sick pay cuts remain.

Meanwhile, Shanks has apologised for a letter its chief executive sent strikers saying staff were 'threatening the contract' as well as 'putting your own jobs at risk.'

30 Years Ago

Those Were The Days

The Oban Times

Thursday, February 25, 1982

Argyll needs to be more ready for nuclear attack

A district councillor has warned that more efforts should be taken to prepare Argyll and Bute for a nuclear attack.

Gaelic drama festival to be held at Bowmore

The Argyll Regional Council of An Comunn Gaidhealach held their quarterly meeting in Lochgilphead on February 13 when the acting chairman Mr Robin Banks, Oban, was in the chair.

Good clean fun at Glencoe

Glencoe Hotel last Friday night proved that for good clean fun, the country is the place to get it.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Break (4)
- 3 Relating to blood carriers (8)
- 9 Refined (7)
- 10 Undress (5)
- 11 Ask to view again and again (7,5)
- 13 Hopeless (6)
- 15 Slowly nearing (6)
- 17 Ones who employs others to serve (12)
- 20 Cool dish served with curries (5)
- 21 Pub sing-along (7)
- 22 Produced (8)
- 23 Sort (4)

Down

- 1 One who reasons (8)
- 2 Single one (5)
- 4 Unwell (6)
- 5 Wholesaler (4-3-5)
- 6 Siren, who lures sailors (7)
- 7 Below par (4)
- 8 Insubordinate (12)
- 12 Wrong (8)
- 14 Laughing nastily (7)
- 16 Give under duress (6)
- 18 Black (5)
- 19 Grain store (4)

Last week's solution

G	U	D	J	U	E
S	O	I	R	E	E
L	G	V	F	A	E
A	D	Z	E	T	I
H	I	S	T	O	R
N	A	G	G	Y	P
S	A	G	G	Y	P
H	A	S	C	I	T
F	U	L	L	B	A
R	L	L	A	O	E
F	R	I	E	Z	E
Y	Y	S	E	N	R

TIREE

TREE Tot's will hold a 'mini-swish' this weekend, giving parents a chance to swap new or nearly new clothing for their rapidly growing children.

Clothes for children aged up to 10 will be swapped on the day. Refreshments will be available for what should be a fun afternoon.

Held at An Talla's small hall, the event will be held on Saturday from 2pm to 4pm.

ISLAY

FÈIS Oigridh Ile is Dhùra 2012 was an outstandingly successful event, held from February 15 to 17.

A total of 65 island children and young people took part in traditional music and dance classes and activities; 43 in the 8 to 18 age group and 22 younger children aged 3 to 7 enjoyed Fèis Bheag, an event begun last year to introduce younger children to music, dance and Gaelic through fun activities. Ionad Chalum Chille Ile (ICCI) was a hive of activity, with groups of children with tutors working in every nook and cranny of the building. Morag's Gaelic café did a roaring trade, getting hot lunches and 'copan' to all who wanted them, even through Wednesday's unexpected power-cut.

The Fèis Ceilidh is always a popular and well-attended event, and this year could be said to have excelled itself. The programme was ambitious; a film montage created by Ciara MacFaggart from some of Islay's historic 'home movies' told the story of a fictitious boy, Uilleam Beag.

The Fèis' children and tutors provided live musical accompaniment to the film show.

The ceilidh played to a packed hall at ICCI where every seat was occupied and more folk stood at the back. Introduced by Christine MacIntyre of Fèisan nan Gaidheal and Iseabail MacFaggart, the children, with their tutors, sang songs and played tunes relevant to the Islay places and events depicted in the film clips, and danced with confidence and obvious enjoyment.

Amongst the older pupils, a notable performance was given by Mairi MacGillivray on fiddle; her playing seems to become more polished and confident each time she plays.

Tutors this year were Murdo Cameron, accordion and guitar; Alasdair Murray, percussion; Eilidh Munro, clarsach; Celine Donohue, fiddle; Paula Davidson, step dance; Fraser Shaw, whistles; and Clare Jordan, Gaelic song. Besides their scheduled teaching during the Fèis days, these excellent young musicians treated the Islay public to informal sessions in village pubs during the

evenings. Fèis Oigridh Ile is Dhùra 2012 was supported by The Schroder Foundation, Iomairt Ghaidhlig Ile is Dhùra, Feisean nan Gaidheal, Mr & Mrs William Donald's Memorial Trust, Argyll and Bute Council, Creative Scotland and ScreenHI.

AN ISLAY man has heard his father's voice for the first time through an archive of Scottish songs.

On Tuesday February 21, BBC Radio Scotland's programme 'Culture Café' broadcast a feature with Islay's Duncan Currie, whose father Alasdair had been killed at the age of 33 in an explosion on the Isle of Jura when Duncan was only 13 months old.

In the phone interview for the programme, Duncan spoke of how he had never, while he was old enough to remember, heard his father's voice, although Alasdair had been a well known local singer.

Through Tobar an Dualchais, a collection of oral history and songs from Scotland's past, at age 50 Duncan was able to hear for the first time a recording of his father's voice singing 'Islay, Dear Islay', and was greatly moved by this emotional experience.

Duncan's son, also called Alasdair, a fine young Gaelic singer and piper with many Mòd successes to his credit, now sings his grandfather's song at Islay ceilidhs and events.

Tobar an Dualchais is available online at <http://tobarandualchais.co.uk>, and holds archives in Gaelic and Scots of recordings made by the University of Edinburgh, National Trust for Scotland and the BBC. SC

PORTSONACHAN

PORTSONACHAN will host this month's Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council meeting, which will discuss safety on Loch Awe, among other agenda items concerning the wider parish.

The community council will meet at Portsonachan Village Hall next Wednesday, March 7 at 7.30pm.

Members of the public are encouraged to attend.

MORAR

MORAR Community Council held its monthly meeting at Lady Lovat Primary School recently.

Among the issues discussed were:
 □ Roadworks on the A830 at Loch Eilt will start on March 26 for two weeks from Sunday night till Friday morning from 8pm till 6am.
 □ The road through Morar village has been damaged by water from a burst pipe at the top of the hill and down the brae. Scottish Water did a temporary



Youngsters catch Book Bug at Oban high

Taynuilt Nursery youngsters visited Oban High School recently where they were welcomed by the Book Bug who encouraged them to read as much as they can.

repair but this has been washed away. Also, the road surface is cracked and damaged from the railway crossing to Woodside. Councillor Allan Henderson will bring this to the attention of the appropriate authority.

□ Boundary Commission changes – letter of thanks from Charles Kennedy for our letter of support.

□ Caledonian Sleeper Service – responses from Dave Thompson MSP and Keith Brown MSP informing the Scottish Government and Westminster have both pledged £50million each.

□ Trees by the railway line and by the road – Alistair Neil asked the councillors about the trees being cut back as they are a safety issue. Mairead said the fence at the bridge had been taken down by Network Rail workers but not replaced. Secretary will phone Network Rail to find out what is happening.

□ Highland Council has offered to replace the damaged notice board.
 The next meeting will be held on Monday March 5 at 7.30pm.

SPEAN BRIDGE

A BBC presenter recently visited Achnacarry Castle, near Spean Bridge, to try his hand at

the arduous Commando training hundreds of volunteers went through during World War II.

Filming a piece for The One Show, Dan Snow was put through his paces by modern day Commandos from Fleet Protection Group and took part in a seven-mile speed march from The Commando Memorial at Spean bridge to Achnacarry. The report is expected to air on BBC One in early April.

PLOCKTON

THE SOUTH-west Ross District Drama Festival was held at Plockton High School recently and attracted two teams from Plockton, two from Lochcarron and one from Stornoway.

After two evenings of performances, Plockton Amateur Dramatic Society was awarded first place for its play 'Visiting hours', by Jane Lockyer Willis.

Second place went to Lochcarron Amateur Dramatic Society, which performed 'From Here to the Library' by Jimmie Chinn.

Plockton's 'Cupboard Love' won the Charlie Rennie award for best comedy moment of the festival. They will now go forward to the Scottish Community Drama Association Highland divisional finals on March 30 and 31.

BRIDGE OF ORCHY

CHANGES to care provision were discussed at a special meeting called by Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council last Tuesday.

Shaun Davidson, area manager for adult care at Argyll and Bute Council, addressed questions on the switch to the direct payment system of care provision.

Under the new system adults requiring care will become 'employers', choosing a person to care for them who they will then employ directly using funds allocated by the council.

Community councillor Anne Marshall, who attended the meeting, said:

'The outcome was they [Argyll and Bute Council] will try to explain more to the community and address concerns about a lack of suitable carers available to employ.'

CALLANDER

THE C29 bus between Callander and Aberfoyle will stop running as a fixed timetable service on March 31 and be replaced by a demand-responsive transport (DRT) service.

Aberfoyle Coaches, which runs the service for Stirling Council, will operate the DRT scheme using taxis and people carriers.

John Buchanan, director of Aberfoyle Coaches, said the limited number of passengers using the C29 had led to the decision.

Mr Buchanan said the £2.40 charge to travel from Callander to Aberfoyle on the C29 would go up to £3.40 under the DRT.

Customers are expected to request a vehicle 24 hours in advance but the company would also attempt to provide them at shorter notice.

STIRLING Council has been forced to apply for retrospective planning permission after it forgot to lodge the paperwork ahead of demolishing Callander's Main Street toilets.

The authority decided in December to remove the dilapidated facility, with the Station Road toilets recently

refurbished and having received a National 5-Star Grade in the 2012 Loo of the Year Awards.

However, it 'forgot' the toilets were in a conservation area and the council was forced to apply for permission after work was completed.

ABERFELDY

RESIDENTS of Aberfeldy have delivered a firm 'no' to the company wishing to develop a hydro power scheme at Ullar Burn.

An all household ballot resulted in 413 votes being cast, of which 63 per cent were against Green Highland Renewables' scheme. It almost exactly mirrors an earlier vote taken between local community councillors.

The latest poll had 200 more returns than the poll conducted when the scheme was first mooted two years ago.

Meanwhile, an earlier survey of 400 holidaymakers showed that their enjoyment of the Birks would not necessarily be affected by the strength of Ullar Burn's flow, but 87 per cent did say they would find their trip more satisfying with the falls at their peak.

KILLIN

ON OCTOBER 1 2010 Emma O'Shea, David McKinnon and Angus McKinnon began a National Trust for Scotland Munro Challenge to celebrate the 155th anniversary of Sir Hugh Munro's birth by climbing Beinn Ghlas and Ben Lawers.

On the day there were 100 people who had climbed the Trust Munros. On the descent over Beinn Ghlas in wet and windy conditions, but then the weather improved and everyone headed back to the trust offices after a great day.

LEWIS

A £2MILLION contract to carry out repairs to Lewis Castle on Lewis has been awarded to Northern Irish company Patton.

The works to secure the external envelope of the castle will be funded by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Historic Scotland and Heritage Lottery Fund.

Comhairle leader Angus Campbell said: 'This is a significant milestone and achievement for the Comhairle and its partners. The whole community will welcome a start on work to reverse the deterioration of Lewis Castle.'

A separate contract to carry out further repairs to the castle is expected to be awarded later this year.

FORT WILLIAM

AFTER 14 weeks of the Lochaber Building Supplies 10-pin bowling league, Alleycats' lead at the top of the scratch division has been cut to six points.

Council stay in second on 60 points after beating Phoenix 5-0 at the Nevis Centre, Fort William, while Ardtoe/Nevis Radio remain third.

The handicap division is even closer with the top three teams all dropping points this week. Alleycats, Council and Ardtoe/Nevis Radio cannot be split at the top, all on 47 points.

The highest scratch team game of the week came from Alleycats with 602, while Council had the highest handicap game with 807. Council also had the week's top scratch two game series with 1,115. Rotavators had the top handicap two game series with 1,565.

Individually, Alleycats' Tony Whitelocke rolled the best scratch game of 186 and the best two game scratch series of 335. Sean MacPherson of the Likely Lads chipped in with a 174. The best handicap game of the week came from Gus Fraser, Council, with 227. Derek Fraser, British Legion Scotland, had the best two game handicap series with 425.



Beachd Ailein
Ailean Caimbeul

THA MI a' faicinn gum bheil riaghaltas na frainge air cur às don tiotal 'mademoiselle' air sgàth 's gum bheil cuid a bhoireannaich den bheachd gum bheil am facal gan comharachadh 'rì m' faotainn'.

Aig an aon àm 's a tha An Fhraing air an tiotal sin a thoirt à pàipearan oifigeil de gach seòrsa, tha i cuideachd ag atharrachadh an dòigh sam bheil fine teaghlach bhann air iarraidh. Gu h-inntinneach, tha 'maiden name', mar a tha e againn sa Bheurla cuideachd, ri atharrachadh gu 'family name' neo ainm teaghlach mar a chanamaid ann an Gàidhlig.

Tha a' mhòr-chuid de dhaoine ciallach an-diugh a' faicinn fir is mnathan co-ionann agus tha an latha seachad far am biodh mnathan pòsta air am meas mar shearbhantach dha na fir aca. Ged a bhios mòran a chanas gur iad na fir a bu chòirach na mnathan a bhith gan 'cur sìos' mar sin, bha tomhas mhòr de chòir aig dualchas ris cuideachd. Tha cuimhne ro mhath agam fhìn air mar a bhiodh mo mhàthair-chèile chòir a' creidsinn gum robh còir na fir a fhrithealadh agus nach robh e idir coltach gum biodh iad ri obair-taighe, còcaireachd neo nighe shoithichean!

'S iomadh gaire a rinn sinn is mise a' tarraing a' m' bhean mu cho tàmailteach 's a bha mi nach do lean an fheallsanachd seo aig a' màthair ise. Tha mi a' creidsinn gum robh pàirt den choire an lùib teagas nan eaglaisean cuideachd agus gu dearbh gu bho chionn glè ghoirid air ais, bha òrd luchd-dreuchd ann sin am meas nan eisimpleirean a b'fheàrr de 'chauvinism'! Tha an saoghal sin ag atharrachadh beag air bheag is tha boireannaich a-nise a' faotainn cothrom air dreuchdan teagas ann an cuid de na h-eaglaisean, ged nach eil anna uile.

Chaidh mòran spàirn a dhèanamh feadh an t-saoghail bho chionn bliadhnaichean às leth co-ionannachd spèis is cothruim dha mnathan agus ged a rinneadh leasachadh air cuisean, tha astar mòr ri shìubhal fhathast. Ach saoilidh mi nach eil lethid na th'air tachairt san Fhraing a' ciallachadh cus mur a tòisich boireannaich pòsta ri sgur a chleachdadh fhàinneachan-pòsaidh cuideachd. Càite an stad sinn? Am feum màthraichean cuideachd seachnadh nochdadh le clann eagal 's gun tuigear gum bheil iad pòsta? Chan eil freagair fhurasta ann agus ged nach eil facal againn ann an Gàidhlig airson 'chauvinism' cha tuirt sin nach eil e nar meas!

THE FRENCH government decision to stop using the terms 'mademoiselle' and 'maiden name' can be lauded as an enhancement of women's rights and respect.

It seems to me, however, that while unmarried women will no longer be so clearly identifiable, they will still be unable to become 'lost in the crowd' until or unless married women stop wearing engagement and marriage rings.

Gaels can feel smug that we have always used 'family name' as opposed to 'maiden name', but the fact that we do not have a Gaelic word for chauvinism doesn't mean that we do not practise it!

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

ROY BRIDGE



Roy Bridge children support backpack appeal

Children of Sgoil Araich Braigh Lochabair, the Gaelic nursery in Roy Bridge, have collected 50 backpacks filled with basic items for deprived youngsters in Africa. The nursery started its appeal before Christmas and was delighted to have backpacks, cash and various items donated by the local community. The bags will be sent to the charity Mary's Meals which will deliver them overseas. Eco committee secretary Cheryl Irons said: 'This has been a great way to recycle backpacks and clothes and we hope to do a similar appeal next year. The children have learnt about children who are less well off than themselves and the basic needs which they have and we take for granted.'

Around the Rurals



From left: Patricia Johnstone from Largieside, Cathy Smith from Kilmichael Glassary, Sally Weaser from Oban and Alison MacCorquodale from Appin during one of the fun races at the recent SWRI Olympics qualifier. 15_1085wv11

Oban

LADIES from Oban and Lorn's rural women's institutes recently took part in their own mini version of the Olympics at Glenclruite Church Hall.

Refined heels were replaced with sensible shoes and trainers, while long skirts made way for trousers as the women took part in a series of fun events, the like of which are more regularly performed by Scouts.

A qualifier for the second Scottish Women's Rural Institute (SWRI) Olympics, participants ranged in age from 32 to 77. The prize – a chance to compete at the national games in Perth later this year.

The Oban WRI won the event, with team members Sally Weaser, Margaret Anne Dow and Kay MacDonald joined by Linda MacLeod from Appin as their fourth member was ill and unable to attend.

In Ssecond place was Southend WRI from Campbelltown, whose members, Elizabeth Semple, Trish Jones, Margaret Bates and Jane Ives, will join Oban in Perth later this year.

Kilmore

MEMBERS of the Kilmore branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute were welcomed to the February meeting by vice president Fiona Dickie.

After business, Fiona introduced Sandra Bergent who showed everyone how to make boxes from coloured paper. Rhoda Thomas gave the vote of thanks.

Competitions: Bowl of Bulbs, 1 Rhoda Thomas; 2 Helen Brotherton. Border tart, 1 Ann Ferguson; 2 Fiona Dickie.

The annual dinner was held in the Falls of Lora Hotel, Connel, on February 17. Thanks go to Mrs Webster and her excellent staff for their kindness to the Kilmore ladies. Good food, good company – a brilliant night.

Taynuilt

PRESIDENT Jessie Servant welcomed 17 members and six visitors to the meeting in Taynuilt Village Hall on February 8.

Julia Hamilton was the speaker for the evening and she gave an informative and well-illustrated talk about the work of the Whale and Dolphin Trust in Scotland, Britain and throughout the world.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening, which highlighted many of the hazards for marine life.

A lovely tea was provided by Jessie Servant and Marlene Stanners and the vote of thanks was given by Jessie Servant.

Competitions: Three-flower arrangement, 1 Alice Campbell; 2 Cathy Potter; 3 Doreen Penswick. Stormy Seas photo, 1 Cathy Potter; 2 Tracey Sage.

Killin

KILLIN WRI will have the chance to learn more about the art of theatre make-up from make-up artist Gemma Hughes at a meeting at the Lesser McLaren Hall tonight (Thursday March 1).

Ms Hughes will bring her experience in numerous theatre productions in London and the USA to the Killin ladies.

Costume jewellery and cupcake competitions will also feature at the event, which starts at 7.30pm.

Got a district news story? Call 01631 568000 or 01397 703003

ON NOW SALE

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Fuel derogation is a victory for common sense

TODAY, Thursday, March 1 marks day one of the introduction of a 5p per litre cut in fuel prices across the islands. The cut is one of the largest of its kind in Europe and is likely to trigger a reaction throughout the rest of the EC that could see other rural communities follow suit.

Final EC approval for this Scottish island derogation scheme was gained in November, following years of being told that such a scheme to assist the economies of remote, isolated, rural locations was either unworkable or unavailable within European guidelines.

It will also be rightly viewed as a huge accolade for the Liberal Democrat wing of the coalition government at Westminster - the Conservatives while in opposition were posting missing in support of the suggestion of fuel derogation - Labour simply refused to acknowledge its potential or availability.

The cut in price will come as a huge relief to regions where a vehicle is far from a luxury but a necessity and whose everyday needs, and therefore input costs, are governed by haulage rates. More needs to be done to allow haulage contractors, who purchase their fuel in bulk and are therefore exempt from the retail rebate, to gain from this sensible derogation scheme and, by passing on the benefits to the wider community, take maximum advantage of the hard won victory.

GLASGOW LETTER

Successful choir concert

GLASGOW Islay Gaelic Choirs enjoyed a good attendance at their annual concert in Bearsden Burgh Hall when the theme was one of connections with the junior choir.

Two of the soloists from the seniors, Jennifer Campbell, accompanied by Theresa Irvine on clarsach, and Alison Campbell, were both members of the junior choir and Doreen Smith was for many years convenor of the juniors.

Individual contributions from the youngsters came from Karen MacDonald, Christy O'Hanlon, Rebekah Boyle, Abigail Kavanagh, Kara MacDonald, Erin Whyte and Bridge Morrison and for those interested in talent spotting look out for accordion playing Bridge in the future. Both choirs performed well, under the batons of Kirsteen Grant and Jane MacQueen, singing a variety of songs on their own and together.

Archie Robertson, president of the Camanachd Association, was in charge of proceedings and kept the audience amused with his many interesting stories.

Glasgow Islay Association

TOMORROW evening (Friday), as I detailed last week, will see the above association celebrate its 150th birthday in the Mitchell Theatre with the concert starting at 7pm - earlier than usual for such functions.

Gaelic choristers in Paisley

THE INFORMAL choral competition for Gaelic choirs will be held at the Wynd Centre this coming Saturday, at 7.30pm, for the Celia Lawson Gaelic Cup.

The four senior choirs in the immediate Glasgow area will take part with the audience voting for the new signature tune for Mod Phaislig 2013. This choral event will be hosted by Mod Phaislig and by Voices in Paisley as part of Weaving Music Threads, the free programme of arts and culture taking place throughout this weekend.

Paisley and Rabbie Burns

PAISLEY and District Highlander's Association held a successful celebration of Rabbie Burns in the High Kirk, Johnstone, with Ian McCosh taking on the duties of addressing the haggis, reciting and singing.

The next ceilidh dance, on March 10 in Elderslie, will see a return to the usual format.

YOUR LETTERS

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page.

The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including an email, 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.

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WE AT The Oban Times do our utmost to make sure that all our reports are fair, accurate and balanced, but we accept that, on occasion, mistakes can occur in the hectic process of producing the biggest local newspaper in the West Highlands.

It is the policy of The Oban Times Group to correct any errors in print. If you find an error of fact on our pages please write to The Editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB giving your day-time telephone number where possible. This statement of policy will appear on this page every week along with any corrections or clarifications.

The Oban Times adheres to the Press Complaints' Commission's Code of Conduct.

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



George Street, Oban, in days gone by

Martin MacNeil of Laurel Road, Oban, submitted this week's flashback photo - a view of Oban's George Street from days gone by. Please send prints to *The Oban Times*, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing their prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

Letters to the editor

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

www.obantimes.co.uk

Telephone: 01631 568000
Fax: 01631 568001

A golden opportunity

Sir, With respect to the gentleman who wrote in last week regarding the former Rockfield Primary School, Oban, I find it very frustrating anyone would want to keep a building which has no use to anyone.

We should be allowed to bring the town into the 21st century.

Why not have a modern building, built with modern materials and modern techniques.

No developer in their right mind would want to buy and convert a building that will always look like a 19th century school.

The Rockfield school site is a prime site, in the centre of the town. This creates a golden opportunity to move the town forward with a development the town could be proud of. With the co-operation of sensible planners, creative architects and a good developer, this site could have many uses and benefit the town.

Get trains back on track

Sir, Doug Carmichael is absolutely right - the present trains for Glasgow to Oban/Fort William are of an almost Third World standard - old rolling stock, non-welded track and a solitary toilet for two carriages.

What tourists must think as they shuggle down the Clyde where the shores are littered with detritus, past cuttings strewn with rubbish, into wonderful scenery often hidden by scrub and trees.

This should be an enjoyable prelude to an iconic trip from Fort William to Mallaig, not something to be endured. We are told that tourism makes Scotland a great deal of money, so why squander an opportunity.

Come on Scotrail and the Scottish Executive - after all funding was found for the Border Line. Upgrade this wonderful asset.

Bus shelter shambles

Sir, About 20 fare-paying school-children travel from North Ballachulish to attend Kinlochleven Secondary School.

There was no bus shelter for the children and I struggled for a year to have one built.

Finally, one was erected during a violent storm a few days before Christmas 2011. Such was the storm, the workmen had to abandon the job for the day. They returned a few days later and completed the job. Wonderful, I thought.

Two days later, again during high winds, the roof of this shelter blew off and landed in a local councillor's garden. I have now been trying to have this ridiculous situation rectified since then with absolutely no success.

No member of Highland Council will accept responsibility for this debacle.

The first shelter cost £4,000 and to fix the existing one another £7,000. The shelter was erected in the wrong place and facing the wrong way.

While Highland Council argues over this, the children travel to school each day soaked

to the skin and spend the day in their soaking clothes.

I am at my wits end trying to get some remedial action from Highland Council and during my last phone call was told the director responsible was too busy to speak on the phone.

Along with another local lady, we have contacted about every member of Highland Council and was promised to have this problem sorted. They sent down a deputation to examine the locus after I had given the exact location of the damaged shelter about 50 yards south of the junction with the B863 Kinlochleven Road. Children travelling north have a proper bus shelter and for some unknown reason they travel free.

Thanks to the power of *The Oban Times* I have had problems fixed in the past. I hope you print my letter to rectify the ludicrous situation.

Speak up on rural education

Sir, With all the evidence coming out about the apparent disreputable tactics of 'spying' used by some Argyll and Bute Council staff and the collaboration rather than independence of the independent educational advisor in the school closure proposals process, is it not time the Scottish Government conducted an external investigation of how the council ran the schools' consultation process?

For children, parents and concerned citizens, there is a chance to speak to the Commission on Rural Education in Lochgilphead on March 6 to put forward the reasons why these smaller schools are so important to their communities and how they could be developed to be a resource for the community. For example, they could be set up to provide video conferencing for the community or be open for rental during the holidays.

I am sure other readers will also have ideas they could share to preserve these cornerstones of our communities, and feed into the process of making policy in the area of rural schools. The Commission wants to hear your views.

Road cash allocation

Sir, I am surprised no councillor for Oban, Lorn and the Isles has informed your readers that George Freeman's letter in *The Oban Times* dated February 16 is misleading.

Oban, Lorn and the Isles gets more funding for roads because there are more road miles in the area.

Can we afford renewables?

Sir, I was interested to read last week Mr Young's advert for his proposed Clachan windfarm, in which he outlined the Community benefits possible.

They could indeed be considerable, but assuming I Renewable Obligation Certificate (ROC) is paid at the current 4.8p, then his

nine turbines would get a ROC subsidy of £1.12 million pounds a year, compared to his community donation of £72,000, as outlined in his leaflet. On a capital cost for nine turbines of £12.41 million that is a gross subsidy rate of 9.0 per cent; plus, assuming 5p/kWh, a further £1.17 million a year from electricity sales. A fair return on capital employed is only reasonable but, on a national basis, can we afford subsidies at these rates in a time of fiscal stringency? The ROC subsidy is spread across all electricity users as a tax - is it, therefore, a moral tax, being socialised across all consumers for the benefit of a few?

Politicians of all parties appear besotted with wind power, yet have not fully considered the consequences. Meeting our 2020 obligations under the EU Renewables Directive will come at a high social and economic cost as Ofgem has estimated that the UK Government's energy policy will result in a doubling of electricity prices to consumers within 15 years; the much higher renewable targets of the Scottish Government will result in even higher prices. The Renewable Energy Foundation calculates the final cost to Scotland of the wind farm fleet at approximately £2 billion annually - about £300 to every Scottish household. For comparison, the net expenditure of Argyll and Bute Council for 2011/12 was £262 million, about 1/7th of £2 billion.

This invisible tax on electricity bills will further strain household budgets, particularly at a time of forecast static or falling income. The Highlands generally have below-average wages, and this tax will have a larger proportional effect on those with lower incomes. Is this just? Tony Dalton, Lochavich.

Misleading claims on wind farms

Sir, I was heartened to read the excellent letters from Malcolm Kirk and Archie McIntyre in *The Oban Times* of February 23.

Both demonstrated a clear understanding of the great wind farm scam being perpetrated by the Scottish Government, whose motives are nothing grander than political expediency, and the wind industry which is driven by profit at all costs. Imagine my disgust, therefore, when on turning the page, I was confronted by a half page 'Open letter' (Advertisement) from Rory Young of West Coast Renewables. This was a thoroughly shameful piece of mendacity which had all the sincerity of the tobacco executives who swear that their products are not injurious to our health.

Mr Young unashamedly tries to seduce local residents with his '30 pieces of silver' but omits to mention the huge losses that will accrue to the local economy from the long term damage to tourism, if his application to erect nine, 70 metre wind turbines at Clachan near Loch Seil is allowed to go ahead.

He then goes on to make the usual false and misleading claims for the amount of energy which will be generated, the amount of CO2 emissions that will be saved and the effect this will have on climate change.

Mr Young is not alone in making these dishonest claims; the entire industry of which he is part and the politicians whom they have seduced,

repeatedly reel off such lies. One of the oft repeated mantras of the Yes2wind organisation is 'harnessing the natural power of the wind is essential to tackle global warming'. It sounds laudable but it is really only essential to earning their massive profits through subsidies paid for by the ordinary energy consumer. It will have no appreciable effect on global warming.

I find it strange residents of Argyll and Bute to formally object to Mr Young's application to desecrate their landscape for no benefit other than his own profit.

Councillors must work together

Sir, I find it strange Councillor Eddie Hunter feels he can tell the SNP candidate not to stand, *The Oban Times* February 23, because they are saying the same as he and others said in 2007.

Surely the words discussion, debate, decision making and democracy go right back to the Greek city states. So he can hardly claim copyright.

Also, I would have thought it was for the electorate to decide who they want as a representative. To try and score points off any party, group or individual before an election does not auger well for unity in the council chamber afterwards. Surely it is not beyond reason to expect that whichever councillors are elected they will work together as a unit and set aside the wishes of party or group in favour of the wishes of the people.

Transport water to England by train

Sir, Once again we read of a water shortage in East Anglia and the east of England.

We are told that this is likely to be endemic. Something should be done. I would propose that water tanker trains be used to transport water from Scottish lochs to Eastern England. These tanker trains would receive water pumped from lochs in the evening, after the last train had passed on the lines to Oban, Mallaig and Kyle of Lochalsh. Pumping stations on the loch shore would send water up to loading points on the railway lines.

The tanker trains would then travel south in the late evening when the main line south of Edinburgh is less busy. They would discharge Scottish water into reservoirs and rivers close to rail lines in Eastern England. This should be possible 350 days a year, allowing for public holidays.

This scheme requires entrepreneurs to build the pumping stations and rail-side facilities to buy tanker trains and to provide reception facilities in England. Water users in East England and the rail companies would benefit and jobs would be created in setting up and running the system. Proprietors of Scottish lochs could charge for water sales.

Which large Scottish lochs are close to railway lines? Answer: Lochs Lomond, Awe, Morar - deepest in Europe - Shiel and Erich. Water supply is guaranteed; all we need is the right kind of entrepreneur and East England would drink freely.

Share your humorous gems, comments on life or amusing tales with the Diary.

Email editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to *Diary*, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

Alan Cochrane

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH'S
SCOTTISH EDITOR



Rant and rail

Legitimate complaints must be heard, whether they upset officialdom or not

WHEN does a legitimate complaint become verbal abuse? I only ask because of the way officialdom, in all its guises, has decided to silence ordinary people who feel let down by the service they receive or, in many cases, don't receive.

As an example, allow me to recount what befell me and other East Coast Mainline passengers at Waverley Station recently. We were waiting at Platform 9 for the 08.00 service to Kings Cross and had been notified by the electronic noticeboard, not by any of the uniformed staff, that the train would be delayed. Ho hum, I thought and returned to my newspaper.

Shortly after 8am, however, the noticeboard revealed that the next train to arrive at that platform would be a Cross Country service to Plymouth and then we just about managed to hear over the tannoy that our train was leaving from another platform at the far side of the station. When we got there we were told by East Coast staff that our service had, in fact, been cancelled as it had broken down at Carstairs and that we were actually joining the 08.30 service to Kings Cross.

Fine, except that because two services were being merged, all seat reservations were void, so passengers had to scramble to find a seat. It was all a bit of nuisance but these things happen, and as a regular rail traveller to London, I think East Coast provides a pretty good service.

But my resigned mood turned to downright annoyance when we were treated to a great long tirade - I can think of no better word for it - on the train's intercom by the train guard/conductor/whatever their title is these days, by name of 'Andy'. He informed us that several staff had been subjected to 'verbal abuse', that his company wouldn't tolerate such stuff and, more significantly, that 'action' was being taken against those passengers responsible for such 'crimes'. Who they were and what they did, I never found out.

I did hear several people complain about the cancellation and the fact that the 08.30 service stopped at different stations, making it necessary for some to change at, for instance, Newcastle to catch connecting services. But I didn't think any of it amounted to abuse.

But this brings me back to my original question. What constitutes verbal abuse?

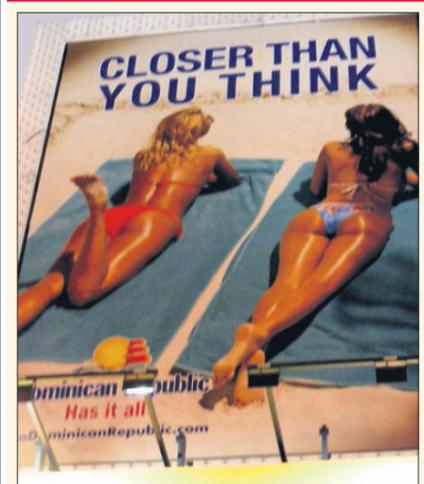
I suppose it is very much in the eye - and ear - of the beholder and my problem is that it has become nigh-on impossible to complain about anything, certainly not to anyone in a uniform. 'Andy', our man on the train, informed us that it was not the fault of any of the East Coast liveried staff at Waverley that our train had broken down and that they shouldn't be complained to. Nobody was accusing them of deliberate sabotage, but if we can't moan to representatives of the company whose failings are responsible for the inconvenience that many of us were suffering, what are we to do?

The company's head office must have known that the train would not be turning up long before we were told, so why didn't it make an announcement until the last minute?

In one respect 'Andy' was right; it isn't the fault of the staff patrolling the platforms. But somebody should be prepared to take the brunt of passengers' ire in the event of poor service and that somebody should be a senior manager. Instead of hiding in a centrally heated office, they should be out in the thick of it dressed in a uniform that makes it plain that they're in charge and, thus, responsible when things go wrong. What about a bowler hat, as used to be worn when we had proper station masters? At least we'd know to whom we should address our complaints and the lesser mortals wouldn't have to take it on the chin the way 'Andy' says it currently is.

But one of these days, we're going to have to get a definition of 'verbal abuse'. If I say: 'Bloody hell, call this a train service!' will I end up in the dock?

Times Diary



Keen to rid itself of the 'Gateway to the Isles' shackles, Oban's tourism sector coined a new slogan, 'Closer than you think', to attract those who believed the town shared a latitude with northern Greenland. Albeit a good idea, it seems the Dominican Republic has beaten the town to the brainwave - and has a rather eye-catching advert too, which if used in Oban would fall under the category of false advertising. The picture of this New York billboard was sent into *The Diary* by Oban's Larni Wright, who recently holidayed in The Big Apple. *Diary* eagerly anticipates Oban's version.

ANNE MacKinnon, Inverness tells us that she was talking to her old granny who was feeling a bit under the weather. Granny assured Anne that she would be fine in a few hours. 'I'll just get a couple of paramedics and lie down in a dark room!'

AN OBAN woman who hasn't sang professionally for more 15 years wowed an audience of 1,000 on a trip to Cape Verd last month.

Susan Hyams' performance at the Riu Tourareg Hotel in Boa Vista can be seen on video sharing site YouTube.

After alerting *The Oban Times* to the video, Susan's husband Raymond said: 'She'll kill me.'

QUOTE of the week: 'A few years ago, everybody was saying, we must have more leisure, everybody's working too much. Now that everybody's got more leisure, they're complaining they're unemployed.' - Prince Philip. People eh, Phil?

Claggan drink driver banned

A CLAGGAN man has been banned from driving for 16 months and fined £810 after admitting driving in Fort William while more than twice the legal alcohol limit.

Graham Allison, of 9 Acharach, pled guilty to driving on the A82 from the train station to Ben Nevis Filling Station in the early hours of September 24.

A worker at the filling station saw the 22-year-old forklift driver getting out of the car and contacted the police, Fort William Sheriff Court heard.

Man admits punching brother

A SPEAN Bridge man has admitted assaulting his brother and giving a false name, date of birth and address to police afterwards.

John McPhee, of plot seven, Spean Bridge travellers site, pled guilty to punching his brother on the head to his injury on Heaste Road, near Broadford, Skye, on September 3. The 30-year-old also admitted attempting to pervert the course of justice by giving false details to police officers at Heaste Campsite, Broadford.

Sentencing was deferred at Fort William Sheriff Court until March 14 for reports.

Woman kicked and spat at officer

A CAOL woman has admitted kicking a police officer on the leg and spitting at her after she and a man tried to leave a Fort William restaurant without paying.

Carol Lawrie, aged 25, of 20 Camaghael Road, pled guilty to assaulting the police constable during the incident at Spice Tandoori, High Street, on February 1.

Stuart Lawrie, aged 21, of 22 Glenpane Street, admitted attempting to leave the restaurant without paying their £46.20 bill.

Sheriff John Rafferty deferred sentencing the pair at Fort William Sheriff Court until March 14 for reports.

19-year-old faces assault trial

A FORT William teenager accused of assaulting three women at a house in Inverloch is due to stand trial at the town's sheriff court on March 12.

Donald MacPhee, of 42b Alma Road, denies assaulting the women at a property on Dubh MacDonal Place on November 5. The 19-year-old is accused of pushing one woman on the body, repeatedly kicking, slapping and punching her on the body to her injury, pushing a second woman to the ground and kicking her on the head and pushing a third woman to the ground.

MacPhee also pled not guilty to kicking and punching doors at the property and smashing a lamp.

Man admits assaulting girlfriend

A KINLOCHLEVEN man has admitted kicking in the back door of his ex-girlfriend's house and repeatedly pushing her during a drunken argument.

Appearing at Fort William Sheriff Court from custody, Shaun Fraser, of 28 Lovat Road, pled guilty to wilfully or recklessly damaging the rear door of a house Foyers Road on February 25.

The 23-year-old also admitted assaulting the woman at a house on Leven Road later the same night. Deferring sentencing Fraser until August 29 for reports, Sheriff John Rafferty said: 'This is a serious matter. But you have pled guilty at the earliest opportunity which to me is consistent with remorse.'

Builder found guilty of Spean Bridge cocaine deal

Detectives watched man hand over drugs worth £24,000

A BUILDER once crowned the strongest man in Scotland was caught helping drug barons, a court heard on Monday.

Undercover detectives watched Louis MacLean, 38, of Fort William, hand over a package of cocaine worth at least £24,000 in a Spean Bridge grocery store car park.

At the time MacLean, released early from jail after a previous drugs offence, was just three weeks away from completing his term on licence. He had been caught up in Operation Arena, set up to target other drug traffickers, prosecutor Susanne Tanner told the High Court in Edinburgh.

Judge Lord Tyre reluctantly granted bail 'on a compassionate basis' because members of his family are seriously ill.

He told MacLean: 'You may wish to reflect on the fact that the court is showing a great deal more compassion than you and your associates have shown in becoming involved in the supply of drugs which cause a great

deal of misery in the area where you live.' The judge warned the drug dealer that when he returns to court on March 26 after background reports have been prepared, he is likely to go to prison.

MacLean, whose family run a B&B at West Court, Achintore Road, Fort William, admitted being concerned in the supply of cocaine on August 21 2009 in the car park of the Spar Store in Spean Bridge.

Ms Tanner said MacLean was seen driving a hired Ford Fiesta that day.

Meanwhile, another man had asked a girlfriend to give him a lift and her silver Volkswagen Polo pulled into the Spar car park. As the woman and other passengers went to get something to eat, the man remained in the Polo, said Ms Tanner.

The Fiesta pulled into the shop's car park, stopped briefly beside the silver Polo and MacLean handed over a package which the other man hid under his black jacket.

As MacLean drove back towards Fort William, the Polo headed north. When police stopped the silver Volkswagen they seized the package of cocaine.

The court heard that in March 2004 MacLean was jailed for five and a half years for his part in the supply of cannabis resin in the Inverness area after police seized 14 kilos of the drug with a street value of £65,000.

He was freed in December 2006 and his licence conditions would have expired on September 11 2009.

Defence QC Robert Anthony said it was well-known that drug dealers who were making all the profits used messengers or 'go-fers' so that they never came into contact with illegal drugs themselves.

'MacLean was not the target of Operation Arena but simply came onto the radar on one day,' said the lawyer. 'MacLean ought to have known better and that is the basis of the plea of guilty.'



Guilty: Louis MacLean emerges from the High Court in Edinburgh on Monday.

Public meeting spotlight on integration of services

PEOPLE in Skye and Lochalsh are being invited to find out more about new arrangements to integrate health, education and social care services provided by NHS Highland and Highland Council at a public meeting in Tigh na Sgìre, Council Offices, Portree, next Monday at 5pm.

Transitions director Jan Baird will explain how, from April 1,

staff are being brought together into integrated teams to deliver the services. Views She said: 'We would like to hear the views of people who have not already been involved in the process in other ways, especially if they use, or look after someone who uses children and families or community care services.'

Landowners publish manual to help prevent wildfires

DEVASTATING moorland blazes in the West Highlands last spring have prompted a landowners group to publish a wildfires manual to help prevent another disaster this year.

Scottish Land and Estates, which represents 2,500 landowners across the country, prepared the guide after demands that fire contingency plans be drawn up in all high-risk areas.

A survey of deer management groups also showed strong support for joint working with fire and rescue services and neighbours to create a chain of wildfire defences.

Recent reductions in livestock numbers meant more areas were now under threat, SLE Highland regional manager Drew McFarlane Slack warned.

He said: 'The risk of wildfire is growing while the resources available to fight it are decreasing. Land use trends are indirectly increasing the quantity of vegetation while climate change predictions indicate an increase in the occurrence of dry and warm spells. 'These factors, coupled with

falling fire and rescue budget cuts, all make for a difficult context. It is therefore essential that we study how well we are organised and look at how prepared and willing we are to work together to support each other in tackling the wildfire threat.'

Private landowners and estates across the Highlands spent an estimated £1million last spring supplying experienced staff and specialist equipment to fight wildfires in Glen Shiel, Torridon, Lochailort, and Newton of Ardoe in Salen, among others. More than 25,000 acres were destroyed between April 30 and May 5.

Welcoming the guide, Trevor Johnson of the Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service said: 'In order to help develop the best possible response to wildfires, the Scottish Wildfire Forum encourages landowners to consider forming local wildfire groups to pre-plan mutual assistance, which will facilitate the effective response and management of wildfire incidents.'



Firefighters battle a raging wildfire above Shiel Bridge last May. Photograph courtesy of Saffron Dilly.



Lochyside RC Primary School P7 pupils Megan Campbell and Lucy Groundwater raised cash for school funds at their bric-a-brac stall. 20.09lochy01

School funds boosted by £1,200

LOCHYSIDE RC Primary was packed out on Saturday morning as supporters helped raise £1,200 for school funds.

A Fairtrade coffee morning, produce made with Fairtrade goods and car boot sale stalls all contributed to the total.

Head teacher Violet Smith told *The Oban Times*: 'It's so good to have the whole community here to promote Fairtrade Fortnight.'

Ms Smith thanked Caol Co-op for generously donating Fairtrade coffee and tea and said Kenyan Fairtrade farmer Joseph Cheruiyot, the chairman of Fintea Growers Co-operative Union, would be visiting Lochyside this morning (Thursday). 'We are so happy that he is coming,' Ms Smith said.

Highland Council agrees on scheme to spread 'windfall' cash across area

A NEW scheme to spread 'windfall' cash from renewable energy developments across Highland communities has been agreed by Highland Council.

Until now, community benefits from windfarm and hydro schemes had gone only to community council areas directly affected.

But at a conference in Inverness on Friday, a new three-tier system of distributing payments was agreed.

The policy, which will govern all onshore renewable schemes, would see the council negotiate on behalf of local communities to secure a minimum of £5,000 per megawatt of installed capacity per year from developers for community benefit funds.

A windfarm developer

By STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

building 20 turbines each with a 3MW capacity would contribute £300,000 annually, with the first £100,000 going to local communities and managed within a local fund.

Of the remaining benefit, 55 per cent would also go to local communities, 30 per cent to a local area funds and 15 per cent to a Highland Trust Fund (HTF).

All three funds would be open to bids from communities, groups and appropriate organisations for local projects.

Communities not able to access local or area funds will be able to bid into the HTF, which

will be operated by a separate organisation from the council.

Council leader Michael Foxley gave a theoretical example of a windfarm coming to west side of Loch Linnhe.

Under the previous system only Ardgour would have received community benefit cash, but now the local Lochaber fund and the HTF would also receive a percentage.

Claiming that payments to local communities by some developers had fallen to £2,000 per megawatt, or in certain cases, nothing at all, he told *The Oban Times*: 'Recently developers and owners have been giving less and less. We are committed to maximising community benefit accruing to all Highland communities from

onshore and offshore renewable energy developments. We will spread benefits as widely as we can throughout Highland for the good of all communities. We will lobby Scottish and UK Governments so that the aims of the policy can be achieved in a realistic timescale.'

Councillor Foxley said SSE, Scottish Power Renewables, Forestry Commission Scotland and Ardnornish Estate had already signed up to the new concordat, with FCS also offering communities the chance to buy a stake in energy developments.

Keynote speaker at the conference, Energy Enterprise and Tourism Minister Fergus Ewing said: 'I want Highland communities to share in the economic and social benefits of

Scotland's onshore and offshore renewables revolution. Scotland leads the UK in our support for local ownership of renewables projects and we have set a new target of 500 megawatts of community and locally owned renewables by 2020, which could be worth up to £2.4 billion to communities and rural businesses.'

The council is also determined to negotiate similar benefits for local communities from offshore developments, which are regulated by the Crown Estate Commissioners and by Marine Scotland.

Where a development takes place in open waters, 20 per cent of the benefit would go to coastal communities with 80 per cent to the HTF.

Andy aims high with Ben Nevis challenge

A YOUNG Fort William man who lost his leg in a serious accident last year will attempt to climb Ben Nevis on Saturday to raise money for charities.

Andy MacLeod, 19, is taking on the gruelling challenge to mark one year since he almost lost his life while cycling in the Lochaber capital.

He was hit by a car and thrown in the air, and had to be flown by helicopter to Glasgow Royal Infirmary suffering from serious leg and head injuries.

Now mobile again with a

new titanium and carbon fibre prosthetic leg, Andy is climbing in aid of Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and the RNLI.

Andy, an adventure tourism and management student at West Highland College in Fort William, will set out with the support of friends and hopes to complete the climb in around six hours.

He said: 'To climb Ben Nevis has been my aim since the accident.'

People can support the event by going to www.charitygiving.co.uk/andymacleod.



Andy MacLeod: climbing Ben Nevis with his new artificial leg.

Official opening of Acharacle Primary School

CABINET secretary for education and lifelong learning Michael Russell will officially open Acharacle Primary School tomorrow.

The minister will be joined by council leader Michael Foxley and education, culture and sport chairman Bill Fernie.

The £6.5million school opened its doors to pupils in May 2009 and incorporates eco-friendly designs to ensure very low energy use. It currently has 47 pupils in P1-7 and 15 in the Gaelic and bi-lingual nursery. Head teacher Lyndsay Bradley said: 'We are all busy rehearsing music and songs to entertain the guests during the official opening.'

Mr Russell's visit to Lochaber will also include a guided tour around Ardnarnachan High School, now in its tenth year.



Teenager refused bail as sentence is deferred

A FORT William teenager who admitted a series of criminal charges has been held in police custody until he is sentenced next month after a sheriff said there was a 'substantial risk' of him re-offending.

Appearing at Fort William Sheriff Court from custody, Dennis Liversedge, of Flat 4, 33 High Street, pled guilty to stealing a box of lager from Grange Stores in the town on February 25 while

on bail. The 19-year-old previously admitted refusing to leave the Crofter Bar, Fort William, after being asked to leave by a police officer at closing time on February 5.

He also pleaded guilty to behaving in a threatening or abusive manner on the town's High Street by shouting and swearing at police, kicking a whee bin and threatening to spit at an officer on the same night.

Liversedge, who moved to Lochaber in September, is also due to be sentenced for stealing a sandwich and a bottle of cider, challenging others to fight and repeatedly shouting and swearing at employees at Tesco, High Street, on February 2.

Sheriff John Rafferty denied an application for bail and deferred sentencing Liversedge until March 14 for reports.

School inspectors praise Lochyside's 'positive, caring and inclusive ethos'

A RECENT government inspection of Lochyside RC Primary has praised the school's 'positive, caring and inclusive ethos'.

Examiners from HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) recently visited the school, speaking to staff and pupils and highlighted the school's 'effective partnerships with parents, churches and the community'.

The report said: 'The school provides high-quality support to help children to develop and learn. Across the school, children are highly motivated by a rich and stimulating variety of active learning experiences.'

The international art project Room 13 was commended for enhancing the pupil's creative and business skills.

Head teacher Violet Smith, whose leadership of the school was also praised, said she was 'delighted' with the report.

She said: 'It highlights the hard work, commitment and dedication of pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community. It acknowledges the impact that our implementation of the Curriculum for Excellence is having on our pupils' learning. The report also reflects the very positive ethos and the excellent teamwork which is the cornerstone of Lochyside RC Primary School.'

Chief Secretary visits Uig and Skye

CHIEF Secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander is visiting Skye this morning to welcome today's introduction of the UK Government's rural fuel rebate pilot scheme, which cuts petrol and diesel on the Hebrides by five pence per litre.

Mr Alexander is visiting Uig Filling Station and the Isle of Skye Brewing Company to see how businesses and motorists will benefit from the scheme.

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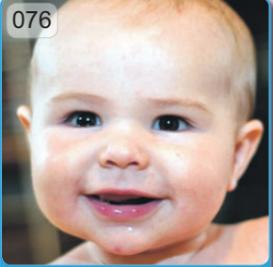
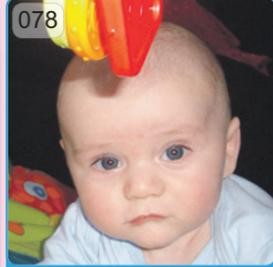
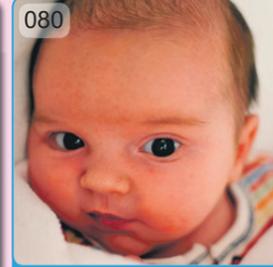
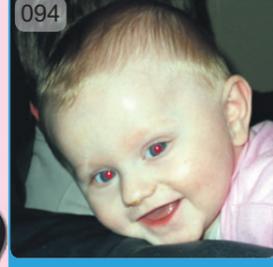
WIN
£500
of shopping vouchers

How the competition works

This year it is up to you, our readers, to vote for who you think should win the title of The Oban Times' 'Bonniest Baby' and £500 worth of shopping vouchers to spend at The Co-operative! We will publish a selection of Bonnie Babies each week of the competition until spring. At the end, the babies with the most votes from each week will qualify for our grand finale. All finalists will then feature in The Oban Times for one last time, again for public vote. The baby with the most votes will then be crowned The Oban Times' 2012's bonniest! For rules and terms and conditions, visit www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies.

ENTER YOUR BABY TODAY! See page 5 or enter online at www.obantimes.co.uk

YOU CAN STILL VOTE FOR A BABY FROM A PREVIOUS WEEK!

 <p>070 Eilidh Flockhart 7 months Stirling</p>	 <p>071 Arron McMaster 2 months Oban</p>	 <p>072 Alexander Munro 1 month Inverness</p>	 <p>073 Isla Munro 21 months Inverness</p>	 <p>074 Arlo Hewitt 2 months Isle of Mull</p>	 <p>075 Emily Byrne 11 months Fort William</p>
 <p>076 Koby Thornton 10 months Kilmartin</p>	 <p>077 Ethan Douglas 8 months Isle of Mull</p>	 <p>078 Jack Fisher 6 months Perth</p>	 <p>079 Caitlin Baird 24 months Exeter</p>	 <p>080 Isobel Baird 2 months Exeter</p>	 <p>081 Isla MacCallum 5 months Isle of Mull</p>
 <p>082 Grace Gallagher 19 months Glasgow</p>	 <p>083 Ayden James Campbell 12 months Oban</p>	 <p>084 Aimee Cameron 3 months Oban</p>	 <p>085 Jake Curtis 9 months Ardrishaig</p>	 <p>086 Innes Russell 10 months Connel</p>	 <p>087 Amy Louise MacDonald 9 months Sydney, Australia</p>
 <p>088 Ava Mae Tomkins 6 months Isle of Lismore</p>	 <p>089 Rosie Isabella Struthers 27 months North Connel</p>	 <p>090 Rory John Struthers 13 months North Connel</p>	 <p>091 Mila Parry 3 months Newport, Gwent</p>	 <p>092 Harrison Veitch 19 months Ardrishaig</p>	 <p>093 Lana Soares Domingues 8 months Oban</p>
 <p>094 Chloe Jaffray 11 months Dunfermline</p>	 <p>095 Isla Belle Houston 3 months Campbeltown</p>	 <p>096 Ruan Kemp 21 months Oban</p>			

Vote for this week's finalist!

How to vote

Readers can vote for their favourite baby by text or by post, using the coupon provided on this page. You can vote for as many babies as many times as you like until we announce the closing date to register your votes. Just make sure you quote the number stated on the child's photograph when voting.

By text (UK and Northern Ireland only):

To vote by text, text the word **BABY** followed by a space then the three digit number stated on the top left hand side of the child's photograph to **88010**.

Text messages cost £1 plus one message at standard network rate. The voting deadline will be announced in a future issue.

By coupon:

Complete the voting form provided on this page and send it to The Oban Times, Bonnie Babies VOTE, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB. Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted. The voting deadline will be announced in a future issue.



Example text.
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*Baby number must be supplied. This can be found at the top left of each baby photograph.

Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted and will not count as one vote.



Terms & conditions: The winner must be willing to take part in publicity. Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted. Text messages cost £1 plus one message at standard network rate. The deadline to receive votes will be announced in a future issue and on The Oban Times website. One text counts as one vote. One coupon counts as one vote. The prize is as stated. No cash alternative. Full terms and conditions at www.obantimes.co.uk. Text votes from UK and Northern Ireland only. Text votes from overseas will not get through and will not be counted.

Dorothy Paul show for Oban

BAFTA award winning actress and Scottish showbiz legend, Dorothy Paul, is coming to the Corran Halls, Oban on Friday, March 23 with her brand new show, 'Retiring from Retirement'.

The fast-moving rollercoaster of a show offers an evening of wonderful music and outrageous comedy in the company of one of Scotland's best loved performers.

It offers an opportunity for hilarious gossip about Dorothy's starry pals, past and present, - her tales of hysterical bus runs, topical tram rides and family soirees. Meet the unstoppable Cleaner, with her numerous jobs and university degrees, her best friend, Wilma, her Zumba class and her long-suffering husband, who still gets his daily ear-bashing.

There is nothing "retiring" about this wee Glasgow wummin' ... and she is really looking forward to seeing you again.

Rainbow guides need help

OBAN'S Rainbow Guide branch risks closure unless more volunteer leaders can be found.

Stella McIver, district commissioner for the Rainbows, said: "Some of our leaders are leaving to go to university and college, and if we don't get some people we may have to close the two units."

The branch is hoping for any new volunteers to apply before the end of June.

Anyone interested in applying should contact Stella on 566 793.

Iona pupils become abbey tour guides for schools

PUPILS at Iona Primary School are gearing up for the new season at Iona Abbey - conducting tours dressed as monks.

The youngsters will don the costumes provided by Historic Scotland and take school groups round the abbey, teaching them the history of the monks who used to live and work there.

Groups who want to take a tour should contact Historic Scotland.



The cast of Luig Amateur Dramatic Society's deliciously over-the-top pantomime Jack and the Beanstalk

Jack and the Beanstalk - Luig style

THE AUDIENCE for the first night of the Luig Amateur Dramatic Society's (LADS) 'Jack and the Beanstalk' was rolling with laughter by the end of Scene 1, and the laughter continued right to the very end. For four sell-out performances a consistently excellent cast brought joy to the people of Luig, their friends, and others who had come from far afield, drawn by the reputation of this formidable team.

Happless but swashbuckling Jack (Julie MacQueen), one of the long-term unemployed, cannot persuade his girlfriend Jill to marry him until he gets a job, even after they have been 'up the hill' and not to fetch a pail of

water? The pretty and intelligent Jill (Kirsty MacLachlan), whose bright idea finally defeats the Giant, sings sweetly of her love for Jack and her need to break free from the cell in the Giant's castle. Totally and delightfully over-the-top Dame Trott (Stephen Glen-Lee) brings her towering comic presence to bear in ever more desperate attempts to raise the rent demanded by the Giant's henchman, the evil and terrifying Fleshcreeper (Dave Page). The indecisive, henpecked King (Joan Morgan) and his snooty and bossy wife (Kay Benn) act as intermediaries, ever protected by the glorious comic double-act of the royal policemen, Push and

Shove (Fiona Cruickshanks and Amanda MacLachlan).

Central to the raising of the necessary funds is Daisy the cow (John Morgan), who is sold for the traditional bag of beans and threatened with being turned into a Giant Big Mac. To convey Daisy's emotions - her justified fears, her stubbornness, her occasional elation when hope of rescue is briefly offered - using nothing but body language within what must have been a cumbersome, if convincing costume, is little short of comic genius. Could Simple Simon (Paula Roberts), that perfectly observed epitome of boyish stupidity, really have been the utterly convincing

wicked Queen from last year's Panto? I hope he finally won the hand of pretty Molly the Milkmaid (Suzy Croucher).

Could it get any better? Oh yes it could.

Up in Cloudland, in a delightful vignette of a scene, we find the utterly incompetent Wizard (Eoghann MacLachlan), who taught Harry Potter - but seamanship, not magic - and his sprightly singing elves (Souvy Page and Innes MacQueen).

All this is orchestrated by the delightful WIT (Wizard in Training) Wanda (Nicky Archibald), whose hat size increases alongside her skill and confidence, until she crowns her

achievements by transporting everyone safely back down the beanstalk in a magic lift.

Add in the skilful direction and choreography of Alison Robertson, the convincing scenery (real perspective) so skilfully painted by Anja Lamont and Tiggy MacDonald, and the utterly amazing costumes by Linda McGregor, and you have an unforgettable mix.

LADS have built up over the past few years a skilled and committed backstage team, and all these unsung heroes deserve also to take a metaphorical bow.

Can this year's show ever be bettered? Watch this space..... PMEB

Young actors' auditions in Oban attract over capacity entry

AN ARMY of budding young actors descended upon the Corran Halls, Oban, last Saturday in the hope of securing a starring role in a theatrical movie.

So high was the number of

youngsters looking to audition for a part in Dreich House, that many had to be turned away.

Graeme Roger, company director for Wildbird, who are producing the film, said: 'We

were auditioning for the parts - the ones that get through will be filming on the green screen next April.'

Dreich House is described as 'a blend of theatre, film, animation

and story-telling.'

It tells the story of an old Victorian mansion, the 'Dreich House' of the title, where unloved children are sent to when their parents want them to disappear.

The Wildbird auditions, which are set to continue at various venues until March 4, have also already visited west coast locations in Kyle of Lochalsh and Fort William.



Fèis tutors and participants enjoyed their day at Upper Achintore Primary School 20_09fais01

Fèis movement builds-up momentum throughout Lochaber

EFFORTS to boost the Gaelic language in Lochaber continued on Saturday with an informal fèis in at Upper Achintore Primary School.

The event organised by Fèisean nan Gaidheal was a follow up to a fèis in Ballachulish last month and attracted people of all ages.

FnG development officer for Lochaber, Maria MacInnes was delighted with the number of children attending but had hoped more adults had come along to enjoy a day of Gaelic language, music and culture.

Tutors included Banavie school-teacher Dierdre MacDonald and her

band Sgoil Chiuil Lochabair, Margaret Ford (singing) and Mairi Jo Campbell (step dancing).

Fèis Lochabair is running their main annual fèis in Lochaber High school from April 2-6. Anyone interested in taking part can contact maria@feisean.org.

Alba gains 10 nominations for Celtic media awards

MG ALBA has had 10 of its programmes short-listed for awards at the Celtic Media Festival 2012.

The 33rd festival is to be held in Derry from April 18-20, and will see the Celtic broadcasting and media world come together to celebrate the languages and cultures of the Celtic countries on screen and in broadcast-

ing. Some 400 nominations were received across 19 categories, with BBC ALBA productions shortlisted in several.

MG ALBA chief executive Donald Campbell said of the nominations: 'It is testament to the hard work and the uncompromising commitment to quality of the production community whose

programmes underpin the success and popularity of BBC ALBA achieved over the past four years since coming on air. Now that the channel is available on Freeview, our programmes are being enjoyed by a wider Gaelic and non-Gaelic audience who are showing an appetite content that's not available on any other television platform.'

Retiring from retirement

DOROTHY PAUL

A brand new live show from the first lady of comedy

Friday 23rd March

Doors open 7.30pm, show starts 8pm

Tickets £18 from the Corran Hall Box Office 01631 567333

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

<p>RACE NIGHT</p> <p>To raise funds for Oban Pipe Band</p> <p>Friday 9th March 2012</p> <p>At 7.30pm</p> <p>In the Masonic Lodge Albany Street</p> <p>A fun night All Welcome</p>	<p>FORT WILLIAM ACCORDION & FIDDLE CLUB</p> <p>Musical Evening</p> <p>on Tuesday 6th March, 2012 at 8pm</p> <p>GUEST ARTISTS: Susie Simpson Quintet Railway Club Inverlochly All Welcome</p> <p>Admission: £4.00 - Tea & Raffle Extra IN THE EVENT OF A LAST MINUTE CANCELLATION BY ANY GUEST ARTIST THE COMMITTEE WILL FIND AN ALTERNATIVE ARTIST</p>	<p>Comunn Gaidhealach an Obain</p> <p>Ceilidh</p> <p>Saturday 3rd March 2012</p> <p>7.30pm</p> <p>Masonic Hall, Oban</p> <p>Norman MacArthur, Myra MacNab, Claire Jordan, Andreas Wolfe, Accordion Hector MacFadyen, Chairman Donald Morrison</p> <p>Admission £5</p>	<p>Mull Theatre presents</p> <p>'Waterproof' & 'From Paisley to Paulo'</p> <p>Craignish Village Hall, Ardferr</p> <p>Thursday 8th March</p> <p>7.30pm</p> <p>Tickets £10/£5</p> <p>01852 500746</p> <p>www.thebooth.co.uk</p>
<p>58th NORTH LORN DRAMA FESTIVAL</p> <p>21-23 March 2012</p> <p>APPIN VILLAGE HALL</p> <p>7.30pm</p> <p>TICKETS ON SALE NOW FROM:</p> <p>The Secretary, Rhuagarbh Croft, Appin, PA38 4BA</p> <p>Telephone 01631 730309</p> <p>£8 Season Ticket (reserved)</p> <p>£3 Single Evening Adult Ticket (unreserved)</p> <p>£1 Single Evening Child Ticket (unreserved)</p>	<p>To advertise in the</p> <p>WHAT'S ON COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD</p> <p>Telephone: 01631 568000</p>	<p>Lochaber Strathspey & Reel Society</p> <p>Annual Fiddlers Rally</p> <p>Saturday 3rd March @ 7.30pm</p> <p>Lochaber High School</p> <p>Admission £8.00 & £6.00</p>	<p>OBAN U3A</p> <p>Tuesday, 6th March, 2012 at 10.30a.m.</p> <p>Caledonian Hotel, Station Square, Oban</p> <p>A warm welcome to members new and old for our monthly coffee and chat meeting.</p>



Dannsa Beò: Dance Live - choreographer Andy Howitt, presenter Anne Morrison and presenter Kevin Walker.

Family Ceilidh Dance

On

Friday 16th March 2012 at 7.30pm

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what's on oban

Thursday 1st March > Highland Ceilidh Night
Corran Halls Ceilidh Dancing and late Disco from 9pm.

Saturday 3rd March > Club Night 11pm - 2am
Skipinnish Ceilidh House with DJ's Mark and Stuart

Fri 2nd & Sat 3rd March > Moray MacNiven
Markie Dans 9.30pm

Fri 9th & Sat 10th March > Chris Suckle
Markie Dans

Friday 16th March > Disco
Markie Dans with DJ stevo

Saturday 17th March > St Paddy's
Markie Dans Cuan an Aire

Friday 23rd March > Tim O'Connor
Markie Dans

what's on lochaber

Friday 2nd March > Nightclub with DJ Irish Al.
Fort William Skipinnish Ceilidh House Beat the Clock

Saturday 3rd March > Nightclub 10pm till 2am
Fort William Skipinnish Ceilidh House Beat the Beats

Wednesday 7th March > Mull Theatre
Sunart Centre, Strontian two comedies (Ages 14+), 8pm
www.sunartcentre.org

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CD review

Ronnie Ross

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Ronnie Ross has been working in Scottish entertainment since the 1960s and is an excellent all round entertainer.

He sings, plays keyboards, accordion and guitar, while his backing musicians provide guitar, banjo, mandolin, bagpipes, drums and backing vocals. He works the hotel and club circuit in the Highlands of Scotland.

Well known and much loved songs as well as new ones, including one Ronnie wrote for his brother, Stewart's Golden Ears, in recognition for his support and expertise in all things audio.

Rose Of The Highlands was written for his wife, Sandra.

Coast

The Turning Stone

The band is rapidly rising in popularity and this album is full of musicality and beautifully crafted lyrics.

"Once in a blue moon I get sent a CD for radio airplay that simply blows me away. This has to be one of the best CDs of the year. Musically, lyrically and atmospherically Coast can stand proud amongst the very best of the Celtic artists in the world." Karin Ingram, Radio Borders.

If you like Runrig you should give them a try.

Clyde Valley Stompers

Collection 1956 To 1961

Goodtime popular jazz. This double CD contains all the recordings from 1956 to 1961, including one previously unreleased track.

The band formed in 1952 and made their first recording in 1956.

They were hugely popular, recording on Decca's Scottish Beltona label, then Pye with Lonnie Donegan producing. They had a hit with "Salty Dog" in 1960. Touring all over the UK, they played on until 1963.

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SPRING has always been a popular time for weddings.

For many years, couples believed there were distinct tax advantages to get married before the beginning of the new tax year on April 6. In fact there was very little financial gain, and with more recent tax legislation, the question of tax now seldom seems to enter the equation.

So why do people choose the spring? Well they may feel it is the start of better weather, and in nature, spring is the start of new life, so therefore couples can start their new lives together.

One thing is certain there will always be more weddings at this season than at any other throughout the year. What this means in practical terms is, all the services connected with weddings will be fully stretched to cope with the demand. It is therefore essential to organise spring weddings more in advance than is necessary at any other time of the year. In fact now is not too soon to start planning a wedding for spring next year.

The first decision you must make is at where the ceremony is to be held, whether it be church, Register Office or a licensed wedding venue.

The next important booking is the reception. Unlike the ceremony venue, most reception establishments can only cope with one wedding on one day, if that day is to be Easter Saturday say, with all the other Easter weddings taking place in the locality, you must book your chosen venue immediately you have organised the ceremony, otherwise you could be beaten to the post.

Transport and the photographer are the next priorities.

One photographer can only be in one place at a time, and transport operators will only have a certain number of vehicles available. So make sure your reservations go in early.

Flowers and the cake will naturally not be prepared until nearer the occasion but it is as well to contact the florist and baker to make sure they are aware they will be required. And always ask for the date you should contact them to finalise matters.

It is difficult for a bride to decide what kind of dress to wear for a spring wedding. The weather could be quite warm, or extremely chilly. But a decision has to be made and with the help of a bridal dress supplier, it is almost certain a suitable gown or outfit can be bought, made or hired to cope with whatever the weather might provide on the day itself. The same applies to the dressing of attendants. The groom however will also need to ensure he and his Best Man are properly attired. So suits should also be acquired in good time, or booked early if they are to be hired.

The honeymoon will have to be arranged of course, and as spring is a popular time for people in general

to have a break, the holiday itself, whether in the UK or abroad, must be booked. A trip to the travel agent is essential to ensure there are no hitches on this important aspect of the wedding.

The success of all weddings depends on timing, organisation and planning. So when the great day dawns, the bride will have the satisfaction of knowing that on her chosen day, she will shine as she could shine at no other time of the year. And that should ensure all the extra effort was very worthwhile indeed.

Naturally if the reception is not to be held in a hotel or similar establishment, the catering will have to be considered. This need not be a problem though, there are many excellent firms of outside caterers who have just the experience and facilities behind them to produce the perfect buffet or sit-down meal, for even the largest of gatherings. They will also be able to organise the extra tableware, cutlery and crockery, sufficient for all the guests. And after the reception, a traditional dance or disco for the guests can also be provided for by travelling bands, groups or discos, who can be hired to set up in the marquee in the evening.

The marquee will have to be suitably decorated for the reception, but then so would any suitable venue whether it be hotel, pub, club, restaurant, church or community hall. Flowers are fine for the reception itself, but a touch formal for the entertainment afterwards. Decorations including balloons, streamers, bunting and elegant drapes can be bought or hired, and don't forget those heart-shaped, helium filled balloons that carry suitable wedding messages and stand proudly upright. They provide a beautiful enhancement for any wedding reception and a wonderful treat for the younger guests.

Of course if the wedding is to be held in a more traditional venue it will have to have been booked up months before. Most caterers provide sample menus for weddings to cover a variety of tastes and budgets. They will also arrange special decor, entertainment and anything else the wedding party might want. Hotels especially will often provide a bride's room where she may freshen up after the ceremony and where she and her husband may change just before going away.

It goes without saying, a wedding day should be a perfect day, one for the couple and their family to remember all their lives. The best way to ensure this is to have it recorded by a skilful photographer. The photographs will capture in frozen beauty, all the breathtaking formality of the day. Many couples now go for what is known as a reportage wedding video. This is a documentary style recording, including sound, of the wedding day, which can capture all the drama, emotions and amusing incidents. It can encompass the bride's last moments at home as she finishes dressing, the wedding ceremony itself, the arrival at the reception of the bride and all her guests, and then final her departure away on the honeymoon. Surely it would be the perfect memento of a unique occasion!



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Hamilton
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Scotland's Exclusive Wedding Event at Hamilton Park Racecourse

Scotland's Exclusive Wedding Event has announced the launch of an additional show at the iconic venue of Hamilton Park Racecourse. The event, which will showcase over 110 exhibitors all waiting to make your wedding dreams come true, takes place on Saturday, March 24 and Sunday, March 25, 2012 from 10.30am to 4.30pm. One of the largest cake selections, spectacular bouquet creations, a tremendous wedding car show display and a range of exquisite bridal couture will give brides-to-be plenty of creative ideas for the big day. The inspiration continues with spectacular designer catwalk shows, free professional makeovers by Giorgio Armani plus much more.

With the wedding season in full swing, The Oban Times has teamed up with event organisers, Eventrix, to offer our readers one FREE ticket worth £8.50 when you purchase one ticket to the event. Plus, every bride-to-be will receive a free discount voucher book worth hundreds of pounds. To claim your 2 for 1 ticket offer, please register online at www.scotlandsweddingevent.co.uk, **QUOTE OT0312** and cut out the voucher. Then, simply present the voucher on entry.

Terms and conditions: One full paid ticket must be purchased to validate this offer. Please note no other promotions or offers are valid with this offer. The offer is valid until the show dates. The offer is as stated. No cash alternative. The operation and management of the online and telephone ticket booking system for this event is the responsibility of Scotland's Exclusive Wedding Event and not of Wyvex Media Ltd.

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'I've always said my business is large enough to cope; small enough to care.'

'I like to err on the side of affordability and alter my style to suit the couple's requirements.'

'I have on average three meetings with the couple because I think it is vitally important to be accessible and to know exactly what people want from their wedding photographer.'

'There is a lot of responsibility on my shoulders at a wedding but when I get home at night and look back at my photos from the day, I'm reminded why I became a photographer. I love weddings and I am very lucky to be able to do this for a living.'

Although Justin is a wedding photographer first and foremost, he is also highly experienced in portraits, events, schools, commercial and press photography.

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For more information please contact me, Justin, on 01631 571179 or email me justin@perfectimagesoban.co.uk

Justin Dammarell, 62 Lochnell Rd, Dunbeg, Nr Oban, Argyll, Scotland PA37 1QJ

www.jdperfectimages.co.uk



Business Improvement District for Oban

Meeting
Corran Halls
 Thursday 8th March, 6.00pm
 All Oban businesses welcome



The BID4Oban steering committee gave a presentation on their survey results.

BID4OBAN SURVEY RESULTS REVEALED
 BID4Oban gave its survey results to the business community, at a meeting held in Cuan Mor on 16 February. Participants were keen to hear the sliding scale of the proposed levy and that a comprehensive events programme would be managed by the future BID4Oban Board.

Project Co-ordinator Pauline Cameron explained: 'Businesses within the 30mph speed limits of Oban and with rateable value of over £3,000 were visited, phoned or mailed to seek their views on priorities for an Oban BID. **46 PER CENT** 'Just over 180 responses to a multiple choice questionnaire have been inde-

pendently analysed by IBP Straetgy & Research, representing over 46 per cent of the business community.'

A BID is a business-led initiative where businesses collectively invest in improvements to their trading environment. In Oban the BID Steering Group hope to raise approximately £150,000 per year from all non-domestic ratepayer businesses, which would all pay a fixed levy towards improving the town.

LOTS TO SHOUT ABOUT
 Steering Group Vice-Chairman Andy Spence said: 'The business survey found that whilst businesses think Oban is a harder place to operate a business than it was five years ago, there was still much in the town's favour

to shout about. 'The town centre is seen as a safe, well lit, easy to find your way around by the majority of businesses who responded to the survey. More than 55 per cent of businesses agreed that the town has well-presented shops and buildings, whilst businesses thought more could be done to market the town to shoppers, hold more events to attract visitors throughout the year, maintain roads and pavements.

PROMOTION
 'When asked what a BID should do for Oban, the majority of businesses said it should try to increase the numbers of visitors and shoppers to the town. Respondents also wanted to have the opportunity to improve their business performance. There was also support for a BID improving the ambience of the town and giving businesses a collective voice.'

MORE EVENTS AND CO-ORDINATION

The survey showed that businesses want to see a BID hold more events to extend the season (66 per cent of businesses) and co-ordinate and invest in the successful initiatives already underway in the town.

PARKING

Cost and availability of town centre parking was another major area businesses wanted to see addressed, together with more marketing of Oban as a tourism and shopping destination and making the most of Oban's scenic beauty and location as a transport hub for visitors to the town.

A POSITIVE FUTURE FOR THE TOWN CENTRE

John Forteith, of Forteith Food Service said: 'All Oban businesses are intrinsically linked to the success of Oban town business. This initiative focuses resources to where

the 'business community' believes will most benefit Oban. It is more important now than ever, given the economic challenges we all face, to utilise our collective resources to enhance Oban as 'a town to do business in'.

URGENT INVITATION

Chairman Graham MacQueen added: 'The Steering Group now wants to start work on developing project proposals which tackle some of these priorities and has extended an urgent invitation for interested businesses to come forward and support this process over the next two months.'

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Come along to the Corran Halls on Thursday March 8 at 6pm for a discussion on the sliding scale of charges and next steps.

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NOTICE is HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 19 (4) of the above Act that by The Glencripesdale Nature Reserve De-Declaration 2012 dated 22 February 2012 it was confirmed by Scottish Natural Heritage that an area of land extending to 609.3 hectares or thereby at Glencripesdale situated in the Parish of Morven in the Council Area of Highland Council is no longer a Nature Reserve with effect from 1 March 2012.

Certified Copies of the De-Declaration with plans annexed have been deposited for public inspection free of charge as undemoted and may be inspected for a period of one month following 1 March 2012.

Head of Planning and Building Standards
Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road
Inverness
IV3 5NX

Scottish Natural Heritage
The Governor's House
The Parade
Fort William
PH33 7PE

Highland Council Service Point
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Scottish Natural Heritage
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**SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE
NATIONAL PARKS AND ACCESS TO THE
COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1949 (AS AMENDED)**

NOTICE is HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 19 (4) of the above Act that by The Claish Moss Nature Reserve De-Declaration 2012 dated 22 February 2012 it was confirmed by Scottish Natural Heritage that the area of land extending to 563 hectares or thereby known as Claish Moss and formerly part of the Estate of Sunart in the Council Area of Highland Council is no longer a Nature Reserve with effect from the 1 March 2012.

Certified Copies of the De-Declaration with plans annexed have been deposited for public inspection free of charge as undemoted and may be inspected for a period of one month following 1 March 2012.

Head of Planning and Building Standards
Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road/The Parade
Fort William
PH33 7PE

Scottish Natural Heritage
The Governor's House
Inverness
IV3 5NX

Highland Council Service Point
Lochaber House
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Boundary Commission for Scotland

**Sixth Review of UK Parliament Constituencies
Secondary consultation on Initial Proposals**

We have published the comments we received in response to our recent public consultation on Initial Proposals for constituencies for the UK Parliament. The proposals and comments can be viewed on our website www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk or at any of our display points throughout Scotland (usually local council offices or libraries).

Those wishing to remark on any of the comments can do so in writing to: Boundary Commission for Scotland, Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5HD or by e-mail to: comments@scottishboundaries.gov.uk or by using the response facility on our website. Remarks should be submitted by **Wednesday 28 March 2012**.

**Argyll Animal Aid
AGM**

March 7th 2012
Community Fire
Station, Soroba Road,
Oban
7.30pm
Proposal to change
the status of the
charity to an SCIO will
be on the agenda.
All welcome



**BREEDON
AGGREGATES**

**Blast at Banavie Quarry-
Friday 2 March, 2012
at 12 Noon**

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS OFFICE, FULTON HOUSE, GORDON SQUARE, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6XY; online at www.highland.gov.uk and, where given, the alternative location(s).

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description	Time period for comments
12/00196/FUL	Village Hall Glencoe	Extension and re-roofing of hall	(14 days)
12/00325/FUL	60M North West of Tigh-A-Churraic Kentalen Appin PA38 4BY	Erection of 7 chalets	(14 days)
12/00592/FUL	Land to East of Station Cottage Corpach Fort William	Erection of 2 houses	(14 days)
12/00683/PIP	Land 90M South East of Fort William Health Centre Camoghuel Fort William	Erection of house (renewal of 08/00370/OUTLO)	(14 days)

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PLANNING

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at 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
11/02372/PP	Temporary siting of static caravan for staff accommodation for a further period of 24 months (retrospective)	Castle Stalker View Appin Argyll and Bute PA38 4BL	Sub Post Office Ledaig
11/02522/MIN	Borrow working to be used in association with new housing development.	Land North of Dunstaffnage Mains Farm, Dunbeg	Sub Post Office Dunbeg
12/00274/PP	Refurbishment and extension of derelict building to form dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and associated improvement works to existing access.	Dobhran Cottage Lochbuie Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA62 6AA	Sub Post Office Craignure
12/00368/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse (renewal of planning permission reference 07/00279/DET)	Land South of Heatherfield Albert Road Oban Argyll and Bute	Oban Area Office

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
11/02481/PP	Change of use from commercial retreat to dwellinghouse, erection of replacement side extension and front porch and installation of solar roof panels.	Duncairn Isle of Iona Argyll and Bute PA76 6SP	Sub Post Office Isle of Iona

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 67 Chalmers Street Ardrishaig PA30 8DX, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at 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
12/00351/PP	Re-roofing and re-cladding of 3 warehouses and malt bin area	Laphroaig Distillery Laphroaig Distillery Road Laphroaig Isle ofIslay Argyll and Bute PA42 7DU	Sub Post Office Port Ellen
12/00354/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Site At Bruichladdich Distillery Bruichladdich Isle ofIslay Argyll and Bute PA49 7UN	Sub Post Office Port Charlotte

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
12/00277/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and detached garage/workshop	Land Adjacent to 122 Frederick Crescent Port Ellen Isle ofIslay Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Port Ellen
12/00353/LIB	Re-roofing and re-cladding of 3 warehouses and malt bin area	Laphroaig Distillery Laphroaig Distillery Road Laphroaig Isle ofIslay Argyll and Bute PA42 7DU	Sub Post Office Port Ellen

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, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST.
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

(DESIGNATED TAXI/DISABLED PERSONS' VEHICLE PARKING BAYS) (TOBERMORY, ISLE OF MULL) AND (AMENDMENT) ORDER 201...

Argyll and Bute Council proposes to make an Order introducing a taxi bay and an additional disabled persons' vehicle parking bay on Main Street Tobermory, Isle of Mull.
Full details of these proposals together with a Plan and a Statement of Reasons for proposing to make this Traffic Regulation Order, are available for inspection during normal office hours Monday to Friday inclusive at the offices of:
(i) Argyll and Bute Council Offices, Breadalbane Street, Tobermory;
(ii) Roads & Amenities Services, Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban;
(iii) Argyll and Bute Council Offices, Kilmory, Lochgilphead.
Any person wishing to object to the proposals should send details of the grounds for objection in writing to the Head of Governance and Law, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT, by 23rd March 2012.
Sandy MacTaggart, Executive Director, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead PA31 8RD

COUNCIL SURGERY

Councillor Louise Glen-Lee (E.W. 5 Oban North and Lorn) will be holding surgeries during the month of MARCH as follows:

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday 7th March	3.30pm - 4.30pm	Taynuilt Village Hall
Wednesday 7th March	5.00pm - 6.00pm	Dunbeg Primary School
Monday 12th March	3.45pm - 4.30pm	Kilniver Primary School
Monday 19th March	3.30pm - 4.30pm	Dalmailly Primary School
Wednesday 21st March	12 noon - 1.00pm	Lismore Village Hall
Wednesday 21st March	4.00pm - 5.00pm	Victory Hall, Benderloch
Monday 26th March	3.30pm - 4.30pm	Appin Village Hall
Monday 26th March	6.30pm - 7.30pm	Easdale Primary School

No appointments are necessary. Councillor Glen-Lee can also be contacted by e-mail and by phone/text 07717 526 999 or 01546 604029

COMMUNITY SERVICES: EARLY YEARS

Is Your Child Eligible For Free Preschool Education Provision?
Preschool Education from August 2012 will be available for:
• Four year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2008 and 28th February 2009
• Three year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2009 and 28th February 2010
A list of current preschool education providers, including those offering Gaelic Medium, is displayed at the following locations:
All Primary Schools
Health Visitors/Doctors' Surgeries
All Council Offices
Libraries
Playgroups & Day Care Centres
Information leaflets will be available from preschool education providers at the time of registration and parents can obtain further guidance from the Pre School Education Helpline, Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon PA23 8AJ (Telephone 01369 708503).
Parents of eligible children should register at their preferred preschool education provider during week commencing 5th March 2012 during the normal operational hours of the unit.

RECRUITMENT

mary's meals Fundraising Administrator

Mary's Meals is a fast growing international charity, currently providing over 600,000 impoverished children in 16 countries with a daily school meal.

Reporting to the Operations Manager, we are looking to recruit a Fundraising Administrator. The successful candidate will lead a small team of administration staff in our Head Office ensuring efficient handling of donations, providing effective support and communication with supporters and managing central database.

Applicants should have experience in an administration role, excellent organisational and time-management skills, outstanding verbal and written communication and have working knowledge of database and MS Office applications.

37.5 hours per week - Salary dependent on skills and experience. Based at Head Office in Dalmally, Argyll.

For a full job description, please visit our website at: www.marismy meals.org.uk/category/vacancies

To apply, please send a current CV with a covering letter to: jobs@marismy meals.org

Closing date: 16th March 2012

Mary's Meals is a movement administered by Scottish International Relief Charity Reg. No. SC022140

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Compass Group UK & Ireland offers excellent career and development opportunities, as an organisation that's proud of its great people, we believe in the opportunity to recognise and share success, that's why we offer a competitive salary, pension scheme and life assurance, sick pay, and company discounts. And because life isn't only about work, we offer a good annual leave entitlement too. Successful candidates will be required to attend an interview in Aberdeen on Tuesday 6th March. Please submit CV's to anita.stevenson@compass-group.co.uk

**The North Pier Restaurants
Are looking for two Supervisors and for
Waiting Staff (Full time & Part time)**

Excellent rates of pay and career prospects.

No experience necessary as all training will be given on site. The ideal candidates will have a passion for the Service Industry.

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to work on stock farm within a team of 3.

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argyll community housing association

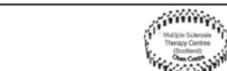
Customer Services Assistant (2 posts) Oban

1 x 26 hours per week Maternity Leave cover - In house repairs team
1 x 35 hours per week Temporary to 31st March 2013 - Area Team

Customer Services Assistant Lochgilphead

1 x 35 hours per week Temporary Post to 31st December 2012 - Area Team
Salary Grade 10 (£15,646 - £17,385 pro rata)
To apply visit our website at www.acha.co.uk;
Tel 01546 605 859 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk

Closing Date for all applications: 12 noon on Friday 9th March 2012



AGM

Will be held on 26th March 2012 At 7pm In the Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre (Oban) Ltd Glenruitten Road, Oban, Argyll PA34 4PU
Telephone/Fax 01631 566602
e-mail oban.msc@btconnect.com

**CROFTERS COMMISSION
COMISEAN NAN CROITEARAN**

DECROFTING APPLICATION

Applicant: Mrs D J Philip
Croft: 1 Braefoot, Ardnamurchan
Extent: 0.88 ha - whole croft
Case no: 4.87.36629

Interest can be expressed in obtaining the tenancy of the croft.

Comments can be made to the Crofters Commission by any member of the crofting community within the locality of the land, within 14 days of the date of this newspaper. Crofters Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW info@crofterscommission.org.uk

DECISION ON APPLICATION TO CREATE A NEW CROFT

Application by Mrs Rena Cameron owner of the holding Strath Farm, Duror, Lismore - Approved.

Any party with an interest in the application may appeal the decision to the Scottish Land Court within 42 days. Information on how to appeal is available from the Crofters Commission.

Farm builds for the future



CUTTING significant time off the milking at Drumalea, Kintyre will allow John Smith and staff to utilise their time better. John is currently putting up a new shed on the farm, which will see a new rotational milking parlour installed. This will be a first for the area and help reduce his milking time by up to half. John, who currently has 12 cows in 24 units, can spend each day up to five hours per shift milking more than 300 cows. He has three farms in West Kintyre: Drumalea at Tangy, and Kilmichael, and recently purchased Drumore Farm near Campbelltown. At Drumalea the main focus is milking where all the production happens. He uses Kilmichael to concentrate of bulling heifers, and keeps his calving pens. His new shed, provided by Robinsons, constructed

by AJC Civil and Dugald Armour will see an increase to 70 cows rotating through the milking parlour. 'We have got a good site and are lucky we have that,' said John. 'The important thing is to have a hard site, and that's something we benefit from.' He said the main driver for the investment is to save time. John employs three full time members of staff, and his wife Ruth and father John also play an active part in the farm. 'We are hoping will at least half the current milking times. This would be free up more time for other jobs,' John explained. The first stage for him is to erect the shed and concentrate on saving time; the milking parlour pens and sorting gates will then be installed. John, who was born and bred on Drumalea, received help from the Scottish Rural Develop-

ment Programme (SRDP). This has encouraged a number of farmers in the Kintyre area to build new sheds and modernise their farms. SRDP is a programme of economic, environmental and social measures which utilises European Agricultural Fund for rural development funding plus Scottish Government match funding. It is a five-year programme designed to support rural Scotland from 2007 to 2013. The Scottish Government has shown commitment to invest and modernise farms, something John stressed is important. 'This grant is being provided to farmers but all the suppliers will also benefit from this. Investment is to improve the infrastructure for dairy on our own farm but also for the dairy industry in Kintyre.'

Picture captions
Above: Construction has started on the new shed at Drumalea, and it is hoped it will be finished by late Spring. 21_c09shed01

Above right: John Smith of Drumalea was born and bred on the Kintyre Farm. 21_c09shed02

Right: Greg Gillespie, one of the three full-time workers in the current milking parlour. 21_c09shed03



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bearing purposes and is unique to Scotland. The buildings and walling system have been developed with Penderfeed. Eildon Concrete Products Limited currently manufactures the pre-stressed concrete panels under one building on the FS Wallingtm system. It also manufactures the pre-cast water and feed troughs. The buildings can

be dismantled and moved, and are ideal for tenant farmers. They can be used for a variety of purposes, including for cattle or calf rearing, bulk aggregates, and machinery maintenance storage. Eildon Concrete Products is based in the Scottish Borders. With good transportation links to the North of England and throughout Scotland.



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Shufflebottom Limited

THE Shufflebottom elephant logo, on farm buildings all over Scotland, is a sign of strength and durability. Shufflebottom Ltd manufactures steel-framed buildings, and has teams of erectors to construct them on-site. Many buildings are custom-designed to be livestock housing, barns, byres, cereal stores, vegetable stores, machinery sheds or workshops. 'We pay a great deal of attention to correct ventilation, which is so important for animal health,' said director Alex Shufflebottom. 'Our buildings are also very secure, which can be particularly

important if they are sited at a distance from the farmhouse.' The business was started by Lorna and the late Martin Shufflebottom in 1977, and is now owned by Alec Davies and two second-generation members of the Shufflebottom family, Alex and Wesley. 'We are proud to be a family business, and also proud to have many repeat customers,' said Alex. Shufflebottom's quest for quality has resulted in the award of the ISO 9001 quality mark. The company has just been assessed for the Conforité Européenne or CE mark, a guarantee of conformity with all the

relevant European Union directives and technical standards. Paul Dickson, the

long-established Shufflebottom agent in Scotland, is based in Argyll.

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Appin hosts croft hustings meeting

THERE will be a hustings meeting ahead of elections to the Crofting Commission at Creagan Inn, Appin on Monday, March 5 at 7 pm.

A good attendance is anticipated and the venue had been selected to allow crofters from the Isle of Lismore to attend and return home on the last ferry.

Sheep EID scheme may face rethink

EUROCRATS could be forced into a rethink over controversial sheep tagging requirements – described as ‘unworkable’ by Scottish farmers – following court action from Germany.

The German Association of Sheep Farmers is to take their concerns about the electronic tagging system – EID – to the European Court of Justice over the expense of the scheme and the unreliable nature of the tag readers.

There is also a question mark over animal welfare as evidence has been brought forward that shows injury to animals’ ears after tagging.

George Lyon, Liberal Democrat MEP for Scotland, said: ‘This court case has the potential to throw a spanner in the works of the controversial EID system.’

‘This is a new window of hope for Scottish farmers who have long known that the system is unworkable and needs to be changed.’

Prime lamb rates down at Stirling

UNITED Auctions sold 5,452 prime sheep including 4102 hogs averaging 193.4p/kg (-9.2p on week) and 1,350 ewes and rams at Stirling last Thursday.

Beltex hogs from Luckenburn sold to £104 and 236p per kilo, while Texels from Craignald sold to £101.50 and to 234p per kilo from Easter Ochtermuthill.

Blackface hogs from Remony sold to 388 and to 207p per kilo Amulree.

Cheviot ewes from Kinaldy sold to £140, with Suffolks from Craignald to £128.50. Blackfaces from Balnaguard fetched £85.50.

Cheviot rams from Corsehope sold to £138.50 with Parkhill selling Suffolks to £132.50.



Fishermen have been forced to discard large quantities of haddock, despite having a catch quota for the species.

Fishermen win battle over haddock discards

Emergency powers stop dumping of large quantities of fine haddock back into the sea

EMERGENCY powers will be used by the European Commission to reduce the amount of haddock being discarded in the west of Scotland.

Under the previous catch composition quota rules, fishermen were forced to discard large quantities of haddock, despite having a catch quota for the species.

In order to reduce unnecessary discards, the EC will immediately suspend the catch composition rules, thus permitting fishermen to land their haddock quota.

This will apply for an initial

six-month period, but it is expected that it will be continued thereafter.

‘Appalling waste’

Jamie McGrigor, list MSP for the Highlands and Islands and Scottish Conservative fisheries spokesman, will visit Peterhead Fish Market early next Tuesday morning when he will meet with representatives of the Scottish White Fish Producers Association to discuss industry issues.

He said: ‘The good news at last from the EU Commission is that they have finally accepted the appalling waste caused by

discards, at least in the instance of haddock in the North Sea.’

‘Quotas are a tool of allocation rather than stock management and in the past fishermen were forced to dump large quantities of fine haddock back into the sea despite having a catch quota for the species.’

‘I congratulate the Scottish fishing industry in reaching this move to common sense which will hopefully achieve a better understanding on the causes of discards which are down to flawed regulations rather than the fault of our Scottish fishermen.’

Store cattle show increase at Stirling

UNITED Auctions sold 1,489 store cattle and 243 young bulls, plus breeding cattle, 155 cast cows and 434 store and breeding sheep at Stirling last Wednesday.

Bullocks averaged 216.79p (+0.07p) and sold to 274.5p per kg for a 255kg Charolais cross from West Muirhouses and £1,370 for a 642kg Blonde cross from Borthaught.

Heifers averaged 217.72p (+1.79p) and sold to 267.4p per kg and £1,460 for a 546kg British Blue cross from Holehouse.

Young bulls averaged 207.51 and sold to 253.5p per kg for a 284kg Limousin cross from Craignald and £1,150 for 665kg Charolais cross from Bayhill.

Cast cows averaged 136.9p and sold to 207.4p for a Limousin cross from Kirvennie and £1,510 for a British Blue cross from Beechbank.

Luining bulling heifers from New Blainslie sold to £1180 while Limousin in-calf heifers from East Banknock sold to £1500 with Limousin in-calf cows from the same home also selling to £1,500.

Mule grit ewes from Burnside sold to £138 with Mule hogs and Suffolk hogs from Raithill fetching £77 and £72 respectively.

Dingwall sale meets exceptional trade for cattle

DINGWALL and Highland Marts Ltd sold 448 store cattle and 110 Over 30 Month cattle at Dingwall last Wednesday when a good show of forward and yearling cattle, showed an increase on the exceptional trade of the last sale.

Bullocks averaged 233.2p (+20.2p) and sold to 323.9p per kg for a 355kg Limousin cross from Dunmaglass Estate, Dores, and £1,320 for a pair of 635kg Limousin crosses from Clyth Mains, Caithness.

Heifers averaged 211.6p (+10.1p) and sold to 265.7p per kg for a pen of 335kg Charolais crosses from Lochdu, Nairn, and £1,270 for a 570kg Simmental cross from Clyth Mains.

Young bulls averaged 189.1p and sold to 218.8p per kg for a 370kg Charolais cross from Whitebog, Rosemarkie, and £810 for a 370kg Charolais cross from Whitebog.

OTM prime cows averaged 155.4p and sold to 196.8p per kg and £1,545 for a 785kg British Blue from Udale, Poyntzfield.

OTM feeding cows averaged 138.0p and sold to 151.8p per kg for a 570kg Simmental cross from Mains of Househill, Nairn.

OTM clean heifers and bullocks averaged 189.1p and sold to 194.4p per kg for a Limousin cross from Hilton Farm, Tain.

OTM bulls averaged 126.0p and sold to 135.0p per kg and £1,390 for a Limousin from Culdoich, Inverness.

Islay sheep sell at Caley Stirling

CALEDONIAN Marts (Stirling) Ltd had forward 2196 prime sheep and 542 cast ewes and tups at Millhall Market, Stirling last Tuesday.

Export ewes averaged £59.19 (-£5.27) selling to £80.50 from J M Roy, Lorgba, Isle of Islay, while heavy ewes averaged £91.50 (+£9.46) selling to £157.50 for a pen of Texels from R McNee, Woodend and £147.50 for Texels from Knocknary.

Hogs averaged 198.44 p (-

5.63p on the week or + 11.23p on the year selling to a top of 252p per kg and £104.50 for Beltex’s from DS & RC Taylor, Easter Ochtermuthill.

Cheviots from Hillcroft sold to 227p per kilo and £100, while Blackfaces sold to 216p per kilo, edentagart and £90 Burnshot.

Tups averaged £97.05 (+£4.02) selling to £131.50 for a Texel from H Greer, Gelvan View.

Tallant, Islay sold Charollais to £107 and Blackfaces to £68.50.

Caledonian host weekly prime sale

CALEDONIAN Marts (Stirling) Ltd sold 255 cattle at their weekly sale comprising 136 bullocks and heifers, 10 young bulls and 23 OTM cattle plus and 86 cast cows and bulls.

Bullocks averaged 198.5p per kg and sold to 227.5p per kg, for a 665kg Limousin from Learielaw Farm, Broxburn and to £1,551 for a 700kg Limousin, from Kinneil Mill Farm, Linlithgow.

Heifers averaged 209p per kg and sold to 241.5p per kg for a 555kg Limousin from Collielaw Farm, Carluke

and to £1,414 per head for a 595kg Limousin from Wintham Farm, St Andrews.

Young bulls averaged 202p per kg and £1,450 per head selling to 227.5p per kg, for a 640kg Limousin from Bogside Farm, Newmains and to £1,718 for a 790kg Limousin from West Glespin Farm, Douglas.

OTM cattle sold to 197.5p per kg for a 545kg British Blue from Todhall Farm, Cupar and to £1,401 for a 895kg Simmental from Torbanhill Farm, Bathgate.

Market reports

STIRLING United Auctions

Bullocks
Up to 250kgs Sorn Mains £660, 270.5p; 251-300kgs Kildalloig £810, West Muirhouses 274.5p; 301-350kgs Barmurrie £870, Courance 267.1p; 351-400kgs Dykes £980, 259.3p; 401-450kgs Courance £1020, Dykes 238.4p; 451-500kgs East Revoch £1195, 251.1p; 501-550kgs Holehouse £1220, Trowdale 234.6p; 551-600kgs Kimpurney £1270, 223.6p; 601-650kgs Borthaught £1370, 213.4p; 651-700kgs Brownrot £1340, 204.6p.

Heifers
Up to 250kgs Sorn Mains £600, Kildalloig 254.3p; 251-300kgs Dykehead £690, West Muirhouse 243.6p; 301-350kgs Kipperoch £820, Littleport 256.3p; 351-400kgs Trowdale £920, 235.9p; 401-450kgs Farden £1060, Auchenflower 250p; 451-500kgs Thirds £1080, East Revoch 230.8p; 501-550kgs Holehouse £1460, 267.4p; 551-600kgs

Brownrot £1280, 214.8p.
Young Bulls
Up to 250kgs Clatto £590, 247.9p; 251-300kgs Knockkallan £750, Craignald 253.5p; 301-350kgs Beeches £830, Clatto 241.2p; 351-400kgs Windsole £885, Muirpark 236.3p; 401kgs -450kgs Courance Farms £940, Knockkallan 222p; 451-500kgs Tillyrie £960, 208.7p; 501-550kgs Borthaught £1040, 196.2p; 551-600kgs Bayhill £1120, 189.8p; 651-700kgs Bayhill £1150, 173.2p.

OTM Cows
Beechbank (BB) £1510, Eater Greenhill 191.2p; Lour (Sim) £1400, Dalpeddar 184.7p; Lathrisk (Lim) £1175, Kirvennie 207.4p; Drumloch (Sal) £1095, 145.2p; Bandirran (Ho) £1065, 129.3p; Titwood (AA) £1065, Kirvennie 181.3p; Hillview (Cha) £1055, Titwood 132.8p.

OTM Bulls
Woodend (BB) £1675, 142.7p; Gatehead (Cha) £1545, Burnbrae 136p; Quixwood (AA) £1495, 127.6p; Kirvennie (Lim) £1160, 181.3p; Hoardweel (BS) £1385,

132.5p.
Breeding Cattle
Bulling Heifers; New Blainslie (Lui) £1180
In-calf Heifers; East Banknock (LimX) £1500; Bridge (SimX) £1450
In-calf Cows; East Banknock (Lim to Lim) £1500; Cormiston Towers (LimX to AA) £1420, (BBX to AA) £1320, (AA to AA) and (SimX to AA) £1300

Sheep
Hoggets; Raithill (Mul) £77; Raithill (SuFX) £72; Scalpise (TexX) £71; Blackford (TexX) £70.50; Dalbrack (BF) £64.50; Auchensalt (BF) £58.50.
Grit ewes; Burnside (Mul) £138.

DINGWALL Dingwall and Highland Marts

Bullocks
201-250kg -Torvaig, Portree, £620, 295.2p;
251-300kg - Glenside, Glenurquhair £810, 300p;
301-350kg - Lochdu, £930, 273p;
351-400kg - Dunain Mains,

Inverness, £1,010, 270.8p;
401-450kg -Torran Farm, Delny, £1,070, 259.3p;
451-500kg - Dalchalloch Farm, Perthshire, £1,110, 238.7p;
501-550kg - Forsie, Westfield, £1,160, Dalchalloch Farm, 221.8p;
551-600kg - Forsie, £1,230, 215.8p
Over 601kg - Torachilly Farm, Contin, £1,260, Clyth 207.9p.

Heifers
201-250 - 2 Naast, Poolewe, £630, 262.5p;
251-300kg - Dunmaglass Estate, £710, 257.9p;
301-350kg - Lochdu, £890, 250.0p;
351-400kg - Borrowston Mains, Thurso, £900, Dunain Mains, 244.3p;
401-450kg -Torran Farm, £960, Dunain Mains 218.3p;
451-500kg - Forsie, £1,055, Penick Farm, Auldearn 219.0p;
501-550kg - Clyth Mains, £1,140; 551-600kg - Clyth Mains, 228.3p;
Over 601kg - Blackpark, Nairn, £1,260, 189.5p.

Young Bulls -
301-350kg - Viewhill, Dornoch, £585, 176.2p;
351-400kg - Castle Muie, Rogart, £705, 191.6p.
OTM cows:

Torgorm, Conon Bridge, (CharX), £1,455; Drummond Farm, Evanton (SDX), £1,445; Fornightly Farm, Lethen, (SimX), £1,390; Forsie (Char), £1,365; Balnagall Farm, Fearn (BBX), £1,315; Torgorm, (ShoX), £1,235; Sandside Estate, Caithness, (AA), £1,210.

OTM bulls:
Strathglass Farms, Beauly, (SAX), £1,270; Borrowston Mains, (Lim), £1,110.
Other leading prices per kg
OTM cows:

Drummond Farm, (SDX), 181.3p; Castle Craig Farms, Nigg, (Lim), 180.2p; Drummond Farm, (SimX), 169.5p; Druid Temple Farm, Inverness, (Sim), 168.1p; Forsie, (Char), 167.5p; Torgorm, (CharX), 166.3p.

OTM bulls:
Borrowston Mains, (Lim), 129.8p; Strathglass Farms, (SAX), 121.0p

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Model shown is Yaris TR 1.0 VVT-i 3 door manual £12,260. Prices correct at time of going to press. 5 year/100,000 mile manufacturer warranty subject to terms and conditions. Yaris TR 1.0i VVT-i Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 48.7 (5.8), Extra Urban 65.7 (4.3), Combined 58.9 (4.8). CO2 Emissions 111g/km.

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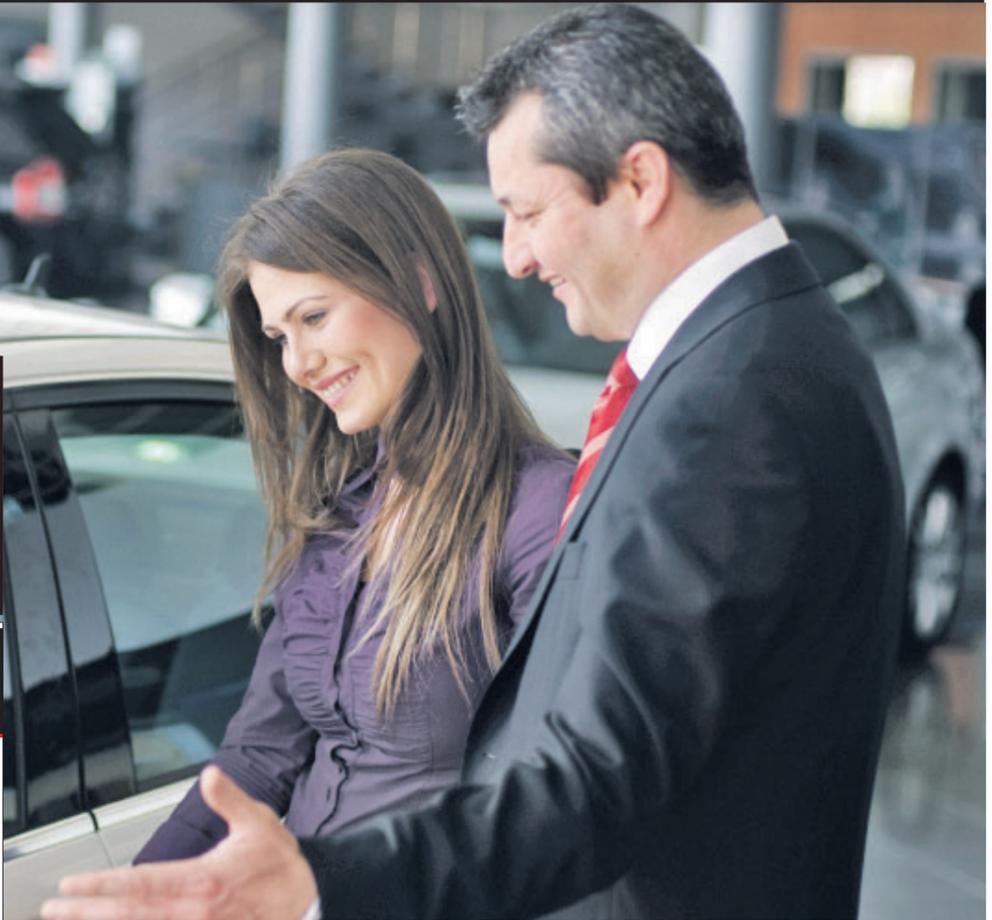
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05 05	Yamaha XJR 1300 Blue, 9800mils	£3,995
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Kia/Suzuki

The new '12' plates will be on the road from 1st March, and this year sees exciting new arrivals at Phoenix Kia and Phoenix Suzuki.

Making their debuts in the Kia stable in 2012 are the all new Kia Optima and the upgraded and restyled Kia Rio. These are in addition to the stylish looking baby in the pack, the Kia Picanto.

Phoenix Suzuki come to the table with equally exciting additions. The all new Suzuki Kizashi is a premier 4-door salon, complete with 4-wheel drive and a host of other extras. Also refreshed for 2012 is the popular hot hatchback, The Suzuki Swift Sport. Reworked with even greater punch and handling ability.

It would also be remiss of us not to point out for those of you more interested in picking up a used car. We see a greater number of trade-ins at this time of year as many people change for the new plate. This means our used car stock is often the freshest and most diverse at this time of year.

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11 11	Kia Ceed 1.6 CRDi 89 2 EcoDynamics 5dr Grey, 11981mls.....	£11,495
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11 61	Kia Pro Ceed 1.6 CRDi 89 2 EcoDynamics 3dr Silver Storm, 4000mls.....	£11,995
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11 11	Kia Pro Ceed 1.4 VR-7 3dr Grey, 14mls.....	£9,995

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11 61	Suzuki Swift 1.2 SZ3 3dr Bright Red, 3000mls.....	£8,295
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11 61	Suzuki Swift 1.3 DDiS SZ3 5dr Galactic Grey, 5000mls.....	£9,995
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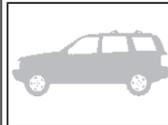


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OFFICIAL FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES FOR THE FREELANDER 2 RANGE IN MPG (L/100KM): URBAN 32.5 (8.7) – 39.8 (7.1) EXTRA URBAN 48.7 (5.8) – 52.3 (5.4) COMBINED 40.4 (7.0) – 47.1 (6.0) CO₂ EMISSIONS: 185 – 158 G/KM.

BIRTHS

FERGUSON - **DICKINSON** - John and Saffron are delighted to announce the arrival of Donald Torin Ferguson, on February 27, 2012 at the Southern General Hospital. First grandchild for Barbara and Malcolm, Glasgow and Ann and the late Donnie, Kilmore.

SMYTH - Rebecca and Matthew are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their son Oliver William Arthur on February 13, 2012. A little brother for Louis, and second grandson for both Val and Les Barnham, Benderloch and Monika and Ian Smyth, Oban. Many thanks to the midwives in Oban and Paisley.

DEATHS

CATTANACH - Peacefully at Dunaros Care Home Isle of Mull on February 20, 2012 aged 91 years, Elizabeth dearly loved wife of the late Alistair, loving Mother of Sandra and Anne and much loved Gran and Great Gran. Sadly missed by all her family. Funeral service was held at Salen Parish Church on Monday February 27, 2012 thereafter to Pennygown Cemetery.

CHISHOLM - James Stewart. Unexpectedly but peacefully at the Belford Hospital on Friday, February 24, 2012. Stewart, much loved husband of Derina, dear father of Natalie, grandfather, beloved brother, father-in-law, uncle and friend to so many. Funeral Service at St Mundas Church, Ballachulish on Thursday, March 1 at 2pm thereafter to St John's Churchyard. All friends respectfully invited. Family flowers only but donations welcome at church door for St John's Church and Great Dane Trust.

CLARK - Tragically at home, 1B Lismore Crescent, Oban on Friday, February 24, 2012. Gary, devoted fiancé of Pauline, beloved son of Jacqui and Stephen, brother of Cheryl, Ryan and Kendra, dearly loved grandson, nephew and cousin.

FORREST - Tragically on Saturday, February 18, 2012. Robert, dearly loved and loving husband of Belle. National Mod Gold Medal Winner 1984 and formerly of Glasgow City Chambers. Funeral service to be held in the Round Church, Bowmore, Isle of Islay, on Thursday, March 1, 2012 at 11.30am followed by interment in Bowmore Cemetery.

MACINTYRE - Rev. Dr. William John MA, BD, DD, FSA Scot. Peacefully at home in Craik with family on Monday February 27, 2012. Much loved husband of Christine, father of Christine and John, grandfather of Kelly, Marsaili, Samantha and Iseabail, great-grandfather of Kieran, Faith and Ellie. Minister of Kilbrandon & Kilchattan prior to long service in Craik & Kingsbarns. Captain in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and the 2nd King Edward VIII's Own Gurkha Rifles, 1943 - 1947. Funeral service at Craik Kirk at 1 pm on Wednesday March 7, 2012. Family flowers only, donations to the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

MACNEILL - Peacefully at Auchinlee Residential Home, Campbeltown, on February 21, 2012, Elizabeth Mary Gillies MacNeill (Betty), in her 83rd year, Keil Cottages, Isle of Gigha, dearly beloved daughter of the late Malcolm and Mary MacNeill and a much loved sister and aunt.

PATON - Suddenly on Wednesday, February 22, 2012, at Burlington, Ontario, Canada. Catherine (nee Campbell), daughter of the late Jane Livingstone and the late Donald Campbell of Killohan, Ardnamurchan, loved and loving wife of Finlay, much loved mother to Alan and Gillian, son-in-law Hector, cherished granny to Deigo, sister to Stewart and Saroj, aunt to Mira and Jess and a very treasured friend to many. Funeral service Burlington February 29, 2012.

ROBERTSON - Peacefully at Eadar Glinn Care Home, Oban, on Sunday, February 26, 2012, in her 86th year, Agnes Martin, loving wife of Alexander (Gingy), much loved mother of Angus, Andrew, George, Jim and the late David Cann. Step mother to Margaret and the late Bobby, Alistair and Jessie, a dear mother-in-law and a cherished granny, great granny and great great granny. Funeral will take place from The Church of Scotland, Glencruitten Road, Oban, on Friday, March 2, 2012 at 1.00 p.m. thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Retiring collection/donations will be taken for Eadar Glinn Benevolent Fund.

ACKNOWLEDGE-MENTS

DOW - Jim, James and family would like to thank all relatives and friends for their kind support following the sad loss of Mollie. Thanks to Ballachulish Surgery for the attention and care they provided, to the Rev Moira Herkes for her comforting services, to Mike McFall Funeral Directors for their help with the funeral arrangements and a special thanks to the staff at the Abbeyfield Nursing Home in Ballachulish for all their care and kindness. Also thanks to all those who paid their last respects to Mollie at St Mundas Church and donated so generously the sum of £380 to Alzheimers Scotland.

ELLIS - Emily would like to thank all family and friends for cards, telephone calls and flowers received following Frank's death. Thanks also to all who attended the service and graveside, to all who travelled from far and near, also Donnie Files for playing the bagpipes. Many thanks to Catriona of Hamish Hoey for handling funeral arrangements in such a caring and professional way. Also the Royal Hotel for a lovely buffet, a special thank you to Rev Dugald Cameron for a most comforting service.

MACRAE - The family of the late Annie MacRae, Fionnphort, Mull wish to thank all those who came to support and help us at her funeral and those who sent cards and letters. Many thanks to Charlie and Iain, Jan, Gillian and Nan for services carried out so kindly and sincerely and especially to all local carers and those in Morar Lodge, Helensburgh. The retiring collection raised £385 to be divided between RNLI and Alzheimer Scotland.

MENZIES - Gwen and all the family of the late John Menzies (Johnny) would like to express their thanks to the many who attended the Requiem Mass and interment at Pennyfuir Cemetery. Special thanks to Father Fraser for his lovely words and to Mary for her uplifting solo singing, also grateful thanks for the many cards, phone calls and flowers received. Many thanks to Enable for their care and devotion to Grandpa in the last 4 years. Thanks also to D and A Munn for professional and caring help with all arrangements. Special thanks also to Stevie at The Royal Hotel for the catering for his Grandpa Johnny. The sum of £260 was collected for The North Argyll Carers Centre, Oban. God bless you all.

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"And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land..." And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere."
(Genesis 12:10 & 13:10)

Abram gave up his faith when he saw the famine, and Lot was outside faith when he saw the green fields of Sodom. If the Believer learns death to his own heart and desires, they will find in the Lord quite a new and wondrous portion. He alone will become their shield and their exceeding great reward.

www.wordsbythewayside.co.uk
Registered Scottish charity SC041290

SCOTT - Christine and Grigor would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their outstanding support after the sad loss of Cyril. Thanks to all who showed Cyril so much love at the Day Hospice and to all the wonderful staff of ward I, for their patience and encouragement. Thanks must go to Rev Bill Gray for a warm and comforting service, Hamish Hoey & Son Ltd with special thanks to Catriona for funeral arrangements, to The Lochnell Arms Hotel for their hospitality and to the brethren of Lodge St. Modan who showed their respects at the Church and graveside.

MEMORIALS

BEATON - In loving memory of Hugh, a dear husband, father, father-in-law and grandfather, who died March 6, 1999. Always in our thoughts.

CLARK - In loving memory of my dear mother Margaret (Peggy), died March 1, 2002. So sorely missed - Kenneth.

MACALLISTER - In loving memory of John, died March 2, 2002. You are still always in our thoughts. Morag and family

MACDONALD - In loving memory of my dear brother, Kenneth, renowned piper, who passed away on February 25, 2010 and loved ones gone before. Your piping heart stopped beating
Your golden fingering at rest

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ECCLESIASTICAL NOTICES

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION

Sunday 4 March 2012
Lent 2

St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Communion..... 08.00
Sung Eucharist..... 10.15
Sunday School and Crèche
Loop System
Large Print Hymn Books
All Welcome
Norman MacCallum, Provost.
(01631) 562323

Kilbrandon Kirk
Holy Eucharist..... 15.15
St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Holy Communion..... 11.00

St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist..... 10.00

ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN

Campbell Street Church
Sunday 4 March 2012
11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.
Phone-In 'Worship Link' available

Rev. Archie McPhail
MA, MTh
(01631) 567076
All welcome

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Tel 0808 100 6000
In memory of Dawn Joyce

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Oban & Lorn Fundraising Branch

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Please contact
Mrs Lillian Kermodie
Tynwald, Glenburn,
Soroba Road, Oban
01631 571009

Your chanter it is silent now
But God only takes the best.
- Inserted by your loving sister Catriona, Crossapol, Tieve.
MACDOUGALL - Ewen Dha m'athair, nam chridhe gu bràth.
- Eleanor.
MACLEAN - Treasured memories of my darling husband Calum, who died suddenly on March 1, 1992. RIP.
Calum, to hold your hand and see your smile
To sit and talk with you awhile
To be together in the same old way
Would be my greatest wish today
With all my love.
- Chrissie xx.
MACLEOD - In memory of Captain Donald MacLeod, Kilchoan, who died on March 1, 1996 Always remembered
Inserted by nephew Hugh.
MACVICAR - In ever loving memory of a devoted, loving wife, mother and nana, Christina (Teena) died March 1, 2007. Johnnie, Mitchell, Catherine and families.

THE FAITH MISSION Annual Oban Rally

Friday 9th March
Baptist Church
7.30pm
Speaker
Donnie Macleod
Book stall and tea

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Working towards a time when every person in Scotland has equal and ready access to the best information, treatment and care for cancer

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

Keira Boyd MacNeill has graduated with a BA (Hons) in Nursing Studies from Glasgow Caledonian University. Keira is the daughter of Sheila and Harry MacNeill, Lairg.

WEDDINGS

BEATON - LUKOWSKI
Claire Beaton & Ben Lukowski were married on December 18th 2011.
They celebrated their marriage with family and friends.
Photograph by Perfect Images, Dunbeg, Oban.

WEDDINGS

MCGARRIGLE-LOPEZ
Tracie McGarrigle and Elio Lopez were married at the Church of Scotland, Corran Esplanade on February 14th 2012. The happy couple celebrated their marriage with a large number of family and friends at The Argyllshire Gathering Halls.
Photograph by Perfect Images, Dunbeg, Oban.

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BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

Oban Times
BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

Thought for the Week

World Day of Prayer Friday, March 2 2012

AT THIS time Christian people throughout the world will be joining in a service with the title 'Let Justice Prevail' which has been written by the Christian women of Malaysia. Each year, the first service is held on the island of Tuvalu in the Pacific Ocean, close to the international dateline and continues for a period of 36 hours until the same date concludes in Alaska just to the other side of the dateline.

In Oban 2012 World day of Prayer welcomes you to Associated Presbyterian Church Campbell Street at 3.00pm to allow us to share in a time of praise and worship. Migration of people from throughout Asia has made Malaysia a land of many ethnic groups who intermingle and integrate into local communities. It is also home to many temporary refugees fleeing war torn or troubled countries. Accordingly, the theme of the service this year is appropriately 'Let Justice Prevail'.

Dalmally syndicate win

A LOTTERY syndicate from Dalmally is celebrating winning over £15,000 from a £6 stake on the Irish Lottery. Dalmally Ladies' Golfing Syndicate won £15,306 when all four of their numbers came up. A member of the syndicate said: 'We're all thrilled to bits because we've been doing it for five or six years. The 28-strong group will each pocket around £546 - the win comes as Dalmally Golf Club prepares to celebrate its 25th anniversary.'

Loch Fyne plankton trial could have fed Britain

SCIENTISTS considered growing plankton in Loch Fyne to feed Britain's population during World War 2 if food supplies were cut. Plans to harvest the tiny creatures were unveiled by Dr Geoffrey Moore, a professor of biology at the University of London, when browsing the archives from Dunbeg's Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS). Trials went ahead in 1941-43, but the growing season was found to be too short. The nets, which would have cost £90,000, would catch more than 26 tonnes of plankton a day.

Police seek help after Loch Awe house theft

POLICE are looking for information about a theft in Lochawe village, when a laptop and jewellery were stolen from a house. The items were stolen following a break-in at a house in the village centre between February 24 - 25, while the occupants were away. Anyone who knows anything about the theft, or may have seen anything suspicious in the area should contact PC Charles MacKenzie on 01631 510 500.

Eco-friendly bin lorry joins Argyll and Bute fleet

ARGYLL and Bute Council is adding a new eco-friendly bin lorry to its fleet in Lochgilphead. The Dennis truck comes equipped with an electric bin-lift which saves between eight and 14 per cent in terms of fuel consumption compared with a traditional lift. Environment spokesman Councillor Bruce Marshall said: 'I am delighted that the council has made yet another addition to their eco-friendly low carbon fleet of vehicles.'



A broken camera prevented Steve getting more photographs of his recent trip to the Antarctic, however, he was lucky enough to get this picture of himself among fur seals and Macaroni penguins in Cooper Bay, South Georgia.

Connel wanderer thinks about slowing down the pace a little at the age of 77

HAVING retired from one career at the age of 54, only to spend the next 22 building his dream business, Connel's Steve Thomas is finally taking time to relax. Handing over the reins to Andy Spink, with whom he formed Hebridean Pursuits and the Roses Charitable Trust, Steve's role will be filled by Jane Sayer, a fellow trustee of group who has been shadowing him for the past 18 months. While stepping back, he will continue to assist the charity when required in his role as founder and patron. Much like Michael Palin's famous chartered accountant who wanted to be a lion tamer, Steve had already established himself as a successful insurance broker in England before his dramatic career shift. Unlike the Monty Python sketch, Steve not only achieved his goal but made the venture a success, thanks in no small part to his own pioneering spirit. It is that spirit that saw the grandfather of five travel to the Antarctic for five weeks to celebrate his retirement - not the kind of trip you'd expect from the average 76 year old. But then very little of what Steve - who turns 77 at the end of the month - does is average.

'I've done quite a lot in my 76 years and now I thought it'd be nice to have more time for family and friends.'

Another source of pride is the charity's success in securing a grant for £190,000 to work with disadvantaged children from other countries. Steve says he has many fond memories of the his work with the trust, and recalls one trip in particular where the elements conspired to create an unforgettable journey. He said: 'I've got particularly good memories of a trip with a group from Edinburgh on board Nanuq of Lorne one Easter. There were bad forecasts so we sailed to Tobermory and then, having reviewed the weather and the options with everyone, we sailed to Canna, where I knew we would be anchored whilst the front passed through. The mate and I were on deck keeping anchor watch for two days and nights as the line squalls kept slamming us. Several boats dragged anchor during the night but we were secure. 'The wind eased early on the second morning, so we had a fantastic sail back to Tobermory. 'The lads had enjoyed that sail so much they so they wanted to give us a treat - they cooked stovies. 'Sadly the recipe was from hell and we had to be seen to enjoy them - oh what fun it is to be an outdoor instructor! 'But the sail training week had been brilliant and enjoyed by all. 'I remember too coming back from Coll in terrible visibility. There was thick fog and we couldn't see much. We were surfing down the waves with a pod of minke whales around us. 'On another trip, there was an exceptional night in the Sound of Mull, when there was a very fine display of the Northern Lights - the whole sky was pulsating.' In his well earned retirement, Steve plans to spend more time at home and visiting his two children and five grandchildren. There has been no thought to giving up the adventuring, although he admits he will miss the life with Hebridean Pursuits and the Roses Charitable Trust. He said: 'I'll keep active as long as I'm fit and healthy. 'However, something I will miss particularly is working with and meeting the characters that get involved. 'I finish with mixed emotions. And Andy and Jane make a strong team to drive the work with the young people forward. 'I've done quite a lot in my 76 years and now I thought it'd be nice to have more time for family and friends.'

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Shinty teams all fired up and ready for the new season

Can Newtonmore make it a hat-trick of premier league titles?

NEWTONMORE'S double cup and league success last year will be hard to replicate, but manager Norman MacArthur will make sure he has his players fired up for their season opener against Lovat at the Eilan this Saturday.

More snatched last season's Premiership title from Kyles Athletic with a 90th minute winner from Danny MacRae in the title decider in Dunoon back in November.

MacArthur's men also won the Camanachd Cup for the first time in 25 years with a dramatic 4-3 extra time win against Badenoch rivals Kingussie at Inverness.

A repeat of last year's success will be tricky for the 'More, but with player such as Scottish international captain Norman Campbell and MacRae to call on, not many would count against MacArthur's side making it three league titles in a row.

KINGUSSIE manager Steven Borthwick is aiming to challenge for the Orion Group Premiership title, starting with a win against newly promoted Kinlochshiel this Saturday.

Kings finished fifth last season and will be without star forward Ronald Ross for much of 2012 due to an ongoing ankle injury, but Borthwick feels his side has enough quality to cope with the loss.

He told The Oban Times: 'I would like to think we can make a strong challenge for the league this year. It's totally dependant on the start we make.'

'We haven't lost anyone from last year, and we've got a young team with some experienced players in there. Louis Munro has had some really bad luck with injuries since he broke through a couple of years ago. But he's going to be one of the best players in the game, there's no doubt about that.'

Borthwick said he wouldn't be taking Kinlochshiel lightly: 'The MacRae brothers are their main players; they are a good strong team and they'll be no pushovers.'

FORT WILLIAM square up to newly promoted South Division

One champions Bute on Saturday, hopefully at Canal Parks if agreement can be reached with Highland Council to use the pitch.

An Aird is out of action until the summer and Fort will be hoping the enforced disruption will not become a major factor as they seek to mount a major challenge across all competitions.

Wet weather has meant the team's pre-season programme was severely curtailed with friendlies against Lochaber and Inveraray cancelled.

However, a 1-0 win at Glenurquhart last Saturday provided some promising signs that youth will play a major role in the coming campaign.

Coach Peter MacIntyre told The Oban Times: 'We had a young player Mark Grant, who is 18, come on before half time in defence and he played very well for over 50 minutes. And Arran MacPhee, who's just 16, played for the last 20 minutes and also looks a great young prospect. They are definitely a couple to watch out for.'

He added: 'I think Bute will do well in the league and it's going to be a very difficult game. It's the old story - we'll just take each game as it comes.'

GLENURQUHART will be looking to make a flying start to their Orion Group Premiership season against Kilmallie at Blairbeg Park on Saturday.

New management team Drew MacNeil and Fraser MacKenzie will take charge of the team for the first time after an impressive pre-season which saw them put five past Strathglass and score 10 against Lochcarron.

The Drumnadrochit side enjoyed a successful 2011, managing to hold off illustrious rivals Kingussie to take fourth place. Joint first team manager MacNeil told The Oban Times making a good start was vital for another successful campaign.

He said: 'The boys have been training hard and we just want to get off to a good start. Having a home tie is definitely good for us. We've got a fairly young team,

SHINTY

and a very young second team especially. First of all you want to try and get more points than you got the previous season. The title is probably a bit far for us at the moment, but we'll be looking to push on in the next couple of years.'

KILMALLIE face a tough-looking away encounter at Glenurquhart as they prepare to get their premier league challenge underway.

The Caol-based side have had a nightmare of a pre-season campaign, with matches scrubbed for weather-related and other reasons.

With match fitness at a premium, Kilmallie played an intra-club bounce game last weekend to sharpen stick skills and reflexes ahead of the Glenurquhart clash.

Chairman Hugh MacIntyre knows preparation has been less than ideal - but can't wait for the action to start.

'Everybody is fit and raring to go - the only one we don't have is Michael Rodger who still has one game to go of his suspension from last year,' he told The Oban Times.

'We had a good turn out at the training on Saturday, but they are really needing a game to get their match fitness up to where it should be.'

He added: 'We are hoping to go further in the cups this year. We were a bit unlucky last season - it's hard going up to Newtonmore and Kingussie and sneaking a win.'

PREMIER LEAGUE newcomers **KINLOCHSHIEL** have a baptism of fire in the top flight when they take on Kingussie on Saturday.

Hopes are high in Lochalsh the team can make a major impact after storming to promotion and the North Division 1 title with maximum points from their games last season.

Coach Johnston Gill, however, has his feet firmly on the ground



Lovat's Calum Cruden and Glenurquhart's Stuart Mackintosh with the new Orion Group Premiership trophy

- not least because of an intimidating fixture list.

'We have Kingussie at home, Fort William at home and Newtonmore away in our first three games - it does not get much tougher than that.'

'But the boys can't wait to get the season started and are really looking forward to Saturday. All the boys are fit and ready, we have no injuries and a couple of young boys ready to break into the squad - Duncan and Oliver 'Achi' MacRae and David Falconer.'

'We have others behind them pushing as well, which is good because it puts pressure on the first team guys. It means they will be looking over their shoulders if they want to keep their places.'

Gill added: 'There is great expectation in the village, but if you look at it realistically we hope to keep a lid on things and have to stay in the league.'

LOVAT kick off their Orion Premiership campaign with a match that really promises to test their mettle - an away game at champions Newtonmore.

The Kiltarity men have been handed a pre-season boost with the return of long term injury absentees Drew Howie and James Grieve, but both are unlikely to feature in Saturday's match as they are still short of match fitness.

Coach Alan MacRae told The Oban Times: 'We have a good, young squad and our injuries

seem to have cleared up from last season. We'll just have to play it by ear and we will certainly have a big test against Newtonmore, when we will be able to gauge how we are fitness wise and player wise.'

'We will be missing a few players, but I think we can handle that with the squad we have got.'

Asked what his targets were for the coming campaign, MacRae was playing his cards close to his chest.

He said: 'We would like a run in the cups and obviously a priority is staying up this season as well. Last time we left it to the last game, so it would be nice to be a bit more comfortable this time.'

LOCHABER are looking to go one better than last season's runners up position and win the Marine Harvest north division one this year.

With no north teams relegated from the top league last year, Lochaber are sure to be amongst the favourites to win promotion as they prepare for their first game away to Lochcarron.

Manager Michael Delaney told The Oban Times promotion was his aim for 2012.

He said: 'That's what we're looking towards. We struggled a little but against Lochcarron last season. But it's the first game of the season so you never know. It's really important to get off to a good start; you've got to win the first two or three games in this league.'

Delaney said the club had a good pre-season and he was looking forward to the weekend. 'We should have a pretty full squad for Saturday,' he said. 'We've not lost anyone from last year and will be bringing some boys up from the second team during the season.'

SKYE CAMANACHD will aim to get their North Division 1 campaign off to a fast start at Caberfeidh on Saturday as coach Willie MacRae looks to turn a punishing pre-season training regime to good advantage.

Pre-season form has been encouraging with strong performances against Newtonmore and in last Saturday's narrow 4-3 loss to Lovat.

Skye had led 3-1, but MacRae was determined to give fringe players a run and cohesion suffered as a result.

Macrae told The Oban Times: 'Newtonmore were very impressed with our levels of fitness and it was a good test for us. The Lovat game on Saturday gave us a chance to use our squad and we know now what to do and what not to do [regarding position and selection].'

'Our defence is very solid and we have Jamie MacDonald back from injury after he missed all of

last season, which is a big positive for the squad. We have done a lot of work since the turn of the year out on the roads especially, so we are a lot fitter than we were at this stage last year.'

He added: 'We plan to get off to a good start at Caberfeidh and the boys are really up for it. We had a terrible start last season, but this time realistically we are looking to be in contention from promotion. That's our plan.'

New **LOCHCARRON** manager Andrew MacKenzie will be hoping to get off to a strong start when his side tackle one of the promotion favourites Lochaber this Saturday.

MacKenzie will be looking to make sure his side pull away from any potential relegation battle, and will have much the same squad as last year, plus new player John Martin Phillips. Lochcarron finished in mid-table last year, a position MacKenzie would be happy with the season.

He told The Oban Times the squad had enjoyed a good pre-season and was ready for their first game. He said: 'The squad is looking good, we've got a few boys working off shore which will effect us.'

'We can hopefully finish where we did last year. We're not looking at promotion this season, our squad is too small. It's more about building for the future and hopefully doing well in the cups.'

Heavy rain has left the pitch at Battery Park in poor condition, meaning the match may be reversed to Spean Bridge. epykles09

After looking odds on to lift the premier league trophy last year, an injury-ravaged **KYLES ATHLETIC** squad ran out of second, allowing Newtonmore to take the title.

And it seems the exertions of last season have taken their toll on the threadbare squad, with four of their star players effectively ruled out for the 2012 season.

Full-back Peter Currie has moved to the USA, Grant Irvine has ruptured his cruciate ligament, Donald Irvine will only be able to play a handful of games after qualifying as a doctor and Sandy MacVicar has been ruled out of action for up to two years after playing with a shattered wrist last season.

'It would be fair to say things are in a bit of a transition,' admitted Kyles trainer James Perlich.

'We have young players to come in but they have not played in the premier league before and because of their step up to the first team, we have relegated our second team to South Division Two.'

'The young boys will be thrown in at the deep end of

premier league shinty and we hope that long term this will pay off for us.'

'The way last season ended was a hard one. It was more the draw with Inveraray, than the defeat to Newtonmore, that was hard to take. We knew we should have won the Inveraray game.'

The club starts with three away games, while the Tighnabruich Playing Field gets new drainage.

OBAN CAMANACHD president Nigel Evans expects his team to return to the top flight at the first time of asking.

The recently-relegated club begin the new campaign away to Tainuill on Saturday.

Nigel said: 'We would be more than disappointed if we were not promoted at the first time of asking.'

'That's not to say we're taking things for granted - it is by no means a foregone conclusion that we will go back up again.'

The team impressed in their recent friendly against high-flyers Kingussie, and despite losing 3-1, Nigel believes the performance sets Oban in good stead for the season ahead.

He said: 'In my view we can compete with the best. We've got the same team and management with Diarmid MacMillan and Andrew Pearson and we are comfortable with that.'

'The main focus is getting back into the premier league, and we hope to have a decent run in some of the cups - in particular the Balliemore which is a more realistic target for us.'

INVERARAY talisman Garry MacPherson will take on a dual role with the club this season, as he supports manager John Smylie as assistant manager while he continues to play.

After scraping clear of relegation last season, Inveraray's priority again will be on premier league survival in 2012.

Manager John Smylie said: 'We will not be able to have a consistent first team because of work commitments but I hope we can get our strongest team out against the teams that will be around us in the league.'

'As always, we'll be looking to get a couple of good cup runs.'

Inveraray host Kyles Athletic this weekend, although earlier this week doubts were cast over whether the pitch would be playable.

OBAN CELTIC'S Davie Hamilton said his club are looking to consolidate their position in what will be a 'very competitive' South Division One in 2012.

With Oban Camanachd and Glenorchy coming down from the premier league, Davie insisted this would be one of the most challenging seasons the club has faced.

He said: 'The first priority

is to stay in this league, but it is going to be harder. We are opening with a hard game against Glenorchy and I see this eight-team league being very competitive.'

'There are a couple of young boys, Andrew MacDonald and Rory Bruce, coming through but apart from that it is a similar team to last season.'

'If we can consolidate this year, we might be able to do something next season.'

The last time **GLENORCHY** won a match was in South Division One when they became champions in 2010.

A forgettable year in the top flight last year, which saw them finish bottom of the table and without a point to their name, has dented the team's confidence but will also make their next win all the more rewarding.

'The heavy defeats last season had a big effect on us,' admitted coach Allan MacKechnie. 'A lot of folk became disheartened but we are in a lower league and I hope we can get a couple of early wins to get the enthusiasm back.'

Allan said his policy of bringing on the club's young talent this season may not be popular with everyone but insisted that was how the club should move forward.

'We're going for a young team this season,' he said. 'Obviously we'll aim to win the league and have a good cup run but we also need to rebuild the side and keep the young players interested by giving them games.'

TAYNUILL manager Davy Thomson says his players are up for the challenge of playing the 'three premier league teams' in South Division One in their first three matches.

Tainuill play Oban Camanachd, Glenorchy and Glasgow Mid Argyll in consecutive weeks.

Davy said: 'This is a competitive league so it will be a difficult season for us.'

'Our goal this year will be to finish in the top half of the league and hopefully do well in the cups, like we did last season.'

'Our first three games are the most difficult we could have been given but this is the standard we have to reach if we want to progress.'

'We have a few young players who have been on the fringes of the team and I am looking for them to push for places in the team.'

Tainuill have lost the services of coach Fraser Inglis, who stood down last season, and up-and-coming youngster Thomas Dalgaty, who is going to university.

Full results next week



Newtonmore won last season's premier division league title and the Badenoch side will be looking to do the same again this season.

Saints Boys lose their first game of the season in a close encounter with Lochnell

THE Oban Express Primary Football league continued on Sunday at the Community Pitch in damp conditions but the seniors got through their 18 match fixture list with some excellent games and close encounters.

The stars of the Galaxy opened their day with an excellent win over Saints 03 with Struan MacDonald and Ellis Hunter on target but they relied heavily on goalkeeper Fergie Carmichael to keep a clean sheet and secure the win. It was to be a false dawn for the Galaxy though as they crashed to a loss against the older Saints 02 who scored the opener in what can only be described as a goalmouth scramble with Lennon Campbell back heeling the ball in. This put Saints in command and they doubled the lead soon after with Gavin Forgivee getting on the scoresheet before Euan Logan sealed the win with a fine goal.

The Galaxy were also stung by the Scorpions of Lochgilphead with a solid midfield display anchored by Euan Finlay which set the foundations for a good Scorpions win including goals from Cameron Williamson, Craig Millar and Jamie Munro. The Scorpions

had earlier been involved in a cracking game against the All Stars with Scorpions taking an early lead through a Tyler Robertson goal. Scorpions then defended bravely for rest of the first half with some fine defending by Struan Robertson and Micheal McCurry 'cuppled' with good saves from Alastair Cupples keeping Allstars out until just before half-time when Allstars equalised. The second half was a rip roaring affair with plenty of end to end action. Craig Millar and Cameron Williamson twice put Scorpions ahead but both time Allstars came back to equalise in a very entertaining encounter.

Lochgilphead Red Star opened their day with a win over Thistle with Kian Francis claiming the only goal of the game but lost their next match against in form Lochnell who had James Divers and Finlay Baenett on target either side of a Red Star equaliser. The Star lost also to Saints Boys with the same scoreline despite Joseph Harper scoring with a terrific header in reply to two goals from Craig McMillan for the Boys. McMillan went on to score another double in the Boys match against Allstars with Craig Easton also on target without reply.

Team of the Day award went to Lochnell who recorded a one nil win against the previously undefeated Saints Boys with Finlay Bennett again on target in the first half but it was backs to the wall in the second with Lochnell defending deep and the cross bar coming to their rescue twice before the final whistle. Lochnell completed their three wins out of three with a three nil win over Thistle with Divers and Bennet grabbing the lime light again on an excellent day for the North Lorne side.

Stablemates Tralee started off with a great win over Wasps with Stuart Black, Dougie MacDonald and Daniel Sloss all on target but they couldn't find the net against Saints 03 who won the match through counters from James Beaton and Connor Moore. Their final game was against Saints 02 who forced several saves from the excellent Dougie MacDonald in goals. It took a cracking strike from Lewis Campbell to beat him and Lewis followed that up with a fine hat-trick. Saints Jude Bain also got in on the act striking the ball into the top corner to confirm the win.

Saints 02 staked their own claim as team of the day with a third

PRIMARY FOOTBALL

win on the bounce against Jags in a tough encounter and a good end to end game. Saints Cameron Clark opened the scoring from a free kick, swerving it over the wall and beyond the keeper. Jags' Keir Maclean drove his side forward and scored an equaliser, knocking the ball home from a corner kick but Saints dug deep in the second half and attacked for the winner with an in form Sam Coates surging forward and they got their rewards when Lennon Campbell turned in an excellent pass from Jude Bain to win the game for Saints.

The Jags also went down to Allstars despite a goal from Finbar Dunne who ran the length of the park to convert but they recorded a confidence boost against 03 when Mark MacKnight scored the only goal with nearly the last kick off the match. To complete the set of fixtures Thistle took on Wasps and won through a double from Rory Dowd and goals from Micheal MacFarlane and Oran Bryck. The seniors will continue with their programme again next Sunday at the high school.

Phoenix boxers compete at senior championships

TWO LOCHABER Phoenix ABC boxers competed at a stage higher than they had ever boxed before when they took the ring at the Scottish Senior Open Boxing Championships at Meadowbank stadium in Edinburgh last weekend.

Middleweight Ryan Watson faced last year's runner-up Darin Reid of Alloa ABC in a last 16 contest in what was always going to be an extremely hard test for the Fort William boxer.

Reid, known for his educated left jab, met his match in the first as Watson landed his own jab as often as his opponent, but Reid held a narrow lead by the end of the second.

In the last Ryan continued to throw quality shots, especially his counter right, but Reid has

not boxed at top level for so long by accident and managed to keep just ahead to claim an 11-6 points victory.

Light welterweight Aidan Donnelly took on Newarthill's Scott MacIntyre in his last 16 bout and whilst MacIntyre is noted for smart boxing Donnelly's intentions were clear from the start.

Donnelly tore into MacIntyre from the opening bell with a ferocious intensity and counted with several shots, but sometimes tended to 'switch off' after any success and allow MacIntyre to punish the Fort William boxer in turn.

After a close opener, MacIntyre managed to pick holes in Aidan's defence close as the Fort William boxer's attacks grew

wilder. Entering the last Aidan still led by a point, but continued deficiencies in his defence allowed MacIntyre to sneak a couple of unanswered points to snatch the verdict 16-15.

Coach Niall Clark told The Oban Times that although disappointed with the results all the coaching team were delighted with their boxers' performances.

He said: 'The last time Ryan entered these championships he faced a top quality opponent and lost by 24 points. This time he faced perhaps the best boxer in Scotland and lost by only five points. That is a major improvement.'

'Aidan has boxed for less than three years and to reach this level so quickly is a major achievement.

BOXING

Neither of these lads have had the advantage of boxing through their teenage years as most of the boys at this level have had so they should be very proud of their achievements.

'Both boxers are ranked just outside the top ten in Scotland so the aim for the rest of this year is to get them inside that elite group.'

Meanwhile, Lochaber Phoenix have announced tickets for their latest home show at the Nevis Centre on April 7 are now on sale from the venue (01397700707), coaches Niall Clark (07554994744) and Vince Lopez (07979321025) or club official Steve Docherty (07767 069532).



Kilmallie warmed up for this weekend's Orion Group Premiership opener at Glenurquhart with a training game involving the first and second team squads. Despite sodden conditions Saturday's match proved a useful exercise as Kilmallie seek to start the season with an away win. Above, Mark MacPherson, who turned 30 the day before the game, clears his lines under pressure from Sebbly MacMillan. Shinty round-up, page 27. 20_09shinty01

Alleycats' lead cut to six points

TEN PIN BOWLING

AFTER 14 weeks of the Lochaber Building Supplies 10-pin bowling league Alleycats' lead at the top of the scratch division has been cut to six points.

Council stay in second on 60 points after beating Phoenix 5-0 at the Nevis Centre, while Ardtoe/Nevis Radio remain third.

The handicap division is even closer with the top three teams all dropping some points this week. Alleycats, Council and Ardtoe/Nevis Radio cannot be split at the top, all on 47 points.

The highest scratch team game of the week came from Alleycats with 602, while Council had the highest handicap game with 807.

Council also had the week's top scratch 2 game series with 1,115. Rotavators had the top handicap two game series with 1,565.

Individually, Alleycats' Tony Whitehead rolled the best scratch game of 186 and the best two game scratch series of 335. Sean MacPherson of the Likely Lads chipped in with a 174. The best handicap game of the week came from Gus Fraser, Council, with 227. Derek Fraser, British Legion Scotland, had the best two game handicap series with 425.

Narrow win for league leaders

INDOOR FOOTBALL

ALI YOUNG Premier League leaders Lochaber Leisure got back to winning ways with a narrow 3-2 victory over Steaua Sookabrest at the Nevis Centre on Sunday night.

Nearest challengers Goon Squad and Achintore FC both won 3-0 against AA Young and Bayern Bru respectively to keep up the pressure.

Meanwhile, Ballachulish FC slipped to fifth after losing 4-6 to TNF United, while HW Energy thrashed The Granite House 8-2. The night's other game saw Liverpool in eighth draw 4-4 with ninth-placed Stroke City.

Ewan wins at Duror

THE LATEST round of West Highland Wheelers winter league saw 25 racers tackle a tricky course at Duror on Sunday.

The race was won in slippery conditions by Ewan Thorburn in a time of 49 minutes 23 seconds. Ben Miller and his father set the course, and the junior rider came home in second place just 54 seconds behind Thorburn, while Ben Thompson finished third.

The two fastest ladies, Emma Holgate and Nix Forster, both

CYCLING

missed parts of the course after confusion about course navigation.

Impressive
Youngster Lachlan Blair put in an impressive time of 63 minutes 14 seconds to finish as the second fastest junior cyclist.

Thanks to Ben, Nigel and Jeanette Miller for all of their hard work. The next Wheelers race is due to be held at Wolftrax, Laggan on Sunday.

Glen Brittle Race

ATHLETICS

LOCAL athlete James Stephenson led a field of 14 home to win Skye and Lochalsh Running Club's Glen Brittle Race on Saturday.

Young Niall Till held the lead for most of the race only to be passed by eventual winner James and Josephine MacDonald in the closing stages.

Sixteen year-old Josephine provided the performance of the day, finishing the tough course to finish second overall in 1:17:58. In the Winter Series Cham-

INDOOR SHINTY

ampionship, Wilma MacRuary did enough by finishing as second female club member home to secure the Ladies Championship with one race to go. The Mens Championship is still not decided, as Niall Till has closed to within eight points of Phil Dewar.

Current standings are: Men - Phil Dewar (28 points), Niall Till (20 points), Neil Turner and Lee Mather (14 points), Women - Wilma MacRuary (36 points), Sarah Stephenson (28) and Janette Tasker (26).

Lochaber and Kingussie lift the silverware

LOCHABER Camanachd's Primary 5 and under shinty team is top of the world after winning the RBS National First Shinty Finals at Lochaber First School on Saturday.

In a pulsating final against Dingwall, hero of the hour was Max Campbell who scored a hat-trick in a nail-biting 5-3 victory.

Darren Whyte had put Lochaber ahead and Cameron Whyte doubled the lead before Dingwall pulled a goal back.

Roaring
With Spean Bridge supporters roaring on the boys from the galleries, Lochaber went 4-1 up only for Dingwall to pull two goals back as the clock ticked down.

But a third goal from Max

sealed matters, and the final whistle sparked wild celebrations from the Lochaber contingent.

Meanwhile over at the Nevis Centre, the RBS P6/7 final was also reaching a conclusion as Portree battled it out with Kingussie in another high quality clash.

Following the initial league matches, Kingussie topped league A with Portree as runners-up and Rockfield finished top of league B with maximum points, followed by Lovat.

Kingussie demolished Lovat 7-1 in the semi-final, but in the other semi Portree really upset the form book to post their best performance of the day to defeat fancied Rockfield 3-0.

The final was a real high-class

affair, played at a frantic pace, but in the end Kingussie scored in the very last minute to claim a narrow 3-2 win and become the 2012 Scottish champions.

Proud
Portree head teacher John Finlayson was proud of how his team, coached by Davie Pringle, fought through to almost claim glory in the final.

He told The Oban Times: 'The team was fantastic and showed great commitment and received huge encouragement and support from their parents. The ongoing good-natured rivalry with Kingussie [coached by Davie Anderson] continues!'

Kingussie captain Alexander Michie received the trophy from Olga Robertson from RBS.

FOOTBALL

In the 3rd/4th place play off, Lovat defeated Rockfield 3-2 in the P6/7 final, while in the P5 and under third place match category Kingussie edged out Inverlochty 2-1 on the golden goal.

Lochaber had booked their place in the final by beating local rivals Inverlochty 5-2, while Dingwall beat Kingussie on the golden goal after their semi had finished 2-2.

Over 200 children took part in the event over both venues. Twelve teams from across Scotland took part in each competition after winning through at regional heats two weeks previously.

Fort William lose out to Inverurie Locos

FORT William will be looking to bounce back against Lossiemouth at Claggan Park this Saturday after slipping to the bottom of the Highland League last weekend.

Strathspey Thistle's 2-0 win against Brora Rangers moved them a point ahead of the Lochaber side.

Manager Danny Conlon said being bottom of the pile should motivate the players to perform. He said: 'I would hope it would. Strathspey have had quite a few good results recently and it just shows what you can do if you put together a little run and get the confidence up.'

'We certainly don't want to finish bottom but you can only do that with hard work. Lossie are a very physical, competitive side and we're going to have to try and match that.'

Conlon will have captain Andy Martin available again and Chris MacLeod has resumed training.

Fort went down 3-0 at Inverurie Locos last weekend despite holding out for the first 75 minutes.

KEEPER CRISIS

Keeper Stewart Gray pulled off a number of impressive saves to keep the home side at bay, but Lewis Campbell pushed Neil Gauld in the box to give away a penalty with 15 minutes on the clock. Gauld scored the penalty and doubled Loco's lead minutes later, again from the spot. Substitute Craig Ross scored in the final minutes to secure the win.

Meanwhile, the Claggan side are facing a keeper crisis this month after a number of postponed fixtures were re-arranged for midweek. Current number one Stewart Gray is based in Inverurie and unable to make the long trip during the week, and with John Campbell and Jonathan Smith still injured, Conlon is looking to unearth a new goalie for the fixtures.

There were no winners in the Fort William FC lotto draw on Saturday. Numbers were 2-3-17. The jackpot goes up to £400 this week.



Fort midfielder Logan Barker takes on Inverurie defender Neil McLean during his side's 3-0 loss on Saturday.



Primary 5 and under champions Lochaber celebrate their victory over Dingwall. 20_09shinty01



Portree: came so close to upsetting Kingussie in the final. 20_09shinty04

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Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday. You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition Rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

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In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.

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WIN £500

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Laura Ann loses out in the semis

POOL
SCOTTISH international pool player Laura Ann Sneddon helped the country's women's team to reach the semi-final of the European Eight-ball Championship for the first time in 10 years.

The Oban player was part of the five-woman team, who narrowly lost 8-6 to Northern Ireland at the championship in Dublin.

Northern Ireland went on to lose the final against favourites England.

Meanwhile, The Oban Backpackers won their first game in the Oban and District Pool League.

Team	Pts
Lancaster A	22
Markie Dans A	20
The Claredon	18
The Cellar	16
Lancaster B	12
The Lochavullin	8
Markie Dans B	6
Oban Backpackers	2

Cup results for indoor footballs

INDOOR FOOTBALL

RESULTS: Carpet Fitters 11, Emergency Services 2; Oban Times 14, Oban Electricians 4; Hotels 4, Oban High School 11

Group A	P	W	D	L	Pts
Carpet Fitters	2	2	0	0	6
Oban Times	2	1	0	1	3
Emergency	2	1	0	1	3
Oban Electricians	2	0	0	2	0

Group B

High School	3	2	0	1	6
Atlantis	1	1	0	0	3
Hotels	1	0	0	1	0
RM Builders	1	0	0	1	0

Islay Golf Club winter league

GOLF

RECENT winter league results: 1 Samuel Graham 43pts; 2 Alister Blair 39pts; 3 Lachlan Cairns 37pts. C.S. 71

Congratulations to Alister Blair overall winner of the winter league. Keith MacDonald was second and Samuel Graham finished in third place.

Five new records set at athletics final

FIVE Argyll age-group records were broken at the area final of Sports Hall Athletics held in Atlantis Leisure, Oban on Saturday.

The final, which attracted 91 competitors, was the last in a series of five competitions held in Argyll over the winter months promoted by Mid Argyll Athletic Club and sponsored by a Communities 2014 Lottery Grant.

After almost five hours of intense competition the overall awards were distributed to most parts of the county with athletes from the Oban area winning three out of the 10 titles.

Three of the records were set in the boys under-13 contest by Ben Coates from Kilmore, who won the Scottish Indoor Under-14 Pentathlon Championship in Glasgow the previous weekend.

Ben's first record was in the standing long jump reaching out to 2.38metres adding 1cm to the long-standing record.

Ben was then in action in the 2lap race, winning in 22.5seconds and trimming 0.3 of a second off his own Argyll age

record set in January. In the 4lap race he recorded an incredible 48seconds taking a full three seconds off the old record set by Ruairaidh MacKinnon from Oban in 2009.

Ben now holds the Argyll age record in five out of the eight sports hall events.

Ashleigh Connor from Campbeltown was the other record breaker and was very impressive in winning the girls under-13 title.

In her first event Ashleigh improved her own Argyll age record in the standing triple jump reaching 6.85metres, adding 22cm to her mark set two weeks ago in the Kintyre competition.

Ashleigh then exceeded the age record in the standing long jump by 4cm clearing 2.26metres.

Abbie Cato from Bunessan Primary on Mull was the under-9 champion winning five events and was not far off the age record in the triple jump and speed bounce.

Mull also won the girls under-11 category with Molly Reade from Tobermory winning ahead

of Rhona O'May from Castlehill Primary in Campbeltown.

Kate Cameron from Southend was a worthy under-15 champion winning five events outright, while Kirsty Gillies, Oban, was under-17 winner ahead of Kerry Colthart, Appin, and Sian Henderson from Salen, on Mull.

The under-9 boys competition was very close with only three points separating the first four boys. Jude Gallagher from Tobermory and Ross Conner from Castlehill Primary shared first place.

Joseph Harper from Kilmartin was the under-11 champion thanks to wins in the high, long and triple jumps.

Oban High School boys dominated the under-15s competition, filling the first three places. Champion Jamie Killorn won six events to ensure victory ahead of Alan Colthart and Scott Black.

Erik Riddell from Tayvallich and Oban boy Gordon Thomson had an interesting duel in the under-17s with Erik the winner in six out of the eight events to ensure overall victory.



Oban Saints Under-14s and Kilpatrick fought out an entertaining 1-1 draw during their Dumbarton Development League fixture at Oban Community Pitch last Sunday. Saints goalscorer Kieran Hendry looks on as the ball is cleared by the Kilpatrick defence. 15_109saints05

Saints youths - results and fixtures

YOUTH FOOTBALL

LAST weekend's results: Blair Thistle v Under 13s postponed. Under 14s 1, Kilpatrick 1. Saints goalscorer was Kieran Hendry.

EDFC United 0, Under 15s 3. Netting for the Oban team were Stuart Twort (2) and Duggie MacLeod.

Helensburgh 1, Under 16s 4. Scoring for Saints were Liam MacEachran and a hat-trick from Ryan MacDougall.

This weekend's fixtures: Drumchapel United v Under 13s; Under 14s v Goldenhill; EDFC United v Under 15s; Under 16s v Strathleven.

Angus and Eddie at the double

CARPET BOWLS

Club	P	Pts
Kilmore	10	62
Cairnbaan	10	48
Benderloch	10	47
Easdale	10	39
North Connel	9	36
Taynuilt	10	24
Connel	9	24

THE winners of the Kilmore Open Doubles were Angus MacFadyen and Eddie Holland, Kilmore who beat Adrian MacKay and Ron MacLean from Cairnbaan.

Tight at the top in indoor league

INDOOR FOOTBALL

Team	P	W	D	L	Pts
Trialists	6	6	0	0	18
Taynuilt	6	6	0	1	18
Emergency	7	4	1	2	13
Seil	7	4	0	3	12
WC Massive	7	3	0	4	9
Spartak	7	3	0	4	9
Teachers	6	2	1	3	7
Hydro	7	1	0	6	3
STC	7	0	0	7	0

RESULTS: Taynuilt 6, Teachers 6; Hydro 2, Trialists 9; Sail Trim Coach 1, West Coast Massive 15; Sail Trim Coach 2, Spartak 11; Emergency 3, Hydro 0; Seil 6, West Coast Massive 3.

Weakened Oban Lorne made to pay

RBS West Division 2

Cambuslang 73-0 Oban Lorne

OBAN Lorne tempted fate by travelling to Cambuslang with only 15 available players and their worst fears were realised when injuries picked up during the match led to a crushing defeat.

A promising victory the previous week, when 22 players were available, became a distant memory after only half an hour, when the hosts went 28-0 ahead.

Oban were dealt a further blow when scrum half Fergus Matheson limped off with a knee injury meaning Oban now had to play the game with 14 men.

Cambuslang ran in another seven tries in the remaining 50 minutes of the game to win 73-0, during which time a brave Oban Lorne saw injuries to Jamie MacMillan, Ryan Jackson and Calum MacLachlan.

Coach Corrie Louw said the 15 men in green who travelled could be very proud of the way they maintained their discipline and commitment throughout the match.

Oban Lorne remain eighth in West Division Two and are looking good to survive in a very tough league. Relegation rivals Uddington were beaten 74-0 by Helensburgh who Oban Lorne face on Saturday at Glencruitten. Kick off 3pm.

Tag rugby tournament at Garmony

TAG RUGBY

ROUND two of the Islands Tag Festival competitions was held at Garmony last Sunday. This was the first junior tournament to enjoy the fantastic new facilities since the clubhouse refurbishment.

The competition was as ever fiercely competitive, with eight teams, almost 60 youngsters encouraged by a large number of family supporters battling it out for the Golden Ball.

Topped the Table
For the second time this season the Salen Sea Eagles coached by Catlyn MacLennan topped the table scoring an incredible 36 tries in their seven games (perhaps Scotland coach Andy Robinson should be giving Catlyn a wee call!).

Saints cause havoc as Athletic are dumped in the Myre

FOOTBALL

West of Scotland Cup 3rd round

Myre Athletic 0 Oban Saints 3

SAINTS travelled to Havoc Park in Dumbarton last Saturday to take on Myre Athletic in the 3rd round of the West of Scotland Cup.

This was the fourth time the teams had tried to play the game with the previous attempts having to be called off due to the bad weather. Although the pitch was a bit heavy on Saturday the playing surface was in remarkably good condition considering the recent spell of heavy rain.

Manager Iain Jackson shuffled his squad for this game with Paul Kerr, Alan Miller and Lewis Cameron coming into the starting line-up.

Saints got off to the perfect start with a goal in the sixth minute. They were awarded a free kick at the edge of the box and Donald Campbell curled a great low shot round the Myre wall which left keeper Michael Reilly rooted to the spot.

However, with the advantage

of a strong blustery wind at their backs the home side came roaring back into the game and Graham Douglas had to make a good save low down to his left hand post from Tony McGrogan the former St Pat's and Queens Park striker.

At the other end Donald Campbell was unlucky when he outjumped the Myre defence to get his head to a Lewis Cameron corner which was heading for the top corner of the net, but the ball cannoned off his own defender Marc MacCallum who was also up for the corner.

Marc was unlucky not to get a penalty two minutes later when he was clearly fouled in the box, but to everyone's surprise the referee failed to point to the spot for what looked like a stone wall penalty.

The home side came close when Mark MacLeod had a good effort which just slipped past the post and Brian Burke had a header sail over the bar.

Just before the half time whistle Paul Kerr was unlucky with a good header that looked a goal

all the way until Barry Quinn stepped up to clear the ball off the line, so the Oban lads had to be content with a narrow 1-0 lead at the interval.

With the advantage of the elements in the second half Saints pushed forward at every opportunity in an attempt to get that vital second goal. Alan Miller came close with a shot that whistled past the post and Ryan Campbell had another good effort but the ball sailed

over the bar.

Saints netted that vital second goal in the 57th minute when Lewis Cameron sent over a great corner from the left which the Myre defence failed to clear. The ball fell kindly for Paul Kerr who prodded it over the line from close range to make the score 2-0.

All credit to the home side they battled away, but were getting little change out of the Saints defence well marshalled by Alex Craik, although keeper Graham Douglas made a great save touching an Andy Rennie shot onto the bar before the ball was scrambled clear.

Myre were pushing men forward to try and get a goal back which was leaving spaces at the back and with a little more composure Saints might have scored on two or three occasions.

However, the icing on the cake of a good afternoon's performance from the Oban side came a minute before full time with a well taken goal after good work from Asen Gaydardzhiev, Ryan Campbell and Alan Miller.



Donald Campbell - scored two goals against Myre.

Taynuilt lose unbeaten home record

FOOTBALL

Central Scottish Welfare League

Taynuilt 0 Renton 3

RENTON maintained their 100 per cent record this season but the away team admitted it took their best performance of the season to take all three points at Glencruitten.

Renton had the first chance to take the lead from the penalty spot when John Napier looked to have taken his man down.



John Napier and Craig Campbell combine to thwart a Renton attack. 15_109taynuilt06

Up stepped the Renton number eight, who placed his shot to the bottom left hand corner but Ben Pollock showed his agility to turn the ball away.

However, the deadlock was broken when a Renton corner wasn't cleared and a defender toe-poked the ball into the net from two yards. Taynuilt came right back into the game and young George McMillan had a great effort turned round the post.

Against the run of play the third and final goal was scored when McPhee and Pollock couldn't decide who was clearing the danger and the Renton number nine nicked in between them to slot the ball home.

Taynuilt manager Stuart Reid said: 'Even though it was a tight game the Renton manager explained to me that this match was their best performance of the season.'

Next week Taynuilt are on league cup semi-final duty at St Pats Academy in Dumbarton against Westcliff, then play Yoker BFC on March 10.

FOOTBALL

West of Scotland Cup 3rd round

Myre Athletic 0 Oban Saints 3

SAINTS travelled to Havoc Park in Dumbarton last Saturday to take on Myre Athletic in the 3rd round of the West of Scotland Cup.

This was the fourth time the teams had tried to play the game with the previous attempts having to be called off due to the bad weather. Although the pitch was a bit heavy on Saturday the playing surface was in remarkably good condition considering the recent spell of heavy rain.

Manager Iain Jackson shuffled his squad for this game with Paul Kerr, Alan Miller and Lewis Cameron coming into the starting line-up.

Saints got off to the perfect start with a goal in the sixth minute. They were awarded a free kick at the edge of the box and Donald Campbell curled a great low shot round the Myre wall which left keeper Michael Reilly rooted to the spot.

However, with the advantage

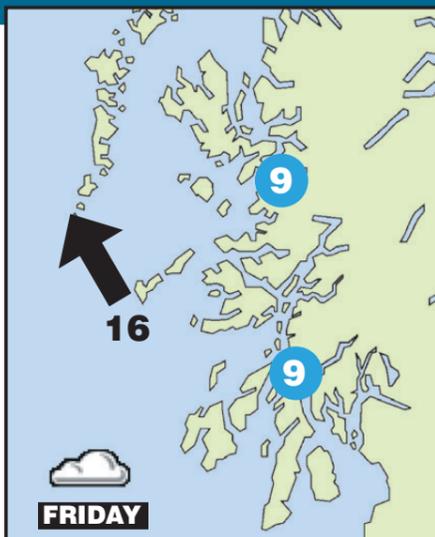
Weather

Thursday Light rain.
Winds moderate, south south westerly
Temperatures 6°C to 9°C

Friday Cloudy
Winds moderate, south easterly
Temperatures 6°C to 9°C.

Weekend Heavy rain
Outlook Winds moderate, southerly
Temperatures 5°C to 8°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States	
Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate



Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, March 1, 2012** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	10.24	2.9	17.36	1.9	22.44	2.9
Thur	04.44	2.0	10.24	2.9	17.36	1.9	22.44
Fri	06.05	2.1	13.20	2.7	18.49	2.0	*** **
Sat	01.12	2.8	07.43	2.1	14.56	2.9	20.03
Sun	02.55	3.0	09.38	1.8	15.42	3.1	21.10
Mon	03.44	3.3	10.20	1.5	16.20	3.4	22.01
Tues	04.24	3.6	10.56	1.1	16.55	3.6	22.43
Wed	05.01	3.8	11.39	0.8	17.28	3.8	23.22

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Portree	+0.55
Campbeltown	-5.30	Tobermory	+0.16
Crinan	-0.47	Dover	+5.30
Islay Port Ellen	2.00		
Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Mallaig	+0.25		

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The Oban Times prints two editions of the paper. There is the main edition as well as the Fort William (Northern) Edition.

Sometimes pages that appear in the Fort William edition do not appear in the main edition (and vice versa).

As an electronic subscriber you get the main edition plus the pages that appear in the Northern edition.

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TOKEN TWO INSIDE

ALSO INSIDE THIS WEEK: Bonnie Babies • Driving Force • BID4Oban • Farm builds for the future

Fort drink driver jailed for seven months

A FORT William man has been jailed for seven months and 15 days and disqualified from driving for four years after stealing a friend's car to drive home following a night of drinking in the town.

Appearing from custody, Michael MacDonald, of Dalriada, 71 Camaghach, pled guilty to stealing the car from outside Linnhe Buildings, Fort William, and driving into Glen Nevis while more than twice the alcohol limit. Fort William Sheriff Court heard the 22-year-old was disqualified from driving and not insured when the incidents took place on February 27.

Prosecutor Fiscal Alison Wylie said MacDonald had been drinking with a female friend and left the pub around 12.30am saying he was walking home. He instead took the woman's car and was seen by police driving without headlights on.

Defending, Hamish Melrose said: 'There was no reason or need for him to do what he did. He realises he has been extremely stupid here.'

Hearing MacDonald had previous convictions for drink-driving and driving while disqualified, Sheriff John Rafferty said he was handing down a 'substantial sentence'.

He said: 'It is quite clear you have no regard for court orders.'

Window smashed accidentally

A PASSENGER onboard an Oban Camanachd bus accidentally smashed a window on the vehicle in Ballachulish on Saturday night.

Police attended the scene and were 'satisfied' the incident was not deliberate.

The team was returning from a pre-season game against Kingussie, which they lost 3-1.



Lochaber win national shinty title

Lochaber captain Calum Neil proudly lifts the RBS National First Shinty trophy after his Primary 5 and under team defeated Dingwall 5-3 in the finals at Lochaber High School on Saturday to become Scottish champions. In the Primary 6/7 finals at the Nevis Centre, which ran concurrently, Kingussie edged out a spirited Portree side 3-2. More than 200 children took part, cheered on by their families and friends. See full report and photos on back page. 20_109shinty02

Football club faces crisis as pitch pressure mounts

FORT William Football Club faces being thrown out of the Highland League unless a new all-weather pitch is built at Claggan Park, club chairman John Wattman said this week.

The stark warning follows a fact-finding visit to the ground by Scottish Football Association chiefs Peter Budge and Graham Sutherland.

The club has already received two warning letters from the Highland Football League about its inability to fulfill home fixtures. Since the season started last July, Fort William have played only six times at home. Ten matches have been postponed because of the weather in that time.

As a means of guaranteeing its survival, the club is suggesting the artificial pitch proposed for the Blar Mhor as part of Miller developments' retail and office complex should be built at Claggan instead. The club argues the option would cost significantly less and would be available most of the time for community use.

Mr Wattman told *The Oban Times* on Tuesday: 'The club has been under threat for a few years because of the number of home games postponed. They [the SFA delegation] were quite horrified at the state of the pitch. Every

year it just seems to get wetter. If nothing happens, our small club is in jeopardy and could get thrown out of the Highland League. If that happened there would be no football youth development and no community involvement at all. We have had two warning letters in the past two years. Every time we go away from home the first question I am asked as club chairman is 'how's your park looking?'

'I would say Saturday's game against Lossie is in doubt already. It is very difficult to sustain a team when you have no park. The SFA won't allow home games to be played away from a designated park, so we would not be allowed to play our games if the all-weather pitch was at the Blar Mhor.'

Mr Wattman also pointed out Claggan Park was not for the sole use of the football club. The current lease only runs for a further two years, he said, and entitles the club to host matches on a Saturday and two, two-hour slots for training per week on off pitch areas only.

He added: 'Outwith these times any organisation can book the park through Lochaber Leisure Centre. As well as the annual Ben Nevis Race, Claggan also hosts school sports days, the Coast to Coast and a Rat Race event. 'Other users include the street league, athletics club, Inverness Caledonian Thistle, and in the past it has hosted the Highland Games. 'Claggan Park is a large community facility - however due to it being a grassed area it is only being used in a limited capacity.' Last week, *The Oban Times* exclusively reported how at the Lochaber north ward forum in Kilmallie Hall last Tuesday night, Fort William FC chairman John Wattman presented Highland councillors with a report from sports developers AP Thomson which quoted a figure of £676,935 to create a shinty-sized all-weather pitch at Claggan. A similar facility at the Blar Mhor development has been estimated by Highland Council officials at £1.62 million. Mr Wattman, who has already briefed local MSP Dave Thompson on the matter, said: 'We intend to have further discussions with him and also with local councillors in the hope that best value for all can be achieved.'

Mallaig to Lochboisdale ferry wins unanimous backing

PRESSURE on the Scottish Government to re-introduce the Mallaig-Lochboisdale ferry is mounting after the service won unanimous backing last week.

Hundreds attended public meetings in Mallaig, Kilmallie Hall in Corpach and Daliburgh. A Road to the Isles Marketing Group summit in Mallaig also demanded the link be included in the Scottish Ferries Plan.

The wave of support follows publication of the draft ferries plan, which controversially stated South Uist opinion was divided on a link to Mallaig.

Provost of Lochaber Allan Henderson attended all four meetings and went to Daliburgh to 'convey clearly the strength of support from the mainland'.

More than 200 people, including MP Angus B MacNeil, MSP Alasdair Allan, MSP Rhoda Grant MSP and CNES transport chairman Donald Manford attended the Daliburgh event in Stennend village hall.

Provost Henderson told *The Oban Times*: 'I have still to meet the man not wishing a direct ferry link from Mallaig to Lochboisdale.'

'All went on the record as very supportive of a direct ferry link from Lochboisdale to Mallaig, including Charles Kennedy MP, who sent a letter. The clear message from the packed hall was that South Uist also needs a direct service to Mallaig to develop the island's economy, just like its neighbours have to other ports. 'RET and investment in the A830 has been so successful that summer ferries now run to capacity. For the economy to thrive and expand business it is imperative that a Lochboisdale to Mallaig link is re-established.'

At Daliburgh, Western Isles MP Angus Macneil and MSP Alasdair Allan called for a trial run to test the route's economic viability. Suggesting the trial could be funded from CalMac's marketing budget, Mr MacNeil said: 'Get a boat as quickly as possible in operation for a couple of months.' Meanwhile, ferry campaign group 'Missing Link' is urging supporters to send a letter backing the Mallaig link to the Ferries Unit in Edinburgh. Consultations on what the final 2012-2022 plan should include ends on March 31.

Celebrations as West Ardnamurchan secures nurse deal

WEST Ardnamurchan residents are celebrating after winning the battle to retain out-of-hours 999 cover for the remote peninsula.

Around 50 protestors gathered outside Holyrood, in Edinburgh before four members from West Ardnamurchan Community Council (WACC) met with Health

Secretary Nicola Sturgeon last Wednesday to reach a deal.

A new scheme was agreed which will see a retained emergency responder team made up of six qualified medical professionals providing 24-hour cover for the area.

The two district nurses will

be part of the team, as will a recently recruited ambulance technician who is due to start work next week.

NHS Highland will advertise for the remaining three posts in the near future.

WACC representative Jac Crossie told *The Oban Times*

local reaction had been 'pretty positive'.

'People are just glad there is actually something in place,' she said.

Following a 20-minute presentation from WACC about the problems they have encountered during 14 months of

negotiations with NHS Highland and Scottish Ambulance Service, Ms Sturgeon apologised for the way the consultation process was handled.

Ms Crossie said: 'We really wanted to highlight what a struggle it has been to carry on for the last 14 months.'

'Other Highland communities might have to go through the same thing in the next few years and we want to make sure lessons are learnt.'

Ms Sturgeon promised to visit Kilchoan in the next few months to ensure local people were happy with the new arrangement.

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Fury erupts as council removes beach bins

HIGHLAND Council has provoked anger after workers removed litterbins from car parks at three popular Lochaber beaches on Tuesday morning.

The bins at Camusdarach, Tougal and Morar had been vandalised, the council said. But Camusdarach resident Carol Jamieson, 64, warned rubbish and human and dog waste left by visitors would pose an environmental hazard.

'It's preposterous, absolutely disgraceful,' she said. 'They don't think about anything else except money.'

A Highland Council spokesperson urged people to take waste home with them. She said: 'There has been a problem with vandalism of litterbins in the Lochailort to Mallaig area and we have had to remove damaged bins.'

Young pipers hit the high notes

YOUNG pipers from Lochalsh and Lochaber were among the major winners in the National Piping Centre's annual junior championships in Glasgow on Saturday.

Brighde Chaimbeul from Kyle, aged 13, took first place in the under-15 piobaireachd, second in the march and second in the strathspey and reel.

Champion

The results ensured that for the second year running Brighde was the overall junior champion.

Meanwhile, 15-year-old Sandy Cameron from Roy Bridge, who is taught by Iain MacFadyen of Kyle, won the under-15 strathspey and reel and came third in the march.

Charles MacDonald of Inverness, whose family have strong Uist connections, won under-18 piobaireachd competition.

Brighde Chaimbeul, second right, and Sandy Cameron, fourth left, enjoyed a successful junior championships in Glasgow.

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Claggan drink driver banned

A CLAGGAN man has been banned from driving for 16 months and fined £810 after admitting driving in Fort William while more than twice the legal alcohol limit.

Graham Allison, of 9 Acharach, pled guilty to driving on the A82 from the train station to Ben Nevis Filling Station in the early hours of September 24.

A worker at the filling station saw the 22-year-old forklift driver getting out of the car and contacted the police, Fort William Sheriff Court heard.

Man admits punching brother

A SPEAN Bridge man has admitted assaulting his brother and giving a false name, date of birth and address to police afterwards.

John McPhee, of plot seven, Spean Bridge travellers site, pled guilty to punching his brother on Heaste Road, near Broadford, Skye, on September 3. The 30-year-old also admitted attempting to pervert the course of justice by giving false details to police officers at Heaste Campsite, Broadford.

Sentencing was deferred at Fort William Sheriff Court until March 14 for reports.

Woman kicked and spat at officer

A CAOL woman has admitted kicking a police officer on the leg and spitting at her after she and a man tried to leave a Fort William restaurant without paying.

Carol Lawrie, aged 25, of 20 Camaghael Road, pled guilty to assaulting the police constable during the incident at Spice Tandoori, High Street, on February 1.

Stuart Lawrie, aged 21, of 22 Glenpane Street, admitted attempting to leave the restaurant without paying their £46.20 bill. Sheriff John Rafferty deferred sentencing the pair at Fort William Sheriff Court until March 14 for reports.

19-year-old faces assault trial

A FORT William teenager accused of assaulting three women at a house in Inverloch is due to stand trial at the town's sheriff court on March 12.

Donald MacPhee, of 42b Alma Road, denies assaulting the women at a property on Dubh MacDonal Place on November 5. The 19-year-old is accused of pushing one woman on the body, repeatedly kicking, slapping and punching her on the body to her injury, pushing a second woman to the ground and kicking her on the head and pushing a third woman to the ground.

MacPhee also pled not guilty to kicking and punching doors at the property and smashing a lamp.

Man admits assaulting girlfriend

A KINLOCHLEVEN man has admitted kicking in the back door of his ex-girlfriend's house and repeatedly pushing her during a drunken argument.

Appearing at Fort William Sheriff Court from custody, Shaun Fraser, of 28 Lovat Road, pled guilty to wilfully or recklessly damaging the rear door of a house Foyers Road on February 25.

The 23-year-old also admitted assaulting the woman at a house on Leven Road later the same night. Deferring sentencing Fraser until August 29 for reports, Sheriff John Rafferty said: 'This is a serious matter. But you have pled guilty at the earliest opportunity which to me is consistent with remorse.'

Builder found guilty of Spean Bridge cocaine deal

Detectives watched man hand over drugs worth £24,000

A BUILDER once crowned the strongest man in Scotland was caught helping drug barons, a court heard on Monday.

Undercover detectives watched Louis MacLean, 38, of Fort William, hand over a package of cocaine worth at least £24,000 in a Spean Bridge grocery store car park.

At the time MacLean, released early from jail after a previous drugs offence, was just three weeks away from completing his term on licence. He had been caught up in Operation Arena, set up to target other drug traffickers, prosecutor Susanne Tanner told the High Court in Edinburgh.

Judge Lord Tyre reluctantly granted bail 'on a compassionate basis' because members of his family are seriously ill.

He told MacLean: 'You may wish to reflect on the fact that the court is showing a great deal more compassion than you and your associates have shown in becoming involved in the supply of drugs which cause a great

deal of misery in the area where you live.' The judge warned the drug dealer that when he returns to court on March 26 after background reports have been prepared, he is likely to go to prison.

MacLean, whose family run a B&B at West Court, Achintore Road, Fort William, admitted being concerned in the supply of cocaine on August 21 2009 in the car park of the Spar Store in Spean Bridge.

Ms Tanner said MacLean was seen driving a hired Ford Fiesta that day.

Meanwhile, another man had asked a girlfriend to give him a lift and her silver Volkswagen Polo pulled into the Spar car park. As the woman and other passengers went to get something to eat, the man remained in the Polo, said Ms Tanner.

The Fiesta pulled into the shop's car park, stopped briefly beside the silver Polo and MacLean handed over a package which the other man hid under his black jacket.

As MacLean drove back towards Fort William, the Polo headed north. When police stopped the silver Volkswagen they seized the package of cocaine.

The court heard that in March 2004 MacLean was jailed for five and a half years for his part in the supply of cannabis resin in the Inverness area after police seized 14 kilos of the drug with a street value of £65,000.

He was freed in December 2006 and his licence conditions would have expired on September 11 2009.

Defence QC Robert Anthony said it was well-known that drug dealers who were making all the profits used messengers or 'go-fers' so that they never came into contact with illegal drugs themselves.

'MacLean was not the target of Operation Arena but simply came onto the radar on one day,' said the lawyer. 'MacLean ought to have known better and that is the basis of the plea of guilty.'



Guilty: Louis MacLean emerges from the High Court in Edinburgh on Monday.

Public meeting spotlight on integration of services

PEOPLE in Skye and Lochalsh are being invited to find out more about new arrangements to integrate health, education and social care services provided by NHS Highland and Highland Council at a public meeting in Tigh na Sgìre, Council Offices, Portree, next Monday at 5pm.

Transitions director Jan Baird will explain how, from April 1,

staff are being brought together into integrated teams to deliver the services.

Views

She said: 'We would like to hear the views of people who have not already been involved in the process in other ways, especially if they use, or look after someone who uses children and families or community care services.'

Landowners publish manual to help prevent wildfires

DEVASTATING moorland blazes in the West Highlands last spring have prompted a landowners group to publish a wildfires manual to help prevent another disaster this year.

Scottish Land and Estates, which represents 2,500 landowners across the country, prepared the guide after demands that fire contingency plans be drawn up in all high-risk areas.

A survey of deer management groups also showed strong support for joint working with fire and rescue services and neighbours to create a chain of wildfire defences.

Recent reductions in livestock numbers meant more areas were now under threat, SLE Highland regional manager Drew McFarlane Slack warned.

He said: 'The risk of wildfire is growing while the resources available to fight it are decreasing. Land use trends are indirectly increasing the quantity of vegetation while climate change predictions indicate an increase in the occurrence of dry and warm spells.'

'These factors, coupled with

falling fire and rescue budget cuts, all make for a difficult context. It is therefore essential that we study how well we are organised and look at how prepared and willing we are to work together to support each other in tackling the wildfire threat.'

Private landowners and estates across the Highlands spent an estimated £1million last spring supplying experienced staff and specialist equipment to fight wildfires in Glen Shiel, Torridon, Lochailort, and Newton of Ardoe in Salen, among others.

More than 25,000 acres were destroyed between April 30 and May 5.

Welcoming the guide, Trevor Johnson of the Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service said: 'In order to help develop the best possible response to wildfires, the Scottish Wildfire Forum encourages landowners to consider forming local wildfire groups to pre-plan mutual assistance, which will facilitate the effective response and management of wildfire incidents.'



Firefighters battle a raging wildfire above Shiel Bridge last May. Photograph courtesy of Saffron Dilly.



Lochyside RC Primary School P7 pupils Megan Campbell and Lucy Groundwater raised cash for school funds at their bric-a-brac stall. 20.09lochy01

School funds boosted by £1,200

LOCHYSIDE RC Primary was packed out on Saturday morning as supporters helped raise £1,200 for school funds.

A Fairtrade coffee morning, produce made with Fairtrade goods and car boot sale stalls all contributed to the total.

Head teacher Violet Smith told *The Oban Times*: 'It's so good to have the whole community here to promote Fairtrade Fortnight.'

Ms Smith thanked Caol Co-op for generously donating Fairtrade coffee and tea and said Kenyan Fairtrade farmer Joseph Cheruiyot, the chairman of Fintea Growers Co-operative Union, would be visiting Lochyside this morning (Thursday). 'We are so happy that he is coming,' Ms Smith said.

Highland Council agrees on scheme to spread 'windfall' cash across area

A NEW scheme to spread 'windfall' cash from renewable energy developments across Highland communities has been agreed by Highland Council.

Until now, community benefits from windfarm and hydro schemes had gone only to community council areas directly affected.

But at a conference in Inverness on Friday, a new three-tier system of distributing payments was agreed.

The policy, which will govern all onshore renewable schemes, would see the council negotiate on behalf of local communities to secure a minimum of £5,000 per megawatt of installed capacity per year from developers for community benefit funds.

A windfarm developer

By STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

building 20 turbines each with a 3MW capacity would contribute £300,000 annually, with the first £100,000 going to local communities and managed within a local fund.

Of the remaining benefit, 55 per cent would also go to local communities, 30 per cent to a local area funds and 15 per cent to a Highland Trust Fund (HTF).

All three funds would be open to bids from communities, groups and appropriate organisations for local projects.

Communities not able to access local or area funds will be able to bid into the HTF, which

will be operated by a separate organisation from the council.

Council leader Michael Foxley gave a theoretical example of a windfarm coming to west side of Loch Linnhe.

Under the previous system only Ardgour would have received community benefit cash, but now the local Lochaber fund and the HTF would also receive a percentage.

Claiming that payments to local communities by some developers had fallen to £2,000 per megawatt, or in certain cases, nothing at all, he told *The Oban Times*: 'Recently developers and owners have been giving less and less. We are committed to maximising community benefit accruing to all Highland communities from

onshore and offshore renewable energy developments. We will spread benefits as widely as we can throughout Highland for the good of all communities. We will lobby Scottish and UK Governments so that the aims of the policy can be achieved in a realistic timescale.'

Councillor Foxley said SSE, Scottish Power Renewables, Forestry Commission Scotland and Ardtornish Estate had already signed up to the new concordat, with FCS also offering communities the chance to buy a stake in energy developments.

Keynote speaker at the conference, Energy Enterprise and Tourism Minister Fergus Ewing said: 'I want Highland communities to share in the economic and social benefits of

Scotland's onshore and offshore renewables revolution. Scotland leads the UK in our support for local ownership of renewables projects and we have set a new target of 500 megawatts of community and locally owned renewables by 2020, which could be worth up to £2.4 billion to communities and rural businesses.'

The council is also determined to negotiate similar benefits for local communities from offshore developments, which are regulated by the Crown Estate Commissioners and by Marine Scotland.

Where a development takes place in open waters, 20 per cent of the benefit would go to coastal communities with 80 per cent to the HTF.

Andy aims high with Ben Nevis challenge

A YOUNG Fort William man who lost his leg in a serious accident last year will attempt to climb Ben Nevis on Saturday to raise money for charities.

Andy MacLeod, 19, is taking on the gruelling challenge to mark one year since he almost lost his life while cycling in the Lochaber capital.

He was hit by a car and thrown in the air, and had to be flown by helicopter to Glasgow Royal Infirmary suffering from serious leg and head injuries.

Now mobile again with a

new titanium and carbon fibre prosthetic leg, Andy is climbing in aid of Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and the RNLI.

Andy, an adventure tourism and management student at West Highland College in Fort William, will set out with the support of friends and hopes to complete the climb in around six hours.

He said: 'To climb Ben Nevis has been my aim since the accident.'

People can support the event by going to www.charitygiving.co.uk/andymacleod.



Andy MacLeod: climbing Ben Nevis with his new artificial leg.

Official opening of Acharacle Primary School

CABINET secretary for education and lifelong learning Michael Russell will officially open Acharacle Primary School tomorrow.

The minister will be joined by council leader Michael Foxley and education, culture and sport chairman Bill Fernie.

The £6.5million school opened its doors to pupils in May 2009 and incorporates eco-friendly designs to ensure very low energy use. It currently has 47 pupils in P1-7 and 15 in the Gaelic and bi-lingual nursery. Head teacher Lyndsay Bradley said: 'We are all busy rehearsing music and songs to entertain the guests during the official opening.'

Mr Russell's visit to Lochaber will also include a guided tour around Ardnarmurchan High School, now in its tenth year.

SABHAL MÒR OSTAIG
Innleat Nàiseanta Coimhearsnachd na Gàidhlig

Bheir do chuid Gàidhlig don ìre as àirde / **Take our language further**

Teenager refused bail as sentence is deferred

A FORT William teenager who admitted a series of criminal charges has been held in police custody until he is sentenced next month after a sheriff said there was a 'substantial risk' of him re-offending.

Appearing at Fort William Sheriff Court from custody, Dennis Liversedge, of Flat 4, 33 High Street, pled guilty to stealing a box of lager from Grange Stores in the town on February 25 while

on bail. The 19-year-old previously admitted refusing to leave the Crofter Bar, Fort William, after being asked to leave by a police officer at closing time on February 5.

He also pleaded guilty to behaving in a threatening or abusive manner on the town's High Street by shouting and swearing at police, kicking a whee bin and threatening to spit at an officer on the same night.

Liversedge, who moved to Lochaber in September, is also due to be sentenced for stealing a sandwich and a bottle of cider, challenging others to fight and repeatedly shouting and swearing at employees at Tesco, High Street, on February 2.

Sheriff John Rafferty denied an application for bail and deferred sentencing Liversedge until March 14 for reports.

School inspectors praise Lochyside's 'positive, caring and inclusive ethos'

A RECENT government inspection of Lochyside RC Primary has praised the school's 'positive, caring and inclusive ethos'.

Examiners from HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) recently visited the school, speaking to staff and pupils and highlighted the school's 'effective partnerships with parents, churches and the community'.

The report said: 'The school provides high-quality support to help children to develop and learn. Across the school, children are highly motivated by a rich and stimulating variety of active learning experiences.'

The international art project Room 13 was commended for enhancing the pupil's creative and business skills.

Head teacher Violet Smith, whose leadership of the school was also praised, said she was 'delighted' with the report.

She said: 'It highlights the hard work, commitment and dedication of pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community. It acknowledges the impact that our implementation of the Curriculum for Excellence is having on our pupils' learning. The report also reflects the very positive ethos and the excellent teamwork which is the cornerstone of Lochyside RC Primary School.'

Chief Secretary visits Uig and Skye

CHIEF Secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander is visiting Skye this morning to welcome today's introduction of the UK Government's rural fuel rebate pilot scheme, which cuts petrol and diesel on the Hebrides by five pence per litre.

Mr Alexander is visiting Uig Filling Station and the Isle of Skye Brewing Company to see how businesses and motorists will benefit from the scheme.

FAMILY GUYS!

Argyll & Bute Council
business gateway
slighe gnothachais

what every family business needs to know...

Business Gateway is calling all family business owners to join an upcoming event exploring what every family business needs to know. Listen and learn from the story of one of Scotland's best known family business owners: Martin Stepek, Chief Executive of Scottish Family Business Association and Ex-Managing Director of J. Stepek Ltd. Martin will deliver his own story of the ups and downs of owning and running a family business, and share the globally-recognised ways family businesses should be run and governed. This is a rare opportunity to learn from a major figure in family business, who combines lifelong business experience and world-leading thinking on such an important subject.

Details are as follows set out below.
Date: 30th March, 2012
Time: 11am - 1.30pm
Venue: Argyll Hotel, Inveraray
Cost: FREE

Please call or email to book a place
T: 01546 605459
E: business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk

KPMG W/M MACKINNON SCOTT SCOTTISH FAMILY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Newsdesk
01397 703003

CÙRSAICHEAN CEUMA

Faigh barrachd fiosrachaidh air na cùrsaichean fo-cheum dha fileantaich is luchd-ionnsachaidh na Gàidhlig a cheanglas an cànan le caochladh agus teagasg.

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Rural education meeting to be held in Lochgilphead

A PUBLIC meeting to discuss the future of rural education in Argyll will be held in Lochgilphead next Tuesday. The Scottish Government's Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education is to host the meeting at the town's joint campus at 6.30pm.

Helensburgh councillor dies

A LOCAL councillor known for his honesty and integrity has passed away at the age of 74. Tributes have been paid to Al Reay, who represented the Helensburgh ward since being elected to Argyll and Bute Council in 2003. Depute leader of the council Ellen Morton said: 'Al was both a respected colleague and a trusted friend. I always knew that I could rely on Al to speak the truth and to offer me unstinting support. 'He never worried about promoting himself - only about doing the right thing both for his ward and for the people of Argyll and Bute. He is an enormous loss to his family and friends to whom I send my deepest sympathies.' Councillor Reay is survived by his wife Liz, three sons, one daughter and three grandsons.

BIDS group presentation date

BIDS4Oban will hold a presentation in the Corran Halls, Oban, next Thursday, March 8. Steering group chairman Graham MacQueen encouraged every Oban business to attend. 'We are giving the business community one more opportunity to turn up and recognise the effort the steering committee members have made for the benefit of the whole of Oban, not just the business community,' said Mr MacQueen. A BID scheme would see all 388 businesses within Oban's 30mph speed zone contribute a small percentage of their rateable value to a core fund, generating more than £150,000 to improve the town and organise events to attract visitors.

Munro climber praises rescuers after first accident

A MOUNTAINEER who conquered all Lochaber's 24 Munros in under 24 hours has paid tribute to Oban's Mountain Rescue team after his first accident in 50 years of climbing. Edinburgh athlete, Charlie Ramsay, was part of a three man walking party taking on the challenging peak when he fell over 160 feet down a steep snow slope just after 2pm, breaking three ribs. Oban Mountain Rescue managed to locate the stricken 68-year old on the north side of the Cruachan ridge - thanks to a new smartphone app the team is testing. A 50m snow trench had to be dug to get him back on the main ridge, where rescuers got him onto a stretcher to take him back down the hill. He was taken to hospital in Oban for treatment. For Charlie, after whom Lochaber's 50m mile Ramsay's Round 24-hour hill challenge is named due to his 1978 record breaking run, the event was sobering - but he's already back on his feet and planning a return trip. He said: 'It was my first accident but thankfully I was well prepared and the rescue team was first class - I cannot thank them enough.'



Steve kicks back during his recent trip around the Antarctic - helped by this conveniently shaped iceberg in Brown Bluff on the Antarctic Peninsula.

Adventurer Steve considers retiring - again - aged 76

AFTER 22 years at the helm of adventure company Hebridean Pursuits, Connel's Steve Thomas is finally putting his feet up at the age of 76. As founder and patron of the Roses Charitable Trust, which runs alongside the commercial arm, Steve has helped more than 10,000 children and young adults in his time in Scotland. Pictured relaxing at Brown Bluff on the Antarctic Peninsula during last month's voyage to celebrate his retirement, he will now hand over running of both organisations to fellow Hebridean Pursuits founder, Andy Spink, and successor Jane Sayer, who has been shadowing the adventurer for the past 18 months. While he admits he will miss the day-to-day running of both organisations, he has no intention of giving up venturing into the unknown. Read more about Steve Thomas's unique story on Page 25 this week.

Glasgow Islay Association marks 150-year anniversary

GLASGOW Islay Association will mark its 150th anniversary tomorrow (Friday) with a special concert, chaired by Lord Robertson of Port Ellen. Around 400 Ileachs are expected to attend the event in the Mitchell Theatre, Glasgow, which will feature some of Islay's best musicians and singers, including Bette Bell, Iseabail Mactaggart, Nina MacKellar, Ian Carmichael, Dougal Gillespie, Isle of Islay Pipe Band, Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir and Glasgow Islay Junior Gaelic Choir. Association president Malcolm Campbell said this year's special annual gathering had been 10 years in the planning. 'We have been fundraising for this night for a long time and there is quite a buzz about this around Glasgow and on Islay. We are hoping to fill the theatre on the night.' Merchandise will be on sale on the night, including a book by former president Roy Cameron on the history of the association. Glasgow Islay Association has commissioned a new tartan for the 150th anniversary and will be giving a civic reception at Glasgow City Council in September.

Police responding to community concerns, claims chief inspector

OBAN and Lorn's top policeman says he is responding to community feedback by planning to allocate specific police officers to specific local areas. Chief inspector Brian Auld has recently received feedback from the council wards of Oban North and Lorn and Oban South and the Isles. Within the initial feedback from the November consultation, were concerns over speeding motorists, anti-social behaviour and violence. However, a more concerning statistic was a drop of around 10 per cent on the previous year of residents who knew who their community police officer was. As a result, chief inspector Auld has drawn up proposals to allocate a designated officer to each of the following five areas: North Connel, Appin, Connel, Taynuilt, Kilchrenn and Dalavich, Lochawe, Dalmally and Bridge of Orchy, Oban town centre, Dunbeg, Dunollie and Soroba, Oban south - Kilmore, Seil, Luing, Kilniver, Kilmelford. Chief inspector Auld said: 'I want the officers in these areas to be identifiable, public facing and to address areas of public concern. Only 83 per cent of those surveyed could identify their local officer, which is a drop from 92 per cent last year. There is room for improvement and that is why I propose to make these changes.' He said the community officers would be trained in the use of social media, such as Twitter, as a means of communication with locals. The community survey received 160 responses from each of the two wards. Surveys were made available at community meetings and community council meetings.

Cautious stance on A83 damaging economy say business leaders

ARGYLL business leaders say being overly cautious is harming the region's economy after the latest closure of the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful. Memories of repeated closures in December and January were brought back as the road through the 'Arrochar Alps' was closed from around lunchtime last Wednesday, reopening two days later after it was declared safe. While the slippage of 30-50 tonnes of material did not block the road, monitoring equipment indicated further slides were likely. 'Keep road open' The Mid Argyll Chamber of Commerce say many Argyll businesses feel the closures are too hasty and has called a special meeting on Friday to discuss the problem. Jane MacLeod, chamber of commerce secretary, said: 'They should be looking to keep the road open if at all possible. 'Sometimes when there's a landslide not an awful lot comes down and they could just clear it and re-open.' Some hauliers have called for measures that would allow drivers to progress through the route after landslides at their own risk. Alternative route A diversion was put in place for the duration of the closure, taking northbound motorists via Tarbet, Tyndrum and Dalmally to rejoin the A83 at Inveraray, with the reverse route in the southbound direction. Last month, transport minister Keith Brown announced a £1million plan to upgrade a forest track into an alternative route through the pass by the end of summer. He said work should start 'by winter' on a long-term solution for the A83.

South Lorn says 'no' to windfarm

Kilmelford meeting votes against proposed Clachan development

SOUTH Lorn communities have given a proposed windfarm at Clachan, near Kilniver, a resounding 'no' vote. A busy public meeting in Kilmelford Village Hall, hosted by Kilniver and Kilmelford Community Council, allowed various speakers opposed to the plan to challenge landowner and developer, farmer Rory Young. By the end of the night it was clear the vast majority of residents objected to Mr Young's plan. The developer has applied for permission to erect nine 77-metre turbines on land near Clachan Seil. The proposal is on land within the Kilniver and Kilmelford Community Council boundary but will also be seen by the communities of Seil, Easdale and Luing. The main opposition came from the People Against Clachan Turbines (PACT) group, which has collected 550 postcards from tourists who said they wouldn't come back to the area if a windfarm was erected, as well as considerable local support. Sarah Henderson, who lives at Clachan Seil, around one kilometre from the proposed development, said the planning application had already caused divisions between the communities affected. She added: 'Partly because of our primary schools co-operative, people in this area feel part of a wider community but they have been forced to become enemies.' PACT stated the development was in an area categorised in the Argyll and Bute Local Plan as 'sensitive countryside'; would have a negative affect on wildlife; and, with the nearest home around 800 metres from the windfarm, it would 'unacceptably affect' living conditions of Clachan Seil residents. At the meeting, issues over access were also brought up and there was much concern about heavy machinery and turbines crossing the fragile Kilniver Bridge. Addressing Mr Young, Clachan Seil resident Phil Moss said: 'If Kilniver Bridge goes, it would be a disaster for everyone in Clachan Seil and that can't happen. There would have to be a complete contingency plan and you would be responsible for getting people to their work.' PACT member George Stewart also noted comparisons with the nearby Raera Windfarm proposal, which was rejected by Argyll and Bute councillors on the planning committee. He asked Mr Young: 'Raera was turned down and your proposal is only four miles away and in the wrong place. Why are you persisting with this?' Explaining his aim was to make his Clachan Farm into a viable business, Mr Young addressed most of the concerns presented to him, adding: 'We think we have a good opportunity for planning permission. We have taken good advice and I think this is a very different prospect to Raera.' Following a show of hands at the meeting, which showed an overwhelming majority were opposed to the plan, Kilniver and Kilmelford community councillors voted six to one against the proposed windfarm and were due to submit their objection yesterday (Wednesday).

"We think we have a good opportunity for planning permission."
developer Rory Young

price watch

	Petrol	Diesel
Glencoe	139.9	146.9
Invergarry	140.9	148.9
Fort William	137.9	144.9
Portree	141.9	149.9
Newtonmore	139.9	144.9
Lochcarron	140.9	148.9
Lochaline	149.9	149.9
Sleat	149.2	156.0
Stornoway	144.9	153.9
Oban	139.9	146.9
Campbeltown	141.0	147.0
Lochgilphead	137.9	144.9
Tiree	157.0	162.0
Coll	171.0	171.0
Arran	146.5	156.0
Benbecula	151.9	159.9

ISLAND communities should see the price of fuel drop by 5p per litre this week, when the fuel duty derogation scheme comes into effect. From today (Thursday), fuel retailers who signed up to the scheme will be able to claim back 5p per litre on sales of fuel. Many businesses have been critical of the scheme, with garages saying the work involved in claiming back the 5p is too onerous. Meanwhile, hauliers who are set to be excluded from the scheme say it will do nothing to lower the cost of living on the islands. Prices quoted, right, are before the 5p derogation.

Argyll and Bute Shanks' staff warn more strike action is likely

'TERRIFIC' support from locals boosted Shanks staff during this week's strike action, but they have warned more walkouts could be on the cards. Action 'undermined' Members of the Unite and GMB unions from Oban were joined by colleagues across Argyll and Bute in walking out on Friday and Monday in protest against Shanks in a row over pay and conditions. However, the company brought extra staff into the affected sites during the weekend to clear the backlog, something the 30 strikers say 'undermined' their action. With negotiations continuing to stall, staff are warning they may consider closing sites completely if a solution isn't found. One striker said: 'The public has been terrific with us. We've had a lot of positive comments from people who've read about why we're striking and we're delighted we have their backing. 'However, we felt a bit deflated when Shanks brought in people over the weekend. Instead of tipping rubbish in Oban, for example, they took it to Lochgilphead. That's an 80 mile round trip in place of a four mile return journey from Oban itself. 'I think another two day strike is likely. We had originally wanted to chain the site off but we were told that was illegal. It is, however, something we're considering.' The row between Shanks and its staff broke out after the company proposed to cut sick pay entitlement by a third. Staff say they are also underpaid by as much as five per cent when compared to their Glasgow colleagues. A four per cent pay increase offer over three years - backdated to the 2010/11 financial year, has been rejected while the sick pay cuts remain. Meanwhile, Shanks has apologised for a letter its chief executive sent strikers saying staff were 'threatening the contract' as well as 'putting your own jobs at risk.' A spokesperson for Shanks said: 'The letter was simply for clarification, we apologise if any employees have felt pressured, it was never our intention.'

30 Years Ago

Those Were The Days

The Oban Times

Thursday, February 25, 1982

Argyll needs to be more ready for nuclear attack

A district councillor has warned that more efforts should be taken to prepare Argyll and Bute for a nuclear attack. In a report to the district's policy committee, Mr Robin Malcolm stated that prudence and common sense justified trying to improve local emergency procedures in the event of a nuclear strike. Communications and transport were particularly vital in a scattered area. Mr Malcolm was reporting to the committee after spending two and a half days at Easingwold, Yorkshire, where in a theoretical exercise councillors from throughout the UK covered the month prior to a nuclear attack and its aftermath. Mr Malcolm reported: 'Over the two and a half days of teaching and discussion it became apparent that some authorities were better prepared than others. Regions, or their equivalents elsewhere, have responsibility for emergency planning and look to districts for assistance. 'In some districts of England they were prepared right down to the level of parish councils. In another quarter, a district was taking a region to court for refusing to carry out its statutory duty. 'Here in Strathclyde we fall somewhere between the two extremes.' A number of key officials had attended courses at Easingwold but only two councillors. Mr Malcolm continued: 'Our ability to cope with a catastrophe is relatively untested, despite having choice targets on our doorstep, and has only involved those associated with the emergency services. 'It is easy to return to Argyll and Bute with the fervour of an evangelist and seek to raise our preparedness to that of the most advanced district in England. However I am a realist and do not believe the present state of world tension warrants such action. 'But I do believe that prudence and common sense justify a greater effort on our part.'

Gaelic drama festival to be held at Bowmore

The Argyll Regional Council of An Comunn Gaidhealach held their quarterly meeting in Lochgilphead on February 13 when the acting chairman Mr Robin Banks, Oban, was in the chair. The regional treasurer, Mr Hugh Macintyre, Oban, reported that the prize draw had produced £300 towards the regional function for 1981 which ended with a total of £612, which was made up of a ceilidh and disco organised by the Cruachan branch, the prize draw and branch donations from Oban and Dunoon. It was confirmed that the regional drama festival would be held at Bowmore on April 2 and 3 and that Mr Danny Macleod, Portlagoon would be adjudicator. Entry forms are now available from the Oban office, and the winning team will represent Argyll at the national final at the Mod at Portree in October.

Good clean fun at Glencoe

Glencoe Hotel last Friday night proved that for good clean fun, the country is the place to get it. The occasion was a concert in aid of funds for St Mun's RC Church with the popular TV show 'Mr and Mrs' being the centrepiece of first class entertainment. The evening was chaired by Father MacQueen, the parish's former parish priest and recently transferred to Rothesay who returned at the special request of the parishioners to take part. Artists taking part included girls 'Iona and Irene' with guitar and recorder, Mrs Bain, singer, Duncan MacDonald, piper, Agnes MacNeil, singer, Morag MacIntosh, singer, Ian Kennedy, fiddle, accompanied by his wife Mary the Ballachulish Primary School 'School Boys' in a sketch and a band of accordionists and drum.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Break (4)
- 3 Relating to blood carriers (8)
- 9 Refined (7)
- 10 Undress (5)
- 11 Ask to view again and again (7,5)
- 13 Hopeless (6)
- 15 Slowly nearing (6)
- 17 Ones who employ others to serve (12)
- 20 Cool dish served with curries (5)
- 21 Pub sing-along (7)
- 22 Produced (8)
- 23 Sort (4)

Down

- 1 One who reasons (8)
- 2 Single one (5)
- 4 Unwell (6)
- 5 Wholesaler (4-3-5)
- 6 Siren, who lures sailors (7)
- 7 Below par (4)
- 8 Insubordinate (12)
- 12 Wrong (8)
- 14 Laughing nastily (7)
- 16 Give under duress (6)
- 18 Black (5)
- 19 Grain store (4)

Last week's solution

G	U	D	J	U	E
S	O	I	R	E	E
L	G	V	F	E	E
A	D	Z	E	T	I
N	O	R	L	Y	E
H	I	S	T	O	R
N	A	Y	P	T	I
S	A	G	G	Y	M
H	A	S	C	I	T
F	U	L	L	B	A
R	L	L	A	O	E
F	R	I	E	Z	E
Y	Y	S	E	N	R

Lorn Lines

THERE was a good turnout of members to Oban Photographic Club's weekly meeting, in the Regent Hotel, on Monday February 20 to hear the results of the 'Mellow Yellow' competition. The judge was well known local expert Frank Walton who gave a constructive and informative assessment of the varied entries. First prize went to Ronnie MacKillop for a stunning close-up of a yellow flower. Stephen Lawson gained second with an image of a pallet of Mellow Yellow oil paint and third with a yellow sports car. Ronnie received the Laird Parker Trophy as well as a voucher from Oban Photographic Centre. The next meeting of the club is an Open night on Monday, March 5 at 7.15pm for 7.30pm when the Royal Navy Photographic department will give a presentation. This should be an interesting evening and everyone is welcome.



A RAPT gathering of Oban Art Society in the Lorn Resource Centre watched and listened to professional artist Kirstie Cohen recently. Kirstie, a graduate of Glasgow School of Art, lives and works outside Inverness. She outlined her career to date and described her painting techniques with many illustrations. So impressed were the members, that the society hopes to book Kirstie for a workshop in the near future.

OBAN Concern for Palestine Group recently organised another successful public meeting which attracted a good turn out with more supporters signing up. The main purpose of the evening was the showing of two DVD films depicting the realities of the situation in Palestine's West Bank and elsewhere. The meeting was led by David Mitchell of Oban who has personal experience of that area and he dealt with the many questions and comments which followed the showing of the films. The main reason for the existence of the Oban group is to ensure a better understanding of the true situation in Israel and Palestine there being a great deal of misunderstanding and much misinformation. Co-founder of the group Graeme Pagan said that we must do everything we can to bring people together in peace and justice. To borrow words from someone else: 'We may just be a drop in the ocean but then the ocean is made up of drops'. Anyone wanting further information or wishing to join the group should contact Graeme Pagan, Neaveaton, Oban, telephone 01631 563737 or email neaveaton@tiscali.co.uk.

A SMALLER attendance than usual meant that some Oban Speakers Club members had to undertake extra duties at their meeting last week. In the first half of the programme Iain Fullerton introduced speakers Jim Fraser who, although he spoke quite well, made little mention of his allocated subject 'A Wealth of Nations', Guido Facenda who talked on 'Let there be Light' and Alec Clark who talked on 'The Abominable Snowman'. Their immediate critics were Ian Crawford, Bill Leech and Donnie Graham. In the second half of the programme, topics chairman Tom Clegg gave subjects ranging from the problems of Rangers Football Club to supermarkets to John Maclean, Ian Crawford, Bill Leech, Roy Wood, Iain Fullerton and Frank Walton. Timekeeper for the evening was Roy Wood and a fair and comprehensive general evaluation was given by Eamonn Arthur. The next meeting will be in Soroba House Hotel on March 8 at 8pm.

MEMBERS of Lorn Garden Club were treated to a fascinating insight into the realities of staging a garden at the Chelsea Flower Show at the recent February meeting, when Caroline De Lane Lea spoke on 'Garden design, Chelsea style'. Caroline, along with her colleague Louise Cummins, won a silver medal for her 'Suber Garden' at the show in 2007, a design based around the theme of the Cork Oak. The next meeting of Lorn Garden Club is on Tuesday March 20 in St John's Cathedral Hall when Douglas Boatman, of Scotplants in Ayrshire will give members some 'Heather Blether' and bring plants for sale. Everyone welcome.

OBAN and District Beekeepers Association will host a beekeeping course in Glencruinnich Church Centre today (Thursday). This limited- number event, which includes lunch and coffee, will be opened by Phil McAnespie, President of the Scottish Beekeepers Association (SBA), and the indoor course will be given by Graeme Sharpe, apiculture specialist at the Scottish Agricultural College, Auchincruive.



TWO SENIOR cadets of the Air Cadet Organisation are hoping to become radio instructors following the completion of their VHF and UHF training at RAF Leuchars. Corporal Ryan Cook, left, and Sergeant JD Cameron will begin their instructors' course in March. Ryan said: 'This is the first time the squadron has used them. We use them a lot of the time on exercise.'

Businesses fear 14-week closure for A82 road works

BUSINESSES along the A82 have warned of dire consequences if the Scottish Government does nothing to help them during improvement works at Pulpit Rock. After more than a year of discussions, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Board has withdrawn its objection to Transport Scotland's plan to spend £11million removing the road's bottleneck. Very little about the plan - which would see the creation of a new quarter mile stretch of two-lane carriageway, a new viaduct to run parallel to the loch shoreline and widening of the existing carriageway to the north of the proposed structure - has changed in that time though, meaning a previously criticised 14-week closure remains part of the year of works. While there is broad acceptance from communities on both sides of the Pulpit Rock stretch that the work is required, the lack of clarity or assistance for businesses in the vicinity is causing concern - with some warning jobs could be at risk if no cash assistance is on the table. One business directly in the line of fire is the successful Ardlui Hotel. Owner, Brian Squires, has been there since 1959 - before the Pulpit Rock traffic lights were installed. He said: 'I have been in correspondence with Transport Scotland but they tell me there's no room for compensation within

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

John Riley said: 'I think we have to try and be pragmatic because we need the upgrade. This has been our single biggest objective in the past 30 years. 'While we don't want to be standing in the way of it, the road will be closed for 14 weeks and there needs to be some sort of compensation for the businesses affected. 'Transport Scotland have said it's outside their jurisdiction but if you look further into it there is a process open to them to offer compensation.' National Park board member Owen McKee doesn't think any closure will last 14 weeks, saying that is just a top-line figure. He added: 'The 14 weeks of closure is always a concern. It's a

problem we're still trying to find a solution for and if anything can be done in the meantime it will be. 'The fact is this work needs done. 'The National Park has now withdrawn its objection and I think it's fairly safe to say things will go ahead now.' Announcing the measures, which include £2.5million towards surveying and design of the next stage of design work on the A82, transport minister Keith Brown said: 'Meaningful engagement with directly affected communities is at the heart of all our major infrastructure projects and we will seek public feedback on this scheme at key stages of the project.'



Winner of this year's international piobaireachd competition for the Metro Cup - Benderloch's Angus MacColl.

USA Metro success for Benderloch pipe master

A PIPER and piping tutor from Benderloch has won the prestigious international piping trophy the Metro Cup in the USA. Angus MacColl won the international piobaireachd competition but downplayed his victory, describing it as 'fine', and was quick to pay tribute to the opposition. He said: 'There's a lot of good players over there - they work really hard. 'Bagpiping is really growing abroad.' Angus gained victory at the event in Newark, New Jersey, which saw him collect \$1,000, a custom-made kilt and a double-eagle gold coin. Already considered as one of the world's greatest pipers, Angus has amassed a considerable haul of awards including numerous gold medals, the Glenfiddich Invitational, the GS MacLennan award in San Diego, and the Donald MacLeod Invitational on Lewis.

Wet weather affects North Lorn roadworks plan

ROADWORKS on the A828 near Oban Airport started this week - one week after they were supposed to begin. Scotland Transerv say weather problems meant contractors working on the A85 at Strone Hill near Dalnally were forced to reschedule. Work on the A828 Ledaig stretch eventually started on Tuesday this week. Eleven days of roadworks at the north end of Benderloch are unaffected by the delay and will start as scheduled on March 12, weather permitting. Meanwhile, engineers are investigating the cause of a faulty drain on the A85 at Pennyfuir. Since the road was resurfaced last year, heavy rain has resulted in a section of the road lifting. It has been cordoned off by police a number of times to prevent a potential accident.

Kilniver speeding crackdown

POLICE caught 19 people speeding through the village of Kilniver on the A816 in only two days last week during a crackdown on speeding motorists. Among them was a 40-year-old man who has been charged with dangerous driving after overtaking a HGV outside Kilniver Primary School. Last Wednesday a 32-year-old woman was charged with speeding after being clocked travelling at 50 mph in the 30mph zone through the village and a 53-year-old man was caught driving at 52mph. A further 11 people were issued fixed penalty notices for speeding. The following day a further five people were caught speeding. Oban Police chief inspector Brian Auld said his officers would be monitoring the speed of motorists outside Kilniver Primary School, Oban Primary Campus and Croft Road.

Peacocks buyout

SEVERAL jobs in Oban and Stornoway have been saved after the Edinburgh Woollen Mill bought clothing chain, Peacocks. The stores are two of only a handful to remain open in Scotland following the successful sale of the business by administrators KPMG. One member of staff in Oban said: 'I'm delighted. We're all happy the company has been saved.'



Marie Curie Oban branch member Irene Main launches the charity's fundraising month with fellow volunteers, from left, Lilian Kermode, Catriona Maitland and June Henderson, alongside Oban Fire Station commander Alex Purdie. 16_109curie01

Oban's Field of Hope comes into bloom

AS THE daffodils in Oban's Field of Hope came into bloom, members of the Oban branch of Marie Curie Cancer Care met there to launch the charity's fundraising month. Lilian Kermode, June Henderson, Irene Main and Catriona Maitland were joined by Oban Fire Station commander Alex Purdie to launch the fundraising month in March, which will see collection boxes placed in shops and offices throughout the town. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue donated the ground used to plant the Field of Hope last September. It was created to give time for reflection to those who have lost a loved one through a terminal illness. Station commander Purdie said: 'We

Colonsay doctor travels four days for three-hour surgery

AN ISLAND doctor made a four-day journey by air, land and sea to cover a three and a half hour surgery - just 18 miles from her home. Dr Jan Brooks, from the Isle of Colonsay, was tasked to cover the Monday surgery on the neighbouring island of Jura. But Jura and Colonsay are not directly linked, so Dr Brooks left

home on the Saturday starting a round trip that some estimates have put at £1,500. Argyll and Bute Councillor Robin Currie, who lives on neighbouring Isle of Islay, said: 'Looking at a map it seems a sensible thing to do but anyone who knows the area knows better. 'It makes you wonder, for three

hours cover, surely a doctor on Islay could have made the short hop to Jura. 'It would be much less cost to the NHS - and the taxpayer.' To get to Jura, Dr Brooks flew approximately 60 miles north to Oban, where she spent the night before hiring a car to drive the 54 miles south to the ferry port of Kennacraig. From there she took the ferry to Islay followed by a further ferry crossing to Jura. A spokesman for NHS Highland said: 'We were aware that there was a gap in the service on the day in question and we had arranged well in advance for another GP to cover that gap. 'However this GP was at very

Road crew sets sparks flying with 4am town street drilling

ROAD workers in Oban have been really enthusiastic about filling in potholes lately - so much so they tackled one at 4am. Staff at TranservScotland, which manages the A85, noticed a hole on the road outside the Regent Hotel in the early hours of Tuesday morning. The ever-industrious workforce decided it needed fixed - to the dismay of local residents trying to get some sleep. One angry householder who was woken by the noise said: 'I couldn't believe my ears when I heard the drilling start at 4.20am. I would have understood if there

EU offshore wind and marine energy seminar comes to Dunstaffnage

RENEWABLE energy will be up for discussion at an 'influential gathering' in Dunstaffnage at the weekend. The Scottish Marine Institute will host the EU offshore Wind and Marine Energy Seminar tomorrow (Friday). European policy, funding and the renewables potential of the west coast of the Highlands and Islands will be among the topics up for debate at the meeting organised by Argyll and Bute Council. Council Leader Dick Walsh said: 'A quarter of Europe's potential offshore wind and tidal energy resource and a tenth of Europe's wave capacity is found in Scotland. Argyll and Bute Council has a vision to be at the heart of renewable energy development in Scotland.'

Argyll-wide community councillors invited to wind energy debate

COMMUNITY councillors from throughout Argyll have been invited to Oban this month for a meeting to unveil the pros and cons of wind energy. Members of Connel and Ardrachattan community councils noticed they were at risk of being inundated with applications for either single turbines or farms, with the number of proposals rising rapidly. However, they felt ill-equipped to adequately hold opinion on the validity or otherwise of an application and decided they needed to find out more. Recognising other community councils might feel the same way, they've invited counterparts from across the county to convene in Oban and hear from impartial experts and planning officers about everything from planning considerations to the potential benefits of the so-called 'green' energy source. Secretary of Connel Community Council Les Stewart said: 'We've noticed a large number of applications for wind farms from Ardrishaig to Appin and we thought it would be a good idea to inform ourselves about them as much as possible. 'For example, do they produce the goods? What are reasonable planning objections and considerations?'

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Laura Ann loses out in the semis

POOL

SCOTTISH international pool player Laura Ann Sneddon helped the country's women's team to reach the semi-final of the European Eight-ball Championship for the first time in 10 years.

The Oban player was part of the five-woman team, who narrowly lost 8-6 to Northern Ireland at the championship in Dublin.

Northern Ireland went on to lose the final against favourites England.

Meanwhile, The Oban Backpackers won their first game in the Oban and District Pool League.

Team	Pts
Lancaster A	22
Markie Dans A	20
The Claredon	18
The Cellar	16
Lancaster B	12
The Lochavullin	8
Markie Dans B	6
Oban Backpackers	2

Cup results for indoor footballers

INDOOR FOOTBALL

RESULTS: Carpet Fitters 11, Emergency Services 2; Oban Times 14, Oban Electrics 4; Hotels 4, Oban High School 11

Group A	P	W	D	L	Pts
Carpet Fitters	2	2	0	0	6
Oban Times	2	1	0	1	3
Emergency	2	1	0	1	3
Oban Electrics	2	0	0	2	0

Islay Golf Club winter league

GOLF

RECENT winter league results: 1 Samuel Graham 43pts; 2 Alister Blair 39pts; 3 Lachlan Cairns 37pts. Cts 71

Congratulations to Alister Blair overall winner of the winter league. Keith MacDonald was second and Samuel Graham finished in third place.

Five new records set at athletics final

FIVE Argyll age-group records were broken at the area final of Sports Hall Athletics held in Atlantis Leisure, Oban on Saturday.

The final, which attracted 91 competitors, was the last in a series of five competitions held in Argyll over the winter months promoted by Mid Argyll Athletic Club and sponsored by a Communities 2014 Lottery Grant.

After almost five hours of intense competition the overall awards were distributed to most parts of the county with athletes from the Oban area winning three out of the 10 titles.

Three of the records were set in the boys under-13 contest by Ben Coates from Kilmore, who won the Scottish Indoor Under-14 Pentathlon Championship in Glasgow the previous weekend.

Ben's first record was in the standing long jump reaching out to 2.38metres adding 1cm to the long-standing record.

Ben was then in action in the 2lap race, winning in 22.5seconds and trimming 0.3 of a second off his own Argyll age

record set in January. In the 4lap race he recorded an incredible 48seconds taking a full three seconds off the old record set by Ruairaidh MacKinnon from Oban in 2009.

Ben now holds the Argyll age record in five out of the eight sports hall events.

Ashleigh Connor from Campbelltown was the other record breaker and was very impressive in winning the girls under-13 title.

In her first event Ashleigh improved her own Argyll age record in the standing triple jump reaching 6.85metres, adding 22cm to her mark set four weeks ago in the Kintyre competition. Ashleigh then exceeded the age record in the standing long jump by 4cm clearing 2.26metres.

Abbie Cato from Bunessan Primary on Mull was the under-9 champion winning five events and was not far off the age record in the triple jump and speed bounce.

Mull also won the girls under-11 category with Molly Reade from Tobermory winning ahead

of Rhona O'May from Castlehill Primary in Campbelltown.

Kate Cameron from Southend was a worthy under-15 champion winning five events outright, while Kirsty Gillies, Oban, was under-17 winner ahead of Kerry Colthart, Appin, and Sian Henderson from Salen, on Mull.

The under-9 boys competition was very close with only three points separating the first four boys. Jude Gallagher from Tobermory and Ross Conner from Castlehill Primary shared first place.

Joseph Harper from Kilmartin was the under-11 champion thanks to wins in the high, long and triple jumps.

Oban High School boys dominated the under-15s competition, filling the first three places. Champion Jamie Killorn won six events to ensure victory ahead of Alan Colthart and Scott Black.

Erik Riddell from Tayvallich and Oban boy Gordon Thomson had an interesting duel in the under-17s with Erik the winner in six out of the eight events to ensure overall victory.

Weakened Oban Lorne made to pay

RBS West Division 2 Cambuslang 73-0 Oban Lorne

OBAN Lorne tempted fate by travelling to Cambuslang with only 15 available players and their worst fears were realised when injuries picked up during the match led to a crushing defeat.

A promising victory the previous week, when 22 players were available, became a distant memory after only half an hour, when the hosts went 28-0 ahead.

Oban were dealt a further blow when scrum half Fergus Matheson limped off with a knee injury meaning Oban now had to play the game with 14 men.

Cambuslang ran in another seven tries in the remaining 50 minutes of the game to win 73-0, during which time a brave Oban Lorne saw injuries to Jamie MacMillan, Ryan Jackson and Calum MacLachlan.

Coach Corrie Louw said the 15 men in green who travelled could be very proud of the way they maintained their discipline and commitment throughout the match.

Oban Lorne remain eighth in West Division Two and are looking good to survive in a very tough league. Relegation rivals Uddington were beaten 74-0 by Helensburgh who Oban Lorne face on Saturday at Glencruitten. Kick off 3pm.



Oban Saints Under-14s and Kilpatrick fought out an entertaining 1-1 draw during their Dumbarton Development League fixture at Oban Community Pitch last Sunday. Saints goalscorer Kieran Hendry looks on as the ball is cleared by the Kilpatrick defence. 15_09saints05

Saints youths - results and fixtures

YOUTH FOOTBALL

LAST weekend's results: Blair Thistle v Under 13s postponed. Under 14s 1, Kilpatrick 1. Saints goalscorer was Kieran Hendry.

EDFC United 0, Under 15s 3. Netting for the Oban team were Stuart Twort (2) and Duggie MacLeod.

Helensburgh 1, Under 16s 4. Scoring for Saints were Liam MacEachran and a hat-trick from Ryan MacDougall.

This weekend's fixtures: Drumchapel United v Under 13s; Under 14s v Goldenhill; EDFC United v Under 15s; Under 16s v Strathleven.

Angus and Eddie at the double

CARPET BOWLS

Club	P	Pts
Kilmore	10	62
Cairnbaan	10	48
Benderloch	10	47
Easdale	10	39
North Connel	9	36
Taynuilt	10	24
Connel	9	24

THE winners of the Kilmore Open Doubles were Angus MacFadyen and Eddie Holland, Kilmore who beat Adrian MacKay and Ron MacLean from Cairnbaan.

Tight at the top in indoor league

INDOOR FOOTBALL

Team	P	W	D	L	Pts
Triallists	6	6	0	0	18
Taynuilt	6	6	0	1	18
Emergency	7	4	1	2	13
Seil	7	4	0	3	12
WC Massive	7	3	0	4	9
Spartak	7	3	0	4	9
Teachers	6	2	1	3	7
Hydro	7	1	0	6	3
STC	7	0	0	7	0

RESULTS: Taynuilt 6, Teachers 6; Hydro 2, Triallists 9; Sail trim Coach 1, West Coast Massive 15; Sail Trim Coach 2, Spartak 11; Emergency 3, Hydro 0; Seil 6, West Coast Massive 3.

Tag rugby tournament at Garmony

TAG RUGBY

ROUND two of the Islands Tag Festival competitions was held at Garmony last Sunday. This was the first junior tournament to enjoy the fantastic new facilities since the clubhouse refurbishment.

The competition was as ever fiercely competitive, with eight teams, almost 60 youngsters encouraged by a large number of family supporters battling it out for the Golden Ball.

For the second time this season the Salen Sea Eagles coached by Catlyn MacLennan topped the table scoring an incredible 36 tries in their seven games (perhaps Scotland coach Andy Robinson should be giving Catlyn a wee call!).

The tournament was organised through Active Schools by Babs Whyte and hosted by Dervaig and Ulva Ferry schools staff and parents who provided a fabulous fare.

Thanks go to Mike Story and Gerry Ralston for refereeing 14 games each, Claire Ralston and Carol Paterson for scorekeeping and to all the volunteer coaches who give up their time each week.

Mull Juniors are back in action at Garmony on Sunday, March 11 when they host round two of the Argyll and Bute Dalriada competition.

Taynuilt lose unbeaten home record

Central Scottish Welfare League Taynuilt 0 Renton 3

RENTON maintained their 100 per cent record this season but the away team admitted it took their best performance of the season to take all three points at Glencruitten.

Renton had the first chance to take the lead from the penalty spot when John Napier looked to have taken his man down.

Up stepped the Renton number eight, who placed his shot to the bottom left hand corner but Ben Pollock showed his agility to turn the ball away.

However, the deadlock was broken when a Renton corner wasn't cleared and a defender toe-poked the ball into the net from two yards. Taynuilt came right back into the game and young George McMillan had a great effort round the post.

Taynuilt manager Stuart Reid said: 'Even though it was a tight game the Renton manager explained to me that this match was their best performance of the season.'

Next week Taynuilt are on league cup semi-final duty at St Pats Academy in Dumbarton against Westcliff, then play Yoker BFC on March 10.



John Napier and Craig Campbell combine to thwart a Renton attack. 15_109taynuilt06

Saints cause havoc as Athletic are dumped in the Myre

West of Scotland Cup 3rd round Myre Athletic 0 Oban Saints 3

SAINTS travelled to Havoc Park in Dumbarton last Saturday to take on Myre Athletic in the 3rd round of the West of Scotland Cup.

This was the fourth time the teams had tried to play the game with the previous attempts having to be called off due to the bad weather. Although the pitch was a bit heavy on Saturday the playing surface was in remarkably good condition considering the recent spell of heavy rain.

Manager Iain Jackson shuffled his squad for this game with Paul Kerr, Alan Miller and Lewis Cameron coming into the starting line-up.

Saints got off to the perfect start with a goal in the sixth minute. They were awarded a free kick at the edge of the box and Donald Campbell curled a great low shot round the Myre wall which left keeper Michael Reilly rooted to the spot. However, with the advantage

of a strong blustery wind at their backs the home side came roaring back into the game and Graham Douglas had to make a good save low down to his left hand post from Tony McGrogan the former St Pat's and Queens Park striker.

At the other end Donald Campbell was unlucky when he outjumped the Myre defence to get his head to the Lewis Cameron corner which was heading for the top corner of the net, but the ball cannoned off his own defender Marc MacCallum who was also up for the corner.

Marc was unlucky not to get a penalty two minutes later when he was clearly fouled in the box, but to everyone's surprise the referee failed to point to the spot for what looked like a stone wall penalty.

The home side came close when Mark MacLeod had a good effort which just slipped past the post and Brian Burke had a header sail over the bar.

Just before the half time whistle Paul Kerr was unlucky with a good header that looked a goal

all the way until Barry Quinn stepped up to clear the ball off the line, so the Oban lads had to be content with a narrow 1-0 lead at the interval.

With the advantage of the elements in the second half Saints pushed forward at every



Donald Campbell - scored two goals against Myre.

opportunity in an attempt to get that vital second goal. Alan Miller came close with a shot that whistled past the post and Ryan Campbell had another good effort but the ball sailed

over the bar. Saints netted that vital second goal in the 57th minute when Lewis Cameron sent over a great corner from the left which the Myre defence failed to clear. The ball fell kindly for Paul Kerr who prodded it over the line from close range to make the score 2-0.

All credit to the home side they battled away, but were getting little change out of the Saints defence well marshalled by Alex Craik, although keeper Graham Douglas made a great save touching an Andy Rennie shot onto the bar before the ball was scrambled clear.

Myre were pushing men forward to try and get a goal back which was leaving spaces at the back and with a little more composure Saints might have scored on two or three occasions.

However, the icing on the cake of a good afternoon's performance from the Oban side came a minute before full time with a well taken goal after good work from Asen Gaydardzhiev, Ryan Campbell and Alan Miller.

FOOTBALL

Donald Campbell was sent through on goal before cleverly rounding the keeper and stroking the ball into an empty net to make the final score 3-0.

Manager Iain Jackson was happy with the result and performance. He said: 'I thought we played some excellent football on a heavy pitch. Myre were a decent team and made us fight all the way for the win.'

Saints stay on West of Scotland Cup duty this Saturday when they take on top Ayrshire side Knockentiber in the 4th round of the competition.

The Ayrshire outfit are previous winners of both the Scottish Amateur Cup and the West of Scotland Amateur Cup, so Saints will have a tough job on their hands on Saturday.

The game will take place at Glencruitten, kick-off 1.30pm with extra time and penalties, if required, to see who plays Dumbarton Academy FPs at home in the 5th round. Referee in charge is Tony McCann from Rhu.

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Phoenix boxers compete at senior championships

TWO LOCHABER Phoenix ABC boxers competed at a stage higher than they had ever boxed before when they took the ring at the Scottish Senior Open Boxing Championships at Meadowbank stadium in Edinburgh last weekend.

Middleweight Ryan Watson faced last year's runner-up Darin Reid of Alloa ABC in a last 16 contest in what was always going to be an extremely hard test for the Fort William boxer.

Reid, known for his educated left jab, met his match in the first as Watson landed his own jab as often as his opponent, but Reid held a narrow lead by the end of the second.

In the last Ryan continued to throw quality shots, especially his counter right, but Reid has

not boxed at top level for so long by accident and managed to keep just ahead to claim an 11-6 points victory.

Light welterweight Aidan Donnelly took on Newarthill's Scott MacIntyre in his last 16 bout and whilst MacIntyre is noted for smart boxing Donnelly's intentions were clear from the start.

Donnelly tore into MacIntyre from the opening bell with a ferocious intensity and counted with several shots, but sometimes tended to 'switch off' after any success and allow MacIntyre to punish the Fort William boxer in turn.

After a close opener, MacIntyre managed to pick holes in Aidan's defence close as the Fort William boxer's attacks grew

wilder. Entering the last Aidan still led by a point, but continued deficiencies in his defence allowed MacIntyre to sneak a couple of unanswered points to snatch the verdict 16-15.

Coach Niall Clark told The Oban Times that although disappointed with the results all the coaching team were delighted with their boxers' performances.

He said: 'The last time Ryan entered these championships he faced a top quality opponent and lost by 24 points. This time he faced perhaps the best boxer in Scotland and lost by only five points. That is a major improvement.'

'Aidan has boxed for less than three years and to reach this level so quickly is a major achievement.

BOXING

Neither of these lads had had the advantage of boxing through their teenage years as most of the boys at this level have had so they should be very proud of their achievements.

'Both boxers are ranked just outside the top ten in Scotland so the aim for the rest of this year is to get them inside that elite group.'

Meanwhile, Lochaber Phoenix have announced tickets for their latest home show at the Nevis Centre on April 7 are now on sale from the venue (01397700707), coaches Niall Clark (07554994744) and Vince Lopez (07979321025) or club official Steve Docherty (0776069532).



Alleycats' lead cut to six points

TEN PIN BOWLING

AFTER 14 weeks of the Lochaber Building Supplies 10-pin bowling league Alleycats' lead at the top of the scratch division has been cut to six points.

Council stay in second on 60 points after beating Phoenix 5-0 at the Nevis Centre, while Ardtoe/Nevis Radio remain third.

The handicap division is even closer with the top three teams all dropping some points this week. Alleycats, Council and Ardtoe/Nevis Radio cannot be split at the top, all on 47 points.

The highest scratch team game of the week came from Alleycats with 602, while Council had the highest handicap game with 807.

Council also had the week's top scratch 2 game series with 1,115. Rotavators had the top handicap two game series with 1,565.

Individually, Alleycats' Tony Whitecliffe rolled the best scratch game of 186 and the best two game scratch series of 335. Sean MacPherson of the Likely Lads chipped in with a 174. The best handicap game of the week came from Gus Fraser, Council, with 227. Derek Fraser, British Legion Scotland, had the best two game handicap series with 425.

Narrow win for league leaders

INDOOR FOOTBALL

ALI YOUNG Premier League leaders Lochaber Leisure got back to winning ways with a narrow 3-2 victory over Steaua Sookabrest at the Nevis Centre on Sunday night.

Nearest challengers Goon Squad and Achintore FC both won 3-0 against AA Young and Bayern Bru respectively to keep up the pressure.

Meanwhile, Ballachulish FC slipped to fifth after losing 4-6 to TNF United, while HW Energy thrashed The Granite House 8-2. The night's other game saw Liverpool in eighth draw 4-4 with ninth-placed Stroke City.

Ewan wins at Duror

THE LATEST round of West Highland Wheelers winter league saw 25 racers tackle a tricky course at Duror on Sunday.

The race was won in slippery conditions by Ewan Thorburn in a time of 49 minutes 23 seconds. Ben Miller and his father set the course, and the junior rider came home in second place just 54 seconds behind Thorburn, while Ben Thompson finished third.

The two fastest ladies, Emma Holgate and Nix Forster, both

CYCLING

missed parts of the course after confusion about course navigation.

Impressive
Youngster Lachlan Blair put in an impressive time of 63 minutes 14 seconds to finish as the second fastest junior cyclist.

Thanks to Ben, Nigel and Jeanette Miller for all of their hard work. The next Wheelers race is due to be held at Wolfrax, Laggan on Sunday.

Glen Brittle Race

LOCAL athlete James Stephenson led a field of 14 home to win Skye and Lochalsh Running Club's Glen Brittle Race on Saturday.

Young Niall Till held the lead for most of the race only to be passed by eventual winner James and Josephine MacDonald in the closing stages.

Sixteen year-old Josephine provided the performance of the day, finishing the tough course to finish second overall in 1:17:58.

In the Winter Series Championship, Wilma MacRuary did enough by finishing as second female club member home to secure the Ladies Championship with one race to go. The Mens Championship is still not decided, as Niall Till has closed to within eight points of Phil Dewar.

ATHLETICS

Current standings are: Men - Phil Dewar (28 points); Niall Till (20 points); Neil Turner and Lee Mather (14 points). Women - Wilma MacRuary (36 points); Sarah Stephenson (28) and Janette Tasker (26).

Lochaber and Kingussie lift the silverware

LOCHABER Camanachd's Primary 5 and under shinty team is top of the world after winning the RBS National First Shinty Finals at Lochaber High School on Saturday.

In a pulsating final against Dingwall, hero of the hour was Max Campbell who scored a hat-trick in a nail-biting 5-3 victory.

Darren Whyte had put Lochaber ahead and Cameron Whyte doubled the lead before Dingwall pulled a goal back.

Roaring
With Spean Bridge supporters roaring on the boys from the galleries, Lochaber went 4-1 up only for Dingwall to pull two goals back as the clock ticked down.

But a third goal from Max

sealed matters, and the final whistle sparked wild celebrations from the Lochaber contingent.

Meanwhile over at the Nevis Centre, the RBS P6/7 final was also reaching a conclusion as Portree battled it out with Kingussie in another high quality clash.

Following the initial league matches, Kingussie topped league A with Portree as runners-up and Rockfield finished top of league B with maximum points, followed by Lovat.

Kingussie demolished Lovat 7-1 in the semi-final, but in the other semi Portree really upset the form book to post their best performance of the day to defeat fancied Rockfield 3-0.

The final was a real high-class

affair, played at a frantic pace, but in the end Kingussie scored in the very last minute to claim a narrow 3-2 win and become the 2012 Scottish champions.

Proud
Portree head teacher John Finlayson was proud of how his team, coached by Davie Pringle, fought through to almost claim glory in the final.

He told The Oban Times: 'The team was fantastic and showed great commitment and received huge encouragement and support from their parents. The ongoing good-natured rivalry with Kingussie [coached by Davie Anderson] continues!'

Kingussie captain Alexander Michie received the trophy from Olga Robertson from RBS.

INDOOR SHINTY

In the 3rd/4th place play off, Lovat defeated Rockfield 3-2 in the P6/7 finals, while in the P5 and under third place match category Kingussie edged out Inverlochty 2-1 on the golden goal.

Lochaber had booked their place in the final by beating local rivals Inverlochty 5-2, while Dingwall beat Kingussie on the golden goal after their semi had finished 2-2.

Over 200 children took part in the event over both venues. Twelve teams from across Scotland took part in each competition after winning through at regional heats two weeks previously.

Kilmallie warmed up for this weekend's Orion Group Premiership opener at Glenurquhart with a training game involving the first and second team squads. Despite sodden conditions Saturday's match proved a useful exercise as Kilmallie seek to start the season with an away win. Above, Mark MacPherson, who turned 30 the day before the game, clears his lines under pressure from Sebby MacMillan. Shinty round-up, page 27. 20_09shinty01

Fort William lose out to Inverurie Locos

FORT William will be looking to bounce back against Lossiemouth at Claggan Park this Saturday after slipping to the bottom of the Highland League last weekend.

Strathspey Thistle's 2-0 win against Brora Rangers moved them a point ahead of the Lochaber side.

Manager Danny Conlon said being bottom of the pile should motivate the players to perform. He said: 'I would hope it would. Strathspey have had quite a few good results recently and it just shows what you can do if you put together a little run and get the confidence up.'

'We certainly don't want to finish bottom but you can only do that with hard work. Lossie are a very physical, competitive side and we're going to have to try and match that.'

Conlon will have captain Andy Martin available again and Chris MacLeod has resumed training. Fort went down 3-0 at Inverurie Locos last weekend despite holding out for the first 75 minutes.

FOOTBALL

Keeper Stewart Gray pulled off a number of impressive saves to keep the home side afloat, but Lewis Campbell pushed Neil Gauld in the box to give away a penalty with 15 minutes on the clock. Gauld scored the penalty and doubled Loco's lead minutes later, again from the spot. Substitute Craig Ross scored in the final minutes to secure the win.

Keeper Crisis
Meanwhile, the Claggan side are facing a keeper crisis this month after a number of postponed fixtures were re-arranged for midweek. Current number one Stewart Gray is based in Inverurie and unable to make the long trip during the week, and with John Campbell and Jonathan Smith still injured, Conlon is looking to unearth a new goalie for the fixtures.

There were no winners in the Fort William FC lotto draw on Saturday. Numbers were 2-3-17. The jackpot goes up to £400 this week.



Fort midfielder Logan Barker takes on Inverurie defender Neil McLean during his side's 3-0 loss on Saturday.



Primary 5 and under champions Lochaber celebrate their victory over Dingwall. 20_09shinty01



Portree: came so close to upsetting Kingussie in the final. 20_09shinty04

Weather

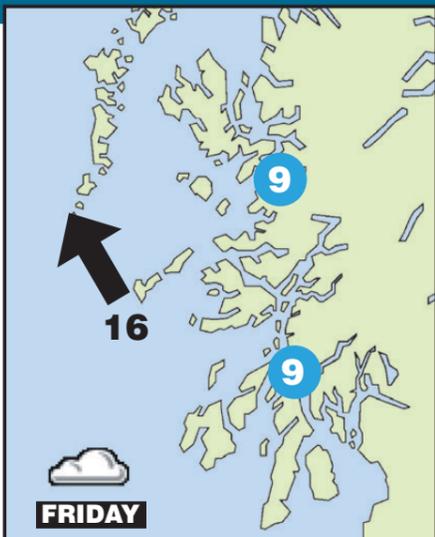
Thursday Light rain.
Winds moderate, south south westerly
Temperatures 6°C to 9°C

Friday Cloudy
Winds moderate, south easterly
Temperatures 6°C to 9°C.

Weekend Heavy rain
Outlook Winds moderate, southerly
Temperatures 5°C to 8°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate



Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, March 1, 2012** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	10.24	2.9	17.36	pm	22.44	2.9
Thur	04.44	2.0	10.24	2.9	17.36	1.9	22.44
Fri	06.05	2.1	13.20	2.7	18.49	2.0	*** **
Sat	01.12	2.8	07.43	2.1	14.56	2.9	20.03
Sun	02.55	3.0	09.38	1.8	15.42	3.1	21.10
Mon	03.44	3.3	10.20	1.5	16.20	3.4	22.01
Tues	04.24	3.6	10.56	1.1	16.55	3.6	22.43
Wed	05.01	3.8	11.39	0.8	17.28	3.8	23.22

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Portree	+0.55
Campbeltown	-5.30	Tobermory	+0.16
Crinan	-0.47	Dover	+5.30
Islay Port Ellen	2.00		
Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Mallaig	+0.25		

Wherever you are...
Whatever the weather

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