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& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Traffic wardens to return to Oban

TRAFFIC wardens are likely to return to Oban's town centre this summer as Argyll and Bute concludes the process of de-criminalising on-street parking, *The Oban Times* can reveal.

The move means the local authority will take over responsibility for policing on-street parking from Police Scotland and it could advertise for new traffic wardens from mid-May onwards.

The de-criminalisation process began shortly after Strathclyde Police made the town's traffic wardens redundant in 2011, leaving a parking free-for-all.

A three-month pilot scheme agreed between the local authority and Oban Police then saw officers handing out parking tickets, which, although unpopular with the public, proved parking regulation was needed in Oban - during the first two weeks of the trial, police handed out 51 and 76 tickets, respectively.

Come mid-May, Argyll and Bute Council will be responsible for ticketing and will gain extra income through parking meters.

Oban South Councillor Fred Hall said: 'If this is to go ahead I hope the primary role of the traffic wardens will be to allow the free flow of traffic through Oban, and not just ticketing.'

Argyll and Bute Council confirmed it is on schedule to complete the de-criminalisation process by mid-May but said more information would be provided for the public soon.

Vote for your favourite bonnie baby

WE'RE down to the final six! The Oban Times' Bonnie Babies competition enters its final round this week, meaning it is your last chance to vote for your favourite in this year's competition.

For this year's Bonnie Six and details on how to vote for your favourite, see page 12.



Councillor Duncan MacIntyre examines one of the many potholes on Oban's Bealach an Righ.

Anger grows over road repair delays

BEAR Scotland says crumbling Bealach an Righ won't be fixed until May

FRUSTRATION and anger was expressed throughout the Oban community this week after BEAR Scotland said it wouldn't be repairing the crumbling Bealach an Righ until May.

The company has faced repeated calls from the community to repair the town's north entrance, with councillor Duncan MacIntyre one of the strongest voices asking for work to be done.

However, BEAR has instead opted to make repairs to the stretch of road between the Corran Halls roundabouts between March 16-18, before carrying out two nights of work on George Street between March 19-20 - ignoring the disintegrating Dunollie Road.

Confirming the date of the work, BEAR's spokeswoman said: 'The resurfacing of Bealach an Righ is scheduled to take place in May this year before the tourist season gets fully underway.'

However, a leaking drain on the

EXCLUSIVE

REPORT by STEVEN FLANAGAN
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road has now been repaired after causing problems for months. Councillor MacIntyre said: 'BEAR said to me that the Bealach an Righ would be done within the current financial year. They said they would do it as part of the Corran Halls stretch and Dunollie Road repairs. They've changed that.'

'The section between the roundabouts isn't even in urgent need of repair. It's very disappointing.'

He added there was 'no way in this world' May could be reasonably described as before the start of the full tourist season,' adding: 'This is not good enough.'

Oban Community Council's chairwoman, Marri Malloy added: 'I'm very, very upset about this. It's a nonsense.'

'I cannot understand why

they're doing the stretch between the roundabouts and not the main entrance to Oban itself. What impression does that give of the town?'

Asked if May could be described as before the start of the full tourist season, Oban and Lorn Tourism Association (OLTA) chairwoman Linda Battison replied: 'Perhaps in the '80s. May has two bank holidays and is also when the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival is held. What a crazy time of year to be doing it.'

She added: 'It just seems we go from one year to the next with the same problem.'

'With these situations we seem almost powerless to get these things done at the right time.'

'It's not acceptable and OLTA will send a letter asking them to reconsider.'

Councillor MacIntyre said the local authority would also be writing to BEAR to ask for the Bealach an Righ works to be brought forward.

Mull hydro scheme hits fund target

MULL'S Garmony Hydro scheme, which aims to generate tens of thousands a year for community projects across the island, has reached its £330,000 fundraising target.

Director Moray Finch said he was 'absolutely delighted' after reaching the target four days ahead of schedule, which he admits many on the island thought was unrealistic.

The cash represents 30 per cent of the cost of the project and will allow Green Energy Mull to obtain a loan and progress with the construction of the hydro scheme.

Moray says that could be complete by the end of the year.

'It's a real boost for us being able to achieve this target,' he said. 'There were quite a few people who didn't think we could get there, but we have.'

The majority of the funding for the project has come from sources off the island, with the promise of a tax-break due to it being an ethical investment, but the scale of investment on the island was described as 'significant' by Mr Finch.

Projects Once up and running, the scheme will initially generate between £25,000 - £30,000 for community projects, with that sum rising to £100,000 per year after the capital loan for the project is paid off.

Moray added: 'I'm delighted to reach the target and delighted for all the local people who have given their assistance and supported the project as well.'

'We had a lot of people take on the minimum investment of £50 per share from right across the island, including lots of people buying them for their children and grandchildren, and that's very much appreciated.'

Inconsiderate motorists using Oban hospital car park as a free, long stay parking solution

INCONSIDERATE motorists are stopping patients and staff at Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital getting to appointments - because they're using its car park as a free, long-stay solution.

Workers have been spotted using the hospital car park as a 'park-and-ride' facility, with colleagues picking them up there due to parking options being limited at work.

NHS Highland has now issued an appeal for people to stop abusing the car park - but the situation has re-opened

the debate about limited parking in Oban's town centre.

NHS Highland's locality manager, Veronica Kennedy, said: 'We have become aware it is becoming more and more difficult for people to park at the hospital despite the fact we recently added an additional 27 new parking spaces.'

'It has been raised by members of the public that they have seen some drivers using the car park as a park and ride facility by parking their cars at the

hospital and then getting picked up by friends and colleagues to go on to another location.

'The actions of these individuals are causing real issues for patients and visitors coming to the hospital and I would ask the small minority of drivers who are causing this problem to stop parking at the hospital and make some other arrangement.'

Oban Community Council chairwoman, Marri Malloy, said: 'It's totally unjust. I have seen teachers

going because there's not enough parking at the schools. I suppose it isn't just teachers though. Parking at the hospital is a big issue. I've suffered from it.'

'I've missed appointments. I've seen people who can't get parked even if they have disabled badges.'

'Perhaps charging would help deter people, with tokens given to people with a real reason to park at the hospital?' BID4Oban chairman Nic Jones added: 'People get fed up of me because

I always mention parking. As far as I know, there are no plans from the local authority to increase the amount of free parking or long-stay parking in the town.'

'If we are to enhance our town centre businesses we need more parking and this is a symptom of the need.'

A spokesperson for Argyll and Bute Council, said: 'We're not aware of any such issue - staff use car parks at the school and designated park and ride facilities in the town.'

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Front page wish comes true for panto stars

Ardfern's finest theatrical talent wowed audiences with their performance of Peter Pan this week - by singing how they wanted to be on the 'Cover of The Oban Times'. The performance marked the return of the village panto and was a big draw for the community. Amber Crowley, who adapted JM Barrie's original play - as well as the Rolling Stones' 'Cover of Rolling Stone' - for the performance, said everything was 'awesome' especially the community reception for the show. For more pictures and information, see our leisure pages. Photograph by Tristan Clamorgan.

Site owner denies new use rumours

OBAN businessman John Stoddart insists he has not yet decided what to do with the former MacDougall's store in Combie Street once it is demolished.

Mr Stoddart, who runs Stoddarts of Oban, said he bought the site because it backs onto his current yard space.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'The building is leaking and needs to be demolished. It can then be marketed as a development site but I have no plans for it yet.'

Mr Stoddart rubbished rumours that he had a business lined up to take on the site, or that it was to become a car park.

He added: 'I've heard all the stories: someone told me that McDonald's and Burger King are moving in!'

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Public meetings planned on Tyndrum to Oban link

PUBLIC meetings in villages linking Tyndrum and Oban will be held this spring as the plan to create a path linking the communities begins to take shape.

Local landowners, community councils and agencies have come together to oversee the next phase of the path's development.

The steering group, chaired by Argyll and Bute Council, is initially focussing on a feasibility study for the route.

Funded by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), the study will include specific details of engineering works and costs.

Engineering consultant Pick Everard has been awarded the contract to produce the feasibility study. The company hopes to complete the study in the spring, when public meetings will be held to gather feedback on the proposal before securing funds to start work on the ground.

An economic study of the proposal, carried out in 2012, suggested that the route could bring up to £1m of economic activity a year into the communities of Tyndrum, Dalmally, Loch Awe, Taynult and Connel.

Longer nursery sessions

NURSERIES in the Highlands will hold longer sessions from August this year.

Classes will be extended to three hours and 10 minutes from the current two and a half hours. Highland Council's adult and children's services committee agreed.

This is part of a pledge by the Scottish government to provide 600 hours of early learning and childcare to pre-school children, an extension from the current 475 hours.

Staffing structure will also change to an early years practitioner system, meaning that all workers have the same qualifications.

Councillor Alasdair Christie, chairman of the adult and children's services committee said: 'This is great news for parents and carers whose children will benefit from more structured education and preparation in pre-school before going on to primary school.'

Staff will also benefit from the changes as many of them will be upgraded with additional support and training.'

Smart ticket Oban trial

A SMART ticketing system will be trialled in Oban this spring in an effort to make travelling throughout the area easier.

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre said he had hopes the new system - which would allow a single ticket to be used for bus, ferry and train transport - could be in launched within six weeks.



John Nicolson, left, and Janet Wallwork Clarke of Dunvegan Castle were presented a prestigious award by Loyd Grossman OBE.

Top award for Dunvegan Castle and Gardens

DUNVEGAN Castle and Gardens has received a prestigious award from a heritage and tourism company.

For the second year running staff and volunteers at the 800-year-old castle on Skye have been recognised for their work by the Hudson's Heritage Awards. This year, they bagged the prize for 'New Discovery' after finding a collection of old letters to the estate. The findings outlined housekeeping

and repair issues, which spurred staff to swap strong chemical cleaners for environmentally responsible products when taking care of the castle, home to the clan chiefs of MacLeod. Visitors can now watch specialist cleaning sessions of some of the estate's collection.

Janet Wallwork Clarke, executive director of Dunvegan Castle and Gardens, said: 'I am delighted to see the whole team recognised for their hard work and creative

engagement with our many visitors who have been fascinated to learn of how we care for the historic fabric of the castle. Not only have we made a step change in the way in which we look after the place but we have seen visitor enjoyment and staff morale improve as a result too.'

Last year the estate's head gardener David MacLean won the 'Beyond the Call of Duty' category of the Hudson's Heritage Awards.

Grants help keep families in remote part of Mull

GRANTS totalling £241,000 have been secured to help keep young families in a remote part of Mull.

Ulva Ferry Local Development Officers, supported through Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) Growth at the Edge Programme, have secured £141,760 from the Scottish Land Fund (SLF) to purchase a plot of land for affordable housing.

In addition to the SLF grant, HIE has confirmed funding for the Ulva Ferry Local Development Officer has been extended for three years, with an additional £100,000 until March 2017. Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT) will have to provide the 50 per cent

funding for the third year. The Ulva Ferry project was set up by HIE and MICT in 2012, after the successful campaign in 2011 by Ulva School Community Association (USCA) to save the school from the threat of closure.

The area has been identified as being economically fragile and is geographically isolated with the community facing a number of challenges, including a lack of affordable housing.

Thanks to a sympathetic local landowner, a plot of land adjacent to Ulva Ferry Primary School has been made available for purchase with assistance from the Scottish Land Fund (SLF). Helen Mackay, convenor

of USCA, said: 'This award is fantastic news. In an area with very few houses to let, lack of affordable accommodation has been badly affecting the ability of young folk with families to live and work here.'

'The whole community, with the school at its heart, has been suffering.'

'Two new homes may not seem much to some, but will make a huge difference to this area's future. We can't wait to get started.'

Of the £141,760 grant, the capital element includes professional fees and amounts to £96,760. The £45,000 revenue element of the grant will contribute to the two-year employment of a

part-time project manager, who will oversee the procurement and construction of two three-bedroom semi-detached houses. These two houses will be offered to families for rental at an affordable rate.

As match funding for the capital grant, a second plot has been donated free of charge by the same landowner and this will be sold with a Rural Housing Burden to ensure any house built on it is available at an affordable price in perpetuity.

MICT will employ the local development officer and project manager and will take on the long term responsibilities of owning and renting the two houses.

Work to start on new £5m Skye distillery

Investment in 19th century farm steading could create eight jobs

WORK to build a new malt whisky distillery on the Isle of Skye is expected to begin within weeks at a listed early 19th century farm steading at Toravaig on the island's southeast coast.

The Torabhaig Distillery and visitor centre will bring a £5 million-plus investment to Sleat and is likely to employ around eight people.

Neil Mathieson, chief executive officer of Mossburn Distillers Ltd, the parent company of Toravaig Distillery Ltd, announced the development last week.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'We hope to be on site in April or May. We would be looking to produce 500,000 litres of pure spirit once we are in full production.'

'Skye is renowned all over the world for its natural beauty and cultural heritage and we believe that Torabhaig will be a valuable contribution both to whisky distilling on Skye and to the island's continuing attraction to international visitors.'

'We have a wonderful property in a beautiful setting looking

over the Sound of Sleat to Knoydart.

'It's a perfect location for a small, traditional distillery and we look forward to working with the local community to bring our plans to life.'

Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch MSP Dave Thompson said it was 'great news' that the island would have a second distillery.

He said: 'This is good for direct employment, but also good for indirect employment in the tourist industry as the proposed visitor centre adds to the island's visitor experience.'

Backing
The distillery also won backing from Sleat Community Council chairman Roddy Murray.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'A £5 million investment in Sleat and eight new jobs in an activity of this nature is something we would welcome.'

'Overall this is something we would like to see happen and it will be another dimension to the economy of this area.'

Mr Murray also said a new water-dependant industry would 'concentrate minds' on solving

ongoing water supply issues in Sleat. Filtration problems at Loch Carmichael, the area's sole source of supply, has meant water has been tankered in from Kyle in recent months.

He said: 'This will strengthen our hand in our bid to have a more assured water supply in this area.'

The development received planning permission from Highland Council several years ago.

The Toravaig site formed part of the late Sir Iain Noble's lands of Fearann Eilean Iarmain.

Sir Iain's widow, Lucilla Noble has been invited to join the board of Torabhaig Distillery Limited.

She said: 'Iain long ago recognised the great potential of the Torabhaig steading as the perfect site for a distillery on the Sleat peninsula and worked hard towards that objective.'

'I am very pleased that this ambitious redevelopment is about to be started and that his vision will become a reality.'

It is anticipated that the first new spirit will flow from Torabhaig by the end of 2015.



Knock Farm steading at Toravaig: site on new distillery. Photograph by Rob Ware.

Tiree festival spot up for grabs

UNSIGNED acts are once again being offered the chance to perform on the main stage at Tiree Music Festival (TMF).

Entries for TMF Unsigned opened last week and could give two acts the chance to perform at the Hebrides' liveliest music festival when it takes place on July 18-20.

Backed by Jim Gellatly, the voice of new music in Scotland, more than 150 acts entered the competition last year, with the entries whittled down to just the best five by the festival committee and Jim.

The winner was picked after the shortlist was put to an online vote,

with Jim's favourite act also picked to play at last year's event.

Meanwhile early bird ticket sales have been as successful as ever for the event, with the first batch snapped up in just 10 hours after Julie Fowlis was the first confirmed act to play.

Tickets go on sale this Friday from 9am and festival director Daniel Gillespie has urged people not to delay if they want to go.

'The demand for tickets has been phenomenal,' he said. 'Festival goers are increasingly combining the festival with a few extra days on Tiree - enjoying the island walks, water-

sports and white sandy beaches. The TMF campsites and campervan site will be open from Wednesday, July 16 to Wednesday, July 23 to cater for all those making a holiday out of TMF and we will also have a series of fringe events outside the main festival days to accompany this.'

Phenomenal
'Last year was phenomenal for TMF, with the quickest sell-out ever, winning four major festival awards and Mediterranean style weather - we've put an order in for the same again for 2014.'

'We're delighted to have Jim on board for the second year to compe-

TMF Unsigned - no one knows unsigned talent like Jim and I'm looking forward to listening to all the entries.'

Jim said: 'I'm delighted to have been asked to return to the TMF Unsigned panel.'

'The competition attracts unrivalled talent and I am sure we will have a difficult task selecting the winner. Tiree is becoming one of Scotland's best festivals and this competition provides a fantastic platform for new music to get heard.'

For tickets and more information about this year's TMF, go to www.tireemusicfestival.co.uk.

Travel website accolade for islands

A TOP travel website has delivered an international accolade to the Hebrides by naming its isles among the world's top destinations.

Lewis and Harris beat off tropical competition from the likes of Madagascar and Thailand to be named among the world's top five islands by TripAdvisor. TripAdvisor's Travellers Choice Awards, based on millions of travellers' reviews on the website, further named Mull in its top 10 European trips, while Skye, Arran and Islay were among the UK top 10.

Western Isles MP Angus MacNeil said the global recognition for Lewis and Harris was 'a fantastic accolade'.

Noting the islands' 'magnificent scenery', he said: 'The most important thing to make a place as its people, who are both friendly and humorous in equal measure. This is a good recognition of the skills and welcome by those who work in the hospitality industry to those visiting the islands and I congratulate them for that. This is a real boost for everyone involved in the tourism industry, who continue

to do a fantastic job in promoting our islands.' He added: 'It is good that visitor numbers have increased by 27 per cent over the past six years and I would like to think that there is a direct link, between the benefits of RET for cars and passengers and this discovery and accolade by TripAdvisor.'

TripAdvisor spokesperson James Kay said: 'The results of this year's awards reveal the ideal island getaway might be closer to home than you think.'

Charity leads new Sound of Barra group

A WESTERN ISLES charity has been put in charge of a forming a community-led group to manage the new Sound of Barra special area of conservation (SAC).

Voluntary Action Barra and Vatersay (VABV) will now work with local people to ensure they play a lead role in any management structure agreed with Scottish Ministers before the group is established later this year.

The government designated the Sound of Barra SAC on the recommendation of Scottish Natural Heritage last summer against strong opposition

from crofters and fishermen worried their livelihoods could be threatened by rules and regulations.

Environment minister Paul Wheelhouse softened the blow by promising strong local involvement in running the SAC once it was set up. He said: 'I have previously said a community-led approach to the management structure will ensure as much local involvement as possible.'

'I want all those with an interest to work constructively with VABV to secure a bright future for Sound of Barra and the wider region.'

VABV development manager Eoin MacNeil said: 'It is vital that the community is central to leading and managing this great resource, recognising and building on all it has to offer.'

Barra councillor Donald Manford said: 'Since the last century our community has been striving to stem the relentless loss of influence over the environment and resources around our shores. We have for the first time an exciting opportunity to create a structure which will empower the people who work here to actively manage our resources.'

Work starts on Muck fish farm homes

CONSTRUCTION is underway on the first of five homes to be built for workers on Marine Harvest's new fish farm off the Isle of Muck.

Residents backed the farm in a vote last year and are now looking forward to new people arriving with their families to begin a new life on the island.

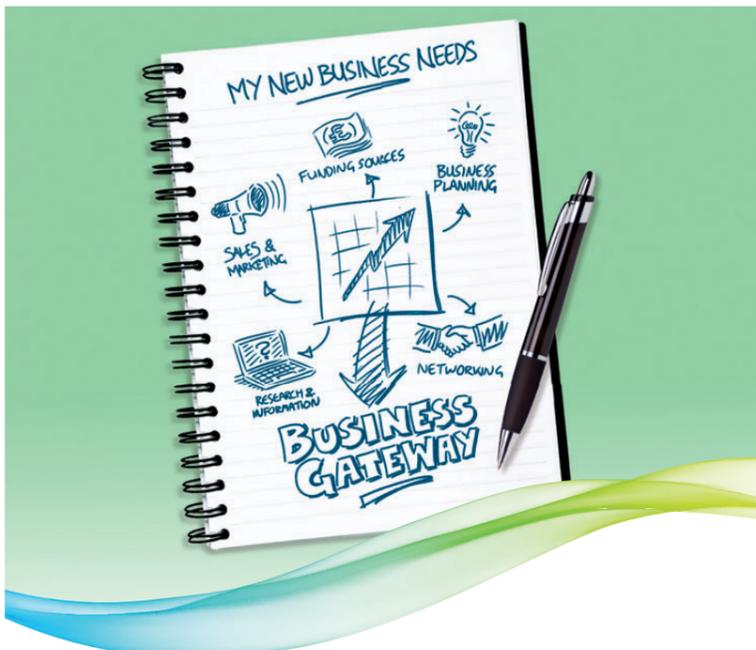
Muck's population could rise by a third once the fish farm is fully operational.

According to islander Mary MacEwen, that will be a big boost to the primary school and the local economy.

Ms MacEwen, who runs Gallanach Lodge with her husband Toby, said: 'Muck has a population of just 30 but I think within the next couple of years we should easily see another 12 people here.'

'They have already appointed a manager and assistant manager, who has two children going into the school.'

'We had two unemployed men on the island and they have both got jobs.'



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Lorn Lines

ONE OF the most popular dates on Oban Camera Club's syllabus is a visit from the well-known and respected local professional photographer Dennis Hardley.

In a spoken commentary last Monday, he guided his audience through 100 of his quality images. They reminisced over the old Caledonian MacBrayne ferries in various locations, saw landscapes and seascapes on mainland and islands, then jumped the pond to Nashville and back to modern visual art. Oban Camera Club occasionally enjoys an

in-house night, when the membership use a trusted format to select a winner.

The subject this year was 'Oban Street Scenes', which attracted a selection of well known Oban landmarks from the tower to the harbour.

Veronica Speirs won two awards, with Alex Clark and Nina Robertson equal in the runner up spot.

The Argyll trophy, donated by Peter and Katy Weir of North Ledaig Caravan Park, was handed over to Veronica.

Results of the nature competition will be delivered at the club's next meeting.



NORTH Lorn Drama Festival is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year and demand for tickets is expected to be high.

Running from March 20 to 22 at Appin Hall, nine one-act plays will be staged from Taynuilt, Dalmally, Benderloch, Appin and Strath of Appin and Lismore Primary School.

The plays will be adjudicated by Kevin Boland from Killearn. At the end of the festival, following the presentation of trophies by Winnie McNicol, there will be a celebratory ceilidh, to which everyone involved with the festival in the past 60 years, either as participants or audience, is invited.



'WELL I didn't expect that,' was the chairman Tom Clegg's first comment last week after Martin Wilson's speech at Oban Speakers Club. Martin had surprised everyone with numerous different interpretations of his subject 'The Seasons'. Equally entertaining and educational were the speeches of Eamonn Arthur on 'William Caxton' and

John Maclean on 'There was a Soldier'. In the second half, topics chairman Frank Walton gave a variety of testing subjects to Roy Wood, Jim Fraser, Alex Clark, Peter Mills, Willie Melville and Tom Clegg. Timekeeper was Guido Faccenda and a fair and comprehensive evaluation was given by Bill Leech.

The next meeting will be held on March 6 at 8pm.

Doors closed on Oban playpark

AS A fundraising drive for the new Oban Community Playpark swings into action this week, the current playpark, next to Atlantis Leisure, has failed a safety inspection and has been closed.

Friends of Oban Community Playpark announced last week that it has raised nearly £20,000 for the project but on Tuesday the group was told the current playpark, which it is attempting to replace, would have to be closed off. Fundraiser Lyndsay Elliot said: 'The closure of the playpark is disappointing news as we were optimistically expecting at least one to two years more use. Even with a good wind behind us we're looking at having no central community play facilities for at least 12

months, which is heart-breaking for our kids and for visitors too.

'We will switch our focus from the grass field area to replacing the existing site and upgrading the garden area, and we will still be able to apply for £100k funding from Sport Scotland in July. We need all of the community to get behind this as we need to raise a further £79k to make this happen.'

To this end, the committee has just sent out 385 letters to local businesses to appeal for donations. The cost of the mailing was funded by D&K Lafferty. Fundraising events lined up include: a ceilidh at Lynn Court, Singalong showing of the Jungle Book at the cinema in April and a 'Big Toddler' walk in June.



BID4Oban's events manager Mike Rowell, left, with Oban Pool League chairman and Scottish Open Pool Championship organiser Barry Clark at the Lancaster Hotel. 16_109poolchamp1

Hundreds 'cue up' to visit town for top pool contest

MORE than 200 people are 'cued up' to arrive in Oban next month as the town hosts Scotland's top pool competition.

The Scottish Open Pool Championship has decided to break with the norm and move its home to Oban for this year's event, with competitors set to arrive in the town from across the country for the two days of competition, starting on March 29.

And if it is a success, the event could return to the town for the next five years - potentially bringing a total audience of more than 1,000 people to the area keen to compete for the £6,000 prize fund. With competitors expected to 'sink' a few pounds when here for the weekend, organiser Barry Clark and event sponsor BID4Oban hope Oban is able to rack up a few new fans.

Barry, also the chairman of Oban Pool League, said: 'Pool is a growing sport in the town and this event will really put Oban on the Scottish pool

map and attract more competitions to the town. It's a great opportunity for locals to compete against players from all across the UK.'

The event has been publicised in Malta, where the World Championships are currently being held, as well as at pool tournaments across the country. Fourteen pool tables will be specially brought in for the Test in the West, which will be hosted by the Royal Hotel, although BID4Oban is preparing welcome packs to encourage competitors and their families to see the rest of the town while here.

Andrea Simpson, chairwoman of the BID4Oban events and marketing group, said: 'The event will bring significant economic benefit to the town, with more than 200 players, their families and supporters travelling. This is particularly welcome at this quiet time of year.'

To enter the mens, ladies or juniors competitions, or for more details, contact the Lancaster Hotel, Oban.

Islanders on their bikes to raise charity cash

A BID to buy defibrillators for the Isle of Coll will see a hardy bunch of islanders get on their bikes and cycle 800 miles around the north of Scotland in May.

Taking on the 'North of the Fault', the group, led by former Scotland rugby international Rob Wainwright, will ascend a total of 54,209 feet during the eight-day charity challenge, which begins at Oban on May 31.

With a target of £20,000, the group is also hoping to raise as much money as possible for Mary's Meals, with a stop planned during the journey that takes them via Moidart, Applecross, Ullapool, Durness, John o'Groats, Beaulieu and back to Oban in just seven days.

As if that challenge wasn't hard enough, those 723 miles will be rounded off by taking on the 88 mile Mull Sportive after a one-day break, taking their total journey distance to 811 miles in just eight cycling days.

Rob said: 'There's eight of us setting off at the moment and we will be averaging 100 miles a day, so it will be tough. 'We originally thought about doing John o'Groats to Lands'

End but thought, why would we want to do that? Why not go around somewhere much more familiar and attractive? That's why we decided on doing the route north of the fault. It is a very challenging route.'

Of their £20,000 target, £3,500 will be used to buy three defibrillators for the island, with the rest of the money raised going towards Mary's Meals.

Joining Rob on the trip is John Mucklow, Stephen McGoldrick, Oliver Tunnell, Fra and Brian Macintyre and Tom Davis. For those training on the island, options are limited - but not impossible.

'I challenge anyone to go along Windy Gap on Coll on a bike - it may not be long but the wind is very strong,' said Rob.

'Basically, we go up and down the same stretch quite frequently.'

Sponsorship has covered most of the cost of the defibrillators so far while the participants themselves will meet the cost of the journey, including accommodation along the way.

To donate to the group, log on to uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/NorthoftheFault.

Man arrested

POLICE were called to an Oban hotel last Friday after a man allegedly broke into the premises - for a nap.

A 26-year-old man was arrested just after 2.30am after the incident at the Palace Hotel and a report submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

Appin residents warned to secure property

APPIN residents have been warned to secure their property after two homeless men were seen causing problems in the area.

In the last week, reports have emerged of people finding their bins being raked through and someone breaking into a house to use a bedroom.

Police have cautioned people to be on their guard and report anything suspicious.

Man tried to break in to veterinary practice

A 39-YEAR-old man was arrested by police in Oban last Thursday after he was spotted acting suspiciously outside a veterinary practice.

He was first spotted trying to enter the front door of the practice, before falling over and rushing towards the rear of the premises just after 10.05pm.

He is accused of trying to break into the property.

Campaigner horrified at Oban family's cancer ordeal

More money needed to fund research

A CAMPAIGNER calling for more funding for pancreatic cancer research says the care of an Oban woman left screaming in agony is the 'worst she's heard of'.

Maggie Watts, of Scunthorpe, has gathered more than 33,000 signatures on a petition set to be presented to Parliament in April in a bid to dramatically improve the life expectancy of those diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

She has spoken to thousands of people across the UK since losing her husband Kevin to the disease in 2009, and has won the support of the likes of Hugh Grant, Lorraine Kelly, Dawn French and Peter Andre after discovering the survival rate after diagnosis hasn't improved in 40 years.

But she said she is horrified by the experience had by Mabel Braidwood at Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital, after learning her cries of agony were ignored by doctors and nurses for days. NHS Highland has since apologised for failings in delivering

palliative care for Mabel, who died last February.

Mabel's children, Dawn, Zoe and Matt, have called on NHS Highland to make sure there is no repeat, but Maggie says their case is an indicator as to why more research is urgently needed.

'Zoe's mum's case sounded horrendous,' she said. 'I've heard nothing to the extent her family went through. I've heard terrible stories of people who lost loved ones but I don't know anyone personally who suffered to this extent. I feel really sorry about that.'

Without very early diagnosis, most cases of pancreatic cancer are incurable - and Maggie says that is because of the lack of knowledge of the condition. 'I think [Mabel's] case highlights the difficulties with pancreatic cancer and while it is horrendous, people are speaking about it. Hopefully as many as possible will sign this petition. 'It is a disease that knows no boundaries and can affect all of us, regardless of age or health.

Twenty-two people die a day as a result.'

She launched the Hope is Contagious petition with Coronation Street actress Julie Hesmondhalgh, whose character in the soap, Hayley Cropper, took her life after being diagnosed with the condition. It requires 100,000 signatures by April 8 to go before the UK Government for consideration.

Mabel Braidwood's daughter Zoe Gillies, is supporting the petition. She said: 'We have had a lot of messages of support since *The Oban Times* published our story and I'd ask everyone to sign this petition.'

'There's a controversial advert where people say they wish they had another cancer, but pancreatic cancer is so cruel and we know so little so it's almost untreatable. 'We need 100,000 signatures on this petition to help save lives.'

For more information on the campaign and to sign the petition, visit the website at hopeiscontagious.info.

Suspended council staff have been paid £270,000

ARGYLL and Bute Council has paid out nearly £270,000 to suspended staff since April 2011, according to figures obtained by *The Oban Times*.

Many employees have been suspended for up to a year despite guidelines recommending any such periods be kept as short as possible.

One employee was paid £38,650.98 between April 2011 and 2012 while another - understood to be Jo Smith, the former communications manager suspended amidst false spying accusations - was paid £24,766.42 over six months.

Six staff currently removed from work have already been paid £28,285 between them. A total of £158,759.28 has been paid out to staff suspended since 2012, while staff have been paid for more than 4,000 days off while suspended since 2011.

By NEIL JOHNSTON

In total £265,866.78 has been paid out to 43 workers removed from work between April 2011 and January this year.

Nine people were dismissed in the same period.

The vast majority of suspensions were for longer than 10 working days.

Brief
The authority's own guidelines are based on the current Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service code of practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures, which states suspension should be as brief as possible.

It recommends: 'Suspension with pay should only be imposed after careful consideration and should be reviewed to ensure it is not unnecessarily protracted.'

All suspensions should be kept under consideration, according to the guide.

Argyll and Bute's own disciplinary procedure states that any decision to remove an employee from duty 'will be reviewed after a period of 10 working days by the officer authorising the temporary removal from duty, and at similar regular intervals thereafter.'

A council spokesman said: 'There is no basis, from the information provided, on which to draw an inference that the council has not acted properly in dealing expeditiously with such cases.'

Investigations
'The council is committed to dealing properly with any such investigations and this requires that due process is followed. 'This can take, in complex matters, some time to complete.'



Flight Sergeant Ryan Cook and graphic designer Mark Gowdie with the new crest design. 16_09crest01

New crest brings Oban corps into 21st century

THE OBAN High School's Air Training Corp has flown into the 21st century with a new crest made by a father and son design team in the town.

Flight Sergeant Ryan Cook set about creating a new crest for the squadron's 40th anniversary after discovering the existing banner had been drawn on sheet metal in the mid 1980s.

He enlisted the help of graphic designer Mark Gowdie, of Digital Kangaroo, and Mark's father, former high school art teacher

Ian, who re-created the original design in a more modern style.

Ryan said: 'Since it is our 40th anniversary year, I wanted to modernise the crest.'

'I think the job Mark and Ian have done is awesome. It has serious impact and I like the prominence of the motto: Fear s'an Iar (Best in the West).'

The Oban High School squadron lived up to its motto last year by winning the title of best squadron in the Highland region.

Man guilty of indecently assaulting young girl

A MAN described as a 'bullying, manipulative, dangerous paedophile' at Oban Sheriff Court has been found guilty of indecently assaulting a young girl.

Stanley Jeffery, aged 64, had denied three charges of lewd, and libidinous practices and one charge of indecent assault but last Friday a jury found him guilty of all four.

His victims included a young girl and two women at two locations in the Lorn area between January 1, 2003 and December 6, 2010.

Summing up for the prosecution last Thursday, day four of the trial, procurator fiscal Eoin McGinty said Jeffery was a 'bullying, manipulative, dangerous paedophile'.

But the following day Sheriff Douglas Small, while charging the jury, told them to disregard any mention of paedophilia. 'You have to disregard the fiscal's emotional language and in particular the word

'paedophile', he said. 'It is not your job to be swayed by emotional epithets. You must consider the facts and nothing else.'

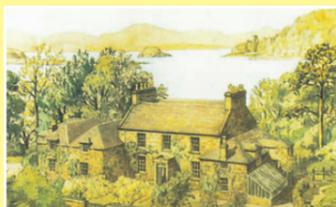
As the jury returned the guilty verdicts, three by unanimous decision, there were emotional scenes among the public gallery. At the start of the trial last week the court heard that the girl wrote a letter, detailing what had been done to her, and left it where her father could find it.

Four years later, she stood in the witness box at Oban Sheriff Court and told the jury those details.

Jeffery, whose address was given in court as 49 Lorn Road, Dunbeg, declined to go into the witness box to give evidence. The one witness who gave evidence for the defence was his wife, who pointed out that if she believed him guilty, then she would not have been there.

Sentence was deferred until April 1 for background reports.

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Penne picante	£6.00
Chicken penne picante	£6.00
Seafood taglieri	£6.00
Papardelle olive garden	£6.00
Haggis & pork meatballs	£6.00
Cannelloni	£6.00
Spinach & ricotta cannelloni	£6.00
PIZZAS - 10"	
Margherita	£4.50
New Mexico	£4.50
Bolognese	£4.50
Pepperoni	£4.50
Hawaiian	£4.50
Mushroom & garlic	£4.50
Spinach & ricotta	£4.50
Smoked salmon	£5.50
Mediterranean	£5.50
Three cheeses	£5.50

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Woman fined £300 after making threat in court

A WOMAN who threatened to have someone 'done in' while in Oban Sheriff Court found herself back in court the next day, but in the dock.

Susannah McCuish, aged 36, of 5 Combie Court, Oban, admitted acting in a threatening and abusive manner and uttering threats in Oban Sheriff Court on February 18.

McCuish had been in the court when a member of her family had been remanded in custody; as she was leaving the court she said of the complainant in the case: 'I'm getting her f****ng done in, she's getting it.'

Jane Thomson, representing McCuish, said her client was under a lot of pressure at home: 'She realises how stupid she has been. It was said in the heat of the moment.' Fining McCuish £300 Sheriff Douglas Small said: 'This has to be taken seriously. A threat was made within the confines of the court.'

Drink driver in dock

'I JUST absolutely hold my hands up, a total misjudgement' is how a 32-year-old man admitted he was wrong to drink-drive, when he appeared in Oban Sheriff Court.

Scott Brown of 9a Leven Street, Renton, Dumfries, was a joiner working on Mull when he was stopped by police shortly after midnight on February 15, Main Street, Tobermory.

He failed a roadside breath-test and his breathalyser reading was 67; the limit is 35.

Sheriff Douglas Small fined him £300 on Wednesday last week, and disqualified him from driving for 18 months with a four-month discount if he successfully completes a driver rehabilitation course.

Volunteers sought for Oban Britain in Bloom bid

SEEDS of success will be sown in Oban this year, if volunteers can be found to help the town bid for this year's Britain in Bloom competition.

BID4Oban believes the town has real potential to win the competition and is keen to put on a real show of strength to wow the judges.

However, if it is to win this year's competition it has to register the town's interest by April - and the business co-operative is urging as many of the town's green-fingered residents as possible to volunteer and make the town 'bloomin' beautiful'.

BID4Oban manager Nic Jones said: 'Because of the work involved we're looking to set up a sub group to make this happen. We're hoping Oban in Bloom will come on board, but we're still looking for volunteers to come forward and help with the effort. It's a terrific showcase and it does give the town kudos if it does well. We obviously want to be able to apply this year but if we can't get the volunteers in time, we would look towards next year.'

If you'd like to volunteer, phone Shona on 01631 569915 or email shona@bid4oban.co.uk.

Group meets

THE UPPER Achintore Regeneration Group in Fort William will meet in Upper Achintore Primary School on Tuesday at 7pm.

Items on the agenda include environmental and fundraising projects and reports from the community wardens and community safety officer.



Shona Robison MSP hands over the Legacy 2014 plaque to Appin Community Council chairman David Craig as Appin residents of all ages attended the opening of the refurbished Jubilee Bridge. 16_109bridge02

Appin gathers to mark official bridge opening

SPORT Minister Shona Robison MSP has helped to officially open the refurbished 19th century Jubilee Bridge in Appin, during a visit to Oban and Lorn.

Alongside Councillor Elaine Robertson, Ms Robison, who is also Minister for the Commonwealth Games, braved the rain in Appin on Monday to declare the bridge open. The Scottish Government's Legacy 2014 Active Places Fund was a main funder of the project, pledging £66,000 towards the overall cost. Later that day the MSP travelled to Oban, unveiling a plaque at Park Primary School for Game On Scotland, the Commonwealth Games education programme, and visited the outdoor education social enterprise Stramash.

Memory

In Appin, Ms Robison praised the community for raising £10,000 towards the bridge refurbishment, adding: 'It is less than 150 days until the Commonwealth Games and something like this will be a memory of how the games touched different parts of Scotland.'

Further grants for the refurbishment - the fifth since the bridge was built in 1887 - came from Crown Estates (£20,000) and Sustrans (£50,000) and Appin Community Council, as well as high profile donations from HM The Queen and Dame Judy Dench.

Appin construction firm S E Carmichael was praised for completing the project well within the time schedule, despite inclement weather.

There was a large community representation at the opening, including children from Strath of Appin Primary School. David Craig, chairman of Appin Community Council, accepted a plaque commemorating the Legacy Fund grant from Ms Robison.

Dr Iain McNicol welcomed guests and Rev Roderick Campbell gave a dedication before young piper Alan Carmichael led the gathering across the bridge.

Much of the congratulations, however, were reserved for local retired engineer Mike Rayworth, who has led the project over the past four-and-a-half years.

Mr Rayworth said: 'We very much appreciated the funding from the Active Places Fund. We were in the desert before that money came in and, all of a sudden, here we are.'

The Jubilee Bridge was built at a cost of five pounds and five shillings to mark the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria and links the north and south of the village.



Fun-filled holiday at rural centre
Children in Lochaber had a fun filled half term break thanks to a local holiday club. Volunteers at the Rural Education Centre, An Clachan, offered three days of baking, crafts and outdoor activities for children between ages four and eight. 20_109holiday01



Lochaber High pupils took part in Nimble Fingers for their citizenship class.

Pupils put nimble fingers to good use

SERVICE users at a Fort William centre for people with learning disabilities have been teaming up with Lochaber High School pupils to make Valentine's Day themed goodies.

The 'Nimble Fingers' project has been running for the past year at the Montrose Centre in Inverloch, with people producing and selling craft items they make from recycled materials.

The initiative is designed to encourage creativity and forge closer ties between service users with the community.

In the latest project, nine S2-S6 LHS pupils worked with Nimble Fingers as part of their citizenship course. Another group worked in school on other Nimble Fingers activities with the aim of securing the Saltire Award for Volunteering and the SQA Award in Volunteering, which has been supported by Voluntary Action Lochaber. Teacher Lynn McAllister said: 'Through their participation in the Nimble Fingers project improvements have been noted in attendance, motivation, confidence and self-esteem, creative thinking, working together, conversational skills and dealing with other people.'

'The benefits are huge and we are beginning to see the potential that many of the children have.'

Lifeboat rescues stranded collie

PORTRÉE lifeboat went to the rescue of a four-legged casualty on the Isle of Raasay last Wednesday.

Collie dog Jan was with her master John Gillies near Manish Point when she fell over a sea cliff on the northwest tip of the island.

Jan could not get back up the cliff and Mr Gillies could not climb down to get her so he called the lifeboat.

The lifeboat used its inflatable dinghy with crew Brian Wells and George Burns aboard to carry out the rescue.

Mr Burns jumped into the surging tide to pluck Jan from a ledge.

Mr Burns said: 'Mr Gillies made the sensible decision to call the lifeboat rather than try to rescue the dog himself. We have carried out quite a few animal rescues over the years.'

Mr Gillies, who runs 1,600 ewes on his croft at Holoman, told *The Oban Times*: 'We had been going to collect a lamb and Jan was following me down when she went over the edge of a big fissure running up from the sea.'

'One of the guys had to go into the sea to pull her out. I was quite amazed she was unhurt, she fell the height of a two-storey house. She only had a wee graze over her eye.'

'It was the second time she's gone over a cliff and she's broken her leg as well. But she's a great dog and I don't want anything else to happen to her.'

Mr Gillies, 60, previously worked as a shepherd on the Isle of Shuna, Appin, for 21 years.

Morvern Lines

WHO KNOWS how much rain has fallen on Morvern in the past few weeks but if I said several feet I doubt if anyone would argue.

Many fields are waterlogged because of poor drainage and the main roads are running like burns for the want of some basic maintenance.

Bring back the conscientious old farmers and the former county council road-section men - at least they had some pride in their work and were accountable.

Fortunately most properties in the parish are built on hillsides unlike those on the Somerset levels, so no sand bags have been needed yet.

IT SEEMS that the weather was no better in bygone times, long before 'global warming' was ever mentioned.

In 1782 a snowstorm raged across the parish, the like of which had not been seen since records began and when the snow melted it caused extensive flooding.

The snow began to fall on March 7 and lasted many weeks putting paid to the usual spring activities.

One man's ploughing was interrupted and by the time he was able to resume he found that a bird had made a nest inside his horse's collar which he had left hanging on a nearby tree.

Towards the end of November 1868 there was another heavy snowfall creating more flooding.

The River Aline overflowed and flooded a cottage in the field beyond Rose Cottage, which the occupants had to abandon for several days.

More importantly, it was recorded that Hector Currie, the postman, or 'rural mail runner' as they were called in these days, on his way from Kingairloch carrying the Morvern mail, had to wait until the water receded to enable him to cross a wooden bridge below Kinlochaline Castle before resuming his journey.

When he eventually arrived in Lochaline it was, according to a diarist, at 'A belated hour, an unusual experience for Hector!'

One of the most violent storms and high tides ever experienced in Scotland, happened on the 28 December 1879.

The first Tay Road Bridge collapsed when a train was passing over it, killing the 74-75 people on board. More than 8,000 trees were reputed to have been blown down between Old Ardtornish Castle and Acharn, and a good deal of structural damage was caused to roads and bridges.

An old cottage at Eignaig, standing about 50 feet above sea level on the Glensanda side of the parish boundary, was flooded. The elderly occupants had to take to the hill where they managed to get shelter under a large rock for the night. The following morning they found their boat lying in the garden up against the house.

AT THE height of the recent storms, the waterfalls along the cliffs behind Ardtornish Castle, known as the 'Morvern Witches', were an interesting spectacle as they were blown upwards and backwards instead of cascading on the woods below.

No less impressive was the area of flat ground below Acharn where the water from the parallel glens, Gleann Dubh and Gleann Geall, form the 'Snag Pool'.

Here one of the most unusual phenomena in the Highlands occurs. Normally the water from the glens discharges into the River Aline, but due to the landform when rivers and burns are in spate they run 'uphill' into nearby Loch Arrianas.

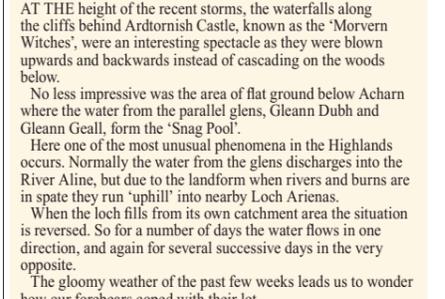
When the loch fills from its own catchment area the situation is reversed. So for a number of days the water flows in one direction, and again for several successive days in the very opposite.

The gloomy weather of the past few weeks leads us to wonder how our forebears coped with their lot.

Imagine, for example, what a shepherd in an isolated glen had to contend with on returning home after a long, cold wet day on the moors.

No hot water, let alone a bath or a shower; a draughty, leaking thatch-roofed cottage with clay floors; a dour peat fire as the only source of heat to dry his clothes against; 10 or more half-naked, starving children and all living in a single room; a few salted herring and a handful of potatoes; emaciated cows and howling dogs under the same roof; hens roosting in the rafters above the humans; no doctor, no contraception; no security of tenure; no unemployment benefit; no old age pension to look forward to; the fear of a visit from the estate factor looking for a higher rent and, finally, the local minister (the very man they trusted) often exhorting them to emigrate because the laird, who paid his stipend, wanted his glen cleared.

Maybe we don't have too much to complain about after all!



Loch Arrianas: water can flow uphill into the loch when burns are in spate.
Iain Thornber iain.thornber@btinternet.com



Overnight A82 road closures

THE A82 will be closed at Pulpit Rock on Loch Lomondside overnight from 10pm to 6am from March 24-28 as contractors continue work to widen the carriageway to two lanes.

Further overnight closures of less than two weeks are planned on dates yet to be advised in April and May.

Work is expected to be completed by early summer.

Residents seek help with stress

SO MANY Lochaber residents sought help at a course to help combat stress that NHS Highland has been forced to lay on extra sessions throughout the year.

Cognitive behaviour therapist Adrian Hart led the course in Fort William over six weeks from the beginning of January and the level of demand caught him by surprise.

He said: 'We simply weren't prepared for the number of people who turned out. An average of 30 people attended over the six evenings, around double the number I had expected.'

'Life is difficult for many people, and it's encouraging that so many recognised by attending the course that they can be helped.'

Men and women of all ages sought help for depression, anxiety, difficulty sleeping, anger problems, low confidence and other life problems. Mr Hart said: 'Some said they wanted to come to the next course, and others said they knew of friends and colleagues that they felt would also benefit from attending.'

Every year NHS Highland's mental health team in Lochaber sees about 300-400 referrals, but the course was designed to support people who chose not to seek help through more conventional NHS routes.

The next six sessions will be held in Kilmallie Hall, Corpach, from 6pm-7.30pm on March 30, May 7, 14 and 28, June 4 and 11.

For more information about stress control or to book a place, call Fort William Health Centre on 01397 709800.

Alternatively, people can simply attend the course without an appointment and are free to take someone along with them.

Police files

A VEHICLE parked at Camesky Road in Caol had extensive damage caused to its paintwork between 4pm on February 15 and 11.45am on February 16.

A GLASS panel was smashed in a front door on Lochaber Road in Kinlochleven between 2pm February 15 and 3pm on February 16.

A VEHICLE parked in Dumbarston Road, Fort William had damage caused to its roof, which appears to have been caused by someone running over the top of it, between 3.30pm and 7.45pm on February 17.

Anyone with knowledge of the incidents is asked to contact local police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Work starts on improving Plock access

WORK has started to improve public access to a scenic area at Kyle of Lochalsh.

Vegetation clearance at The Plock of Kyle has started as part of the £324,316 scheme. Other works involve repairing and managing the viewpoint and approach roads and increasing the size of the car park, scheduled to start at the beginning of April. Much of The Plock has fallen into disuse despite having a fine viewpoint and secluded coastal coves - prompting a local campaign to restore the area as a valuable public asset.

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Drug user jailed for seven months

A KNOWN drug user has been jailed for seven months for failing to co-operate with Oban police officers.

John William Pellow pled guilty last Tuesday to intentionally obstructing police officers in the exercise of their powers pursuant to a Sheriff Intimate Search Warrant.

Hospital

The warrant authorised medical practitioners to carry out specified medical procedures in order to establish whether Pellow, 35, of 20 Ladyloan Gardens, Drumchapel, had controlled drugs within his person, at Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital on February 16 and 17.

Procurator Fiscal Eoin McGinty told the court the warrant had been applied for and granted because officers believed that Pellow had swallowed drugs which had been brought to Oban to sell.

Police searched an address where they found Pellow, another man and a woman with a one-year-old child.

Syringe

'On being searched she had an uncapped syringe, despite the fact there was a child on her knee,' said the fiscal.

The three had a number of plastic bags on the floor prepared for wrapping drugs but none were found and this made the officers believe that Pellow swallowed them.

He was taken to hospital and despite the warrant refused to co-operate, which meant 'standing several officers by his [Pellow's] bed for a couple of days,' added the fiscal.

Pellow's defence agent said that nothing of interest was found.



Park goes bananas for Fairtrade

Park Primary School pupils are going bananas for Fairtrade Fortnight, after Oban supermarket LIDL donated 20 bunches to the school. Pupils Aidan MacDonald and Rosa Comely, both of P3, wrote to the supermarket asking for bananas so they could make treats for pupils and staff. Lid's Duncan Mouat is pictured presenting Aidan and Rosa with their treats on Tuesday. 16.10918d1

Highland-wide crackdown at dog-fouling 'hotspots'

DOG FOULING 'hotspots' in Fort William are among those being targeted in a Highland-wide crack down.

Dog wardens and enforcement officers will be patrolling the play park on Banavie Road and other areas to take enforcement action if owners fail to pick up after their pets.

The Highland Council 'Your dog, Your Mess, Your £40 Fine' campaign is aimed at irresponsible dog owners who allow their dogs to foul in public places. The clean-up drive is part of Keep Scotland Beautiful's Clean up Scotland initiative to make litter and dog

fouling as socially unacceptable as drink driving.

TEC services chairman Councillor Graham Phillips said: 'Almost seven in 10 people rate dog mess as the item on our streets, parks and beaches that most bothered them. Dog mess is unpleasant and a health hazard both to the general public and to grass cutting contractors and council staff tasked with clearing it up.'

Anyone wishing to report instances of dogs being allowed to foul in public places can contact the council on 01349 886603 or emailing recycle@highland.gov.uk.



Fiona Docherty, assistant community works officer, gets the message across in Fort William.

Argyll opts out of islands power group - for now

IT SEEMS unlikely that Argyll's islands will become part of a movement to see more powers delegated to Scotland's islands - despite a plea from the Scottish Secretary.

During a visit to Oban last week, Alistair Carmichael said that, as one of the architects of the Our Islands, Our Future (OIOF) movement, he believes it would be stronger with the involvement of Argyll's isles.

However, fellow Islay-man and Argyll and Bute councillor Robin Currie said joining the movement doesn't hold any obvious advantage for Argyll

- nor did they feel particularly wanted.

Speaking to *The Oban Times* last week, Mr Carmichael said: 'It's not for me to say we must go and work with Argyll and Bute Council and the islands there; if Argyll and Bute Council wants to come to me with a particular agenda for its islands, I'm all ears. My door is always open.'

'From what I see with OIOF, the things that can come will bring us much benefit to the wider Hebrides anyway. It's not something that will happen overnight though - nobody has a monopoly on wisdom.'

'I do think the movement would be stronger [with the Argyll isles].'

But not only did Councillor Currie feel the Argyll isles weren't welcomed into OIOF, he didn't think there would be any real benefit.

He said: 'Last June I put a motion to the council that we should get involved with OIOF because we've got a good number of islands here and we face a number of the same problems as the Western Isles.'

'The council agreed we should try to get involved and myself, Roddy McCuish and [former

director of infrastructure services] Sandy Mactaggart went along to a conference it held last September.'

'But there was no effort whatsoever from it to get us involved. When we were asking to attend, we got a very warm invitation to go but the detail of the agenda wasn't really relevant to us. I think they're missing the big issues. Probably, the best for our future just now is to try to do our own thing.'

However, he said the council may take an interest in getting involved in the future once the agenda has been ironed out.

Providing free meals poses problems for small schools

QUESTIONS have been raised about how a plan to give free meals to pupils will be implemented in the Highlands' smallest schools.

The Scottish government recently announced free school dinners will be offered to all P1-3 children from January next year.

But councillors have been left wondering how this will be carried out in the 10 Highland schools without a catering service in place.

Eigg, Rum, Muck, Invergarry, Inverie and Elgol are amongst those affected. Possible solutions are to transport meals from schools with kitchens or

to arrange a contract with local catering businesses to provide the meals.

Eilean a' Cheò councillor Hamish Fraser expressed concern about Elgol Primary 1 on Skye, which has a current roll of 19 pupils.

He said: 'I have no idea how this is going to work. The school is very small so trying to install the facilities would involve building a new section and that would be very expensive.'

'Meals could be transported from Broadford but that would be a 30-mile round trip so would also be expensive.'

'I think a contract would need to be made with a local caterer.'

'The only other solution would be to pay the money directly to the parents to provide the meals themselves. This is a Scotland-wide directive from the government so something will have to be put in place.'

'These children can't be discriminated against because of the size or location of their school.'

Highlands and Islands MSP and member of the education and culture committee Mary Scanlon said: 'There is no doubt this is going to be challenging particularly in remote, rural areas but I think it's a challenge that can be met.'

'I think the council should look

at local restaurants, cafes or even individuals who could provide the meals to schools, provided they meet nutritional and quality standards.'

'I think the Scottish government will be sympathetic about any extra resources needed to implement this because it's very important that all of the children in P1-3 are provided for.'

Caol and Mallaig councillor Bill Clark said: 'I'm happy to hear that this is going ahead. When it comes to children can you put a price on their health? Children and older people are the ones who need to be provided for and doing that should be the most important thing.'

Got a story for The Oban Times? Call our newsdesks on 01631 568000 01397 703003

Islay affordable homes cheer

THE FIRST steps have been taken to tackle a shortage of affordable homes on Islay, as Argyll and Bute councillors passed an application for 18 affordable units to be built on the island.

Councillors unanimously agreed to the proposal, submitted by housing developer Tigh Grian Limited, for the units

at Port Ellen at last Wednesday's planning meeting.

The development will include a semi-detached block of four one-bedroom flats, two terraced blocks of four two-bedroom houses, one semi-detached block of two-bedroom houses, and two semi-detached blocks of four three-bedroom houses.

The planning application

included a new vehicle access, parking and a wider footpath to the front of the development.

The housing initiative is part of a larger plan for the area of land to the south east of Imerilven Cottage. The site has been earmarked for the development of 46 residential units on Argyll and Bute Council's Local Development Plan.

Morvern community leads the way with hydro scheme

THE 400-strong community of Morvern has become the first in the country to invest its own money in a hydro scheme on land managed by Forestry Commission Scotland.

The move will provide the community with additional regular income from the hydro project on a burn west of Lochaline is switched on later this year.

The 469kW scheme on the Abhainn Shalachain could generate enough electricity to run 350 homes.

Morvern Community Development Company (MCDC) and Morvern Community Trust have invested £30,000 in the development.

It is hoped other communities will follow their lead and take a stake in similar renewable schemes on the national forest estate.

MCDC director Angus Robertson, a hydropower enthusiast, said: 'Whilst the community would have preferred to have a larger sum to invest into this project, it is delighted to be involved and will give the project all its support though the construction phase and into the future.'

'Morvern Community Development Company is grateful to Forestry Commission Scotland and all other Scottish Government agencies for their help in

pushing this ground-breaking project through.'

Returns on the investment - expected to be in the region of 10 per cent annually - will be topped up by almost £2,500 each year through Highland Council's policy of seeking £5,000 per megawatt community benefit payment from renewable energy developers.

The Morvern groups have also been given a five per cent free stake in the project and will use this to obtain additional income.

The hydro scheme is one of a number being developed by Perth-based Green Highland Renewables and other energy

companies on land managed by Forestry Commission Scotland.

Welcoming the news, environment minister Paul Wheelhouse said: 'As hydro schemes start to progress in other parts of the country, we are confident that the move taken by the Morvern community will act as a catalyst for others to take up similar opportunities.'

Ian Cartwright, managing director at Green Highland Renewables, said: 'Small scale hydro schemes offer good long-term returns for investors and we are very pleased this project will be completed with direct investment from the community.'

Oban restaurant here to stay

AN OBAN restaurant has been forced to ward off rumours it has been bought by a national pub chain - despite competing with the business.

Colin and Joan Felgate own the Olive Garden restaurant on Oban's Railway Pier, a business which they've run since May 2011 with the help of daughter Stacey.

However, in recent weeks they've been told by customers that they have sold up, having rejected numerous bids for the business.

'Nothing could be further from the truth,' said Colin, who recently introduced a new tapas menu to compete with the Wetherspoon pub that opened next door.

'It's getting ridiculous. Three or four people a day say we've sold out.'

Such is the power of the Oban rumour mill, that even the Mediterranean restaurant's staff have told their employers they've sold up.

'It's unsettling for the staff,' said Joan. 'We're very much here to stay and have no intention of selling up.'

Benefited

However, the business has benefited from the opening of the JD Wetherspoon pub, with many diners opting to visit next door in search of food cooked to order.

Joan added: 'People are seeking us out more and that's been great for us.'

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BARRA

BARRA Airport is once again in the running to be named the best approach in the world. Private Fly has listed the beach runway as one of the most exhilarating aviation experiences to be found anywhere, listing it alongside the likes of Cape Town, Gibraltar, and Hong Kong's airports. Barra's approach, which won the award following a public vote in 2012, is described by the website as: 'Wonderful views, a very challenging approach and the unique experience of landing on a beach.' You can vote for the airport by logging on to privatefly.com and following the link for the Airport Approaches Poll 2014.

GLENDALE

GLENDALE Community Council received a £34,000 grant to build a new wall for the village cemetery. The cash from Heritage Lottery Fund will not only fund the wall but will allow locals in the northwest Skye village to participate in constructing the wall and achieve a dry stone walling certificate. Bilingual workshops will also be on offer to research and record the history of Glendale Cemetery. Findings will be available as a permanent educational resource for the village. Community council member Stuart Edinburgh said: 'We are delighted to have received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund. The project will be a lasting legacy for generations to come as well as providing an opportunity to maintain rural skills while learning more about our local heritage.'

KILLIN

THE KILLIN and Ardeonaig Trust will hold its AGM in the Killin Hotel on March 15 from 11am-2pm, where there will also be an update on its projects. Among those subjects to be discussed will be the Old Mill, the Thrift Shop, Breadalbane Park, the sports and leisure club and the feasibility study into a public toilet for Killin. Chairman of the trust, Willie Angus, said: 'You are invited to come along, join or renew your membership details, and become involved in the discussions. This is your opportunity to help KAT make Killin a better place. Soup and sandwiches will be served.'



Nurse Julie Hitchcox receives one of the garments from members of the Dalavich Knitting Circle.

Dalavich knitters deliver on baby clothes

THE LADIES of Dalavich Knitting Circle have handed over the results of their labours to help premature babies - and are now looking for a new cause to support. Julie Hitchcox, a nurse at Queen's Medical Centre Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit in Nottingham, picked up garments knitted by the ladies, who meet every Tuesday in the Dalavich Village Shop.

Since October 2013, they have been knitting clothes for premature babies and Julie collected the garments when she came to visit her friend, group member Maggie Kingsbury-Smith. The ladies are now looking for other charities who would benefit from hand-knitted goods. Ms Kingsbury-Smith said: 'We enjoy

our regular knitting sessions and are often joined by visitors who send their work up to us, which is lovely. We have knitted garments for babies in Africa, garments for premature babies and are now looking for another charity to support. It could be another neo-natal unit, a children's home or anything really. We will keep knitting, it's just nice to knit for a good cause.'



Ivor Souter, Highland Council's rural and community transport officer presents Dubhghlas Irbhinn with his certificate.

Dubh on course to deliver training

A KINLOCHLEVEN man has received a MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) training certificate after completing a four-day course in Edinburgh. Dubhghlas (Dubh) Irbhinn, chairman of Loch Leven Community Minibus Association, can now assess and issue certificates from the Community Transport Association. This will enable him to conduct courses in Lochaber and therefore save people from having to incur lengthy

KINLOCHLEVEN

journeys to attend courses. MiDAS provides both classroom-based theory training and an on-road driving assessment, with additional training on passenger assistance and the use of wheelchair accessible vehicles. Anyone interested in undergoing training can contact the Lochleven Community Minibus Association on 07776266720.

BALLACHULISH

BALLACHULISH Village Hall will be filled with music on Tuesday night as an opera cabaret group is set to pay a visit. Four singers and a pianist will entertain the audience with excerpts of various musicals as part of Opera Highlights. The show begins at 7.30pm and tickets can be purchased by calling Ballachulish visitor centre on 01855 811866.

CRIANLARICH

A BID to upgrade Lower Station Yard in Crianlarich has received a £400 boost - thanks to the safety of staff working on the bypass road. Contractors RJ Macleod and Grontmij had an accident free December and January, which would normally result in a bonus to be shared among workers. However, they voted instead to donate the cash to the organisation aiming to make the village more attractive to tourists once the route opens, Crianlarich into Action (CiA). The money, £200 from each contractor, will go towards buying picnic benches for Lower Station Yard, which is being transformed by the community. Alan Smailes, who is helping co-ordinate the CiA project, said: 'It's great to think that the money would normally have been divided between the staff for being safe, but they've decided instead to give it to the community.' Meanwhile, the Crianlarich bypass is due to be complete in the summer, with a temporary underpass to be built for the West Highland Way link path to Crianlarich in April.



Thea Fraser, left, and Cara Davie, both P6, toured BSW sawmill with their Banavie classmates. 20_f09banavie02

Pupils enjoy sawmill visit

BANAVIE Primary School pupils recently paid a visit to their local sawmill. The P6/7 class toured the BSW Timber factory as part of a project on employment and tourism in Lochaber.

BANAVIE

The youngsters learned about the company's history and the machinery in the Corpach sawmill.

crossing.' The community council is to speak to BEAR Scotland, which maintains the A85 trunk road on behalf of Transport Scotland, about making the crossing, near the school, more visible.

Callander to train young people in hospitality, the primary labour driver in Callander. He went on to share his view for Scotland, suggesting he wanted to see a country that puts young people at the heart of policy making; ensures Scotland is the best place to be young and grow up and recognises the value of youthwork. While picking up on the First Minister's point that it was only through partnerships and investment in preventative spend that the third sector can realise its dreams, he said: 'The Community Learning Development sector is predicated on empowerment and, as a sector, we need to give our young people the best information and highest level of support to enable them to critically evaluate the choices for the tough decision presented to them.'

KILCHOAN

KILCHOAN archaeology enthusiasts are coming closer to finding answers about three mysterious stone circles. The first was found on Ardnamurchan Estate last month and another two have been discovered on the land, around four miles away between Loch Muile and Camas nan Geall. Amateur group Ardnamurchan Community Archaeology found one of the rings to be 10 metres wide, with a much smaller one nearby. They now believe the smallest to be the remains of huts people lived in around 2,000 years ago, with the larger perhaps used as a communal meeting hut. Jon Haylett, a member of Ardnamurchan Community Archaeology, said: 'The first hut could have been from a completely different group of people, or it could be the same community that have moved. We don't believe they were built to last a long time because the people around at that time travelled a lot for fishing and hunting.' It is hoped professional archaeologists will visit in the summer to carry out an excavation on the findings. Mr Haylett said: 'Only in the last couple of years have we realised what a goldmine we're sitting on here but the danger for us as amateurs is that we start digging about, find something really good and we wreck it. We're hoping to have a proper excavation if someone is willing to give up some time.'

CALLANDER

CALLANDER Youth Project Trust (CYPT) has received a significant boost after sharing the stage with Scotland's First Minister during a national conference last week. Project manager Chris Martin was on the panel for The Gathering 2014, the 10th anniversary of the event, held at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre in Glasgow last Wednesday and Thursday. More than 3,000 people attended the event over its two days, which saw Chris join Alex Salmond and three other representatives from the third sector to debate the implications of independence for voluntary organisations. During his appearance on the panel, Chris introduced the CYPT project, one of Inspiring Scotland's 14:19 Fundventures, and explained that CYPT was based in rural Stirling and had recently bought the former Bridgend House Hotel in



Ally receives his kit from Sea Breezes Restaurant chef Lauchie Low as Cancer Research UK representatives Alistair Nicolson and Roddy Beaton look on.

Skye athlete welcomes business boost

SKYE athlete Ally K Macpherson has won more sponsorship for his upcoming challenge to run 125 miles round the island in aid of Cancer Research UK. The accordion player and CalMac worker will begin the marathon feat on April 11 and is being backed by Portree businesses Sea Breezes Restaurant and Portree Filling Station, which have funded the jackets, t-shirts and vests to be worn by Ally K and his support team during the event. Portree man Ally said: 'It's fantastic that two

local businesses have come on-board to help with my challenge for such a great cause. 'The kit will play an essential part in the build up to the event and during the challenge itself. I would like to personally thank Neil MacNeil from Sea Breezes Restaurant and John and Donnie Matheson from Portree Filling Station for their generosity.' Ally aims to complete the challenge in under 35 hours. Anyone wishing to donate at www.facebook.com/AllyKRunsSkye.

TAYNUILT

SCOTTISH crumpets and girdle scones were the order of the day as Taynuilt SWRI members met on February 12 in the village hall. President Jessie Servant opened the meeting and welcomed all the members. Demonstrations for the evening were led by Alison and Ellen MacCorquodale, who offered tips and advice and allowed the ladies to sample some lovely baking. A vote of thanks was given by Mary Morse. Tea was provided by hostesses Mary Morse and Tracey Sage. Competitions: Mini Decorated Cake - 1 Alice Campbell; 2 Tracey Sage. Tote Bag - 1 Jean White.



Lohcarron youngsters turn attention to hatchery. Pupils from Lochcarron Primary School visited a Scottish Sea Farm hatchery. The children were given a tour of Coudoran Hatchery in Kishorn, Wester Ross, with site manager Niall McCallum and learned about the work that goes on there.

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Did you know that ScotRail runs an award-winning bike hire scheme alongside Fort William-based Nevis Cycles?

The West Highland cycle shop offers 10% cycle hire discount to ScotRail ticket holders and 15% discounts to people using the Freedom of Scotland Travelpass.

To showcase this fantastic offer, the train operator and bike shop have teamed up with The Oban Times to offer readers the chance to win:

- A day's free bike hire for two adults from Nevis Cycles
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T&Cs ScotRail allows bikes on board all its trains free of charge, subject to space and, in some cases, a cycle reservation. You can now also book your cycle online as part of your ticket purchase. Nevis Cycles opens at 9am and closes 5.30pm (Monday to Saturday). Bikes must be collected and returned within these times. Must be claimed by December 31, 2014. The prize is as stated. No cash alternative. The Editor's decision is final. Photocopied entries will not be accepted. The winner will be asked to take part in publicity and may appear in a Wyvex Media publication and website. This competition is not open to Wyvex Media and associated company employees and their families. The prize is not transferable or redeemable for cash equivalent.

PORT ELLEN

A LARGER cafe and new changing facilities are part of plans to extend the existing pavilion at Port Ellen Playing Fields, Islay.

The extension, which will include a storage room and community room, will wrap around the existing pavilion in a U shape.

An application by Port Ellen Playing Fields Association for the extension was passed by Argyll and Bute councillors at a recent planning meeting.

TIREE

A VOTE will be held at the end of next month to see if a recently closed shop on Tiree should be taken into community ownership.

I and F MacLeod closed last month after the owners, Iain and Fiona, failed to find a buyer for the popular island shop.

Now the Tiree Community Development Trust (TCDT) will ask residents on March 29 if they should progress with moves to purchase the Crossapol retailer via a new community shop group.

Asked if it was becoming more likely the shop would come into community ownership, finance and governance manager at TCDT, Andy Wright said: 'The vote will determine everything so until then it's hard to say. If there is a no vote then the group will disband and take no further action. If yes, they will move into the next stage which is to work on a detailed business plan.'

At an open day last year, 90 per cent of those who voted said yes to investigating the possibility of taking the shop into community ownership.

Ahead of the vote, every household on Tiree will receive a booklet to provide information on the options.

Anyone with questions or requiring further information should contact Jackie at the Trust on 01879 220 074 or email jackie@tireetrust.org.uk.

TIREE'S community wind turbine is turning again - but a cabling problem is limiting its output.

Tilley was knocked out of action last year after a part failure but difficulty sourcing a replacement meant it wasn't fixed until this month.

However, since the failure of the turbine, the sub-sea connector linking the island with the mainland has failed, restricting the maximum output of the turbine to just 50Kw - 850Kw short of its peak. Briggs Marine have a team on the island waiting to replace the sub-sea cable with one of a greater capacity when there is a three or four-day weather window.

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Work to start on Kilbeg development

THE FIRST phase of an ambitious project to create a new village conference centre, sports facilities and education hub in south Skye will get underway on Monday with an official sod-cutting ceremony.

The initial £6.7 million works of the Kilbeg Village development will provide Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (SMO) with a new administration, research, and enterprise building.

Development infrastructure and services will also be put in on the first four acres of the site next Arainn Ostaig campus, the original home of the Gaelic college.

Construction is expected to take 15 months.

Phase two will see a 40-bedroom conference and training centre, together with new college and community sports facilities by 2018. Up to 75 new homes will be built over the 20-year time frame of the development.

Distillery

rumours sweep Isle of Raasay

RUMOURS have been sweeping the Isle of Raasay that a local hotel is to become a whisky distillery.

Borodale House, formerly the Isle of Raasay Hotel, has been boarded up for 18 months after owner Jane Gatens closed the doors. According to local sources, a prospective buyer viewed the two-storey property and revealed the distillery plan.

However, the premises was still up for sale on the selling agents' website for offers over £250,000 on Tuesday night.

One resident said: 'We are all keeping our fingers crossed.'

Ms Gatens could not be contacted for comment.

Scotland call up for Spean darts player

A LOCHABER darts player is to represent his country for the first time at the upcoming BDO British Internationals.

Bryan Whyte, from Spean Bridge, will compete against the best from England, Wales and Northern Ireland at The Venue, Halifax from April 4-6.

Whyte, 32, is a member of the Highland team and regularly plays at the Trade Winds bar in Corpach.



Lochyside primary pupils focus on Fairtrade

Lochyside Primary School pupils spent an afternoon learning about Fairtrade food in local shops. Neil MacLeod, store manager of the Co-op, Caol, showed the children some of the products they sell and how it helps workers around the world earn a decent wage. Back from left: Tegan Dennison P6, MacFauld P7, Co-op manager Neil MacLeod and Kiah Ferreira P6. Front from left: Ellie McLellan P5, Alan McLaughlin P5, Dylan Monk P7 and Cody McSorley P7.

Woman injured in Ben Nevis avalanche

AN AVALANCHE swept a French couple 1,000 down Ben Nevis on Monday, leaving a woman with serious head injuries.

Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team found the pair on the Brenva face after a five-hour search.

Both were airlifted out by the Royal Navy Rescue 177 helicopter to a waiting ambulance then taken to Belford Hospital.

The woman, thought to be in her mid-40s, was transferred to a Glasgow hospital on Monday night.

John Stevenson, Lochaber Mountain Rescue leader, said: 'We think the couple were out walking in the area when they were avalanched. The woman had a major head injury so we had to get them off the mountain as quickly as possible.'

'Thanks to all team members and R177 for an efficient package and speedy extrication as time is very much of the essence in these scenarios.'

Meanwhile, a man fell 50 metres on Nam Na Gulairm in Glencoe while walking with a party of four around 3.30pm the same day.

The Rescue 177 helicopter, still in the area from the Ben Nevis rescue, picked him up.

John Grieve, Glencoe Mountain Rescue team leader said: 'Because he was unconscious for a short period it was treated as a serious injury but the reports were good by the time he got to the ambulance.'

Elsewhere, Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team risked life and limb on Saturday in a 10-hour attempt to save a climber who fell through a cornice on Beinn Eibhinn, north of Corour.

The team themselves fell through cornices four times and were avalanched whilst navigating whiteout conditions with extremely poor visibility but eventually found the mountaineer uninjured.

John Stevenson said: 'The conditions were just awful, the weather was really bad. You could barely see in front of you, everything was just white, it was like walking around inside a ping-pong ball.'



Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team stretcher out the injured woman from Ben Nevis on Monday.

Supermarket and home store lined up for retail park

A NEW supermarket and home discount store have been confirmed as tenants for a Fort William site if plans are approved.

EXCLUSIVE REPORT by EMMA CRICHTON rhaddock@obantimes.co.uk

Aldi and Home Bargains could be built at North Road as part of a mixed use, five unit retail park if Highland Council gives permission to Morbaine Ltd property developers.

The company already has approval for a 'non food' outlet at North Road but needs further authorisation to build food stores on the land. A planning application to be lodged in coming months also includes a fast food unit which has not yet been named, although KFC has expressed interest.

It is thought a retail park on the five-acre brownfield site, between the Rio Tinto Alcan junction and the Ben Nevis Motors Ford car showroom on the A82, would bring 150 permanent jobs and £10m of investment to the area, as well as further jobs during the construction period.

Morbaine director Alex Brodie said: 'This development is an exciting opportunity for Fort William which will deliver considerable investment in the town, a greater range of shopping and create 150 permanent jobs.'

'I am delighted that we can already announce that Aldi and Home Bargains will be tenants of the retail park.'

'We are currently in talks with a number of other major retailers to fill the remaining two units.'

Plans will be displayed at a public exhibition in the Nevis Centre on Friday March 7 from 2-7.30pm and Saturday March 8 from 10am-2.30pm where the project team will be available to answer questions.

The move is the latest in a protracted series of negotiations between Highland Council and Morbaine Ltd dating back to 2007.

Previously an application for 'bulky goods' and 'non food' developments was accepted but the planning committee rejected a bid for food outlet in the retail park on the A82.

Currently the company has permission for around 55,000 sqft of retail space, half for general retail and half for bulky goods such as furniture and DIY products.

The latest development comes after Tesco put its plans for a supermarket on the Blar Mhor outside Fort William on hold.

Mr Brodie said: 'That has had an indirect impact on our plans. We have had a bumpy road with this site for many years. There's a lot of policy and politics involved and the but now we have a better market for the store.'

Fort William and Ardnamurchan councillor Thomas MacLennan said: 'It's always interesting to hear of future developments in Lochaber and I look forward to seeing the plans.'

'Obviously any planning application will be subject to a full report by a planning officer.'

Green light for Mallaig harbour plan

MALLAIG'S former village hall is to be demolished and replaced with marina facilities and a jetty.

Sir Cameron Mackintosh's development at East Bay will comprise a main building with toilets, showers and laundry services with a retail unit and two residential flats.

A second 'craannog' building will have mixed use units, potentially for a ticket office and take away hot drinks area.

The south planning applications committee unanimously approved the £750,000 plan on Tuesday.

Councillor Thomas Prag said: 'Can we have one of these built for every coastal community please?'

However, Councillor Allan Duffy raised concerns over the loss of disabled parking bays. A decision on relocating the spaces will be decided at a future meeting. When 66-year-old theatre impresario Sir Cameron revealed his plans to Mallaig residents last year he faced a backlash from local food outlets fearing a loss of trade. Some residents also complained about a loss of car parking and sea views. But a social networking campaign in support of the development gathered 700 members in its first few days.

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Wayfarer sails	MECHANICAL/ELECTRICAL	4 box section roofing sheets 3m x 1.1m, unused
Plastic Yak dinghy with oars	High lift 1000kg pallet truck, manual/hydraulic	Flymo garden vac
Fast canoe with paddles	4 x 4 Honda power barrow 250kg	Rolls/short lengths Rylock and chicken wire
Several lifejackets, gas and manual, also kids sizes	Honda powered fail mower, 4 ft cut (good, only needs assembly)	Misc lengths/idsa plastic plumbing pipes
Plastimo oars: 1 pair 2m70, 1 pair 2m25	Tirfor type winch, 3000 (monster) with rope, good	Roll yellow electrical hazard tape
Outboard fuel tank 12.5 litres	Misc. circular saw/trimmer discs	Heavy duty tree stop
Buoys - lots, small, medium and enormous	12 volt winch plus remote controls	Box 100 'Calyppo' stone marble wall tiles, 10 x 10cm
Buster 15 ft aluminium leisure/work/fishing boat 30hp Yam plus Malta aux	Small Stuart Turner pump	33 'Fired Earth' terra cotta tiles, 22 x 22 cm, new
2 x small anchors with chain	2 x log rotating levers	Flatbrow, handmade by Hungarian bowyer, with selection of arrows
Boarding ladder	Sack truck	Various lengths sarking
Various fenders	2 x small gate valves and fittings	
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Opening of new joint police and ambulance station

POLICE Scotland Chief Constable Sir Stephen House and Scottish Ambulance Service chairman David Garbutt will open the new joint £4.7 million police and ambulance station at Fort William today (Thursday). The state-of-the-art premises on the Blar Mor next to the A830 replaces the former police station on Fort William High Street and the old Scottish Ambulance Service base at Inverlochry. Scottish Police Authority chairman Vic Emery and former convener of the Northern Joint Police Board will also attend the ceremony. The site was chosen for fast access to the main road to improve response times.

Curtain up on opera cabaret

BALLACHULISH Village Hall will be filled with music on Tuesday night as an opera cabaret group is set to pay a visit. Four singers and a pianist will entertain the audience with excerpts of various musicals as part of Opera Highlights. The show begins at 7.30pm and tickets can be purchased by calling Ballachulish visitor centre on 01855 811866.

Work starts on raising road

WORK to raise the level of a flood-prone croft road in west Lochaber will get underway next month. The £250,000 upgrade on the single-track Moss Road in Acharacle will see several low lying sections next Loch Shiel raised to improve access. Access by car is currently impossible at times of flooding, when residents in houses on the north side of the loch are cut off. Acharacle Community Council chairman Hugh MacPherson said the improvement was designed to keep the road open during a 'normal' flood. Residents had objected to raising the road higher to cater for a once in 100 years event because of the visual impact. The project, being carried out by Fort William-based Fion Construction Limited, will take 18 weeks to complete.

Shock fuel poverty figures

MOST Western Isles households are in fuel poverty, according to a shock draft report. Local energy advisory service TEAS found 70 per cent of households are having to spend at least 10 per cent of their income on heating costs. The survey, which was commissioned by the comhairle, also revealed that 21 per cent of households were in extreme fuel poverty through spending 20 per cent or more on heating. The comparative figures for Scotland are 28 per cent and eight per cent, respectively.

Lifeboat called out twice in four days

KYLE of Lochalsh lifeboat launched on Monday afternoon to aid a fishing vessel drifting towards rocks in Broadford Bay. The 20-metre boat Howling Gale had sent a Mayday call after losing all power from engine failure. The lifeboat arrived on scene within minutes to find the stricken vessel, which had one person on board, only 200 metres from the shore and drifting rapidly with the tide. The crew took the vessel under tow back to Broadford pier before returning to the lifeboat station in Kyle. The callout was the second in four days for the Kyle crew after they responded to reports of a drifting boat off Plockton on Thursday afternoon. The small unmanned dinghy had broken free from the pontoons in Plockton.



Highland Hospice Fort William shop manager Maggie Wilson, left, and staff members Betty Campbell, Clare Gray and Pat Ferguson receive the £1,000 cheque from artist Brian Mullins, third left, and Framing Place owner Alan Kinnear. 20_109painting01

Spitfire painting raises £1,000 for Highland Hospice

A STUNNING painting created to commemorate a young Canadian pilot killed when his fighter plane crashed into a mountain near Fort William has raised £1,000 for Highland Hospice. 'Spitfire Sunrise, in Memoriam 16th May 1943', was put up for auction by Lochaber artist Brian Mullins to raise funds for the charity after his wife Vicki recovered from breast cancer. Flying officer John Donald MacDonell died when his plane exploded in a fireball on Meall an t-Suidhe below Ben Nevis during a wartime training mission on that day. A monument was unveiled in his honour in Glen Nevis last year. Mr Mullins' artwork depicts the 21-year-old pilot's Spitfire flying over Ben Nevis in his under a low morning sun.

The charity gift idea was born after discussions between the artist and Allan Kinnear, who framed the painting at The Framing Place on High Street. After *The Oban Times* ran the story, a Mallaig man walked into the shop and immediately agreed to buy the £1,000 asking price. The mystery buyer wishes to remain anonymous. Mr Mullins, 62, chose Highland Hospice after previously walking round the entire Morvern coastline in aid of Maggie's Centres. The ex-RAF pilot is delighted the painting will remain in Lochaber and that a good cause would benefit from its sale. He told *The Oban Times*: 'It has done what it meant to do - raise money for Highland Hospice while commemorating the death of the young Canadian pilot. 'I wanted to give the money to a local charity because the money is going to stay in the Highlands.' Highland Hospice Fort William shop manager Maggie Wilson said: 'We are very grateful for this generous donation. 'Part of the old hospice in Inverness is going to be knocked down and they building a new hospice with individual rooms to give people a better quality of time with their families. This money will go towards that.'

Head teacher heads home after 15 years

By EMMA CRICHTON fort@obantimes.co.uk

KINLOCHLEVEN High School's headmaster is to leave after 15 years in Lochaber. John McGilp has taught at Lochaber, Ardnamurchan and presently Kinlochleven high schools but has now decided to return to his home town of Kilmara, East Ayrshire to be close to his family. Mr McGilp spent the last seven years as head teacher, apart from a short stint as acting head in Thurso in 2012, but will move to Coltness High School in Wishaw, North Lanarkshire, some time after Easter. The 39-year-old - who at 33 became Scotland's youngest head when he took up the post in 2007 - said: 'I'll be sad to go but it's definitely time for me to go back down the road and spend time with my family. 'Lochaber has become a home away from home, I've got used to all the friendly faces over the years. As for Kinlochleven, I've got great staff and a good relationship with the parent body. I'll especially miss the kids, I already missed them a lot when I was in Thurso.' Mr McGilp joined Lochaber High School as a maths teacher



John McGilp is to leave Kinlochleven High School after seven years as headmaster.

in 1998, where he also spent some time as a guidance teacher before moving to Ardnamurchan in 2006. It was in 2007 he moved to Kinlochleven to fill the headmaster post. Stewart Borland, chairman of the parent council said: 'John is an absolutely brilliant teacher who will be sadly missed. The hours that he puts in to doing things for the school are exceptional and it will be a real loss to the community as well as the school. He is much loved by the staff, parents and kids.' The announcement has raised concerns among parents about a replacement after chemistry teacher Gordon Milne, acting head during Mr McGilp's time in Thurso, was left to juggle headmaster's duties with teaching chemistry and sourcing temporary staff cover in the head's absence. Furious parents accused Highland Council of 'abandoning' the school and now fear a repeat performance. Mr Borland said: 'Gordon was thrust into acting head when he wasn't even a full deputy. The kids technically didn't have a chemistry teacher and there were pupils seriously affected by that. 'Some girls didn't get the grade they needed for Higher Chemistry so they either didn't get into the university they wanted or didn't get in at all. 'Highland Council did nothing to help last time and the parent council is extremely concerned about what's going to be put in place now. There's big shoes to fill and nobody I can see that can fill them.' Norma Young, Highland Council's area education manager for the west said: 'John McGilp will be required to give eight weeks notice and during that time the council will be advertising his post and looking to secure his replacement as soon as possible.'

Business leader warns 'no' vote

A 'FAIRER, happy and prosperous' independent Scotland would be 'great' for the rest of the UK, a leading 'yes' campaigner told Lochaber business representatives last week. And Business for Scotland chief executive Gordon MacIntyre-Kemp warned a 'no' vote would diminish the country internationally. In the latest Fort William Chamber of Commerce independence debate, Mr MacIntyre-Kemp said global coverage of the September 18 referendum would be equivalent to £1 billion of advertising and Scotland should grab its chance. 'There will be 48 hours from the polls opening to the result being declared,' he said. 'We can choose to broadcast that we are a confident, outward looking nation or we can use that time to send out a message that we are no more capable than Shropshire. 'The rest of the world will not understand why we would not vote 'yes.'

By STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

the US Federal Reserve ploughed £540bn into London-headquartered Barclays Bank to save it from collapse - and £1 trillion overall into the UK banking system. 'No country in the world has to bail out its own banks,' he said. 'It is just not the law.' Arisaig businesswoman Anne Widdop feared splitting up joint UK services would be costly. Mr MacIntyre-Kemp replied that the NHS in Scotland was already separate and saw no reason why the DVLA and the Inland Revenue, which is based at East Kilbride, could not continue to be shared. A 'no' vote, he claimed, would mean Scottish taxpayers paying part of the estimated £80bn HS2 project to run high-speed trains between London, Manchester and Leeds. A report by global accountancy firm KPMG, he said, estimated that HS2 could cost the Dundee and Aberdeen economies £330m and 17,000 jobs each year because of the drift of business south. 'Why is being 'Better Together' in their interests?' he asked. Questioned how an independent Scotland would close the gap between rich and poor, Mr MacIntyre-Kemp cited Imola in Italy, where 66 per cent of people worked in employee-

owned cooperatives - including the Maserati car plant. He said: 'Co-operatives work. Yet since Thatcher we have been closing down our mutual building societies. 'You could get 10 unemployed people to get together and run co-ops, paying no tax for the first three years. That is how you get people off the dole and working.' Karl Griffin of Ballachulish Tourist Information Centre wondered how long North Sea oil production would remain sustainable given the huge worldwide expansion in extracting cheap shale gas by fracking underground rocks. Mr MacIntyre-Kemp said industry body Oil and Gas UK predicted the North Sea had 60 years of commercial life left as smaller specialist firms, many Scottish, replaced big corporations in extracting and exploring for oil. He said: 'The 'yes' side has a plan to reindustrialise Scotland when the oil runs out. Better Together has no plan.' The chamber will hold its next independence debate in the Alexandra Hotel, Fort William, on Friday April 18 from 7pm-9pm. Guest speaker will be the Right Honourable Danny Alexander, Liberal Democrat MP for Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey and Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

But Blair Allan of Lochaber Housing Association asked if Scotland could have bailed out its banks during the financial crash of 2008. Mr MacIntyre-Kemp said



Gordon MacIntyre-Kemp: world expects a 'yes' vote. 20_109indy01

Guidebook writer honoured at festival



Andy Nisbet, left, was presented the Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture by David Jones of Rio Tinto Alcan. 20_109award01

A VETERAN Scottish climber, writer and instructor was presented with the Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture. Andy Nisbet, 60, was the seventh recipient of the annual award from Fort William Mountain Festival. David Jones of Rio Tinto Alcan presented the trophy to Mr Nisbet at the festival's climbing night in the Nevis Centre on Saturday. Mr Nisbet said: 'I'm pretty honoured to get this award and thanks to everyone for all of the compliments. I fully intend to keep going for many years, I have no intention of giving up.' The award celebrates the achievements of one inspiring individual and their outstanding contribution to Scotland's mountains in the fields of sport, theatre, art, photography, film and literature. Mr Nisbet has compiled accurate and detailed record of tens of thousands of climbs across Scotland in the Scottish Mountaineering Council's climber's guidebook series. He has almost 1,000 new winter routes to his name and over the decades has compiled far more first ascents in winter than any other Scottish climber. His guidebooks have introduced many climbers to the cliffs and corners of the country they might not otherwise have discovered.

Glenfinnan gears up to host weekend of fundraising

GLENFINNAN will host a weekend long fundraising event in March including a 21km kayak race. Loch Shiel Viking Challenge will raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support and the event, to be held on March 29 and 30, will feature craft stalls, kayak demos and a barbecue. There will also be an evening ceilidh in a marquee with music from The Jim Hunter Band and Glenfinnan Ceilidh Band. The race itself will start from Monument Beach with a 12km 'turn around point' for those who would prefer a shorter route instead of the full 21km. Alastair Wallace, one of the organisers and committee member of Loch Shiel Viking Challenge said: 'A lot of local kayakers have shown an interest and we think people will come from all over Scotland and the rest of the UK to take part. We've already had a lot of help from local businesses, everyone

has been really supportive.' Glenfinnan Community Council has been working alongside the committee to arrange the event and members believe it will do a lot for the village before the tourism season kicks in. Chairman Duncan Gibson said: 'There's been a good wee buzz around the village about this, I've had lots of positive feedback from the community. 'The council will be thinking of activities for the kids to do during the race and we'll help out with tea and coffee for the spectators as well as running the bar at night. Glenfinnan Estate are providing land for camping and car parking which will help bring people in. 'I think it will be really good for the community and hopefully it will become an annual thing.' For more information or to book a place in the kayak race go to www.lochshielvikings.org.uk.

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Decision to ignore Oban's gateway road shows BEAR is out of touch

ONCE again, we find ourselves just weeks from the start of the tourist season and - just like last year - the condition of the Bealach an Rìgh, the main artery into Oban is the main topic of conversation.

It is, frankly, an embarrassment to the area and a safety risk. The size of pot-holes in the road already present a danger for stopping distances and could potentially cause damage to vehicles. Cyclists must be terrified of using the route.

As a tourist town, first impressions are everything. What first impression must our visitors have when they encounter this ramshackle surface? It could be the difference between looking forward to your stay - or dreading it.

Its condition wouldn't be accepted in any other developed country where tourism is the main economic driver for a town. Many nations with a far lower GDP than Scotland would ensure their infrastructure is in far better condition.

What's most disappointing though is BEAR Scotland's attitude to the town. *The Oban Times* last month asked the company when work would be done on the Bealach an Rìgh, and the company responded by saying 'works will take place at both Corran Halls and George Street in March 2014'. This same information was relayed to Argyll and Bute councillors.

At its worst, it could be described as mischievous, at its best, it shows a lack of understanding of the local area. Either way, to describe May as 'before the start of the tourist season gets underway' is just fantasy.

It is disappointing in the extreme and one hopes BEAR Scotland will alter its plans and make much needed repairs to the Bealach an Rìgh ahead of the Corran Halls roundabouts, where the need is far less severe.

And we can only hope that, in future, common sense prevails when it comes to road repairs.

GLASGOW LETTER

Ceol's Craic

CEOL'S Craic will present an evening of music and film in the CCA this coming Saturday, March 1, presented in association with the Glasgow Film Festival.

The event will feature new compositions by Catriona McKay, Alistair MacDonald (Strange Rainbow), Aileen Campbell and Margaret Bennett.

Starting at 7.30pm the contributors will play and respond to each other's material in two sets with the second of these at 8.45pm concentrating on Gaelic language and song.

This will be a synthesis of the traditional and contemporary, through live performances, film and Gaelic song.

Tickets are available from www.cca-glasgow.com or telephone 0141 352 4900.

Piping

competition

THE RENOWNED annual Professional Piping Competition of the Glasgow Uist and Barra Association will take place in the College of Piping, Otago Street, on Saturday March 8.

The morning session will start at 9am and the afternoon session at 1.30pm.

The day will consist of competitions in piobaireachd, light music and hornpipes and jigs - a full variety of music played on the Highland bagpipe.

Glasgow Islay Association

Annual Gathering

THE ANNUAL Gathering and Dance of the Glasgow Islay Association will take place on Friday March 7 in Glasgow University Union with the concert starting at 7.30pm with the dance to follow.

With John MacLellan, manager of Kilchoman Distillery in the chair, the artists will be Ainsley Hamill, Robert Robertson, Mairi McGillyvray, Alasdair Currie, the Ella Edgar Dancers and Martin Skene. Tickets available at the door.

Glasgow Skye Association

FOLLOWING on from their successful family ceilidh earlier in the year, the

Glasgow Skye Association recently held an evening of Buntata's Sgadan in the Crawford Theatre with the men of the committee showcasing their culinary skills.

With an attendance of 60 patrons this was an enjoyable event with entertainment provided by the association piper John Rennie, accordionist Fiona Johnstone and Calum Alex MacDonald the winner of the 2013 Traditional Gold Medal.

Reminders

THE GLASGOW Islay Gaelic Choirs Concert, with Rhyader Welsh Male Voice Choir as guests, will take place tomorrow evening (Friday) in Milngavie Town Hall at 7.30pm.

On Saturday March 8 the Oban High School Former Pupils will be holding their annual dinner dance in the Crowne Plaza Hotel at 7.30pm with Ted Heath, former PE teacher, as guest speaker.

For tickets telephone Anne Byiers 0141 943 0281.

Diary dates

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

Saturday March 1: Ceol's Craic - see above. Clydebank and District Highlander's Association Buffet Dance, Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick, 7.30pm to 11.30pm - Nicky McMichan's Band.

Tuesday March 4: Live at the Star, Admiral Bar, Waterloo Street, 8pm - Blue Flint.

Friday March 7: Glasgow Islay Association Annual Gathering and Dance - see above.

Saturday March 8: Glasgow Uist and Barra Association Piping Competition - see above. Oban High School Former Pupils' Dinner Dance - see above.

Sunday March 9: Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championships, Broughton High School, Edinburgh.

Pub scene

MARTIN Pottinger will be playing in the Park Bar on both Saturday and Sunday this weekend with Eriskay Lilt there on Friday.

In the Islay Inn it will be the Keelies on Friday and Black Velvet on Saturday. **Neil Murray. Tel: 0141 954 8105. Email: neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk.**

YOUR LETTERS

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

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

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

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

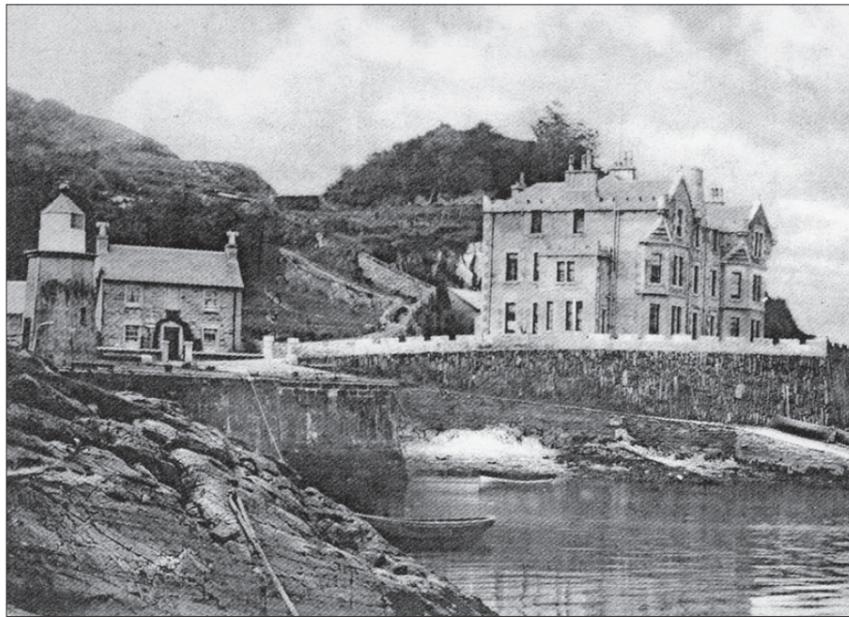
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It is the policy of The Oban Times Group to correct any errors in print. If you find an error of fact on our pages please write to The Editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB giving your day-time telephone number where possible. This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

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



The Crinan Hotel in days gone by

This week's flashback photograph was submitted by regular contributor Colin Armstrong of Coventry and features the Crinan Hotel in days gone by. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing photos returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

Letters to the editor

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NHS needs to

act on new telephone system

Sir, I read with disappointment that the NHS is choosing to ally concerns rather than review its new appointment confirmation procedure, as reported in *The Oban Times* of February 20.

While understanding the need to reduce costs and delays associated with missed hospital appointments, the text, email, SMS or phone call from the dentist works well and is more confidential and less obtrusive than a phone call.

When the phone rings, the household has only the caller's word that they are calling from the NHS.

Scammers contact thousands of people every day knowing that someone will give them the data they want, so just happening to have a hospital appointment is no guarantee.

Apart from stating that they are from the NHS, the caller is not able to offer any form of identification to confirm that they are who they say they are. We are all warned on a daily basis not to give out personal data. Date of birth can be just one step on the road to identity theft.

It is therefore disappointing that a body as important as the NHS is widely encouraging exactly this behaviour, as it makes it difficult for everyone to know where to draw the line. **Linda Smith, by email.**

Delighted at

Loch Etive fish farm approval

Sir, I was delighted to see that Argyll and Bute councillors unanimously approved the fish farm on Loch Etive, in spite of local opposition.

Not that I have researched this particular project, but it seems that, in this case, the councillors have taken an overall view of the project and considered the bigger picture, not just the voices of the 'Not In My Back Yard'.

It must surely be the duty of councillors, not only to represent their own particular community, but also to take into consideration the good of Argyll, and even Scotland, as a whole.

Far too often we have seen small local communities - and those non-locals that they have enticed into the fray - lobby vociferously against an application for a house, a fish farm, a small business or a wind farm and succeed in swaying our councillors to ignore the larger picture.

In my experience a typical profile of objectors is people comfortably housed, financially stable and averse to any kind of change regardless of the overall needs of the area. Argyll cannot afford to stand still.

It's a fact of life that every new shed, house, fish farm or wind farm has an impact on our environment and our landscape and involves change.

It's also a fact of life that people need homes, people need jobs, people need to eat and our power consumption is ever increasing.

It was only three weeks ago that *The Oban Times* ran an article on how to halt and exodus of people from Argyll exodus.

So let's open our doors to

businesses, create jobs and concentrate more on ensuring that projects are implemented as sympathetically as possible rather than putting every possible obstruction in the way of progress. If not, the exodus will continue and Argyll will become a dead county occupied predominantly by the elderly, the well off and second home owners.

Fiona Wyllie, Arduaine, Oban.

Poor protection of hospital patients

Sir, It is some weeks since I read Steven Flanagan's article 'Family's anguish over cancer care'.

It has taken me a while because of the emotions I felt reading it. During the Bank Holiday weekend of August 2011, my mother was admitted to Dunoon's Cowal Hospital, after a fall. She was 94, frail and in pain. They x-rayed and found tumours on the chest and that assigned her to the awful path she ended on. We were ignored when her pain was not controlled over the weekend.

On the Monday we were told she'd been sent to the hospice. This was an empty room with not even a sponge for her mouth. My mum lay rolling in agony with an untreated bladder infection.

Two staff seemed at a loss. They told me the named GP refused to come out because it was a Bank Holiday. In response to our pleas they phoned him twice and he prescribed morphine by phone. My mum died rapidly after the second phone call.

We complained through all the channels but they took two years to report back.

With such poor protection of patients, is it any wonder another family has been left with bad memories? I wonder how many other patients have suffered in this region, old and frail, once the wartime backbone of Scotland and now at the mercy of NHS Highland, perhaps without an advocate.

Andre Messersmith.

Methadone won't attract addicts

Sir, I would like to take issue with some of the points raised in your story regarding the introduction of Methadone 'by stealth' in Campbeltown.

I find it hard to believe this service would attract 'hard drug users from outwith the town'. I don't believe a medical service - which is widely available elsewhere - would persuade addicts to leave family, friends, drug support services and their present home to move to a town 100 miles from anywhere else.

To those quoted in the article - Campbeltown Community Council, specifically Councillor Donald Kelly, and MSP Jamie McGregor - I ask - what if your son, or daughter, had an addiction to heroin? Would you not want them to be treated in their own home town, as rapidly as possible? Clearly you are all lucky enough not to have been touched by heroin addiction, and for this reason it appears compassion for others has been lost along the way.

We need to start looking at drug addiction in a similar way to alcohol addiction. It is not going to go away. Most addicts in this area fund

their addiction by working; some fund a lesser one by benefits. There is little crime committed to fund habits.

I'm also surprised Kintyre Substance Misuse Group isn't giving the service its full support, after the issue of lack of transparency was apologised for.

Once this issue is investigated, and dealt with so there is no repeat incident, it would be good to hear the community council and our MSP are fully behind a responsible, tightly controlled, prescribing service.

As to the people of Campbeltown who, according to Councillor Donald Kelly, are 'furious' that this service was 'imposed' on them, I think, are you really? It would be good to hear from residents who aren't 'furious'; who understand that this service is obviously needed in Campbeltown.

And to those who are 'furious' that people from their own home town are being prescribed Methadone to help them try and beat an addiction that can devastate lives, families, communities, how very sad I am for you. **Name and address supplied.**

Town name change plans

Sir, Eighty-four years have passed since Angus MacDonald of Taigh a' phuirt, Glencoe, first laid a wreath at the monument at Upper Carnoch to commemorate local Gaels killed by government troops during the Massacre of Glencoe, *The Oban Times*, February 22 1958.

The wreath was provided by Mary Rankin, also of Taigh a' phuirt, probably because the first clansman to fall was Duncan Rankin (Donnchadh MacRaing) while crossing the River Coe near the chief's house at Invercoe.

That incident was passed on orally by Angus to the late Rory MacKay of Inverness and Rory told the story to his friend John Prebble who included it in his book entitled Glencoe: The Story of the Massacre.

One hundred years have passed since Charles Stewart of Achara, Duror of Appin, wrote a letter to the Provost of Fort William suggesting that the names of Fort William and Fort Augustus should be changed and that the older names should be reverted to. Here is the gist of that proposal: 'The historical circumstances, under which the names of Inverloch and Abertarff [sic] were changed some 168 years ago, into Fort William and Fort Augustus, are well known to all of us.'

The names then attached to the military forts, being the baptismal names of the Duke of Cumberland, the victorious general of the English army, at the then recent battle of Culloden, were chosen at a time of violent political action and feeling, after the suppression of an attempt, ill-fated and happily unsuccessful, as subsequent history has proved, to change the dynasty of Great Britain and Ireland.

'When the localities were renamed, the new nomenclature, selected no doubt somewhat unfortunately, carried with it something vindictive, something of a sting, inasmuch as it expressed a sentiment of conquest and subjugation, and invented new names which tend to perpetuate

memories of personalities and events which are to many people distasteful or painful,' *The Oban Times*, January 10 1914. The council had a short discussion on the matter but the feeling of the meeting seemed to be inimical to the proposal and the letter was allowed, for the time being, to lie on the table. Interestingly, the fort was built to honour William III, the king who signed the order to plan the Massacre of Glencoe, but the current name may instead honour 'Butcher' William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland. Does it matter? Why would anyone want to honour either of them? The town has been renamed several times.

It can be renamed once again unless the townsfolk insist on keeping its current name. **Ewan Macintyre, Culloden.**

Bedroom tax

Sir, I welcome the cross party support in condemning Argyll and Bute Council's refusal to mitigate in full the effects of the 'bedroom tax'.

The Scottish Parliament's funding is not being used as intended with the council predicting over half a million pounds unpent. This leaves more than 200 families being callously left to choose between food, heat or rent and the possibility of being removed from their communities and local support networks.

Labour, the SNP and even the Liberal Democrats supported this funding at the Scottish Parliament. Labour and the SNP are committed to abolishing the 'bedroom tax' after independence. It is recognised that the 'bedroom tax' affects not only the poorest but particularly those with disability, with caring needs or those in a position not of their own making. The SNP council group put forward a proposal to compensate everyone affected by the 'bedroom tax' in full as intended.

The Conservative and Unionist administration at Argyll and Bute Council has put Tory political ideology before the needs of some of our most unfortunate residents. The funding is available so individual councillors must look to their consciences, defy their political masters and support this group of vulnerable people as soon as possible.

Councillor James Robb.

Hospital care in Oban

Sir, I write regarding the letter 'Quality hospital care in Oban' February 13.

I am pleased the writer of this letter and his partner received such good care in Lorn and Islands Hospital, but my and my husband's experience was not so good. My husband fell out of bed twice and it would have been three times had I not caught him in time. The third and last time was only a week before he died.

We were told there was to be a case study done but we have never heard anything and presumably if there had been one, the results would have been made known to us. Myself and a member of my family spoke to the hospital about what happened but did not take it any further, just wanting this not to happen to anyone else but I still feel there are a lot of unsatisfactory answers to our questions. Accidents happen but three times is not acceptable.

Name and address supplied.

Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

CHAN eil dad as gràineile leam na burraidheachd agus chuirinn taic ri innleachd sam bith a chuireadh stad air sin ann a suidheachadh neo àite sam bith.

Mar a tha deagh fhios ag duine sam bith a dh'fhuing a leithid, tha burraidheachd air a bhonnachadh air creideas gur e 'neart a tha ceart' agus gum feum an fheadhainn as laige gèilleadh.

Tha mòran chloinne a' fulang burraidheachd san sgòil ach bhò chionn beagan bhliadhnaichean chaidh fìor dheagh innleachd a stèidheachadh far am bheil clann bhon chlas as àirde gan cur an urra ri stiùireadh, taic agus dìon nan sgoilearan as ùire. Buddies neo caraidean a chanar riutha agus tha mi a' tuigsinn gum bheil seo ag obrachadh gu math. Ach ged a tha sinn uile an eisimeil taic agus càirdeas charaidean fad ar beatha, saoilidh mi aon uair 's gum faigh an òigridh cleachdte ris an sgòil gum bheil iad fhèin nas riarachte an caraidean a thaghadh seach duine eile a bhith gan comharrachadh dhaibh.

Ged a tha sin ag obrachadh dhan mhòr-chuid gun teagamh sam bith, tha cuid ann, airson caochladh adhbhair, aig am bheil feum air taic shònraichte fad-ùine agus cuid gu dearb an ire mhath fad am beatha.

Chan eil duine dol a dh'àicheadh gur còir làn-thaic a thoirt dha na daoine sin aig am bheil feum air, ach chan eil mise idir a' creidsinn gum feumar caraid a chomharrachadh dhan a h-uile leanabh chun am bheil iad ochd bliadhna deug airson feumalachdan a' bheagain a fhreagairt.

Tuigidh sinn uile tha mi 'n dòchas gum bheil feum air dìon a thoirt dha cuid agus gum feumar siostam a stèidheachadh gu dèanamh cinnteach gum faigh iad nan sochair ann an taic a tha a dhìth orra, ach tha fhios gum bheil dòigh nas fheàrr air sin a chur an gnìomh seach fàis air dh'fheadh mìlean a chosg eadar 2015 agus 2020 a' trèanadh 'charaidean' dhan a h-uile leanabh ann an Alba.

Ged nach eil a h-uile pàrant a dèanamh an dleasanais dhan cuid cloinne, tha a' mhòr-chuid a' dèanamh sin, agus carson a bhith a' cur cuideigin eile eadar iad is an teaghlach? Saoil nach gabhadh barrachd saothair a dhèanamh gum clann ann an èis a chomharrachadh ach an gabh iad cuideachadh?

Agus aig an aon àm, saoil nach eil mòran sheann daoine feadh na dùthcha a cheart cho feumach air caraidean a sheas an còraichean ann an caochladh shuidheachaidhean, eadar sreath shochairan dhaibh agus sheirbheisean slàinte nuair a tha feum aca air?

YOU CAN choose your friends but not your relatives, according to the proverb!

This may no longer be true for Scottish youth if they are to have 'state guardians' to age 18. While recognising that many young people require more support, I am not convinced this will be best achieved by blanket provision which risks creating a wedge within families.

Some young people and many older people need friends to speak for them.

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

SCOTS

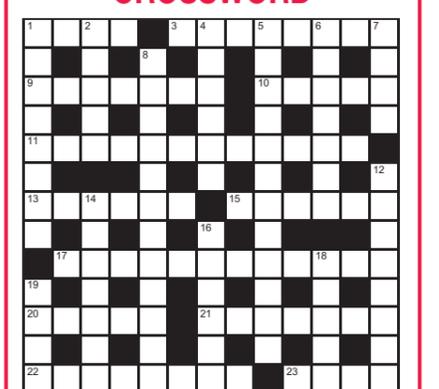
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Burglar targets Kilchrenan properties

MORE than £3,000 of goods were stolen from Kilchrenan last week, with police a suspected travelling opportunist burglar.

Two properties were targeted during the raids, which first saw a shed broken into between 10.40pm on Wednesday, February 19 and 10am the following day. A portable generator was stolen, along with a MIG welder, valued at £2,000, and a further £1,000 of tools.

Police were later called to another property in Kilchrenan, which was broken into sometime between 5.30pm February 19 and 8.30am on Saturday, February 22.

Stolen from that property were several bottles of alcohol and other items.

Oban's chief inspector Alistair Davidson said: 'It indicates to me that whoever broke into these properties didn't have enough room in the van and they're not from this area, otherwise they would have simply unloaded and returned to take more.'

Advising everyone makes sure their homes are securely locked, he urged anyone with information to contact Oban Police on the 101 non-emergency phone number.

Port Appin car theft appeal

INFORMATION is being sought as to the whereabouts of a car stolen from Port Appin over the weekend.

Sometime between 9am on Friday and 8am on Monday, a Mazda Premacy GXi was stolen from the near the ferry terminal.

Any information on the whereabouts of the silver people-carrier, registration SP03 UBW, should be reported to the police.

Health and safety day for workers

A HEALTH and safety awareness day for forestry industry workers will be held in Spain Bridge next month.

The free event, on March 25, is targeted at all involved in forest operations, from forestry work managers to site supervisors, to those carrying out the work.

For further information e-mail treework.shads@hsc.gsi.gov.uk by Friday, March 7.

Church parking response 'harsh'

A LETTER from an Argyll and Bute Council officer describing Oban Congregational Church's management of parking during funerals as 'illegal' has been slammed by Oban Community Council.

The community council wrote to the local authority for advice after the church's minister, Rev Ken Hunter, pointed out hearses often cannot park near the church because of motorists moving traffic cones used to reserve space.

But a reply to the community council, read out at Monday's meeting by secretary Duncan Martin, stated: 'The Congregational Church has attempted to manage parking themselves illegally.'

The council has since made it clear that parking restriction are determined by Traffic Regulation Orders that do not specifically cover funerals but that it would work with the church to suspend parking bays while funerals take place.

However, the written response received by the community council found universal disapproval at the meeting on Monday.

Speaking at the meeting, Oban North and Lorn Councillor Louise Glen Lee described the response as 'disappointing' and 'harsh'.

Rev Hunter said cones were put out for weddings and funerals but these were often moved by motorists.

He said: 'It's getting quite bad at times. We have had to walk coffins down the street before. It's not so bad for weddings, but for a funeral, the hearse really should be as close to the church as possible.'

'It's just about consideration.'



Barry Hutchison used his book to help Fort William Primary School pupils write their own short stories. From left: Atrus Trofimovs, Reinis Cameron, Kerri Watson, Liam McCrimmon and Ralfs Guza, all P7. 20_10860r01

Author helps children face their fears to become writers

A FORT WILLIAM author has been helping local pupils to use their childhood fears as inspiration for penning short stories.

The primary five to seven class at Fort William Primary School studied Barry Hutchison's first book, 'Mr Mumbles' in the Invisible Fiends series and are now

working on their own stories, based on childhood fears. Mr Hutchison, from Lochyside, visited the class to brainstorm ideas about fears

and characters for their fictional horror books, which the class teacher hopes will be displayed in Fort William Library once finished.

Loan worth £2.3m agreed for new homes

Council and ACHA reach agreement

A £2.3MILLION loan facility has been agreed between Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) and Argyll and Bute Council to aid with the building of new homes.

The loan will be provided from the council's reserves on the principles of a 25 year capital and interest mortgage and will support the construction of 40 new homes for rent at Glenshellach in Oban - and help ACHA deal with a 600-

name waiting list.

ACHA's chief executive, Alastair MacGregor, said: 'I would like to thank Argyll and Bute Council for the innovation they have shown within their existing powers to provide housing mortgage finance to supplement the grants ACHA has been able to secure from the Scottish Government and the Council.'

Robin Currie, Argyll and Bute Council's spokesperson

for strategic housing added: 'We have recognised the challenges faced by the Registered Social Landlord (RSL) sector in raising private finance in the current economic climate and we took a decision in 2012 to earmark reserves for this purpose.'

The housing development at Glenshellach in Oban, which the funding will support, will be available for let from November.

Defibrillator for Glenfinnan

GLENFINNAN has become the latest West Highland community to receive a defibrillator.

Marine Harvest Scotland (MHS) donated the machine and the cabinet housing it after a request from Glenfinnan Community Council. The defibrillator, located on the outside wall of the Glenfinnan House Hotel, is lit up and heated so it can be used at any time of day or night.

Community council member Eileen O'Rua said: 'Because of the journey time from Fort

William this could mean the difference between life and death should somebody need help.

'We are very grateful to Marine Harvest for supporting us.'

MHS business support manager Steve Bracken said: 'We were approached by the community council who asked if we would consider donating it and we were delighted to do so.'

Community training with the defibrillator will be carried out at Glenfinnan House Hotel at 10.30 am and 1.30pm on Saturday.

SAMS students recall stories of the year

STUDENTS at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) will gather next month to hear how they can advance their careers - and have fun.

The 'I Know What You Did Last Summer' seminar invites students to share stories of extra curricular activities. Anyone interested should contact Morgan at SAMS. The event is held on March 5.

Oban voucher scheme delivers £6,500 boost

A VOUCHER scheme designed to boost Oban's town centre has delivered the town a £6,500 boost.

In November, BID4Oban launched the Love Oban scheme in November, aiming to keep more of the festive spend in the town.

In addition to helping keep more than £6,500 in the town, more than 70 of the town's traders have signed up to accept the vouchers.

The business co-operative is now planning on developing the brand further - and hasn't ruled out holding an event to celebrate Oban's strengths.

BID4Oban manager Nic Jones said: 'The vouchers did very well over the Christmas period - but they're not just for Christmas and they're still selling. What's important is that the money stays in the town and is spent with local businesses.'

'One of the things we're looking at now is building on what we've got as we want to keep it in people's minds.'

A criticism of the voucher scheme is that it isn't available digitally, but Nic said: 'I don't want to promise anything but we're very much looking at it. It has to be a natural progression though.'

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

20 YEARS AGO



FEBRUARY 24 1994



Islay's first fèis hits all the right notes

Islay's first festival of Gaelic language and music, held during the February school holiday, has been voted an outstanding success by the 65 youngsters who took part and their parents.

The climax of the week's activities came on Friday night in the Ramsay Hall, Port Ellen, when the young musicians and actors, supported by their tutors, played to a packed house. The youngsters who took part in the fèis are pictured with their tutors in Bowmore Hall. 1091200y03



Spotlight on recycling

Children from Park Primary School in Oban and Councillor Robin Banks were entertained by Eddie Copestake, Kate Hall and Jeff Bird from the London-based 615 Theatre Company who performed their 'Bottle Busters' play about recycling. 1091200y04



School 'lollipop man' retires

John Morrison retired on Friday after five years as Rockfield Primary School's 'lollipop man'. The children turned out in numbers to thank him for his kindness and two youngsters, Donald and Jacqueline Watt, presented him with a gift. 1091200y02



Prize cheer for Sheila

Sheila Gibb from Oban receives her prize of a canteen of cutlery from House and Home manageress Gwyneth Neal. The competition was held before Christmas in conjunction with The Oban Times and Viners. 1091200y05



MP opens fitness suite

A new fitness suite, recently fitted out at Atlantis Leisure, Oban, was officially opened on Saturday by Ray Michie, MP for Argyll and Bute. Ray got on her bike at the new fitness suite she had just opened at Atlantis and invited councillors Ian Smyth and Alan Macaskill to join her. 1091200y01



'Giant killers' Thistle win knock-out cup

Dunollie Dynamos were strong pre-tournament favourites when the clubs participating in the Oban and District Junior Football league took part in a knock-out competition for the Kirsty Miller Cup, held at the blaes parks, Glenclutten, on Sunday.

But Dynamos faced the impressive Oban Thistle, well organised by coach Eoghan May. Thistle, the one team who can match Dynamos physically, snatched an early lead and competed well but were forced to defend for long periods before clinching victory.

Left: Oban Thistle, winners of the Kirsty Miller Cup. 1091200y06

Ardfern annual pantomime makes welcome return

ARCHIE Spencer was the star of the show as The Boy Who Never Grew Up when Ardfern welcomed the revival of its annual pantomime at Craignish Village Hall at the weekend. At just 12 years of age, Archie had a huge task to take on the lead role in JM Barrie's most famous work, but his gymnastic skills and acting talent brought the mischievous character to life and thrilled the audience. His leading lady, Wendy, was played by Katie McNiven, who showed her own acting potential with a rousing performance too. But it was the performance and efforts of all the cast and crew that resulted in such an enjoyable evening for all, and director Amber Crowley said she was delighted with the result. She said: 'It has been several years since we had a pantomime in Ardfern and it is such a wonderful way to brighten up the gloomy end of winter

days I thought I would have a go at directing one for the first time.' Among the amusing changes for the play, Tinkerbell was renamed Tankerbell, played by 6'2 local builder and metalworker Martin Crowley. Hook, played by Chris Fox, went on a rampage around Craig-Neve-Nish-Land, while music was provided by a local band consisting of Murray MacKay on guitar, Nigel Frydman on bass and Tom Fisher on drums. Amber added: 'The finale of the show was Time Warp and the wave of community spirit that filled the hall, with the whole cast and every single member of the audience singing and dancing, was an awesome thing to behold. 'The extraordinary talent and strong community housed on our little peninsula was shown in its true, magnificent colours.'



The residents of Craig-Neve-Nish-Land certainly had a striking look.



Peter Pan, played by Archie Spencer, takes on Chris Fox's Hook during Ardfern's pantomime at the weekend.



Hook cooks up mischief with his crew.



Peter Pan and Wendy, Katie McNiven, share a moment during Ardfern's pantomime.

GRAND FINALE

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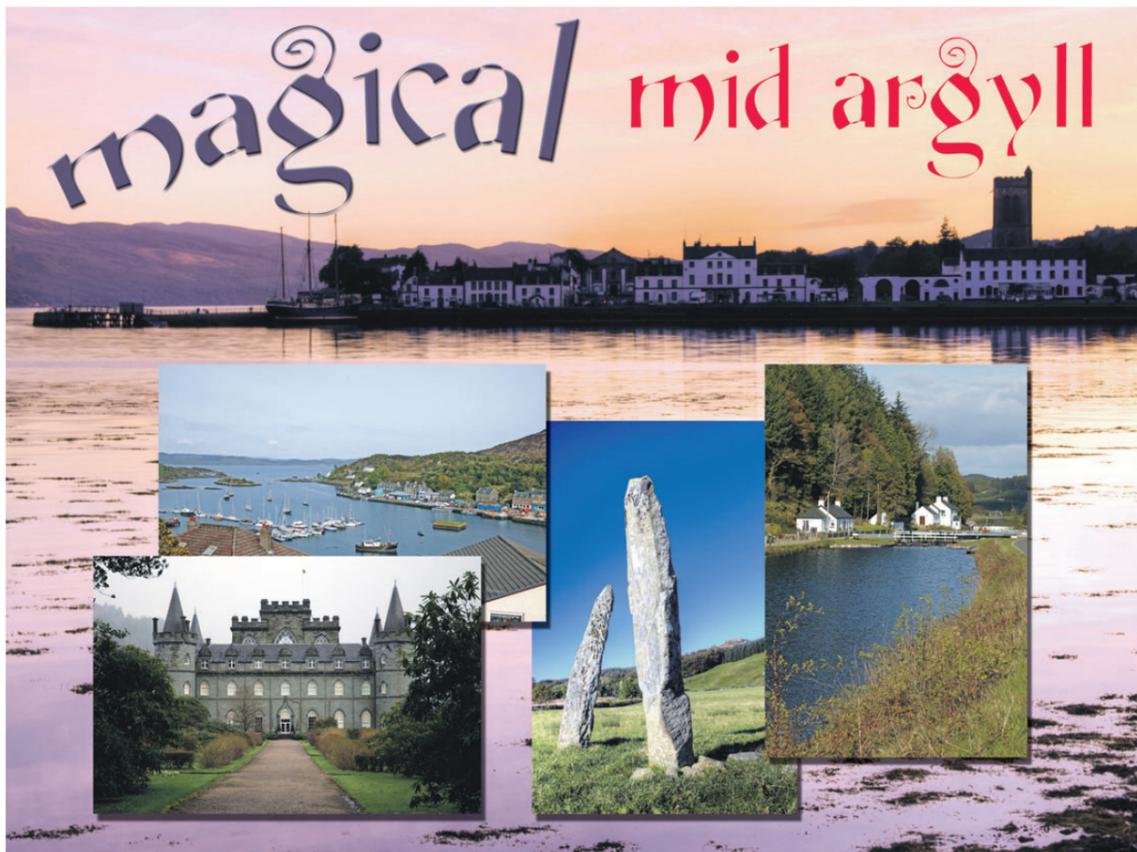
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THE SPRING is almost here and people can start to think about heading out doors and exploring the beauty of Mid Argyll.

Kilmartin Museum will open its doors again tomorrow (Saturday) after the winter break and people will be able to delve into the history of Kilmartin Glen.

People can take a step back in time to this mystical era, an era when kings were crowned at the top of Dunadd Fort and clan chiefs stood tall in Carnasserie Castle. The area and its magical past has long attracted visitors, artists, filmmakers and historians to the area where archaeological digs have revealed an insight into how people lived thousands of years ago.

Kilmartin Museum is ideally positioned

a stones throw from Dunadd Fort for people who want to learn more about the area's cultural heritage, whilst Lochgilphead and Ardrishaig sit in the midst of the Kingdom of Dalriada and are well equipped to serve the 21st century visitor.

People can stop over in one of the area's beautiful hotels or sample the finest seafood at the area's many restaurants, while bars serve up the finest whiskies and real ales.

To the west of Lochgilphead people can visit Auchindrain Museum, the last remaining township in Scotland.

People can see a

glimpse of how families lived in the small farming community where they worked together to manage the land.

A short journey up the A83 and Inveraray is home to even more history and magic as the home of Inveraray Castle, the seat of

Clan Campbell. The Duke of Argyll founded the burgh in 1745 and with architect Robert Mylne building much of the burgh it is one of Scotland's first planned towns.

South of Lochgilphead at the top of Kintyre is Tarbert, the former home of Rob-

ert the Bruce and the first place the Vikings landed on mainland Scotland.

The recently restored Tarbert Castle sits proudly above the historical fishing village and has been a key area of defence in Scotland's past. It overlooks Tarbert

Harbour, which has become the focal point of many events throughout the summer. The fishing village is awash with activity during the summer months with a seafood festival, music festival and boat festival all on offer.

Kilmory Guest House Lochgilphead
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What's on

THE OBAN TIMES
FREE EVENT LISTING

THURSDAY - February 27

Scottish Opera, Craignish Village Hall, Ardfern
7.30pm, Rantin, Corran Halls, Oban

FRIDAY - February 28

7.30pm, Oban Art Society talk on designing jewellery, Lorn Resource Centre, Oban
Steak Night, Taynuilt Hotel, Taynuilt

SATURDAY - March 1

7.30pm, Fiddlers Rally, Lochaber Strathspey and Reel Society, Coil Community Centre.
Opening Day, Benmore Botanic Gardens, Argyll

SUNDAY - March 2

12-3pm, Wedding Fair, Ardansaigh Hotel.

TUESDAY - March 4

10.30am, Oban USA, Regent Hotel, Oban.
8pm, Musical Evening, Fort William Accordion and Fiddle Club, Fort William.

THURSDAY - March 6

7pm, Public talk on the Corryvreckan, Ocean Explorer Centre, Oban.
7.30pm, Oban Accordion and Fiddle Club, Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Oban.

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Simply email details of your event to
whatson@obantimes.co.uk.

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Aidan O'Rourke receives his award from BBC Proms presenter Katie Derham.

Aidan is musician of the year

ACCEPTING the award for musician of the year at the BBC Radio Folk Awards in London's Albert Hall, Oban's Aidan O'Rourke thanked the most important people in his development - his mother and father.

Fiddle player Aidan, who now lives in Edinburgh and plays with the folk group Lau, picked up the award last Wednesday and made sure Joe and Rosena O'Rourke, who live in Clachan Seil, were top of the thank you list.

The 38 year old told *The Oban Times* this week: 'There's a saying within our band when something great happens, like finding ourselves eating fish in a fancy restaurant in Japan, and we say: 'Aren't we glad we practised!'

'As far as those 'aren't we glad' moments go, receiving that award was one of the

best.

'I always enjoyed the challenge of practising but as a nine or 10 year old I often wanted to be outside playing shinty with my pals. My parents were never strict about it but they had a way of prolonging my practice and I began to win competitions. I really started to enjoy bringing home trophies!'

Aidan also paid tribute to his late fiddle tutor George McHardy, who would take lessons from his home in Soroba, Oban.

'Lessons with him were good craic,' said Aidan. 'I have spoken to a lot of fiddle players whose teachers were vicious but George became a good friend.'

Aidan received his prestigious folk award from BBC Proms presenter Katie Derham, which initially led to disappointment.

'At these awards cer-

emonies they usually get someone associated with you or the band to present the award,' he said. 'I had met Katie Derham before but there was no obvious link to me.'

'I had a piece of card with some bullet points, in case I won, and when she came on stage I just crumpled it up and threw it over my shoulder.'

'When my name was read out everyone around me was laughing at me!'

The shock of going up to collect the award meant much of his presentation was a blur, but Aidan confesses to remembering a hug from radio presenter Zoe Ball following his win and 'hanging out' with Radiohead drummer Phil Selway - Aidan's a big fan of the band.

It all just goes to show - practice makes perfect.

Sally Magnusson launches new book in Tobermory

SCOTTISH broadcaster and writer, Sally Magnusson, spoke about what she described as 'the biggest story of my life' to a packed audience at An Tobar, in Tobermory.

The presenter of the BBC's Reporting Scotland was on Mull to launch her new book, *Where Memories Go: Why Dementia Changes Everything* which recounts her experience of looking after her mother, Mamie Baird Magnusson - also a renowned journalist - who was struck down by the illness.

The event was hosted by local writer, Judy Fairbairns, acclaimed author of her memoir, *Island Wife*.

Ms Magnusson explained that the island was an apt place to launch her book as it was on a visit to Mull to explore the ruined township from which their ancestors had been evicted during the Highland clearances that her mother's symptoms of dementia had first become

apparent.

Referring to her book as a 'clarion call for action' to policy makers and health professionals, Ms Magnusson revealed that her experience of caring for her mother raised issues 'as vital as anything I'd ever examined as a journalist.'

She described how a lack of empathy for people suffering with dementia had 'staggered' her, despite one-third of the UK population having a close friend or family member with the disease.

Ms Magnusson movingly described her mother's illness through a series of readings from her book which ranged from the emotional low of her mother failing to recognise her and throwing her out of the house on Christmas Eve to the many precious times they spent together, and how she had tried to savour the latter.

'There were wonderful times as well as moments of great sadness,' she said.



Sally Magnusson launched her book *Where Memories Go: Why Dementia Changes Everything* in An Tobar, Tobermory.



Douglas Murray performs to the Oban audience. 16_t09piping01

Delightful piping at this month's Netherlorn recital

PIPE Major Douglas Murray was the star turn at this month's Netherlorn Piping Society recital.

At the meeting in Oban's Argyllshire Gathering Halls last Wednesday, young pipers from the Oban High School juvenile and novice juvenile bands supported the Fife man, who leads the grade one Police Scotland Fife Pipe Band.

On the solo competitions

stage Dougie performs to the highest of standards and was runner up at the both the Argyllshire Gathering and the Northern Meeting.

Dougie is also a reed maker by profession and produces reeds for some of the top pipe bands.

The final Netherlorn recital of the season takes place on Wednesday, March 19 when the guest player will be the inimitable Fred Morrison.

Creative Scotland funds several Skye arts projects

SKYE-BASED arts organisations have joined forces to award up-and-coming local artists between £900 and £3,000 through a locally-run scheme funded by Creative Scotland.

The partners - Aros, ATLAS Arts, Fèisean nan Gàidheal, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and Sleat-based SEALL - made seven awards to eight artists.

Each now has a year to complete their work and will be offered an opportunity to exhibit in Skye and Lochalsh.

They are:

- Multi-instrumentalist and percussive dancer John Sikorski will learn to play the sousaphone and take classes with three internationally-renowned brass players.
- Pianist and composer Leighton Jones will participate in a six-day conducting class in Romania.
- Heather McDermott will

develop her stainless steel and cold enamel jewellery.

- Printmaker Emma Noble will extend her skills into screen-printing.
- Multi-disciplinary artists Kate McMorris and Hector MacInnes will work on an installation exploring the local community and national identity.
- Painter Katherine Barrington will create a new body of work which she will initially show in Copenhagen before returning it to Skye.
- Photographer Suzy Lee will produce a video work in Gaelic and English which will be accompanied by a limited edition artists book.

Arthur Cormack of Fèisean nan Gàidheal said: 'This has been a rewarding exercise for the partners to gain insight into the work of local aspiring talent.'

A further two rounds of funding will follow in September and in early 2015.

Outer isles' musicians get together for Mod Ceilidh



BARRA and Uist's finest musicians gathered in Skipinich Ceilidh House, Oban, on Saturday to help raise funds for this year's Royal National Mod. If not from the isles, the performers who took to the stage on Saturday night had strong links to the islands, from which a large crowd attended. Pictured ahead of their performance are, from left, Alison MacVicar, Murdo MacDonald, Alasdair MacLean, Ian MacLean and Morag MacNeil. 16_t09barraceilidh

Screen Machine Scotland's Mobile Cinema

Fort William Thu 27 Feb - Sat 1 March
Strontian Mon 3 March
Lochaline Tue 4 March
Craignure Wed 5 March
Tobermory Thu 6 - Sat 8 March



Lego (U) 100 mins "An uproariously funny family adventure." *The Telegraph* 28/02 at 5.30pm, 01/03 at 2pm, 03/03 at 5.30pm, 04/03 at 5.30pm, 05/03 at 5.30pm, 06/03 at 5.30pm, 08/03 at 2pm

Frozen (PG) 108 mins Disney's latest animated delight. "Sweet story and strong characters." *Scotsman* 27/02 at 5.30pm

American Hustle (15) 138 mins Caper movie which oozes pizzazz. "... irresistibly watchable black comedy..." *The Guardian* 28/02 at 8.30pm, 03/03 at 8.30pm, 05/03 at 8.30pm, 08/03 at 8.30pm

The Railway Man (15) 116 mins Powerful story of a PoW's ordeal working on the Burma railway. "Scrupulously tasteful film." *The Scotsman* 27/02 at 8.30pm, 01/03 at 8.30pm, 04/03 at 8.30pm, 06/03 at 8.30pm

Philomena (12A) 98 mins True story of an Irish woman's search for her son. "... a crowd-pleaser and drama of real intelligence..." *The Telegraph* 01/03 at 5.30pm, 07/03 at 5.30pm

Book in advance at: www.screenmachine.co.uk or phone 0871 902 5750. Tickets also at the cinema 30 mins before screenings. £7.00 Adults. Concessions £5.50. 3D +£1.50

Young dancers become teachers after five day course



Lochaber dancers spent their half term at a five day workshop to gain a leadership qualification.

TEENAGE girls from across Lochaber and Oban will now be able to help teach dance, thanks to a half term course.

Lead dancers from Ardnamurchan, Mallaig, Kinlochleven and Oban

high schools joined Lochaber pupils to take part in the five-day session.

After a week of learning moves, practising routines and focusing on personal development with Y Dance Active staff,

the girls sat an assessment to qualify for an Award in Dance Leadership. With this qualification, participants can assist teachers during classes in their respective schools and communities.

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An age guide of 12+ is suggested for this production. Please note that booking fees only apply to bookings with the box office. The National Theatre of Scotland reserves the right to alter casts, performances, seating or other arrangements and latecomers may not be admitted. National Theatre of Scotland is a company limited by guarantee and registered in Scotland (SC234270) is a registered Scottish charity (SC033377). Photo by Colin Egan. #RANTIN

Aladdin's Lamp brings warmth to Luining



The cast of Luining's panto Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp.

IN THE dark, damp days of February, the Luining Amateur Dramatic Society (LADS) always know how to cheer us up – they put on their ever-popular panto.

This year it was Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp, and in every way it was up to expectations. In many ways it exceeded them. It was a courageous decision to put on a panto with so many changes of scene in the confined space of Cullipool Hall, but director Alison Robertson knew she had a great scene designer/painter in Anja Lamont, and a great team

of backstage helpers and set constructors to make it all work. It worked, and with amazing swiftness.

As always, some special images and moments stick in the memory. Alasdair MacLachlan's amazing appearance as the huge blue Genie of the Lamp. And who could erase from the mind (or wish to!) his brother Eoghann's cameo appearance as a belly dancer (in every sense of the word). The range and depth of the sweet singing was memorable, as was the flowering into full-sized roles of the next generation

of LADS stars – Hazel Cruickshanks as Princess Pandora, Emma MacLachlan as the Spirit of the Ring, and Innes MacQueen as Constable Pong, in a memorable double act with his mother, Julie, as Constable Ping. Other talented newcomers to the group were Andrew Pinkerton as a very imposing Emperor, and the multi-rolled and invaluable Gregor Shuff. Every panto, of course, hinges on the dame, and in our time we have had them large and small but never actually female. This was a huge challenge for Paula

Roberts, but the audience knew, from the very wide range of roles she had triumphed in before, that this was a mountain she could climb. The lilac wig and the huge winged glasses soon made it clear that there was a trace of Dame Edna in the mix, but it was a unique mix and a hugely successful one. Mention must be made here of her remarkable costume, another triumph by the inimitable Linda McGregor, comprising as it did of a kind of bee-stripped 'onesie' surmounted by a crinoline frame hung about with the tools of her laundry

woman's trade. But what about the 'hero' and heroine – Aladdin and the lovely Princess Pandora? Kirsty MacLachlan brought charm and fun as well as her expected sweet singing to the part of Aladdin, and Hazel Cruickshanks was a delight as the Princess, her lovely singing also adding greatly to her role. And now we come to the villain of the piece – evil 'uncle' Abanazer. Green and gruesome from head to toe, Joan Morgan stirred the audience from the outset into torrents of abuse and shouted warnings to the

hapless hero and heroine. Fiona Cruickshanks as 'Twerky Twankee's slightly less idle son, Wishey Washy, with her own side-kicks, Hoo Flung Dung (Amanda MacLachlan), Sum Yung Guy (Gregor Shuff) and Ed Foo Yung (Nicki Archibald) created a delightful comic team. Kay Benn as Princess Pandora's wise (but generally ignored) hand maiden, was resplendent in kimono and restrained Japanese style. Emma MacLachlan held a hint of mischief as the beautiful Ringo, Spirit of the Ring.

Emmet is hopelessly and hilariously underprepared. Dallas Buyers Club (15) Dallas 1985. Electrician and sometimes rodeo bull rider Ron Woodroof lives hard, which includes heavy smoking, drinking and drug use. While in the hospital on a work related injury, the doctors discover that he is HIV+, and that he will most likely die within thirty days. Ron begins to research the disease, which seems to be most effectively treated by the drug AZT. AZT, however, is only in the clinical trials stage within the US. Incredulous that he, as a dying man, cannot pay for any drug which may save or at least prolong his life, he goes searching for it by whatever means possible.

The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (12A) The dwarves, along with Bilbo Baggins and Gandalf the Grey, continue their quest to reclaim Erebor, their homeland, from Smaug. Bilbo Baggins is in possession of a mysterious and magical ring.

RoboCop	Thurs 27th	19.00 (screen 2)	
Out of the Furnace	Thurs 27th	21.00	
Child In Chains	Thurs 27th	18.00	
12 Years A Slave	Fri 28th	14.30, 18.00, 21.00	
The Lego Movie	Fri 28th	18.00 (Screen 2)	Sat 1st 13.00 3D, 15.30 2D
	Sun 2nd	13.00 3D	Mon 3rd 18.30 2D
	Tues 4th	18.30 2D	Wed 5th 18.30 2D
	Thurs 6th	18.30 2D	
Dallas Buyers Club	Fri 28th	20.30 (Screen 2)	Sat 1st 21.00
	Sun 2nd	18.30	Mon 3rd 21.00
	Tues 4th	21.00	Wed 5th 21.00
	Thurs 6th	21.00	
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug			Sat 1st 18.00 3D HFR
			Sun 2nd 15.30 2D

RoboCop (12A)
In 2022 Detroit, when Alex Murphy (Keanu Reeves) – a loving husband, father and good cop – is critically injured in the line of duty, the multinational conglomerate OmniCorp sees their chance for a part-man, part-robot police officer.

Out of the Furnace (15)
When Rodney Baze mysteriously disappears and law enforcement doesn't follow through fast enough, his older brother, Russell, takes matters into his own hands to find justice.

Child In Chains - Documentary by Jon Pullman
In his documentary, Jon Pullman documents the abuse of Palestinian children in the Israeli Military Court System.

12 Years A Slave (15)
ONE DAY ONLY!!!!!! In the antebellum United States, Solomon Northup, a free black man from upstate New York, is abducted and sold into slavery. In 1841, Solomon Northup (Chiwetel Ejiofor) is a free negro living with his wife and two children in Saratoga Springs, New York. He makes his living as a skilled carpenter and fiddle player. One day he is lured by a pair of men (Scott McNairy and Taran Killam) into a lucrative touring gig with a circus. During a night of celebration the two men drug Northup. Upon waking he finds himself chained to a floor, being prepared to be sold.

The Lego Movie (U)
The original 3D computer animated story follows Emmet, an ordinary, rules-following, perfectly average LEGO minifigure, who is mistakenly identified as the most extraordinary person called the Master Builder and the key to saving the world. He is drafted into a fellowship of strangers on an epic quest to stop an evil LEGO tyrant from gluing the universe together, a journey for which

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club
Thurs 6th March 2014 7.30pm
Argyllshire Gathering Hall
Telforton Caledonian Band
Admission £4 All Welcome!

OBAN HIGH SCHOOL PIPE BAND & FRIENDS IN CONCERT
Thursday March 13 @ 7.30pm
Corran Halls, Oban
Tickets: £8 adult, £5 under 16/concessions
Family Ticket (2 adults/2children) £20
Tickets from Oban Music Shop, Oban High School, and Committee Members.

Lochaber Strathspey & Reel Society
Annual Fiddlers Rally
1st March 2014
In Caol Community Centre
At 7.30pm
Tickets available at the door

OBAN U3A
Tuesday 4 March 2014 at 10.30am
Regent Hotel, Corran
Esplanade, Oban
A warm welcome to members new and old for our monthly coffee and chat meeting.

To advertise in our community noticeboard call 01631 568000

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All steaks will served with vine cherry tomatoes, onion rings and your choice of triple cooked chips or mashed potato. Other options will also be available on the night.

If you like the sound of this then please call to book your table now on 01866822437. You can also send us a message through our Facebook page or email us at enquiries@taynuilthotel.co.uk



Donnie Maroot will tell one-liners from his Awful Joke Book during his unofficial world record attempt. 109donnie01

An hour-long hoot with Donnie Maroot

WESTERN Isles funnyman Donnie MacLeod is attempting to set an unofficial world record for telling the most jokes in an hour - and raise thousands of pounds for island charities.

Donnie 'Maroot', as he is more commonly known, hails from Lewis but now lives in Glasgow and is a familiar face at the Park Bar, the venue for his comical challenge.

UK comedian Tim Vine currently holds the official record of 550 jokes in an hour but Donnie is aiming to tell close to 600 jokes in the allotted time in front of an expectant audience in the Park next Wednesday, from

8.30pm. The actuary, who got his sponsorship off to a flying start when his employers Scottish Friendly pledged £2,000, has already published two versions of his Awful Joke Book. Proceeds from the books, full of Donnie's original one-liners, are split between Bethesda Care Home and Hospice in Stornoway, Harris House in Tarbert, Tagas Uibhist in Benbecula and Cobhair Bharraigh in Castlebay.

Donnie told *The Oban Times*: 'I was wondering if I could beat Tim Vine's record and my employers said they would give me

£2,000 to do it! 'It is certainly an easier way of raising money than dragging a pile of books around.' An annual competitor at the Royal National Mod, Donnie is used to performing in public, but never as a stand-up comedian. 'I've never tried anything like that - it should be interesting enough,' he said. 'I've got my P45 ready to go just in case it works out!'

Singer Robert Robertson will warm up the crowd before Donnie attempts his 'world record'. Donations can be made online at justgiving.com/DonnieMaroot

Glenfinnan to host fundraising kayak race

GLENFINNAN will host a weekend long fundraising event in March including a 21km kayak race. Loch Shiel Viking Challenge will raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support and the event, to be held on March 29 and 30, will feature craft stalls, kayak demos and a barbecue. There will also be an evening ceilidh in a marquee with music from The Jim Hunter Band and Glenfinnan Ceilidh Band. The race itself will start from Monument Beach with a 12km 'turn around point' for those who would prefer a shorter route instead of the full 21km.

Alastair Wallace, one of the organisers and committee member of Loch Shiel Viking Challenge said: 'A lot of local kayakers have shown an interest and we think people will come from all over Scotland and the rest of the UK to take part. We've already had a lot of help from local businesses, everyone has been really supportive.' Glenfinnan Community Council has been working alongside the committee to arrange the event and members believe it will do a lot for the village before the tourism season kicks in. Chairman Duncan Gibson said: 'There's been a good

wee buzz around the village about this, I've had lots of positive feedback from the community. The council will be thinking of activities for the kids to do during the race and we'll help out with tea and coffee for the spectators as well as running the bar at night. Glenfinnan Estate are providing land for camping and car parking which will help bring people in. I think it will be really good for the community and hopefully it will become an annual thing.' For more information or to book a place in the kayak race go to www.lochshiel-vikings.org.uk.



North Connel's Guide Unit helped raise £290 for charity with a soup lunch and cake sale at Benderloch's Victory Hall on Sunday, all as part of Thinking Day. Guides sold cakes they made themselves as well as donated treats, all in aid of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) Thinking Day Fund to help education projects in developing countries. Pictured at the sale are, from left, Jenny Tamplin, Ellidh Shearer, Kate MacPherson, Megan MacLean, Laura Campbell and Veronica Spears.

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SUSTAINABLE

Saturday 8th March 2014 - Mull Renewables Fair

The Mull Renewables Fair returns to Craignure Hall on Saturday 8 March, 2014. This follows the previous successful event which was attended by more than a hundred local people from Mull and Iona and seventeen businesses offering advice and information on the production of renewable energy. The last theme was 'Connecting Communities', both with renewable energy and also engaging people in a common project of benefit for all.

This year, Mike MacKenzie, who sits on the cross party group looking at renewable energy and energy efficiency, will open the fair and speakers will include one of the architects of the Green Deal on *What do the Green Deal and ECO mean for Mull*. The government has just made some new announcements last week with regard to incentives for energy saving measures including wall insulation which will be clarified at the fair by Vinay Kanani.

This year

- Learn how to generate heat and power at home for your home and family.
- Meet installers of heat pumps; wind turbines; log, wood chip and pellet boilers; hot water and electricity systems powered by the sun.
- See examples of equipment at the hall including a heat pump
- Find funding for improvements and renewables with help from your island energy advisors Anne-Clare and Nancy, Allenergy, and Home Energy Scotland.

Programme for 2014:

12 noon - Wilson Shaw from BCA group will be giving a presentation on Internal Wall insulation showing what it involves with some case studies and speaking of the work his company has been doing in mainland Argyll.

2pm - Presentation by Napier University - see below

This year we are also looking for 2 island homes in a similar state to insulate to a high standard, one with conventional internal wall insulation and the other with a ground breaking new external system combined with internal ventilation. This is for a long-term study which will include looking at the effect on occupants before, during and after work. If you want to know more or put forward your home for consideration please come to the presentation by Napier University on 8th March at 2pm in Craignure Hall.

Alternatively contact energyadvisor@mict.co.uk / 01680 812909

3.30pm - Talk about how air-to-air source heat pumps work (the machine will be on display).

Mull and Iona Sustainable Homes

Launched in December 2013, Mull and Iona Sustainable Homes aims to help residents reduce their carbon footprints and to minimize energy bills. The project is organised through the Mull and Iona Community Trust with funding from the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund and has three key elements; to provide impartial energy advice to households, to get local businesses involved in installing energy saving measures and to kick start a case study into an innovative new approach for hard to treat homes.

Energy advice to households will focus on ways to reduce energy consumption and therefore bills. Help with navigating the complex incentives and assistance packages available from the UK and Scottish Governments will also be available. From March the project will have two qualified assessors who will be able to produce Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) and Green Deal Advice Reports (GDARs) which are a prerequisite for any of the assistance packages. This advice will be free to all islanders although contributions may be sought for the lodgement of EPCs and GDARs. Secondly the project seeks to engage with local businesses and installers to promote accreditation to government schemes without which they cannot benefit from the work generated. The local economy will benefit as will residents.

ALIENERGY

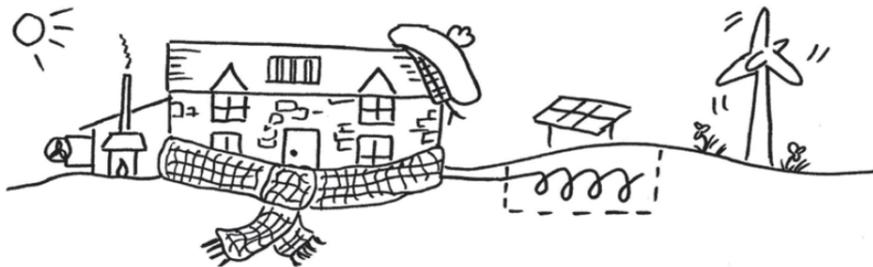
Argyll, Lomond & the Islands Energy Agency

Energising Argyll

- Free advice, support and mentoring on energy awareness and affordable warmth
- Access to Argyll's area based energy efficiency schemes
- Advice and consultancy on renewable energy, renewable heat and energy saving
- Energy education and awareness - schools and communities
- Information and support on developing skills and business opportunities in Argyll's growing energy sector
- Project management and consultancy – and assistance with securing funding for energy projects

Come and see us at the Mull Renewables Fair on Saturday 8th March

enquiries@alienergy.org.uk 01631 565183
Search for us on Facebook and Twitter



MULL Sat 8th March 11am - 4pm Craignure Hall RENEWABLES FAIR 2014

Find out how you can reduce your heating costs, keep warm & save energy

Learn how to generate heat & power at home, for your home & family

Meet installers of: heat pumps; wind turbines; log, wood chip & pellet boilers; hot water & electricity systems powered by the sun

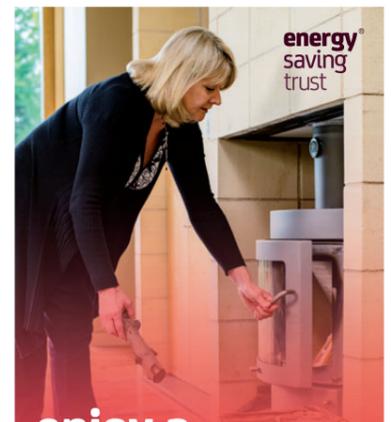
See examples of equipment at the hall including a heat pump

Find funding for improvements and renewables with help from your island energy advisors Anne-Clare and Nancy, Allenergy, and Home Energy Scotland.

Mike MacKenzie MSP will open the fair and speakers will include one of the architects of the Green Deal on "what do the Green Deal and ECO mean for Mull"

Do you live in a house which is hard to keep warm and damp free?

We are looking for 2 island homes in a similar state to insulate to a high standard, one with conventional internal wall insulation and the other with a ground breaking new external system combined with internal heat recovery ventilation. This is for a long-term study which will include looking at the effect on occupants before, during and after work. If you want to know more or put forward your home for consideration please come to the presentation by Napier University on 8th March at 2pm in Craignure Hall. Alternatively contact energyadvisor@mict.co.uk / 01680 812909



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For clear and impartial advice call Home Energy Scotland from the Scottish Government free on 0808 808 2282 or visit homeenergyscotland.org

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SUSTAINABLE MULL AND IONA



MULL AND IONA

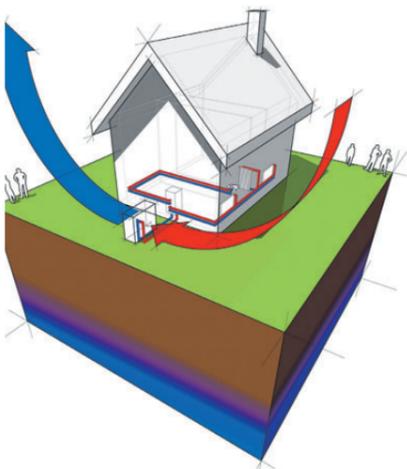
Thirdly a case study researching into improving hard to treat homes. Around a quarter of the heat in your house is lost through the roof but even more – up to a third – is lost through the walls (not including windows) of your home.

This case study is a pioneering comparative study of insulation applied to hard to treat homes. Around 65% of housing on Mull and Iona comes into the “hard to treat” category. This means that saving money on bills by improving the building structure

with insulation is challenging. If your house was built before 1919 then the likelihood is that the walls are solid and if it was built much later with a cavity, the cavity is often too narrow, or even if wide enough, filling it with insulation can cause damp issues in our climate. Rooms in the roof and dormer windows pose further challenges. We want to test a new product and look at current best practise on 2 island homes. The aim is to involve local business in developing a solution which will not only keep the heat in a home but also use controlled ventilation

(not those draughts from cracks and gaps) to stop rooms getting stuffy and avoid damp and condensation issues.

If you are a domestic householder and would like advice on anything to do with heating your home or improving its efficiency or are a local business who is interested in getting involved please get in touch with Nancy Winfield and Anne-Clare Landolt are based at An Roth, Craignuire and can be contacted on 01680 812909 or on energyadvisor@mict.co.uk.



Find out more about how you can save money on your energy bills at the Mull Renewables Fair.



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Barr Renewables will be at the Mull Renewables Fair on the 8th March, we look forward to seeing you there.

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Design - the top reason why families love their new build home

Design is the top reason homeowners gave for loving their new build homes, according to new research by NHBC (The National House-Building Council).

The new survey of over 1,000 people found that the design topped the list of their favourite things about their new build home, followed by its location and size and space.

The research, which was published on Valentine's Day, found that over one fifth (20 per cent) of people fell in love with the design and layout/look and feel of their new home, followed by a similar number (19 per cent) who said they were most attracted by its location. In third spot, just over 17 per cent said they loved the space that their new homes gave them.

Other popular answers were that new homes are energy efficient as well as being warm and cosy.

Previous research by NHBC Foundation found that families who live in new build homes built to 2013 standards could save more than £1,400 a year on their energy bills when compared to their neighbours in older homes.

The research was carried out using NHBC's nine month customer satisfaction survey.

The top 10 reasons people gave for loving their new home are:

1. Design and layout / look and feel
2. Location
3. Size and space
4. Kitchen
5. It's new
6. Cosy and warm
7. Energy efficiency
8. Maintenance-free/No DIY
9. Garden
10. Quality of home



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Argyll College UHI

Argyll College UHI Ltd provides access to a range of further and higher education opportunities. We require the following post:

Financial Director

The post is part-time for a fixed term of 2 years. Salary and hours negotiable.

We are looking for an enthusiastic and experienced individual to assist the college in developing its role as the primary provider of tertiary education within Argyll and the Islands.

The primary purpose of the post is to develop sound financial strategies towards achieving our mission.

The successful applicant will be responsible for managing operational activity and the effective running of systems, procedures and staff to provide a customer focused service for internal and external users of our services. The post also encompasses responsibility for risk analysis, financial compliance and the role of Company Secretary. Liaison with the Scottish Funding Council and within the UHI partnership will be an integral part of this role.

The successful candidate will be subject to an application to join the Disclosure Scotland Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme.

An application for this post can be downloaded from the vacancies section of our website at: www.argyllcollege.ac.uk

All applications must be made on the Argyll College application form.

Please send/e-mail to: Moira Gillespie, HR Admin Assistant, Argyll College UHI, Glenshellach Business Park, Oban PA34 4RY

E-mail to moira.gillespie@uhi.ac.uk

The closing date for applications is Friday 21st March.

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Isle of Mull Ref: DVR00625

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Closing date: 14 March 2014.
To apply visit our website



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Quality Systems Assistant Manager

An opportunity has arisen for the appointment of a Quality Systems Assistant Manager to join Marine Harvest's Quality systems team, based in Fort William. The main responsibility of the post will be to complete farm and processing audits in support of the Company Quality and Environmental standards, and to suggest and agree improvements and corrective actions where appropriate.

Principle responsibilities will include generating essential reports to meet customer requirements, supporting farm and processing managers with external audits and maintaining the Company's document management system. In addition the successful candidate will be required to carry out audits to support the Quality and Environmental Management Systems including ISO 9001, ISO 14001, British Retail Consortium standards, GlobalGAP, Label Rouge and ASC.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills and possess a high degree of computer literacy. Whilst it is not a requirement of the post it would be advantageous if applicants possessed a further education certificate in a related discipline. A driving licence is also essential.

If you would like to be considered for this post please apply in writing to: Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Manager, Business Resource Centre, Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 7PT by Friday 14th March 2014.



Couple, Cook/Housekeeper & Gardening/Maintenance person for West Coast Highland Estate

The Glenmoidart Estate is a family owned sporting property near Fort William. The applicants' responsibilities will include cooking and housekeeping in the main house (used exclusively by the owning family), and weekly changeover of a holiday cottage. In addition to the house work it will also involve gardening and maintenance work for the partner, knowledge of engines will be an advantage. The positions are part time with a minimum of 20 hours each per week, considerably more in season. The package includes a 3 bedroom cottage in a stunning location.

Car is essential.

Apply with CV for each applicant
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Hydro Project Officer

Hours: 38 hours per week (Job Share considered)
Salary: £22,000 - £25,000
Duration: April 2014 to Dec 2015
Closing Date: 17th March 2014 (9am)

This post has been created to provide focussed project management for a 100kW hydro project. We wish to recruit a key worker(s) to fundraise up to £500,000 and to project manage the construction to completion.

For further details, and to apply, visit our website at www.sunartcommunitycompany.co.uk
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Opportunity on Isle of Mull Estate

A small estate with a thriving self catering cottage enterprise seeks a multi skilled person for maintaining holiday cottages, including painting and minor repairs, grass cutting and all house keeping duties to carry out changeovers. Accommodation and work for partner may be available.

Application forms available from Caroline Isaac on caroline.isaac@bellingram.co.uk

Oban Times RECRUITMENT Oban Times



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Temporary Weekend (Sat & Sun) Guides 2014

Oban Distillery Visitor Centre, a five star Scottish Tourist Board attraction and the home of Oban Single Malt Whisky, are looking to recruit Temporary Seasonal Guides to carry out tours of the Distillery for visitors.

We are looking to recruit confident individuals who possess a high standard of communication and customer service skills with the ability to work within a team.

We are looking for candidates to work a fixed weekend shift of Saturday and Sunday during this season. Positions will be starting from the 24 March until around September/October.

Interested candidates should call Andrea Verrall, Brightwork on 0141 272 8104 or email your CV to andrea.verrall@brightworkltd.com. We will be attending a job fair in the Corran Halls on 5th March if you would like to come along. Interviews will be held locally.

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Candidates for this post will be required to work a continental shift pattern. As this position involves travelling a current clean driving license is essential.

NET WASHING TEAM MARINE OPERATIVE (3 Posts)

Salary £16,935

Candidates will be enthusiastic, self-motivated and be able to demonstrate prior experience in working within small, focused teams. Day to day duties will include net washing, net changing and boat handling. Previous aquaculture experience is essential for this post. Preference will also be given to those candidates who can offer transferable, related skills and qualifications. Candidates for this post will be required to work a continental shift pattern. As this position involves travelling a current clean driving license is essential.

In return, the Company offers a comprehensive pay and benefits package including entry into the Company pension scheme.

For an application form and job description, please contact:
Angela Gibson HR Officer,
The Scottish Salmon Company, Ardkinglas Estate, Cairndow,
Argyll, PA26 8BH. Tel. No. 01 499 600 430
Email: angela.gibson@scottishsalmon.com Closing date for applications:
5pm Friday 14th March 2014
Visit our website at www.scottishsalmon.com

Marketing and Engagement Manager Vacancy

Comar is currently seeking to appoint a full-time Marketing and Engagement Manager, to lead forward Comar's strategic marketing, audience development and education strategies.

The role will be responsible for developing marketing and engagement initiatives at the highest level, to help secure Comar's position as a unique, flagship arts organisation and for building and leading a small team who will work to collectively share Comar's artistic programme, and broaden and deepen engagement in our work.

Salary: £24,000-26,000 per annum
This is a Full-time position, on a 12 month fixed-term contract initially. However, this is a vital role in Comar's development and, as such, there is a very strong likelihood of the role becoming permanent after an initial 12 months.

To apply please send your CV and a covering letter to caroline.winn@comar.co.uk by Tuesday 18th March. Interviews will be held wc 24th March.

For a full Job Information Pack please visit www.comar.co.uk

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Hope Kitchen, Oban
Catering Coordinator
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An opportunity has arisen to coordinate all aspects of the day to day organisation of the catering service and assist the service manager in developing the service in line with the ideals and aims of the organisation.

Service Manager
 28 hours per week
 £24,000 pro rata (£19,200) per annum

An opportunity has arisen to manage the above service and participate in managing and developing the service in line with the ideals and aims of the organisation.

The posts are fixed term contracts for one year (52 weeks)
 Closing date for applications: 15 March 2014
 For more information or to request an information pack and application form please email: wendywhyte636@hotmail.com or write to:
The Secretary, Hope Kitchen Management Committee
 Mingulay, Barran, Kilmore, Oban PA34 4XR

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Mull and Iona Community Trust
VACANCY - Ulva Ferry, Isle of Mull
Housing Project Manager
(0.6 full-time equivalent)
 Salary £23,000 per annum (pro rata)

Mull and Iona Community Trust is looking to recruit a Project Manager to oversee development of an exciting new housing scheme at Ulva Ferry on the Isle of Mull. Reporting to the General Manager, the Housing Project Manager will work closely with a local steering group and with the community as a whole.

The project will involve securing the funding package for construction of two houses, finalising the design and obtaining all necessary consents and the establishment of governance structure under which the two houses will be offered at an affordable rent to local families.

The applicant will have a good understanding of project planning and budgetary control as well as the issues affecting fragile rural areas. Strong computer skills are desirable. A relevant qualification or prior experience would be advantageous as would a knowledge and affinity for the locality. Support and training is available for the right person. The position will be part-time for 3 days per week (with flexibility).

The contract will run for two years.
 To view the job description visit www.mict.co.uk, then contact Moray Finch, General Manager of the Community Trust (enquiries@mict.co.uk) for an application pack;

Closing date for applications: 10th March 2014

Mull and Iona Community Trust
VACANCY - Ulva Ferry, Isle of Mull
Local Development Officer
(0.5 full-time equivalent)
 Salary £24,000 per annum (pro rata)

Mull and Iona Community Trust is looking to recruit a self motivated individual to act as a catalyst for innovative and sustainable community development in the Ulva Ferry area. Reporting to the General Manager, the Local Development Officer will work closely with a local steering group and with the community as a whole.

Specific projects include affordable housing, play-park and community facilities; community transport, renewables and communications and assisting local groups.

The applicant will have a good understanding of the issues affecting fragile rural areas. Strong computer skills are desirable, as are strong diplomacy and communications skills.

A relevant qualification or prior experience in community-led development would be advantageous as would a knowledge and affinity for the locality. Support and training is available for the right person. The position will be a job share for 2.5 days per week.

The contract will run until March 2015 with the possibility of two further years subject to funding.

The ability to work on your own initiative is essential.
 To view the job description visit www.mict.co.uk, then contact Moray Finch, General Manager of the Community Trust (enquiries@mict.co.uk) for an application pack;

Closing date for applications: 10th March 2014

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 TO REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF
 LANDLORDS OF CROFTS

For an application pack and full details on this appointment, please visit the dedicated public appointments website www.appointed-for-scotland.org If necessary, paper copies of application forms and packs can be provided on request. If you experience any difficulties accessing our website, or wish a paper copy application pack, please contact the Public Appointments Centre of Expertise on Freephone 0800 015 8449 or by email at paapplicationsmailbox@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

The closing date for applications is Friday 14 March 2014.

Scottish Ministers welcome applications from groups currently under-represented on Scotland's public bodies, such as women, disabled people and people aged under 50.

Appointed on merit; committed to diversity and equality

J.M. BRECKENRIDGE
Driver/Storeperson
Fort William
 Apply to Mr C McDonald. Telephone 01631 563 711
 Permanent full time position
 Full clean driving licence required
 • Good rates of pay

CLEANER REQUIRED
 Temporary position from 3rd March for approximately 2 weeks to clean holiday accommodation in preparation for the start of the 2014 season.
Telephone 01631 562425 or 07919 940234

public notices

PROPOSED ASSIGNMENT OF A CROFT
 John Allan MacKintosh, is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to assign the tenancy of the croft at 49B, Banavie, Kilmallie, to Rodger John William Bayliff of Sleepy Hollow, Banavie, Fort William.

If you have an interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or other permanent form to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (email: info@crofting-scotland.gov.uk) within 28 days from the date of publication of the advert.

Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry.

CROFTING COMMISSION
COMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD
FIRST REGISTRATION OF COMMON GRAZINGS

The Crofting Commission have registered the following Common Grazings on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Ockle Common Grazings, Ardnamurchan & Sunart
 Registration Number: CG46

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may appeal to the Scottish Land Court. The appeal must be brought within 9 months from the date of this advert and should be made directly to the Land Court.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

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Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010
3 Commercial Moorings, Kilniver
 Notice is hereby given that Kilniver Estate has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of 3 commercial moorings at:

Location	Latitude Co-ordinates	Longitude Co-ordinates
Loch Feochan	56°20.682' N	05°30.635' W
Loch Feochan	56°20.652' N	05°30.682' W
Loch Feochan	56°20.616' N	05°30.727' W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at the Sub Post Office, Kilmelford.

Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to:
 Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email: MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, quoting reference: FKB/J268 Kilniver Estate

69%
 of the business community read the regional press

To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982
TAXI FARE REVIEW

Notice is hereby given that Argyll and Bute Council, having consulted with taxi operators licensed by the authority, propose to make the following changes to the maximum fares for taxis operating within the jurisdiction of Argyll and Bute Council. It is proposed these maximum fares will become effective from 9th June 2014.

Any person wishing to lodge representations in respect of these proposals should do so by writing to the Head of Governance and Law, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RT no later than 28th March 2014.

Tariff	Hirings from ranks or "flag"	Initial charge	Subsequent charge	General effect
Tariff 1	Hirings from ranks or "flag" between 7am and 10pm	£3.00	20 pence	(general effect - increase of 30p to 'initial charge' and distance for each unit of 'subsequent charge' reduced from 200 to 176 yards)
Tariff 2	Hirings from ranks or "flag" between 10pm and 7am	£3.60	20 pence	(general effect - increase of 40p to 'initial charge' and distance for each unit of 'subsequent charge' reduced from 170 to 150 yards)
Tariff 3	Hiring from ranks or "flag" between 10pm 24th December and 7am 27th December and between 10pm 31st December and 7am 2nd January	£4.20	20 pence	(general effect - 50p increase to 'initial charge', subsequent charge yardage to remain the same)

Soiling Charge - £100 maximum (with permission to display warning signs indicating that there may be an additional charge for any potential loss of earnings suffered as a consequence)
 Waiting Time - 35 pence per minute commencement of journey, charged on a pro rata basis per second
 (general effect - increase of 5p)
 Taxi called by means of telephone - 30 pence additional charge
 Large Mini-bus type vehicle (carrying 5 or more passengers together at their own request) -
 a) Where Tariff 1 would apply - charge Tariff 2
 b) Where Tariff 2 would apply - charge Tariff 3
 c) Where Tariff 3 would apply - surcharge £1.00
 Fee by negotiation - for all journeys commencing within but finishing outwith Argyll and Bute, in a place of the above charges, such fares may be charged as prior to the acceptance of the hire, were proposed to the hirer and accepted by him/her
 Ferry Fares - The hirer shall be liable for the cost of a return ferry fare for any journey involving a ferry

www.highland.gov.uk

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the SERVICE POINT, LOCHABER HOUSE, HIGH STREET, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6EL and online at <http://www.highland.gov.uk>

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

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
14/00508/FUL	Ardvullin House Ardgour, Fort William	Replacement of rear conservatory with a new single storey conservatory
14/00523/FUL	Old Drill Hall Loan Fern Ballachulish	Demolition of existing store & construction of new 2 storey store facility

Time period for comments is 14 days
 ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
 Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

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HIGHLAND WELCOME (UK) LIMITED
 NOTICE is hereby given that on 19 February 2014, a Petition was presented to the Sheriff at Fort William by Highland Welcome (UK) Limited, a company incorporated under the Companies Acts (Company Number SC411722), having its registered office at Woodland House, Happy Valley, Torlundy, Fort William, PH33 6SW craving inter alia that Highland Welcome (UK) Limited, a company incorporated under the Companies Acts (Company Number SC411722), having its registered office at Woodland House, Happy Valley, Torlundy, Fort William, PH33 6SW be wound up by the Court; in which Petition by Interlocutor dated 19 February 2014, the Sheriff appointed all parties having an interest to lodge Answers in the hands of the Sheriff Clerk at Fort William within 8 days after intimation, service and advertisement, under certification.

Duncan MacPhee
 Solicitor for the Petitioner
 MacPhee & Partners
 Airds House
 An Aird
 Fort William
 PH33 6BL

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Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

PLANNING

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, Monday to Friday 9am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm. On Wednesdays, the Customer Service Points will open at 10am. At the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. 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.

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
13/02810/PPP	Alterations and change of use of dwellinghouse and barn to retail/bar/restaurant, erection of extension/decking, formation of car park and vehicular access	Forge Cottage Portnacraigh Appin Argyll And Bute PA38 4BL	Sub Post Office Ledaig
13/02933/PPP	Site for the erection of 3 dwellinghouses.	Land West of 8 Fountainhead Bunesan Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA67 6DS	Sub Post Office Bunesan Isle of Mull
14/00155/PPP	Erection of an 80 metre high meteorological mast for a temporary period of 36 months	Land Approx. 3.4km South East of Ballineanoch Farm East Lochawside Dalmaily Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Dalmally
14/00209/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land North East of Acharadhail Croft Ardturn Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Bunesan Isle of Mull
14/00247/PPP	Erection of dwellinghouse (amended design relative to planning permission reference 13/01505/PPP)	Craig Lodge Dalmaily Argyll and Bute PA33 1AR	Sub Post Office Dalmally
14/00253/PPP	Erection of dwellinghouse, formation of vehicular access and installation of sewage treatment plant and infiltration system	Land North West of Torrain Isle of Iona Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Isle of Iona
14/00266/PPP	Change of use from store to offices and salon	Store 16 Airds Crescent Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 5SJ	Oban Area Office
14/00329/PPP	Site for the erection of one dwellinghouse	Land to West of Portnacraigh Portnacraigh Appin Argyll and Bute PA38 4BL	Sub Post Office Ledaig
14/00405/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse.	Plot A1 Land South West of Ashcroft Dervaig Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Dervaig
14/00412/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse.	Plot A2 Land South West of Ashcroft Dervaig Isle of Mull	Sub Post Office Dervaig
14/00414/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Plot C1 Land East of Fomer Mornish Primary School Calgary Isle Of Mull Argyll and Bute PA75 60S	Sub Post Office Dervaig
14/00415/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse.	Plot C2 Land East of Fomer Mornish Primary School Calgary Isle Of Mull Argyll and Bute PA75 60S	Sub Post Office Dervaig
14/00442/PPP	Renewal of Planning Permission in Principle 10/01937/PPP (Site for the erection of a dwellinghouse).	Land North East of Dunmhairi Kilchrean Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Taynuilt
14/00443/PPP	Site for the erection of a dwellinghouse	Land North East of Dunmhairi Kilchrean Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Taynuilt

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS)(SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
13/02812/LIB	Alterations and change of use of dwellinghouse and barn to retail/bar/restaurant, erection of extension/decking and signage, formation of car park and vehicular access	Forge Cottage Portnacraigh Appin Argyll and Bute PA38 4BL	Sub Post Office Ledaig

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS)(SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

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, Central Validation Team, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD.

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.

First Registration of a Croft
 Mr Ronald & Mrs Joyce Christine Darvill have registered their croft 4 Lower Scotstown, Ardnamurchan and Sunart on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by November 20, 2014. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home

The crofts registration numbers are A0345

Oban Branch Macmillan Cancer Support AGM
 Friday 7 March 2014
 7.30pm LIDGH
 All Welcome

First Registration of a Croft
 James J Munro has registered his crofts 2 and 3 Clovulin, Ardgour, Kingairloch on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by October 31, 2014.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home

The crofts registration numbers are C43 and C44

Friends of Oban Hospice AGM
 Thursday 20th March 2014
 7.30pm
 Glencruitten Church Centre
 New Members Welcome

Atlantis Leisure - NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
 The Annual General Meeting of Oban & Lom Community Enterprise Limited will be held at Atlantis Leisure on March 24, 2014 at 7pm, Atlantis Function Room.
 All welcome.

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE
 D.I. Lamont & Co Ltd trading as D.I. Lamont & Co Ltd of Duncairn House, Salen, Acharacle, Argyll, PH36 4JN is applying for a licence to use Duncairn House, Salen, Acharacle, Argyll, PH36 4JN as an operating centre for 1 goods vehicle.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

The future of farming lies in diversification

Marketing of 'quality' products offering change and building west coast reputation

AGRICULTURE could be considered the biggest economic driver on the west coast.

With a value of more than £56 million a year, from farming alone, investment and training may be a fail-safe opportunity for a stronger economic future.

A survey, conducted by Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum, shows the business end of the farming market is almost holding up in tough economic times.

But with fewer farmers working less land, experts say the best opportunities lie in diversification.

The survey's results reveal the farming community is shrinking with fewer people farming smaller areas of land, with fewer heads of stock.

Yet, the value of stock is on the rise.

Products such as Argyll Hill Lamb are leading the way in building a reputation for quality, and also for the pure environment in which lamb is reared.

Reputation

Other products can build a reputation on the high quality products that already exist.

In Lochaber and Skye, Highland Council has supported more than 80 potential food and drink businesses through Business Gateway.

It is hoped that agricultural holdings will be able to take advantage of the demand for new high quality products.

Sheep, beef and dairy livestock numbers dropped to an all-time low in 2010 but are now beginning to rise again.

This is in direct response to a market demand for the

quality product from the west coast.

Farmers themselves, however, are in a steady decline. The agricultural forum has concerns of an overall ageing population within the industry and is putting in place a number of training initiatives to try to turn the problem around.

The survey showed there are still low levels of profit, with farmers highlighting subsidy income to their continued existence.

The imperative of keeping the land in use for practical and economic reasons are clear, but the farming community may also play a vital role in the bigger economic recovery for the whole of the area.

It is hoped, by the agricultural forum, the continued diversification of both farms and crofts brings sustainability to the market.

The survey highlights tourism as a good example of alternative ways for a farm to increase its profitability.

Angus MacFadyen, chairman of Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum, is clear that the product can match any other in the country.

An Argyll hill farmer himself, he says: 'The product is growing in value because people appreciate the way in which it has been farmed in a pure, clean environment.'

Part of the growth in the market is the belief in the wide range of products available. Fergus Younger, Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum's rural development manager, has helped to develop a Food from Argyll brand in order to establish a foothold in key national and international markets.



Fergus Younger: aiming to secure a 'vibrant, active and progressive agricultural community'

The branding encourages the name of Argyll, Lochaber or Skye and so on, not only to be a serious contender for the high end of the market, but also connects a quality product with a quality experience, which in turn encourages tourism.

VisitScotland's regional director, David Adams McGilp agrees.

Provenance

He said: 'Visitors today are very interested in local produce and food provenance, so the origin of what they consume is becoming as serious a consideration as the quality of the product.'

'People always like to be offered something special, and there is no shortage of local specialities.'

'On the back of the quality product, there are more

opportunities than ever for activities to be integrated and complementary.

'Think of the increase in farm-based holiday accommodation and activities across Argyll and the Highlands, and how this has happened in response to market demands.'

The Scottish Government wants the agricultural world to be part of the 'customer journey'.

This can be achieved, it suggests, through the production of food and drink.

In its 2013 tourism strategy it looked at agricultural producers as a 'very strong fit with the development of tourism'.

Despite current successes in farming diversification into tourism, the agricultural forum is not resting on its laurels and is keen to address the ageing population of farmers.

Fergus Younger points to improving conditions to 'secure a vibrant, active and progressive agricultural community that plays a vital role in safeguarding and maintaining our pristine natural quality environment, further improve the value and volume of our food production in a sustainable manner, and enhance the established provenance and authenticity of quality food from Argyll and the Isles'.

This will be achieved through the agricultural forum offering land-based education and skills training, increased access to productive land and promoting succession planning.

By building on this collaboration, they hope to continue the reversal of fortunes for the farmer.



The pure environment is part of the pull of the product.

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PERSONAL NOTICES

THANK YOU
 Graham Whitelaw would like to thank everyone for their cards, presents and kind words on the occasion of his retirement from his post as Sheriff Clerk, Oban and Campbeltown.

JACKSON
 Christopher & Jasmine are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their daughter Rosie Jasmine, born on January 17th, 2014. First grand daughter for John & Yvonne Jackson, Appin and for Owen & Maxine Hoey, Oban.

JOHNSTON (née McWhirter)
 Judith is thrilled to announce the birth of her grandson. To Katie and Chris of Stirling on February 18, 2014 a beautiful healthy boy, Luke Richard. A wonderful new life. Ricky (Bank of Scotland) would have been a very proud grandfather.

Happy 18th
Christina Louise MacKinnon!
 Love from Mum, Dad, Jamie, Rebecca & Diarmid.

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Market reports

United Auctions Tیره

UNITED Auctions held their Annual Early Spring Sale of 298 Cattle at Tیره Auction Mart last Thursday, when bullocks sold to average £897.40 per head or 239p per kilo against £843.65 per head or 229.3p per kilo last year.

Heifers sold to average £775.70 per head or 221.3p per kilo against £648.46 per head or 201.5p per kilo last year.

Bullocks sold to a top of £1,260 for a pen of six charolais crosses from Heylipol Farm and hereford crosses from Clachan fetched the same price.

Heifers sold to a top of £1,230 for charolais crosses from Heylipol. Top price per kilo came from Ruaig's consignment with a pen of three limousin crosses selling to 286pence whilst Heylipol Farm sold a pen of four charolais cross heifers to lead this section at 265pence.

A feature of the sale was Heylipol Farm's consignment of 86 charolais, limousin and AA bullocks and heifers which averaged 426 kilo's at £1,083 per head or 254pence per kilo.

Principal lots and prices:

Bullocks:
AAx: £1130(6) & £1060(7)
- Heylipol Farm; £1040 - Hillcrest.
BSHx: £760(4) - Middleton Farm
BRBx: £1000 - Ruaig; £950 - Sackhill; £880 - Ruaig.
CHARx: £1260(6), £1240(2), £1230(3), £1200(5), £1150(3), £1090(2), £1080(3) & £980 - Heylipol Farm.
HERx: £1260, £1140(3), £1030 - Clachan.
LIMx: £1150(4), £1080(4), £1070, £1010(2), £980 - Heylipol Farm; £960 - Hillcrest; £930 - 3 Kenovay; £910(2) - Ruaig; £890 - MainRoad; £840(2) - 7 Balinoe; £830 - 3 Kenovay.
LUNING: £880(3) - Middleton Farm.
SALx: £880 - Middleton Farm
SIMx: £1060, £860 & £810 - Lochphuil.
Heifers: AAx: £720(2) - Hillcrest
BRBx: £790 - 17 Balevullin.
CHARx: £1230 & £1170 - Heylipol Farm; £1160 - Ruaig; £1090, £1060(2), £1050(6), £1030(5), £1020, £990(5), £980(2), £970(5), £930(4) & £890(2) - Heylipol Farm.
HERx: £1000(4) - Clachan; £930 - Ruaig; £880 - Clachan.
LIMx: £790(3) - Hillcrest.
SALx: £660(5) - Middleton Farm.
SIMx: £830 - Lochphuil; £780(2) - 17 Balevullin.
Top prices per kilo:
Bullocks: AAx: 259p - Hillcrest & Heylipol Farm(13); 230p - Hillcrest; 215p & 214p(2) - Benview.
BSHx: 219p(4) - Middleton Farm.
BRBx: 283p - Sackhill; 275p, 238p & 230p - Ruaig.

CHARx: 282p(3), 276p(3), 271p(3), 270p(2), 266p(6), 262p(2), 261p(3), 253p & 249p(2) - Heylipol Farm.
HERx: 216p(2) & 210p(2) - 8 Barrapool.

LIMx: 286p(3) - Ruaig; 284p - MainRoad; 267p(3) - Hillcrest; 263p & 262p(2) - Heylipol Farm; 260p - Hillcrest; 259p - Heylipol Farm & Ruaig(4); 250p(3), 248p & 244p(4) - Heylipol Farm; 242p(2) - Hillcrest; 234p - 7 Balinoe; 232p - 6 Balevullin; 227p(2) - 7 Balinoe; 226p - 3 Kenovay; 225p - 6 Balevullin.

SALx: 224p - Middleton Farm & 15 Crossapol; 221p - 15 Crossapol; 220p(2) - Lochphuil.

SIMx: 260p, 236p, 233p, 229p, 224p(2) & 223p - Lochphuil.
HEIFERS:
AAx: 205p - Benview.
CHARx: 265p(4), 261p, 255p(3), 252p(6) & 249p - Heylipol Farm; 245p - Ruaig; 244p, 241p(5), 239p(5), 238p, 236p(3), 233p(2) & 232p(2) - Heylipol Farm.
HERx: 196p(4) - Clachan.
LIMx: 238p - 7 Balinoe; 232p(4), 228p(3) & 225p(5) - Hillcrest; 223p - 6 Balevullin.

SIMx: 229p & 225p - Lochphuil.
Breeding cattle:
Incalf heifers: £1120 - 13 Moss.
INCALF COWS: £800 - Hillcrest.
OTM COWS: £1000, £900 - Heylipol Farm; £720 - Hillcrest.

Caledonian Marts Stirling

CALEDONIAN Marts sold 407 store cat store cattle and 12 young bulls at its Stirling sale on Monday, as well as forward 1,393 store hoggets and breeding ewes.

Bullocks 179 averaged 238p to 292p per kilo for a 125kg Charolais from Turbiskill Farms, Tayvallich, Argyll and £1400 gross for 680kg Limousin from Fairfield, Kippen.

Store hoggets sold to £74 for Texel x's from W Stevenson, Ballingray. Ewe hoggets sold to £75.50 for Texel's from R Bell & Partners, Craigo.

Grit Ewes sold to £155 for Texel x's from W Adam, 20 Mannerston Holdings.

Heifers 155 averaged 225p to 264p per kg for a 365kg British Blue from Allanfauld, Kilsyth and £1200 gross for a 565kg Charolais from Shortridge, Slamannan.

Leading Prices:
Bullocks £ per head:
0-250kgs - £620 Droystone;
251-300kgs - £810 Tower; 301-350kgs - £800 Wester Blairsketh; 351-400kgs - £1070 Allanfauld; 401-450kgs - £1120 Linfair; 451-500kgs - £1140 Gibbleston; 501-550kgs - £1240 Fairfield; 551-600kgs - £1370 Middelrigg; 651-700kgs - £1400 Fairfield.

Heifers:
0-250kgs - £630 East Gartfarren; 251-300kgs - £700 Laigh Letterpin; 301-350kgs - £895 Allanfauld; 351-400kgs - £965 Allanfauld; 401-

450kgs - £1040 Linfair; 451-500kgs - £1150 Shortrigg; 551-600kgs - £1200 Shortrigg.
Leading Prices:
Bullocks p per kilo:
0-250kgs - 222p Turbiskill and Borlick; 251-300kgs - 283p Balquhaston; 301-350kgs - 258p Wester Blairsketh; 351-400kgs - 276p Allanfauld; 401-450kgs - 260p Linfair; 451-500kgs - 239p Eskechreggan; 501-550kgs - 240p Fairfield.
551-600kgs - 228p Middelrigg; 651-700kgs - 206p Fairfield.

Heifers:
0-250kgs - 257p Gartfarren; 251-300kgs - 264p Laigh Letterpin; 301-350kgs - 261p Glenhead; 351-400kgs - 264p Allanfauld; 401-450kgs - 239p Linfair; 451-500kgs - 230p Shortrigg; 551-600kgs - 212p Shortrigg.
Leading Prices:
Hoggets: Suff - £72 Spinkhill; Tex x - £66 Ballingray; Tex - Mornish £65; Mule - £65 Innieshewan; BF - £64.50 Innieshewan.
Ewe Hoggets: Tex - £74.50 Craigo; Llyne x - £54 Turbiskill Farms.

Grit Ewes: Belt (Carrying twins) - £150 Mannerston; Tex (carrying twins) - £155 Mannerston; Tex (carrying singles) - £112 Mannerston; Char (carrying twins) - £105 Blairlinnans; Chev (carrying twins) - £105 Blairlinnans; Tex x (carrying singles) - £83 Blairlinnans.

Grit Gimmers: Char (Carrying twins) - £138 Mannerston; Tex x (carrying twins) - £116 Blairlinnans; Mule (carrying twins) - £109 Waterloo; Tex (carrying singles) - £108 Mannerston.
Cast Tups: BF - £70 Mornish; BF x - £68 Myretonhill.

United Auctions Stirling
UNITED Auctions sold 5,546 prime sheep including 4,320 lambs and 1,226 ewes and rams at its Stirling sale last Tuesday.

Lambs: Pitkevy (Suff) £95; Cadogan Estate (Tex) £98; Wardhead (Chev) £92; Dalbrack Glenesk (Mule) £85; Glenhead and Sheanlarich (BF) £83; Luckenburn (Btex) £98; Southfield (Char) £84.50.

Lambs: Dunslaw (Suff) 206p; West Park (Tex) 223p; Dalbrack Glenesk (Chev) 211p; Gartvaigh & Trean (Mule) 197p; Camoquithill (BF) 194p; Easter Ochtermuthill (Btex) 229p; Tay & Torridan (Char) 207p.

Ewes: Pitsundry (Suff) £109.50; Garvald Mains (HB) £84.50; Dalfask (BFL) £83.50; Tay & Torridan (Btex) £99.50; Alton of Bandon (Tex) £98.50; Southfield (Char) £81.50; Garvald Mains (Chev) £80.50; Kinloch (Cross) £88.50; Ormiston (Mule) £79.50; Dalfask (BF) £72.50.

Rams: Quixwood (Suff) £89.50; Wester Bowhouse (BFL) £94.50; Prieston (Tex) £109; Old Camb (Chev) £85.50; Trean (BF) £45.50.

Islay to host wild geese management conference



Nigel Miller warned habitats could become 'damaged' if goose populations aren't managed.

ISLAY will host a two-day National Farmers' Union Scotland (NFUS) conference next month on the future management of wild geese in Scotland.

Chaired by Ken Rundle of SRUC, the conference will see a range of speakers including NFUS president Nigel Miller and deputy director of policy Andrew Bauer.

Since the 1970s, there has been a steady increase in goose numbers of some species in parts of Scotland, particularly around the remote and fragile islands and coastal areas. Farmers and crofters in these areas are seeing a significant increase in damage to farmland as a result of growing goose populations and are having to adjust their farming activity to cope.

There will be farm visits on Monday March 10, including to the RSPB Wildlife Reserve at Loch Gruinart, before the conference proper starts on March 11 at the Columbia Centre.

The event will cover a range of topics including the challenges set by farming with both protected and quarry species of geese across Scotland.

Head of the bill is Paul Walton, head of habitats and species at the RSPB, who will speak

about meeting the UK's nature conservation objectives.

The afternoon will feature workshops for attendees focussing on co-existence of protected species alongside farming as well as the impact of quarry species of geese.

Nigel Miller, president of NFUS Scotland who will be speaking at the event, commented: 'This is an important event for not only Islay, but many other areas which have been affected by the increase in the goose population. The lessons learnt and the experience gained on Islay will have a real spin off benefit for other regions.'

'From the two-day conference we aim to re-examine the Scottish Government's policy objectives on goose management and ensure there is a viable future for agricultural businesses which are affected by geese in the Highlands and Islands and other areas of Scotland.'

'The future changes to the Common Agricultural Policy will have a significant impact on farmers in these fragile areas. The habitat that has been built by farmers may become damaged if wildlife populations, like geese, are not managed. We need to ensure there is support in place to help farmers cope with growing goose populations.'

Robbie takes top prize at annual stockjudging competition



Willie Shaw, with stick, judges the top lamb class alongside steward Angus Dickie. Photograph by Kevin McGlynn.

DESPITE being held on a rainy Valentine's evening, 130 people attended the annual stockjudging competition, held by the North Argyll branch of the Blackface Sheep Breeders Association.

Held at the mart in Dalmailly, the competition was won by Robbie Campbell, who also took the top prize in Fort William recently. However, there were plenty of prizes for local farm Balliemeanoch; John MacPherson was second overall in the individual award and runner-up in the team event, along with sons Grant and Alex.

Balliemeanoch won the open top hogg class and took the

first two places in the top hogg homebred class, while Grant MacPherson was second behind Niall Menzies in the Young Farmers Cup. But judges awarded the best sheep to one of the furthest travelled competitors, Messrs Campbell, Succothmore.

Results: Individual and North Eastern Trophy: 1 Robbie Campbell; 2 John MacPherson; 3 Kevin MacKinnon. Team: 1 Kenny McCallum, Donald McColl, Robbie Campbell; 2 Grant MacPherson, Alex MacPherson, John MacPherson; 3 Archie McGregor, Hugh Blackwood, John Murray, Young Farmers Class and Suie Lodge Cup: 1 Niall

Menzies; 2 Grant MacPherson; 3 Blair Menzies. Ladies and Youngs Animal Health Shield: 1 Joanne McKenzie; 2 Catriona Anderson; 3 Wilma Cameron. Under 14s: 1 Katie Cameron; 2 Ruairidh Cameron; 3 A Shaw. Top Hogg Homebred Class and Bill Black Shield: 1 J & J MacPherson, Balliemeanoch; 2 J & J MacPherson, Balliemeanoch; 3 Messrs Campbell, Succoth. Open Top Hogg Class: 1 J & J MacPherson, Balliemeanoch; 2 Messrs McLarty, Little Port; 3 J & J MacPherson, Balliemeanoch. Champion Sheep won by Messrs Campbell, Succothmore. Winner of draw, Angus Campbell.



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DIAMOND WEDDING

GRAHAM - MACLEOD - On February 26, 1954, at Hope Street Free Church, Glasgow by Rev William Campbell (uncle of the bride), Donnie to Annie MacLeod. Present address Kiloran, Feochan Gardens, Oban.

DEATHS

CAMERON - Peacefully on February 19, 2014, surrounded by her devoted family, after a long illness bravely and patiently borne, Catherine Ann (Morvern Postie for almost 40 years), dearly loved younger daughter of the late Alexander and Helen, Bunavullin, Drimmin, and darling sister, companion and very best friend of Bibby. Funeral was held on Tuesday, February 25 2014 at Drimmin. She was much loved and will be sorely missed by all her family and many friends.

CAMPBELL - Gertrude Campbell (née Mann), wife of the late Duncan MacVicar Campbell, mother of Duncan, Ivar, Eoin, and the late John and Ian, died February 21, 2014. Funeral Service on Friday February 28 at Stuchur Cemetery at 1pm to which all friends are respectfully invited.

GILLIES - Suddenly but peacefully at the Lorn & Islands Hospital, Oban on February 20, 2014, Jeanie (Jean) Rankin (née McNicol) aged 83 years, wife of the late William, formerly of Curacao, Tainui, much loved mother of John, Duncan, William, James, Catherine and Helen, loving mother-in-law, granny, great-granny and sister. Funeral to take place on Friday February 28, 2014 at Muckkaim Parish Church at 1pm, donations for Muckkaim Parish Church.

LIVINGSTONE - Peacefully, at Glenaray Ward, Mid Argyll Hospital, on February 18, 2014, Alistair Livingstone, aged 93 years, of 12b Caledonia Court, Ardrishaig and formerly of Poltalloch and Kilmorey, former BRS Driver and latterly of M & K MacLeod, beloved husband of the late Anne Wilson, dear brother of Dolly and Mary and a much loved uncle and cousin to all the family. A good neighbour, dear friend and former work colleague to many. Funeral Service was held in Glassary Parish Church, Kilmichael, on Tuesday, February 25, followed by interment at Achnabreac Cemetery. Sadly missed.

McPATRIDGE - Peacefully at Abbeyfield, Ballachulish, on Tuesday, February 25, 2014, John, aged 83, loving husband of the late Irene, much loved father of Paul, Ian and David, and much loved granddad. Funeral to be held at St Mun's RC Church, Ballachulish at 1pm on Saturday March 1, 2014. Refreshments at Holly Tree, Kentallen.

McLAREN - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on February 20, 2014, in her 85th year, Elizabeth Leitch McLaren (Betty), beloved wife of the late Duncan, much loved mother, mother-in-law and granny.

TELFORD - Marita Telford, formerly of Dalnally and Tainui, died aged 81 years on February 21, 2014, in Herefordshire after a brief illness.

THOMSON - Bunty (Margaret Mary), at home aged 91 on February 20, 2014. Widow of Alan Sainsbury and John Thomson. Much loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Donations if desired to The National Deaf Society Scotland. Please contact Helensburgh Co-operative Funeralcare for details of funeral arrangements on 01436 673322.

WRAGG - Katherine Ray (née Brown). Peacefully at Lochside Care Home, Shandon on February 23, 2014. Kay, beloved wife of Charlie formerly of Glenmolloch Farm, Luss, much loved mother of Iain and Hazel, loving mother-in-law and granny. Funeral service at Luss Parish Church on Friday February 28 at 1.30pm followed by interment in churchyard. No flowers please but, if desired, donations to Alzheimer Scotland Helensburgh Branch would be appreciated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

JONES - Kenny, Tina and family wish to thank all relatives and friends for all their expressions of sympathy and support over the loss of our dear daughter and sister Janet. We are blessed to have had such love and ongoing support over the last year and would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the many Masses and prayers said for Janet. Also for the many cards, letters, gifts and flowers sent, we are most grateful. Special thanks to Lochaber MS Group for their kindness, to Right Rev Bishop Toal, Monsignor Wynne, Fr McCauley and Monsignor MacKinnon for spiritual comfort and support.

MACCORMICK - The family of John would like to thank all relatives and friends for all their expressions of sympathy and support since our sad loss.

Special thanks to staff at Mull and Iona Community Hospital, Lorn and Islands Hospital (Ward B) and all at Bunessan Surgery for all their care and attention. Thanks to Rev John Collard for the comforting service, Iain MacDougall and Linda Cameron for their help with funeral arrangements. Thank you to all who attended the church and graveside to pay their respects and for the contributions to the collection of £435 for Erskine Hospital and Pulmonary Fibrosis Trust.

MACLEOD - The family of the late Sheila MacLeod wish to thank everyone for their kindness, support, cards, phone calls, flowers, and visits following their sad loss. Sincere thanks to Doctors E Boyle and E Glen, District and Macmillan Nurses, and all in Lorn and Islands District Hospital Ward B, Rev Bill Gray and Mr Donald MacKinnon for their spiritual comfort and uplifting service. Thanks to D & A Munn for efficient and sensitive handling of funeral arrangements, also the Royal Hotel for refreshments. Retrial collection for Macmillan Nurses realised the sum of £491.29.

MEMORIAMS

CAMERON - In loving memory of my darling wife Sheena Ann, who died on February 26, 2013. Long are the days without you here But we know that you are near You are never more than a thought away Very sorely missed. - Your loving husband Dugald (Dougie)

CAMERON - In loving memory of our mum Sheena Ann Macintyre, who passed away February 26, 2013. Life ends but memories last forever. - Mark, Lynn and Ruth xxx

MACALLISTER - In loving memory of our dad and granddad John, who died on March 2, 2002. - Sadly missed by all the MacAllister Family.

MACBEAN - In memory of my dear sister Sheena, who passed away on March 3, 2013. Always in my thoughts. - Janet.

MACDONALD - Precious memories of my dear mother Mary who died February 24, 1998. Deep in my heart you will always stay. - Jessie and Ian xx

MACLEAN - Treasured memories of my darling husband Calum, who died suddenly on March 1, 1992. R.I.P. Calum, those we love live in our hearts forever. With all my love. - Chrissie xx.

MACLEOD - In memory of Captain Donald MacLeod, Kilchoan, who died March 1, 1996. Always remembered. - Inserted by nephew Hugh.

MACQUEEN - In loving memory of our dear mum Veronica who passed away on February 25, 2000. Loved and missed always. - Yvonne, Richard, Michael and Innes.

MACQUEEN - Treasured memories of Veronica a much loved sister and auntie, who passed away on February 25, 2000. Loved and remembered always. - Violet, Iain, Janet, Jennifer and families.

MACVICAR - In loving memory of a dear wife Christina (Teena) who died March 1, 2007. Will never be forgotten. - Johnnie

MACVICAR - In memory of a loving mother and nana, Christina, died March 1, 2007. Dearly loved, never forgotten. - Catherine, John, John, Niall and Michael.

MORTON - In loving memory of a dear wife and mother Catherine passed away February 24, 1995. Forever in our thoughts. - John, John and David x

In loving memory of a cherished mum and nana Catherine, passed away February 24, 1995. A day doesn't go by that we don't think about you. Love always. - Karen, Norman, Christopher, Lewis and Arran xxx

In loving memory of my beloved daughter-in-law Catherine, passed away February 24, 1995. Forever in my thoughts. - Mum x

ROBERTSON - Agnes. In loving memory of a loving mum, mother-in-law, and granny, who passed away February 26, 2012. Forever in our thoughts. - Jim, Jessie and family.

Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

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CHURCH NOTICES

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION

Sunday 2 March 2014
Quinquagesima
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Communion.....08:00
Combined Mattins and Eucharist.....10:15

Children's Corner
Loop System
Large Print Hymn Books
All Welcome
Nicki McNelly, Provost
(01631) 562323
Kilbrandon Kirk
Holy Eucharist.....15:15
Holy Cross, Portnacraich, Appin
Evensong.....18:00
A cordial welcome to people from any church or none
St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Mattins.....11:00

St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist.....09:30

Wednesday 5 March 2014
Ash Wednesday
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Said Eucharist.....11:00
Sung Eucharist.....19:00

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Fighting Cancer on all fronts...
CRC Scotland spends more on research than any other organisation
Commitment of over £15 million each year
Cancer Research UK
Angel Building
407 St John Street
London EC1V 4AD

MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE

Oban & Lorn Fundraising Branch
Donations always gratefully accepted
Please contact
Mrs Lillian Kermode
Tynwald, Glenburn,
Soroba Road, Oban
01631 571009

Oban Hospice
CARING FOR THE FUTURE
Donations always gratefully accepted
Please contact
Jack Tolan
Birch Hill
Achnacreebeag
North Connel, PA37 1RE

WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT
Working towards a time when every person in Scotland has equal and ready access to the best information, treatment and care for cancer
West of Scotland Fundraising Office
1st Floor, Erskine House
North Avenue, Clydebank
Business Park, Clydebank G81 2DR
Tel 0808 100 6000
In memory of Dawn Joyce



Josie Campbell, left, Elaine Strathie and her mum Myra were amongst the volunteers who served up home baking to hungry locals who helped raise £300 for Age Concern. 06_a08te01

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Thought for the week

Water, water, everywhere

The floods in the south of England have brought about a flurry of people all playing 'The Blame Game'. Behind this is the assumption that 'it must be someone's ultimate responsibility'. Why have we not been hearing more of the complaint that God is behind all this disaster?
Since Carl Sagan coined the phrase 'The Cosmos is all that is or was or ever will be' people have assumed that we are alone in an accidental universe born of chance - there is no room for a Creator-designed universe. So man is no longer a special being different from and responsible for the rest of creation. The choices we make are meaningless, because we live in a meaningless universe and ultimately will have a meaningless death in which everything we are will be recycled into other forms of life.



Fresh calls are being made for more landslide mitigation works at Butterbridge following last week's closure.

Pressure mounting on Transport Scotland over A83 landslides

PRESSURE is mounting on Transport Scotland this week to install protective netting along larger stretches of the A83 after a second landslide hit Butterbridge at the weekend. Tonnes of rubble fell on to the A83 between the Rest and Be Thankful and Cairndow at 11.09am on Sunday, closing the road to motorists until the following morning.

The landslide was the third to have occurred away from the landslide-prone Rest and Be Thankful in recent months. Now businesses and residents who depend on the lifeline route are calling on Transport Scotland to take action at other A83 'trouble spots'.

Jamie McGrigor, MSP for Highlands and Islands, said: 'It is of real concern this landslide and October's occurred at locations outside the area where the emergency relief road at the Rest and Be Thankful can be used in the event of closures.'

'Following this landslide at Butterbridge I will be writing to the minister to push for practical landslide prevention measures on these sections to be implemented without delay.'

A spokeswoman for Transport Scotland said: 'We have always been aware there are other landslide risks along the A83 and that is why we are having the surveys at Glen Kinglas, Cairndow and Loch Shira carried out. 'We will be in a better position to decide what the most appropriate action will be when they are completed.'

Further protective netting is currently being installed at the Rest and Be Thankful to minimise the threat of landslides reaching the road.



Elidh Moira Ormiston, Barchaline graduated recently with a Postgraduate Diploma in Outdoor Education, Moray House, Edinburgh University. Elidh is wife of John, mother of Saul, Seori and Kyle and daughter of Moira and the late Sandy Cousins. Elidh is a lecturer in the School of Adventure Studies, West Highland College, UHI, expedition leader with World Challenge and guide with Wilderness Scotland.

A close shave for Ballachulish stag

A RED deer stag which has been the centre of an online campaign ran into danger when it was nearly hit by a van in Ballachulish. Affectionately named Tarquin leaped on to the village's main road but the driver managed to avoid crashing into the beast, according to local reports.

A social networking campaign to save the stag, known to roam crofts and gardens in the area, received overwhelming support earlier in the month, after it was suggested he posed a danger to locals and should be shot. Ballachulish Community Council chairman Kevin Smith said: 'I'm thankful that nobody was hurt and that the stag wasn't harmed. Hopefully it will be left alone to do its own thing and will eventually disappear back where it came from when we have some warmer weather.'

Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

GRADUATION
Elidh Moira Ormiston, Barchaline graduated recently with a Postgraduate Diploma in Outdoor Education, Moray House, Edinburgh University. Elidh is wife of John, mother of Saul, Seori and Kyle and daughter of Moira and the late Sandy Cousins. Elidh is a lecturer in the School of Adventure Studies, West Highland College, UHI, expedition leader with World Challenge and guide with Wilderness Scotland.

Trading standards alerted over company's Green Deal Scheme

ARGYLL and Bute Council's Trading Standards has received a number of complaints concerning Green Deal Awards Limited of Wellwynd, Airdrie, which has been carrying out 'green deal assessments' for a fee of £149. In a number of cases customers found that the assessments had not been carried out, and have been unable to obtain a refund. North Lanarkshire Council has confirmed the company has ceased trading and has issued the following advice:

Consumers who have paid by credit card and not had a survey carried out should approach their credit card provider and submit a S75 claim for reimbursement due to breach of contract.

Where consumers have had an Energy Performance survey (EPC) carried out, but haven't been given a certificate yet, the company's director has said they will endeavour to have these certificates sent out so that the consumers can progress through the Green Deal Scheme.

Consumers who have paid by debit card should initially approach their debit card provider to ask for a chargeback on the grounds that the company have indicated they will not be able to carry out the agreed contract.

A FASHION show and pop-up charity shop will be coming to Tobermory as Oxfam Boutique spreads its wings from Glasgow to Mull. The boutique sells sustainable fashion with a unique range of clothes and accessories which includes one-off designs created just for Oxfam, with money raised going to fight poverty around the world.

The shop will be open at An Tobar on March 1 from 10am-4pm, while the fashion show, in the same venue, will run from 7pm until late. There will mainly be ladieswear and accessories but also a small amount of vintage clothing and accessories and some men's clothing.

The event is supported by Michael Russell MSP, whose office is helping to organise the event. He said: 'Argyll and Bute has an incredibly rich pool of talented people but we know that finding the right job can be difficult. That's why events such as this are so important to helping people across the constituency find opportunities and jobs to enhance their careers.'

Employers prepare for Oban jobs fair
EMPLOYERS from across Argyll will invite job-seekers to Oban's Corran Halls next Thursday as the Argyll and Bute Employment Partnership hosts its Opportunities for All Careers and Jobs Fair. Running from 10am-2.30pm, employers attending include Scottish Sea Farms, FishFrom and Oban Distillery.

The event is supported by Michael Russell MSP, whose office is helping to organise the event. He said: 'Argyll and Bute has an incredibly rich pool of talented people but we know that finding the right job can be difficult. That's why events such as this are so important to helping people across the constituency find opportunities and jobs to enhance their careers.'

Charity boutique to pop-up in Mull
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& West Highland Times
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Hungry like a Wolff

SUSIE Wolff has announced that she will continue in her role as Development Driver for Williams, which will take her to the next stage in her F1 career. The announcement will see the former Oban woman become the first female driver to compete in a Formula One Grand Prix session in over two decades, as she achieves her super licence and takes to the wheel in the Williams Mercedes FW36 in two F1 sessions this summer.



Oban's Susie Wolff is to continue as Development Driver for the Williams F1 Team.

and the increased responsibility is testament of the team's faith in her abilities. The role also builds on Susie's promising performance for Williams in last year's Young Drivers Test in Silverstone.

Susie said: 'I am really proud to be taking this next step in my racing career with Williams. It's not about being a woman, it's about being the absolute best you can be in the sport. I'm grateful to Williams for supporting me and giving me more responsibility within the team. 2014 is going to be a real

MOTOR RACING

milestone in my career. I have a big opportunity and I'm going to grab it with both hands.'

Joining Williams in April 2012, Susie made the transition from racing for Mercedes Benz in the German Touring Car Championship to F1 - which was highlighted by BBC2 documentary 'Driven: The Fastest Woman in the World.'

Written and directed by her BAFTA nominated brother, David Stoddart, the documentary followed Susie's bid to progress into F1, compete with the elite within motorsport and battle with outdated sexist views about women in the sport.

Speaking about Susie's continued role with the team Pat Symonds, chief technical officer, said: 'Susie has become a valued member of our driver line up and 2014 will see her take on more responsibilities as we seek to make a strong step forward in performance. Susie has demonstrated a natural talent for developing a car and providing strong insights and feedback. These characteristics will be key this season as teams seek to quickly understand and refine the radically overhauled 2014.'

Exciting season ahead, says former Scottish cap



by Fraser Inglis

THE RESTRUCTURING of the leagues will, I hope, lead to an exciting season but more importantly give teams the chance to improve their standard of play through increased competition.

Reducing the Premier League to eight teams was not universally popular but the change means there is no comfort zone and competition will be intense.

Newtonmore will rightly start as favourites for the Premier League. However, Lovat showed last season they are a young and improving side and they will be hoping to go one better this year.

Kyles were a major force in the cup competitions last season, reaching three finals. They will be hoping they can bring their cup form into the league campaign this year but player availability will be the key to Kyles' success.

The other teams in the league will be hoping to retain their place in the elite league, as returning to the premiership from the new National Division One will be far from a certainty. Kingussie are still in transition, while Inveraray will do very well to get close to the third position last year.

With new management teams at both Glenurquhart and Kinlochshiel, they will need to settle in quickly and get their best teams on to the field every week.

Lochaber manager Robert Johnstone turned Lochaber's season around last year and it will be interesting to see if he can carry that form into this year.

Player commitment will be very important to all teams but, for the sides with smaller player pools, it could be the difference between survival and relegation.

There-introduction of National Division One will give teams from north and south the ideal environment for improvement through increased competition.

National Division One will provide the best preparation for competing in the premier league. It is shaping up to be a very good league and will be closely contested, which means the start teams make could prove crucial.

Fort William will be favourites for this championship with their experience and talented young players like Arran MacPhee and Steven Stewart.

Near neighbours Kilmallie have been in the premier league before and many of their older players would surely like another chance in the top league.

Caberfeidh and Beaulie are both clubs with a long and distinguished history and the current players will see the chance to add to that history by gaining premier league status. Both have the potential to do well.

The South bid will be led by Oban Camanachd and Glasgow Mid Argyll and both have points to prove; Oban Camanachd dropping down from the premier last season and Glasgow stepping up in standard from South Division One.

Oban Camanachd came up short last season in the premier. Their desire to improve and get back to the top league and prove themselves will be the key to their season.

Glasgow Mid Argyll are well organised and will be difficult opponents for everyone.

Glenorchy have a good group of talented players but player availability has been a problem in recent seasons and that situation will need to improve if they are to make a challenge.

Bute have proven they are good enough and very committed over the last decade but with retirements and loss of players to other clubs they will do well to mount a sustained challenge.

New shinty season preview ... New shinty season preview ...



Newtonmore Captain, Scott Chisholm, with the Orion Group Premiership trophy surrounded by the shirts from Orion Group Premiership teams.

Orion Group announces sponsorship extension until the end of 2014

THE Orion Group has extended its sponsorship of shinty's Premiership until the end of 2014.

Orion Group began its sponsorship of shinty's top league in 2012 when the company was celebrating its 25th year of operation and following two thrilling seasons, both clinched by Newtonmore, it has agreed to continue its involvement for the coming year.

Orion Group's head of marketing and communications, Scott Burns-Smith, said: 'Orion is delighted to be sponsoring the Premiership for the forthcoming season. As a company operating not only in Scotland but across various locations internationally, sponsoring such sporting associations and projects within different cultural communities is part of our organisation's ethos and we are pleased to offer our support to

the Camanachd Association for the third consecutive year.'

Camanachd Association president, Archie Robertson, said: 'The Camanachd Association is delighted Orion Group has extended its sponsorship of the Premiership. The Orion Group Premiership showcases the best of shinty so it is fitting that the pairing with such a prestigious and successful Scottish company continues.'

Coll Sharks Football Club celebrates first anniversary

YOUNG footballers on the Isle of Coll celebrated the one year anniversary of the Friday night football club with the first annual prize-giving and awards ceremony for Coll Sharks FC at An Cridhe, Arinagour.

With numbers averaging 15 each week, football has proved a big hit with the boys and girls of the island, who showed off their new football kits at the awards event.

George McCannachie, who coaches the team along with Richie Martindale, said: 'The kids were absolutely delighted with their new strips and they really deserved some reward after all their hard work over the last year.'

YOUTH FOOTBALL

'We'd like to say thanks to the Coll Association which provided the kits and to the Coll Half-Marathon Committee for funding the medals and trophies. All we need to do now is find a team to play against!'

The team are interested in finding tournaments to take part in this summer or to line up matches against other teams in the Oban area. Visiting teams would also be made very welcome on Coll and anyone interested should contact George on 01879 230000.



The Coll Sharks are, back row first, from left, Ishbel MacKay, Ewan Carswell, Fraser Carswell, Thomas Wilson, Joseph Williams-Bale, Joseph Wilson, Ross Martindale, Fergus Maclean-Bristol. Front row: Xander Maclean-Bristol, Caitlin MacKay, Patrick MacIntyre, Angus Carswell, Fergus MacIntyre, Malcolm MacIntyre, Hamish MacIntyre, Calum Carswell. The coaches are Richie Martindale, left, and George McCannachie.

Joy as Outreach pick up their first point of the season

IT HAS been a crucial two weeks in the Oban Pool League as teams at the top and bottom of the table posted important results.

The Cellar inflicted a fifth successive defeat on the Gluepot, while Markie Dans 'A' and the Lochnell and unsurprisingly honours remained even.

The gulf in quality between the big three and the rest has become evident after week sixteen of the domestic pool season.



Oban Saints Under 14 striker Martin Rennie challenges for the ball during the game against Renton last Saturday at the Oban Community Pitch. Martin bagged a hat-trick as Saints ran out 10-1 winners. 07.09.1002

team Outreach posted their first point by gaining a draw against Markie Dans B.

The only other fixture completed in week 17 took place between Foley's Bar and the Lochnell and unsurprisingly honours remained even.

The gulf in quality between the big three and the rest has become evident after week sixteen of the domestic pool season.

Markie Dans 'B' would have certainly fancied their chances of continuing their recent form but a lacklustre performance was punished by a fast improving Outreach. Ultimately, it may have only been a point earned but the smile across some of the Outreach players witnessed by their growing fan base has justified their inclusion this season.

Results, February 13: Lancaster B 2-8 Markie Dans A; The Lochavullin 1-9 The Cellar; The Gluepot 3-7 Foleys Bar; The Lochnell 2-8 Lancaster A; Outreach 5-5 Markie Dans B.

Results, February 20: Foleys Bar 5-5 The Lochnell; The Cellar 9-1 The Gluepot; Markie Dans A 9-1 The Claredon.

POOL

The Lancaster 'A' continue to hold the slenderest of leads over both the Cellar Bar and Markie Dans 'A' but the story of the week was Outreach finally registering their first point of the season.

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Oban Pool League is sponsored by the Creagan Inn		
P	Pts	
1	26	Lancaster A
2	26	Cellar Bar
3	26	Markie Dans A
4	17	Lancaster B
5	15	Markie Dans B
6	14	Lochnell
7	14	Foley's Bar
8	8	Claredon
9	8	Gluepot
10	8	Lochavullin
11	5	Creagan Inn
12	1	Outreach

Newtonmore

CONTINUOUS improvement is the key to success for last year's Orion Group Premiership and Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup winners Newtonmore.

Coach PJ Mackintosh said: 'We just want to keep improving. I think that's the aim for most teams right now. It would be good to get some more young boys in the team because some of our players are getting a wee bit older so we need some fresh meat.'

'We have a couple of young ones who played last year so I'll be concentrating on getting them to a high standard and into a few more games. We're training all the time so everything's going well.'

Joe Mackenzie has left the team because of work commitments but the club is pleased to welcome back forward line Evan Menzies after a year in Australia.

Newtonmore will play Lochaber at home in the first game of the Orion Group Premiership on Saturday.

Player to watch: Evan Menzies. The 26-year-old forward was top goal scorer two years in a row before leaving the team for Australia last year.

Kyles Athletic

IN A season when Kyles Athletic failed to challenge for the league title and lost the Camanachd Cup final, it would be easy to think that 2013 was a disappointing year for the Argyll men.

Not so, says trainer James Perlich, who can count the Macaulay Cup and the Celtic Society Cup among the Tighnabruich side's achievements of last term.

'We don't have any changes to make this season,' he said. 'Pre-season has gone relatively well and we'll go into the season with the mind set of trying to win every game.'

But while the perennial issue of player availability will give Perlich a headache from week to week, there is a more pressing concern: league reconstruction.

'Looking at the fixtures in this new eight-team league, there could be trouble ahead. If you haven't done well in the cups come the last weekend of May and at the end of August then you could have weeks without a game.'

'I fear there might be top flight teams having to manage players who are sitting twiddling their thumbs, waiting for a game. That's a real problem for coaches.'

One to watch: Teenagers Zac Coley and Cammy Keith have improved year on year and featured heavily in the first team last season. The youngsters could quickly become permanent fixtures if Kyles lose more senior players through injury and suspension.

Lovat

LOVAT will have a tough task improving on last season when they lifted the Co-operative MacTavish Cup and claimed second place in the Orion Group Premiership.

Coach Allan MacRae will have much the same squad at his disposal but has lost two key

members - Danny Kelly is playing football with Ross County and Jamie Mathieson is working in Italy.

On the plus side, Jamie Matheson is fit again, while Iain Nicholson and Fraser Gallagher are likely to be challenging for places, MacRae said.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'We will be trying to keep going as we have been going. I will be looking for a bit of improvement and consistency but with a tighter league and fewer teams it will be cut-throat.'

'Last year we were up there competing at the top and hopefully we can do the same again.'

Lovat have a tough opener to their season on Saturday when they take on Kyles at Balgait Park.

MacRae said: 'I don't think there's going to be any easy games. I think it will be pretty full on from the first match.'

Manager's player to watch: Kevin Bartlett. The speedy forward adapted well to premiership shinty after joining Lovat from Caberfeidh and could make a big impact in his second season.

Kingussie

KINGUSSIE will focus on maturing a young squad this season as they put forward teenage players, said co-manager Russell Jones.

'We want to keep improving and building the team year on year. We have quite a young squad but we're hoping they've matured over the winter and will be ready for a good performance this season.'

Paul Gow will be missing from the team as he suffered a long-term injury after breaking his jaw in three places last month.

'He is one of our most experienced players so that's going to be a big blow for us. Our numbers aren't massive so we can't afford to have any suspensions or injuries, although there's not much you can do to prevent injuries.'

Kingussie will play Inveraray in their first game of the Orion Group Premiership on Saturday.

Player to watch: Thomas Borthwick. The 20-year-old centre forward scored in the 2010 Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup final at age 16 and has been improving this winter after a break in Australia.

Inveraray

INVERARAY have welcomed a number of familiar faces back to the fold as player-manager Garry MacPherson looks to expand his first team squad.

Forward Grant Griffin has returned from two years in Australia and Chris Crawford and David 'Bingo' Robertson have recovered from long-term injury. Meanwhile, key defender Douglas Dando has been hard at training and is likely to feature more regularly this term.

MacPherson said: 'With only eight teams in the premier league, we will need to be sharp from the off.'

'I think a lot of results will come down to which team is on their game that day.'

Inveraray got off to a flying start last season, finding a new source of goals through youngster Lewis McNicol, but unless they make a similar impact

early on this season they could spend the year challenging at the wrong end of the table.

While MacPherson said his team will do all it can to stay in the Orion Group Premiership, he admitted he did not fear relegation.

'We were relegated to the National Division One 10 years ago and it did us good. We won matches, grew in confidence and cups and promotion followed.'

One to watch: Young full back Alan MacDonald, last season's player of the year, will be relied upon to steady an Inveraray defence still finding its feet at the top level.

Lochaber

THE Spean Bridge side face a real baptism of fire in their opening fixture of the season away to Orion Group Premiership champions Newtonmore.

If that were not tough enough, the Spean Bridge team go into the game not having played any shinty after games against Kilmallie then Fort William last Saturday were wiped out by the weather.

Coach Robert Johnstone remains undaunted, however, and can't wait to see how his team compete against the best.

He said: 'The boys have been training hard on fitness and stick work. The absence of games will make us a bit rusty but I don't think it will affect our ability.'

'Newtonmore are the benchmark to aim for and to get a result against them would be a big confidence boost.'

Johnstone will put the accent on youth this season with Duncan MacKenzie, Jack Dignan, Stuart Callison, Pat Toal and Ryan Johnstone all set to play a big part in the team, which has Lachie Campbell as captain.

Manager's player to watch: Pat Toal has speed, ability and reads the game well. The versatile 18-year-old will play in the forward line.

Glenurquhart

STAYING in the Orion Group Premiership is top priority for new Glenurquhart manager Billy MacLean.

MacLean, who will co-manage with David Menzies after taking over from Fraser MacKenzie and Drew McNeil said: 'The first ambition is to avoid relegation, then once we have done that ideally we would like to win a cup but it's going to be a very competitive league.'

Liam Girvan has gone back to Inverness after spending a year at Glenurquhart but the team will be boosted by new players Michael Brady and Raymond Robertson, coming from Glenarry and Boleskin respectively.

McNeil added: 'Both boys are coming from a lower level of shinty but they have been training hard and are keen to make appearances in the first team.'

Player to watch: Neil Reid, 22, and Lewis MacLennan, 25. Both men are experienced players and have been top goal scorers in preseason games.

Kinlochshiel

STAYING in the eight-team Orion Group Premiership this season is the main aim of new Kinlochshiel boss Colin Fraser.

'Shiel will be boosted by the return of Crisdean 'Ach' MacRae and Neil Fraser to the squad but as always be faced with the problem of assembling their far-flung players on match days.

Fraser, who has taken over from Johnston Gill, said: 'It is really hard to get the boys together - they are scattered all over Scotland. The only time they see each other is on a Saturday and that is a big stumbling block for us.'

'We have boys in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and four or five in Inverness and boys going off shore as well which scuppers our plans.'

'But the guys are looking forward to it and have been training very hard. You can't ask for more than that.'

'We want to do a bit better than we did last year. We just want to survive in the league - that's our aim.'

Manager's player to watch: Oliver 'Ach' MacRae. The versatile 17-year-old is improving every season and can play in defence, the centre line or the forward line.

Oban Camanachd

MANAGER Gussie Campbell says now is the time for his young team to deliver, by plotting a course back to the Orion Group Premiership.

Now into the third year of his four-year plan, Campbell admits he cannot use his side's inexperience as a reason for failure.

'We can't keep saying we've got a young team,' he said. 'There has to be an end product for this team and, for me, this is the season they need to produce.'

A tricky tie away to Caberfeidh on the opening day will be a typically tough test in the new Marine Harvest National Division and Campbell has added the experience and expertise of coaches Ian Hay and Fraser Inglis for a difficult year ahead.

The team also has ambitions to lift a cup this season: the Celtic Society Cup and Oban's own Macaulay Cup will be the most realistic targets. Campbell said his squad was desperate to make up for a poor showing in the Macaulay final two years ago.

The coaching team has promoted David Lafferty, Shaun Morgan and Connor Howe from Lochside Rovers.

One to watch: Daniel Cameron, so often the rock at the heart of Camanachd's defence, has been playing at centre in pre-season and his power in midfield could provide an attacking base for a pacy forward line.

Fort William

FORT WILLIAM look to be in fine shape as they look to bounce back up to the Orion Group Premiership.

Pre-season form - including a 4-0 win over Inveraray - suggests The Fort must be considered among the favourites for promotion from the National Division.

However, building a team which can challenge for top honours in future is the number one priority, says co-manager Adi Robertson.

He said: 'We want to nurture a team that will be with us for

New shinty season preview ... New shinty season preview ... New shinty season preview



Fixtures

Saturday March 1

Orion Group Premiership
 Glenurquhart v Kinlochshiel
 Deek Cameron
 Inveraray v Kingussie
 Innes Wood
 Lovat v Kyles Athletic
 Graham Cameron
 Newtonmore v Lochaber
 David Mitchell

Marine Harvest National Division
 Beaulieu v Glasgow Mid Argyll
 Evan MacRae
 Bute v Kilmallie
 Billy Wotherspoon
 Caberfeidh v Oban Camanachd
 David Stafford
 Fort William v Glenorchy
 John Angus Gillies

Marine Harvest North Division 1
 Inverness v Newtonmore
 Neil Ferguson
 Kingussie v Glenurquhart
 Ronnie Campbell
 Skye v Beaulieu
 Archie Ritchie
 Strathglass v Lovat
 Calum Girvan

Marine Harvest North Division 2
 Boleskin v Fort William
 Ron Kennedy
 Glengarry v Skye
 Robert Morrison
 Kinlochshiel v Lochcarron
 Martin MacLean
 Lochaber v Aberdeen Uni
 John Matheson

Marine Harvest North Division 3
 Kilmallie v Caberfeidh
 Ted McDonald
 Lochroom v Inverness
 Andy MacLean

Marine Harvest South Division 1
 Kilmory v Strachur
 Colin MacDonald
 Kyles Athletic v Ballachulish
 John MacGregor
 Oban Celtic v Aberdour
 Lachie Wood
 Taynuilt v Lochside Rovers
 Daniel MacRae

Marine Harvest South Division 2
 Aberdour v Bute
 Neil MacDonald
 Ballachulish v Inveraray
 John Wood
 Col Glen v Tayforth
 Euan Pearson
 Glasgow MA v Glenorchy
 Robert Baxter

All throw-ups are 2.30pm unless stated

Girls' Shinty Day in Cumbernauld

GIRLS' SHINTY

A FREE Girls' Shinty Day has been organised for Sunday March 2 from 1pm to 4pm at Broadwood, Cumbernauld.

This is aimed at all ages and abilities, from 5 to 16-year-olds, and will involve a variety of skill sessions based on age, experience and ability. The club would welcome input and assistance from all the clubs including any of the senior or national women's teams. Pre-registration would be appreciated but is not necessary so that approximate numbers can be known. For more information and to register email ccl.shinty@hotmail.co.uk.



Donald Stewart, marketing and communications director of the Camanachd Association, left, receives the new trophies from Alan Sutherland managing director and Jayne MacKay PA to managing director of Marine Harvest.

Marine Harvest delivers new trophies

THE 2014 season sees the launch of two National Divisions, the senior's Marine Harvest National Division and the women's Marine Harvest National Division Two, and recently the Camanachd Association took delivery of the brand new trophies from Marine Harvest managing director, Alan Sutherland.

Consultation

The Marine Harvest National Division was introduced following an extensive consultation process during 2012 and 2013 which sought to eradicate a number of the problems within senior shinty including lack of development in the South and the season continually over-running. The teams competing in the new league

are Beaulieu, Bute, Caberfeidh, Fort William, Glasgow Mid Argyll, Glenorchy, Kilmallie and Oban Camanachd.

The women's game went through a similar process and following open discussions with their clubs voted unanimously to remove the two regional leagues which sat below their existing national league and replace them with one additional national league. Two larger leagues will result in a rise in the number of games, an increase in competition for the established sides and a wider opportunity for progression for developing teams.

Camanachd Association president, Archie Robertson, said: 'The Marine Harvest National Division is an exciting addition to

senior shinty's competition structure and to the Marine Harvest sponsorship which is now entering its 26th year. It will go some way to alleviating the problems faced by our sport and with such a strong calibre of teams from the North and South involved, I am sure we are in for some exciting encounters.'

New format

Marine Harvest's Alan Sutherland said: 'We are delighted to support the new Marine Harvest National Division for both senior and women's shinty. A lot of work has gone into establishing this new format and Marine Harvest is fully supportive of the outcome which we hope will continue to raise the profile of shinty even further.'

the lookout for new players. 'The objectives this season will be to give these boys games and avoid relegation.'

One to watch: Ryan Gillies burst onto the scene last season and the promising youngster is likely to become a key part of Taynuilt's new, younger team.

Lochside Rovers

THE OBAN side will look to the experience of Brian MacCallum, Christopher Ecclestone and Aidan MacIntyre to lead their 2014 campaign as a troop of teenagers are drafted in.

Lochside have lost three players to Oban Camanachd and are forced to bring in junior players to complete the squad.

The new management team of David 'Skinny' MacInnes and Tony Howlett will have a job on their hands to bring silverware back to Oban but the inclusion of the young Oban prospects in adult shinty could unearth a star of the future.

One to watch: At just 15 years old, half back Ross MacMillan already looks a prospect and he could adapt more quickly than most against adult opposition.

Ballachulish

SUTHERLAND Cup and Buloogh Cup holders Ballachulish are hoping promotion for the second successive season will take them into the National Division and one step closer to top-flight shinty.

The Jubilee Park team have secured the services of local boy Grant MacKenzie who scored a hatful of goals for Kilmallie last year and will bring added firepower to the forward line.

But coach Craig Munro will have to find replacements for wing centres Donald Wilson and John Clark, who have both retired from the game.

Captain Alan Clark, meanwhile, is likely to miss the first

few games as he recovers from shoulder surgery.

Munro said: 'We want to win trophies. We have a few players missing and if we can get through the start of the season we are more than capable of promotion.'

He added: 'Grant scored 40-odd goals in North Division 1 so I would hope he is capable of scoring that again.'

Manager's player to watch: Grant MacKenzie. The burly full forward will be a potent threat to opposition defences with his power and accuracy.

Glenorchy

GLENS supporters will see a first team line-up in 2014 that is identical to last season - but the club has reinstated a second team for this year to compete in South Division Two.

Club secretary Findlay Ross

said: 'We have a lot of boys aged between 13 and 15 who need game time, so they will make up the core of the second team, supplemented by some more experienced heads from yesteryear.'

For the first team, mid-table respectability will be the aim. 'Looking at this National Division, it is a really tough league,' said Ross. 'It is almost like a second premier league.'

One to watch: John McNulty seems to have been around forever but has only just turned 19 years old. Games in the National Division could see him thrive against a higher standard of opponent.

Strachur

STRACHUR have appointed two new managers, Brain Dickie and John Montgomery, in a bid to breathe new life into

Glenorchy do the double over Ballachulish

Ballachulish 1, Glenorchy 4
 A WEEKEND of consistent rain and hail meant the friendly between Ballachulish and Glenorchy was moved from Jubilee Park to the astro turf pitch in Kinlochleven on Saturday.

The friendly game turned out to be as miserable as the weather for the home team as Glenorchy held a 2-0 lead by half time, thanks to goals from Grant MacPherson and Keiran MacKay.

Ballachulish pulled one back in the second half through a Lorne Brown strike against his old

team. The game stayed tight for a short period, before two further goals from Glenorchy's John MacNulty made the final score 4-1.

Edging

The junior teams played earlier in the day with Glenorchy just edging the game to win 3-2 with goals from Arik MacKechnie, Callum Kirsop and Findlay Ross.

Ballachulish replied with goals from David Malcolm and Ally Banks and Ali MacDonald of the home team was named man of the match.



The games were played on the 3G pitch at Kinlochleven. 20_f09shinty02

a number of years and if that's enough to take us up then great but if not then it's not a disaster.

'The National Division will be a very competitive league with Oban, Kilmallie and Caberfeidh in there so promotion is by no means a certainty.'

'We want to do well in the league and the cups and apart from one or two teams we don't fear anybody. We are looking forward to playing against premier league teams in the cup draws.'

He added: 'There has been a really good response in training - everybody is up for it and looking forward to the season.'

Defender Liam MacIntyre could make his return to the squad within weeks after undergoing four operations on a broken hand sustained against Newtonmore last year.

Manager's player to watch: Arran MacPhee, at just 17, is likely to be the playmaker in the forward line and has all the attributes to be one of the best in the game.

Kilmallie

LAST SEASON'S North Division 1 champions Kilmallie have lost four key players from their squad as they prepare to open their National Division campaign against Bute.

Top goal scorer Grant MacKenzie has departed for Ballachulish, international forward John Stewart is unlikely to play this season due to arthritis, talismanic goalkeeper Kevin Toye has quit the game for personal reasons and Martin 'Shorty' Graham is out for at least two months as he continues to struggle with a knee ligament problem.

Coach Duncan Kelly said: 'These are four good players and would have been down for automatic selection this year.'

'We know it is going to be a very difficult league, especially when you see the results that Fort William and Oban have had against premier league teams.'

'We have brought in 16-year-old Shane Gillies and we know it will be a baptism of fire for him. But he is a good young goalkeeper and he's only going to get better.'

Craig MacIsaac, 16, will also

feature in the squad, Kelly said. Manager's player to watch: young Craig MacIsaac may be only 16 but has the natural skill, pace and confidence to do well.

Bute

'AS ONE door closes, another opens,' said Bute president Barry Martin when he revealed talisman Iain MacDonald would not be playing this season, adding that centre James Dunn had returned from time served in the army.

The reshuffle is typical of Bute's pre-season and the islanders will be happy to retain a place in shinty's new National Division.

Martin said: 'We are looking at the next crop of players coming through but this year could be a struggle in such a competitive league.'

'We have lost Iain MacDonald, and Leighton Reid has joined Kyles, so this season will be a steep learning curve for our boys.'

One to watch: James Dunn has returned to the club after serving with the army and his energy in the centre could help Bute stay in the division.

Skye Camanachd

THE ISLANDERS will seek to make amends for last season's disappointment by grabbing promotion from North Division 1 to the National Division - but coach John MacLeod knows that won't be easy.

He said: 'The main thing is getting out of this league and playing at a higher standard, but Strathglass and Inverness will be thinking the same thing.'

'Considering how poorly we played last year and the set up we have here it is very important to go back up to a higher level. We need to be upping our game.'

'We have started a 'no train, no play' system for the first time and all the boys have come out of the woodwork and are training hard.'

'The one thing we lacked last year was better fitness, which cost us games late on, but this year the fitness has improved.'

Ironically, Skye play Beaulieu second team in their first game having defeated Beaulieu first

Oban Celtic

THE OBAN team will be looking to its stars of the future to lead a Marine Harvest South Division One challenge this season.

Having lost more experienced players, Celtic will have to rely on their youngsters to shape the next team.

But although the club has a young squad, it can count on Scotland Under-21 internationals Daniel Madej and Gary McKerracher among the ranks.

Club president David Hamilton said: 'The main objective this season is to consolidate in this division. It is maybe too soon for this team to talk about winning the league.'

But once we get this year under our belts, and if we can keep this team together, I would expect to push for promotion next season.'

One to watch: Iain MacFarlane has improved rapidly since finding his feet at half back and the teenager could be an important player, despite his lack of experience.

Taynuilt

MANAGER Davie Thomson has some team reshuffling to do after losing nearly half of his first team to retirement and work commitments.

But there is hope that the young players who broke onto the scene last year, as well as those with something to prove this season, can help to keep Taynuilt in South Division One.

Thomson said: 'I am going to try and introduce as many young players as possible, because I see this period as one of rebuilding. We have lost a number of experienced guys for various reasons and we are constantly



Bob Wylie, centre, receives a commemorative shield from Oban Celtic president Davy Hamilton, while Bob's daughter Lorna holds the Robert Wylie Memorial Trophy, which was presented to Oban Celtic after Saturday's win against Glengarry. 16_109celtic1

Bob gets special award from Oban Celtic

ONE OF Oban Celtic's most loyal volunteers has been thanked for 20 years of volunteering ahead of a special match in memory to his son, Robert Wylie.

President of the club, Davy Hamilton, presented Bob Wylie with a commemorative engraved glass shield in recognition of his efforts, the likes of which are vital to the long-term success of the sport and the club itself.

The presentation took place ahead of Saturday's Robert Wylie Memorial Shinty Match at Mossfield, where Oban Celtic defeated Glengarry 2-0. Robert's sister, Lorna, presented the medals and the trophy afterwards.

Making the presentation, Davy said: 'Bob has been a good volunteer for Celtic over the years

and that's why we're presenting him with this. 'There's a shortage of volunteers now across the whole of the sport but Bob has always been good.'

New volunteers are actively being sought by the club and Davy is hoping former players and supporters will answer the call for assistance.

Help the club

He said: 'This isn't just a local problem, it's the same all over the country. Even ex-players, they take all the goodness out of the game when they're playing, but they then decide to stop playing and disappear. It'd be great if they could come back and help the club.'

Anyone looking to volunteer should contact Davy at Oban Celtic.

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

WIN £1250

COMPEITION

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery. The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company. In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company. The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time. Employees of Wyves Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:
B MacDonald, Alma Road, Fort William
E Gilchrist, Garry Crescent, Invergarry

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I enclose £1 for 20 crosses (tick box) The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

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Saints march into last 16 of Scottish Cup

'When we got the equaliser our touchline thought we would go on and win it'

Fosters Scottish Amateur Cup 6th round replay
Oban Saints 4
Thorn Athletic 2

OBAN Saints marched into the last 16 of the Fosters Scottish Amateur Cup with an excellent 4-2 away win over old rivals Thorn Athletic on the superb 3G pitch at Johnstone Sports Hub.

The teams met in Oban two weeks previously with Thorn getting a last-minute equaliser to force the game to a replay, but this time the Oban side made no mistake in a tremendous match that flowed from end to end all afternoon.

The windy conditions made it difficult for the players but they must take great credit for turning in a cracking game which must have been enjoyed by the good crowd of spectators.

The Saints squad was missing several players - goalkeeper Daniel Cassells along with Paul Kerr, Allan MacKay and Colin Tindall who were away in Germany celebrating Paul's 30th birthday.

Flawless

Veteran David Dunlop took over between the sticks and the big keeper turned back the clock with a top class performance.

Saints were playing into the strong wind in the first half but they defended well restricting the Thorn attack to very few clear cut chances and anything that did get through was easily dealt with by David Dunlop.

The visitors looked dangerous on the break with the new strike partnership of Craig MacEwan and Lewis Cameron looking impressive, but again Thorn keeper Liam McWilliams wasn't troubled all that much.

The half-time whistle arrived with the scoreline blank.

The second 45 minutes was

barely two minutes old when the visitors opened the scoring after Craig MacEwan rose above the Thorn defence to head home a Ross Maitland corner.

This set-back stunned the home side and they came storming back into the match and had Saints on the back foot and equalised in the 57th minute when Colin Carswell, who had a good game for Saints, lost his man in the box at a free kick which allowed Mark Downey to steal in and steer the ball into the net.



David Dunlop

Thorn looked in the mood now and had Saints pinned back and it was no surprise when they took the lead for the first time in the tie when Paul Young fired a great free kick into the box which beat the Saints defence and Stuart Robertson gave David Dunlop no chance with a well placed header.

Saints looked a disjointed side at this point, but this group of players never give up.

Myles McAuley, Dene Cassells and Donnie Campbell got to grips in midfield and started to take the game to Thorn and with 10 minutes remaining they equalised when Donnie Campbell got on the end of a Lewis Cameron cross to force the ball home from close range - game on!

FOOTBALL

You would have thought the teams might have settled for extra time, but no, they kept going at each other hammer and tongs and with two minutes left on the clock it was the visitors who broke the deadlock when Donnie Campbell headed home a great cross from Lewis Cameron.

Thorn had no option but to push men forward to try and get an equaliser, but with the game in added on time played by the referee the Oban side netted the killer blow.

Low shot

Roy McLuckie won a vital tackle on the right hand side and then played a great ball through for Lewis Cameron who raced forward to hammer a low shot past the helpless Liam McWilliams to make the final score 4-2.

Manager Iain Jackson was a very happy man at the final whistle. He said: 'It was a great game. I must admit I was a bit worried being 2-1 down with 10 minutes remaining, but when we got the equaliser our touchline were confident that we would go on and win it and that's exactly what happened.'

'This team never give up and keep plugging away and we have the individual players who are always likely to score. I would like to say a special thank you to David Dunlop for helping out in goals - it was like he had never been away, he was excellent.'

Saints now face a very tough game on Saturday when they take on top Central Scottish League side Eastfield in the last 16 of the national competition.

The match is scheduled to be played at Glencruitten with a 2pm kick-off.



Donnie Campbell scored two goals for Saints during Saturday's 4-2 Scottish Cup win against Thorn Athletic.

Dream debut for Green Machine's new stand-off at Cumbernauld

RBS West Division 2
Cumbernauld 13
Oban Lorne 32

A TRY minutes into his Oban Lorne debut was the dream start for new stand-off David McCabe as he helped the Green Machine maintain their promotion charge at Cumbernauld - the team's first game since January 18.

With twins Struan and Cameron Smith unavailable, in came Ryan Jackson, Dan Hull, and McCabe.

A keen Green Machine started the game playing some of the quickest attacking rugby of the season, McCabe and Dougie Pender linking up well to put the hosts on the back foot.

After a good driving maul Oban were awarded two successive scrums, five metres

from the line, and an impressive shove from the forwards allowed enough space for McCabe to dive over to score.

But Cumbernauld hit back with a well taken penalty to narrow the score to 5-3 and took the lead on 25 minutes against the run of play with a well taken try.

Into the second half, and with coach Corrie Louw's half-time team talk still ringing in their ears, Oban Lorne took only five minutes to regain the lead. Ryan Jackson finished off a flowing move in the 22 to score in the left hand corner.

Three further scores followed in a dominating 15-minute period; Robin MacQueen, Crawford Brown and Tommy Sutherland all crossed over to race Oban Lorne into a 26-8 lead.

To Cumbernauld's credit they kept fight-

ing strong and scored a consolation with 10 minutes to go.

In the closing stages, a Cumbernauld back was sin-binned for a very dangerous tip tackle on Oban centre Craig Wright and then Oban's Tommy Sutherland was yellow carded after a minor off the ball incident with a Cumbernauld forward.

Playing 14 v 14 spaces began to open up and Oban Lorne rounded off the scoring with a first try for replacement winger Daniel Hoey, following a break from Dougie Pender.

Oban are back in home action this Saturday as they welcome Loch Lomond to Glencruitten. Kick off is 3pm.

RUGBY

Another good performance from Oban Athletic

FOOTBALL

OBAN Athletic maintained their fine form with a comfortable 4-0 win over Cardross, despite having a number of first team players missing from the previous week.

Athletic started brightly and Dougal Graham was at the forefront of every attack, so it was no surprise to see his beautiful 40 yard pass slammed into the bottom corner by Iain MacInnes after 10 minutes.

The home side doubled their lead after 20 minutes when a Kris Gillies free kick careered off a Cardross arm and into the bottom corner.

Athletic were dominant and forging wave after wave of attack and made the score 3-0 five minutes before half time when Dean Smith slotted the ball home.

The second half was far from fluent and a lot of niggling fouls killed any flow to the game. However Dean Smith was far from finished as he slammed a left foot shot into the top corner to end the contest in spectacular fashion.

Manager Calum Fox said: 'There is a real buzz around the lads at the moment, the away result at Dennistoun was a real shot in the arm and credit to the boys who stepped in with some solid performances.'

'The key now is to replicate that performance on Saturday at home to Dennistoun and although we have a few missing again, we feel we can compete and you just never know.'

Athletic v Dennistoun 2pm at Oban Community Pitch. Follow Oban Athletic on twitter at @obanathletic or www.obanathletic.co.uk

Oban Saints youth results and fixtures

YOUTH FOOTBALL

LAST weekend's results: Ardencaple 2, Under 13s 1. Scoring for Saints was Oran Bryce, Under 14s 10, Renton 1. On target for Saints were Martin Rennie (3), Kenny MacDonald (2), Beppe Lopez (2), Craig MacMillan and Lewis Buchanan. Under 15s 1, Goldenhill 3. Saints' goalscorer was Hector MacDonald. Under 17s 6, Westerton 0. Alan Buchanan (2), Duggie MacLeod (2) and Jamie MacPherson (2) were on target for the local side.

This weekend's fixtures: Under 13s v Campbeltown Pupils Youth; Under 14s no game; Drumchapel Utd v Under 15s; Milngavie v Under 17s.

School team play well in Edinburgh
OBAN High School's S1/2 rugby team made the long journey on Sunday, February 23, to Edinburgh to take on Lasswade RFC and Kelso RFC in a round robin tournament.

Captained by Iorne Sinclair, Oban beat Lasswade 34-5 in the first match then drew 7-7 against Kelso in what was a very hard fought encounter.

Next week Oban High S1/2 and U15's are at home to East Kilbride.

YOUTH RUGBY

Ella makes a splash

SWIMMING

PARK Primary School primary seven pupil Ella MacKechnie is making a splash with her swimming achievements.

Ella is seeded second in the age 12 and under 50m backstroke and will compete in the Scottish Schools National Finals in East Kilbride on March 7.

Islay Golf Club

GOLF

RESULTS from the Islay Golf Club Winter League played on February 26 - 1 A Livingstone 38 pts; 2 A Blair 36 pts; 3 D Livingstone 35 pts.

Top award for Taynuilt badminton youngster

BADMINTON

A YOUNG Argyll badminton player has served up another award in a trophy-laden season.

But Harry Mobey's latest recognition has come from off the court and is down to his commitment to the game, as well as his skills.

The 13-year-old, from Taynuilt, received The Mary Russell Award from Badminton Scotland at the Senior Glasgow Championships in Glasgow on Sunday.

The award is made to players under the age of 18 from the Glasgow and North Strathclyde region who have shown sig-

nificant improvement in the past year. Harry has won successive Scottish and national singles tournaments over the past 12 months, as well as a top 12 finish in an international tournament.

Harry, who has to manage his asthma in order to compete at the elite level of the sport, has to be extremely organised in order to travel to training and competitions all over the UK.

Harry said he had no idea he was being nominated for the award, which came as a 'huge surprise'.



Harry Mobey with Badminton Scotland's Mary Russell Award.

Dalmally bowl them over to lift Awe Shield

CARPET BOWLS

DALMALLY Bowling Club triumphed over local rivals Portsonachan in the annual series of Scottish Carpet Bowling matches for the long established Awe Shield.

Established in 1983 for competition between the two Awe side carpet bowling clubs the Awe Shield was won by Dalmally after a series of four matches played over the winter between the two clubs.

It is only the 10th time in the 30-year history of the Shield that Dalmally have held the trophy.

In the individual rink competition over the series of matches

the Dalmally rink, skippered by Bobbie Johnston, won a close competition over the Portsonachan rink, skippered by Graham Boyles. The two rinks were separated only by a countback of shots for and against.

Scottish Carpet Bowls is a unique form of indoor bowls and the two clubs play over the winter in the Fyneside League in competition with Inveraray, Furnace and Cairndow Bowling Clubs. New members are always welcomed at all clubs.

Weather

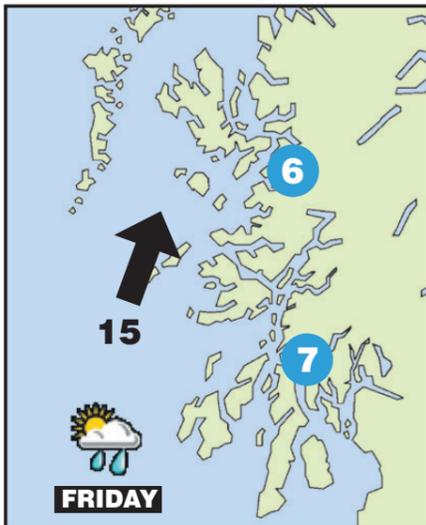
Thursday Light rain showers
Winds strong south westerly
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C

Friday Sunshine and showers
Winds moderate south south westerly
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C.

Weekend Sunshine and showers
Outlook Winds moderate westerly
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 to rough



Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, February 27, 2014** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	04.17 3.8 10.24 0.9 16.41 3.6 22.45 0.7	
Fri	05.00 4.1 11.14 0.6 17.18 3.9 23.32 0.4	
Sat	05.40 4.3 11.59 0.4 17.54 4.0 *** **	
Sun	00.16 0.2 06.18 4.3 12.41 0.3 18.30 4.1	
Mon	00.59 0.2 06.56 4.3 13.20 0.4 19.06 4.0	
Tues	01.40 0.3 07.32 4.1 13.58 0.5 19.40 3.9	
Wed	02.20 0.5 08.08 3.9 14.37 0.8 20.14 3.7	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

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Work to start on Kilbeg development

THE FIRST phase of an ambitious project to create a new village conference centre, sports facilities and education hub in south Skye will get underway on Monday with an official sod-cutting ceremony. The initial £6.7 million works of the Kilbeg Village development will provide Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (SMO) with a new administration, research, and enterprise building. Development infrastructure and services will also be put in on the first four acres of the site next Arainn Ostaig campus, the original home of the Gaelic college. Construction is expected to take 15 months. Phase two will see a 40-bedroom conference and training centre, together with new college and community sports facilities by 2018. Up to 75 new homes will be built over the 20-year time frame of the development.

Distillery rumours sweep Isle of Raasay

RUMOURS have been sweeping the Isle of Raasay that a local hotel is to become a whisky distillery. Borodale House, formerly the Isle of Raasay Hotel, has been boarded up for 18 months after owner Jane Gatens closed the doors. According to local sources, a prospective buyer viewed the two-storey property and revealed the distillery plan. However, the premises was still up for sale on the selling agents' website for offers over £250,000 on Tuesday night. One resident said: 'We are all keeping our fingers crossed.' Ms Gatens could not be contacted for comment.

Scotland call up for Spean darts player

A LOCHABER darts player is to represent his country for the first time at the upcoming BDO British Internationals. Bryan Whyte, from Spean Bridge, will compete against the best from England, Wales and Northern Ireland at The Venue, Halifax from April 4-6. Whyte, 32, is a member of the Highland team and regularly plays at the Trade Winds bar in Corpach.



Lochside primary pupils focus on Fairtrade

Lochside Primary School pupils spent an afternoon learning about Fairtrade food in local shops. Neil MacLeod, store manager of the Co-op, Caol, showed the children some of the products they sell and how it helps workers around the world earn a decent wage. Back from left: Tegan Dennison P6, MacFauld P7, Co-op manager Neil MacLeod and Kiah Ferreira P6. Front from left: Ellie McLellan P5, Alan McLaughlin P5, Dylan Monk P7 and Cody McSorley P7.

Woman injured in Ben Nevis avalanche

AN AVALANCHE swept a French couple 1,000 down Ben Nevis on Monday, leaving a woman with serious head injuries. Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team found the pair on the Brenva face after a five-hour search. Both were airlifted out by the Royal Navy Rescue 177 helicopter to a waiting ambulance then taken to Belford Hospital. The woman, thought to be in her mid-40s, was transferred to a Glasgow hospital on Monday night. John Stevenson, Lochaber Mountain Rescue leader, said: 'We think the couple were out walking in the area when they were avalanched. The woman

had a major head injury so we had to get them off the mountain as quickly as possible. 'Thanks to all team members and R177 for an efficient package and speedy extrication as time is very much of the essence in these scenarios.' Meanwhile, a man fell 50 metres on Nam Na Gulairm in Glencoe while walking with a

party of four around 3.30pm the same day. The Rescue 177 helicopter, still in the area from the Ben Nevis rescue, picked him up. John Grieve, Glencoe Mountain Rescue team leader said: 'Because he was unconscious for a short period it was treated as a serious injury but the reports were good by the time he got to the ambulance.' Elsewhere, Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team risked life and limb on Saturday in a 10-hour attempt to save a climber who fell through a cornice on Beinn Eibhinn, north of Corran. The team themselves fell through cornices four times and were avalanched whilst navigating whiteout conditions with extremely poor visibility but eventually found the mountaineer uninjured. John Stevenson, said: 'The conditions were just awful, the weather was really bad. You could barely see in front of you, everything was just white, it was like walking around inside a ping-pong ball.'



Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team stretcher out the injured woman from Ben Nevis on Monday.

Supermarket and home store lined up for retail park

A NEW supermarket and home discount store have been confirmed as tenants for a Fort William site if plans are approved.

EXCLUSIVE REPORT by EMMA CRICHTON rhaddock@obantimes.co.uk

Aldi and Home Bargains could be built at North Road as part of a mixed use, five unit retail park if Highland Council gives permission to Morbaine Ltd property developers.

The company already has approval for a 'non food' outlet at North Road but needs further authorisation to build food stores on the land. A planning application to be lodged in coming months also includes a fast food unit which has not yet been named, although KFC has expressed interest.

It is thought a retail park on the five-acre brownfield site, between the Rio Tinto Alcan junction and the Ben Nevis Motors Ford car showroom on the A82, would bring 150 permanent jobs and £10m of investment to the area, as well as further jobs during the construction period. Morbaine director Alex Brodie said: 'This development is an

exciting opportunity for Fort William which will deliver considerable investment in the town, a greater range of shopping and create 150 permanent jobs. 'I am delighted that we can already announce that Aldi and Home Bargains will be tenants of the retail park. 'We are currently in talks with a number of other major retailers to fill the remaining two units.' Plans will be displayed at a public exhibition in the Nevis Centre on Friday March 7 from 2-7.30pm and Saturday March 8 from 10am-2.30pm where the project team will be available to answer questions.

The move is the latest in a protracted series of negotiations between Highland Council and Morbaine Ltd dating back to 2007. Previously an application for 'bulky goods' and 'non food' developments was accepted but the planning committee rejected a bid for food outlet in the retail park on the A82. Currently the company has permission for around 55,000 sqft of retail space, half for general retail and half for bulky goods such as furniture and DIY products. The latest development comes after Tesco put its plans for a supermarket on the Blar Mhor outside Fort William on hold. Mr Brodie said: 'That has had an indirect impact on our plans. We have had a bumpy road with this site for many years. There's a lot of policy and politics involved and the but now we have a better market for the store.' Fort William and Ardnamurchan councillor Thomas MacLennan said: 'It's always interesting to hear of future developments in Lochaber and I look forward to seeing the plans. 'Obviously any planning application will be subject to a full report by a planning officer.'

Green light for Mallaig harbour plan

MALLAIG'S former village hall is to be demolished and replaced with marina facilities and a jetty.

Sir Cameron Mackintosh's development at East Bay will comprise a main building with toilets, showers and laundry services with a retail unit and two residential flats. A second 'craannog' building will have mixed use units, potentially for a ticket office and take away hot drinks area. The south planning applica-

tions committee unanimously approved the £750,000 plan on Tuesday.

Councillor Thomas Prag said: 'Can we have one of these built for every coastal community please?' However, Councillor Allan Duffy raised concerns over the loss of disabled parking bays. A decision on relocating the spaces will be decided at a future meeting. When 66-year-old theatre impresario Sir Cameron revealed his plans to

Mallaig residents last year he faced a backlash from local food outlets fearing a loss of trade. Some residents also complained about a loss of car parking and sea views. But a social networking campaign in support of the development gathered 700 members in its first few days.



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Lewis crofting community votes 'yes' to estate buyout

A CROFTING community on Lewis is celebrating after voting overwhelmingly to buy the land on which they live. A count of postal ballots in Breasclate Community Hall on Monday night revealed 254 local people were in favour of taking over the 11,400 Carloway Estate with just 86 opposed. The three to one majority and the 67.6 per cent turnout delighted Urras Oighreachd Chàrlabhaigh (Carloway Estate Trust) steering group, which is leading the buyout move. Chairman Kenny John MacLennan told *The Oban Times* on Tuesday: 'There was a big cheer in the hall when the result was announced and I took that as very positive.

'What is encouraging was that a lot of young people were there last night to see what was happening. They are the people that have to keep the thing going. 'From the steering group's point of view it is a very good response and a very clear steer on what the community wants to do. A 75 per cent yes vote is very healthy.' He added: 'Next steps will be applying for Scottish Land Fund money and trying to get the land secured financially. The hard work starts now.' Present estate owner Ken Galloway and the trust have mutually agreed a sale price of £180,000 but fees and funding a development officer for

two years takes the total required to £250,000. Renewable energy, tourism projects and creating local jobs for young people are likely to figure highly in the trust's future plans. Na h-Eileanan an Iar MSP Alasdair Allan welcomed the decisive result. He said: 'I believe the people of Carloway now have a great opportunity ahead of them as they strive to become their own landlords and take more control of their local economy. I believe they can be as successful as many other local community buyouts. I am very willing to work with the trust to help find the best way forward for a buyout, and have written to them asking what I can do to help as they consider their options for a purchase.'

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Opening of new joint police and ambulance station

POLICE Scotland Chief Constable Sir Stephen House and Scottish Ambulance Service chairman David Garbutt will open the new joint £4.7 million police and ambulance station at Fort William today (Thursday). The state-of-the-art premises on the Blar Mor next to the A830 replaces the former police station on Fort William High Street and the old Scottish Ambulance Service base at Inverloch.

Scottish Police Authority chairman Vic Emery and former convener of the Northern Joint Police Board will also attend the ceremony. The site was chosen for fast access to the main road to improve response times.

Curtain up on opera cabaret

BALLACHULISH Village Hall will be filled with music on Tuesday night as an opera cabaret group is set to pay a visit.

Four singers and a pianist will entertain the audience with excerpts of various musicals as part of Opera Highlights.

The show begins at 7.30pm and tickets can be purchased by calling Ballachulish visitor centre on 01855 811866.

Work starts on raising road

WORK to raise the level of a flood-prone croft road in west Lochaber will get underway next month.

The £250,000 upgrade on the single-track Moss Road in Acharacle will see several low lying sections next Loch Shiel raised to improve access.

Access by car is currently impossible at times of flooding, when residents in houses on the north side of the loch are cut off.

Acharacle Community Council chairman Hugh MacPherson said the improvement was designed to keep the road open during a 'normal' flood.

Residents had objected to raising the road higher to cater for a once in 100 years event because of the visual impact.

The project, being carried out by Fort William-based Fion Construction Limited, will take 18 weeks to complete.

Shock fuel poverty figures

MOST Western Isles households are in fuel poverty, according to a shock draft report.

Local energy advisory service TEAS found 70 per cent of households are having to spend at least 10 per cent of their income on heating costs.

The survey, which was commissioned by the comhairle, also revealed that 21 per cent of households were in extreme fuel poverty through spending 20 per cent or more on heating.

The comparative figures for Scotland are 28 per cent and eight per cent, respectively.

Lifeboat called out twice in four days

KYLE of Lochalsh lifeboat launched on Monday afternoon to aid a fishing vessel drifting towards rocks in Broadford Bay.

The 20-metre boat Howling Gale had sent a Mayday call after losing all power from engine failure. The lifeboat arrived on scene within minutes to find the stricken vessel, which had one person on board, only 200 metres from the shore and drifting rapidly with the tide.

The crew took the vessel under tow back to Broadford pier before returning to the lifeboat station in Kyle.

The callout was the second in four days for the Kyle crew after they responded to reports of a drifting boat off Plockton on Thursday afternoon. The small unmanned dinghy had broken free from the pontoons in Plockton.



Highland Hospice Fort William shop manager Maggie Wilson, left, and staff members Betty Campbell, Clare Gray and Pat Ferguson receive the £1,000 cheque from artist Brian Mullins, third left, and Framing Place owner Alan Kinnear. 20_109painting01

Spitfire painting raises £1,000 for Highland Hospice

A STUNNING painting created to commemorate a young Canadian pilot killed when his fighter plane crashed into a mountain near Fort William has raised £1,000 for Highland Hospice.

'Spitfire Sunrise, in Memoriam 16th May 1943', was put up for auction by Lochaber artist Brian Mullins to raise funds for the charity after his wife Vicki recovered from breast cancer.

Flying officer John Donald MacDonell died when his plane exploded in a fireball on Meall an t-Suidhe below Ben Nevis during a wartime training mission on that day. A monument was unveiled in his honour in Glen Nevis last year.

Mr Mullins' artwork depicts the 21-year-old pilot's Spitfire flying over Ben Nevis in his under a low morning sun.

The charity gift idea was born after discussions between the artist and Allan Kinnear, who framed the painting at The Framing Place on High Street.

After *The Oban Times* ran the story, a Mallaig man walked into the shop and immediately agreed to buy the £1,000 asking price.

The mystery buyer wishes to remain anonymous.

Mr Mullins, 62, chose Highland Hospice after previously walking round the entire Morvern coastline in aid of Maggie's Centres.

The ex-RAF pilot is delighted the painting will remain in Lochaber and that a good cause would benefit from its sale.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'It has done what it meant to do - raise money for Highland Hospice while commemorating the death of the young Canadian pilot.'

'I wanted to give the money to a local charity because the money is going to stay in the Highlands.'

Highland Hospice Fort William shop manager Maggie Wilson said: 'We are very grateful for this generous donation.'

'Part of the old hospice in Inverness is going to be knocked down and they building a new hospice with individual rooms to give people a better quality of time with their families. This money will go towards that.'

Head during Mr McGilp's time in Thurso, was left to juggle headmaster's duties with teaching chemistry and sourcing temporary staff cover in the head's absence.

Furious parents accused Highland Council of 'abandoning' the school and now fear a repeat performance.

Mr Borland said: 'Gordon was thrust into acting head when he wasn't even a full deputy. The kids technically didn't have a chemistry teacher and there were pupils seriously affected by that.'

'Some girls didn't get the grade they needed for Higher Chemistry so they either didn't get into the university they wanted or didn't get in at all.'

'Highland Council did nothing to help last time and the parent council is extremely concerned about what's going to be put in place now. There's big shoes to fill and nobody I can see that can fill them.'

Norma Young, Highland Council's area education manager for the west said: 'John McGilp will be required to give eight weeks notice and during that time the council will be advertising his post and looking to secure his replacement as soon as possible.'

John McGilp is to leave Kinlochleven High School after seven years as headmaster.

The hours that he puts in to doing things for the school are exceptional and it will be a real loss to the community as well as the school. He is much loved by the staff, parents and kids.'

The announcement has raised concerns among parents about a replacement after chemistry teacher Gordon Milne, acting

in 1998, where he also spent some time as a guidance teacher before moving to Ardnamurchan in 2006. It was in 2007 he moved to Kinlochleven to fill the headmaster post.

Stewart Borland, chairman of the parent council said: 'John is an absolutely brilliant teacher who will be sadly missed.'

By EMMA CRICHTON fort@obantimes.co.uk

KINLOCHLEVEN High School's headmaster is to leave after 15 years in Lochaber.

John McGilp has taught at Lochaber, Ardnamurchan and presently Kinlochleven high schools but has now decided to return to his home town of Kilmara, East Ayrshire to be close to his family.

Mr McGilp spent the last seven years as head teacher, apart from a short stint as acting head in Thurso in 2012, but will move to Coltness High School in Wishaw, North Lanarkshire, some time after Easter.

The 39-year-old - who at 33 became Scotland's youngest head when he took up the post in 2007 - said: 'I'll be sad to go but it's definitely time for me to go back down the road and spend time with my family.'

'Lochaber has become a home away from home, I've got used to all the friendly faces over the years. As for Kinlochleven, I've got great staff and a good relationship with the parent body. I'll especially miss the kids, I already missed them a lot when I was in Thurso.'

Mr McGilp joined Lochaber High School as a maths teacher

Head teacher heads home after 15 years

By EMMA CRICHTON fort@obantimes.co.uk

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Norma Young, Highland Council's area education manager for the west said: 'John McGilp will be required to give eight weeks notice and during that time the council will be advertising his post and looking to secure his replacement as soon as possible.'

John McGilp is to leave Kinlochleven High School after seven years as headmaster.

The hours that he puts in to doing things for the school are exceptional and it will be a real loss to the community as well as the school. He is much loved by the staff, parents and kids.'

The announcement has raised concerns among parents about a replacement after chemistry teacher Gordon Milne, acting

in 1998, where he also spent some time as a guidance teacher before moving to Ardnamurchan in 2006. It was in 2007 he moved to Kinlochleven to fill the headmaster post.

Stewart Borland, chairman of the parent council said: 'John is an absolutely brilliant teacher who will be sadly missed.'

By EMMA CRICHTON fort@obantimes.co.uk

KINLOCHLEVEN High School's headmaster is to leave after 15 years in Lochaber.

John McGilp has taught at Lochaber, Ardnamurchan and presently Kinlochleven high schools but has now decided to return to his home town of Kilmara, East Ayrshire to be close to his family.

Mr McGilp spent the last seven years as head teacher, apart from a short stint as acting head in Thurso in 2012, but will move to Coltness High School in Wishaw, North Lanarkshire, some time after Easter.

The 39-year-old - who at 33 became Scotland's youngest head when he took up the post in 2007 - said: 'I'll be sad to go but it's definitely time for me to go back down the road and spend time with my family.'

'Lochaber has become a home away from home, I've got used to all the friendly faces over the years. As for Kinlochleven, I've got great staff and a good relationship with the parent body. I'll especially miss the kids, I already missed them a lot when I was in Thurso.'

Mr McGilp joined Lochaber High School as a maths teacher

head during Mr McGilp's time in Thurso, was left to juggle headmaster's duties with teaching chemistry and sourcing temporary staff cover in the head's absence.

Furious parents accused Highland Council of 'abandoning' the school and now fear a repeat performance.

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John McGilp is to leave Kinlochleven High School after seven years as headmaster.

Business leader warns against 'no' vote

A 'FAIRER, happy and prosperous' independent Scotland would be 'great' for the rest of the UK, a leading 'yes' campaigner told Lochaber business representatives last week.

By STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

the US Federal Reserve ploughed £540bn into London-headquartered Barclays Bank to save it from collapse - and £1 trillion overall into the UK banking system.

'No country in the world has to bail out its own banks,' he said. 'It is just not the law.'

Arisaig businesswoman Anne Widdop feared splitting up joint UK services would be costly.

Mr MacIntyre-Kemp replied that the NHS in Scotland was already separate and saw no reason why the DVLA and the Inland Revenue, which is based at East Kilbride, could not continue to be shared.

A 'no' vote, he claimed, would mean Scottish taxpayers paying part of the estimated £80bn HS2 project to run high-speed trains between London, Manchester and Leeds.

A report by global accountancy firm KPMG, he said, estimated that HS2 could cost the Dundee and Aberdeen economies £330m and 17,000 jobs each year because of the drift of business south.

'Why is being 'Better Together' in their interests?' he asked.

Questioned how an independent Scotland would close the gap between rich and poor, Mr MacIntyre-Kemp cited Imola in Italy, where 66 per cent of people worked in employee-

owned cooperatives - including the Maserati car plant.

He said: 'Co-operatives work. Yet since Thatcher we have been closing down our mutual building societies.'

'You could get 10 unemployed people to get together and run co-ops, paying no tax for the first three years. That is how you get people off the dole and working.'

Karl Griffin of Ballachulish Tourist Information Centre wondered how long North Sea oil production would remain sustainable given the huge worldwide expansion in extracting cheap shale gas by fracking underground rocks.

Mr MacIntyre-Kemp said industry body Oil and Gas UK predicted the North Sea had 60 years of commercial life left as smaller specialist firms, many Scottish, replaced big corporations in extracting and exploring for oil. He said: 'The 'yes' side has a plan to reindustrialise Scotland when the oil runs out. Better Together has no plan.'

The chamber will hold its next independence debate in the Alexandra Hotel, Fort William, on Friday April 18 from 7pm-9pm.

Guest speaker will be the Right Honourable Danny Alexander, Liberal Democrat MP for Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey and Chief Secretary to the Treasury.



Gordon MacIntyre-Kemp: world expects a 'yes' vote. 20_109indy01



Andy Nisbet, left, was presented the Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture by David Jones of Rio Tinto Alcan. 20_109award01

Guidebook writer honoured at festival

A VETERAN Scottish climber, writer and instructor was presented with the Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture.

Andy Nisbet, 60, was the seventh recipient of the annual award from Fort William Mountain Festival.

David Jones of Rio Tinto Alcan presented the trophy to Mr Nisbet at the festival's climbing night in the Nevis Centre on Saturday.

Mr Nisbet said: 'I'm pretty honoured to get this award and thanks to everyone for all of the compliments. I fully intend to keep going for many years, I have no intention of giving up.'

The award celebrates the achievements of one inspiring individual and their outstanding contribution to Scotland's mountains in the fields of sport, theatre, art, photography, film and literature.

Mr Nisbet has compiled accurate and detailed record of tens of thousands of climbs across Scotland in the Scottish Mountaineering Council's climber's guidebook series.

He has almost 1,000 new winter routes to his name and over the decades has compiled far more first ascents in winter than any other Scottish climber.

His guidebooks have introduced many climbers to new cliffs and corners of the country they might not otherwise have discovered.

Glenfinnan gears up to host weekend of fundraising

GLENFINNAN will host a weekend long fundraising event in March including a 21km kayak race.

Loch Shiel Viking Challenge will raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support and the event, to be held on March 29 and 30, will feature craft stalls, kayak demos and a barbecue. There will also be an evening ceilidh in a marquee with music from The Jim Hunter Band and Glenfinnan Ceilidh Band.

The race itself will start from Monument Beach with a 12km 'turn around point' for those who would prefer a shorter route instead of the full 21km.

Alastair Wallace, one of the organisers and committee member of Loch Shiel Viking Challenge said: 'A lot of local kayakers have shown an interest and we think people will come from all over Scotland and the rest of the UK to take part. We've already had a lot of help from local businesses, everyone

has been really supportive.' Glenfinnan Community Council has been working alongside the committee to arrange the event and members believe it will do a lot for the village before the tourism season kicks in.

Chairman Duncan Gibson said: 'There's been a good wee buzz around the village about this, I've had lots of positive feedback from the community.'

'The council will be thinking of activities for the kids to do during the race and we'll help out with tea and coffee for the spectators as well as running the bar at night. Glenfinnan Estate are providing land for camping and car parking which will help bring people in.'

'I think it will be really good for the community and hopefully it will become an annual thing.'

For more information or to book a place in the kayak race go to www.lochshielvikings.org.uk.

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Lasagne & chips	£6.00	Mushroom & garlic	£4.50
Chicken lasagne & chips	£6.00	Spinach & ricotta	£4.50
PASTAS		Smoked salmon	£5.50
Spaghetti bolognese	£6.00	Mediterranean	£5.50
Penne picante	£6.00	Three cheeses	£5.50

www.theolivegardenoban.co.uk

Traffic wardens to return to Oban

TRAFFIC wardens are likely to return to Oban's town centre this summer as Argyll and Bute concludes the process of de-criminalising on-street parking, *The Oban Times* can reveal.

The move means the local authority will take over responsibility for policing on-street parking from Police Scotland and it could advertise for new traffic wardens from mid-May onwards.

The de-criminalisation process began shortly after Strathclyde Police made the town's traffic wardens redundant in 2011, leaving a parking free-for-all.

A three-month pilot scheme agreed between the local authority and Oban Police then saw officers handing out parking tickets, which, although unpopular with the public, proved parking regulation was needed in Oban - during the first two weeks of the trial, police handed out 51 and 76 tickets, respectively.

Come mid-May, Argyll and Bute Council will be responsible for ticketing and will gain extra income through parking meters.

Oban South Councillor Fred Hall said: 'If this is to go ahead I hope the primary role of the traffic wardens will be to allow the free flow of traffic through Oban, and not just ticketing.'

Argyll and Bute Council confirmed it is on schedule to complete the de-criminalisation process by mid-May but said more information would be provided for the public soon.

Vote for your favourite bonnie baby

WE'RE down to the final six! The Oban Times' Bonnie Babies competition enters its final round this week, meaning it is your last chance to vote for your favourite in this year's competition.

For this year's Bonnie Six and details on how to vote for your favourite, see page 12.



Councillor Duncan MacIntyre examines one of the many potholes on Oban's Bealach an Righ.

Anger grows over road repair delays

BEAR Scotland says crumbling Bealach an Righ won't be fixed until May

FRUSTRATION and anger was expressed throughout the Oban community this week after BEAR Scotland said it wouldn't be repairing the crumbling Bealach an Righ until May.

The company has faced repeated calls from the community to repair the town's north entrance, with councillor Duncan MacIntyre one of the strongest voices asking for work to be done.

However, BEAR has instead opted to make repairs to the stretch of road between the Corran Halls roundabouts between March 16-18, before carrying out two nights of work on George Street between March 19-20 - ignoring the disintegrating Dunollie Road.

Confirming the date of the work, BEAR's spokeswoman said: 'The resurfacing of Bealach an Righ is scheduled to take place in May this year before the tourist season gets fully underway.'

However, a leaking drain on the

EXCLUSIVE REPORT

by STEVEN FLANAGAN
sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk

road has now been repaired after causing problems for months.

Councillor MacIntyre said: 'BEAR said to me that the Bealach an Righ would be done within the current financial year. They said they would do it as part of the Corran Halls stretch and Dunollie Road repairs. They've changed that.'

'The section between the roundabouts isn't even in urgent need of repair. It's very disappointing.'

He added there was 'no way in this world' May could be reasonably described as before the start of the full tourist season, adding: 'This is not good enough.'

Oban Community Council's chairwoman, Marri Malloy added: 'I'm very, very upset about this. It's a nonsense. I cannot understand why

they're doing the stretch between the roundabouts and not the main entrance to Oban itself. What impression does that give of the town?'

Asked if May could be described as before the start of the full tourist season, Oban and Lorn Tourism Association (OLTA) chairwoman Linda Battison replied: 'Perhaps in the '80s. May has two bank holidays and is also when the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival is held. What a crazy time of year to be doing it.'

She added: 'It just seems we go from one year to the next with the same problem.'

'With these situations we seem almost powerless to get these things done at the right time.'

'It's not acceptable and OLTA will send a letter asking them to reconsider.'

Councillor MacIntyre said the local authority would also be writing to BEAR to ask for the Bealach an Righ works to be brought forward.

Mull hydro scheme hits fund target

MULL'S Garmony Hydro scheme, which aims to generate tens of thousands a year for community projects across the island, has reached its £330,000 fundraising target.

Director Moray Finch said he was 'absolutely delighted' after reaching the target four days ahead of schedule, which he admits many on the island thought was unrealistic.

The cash represents 30 per cent of the cost of the project and will allow Green Energy Mull to obtain a loan and progress with the construction of the hydro scheme.

Moray says that could be complete by the end of the year.

'It's a real boost for us being able to achieve this target,' he said. 'There were quite a few people who didn't think we could get there, but we have.'

The majority of the funding for the project has come from sources off the island, with the promise of a tax-break due to it being an ethical investment, but the scale of investment on the island was described as 'significant' by Mr Finch.

Projects

Once up and running, the scheme will initially generate between £25,000 - £30,000 for community projects, with that sum rising to £100,000 per year after the capital loan for the project is paid off.

Moray added: 'I'm delighted to reach the target and delighted for all the local people who have given their assistance and supported the project as well.'

'We had a lot of people take on the minimum investment of £50 per share from right across the island, including lots of people buying them for their children and grandchildren, and that's very much appreciated.'

Inconsiderate motorists using Oban hospital car park as a free, long stay parking solution

INCONSIDERATE motorists are stopping patients and staff at Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital getting to appointments - because they're using its car park as a free, long-stay solution.

Workers have been spotted using the hospital car park as a 'park-and-ride' facility, with colleagues picking them up there due to parking options being limited at work.

NHS Highland has now issued an appeal for people to stop abusing the car park - but the situation has re-opened

the debate about limited parking in Oban's town centre.

NHS Highland's locality manager, Veronica Kennedy, said: 'We have become aware it is becoming more and more difficult for people to park at the hospital despite the fact we recently added an additional 27 new parking spaces.'

'It has been raised by members of the public that they have seen some drivers using the car park as a park and ride facility by parking their cars at the

hospital and then getting picked up by friends and colleagues to go on to another location.

'The actions of these individuals are causing real issues for patients and visitors coming to the hospital and I would ask the small minority of drivers who are causing this problem to stop parking at the hospital and make some other arrangement.'

Oban Community Council chairwoman, Marri Malloy, said: 'It's totally unjust. I have seen teachers

doing it because there's not enough parking at the schools. I suppose it isn't just teachers though. Parking at the hospital is a big issue. I've suffered from it.'

'I've missed appointments. I've seen people who can't get parked even if they have disabled badges.'

'Perhaps charging would help deter people, with tokens given to people with a real reason to park at the hospital?'

BID4Oban chairman Nic Jones added: 'People get fed up of me because

I always mention parking. As far as I know, there are no plans from the local authority to increase the amount of free parking or long-stay parking in the town.'

'If we are to enhance our town centre businesses we need more parking and this is a symptom of the need.'

A spokesperson for Argyll and Bute Council, said: 'We're not aware of any such issue - staff use car parks at the school and designated park and ride facilities in the town.'

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Lorn Lines

ONE OF the most popular dates on Oban Camera Club's syllabus is a visit from the well-known and respected local professional photographer Dennis Hardley.

In a spoken commentary last Monday, he guided his audience through 100 of his quality images. They reminisced over the old Caledonian MacBrayne ferries in various locations, saw landscapes and seascapes on mainland and islands, then jumped the pond to Nashville and back to modern visual art. Oban Camera Club occasionally enjoys an

in-house night, when the membership use a trusted format to select a winner.

The subject this year was 'Oban Street Scenes', which attracted a selection of well known Oban landmarks from the tower to the harbour.

Veronica Speirs won two awards, with Alex Clark and Nina Robertson equal in the runner up spot.

The Argyll trophy, donated by Peter and Katy Weir of North Ledaig Caravan Park, was handed over to Veronica.

Results of the nature competition will be delivered at the club's next meeting.

□□□

NORTH Lorn Drama Festival is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year and demand for tickets is expected to be high.

Running from March 20 to 22 at Appin Hall, nine one-act plays will be staged from Taynuilt, Dalmally, Benderloch, Appin and Strath of Appin and Lismore Primary School.

The plays will be adjudicated by Kevin Boland from Killearn. At the end of the festival, following the presentation of trophies by Winnie McNicol, there will be a celebratory ceilidh, to which everyone involved with the festival in the past 60 years, either as participants or audience, is invited.

□□□

'WELL I didn't expect that,' was the chairman Tom Clegg's first comment last week after Martin Wilson's speech at Oban Speakers Club. Martin had surprised everyone with numerous different interpretations of his subject 'The Seasons'.

Equally entertaining and educational were the speeches of Eamonn Arthur on 'William Caxton' and

John Maclean on 'There was a Soldier'. In the second half, topics chairman Frank Walton gave a variety of testing subjects to Roy Wood, Jim Fraser, Alex Clark, Peter Mills, Willie Melville and Tom Clegg. Timekeeper was Guido Faccenda and a fair and comprehensive evaluation was given by Bill Leech.

The next meeting will be held on March 6 at 8pm.

Doors closed on Oban playpark

AS A fundraising drive for the new Oban Community Playpark swings into action this week, the current playpark, next to Atlantis Leisure, has failed a safety inspection and has been closed.

Friends of Oban Community Playpark announced last week that it has raised nearly £20,000 for the project but on Tuesday the group was told the current playpark, which it is attempting to replace, would have to be closed off. Fundraiser Lyndsay Elliot said: 'The closure of the playpark is disappointing news as we were optimistically expecting at least one to two years more use. Even with a good wind behind us we're looking at having no central community play facilities for at least 12

months, which is heart-breaking for our kids and for visitors too

'We will switch our focus from the grass field area to replacing the existing site and upgrading the garden area, and we will still be able to apply for £100k funding from Sport Scotland in July. We need all of the community to get behind this as we need to raise a further £79k to make this happen.'

To this end, the committee has just sent out 385 letters to local businesses to appeal for donations. The cost of the mailing was funded by D&K Lafferty. Fundraising events lined up include: a ceilidh at Lynn Court, Singalong showing of the Jungle Book at the cinema in April and a 'Big Toddler' walk in June.



BID4Oban's events manager Mike Rowell, left, with Oban Pool League chairman and Scottish Open Pool Championship organiser Barry Clark at the Lancaster Hotel. 16_109poolchamp1

Hundreds 'cue up' to visit town for top pool contest

MORE than 200 people are 'cued up' to arrive in Oban next month as the town hosts Scotland's top pool competition.

The Scottish Open Pool Championship has decided to break with the norm and move its home to Oban for this year's event, with competitors set to arrive in the town from across the country for the two days of competition, starting on March 29.

And if it is a success, the event could return to the town for the next five years - potentially bringing a total audience of more than 1,000 people to the area keen to compete for the £6,000 prize fund.

With competitors expected to 'sink' a few pounds when here for the weekend, organiser Barry Clark and event sponsor BID4Oban hope Oban is able to rack up a few new fans.

Barry, also the chairman of Oban Pool League, said: 'Pool is a growing sport in the town and this event will really put Oban on the Scottish pool

map and attract more competitions to the town. It's a great opportunity for locals to compete against players from all across the UK.'

The event has been publicised in Malta, where the World Championships are currently being held, as well as at pool tournaments across the country. Fourteen pool tables will be specially brought in for the Test in the West, which will be hosted by the Royal Hotel, although BID4Oban is preparing welcome packs to encourage competitors and their families to see the rest of the town while here.

Andrea Simpson, chairwoman of the BID4Oban events and marketing group, said: 'The event will bring significant economic benefit to the town, with more than 200 players, their families and supporters travelling. This is particularly welcome at this quiet time of year.'

To enter the mens, ladies or juniors competitions, or for more details, contact the Lancaster Hotel, Oban.

Islanders on their bikes to raise charity cash

A BID to buy defibrillators for the Isle of Coll will see a hardy bunch of islanders get on their bikes and cycle 800 miles around the north of Scotland in May.

Taking on the 'North of the Fault', the group, led by former Scotland rugby international Rob Wainwright, will ascend a total of 54,209 feet during the eight-day charity challenge, which begins at Oban on May 31.

With a target of £20,000, the group is also hoping to raise as much money as possible for Mary's Meals, with a stop planned during the journey that takes them via Moidart, Applecross, Ullapool, Durness, John o'Groats, Beaulieu and back to Oban in just seven days.

As if that challenge wasn't hard enough, those 723 miles will be rounded off by taking on the 88 mile Mull Sportive after a one-day break, taking their total journey distance to 811 miles in just eight cycling days.

Rob said: 'There's eight of us setting off at the moment and we will be averaging 100 miles a day, so it will be tough. 'We originally thought about doing John o'Groats to Lands'

Man arrested

POLICE were called to an Oban hotel last Friday after a man allegedly broke into the premises - for a nap.

A 26-year-old man was arrested just after 2.30am after the incident at the Palace Hotel and a report submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

Appin residents warned to secure property

APPIN residents have been warned to secure their property after two homeless men were seen causing problems in the area.

In the last week, reports have emerged of people finding their bins being raked through and someone breaking into a house to use a bedroom.

Police have cautioned people to be on their guard and report anything suspicious.

Man tried to break in to veterinary practice

A 39-YEAR-old man was arrested by police in Oban last Thursday after he was spotted acting suspiciously outside a veterinary practice.

He was first spotted trying to enter the front door of the practice, before falling over and rushing towards the rear of the premises just after 10.05pm.

He is accused of trying to break into the property.

Campaigner horrified at Oban family's cancer ordeal

More money needed to fund research

A CAMPAIGNER calling for more funding for pancreatic cancer research says the care of an Oban woman left screaming in agony is the 'worst she's heard of'.

Maggie Watts, of Scunthorpe, has gathered more than 33,000 signatures on a petition set to be presented to Parliament in April in a bid to dramatically improve the life expectancy of those diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

She has spoken to thousands of people across the UK since losing her husband Kevin to the disease in 2009, and has won the support of the likes of Hugh Grant, Lorraine Kelly, Dawn French and Peter Andre after discovering the survival rate after diagnosis hasn't improved in 40 years.

But she said she is horrified by the experience had by Mabel Braidwood at Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital, after learning her cries of agony were ignored by doctors and nurses for days. NHS Highland has since apologised for failings in delivering

palliative care for Mabel, who died last February.

Mabel's children, Dawn, Zoe and Matt, have called on NHS Highland to make sure there is no repeat, but Maggie says their case is an indicator as to why more research is urgently needed.

'Zoe's mum's case sounded horrendous,' she said. 'I've heard nothing to the extent her family went through. I've heard terrible stories of people who lost loved ones but I don't know anyone personally who suffered to this extent. I feel really sorry about that.'

Without very early diagnosis, most cases of pancreatic cancer are incurable - and Maggie says that is because of the lack of knowledge of the condition.

'I think [Mabel's] case highlights the difficulties with pancreatic cancer and while it is horrendous, people are speaking about it. Hopefully as many as possible will sign this petition.'

'It is a disease that knows no boundaries and can affect all of us, regardless of age or health.

Twenty-two people die a day as a result.'

She launched the Hope is Contagious petition with Coronation Street actress Julie Hesmondhalgh, whose character in the soap, Hayley Cropper, took her life after being diagnosed with the condition. It requires 100,000 signatures by April 8 to go before the UK Government for consideration.

Mabel Braidwood's daughter Zoe Gillies, is supporting the petition. She said: 'We have had a lot of messages of support since *The Oban Times* published our story and I'd ask everyone to sign this petition.'

'There's a controversial advert where people say they wish they had another cancer, but pancreatic cancer is so cruel and we know so little so it's almost untreatable.'

'We need 100,000 signatures on this petition to help save lives.'

For more information on the campaign and to sign the petition, visit the website at hopeiscontagious.info.

Suspended council staff have been paid £270,000

ARGYLL and Bute Council has paid out nearly £270,000 to suspended staff since April 2011, according to figures obtained by *The Oban Times*.

Many employees have been suspended for up to a year despite guidelines recommending any such periods be kept as short as possible.

One employee was paid £38,650.98 between April 2011 and 2012 while another - understood to be Jo Smith, the former communications manager suspended amidst false spying accusations - was paid £24,766.42 over six months.

Six staff currently removed from work have already been paid £28,285 between them. A total of £158,759.28 has been paid out to staff suspended since 2012, while staff have been paid for more than 4,000 days off while suspended since 2011.

By NEIL JOHNSTON

In total £265,866.78 has been paid out to 43 workers removed from work between April 2011 and January this year.

Nine people were dismissed in the same period.

The vast majority of suspensions were for longer than 10 working days.

Brief

The authority's own guidelines are based on the current Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service code of practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures, which states suspension should be as brief as possible.

It recommends: 'Suspension with pay should only be imposed after careful consideration and should be reviewed to ensure it is not unnecessarily protracted.'

All suspensions should be kept under consideration, according to the guide.

Argyll and Bute's own disciplinary procedure states that any decision to remove an employee from duty 'will be reviewed after a period of 10 working days by the officer authorising the temporary removal from duty, and at similar regular intervals thereafter'.

A council spokesperson said: 'There is no basis, from the information provided, on which to draw an inference that the council has not acted properly in dealing expeditiously with such cases.'

Investigations

'The council is committed to dealing properly with any such investigations and this requires that due process is followed.'

'This can take, in complex matters, some time to complete.'



Flight Sergeant Ryan Cook and graphic designer Mark Gowdie with the new crest design. 16_109crest01

New crest brings Oban corps into 21st century

THE OBAN High School's Air Training Corp has flown into the 21st century with a new crest made by a father and son design team in the town.

Flight Sergeant Ryan Cook set about creating a new crest for the squadron's 40th anniversary after discovering the existing banner had been drawn on sheet metal in the mid 1980s.

He enlisted the help of graphic designer Mark Gowdie, of Digital Kangaroo, and Mark's father, former high school art teacher

Ian, who re-created the original design in a more modern style.

Ryan said: 'Since it is our 40th anniversary year, I wanted to modernise the crest.'

'I think the job Mark and Ian have done is awesome. It has serious impact and I like the prominence of the motto: Fear s'an Iar (Best in the West).'

The Oban High School squadron lived up to its motto last year by winning the title of best squadron in the Highland region.

Man guilty of indecently assaulting young girl

A MAN described as a 'bullying, manipulative, dangerous paedophile' at Oban Sheriff Court has been found guilty of indecently assaulting a young girl.

Stanley Jeffery, aged 64, had denied three charges of lewd, and libidinous practices and one charge of indecent assault but last Friday a jury found him guilty of all four.

His victims included a young girl and two women at two locations in the Lorn area between January 1, 2003 and December 6, 2010.

Summing up for the prosecution last Thursday, day four of the trial, procurator fiscal Eoin McGinty said Jeffery was a 'bullying, manipulative, dangerous paedophile'.

But the following day Sheriff Douglas Small, while charging the jury, told them to disregard any mention of paedophilia. 'You have to disregard the fiscal's emotional language and in particular the word

'paedophile', he said. 'It is not your job to be swayed by emotional epithets. You must consider the facts and nothing else.'

As the jury returned the guilty verdicts, three by unanimous decision, there were emotional scenes among the public gallery.

At the start of the trial last week the court heard that the girl wrote a letter, detailing what had been done to her, and left it where her father could find it.

Four years later, she stood in the witness box at Oban Sheriff Court and told the jury those details.

Jeffery, whose address was given in court as 49 Lorn Road, Dunbeg, declined to go into the witness box to give evidence. The one witness who gave evidence for the defence was his wife, who pointed out that if she believed him guilty, then she would not have been there.

Sentence was deferred until April 1 for background reports.

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Welterweight title fight for Fort's Igor

REPORT BY STEPHEN NORRIS
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

A FORT William amateur boxer will fight for the welterweight crown at the Scottish youth championships final at Ravenraig in Motherwell on Saturday.

Igor Sliwinski will face John Docherty of Byron ABC - universally recognised pound for pound as the best youth boxer in Scotland.

Sliwinski, from local club Lochaber Phoenix, battled through two tough qualifying

bouts at Scotstoun Sports Centre in Glasgow last weekend to earn his title shot.

And his gritty performances showed just why the 17-year-old is such a highly thought of talent.

Traditionally, youth boxing worldwide has been split into two age categories to make things as fair as possible for all participants as natural strength can make a huge difference to growing boys.

But this year the sport's governing body decided to amalgamate the groups into one division - making it twice as difficult to win a title.

That meant Igor's division by the semi-final stage had three reigning Scottish champions, one of whom was British champion with the other two British silver medalists.

In his quarter final against the powerful Robert Gordon from Inshch Boxing Club a lethargic Sliwinski let his Aberdonian opponent outwork him.

But in the second Igor's body punches forced Gordon to take a standing eight count and the in the third kept the momentum going to win a unanimous decision.

In his semi-final against the taller Nathan Leavers of Denbeath on Sunday Igor dominated the opening round but inexplicably

BOXING

took almost the entire second round off and Leavers brought things level on points.

With a place in the final up for grabs, Sliwinski regained his early dominance and had Leavers on the ropes with powerful combinations to claim the last round and the verdict.

Club official Steve Docherty praised Sliwinski for winning through - but warned the final will be a different proposition.

He said: 'A few times at crucial stages of his bouts at the weekend he lapsed mentally before re-establishing himself - but he simply won't be able to do that in the final.'

'To put the task in hand in context Docherty stopped a reigning Scottish champion in the first round of the semi-finals. The same boxer outpointed Igor on a club show a year ago.'

'In saying that, Igor has improved tremendously since then and if anybody is capable of defeating Docherty then it is our boy.'

'He has the power, strength, desire and fitness to knock anybody out of their game plan and I truly believe he is going to show he belongs at this level. He has a great future in boxing and I'm delighted with his progress so far.'



John MacDonald leads the rankings for Commonwealth Games qualification after round one.

Acharacle shooter is dead-eye in Doha

TWO WEST Highland shotgun aces lined up against each other in Qatar last week in the first of a cut-throat qualifying series for the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow this summer.

Acharacle shooter John MacDonald and rival Jonathon Reid, from Tarbert, Loch Fyne are competing for just two places in the Scottish Olympic trap team along with Andrew Addison from Lanark.

And it is MacDonald who leads the qualification race after shooting 118 of a possible 125 clay targets to claim fifth place at the Qatar Open in Doha.

His score was one better than current

world champion Pelliello Giovanni and earned him a place in the final shoot-off in the world-class event.

Addison shot a 113 to come 15th in the 95-strong field while Reid scored 107.

MacDonald told The Oban Times: 'Most of the top trap shots from all over the world were there so I was absolutely delighted to come fifth overall, especially as I have not shot competitively since September last year.'

'It was the first real outing to get qualification for the games and I was well ahead of the other two contenders.'

'The main target is to be ahead of these

SHOOTING

guys all the time. I am right up there with the best in the world at the moment and that is great.'

Next up for the Highland duo is the Kuwait Grand Prix on March 8-15, the second of five top-level qualifying events over the next three months.

Their scores will decide which two make the team. Whoever comes third will be the reserve.

The SportScotland Commonwealth Games selection committee will announce their decision during the first week in May.



Igor Sliwinski: through to Scottish youth championships final. 20_0919gor01

Netball team thrash Edinburgh in Beattie Quaich quarter final

NETBALL

FORT WILLIAM netballers joined forces with players from across the Highlands to thrash the Holyrood team in the quarter final of Netball Scotland's Evelyn Beattie Quaich Cup on Saturday.

Jess Loveday and Claire Lumley-Holmes were thrilled to join the team and helped secure an astonishing 73-33 win in Edinburgh.

Ms Lumley-Holmes said: 'The fact Fort William players and the Highland team are taking part in this knockout competition is testament to the growth of netball and passion for the sport.'

'As with most clubs in this area, the players face geographic challenges that mean they are not able to regularly train together and certainly not as frequently as their competitors.'

'Nonetheless, the Highland side showcased the talent and potential in this area by not just winning the match but thrashing the Edinburgh side.'

The team will go on to play Glasgow side Kelvin in March.

Actions speak louder than words for Finlay

LOCHABER Athletic Club (LAC) joined in the Fort William Mountain Festival with a race up the modest heights of Cow Hill on Saturday.

The run followed the festival's Hill Running Highs event at the Nevis Centre the night before,

which featured a question and answer session from athletes Manny Gorman, Finlay Wild, Donald King and Guy Steven.

Romped

And Wild proved actions speak louder than words when romped round the loop course up, over

and round the hill to finish first in a time of 28mins 27secs.

Tom Smith had accelerated straight into the lead and was soon overtaken by Finlay but came second of the 32-strong field, finishing in 30mins 53secs, shortly followed by Kieron Ross



Lochaber's Tom Smith leads the chasing pack in the early stages of the Cow Hill climb. 20_09athletics01

ATHLETICS

of Jottnar in 32mins 14secs.

Kathleen Henderson (unattached) was the first lady home with a time of 37:29, with Victoria Leiper of the Shettleton Harriers arriving less than 30 seconds later in 38:52.

Thanks go to Niall MacBeath, Bill Scott, Damien Forster and Shonda Macnab who assisted with marking, marshalling, registration and timekeeping.

Top 20 (Lochaber AC unless otherwise stated): 1 Finlay Wild 28:27; 2 Tom Smith 30:53; 3 Kieron Ross (Jottnar Runners) 32:14; 4 Ross Cowie (unattached) 34:14; 5 Peter Davies (unattached) 35:58; 6 Ali Kennedy 36:49; 7 Kathleen Henderson (unattached) 37:29; 8 Barrie MacKinnon 37:45; 9 Mark Willetts (unattached) 38:12; 10 Colin MacDougall (Tinto Hill Runners) 38:25; 11 Victoria Leiper (Shettleton Harriers) 38:52; 12 Louise Provan (HBT) 39:04; 13 David MacDonald 39:15; 14 Julia Connor (Tinto Hill Runners) 39:21; 15 Brian Campbell 40:20; 16 Lewis Smith 40:38; 17 Nicola Forster 41:08; 18 Scot Campbell (unattached) 41:15; 19 Julie Corner 41:31; 20 Colin Wilson (Lomond Hill Runners) 41:43.

Muddy hell for Joe

FORT WILLIAM rider Joe Barnes claimed top spot in the Fort William round of a national mountain bike series on Sunday.

Over 270 competitors descended on Nevis Range to tackle the tough cross-country course round Leanachan Forest in a relentless downpour and extremely muddy conditions.

The event, the first of six in the Scottish Enduro Series, included four timed stages over key sections on the 25km course.

Barnes, 25, proved too good



Joe Barnes tackled muddy conditions to win the Scottish Enduro at Leanachan Forest. Photo: No Fuss Photography.

MOUNTAIN BIKING

for his rivals and charged over the tough terrain to complete all stages with an overall time of 14mins 13secs.

Second place went to Greg Callaghan with 14mins 55secs with Fergus Lamb just three seconds behind.

Lochaber men James Shirley and Lachlan Blair came sixth and seventh.

Emma Guy was the quickest female, with an overall time of 19:56. Second was Lesley Ingram in 20:25 and Julia Hobson came third with 21:20.

Round two of the Scottish Enduro Series will be on April 5 and 6 in Innerleithen, Scottish Borders.

Top 20: 1 Joe Barnes 14:13; 2 Greg Callaghan 14:55; 3 Fergus Lamb 14:58; 4 Gary Forrest 15:07; 5 Liam Moynihan 15:28; 6 James Shirley 15:41; 7 Lachlan Blair 15:49; 8 Joe Young 15:54; 9 Crawford Carrick-Anderson 16:01; 10 Paul Aston 16:18; 11 Seb Stott 16:19; 12 Huw Oliver 16:22; 13 Ronan Taylor 16:24; 14 Alastair MacLennan 16:25; 15 Gary MacDonald and Drew Carters both 16:28; 16 Callum McCubbing 16:30; 17 Nash Mason 16:35; 18 Tobias Pantling 16:37; 19 Stuart Wilcox 16:43; 20 Mark Maciver 16:48.

Poor refereeing decisions go against the Fort

FOOTBALL

FORT WILLIAM will look to bounce back from last weekend's disappointing 6-0 defeat to Forres against Wick on Saturday.

Manager Danny Conlon was missing half a team for the unhappy away day but all the absentees should be available for the visit of the Northmen to Claggan Park.

The Fort, still looking for their first home win of the season, will need to be at their best to get any kind of result but the recent 3-3 draw against Buckie gives some ground for optimism.

Conlon told The Oban Times: 'We know on their day Wick can destroy anybody as we found out up there when they beat us 8-1.'

'The six we had missing against Forres are all available this week which will put us in a far stronger position.'

'We have a run of games coming up at home and it would be great for confidence if we could get one or two points on the board.'

'I was relatively pleased with our start against Forres and it is vital that we stay in the game. The longer we can do that our confidence will build and we can kick on from there.'

Conlon was left raging on Saturday after what he saw as poor refereeing decisions undid his team's early good work.

The Fort, with three 17-year-olds and two 16-year-olds in the line up, were holding Forres 0-0 after 25 minutes when Willie Gemmill was adjudged to have brought down the six foot three Lee Fraser.

Conlon said: 'Gemmill just brushed him and the centre forward went down like a ton of bricks. Then in the last minute of the first half the ref gave a corner which was never a corner.'

'We were still arguing about it when they scored again and we were 3-0 down. After that it was a case of seeing out the 90 minutes as best we could.'

Bowled over by Pam Weller

TEN PIN BOWLING

AFTER week two of the 10-pin bowling singles leagues at the Nevis Centre Pam Weller leads the scratch league with 45 points followed by Rossamy Wareing in second place with 44 points with John Weller in third place with 42 points.

The handicap league is led by Rossamy Wareing on 43 points followed by Tim Attack on 38 points and Brian Johnstone in third place on 36 points.

Pam Weller leads the chase for the Nevis Radio High Pin Trophy with 962 pins followed by Rossamy Wareing in second with 939 and John Weller in third with 925 pins.

There were a spate of good scratch games this week with 190 and 177 from John Weller. Manuel Costas rolled 180 and 175, while Rossamy Wareing rolled a 183. Pam Weller a 179 and Darren Duncan a 172.

The top three-game game scratch series this week was 521 by John Weller. The top three-game handicap series was 673 from Craig Findlay.

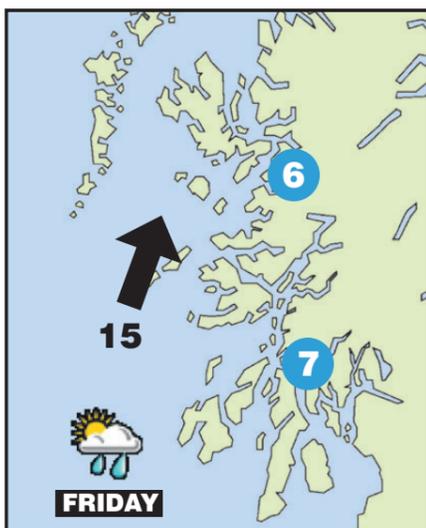
Weather

Thursday Light rain showers
Winds strong south westerly
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C

Friday Sunshine and showers
Winds moderate south south westerly
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C.

Weekend Outlook Sunshine and showers
Winds moderate westerly
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 to rough



Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, February 27, 2014** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	10.24	0.9	16.41	3.6	22.45	0.7
Thur	04.17	3.8	11.14	0.6	17.18	3.9	23.32
Fri	05.00	4.1	11.59	0.4	17.54	4.0	*** **
Sat	05.40	4.3	11.59	0.4	17.54	4.0	*** **
Sun	00.16	0.2	06.18	4.3	12.41	0.3	18.30
Mon	00.59	0.2	06.56	4.3	13.20	0.4	19.06
Tues	01.40	0.3	07.32	4.1	13.58	0.5	19.40
Wed	02.20	0.5	08.08	3.9	14.37	0.8	20.14

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardnishraig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

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