

Guide

to essential local services

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Inside this week

Rescued skipper says thanks



Shinty season gets underway



Also inside

- Lochaber has it all
- Leisure news

plus all the latest job vacancies and sports news



Police launch Myriad

ONE OF the biggest operations to ever take place in the Oban and Lorn area has already targeted drug users, thieves and speeding motorists in its first few days.

Operation Myriad is a force-wide initiative but between March 1 - 15 'L' Division, which incorporates Argyll and Bute and West Dunbartonshire, will have exclusive access to Strathclyde Police's specialist teams.

On the first day of Myriad, police set up roadblocks on the A816 at Arduaine, the A85 and A819 near Dalmally, the A828 at the Creagan Inn and the A82 at Tarbet.

At its peak, the operation involved 24 police officers in the Oban area, with 16 staff from the Glasgow area supplementing eight officers on duty from Oban Police Station.

At Creagan last Friday, police stopped a heavy goods delivery vehicle and found the 45-year-old driver to be in possession of herbal cannabis, cannabis resin and ecstasy tablets. Officers also stopped a car at Creagan that turned out to be stolen.

In Dalmally, four cars searched with the help of sniffer dogs were found to contain drugs.

On the same day, officers set a speed trap in Bridge of Orchy and within three hours, charged six drivers with speeding offences.

On Tuesday, police visited premises in Oban that sell knives to advise shop owners about changes to legislation on how the items can be displayed and supported dog warden Peter McLuckie in targeting dog fouling.

The first few days of the operation has already seen Strathclyde Police's experts in domestic abuse, the marine unit, the dog branch, specialised entry teams and police horses complementing staff in Argyll and Bute.

Chief inspector Brian Auld, area commander for Oban, Lorn and the Isles, said: 'As part of Operation Myriad we will have different activities every day for 15 days, making it possibly the largest sustained activity the area has seen.'

'The point of Myriad is to target community concerns and offending behaviour that may drop through the cracks, because it is not routine.'

'The road blocks were set up to target fuel and metal thieves and to find out who is moving around our roads network. It wasn't our intention to find drugs and a stolen car but that was a bonus for us.'

'Thefts were never previously on the ward area plans, so it hasn't been my primary focus but I am acting on recent information from elected members and community councils.'

Counterfeit DVDs seized in Dunbeg raid

A HAUL of fake DVDs, thought to be worth more than £30,000, has been seized in Dunbeg.

The seizure, part of Operation Myriad, saw CID officers from Dunoon and Helensburgh join the team in Oban to carry out a search of a house in the village's Lochnell Road. Trading Standards and the Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT) were involved in the raid, which also saw computers and other electrical equipment seized. More counterfeit DVDs were found in sheds and at a storage container in Oban.

As a result of the CID investigation, a 37-year-old

man has been charged under copyright and patents legislation. Police investigations are continuing to find out where copies of the fake DVDs may have been distributed.

Copyright and licensing are key aspects of this month's Operation Myriad, which is running every day from March 1 - 15.

Oban Police Station will have an open day on March 16, when members of the public will be invited to see the results of Operation Myriad and find out more about what goes on at the station.

Athletics

medal success

Oban High School pupils, Ben Coates and Emma Thompson, have returned with medals from the Scottish Indoor Athletics Championship at the new Emirates Arena in Glasgow on Sunday. Fourteen-year-old Ben, from Kilmore, won the under-16 60m hurdles gold medal, while Oban's Emma Thompson, also aged 14, took bronze in the under-16 triple jump. Tobermory girl Molly Reade, aged 12, also took bronze in the under-14 high jump. See sports pages. 15_t10medal02



Portnahaven ladies win safety railing battle with council

A GROUP of elderly residents on Islay have convinced Argyll and Bute Council to fix a safety railing after offering to pay the cost themselves.

The ladies of the Portnahaven Scottish Women's Rural Institute were so frustrated at a year-long delay to the railing repair that they offered to pay for it themselves.

And after hearing of the ladies' pledge via *The Oban Times*, the council has this week stated it plans to fund a replacement handrail.

The railing was removed after it fell into disrepair. But elderly residents claimed the path was dangerous. SWRI member Betty Ross, who this week welcomed the council's commitment, had told *The Oban Times*: 'It is the council's responsibility to fix the railing because the path can

be very dangerous. There are a lot of pensioners that use it to get to the only shop in the village - one of the ladies is 95 years old.'

'If money is the issue, we are very good at raising money and will get as much as we can.'

'My message to the council would be: give us a figure. Tell us what you have and we'll raise the rest.'

In response, Jim Smith, the council's head of roads and amenity services said: 'This is clearly an important issue to the community of Portnahaven, and the will of the SWRI to take practical action themselves is very encouraging to see.'

'We are going to replace the handrail and are currently identifying how and when this can be carried out.'



Oban watchkeepers Isobel McGill and Sheila Young admire the new Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders sergeant's mess kit at Oban War and Peace Museum. 15_t10wap03

Museum looks forward to 500,000th visitor

OBAN War and Peace Museum is gearing up for its 500,000th visitor after opening for its 19th successive season.

Oban's only museum, which is run by volunteer watchkeepers, has added new items to the exhibition, including a colourful Argyll and Sutherland

Highlanders sergeant's mess kit, gifted by Alan Morrison, Kilmore.

If visitor numbers continue at the current rate, the museum should welcome its 500,000th visitor in late summer this year.

In spite of the economic gloom of the recession, the museum

attracted almost 32,000 visitors in 2012, over 3,300 more than in 2011.

Alison Palmer, a director at Oban War and Peace Museum, said: 'Visitors come from across the globe to visit the museum with many of them posting favourable comments on social

media sites and in the visitors book. Notably they comment on the warm and friendly welcome given by volunteers.'

'Hopefully 2013 will see an increase in income from donations made by visitors, following a small overall drop last year.'

A82 may not close for 14 weeks

BUSINESSES along the A82 may be spared a 14-week road closure this summer with speculation mounting that any permanent closure could only last three weeks.

Local businesses have been told by engineers from Northern Irish firm McLaughlin and Harvey Ltd that any all-day closures will be limited as the company cannot afford the penalties associated with the complete restriction of traffic.

Glenn Squires, one of the partners who own the Ardlui Hotel, said: 'The contractors are all Irish lads and they've apparently been saying they think it'll be nowhere near 14 weeks - it could be just two weeks then a lot of night time closures.'

Mr Squires added his frustration that more information has not been forthcoming from Transport Scotland in advance of the works.

He said: 'I thought we would

have been contacted by now.'

Transport Scotland say closures could yet last up to 14 weeks, but say incentives are in place to ensure closures are kept to a minimum. A spokesman said: 'A 14 week window, starting October 1, has been allowed during which the contractor is able to completely close the A82 without restriction.'

'Following award of the contract to build this scheme, we are continuing to work with the contractor to ensure any unavoidable disruption on the local community is minimised.'

'Early proposals are now being developed and members of the public and road users will be kept apprised as these become clearer and more definitive.'

'The design and build contract incentivises the contractor to identify any construction methodology which minimises disruption to the road user.'

'All stakeholders will be kept apprised as these become clearer and more definitive.'

Due to last up to one year, preliminary works get underway this month with the clearance of vegetation and other minor obstructions.

Covering 0.4km of the road, the work will see the traffic lights removed, returning the road to two-way traffic after a period of some 30 years.

McLaughlin and Harvey were contacted for comment but were unavailable at the time of going to press.

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Moidart man refused to take breath test

A MOIDART man has been banned from driving for 13 months and fined £400 after refusing to take a breath test. George Clark, of Clarkston, Rosheen, admitted to failing to provide two specimens of breath at Fort William Police Station on December 27. Clark was stopped by police on the Lochailort to Glenuig road, Fort William Sheriff Court heard. Prosecutor Alison Wylie said: 'It was in a reasonably rural location and he probably was not expecting police to be there.' Defending, Hamish Melrose said Mr Clark, 59, asked for a calibration certificate of the breathalyser at the station. 'That was taken as a refusal - he understands that now,' he said. Clark's ban will be cut to 10 months on completion of a drink drivers' rehabilitation programme, Sheriff Noel McPartlin said.

Lifeboat goes to aid of unconscious Kerrera angler

THE VOLUNTEER crew of Oban lifeboat went to the aid of an angler on the Isle of Kerrera on Thursday afternoon after reports he was unconscious. However, when the lifeboat arrived at the island with paramedics the man had regained consciousness and walked on to the boat to be taken back to Oban.

Wild side of Colonsay explored during festival

RESIDENTS and visitors to Colonsay will explore the island's wild side during the third annual Festival of Spring. Colonsay Festival of Spring, running from April 29 to May 20, has been funded through lottery grants and sponsorships, rewarding an initiative to attract more visitors to enjoy the island's exceptional natural beauty, history and wealth of wildlife. There is also an opportunity for island visitors to join in a huge range of art and craft and baking workshops, from knitting workshops and landscape photography to artisan bread baking.

Racist comment charge denied

A FORT William woman has denied making a racist comment to another woman and shouting and swearing at Wallace Place in the town on November 24. Alexandra Melsaac, 38, of 33 Wallace Place, is due to stand trial at Fort William Sheriff Court on March 14.

Funding boost for first time buyers

THE SCOTTISH Government has announced a £1.3 million funding boost for first-time homebuyers in the Highlands. The Rural Rent to Buy scheme will help people on modest incomes rent a newly built property for five years before buying it at a reduced price. The Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust and Highland Council are backing the initiative.

Trial date set

A FORT William man is due to stand trial at the town's sheriff court on April 10 accused of behaving in a threatening manner at his home. Donald MacKinnon, 23, of Flat 1,4, Ben Nevis Terrace, denies shouting and uttering threats of violence on December 27. An intermediate hearing is scheduled for March 14.

4G mobile phone coverage by 2017 promise will mean nothing to Argyll and Bute, claims MSP

AN ANNOUNCEMENT to deliver 4G mobile phone coverage across the UK by 2017 will 'mean nothing' to Argyll and Bute's mobile phone users, says the area's MSP. Ofcom last month awarded contracts to five bidders to operate 4G services and committed to providing coverage to 98 per cent of the country indoors by the end of 2017 at the latest. But Michael Russell MSP, who has long campaigned for better mobile phone services in the area told *The Oban Times*: 'Alas the 4G announcement will mean nothing to most mobile phone users in Argyll and Bute as the main networks have so far failed even to deliver 3G coverage to the area.'

Contempt

'I still think that no 4G should be rolled out anywhere until everywhere has 3G and if O2 and Vodafone in particular

- the main providers here - do not very quickly ensure major improvements in their local service they will be guilty of treating their customers with even greater contempt than they do now. 'I shall be making that point to them in no uncertain terms.'

In the House of Commons, Argyll and Bute MP Alan Reid has questioned Communications Minister Ed Vaizey MP on the progress of the Government's Mobile Infrastructure Project - the project to bring mobile phone coverage to communities who have no access.

Ofcom said its commitment to the 4G network would lead to faster mobile broadband speeds, lower prices, greater innovation, new investment and better coverage. The Countryside Alliance has called for 4G delivery in rural areas sooner rather than

later. Countryside Alliance executive chairman Barney White-Spunner said: '2017 is still a long way away and our concern is that the city markets will be the priority, leaving rural communities and businesses, who don't even enjoy reliable 3G access, falling further behind.'



Tiree skipper Willie Grafton and his two crewmen on the *Silver Spray*.

Rescued skipper says thanks after 11-hour ordeal at sea

A FISHERMAN who endured an 11-hour rescue at sea is back to work and grateful to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution for helping him. Tayvallich-born fishing boat skipper Willie Grafton told this week of his gratitude to the crew of the Tobermory lifeboat and his frustration during the rescue drama on the high seas. Willie's 34ft Tiree-based boat, the *Silver Spray*, was towed around the Isle of Coll to the safety of Tobermory instead of by the direct route through Gunna Sound to its usual anchorage. Replaced Willie said: 'The lifeboat's regular coxswain was off with a broken arm and replaced by a temporary skipper who did not feel comfortable to navigate

through Gunna Sound while towing the fishing boat in gale force winds.' Willie, whose boat was at the mercy of heavy seas with a broken gear box, added: 'The lifeboat's replacement skipper on that day was from the east coast. 'He said he wasn't sure of the straight forward route through the Gunna Sound and put hours

and many miles onto our journey by towing us around the island of Coll. 'I am grateful for the rescue, but at the same time I was exasperated and frustrated that we could not be towed along the shortest route.' Willie and his two crew members spent five days anchored at the Mull harbour until a replacement part arrived

for the broken gearbox. Asked if he had thanked the lifeboat skipper Willie gave a wry smile and replied: 'Oh aye, I thanked him all right and then I bought him a pint.' Willie's thanks also went to skipper Coinneach MacKinnon who tried to take the *Silver Spray* before the tow rope snapped. He said: 'I had arranged for Coinneach to tow me back to

Tiree before the lifeboat arrived but it was not to be.' Willie's love of fishing began when he was eight when he sailed out of his home village of Tayvallich, near Lochgilphead. He said: 'There is only one life for me, that gives me fulfilment, and that is fishing full time.' The rescue was filmed by the lifeboat crew and can be viewed on *The Oban Times* website.

As he prepared to set out from Tiree's Milton Harbour with his two crewmen at Sam, Willie discovered the *Silver Spray* had a flat battery but said: 'It's just another small problem that'll be easily overcome. 'I am planning a 14-hour long fishing trip today in the hope of making up for those disastrous five days we were tied up at Tobermory.'

Isle of Mull airfield job kept under wraps, claims current assistant

THE MAN who has run an island airfield since the 1960s says Argyll and Bute Council didn't tell him it was advertising for the post of airfield attendant. David Howitt, 73, has run Glenforsa Airfield since 1966. He told *The Oban Times* he was 'extremely hurt' the authority didn't tell him it would be looking for someone to take on the role of Glenforsa attendant. He said: 'Nobody told me it was going to be advertised. This

is extremely hurtful for someone who has run it for three different councils.' Glenforsa is due to re-open at Easter after being closed following an accident last September - an incident David blames for this move. He added: 'It is as if in some way they think I am responsible for the accident, which I definitely am not.' The accident, in which a light aircraft crashed after

encountering a gust of wind, was caused by pilot error. David runs the unlicensed airfield on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council, but is not a direct council employee. 'I think they will give it to someone else on the grounds of equality,' he said. 'The indignity of even having to apply for it is astounding.' The council previously confirmed they would be looking to lease the airfield out

to secure its future. There had been suggestions in aviation magazines that Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT) were exploring this - a suggestion the trust denies. Moray Finch, general manager of MICT, said: 'The community trust has no aspirations for involvement in the airfield. 'It has not been considered by the board but if we were requested to look into it the board would do so.'



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Fire service pledge to Knoydart and Eigg

HIGHLANDS and Islands Fire Service has vowed not to 'abandon' Knoydart and Eigg after voting to disband community response units in the remote areas. The board took the move to close the units after its final meeting before a single national fire board comes into being on April 1, saying more than £400,000 would need to be invested if they were to continue. The community crews are trained to deal with road accidents and wildfires, with personnel from Mallaig attending house fires. Fire board convener Andrew Drever said: 'It is important to note that HIFRS will not abandon the communities of Knoydart or Eigg. 'The service will work with these local communities to put in place a robust prevention and protection action plan to ensure their safety.' But Maggie Fyfe of Eigg Heritage Trust told *The Oban Times* local people were concerned with what the decision would mean for the island. She said: 'We've got no idea what they're proposing for the future. 'We've got a number of people who would be more than willing to become a member of the response unit, but we don't know what's going to happen next. 'Just because there hasn't been a fire for a while doesn't mean the danger isn't still there.'

Argyll and Bute gains £372,000 crisis funding

A CRISIS fund set up for vulnerable people has allocated £372,760 to Argyll and Bute Council. The Scottish Government's Scottish Welfare Fund was launched by Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, who announced the £33m funding pot last week. Every local authority has been allocated funds to provide community care grants and crisis grants to the disabled, elderly, lone parents and other vulnerable groups. The money is awarded to people facing a financial crisis and in need of short term help and to help people get essential household items to set up or stay in their own homes, rather than be in care. Allocation Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell welcomed the allocation of £372,760 to Argyll and Bute.

Night closures scheduled to allow Connel Bridge cable work

WORK to move a high voltage cable will see the Connel Bridge closed overnight to both pedestrians and vehicles for five days from Sunday.

from overhead gantries on the bridge for more than a year, but weather and timing for the tourist season meant repeated delays.

Both pedestrians and vehicles will be unable to cross between 10pm-6am until Friday, March 15 when the work starts at 10pm this Sunday.

Access over the bridge will be allowed for a maximum of 10 minutes on the hour every hour, with access for emergency services provided at all times. A signed diversion route will also be in place.

Scotland Transerv, who maintains Scotland's trunk roads, say a complete closure will ensure safety and the quick completion of the work.

The works will involve excavation of the footpath and verge areas on both the north and south of the bridge, as well as overhead works.

Andy Fraser, Scotland Transerv, said: 'The relocation of the cable duct and high voltage cable will remove the risk of future bridge strikes dislodging the cable and subsequently causing damage.'

Demand for home grown produce boosts local trade show

A DESIRE for more locally sourced, home grown produce saw a significant boost to this year's Forth Highlands and Islands Trade Show in Oban last week.

Significant boost
Around 1,000 people came through the doors at the Corran Halls, with the supermarket horse meat revelations driving extra interest in local meat, with brands such as Argyll Angus, Argyll Hill Lamb Group, Argyll Pork Producers, Argyll Wild Venison and Argyll Free Range Eggs all receiving a significant boost in interest.

The 34th anniversary of the biennial trade show boasted its biggest ever food and drink exhibitor turnout - more than double the number who attended Scotland's national food and drink show.

'Unrivalled platform'
John Forteith, general manager of Forth Foodservice, said: 'In the wake of the horse meat scandal, there was a massive interest in the locally sourced meats that we produce on site at our facility in Oban.'

'We were delighted to have several of the farmers we work in partnership with in attendance, and they were fully engaging with visitors coming to the event.'

With around 450 businesses travelling to Oban for the trade show, held on Wednesday and Thursday last week, producers enjoyed an unrivalled platform to market their products directly to local customers.

John Forteith said the event also provided a significant tourism boost to the Oban and Lorn area, with visitors enjoying spectacular weather during the two-day event and a 'truly spectacular' emergence of the *MV Isle of Mull* through the mist at the end of the event last Thursday evening.

Forteith's is now preparing for its food and drink show in Fort William in early 2014 before the trade show returns to Oban in 2015, coinciding with the 60th anniversary of Forth Foodservice.

No new road at A83 Rest and Be Thankful

THERE will be no new road at the Rest and Be Thankful with the A83 Task Force set to formally back the cheapest solution.

The stakeholder group - made up of local business interest, hauliers, council officials and tourism representatives - informally notified Transport Scotland of its decision to back the Red Option outlined in the Jacobs Report last week, with formal notification to be given at its next meeting.

With Transport Scotland having already backed the Red Option, it means between £9-10million will be spent installing 440m of new debris flow netting or other landslide mitigation measures, improving drainage and an extensive planting programme.

The decision comes shortly after Argyll and Bute Council said its long-term preference was for the Green Option - a new road to be built at the other side of Glen Croe - however it also backed the Red Option as the one most likely to have an immediate effect.

Mike Story, who sits on the Task Force as executive director of Argyll and the Isles Tourism, said the Red Option was preferred as it was the only choice which made a difference in the short time.

However, Campbelltown's John Semple, lead councillor for transport, said the council would continue to apply pressure for a new road if the Red Option failed to prevent closures of Argyll's main artery.

He said: 'The Red Option was the one that made the biggest difference in the shortest space of time. I'm not an engineer, but

my understanding is the other options would have involved a significant period of engineering works in advance, maybe 18 months to two years.

'If the Red Option works and there are no more landslips, great. If there are further landslips though, we will then be pushing for work to start on another option to get a secure route.'

Of the £9-10million to be spent on the Red Option, £3.25million will come from the £4million of overall improvements Transport Scotland will make on the road in 2013/14.

Funding for the rest of the work has yet to be identified. A further £10million will be spent on improving other parts of the A83 - again with the funds yet to be sourced.

Man has flesh ripped off finger

Ring caught on fence as footballer retrieves ball

A YOUNG Oban man who had his finger ripped off in a horrific accident has told *The Oban Times* it has ruined his life.

15-foot drop
Andy Smith was playing football at Atlantis Leisure Centre last Monday evening when the ball went over the fence. Instead of walking to the gate the 20 year old decided to climb the fence.

He said: 'My ring got caught on the fence as I jumped over, it was a 15-foot drop on the other side. As I fell it just took my finger clean off.'

Andy, who said Atlantis staff were 'great' and did all they could, was then taken to Oban hospital where he was told he would get a helicopter to Glasgow.

But the helicopter never arrived. 'They said someone else needed the helicopter more than me, I was angry and upset,' said Andy.

He arrived at hospital in Glasgow just after 9pm but wasn't taken into surgery until 10.30am the following morning. 'I was left overnight with just a bone sticking out and paper towel around it,' he added.

The Soroba boy is convinced that his finger could have been reattached if he had been seen sooner, as it was immediately picked up and put into a bag of ice after the accident.

He said he wasn't given any reason why it took so long to get him into surgery and spent several days in hospital. 'I was up crying all night just in severe pain,' he said.

Andy has now had his finger bone grinded down and the skin stitched over forming a sort of 'large knuckle'. He will have to endure weekly trips to Glasgow for check ups and physiotherapy and may need a further operation in a year's time.

'To be honest it has kind of ruined my life,' said Andy. 'It will get better in a long, long time but it is a long process.'

'I want to thank everybody who has given me hope and lovely messages. The ambulance service were great as were Atlantis and the boys I was playing football with.'

He added: 'I don't understand why there are studs on the top of the fence but I shouldn't have climbed it in the first place.'

'I'll not be wearing a ring again, I'll get my wedding ring tattooed on if I'm ever married.'



Footballer Andy's finger was ripped 'clean off'

Mull abusive message victim speaks out

A WOMAN who received an abusive message which referred to her physical disability has spoken out as her tormentor appeared in Oban Sheriff Court.

Murray Stormonth, 50, of flat 15, the Old Bond Store, Main Street, Tobermory, admitted sending an obscene message to local councillor Mary-Jean Devon.

Stormonth, who pled guilty to making 'derogatory personal remarks' and using language of a 'menacing nature', will be sentenced on April 2.

But Mary-Jean Devon is just glad her ordeal is finally at an end. She said: 'I don't look at myself as having a disability, I just have a challenge every day but not everyone feels that way and his comments were really nasty. It is not nice and it is not acceptable.'

'I'm just really glad this is over. I think this is a result not just for me but for other people who may have suffered the same thing.'

Richard Hamer, a director at disability charity, Capability Scotland, added: 'We hope that this conviction will send out a clear message to perpetrators that hate crime against disabled people will not be tolerated. It is encouraging for disabled people to see this type of crime being taken seriously by the justice system.'

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Morvern Lines

AS WINTER loosens its grip, we all look forward to signs that spring is not far away – the first daffodils, longer daylight hours, the arrival of golden plovers on the hilltops, new born lambs and, of course, warmer weather.

One of the most evocative is the scent of heather burning wafting through the glens and reminding us of our Palaeolithic past. Heather, or muirburning as it is more commonly called, is one of the oldest land management tools known to man.

Providing it is controlled and conforms to current legislation, it allows the sun to reach the soil and improves surface conditions for the reception of and germination of seed and saplings.

Unfortunately, thanks to too many poorly cited forestry blocks and overzealous new-age conservation principals, little burning takes place in Morvern nowadays. Although SNH has not yet banned it altogether, its literature is discouraging in the extreme leaving traditional land managers wondering if it is really worth the trouble. The result is that thousands of acres of former rich grazing are rapidly disappearing under an impenetrable mat of poor quality vegetation.

There is a grant for burning but anyone contemplating applying for one should be aware it comes with a raft of conditions some of which are well nigh impossible to follow outwith an urban situation.

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I ONCE knew of a minister in the Borders with a large, sleepy congregation consisting mainly of tenant farmers and landowners.

They would invariably nod off during the sermon until the minister regularly intoned in a loud voice, 'Lord grant us mercy' with the emphasis on the word 'grant,' at which he maintained they would quickly wake up, turn to their neighbours and ask, 'A grant, who is giving a grant now?'

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THE LATE John Foster Yeoman, founder of the highly successful Glensanda Quarry on the Morvern Peninsula which now employs more than 200 people, was offered many grants at the beginning of his operation but refused them on principle.

His reasons were, firstly, as soon as a grant is awarded the recipient is tempted to take a risk as it is not his or her money and secondly, someone, somewhere with no knowledge of the business begins to start dictating how it should be run. A sound, commonsense approach worth following.

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A ONCE notable landmark on the west side of Glen Liddesdale above Loch Sunart, called 'The Devil's Acre', has recently reappeared in the landscape following the felling of a Sitka Spruce forest planted more than 30 years ago.

The story surrounding this spot concerning a visit to a tenant farmer by His Satanic Majesty many generations ago was first brought to light by the Rev James MacDougall (1833-1906), minister of Duror and a well known collector of Celtic folklore.

In his book 'Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition – Folk and Hero Tales', published in 1891, MacDougall gives the source as Alexander Cameron, a native of Ardnamurchan who, as a boy, had heard it from his grandfather. It was also known to the Grahams of Liddesdale, a well-known shepherding family who lived in the neighbourhood for many generations until the 1960s.

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IN THE recently restored 15th century Kinlochaline Castle and now a private house, there are two interesting and unusual carved tablets.

Set in the south west ground floor wall above the only entrance, there is a sandstone block showing an antlered stag pursued from above by a hound and underneath a salmon. Above the fireplace in the north west wall of the ground floor chamber there is a second stone showing a nude female figure kneeling sideways but facing to the front. In her right hand she holds a round disc-like object and under her left arm a large sack or purse; in the top left hand corner is a jug or some such container with horizontal bar decoration. This second plaque is locally interpreted as the original owner dispensing hospitality but is more likely the grotesque figure of a 'Sheila na gig' – a device, Irish in origin, used to ward off evil spirits. According to tradition the castle, known in the past as 'Caisteal an Ime' – the Butter Castle – was built by a lady of the MacInnes clan who paid her architect with a quantity of butter equal to the full worth of the castle.

Iain Thornber.

Flagship tourism summit urges maximum from nature

ARGYLL'S flagship tourism summit will urge local businesses to make the most of their surrounds and turn the area's natural assets into experiences.

Held on March 13 at Mount Stuart on Bute, the event organised by Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative (AITC), aims to share ideas and to build

on existing visitor numbers. This year's event will see the launch of the organisation's new website Uniquely Argyll. With partnership working

a key message at the summit, lead councillor for renewables and tourism at Argyll and Bute Council Donald Kelly said: 'The 2012 Tourism Summit

attracted 130 delegates and generated a wealth of new ideas and networking opportunities for local businesses. 'We know we have spectacular

tourism assets in Argyll and Bute, but we are competing in a global market for visitors and it is important to work together.'



Plockton Small Boat Sailing Club Commodore Alexander MacKenzie, left, and club secretary Tristan Southall, right, receive the award from Luke Patience.

Plockton Small Boat Sailing Club sails off with coveted RYA award

PLOCKTON Small Boat Sailing Club is on the crest of a wave after winning the coveted RYA Scotland Club of the Year at the national yachting organisation's annual awards at Largs.

Club commodore Alexander MacKenzie and secretary Tristan Southall travelled to the Ayrshire town to receive the accolade from Luke Patience, recent silver medallist in the 470 class at the London 2012 Olympic Games.

The award was sponsored by ICOM UK and the club received a waterproof, floating hand-held VHF radio.

Plockton Community Council Chairman Charlie MacRae said: 'Well done to all involved in the club and perhaps especially to

those who have given their time over many years to make the club what it is today. It is a fitting start to the club's 80th anniversary year.'

Club Commodore Alexander MacKenzie said: 'To win this award means a lot to Plockton sailing club, it's a huge honour. 'There are generations of sailors from Plockton including my grandfather who was one of the founder members of the club so it's great for us and I'm sure all the rest of them will be delighted.'

He added: 'We have over the years expanded our efforts to involve people in the community. Originally the club was all about Plockton but as the numbers of people from Plockton dwindled, we had to cast the

net further and we get people from Skye, from 60 to 70 miles away, who come to sail in the village.'

'A lot of people put in huge efforts every week to coach younger people and encourage them.'

Club secretary Tristan Southall looked on the award as 'a stepping stone'.

He said: 'There are a lot of things we don't have, like showers and changing rooms. There is always investment required for improved rescue facilities, outboard engines.'

'This hopefully gives us a platform to go forward, maybe train up more people as instructors, maybe some assistant instructors from some of the juniors and keep building the sport in our area.'

SAMS learn to fly to see the sea

Dunstaffnage to use robotic aircraft

SCIENTISTS at Oban's marine research institute are hoping to advance their knowledge of the sea – by learning to fly.

Scientists at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Dunstaffnage have started learning how to use Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA), which are capable of gathering data about the sea from the sky.

Robotic aircraft Scientific instruments and sensors can be mounted on the planes, which are then flown above the sea surface.

The sensors are capable of collecting vast amounts of data in a single flight.

This provides a cost-effective method of data collection in comparison with traditional methods.

Shane Rodwell, electronics engineer at SAMS, said: 'Remotely piloted aircraft work was once only the domain of NASA and company. It's great that technology has now reached a level where lighter robotic aircraft have become suitable platforms for serious scientific work.'

'It's great that SAMS now has the technology and expertise to be a leading UK centre for light remotely piloted aircraft work, especially with support from our neighbours at Oban airport.'

'We can do anything from aerial mapping, to more sophisticated scientific imaging. Atmospheric measurements are high on our agenda too.'

'Our fleet of autonomous underwater vehicles have for some time been making measurements below the

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

"Remotely piloted aircraft work was once only the domain of NASA."

Shane Rodwell, SAMS.

sea surface. Our remotely piloted aircraft fleet will complement these by allowing us to make measurements above the sea, so that we can investigate ocean-atmosphere interactions more closely.'

The aircraft will potentially be used to gather data on the melting of sea ice, surveying jellyfish, searching for invasive species of seaweed and to study how seals and other marine mammals interact with off-shore energy projects.

Much of the research conducted in marine science is done aboard costly research vessels whereas RPAs are cheaper and are able to gather considerable amounts of data in a much faster time.

Therefore they provide a very efficient method for the collection of data in marine science.

The scientists who are undergoing training have been practising using flight simulators at SAMS and will be undertaking a week of further training in Northumberland this week.

Driver banned for five years and fined £1,200

A SPEAN Bridge man has been banned from driving for five years and fined a total of £1,200 for a string of offences committed on Christmas Eve.

John McPhee, of 11 Spean Park, took a car without the owner's consent then drove on the A82 towards Torlundy from Spean Bridge while disqualified and without insurance.

After being stopped by a police patrol on the road, the 31-year-old later that day also

failed to provide two breath specimens at Fort William Police Station.

At Fort William Sheriff Court last Wednesday, Sheriff Noel McPartlin chose not to send McPhee to prison 'on balance' after hearing pleas in mitigation.

The sheriff told McPhee his driving ban would be cut by one year if he successfully completes a drink drivers' rehabilitation programme.

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Sheriff hands out three driving bans

A FORT William man has been banned from driving three times for driving a disability car on two occasions with no licence or insurance, once while drunk behind the wheel.

Appearing for sentencing at Fort William Sheriff Court, Ewan Gourlay admitted being twice the drink drive limit when stopped by police on the A82 through the town on December 16, having just a provisional licence and no proper insurance.

He also pled guilty to then threatening to spit at police officers in Fort William Police Station while stating he had hepatitis C.

Gourlay, 44, of 110 Lundavra Road, further admitted driving without a licence or insurance on Achintore Road on January 30 while on bail.

Sheriff Noel McPartlin handed Gourlay three bans of one year, 15 months and two years, fined him a total of £630 and ordered him to carry out 80 hours of unpaid work in the community.

Single force takes over with 'legacy of success'

THE NORTHERN Joint Police Board (NJPB) met for the final time last Thursday ahead of the single national police (Police Scotland) coming into effect on April 1.

Both Northern Constabulary Chief Constable George Graham and convener Norman M MacLeod hailed the 'legacy of success' being left by both the northern force and the NJPB.

Convener Norman M MacLeod said: 'We as a board have delivered a number of state of the art police stations during my time here, including excellent facilities at Nairn, Lairg and Fort William to name but a few.'

'It is that investment in the future which has ensured our officers now have fit for purpose premises in which to carry out their duties.'

Wishing Chief Superintendent Julian Innes well in his new position as Highlands and Islands



Chief Constable George Graham.

Local Policing Commander, Chief Constable Graham added: 'I am convinced that the dedication and professionalism of my officers will continue as we move into Police Scotland and we will continue to provide the high level of policing we have in the past.'

SeaGeneration (Kyle Rhea)Ltd

Kyle Rhea Tidal Array Public Exhibition Days

Tuesday 19th March 2013 - 3.30pm – 8pm

The Broadford Hotel, Broadford

&

Wednesday 20th March 2013 - 3.30pm – 8pm

Glenelg Community Village Hall

SeaGeneration (Kyle Rhea) Ltd is proposing to install an array of four SeaGen tidal devices to generate clean, predictable energy from the tidal currents of Kyle Rhea.

A licence application for the project has been submitted to Marine Scotland and we would like to provide the local community with the opportunity to find out more about what is being proposed. An Environmental Impact Assessment has been completed and information on the possible impacts of the project will be available.

If you would like to learn more please come along to one of our drop-in sessions to discuss any questions you may have concerning the proposed project, the SeaGen technology, and the possible benefits and/or impacts of the tidal energy scheme.

We look forward to meeting you

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Fort William race night off and running

FORT William Cricket Club and the Belford Hospital are to hold a race night in the Volunteer Arms in Fort William tomorrow night (Friday) at 7pm. Proceeds from the fun event will be split 50-50 between the two.

Western Isles MP in Post Office talks

NA H-EILEANAN an Iar (Western Isles) MP Angus Brendan MacNeil has met with the Post Office Ltd following the announcement that the Crown Post Office in Stornoway is to be relocated to a retail outlet.

Services
Mr MacNeil said he 'made it clear' at the meeting that the branch must remain within the town centre and should retain all the services it currently offers, 'enhanced, if possible'.

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Spean Bridge man fined £700 after Fort William High Street assault

A SPEAN Bridge joiner who assaulted his partner's ex-boyfriend in Fort William High Street in front of shocked passers-by has been fined £700. Alexander MacLeod laid into David Landesa after he and his partner met him by chance on January 24.

MacLeod, 42, began punching Mr Landesa on the head, knocked him down and kicked him as he lay on the street, Fort William Sheriff Court heard.

Injuries
The victim suffered injuries to his mouth, face, left eye, upper chest and shoulder in

the afternoon attack, which was caught on CCTV. 'A lot of people witnessed the assault and were extremely distressed by it,' Procurator Fiscal Alison Wylie said. 'Mr Landesa was not the one who started it.'

Defending, Stephen Kennedy said there had been 'an acrimonious split' between the complainant and MacLeod's current partner. The couple had just come from a nearby solicitors', where they were informed of Mr Landesa's ongoing opposition to selling the house he and his ex-partner jointly owned.

Spying Mr Landesa, MacLeod 'saw red and simply lost control', Mr Kennedy said. 'It was a spontaneous reaction to seeing Mr Landesa,' he added. Sentencing MacLeod, Sheriff Noel McPartlin said there was 'no excuse' for his assault.

'It was a serious disturbance of the peace,' he said. 'A number of people saw what happened and were distressed - and I'm not at all surprised.' MacLeod earlier admitted repeatedly punching Mr Landesa on the head and kicking him on the body, all to his injury.

Council refuse to comment after alleged suspension

ARGYLL and Bute Council has refused to comment after a member of their staff was allegedly suspended after being reported for selling road infill material belonging to the authority.

A member of the public reported a staff member from the roads department after they filmed him dropping off hardcore to an Oban business.

It is understood the footage of the incident has been shown to council officials, resulting in the suspension of the member of staff in question, pending an inquiry. It is claimed by employees at the business this has been going on for some time with the council staff member selling the hardcore for personal profit. The council refused to comment when asked if an allegation of this nature had been made.

A spokeswoman said: 'We would never comment on an individual member of staff.'

Lewis airlift

A MAN was airlifted to hospital with a leg injury after falling 20 feet down a cliff face on the Isle of Lewis.

The 44-year-old fell onto a shingle beach at Garrobost on the east of the island at around 7.30pm on Sunday night.

He called for help using his mobile phone and was taken for treatment by Stornoway Coastguard helicopter.

Portree forum to focus on health and social care

HIGHLAND Council's Eilean a' Cheo ward forum in Portree on March 18 will focus on the future health and social care needs across Skye, Lochalsh and southwest Ross - with a new single site hospital, including in-patient and community resources, top of the agenda.

Dr Paul Davidson, clinical director for NHS Highland's north and west operational unit and Kate Earnshaw, NHS District Manager for Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross will lead debate.

Highlife Highland chief executive Ian Murray will also attend to give an overview of the organisation's work since it was set up by the council 18 months ago, along with examples of new initiatives across the Highlands.

Police and fire and rescue services will be present to give an update on service changes.

Councillor Drew Millar, who will chair the meeting, said the aim was to make community planning 'really effective' on the island.

Time will be set aside for public questions, which should be advised in advance in writing so that informed responses can be given.

The forum runs from 2pm to 4pm in the Council Chamber, Tigh na Sgìre.

Social work out-of-hours calls to be answered locally

EMERGENCY out-of-hours calls for social workers in Argyll and Bute will be answered locally for the first time when a new service begins on April 1.

The new Social Work Emergency Service (SWES) will be the first point of contact with on-call social work staff for police, health care staff and other professionals and will provide essential cover in situations where children or adults may require protection or emergency intervention.

The service will be administered by Carr-Gomm, on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council, and replaces the existing call-handling service which has been based in Glasgow.

Lead councillor for adult services Anne Horn said: 'This is good news for the quality of services in Argyll. Staff answering the phones will have a better knowledge of the area and will be able to work more closely with the local social work teams.'

The new numbers for SWES calls are 01631 566491 (main number) and 01631 569712 (second number).



Kerrie MacPhail of Kerrie's Tyres with staff members, from left: Kenny Ahmed, Brian Todd and Neil O'Hara.

Kerrie hosts car care course strictly for women

FEMALE drivers are being offered the chance to dispel the stereotype once and for all that women can't change car tyres.

Oban garage owner Kerrie MacPhail has decided to provide free instruction after the majority of her female customers admitted they were 'clueless' when it came to the task.

Kerrie, who runs Kerrie's Tyres, and her staff will host a Ladies Afternoon on Saturday March 23, giving female drivers instruction in changing tyres, tyre safety and basic car checks.

'I have been thinking about doing this for a while,' said Kerrie.

'A lot of women come in and say they wouldn't know where to start when changing a tyre.'

'My mind was made up the day a woman came in to ask how to change a tyre, because she had recently divorced and her husband had always done it.'

'That's not to say every man out there can change a tyre but I have found they are less likely to admit they can't!'

Safety risk

Kerrie says the main reason she went into business on her own was to help women who were 'intimidated' by going into garages.

And she is all too aware of the safety risk of not knowing how to get your car back on the road after a puncture.

'The open day is a safety message more than anything else,' she added. 'People are very wary of stopping and helping strangers at the side of the road.'

'There are also a lot of black spots for mobile phone signal in this area, so it helps if you can change a tyre to get you home.'

Support for the event, which will also raise money for the Ryan MacPhail Memorial Fund, has come locally from Highland Fasteners and from tyre companies Kumho, Michelin and Vredestein.

The initiative has also received the backing of local police and fire and rescue stations.

Lorn Lines

OBAN and District Classic Vehicle Club held its annual dinner at the Lochnell Arms Hotel, North Connel, on Saturday February 23 when a good turnout of members and their partners enjoyed a lovely meal.

At the monthly meeting on Thursday February 28, a talk on 'Road Traffic Crashes' was given by Kevin Devine from Oban Ambulance Station. This was followed by an interesting presentation from two club members about cars they used to own and had restored over the years.

The next meeting will be held at the Lochnell Arms Hotel, North Connel, on Thursday March 28 at 7.30pm. Anyone interested in classic vehicles is invited to attend.



Highland dancer Eilidh MacInnes with Jill Bayliss, Vice Consul of the Foreign Commonwealth Office, Lena Larsson, from Sweden, head of UN Mission and Hugh Evans, Consul General in Kurdistan for the British Embassy.

HIGHLAND dancer Eilidh MacInnes had an ambassadorial role on a recent trip to Iraq.

Having been asked to bring haggis out to The Caledonian Society of Kurdistan's Burns Supper, the Oban woman also took DVDs of Scottish landmarks.

Eilidh had been invited by the society to perform at the Burns Supper, organised by the British Embassy in northern Iraq, and also instructed the guests in some traditional Scottish dances.

Guests included business people from all over the world, representatives of national governments and the Kurdish regional government.

Eilidh said: 'It was a great experience and very interesting.'



The Oban 200 committee carried out one of its last acts after a commemorative flag marking the town's bicentenary was presented to Oban Community Council. Representing Oban 200, Councillor Duncan MacIntyre, centre, handed the flag to community council chairwoman Marri Molloy, left.

Jura joins heated Islay ferry debate

JURA Community Council has waded into the often heated Isle of Islay ferry debate by stating ferry crossings from Kennacraig should be evenly split between Port Ellen and Port Askaig.

The pressure group Islay and Jura

Fair Ferries Forum was set up last month after the Scottish Government's Final Ferries Plan indicated more sailings would continue to come into Port Ellen.

Responding to a request to contribute to the debate, Jura Community

Council has emailed Transport Scotland stating that a 50/50 split between Port Ellen and Port Askaig would be the fairest option.

Vehicle ferry

The Jura vehicle ferry runs between Feolin on the island and Port Askaig.



Prizewinners line up at a frosty Nevis Range last Tuesday.

Caol primary retains cross-country title

CAOL Primary School retained the Lochaber primary schools cross-country championships at Nevis Range in glorious winter conditions on Tuesday afternoon.

Inverloch came in second in the team event, pipped by only a single point, with Fort William RC medalling in third.

Lachie Shaw of Fort William RC Primary School took the boys' individual title from Brett MacMillan from Inverloch

in second and Caol's Jamie Duncan in third.

Charlotte Adam-Prosper of Lochaline primary was first girl home in the girls' race, followed by Rebecca Johnstone of Invergarry Primary and Regan Porter from Roy Bridge Primary.

More than 100 children from P4-P7 from 19 schools took part in the event, which was organised by local Active School co-ordinators.



Individual race winners Charlotte Adam-Prosper and Lachie Shaw with their trophies after the cross-country championships at Nevis Range.

New Coll hall used more than expected

COLL's new £2.5million community hall, An Cridhe, is already enjoying better than anticipated usage levels - according to the community company behind it.

Seonaid MacLean-Bristol, chairwoman of Development Coll, has welcomed sustained levels of interest from the island's near 200 residents, with 68 inductions at the gym alone recorded as excellent progress for a hall that was officially opened by Princess Anne last summer.

With three members of staff now in place to run the hall and its associated bunkhouse until the end of the year thanks to Big Lottery funding, hopes are high the development can continue to drive tourism and interest to the island as well as provide vital community facilities for residents.

Seonaid MacLean-Bristol said: 'It's been fantastic for the island.'

'There's lots of things coming out of it and there's lots of ideas we have for it.'

Gym

'To have 68 inductions at the gym is excellent for a community of this size and the staff we now have in place are really fab.'

The Bunkhouse has now received four-star status and already reached the half-way point of its sales target for the whole of 2013.

Seonaid added: 'We feel we're ahead of where we wanted to be with the hall so we're very pleased so far.'

'Now it's a question of making sure the community feel it's their building.'

To help with that, various sports including hockey, football and netball, are being played in the hall.

Some minor snagging is still being done on the building itself but plans are afoot to further enhance the range of services, including bringing more cultural events to the hall over the next year. Development Coll hopes the income from An Cridhe and its bunkhouse will contribute towards further projects in the community, with the income helping to make the social enterprise more robust. It's hoped a new website for the hall will be up and running in the coming months.

Warning on Dyson 'service'

COMHAIRLE nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) trading standards are warning consumers about cold callers offering to service Dyson vacuum cleaners.

Residents have received calls from a company offering to carry out the service 'for a special price'. No Dyson engineers are presently operating in the islands.

Consumers can get further advice from trading standards on 01851 822 694.

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KERRERA

PROJECTS on the Isle of Kerrera are being hampered by a lack of funding, according to members of the island's development trust.

Permission was granted last October for Argyll and Bute Council for pontoons to be installed on either side of the Sound of Kerrera for commuting use.

But David Keys, director of Kerrera Development Trust, told *The Oban Times* the group had so far failed in applications for money to install the pontoons.

He said: 'We have planning permission for pontoons on either side of the sound. This would allow people safe access to the island outside of ferry hours.'

The trust is also looking at the construction of a small building for community use and it is hoped tying this up with the pontoons funding application may bring more success.

More directors are also required to sit on the trust so that larger projects, including wind turbines, can be progressed.

and we have a lot of hard work ahead of us to try and achieve a long term solution to transport issues on the island.

'We have to find some way of keeping some sort of service on the island but we don't know what that will be.'

She added: 'The whole community is behind us but we have got to look for something and we are in the early stages.'

'We are hoping to get a working group with other community councils and we are exploring how far we can take it. It is a lot for one small community council to take on as there is a lot of expertise required but we are beginning to research what sort of grants might be available.'

Lead councillor for community Louise Glen-Lee said: 'Transport links are vital across Argyll and Bute, especially for our island communities which depend upon them for both social and economic reasons.'

'I am pleased that the council and Royal Mail have found a way of extending the service until next year. We will use this time to explore the best way of providing an alternative when the contract does come to an end.'

SLEAT

COMUNN Eachdraidh Shléite (Sleat Local History Society) will hold the latest in its winter programme of talks in the Conference Room at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig next Friday.

Iona MacDonald will give a presentation on 'The MacDonalDs of Belfinlay and Waternish: a Family and Community History', illustrated with documents and photographs from the family collection. The meeting starts at 7.30pm.

LUING

AN ISLAND community is trying to find a solution to its transport problems after being told the current bus service will end next year.

A post bus currently runs on the Isle of Luing, and was due to end this summer but a contract extension agreed with Argyll and Bute Council has seen residents handed a 'grace period' until July 2014.

The bus, operated by Royal Mail, is described as a lifeline for local people and is the only means of public transport on the island. Locals say they have been 'very fortunate' with the two 'wonderful drivers' they have had.

It takes children to school and allows residents without cars to get around the island and gain access to the ferry. Islanders also fear visitor numbers will be affected if there is no public transport provision.

Denise Cowley is the secretary of Luing Community Council which will be working on a solution to the island's transport issues.

She said: 'We are absolutely delighted with the contract extension and we are very conscious that the ward councillors and Roddy McCuish really pulled out all the stops with Royal Mail.'

'It gives us a year's grace

Cathy Way, Royal Mail's director of logistics in Scotland, added: 'This further extension of the service will give the council and islanders sufficient time to find an alternative service when the contract finishes next year.'

'Royal Mail will, throughout, continue to provide its main priority - the mail delivery service to Luing - as it has always done.'

Transport options, including the possibility of an electric bus, will be discussed at the next community council meeting on March 12.

FORT WILLIAM

FORT William Community Council (FWCC) held its monthly meeting in the Nevis Centre on February 19.

Abridged minutes: Police: Sergeant Haugh reported that two tickets had been issued for misuse of



Allan Henderson and councillor Eddie Hunter with the Lochside RC committee and their award. 20_10award01

Lochside pride at winning UNICEF award

LOCHSIDE RC Primary has become one of the first in the Highlands to be given a UNICEF award recognising the school's work to encourage children to learn their rights and responsibilities.

The school has been working towards the rights respecting school award since the end of 2011 and passed a recent UNICEF assessment with flying colours.

The award is given to schools which have put the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of a school's planning, policies, practice and ethos.

The report praised Lochside's approach to teaching pupils about diversity and rights and the school's several committees, including the eco group, the Fairtrade committee and playground buddies.

It said: 'The children and staff demonstrated very positive attitudes towards cultural awareness and were very keen to learn about other cultures.'

Provost Allan Henderson presented the award to the youngsters.

He said: 'You are a credit to your parents and you can all be very proud of yourselves.'

disabled parking bays in Ross Place. Once use is established the owners may be requested to remove the caravans.

Points raised: Local car owners were using the '30-minute waiting' parking spaces and the taxi rank outside the Department of Work and Pensions offices and spaces opposite for long term use.

This is to the detriment of customers wanting to stop short term and shop in the area. It was requested that this area be monitored by traffic wardens.

The Traffic Order in Gordon Square is taking a long time to

implement. Councillor Murphy advised that Traffic Orders are being renewed for the entire town area and as there is only one person employed to deal with these. It was asked if the High Street could be dealt with as a priority. Councillor Murphy to action.

Lundavra Road: Cars are travelling faster than is safe in an area, which has two play areas for children, a shop, and housing schemes both sides of the road. Sergeant Haugh advised it is unlikely cars are travelling over the speed limit but drivers should be reported

if cars are continually noisy or driving faster than is safe.

Matters arising from January minutes: Regeneration of High Street: It was agreed FWCC ask for regular updates and give their full support. D Purdon advised that he had contacted Mr MacLean to give him information on the setting up of a 'Fort William Lottery' as a funding possibility.

Water seepage on to Argyll Terrace: Councillor Murphy advised that the tenders have gone out and work will start when the tender process is complete.

Hanging Baskets: The chairman advised that FWCC's application for funding to the Highland Council Discretionary Budget for Wards 12 and 22 to place summer floral displays in the High Street and the Parade has been successful. Councillor Gormley informed the meeting that due to the fact this application was for the High Street, the application was commended by councillors from both wards.

The meeting agreed this is wonderful news and look forward to bringing the project to fruition. Project progression

STRATH OF APPIN

PARENTS, grandparents and friends enjoyed a fabulous afternoon of refreshments and cakes at Strath of Appin Primary School's Fairtrade coffee afternoon.

As well as the cakes donated by parents, many inspired by the Fairtrade cookbook the children produced at Christmas, the younger pupils, assisted by P7, baked scones on the day which proved popular with everyone who attended.

Primary one to three and primary seven pupils, who organised the event to raise awareness of Fairtrade Fortnight, thoroughly enjoyed their afternoon of showing guests to their seats, taking drinks orders and ensuring that cups and plates didn't stay empty for long.

A total of £71 was raised for Fairtrade charities.



Children from Strath of Appin Primary School at their Fairtrade event.

INVERLOCHY

A VALENTINE'S party was organised by Inverlochly Rural to brighten up the dreary month of February.

Special guests were Fort William Rural members and Isobel Campbell and daughter Linda of Lochaber Rural Complex and Nevis Radio fame. President Mrs May Webb welcomed everyone and after a short business report, Isobel and Linda set the ladies a challenge to identify a number of strange articles, all of them used in farming kitchens years ago.

These can all be seen at the Torlundy Rural Complex.

There was much hilarity and amazement when the ladies were told of the uses of some of the items.

This was followed by a sumptuous tea, then Isobel and Linda judged the competitions for the Romantic Poem.

Bessie Hood and Irene Pinkett were placed first equal. Heart Shaped Biscuits: 1 Irene Pinkett; 2 Cathie Stevenson; 3 Bessie Hood. The president thanked everyone and presented Isobel and Linda with a token of appreciation for a wonderful evening.

KINLOCHLEVEN

C T R Wilson, Scotland's only Nobel Laureate in Physics, made observations of the 'glories' while working at the Observatory on Ben Nevis.

A passion to reproduce this phenomenon in the laboratory led him to invent a device called a cloud chamber.

At Kinlochleven High School next Thursday, Professor Alan Watson FRS will talk on C T R Wilson as a scientist and as a person and show how important his work was in developing one of the most exciting fields of modern physics. 'CTR Wilson, Ben Nevis and The Higgs Particle', an RSE@Lochaber event, starts at 7pm.

SEIL

A LIVELY concert was held in the Tigh an Truigh Inn on the Isle of Seil last weekend which saw it packed with family and friends in a 'cosy atmosphere'.

The band Mudslide performed on the night with lead singer Dougie Robertson taking a break from his day job of island plumber. Covers of blues and rock and roll songs had feet tapping and hands clapping.



Echoes from the past: Staff at the Kilmuir 'Factory', a busy weaving and basket making business, in 1949 or 1950.

Skye history group to re-print book on crofting way of life in Kilmuir

A SKYE history group, buoyed by the success of its latest book, is to re-print its first publication which sold out several years ago.

Echoes from the Past, which depicts the crofting way of life and the people in the north end district of Kilmuir, was first printed in 2006.

Written by contributors and volunteers of the Kilmuir and Kilmaluag History and Heritage Group - some of whom have since died - the book sold more than 1,000 copies.

The popular publication found its way around the world with people living all over the UK, North America and Australasia snapping it up.

However, the book's printers later went bust and the community group, which published a sequel at the end of last year, feared the original templates had been lost forever.

But the volunteers were delighted to find the templates had been salvaged after all and have had dozens of requests from people wishing to buy the book.

A group spokeswoman said they had been 'taken aback' by public interest in *Echoes from the Past* and hoped the new print run would satisfy demand.

She said: 'It was a source of pride for everybody connected with *Echoes* to complete it and we hope the new print run will reach a new audience.'

The book's return to the limelight is all the more poignant following the recent death of group member Johan MacPhee.

Among the stories featured are the changing social customs in the tight-knit crofting community, the land struggles and the story of retired doctor Calum Og MacRae who served north Skye for several decades as the only GP.

The area's herring basket factory, religious history and coastguard operations, which were depicted by the late Norman MacInnes, are also included along with an assortment of photographs.

The sequel *More Echoes from the Past* was published last November and more than 700 copies have already been sold.

It features a wealth of stories about the characters of the area including the revered postmistress Peigi Bheag who lived to the age of 107 and the local policeman Roderick MacDonald - Ruairidh Mor - who helped feed the poor.

The reprinted *Echoes from the Past* is priced £10, plus £2.50 postage and packaging, and it will be available at a variety of shops on the island or via post by enclosing a cheque to Kilmuir and Kilmaluag History & Heritage Group, 8 Hungladder, Kilmuir, Isle of Skye, IV51 9YT.

Any profits from book sales will be ploughed into community projects.

particularly in the mornings. Were councillors consulted about the loss of these parking bays to the public?

If the car park is being used as an operational base, is planning permission required?

If not, would that facility be available to other commercial operators? Councillor Murphy to action.

Next meeting: March 19 at 7pm.

INVERGARRY

SPRING is definitely in the air in Invergarry with planning underway for a home and garden sale in Glengarry Community Hall, with a provisional date of Sunday May 12 set. To book a table, contact 01809 501447.

Insight into role of Forestry Commission for Scotland

THE FORESTRY Commission for Scotland (FCS) manages 500sq kms of land in the Lochaber Forest District.

Surprisingly, only half of this is afforested, which means a wide variety of habitats have to be taken into consideration.

In a fascinating insight into the role of FCS in managing the national forest estate for biodiversity, environment Forester Henry Dobson gave Lochaber Natural History Society (LNHS) a talk about what his job entails.

Henry provides advice to his colleagues on topics as diverse as where and when to fell, what to leave, when to cull deer and how to encourage native flora and fauna.

Ancient woodland is a scarce commodity throughout the UK, yet about 20 per cent of Lochaber's woods are either natural or on previous ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

Care is taken to protect existing ancient woodland. Natural regeneration is allowed to take place after felling of conifers on former PAWS that are known to contain a good remnant flora and fauna indicative of native woodland.

This process is helped by selective grazing, using a flying herd of Highland cattle that are used to keep down coarse grasses, bracken and scrub.

This allows young saplings to thrive, by grazing and trampling at specific times of the year. Conversely, inappropriate browsing is controlled by deer culling.

A scientific index of damage in an area is taken into account in deciding where to focus efforts on reducing deer numbers. Deadwood is also a critical component of local ecosystems and active management of this provides a critical habitat for up to one third of all species at some part of their life cycles.

Species protection is a key component of FCS policy, and the commission is the lead partner in the Species Action Plans for several important native species which include,

in Lochaber, black grouse, red squirrel, the pearl-bordered fritillary and chequered skipper butterflies and wood ants.

For each of these, populations have to be identified and forestry work tailored to protect their homes and prevent disturbance. This work is taken further in micro-managing open habitat for optimal colonisation of butterflies, as at the reserve at Allt Mhuic.

Floating rafts in lochs included in the forest estate have been provided for the rare black-throated diver to nest on. As well as a plethora of bird and bat boxes, feeding stations have been provided for red squirrels to allow public viewing and platforms have been erected to encourage ospreys to nest in appropriate places and to encourage the white-tailed eagles. Where existing raptor nests are identified, no-disturbance zones are established around these.

Similarly, badger setts, squirrel dreys and other holts have to be noted and avoided.

Other projects include planting of juniper clusters to help boost the Lochaber population of this scarce and declining species.

On the mountains above the forest edge, a very rare habitat exists for alpine scrub and rare plants such as mountain willows and dwarf birch are often physically protected.

The estate even includes wildflower meadows at Savary, where it is hoped that upland hay meadow, a rare vegetation type, can be re-established.

The opening-up of river and burnside margins to allow re-establishment of fish stocks and the regeneration of native marginal vegetation is also routinely carried out.

LNHS meets at 7.30pm in the Alexandra Hotel, Fort William, on the third Monday of the month throughout winter and everyone is welcome. The next meeting on March 18 will be a talk by Professor Ian Parsons on 'Greenland: rocks and wildlife', which will be followed by a short business meeting.

MALLAIG

IN 1876 they wiped out General George A Custer and his 7th Cavalry at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Now Chief Sitting Bull and his Sioux people have fled from the United States to Canada.

A young man follows White Bird to Sitting Bull's camp.

This young man's name is Duncan McDonald.

Descended from chiefs of the Nez Perce and from chiefs of one of Scotland's most formidable clans, Duncan's family - first as Lochaber Highlanders, then as Native Americans - have twice been victims of massacre and dispossession.

Professor Jim Hunter will tell their story in a lecture in Mallaig High School next Tuesday.

'A Lochaber McDonald in the Camp of Sitting Bull', the latest RSE@Lochaber public talks, starts at 7pm. The event is free.

BROADFORD

THE FIRST training workshop for a new seashore wildlife project in the Highlands is planned for Broadford on Skye on March 29 as 'The Year of Natural Scotland' gets underway.

Timed to take advantage of the spring equinox low tide, the event will provide an introduction to how to identify and record seashore wildlife, co-ordinator Janet Ullman said.

Other workshops elsewhere on the Highlands' coastline will follow over the next three years.

Highland Council, on behalf of the Highland Biodiversity Partnership, is managing the project, which is being funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Scottish Natural Heritage, council and the Crown Estate.

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Premium rate phonecalls costing taxpayers thousands

PUBLIC bodies on the west coast have squandered thousands of pounds on phone calls to premium rate numbers, directory enquiries and the talking clock.

The Oban Times asked Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, NHS Highland, Argyll and Bute Council, NHS Western Isles, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Strathclyde Police how much they spent on calls to directory enquiries and premium rate numbers over the 2011-12 financial year.

We also asked how many phone calls were made to the talking clock, at what cost and the time spent on the longest call to the service.

Argyll and Bute Council spent the most in the shortest period of time, having only been able to provide data for February and March 2012 due to a computer error. Council staff made 145 calls to directory enquiry services during that period, costing £473.66. It also spent £131.19 on 539 premium rate phone calls

and £14.76 on the talking clock - with the longest call lasting 180 seconds - in the same period.

The council said premium rate calls were only allowed following a formal request from heads of service via its IP phone service. It adds some premium rate calls were essential for everyday operations.

NHS Western Isles, meanwhile, made 7,436 calls to premium rate numbers, costing £803.87 over the course of the financial year. Directory enquiry

services received 137 calls from NHS Highland, costing £222.39, with a call lasting 88 seconds the longest to the talking clock of 40 calls, costing £54.84.

The health board said it was 'concerned' by inappropriate use of its phones by staff, adding 'clear communication has been issued to staff with regard to this matter'.

Strathclyde Police spent the longest on the phone to the Talking Clock, with three minutes and one second the longest of

the 1,082 calls to the service, costing £459.88.

The police force also made 182 calls to 118 directory enquiry services, costing £350.74, and 1,609 premium rate calls, costing £128.17.

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, meanwhile, says it does not have a record of calls it made to the services. A spokesperson said: 'Any calls made to non-routine numbers or premium rate numbers are scrutinised and are justified by those making them.'

'Any concerns made over misuse of these numbers will be investigated.'

NHS Highland was the only public body spoken to by The Oban Times. It said access to the premium rate and talking clock services were restricted. Directory enquiry services were not used, as each central switchboard it operates has a disc from BT with directory details on it.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar did not respond to The Oban Times request.



Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

'S E RUD urramach a th' ann dha cuideigin aideachadh gun robh e ceàrr agus maitheanas iarraidh. Ach nuair a nochdas Ministear Riaghaltais gum d' rinn an roinn aige mearachd agus gum bheil iad air an inntinn atharrachadh, mar a thachair a thaobh cùmhnant-seilge Ratharsaigh, chan eil a' mhòr-shluagh cho deiseil creidsinn gum bheil an t-athreachtas cho fìrinneach 's a tha e a' leigeil air!

'S e aon adhbhar airson sin nach eil e ann an nàdar Mhinistearan Riaghaltais an dàrna cuid aideachadh gum d' rinn iad dad ceàrr, neo maitheanas iarraidh.

Tha bliadhna aig croitearan Ratharsaigh gus smachd tèarainte fhaotainn air ceadan-seilge, ach ma leanas Riaghaltas na h-Alba, an turas seo, ris a' phoileasaidh aca a thaobh fearann agus coimhearsnachdan iomallach, tha còir gun tig co-dhùnadh ceart. Tha e nise air tighinn am follais nach robh ach beagan is mile not eadar an tairgse aig na croitearan agus a' chompanaidh dhan tugadh a' chùmhnant, ach a leig às na còraichean nuair a thug iad na bh' air tachairt.

Chosg a' mhearachd naoi mìle dhan sporan phoblach ann an airgead diolaidh ach le suim cho beag cha robh e ro dhoirbh dha Ministearan an co-dhùnadh atharrachadh, ged a tha beagan maslaidh ann gun teagamh.

Chan eil e idir cho furasta dha leithid Riaghaltas na co-bhanntachd ann an Lunnainn an slighe atharrachadh air poileasaidh sònraichte sam bith, fiù's ged a bhiodh iad a' faicinn nach eil cùisean a' dol mar a bha iad an dùil is mar 's dòcha a gheall iad.

Chan e a-mhàin na duilgheadasan poilitigeach a thig nan rathad ach glè thrìc tha cosgais anabarrach mòr gu bhith an lùib leithid de cho-dhùnadh. Chan eil saoghal riaghlaidh furasta aig am sam bith agus nuair a tha dùbhlann eaconomach eadar-nàiseanta mar a tha an-dràsta, tha e doirbh buileach! Ach tha luchd-poilitigs an sàs den roghainn fhèin agus tha làn-choir agaimn an cumail ri cuid gheallaidhean a thaobh math na dùthcha is a' mhòr-shluagh.

Mar eisimpleir, gheall Ministearan mar dhileab bho Gheamaichean Lunnainn gum biodh barrachd a' dol an sàs ann an lùth-cheasachd de gach seòrsa le caomhnaidhean dha seirbheisean slàinte ri linn fallaineachd a' mhòr-shluagh.

Deagh amas! Ach ciamar a ghabhas sin coileanadh ma thig air Comhairlean ionadan poblach spòrs a dhùnadh ri linn ghearraidhean ann an airgead poblach, mar a tha a' tachairt ann an Sheffield? An dàrna poileasaidh a' fàsgadh an diog à tèile!

Fort William church organ to burst back into life

Concert marks £20,000 fundraising campaign for 107-year-old instrument

A FORT William church will echo to the sound of a magnificent organ given a new lease of life thanks to a painstaking refurbishment.

And next Friday's concert recital in Duncansburgh MacIntosh Parish Church of Scotland will be a celebration in more ways than one.

Acclaimed organist Morley Whitehead is returning to Lochaber to perform, while the occasion also marks the successful £20,000 fundraising campaign for the 107-year-old instrument's restoration.

Mr Whitehead, organist at Morningside Parish Church, Edinburgh, first played the church organ at Kilmalie Singers' performance of Handel's Messiah in December 2011.

EXCLUSIVE REPORT by STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

and grateful we were able to raise the money for it. We have saved an old organ either going to rack and ruin or being changed out of all recognition.

Delighted

Kent-born Mr Whitehead, also music specialist at Edinburgh University Library and accompanist to a number of the city's musical institutions, said: 'I am delighted to have been invited to play on the very fine, newly restored organ here at Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church in Fort William.'

The refurbishment was carried out by Michael and Andrew MacDonald, Organ Tuners, Glasgow, who gave the instrument 'a considerable overhaul', adding two stops to complete the range originally intended when it was built over a century ago by Forster and Andrews of Hull.

Recital

The beautifully crafted instrument was given a rousing baptism at a recital reported in The Oban Times in March 1906: 'Seldom, if ever, has a Fort William audience been treated to such a delightful recital of music as was given in Duncansburgh Parish Church on the evening of Wednesday last, by Mr A Hollins, the blind organist of Free St George's, Edinburgh. The occasion was the installation of the new pipe organ.'

The concert next Friday starts at 7.30pm.



Organists May MacIntyre and David Hamilton are looking forward to next Friday's concert. 20_f10organ01

Advice

He then provided invaluable advice on the refurbishment, said May MacIntyre, who plays the organ at Sunday services in rotation with local postman David Hamilton.

Miss MacIntyre, who retired as assistant rector at Lochaber High School in 1989, told The Oban Times: 'Morley emphasised the importance of retaining the organ's original features, especially its 'tracker action', which has been drastically altered in so many other fine organs.'

Electronic

'We were hovering on the verge of making it an electronic organ, which would have been criminal to do.'

'We received £20,000 for the refurbishment thanks to wonderful support from the congregation and the wider community. We are delighted

IT IS both pleasing and worrying that it took public pressure to 'join up' government policy on the Raasay sporting rights contract. The error will cost the taxpayer about seven times the original 'added value' objective.

How much more difficult for the Coalition Government to consider any turn-around when different policies are obviously at odds. For example, Ministers promised significant savings in health service costs as more took up sports following the London Olympics. This laudable aspiration is now threatened by Government cuts leaving councils unable to maintain sports facilities.

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

Le taic bho

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Man in custody after allegedly slapping boy

ALLEGEDLY assaulting a nine-year-old boy by slapping him on the face landed a man in jail this week.

Pawel Kuznicki, 34, of no fixed abode, is also alleged to have assaulted a woman during the incident at an address in Colonsay Terrace, Oban. He is further accused of acting in a threatening manner and making the pair fear for their safety.

He denies all charges and is expected to stand trial on April 3.

He was remanded in custody and will next appear in court on March 20.

Ceilidh cash handed out to charities

ORGANISERS of last year's Oban 365 Hogmanay Ceilidh in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls have handed out almost £5,000 in proceeds from the event to charities.

Ian MacInnes and John Sweeney met representatives of Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease and Macmillan Cancer Support at Lorn and Islands Hospital in Oban last Friday to hand over cheques worth £1,595 each.

Ian had already handed over a cheque for the same amount to Yorkhill Day Surgery Unit.

Iain and John thanked the main sponsors of the Hogmanay event, whose donations covered the cost of the ceilidh and allowed all proceeds to go to charity.

The sponsors were: Oban Express, Barbour Carpet Services and D and Fuels, SEC Joiners, Oban A Munn.



Lucy Heycock, left, and Caroline Henderson, of Macmillan Cancer Support and ABCD respectively, receive the cheques as John Sweeney, Oban 365, Alfie MacKenzie, ABCD, John Barbour, ABCD, and Ian MacInnes, Oban 365, look on. 15_210cheque01

Connel residents' survey suggests one-way system to ease traffic problems

CONNEL residents responding to a community survey have suggested turning Main Street into a one-way road - and opening a fast-food takeaway.

Around 50 people have so far responded to the poll by Connel Community Council, which asked residents what they liked, disliked and wanted to change about the Lorn village.

While the responses were broadly positive about the village itself, there were some interesting responses about changes some residents would like to see - however likely or unlikely they might seem.

The responses are set to be discussed at next Tuesday's meeting of the community council and its secretary Les Stewart said: 'The idea to make Main Street one way is interesting.'

'The village shop comes out really well in the survey.'

'But one of the negative points mentioned in the survey is how it's getting more and more difficult to park next to the shop and the number of big trucks coming through there.'

There was concern too that many of the houses in the village aren't connected to the main sewer, meaning raw sewage is dumped into Loch Etive. There were some even more creative suggestions among the responses.

Les said: 'There was a suggestion that a McDonald's should be in the village - and someone even suggested building a swimming pool!'

Connel Community Council meets to discuss the proposals at Connel Village Hall on Tuesday from 6.30pm.

Oban businesses to be urged to work together at first forum

BUSINESSES in Oban are being urged to work together for the benefit of the whole town when BID4Oban holds its first business forum next week.

Taking the place of the old Chamber of Commerce, the new forum is designed to help develop and drive ideas to generate more trade for the town. Open to anyone who is a current levy payer or anyone interested in becoming an associate member, BID4Oban's chairman John Forthright believes it is crucial traders have their voices heard.

He said: 'The forum is an important part of the BID's plans to bring business and relevant stakeholders together to network, get involved in delivering the BID's objectives and benefit from collective working.'

Sponsored by Business Mentoring Highland - a Scottish Chambers of Commerce and Highlands and Islands Enterprise

initiative - the first Oban Business Forum will take place on Monday March 11 at The Olive Garden, Oban, starting at 6pm.

BID manager Nic Jones added: 'Under our theme of Adding Value, we'll be giving an update on current and future projects funded through the Levy and hearing a presentation by our event sponsor on what a free business mentoring service - which offers free confidential support from experienced business people - can do for business.'

The forum meeting comes as the first round of applications to the Business Frontage Improvements Scheme are being assessed.

Up to £1,000 including VAT is being made available for upgrade work to the fronts of the businesses with the first announcements on grants being made by March 14. The next round of funding will close on September 31.

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The area's biggest town Fort William is currently seeing work being carried out on the massive Blar Mhor development, with building of a new joint police and ambulance headquarters getting underway last week. Tesco also have planning permission to create a new superstore at the site. The recent regeneration of the former Grand Hotel site on Fort William High Street has brought a number of national chains to the west end, driving shoppers and tourists back to the centre of the town. The historic Lochaline salt mine was recently reopened, providing an employment and economic boost to the area, while building work has started on creating the Ardnamurchan Distillery, with the first whisky set to be produced before the end of the year. Meanwhile, Marine Harvest continue to expand in Lochaber, with a new £15 million fish farm currently under construction near Lochailort. So as winter gives way to spring, why not get out and about and see what Lochaber has to offer.

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Glencoe honours visionary engineer

GLENCOE Mountain Resort has honoured the visionary engineer who drew up plans to found the ski centre - Scotland's first - 60 years ago.

At the base station restaurant on Friday, more than 40 people from the early days of Scottish skiing joined 96 year-old Philip Rankin from Ballachulish to celebrate his achievements.

Mr Rankin was a young engineer in Glasgow when in 1953 he first mooted the idea of building a permanent ski tow on the northern slopes of Meall a' Bhuiridh.

He had already skied the hard way many times - walking up then ski-ing down - and reckoned a lift up to the mountain's snow-holding ravines would unlock its potential for snowsports.

Then editor of the Scottish Ski Club Journal, Mr Rankin wrote an article detailing his ideas and three years later Scotland's first permanent tow was built.

Those present at Friday's ceremony included members of the original work party and ski patrol, along with legendary climber Hamish McInnes and resort owner Andy Meldrum.

Mr Meldrum said: 'We invited all the old-timers we could contact to be present when a specially-commissioned photo portrait of Philip was unveiled in the Log Cabin Restaurant at the resort.'

Mr Rankin said the original ski tow, based on a system to convey baskets of tea down from hillsides in India, proved to be 'a bit of a disaster' and had to be rebuilt.

Under skilled guidance from Jimmy Hamilton, one of Mr Rankin's engineering contemporaries, a new chairlift was installed in 1959-60 and Glencoe ski area began to enjoy commercial success.

Mr Rankin said after the presentation: 'I think what they have done here is absolutely wonderful. I just wish I had the cash to do it myself.'

'I expected there might be 12 people or so there but the place was packed. All the old cronies were present - there were quite a few walking sticks about!'

Chair of Ski-Scotland, Heather Negus was delighted Glencoe had recognised the achievement of a 'remarkable man'.

She said: 'Without his vision, determination and practical knowledge, it is possible that downhill skiing might never have been established in Scotland.'

'Little did he know then that he was founding an industry which 60 years later would be worth around £30 million per year to the Scottish economy, currently enjoying the benefits with great snowsports conditions at all the resorts.'

Cairngorm and Glenshee ski areas opened in the early 1960s, the Lecht followed in the late 1970s and Nevis Range in 1989.



Glencoe ski resort founder Philip Rankin was honoured at a special ceremony on Friday



Lochaber Youth Theatre made a big impression in Fort William on Saturday. 20_110theatre01

Lochaber Youth Theatre fundraisers take to high street

LOCHABER Youth Theatre (LYT) provided a splash of colour on Fort William High Street on Saturday during a fundraising day for their latest production.

The ambitious group has entered UK-wide project 'National Connections' aiming to be one of 10 companies chosen to perform at

the National Theatre in London in July. LYT will premiere its entry 'Ailie and The Alien' at the Nevis Centre before taking the play to the regional heat at Eden Court from April 2-4, when they will be judged against seven other entries from the north and northeast of Scotland. LYT director Ilona Munro told *The*

Oban Times: 'This is the first time we have ever done this and it is quite a big thing for us. We have quite a good youth theatre just now with about 15 people. Some older youth theatre members have come back to help, which is nice.' Curtain goes up on 'Ailie and The Alien' on both nights at 7pm (12 and over only).

Second investigation launched into Spean climber's death

A SECOND investigation had been launched into the death of a Spean Bridge man on Ben Nevis last Monday.

Mark Phillips fell from Raeburn's Buttress on the North Face of the mountain while climbing with a friend. After speculation that a rope was accidentally cut as the 51-year-old was being winched onto an RAF helicopter causing him to fall to his death, Northern Constabulary said it would investigate.

The RAF has decided to set up a separate inquiry into personnel and equipment involved

in the attempted rescue. Meanwhile, tributes have been paid to Mr Phillips, with Lochaber Provost Allan Henderson saying he was 'extremely saddened' by the news.

Popular
TEC Services director Neil Gillies said Mr Phillips was a 'popular, helpful and highly valued member of our team.'

Mr Phillips' wife Caroline said she had 'entire confidence' in the police investigation.

She added: 'Mark was a loving father and husband and will be sorely missed by us and his many friends and work colleagues.'

Deep snow breaks man's 300 foot fall

A MAN fell more than 300 feet while climbing in Glencoe on Tuesday morning - only to have his fall broken by a patch of deep snow.

The climber, in his 50s, is thought to have been airborne for much of the fall after he slipped 1,500 feet up Buchaille Etive Mor.

He suffered arm, shoulder and leg injuries but a Northern Constabulary spokesperson said his injuries were 'not life threatening'.

Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team was called out by the man's climbing partner

after he slipped while attempting a traverse from Crowberry Gully to Curved Ridge.

He was conscious when the rescue team helicopter found him and airlifted the man to the West End car park in Fort William. An ambulance then took him to the Belford Hospital for treatment to his injuries.

A total of 11 people have died in Scottish hills so far this year. A group of four students were killed after being engulfed by an avalanche while walking on the 3,773 foot Bidean nam Bian in Glencoe in January.

Fort police station opening hours cut

FORT William Police Station will no longer open 24 hours a day when the new national police force comes into effect next month.

The reception will only open from 8am-8pm seven days a week from April 1. Stornoway Police Station will see the same reduction in opening hours while

Portree will be cut from 8am-8pm every day to 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

Chief Superintendent Julian Innes said: 'Police will still maintain a visible presence in communities. We encourage people to contact us during opening hours where they have a routine enquiry. People can still dial 999

in an emergency and for non-emergencies can still contact police on a 24 hour basis by telephoning any of the advertised non-emergency numbers.'

Fort William councillor Andrew Baxter told *The Oban Times* he felt the move would not have a negative impact on policing in the area.

Argyll business mentoring scheme offers free support

Programme matches mentors with management experience

A FREE business mentoring scheme is aiming to help businesses across Argyll reach their full potential.

Oban's Pauline Cameron delivers the Scottish Business Mentoring Programme - run by the Scottish Chambers of Commerce - across the whole county, linking experienced businessmen and women with companies seeking to stabilise, enhance or grow their operation.

Offered on a confidential basis, the programme links companies that have been running for at least a year with people whose own background would be most beneficial to their own particular needs.

The one-to-one support for a period of up to one year at a time can cover any subject from cash-flow and diversifying

income streams, to marketing and dealing with the specific challenges posed by the current economic climate.

Pauline said: 'Richard Branson is a great believer in business mentoring, but there's still a bit of 'if I admit I need help, I must be weak' culture around in the business community which needs addressing.'

'The programme matches volunteer mentors, who have significant business and management experience, with businesses seeking to grow and looking for an objective sounding board or support to work through specific business issues.'

Andy Maxtone, business mentoring manager for the Scottish Chambers of Commerce, added: 'It's about helping a business grow in the best way without

making the mistake. Quite often, the business mentor has made the mistake and learned from it and they can pass on that experience.'

'What makes this scheme so valuable is the mentors are volunteers and there is no vested interest other than wanting to help. We have a wealth of experience out there and if we can use that in a positive way it helps the whole area and businesses to grow.'

Pauline is keen to hear from businesses who wish to take advantage of the scheme and anyone with relevant business experience interested in becoming a mentor.

For more information on the mentoring programme or to get involved email Pauline on pcameron@businessmentoring-scotland.org.



Karen Baxter, left, and Allan McDougall, right, of Dunoon's Argyll Smokery, who have previously benefited from the Business Mentoring Programme, with the Scottish Chambers of Commerce's Andy Maxtone and Pauline Cameron. 16_110pauleineargyllsmokery1

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or contact Pauline Cameron on 01631 566007
pcameron@businessmentoring-scotland.org

Business Mentoring is a partnership between Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Scottish Chambers of Commerce and Highlands & Islands Partnership Programme

Pre-owned clothing business up for grabs

A PIONEERING business that sells pre-owned designer clothing is looking for a new owner following a successful trial period.

Off the Rails, on George Street, Oban, operates in a similar manner to e-Bay, but for clothes, allowing customers to see first hand the garments available before buying.

However, with both owners Sandra Melville and Catherine Hunter running the enterprise alongside their full time jobs, they feel they don't have the time to dedicate to the business and decided to shut up shop last week.

They are keen to pass on the business to anyone wishing to take up the reins and take advantage of the good trade already built up.

Sandra said: 'The business has been so well received and we've been quite overwhelmed.'

'However, as we both work full-time we don't think we can devote the time to taking it through 'the season' without letting standards slip. It would be such a great opportunity for someone and we've done all the hard work getting it up and running, building a reputation and establishing a client base. So it's there on a silver platter for the right person.'

Anyone interested in taking over Off the Rails can contact Sandra and Catherine on offtherailsoban@gmail.com.

Meanwhile the shop will be open on Saturday between 12noon and 3pm for clients to collect their unsold items. Anyone who cannot attend should email the owners.

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GLASGOW LETTER

Shot themselves in the foot?

WHILE the crofters' co-operative on the Isle of Raasay is relieved at the decision to restore the Raasay Crofters Association lease to the island's sporting and stalking rights, the whole issue has opened a can of worms as to who makes these decisions.

The competitive tendering process that resulted in an Ayrshire-based business being awarded the rights may be commercially sensible and socially acceptable in a mainland and urban situation but makes little or no common sense in a rural or island environment, especially when the island-based co-operative had been successfully managing the sporting rights for the previous 18 years.

Perhaps this clear lack of understanding of rural needs will also fuel calls to opt for a community buy-out of the island.

At a time when the Scottish Government is keen to show it has an understanding of the many and diverse issues that make up the rich mosaic of Scotland, this bureaucratic bungle highlights that sights remain firmly fixed on the Central Belt.

GLASGOW LETTER

Glasgow Islay Association Annual Gathering

HAVING survived its year-long celebrations in 2012 to celebrate the 150 years since it was founded, the association will be delighted that its Annual Gathering Concert 2013 was such a success.

Partick Burgh Main Hall was almost packed to capacity and the crowd was treated to a variety of songs from youngsters Kirsten Laurie and Ruaraidh MacKinnon and Mod Gold Medallists Eilidh Davies and Paul McCallum. Greg Harley, another youngster and a member of Johnstone Pipe Band, gave an impressive display of piping and Brighde Morrison did likewise on the accordion. Kirsten Grant was the accompanist.

Prior to the concert, a presentation was made by committee member Irene Justice to Norma MacDougall who served for several years as accompanist for the association.

Kenneth Thomson, conductor of the Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association, was charged with ensuring the smooth running of the concert and in his address he emphasised the important role Islay and its people had played, and still play, in his life. Brighde Morrison presented Kenneth and his daughter Alison with mementoes of the occasion.

Although the numbers present were far short of the 'good old days' in St Andrews Hall and then the City Halls, the evening was very much a gathering with many of those present thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to meet up with past acquaintances.

The annual dance took place the following evening in the Student's Union at Strathclyde University to the music of the 'Reely Jiggered' Band.

Concert of spiritual music

LIKE the Islay Association the previous evening, organisers of the 'Journey through the Hebridean Heart' will be well satisfied that their concert in St Mary's Church in the Calton area of Glasgow was very much a gathering of Gaels.

The church was well filled to hear a fusion of some of the finest musicians and singers, too many to name here, of 'Gaidhlig Scotland'. The main recipient of the proceeds will be the repair programme of Our Lady of Sorrows Church, South Uist, a church dedicated to the memory of the fallen at Paschendaele where so many Gaels lost their lives.

The concert was composed by Cathy MacDonald and was recorded by the BBC. It

will be broadcast at 9pm on Easter Sunday by Radio nan Gaidheal.

Buffet ceilidh dance

COMUN an Taobh-an Iar will hold its buffet ceilidh dance on Friday March 15 in Ellangowan Social Club, Milngavie, from 8pm to 1am.

The Charlie Kirkpatrick Trio will provide the music. For further information telephone 0141 942 4495.

Live at the Star

SINCE February, the above Folk Club has changed both night and venue.

It now takes place on Tuesday evenings in the 'Hold Club', The Admiral, 72A Waterloo Street, and this week will feature Ivan Drever.

Piping competition

GLASGOW Uist and Barra Association will hold its Annual Professional Piping Competition in the College of Piping, Otago Street, this coming Saturday with the morning session starting at 9am and the afternoon session at 1.30pm.

Diary dates

Friday March 8: Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association Annual Concert, Cottier's Theatre, Hyndland Street, 7.30pm. Clydebank and District Highlander's Association Ceilidh, Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick, 7.30pm.

Saturday March 9: Glasgow Uist and Barra Association Annual Professional Piping Competition College of Piping, Otago Street - see above. Paisley and District Highlander's Association Ceilidh Dance, Elderslie Village Hall, 7.30pm. Oban High School Former Pupil's Dinner Dance, Crowne Plaza Hotel, 7.30pm.

Tuesday March 12: Gaelic Quiz, Park Bar, 7.30pm. Please note change to second Tuesday of the month. Live at the Star - see above.

Thursday March 14: Donnie Munro, Eastwood Theatre, 7pm.

Friday March 15: Donnie Munro, Tolbooth, Stirling, 8pm. Comun an Taobh-an-Iar, buffet dance - see above, **Saturday March 16:** Highlander's Club Dance, Partick Burgh Hall, 8pm. Donnie and Diane Band.

Pub scene

IN THE Islay Inn this weekend it will be Black Velvet on Friday and Crooked Reel on Saturday while in the Park Bar it will be Scott Harvey on Friday, Dodgy Ground on Saturday and Nicky McMichan on Sunday.

Neil Murray, Telephone: 0141 954 8105. Email: neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk.



Corson's Auction Mart, Oban, 1993

Reader Mrs K Boyd of Oban submitted this week's flashback photograph which features the town's Corson's Auction Mart on the day it was handed over to William Low for its supermarket. The photograph was taken from the hydropathic ruin on February 28 1993. Please send prints to The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing their prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

Letters to the editor

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Telephone: 01631 568000
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Rest and Be Thankful - right answer, wrong question

Sir, The Government is congratulating itself for answering the question 'How do we by-pass the Rest when it again becomes blocked by land-slides' when the question should have been 'How do we prevent the Rest becoming closed in the first place?'

So once again time and money has been frittered away that could have been better directed to curing the underlying problem of the regular closure of A83 life-line road to Argyll.

We need the engineers to identify the simplest scheme that will prevent closures and the expenditure of the minimum amount of money necessary to achieve that; no more, no less.

Alec Logan, Clonaig, Tarbert.

Happy at Glencruitten Hostel

Sir, We were delighted to see the report in *The Oban Times* about Glencruitten Hostel, where our two children have been very happy staying.

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to Alex Craik, who has done so much for the children in the hostel and helped to carry through recent improvements.

For our children, the school is not just about learning, it is also about receiving good pastoral care and this is exactly what they received from the hostel and the high school.

Calum and Sandra Morrison, Achadhnamara, Fionnphort, Isle of Mull.

Care of the elderly an Argyll and Bute wide concern

Sir, Care of our elderly is not only a concern in Cowal but Argyll and Bute wide and has to be addressed, not in isolation or as a financial expedient, but as a policy commitment now and for the future.

The need for this service will be subject to increased demand both in care standards and the numbers of vulnerable elderly.

This applies to not only our care homes but to home care services recently privatised - concerns already being expressed - and we must continue to ensure the quality of care is maintained at the highest standard. The issues related to Struan Lodge, Cowal, cannot be allowed to develop

further - care of the elderly is an honourable pursuit and the removal of security and dignity is inexcusable and must be opposed.

The fact local elected representatives Breslin and Blair did not vote with the will of their electorate but with their political allegiance is for their conscience and their current reconsideration of their position may be a reflection of this.

Their lack of local commitment is one thing but the 'unforeseen consequences for the rest of Argyll and Bute' of their 17 administration colleagues voting 'yes' for closure is another.

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre, Oban North and Lorn.

Mull BID a dubious wishlist

Sir, I write with regard to the Mull and Iona Business Improvement District proposal (MI-BID) and the controversy and upset it is causing around the islands.

I recently went along to a MI-BID question and answer session at Fionnphort thinking I would be a lone voice. There were two local businesses who attended who are also listed as forming part of the steering group and have been for the past 12 months.

Because it looked like they were supporting the BID by being on the steering group I avoided talking about the BID to them over the last year because I didn't want to risk falling out with them. Imagine my surprise therefore when they said as far as they were concerned they had never been on the steering group and were not in favour of the MI-BID and would be voting no! Since then at least 10 others listed on the steering group have said the same to me.

There is a real sense of anger about this BID - businesses from Iona, Fionnphort, Bunesan, Pennyghael, Lochdon, Craignure, Aros, Dervaig and Tobermory have all expressed their anger and concern on what they see as an unfair, divisive, undemocratic process and a proposal that is purported to be a business plan is nothing more than a wish list, as well as being very poor value for money.

The BID legislation is flawed and was written and designed for town and city centre localised regeneration projects not an island wide project. Don't get me wrong, we are an established and successful business with progressive views which is why after nearly 23 years in business we are still here and continuing to grow. We can clearly see a BID is not the correct vehicle for this island community and will be voting no and encouraging others to do so also.

We hope businesses on Mull will make the effort to read the MI-BID proposal carefully

before deciding which way they will vote. Five years is a long time in the life of any business to be saddled with having to pay a compulsory business levy for what can only be described as a woefully written and dubious wish list.

Jane Noddings, Fionnphort, Isle of Mull.

Inexcusable ballot delay

Sir, A ballot paper from the Highland Council's executive's office in Fort William is circulating in Morvern asking which two bodies should hold and administer future community benefit payments - the community council or a private trust.

Although simple and straightforward, this referendum has taken almost a full year to implement. This inexcusable delay has meant that no benefit has been forthcoming from at least one hydroelectric scheme which, in turn, has hindered any investment in a renewable energy scheme the community might have planned.

There is only one local body who should be responsible for administering this income and that is the democratically elected Morvern Community Council whose members are barred from taking part under the terms of the alternative option.

Iain Thornber, Knock House, Morvern.

Just another slow connection?

Sir, I have recently returned from a holiday in Patagonia and have been attempting to catch up on the local events.

This was not as challenging as it might have been had my journey been the other way round as I was impressed by the mobile phone reception and internet speed in South America compared to what I am accustomed to in Argyll.

I note the number of diversions and harsh weather of recent weeks but there is a difference between being safe and being utterly risk averse. The 'old skippers' had a wealth of local knowledge and experience rather than just relying on technology.

The NHS is investing in

greater use of telecommunications to improve patient access to services whilst the CalMac vessels serving these islands are reliant on radio communications for weather updates at local ports - and these are made manually - yet the weather/visibility/wind reports for Islay Airport are available on a public website.

Mobile phone reception across Islay and Jura is patchy with major blackspots.

There appears to be significant belated interest in the Scottish Ferries Review and the report as it pertains to this area. Instead of celebrating the current position whereby the islands have a guaranteed two-vessel service with recently upgraded terminals both on Islay and the mainland and continuing to press for other upgraded links for telecommunications, this area risks being labelled as home to a bunch of unappreciative whingers.

There are statutory and democratic bodies able to speak to ferry services via Islay Community Council, Islay and Jura Transport Forum, Ferry Users Committee and yet now there is a suggestion of an 'Islay Fair Ferry Forum'.

I have been unable to find any details about its membership or constitution on the internet but perhaps it is just another slow connection?

Jena Knowles, Islay, by email.

Budget concern

Sir, A 19-16 majority if translated as a jury verdict would no doubt cause the judge to send the jurors back to deliberation.

As for a juror who states that he didn't cast a vote, the words contempt of court come to mind. What does Councillor Kelly imagine he was elected for? To abstain on a small matter which affects very few may be okay, but an annual budget affects every person in Argyll.

Did Councillor Kelly even consult a core number of his constituents to see what they thought? Bringing in a budget on such a small minority because you've formed a group who can give you control does not auger well for the implementation of those budget measures. To my mind, a majority is something like 26-10 if it is to be seen as consensual.

George Doyle, Easdale.

Alan Cochrane

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH'S SCOTTISH EDITOR



Dead meat

The horse meat scandal has forced us to really think about where our food actually comes from

WITH Britain, not to mention the whole of Europe, still agog over the horse meat scandal it is no surprise that many old-fashioned butchers' shops are now doing a roaring trade.

People need to have confidence in what they're buying and dealing with a man, in ever-so slightly blood-stained white overalls and a blue and white striped apron, who appears to know what he's talking about, gives them that confidence.

Never has the old injunction of caveat emptor been more appropriate. But the essential problem here is that the average buyer cannot really beware when he or she usually doesn't have a clue what they're buying when it comes to meat - be it beef, lamb, pork, veal or, for that matter, horse.

Supermarkets are getting the blame and rightly so, because it is clear that they haven't been particular enough about what they've been selling to the public. However, it is also the case that the almost total ignorance amongst the public about buying, cooking and eating meat has contributed to the scandal.

It appears to be the case that it is processed meat that has allowed unscrupulous traders to make money out of this ignorance. But I reckon that we meat-eaters should equip ourselves to better combat their excesses. We should start asking questions and begin demanding some precise answers.

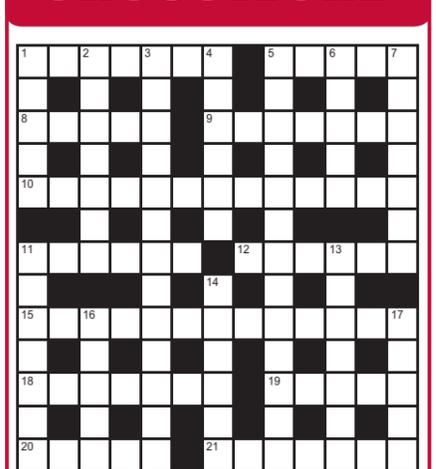
My wife reckons that on the basis of some school summer holidays spent working in a butchers' shop, I can be a bit of a bore about meat (as well as many other things, she'd probably add). But I do like to know what I'm buying. Unfortunately, not a lot of so-called butchers in supermarkets really know what they're selling. For instance, when I challenged one young man, wearing the appropriate uniform of a butcher in one of our larger supermarkets, why labels marked 'roasting joint' were stuck on cheap cuts like brisket and silverside, he admitted that he'd never, ever roasted brisket... or any other cut of meat for that matter. He wasn't a butcher, and the outfit he wears is primarily designed to con the customer. Perhaps the biggest difficulty is one of the most popular purchases: mince. What is it? There are any number of variations, all looking roughly the same. And then there's the 'economy' varieties of mince now offered by many of the bigger supermarkets. Oh sure, if you read the small print you can just about work out the fat content but unless I'm very much mistaken there's no proper definition of what's contained in what is, in reality, Scotland's 'other' national dish.

Then there's that stuff called 'stewing steak', sometimes called 'braising steak' or maybe 'stewing beef' or even just 'stew'. What is it, exactly? And it's not just those dressed up as butchers in supermarkets who don't know the answer. I asked one such, only this time in one of Edinburgh's poshest butchers' establishments, and he said: 'It's stewing steak.' I said: 'I can see that from the ticket, but what cut is it?' To this he replied: 'It's for stewing.' It was clear that we were getting nowhere with this line of questioning, so I asked to speak to his boss, who was a proper butcher, and who told me it was shoulder steak, which was just what I wanted and which I reckon is the best cut for casseroles, stews and pies.

Ditto, that stuff labelled 'thin cut steak' or just 'steak'. What is it? Another mystery. Let's have much clearer labelling about the various cuts of meat, as well as guidance about how to cook them. But we, the public, really need to better educate ourselves about meat; the horse scandal has proved that we can't really trust anyone else to do it. For myself, I loved those days in the butcher's, in spite of all the cuts and nicks that still decorate both my hands (there was often quite a bit of my blood in the sausages, if truth be told). My speciality was potted hough - absolutely delicious stuff that can still be bought in better butchers.

I bought a couple of pots recently in Anderson's in Broughty Ferry and when I offered a neighbour to choose between one pot of this marvellous hough or one of expensive foie gras as a reward for looking after our cats, I was extremely relieved that he chose the foie gras. Bon appetit!

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD



- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Across | Down |
| 1 Shoe leathers (7) | 1 Projections in the small intestine (5) |
| 5 Bird on a building site? (5) | 2 Sweet white wine (7) |
| 8 Flower colour (5) | 3 Open to disapproval (13) |
| 9 One of two? (7) | 4 Subdivision (6) |
| 10 Unable to be kept up (13) | 5 Fight back (13) |
| 11 Action to keep one moving (6) | 6 Go off script (2-3) |
| 12 Forcefully (6) | 7 Plead (7) |
| 15 Cannot compete (13) | 11 First (7) |
| 18 Entertainer at the circus (7) | 13 Get it off your chest (7) |
| 19 Bridal path (5) | 14 Pure (6) |
| 20 Short form addressed person is (5) | 16 A horn (5) |
| 21 With enthusiasm (4,3) | 17 Correct text (5) |



Last week's solution

We are now inviting questions for Chief Inspector Brian Auld, Area Commander for Oban, Lorn and the Isles. Submit your questions via The Oban Times' website or email editor@obantimes.co.uk

YOURSAY



Lochaber pupils enjoy trip to London

A GROUP of Lochaber High School senior pupils took in some of London's famous sights, including Wimbledon, Oxford Street and the London Eye during a long weekend. Some 92 sixth years and staff went to a number of museums and galleries during the busy trip, and during a walking tour saw the main sights from Tower Bridge to Buckingham Palace, including Parliament, Whitehall and Horse Guards Parade to see the Changing of the Guard. The youngsters also visited

Chelsea FC's stadium Stamford Bridge to see the European Cup and FA Cup and enjoyed meals out at Carluccio's and the Hard Rock Café. Head teacher Jim Sutherland said shopping with the youngsters on Oxford Street on Saturday afternoon was 'not an experience for the faint-hearted'. He said: 'This was the seventh annual prefects' trip to London - a subsidised reward for those who have made a significant contribution to the school.'



The 56 youngsters outside the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square during the long weekend

Lochaber Strathspey and Reel Society's fiddler's rally enjoys enthusiastic local support

THE ANNUAL Lochaber Strathspey and Reel Society's fiddler's rally on Saturday night proved to be another outstanding success as over 50 musicians took the stage before an ap-

preciative audience at Lochaber High School. Fiddle and accordion players from Perth, Fife, Thurso, Dumfries, Aberdeen, Cowal and Oban joined their Lochaber

counterparts to set feet tapping with a varied programme of tunes. **Support** Guest artistes were the Dunoon Mòd gold medal winner Eilidh

Davies from Invergarry on the fiddle and Andrew MacDonald, formerly of Inverlochy and now from Arisaig, on accordion.

Conductor Mary Adams told *The Oban Times*: 'We really appreciate the support we get from all over Scotland from musicians coming to play year after year.'

'We also appreciate the people in Fort William turning out time and time again as they have been doing for years.'

Hector MacLean was chairman until the interval after which Father Roddy MacAulay took over for the remainder of the evening.

Ticket proceeds were boosted by a raffle while money raised from teas and coffees at the interval went to the Lochaber Rural Educational Trust.

Any fiddlers or accordions are invited to attend the society's practice nights at West Highland College in Fort William on Wednesday nights from 7pm to 9pm.

'We always welcome new members,' Mary said.



Mary Adams conducts at the fiddlers' rally on Saturday night

Dochie MacCallum and band are guests at Inveraray



Dochie MacCallum and his Scottish Dance Band

INVERARAY and District Accordion and Fiddle Club held its February club night on what was the worst day of the winter - the 13th! - therefore the attendance was, not surprisingly, affected.

However, chairman Niall Iain MacLean gave a warm welcome and appreciation to those who had travelled from near and far.

Supporting players were Fyne Folk with Sally Hall, Alex John MacLeod and Jake MacKay on fiddle, Nick MacFarlane on accordion and Agnes Liddell on keyboard; also on accordion - Margaret Kemp and John Renton; on melodeon James MacArthur; Jake MacKay on 'mootherie'; Jimmy MacDonald on keyboard - and all their

selections were much enjoyed. Guest artistes were Dochie MacCallum and his Scottish Dance Band, with his line-up of long standing, Dochie on lead accordion, Rickie Francie on second box, Neil MacMillan on keyboard and Gus Millar on drums. They did their first spot to end the first half and played for the whole of the second half and what a wealth and variety of music they provided.

Too soon it was 11pm and after a closing set of jigs, a stamash with encore brought a lovely evening to a close.

Next week it's the turn of the Ian Muir Trio from Prestwick to fill the guest artiste spot at Inveraray.

Fort William primary pupils test mediator scheme

PUPILS at Roinn-sgoile Ghaidhlig a' Ghearasdain (Fort William RC Primary School) are learning to be peer mediators - the first in Lochaber to do so.

Under the scheme, children help each other deal with conflicts and minor playground disputes such as falling out with friends, being left out, arguments, witnessing something

unfair and misunderstandings. Primary 5 and 6 pupils in the Gaelic and English classes have had two days training and are now qualified to mediate if asked to by other children.

Acting head teacher Kim Bentley told *The Oban Times*: 'In conjunction with a range of approaches we use in school, this approach will provide an additional means to promote

a positive school environment and school culture.

'It will help to improve pupils' self-esteem, relationships and empathy towards others. It will also give children a greater sense of responsibility, and develop life skills.'

She added: 'The children are very excited and we look forward to seeing them develop their skills as peer mediators.'

Dunstaffnage Marina - Looking forward to new dawn



Twig Olsen, who has just taken up his new position as harbour master at Dunstaffnage Marina. 16_t10dunstaffnage1

The 8th December 2011 saw one of the worst storms on record to hit the West Coast of Scotland. This caused devastation throughout the country bringing down trees and extensively damaging property. The weather station at Dunstaffnage Laboratories showed winds of over 85 mph and a gust was measured from an unauthorised source that showed a massive 143 mph. This barrage of wind and rain continued on for the best part of a 10-12 hour period which held the tide up across the bay at Dunstaffnage effectively not permitting the normal low tide period to occur. While the actual damage sustained to Dunstaffnage Marina was by contrast quite minor to some properties in the country the wind still nevertheless upturned a number of pontoons which were damaged. Further damage was caused by the twisting of the berthing fingers that were attached to them. The clearing up process was slow and laborious as commercial repair teams were quickly deployed throughout the west coast and to the marinas along the Clyde. Dunstaffnage had therefore either to wait until these teams became available or tackle the clear up with their own staff. Everyone at Dunstaffnage Marina rose to the occasion and not just over a few days but a relentless number of weeks. The marina today is better and stronger than ever having just completed a £300,000 refit. This has been achieved by the renewal of over 90 per cent of its chain and ground tackle below the waterline and the rebuilding or replacement of pontoons and walkways. The electric supply also has been rewired to all of the walkways and a new hose water supply has been run to all service points. The Completion Certificates issued by the Electricians and Dive Team demonstrate the high level of work and commitment that has been completed across the facility. Twig Olsen, a well known face at the marina over the past seven years,

has also just agreed a contract to become the new harbour master. He said: 'The west coast of Scotland has something special. Dunstaffnage in particular is special not just because of the location, but the access, not just by water but by road, rail and air.' Dunstaffnage Marina or the 'castle in the bay of masts' lies in a naturally protected bay that is secure from most winds and provides access at most states of the tide. The bay has always been used and probably since Viking days and certainly from the Middle Ages where the Lords of the Isles anchored their galleys in the bay as they plied their way south to trade weapons for wine and spices as far away as the south of France. Clearly an adventure today but 500 years ago in an open boat it would have been an epic journey. Today the Vikings have long gone and the Lords of Isles are only in the history books. However, the marina still has a replica of a Galley which will hopefully be on display this summer in the top car park. There is a new security barrier and entrance gate to the pontoon area which is accessed only by an electronic key fob that allows the user the use of the marina and the showers and toilet block. With boat purchase costs sitting high it is important to protect the client's vessels and belongings aboard with the latest state of the art security and CCTV coverage. There is a BT Open Zone that now covers all parts of the marina. Dunstaffnage Marina has always provided a good strong team of engineering staff who are able to undertake boat repairs in wood and GRP. The business is an approved Yanmar and Beta Marine Engine Centre and Dunstaffnage Boat Services has a keen team of dedicated marine engineers who love boats and the challenges that can come from working with them. All engineering work undertaken is done to a British Standard of Quality as Dunstaffnage Marina is a registered ISO: 9001 Firm and one of only a few Marinas in the UK to hold this certification. There are two WISE hoists that can lift vessels up to a maximum of 40 - tonnes and there is excellent storage ashore facilities for the larger vessels. The Shop@WestCoast in located in the main Reception Building and provides most Chandlery items along with boat spares and sailing clothing. There is also an excellent Boat Brokerage which always has a range of interesting well priced yachts and motor boats. This is run in conjunction with Boat Shed Scotland. The Wide Mouthed Frog with its Bistro, Bar and Beds is now rented out to Chris and Catherine who run an excellent facility and provide good quality food and beverages at sensible and affordable prices. They are always ready to quote for functions and are also licensed to do weddings. Many of the rooms have a sea view of the bay and the Hotel and Bar is open all the year round with just a few weeks in February when it is closed for refurbishment. This week the marina has taken on three new staff members (two of which return to Dunstaffnage after a period of some years away from the business) and this is despite the economic trend across the country. Dunstaffnage Marina currently sits with a capacity for around 180 boats but is expanding shortly to 250 serviced berths and already the preliminary underwater ground works has been done with strengthening chain and ground tackle. This extra capacity will allow the marina to handle much larger transient yachts which require deeper berths even at low points in the tide. Any yachtsman looking to locate to Dunstaffnage Marina for this season should contact the marina on 01631 566555 or by email to enquiries@dunstaffnagemarina.com as berths are allocated as usual on a first come first served basis. Dunstaffnage - think sailing!



16_t10dunstaffnage3



The marina's new hoist, which caters for vessels up to 40 tonnes in weight. 16_t10dunstaffnage2

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Piping kicks off six days of music in Lochaber

THE 39TH Lochaber Music Festival gets underway in Fort William tomorrow with hundreds of participants singing, playing, reciting or dancing in 150 different classes.

The six-day event opens with piping and chanter competitions, followed on Saturday by piping, fiddle, tin whistle, accordion, clarsach and Scots piano.

The premier traditional instrumental award competition will be held at Lochaber High School around 3.30pm.

Monday features poetry classes and strings during the day and a fine evening of string playing at Lochaber High School.

Tuesday sees singing, wind and piano classes during the day and more poetry and Bible readings and Scottish Country Dancing at Kilmallie Hall before an exciting evening programme at Lochaber High School with the Young Musician of the Year competitions and the premiere Vocal and Instrumental Award competitions which, like the Traditional award on Saturday, feature the best solo performers from the festival.

Wednesday morning, March 13, features choirs, action drama, group music making and wind classes, then the festival rounds off with the Grand Festival Concert in Lochaber High School Hall on Thursday at 7pm with a varied selection of the best performances from the whole week, along with the presentation of trophies.

Numbers of entries are well up on last year, with healthy numbers in vocal, instrumental and speech classes. Festival chairwoman Lilian MacDonald



Fiddle player Hannah MacRae was among the winners at the 2012 Lochaber Music Festival. 20_110music01

said: 'We are delighted to have so many people taking part again this year.

'Preparations are well in hand. We have an excellent team of adjudicators and it promises to be a busy but enjoyable week.

'Please come along and support the performers during the daytime or in the evenings - you will certainly be entertained!'

The festival 'help desk' will be at the Alexandra Hotel during the day on Monday to Wednesday as usual and the programme will shortly be available from Fort William Library or Lochaber High School office.

For more information on times, tickets and adjudicator CVs visit www.lochabermusicfestival.co.uk.

Ardtornish Quintet

AWARD-winning Scottish author and poet Jackie Kay has given *The Oban Times* exclusive permission to share with our readers five poems she recently composed in Morvern.

Here, in the penultimate of the series Ardtornish Quintet, Jackie remembers her time as a child on holiday with her family on a croft in Morvern, the old building now much changed since.

The poems were written at the Rose Cottage writer's retreat at Ardtornish, where Jackie was Scottish Book Trust writer-in-residence.

Croft near Croig

The old croft is still practically the same old stone. But has a new roof, and the cludgie is now a studio. But even so, it's easy to see me back then, a girl Putting on a show, dancing, my brother in the God's,

High up on the croft roof, and my mother with her bra Straps loose, and my father too, bare chested. Shorts on, button undone, dark-haired, taking in the view. And that too, unchanged, lifting the heart, now as then.

We walk in and out of the croft; stand on the new deck, Remembering the burnt out farmhouse years ago, Mrs Dudgeon Brae and Sam the Shepherd, vivid as yesterday. The late night ceilidh, the Highland cattle at the gate

The night my mother returned home late, alone. The goat's thin milk and the smell of the ferns. July - the bracken, the shimmer on the bay And the famous white sands of Calgary.

It seems that one holiday stood the test of time, The way that memory casts a net, a spell Over an entire family one ordinary year. Not far from Tobermory on the isle of Mull.

Why each of us holds dear is a mystery: nostalgia. The slabs of cheddar - the characters, Dervaig's post box. The stories of Balfour-Paul, the myths, the sea gulls Even the railings on the ferry, the iconic ruin.

My mother sang the song of the island on the boat here, And nothing could stop us recalling this place All these years later; the croft on the hill Surprises by bringing tears to our eyes still.



Jackie Kay was Scottish Book Trust writer-in-residence at Ardtornish.

Carbost bow out with two trophies at Portree Kilmuir Gaelic Group go through to Highland finals in Nairn



Carbost Village Drama Group won two trophies at Portree. Back left to right, Gillian Stuart (prompt), David Oliver, Jan Lewis, Bryan Foskett. Front, Mary MacKay, David Hammond, Jean Thomas.

CARBOST Village Drama Group took a bow at last weekend's Scottish Community Drama Association Skye District One-Act Festival at Aros in Portree when they lifted two trophies.

Their performance of 'Grave Matters', written by Peter Stallard and adapted and directed by Carbost man David Hammond, was well received both by the audience and adjudicator Russell Boyce who, in summing up, praised the team for its set design, use of props and make-up, Fiona Jowlett, direction and acting.

Set in a graveyard, as the title suggests, the 'Grave Matters' plot centred on the theft of a holy chalice, stolen by the local magistrate and police sergeant Roberts, played by Bryan Foskett, and David Oliver.

Destroyed

The pair pinned the blame on local delinquent Tom Macleod, David Hammond, who had set fire to the church, by alleging that the chalice had been destroyed in the fire.

Subsequently, both magistrate and sergeant are mysteriously killed and in the graveyard they are given the task of restoring the chalice to its rightful place by the grave warden, Jean Thomas, before being allowed to 'pass over'.

The two elicited the help of the local clairvoyant Rose Parry, Jan Lewis, and Tom. The sergeant's nagging wife, Mary MacKay, also has a part to play in the chalice's final return.

Wakefield Quaiach

Cabost won the Wakefield Quaiach for best stage presentation and David Hammond took the special adjudicators award, the Elizabeth Wakefield Trophy, for best actor for his characterisation of Tom Macleod.

Winners

In the overall competition Carbost Village Drama Group came third behind Portree Amateur Dramatic Society and winners Kilmuir Gaelic Group.

The audiences were treated to six plays performed over Friday and Saturday night.

Kilmuir now go through to the Highland final in Nairn on April 5-6.

Names in spotlight

THE HISTORY behind the placenames of Ardchattan parish will be explored during the first All Our Stories talk in Benderloch's Victory Hall.

An informal session will take place with the help of Taynuilt's John MacFarlane, Gaelic scholar and local historian, this Saturday from 2pm.

Annual lunch

ARISAIG WRHI held its annual lunch on February 21 at Cnoc na Faire.

Thirteen members and friends enjoyed a delicious lunch and the trip to Pitlochry for a theatre visit was discussed.

Taynuilt SWRI

TAYNUILT SWRI president Jessie Servant opened a short business meeting and welcomed all the members to Taynuilt Village Hall on February 25.

The open meeting scheduled to be held on February 13 had to be cancelled as a result of bad weather.

Party planned to celebrate Aberfeldy cinema success

THE LONG journey to bring the magic of cinema back to Aberfeldy is almost over - and 2,000 are to be invited to join the party.

After a 30-year gap, The Birks Cinema is on track for opening to the general public this spring. After a tremendous fundraising campaign, and a one-year £1.3million construction programme, the modern cinema that will screen the latest blockbuster films will open its doors to the public towards the end of April.

Plans are in place to hold a series of community events in the run-up to the official opening.

As it is a community-led social enterprise, the board of the cinema has decided to offer 'sneak previews' to local children free of charge and to invite people from all walks of life including local businesses and community groups around Highland Perthshire and Killin, to a number of advance screenings.

Charlotte Flower, chairwoman of The Birks Cinema trading company that will run the cinema, said: 'Our approach of involving local groups and individuals to come in for a free film is partly intended to 'test run' the operations of the cinema and café bar, but it is also a statement of our intent - this is a community cinema, it is everybody's cinema.

'All those who helped make this a reality are the real stars of the show.'

The Birks Cinema group will be inviting more than 2,000 schoolchildren and adults to the advance-screening programme.

In addition to these free events, a 'golden ticket' event is also planned to give people from all over Highland Perthshire the opportunity to win places at special screenings. More details on this will follow later in March.

The building work inside and out is almost complete and the official handover from the contractor Hadden Construction to the Friends of The Birks Cinema Board is expected towards the end of March.

MEET THE AUTHOR
J David Simons, author of Oban-based The Credit Draper.

Monday 11 Mar, Oban Library, 7 p.m.
 Tuesday 12 Mar, Waterstones, Oban, 3 p.m.

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ALSO
 Monday 11 Mar, Oban Library, 5.30 p.m.; kosher buffet and discussion about 'Being Jewish in Scotland', with Fiona Frank, Outreach Worker, Scottish Council of Jewish Communities.

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 Mon 11th, 18:00 • Tues, 12th, 20:45
 Wed 13th, 18:00, Thurs 14th, 20:45

I Give it a Year
 Fri 8th, 18:00 • Sat 9th, 18:00 • Sun, 10th, 18:00
 Mon 11th, 20:30

Tangled
 Sat 9th, 13:00

The Incredibles
 Sat 9th, 15:00

Up
 Sun 10th, 13:00

Hook
 Sun 10th, 15:00

Zero Dark Thirty
 Tues 12th, 17:30 • Wed 13th, 20:30 • Thurs 14th, 17:30

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Lincoln (12A)
 In 1865, as the American Civil War winds inexorably toward conclusion, U.S. president Abraham Lincoln endeavours to achieve passage of the landmark constitutional amendment which will forever ban slavery from the United States.

Hyde Park on Hudson (12A)
 In the 1930's Hudson Valley, Margaret "Daisy" Suckley is reacquainted with her distant cousin President Franklin D. Roosevelt to help him relax at his convinced that they can last. With their first anniversary approaching, neither wants to be the first to give up but will they make it?

A Good Day to Die Hard (12A)
 Animation based on the well-known story of Rapunzel.

The Incredibles (U)
 The story of a superhero family from Pixar.

Up (U)
 Carl Fredrickson and his 8 year old stoway take to the skies in this animation for all the family.

Hook (U)
 We all know the story of Peter Pan and the Lost Boys, but what if Peter Pan grew up?

Zero Dark Thirty (15)
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Oban Times LEISURE TIMES

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COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Inveraray & District Accordion & Fiddle Club
 Argyle Hotel, Inveraray
 Wednesday 13th March at 8.00pm

Guest Artists
 From Prestwick
 Ian Muir Trio

Supporting players most welcome

Meur Lochabar Presents a HARRIS CEILIDH West End Hotel
 Saturday March 16 @ 7.30pm
 Freddie MacKenzie, Eoghain MacLeod, Cathie Rachel Morrison, Catherine MacLeod, Jayne Morrison.

Piper: Alistair MacDonald
 Bean an Igh: Margaret MacLellan
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 Admission £10

Happy House Christian Preschool COFFEE MORNING!
 Saturday 9th March, 10.30 - 12.30
 Glenruthven Church Centre

Tea, Coffee, Home-baking, Stalls, Kids activities, Easter bonnet parade.
 Admission Adults £2.00, Children £1.00

Oban High School Pipe Band In Concert
 Thursday 14th of March 2013 @ 7.30pm in the Corran Halls, Oban

With Special Guests.
 Tickets: £8 adult, £5 under 16/concessions, Family Ticket (2 adults/2 children) £20

Tickets from: Oban Music Shop and Oban High School.

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Oban Provincial Mod

Juniors:
 Friday, 21st June

Seniors:
 Saturday, 22nd June

Comunn Gàidhealach an Obain
Soup Lunch

Free Church Hall
 Saturday, 16th March
 12.00 - 2.00 p.m.

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Oban Times LEISURE TIMES

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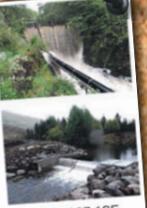
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Mystery deepens as HMS Dasher body search draws blank

The circumstances were gruesome - Ardrossan's beach was out of bounds to the public for three weeks

SPECIAL FEATURE

By JENNIFER LYON
jlyon@arranbanner.co.uk

IT HAS been a campaign lasting almost 70 years, with many setbacks, and now relatives of the seamen who died in one of the worst British naval disasters of the Second World War have had to accept that they may never find their lost loved ones.

Excavation work at a site in

Ardrossan Cemetery, thought to be a mass grave of bodies from the HMS Dasher disaster, has ended in disappointment.

The archaeology team, led by John Atkinson, hoped to find evidence of a grave site but instead found undisturbed virgin soil.

The sailors had been part of the complement of 555 seamen serving on the aircraft carrier HMS Dasher.

She sank off the coast of Arran in March 1943, ripped apart by an explosion that may have been caused by a fuel leak and a dropped cigarette.

An 89-year-old former RAF pilot has spoken recently for the first time about the part he played in the disposal of bodies from the sunken ship nearly 70 years ago.

From Saltcoats, he doesn't want his name to be revealed, but after reading about bodies being washed ashore at Ardrossan, he decided to speak about his experience after the sinking.

In 1943 he was an 18-year-old member of the Ardrossan Air Training Corps. His father was the manager of Pringle's Garage in Saltcoats and was also in charge of the local ARP.

Stored in Pringle's garage were a number of ambulance trailers that had been designed to carry up to six casualties to hospital and were available in the event of a mass bombing campaign by the enemy.

On Saturday March 27 1943, five



John Steele believed the Ardrossan Cemetery site could have contained the bodies of some of the victims.

minutes after a catastrophic onboard explosion, HMS Dasher sank with loss of 379 lives.

A few days after the sinking of the mighty aircraft carrier, bodies started to wash ashore at Ardrossan north shore beach.

The circumstances were so gruesome the beach area was placed out of bounds to the public for almost three weeks.

The ambulance trailers were quickly hitched onto cars and driven to the beach where the volunteer ARPs collected the bodies, helped by Royal Navy personnel.

Bodies

The 89-year-old from Saltcoats said: 'As a voluntary member of the ARP, I and a number of other ARP volunteers drove ambulance trailers to the north shore beach in Ardrossan. On arrival we could see the bodies lying on the beach.'

'The uniforms were badly contaminated with black oil and we placed the bodies on our ambulance trailers and drove them to a building near Ardrossan Harbour.'

'Every time we removed bodies from the beach there would always be about six bodies.'



In March 1943, HMS Dasher was ripped apart by an explosion.

'We removed bodies from the beach on many occasions but it did not happen every day.'

He told John Steele that initially they stored the bodies in a building opposite the local newspaper office in Ardrossan, but when this was full they were ordered to collect the Dasher bodies off the beach and take them to a small building in nearby Saltcoats. This brick built building

was also soon overflowing and the bodies were taken to Kilwinning.

After the three temporary mortuaries were filled, out of respect they were all collected and taken to Castlecraigs, a prominent building in Glasgow Street, Ardrossan, where the bodies were laid out on the large dance floor.

When asked how many bodies he assisted in removing he replied: 'At

least 50. There would be at least this number as each day we were involved in removing them; we were removing about six bodies each time.'

'We did not remove bodies every day.'

'When all the Dasher bodies were removed from Castlecraigs, I do not know where they were taken to or where they were buried.'

'On joining the RAF I was posted

overseas and flew with the RAF in Rhodesia, Egypt and Africa but I've always wondered about those bodies.'

John Steele believed the site could have contained the bodies of some of the victims. He said it was sad for the victims' surviving families nothing had been found.

'I just feel sorry for all the victims' families because they are all in their 70s and this might be their last chance to find them,' said Mr Steele.

'After 20 years I definitely will continue the search.'

Help

'We know so many bereaved families and they are all crying out for help but no one at the top of the Ministry of Defence seems to be listening.'

Mr Steele added he believed there could still be a gravesite at Ardrossan Cemetery as well as a second site, possibly in a field within a two-mile radius of Ardrossan.

Speaking about the lack of official information about HMS Dasher's victims' graves, Mr Steele added: 'It's wrong that this is the way that the war dead are being treated. It is absolutely appalling.'



The former RAF pilot was involved in the disposal of the bodies from HMS Dasher in 1943.

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Twenty years ago

Thursday March 11, 1993

Oban ward named after porter



Mrs Peggy Fleming and her son, Andrew, unveil the plaque to commemorate her late husband Malcie Fleming. t10twenty02

THE ASSESSMENT Ward of Dalintart Hospital in Oban was re-named on Friday, in memory of the late Malcie Fleming.

The ward has been named after Mr Fleming in memory of his 42 years service with the health service. Mr Fleming, who was a porter, retired in 1991 but passed away last year.

Colleagues, friends and family of Mr Fleming

watched on Friday afternoon and his wife, Peggy Fleming, unveiled a plaque in the hospital.

His son, Andrew Fleming, said: 'On behalf of my mother, my sister and myself, I would like to thank you all for this honour you have given to my father's memory.'

'We are all very proud he has received it. It helps us to know he was so highly thought of.'



Little helping hands

THROUGH the sale of Helping Hands carrier bags in their Oban off licence store, Augustus Barnett was able to present cheques for £250 to st Columba's Playgroup and the Soroba Young Families Group, Oban. Store manager, Simon Learmouth, is pictured presenting the cheques to representatives of both groups. t10twenty04

Message in a bubble



GRAHAM Durant from Glasgow University and his assistant Fiona Dick show David White from Oban one of the attractions which will be on show at the Argyll Science Festival this month. t10twenty01

Plans to meet the challenge of change



Councillor Foxley (third from right) is pictured with district councillor Charles King (second right) and members of morar Community Council. t10twenty03

THE IMMINENT Morar bypass has prompted Highland Regional Council to prepare an action plan to meet the challenge of change in the community.

Council officials have consulted extensively with

crofters and landowners in an attempt to minimise problems arising from bypassing.

They have also tried to maximise opportunities, such as allocating land for housing and enhancing the image of the village to encourage visitors.

Pottery business boosted



Pete Walker of Mull Pottery. t10twenty06

INCOME has trebled for a Mull businessman who has recently moved his shop premises into Tobermory.

Pete Walker, who runs Mull Pottery, has found that his takings have trebled since moving his shop and workshop from just outside Tobermory onto the town's Main Street.

He said: 'Sales have trebled by coming down here as I am catching visitors off the Kilchoan ferry.'

'We have great customers from over there and from the Hebridean Princess. We are catching all these people, which has made a considerable difference to the business.'



Dry stone dyking course at Kilchoan

A GROUP of Kilchoan crofters who wanted to make their dry stone dykes stock-proof, have just completed a three-day course which taught them how to carry out the repairs themselves.

Instructor Dave Goulder and Maie Angus join others at the LEADER dry stone syking course. t10twenty05

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FARMING

Raasay u-turn warmly welcomed by crofters

'We are sure that lessons will be learned'

WHEN NEWS broke two weeks ago that Edinburgh civil servants had handed shooting rights on state-owned crofting land on Raasay to outside bidders South Ayrshire Stalking, reaction - almost all of it condemnatory - was swift.

Now, following First Minister Alex Salmond's reversal of that decision and to restore the lease to Raasay Crofters Association, the response has been no less abrupt. Scottish Crofting Federation chair Derek Flynn said: 'We are delighted that the Scottish Government has accepted that a serious error was made and has taken the necessary action to restore these rights to the crofters' co-operative that has managed them so well for the last 18 years.

'We are sure that lessons will be learned from this and that decisions of such gravity affecting remote and fragile communities will in future be taken at ministerial level.'

Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch MSP Dave Thompson, whose suggestion of a community buyout

of the island was received with little enthusiasm by crofters in last week's *Oban Times*, said: 'The intervention means an extended time frame of the Raasay Crofter's lease by a year, which will allow time for a longer-term solution and the option of a buyout.'

'Raasay is a fantastic but fragile island community and I think [Environment Minister] Paul Wheelhouse, who has recognised from my first contact with him on this matter that the sporting rights and land ownership are vitally important to the islanders.'

Ross, Skye and Lochaber MP Charles Kennedy was less magnanimous over the change of heart.

He said: 'I welcome the fact that this ministerial muddle has at last been acknowledged and that the sporting rights are now firmly back where they belong - in the hands of the local crofting community.'

'Now it is imperative that the situation well beyond one year hence is clarified to enable long-term planning and development. 'And the £9,000 paid out in

compensation should at least be matched as a contribution directly from the Scottish government to the Raasay crofters.'

But David Cameron, chairman of Community Land Scotland, described the move as 'very welcome news'.

He said: 'It will now be for Scottish Ministers to get the word round every department of government that they favour community empowerment as a means to drive sustainable economic development and that they never want to see a repeat of this episode.'

'Beyond that, it would be appropriate for the Scottish Government to make it clear to the people of Raasay that if that community wants to, the Scottish Government stands ready to enable the people of Raasay to take further steps toward local ownership and control of their land.'

Environment minister Paul Wheelhouse thanked South Ayrshire Stalking 'for their understanding and agreement' to withdraw from the contract.

He said: 'In my assessment they

have behaved very honourably in our dealings with them. I am also encouraged by their offer to work with the crofters for their mutual benefit to make the most of the sporting rights on Raasay if that is of interest to the community - it is for the crofting association to decide whether to pursue this offer further.'

South Ayrshire Stalking boss Chris Dalton said the decision to withdraw was down to the 'strength of feeling expressed'.

He added: 'We were not aware we were bidding against the crofters when we tendered for these sporting rights in good faith.'

'Should the islanders require any support or assistance in making the most of their sporting rights we would be happy to discuss with them how we could help.'

Grazing cattle sell well at Dalmally March sale

UNITED Auctions held their annual March sale at Dalmally Auction Mart last Saturday when 164 cattle and 102 sheep were sold.

A good offering of quality grazing cattle sold well.

Bullocks averaged 238pence per kilo whilst the offering of heifers leveled at 215pence per kilo.

The top priced bullock was consigned by Mr Joe Jordan, Cairnbaan, North Connel when his yearling sold at £910 and yearling heifers from M/s Adam, Garraron and Melfort Farms sold to £885.

Leading the prices per kilo for bullocks was Dall and Duncroisk Farms, Killin when their Limousin crosses sold to 265pence whilst Garraron and Melfort's Limousin heifers sold to 244pence per kilo.

Breeding cattle from No15 Ormiclate, Uist sold to £1,000.

DALMALLY

United Auctions

Bullocks
LimousinX: £910
- Cairnbaan(Jordan) £835(4)
- Dall £825(3) and £800 - Garraron and Melfort Farms £755
- Tullochcan £735(5) - Dall £735 - Glenshelloch £730(6)
- Garraron and Melfort Farms . SalerX: £625 - Blantyre Farm Partnership

SimmentalX: £575 - Cornaigmore, Coll
Aberdeen AngusX: £575(3) - Glenaros, Mull

Heifers
Aberdeen AngusX: £760 - Carnoch 16, Glencoe £680, £670 and £600 - Glenaros, Mull.
CharolaisX: £870 - Carnoch 16 Glencoe £635(3) - Blarghour Farm.

LimousinX: £885 - Garraron and Melfort Farms £850 and £755 - Ardsignish, Ardnarmurchan £685 - Tullochcan £675(2) - Garraron and Melfort Farms £665 - Dall Farm £655 - Tullochcan Farm £655(2) - Garraron and Melfort Farms £635(2) - Dall Farm £625 - Garraron and Melfort Farms £615(4) - Balantyre Farm Partnership £615(12) - Garraron and Melfort Farms £605(3) - Dall Farm.

SalerX: £645 - Balantyre Farm Partnership.
SimmentalX: £755 and £625(2) - Blarghour Farm.

Prices Per kilo

Bullocks
Aberdeen AngusX: 223p(3) - Glenaros, Mull.
LimousinX: 265p - Dall and Duncroisk 263p(6) - Garraron and Melfort Farms 261p(5) - Dall Farm 261p and 250p - Glenshelloch 246p(3) and 241p - Garraron and Melfort Farms 236p - Tullochcan Farm 231p(2) - Dall Farm 228p - Ardsignish 227p(2) - Dall Farm.

SimmentalX: 219p - Cornaigmore, Coll.
Heifers
Aberdeen AngusX: 236p(3) - Glenaros, Mull
CharolaisX: 215p - Carnoch 16, Glencoe.

LimousinX: 244p(12), 212p and 226p(2) - Garraron and Melfort Farms 225p - Ardsignish.
In-calf heifers: £1000 - 15 Ormiclate, South Uist.
Sheep
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Environment Minister Paul Wheelhouse meets Raasay Crofters Association on Friday

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09 MITSUBISHI L200 WARRIOR, Double cab pickup, Manual, Rear cover, Alloy, Met grey, 30k miles	£11,950
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60 NISSAN NAVARA TEANA Double cab pickup, Manual, Heated leather, Sat Nav, 30k miles	£13,450
58 NISSAN NAVARA OUTLAW 08 double cab pickup, manual, alloy cover, epack, alloy, black	£8,950
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08 FORD TRANSIT 350 Double Cab, Alloy Dropside Tipper, tow bar, Blue 60k miles	£8,950
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forteith Foodservice

west highlands & islands tradeshow 34th Anniversary

Jo-Anne Baker and Rosanne Ogden of MacPhee and Partners, who run a competition to win a special hamper during the 34th anniversary of the Forteith Trade Show. 16_t10macphee1

Easdale's Keren Cafferty showcased the range of delicious jams, marmalades and chutneys from her award-winning Puffer Food Company, which was initially started as a way to diversify income from the Puffer Bar during the winter months. 16_t10kerencafferty1

FORTEITH Foodservice, the Oban-based food and drink wholesaler, has won a prestigious industry award for its corporate social responsibility policies.

Picking up the Corporate Responsibility Award at Scottish Wholesale Achievers, the award recognises the company's efforts to forge stronger relationships with local suppliers and meet customers' demands for more Scottish products.

Some 500 people attended the gala dinner and awards presentation, hosted by TV presenter Cathy Macdonald, at the Sheraton Grand in Edinburgh last month.

Forteith was also runner-up in the Best Marketing Initiative for its Lochaber Food and Drink Show and collected a Highly Commended award in the Best Delivered Operation (Foodservice) category.

John Forteith, general manager, said: 'We look to build on these awards over the coming months and continue to drive excellence throughout our business.'

John Forteith, general manager of Forteith Foodservice, centre, presented bottles of Oban whisky to Rory Cameron of Cobbs Bakery, which won the prizes for best presentation stand and most orders placed, and to La Tua Pasta's Jessica Scudetti, who was voted most passionate exhibitor. 15_t10cobbs01



RECRUITMENT

The Scottish Salmon Company

The Scottish Salmon Company is the leading independent producer of superior Scottish salmon. We are committed to high standards of animal welfare, sustainable operations and promoting a responsible environment policy.

3 x Marine Operatives

- 1 located; Mull (Geasgil) Ref: MARSO/03/1
- 1 located; Portavadie (Glenan) Ref: MARSO/03/2
- 1 Located: Loch Fyne (Strondoir Bay) Ref: MARSO/03/3 £16,284 (plus overtime)

We are recruiting for three Marine Operatives for our marine sites as named above. Applicants must be flexible as you will be required to move to other sites throughout the company on a regular basis, to cover busy periods, holidays, sickness etc. Duties will include all the day to day operations of the site including fish welfare, treatment, sampling, grading and moving, site maintenance, net changing and boat handling. Applicants must have good practical and problem solving skills and ideally have marine experience. Previous fish farming experience would be desirable, but is not essential as training will be provided.

Current, clean driving licence is desirable. Hours are 40 per week Monday to Friday, with weekend working payable at an enhanced rate, required on a rota basis. We operate a generous company pension scheme and annual leave entitlement is 31 days.

Hygiene Team Operative

Location; Cairndow, Argyll Ref: HTOP/02/13
£7.68 per hour with a minimum of 30 hours per week required plus unsocial hours shift allowance where applicable.
(Unsocial payment applicable if you work between the hours of 10:00pm - 05:00am)

We are also seeking to recruit a Hygiene Operative, to join our existing, Hygiene Team located in Cairndow. The candidate will be involved in all day to day cleaning operations, ensuring that the Company's internal hygiene, food safety procedures and external regulations are adhered to at all times. The role requires a self motivated individual who can work as part of a team and have a "can do" approach. The ideal applicant will have previous cleaning experience and knowledge of hygiene standards, Basic Food Hygiene Certification, Respiratory Equipment Compliance and First Aid Certification would be advantageous but not essential as training may be provided.

A valid, full driving licence and own transport is essential for this post as the successful candidate will need to be available to work evenings/night shift and occasional weekends.

For an application form and job description, please contact:
Veronica Anderson, HR Officer
The Scottish Salmon Company
Ardringlas Estate, Cairndow, PA26 8BH
Tel: +44 (0) 1499 600 415
Email: veronica.anderson@scottishsalmon.com

Closing date for applications: Friday 15th March 2013
Visit our website: www.scottishsalmon.com

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Salary dependant on experience
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Saturday Cleaner / Housekeeper for privately owned 2 bedroomed holiday cottage at Melfort Pier. Saturday changeover. Excellent Rate of pay Plus Retainer! Must be reliable and previous experience is desirable. Own transport required. Tel 07973 135656 for further information

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6 months Temporary Contract 35 hours per week with a view to the post being made permanent.

The Association is seeking to recruit a Temporary Customer Services Assistant. The main purpose of the post is to provide excellent front line customer service to tenants, applicants, owners and other stakeholders as well as administrative support to other sections of the Association.

Applicants should possess general administration experience in a busy office environment. Must be a good communicator and be fully competent in the use of Microsoft Office.

To request an Application Pack for the post please contact May Tosh, Corporate Services Manager at Crannog Lane, Oban, PA34 4HB or telephone 01631 564451 or email may@westhighlandha.co.uk

Closing date for Applications will be Monday 11th March 2013, with interviews being held week commencing 18th March 2013.

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Argyll's fastest growing estate agency is looking for an enthusiastic and motivated individual to join our new office in Oban on a self employed basis.
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info@watersideprop.com

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Part Time/ Permanent Post
For Application Form & Job Description
Contact Manager Morag A Telfer
Tel: 01631 562168

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£12,464 - £12,991 (pro rata) per annum

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Hours of employment are an average of 11.5 per week organised from 12pm to 5.30pm every Tuesday and from 11am to 5.30pm on Saturday and Sunday on alternate weeks.

In return we offer excellent benefits including a choice of pension schemes, opportunities for development and 7 weeks annual leave.

If you would like more details about the job including terms and conditions, job description etc, please visit our website www.bield.co.uk or telephone 0131 273 4020 (answering service) or 0131 273 4071 (general enquiries).

Closing date for returned applications is Friday 22 March 2013.

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Oban Times Oban Times RECRUITMENT RECRUITMENT

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Young's Clare Fleming didn't have orders at the forefront of her mind when she visited the trade show. She said it was more about 'giving people a chance to sample the products'. 16_t10forteiths07



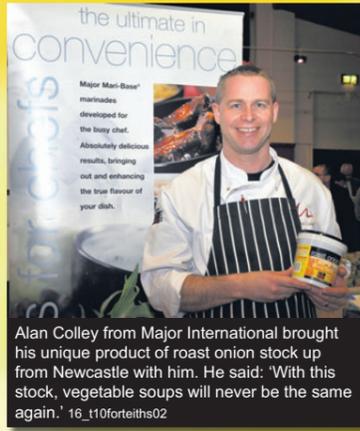
Peter Kinder and Michelle Welsh from Delice de France served up some delights on Thursday at the show. 16_t10forteiths03



Jim Kerrigan from Glasgow is hoping to make a splash as part of the boldly named Cake. Their products are a new to Forteith's portfolio and make 'buying cakes affordable to the customer'. 16_t10forteiths04



Auld's Tracie Duff told The Oban Times there had been a lot of interest in her gluten free products. 16_t10forteiths06



Alan Colley from Major International brought his unique product of roast onion stock up from Newcastle with him. He said: 'With this stock, vegetable soups will never be the same again.' 16_t10forteiths02



Glasgow's Stacey Caldwell enjoyed her visit to Oban acting as an ambassador for Britvic. A range of soft drinks were on offer with their refreshing ice teas well taken up. 16_t10forteiths05



Martin Friel from Mulrines came over from Donegal for Forteith's Trade Show. He brought the company's Juice Press range along with him to help expand their business in Scotland. The premium range includes freshly pressed Irish apple juice. 16_t10forteiths01



Hannah Gilbert presided over the sweet-tooth's stand of choice, with Coppenwrath and Wiese's offerings one of the more decadent at the event. 16_t10wiese1



Vivian Bryan from Arran family firm Wooleys, who made their first ever visit to the Forteith Trade Show last week. 16_t10wooleysarran1



Findlay Ross of Argyll Breweries. 15_t10brewery01

Temporary Farm Technicians

£8.14 per hour

We currently have three vacancies for Farm Technicians from April to September to work between our Seawater sites at Gorsten, Kingairloch, Linnhe and Leven.

The successful applicants will be required to carry out a variety of duties including feeding, net changing and other general farm tasks, on all four sites, and be willing to work flexibly to meet the demands of the job. The post would be offered on a temporary basis, working 40 hours per week plus overtime if required.

Applications are invited from individuals who have a positive approach to this type of work and who are competent swimmers. Experience is certainly an advantage although training will be provided. A current driving licence is desirable.

If you are interested in applying for this vacancy please submit an application in writing, by the closing date of Friday 22nd March to:

Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Manager
Marine Harvest (Scotland) Limited, Business Resources centre
Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 7PT



Midton Acrylics Ltd, Lochgilhead Customer Account Supervisor

We are looking for the right person to assist us with the account management of our expanding customer base. The successful applicant should possess excellent communication skills and be comfortable with multi-tasking in a fast moving environment. Good numeracy skills and experience of working in a sales environment are desirable. A degree qualification (ideally in Marketing or another business discipline) is preferred but not essential. Full in-house training will be given.

Applications (covering letter and C.V.) should be submitted to:
neil@midtonacrylics.co.uk

(For more information and/or an informal chat, contact Neil on 01546 602182 or email; neil@midtonacrylics.co.uk)

I A MacKinnon Haulage Class 1 HGV

C Plus E, Driver Required.
Contact Iain MacKinnon 07767 402937

Highland Hospice Shop Supervisor

Fort William (16 hours / week)
£14,508 - £17,253 pro rata

Highland Hospice is looking to recruit a part-time Shop Supervisor for our Fort William shop. Hours will be worked flexibly and you will supervise the day-to-day operations of the shop and the volunteer team in order to maximise sales. Ideally you should have supervisory experience in a retail environment and experience of working with volunteers.

For a job pack contact Susan Ross at Highland Hospice, Ness House, 1 Bishop's Road, Inverness, IV3 5SB, tel 01463 243132 or by email to s.ross@highlandhospice.org.uk

Job packs can be downloaded from Highland Hospice website at www.highlandhospice.org

Closing date for receipt of applications is 25th March 2013

CARE HOME MANAGER

We are a ten bedroom care home for the elderly.

The home is operated by a charitable trust and we require an experienced manager.

All applicants should have previous experience in care of the elderly. They must be a strong leader with good character and caring skills.

In return we will offer a competitive salary and full back up from our management board. You will work in a beautiful location in the village of Killin.

Contact - Jim Cusley
Falls of Dochart Retirement Home
Tel. 01567 820211
E-Mail: jimcusley@midlix.com



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Celebrating 10 years of making biomass heat work!

Quantity Surveyor / Estimator

Due to recent growth, we are looking to recruit a QS / Estimator to assist our Projects Team

The HWEnergy Projects team undertake the design build of biomass heating installations nationwide. Reporting to the Projects Commercial Manager, you will be responsible for the financial monitoring and control of our Projects, as well as pricing completion of tenders, procurement, and other aspects of commercial and contracts management. Experience in a contracting environment is essential, with experience in the Mechanical and Electrical industry desirable.

This is a fantastic opportunity to play a leading role in a market leading company in one of the most exciting sectors of the Renewables market. Based in Fort William, the role will also involve travel throughout the country. An attractive package will be offered to the right candidate.

To apply send C.V to craig.sutherland@hwenergy.co.uk

Closing Date for Applications: Friday 22nd March 2013



Accounts administrator Experienced Accounts administrator to join our Oban office team.

Duties will include:

- Sales Ledger: Posting sales invoices, allocating receipts
- Purchase Ledger: Coding and posting purchase invoices & supplier payments.
- Month and year end reconciliation & production of reports
- VAT returns
- Issuing monthly customer statements, debt collection
- Other accounts related tasks - dealing with customers, orders & enquiries & telephone reception

The successful candidate will have excellent numeration and communication skills and must be a good team player. Experience of Working in a similar role is essential. This is a varied and challenging role so candidates must be able to prioritise their own workload.

Experience of Word and Excel is essential. Experience of book-keeping with SAGE 50 advantageous. Competitive salary

This role is ideally suited to flexible working hours and part time hours/ job share Will be consider

LGV Class II Driver

Based at our Fort William & Oban Depot

Gas Depot Clerk/Delivery Driver

Based at our Fort William & Oban Depot

This position is both challenging and varied the ideal candidate must hold a full driving license (ADR preferred) Heavy lifting of gas bottles involved. You must have good customer care skills, pleasant telephone manner and be computer literate. You should be well organized and able to work on your own initiative.

All interested parties please phone 01631 566370 ask for Graham Greenlees or alternatively e-mail: info@argyllresources.co.uk for an application form.

THE COMMISSIONERS OF NORTHERN LIGHTHOUSES

Require an

Electro Technical Officer

To serve in the post of Electro Mechanical Engineer onboard their Lighthouse Tenders on a fixed manning rota - 28 days duty followed by 28 days leave.

The Northern Lighthouse Board - www.nlb.org.uk is the General Lighthouse Authority for Scotland and the Isle of Man, established by statute to provide, maintain and inspect marine Aids to Navigation - lighthouses, buoys, beacons and, increasingly, precision satellite navigation and positioning - throughout its waters.

Minimum qualification is an HND or similar in electrical engineering. The successful candidate will require a valid MCA Medical Certificate (ENG 1) and in addition, be willing to work towards obtaining an EOOW qualification. Full training and support will be provided by the Northern Lighthouse Board.

Essential experience and skills include diesel electric marine propulsion and planned maintenance, maintenance report and record keeping, computer literacy and a good understanding and awareness of Ship Safety Management Systems.

Applicants who have experience of the following will be viewed favourably: A.C. Drives and Power Management Systems, DP (AA) and Planned Maintenance Systems, ISM Procedures and Auditing and Engine Room Watch Keeping.

Flexibility and good interpersonal skills are essential, as is the ability to communicate at all levels and work within a small team environment.

Salary range is £36, 996 per year rising to £40, 368 per year, depending on performance. Benefits package includes career average pension scheme or stakeholder's pension scheme. There is also the opportunity to add real value to a professional organisation dedicated to the safety of those at sea and to the protection of our maritime environment.

For further details and an application pack please e-mail jobs@nlb.org.uk

Or write to: The HR Adviser, Northern Lighthouse Board, 84 George Street, EDINBURGH EH2 3DA. Closing date is 31st March 2013

The Northern Lighthouse Board is an equal opportunities employer and positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible people regardless of sex, race and disability

Business

Business reporter:

Steven Flanagan
sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk
01631 568021

'Meet the buyer' workshops for Argyll

Local events aimed at public sector tendering

A MEET the buyer event and a workshop on public sector work is among the activities available for businesses in Argyll in the coming weeks.

The 'Is the Public Sector Right for You?' introductory workshop is designed for businesses and third sector organisations that have had little or no experience of tendering and would like to become 'tender ready'. The workshop will provide businesses with information to decide if the public sector market is for them, give an overview of the tendering landscape and share tips on successful tendering.

The workshops will take place on April 11 in Lochgilphead, April 19 in Dunoon and April 26 in Oban. Anyone wanting to attend should first register with the Supplier Development Programme (SDP) and then book a place via the website

www.sdpscotland.co.uk. An informal 'Meet the Buyer' networking event will follow each of the workshops. This gives an opportunity for businesses to meet members of the council's procurement team, ask questions and find out about opportunities to supply the council.

Local events will continue to be added to the SDP schedule for the year. This could include workshops on tender writing, supplying food and drink or policy workshops covering health and safety, equality and quality management.

Once a business has registered they are able to attend events in any other participating local authority area.

Only registered companies will receive e-bulletins, information updates and access to the free workshops so Argyll and Bute Council is urging businesses to register now to take advantage of the help on offer.

Jura Distillery looks to '77 for a vintage performer

JURA distillery has added a new, limited-edition vintage expression to its collection - the 1977 - which is to be called the Gaelic word for the Yew tree, translated as 'Juar'.

Distillery manager Willie Cochrane said: 'The 1977 is a perfect mix of amber and gold shades, a quality which is only achieved through age. Complemented by an enticing scent and soft sweet flavours, 'Juar' is a real treat for all whisky lovers.

'Each of the lucky 498 buyers of this whisky will also receive their own hand-carved box, each one a testament to the craft and expertise of Scottish-based cabinet maker John Galvin.

'We're proud to collaborate with someone who takes craft as seriously as we do.'

Yew trees once grew throughout the Isle of Jura and the tree has long been associated with immortality and regeneration, with some even believing it gives access to the 'otherworld'.

Filled to cask in 1977, this vintage whisky was originally matured in three first-fill bourbon casks before being finished in a ruby port pipe for 12 months.

Each of the 498 bottles has absorbed the character and colour that only comes with careful aging.

The 1977 vintage is presented in a solid oak box, with each box hand-crafted individually by John Galvin.

The whisky is sweet, fruity and warm amber in colour. The nose provides subtle notes of peach melba, creamy caramel, ripe sweet pineapple and maple syrup, giving way to the tastes of crushed pear, passion fruit, kiwi and sweet apricots.

Jura 1977 is bottled at 46 per cent ABV and available to buy from www.jurawhisky.com or from specialist whisky retailers priced at around £600.



The 1977 vintage is presented in a solid oak box, with each box hand-crafted individually by Scottish-based cabinet maker John Galvin.

Island brewer fails in grant bid

Plan to build new mainland bottling plant put on hold

AN ISLAND brewery has been forced to slam the brakes on its expansion plans after being turned down for a government grant.

The Arran Brewery had planned to expand its existing presence on the island and build a new bottling plant on the mainland.

The move would have created 10 new jobs on the island and a further 67 on the mainland but the project was dependent on the government providing a grant. Scottish Government Minister Fergus Ewing turned down its grant application.

Brewery managing director Gerald Michaluk said: 'I am obviously very disappointed.

'We make only on average 6p profit on a bottle of Arran Beer and pay 24p duty. As we move above 500,000 litres of beer produced the duty rate rises to as much as 49p a bottle. Clearly much higher than our 6p profit.

As we refuse to compromise on quality of ingredients, the only way to continue to make a profit is to have efficient brewing equipment that can save us 50p a bottle in production costs.

'This is why we applied for a grant from the Scottish Government so we could continue to expand our business.

'Without grant assistance a brewery of this size on an island like Arran is simply not economic but with a grant we could have made the numbers work and created sustainable jobs both here on Arran and on the mainland in a new bottling facility that would have shaved a few more pence off costs.

'This is clearly a set back and has wasted a lot of time while we awaited the decision but we will overcome, as they say, and move forward regardless.

'It is just going to be a lot tougher, take a longer and involve a whole lot more effort.'

Whisky down the drain by accident

THOUSANDS of litres of whisky went down the drain by accident at a bottling plant in Dumfries last week.

A mix-up during cleaning at the Chivas Brothers plant saw thousands of litres of bulk whisky being released into the drain network. The smell was so strong that sewage workers reported it.

Chivas Brothers - which employs 600 workers at the plant and produces the world's second biggest-selling brand, Ballantine's - said it was investigating an accidental release of spirit.

A Scottish Water spokesman said: 'Staff at our waste water treatment works were already aware of a problem and were working to identify the source when contacted by Chivas Brothers.'

Local food and drink wholesaler wins prestigious industry award

FORTEITH Foodservice, the Oban-based food and drink wholesaler, has won a prestigious industry award for its corporate social responsibility policies.

Picking up the Corporate Responsibility Award at Scottish Wholesale

Achievers, the award recognises the company's efforts to forge stronger relationships with local suppliers and meet customers' demands for more Scottish products.

Five hundred people attended the gala dinner and awards presenta-

tion, hosted by TV presenter Cathy Macdonald, at the Sheraton Grand in Edinburgh last month.

Forteilh was also runner-up in the Best Marketing Initiative for its Lochaber Food and Drink Show and collected a Highly Commended

award in the Best Delivered Operation (Foodservice) category.

John Forteilh, general manager, said: 'We look to build on these awards over the coming months and continue to drive excellence throughout our business.'

PUBLIC NOTICES

www.highland.gov.uk

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 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
13/00482/FUL	4 Creag Ghorm Kentalen, Appin	House Extension
13/00660/FUL	95 High Street Fort William	Change of use to cafe
13/00669/PIP	Land 150m South of Dal-Ghorm, Ardtoe, Acharacle	Erection of house
13/00670/PIP	Land 75m South of Dal-Ghorm, Ardtoe, Acharacle	Erection of house
13/00671/FUL	Land 175m NE of The Angus Centre, Angus Crescent, Upper Achintore Fort William	Temporary Siting of hard/soft material (Renewal of 09/00461/FULLO)

Time period for comments is 14 days.
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

MALLAIG HARBOUR AUTHORITY

Appointment of Non-Executive Board Members

Mallaig Harbour Authority is seeking to make appointments of two non-executive members to its Board and individuals with an interest in public service are being sought.

Mallaig Harbour Authority is a Trust Port which differs from company or local authority owned ports by its constitution and powers. All port investments are funded from trading revenues supplemented by commercial borrowings.

The main duties of the Authority are to maintain, improve and develop the Port. Appointments will be for three years commencing April 2013 and will be part time, typically a few days per month. A modest remuneration is payable.

Competencies/Skills

Applicants must be able to demonstrate the following:

- That they have achieved results in demanding situations and can demonstrate ability and a proven track record in their chosen profession (or other activities);
- That they have the ability to contribute effectively in group discussions involving a wide range of people, including specialists and professionals. This includes the intellectual ability to extract the essence of an argument from papers and to analyse problems and assess evidence impartially;
- That they have been able to earn the respect of colleagues and been influential as a member of a team working over a sustained period of time towards demanding goals;

Applicants should make clear the level and depth of management or specialist expertise (if any), and of any other experience which demonstrate knowledge and interests relevant to this post e.g. management of harbours, financial management, human resources and industrial relations, laws relating to Scotland.

Residence within a reasonable distance of the port, and familiarity with local issues in the region surrounding the port, are highly desirable.

The Authority is committed to equality of opportunity and encourages a diverse range of applicants and to the principle of appointment on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process in accordance with the Guide To Good Governance for Trust Ports.

Further details and application forms can be obtained from:
Mallaig Harbour Authority, Harbour Office, Mallaig, Inverness-shire. PH41 4QB or info@mallaigharbourauthority.com

Closing date for applications - 2pm on Friday 22nd March 2013

To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

PLANNING

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref No	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
12/02619/PP	Upgrade of existing treatment works comprising: erection of sludge treatment building, chemical building and membrane building, microstrainer kiosk, standby generator kiosk and transformer kiosk and ancillary development	Tullich Water Treatment Works Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4SD	Oban Area Office
13/00389/PPP	Site for the erection of 6 holiday chalets, formation of new access and installation of sewage treatment plant	Land North of Tigh Dearg Kilchrean Taysmull Argyll And Bute PA35 1HD	Sub Post Office Taysmull
13/00390/PP	Installation of heat source pump to the rear elevation	33 Lora View North Connell Oban Argyll And Bute PA37 1RR	Sub Post Office Ledaig
13/00416/PPP	Site for the erection of 5 dwellinghouses	Land South Of Railway Station Taysmull Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Taysmull

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref No	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
13/00338/PP	Change of use from dwellinghouse to guesthouse and erection of extensions and change of use from garage to form ancillary residential accommodation (retrospective)	1 Argyll Terrace Tobermory Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA75 6PB	Tobermory Area Office

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 67 Chalmers Street Ardrishaig PA30 8DX, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref No	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
13/00311/PP	Installation of an air to air heat pump heating system (retrospective)	1 Shore Street Port Charlotte Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA48 7TR	Sub Post Office Port Charlotte

Argyll and Bute council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website <https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk>

The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Whitegates Office Whitegates Road Lochgilphead PA31 8SY.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at the above address and at all Council Libraries.

Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered.

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

APPLICATION FOR A KNIFE DEALER'S LICENCE

Notice is hereby given that Mario Di Ciacca has applied for a Knife Dealer's Licence for the premises known as Angler's Corner, 4 Craigrad Road, Oban, PA34 5NP to trade on all days from 9.00am to 6.00pm.

Any person wishing to object or make representation regarding this application must do so in writing specifying the objection or nature of the representation, giving the name and address of the person making it and signed by that person to the undersigned by no later than 28 days from 7th March 2013. The Licensing Authority may entertain an objection/representation received after the 28 days before they make a final decision if satisfied there is a good reason why not made within 28 days.

CHARLES G REPPKE, Head of Governance & Law, Argyll & Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead PA31 8RT
7th March 2013

**MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010
MARINE CONSTRUCTION: PORT APPIN,
NORTH OF APPIN PIER, ARGYLL**

Notice is hereby given that Dr D.E.F Newton has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of the installation of a private moorings area at:

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Port Appin, North of Appin Pier, Argyll	56° 33.53' N	05° 24.88' W
	56° 33.31' N	05° 25.02' W
	56° 33.23' N	05° 24.87' W
	56° 33.32' N	05° 24.72' W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at PortAppin Post Office

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/J215

Dr D.E.F Newton

**Marine Scotland -
Quayside Conversations**

Friday 15 March 2013, at The Royal Hotel, Argyll Square, Oban, PA34 4BE from 4 to 7pm.

The Scottish seafood industry faces many challenges, from a number of different EU fisheries policies to financial pressures and difficulties with local recruitment. Government policy has an impact on the livelihood of fishermen and those working onshore, and we want to hear directly from you to help ensure we get these decisions right.

The next of eighteen Marine Scotland Quayside Conversations will take place in Oban on Friday 15 March 2013. All of those connected with the local fishing and onshore seafood sector are invited to attend. This is your opportunity to put your views on local or national issues directly to Marine Scotland staff and help shape future government policy.

For more information please contact Susan Ewart on 0131 244 4477. Or visit www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/Sea-Fisheries/quayside

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A.G.M.
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BIRTHS

BOWMAN - JORDAN - Anthony and Clare are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their daughter, Olivia Catriona on February 2, 2013 at the RAH, Paisley. First granddaughter for Sandra Jordan, Oban and Ian Jordan, Connel, and Debbie Bowman, Port Ellen, and Douglas Bowman, Ardbeg, Islay. Also delighted are Olivia's four sets of Great-Grandparents! Thanks to family and friends, maternity staff at the RAH, and special thanks to Islay midwives.

JORDAN - MACLEOD - Niall and Elaine are delighted to announce the safe arrival of Lewis Callum on February 13, 2013 at the RAH Paisley, first grandson for Sandra Jordan, Oban, and Ian Jordan, Connel, and second for David and Joan MacLeod, Oban, and great-grandson for Ian and Margaret MacLean, Oban, and Joe and Dolly Jordan, North Connel. Thanks to family and friends, maternity staff at the RAH, and Oban midwives.

MACKECHNIE - Iain and Lindsay are overjoyed to announce the arrival of their beautiful baby girl Georgie, a wee sister for Quinn. Born on Friday February 22, at Oban maternity unit. Another grandchild for Gilbert and Iona, Oban. Frances Smith, Oban. Fiona Manson, Glasgow. Thomas Smith, Airdrie. A huge thanks to the midwives Elaine Shanks and Kirsteen Mckellar.

MACKECHNIE - Gordon and Jackie are delighted to announce the birth of their baby boy Cameron Archie Mackechnie born February 23 at 1.16am weighing 8lbs 9oz.

MCQUEEN - Fraser and Irene would like to announce the birth of their son Cameron Fraser on February 22, 2013. A wee brother for Sam. Thanks to all at Oban Maternity Unit especially Kirsteen and Elaine.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

FRASER-MACLEOD - Ian to Chrissie, married March 7, 1963 in Islay.



GRAY - Alistair and Ann (née Fraser), were married in Fort William Free Church on March 5, 1963. Congratulations from all the family. Present Address: Alana, 7 Blaich, Fort William

DEATHS

CAMERON - Sheena Ann Cameron, (née Macintyre), Lochandhu, Taynuilt, darling wife of Dougie and beloved mother to Mark, Lynn, Ruth and the late John, passed away peacefully at the Western Infirmary, Glasgow on Tuesday, February 26, 2013.

CARTER - Gavin. Peacefully at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley, on Friday, March 1, 2013, Gavin Carter (The Baker formerly from Tiree), a much loved dad, grandpa and great-grandpa who will be sadly missed.

LINDSAY-MACDOUGALL - Katherine, peacefully at home, on February 28, 2013, aged 97, much loved aunt, great aunt and dear friend to many. Funeral Service will be held at Christ Church, Lochgilphead, on Monday, March 11, at 11.00am, followed by interment at Kilvarree, Craignish. Flowers welcome. Donations, if desired, to Educational Project Zambia, cheques payable to Christ Church, Invereyne Lodge, Lochgilphead, PA31 8PY.

MACAULAY - Suddenly but peacefully, at The Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, on Wednesday, February 20, 2013, aged 70 years, Ian, 68 Lorn Road, Dunbeg, beloved husband of Mary, loving dad of Neil and John, father-in-law of Ginah and much loved grandpa of Emma, Callum and Jay. Very sorely missed.

PRINGLE - Dunbeg. Peacefully at University Hospital, Ayr on February 25, 2013, Jean aged 71. Much loved wife, mother and grandmother. Sadly missed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
MACAULAY - Mary, Neil, John and family would like to express their sincere thanks to all family, friends and neighbours for their heartfelt kindness and support after the sudden and very sad loss of Ian. Thanks for all the cards, flowers, phone calls and visits. Thanks to David and Jim of the ambulance service and to all hospital staff at A & E and Ward B, Lorn and Isles Hospital. Thank you also to Rev Dugald Cameron for his comforting service. Ian MacInnes and staff of D and A Munn for their care and consideration and support, to Mairi for her lovely Gaelic Song and to all who attended the church and graveside. Your kindness has helped us through this sad time. 68 Lorn Road, Dunbeg.

MACCIVER - The family of the late Iain would like to express their sincere thanks to all family, friends and neighbours for the many kind expressions

of sympathy, flowers, cards and phone calls. We would especially like to thank Rev John Paton for his comforting service. Thanks to Billy McClymont for his efficient handling of funeral arrangements, Claire and Gerry for catering. Finally to all who attended at church and graveside and gave so generously in Iain's memory. The sum of £1,500 was raised for MS Trust.

MACKINNON - The family of the late Lily MacKinnon would like to thank most sincerely all relatives, friends, neighbours and work colleagues for all the many kind and thoughtful expressions of sympathy extended to them in so many ways during their recent sad loss. Thanking all staff at A & E at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Scottish Air Ambulance and staff at the Cardiology Department at The Golden Jubilee Hospital, Clydebank. Special thanks to the Rev Margaret Miller for her comforting and personal service, Neil and Sheila Sinclair for the touching music, Ian MacInnes and staff of D & A Munn for their caring and efficient funeral arrangements and staff at the Falls of Lora Hotel for the lovely buffet and refreshments. To all who paid their last respects at the church and the graveside and who generously donated in excess of £900 which was split between Oban and Lorn Riding for the Disabled and Argyll Animal Aid.

MCKINNEY - The family of the late Charlie McKinney would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind expressions of sympathy cards, mass cards and phone calls, Dr Thomson and Johnnie, Lochgilphead Hospital, all the social workers and carers who looked after Charlie for all these years. Also Father James (Oban) and Father David (Lochgilphead) for the lovely service on the sudden death of Charlie. The Golf Club for the beautiful buffet and refreshments and for all who attended the church and graveside. Thanks to D and A Munn for their kind support and funeral arrangements. Collection for Cathedral Church Hall £374. Charlie will be missed by all family and friends. May he rest in peace.

MEMORIALS

BARBER - Formerly of Bridgend, Islay. In loving memory of our dear mum, Betty, who died March 5, 2012. Loved and remembered every day.
- From all the family, home and away.

BEATON - In loving memory of Hugh, a dear husband, father, father-in-law and grandfather, who died March 6, 1999. Inserted by his loving wife Bella, Hugh, Mary, Lorna and David. Always in our thoughts.

BURTON - For our boys, Paul Burton and David Burton, always in our hearts.
- The Burton family, Oban and East Kilbride

DONN - Ina. Treasured memories of a dearly loved mum, granny and great-granny who passed away peacefully, March 3, 2012. Sadly missed, loved, and remembered always. Forever in our hearts.
- Iain, William and families.

DUNCAN - In loving memory of Dally, who died on March 4, 2012, a deeply missed husband, father and grandfather. We think of you each day.
- From all the family.

GALBRAITH - Treasured memories of a dear son and brother Finlay Neil, who passed away on March 5, 2010. Your photo stands in pride of place. A lovely smile upon your face, You always seem to be so near, How we wish you were still here.
- Sadly missed, Mum, Dad and Christine.

KENNEDY - In loving memory of our Mum Iona Margaret who passed away on March 7, 2012. The pain of losing you will never go away, the memories we have of you are always here to stay. Forever in our hearts and thoughts Kenneth & Fiona MacPhee xx

LEITCH - In loving memory of my dear wife Myra, mum and grandma, who died so suddenly on March 9, 2005. Eight years have passed since that sad day. You closed your eyes and slipped away. Your life was one of kindly deeds. A helping hand for other's needs. Your memory is a keep sake. With which we'll never part. God has you in his keeping. We have you in our hearts. Gus An Coinnichidh Sinn A - Rithist
- Ivor, Neil, Debbie and family.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of my dear brother, and our uncle, Dian, who died on March 7, 1977. Loved and remembered always. Freena and family, Bunessan, Mull.

MACKINNON - In loving memory of our parents, grandparents and great grandparents, Hamish, died March 5, 1997 and Mary, September 20, 2004. The flowers we place upon your grave. May wither and decay. But love for you who sleeps beneath. Will never fade away.
- Love from your girls, Johan, Annie, Marion and families, Killin, Lawers and Ferist.

MACLEAN - In loving memory of Archibald Maclean of Hough House, Isle of Tiree, who passed away on March 6, 1983. A most dearly loved uncle, friend and mentor. Also remembering all loved ones gone before and after. Sadly missed.
- Iain, Ishbel and family, Tobermory and Niall, Glasgow

MACLEOD - Precious memories of my dear wife, mum and gran, Lottie, who passed away on March 9, 1993, at her home, Sunnyville, Tiree. Love lasts beyond a lifetime, It lives forever more. A timeless flowing in the heart, Like waves upon the shore, - Your loving husband Hugh.

The special years will not return. When we were all together, But with the love that's in our hearts. You will walk with us forever. - Ian, Fiona, Kirsteen and Niall

The say in time you do forget To some that may be true But no morning dawns No night returns, without a thought of you.
- Morag, John and family, Dalnally

MACLEOD - In loving memory of my dear mum, gran and great gran Lottie, who passed away March 9, 1993 at Sunnyville, Tiree. In our hearts your memory lingers. Sweetly, tender, fond and true There is not a day dear mum That we don't think of you. Love you mum.
- Rita and family.

MACLEOD - The flowers I place upon your grave May wither and decay. But love for you who sleeps beneath Will never fade away.
- Johann x

MACPHAIL - In loving memory of my dear nephew Allan, who passed away March 11, 2004. Loved and remembered always.
- Auntie Ann.

MACPHAIL - In memory of Allan, who passed away on March 11, 2004. Lovingly remembered.
- Jennifer x

MACPHEE - Treasured memories of a much loved son and brother Fraser, who died tragically in an accident on March 8, 2002. In God's hands but forever with us and in our hearts.
- Mum, Dad, Catriona, Niall, Ruairidh and Arran.

MAXWELL - In loving memory of my dear husband Alex, died March 7, 2009. The moment that you died My heart was torn in two One side filled with heartache The other died with you I often lie awake at night When the world is fast asleep And take a walk down memory lane With tears upon my cheeks Remembering you is easy I do it every day But missing you is heartache That never goes away I hold you tightly within my heart And there you will remain Today, tomorrow, forever Till we meet again
- Love always, Margaret.

MAXWELL - Remembering Alex, who passed away on March 7, 2009. Another year without you dad, still as raw as ever. Always in our thoughts.
- Diane and family.

MCCRAE - Margaret (Daisy) Nicholson, died March 6, 2008 in London, Ontario, dear mother of Mairi and Margaret.
- Sadly missed by all the family in South Wales, Canada and Oban.

MCNEILL - In loving memory of Alasdair, a dear husband, dad, and grandpa who died on March 7, 2001. Time passes - memories remain. In our hearts till we meet again.
- Eleanor and family, Colonsay and Oban

NICOLSON - In loving memory of John who passed away on March 6, 1999, and my dear daughter, sister and Auntie Margaret who left us on March 13, 2012. Always in our thoughts.
- Mum, Derick, Lynda and Sarah

STODDART - In loving memory of our dear mother Isabella Livingston, died March 11, 1990. Always in our thoughts.
- Inserted by family Glasgow.

WEATHERALL - Jack. Dear husband, dad and grandpa (Ali), died March 6, 2010. Loved and remembered every day.
Katie, Anne, Carine and family

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In memory of Dawn Joyce

CHURCH NOTICES

ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN
Campbell Street Church
Sunday 10th March 2013
11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.
Phone-In 'Worship Link' available
Rev. Archie McPhail
MA, MTh
(01631) 567076
All welcome

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION
Sunday 10th March 2013
Mothering Sunday
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Communion..... 08.00
Family Sung Eucharist..... 10.15
Loop System
Large Print Hymn Books
All Welcome
Nicki McNelly, Provost.
(01631) 562323
St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Holy Eucharist..... 11.00
St Columba,
Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist..... 09.30
Thursday 14 March 2013
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Morning Prayer and Eucharist..... 09.30

LONDON GAELIC SERVICE
In Crown Court Church of Scotland,
Russell Street, Covent Garden
on
Sunday 10th March at 3.30pm.
Preacher
Rev. Donald MacKenzie, Tain

Oban Times ANNOUNCEMENTS
Oban Times ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEDDINGS



MELDRUM - LEWIS

Elizabeth-Anne Meldrum and Alastair Lewis were married at Tobermory Parish Church, Isle of Mull on February 9, 2013. They celebrated their marriage at the Western Isles Hotel, Tobermory. The happy couple and their guests partied long into the night culminating in a spectacular firework display.
Photograph by Perfect Images, Dunbeg, Oban.

GRADUATIONS



Zoë Latimer BSc (Hons) graduated from Glasgow University, Master of Science (with merit) in Sports and Exercise Science. Zoë is the daughter of Mairi and Byron, Connel.

Anti-Mull BID group call to halt ballot

'We have no power to cancel the ballot process in terms of the legislation,' said council

A GROUP against the establishment of a Business Improvement District on Mull, Iona and Ulva are calling on Argyll and Bute Council to halt the ballot.

The No Confidence group, which held a public meeting last Friday in Aros Hall, say the support the BID proposal has on the islands has been misrepresented to the council.

Andrew Kain, who led the presentation during the meeting, told The Oban Times the group had written to the council asking them to halt the BID process as it doesn't comply with regulation.

Mr Kain said: 'There is no doubt this is something well intentioned and everyone agrees things need to be done.'

'At the moment nothing is being put forward but in the event the BID fails the committee need to do something. Getting back the cohesion in the island is the first thing.'

'These splits need to be healed as soon as possible. We are looking for something which will involve all aspects of island life not just tourism.'

Mr Kain added he fears the BID may pass by 'default' as some people voted yes early on but have now changed their minds while others have torn up their ballot papers.

Members of the BID steering group were unable to attend last Friday but are hosting a public meeting tomorrow (March 8) in Aros Hall, Tobermory.

Richard Nealon, vice-chair-

man of the BID steering group, said: 'This is a fantastic opportunity for our islands. Quite simply, there are 150,000 fewer visitors to our islands than five years ago: how are we going to attract them back?'

'It's a thoughtful plan, that has been put together after consulting with hundreds of businesses over the past 15 months.'

'Up until now, the No Confidence group have suggested that there have been no need to make any improvements. It is gratifying to see that they now agree with the BID proposers that we really do need to act and invest our way out of the recession.'

'Hopefully it won't be long before we're able to persuade them to vote yes.'

'We have organised an open meeting for Friday March 8 at 7pm in the Aros Hall, Tobermory. We recommend that anyone who is interested in learning the facts about the BID to attend.'

'We are sure that calm, measured discussion will help everyone to understand the BID aims. Ultimately this is a democratic process. The voters will decide. It's up to the voters to find out for themselves what is at stake and to cast their vote accordingly.'

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council added: 'We are aware of the ongoing debate regarding the Mull, Iona and Ulva BID proposal.'

'We have no power to cancel the ballot process in terms of the legislation.'

Guild coffee morning raises almost £800 for charities



A coffee morning organised by the Church of Scotland Guild in Oban made £786 for the Heart of Art Project and Mary's Meals. Ian Kerr is pictured asking guests at the event in Glenclutten Church Centre to 'Guess the weight of the cake', while Isabel Wohlgemuth pours the tea. 15_110coffee01

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THE REGIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE WEST HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS AND ARGYLL



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Ben is Scottish under 16 indoor hurdles champion

He used gravel driveway as practice track

THE NEXT generation of Scottish elite athletes are expected to have access to modern-day facilities and the top coaches in the sport – but Argyll's newest Scottish champion takes a more basic approach.

Kilmore's Ben Coates, who won gold in the 60m hurdles at the Scottish Under-16 Indoor Athletics Championship on Sunday, borrowed hurdles from Oban High School and used his 80-metre gravel driveway as a practice track in preparation for the national event in the new Emirates Arena in Glasgow.

Ben, who is coached by his father Iain told *The Oban Times*: 'I am amazed I did so well because there is a big step up to national standard.'

'The school let me borrow some hurdles and I have been training on my driveway. It is not ideal; it is mostly gravel and stone and there's a gate at the end, so I have to stop pretty quickly!'

'I do some training on the high school artificial pitch and on grass at Mossfield but it would be great if there was a track nearby. I just do the best with what I've got.'

With ambitions to one day compete in the Olympic Games, Ben said he enjoyed training. 'It is hard work but it makes me better, and I like to win. The boys that beat me in the 60m final were older and bigger but a couple of years of training and I reckon I'll catch them!'

Ben, who was representing Mid Argyll Athletic Club on Sunday, won the 60m hurdles in a new

personal best of 9.01 seconds. He also set a new personal best in the 60m sprint, recording 7.88 seconds in his first round heat on his way to the final, where he finished seventh.

There was further Argyll success with fellow Oban High School pupil Emma Thompson winning bronze in the girls under-16 triple jump. The Oban girl, who is also 14 years old, set a personal best 9.26m to cap an excellent performance.

Twelve-year-old Molly Reade from Tobermory, who was representing Mull Athletic Club in the under-14 high jump, also took home bronze medal with a first time clearance of 1.45m.

ATHLETICS

A total of 11 young athletes from Argyll travelled to Glasgow with many setting new personal bests in their events.



Ben Coates is the under-16 Scottish champion at the 60m hurdles. 15_110ben02



No way through for Keiran Hendry as he's muscled out of things during Oban Saints Under 15s 3-2 defeat by Castle Rock last Sunday.

Easy win for Oban Lorne Ladies

LADIES RUGBY

OBAN Lorne Ladies moved up to third in the SRU Women's National League after an emphatic 81-0 away victory over Edinburgh team Lismore Ladies.

Donna Smith ran in seven tries for the visitors, with player of the match Kirsty Gillies and Shannon Reynolds both grabbing a brace. Other try scorers were Audrey Barr and Camilla Leslie and Karen MacCorquodale kicked eight conversions.

Oban Lorne captain Katie Ritchie, who missed the game, said: 'I am very proud of the way the team played today.'

'Everyone played their part in the win but one of the more pleasing aspects of our game was the clinical way the tries were scored. We looked like scoring every time we got good possession.'

Oban Lorne Ladies have two games in hand on the teams around them in the National League.

SAFL results and upcoming fixtures

FOOTBALL

LAST Saturday's results: Scottish Amateur Cup 7th round - Colville Park 2 Oban Saints 2; Coronation Cup quarter final - Tarbert 1 Easthall Star 1. Tarbert win 4-3 on penalties. Premier Division 2 - Clydebank 1 Campbeltown Pupils 5; Division 1B - Goldenhill 7 Lochgilphead Red Star 2.

This Saturday's fixtures: Scottish Amateur Cup 7th round replay Oban Saints v Colville Park; Premier Division 2 - Carlton YM v Campbeltown; Pupils; Division 1A - Millbeg v Tarbert; Division 1B - Whitehill FP v Lochgilphead Red Star

Oban Pool League

POOL

RESULTS: Gluepot 5 Lochavullin 5; Lancaster 'A' 4 Markie Dans 'A' 6; Cellar 8 Lochnell 2; Claredon 5 Lancaster 'B' 5; Markie Dans 'B' 5 Kelvin 5.

This week's fixtures: Lochnell v Gluepot; Lancaster 'B' v Markie Dans 'B'; Kelvin v Claredon; Lochavullin v Lancaster 'A'; Markie Dans 'A' v Cellar.

League Table	Pts
1 Markie Dans 'A'	27
2 Cellar	26
3 Lancaster 'B'	20
4 Lancaster 'A'	16
5 Lochavullin	14
6 Lochnell	14
7 Markie Dans 'B'	11
8 Claredon	10
9 Kelvin	6
10 Gluepot	4

*Only played 14 games, the others have played 15.

Golf at Glencruitten

GOLF

THE SCORING was excellent at Glencruitten on Saturday for the weekly Stableford, with 10 out of 21 players managing a score of 36 points or more.

Keith MacCallum (14), led the way with 43 points, Declan Curran (9) was second with 41 points, Steven McCuish (16) was third with 40 points, Alan Garret (8) fourth with 39 points and Hughie May (16), Ian McCuish (6), Stuart Cameron (15) each had 38 points.

Atlantis lose out to the Carpet Fitters

INDOOR FOOTBALL

RESULTS: Atlantis 4 Carpet Fitters 6; Oban High School 4 Rm Builders 5.

Fixtures: RM Builders v Carpet Fitters; Glenorchy v OES; Oban Times v Oban High School; Handy Men v Royal Hotel.

Team	P	W	D	L	Pts
Atlantis	9	8	0	1	24
Carpet Fitters	8	7	0	1	21
RM Builders	8	7	0	1	21
Oban Times	9	6	0	3	18
Oban HS	9	5	1	3	16
Handy Men	8	3	0	6	9
Glenorchy	8	2	0	7	6
Royal Hotel	8	1	0	7	3
OES	8	0	0	8	0

Scottish Cup results

FOOTBALL

FOSTERS Scottish Amateur Cup 7th Round results: Bank Street Athletic 4 Wellhouse 5; Campsie Minerva 3 Hurlford 2; Colville Park 2 Oban Saints 2; Drumchapel 5 Cambusnethan Talbot 1; Greenock HSFP 1 Dumbarton Academy FP 2; Shotts Victoria 3 Coupar Hearts 2; Star Hearts 1 Giffnock North 3; Westerlands 3 Auldhouse 2.

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Home tie for Green Machine against Broughton in National Bowl semi final

RBS West Division 3 Oban Lorne 26 Paisley 30

OBAN Lorne has been given a home tie in the semi-final of National Bowl on March 30, the club's biggest game in its 50-year history.

The Green Machine will play Edinburgh side Broughton, following the draw, which was made in Glasgow on Monday.

Grangemouth Stags v Kinloss make up the other semi-final and the winners of each match will progress to finals day at Murrayfield on April 20.

Amongst the excitement of the

cup, however, Oban Lorne suffered a surprise West Division Three defeat – their first in 2013 – to Paisley last weekend.

The West Bowl champions had already beaten their opponents twice this season with a 31-21 win away in the league and a comfortable 18-0 win at Glencruitten in the Bowl.

And the trend looked to be continuing as, after a five-metre scrum, Oban flanker Struan Smith ran in to score the first try of the afternoon. Craig Wright converted to give an early 7-0 lead.

This, however, was a false

dawn for Oban Lorne as the visitors stunned the home crowd by running in three tries during a bizarre 15-minute period to lead 24-7 at the break.

The second half didn't start too well for Oban with the lead yet again extended to 27-7 with another penalty but the Green Machine was given a numerical advantage over the visitors, with the Paisley hooker being red carded after 50 minutes for a professional foul.

Oban were now on top and prop Tommy Sutherland scored from close range after a good pass from Fergus Matheson.

RUGBY

The visitors hit the 30-point mark with another penalty with 20 minutes to go in the game but Oban dominated the final 20 minutes and hit back with scores from Cammy Smith and Andy MacDougall. A last minute conversion from Craig Wright did gain the Oban side two important losing bonus points.

Oban Lorne has no game next weekend but will travel to Loch Lomond on March 16 for a first versus second place battle in the league.

Gillies and Maitland bag hat-tricks in easy away win

West of Scotland Amateur League Belleaire 2 Oban Athletic 12

OBAN Athletic's Kris Gillies and Scott Maitland racked up six first-half goals between them as their team recorded a convincing away win in Greenock.

The Tartan Tavern-sponsored Athletic came out of the blocks

and were 3-0 up after 20 minutes following a quick-fire double from Gillies, with Maitland adding his first of three goals.

Stephen Kelly was impressing despite playing out of position at left back and was involved in almost all of Athletic's attacks.

Gillies and Maitland were relentless in front of goal and Iain MacInnes joined in the scoring

with his first of two goals before half time.

The one-way traffic continued in the second half as Maitland completed his hat trick, Dean Smith bagged a brace and debutant Andy Mackey rounded off Athletic's best away performance by far.

Manager Calum Fox was delighted: 'We blew them away

FOOTBALL

in the first half thanks to Kris and Scott.

'I was also impressed with Stephen Kelly, who might have found a new position!

'I took Scott and Kris off early because the only other thing they could get from the game was an injury.'



Cricket festival winners, Park Primary School.

Park primary wins Festival of Cricket

NEARLY 100 pupils from local primary schools, Rockfield, Park and St Columba's, gathered at Oban's Atlantis Leisure last Thursday for a Festival of Cricket.

Jointly organised by Oban Cricket Club and Active Schools, the festival is the culmination of a number of cricket taster sessions that the local schools have attended.

The festival, now in its fourth year, saw some fantastic games and the two teams from Park Primary School emerged at the top of their respective groups to contest the final and ensure that the pre-

CRICKET

vious domination of this tournament by Rockfield School would end this year.

Ronnie Kelly of Oban Cricket Club said: 'The final was a superb game with some committed fielding and clean hitting from both sides, all played in the best spirit.'

The club hopes to build on the success of this event by organising further cricket sessions at Atlantis Leisure. These sessions will be advertised to the local schools.

Oban Express Sunday League back in action after winter break



Saints 2002s were for the first time wearing their new blue and white strip, sponsored by MGM Timber. Team mascot Alfie Graham is pictured at the front.



AC Milan were wearing their brand new red and black strips, sponsored by Oban Express, which also sponsors the league.



Blue Brazil defence taking a well-earned rest during the Sunday League programme. 07_110primary01



Spartak's Ross MacKay. 07_110primary02



Daniel Sloss from Saints 2002s. 07_110primary06

Favourites on form as shinty season gets underway

Newtonmore

NEWTONMORE will be without forward Glen Mackintosh for their trip to take on Lovat at Balmacara this weekend.

More manager PJ MacKintosh has demanded his side up their performance after slack finishing led to them nearly dropping points last weekend against Glenurquhart despite controlling much of the play. The final score was 3-2 to 'More, with a goal from John MacKenzie and two from Fraser MacKintosh.

PJ MacKintosh told The Oban Times he was 'really disappointed' with his side's failure to secure a more comfortable win.

He said: 'I thought we dominated from start to finish. In the first half we had chance after chance but we couldn't put them away. The second half started the same and the unfortunately we gave away two silly goals.

'We've got to work harder and improve our concentration. Glen has been quite influential for us so we'll miss him.'

Despite Lovat's 0-0 draw with Lochaber last weekend, 'More will be wary of a side who won both league meetings between the sides last season.

MacKintosh said: 'They took points off us last season, and it's going to be difficult for us to win up there.'

Kingussie

KINGUSSIE will look to make it two wins in a row when they host Orion Premiership new boys Lochaber this Saturday.

Kings defeated their bogey team from 2012, Kinlochshiel, 4-2 at Balmacara last weekend. They twice came from behind to take a convincing win, with goals

coming from Louis Munro, Paul Gow and two from Lee Bain.

Manager Russell Jones said: 'I was really pleased with the game overall, it was a great team effort.

'After they went 2-1 up we totally dominated. We hit the bar and their keeper pulled off one of the saves of the season from Lee Bain.

'It's only one game, so we're not counting our chickens. We'll be looking to build on a solid start, and we're just taking it one game at a time.'

He continued: 'We know all about Lochaber, we had two really tough games against them last season when they were a division one side so we'll have every respect for them.'

Gary Munro missed the Kinlochshiel game and is a doubt for this weekend after pulling his groin in training.

Fort William

FORT WILLIAM will be keen to log their first points of the new season when they welcome Kinlochshiel to An Aird on Saturday in what promises to be a cracker of a match.

'Shiel led Kingussie 2-1 with 20 minutes to go in their league opener and Fort joint coach Victor Smith is aware the Lochalsh side will also wish to avoid another defeat.

He told The Oban Times: 'Both teams are looking for points because both got beaten on Saturday - so it would be a nice one to win. Kinlochshiel are pretty strong throughout the whole team so we will have to play well to try a get a result.'

Smith does not expect major changes to his squad, but one welcome addition will be the return of defender Stevie Stewart

from suspension.

Fort lost 1-0 to Inveraray last weekend but Smith was upbeat about the performance and singled out Jack Fraser, who was switched from wing forward to midfield bolster the centreline.

He said: 'The team out in plenty of effort and plenty of fight right to the end which is a good sign.'

Oban Camanachd

OBAN CAMANACHD proved they belong in the Orion Group Premiership by matching their opponents in a hard-fought 3-1 defeat at Kyles.

The visitors, who gained promotion to the top division last season, were stunned on eight minutes when Duncan Kerr opened the scoring but soon settled down and matched their opponents for much of the game.

A 3-0 half time lead, through further goals from Roddy MacDonald and Ewen Campbell all but settled the tie but a late, emphatic finish from Scott MacMillan was just reward for a battling Oban side.

Manager Gussie Campbell said: 'I think the balance of play was probably 50/50 but we spurned two golden opportunities to score and when you do that, teams like Kyles are going to punish you.'

'On the plus side, our goalkeeper, Robert Dunning, had two outstanding saves and Scott scored a great goal; any shot that beats Kenny MacDonald from 25 yards has to be a great strike.'

'I was happy that we looked every bit as fit as Kyles and our tackling is harder now because we need those attributes every week to stay in this league.'

'A lot of people had us written off at the start of the season but I saw enough on Saturday to convince me we have what it takes to stay up.'

Campbell will be able to call on David 'Skinny' MacInnes and Craig MacMillan for the visit of Inveraray to Mossfield this Saturday.

Kinlochshiel

KINLOCHSHIEL make the journey to Fort William this weekend hoping to bank their first league points after losing to 2-4 to Kingussie at home.

Coach Johnston Gill will be hammering home to his players that nothing but 90 minutes of full commitment will do after 'Shiel failed to capitalise on their first half dominance over Kings and slipped to defeat.

Fort will also be looking for points after Saturday's 1-0 loss to Inveraray - a fact not lost on Gill as he makes final preparations for the An Aird clash.

'Both teams have to put points

SHINTY

on the board,' he told The Oban Times: 'If you start falling behind in the league early sometimes it can be difficult to get back into things as Kilmallie found out to their cost last year.'

'If Gary Innes is playing, stopping him will be one of our priorities. But if we play like we can do we can match any team. We just have to try to do what we did against Kingussie for the full 90 minutes.'

Gill reports no injury problems but 'Shiel's problem remains strength in depth and David Glass, along with Connel Fraser will be drafted in to provide extra cover.'

Against Kings, Duncan 'Ach' MacRae gave 'Shiel the lead on half time before Munro equalised and Finlay MacRae made it 2-1. But a Bain double and a Gow strike ensured the points went back up the A87 to Badenoch.

Glenurquhart

GLENURQUHART are hoping to be back to full strength to welcome Kyles Athletic on Saturday to Drumadrochit after five players missed out last weekend.

Illness and work commitments laid waste to much of Fraser MacKenzie and Drew McNeill's plans against Newtonmore, and the champions took advantage to record a 3-2 victory.

MacKenzie said: 'Hopefully we'll be back to full strength. We were soundly beaten both times by Kyles last year so we need to put that right. The boys will be up for it and we can build on the second half performance last weekend.'

Glen nearly grabbed a draw after finding themselves two goals down with nine minutes to play. Lewis MacLennan pulled one back only for 'More to restore their two goal lead minutes later. Ewen Brady made it 3-2 in the 88th minute but Glen could not find an equaliser.

MacKenzie said: 'Overall we can't complain about the loss, they were the better side. In the first half they could have been three up.'

'I was glad to get Kyles and Newtonmore early on to test ourselves. We'll have to put the first half behind us. There were positives to take from the second half though.'

Inveraray

Following a comfortable win over Fort William on Saturday, INVERARAY player/manager Garry MacPherson insisted he was not playing mind games by admitting his team could struggle this season.

MacPherson has fretted over his senior squad lacking in numbers this season but his goal



Oban Camanachd defend this Kyles attack during last Saturday's Orion Group Premiership fixture. The Tighnabruaich side won 3-1.

Photo: John MacTavish

last Saturday gave the men from the Royal Burgh a 1-0 home victory.

MacPherson said: 'It was a good result but it was a home game with a full squad and those are the games we need to take points from.'

'I was very happy with the performance because I felt we could have won by more goals - their keeper was outstanding.'

David Robertson dominated the midfield for the home side but MacPherson was keen to praise the whole team for their commitment.

With a home game against Oban Camanachd this weekend, MacPherson is keen to add to Inveraray's points tally.

'It is a home game, so we will be looking to take something from it,' he said. 'Camanachd look a better team than they were two years ago and they beat us last season in the Macaulay Cup, so it should be a tough test.'

Lovat

LOVAT take on champions Newtonmore at Balmacara after bagging a hard-fought point in their opening fixture at Lochaber on Saturday.

The Kiltarlity men will be without Jamie Mathieson, who damaged cruciate ligaments in his right knee only minutes into the game at Spean Bridge.

Lovat have nothing to fear in taking on the Orion Group

Premiership favourites - they defeated Newtonmore twice in the league in 2012 and, with a forward line capable of inflicting damage on any team, certainly have the firepower to trouble the visitors' defence.

Coach Allan MacRae told The Oban Times: 'Newtonmore got a decent result against Glenurquhart but we beat them twice last season and we will be trying to do that again.'

'We must try to match them in every area because they are a strong team, so we have to be strong as well. We are really looking forward to the game in front of our home crowd.'

Lovat's 0-0 draw at Spean was probably a fair reflection of the game, although keeper Stewart MacDonald had to pull off three outstanding saves - one from a Shaun Nicolson penalty.

Lochaber

LOCHABER will look to build on last weekend's goalless draw with Lovat when they visit Kingussie this Saturday.

The Spean Bridge side faced the Badenoch side twice in cup competitions last season, losing in the Macaulay Cup but managing a 2-1 win in the MacTavish Cup semi final.

Manager Michael Delaney said his side needed to be more clinical in front of goal to defeat Kingussie.

He said: 'We need to be sharper up front. The defence played well and the midfield did okay, but we need a bit more in attack. I think if we had been playing a division one side we would have won two or three nil.'

'We'll only get sharper playing games. That was the first time that team's played together since the end of October - some of those guys hadn't picked up a stick since the end of last season.'

'We played Kingussie twice last season, and we learned from the first game so hopefully we can do that again. We're looking forward to it. We should be pretty much full strength.'

Kyles Athletic

KYLES ATHLETIC showed they have the strength in depth to win the Orion Group Premiership after they were able to rest key players ahead of this weekend's trip to Drumadrochit.

The Scottish Cup holders had a stern test against premier league new boys Oban Camanachd last weekend but were able to start the game with Sandy MacVicar and Roberto Zavaroni as substitutes and rest Andrew King, who is on the road to recovery from injury.

Kyles trainer James Perlich said: 'The thing that pleased me most last Saturday was the quality of our bench. Sandy and Roberto made an impact when they came on and

the quality we have in the first team means we don't have to rush Andrew back.

'We looked a bit rusty on Saturday but we asked the players to get two points and that is what they did.'

Kyles all but won the game inside the first half, thanks to goals from Duncan Kerr, Roddy MacDonald and Ewen Campbell but conceded a late consolation goal.

Looking ahead to Saturday, Perlich admitted the focus was on his own team, rather than the opposition. 'I know how Glenurquhart might play and Drew MacNeil always has his teams well organised,' he said.

'Every team will be gunning for us as the Scottish Cup holders, so we just need to get a settled team.'

Kyles have a full squad to pick from this Saturday.

Kilmallie

KILMALLIE travel to Caberfeidh this weekend win a fine 4-1 win over Beaulu under their belts as the Canal Parks men look to book promotion to the new National League Division One next season.

Coach Duncan Kelly was a happy man after Saturday's win - and will be demanding more of the same at Strathpeffer.

He told said: 'It will be a hard game at Caberfeidh and we will have to be at our best to win it.



'Shiel's Finlay MacRae eludes Kings' James MacLean in this tussle but the visitors had the final say with a 4-2 win at Kirktown.



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.

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Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition Rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

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.

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This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

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Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup preliminary and first round draw

Beaulu v Strathglass, Caberfeidh/Bute v Oban Celtic, Inverness v Glenorchy, Kilmallie v Glasgow Mid Argyll, Kilmory v Strachur, Taynuilt v Skye. Ties to be played on Saturday, May 4.



Kilmallie's Mark Graham, left, comes out on top in this challenge during his team's 4-1 win against Beaulu.

North success in First Shinty Finals



Banavie came third in the P6-7 finals after defeating Portree with a 'golden goal' 20_f10banavie01



Park of Oban were delighted with their silver medals at the P5 and under championships at Lochaber High School 20_f10park01



Kyle of Lochalsh performed well in the group stages of the P6-7 competition 20_f10kyle01



Taynuilt were unlucky not to qualify for the knockout stages 20_f10taynuilt01



Bracadale from Skye represented Struan and Carbost primaries in the P6-7 finals 20_f10bracadale01



Portree claimed fourth spot in the P6-7 finals at the Nevis Centre 20_f10portree01



Dingwall show what it means to be Scottish - and world - national indoor shinty champions 20_f10dingwall01



Beaulieu celebrate after becoming national shinty champions at P5 and under level 20_f10beaulieu01



Camanachd Association president Archie Robertson with P6-7 championships silver medallists Glenurquhart 20_f10glenurquhart01



Results

Results 2nd March

Orion Group Premiership
 Inveraray 1 - 0 Fort William
 Kinlochshiel 2 - 4 Kingussie
 Kyles Ath 3 - 1 Oban Cam
 Lochaber 0 - 0 Lovat
 Newtonmore 3 - 2 Glenurquhart

Marine Harvest North Division 1
 Kilmallie 4 - 1 Beaulieu
 Skye 6 - 1 Inverness
 Strathglass 1 - 2 Caberfeidh

Marine Harvest South Division 1
 Glenorchy 5 - 1 Aberdour
 Lochside Rovers 2 - 1 Kilmory
 Oban Celtic 2 - 0 Strachur
 Taynuilt 0 - 0 Glasgow MA

Marine Harvest North Division 2
 Fort William 1 - 2 Beaulieu
 Glenurquhart 2 - 0 Aberdeen Uni
 Glenurquhart 0 - 5 Newtonmore
 Kingussie 3 - 3 Kinlochshiel
 Lovat 6 - 0 Skye

Marine Harvest South Division 2
 Aberdour 1 - 3 Col Glen
 Ballachulish 5 - 0 Bute
 Glasgow MA 0 - 6 Inveraray
 Tayforth 0 - 7 Kyles Athletic

Marine Harvest North Division 3
 Boleskine 5 - 0 Lewis
 Caberfeidh 1 - 5 Kilmallie
 Inverness 8 - 0 Strathglass
 Lochcarron 1 - 4 Lochbroom
 Strathspey 1 - 3 Lochaber

Fixtures

Fixtures 9th March

All throw-ups 2.30pm unless stated

Orion Group Premiership
 Fort William v Kinlochshiel
 Robert Baxter - 1.30pm
 Glenurquhart v Kyles Athletic
 Innes Wood
 Kingussie v Lochaber
 Evan MacRae
 Lovat v Newtonmore
 Graham Cameron - 1.30pm
 Oban Camanachd v Inveraray
 Ted McDonald

Marine Harvest North Division 1
 Beaulieu v Inverness
 Deek Cameron
 Caberfeidh v Kilmallie
 Donald MacRae
 Strathglass v Skye
 Neil Ferguson - 3pm

Marine Harvest South Division 1
 Bute v Glenorchy
 John Mitchell
 Glasgow MA v Lochside Rvrs
 Ewan MacDonald
 Kilmory v Aberdour
 Colin MacDonald
 Taynuilt v Oban Celtic
 Daniel MacRae

Marine Harvest North Division 2
 Aberdeen Uni v Beaulieu
 John Matheson
 Glenurquhart v Glenurquhart
 Lachie Wood
 Kinlochshiel v Fort William
 John Angus Gillies
 Newtonmore v Lovat
 Euan Pearson - 1.30pm
 Skye v Kingussie
 Ronnie Campbell

Marine Harvest South Division 2
 Aberdour v Glasgow MA
 Douglas Ferguson
 Ballachulish v Col Glen
 Dunkie Kerr
 Kyles Athletic v Inveraray
 John MacGregor
 Tayforth v Bute
 Neil MacDonald

Marine Harvest North Division 3
 Inverness v Caberfeidh
 John Sloggie
 Lochaber v Boleskine
 Willie MacRae
 Lochbroom v Strathspey
 Archie Ritchie
 Kilmallie v Lochcarron
 Alex MacVicar
 Strathglass v Lewis
 Calum Girvan - 12pm

The Oban Times
 Number 1 for shinty every week

SCHOOLS shinty in the north Highlands has received a huge boost after Dingwall and Beaulieu won the Gilmour Sports National First Shinty Finals at Fort William on Saturday.

Dingwall triumphed in the P7 and under event at the

Nevis Centre with a 3-0 victory over Glenurquhart in the final, then minutes later Beaulieu beat Park of Oban 2-0 to lift the P5 and under trophy.

In the P7 play off for third, Banavie overcame Portree in the second period of extra time with a golden goal from

Greig Kelly, while Kyles claimed third in the P5 event with a 3-0 win over Lochaber. The semi-finals went through from a round-robin competition earlier in the day in which each team played five games in a mini-league.

Hundreds of supporters attended both events, including

Portree Primary head teacher John Finlayson.

He told The Oban Times: 'The team played well throughout and did well to reach the semi-finals. The boys enjoyed their day out and send their congratulations to Dingwall for their fine achievement.'

We are more than capable of doing that but we have to make sure we turn up and play the way we can. They have a good home record so it won't be easy.'

Kilmallie went 2-0 up against Beaulieu through Michael Rodger and Mark Graham before Marc MacLachlan pulled one back on the half hour mark

Grant MacKenzie restored Kilmallie's two-goal cushion five minutes later and a Rodger penalty on 70 minutes put the issue beyond doubt.

Kelly said: 'North Division One is never easy to get out of and it was a good start to the season. Our keeper only had one good save to make. The whole team played really well.'

Skye

Camanachd

SKYE Camanachd will go into this Saturday's game with Strathglass on a high after beating Inverness 6-1 at Portree last weekend.

Manager Willie MacRae told The Oban Times Shockie MacLennan and Shaun Hedley should be available after missing out against Inverness, and said he expects to have a full strength squad.

Danny Morrison and Will Cowie gave Skye a 2-0 half time lead against Skye, with further goals coming from Jordan Murchison and Chris Rose, with Morrison finding the back of the net twice more.

MacRae said: 'I was happy with the game, all four of our starting forwards scored so that's good for their confidence.'

'Danny Morrison scored three - he's always been a good forward but he's not always had the breaks in front of goal, but on Saturday it all seemed to click for him.'

Strathglass will be looking to bounce back after losing 2-1 to Caberfeidh last weekend.

MacRae said: 'Strathglass are always a sturdy team, especially on their own pitch. I think they were a bit unlucky last weekend but we'll go into it with a bit of confidence.'

Glenarray

GLENGARRAY got their Marine Harvest North Division Two campaign off to a fine start with a 2-0 win over Aberdeen University at Craighard Park, Invergarry on Saturday.

First half goals from Steven Cameron and Aaron Clark were just reward for Glenarray's early dominance.

The visitors found a more fluid game in the second half but were unable to find a way past a resolute Glenarray defence.

Garry manager Ewen Cameron said he was generally pleased with his team's performance in their opening fixture.

He told The Oban Times: 'You always want to win your home games. We played well in the first half and not so well in the second.'

'I think they came more into things probably because they were a bit stiff in the first half from all their travelling.'

Glenorchy

IT MAY only be the second game of the season but Glenorchy coach John Smith says this weekend's trip to Bute will be his club's toughest game this season and a potential title decider.

Glenorchy warmed up for the encounter with a 5-1 win over Aberdour at the Mart through Jordan Murchison and Chris Rose, with Morrison finding the back of the net twice more.

But Smith said Bute will be a tougher test, especially on their home turf.

'This will be a very difficult game, the toughest we're going to have this season, so we have got to play like it is the game that will decide the league title,' said Smith. 'You don't want to look back on matches like this at the end of the season with regret.'

'It's not a cup final but it's nearly as important.'

Smith is part of a selection panel made up of former players and current senior players, who will oversee team selection and tactics. The system has served Glenorchy well in the past.

'The boys have highlighted Bute's danger men but you can't get too preoccupied with the opposition; we will play to our strengths and focus on a style of play that we think will do the most damage.'

'I was surprised with the quality of our play last Saturday, considering it was the first game of the season, but we have 22 players to choose from and every one of them knows they have to raise their game to get, or keep, their place in the team.'

Glenorchy will have a full squad to pick from this week.

Taynuilt

A YOUNG Taynuilt team left the pitch on Saturday feeling like winners after battling to a commendable draw against Glasgow Mid Argyll last Saturday.

Manager Willie Gillies put trust in the club's youngsters by giving some of them a starting place and they repaid him with an energetic performance.

Gillies said: 'GMA destroyed us 6-1 in both games last season, so 0-0 feels like a win for us.'

'I don't think we even played to our full potential but we soldiered on through the 90 minutes and there were times I thought we dominated the game. We had identified one of their wingers as a danger man, so I had him man-marked and that seemed to work.'

'I think the first game of the season at home was a good time to get GMA, because I expect them to do well this season.'

In the absence of Stuart Scott, Mark Bergant impressed as he made his first start at half forward and youngster Fraser MacMillan came off the bench in the second half to cause trouble for the visitors' defence.

At the other end, goalkeeper Gary Cameron was key to his sides clean sheet with two fantastic saves.

Gillies added: 'I want to give the young boys a good chance this season but we have a good team here and I am very pleased with how Stephen Parr is settling in at centre. He has grabbed the opportunity to play there with

both hands and I thought he dictated play in the midfield.'

Gillies said he was looking forward to this weekend's game against Oban Celtic.

Oban Celtic

IT WAS a winning start to the season for Oban Celtic but a 2-0 scoreline disguised a spirited fightback from Strachur at Mossfield.

Having had the lion's share of possession, Celtic opened the scoring through Davie Ferguson towards the end of the first half but they suffered a nervy encounter thereafter, until Alan MacInnes sealed the two points as the full time whistle approached.

Celtic goalkeeper Jack Hill was called upon to make important saves and Strachur hit the post as they looked to claw themselves back into the game.

Oban Celtic president David Hamilton said: 'The second goal came right at the end but it was a big relief; it wasn't as comfortable as the scoreline suggests.'

'Defenders Daniel Madej and Gary McKerracher dealt with most that came their way but we needed Jack to make a couple of saves in the second half.'

'Neil Carmichael did very well in the middle of the park against their very fit centre.'

Hamilton said he expected a tough game this weekend at Taynuilt.

Lochside Rovers

LOCHSIDE ROVERS looked to be on an easy street at Ganavan last Saturday as a Diarmid MacMillan brace put them 2-0 in front after 15 minutes.

But the 20th minute dismissal of half back Ewan MacCorquodale for violent conduct put the pressure on the home side, who had to battle hard to keep the lead.

Manager Andrew Pearson praised the effort of his young side, who were a man down for 70 minutes.

An 87th minute strike from Kilmory's talismanic centre Duncan MacBrayne made for a nervy final few minutes for Lochside.

Pearson said: 'The second half was pretty much backs to the wall but the boys were brilliant.'

'We picked up a couple of injuries during the game, so boys were being played out of position. Keith MacMillan was outstanding before he came off injured and David Lafferty at centre worked extra hard to close down their spare man.'

Pearson expects a tough challenge against GMA this weekend and will be missing the suspended Ewan MacCorquodale and the injured Keith MacMillan.

Forward Michael MacQueen will be available after missing last weekend's match.

Bute

HAVING had to look on as other teams got their league campaigns underway, BUTE will be more keen than most to get underway this Saturday.

The islanders face a tough test in the shape of Glenorchy at The Meadows this weekend but new manager Graham Fisher insists his new-look attacking side are

ready.

He said: 'We haven't played Glenorchy in the league for a couple of years and they have had the advantage of having played a game already but we will be looking to get the win and have a new-look attack that will give our supporters some entertaining shinty.'

Bute have invited supporters and sponsors to the clubhouse for a gathering before and after the match.

Ballachulish

Pre-season favourites BALLACHULISH began their South Division Two season with a comfortable 5-0 win over BUTE juniors at Jubilee Park.

The match, sponsored by OXOX Design and Event Management, was officiated well by John MacGregor on his debut as a referee at this level.

Straight from the throw up the more experienced Balla' team asserted dominance and it took only eight minutes for Duncan MacDonald to slot home the opening goal.

Almost immediately after, young MacDonald fired in his second goal after some good passing play.

The Ballachulish midfield kept the forwards fed with plenty of ball, playing very attractive shinty, but John Whitelaw in the Bute goal was on impressive form all day.

On the half hour mark Whitelaw made a double save, the first coming from a rasping shot from the edge of the 'D', saved well by Whitelaw's stick. The rebound landed to David Grant who was quickest to react with a well struck shot from five yards, only for Whitelaw to dive athletically across the goal to palm the ball away. Lorne Brown scored just before half time to make the score 3-0.

It didn't take long for Balla' to pick up where they left off and Scott Henderson scored two minutes into the second half. Duncan MacDonald completed his hat trick five minutes later.

Next week will see action on the Jubilee Park again when Col Glen travel to Ballachulish.



Teamtalk - The Oban Times' new website feature

The Oban Times is starting a new online feature, Teamtalk, which uncovers the characters in the dressing rooms of the area's favourite sporting teams. Players will lift the lid on their club mates' antics, revealing who is the worst at training, who is the joker in the pack and who is future management material. Visit www.obantimes.co.uk to see Glenorchy Camanachd captain Duncan Smith talk about his teammates, pictured.

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Saints battle through to force Scottish Cup replay

'We know we're in for another tough game in the replay'

Fosters Scottish Amateur Cup
7th Round
**Colville Park 2
Oban Saints 2**

SAINTS travelled to Motherwell to take on high flying Colville Park in the 7th round of the Fosters Scottish Amateur Cup with a place in the quarter finals at stake and a brave fighting performance earned the Oban side a 2-2 draw against one of the cup favourites and a team packed with experienced ex-professionals and junior players.

Manager Iain Jackson named the same starting line-up that had played well to defeat Cambusbarron in the last round.

The game was played on a superb grass surface at Colville Park Country Club and it was the home side, one of the top teams in the country, that came flying out of the blocks and had Saints on the back foot right from the first whistle.

However, the visitors were defending well and looked dangerous on the break and took the lead in the 13th minute when Willie Gemmell and Donald Campbell worked a short corner before the ball was driven across the goalmouth. Colville keeper Jordan Longmuir could only parry the ball out and it fell kindly for Saints skipper Keith Millar who fired the ball home from close range.

Park came storming forward but the Saints back line was in good form, thwarting the eager home front line on several occasions with some superb last ditch tackles.

One criticism that could be levelled at the visitors was that they were giving away too many free kicks in dangerous areas, but thankfully the home side failed to take advantage.

Saints were being forced to defend in depth but looked dangerous breaking forward and Mattie Rippon had a right foot pile-driver sail inches over the bar.

At the other end Chris Graham was on hand to clear a goal-bound effort off the line which was quickly followed by a good diving save from keeper Daniel Cassells.

The home side's main tactic was for their two central defenders to ping long balls from the back into the corners for their

forwards to chase but the Saints defenders were coping reasonably well with this play.

The visitors came more into the game as the half wore on and increased their lead in the 36th minute when the home defence failed to clear a Willie Gemmell throw-in. Somehow the ball ended up at the back post where Craig MacEwan was on hand to knock it home.

The Oban side, which had been under the cosh for long periods couldn't believe they were two goals in front, but they also knew the game was far from over.

With five minutes to go before the half time break the visitors gave away another free kick at the edge of the box and this time Colville made them pay.

The first effort by Mike



Dene Cassells - covered every blade of grass.

Kennedy was blocked but the ball came back out to Fraser Love who shot for goals. Daniel Cassells made a great fingertip save, but instead of the ball going past for a corner it hit the post and came back into play where Alan Lister was on hand to force the ball into the net from close range to make the score 2-1.

The Saints squad looked gutted as they trooped off the pitch at the interval after defending so well for long periods and then to lose a goal just before the half time whistle.

However, after words of encouragement the Oban side started the second half well and Dene Cassells, who had worked his socks off all afternoon covering every blade of grass on the pitch had a great chance, but he failed to get his header on target and the ball went past the post.

Just like the first half the home

FOOTBALL

side had the majority of the play but again the visitors, well marshalled by Alex Craik, Jamie Graham and Marc MacCallum were defending well.

However, Colville drew level in the 63rd minute when Mikey Brown found himself some space in the box where he got on the end of a cross to head the ball past a helpless Daniel Cassells.

The omens were not looking good for the Oban side now as Colville smelt blood and threw everything bar the kitchen sink at them as the half wore on.

Saints introduced Myles McAuley midway through the half and he made a great overlapping run before firing a dangerous ball across the goalmouth, but unfortunately for Saints there was no-one on hand to get on the end of the cross.

Willie Gemmell had a couple of reasonable efforts from free kicks from the edge of the Colville box but they didn't trouble keeper Jordan Longmuir too much.

The home side pushed hard for a winner as the game drew to a close and Michael Kennedy was unlucky when his shot came back off the crossbar with Daniel Cassells beaten.

The Oban goal was under siege in the final few minutes but with everyone back defending their penalty area the visitors managed to hold out and it was a jubilant Saints squad that left the field after the 90 minutes having taken one of the cup favourites to a replay back in Oban.

Manager Iain Jackson was delighted with his players and the result. He said: 'We knew it would be hard, and we would need to defend for long periods and that's exactly the way it turned out. We also know we're in for another tough game on Saturday as Colville Park are an excellent side but we have home advantage now and hopefully we can be a much bigger threat going forward this time around.'

The match will be played at Glencruitten with a 1.30pm kick-off with extra time and penalties, if required, to see who goes into the draw for the quarter finals. Referee is Tommy Gilchrist from Glasgow.



Spartak's Daniel Beaton and Lewis Campbell hold off a challenge from Lochgilphead Red Star's Aaron Harris during their match at the Oban Express Sunday League. See inside for more photographs.

Primary League back up and running

MORE than 160 children took part in the first week of the Oban Express Primary Football League season at Oban High School on Sunday.

Teams from the Oban and Lorn area were joined by those from Lochgilphead and organisers expect even more children to take part this weekend, as teams from Fort William join in.

With the majority of matches taking place on the artificial Oban Community Pitch, an overspill of matches was played on the nearby high school rugby pitch.

The entertaining Fun Fours for primary one pupils is continuing this season but there is an additional competition - Fantastic Fives - for the older age group, which introduces goalkeeping to the games.

PRIMARY FOOTBALL

The more senior children continue to play seven-a-side matches.

The season will run until November and organisers have thanked Walker Owen from Oban Express for the continued support of the league.

Oban Saints youths results and fixtures

YOUTH FOOTBALL

LAST weekend's results:
Ardencaple 1 Under 13s 1.
Scoring for Saints was Couper Munt, Clydebank 1 Under 14s 7. On target for Saints were Jay Cooper (3), Craig MacIntyre (2), Liam Higgins and Zander Kilmurray. Under 15s 2 Castle Rock 3. Stuart MacLean scored both Oban goals. Helensburgh 2 Under 16s 0.

This weekend's fixtures:
Kilpatrick Reds v Under 13s;
Under 14s v Antonine; Under 15s no game; Lenzie Colts v Under 16s.

Tight at the top in indoor league

OVER 35s LEAGUE

Team	P	W	D	L	Pts
Emergency	7	5	1	1	16
Trialists	5	5	0	0	15
WC Massive	5	4	0	1	12
Taynuilt	6	4	0	2	12
Clements	7	2	1	4	7
Teachers	6	1	1	4	4
Spartak	5	1	1	3	4
Hydro	5	1	0	4	3
STC	6	1	0	5	3

Results: Sail Trim Coach 2 West Coast Massive 6; Clements 1 Trialists 7; Emergency 5 Hydro 2; Sail Trim Coach 3 Teachers 6; Clements 1 Emergency 3; Emergency 8 Taynuilt 6; Clements 4 Teachers 4.

Knockout Cup at North Connel

CARPET BOWLS

THE final of the Knockout Cup will be played on Tuesday March 26 and will be hosted by North Connel Bowling Club.

Cairnbaan are in the final and will play the winner of the Easdale v Kilmore semi final.

Winner of the Kilmore Open Doubles played on February 9 were Eddie Holland and Allan MacFadyen, who beat Neil MacCorkindale and Colin Clark in the final.

Club	P	Pts
Kilmore	10	68
Cairnbaan	10	52
Benderloch	10	49
North Connel	10	32
Easdale	11	29
Connel	9	24
Taynuilt	8	18

Indoor tournament

HOCKEY

A HOCKEY tournament will take place in Atlantis Leisure next weekend to help promote the fledgling Oban club.

Oban Hockey Club, which has male and female members, is hosting the indoor tournament on March 16 between 1pm - 5pm and is open to anyone aged over 16 years. Anyone wishing to enter a team should contact Oban Hockey Club's Tara Pollock on tara.pollock@argyll-bute.sch.uk.

Golf results

GOLF

RESULTS of the Islay Golf Club March Medal: 1 Philip Maxwell 93 less 25 net 68; 2 Norman MacDonald 73 less 3 net 70; 3 Ruairaidh MacIntyre 75 less 5 net 70. CSS 70. GENTS 9 hole March Medal at Tobermory: 1 Tom Nunn 37-07-30, 2 Ross Kirsop 38-08-30, 3 Mike Campbell 42-10-32.

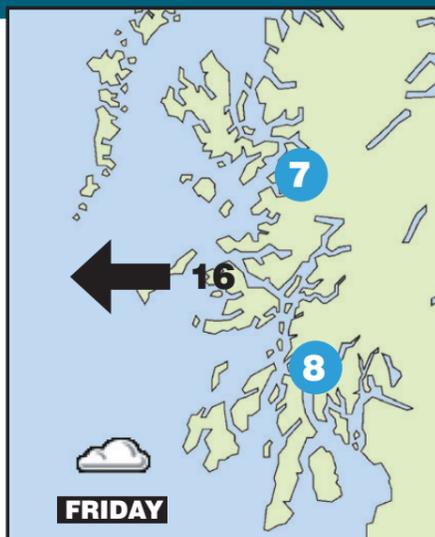
Weather

Thursday Light rain
Winds moderate, easterly
Temperatures 5C to 8°C

Friday Cloudy
Winds moderate, easterly
Temperatures 5°C to 8°C.

Weekend Cloudy
Outlook Winds moderate east south easterly
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States
Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate



Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, March 7, 2013** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur 02.01	3.1 07.51 1.5 14.57 3.0 20.36 1.4	
Fri 03.15	3.3 09.16 1.3 15.57 3.2 21.43 1.1	
Sat 04.06	3.6 10.17 1.0 16.38 3.5 22.35 0.8	
Sun 04.47	3.9 11.03 0.8 17.09 3.7 23.19 0.6	
Mon 05.24	4.1 11.43 0.7 17.40 3.9 *** **	
Tues 00.00	0.5 05.58 4.2 12.21 0.6 18.11 3.9	
Wed 00.39	0.5 06.32 4.2 12.57 0.6 18.42 4.0	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Portree	+0.55
Campbeltown	-5.30	Tobermory	+0.16
Crinan	-0.47	Dover	+5.30
Islay Port Ellen	2.00		
Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Mallaig	+0.25		

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The following pages are from the Fort William (Northern) Edition of The Oban Times.

The Oban Times prints two editions of the paper. There is the main edition as well as the Fort William (Northern) Edition.

Sometimes pages that appear in the Fort William edition do not appear in the main edition (and vice versa).

As an electronic subscriber you get the main edition plus the pages that appear in the Northern edition.



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The Oban Times

FORT WILLIAM & LOCHABER EDITION

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Thursday 7 March, 2013

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Inside this week

Rescued skipper says thanks



Shinty season gets underway



Also inside

- Essential local services
- Leisure news

plus all the latest job vacancies and sports news



Lochaber Youth Theatre made a big impression in Fort William on Saturday. 20_110theatre01

Lochaber Youth Theatre fundraisers take to high street

LOCHABER Youth Theatre (LYT) provided a splash of colour on Fort William High Street on Saturday during a fundraising day for their latest production.

The ambitious group has entered UK-wide project 'National Connections' aiming to be one of 10 companies chosen to perform at

the National Theatre in London in July. LYT will premiere its entry 'Ailie and The Alien' at the Nevis Centre before taking the play to the regional heat at Eden Court from April 2-4, when they will be judged against seven other entries from the north and northeast of Scotland. LYT director Iona Munro told *The*

Oban Times: 'This is the first time we have ever done this and it is quite a big thing for us. We have quite a good youth theatre just now with about 15 people. Some older youth theatre members have come back to help, which is nice.' Curtain goes up on 'Ailie and The Alien' on both nights at 7pm (12 and over only).

Green light for square re-vamp

NEWS that a major revamp of Fort William town centre could get underway this summer has been given a warm welcome by the local community and businesses.

Highland councillors are expected to vote in favour of spending £540,000 to renovate Cameron Square on the town's ailing High Street at a meeting in Inverness today (Thursday).

The Scottish Government has given Highland Council a £3 million cash injection to fund 'shovel ready' projects across the region.

And a report by Highland Council deputy chief executive and director of housing and property Steve Barron says the Cameron Square scheme could start in August and be complete by the New Year.

The plans include levelling out the sloped centre of the square to create a performance area surrounded by stepped stone seating.

Final designs have not been fully drawn up, but are also expected to include improved lighting and seating and a statue or artwork.

The previously proposed covered stage, which proved contentious with nearby businesses, no longer features in the proposals after local consultation.

Fort William Community Council chairman Neil Clark told *The Oban Times* the project could provide a much-needed boost to the town centre.

He said: 'I think it's a great idea. I'd welcome anything that can bring some life back into the town centre. We've got lots of people with good ideas

By RICHARD HADDOCK
rhaddock@obantimes.co.uk

but we never seem to have the funding. It'll have to be done in consultation with the neighbours. I know some of them in the past haven't been too happy about the idea of music playing all day. But I presume if it was volume controlled it wouldn't be a problem.'

Chris Robinson, chairman of West Highland Museum's management committee, echoed Mr Clark's warm reception.

He said: 'We welcome it wholeheartedly, anything that brings people into Cameron Square is a good thing. The town needs the focal point it has lacked for some time and the High Street is sadly not what it once was.'

DE Shoes manager Mike Brown said he was 'very much in favour' of the redevelopment.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'There's another plan to open a single track road through the High Street but I think doing up Cameron Square is a much better use of the money.'

'At the moment it's difficult to say if it will attract people back, but at least if they do come it will give them a positive impression of the town.'

Councillor Brian Murphy said he expects the funding to be approved. He said: 'I'm delighted to see this money coming forward to enable us to move the project on.'

Second investigation launched into Spean climber's death

A SECOND investigation had been launched into the death of a Spean Bridge man on Ben Nevis last Monday.

Mark Phillips fell from Raeburn's Buttress on the North Face of the mountain while climbing with a friend. After speculation that a rope was accidentally cut as the 51-year-old was being winched onto an RAF helicopter causing him to fall to his death, Northern Constabulary said it would investigate.

The RAF has decided to set up a separate inquiry into personnel and equipment involved

in the attempted rescue. Meanwhile, tributes have been paid to Mr Phillips, with Lochaber Provost Allan Henderson saying he was 'extremely saddened' by the news.

Popular
TEC Services director Neil Gillies said Mr Phillips was a 'popular, helpful and highly valued member of our team'.

Mr Phillips' wife Caroline said she had 'entire confidence' in the police investigation.

She added: 'Mark was a loving father and husband and will be sorely missed by us and his many friends and work colleagues.'

Deep snow breaks man's 300 foot fall

A MAN fell more than 300 feet while climbing in Glencoe on Tuesday morning - only to have his fall broken by a patch of deep snow.

The climber, in his 50s, is thought to have been airborne for much of the fall after he slipped 1,500 feet up Buchaille Etive Mor.

He suffered arm, shoulder and leg injuries but a Northern Constabulary spokesperson said his injuries were 'not life threatening'.

Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team was called out by the man's climbing partner

after he slipped while attempting a traverse from Crowberry Gully to Curved Ridge.

He was conscious when the rescue team helicopter found him and airlifted the man to the West End car park in Fort William. An ambulance then took him to the Belford Hospital for treatment to his injuries.

A total of 11 people have died in Scottish hills so far this year. A group of four students were killed after being engulfed by an avalanche while walking on the 3,773 foot Bidean nam Bian in Glencoe in January.

Fort police station opening hours cut

FORT William Police Station will no longer open 24 hours a day when the new national police force comes into effect next month.

The reception will only open from 8am-8pm seven days a week from April 1. Stornoway Police Station will see the same reduction in opening hours while

Portree will be cut from 8am-8pm every day to 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

Chief Superintendent Julian Innes said: 'Police will still maintain a visible presence in communities. We encourage people to contact us during opening hours where they have a routine enquiry. People can still dial 999

in an emergency and for non-emergencies can still contact police on a 24 hour basis by telephoning any of the advertised non-emergency numbers.'

Fort William councillor Andrew Baxter told *The Oban Times* he felt the move would not have a negative impact on policing in the area.

Raasay delight at return of sporting rights

By STEPHEN NORRIS

THE LEASE for sporting rights on Raasay has been returned to local crofters for the current season to the delight of islanders.

First Minister Alex Salmond announced the move at First Minister's Questions in parliament last week, striking down a previous decision by government officials to award the lease to South Ayrshire Stalking.

The dramatic turn of events came after the Girvan-based company withdrew its interest, by mutual consent, in return for £9,000 costs towards expenses incurred.

South Ayrshire Stalking had outbid Raasay Crofters Association (RCA) by £1,850 for the lease but officials were under no obligation to accept the highest offer.

The initial awarding of the rights to an outside bidder prompted a furious outcry from across Scotland and abroad amid accusations the government was little better than rapacious landlords of the past.

The crofters had held shooting and fishing

rights for 18 years and invested heavily in deer management and venison production.

The restored lease will now be extended until November so the community can be consulted on a longer term solution.

Environment Minister Paul Wheelhouse visited Raasay on Friday to discuss options for the lease with RCA and other community representatives. He said: 'It was a valuable opportunity to visit Raasay today and hear from the community about the importance of the sporting rights to the island. We will consult fully with the local community throughout and today's meeting was just the start of this process. We want the broadest possible consensus going forward on how to maximise community benefit.'

He added: 'It's regrettable that the original decision to award the sporting rights contract was made without ministerial involvement. I share the concerns expressed locally about the

way in which the contract was awarded and will ensure, as I have indicated previously, that in future, appropriate ministerial consideration is given when such decisions are being made. That is why I have taken steps to resolve the situation and I hope the Raasay islanders will be content with this solution.'

RCA secretary Anne Gillies said islanders were 'delighted' at the government's change of heart.

She told *The Oban Times*: 'We are really glad the ministers took the decision they have and sorted things out. They absolutely recognised a mistake had been made and we are glad they have put it right. The lease has been extended for a year to give everybody time to discuss the best way forward.'

'We are so grateful for all the support we have had from all over Scotland and beyond - it has been amazing. We plan to talk to people, not just the crofters' association, to work out an agreed long term future for the shooting lease.'

See reaction to the decision, page 16.



10 >

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Council defends lack of Lochaber mortuary

HIGHLAND Council has defended a lack of a mortuary in Lochaber after it emerged the bodies of four victims of the recent avalanche tragedy in Glencoe were held at the mountain rescue team base in the village for several hours before being transferred to Inverness.

The council closed its mortuary in Glen Nevis last year and road accident and mountain victims are now taken to Raigmore for identification.

Now local funeral director Mike McFall is building his own refrigerated storage facility to 'solve the problem the council created'.

According to Mr McFall, 61, the move will alleviate families' 'distress' caused by the absence of suitable facilities locally.

A council spokesman told *The Oban Times*: 'Fort William was the last district mortuary under ownership of the council.'

'It was deemed no longer fit for purpose and it was decided in consultation with local members and police that we would declare it surplus to requirements and sell it. It was put on the market and is currently under offer. 'We do not have a mortuary anywhere else in the Highlands and should somebody lose their life in Aviemore or the Cuillins it would be no different from Fort William - the body would be conveyed to Inverness for a post mortem and identification.'

He added: 'There is no statutory duty for the council to provide the service.'

Planning sought for Ardtoe houses

SPEAN Bridge couple Jimmy and Gladys Johnston have lodged planning applications with Highland Council to build two houses on land at Dal-Ghorm, Ardtoe, near Acharacle.

Bumper jackpot

A BUMPER jackpot of £1,000 is up for grabs in Ballachulish Shinty Club's weekly lottery this weekend. Last weekend's numbers were 10, 14 and 19.



The Rotary Club of Lochaber, Cancer Research UK shop staff in Fort William and Lochaber Together volunteers launch the new 'donation station' in the Nevis Centre. 20_1101together01

Working together in fight against cancer

THE ROTARY Club of Lochaber, the Cancer Research UK shop in Fort William and local fundraising group Lochaber Together have teamed up to raise funds to help bring the day closer all cancers are cured.

In a new initiative, the Rotary will be distributing donation bags around Lochaber for people to fill with unwanted items.

From now until the annual Run Together Fort William on April 27, goods can be deposited in the big box at a 'donation station' in the Nevis Centre.

From there, they will be transferred to the Cancer Research shop on High Street to be sold in aid of research into all 200 types of cancer.

The bags can be filled with clothing, bric-a-brac or books. Even old clothes, which can't be sold, can still be sent for recycling. No electrical items are requested.

Anyone that registers for the 5k Run Together will receive a bag in their welcome pack. These can either be returned to the Nevis Centre or brought along to the event. Lochaber Together chairman Adam Ramsey welcomed the extra help as planning for the big day gets underway.

He said: 'It's amazing how we all get stuck in. The help from the Rotary Club frees up the committee to concentrate on the planning of our main event and this year it is going to be bigger and better than the previous one.'

'A very important part of this drive is for people to sign up for gift aid. For every £20 worth of goods sold in the shop from these bags, the taxman adds 25 per cent at no extra cost to anyone. Simply complete the necessary form at the shop, then donate a gift aid label to place on each bag donated.'

Sheana Fraser, President of Lochaber Rotary Club, said: 'We are delighted to be able to help the local fundraising group and Cancer Research shop. Cancer affects almost everyone at some point in their life.'

Anyone requiring extra bags for donations can contact the Rotary Club on 01397 712357.

Facebook bail breach sees accused locked up

CHANGING his Facebook profile and photo cost a former fisherman from Morar his liberty as he awaits trial for sending sexual messages to underage girls.

Thomas Crawley, of 1 Camus Crescent, was remanded in custody at Fort William Sheriff Court after breaching bail conditions ordering him not to use the social networking site or text.

Crawley, 27, was released on bail on January 30 but was arrested on February 8 after the mother of one of his alleged victims noticed he had changed his Facebook page and contacted police.

Procurator Fiscal Alison Wylie said the accused had 'amnesia' about what he had been ordered not to do.

By STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

'If your profile changes it pings to all your friends,' she said. 'He claimed to have forgotten about it.'

Defending, Hamish Melrose said Crawley was granted police bail on December 24 on condition he did not contact or approach five persons until he appeared in court.

He then appeared at court on January 30, when the added bail conditions were imposed.

A 'very stupid' Crawley then used his sister's computer to change his Facebook page and sent two messages to a male friend who had been trying to contact him.

'There was no attempt to contact the victims here,' said

Mr Melrose. Sheriff Noel McPartlin said the breach of bail was 'a serious matter', remanded Crawley in custody and ordered a social work report. A further hearing was scheduled for March 14.

Crawley is accused of sending numerous text and Facebook messages of a sexual nature to a 13-year-old girl between May 1 and December 18, sending messages with sexual innuendo via Facebook to a 12-year-old girl between October 1 and December 19 and sending another 13-year-old girl numerous texts of a sexual nature on November 11 and December 20.

He is also accused of three related charges of behaving in a threatening and aggressive manner by sending the messages. Crawley denies all charges.

Church survey results to be revealed at public meeting

ARDNAMURCHAN locals will be informed of plans for the future of a 180-year-old church near Kilchoan at a public meeting later this month.

Local minister Rev Fiona Ogg canvassed public opinion on the prospect of expensive renovation work at Ardnamurchan Parish Church to discover if locals felt the costs were worth it.

Questionnaires were distributed across the area, with completed forms handed in by the end of February. Rev Ogg told *The Oban Times*

she had not counted up the number of forms returned but thought the level of response was 'quite good'.

Church members were due to meet with West Ardnamurchan Community Council this week to discuss the survey results and will set a date for the public meeting shortly.

The total cost of the works has not been finalised, but it is thought more than £100,000 is required just to weatherproof the building, which still holds weekly services.

Woman bought six bottles of vodka for 14 and 15-year-olds

A TEEN party in Fort William got out of hand after a woman bought six bottles of vodka for 14 and 15 year-olds.

Lauren Findlay, of 2 Dun Deardail, Claggan, collected cash to buy three bottles of spirit from a store in Bruce Place - then took a taxi into town to buy three more, Fort William Sheriff Court heard.

Fiscal Alison Wylie described how police arrived at the flat after a tip-off to find 'bottles of alcohol in various stages of consumption' and youngsters scattering everywhere.

She said: 'The accused left by means of a window.'

'Thirty young people were there, including children, who were trying to hide in the house.'

'One of the girls was unable to stand and was vomiting. Her mother had to come and take her home.'

Findlay told police the carry out was for an 18-year-old male friend who initially confirmed the tale - but officers soon uncovered the true story.

The 18-year-old admitted buying alcohol on November 17 for four underage girls and to attempting to pervert the course of justice between November 17 and 29 at an address in Wallace Place and elsewhere in Fort William.

Defending, Stephen Kennedy said: 'She realises the seriousness of both charges.'

Ordering background reports, Sheriff Noel McPartlin told Findlay: 'This is a shocking situation.'

Sentence will be passed on March 27.

Raffle raises mountain rescue cash

A RAFFLE in a well-known Lochaber pub has raised £1,800 for Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team.

'The Big Winter Raffle' was run throughout the month as part of the Clachaig Inn's FebruaryFest event, with specialist avalanche equipment, weekend breaks and single malt whisky among the prizes up for grabs. A series of free mountain safety lectures ran in conjunction with the festival and attracted around 400 mountain enthusiasts to the inn.

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Glencoe honours visionary engineer

GLENCOE Mountain Resort has honoured the visionary engineer who drew up plans to found the ski centre - Scotland's first - 60 years ago.

At the base station restaurant on Friday, more than 40 people from the early days of Scottish skiing joined 96 year-old Philip Rankin from Ballachulish to celebrate his achievements.

Mr Rankin was a young engineer in Glasgow when in 1953 he first mooted the idea of building a permanent ski tow on the northern slopes of Meall a' Bhuiridh.

He had already skied the hard way many times - walking up then skiing down - and reckoned a lift up to the mountain's snow-holding ravines would unlock its potential for snowsports.

Then editor of the Scottish Ski Club Journal, Mr Rankin wrote an article detailing his ideas and three years later Scotland's first permanent tow was built.

Those present at Friday's ceremony included members of the original work party and ski patrol, along with legendary climber Hamish McInnes and resort owner Andy Meldrum.

Mr Meldrum said: 'We invited all the old-timers we could contact to be present when a specially-commissioned photo portrait of Philip was unveiled in the Log Cabin Restaurant at the resort.'

Mr Rankin said the original ski tow, based on a system to convey baskets of tea down from hillsides in India, proved to be 'a bit of a disaster' and had to be rebuilt.

Under skilled guidance from Jimmy Hamilton, one of Mr Rankin's engineering contemporaries, a new chairlift was installed in 1959-60 and Glencoe ski area began to enjoy commercial success.

Mr Rankin said after the presentation: 'I think what they have done here is absolutely wonderful. I just wish I had the cash to do it myself.'

'I expected there might be 12 people or so there but the place was packed. All the old cronies were present - there were quite a few walking sticks about!'

Chair of Ski-Scotland, Heather Negus was delighted Glencoe had recognised the achievement of a 'remarkable man'.

She said: 'Without his vision, determination and practical knowledge, it is possible that downhill skiing might never have been established in Scotland.'

'Little did he know then that he was founding an industry which 60 years later would be worth around £30 million per year to the Scottish economy, currently enjoying the benefits with great snowsports conditions at all the resorts.'

Cairngorm and Glenshee ski areas opened in the early 1960s, the Lecht followed in the late 1970s and Nevis Range in 1989.



Glencoe ski resort founder Philip Rankin was honoured at a special ceremony on Friday

Police launch Myriad

ONE OF the biggest operations to ever take place in the Oban and Lorn area has already targeted drug users, thieves and speeding motorists in its first few days.

Operation Myriad is a force-wide initiative but between March 1 - 15 'L' Division, which incorporates Argyll and Bute and West Dunbartonshire, will have exclusive access to Strathclyde Police's specialist teams.

On the first day of Myriad, police set up roadblocks on the A816 at Arduaine, the A85 and A819 near Dalmally, the A828 at the Creagan Inn and the A82 at Tarbet.

At its peak, the operation involved 24 police officers in the Oban area, with 16 staff from the Glasgow area supplementing eight officers on duty from Oban Police Station.

At Creagan last Friday, police stopped a heavy goods delivery vehicle and found the 45-year-old driver to be in possession of herbal cannabis, cannabis resin and ecstasy tablets. Officers also stopped a car at Creagan that turned out to be stolen.

In Dalmally, four cars searched with the help of sniffer dogs were found to contain drugs.

On the same day, officers set a speed trap in Bridge of Orchy and within three hours, charged six drivers with speeding offences.

On Tuesday, police visited premises in Oban that sell knives to advise shop owners about changes to legislation on how the items can be displayed and supported dog warden Peter McLuckie in targeting dog fouling.

The first few days of the operation has already seen Strathclyde Police's experts in domestic abuse, the marine unit, the dog branch, specialised entry teams and police horses complementing staff in Argyll and Bute.

Chief inspector Brian Auld, area commander for Oban, Lorn and the Isles, said: 'As part of Operation Myriad we will have different activities every day for 15 days, making it possibly the largest sustained activity the area has seen.'

'The point of Myriad is to target community concerns and offending behaviour that may drop through the cracks, because it is not routine.'

'The road blocks were set up to target fuel and metal thieves and to find out who is moving around our roads network. It wasn't our intention to find drugs and a stolen car but that was a bonus for us.'

'Thefts were never previously on the ward area plans, so it hasn't been my primary focus but I am acting on recent information from elected members and community councils.'

Counterfeit DVDs seized in Dunbeg raid

A HAUL of fake DVDs, thought to be worth more than £30,000, has been seized in Dunbeg. The seizure, part of Operation Myriad, saw CID officers from Dunoon and Helensburgh join the team in Oban to carry out a search of a house in the village's Lochnell Road. Trading Standards and the Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT) were involved in the raid, which also saw computers and other electrical equipment seized. More counterfeit DVDs were found in sheds and at a storage container in Oban.

As a result of the CID investigation, a 37-year-old

man has been charged under copyright and patents legislation. Police investigations are continuing to find out where copies of the fake DVDs may have been distributed.

Copyright and licensing are key aspects of this month's Operation Myriad, which is running every day from March 1 - 15.

Oban Police Station will have an open day on March 16, when members of the public will be invited to see the results of Operation Myriad and find out more about what goes on at the station.



Oban watchkeepers Isobel McGill and Sheila Young admire the new Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders sergeant's mess kit at Oban War and Peace Museum. 15_110wap03

Museum looks forward to 500,000th visitor

OBAN War and Peace Museum is gearing up for its 500,000th visitor after opening for its 19th successive season.

Oban's only museum, which is run by volunteer watchkeepers, has added new items to the exhibition, including a colourful Argyll and Sutherland

Highlanders sergeant's mess kit, gifted by Alan Morrison, Kilmore.

If visitor numbers continue at the current rate, the museum should welcome its 500,000th visitor in late summer this year.

In spite of the economic gloom of the recession, the museum

attracted almost 32,000 visitors in 2012, over 3,300 more than in 2011.

Alison Palmer, a director at Oban War and Peace Museum, said: 'Visitors come from across the globe to visit the museum with many of them posting favourable comments on social

media sites and in the visitors book. Notably they comment on the warm and friendly welcome given by volunteers.'

'Hopefully 2013 will see an increase in income from donations made by visitors, following a small overall drop last year.'

A82 may not close for 14 weeks

BUSINESSES along the A82 may be spared a 14-week road closure this summer with speculation mounting that any permanent closure could only last three weeks.

Local businesses have been told by engineers from Northern Irish firm McLaughlin and Harvey Ltd that any all-day closures will be limited as the company cannot afford the penalties associated with the complete restriction of traffic.

Glenn Squires, one of the partners who own the Ardlui Hotel, said: 'The contractors are all Irish lads and they've apparently been saying they think it'll be nowhere near 14 weeks - it could be just two weeks then a lot of night time closures.'

Mr Squires added his frustration that more information has not been forthcoming from Transport Scotland in advance of the works.

He said: 'I thought we would

have been contacted by now.'

Transport Scotland say closures could yet last up to 14 weeks, but say incentives are in place to ensure closures are kept to a minimum. A spokesman said: 'A 14 week window, starting October 1, has been allowed during which the contractor is able to completely close the A82 without restriction.'

Following award of the contract to build this scheme, we are continuing to work with the contractor to ensure any unavoidable disruption on the local community is minimised.

'Early proposals are now being developed and members of the public and road users will be kept apprised as these become clearer and more definitive.'

McLaughlin and Harvey were contacted for comment but were unavailable at the time of going to press.

'The design and build contract incentivises the contractor to identify any construction methodology which minimises disruption to the road user.'

'All stakeholders will be kept apprised as these become clearer and more definitive.'

Due to last up to one year, preliminary works get underway this month with the clearance of vegetation and other minor obstructions.

Covering 0.4km of the road, the work will see the traffic lights removed, returning the road to two-way traffic after a period of some 30 years.

McLaughlin and Harvey were contacted for comment but were unavailable at the time of going to press.

Argyll business mentoring scheme offers free support

Programme matches mentors with management experience

A FREE business mentoring scheme is aiming to help businesses across Argyll reach their full potential.

Oban's Pauline Cameron delivers the Scottish Business Mentoring Programme - run by the Scottish Chambers of Commerce - across the whole county, linking experienced businessmen and women with companies seeking to stabilise, enhance or grow their operation.

Offered on a confidential basis, the programme links companies that have been running for at least a year with people whose own background would be most beneficial to their own particular needs.

The one-to-one support for a period of up to one year at a time can cover any subject from cash-flow and diversifying

income streams, to marketing and dealing with the specific challenges posed by the current economic climate.

Pauline said: 'Richard Branson is a great believer in business mentoring, but there's still a bit of 'if I admit I need help, I must be weak' culture around in the business community which needs addressing.'

'The programme matches volunteer mentors, who have significant business and management experience, with businesses seeking to grow and looking for an objective sounding board or support to work through specific business issues.'

Andy Maxtone, business mentoring manager for the Scottish Chambers of Commerce, added: 'It's about helping a business grow in the best way without

making the mistake. Quite often, the business mentor has made the mistake and learned from it and they can pass on that experience.'

'What makes this scheme so valuable is the mentors are volunteers and there is no vested interest other than wanting to help. We have a wealth of experience out there and if we can use that in a positive way it helps the whole area and businesses to grow.'

Pauline is keen to hear from businesses who wish to take advantage of the scheme and anyone with relevant business experience interested in becoming a mentor.

For more information on the mentoring programme or to get involved email Pauline on pcameron@businessmentoring-scotland.org.



Karen Baxter, left, and Allan McDougall, right, of Dunoon's Argyll Smokery, who have previously benefited from the Business Mentoring Programme, with the Scottish Chambers of Commerce's Andy Maxtone and Pauline Cameron. 16_110pauleargyllsmokery1

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pcameron@businessmentoring-scotland.org

Business Mentoring is a partnership between Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Scottish Chambers of Commerce and Highlands & Islands Partnership Programme

Pre-owned clothing business up for grabs

A PIONEERING business that sells pre-owned designer clothing is looking for a new owner following a successful trial period.

Off the Rails, on George Street, Oban, operates in a similar manner to e-Bay, but for clothes, allowing customers to see first hand the garments available before buying.

However, with both owners Sandra Melville and Catherine Hunter running the enterprise alongside their full time jobs, they feel they don't have the time to dedicate to the business and decided to shut up shop last week.

They are keen to pass on the business to anyone wishing to take up the reins and take advantage of the good trade already built up.

Sandra said: 'The business has been so well received and we've been quite overwhelmed.'

'However, as we both work full-time we don't think we can devote the time to taking it through 'the season' without letting standards slip. It would be such a great opportunity for someone and we've done all the hard work getting it up and running, building a reputation and establishing a client base. So it's there on a silver platter for the right person.'

Anyone interested in taking over Off the Rails can contact Sandra and Catherine on offtherailsoban@gmail.com.

Meanwhile the shop will be open on Saturday between 12noon and 3pm for clients to collect their unsold items. Anyone who cannot attend should email the owners.

Practical help, advice and support for new and growing businesses

To find out how Business Gateway can help your business, contact the local office on 01546 605 459 or visit www.bgateway.com

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Night closures scheduled to allow Connel Bridge cable work

WORK to move a high voltage cable will see the Connel Bridge closed overnight to both pedestrians and vehicles for five days from Sunday.

Scottish and Southern Energy had hoped to move the cable from overhead gantries on the bridge for more than a year, but weather and timing for the tourist season meant repeated delays.

The work will see the high voltage cable moved to a newly installed duct running below the carriageway of the bridge.

Both pedestrians and vehicles will be unable to cross between 10pm-6am until Friday, March 15 when the work starts at 10pm this Sunday.

Access over the bridge will be allowed for a maximum of 10 minutes on the hour every hour, with access for emergency services provided at all times. A signed diversion route will also be in place.

Scotland Transerv, who maintains Scotland's trunk roads, say a complete closure will ensure safety and the quick completion of the work.

The works will involve excavation of the footpath and verge areas on both the north and south of the bridge, as well as overhead works.

Demand for home grown produce boosts local trade show

A DESIRE for more locally sourced, home grown produce saw a significant boost to this year's Forth Highlands and Islands Trade Show in Oban last week.

Significant boost
Around 1,000 people came through the doors at the Corran Halls, with the supermarket horse meat revelations driving extra interest in local meat, with brands such as Argyll Angus, Argyll Hill Lamb Group, Argyll Pork Producers, Argyll Wild Venison and Argyll Free Range Eggs all receiving a significant boost in interest.

The 34th anniversary of the biennial trade show boasted its biggest ever food and drink exhibitor turnout - more than double the number who attended Scotland's national food and drink show.

'Unrivalled platform'
John Forteith, general manager of Forth Foodservice, said: 'In the wake of the horse meat scandal, there was a massive interest in the locally sourced meats that we produce on site at our facility in Oban.'

'We were delighted to have several of the farmers we work in partnership with in attendance, and they were fully engaging with visitors coming to the event.'

With around 450 businesses travelling to Oban for the trade show, held on Wednesday and Thursday last week, producers enjoyed an unrivalled platform to market their products directly to local customers.

John Forteith said the event also provided a significant tourism boost to the Oban and Lorn area, with visitors enjoying spectacular weather during the two-day event and a 'truly spectacular' emergence of the MV Isle of Mull through the mist at the end of the event last Thursday evening.

Forth's is now preparing for its food and drink show in Fort William in early 2014 before the trade show returns to Oban in 2015, coinciding with the 60th anniversary of Forth Foodservice.

No new road at A83 Rest and Be Thankful

THERE will be no new road at the Rest and Be Thankful with the A83 Task Force set to formally back the cheapest solution.

The stakeholder group - made up of local business interest, hauliers, council officials and tourism representatives - informally notified Transport Scotland of its decision to back the Red Option outlined in the Jacobs Report last week, with formal notification to be given at its next meeting.

With Transport Scotland having already backed the Red Option, it means between £9-10million will be spent installing 440m of new debris flow netting or other landslide mitigation measures, improving drainage and an extensive planting programme.

The decision comes shortly after Argyll and Bute Council said its long-term preference was for the Green Option - a new road to be built at the other side of Glen Croe - however it also backed the Red Option as the one most likely to have an immediate effect.

Mike Story, who sits on the Task Force as executive director of Argyll and the Isles Tourism, said the Red Option was preferred as it was the only choice which made a difference in the short time.

However, Campbelltown's John Semple, lead councillor for transport, said the council would continue to apply pressure for a new road if the Red Option failed to prevent closures of Argyll's main artery.

He said: 'The Red Option was the one that made the biggest difference in the shortest space of time. I'm not an engineer, but

my understanding is the other options would have involved a significant period of engineering works in advance, maybe 18 months to two years.

'If the Red Option works and there are no more landslips, great. If there are further landslips though, we will then be pushing for work to start on another option to get a secure route.'

Of the £9-10million to be spent on the Red Option, £3.25million will come from the £4million of overall improvements Transport Scotland will make on the road in 2013/14.

Funding for the rest of the work has yet to be identified. A further £10million will be spent on improving other parts of the A83 - again with the funds yet to be sourced.

Man has flesh ripped off finger

Ring caught on fence as footballer retrieves ball

A YOUNG Oban man who had his finger ripped off in a horrific accident has told *The Oban Times* it has ruined his life.

15-foot drop
Andy Smith was playing football at Atlantis Leisure Centre last Monday evening when the ball went over the fence. Instead of walking to the gate the 20 year old decided to climb the fence.

He said: 'My ring got caught on the fence as I jumped over, it was a 15-foot drop on the other side. As I fell it just took my finger clean off.'

Andy, who said Atlantis staff were 'great' and did all they could, was then taken to Oban hospital where he was told he would get a helicopter to Glasgow.

But the helicopter never arrived. 'They said someone else needed the helicopter more than me, I was angry and upset,' said Andy.

He arrived at hospital in Glasgow just after 9pm but wasn't taken into surgery until 10.30am the following morning. 'I was left overnight with just a bone sticking out and paper towel around it,' he added.

The Soroba boy is convinced that his finger could have been reattached if he had been seen sooner, as it was immediately picked up and put into a bag of ice after the accident.

He said he wasn't given any reason why it took so long to get him into surgery and spent several days in hospital. 'I was up crying all night just in severe pain,' he said.

Andy has now had his finger bone grinded down and the skin stitched over forming a sort of 'large knuckle'. He will have to endure weekly trips to Glasgow for check ups and physiotherapy and may need a further operation in a year's time.

'To be honest it has kind of ruined my life,' said Andy. 'It will get better in a long, long time but it is a long process.'

'I want to thank everybody who has given me hope and lovely messages. The ambulance service were great as were Atlantis and the boys I was playing football with.'

He added: 'I don't understand why there are studs on the top of the fence but I shouldn't have climbed it in the first place.'

'I'll not be wearing a ring again, I'll get my wedding ring tattooed on if I'm ever married.'



Footballer Andy's finger was ripped 'clean off'

Mull abusive message victim speaks out

A WOMAN who received an abusive message which referred to her physical disability has spoken out as her tormentor appeared in Oban Sheriff Court.

Murray Stormonth, 50, of flat 15, the Old Bond Store, Main Street, Tobermory, admitted sending an obscene message to local councillor Mary-Jean Devon.

Stormonth, who pled guilty to making 'derogatory personal remarks' and using language of a 'menacing nature', will be sentenced on April 2.

But Mary-Jean Devon is just glad her ordeal is finally at an end. She said: 'I don't look at myself as having a disability, I just have a challenge every day but not everyone feels that way and his comments were really nasty. It is not nice and it is not acceptable.'

'I'm just really glad this is over. I think this is a result not just for me but for other people who may have suffered the same thing.'

Richard Hamer, a director at disability charity, Capability Scotland, added: 'We hope that this conviction will send out a clear message to perpetrators that hate crime against disabled people will not be tolerated. It is encouraging for disabled people to see this type of crime being taken seriously by the justice system.'

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Alleycats lead scratch division

TEN PIN BOWLING

AFTER Week 12 of The Lochaber Building Supplies 10 pin bowling leagues at the Nevis Centre Alleycats lead the scratch division with 56 points followed by Council in second with 44 points with Splitheds in third with 41 points.

The handicap division is much closer with Alleycats leading with 39 points whilst Council are one point behind with 38 points. Ardtoe/Nevis Radio lies in third place with 34 points.

The top individual game this week came from Frank Sweeney (Council) with a 187 scratch, 248 handicap.

The highest two-game scratch series of 312 was rolled by both Pam Weller (Alleycats) and Brian Stewart (Council). The top two-game handicap series of 428 came from John Weller (Alleycats).

Council swept the board for this weeks best team performance with a scratch game of 637, handicap game of 844, two-game scratch series of 1145 and two-game handicap team series of 1559.

Lochaber lose out to Inverness

SQUASH

LOCHABER Plumblin came up against Inverness team Jamie Tulloch Personal Training, the leaders in the Highland Squash Association Premier League at Fort William last Thursday.

In the first match Archie MacGillivray was beaten 3-0 by Ewan Heams, then Robert Douglas took on Sean Kelly, who took a two game lead. Robert narrowly won the next two but Sean was stronger in the final game and won 3-2.

The third match between Alan Love and Alan McKay swung back and forth with Love taking a 2-1 lead. MacKay levelled at 2-2 before Love had a decisive win in the fifth to take the match 3-2.

Top seeds Bruce Love and Ali McCorquodale had everything to play for in the final match. Bruce started strongly winning the first game but Ali responded to win a long second game 21-19 and took the third.

Bruce drew level but Ali finally won 3-2 to and the team score tally was 11-7 to Inverness. Overall, this was a good performance against the strongest team in the Premier League.

Nairn prove too strong for 16s

YOUTH RUGBY

LOCHABER under 16s played their first match in nearly five months on Saturday, with the rustiness contributing to a 29-7 loss away to Nairn Academy.

The home side ran in three tries in the first half to take a comfortable half time lead.

Lochaber weren't being overrun, and got more into their stride in the second half. Finlay Ireland broke three tackles to run in Lochaber's only try of the day with Calum Boyd converting against the wind.

Nairn scored a final try before the whistle.

Lochaber's next game will be at home against Plockton High School on Saturday March 23.



Martin Johnstone gets half a yard on Ryan Ferguson during Saturday's hard fought 0-0 draw. 20_110shiny04

Fort show big improvement against Wick

FORT William manager Danny Conlon is hoping the double boost of an impressive performance against Wick Academy last weekend and two new signings can lead to a good result against Forres Mechanics at Claggan Park on Saturday.

Fort travelled in trepidation to take on the league leaders, with many onlookers anticipating a cricket score.

But the Lochaber men put in a battling display to stay in contention right to the final whistle and created a number of chances of their own, although Wick, who have a 100 per cent home record this season, were below their best.

Conlon told The Oban Times: 'We were really pleased with the performance despite the defeat, considering it was top against bottom.

'As the game went on they

were getting a bit nervous because they couldn't put us away. It wasn't one-way traffic by any means - we had a few good chances in the first half.

'It was our best 90 minutes so far. Hopefully we can build on that, it's just whether we can do it consistently.'

Parried

Lewis Campbell nearly gave Fort the lead in the fifth minute, but saw his shot parried by the Wick keeper, and Andrew McLean had the away side's best chance in the second half but shot wide.

The only goal of the game came in the 24th minute with Gary Weir heading home for Wick.

New loan signing Kyle Robertson, who has joined from Clach, played in goal and Conlon said he was impressed with the youngster.

'He did fine,' Conlon said. 'But to be honest he didn't have an awful lot to do because the rest of the boys played so well.'

Fort are still awaiting international clearance for their other new signing, 21 year-old Polish striker Marcin Resiak.

After taking on Clachnacuddin on Tuesday night, Fort will be focussing on Forres. Conlon's side will be looking to improve on their last meeting, which saw them lose 5-0 in November.

FORT William under 17s continued their impressive form with a 4-1 win against Nairn County at Claggan Park on Sunday.

The home side got off to a flyer after two minutes when Aellen MacLellan volleyed home Ryan Clark's cross.

Lewis Morrison was fouled in the box, and picked himself up to

FOOTBALL

slot home the penalty to double Fort's lead after 10 minutes.

The referee adjudged Fort's Calum Shepard to have handled the ball in his own box, but keeper Ryan Boomer dived to keep out the resulting spot kick.

The goal of the game came early in the second half, when Fort midfielder due Barna Tot and Sean Leider passed their way through the Nairn defence for Leider to roll the ball home.

The pacy MacLellan was able to grab his second of the day with 20 minutes to play, and Nairn managed a late consolation.

A ROLLOVER jackpot of £600 is up for grabs in this week's Fort William FC lotto draw. Last week's numbers were 5, 7 and 11.

Lochaber lip lands players in trouble with strict referee



Referee Colin MacDonald books Calum MacDonald at half time as a distinctly unimpressed Lochaber manager Michael Delaney looks on 20_110lochaber01

REPORT BY STEPHEN NORRIS
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

PRE-SEASON warnings from the Camanachd Association that backchat to referees and foul language would not be tolerated went unheeded at Spean Bridge on Saturday as whistler Colin 'Coke' MacDonald booked no fewer than six players for giving him lip.

Saw yellow

Lovat's Lorne MacKay, Calum Cruden and Stewart MacDonald, together with Lochaber players Calum MacDonald, Martin Johnstone and Stuart Callison all saw yellow during a hard but fair match with scarcely a bad challenge of note.

The 0-0 draw may not have been one for the purists but it was compelling enough for all that - not least because the frequent interruptions to play for the blizzard of bookings had both sets of supporters in a ferment.

Even Lochaber coach Michael Delaney got involved in the disciplinary proceedings, running on to the pitch at half time to plead MacDonald's case. It was to no avail - the keeper's name also went into ref MacDonald's notebook.

Delaney had already made his players aware of the crackdown on dissent and unsurprisingly was unimpressed with collection of yellow cards - not least because Lochaber picked up only six cautions in the whole of last season.

He told the Oban Times: 'It's a hard lesson for them to learn, there's none of them criticising the referee's performance.'

'We have not got a big enough squad to keep picking up bookings. There was one bad challenge during the whole game and that was it.'

Few chances

The game itself saw few clear-cut chances but Lovat keeper MacDonald made two stunning second half saves, pulling off a point blank stop from Ben Delaney then minutes later somehow blocking Shaun Nicolson's low-struck penalty with his caman.

Lovat coach Allan MacRae told The Oban Times: 'Lochaber were fired up in front of their home crowd and it was nice to come away with a draw.'

Junior runners receive their medals

LOCHABER Athletic Club's penultimate winter league race took place on Sunday in Glen Nevis in perfect conditions.

And the club's junior runners were presented with medals after their race at the finish point at Café Beag.

A field of 36 runners took part in the seniors' event - a 4.5-mile course to the vitrified fort with Lochaber's promising young athlete Calum Fraser in the lead from start to finish - a fantastic run from an under-18.

Jon Gay was second, another great race considering only last week Jon set a new record for a winter for Ramsays Round (53 miles, 24 Munros all in under 24 hours). Manny Gorman of Westies finished third while in the ladies' race Diane Baum was first and in 12th overall.

ATHLETICS

Diane, who has had some great races since she joined Lochaber AC, was followed by Amanda Blackhall in second with Jog Scotland's Elaine Liddell third - another great performance from an ever-improving athlete.

Some other notable runs included young Joseph Tangney in fifth, and Jim Hamilton and Aileen Duncan also posted fine runs considering they had run 18 miles the previous day marathon training.

Thanks go to all the marshalls and all who helped. Next and final race in the winter league is the glen 10k on Sat 16th March. The presentation will take place in the Nevis Centre at 8pm that evening.



Lochaber AC junior runners with their medals after Sunday's presentation.

Weather

Thursday Light rain
Winds moderate, easterly
Temperatures 5C to 8°C

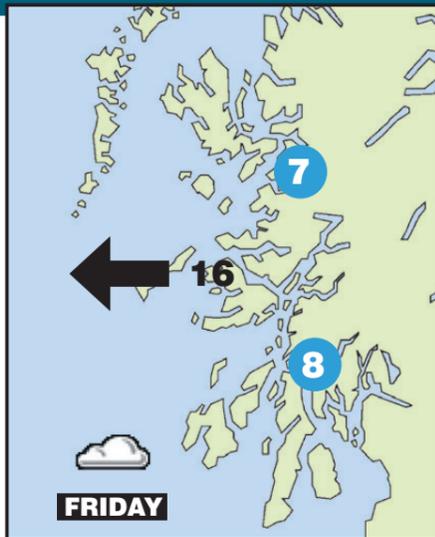
Friday Cloudy
Winds moderate, easterly
Temperatures 5°C to 8°C.

Weekend Cloudy

Outlook Winds moderate east south easterly
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate



Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, March 7, 2013** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur 02.01	3.1 07.51	1.5 14.57 3.0 20.36 1.4
Fri 03.15	3.3 09.16	1.3 15.57 3.2 21.43 1.1
Sat 04.06	3.6 10.17	1.0 16.38 3.5 22.35 0.8
Sun 04.47	3.9 11.03	0.8 17.09 3.7 23.19 0.6
Mon 05.24	4.1 11.43	0.7 17.40 3.9 *** **
Tues 00.00	0.5 05.58	4.2 12.21 0.6 18.11 3.9
Wed 00.39	0.5 06.32	4.2 12.57 0.6 18.42 4.0

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrisaig	-5.35	Portree	+0.55
Campbeltown	-5.30	Tobermory	+0.16
Crinan	-0.47	Dover	+5.30
Islay Port Ellen	2.00		
Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Mallaig	+0.25		

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