

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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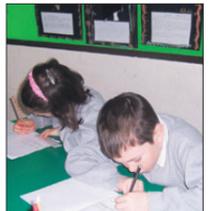


Stan's back from his tour of the world



Message in a bottle found after 76 years - to the very day

GAELIC matters



Also inside this week: More Bonnie Babies • Business news • Dunbeg housing cash plea • £15.5m roads cash

Man killed on Islay cable vessel

A MAN working as part of the team laying an electricity cable off Islay has died after being caught in the anchor chain of the ship he was aboard. The man, who is of Polish origin and in his 40s, was working aboard the Forth Guardians off Brodsdale Island in the Sound of Islay when the incident happened.

The ship owner, Fife-based Briggs Marine, has suspended its work to re-lay the cable while an investigation into the incident takes place.

The crew had finished for the day and the man was picking up a pre-laid mooring at around 7.30pm.

It is believed he was then hit by the anchor cable and thrown into the water.

The crew of the vessel managed to get him out of the water within 10 minutes and into a rigid inflatable boat. The Islay lifeboat was called out to assist.

The man was then taken by helicopter to Crosshouse Hospital near Kilmarnock but died from his injuries just after 9pm.

A spokesman for Briggs Marine said on Monday that the man had worked with the company for two years and his colleagues were extremely shocked by what had happened.

The company is working for Scottish and Southern Energy to carry out repairs to the cable, which brings mains electricity to Jura, Islay and Colonsay.

The cable was damaged at the end of September last year and a temporary repair was carried out at the end of 2010.

The full repair, involving three ships and 25 workers, only started this week and was due to break for Easter on March 28.

Heb science fest

THE second Hebridean Science Festival takes place this weekend, aiming to be even bigger and better than last year. The festival runs from today (Thursday) and finishes on Saturday. For more - www.hebrideansciencefestival.com

Pontoons in place for 2012

Organising body becomes community interest company

PONTOONS will be in Oban Bay by spring 2012.

Directors of the company behind the plan, Oban Bay Marine (OBM) say the project will be delivered on time and under original budgets. The 54-berth transit marina will open the west coast up to yachts, bringing a much needed income boost to the town, they claim.

Two things stand in the way of the development - a change in the original approved plans and a 'small shortfall' in cash.

John MacGregor chairman of Oban Bay Marine (OBM) said: 'The cost of the project has come down and the number of berths have increased.'

'We still have £800,000 on the table from Crown Estates. We have met with Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) several times. They will certainly come up with a massive amount of funding. There are other potential funding streams.'

'Two pontoon manufacturers are keen to provide a fixed price project. We have made plans for a piled transit marina system. This type of anchorage will reduce maintenance costs from £20,000 to £5,000 per year.'

'After permissions are granted, there will be a site investigation in the next few weeks to detect the seabed surface and viability.'

'We will then take tenders for a fully equipped 54-berth development with lighting, fuel berth, bollards and signage with a view to completion in spring 2012.'

'Our income is based on the pontoon use at a 50 per cent occupancy based on the traffic on a similar facility in Tobermory.'

'We have support from every area of the community including the chairman of the local area committee, Councillor Duncan MacIntyre and the Port Users Group.'

At the Annual General Meeting, held on Monday night, OBM became a community interest company - meaning it can issue shares. Director Mike Robertson explained: 'It is a bit like the operation at Oban Mart. People can lend the company unsecured money, or they can donate or buy a small amount of shares.'

Director Maitland Murray, said: 'On the same footprint as the original plan we have changed the seaward entrance from north to south to give greater protection to vessels from a north westerly wind. This south entrance is worth fighting for as it would make the project less vulnerable.'

'Pedestrian access will now be from the Esplanade (George Street) rather than the South Pier.'

OBM were turned down for Oban CHORD funding last year after the project was deemed unviable by Argyll and Bute Council.

Work on the port side has

"We have support from every area of the community"

chairman
Oban Bay Marine



The fishing boat Lady Evelyn may sail again and relieve local concern that she would rot away at her North Pier mooring 15. s11b0a1

Lady Evelyn may move at last

A FISHING boat that has lain precariously on its side for over two years at Oban's North Pier could be moved within a week.

The owner of the eight-metre long, Irish registered Lady Evelyn, Derek Grier, has been working to repair the hull of the decaying vessel for some time, struggling against complications presented by a combination of a bad back and low income.

While the vessel has been described as everything from 'a blight on Oban's harbour' to 'a black mark on the town', Derek is hoping his perseverance to return the vessel to its former glory will pay off.

'I have about seven to 10 metres of caulking (joint sealing) to re-do above the waterline before the vessel can be refloated.'

'After that, a temporary patch can be put on to facilitate a quick move to her new home.'

'The idea then is to strip her of everything that has corroded too badly to repair and to clean her thoroughly inside and out.'

One possible hitch is that Derek is yet to acquire the legs, which he said will have to be about 18ft long by 1ft thick, similar to a telegraph pole. He also requires a three-inch pipe for a salvage pump to allow the boat to be moved.

Once done, he hopes to be able to carry out the repairs without

attracting any negative attention.

As he suffers from a bad back, Derek is limited in the amount of work he can do at any one time. He is therefore hoping someone experienced in boat repairs can give him advice on the best way to progress his efforts.

He said: 'There is no money in it, but if things go the way I hope there will be plenty of motoring around the west coast and I have been promised a good welcome if she ever was to make it back to her home port of Dingle in southern Ireland.'

To assist Derek or for more information, you can email admin@rebuildalittlefish.co.uk.

progressed to the stage that the vessel can effectively be righted and put on 'legs' to allow a temporary patch to be made, allowing the boat to move to a new home at the Sound of Kerrera on the Gallanach side.

Once there, it will once again be put on legs and repairs won't be at the mercy of the tides, hopefully speeding its restoration.

Derek, who only took ownership of the once-proud vessel last October said: 'The next stage is to get the Lady Evelyn up onto her legs at the end of this week/beginning of next week after I finish the repairs to the port side.'

'I have about seven to 10 metres of caulking (joint sealing) to re-do above the waterline before the vessel can be refloated.'

'After that, a temporary patch can be put on to facilitate a quick move to her new home.'

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Search mounted for Oban burglar

THE SEARCH is on for a burglar who was disturbed by a couple in Oban's Ardconnell Road after he entered their home last Tuesday.

At around 1am a woman in the house was disturbed and saw a man walking through her hallway and into the kitchen. She shouted for her husband the man fled. The man is described as between five feet, nine inches and six feet in height and aged in his late 20s.

He was wearing a grey hooded top, dark body warmer and grey jogging bottoms.

Anyone saw anything suspicious should contact Oban Police Station on 01631 510500.

Argyll and Bute announce Royal Wedding holiday

ARGYLL and Bute Council have confirmed they are giving staff and pupils an extra day off for the Royal Wedding on April 29. The decision was made at an executive meeting of the authority.

Man arrested after Oban filling station late night mugging

POLICE have arrested a 26-year-old man following a robbery in a filling station on Soroba Road, Oban at around midnight on Monday.

The man is accused of striking a woman on the head and stealing her purse, before removing cash from it.

A85 to close overnight near Dalmally

THE A85 will be closed overnight at Orchy Bridge, near Dalmally, on March 22 to allow for repairs.

The closure will begin as a single lane convoy system from 6pm and at 10pm the full closure will be enforced until 6am the following day.

The works, to be carried out by Scotland Tarnserv, involve the repair of a section of the bridge deck, which is rapidly deteriorating as a consequence of the severe winter weather.

Local access will be maintained and emergency services will have unrestricted access.

University brings £26 million and 350 jobs to Argyll economy claims report

THE UNIVERSITY of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) contributed over £26million to the Argyll economy in the 2009/10 financial year, also supporting over 350 jobs.

A new economic impact assessment shows that the involvement of the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Dunbeg and Argyll College reaped significant benefits for the area.

Meanwhile, the Lochaber economy benefited to the tune of £9.3million, with the UHI supporting 66 jobs in the area.

In total, the UHI contributed £191million to the Scottish economy,

supporting 3,300 full time jobs.

The report, Economic Impact of the University of the Highlands and Islands and its academic partners, showed that for every £1 invested in UHI, the university put back nearly £4 into the economy.

Welcoming the report, UHI principal and vice-chancellor, James Fraser, said: 'It shows that investment in UHI from the public purse has a demonstrable benefit and, in these uncertain economic times, it is right to analyse that benefit and let people know the value UHI brings to their communities.'

'It reaffirms our belief that there

is a tangible economic difference to be made by UHI delivering higher education in partnership with our constituent colleges and research centres, many of whom who also deliver further education in their respective communities.'

However, Mr Fraser has warned that UHI will need a greater share of public funding if it is to achieve its objectives and is lobbying political parties to press its case in the run up to the Holyrood election in May.

He said: 'A new university awakens high levels of expectation in its community and UHI is no exception.'

'We have to generate the academic

and financial strength to grow our activities in order to satisfy the demand for education, training, learning and research.'

'We are in the ironic position of being able to accept more students from outside the UK, because we charge them full cost fees, but not able to grow the number of students from the UK and Europe, because of government funding constraints.'

'Scotland has created a new university; Scotland must ensure that it progresses to maturity by allocating exceptional funding in the early years.'

See also - Page 3

ITS BED MONTH!

Lots of bed deals on show now!

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11/12 Argyll Square, Oban
0845 230 3937

LORN DRAMA FESTIVAL

13 ONE-ACT PLAYS to be performed by Drama Groups from all over Argyll at the Corran Halls, Oban on 22-25 March 2011 at 7.30pm prompt

Admission £5.00 (£4.00 conc.) Season ticket £15.00 (£12.00 conc.)
Tickets available from the Corran Halls (telephone 01631 567333)

The Oban Times & West Highland Times

THE REGIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE WEST HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS AND ARGYLL



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Online campaign calls for return of sea plane service to Oban

A FACEBOOK campaign has started to bring Loch Lomond Sea Planes back to Oban after the company cut the route because of lack of interest.

Local ferryman Allan Strang, who works on the Kerrera route, has only just started the page, but has already attracted 27 fans.

On occasion, locals would use it to go and meet friends and family in Glasgow as it took just over half an hour from Oban to the Clyde. Even football fans were using the service.

around Glasgow, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs area too, which was more profitable to them than running flights to Oban.

For Oban and it would be great to see them return. To support the campaign, log in to your Facebook account and search for: 'Join to campaign for the sea plane service to Oban to start up again.'

Concern over format of crunch schools talks

CONCERN has been voiced over the format of pre-consultation meetings involving rural schools in Argyll and Bute which are threatened with closure.

A well-attended Connel Community Council was told the pre-consultation meeting involving the village school - Achaleven Primary - would take place on March 28.

But John Little, chairman of the school's parent council, said it was 'very difficult to know what's going on'.

He explained: 'The new process includes a pre-consultation stage to identify the community impact, look at the education benefit and look at the alternatives to closure of the school.'

'It is going to be a meeting by invitation only, and we have still to agree who can be invited. The council wants it to be more like a workshop.'

Difficult

'We have to be prepared by the 28th to make a case for the school - but it is very difficult at the moment to know what's going on.'

'I have had nothing official from the education department at the council. I am supposed to be organising a meeting with the help of the education department but have not been told what the agenda is or anything like that.'

Mr Little told the meeting neither of the possible receiving schools for pupils from Achaleven - Lochnell and Dunbeg - are part of the pre-consultation process.

'We want to make sure that every parent who wants to send their children to Achaleven is

at the meeting and part of the process.'

Achaleven currently has just eight pupils, down from 27 in the previous school year, but Mr Little said numbers could increase just as quickly as they had decreased.

'The pre-school community have really come out to support us. They want this local school.'

He said three pupils were due to leave at the end of this school year, with three due to start. But in the following two years there could be more than 20 children starting classes at Achaleven.

'It would be folly to kick the school while it is down when there is the opportunity to build it up again,' he said.

Rumours

The two main reasons for the low school roll at the moment were the current lack of a pre-school group, which had led parents to look to Dunbeg, and the fact that when rumours surrounding the future of the school had started to spread, parents had chosen to place their children elsewhere.

MSP Jamie McGrigor, who was present at the community council meeting, said the loss of the school would have a big impact on the village.

'If we have to look at saving money, there must be other ways of doing so rather than closing schools. I think the disparate communities of Argyll are part of its strength and the damage that can be done by not having a school is very big.'

He said he would speak in support of rural schools to the education minister.

Argyll and Bute gets healthy slice of cash

PEOPLE in Argyll and Bute should be fitter, leaner and healthier after receiving 29 per cent of NHS Highland's health and wellbeing funding.

From 2008 - 2011 the Scottish government gave a total of £54million for projects to improve the health of its citizens.

An Argyll and Bute spokesperson said: 'As an illustration, NHS Highland received £1.63m of the money earmarked for maternal and infant nutrition and child healthy weight. This was

then proportionately distributed around the four CHPs in NHS Highland's area. Argyll and Bute received about 29 per cent of it.'

'The Counterweight programme for adults is also being rolled out in Argyll and Bute. And local residents have also benefited from extra input from Paths For All in the form of development officer time spent in the area and provision of training and promotional resources to support volunteer-led walk schemes throughout the area.'

Kirk's a treat for tourists

VISITSCOTLAND is to promote St Conan's Kirk as a tourist attraction.

The tourism body cannot officially give the cash-strapped kirk visitor attraction status because it is still used as a church.

However, the Oban office has proposed to include the kirk on its website and an application form has been sent to trustee Davy MacLeod. The trustees have also priced new signs for the kirk and Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council has set aside £100 for this.

The Oban Times highlighted the plight of the picturesque building last year when it was discovered it required an estimated £1m of repairs.

Benbecula film festival

BENBECULA will this week host a new three-day film festival screening environmentally-themed international documentary, fictional film and video.

The main themes of the festival are climate change and sustainability, which are covered in three strands - what is there currently, how it could be lost forever and how the situation could be changed.

Organised by local groups Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Arts Centre and Sustainable Uist, the festival aims to increase appreciation of landscape and ecology and enhance understanding of the global and local environmental issues through screenings, related talks and events, plus ancillary screenings at primary and secondary schools throughout the Uists.

Gaelic group to close

GAELIC teaching organisation TAIC is to close this month after its core funding was pulled.

Last year the national Gaelic development agency Bòrd na Gàidhlig ruled no further core funding would be available after contracts expire this month.

The group has closed an office

in Glasgow and its Inverness centre, with seven staff, is due to close on March 31. The voluntary group, formerly CNSA, formed in 1982 and earned an international reputation for delivering pre-school and adult learning services to families using Gaelic at home.

Fairtrade Fortnight ends on a high

FAIRTRADE Fortnight ended its campaign on a high with support from Westminster and beyond.

Events organised by a local organising committee raised awareness to the public of the many fair trade products available in Oban and Lorn such as clothing, basic ingredients, Easter Eggs and much more.

Alan Reid MP, prospective parliamentary candidate Councillor Alison Hay and Councillor Elaine Robertson joined local Fairtrade campaigners in Oban's Tesco store to promote the Fairtrade movement.

Mr Reid said: 'I am delighted to meet Oban Fairtrade campaigners and to see that Oban is at the forefront of the Fairtrade movement.'



Fairtrade campaigners in Tesco supermarket in Oban.



Jean McLeod and Kim Malcolm on the old Duror bridge which they would like to see restored as a local beauty spot. 15_111durorbridge01

Ambitious bid to restore old Duror bridge

AN ambitious plan to restore an ancient bridge to its former glory is being drawn up in Duror.

The idea to repair the old bridge was submitted to Duror and Kentallan Community Council after members asked how they could best spend some money they had available for improvements around the villages.

Community council member Jean McLeod, who raised the idea to her colleagues, said it was a big project and advice should be sought on how to proceed.

She said two trees would need to be removed and further details sought on the state of the stonework and the repairs needed.

Fellow member, Kim Malcolm, explained the main road to Oban used to run over the bridge until work started on the new highway at the start of the Second World War and completed after hostilities had ceased.

'Its only claim to fame was that

REPORT by STUART LAUNDY slaundry@obantimes.co.uk

an Oxford trainer aircraft on a low loader got stuck on the bridge during the war!

'It is quite a good looking and picturesque bridge,' he added.

"I would like the village to know we are doing our best to rescue the bridge."

Jean McLeod, Duror and Kentallan community councillor,

Over the years, the bridge has been left to fall into disrepair, with part of its stonework simply falling off and into the river below, or its banks.

'We want to repair it because it is a feature,' said Jean.

'It is a very attractive bridge and the idea of rescuing it would be to rescue part of the history of this part of the world. There is quite a lot of interest in the village and quite a lot of people have come to us, including parents who have walked their children across the bridge.'

'But it would be a long drawn out plan. Tree surgery would be expensive as would masonry.'

'I would like the village to know we are doing our best to rescue the bridge and if we can't, then at least we have tried.'

It is thought the old Duror bridge has been in place for some 800 years, possibly built on the site of a previous wooden structure.

Volunteer transport scheme in doubt

THE FUTURE of a 'lifeline' volunteer driving scheme has been put in doubt, despite a promise of financial assistance from the community.

North Argyll Voluntary Car Scheme (NAVCS) provides transport for people living in rural areas who have no vehicle of their own and operates with the help of volunteer drivers.

Although passengers pay a fee of 25 pence per mile, the scheme relies on funding from Argyll and Bute Council, which this year is to be cut by 70 per cent.

NAVCS member Kate Craig from Lochave told Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council

that the scheme was particularly important to their area.

At the last community council meeting she said: 'If we cannot get funding from somewhere there will be serious question marks over the scheme.'

'It operates in different parts of Argyll but we are the furthest from Oban and if it was lost it would be disastrous for people here. People in the area use it to go shopping and for surgery visits but people living in Bridge of Orchy also rely on it for trips to hospital.'

The scheme costs roughly £30,000 a year to run and last year's council subsidy was £15,000.

Kate indicated the charity makes around 1,500 passenger trips from the Glenorchy area every year. The community council agreed to donate £250 to help with the running of the scheme. Councillors Donald MacDonaid and Elaine Robertson attended the community council meeting and said they regarded NAVCS as a priority service.

Councillor Robertson added: 'I would think the service would be viewed sympathetically because it provides a crucial service for outlying areas.'

Neither of us can say what will happen but we can put up the best argument we can in favour of it.'

Recycled rubbish collections resume in North Connel

RESIDENTS in and around North Connel with recycling bins stuffed with paper will be relieved to hear the collection vehicle is working again.

Collections had to be cancelled twice last month because of a mechanical failure, leaving locals with no option but to put additional paper in their general waste bins or visit the recycling centre.

No other lorries were available as each vehicle is fully tasked.

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesperson said: 'The vehicle has now been repaired and as well as carrying out normal routes, we are working to catch up with areas that have been missed.'

Mull Lines

A BUSINESSMAN wants to buy the disused toilets in Tobermory and turn them into a tourist office or an ice-cream parlour, Mull Community Council heard.

Argyll and Bute Council members told the meeting it does not have a statutory responsibility to provide toilets and therefore the building would be sold off.

When asked how much they would cost, the councillors told community councillors they had a duty to get best value.

Councillor Roddy McCuisk said: 'If they are being sold at the market value we have to go to the Scottish government.'

The toilets would be sold at a later date. If there was going to be a change of use then the conveniences would need to go before a planning hearing.

The lack of loos was a blow to Mull Music Festival as it was hoped they could be opened for the large number of people coming to the town.

Councillor Mary-Jean Devon said: 'We will now need to look at Portaloos for the festival.'

MULL Community Council heard a housing scheme in Tobermory has been reduced in scale because of cash flow problems.

Councillor Mary-Jean Devon told the committee that there were to be '24 houses at Shillinghill but now they are only building four houses and a block of flats - until the cash flow goes back up.'

At present the Scottish government has said the money for the projects is in a budget but may not be released for up to five years. Argyll and Bute Council later agreed a bridging loan for the project.

ISLANDERS are being asked to take complaints to all four councillors in the ward to make sure they are always on the area committee agenda.

Various topics on Argyll and Bute Council's area committee tracker have been there for some time, but Councillor Donald 'Skye' MacIntosh said they will eventually be resolved.

At Mull's Community Council a bus shelter in Bunnassan without a roof was added to the list, as was a car on the pier in the village.

Councillor MacIntosh said he could see from the tracker that the car had been removed but the bus shelter had still not been sorted. He said he would raise the matter again.

MULL Community Council has been told that the water supply for Lochdon will be part of Scottish Water's strategic plan.

Residents were under the impression they would be left behind when a new scheme to upgrade the Mull supply did not include them.

However, Scottish Water has now written to residents telling them they were included in the scheme after all.

CHILDREN from Dervaig made a trek in Arctic conditions to raise money for Comic Relief.

Olivia Nisbet, aged 11, a pupil at Dervaig Primary School, enlisted her friends - one as young as four - to walk from Dervaig to Tobermory.

The 11 hardy youngsters, with a little help from parents, braved a gale force blizzard and a temperature of only one degree to complete the walk.

However, they raised £500 for the charity. Refreshments were provided for the youngsters at the MacDonald Arms Hotel, Tobermory, and the Bellachroy Hotel, Dervaig.



The incredible 11 - Olivia Nisbet, Dean Ridley, Katie Hamilton, Zac Finch, Fergus Richards, Ryan Hamilton, Liam Reid, Justin Geall, Sam Scarlet, Abby McKenzie and Lonneke Hutton who made the 10 mile trek for Comic Relief in Arctic conditions.

MULL band Vitamin T has a tonic for the end of winter - a new album.

The band, which has been together for 10 years in various guises, has released its third recording, Run For It, with an official launch party in Arts and Music Venue An Tobar, tomorrow (Friday) at 8pm.

Playing all the tracks live John Weir, Steve Cordingley, Colin Bissett and Richard Gawthrop will be rocking the town with tracks such as Run with It, In My Dreams, Forget About Me, Dance the Night Away and Are You Scared?

The band says its music influences cover a wide spectrum through The Beatles, The Who through to the Delta Blues and classical music.

Training could boost care for the vulnerable

CHILD Protection training running in Oban could help voluntary organisations look after all vulnerable people in Argyll.

The training on March 21 will highlight good working practice and meet the requirements for training under the new Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) legislation that has replaced Disclosure Scotland.

Eleanor MacKinnon, training manager at Argyll Voluntary Action, said: 'All community groups need to be aware of child protection issues.'

'Even if your group is not working with children directly, there may come a time when a child decides they need a trustworthy and respected adult to confide in and they may turn to a member of your staff or a volunteer.'

'Your group therefore has a duty to ensure volunteers are equipped with the necessary information and knowledge to be able to offer

that child guidance and support. By working with the Child Protection training officer, the Third Sector partnership is able to offer this informal workshop for committee members. There will be nothing scary, just an opportunity to raise awareness within our community groups on both child protection whilst at the same time Argyll Voluntary Action will update on the new Protection of Vulnerable Group (Scotland) Act.'

Under the PVG Act any organisation which works with children or vulnerable adults, whether as clients, members, volunteers or staff, and employers must be in receipt of an appropriate and valid scheme record for an individual before they take up their position. This applies to paid and unpaid staff.

To book a place contact 01631 564839 or email office.ava@btconnect.com.

Defendant ordered to curb bad temper

A MAN has been ordered to complete a community pay back order after appearing at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

Mark Edgar was told he would have to complete anger management classes and have his behaviour monitored for 18 months

after pleading guilty to a breach of the peace. The 47-year-old, of 79 Batston Street, Govanhill, Glasgow, admitted behaving in a threatening or abusive manner, causing fear and alarm, at an address in Scalpay Terrace, Oban, on February 12.

Argyll and Bute teachers to be balloted on strike action

TEACHERS throughout Argyll and Bute are to be balloted on strike action over changes to their terms and conditions of employment.

Changes

Changes being introduced throughout Scotland would see a reduction in non-contact time,

sick pay and guaranteed pay for promoted posts.

Teachers Union, Education Institute for Scotland (EIS), have said they reject any change to the terms and conditions of teachers – and are encouraging teachers to take action.

The EIS said negotiations with

the Scottish government and Argyll and Bute Council through local authority body Convention on Scottish Local Authority (CoSLA) had 'come to an end.'

Pay freeze

The changes to teachers terms include a two-year pay freeze but it was other proposals which

caused the talks to break down. The union objected to a cut in sick pay and lower pay for those who stayed on promoted salaries when their posts were abolished.

The EIS will ballot its members on the proposals during March. CoSLA said: 'All of our dis-

cussions with the trade unions to date have been designed to protect services for young people but also teacher posts as far as possible in the current financial climate.

'The cumulative effect of these cuts will be to demoralise the teaching profession, make teach-

ing an unattractive option for highly qualified graduates, and damage the operation of schools and the quality of education that children receive.

'No firm guarantees on teaching jobs, no meaningful commitment to reduce teacher unemployment, no improved

prospects for the many recently-qualified teachers struggling to find even temporary employment in schools.

'These proposals, if adopted, would lead to greater casualisation of the teaching profession with serious and damaging consequences for pupils.'

Coll awaits planning clarification

THE ISLE of Coll has heard that construction won't start on its new hall, An Cridhe, until the position with planning permission is clarified.

High tenders meant that a number of alterations had to be made to the building's plans for it to come in on its £2.5million budget, after which a contract was agreed with Mull Builders, TSL.

However, many of the changes are material, including a redesign of the bunkhouse, the use of cheaper materials for roofing and cladding, and a slight relocation of the site itself.

That could mean a whole new planning application has to be submitted to Argyll and Bute Council, a concern that was expressed by some locals at a public meeting about the project on the island last week.

However, the chief executive of the An Cridhe project, John Fraser, said he hopes that won't have to happen.

He said: 'We are still in negotiations with the council, so the simple answer at this stage is I don't know.'

'There have been some changes, the bunkhouse has been squeezed a bit and we've done some jiggling to make it cheaper to build.'

'The hall has moved a bit closer to the road; maybe ten yards.'

'The planning is so vague anyway, so if we'd done it and not said, nobody would have noticed.'

Mr Fraser said that, even if a reapplication was required, it would not impinge on any of the grant funding allocated to the project.

Meanwhile, Mr Fraser has resigned as chairman of Development Coll, but maintains his position as chief executive of the An Cridhe project.

He said: 'I thought there was a conflict of interests, as Development Coll is responsible for the whole development programme on Coll and I would effectively be providing progress reports to myself.'

Bute parents meet in bid to save primary school

NORTH Bute Parents' Council will hold a meeting at North Bute Primary School tonight (Thursday) to put forward their case to save it from the renewed threat of closure.

At the meeting, there will be an opportunity for current and prospective elected candidates to present their position regarding educational provision, followed by a question and answer session.

The meeting will be held at Port Bannatyne Village Hall from 7pm.

Glencoe roadworks

TRANSERV Scotland is to complete work on the Ba Bridge, between Bridge of Orchy and Kings House at Rannoch Moor on the A82, resulting in a single lane closure on the route.

The work, between March 21 and April 8, will involve site clearance, verge reinstatement, erection of outer fencing and the completion of the parapets.

The single lane closure will be in place between 8am and 5.30pm.

NEWSDESK
01631 568000



Seaman Kenny Gunn, from Harris, left the message from the MV Loch Dunvegan 76 years ago

Crewwan Andy Reid with the lemonade bottle containing two messages dredged from the water 76 years to the day they were tossed into the Sound of Mull.

Message in a bottle found after 76 years - to the very day

A MESSAGE in a bottle was dredged from the sea 76 years to the day it was thrown into the Sound of Mull from a Caledonian MacBrayne vessel.

Emotional

The daughter of the seaman, who put his name and address inside the bottle, says a number of things have reminded her of her father recently – and finding this bottle is 'quite emotional.'

The bottle was dredged from the sea by west coast scallop boat the *Dawn Maid*, which sails out of Oban. A note inside gave the date of March 10, 1935 and the bottle was pulled out from the depths on March 10, 2011.

During a regular dredging trip

fisherman Andy Reid spotted an unusual glass bottle amongst the catch.

When he opened up the bottle with skipper Robert Scott, both from Oban, they found not one but two messages inside.

Allan 'Winker' MacLean, from Isle of Mull Scallops, who operates the *Dawn Maid* said: 'It is a bit spooky that the message should be found on the same day - 76 years apart.'

'The messages were from two men, a Mr K Gunn of the *MV Loch Dunvegan* and William John MacKinnon of the *SS Diamond*. I think a relative of Mr MacKinnon still lives in Tobermory.'

In Oban, the daughter of message writer Kenny Gunn, Mrs Grace Scott, told *The Oban Times*: 'It is quite emotional that this message from my father has been found.'

'He would have been 97 this year.'

'My father was a seaman with MacBrayne's and he worked aboard the *Loch Dunvegan*.

'I imagine that the other man would have been making his way home aboard ship when this was dropped into the sea. My father belonged to Tarbert, Harris and he had a lovely dry humour.'

'This was just the kind of thing that he got up to.'

'It is lovely to hear from him.'

Dunstaffnage science park project goes out to tender

PLANS for the £7.5m science park at Dunstaffnage have taken a step closer this week after Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) put the contract works out to tender.

First phase

In August 2010 the HIE Board approved the investment to create the first phase of the science park on a site next to the existing Scottish Association for Marine

Science (SAMS) laboratories at Dunstaffnage.

The project aims to build on SAMS' world-class reputation for research and act as a launch pad for new businesses in Scotland's growing life sciences sector.

A contractor is expected to be appointed in around five months. Construction of phase one, creating a new laboratory and office

building capable of hosting three marine science businesses and supporting up to 119 jobs, could start as early as September this year.

HIE will contribute £4.5m of its own grant-in-aid budget from the Scottish Government, and has attracted the remaining £3m towards this first phase from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Community council is gunning for speeding motorists

COMMUNITY councillors in Connell are to carry out their own survey of traffic speeds through the village after questioning figures produced by the police.

They have even gone as far as buying their own speed gun which will be used to see just how fast motorists are travelling.

Police say their figures show the average speed through the village – on the main A85 route – is just 31mph.

Community council secretary, Les Stewart, told last Friday's meeting: 'We have never been satisfied about the average speed assessment by the police. We would like to check that.'

Mr Stewart explained that because the police survey found speeds were acceptable, there was little that could be done to counter what villagers see as a major problem.

'This is not vigilante-ism – we

want to test what is happening. Does a truck go 31mph or does it go quicker?'

The speed gun had been bought on the Amazon website and an initial try-out showed it was 'very accurate', said Mr Stewart. And he assured the meeting: 'We are not going to be booking anyone or wearing yellow jackets – we are going to be scientific about it.'

He asked for volunteers to

help collect speed data and said findings would be reported back to the community council in due course.

Argyll and Bute councillor Elaine Robertson said mention had been made at a Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council meeting she had attended that HGVs were speeding through Connell late at night. And she urged Connell members: 'Let the police know of your concerns.'

Allegation of late night street assault

A MAN required four stitches to a cut on his head after an assault in Airds Place, Oban, in the early hours of Tuesday morning.

The 24-year-old was with friends when he was allegedly assaulted by a 26-year-old Oban man.

It is alleged the victim was headbutted, causing him to fall backwards. He was treated for his injuries at Lorn and Islands Hospital.

Tiree school allegations to be investigated

ARGYLL and Bute Council is to investigate a number of serious allegations made about the running of Tiree High School.

The claims were sent to *The Oban Times* by an anonymous 'concerned parents' group' last week, but the Tiree Parent Teacher Association has refuted the allegations, saying they are '100 per cent behind the school.'

We cannot print the allegations for legal reasons, but a copy of the letter has been passed to Argyll and Bute Council.

A spokesperson for the local authority said: 'These allegations have only just been brought to our attention and we will investigate them thoroughly before taking any further action.'

The chair of the PTA, Kate MacCallum, has criticised the author of the letter, saying any concerns should be raised through the proper channels.

She said: 'I think it's really sad that someone has done that rather than come to the PTA in the first place.'

'Yes, things happen in the school, quite like things happen in any other school. Because it's a small island school, these things get focused on much more.'

AGM

Mrs MacCallum said that the PTA will hold its Annual General Meeting this Friday, giving parents yet another opportunity to attend and express concerns, if they have any.

The meeting will be held at 7pm in the school. All parents are welcome to attend.

Mrs MacCallum added that the PTA's only real concern is that, because of budget cuts, some subjects have had to be dropped from the school curriculum.

For that reason, the PTA, together with Argyll College, have devised a way to bring new modules to the school, utilising the help of locals employed in relevant trades, such as hospitality, to pass on their knowledge.

Mrs MacCallum said: 'We've asked for people from the community with the appropriate skills to work with the kids to help fill the gap.'

'I think it's a really good idea and we'd rather do this than have nothing at all to replace classes such as tech and home economics.'

Police warning as fuel thefts increase throughout Lorn

OWNERS of heating oil tanks and red diesel stores are being urged to be extra vigilant over security after a spate of oil thefts across Lorn in the past few weeks.

Oban Police say they have noticed an increase in the number of thefts over this period of time, particularly in the Appin, Taynuilt and Dalmlally areas.

Inspector Julie McLeish said: 'This is happening all over Argyll but we have noticed a sharp rise in the number of incidents in our area.'

'We will be putting on extra patrols throughout the district but I would urge people to be extra vigilant and any extra security, such as padlocks, would be beneficial.'

Council Tax discount claims may miss deadline

SINGLE occupants of properties in Argyll and Bute must get their Council Tax application in to have any discounts due to them by April, otherwise they may face a huge increase in their bill for 2011/12.

Douglas Hendry, director of customer services, told a meeting of the executive committee that to date there was only a 50 per cent return in applications, which may have harsh consequences for households.

£4 million fish farm modernisation underway

BARCALDINE-based company, Fusion Marine, has started the latest phase in a £4million modernisation of Scottish Sea Farms facilities across Scotland.

Working in partnership, the latest tranche of work has already commenced, with Fusion Marine refurbishing 24 salmon pens in Shetland.

Scottish Sea Farms have also earmarked an additional £400,000 investment for other projects, including 16 new pens for Kishorn and an upgrade programme at Loch Nevis.

Since the programme began in 2007, over 200 pens have been refurbished or renewed by Fusion Marine.

Coastguard consultation gains six week extension

A CONSULTATION on the future of coastguard provision has been extended by six weeks.

UK shipping minister, Mike Penning, made the announcement last week, shortly after a debate on the subject was postponed.

Western Isles MP, Angus MacNeil, said: 'I am pleased that the Minister has listened and extended the consultation period over the future of these lifeline services.'

'We must now use this extra time to complete the case and persuade the UK government to abandon these crazy cuts that will put lives at risk.'

Taynuilt man caught with drugs

A TAYNUILT man has been reported to the procurator fiscal after being found to be in possession of a quantity of diazepam last Monday night, following a police stop-search in Oban.

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Oban link to Diana memorial award

A SCHOOL pupil whose family ties are in Oban has been awarded the Diana Memorial Award for her volunteer work. Heather Macmillan, who is a sixth year pupil at Glenrothes High School, is the daughter of Oban's Kenneth and Carol Macmillan. Her grandparents, John and Sheila Findlay and David and Irene Macmillan, still live in the town. Heather helps with her local Scouts troop and assists younger pupils at the school where she is head girl. She plans to attend Edinburgh University to study medicine and hopes to become a paediatrician.

Mull drink-driver banned and fined

MULL man, Donald MacFarlane Halbert, has been banned from driving for a year after admitting driving whilst over the alcohol limit.

Oban Sheriff Court heard that Halbert, 18, of Wood Cottage Croft, Tobermory, was stopped by police in the early hours of February 27 this year after he was noted driving erratically on the A848, Tobermory to Salen road.

Council wants your comments on paths

RESIDENTS of Argyll and Bute have until April 4 to register comments on the council's Finalised Core Paths Plan.

To date, the council has only received 50 comments on the plan, compared to 332 at the consultative draft stage.

The plan is being established to prioritise the management and upkeep of the county's pathways and to protect walking routes in the case of planning considerations.

Oban man caught with Valium tablets

AN OBAN man was caught with 13 valium tablets days after he told Oban Sheriff Court that he was seeking help for his addiction.

Daniel Kelly, 20, whose address was given in court as the Solas homeless unit in the town, was stopped by officers on Albany Street on Monday, March 7 after he was spotted at a suspected drug dealer's flat.

Days beforehand, Kelly had his sentence deferred on another matter at the court on the basis he attend a local addiction clinic. Sheriff Paul Reid fined Kelly £400.

Student banned after tailgating

A STUDENT who tailgated an off duty police officer before dangerously overtaking between Taynuilt and Oban has been banned from driving for a year.

Cameron McGee, 22, of Flat 3-2, 94 Shuna Street, Glasgow, who was in the area he grew up in to visit family and friends, was also fined £300.

Ardfern drink-driver three times limit when he collided with police car

Second motorist fined and banned after being found asleep at the wheel by the roadside

A NIGHT drinking in an Ardfern pub has cost two men their driving licences after leaving in their cars - with one colliding with a police vehicle.

Three times limit
Appearing separately at Oban Sheriff Court on Tuesday, both

Alan Grierson, 47, of 24 Elm-bank Road, Port Glasgow and James Hendry, 45, Sana, Craobh Haven, were told that they would have to wait at least a year before re-sitting their driving test after admitting driving while about three times the legal alcohol

limit on November 14 last year. Grierson also admitted colliding with a police vehicle during his drunken drive from the pub towards Craobh Haven. First to appear in the dock was Hendry, a self employed joiner. The court heard that police

officers were in Arfern on other business.

At about 2am, they came across a vehicle parked just off the road. Hendry was asleep inside the car and it was established he was the driver.

A breath test showed Hendry to have 99mics of alcohol in his blood - the limit is 35. In addition to being banned from driving, Hendry was fined £300.

In the early hours of the same morning, Alan Grierson had offered to give two people a lift back to Lunga Estate, where he

is employed as a gardener but en route he clipped the passing marked police car, damaging it.

Police found Grierson had 102mics of alcohol in his breath. In addition to a driving ban, Sheriff Paul Reid fined Grierson a total of £600.

Dunbeg housing could use 'rainy day' cash

Reserve housing fund could help £1m shortfall

AN OBAN and Lorn councillor has urged colleagues to raid a reserve housing fund to help make up a £1m shortfall in the proposed housing development at Dunbeg.

Councillor Roddy McCuish said the council should donate the estimated £1m needed to begin the first phase of the housing project, which would see 50 houses built.

The funding problem was revealed at a meeting of the area's community planning group last Wednesday by Lesley McInnes, chief executive of West Highland Housing Association, one of three partners behind the project.

Following Ms McInnes' presentation, Councillor McCuish said: 'I was born in Dunbeg and I have special feelings for the place.'

'Funding is clearly a problem and I think the council can help. We have £8m in the Strategic Housing Development Fund and I don't see why we can't use that. That's what it is for.'

The Strategic Housing Development Fund has been generated from the tax on second homes.

Councillor McCuish added: 'We keep this fund for a rainy day. Well, the rainy day is here.'

When asked by group chairman Duncan MacIntyre whether he would give, or lend the money, Councillor McCuish said: 'I would give it, to move things forward.'

Councillor MacIntyre agreed extra housing for the area was essential in anticipation of continuing development at Scottish

"We keep this fund for a rainy day. Well, the rainy day is here."

Councillor Roddy McCuish

Association for Marine Science (SAMS) and following the award of university status to the University of the Highlands and Islands.

He said: 'According to SAMS we can expect around 400 new jobs over the next eight to 10 years, which means more people coming to this part of Argyll. They will all be looking for housing.'

Ms McInnes had indicated there would be an average of four applicants for every house the association had to offer.

During her presentation Ms McInnes expressed frustration that the partnership, which also includes HIE and SAMS, had struggled with funding, despite having not laid a single brick on the development site.

The development at Dunbeg has the potential for 800 houses and following the completion of phase one (50 houses) the next phase is to build 100 houses.



Kirsty, left, and Jenna MacInnes will be dancing in the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. 08_110danc01

Dancers selected for famous Edinburgh Tattoo

TWO HIGHLAND dancing sisters from Oban have been selected from hundreds of hopefuls to dance at Edinburgh's famous Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in August.

Jenna and Kirsty MacInnes, who attend the Eilidh MacInnes School of Dance, are among the 40 dancers from Scotland who will perform at the showpiece

event. Organisers this year put a maximum age limit of 21 on dancers but 14-year-old Jenna and her 12-year-old sister are two of the youngest dancers chosen.

The girls auditioned at the Redford Barracks in Edinburgh on February 27 and were told the good news that night.

'I am so excited about dancing at the Tattoo,' said Kirsty, who

was selected despite being two years younger than the specified minimum age.

'I was the youngest there, so I didn't expect to be chosen. My mum was so pleased for us she was crying!'

Jenna added: 'We are going to dance in 24 shows. We are going to go to rehearsals in Edinburgh once a month at the moment but

we will be going down more often as it gets nearer to the event. 'I have spoken to some girls who have taken part in it before and they said all you see are the flashing lights from the cameras.'

Both girls dance in the premier class in competition and have won prizes at Cowal Games and the Argyllshire Gathering.

Argyll's last curling rink to close

THE FUTURE of curling in Argyll is under threat as Drimsynie Ice Rink, the last curling rink in the region, closes at the end of the month.

The Campbell family, of Lochgoilhead, which owns and operates the ice rink told curlers it would close at the end of the season, as a drop in players meant the rink and the Argyll Curling League were no longer financially viable.

In a letter circulated to curlers on Monday, the Campbell family said: 'This has not been an easy decision to make. For us as a company to commit the finances to putting in a new ice plant we would have to see that curling as a sport has the potential to grow. Our income

from curling over the last few years has shown a downward trend and that does not look like changing.'

Home to the Argyll Province Club, the closure of the Drimsynie rink spells the end of the Argyll league and mid-week curling matches on Monday and Wednesday evenings.

The secretary of the Argyll Province Club, the umbrella organisation that incorporates 13 curling clubs across the county, Jim Brown said he was 'saddened' by the news. But he added: 'We knew it was coming as support for curling as a sport has waned in recent years.'

Jim said the Argyll curlers could still compete at other

rink but it would be less frequently because of the distance to be travelled.

'The future of the Argyll Province Club will be decided at our AGM, which will be held on March 26,' he said.

Secretary of Oban Curling Club, Graeme Innes, said Oban curlers too would decide on the future of its club at the end of the season.

'We need to decide whether or not we will continue as a club and if we can compete in another curling league,' he said. 'Hopefully we can carry on as a club but it will be in a different capacity. The closure of the Drimsynie Curling Rink is a real blow to the Argyll curling community,' he added.

Islay water works project completed

A £4.6m project to upgrade the Port Charlotte Water Treatment Works on Islay has been completed, alleviating building constraints on the island.

The project at Port Charlotte, which was carried out by Biwater Leslie Joint Venture (BLJV) for Scottish Water Solutions, involved the installation of new secondary filters and wash water recovery tanks.

Jane McKenzie, Scottish Water's regional community manager, said: 'There were some temporary disruptions to the water supply on a few occasions during the project but we made every effort to minimise these.'

The plant was built in the 1980s and last upgraded about 11 years ago.

Councillors challenged to take an advanced driving test

THE FOUNDER of a national safe driving scheme has challenged councillors on Oban, Lorn and the Isles to take part in the scheme in a bid to promote road safety.

Pass Plus is additional driver training for those who have already passed their test and was the brainchild of retired accountant Cecil Ritchie, who lived in Clachan Seil when he was involved in a road crash at Dunach Hill, near Kilmore, in which his wife was badly injured.

Cecil set about raising awareness of driver training to the extent that all local authorities in Scotland are aware of Pass Plus and similar schemes. One such scheme is Drivecheck, rolled out by the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM).

At a meeting of Oban, Lorn and the Isles Local Area Community Planning Group (LACPG) last Wednesday, Mr Ritchie challenged councillors to take the IAM test.

Councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'I would be happy to take up your challenge because Argyll and Bute councillors cover more road miles than anyone else.'

Census forms come through rural letter boxes

ABOUT 140,000 postal questionnaires for Scotland's biggest population survey, the 2011 Census, will arrive at addresses in Argyll and Bute from this week.

The census takes place on March 27 and while those in built up areas will receive their census forms first hand from census takers - or enumerators - those at remote addresses will receive their forms by post as it is more cost efficient.

Census regional manager Andrew Law said: 'The census is a way for people to tell the government and businesses about the services they use and need, now and in the future.'

'It's vital rural communities are included because the census results are used to target billions of pounds of public money on services, including health, housing and transport. Personal information is kept confidential for 100 years.'

'There are 13 questions about the household and up to 35 questions for each person. 'Most of the census questions are multiple choice and can be answered by simply ticking a box.'

For further information on Scotland's Census visit www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk

Missing kayak spotted being loaded in car

A KAYAK reported missing in last week's *Oban Times* was spotted by an eagle eyed reader being put into the back of a dark coloured estate car.

Staff at adventure and education company Stramash have now reported the matter to the police who are making enquiries.

Anyone with more information on the blue and white Inazone 243 river kayak lost on Saturday March 5 should contact the police on 01631 510500 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800555111.

Youth given final warning

AN OBAN teenager responsible for two assaults, a breach of the peace and a bail violation within the last six months has narrowly escaped jail.

Gavin Lafferty, 17, of 11B Angus Terrace, was told by Sheriff Paul Reid that he had only just been persuaded by his solicitor not to put him behind bars, instead imposing a combination of fines and probation to force him to be of good behaviour.

Sheriff Reid told the apprentice bricklayer: 'I'm giving you a chance - don't blow it because - trust me - if you do you are going to jail.'

Lafferty was fined a total of £500, ordered to complete 18 months of probation and had sentence deferred on the most recent assault for three months to be of good behaviour.

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Kilmelford time share owner turns down council's tax incentive

A TIME share owner has told the Scottish government and Argyll and Bute Council that he does not want his share of a cash payout - because it is unfair to the community and other businesses.

Businessman John Christlieb says a legal loophole administered by Argyll and Bute Council, under the Small Business Bonus Scheme (SBBS), means time-share operations throughout the area receive tax back on payments as they are considering as small businesses and not the multi-million pound industry that they actually are.

Mr Christlieb, who is also the owner of Melfort Pier and Harbour, at Kilmelford said: 'With the present financial mess the council and the country are struggling with it seems beyond comprehension that you will be giving members of a private members club £47,000 under a Small Business Bonus Scheme.'

'The business is neither small nor requiring a bonus. Many of the members of time shares and private clubs are wealthy and do not need more help. 'At the same time of making these pay outs you are sanctioning the loss of staff members, closing schools and stopping services essential for some.'

A Scottish government spokeswoman said: 'It is local authorities that are responsible for the administration rates in Scotland, and the Scottish government has no locus to intervene directly in individual cases.'

Argyll and Bute Council said: 'The Scottish Government has announced that SBBS is continuing unchanged for 2011/12.'

'The cost of SBBS relief is fully funded by the Scottish Government, and we operate this relief according to the legislation and guidance issued by them.'

'We do not give payments to time-share operations as such. Rather they receive relief of rates which reduces the amount they have to pay, provided that the rateable value of each unit is below the scheme's limits.'

No compulsory redundancies for 5 Scots

ARGYLL'S serving infantry troops will not be affected by planned cuts as part of the Strategic Defence Review, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has said.

The MoD said this week that the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 5th Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland (5SCOTS) will face no compulsory redundancies and neither will any other infantry battalion.

The claim comes amid reports in the national press that veterans from Afghanistan will not be safe from plans to cut £4.3bn from the MoD's annual budget.

Reports say up to 11,000 personnel will face compulsory redundancies, with 5,000 to be cut from the army, 3,300 from the Royal Navy and 2,700 from the Royal Air Force, including crew in training.

No job cuts
Speaking on Monday, the MoD said that no infantry troop would lose their job.

A spokeswoman said: 'This is not affecting 5SCOTS. There's no change to our infantry battalions and that's not set to change.'

'We can't say categorically that that nobody from 5SCOTS will go, as some people may decide to

leave of their own accord.'

Voluntary redundancy packages may be offered to the troops though.

The spokeswoman could not give long-term assurances, however.

Argyll and Bute Liberal Democrat MP, Alan Reid, was pleased to hear 5SCOTS would not be affected, but said cuts to the MoD budget were necessary.

He said: 'It's good news and certainly welcome news for this area. However, all budgets do have to be cut because the previous government left a huge budget deficit.'

Park use maths in the real world



Pupils at Park Primary School, Oban had fun with mathematics last Thursday in a day of events inspired by World Maths Day. Games, challenges and puzzles were order of the day for the children of P4-7, who were mixed up into different groups. Pictured are the pupils taking part in one of the more imaginative challenges, a competition to see who could make the best smoothies and record an accurate recipe 15_11parkmaths1

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New style Oban pavement goes on trial in George Street

A NEW sample patch of pavement has been prepared in Oban's George Street and members of the public are being asked for their views before it is adopted, subject to funding.

Scotland Transerv, the operating company for the management

and maintenance of the Trunk Road Network in the Argyll and Bute area, is currently preparing a design for improvement works to Oban town centre.

The proposed works extend from the north roundabout near the Corran Halls to Argyll

Square, including the Esplanade.

A spokesperson for Scotland Transerv said: 'The scheme, which is still subject to the availability of funding, is likely to comprise replacing the footway surface, reconstructing the car-

riageway and the renewal of the street lighting network. The date of the construction phase of the project is yet to be determined.'

'Scotland Transerv has prepared a trial panel of a footway material for discussion for the planned improvement works in

Oban town centre.

The trial panel is located on George Street, opposite the former cinema.

The proposed footway material is a synthetic material that is imprinted when hot to produce a decorative pattern that is

durable and is an alternative to traditional paving materials.

'Scotland Transerv would like the general public to view this footway trial panel and send comments to obanfootway@scotland.transerv.co.uk,' added the spokesman.



Rowantree Hotel staff Lesley Alcorn and Michael Durkin welcome back Stan with a beer. 17.11.11stan01

Man served jail sentence waiting for court case

A MAN was admonished at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday after pleading guilty to repeatedly punching a police officer.

Iain MacColl, whose address was given in court as c/o Solas, Albany Street, Oban, pled guilty to assaulting an Oban police officer, scratching his face and attempting to gouge his eye.

MacColl, aged 44, had already spent 39 days on remand for the offence, committed on February 3 this year.

In sentencing MacColl Sheriff Eric Brown said: 'I do not wish it to be thought that this incident is anything but serious but having served the equivalent of a 60 day sentence I admonish you.'

Planning improves in Argyll and Bute

PLANNING in Argyll and Bute has seen a significant improvement.

In a recent survey the council was seen to be performing 18 per cent above the average on indicators such as application processing and advice to applicants.

Superstore breach of the peace ends in £100 fine

A MAN who shook and shouted at a woman in the café of an Oban superstore was fined £100 when he appeared at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

James Carmichael, aged 46, of Flat 02-3 Thornwood Crescent, Glasgow pled guilty to committing a breach of the peace at the store on Lochavullin Road on August 5 last year.

Road defects were in decline before winter weather

ROADS in Argyll and Bute recorded a reduction in road defects, the latest figures show.

In the third quarter from November 2010 roads inspectors noted fewer problems on the roads. However council officers noted in the following quarter there is likely to be a substantial increase.

Pupils learn about local tourism

PRIMARY seven pupils from Park Primary School visited Oban's tourist information centre as part of their project on Oban and the surrounding isles.

The pupils visited at the beginning of Scottish Tourism Week, and learnt all about tourism in the area.

Mull trust 'very lucky' to get planning passed

A COMMUNITY Trust has been told it is 'very lucky' to get retrospective planning permission.

Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT) was eventually granted permission, despite councillors being against authorising it.

A planning ruling in early March states MICT have to ensure the community building in Craignure fits opaque glass to right-hand-side windows that overlook a domestic property and to mask an outfall pipe that will discharge into the Sound of Mull.

Councillor Roddy McCuish told Mull Community Council the planning condition of improving the look of the pipe had to be adhered to or MICT may not get a completion certificate and, subsequently, the building would not be able to be used.

Faults
Councillor McCuish who is the Argyll and Bute Council's Planning and Protective Services Board vice-chairman said: 'MICT were very lucky to get away with this.'

'I understand there have been faults on both the council's and

MICT's side. But retrospective planning in cases will happen less and less.'

Councillor Mary-Jean Devon added: 'I have to say that the meeting of this condition is the rise and fall of MICT.'

Moray Finch, general manager of MICT, said: 'We have a technical report prepared by engineers with regard to the pipe.'

'Over the next few days the board will discuss the detail of the report and then speak to planners.'

'The opaque windows are already being fitted.'

Lord Lieutenant conducts last duty as HMS Campbeltown bids farewell



Kenneth MacKinnon CVO RD WS performed one last duty as Lord Lieutenant of Argyll and Bute when he inspected the guard of HMS Campbeltown in Campbeltown last week. Picture: Kevin McEllynn

ARGYLL and Bute's Lord Lieutenant retired last week - but was soon back in uniform.

For although Kenneth MacKinnon CVO RD WS was no longer Lord Lieutenant, he performed one last duty when HMS Campbeltown paid a visit to her affiliated town of Campbeltown before she is decommissioned.

Mr MacKinnon, of Oban, has served as the Lord Lieutenant for nine years and last week he and his wife Clare and a group of Argyll friends celebrated his retirement and 75th birthday with a party.

But he donned the uniform one more time to attend the farewell parade through the streets of Campbeltown and inspected the guard from HMS Campbeltown and the town's sea cadets.

'My successor has not been named,' said Mr MacKinnon who served with the Royal Navy Reserve and retired from DM MacKinnon, Oban in 1996.

A type-22 frigate, HMS Campbeltown is due to be decommissioned in Plymouth on April 7 and arrived in Campbeltown Loch last Wednesday, surrounded by a fleet of local boats.

A parade last Wednesday evening saw the ship's bell handed back to Campbeltown, as locals turned out to show their support; it will eventually go back to Campbeltown Pennsylvania, USA, as the first HMS Campbeltown was originally an American lend lease ship which famously rammed the dock gates at St Nazaire during the Second World War.

On Monday, she fired an 11-gun salute to mark her visit with the ship's company lining her decks.

She will return to Plymouth on March 31 for decommissioning on April 7 when a group from Campbeltown will attend.

'Another fine mess you gotten me into'

'Stan Laurel' returns to Oban after seven years of world travel

A SIX-foot statue of Stan Laurel, stolen from Oban's Rowantree Hotel seven years ago, has reappeared on the premises - with a story to tell.

Staff at the hotel found a globetrotting Stan safe and well, standing at the back door to the hotel car park last Wednesday morning.

Tied around his neck was a diary of places he had 'travelled' to, including Afghanistan, Libya, the North Pole and Hollywood.

The diary entries are complemented by pictures of Stan with HM the Queen, Colonel Gaddafi, Barack Obama and Spain's World Cup winning football team.

The cover of the diary reads: 'Ah is no awa tae bide awa, ah wis aye cumin back tae see ye.'

The Rowantree Hotel's office manager Michael Durkin was working at the hotel in 2004 when Stan was stolen.

'I can see the funny side now,' he said.

'Someone has obviously gone to a lot of trouble to play this prank and it did bring a smile to my face.'

'I remember when he was stolen everyone was annoyed and pretty embarrassed that a

six-foot statue could have been taken out of reception without anyone noticing.

'Gilbert MacKechnie, who owned the hotel at the time, was pretty upset about the whole thing and offered a £1,000 reward for his safe return.'

Staff at the hotel even reported the incident to the police at the time but had given up hope of Stan returning.

Michael said: 'The whole thing had become a bit of an urban legend and we would always tell the story to new staff members because they didn't believe people would steal things as large as that.'

The opening diary entry explains: 'What can I say? I went out for a loaf. In 2004 I was a wanted man. £1,000 was offered for information about my whereabouts. By then I was at the North Pole and it was more hassle than it was worth for the Eskimos to get me back to Oban.'

Stan has been returned to his old stomping ground in the Rowantree's reception for the time being.

As his final diary entry reads: 'It will be a while before I go out for a loaf again.'

Lorn Lines

AT THE most recent meeting of Oban Photographic Club members enjoyed high quality images from the Photographic Alliance of Gt Britain (PAGB) portfolio.

While landscapes, seascapes and portraits are still well represented it has to be said that more and more digitally created art/photo images are being produced by clubs around Scotland and winning prizes too!

Representatives of the club travelled to Helensburgh this week for the Frank Walton Inter-Club competition.

Our next local meeting is the AGM on March 21 at 8pm in the Regent Hotel. Good attendance is requested.

THE Lorn Drama Festival will run from Tuesday to Friday next week, March 22 - 25, with 11 different drama groups from all corners of Argyll performing at the Corran Halls Oban from 7.30pm each evening.

All 13 plays this year are comedies. There are three plays each evening so come along and support your local group and have a good night out.

Now in its 14th year the drama festival is a regular feature in the spring season and is well attended by people from throughout the west coast as well as from Oban.

For any further information on anything to do with the festival contact martyngibson@phonecoop.coop.

OBAN and Lorn Lions have presented Oban Phoenix Cinema with a cheque for £250 for plans to reopen the cinema.

THE WORK of Argyll bard Duncan Bàn MacIntyre will be celebrated at an evening event in Oban tomorrow (Friday). Organised by An Comunn Gàidhealach an Obain, the talk will be led by Dr Roddy MacLeod and Calum Ross will sing songs written by the bard.

It will be held in the Free Church Hall and will begin at 7.30pm.

OBAN and Lorn Lions Club is joining the international aid effort for victims of the earthquake and tsunami that has devastated Japan.

Club members will be outside Waterstones book shop in George Street this Saturday between 10am and 4pm.

Lions International has 22 clubs based in and around Sendai, one of the worst areas affected, and there are 100,000. Lions Club members in Japan.

AT LORN Archaeological and Historical Society's February meeting Dr Kirsty Owen from Historic Scotland talked about the latest restoration phase at Stirling Castle.

To a full house she explained the skills and thinking behind the style of restoration at the King James V palace buildings.

She emphasised the national importance and impression it would have given visiting monarchs or dignitaries of the late 1500s, and went into some detail about the significance of the carved oak heads that have attracted a lot of press interest recently. Dr Owen explained that in reality the palace only reached its full potential for a short time before the court moved south after the Union of the Crowns in 1603. The restoration to this period is now almost complete and full public access is expected within a few months.

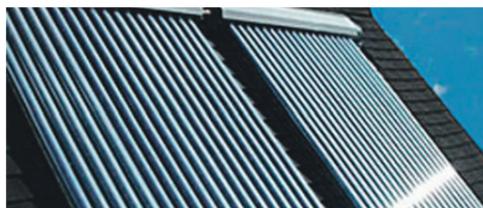
The next meeting will be on the March 25 at the Undercroft, Glencairn Church Centre when Sue Hotheral will talk on The Kelp Industry, an episode in a long history of seaweed use.

OBAN Phoenix Cinema is currently undertaking a full feasibility study to support proposals to buy and refurbish the cinema in Oban. The association's steering group would very much appreciate as many people as possible spending five minutes to answer a few cinema related questions. To receive a survey contact obanphoenixcinema@gmail.co.uk



use green heat

RENEWABLE HEAT INCENTIVE (RHI)




The government has announced that from summer 2011, the RHI will support non-domestic users of heat who want to install wood fuel boilers, solar hot water panels or heat pumps.

There will also be support for householders.

In April, there are use green heat advice surgeries for businesses and householders looking to install a renewable heating system:

April 18th
Strachur Memorial Hall, 4pm to 7.45pm

April 19th
Stagecoach Inn, Cairndow, 2pm to 7.30pm

April 20th
Aqualibrium, Campbeltown, 3pm to 8pm

April 21st
Glencairn Church Hall, Oban, 3.30pm to 7.45pm

If you are unable to attend a surgery but would like more advice and support call ALI energy on 01631 565183 or email: info@usegreenheat.co.uk





Argyll, Lomond & the Islands Energy Agency



European Regional Development Fund
Investing in your Future

Linda clocks up 500 hours in 'bends' unit at Dunstaffnage

AFTER 500 hours in a decompression chamber a medical attendant says she is not ready to give up yet.

Linda Robb is the longest serving assistant in the treatment of 'bent' divers at the Dunstaffnage unit. She has worked in the unit since 1988, and has helped treat 77 divers in that time.

'It can seem like a long time in the chamber,' says Linda 'but over the years we have come up with many different ways of passing the time. Playing Scrabble was my favourite for many years and I think there are probably a number



Linda Robb inside the recompression chamber at Dunstaffnage

of patients I should apologise to for being a little too competitive at times.'

Linda originally joined the old Scottish Marine Biology Association as a marine science assistant but soon volunteered to be a part-time member of the hyperbaric unit.

'My initial interest came from being a diver myself at that time. Over the years I became more interested in the medical side of the work and I am now trained to provide Intermediate Life Support within the chamber. Many of the divers we see have only mild

to moderate symptoms, but there are times when we deal with life or death situations. On two occasions I have been at pressure with divers for over 48 hours at a time because they were too ill to come to the surface. Thankfully, they both went on to make good recoveries.'

The bends, a common name for decompression illness, is caused by bubbles of nitrogen developing in the blood and tissues of a diver during or following a dive. The treatment involves being placed in a recompression chamber for a minimum of five hours.

DOWN YOUR WAY

This week - Iona

ISLANDERS are planning a knees-up to celebrate the Royal Wedding - and they are asking folks to put on their old wedding finery.

Louise Alloway said: 'We are holding a disco in the village hall and we thought it would be great fun if people got dressed up in their bridesmaid dresses or old wedding outfits for the occasion. Obviously one or two of us are giving up our own invites to the real thing to go along to Iona Village Hall but I think it will be worth it!'

The event is on Friday April 29 from 7.30pm. There will be a small entrance fee.



Iain Dougall, a stonemason from Iona, was given a retirement present of four Zwartble ewes from his work colleagues and family. 16. 111ardio2

AFTER 18 years of dedicated service to Iona Abbey, a stonemason's career has come to a sheepish end.

Iain Dougall, of Ardonra, was hoping not to bleed too much about his retirement but his work colleagues had a different idea and bought him four Zwartble ewes. The four new girls in his life are named Abbie, Lily-Anne, Carrie and Beatrice but it was a complete surprise to Iain that he was getting them.

Iain had no idea the sheep were being smuggled onto the island and was absolutely staggered when he was taken out to the shed to see them with their colour-coded collars and name tags.

Iain said: 'I thought I might get a bottle or a small gift. I had no idea I might get a sheep - far less four all ready for lambing.'

'I suppose this will be one of the best times to retire as there is so much to do on the croft.'

Gordon Rutherford, Iain's boss, said: 'We decided we wanted to do something a wee bit something different for Iain, so buying a Zwartble seemed a good idea.'

'We bought one animal, while Iain's family bought the other three. They cut quite a striking sight at the north end. I heard one islander fell off his bike when he saw them.'

'Iain has been a good colleague, great to work with. He will be very much missed on our team.'

'I would personally like to thank Iain for all his hard work and dedication to the task and the support he has offered me over the years.'

Iain started work for the Iona Cathedral Trustees, as they were then called, on March 1 1993 replacing the renowned stonemason and Gaelic speaker Attie MacKechnie.

When Historic Scotland took the trustees over around 2000, Iain transferred to work for the Monument Conservation Unit of Historic Scotland, still as a stonemason.

Iain said he hasn't yet had the chance to see everyone he works with to thank them and would like to pass on his grateful thanks for his new girls.



EARLY plans for the annual dress-up disco are underway, but this year there will be a requirement for some leather and maybe a wee bit fringing.

Last year islanders were treated to *Pirates of the Hebridean* theme night but this year the islanders are heading west - to the wild west for a roo'in' shootin' party. Organisers say it is time to get your costume ready. Posters will be going up in August.



ISLANDERS are getting a rare glimpse of an historic house. Dunsmeorach, the proud white house near to the Relig Oran, has been having a major overhaul to increase the accommodation for the Christian group The Iona Community.

Costing slightly short of £500,000, the building was once the summer home of Lord George MacLeod of Funary and has been used for a number of years as accommodation for the many volunteers who come to live and work in the community.

After the major works to increase the number of bedrooms and the size of the living space, the house is due to be open to the public on March 17. Tea and biscuits will be served to everyone who wants to come along and see round the house.



Children from Iona with the very big cauliflower.

IONA Primary School head teacher Elizabeth Kennedy writes: 'Once upon a time there was a small school where the children loved to work in the garden. One year they planted some cauliflower seeds and to their amazement they grew an enormous and very tasty cauliflower.'

'Even though the weather has been dreadful with gale force winds this year everyone is beginning to think about getting out into the garden and preparing it for the next season. The pupils in Iona Primary are hoping that once again they will have a good crop of vegetables.'



ZUMBA has reached Iona with woman pulling on their hot pants and dancing down to the village hall for an hour on Friday afternoon.

Kate Peetrie, from 'the other side' of Mull, took the class for the first time last Friday between 1.45pm and 2.45pm.

Islander Dot Stewart, who got into her own leotard especially for the occasion, said: 'It was great. There were loads of us and we could have been anywhere in the world. There was a room full of enthusiastic women taking part in the dancing. We tried to encourage Ben Brace from the hotel to come along, but he wasn't having any of it.'

Next week DOWN YOUR WAY visits Loch Fyne

with reporter Edel Kenealy.

You can contact her at 01631 568000 or email ekenealy@obantimes.co.uk.

BARRA

BARRA residents have told Caledonian MacBrayne not to alter the ferry route from Castlebay to Oban, saying going to Mallaig instead would be a backwards step.

Islanders told the ferry operator that such a move would be damaging to the local economy, adding that any dilution of services would be deemed unacceptable for the community.

ISLAY

THE NEW Islay ferry, *MV Finlaggan*, has now entered drydock in Remontowa shipyard in Gdansk, Poland, which has been building and fitting out the 90-metre long vessel.

A final coat of paint will be applied and the stabiliser system commissioned. On return to the fitting-out berth, load trials on the bow and stern ramp will be conducted with truck and bus trials. The new ferry is built to carry a total of 550 people, 85 cars and 10 articulated lorries/coaches.

Inside the vessel, work progresses in the accommodation area with all galley and crew cabins complete and work in the passenger areas is ongoing, with completion due in approximately 18 days. In the new vessel are three passenger decks containing an observation lounge, reclining seat lounge, quiet lounge, restaurant, shop, children's play area, two disabled lifts and two external decks for panoramic seating.

Internal painting of machinery spaces and other areas is ongoing. Electrical work continues with most lighting in place, and alarm systems being commissioned. Windlass anchor and capstans have all been tested.

There has been a slight delay to the external painting programme due to extremely cold winter weather in Poland, where average night-time temperatures fell to -23°C during the last few weeks and daytime temperatures rarely rose above -15°C.

Harbour trials are ongoing, with sea trials to take place on March 23-24 and 29-31. The ship's crew are due to travel out in early April for passenger certificate trials. The vessel is due for handover in April 2011, with arrival in Scotland expected in early May.

A FUNDRAISING dinner will be held on Saturday March 19 in Islay High School Assembly Hall.

A three course dinner will be served and the evening will feature a presentation on a 'Trek to the South Pole in the footsteps of Shackleton' given by Will Gow and Henry Adams.

There will also be an auction of high quality items. For more information or to book a table, contact Islay High School.

THERE have been new appointments within Coisir Ghaidhlig Ile.

Upon retiral of president Iain MacPherson, vice president Fergus Muir takes over the chair.

Libby Morris will assist with Gaelic tuition and Arlene MacKerrell will be assistant conductor.

The senior choir's membership has risen to 36 and practices are well attended. Ladies' and mens' choirs rehearse on alternate Tuesday evenings and the full choir practices each Thursday evening. The choir meets in Bowmore Hall, unless otherwise advised. Visit the choir's website at www.islaygaelicchoir for the latest choir news.

KYLEAKIN

THE EILEAN Bàn Trust is presenting the 'Bright Water Concert' on Saturday March 19 in Kyleakin Village Hall.

The concert will feature students from the School of Traditional Music in Plockton and Strath Gaelic Choir, along with readings from the works of Gavin Maxwell. There will also be a raffle in aid of the trust in the interval with exciting prizes.

Ticket information on 01599 530183.

GLENELG

VOLUNTEER stewards are still required for the 'Drams in the Field' music festival at Glenelg over the weekend of September 2-3 for litterpicking and car parking duties.

For further information, or if you would like to help out, please email Kyleakin Environmental Group on skykeg@yahoo.co.uk.

GLENELG

FOLK and broadcasting legend Jimmie Macgregor is bringing his 'Jimmie Macgregor Gathering of Songs, Stories and Famous Folk' show to Glenelg Hall next Saturday.

Jimmy, who turned 81 last Thursday, will sing, talk about his life and tell stories and tales of interviews with the likes of John Wayne and 'Tarzan'.

Jimmie and fellow musician Robin Hall were hugely influential in the folk music revival, the duo touring the world to appear in countless venues from the Albert Hall to the smallest folk clubs.



Cullipool Village Hall on the Isle of Luing was filled to capacity for all four performances of Luing Amateur Dramatic Society's performances of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. The cast and crew worked hard since last October to put on the entertaining show and are already looking forward to next year's show.

MORVERN

MORVERN Community Council (MCC) met in Lochaline Village Hall on Thursday March 3.

Present: chairman Iain Thornber, C MacKechnie, H MacKechnie, D Robertson, H Watt and four members of the public.

In attendance: Messrs Scott Bellwood and Ian Cameron, Highland Council Cleansing Department.

Highland councillors: None present. No apologies.

Draft minutes (abridged): The chairman introduced Mr Scott and Mr Bellwood, who gave a presentation on the new schedule of waste bin collection.

One objective is to reduce landfill on environmental cost grounds as landfill charges are being increased progressively each year.

The skip service will cease from April 1, the reasons being that materials cannot be monitored, causing problems, and that contractors are surreptitiously depositing material for whose disposal costs they are responsible while contributing to the annual £75,000 cost to Lochaber.

The chairman presented an 88-name petition against the removal of the skip service to be forwarded to TEC services chairman Councillor John Laing and to all ward councillors. He emphasised the risk of greatly enhanced fly-tipping if the policy is implemented. Mr Bellwood responded saying fly-tipping was no longer a concern of the Cleansing department but had been transferred to the Community Works Department.

The chairman deplored the lack of communication between Highland Council and MCC on this matter, which had apparently been decided at the November 2010 meeting of the committee.

A member of the public pointed out that he had studied the minute and found the reference to the skip provision was restricted to a single sentence answer to a question by a councillor, but the matter had NOT been discussed by the committee.

There was unanimous dissent about the withdrawal of the service. The chairman thanked Messrs Bellwood and Cameron who left the meeting.

Correspondence: Stray cattle on the White Glen road (A884) and deer being fed close to the same road near Liddesdale on Laudale Estate. In respect of the former, Ardtornish Estate is strengthening and repairing the stock fences adjacent to the A884 which should resolve the problem. Public asked to report any future encounters. The deer food has been moved from Liddesdale. In future, blocks will be put out on the hill to avoid feeding on the low ground so the problem should not occur again.

Letter from H Raven, Ardtornish Estate, regarding proposed new housing in and around Lochaline at three sites. Request for discussion about options. The estate wish to see more house building, including affordable homes. Meeting to be convened in public to specifically discuss. Date to be announced.

Treasurer's report: General account balance at February 4 2011 - £10 021.18, including £1,222.50 repayment of loan by Morvern Community Trust and £1 015.04 per capita grant from Highland Council. Common good account balance at January 25 2011 - £6,111.03, including £5,000 lodged in this account for convenience.

Chairman's report: The chairman advised of a forthcoming meeting with Iain Bruce-Low, Highland Council Community Works Officer, to inspect public roads in Morvern needing repairs, including the road from Lochaline Stores to the hotel and the badly rutted section at the War Memorial. Mr Bruce-Low has allocated funding in his budget for hot-skimming the surface.

The Drimmin road from Mungosdale Bridge to the Old Ferry slipway will be inspected. Police Constable Andrew Irvine wishes to be involved in assessing the problem of overhanging branches and tree limbs along

the Drimmin road with a view to having the worst of them taken down for safety reasons.

The chairman attended a liaison committee meeting of the Ardtornish (Loch Tearnait) Hydro Electric Scheme. Project proceeding well, no complaints from walkers or the public.

Angus Robertson has intimated there will be an open day when the work is completed to allow the public to view the scheme. An application to build another small scheme above Ullin in the White Glen will shortly go before the HC planners. The chairman and Dr Douglas Watt attended a meeting in Strontian regarding the Scottish Ambulance Service and heard that local ambulances would always have two staff present during a call-out. The chairman and Dr and Mrs D Watt attended the HC Ward Forum to hear Chief Inspector John Chisholm, Fort William Station, confirm there would be no change in staffing levels at Strontian.

Members of the council: Mr C MacKechnie queried whether the public water supply could cope with additional housing planned in Morvern, in view of problems encountered in Lochaline during recent severe winter weather. It was agreed to ask the Water Board for its views. Mr MacKechnie also raised the problem of children leaving Lochaline Primary School to attend Tobermory High School, instead of Ardnamurchan. After this summer, there are expected to be 10 Morvern pupils crossing to Mull. Possible reasons for this were discussed. It was pointed out Ardnamurchan stands to lose one teacher for every reduction of 10 pupils, the present roll being 130.

Additional matters raised by the public: Concern was expressed about the access track to the beach below the Lochaline Hotel. This has been blocked by a locked gate denying access by divers and people with ponies.

KILMALLIE

KILMALLIE Community Company's (KCC) fourth AGM in Kilmallie Hall on March 3 saw changes to the board of directors.

Founding members Ossie Veitch and Angus MacPhie stood down, as did other long serving directors Hugh Muir and Linda Taylor.

Because they had been the moving force right at the start, Ossie was presented with a goblet made from pine taken from a wind blown tree, while Angus was given a white cup made from oak.

New directors elected were Paul Brian for a further three years, Chris Strong and Lee Mackenzie new to the board and Jan MacLugash was appointed as the representative on the board for the community council.

After the AGM business was concluded, three possible new community projects were discussed.

Su Sen described the plans of Caol Regeneration Company to commission a feasibility study to determine if it is possible to develop a marina and a small boat launching facility near to the Caledonian Canal entrance.

Jan MacLugash described possibilities for becoming involved in the management or ownership of British Waterways land next to the canal, while Roddy Mainland described the rowan woodland above Lady Margaret Drive and suggested that this was a natural addition to the Oakwood as the nature trail continues through it.

All three projects received a positive response though there are many details yet to be worked out.

The Saturday before the meeting, a work party met at the Cnoc nam Faobh Oakwood to improve the nature trail and remove litter.

In less than two hours the small group of volunteers collected the remains of the old roadside fence and enough rubbish to fill two trailers.

KCC secretary Paul Biggin said: 'Many thanks to those who helped and to Ewan Kennedy Contractors, which as a voluntary contribution removed dangerous trees and branches which had been hovering over the path since the last gale. All in all it was a good community effort.'

STRONTIAN

KILCAMB Lodge, Strontian, has been put on the market for offers over £1.4 million through property consultancy Knight Frank.

Husband and wife David and Sally Fox have run the country house hotel for the last eight years but have now decided to retire. The couple have invested heavily in the business, which won the Romantic Hotel of The Year 2010 award. Mr Fox said: 'We have loved every minute of running Kilcamb Lodge but now is the right time for us to retire. We have decided to continue living in this wonderful part of Scotland and will continue to enjoy the spectacular scenery and friendliness of the locals.'

LEWIS

MOD NAN Eilean Siar 2011 local committee has organised a fundraising ceilidh and dance on Saturday March 19 at An Caladh Inn, Stornoway.

This ceilidh coincides with Mòd Ionadail Leòdhais which is being held in Stornoway from March 14 to 20. The evening will begin at 8pm and the committee is delighted to

announce that Robert Nairn and his Pneumatic Drills will provide the music on the evening.

They will be joined by local favourite Iain MacKay and prize winning guest artiste Lynn Phipps.

Over the coming months, the committee will have a series of ceilidhs taking place in different locations across the Western Isles and information will be available nearer the time of the event. Tickets for the ceilidh on March 19 are available from An Comunn Office, Stornoway, or at the door.

ACHARACLE

A GROUP of Acharacle children have been learning how to survive in the wilds of Lochaber. Pupils from P4 to P7 have been taking part in the 'Forest School' sessions, run by Lochaber-based Wildwood Bushcraft, in woodlands next to their school.

The course, which is part-funded by Scottish Natural Heritage, teaches the children about bushcraft, making forest art and nature surveys. So far they have learned the fundamentals of survival - including tying knots, lighting fires with sparks, baking bread on the campfire and building mini shelters.

The project aims to get the children enjoying working together, being active outdoors, discovering more about their local woodland, and learning useful, practical skills.

Wildwood Bushcraft's Leon Durbin said: 'It has been great to see the enthusiasm and the progress made by everyone in the group. Outdoor classrooms are a great medium for learning because they make education so much fun.'



You can't start a fire without a spark: two Acharacle pupils learning how to make a campfire.



MacDiarmid Nursery children took part in I CAN's Chatterbox Challenge and the Guinness world record attempt.

MACDIARMID Nursery in Skeabost, Isle of Skye, took part in children's communication charity I CAN's Guinness World Record attempt for the largest game of Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes last week.

The children, aged 2 to 6, also performed songs and nursery

SKEABOST

rhymes in front of proud families and staff in aid of I CAN's Chatterbox Challenge.

BP Openreach backed the special fundraising day for the charity, which supports children

with speech, language and communication difficulties.

Joy Naylor from Macdiarmid Nursery told *The Oban Times* the nursery was 'thrilled' to have taken part. She said: 'The children have really enjoyed learning and singing nursery rhymes and practicing their

speech and language skills.' Joy is the only person on the Isle of Skye to be accredited with the I CAN-approved 'supporting communication' standard of service for pre-school age children. She is now training for the enhanced certificate Ankerly Nursery in AInness.

ISLAY LETTER

Almost on film

BRUICHLADDICH Distillery almost became the setting for a new film to be shot in Scotland by award-winning director Ken Loach.

Sadly, the island setting fell through as there is not enough accommodation in the area to house the 80-plus cast and crew who will be involved in the project.

The as yet to be titled film will now be shot in a warehouse on the outskirts of Glasgow with filming likely to begin in the early spring.

Bruchladdich would have been an ideal setting for the storyline which involves the theft of a barrel of rare whisky and its replacement with the replica containing much inferior spirit.

Among 74-year-old Loach's best known productions are 'Kes', the adventures of a boy and a kestrel and 'The Wind That Shakes The Barley' set during the Irish troubles in the 1920s.

Venison supper

THE FINLAGGAN Trust's annual venison supper, now in its 23rd glorious year, lived up to expectation when supporters from far and wide wined and dined in the candlelit Ballygrant village hall.

The menu, featuring local produce well prepared and presented, pleased the palates as did the spirited offerings from Diageo and the Islay Altes Company.

It was a busy night for Gaelic vocalist Andrew McCowan who not only sang for his supper but compered the musical entertainment sustained by a group of the island's best known and most popular performers. Also adding to the merriment were Finlaggan stalwart supporters Janette and Russell Hannah who are regular supper guests.

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Recipes wanted

AS PART of its 150th anniversary celebrations in 2012 the Glasgow Islay Association is to publish a book of recipes submitted by members, friends and supporters of the group.

In an endeavour to obtain 150 recipes, the organisers are inviting submissions from local Ilich as well as from those further afield.

Typed details of culinary delights should be sent without delay to the association's immediate past president Peter Campbell at 108 George Street, Dunblane, FK15 9HF. They can also be sent online to info@glasgow-islay.org.uk. All systems go, the recipe book should appear in the early autumn.

Trio's visit

THE INCREASINGLY popular Scottish Reed Trio will be in concert at Bowmore Distillery on Wednesday March 23 at 8pm.

The trio, comprising Catherine Earnshaw on oboe, Frances Prybus on clarinet

and bassoonist Heather Kent met while they were students at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. They set up the trio three years ago and have appeared at the Royal Albert Hall and at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. They also broadcast regularly on radio and television.

Their Bowmore concert will feature the specially commissioned 'The Dalriada Suite', composed by Oliver Searle and featuring a segment inspired by a historical event on Islay. All will be musically revealed on the night.

The trio's Bowmore appearance is promoted by Islay Arts Association.

Islay gathering

I ENJOYED my visit to the 149th annual gathering of the Glasgow Islay Association held in the University Students' Union on March 5.

Perhaps an absence of some years makes the heart grow fonder and it was good to see familiar faces who were always much in evidence at the glut of gatherings I once attended. The concert entertainment pleased everyone, the performers were at the top of their game and the guest chairman and Gaelic broadcaster John Carmichael excelled. The success of the event delighted the organisers, especially Bowmore's Malcolm Campbell who took over as group president in June of last year.

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

LISMORE

TWENTY two sections of a banner were handed out on a Sunday recently to an unsuspecting Lismore congregation, who were asked to take them away, decorate them with some reference to Fairtrade and return them the following Sunday.

Lismore's Fairtrade representative, Anne Livingstone, was delighted by the response and imaginative efforts made by everyone involved, including the Sunday School.

The sections will be returned to Fairtrade headquarters who hope that the countrywide response will make up 2.5 miles of banner, as part of their main annual drive to raise the profile of all the work achieved worldwide in helping farmers through fairer trade.

Lismore is well on its way to becoming a Fairtrade island, with Fairtrade products being used in the Heritage Centre Cafe, in the village hall and sold in the shop.

Once the primary school is also accepted as meeting the necessary criteria, Lismore will be officially recognised as a Fairtrade island.

Mairi Campbell hosted a very enjoyable candlelit ceilidh in the hall bringing with her the pupils she was tutoring at one of her Lismore Fiddle Retreats.

These musicians came from all over the country and beyond and together with some locals, they formed the evening's house band.

A great variety of songs, poems, dances and various instrumental items created a great evening of entertainment. Mairi herself treated us to one of her newer songs about the journey her widowed grandmother made back to Scotland from China with two small children: 'Home (is not what I left behind)'.

It was a very moving performance indeed and this song will be released in May on her album 'Soundcloud'.

Katy Croissant, Sarah Campbell, Yorick Payne, Mary MacDougall, Stephen Green and Sebastian Tombs were among the locals who performed.

TARBERT

FOUR NEW trustees have been appointed to the board of Tarbert Harbour Authority.

Philip Robertson and Archie McCallum were selected whilst current board members Alan Macdonald and Scott Woods have been reappointed to the board.

Kenny MacNab, chairman of the appointments panel and vice chairman of the Board of Trustees for the authority, said the calibre and experience of the candidates was outstanding. He added the new appointments would strengthen the harbour board.

The four men, all from Tarbert, will take up their positions on April 1.



Shayne Stewart and Flora MacLean with some of Lismore's 22 Fairtrade flags that will go forward to complete a national Fairtrade banner which is to be 2.5 miles long.

A CAPACITY audience at Tarbert Village Hall was treated to a stunning programme of folk and classical music last week.

With 21 young and talented performers from Tarbert and 15 from Lochgilphead, this first concert in the 'Tarbert Youth Music Series' was a tremendous success.

Organised by a group of parents, the Tarbert Youth Music Series was created to give talented young musicians from schools across Mid-Argyll the opportunity to perform regularly in an informal setting.

With the village hall decorated in a Springtime theme and even cakes for the interval decorated with Spring flowers and musical

notation, the informal ambience was set to encourage the young musicians to give their best performances.

Performers included the Tarbert Academy Folk Group, a pipe quartet from Lochgilphead, Loch Fyne Strings (with performers from both Tarbert and Lochgilphead), and the Tarbert Academy Vocal Ensemble.

To complete the varied and exciting programme, the audience were also treated to a range of solo and duet performances from both high schools and from primary schools across the Mid-Argyll area, including piano, vocals, cello, violin, flute, saxophone and trombone. This first concert in the series

was particularly aimed at giving young people the chance to perfect their performances prior to appearing in the Mid-Argyll Music Festival at the end of March.

Organisers are hoping that relationships forged between young musicians at the various schools will ensure that, at the next concert in the series on Friday, June 10, at Tarbert Village Hall, the schools will join forces to encourage the young performers to play together in a variety of combos.

The concert also raised more than £200 for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) and the Tarbert Academy School Fund.



Pipers and wind instrumentalists from Lochgilphead Joint Campus. 04_c10con01

CALLANDER

CENTRAL Scotland Police have warned residents to be on their guard after a bogus workman robbed a 77 year old woman.

The woman, who lives in Callander, was at home when a man knocked on her door, pretending to work for the council. He told

her that he needed to turn off her water and she let him in.

After he'd left, she noticed that the bedroom door had been opened and a three figure sum of cash had been stolen.

The man was described as having a soft Irish accent, aged between 28 - 30, about 5'6-5'8, slim, with short black hair and dark eyebrows.

He was wearing dark blue trousers, possibly jeans, a dark jumper, black shoes and black gloves.

A spokesperson for Central Scotland Police said: 'It's likely there may have been an accomplice with this man who, whilst the lady was being distracted by him, has entered other rooms in search of valuables and money.'

BENDERLOCH

A BENDERLOCH student has been recognised for her environmental credentials after being named in a list of 15 of Scotland's top young conservationists.

Susan Jones, who studies at Stirling University, was named as one of 15 on the Young Scottish Green List and attended a reception in Edinburgh last week.

The 22-year-old has been the president of Stirling University's nature society for four years.

She planned and carried out work in the university's wildlife garden and has recorded wildlife on campus.

She also created the first species lists for the university and carries out follow-on conservation work to protect the wildlife on campus.



Susan Jones, from Benderloch who studies at Stirling University

DUROR

THE March meeting of the community council was held in the community centre on Wednesday, March 9, at which the following items were among those discussed:

AN investigation into the mystery of the missing seat is has been launched!

Members of Duror and Kentallan Community Council were told the seat, in the play park, had disappeared.

One or two suggestions were put forward as to who might have taken it away to carry out repairs and council member Dave Shepton agreed he would look into the matter.

A NUMBER of issues concerning driving through Duror and Kentallan have been raised with Transport Scotland.

A resident in the village has voiced concerns about the speed of traffic driving past the community centre. The community council has also highlighted safety issues at the junction between the A828 and Achindarroch.

The council is also awaiting the results of traffic surveys which were carried out late last year.

THE Royal Mail has issued an unreserved apology to residents of Duror and Kentallan for the below par service they received at the end of last year and during the festive season.

In a letter to the community

council, Ian Tibbets, delivery office manager for Oban, admitted the Royal Mail had fallen well below service levels expected from the organisation.

He said 'exceptional circumstances' involving staff sickness and absence combined with the bad weather had been to blame.

He accepted the council's criticism regarding a lack of communication from Royal Mail to residents.

'We will do everything realistically possible to ensure that this regrettable situation will not be repeated.'

He also thanked the council for praising the 'exceptional efforts' made by those postal workers who did manage to maintain the service as best they could.

In turn, community councillors thanked Mr Tibbets' for his welcome response to their concerns. DUROR Community Choir's bid to take delivery of a new digital piano has received a £500 boost.

Following the community council's offer to provide funds to benefit local groups, the choir asked for a contribution towards the total cost of the instrument, which is expected to be about £1,000.

Terence Goodwin, the choir's musical director, explained the group was attracting an increasing number of singers and as a result had recently started to meet in the community centre.

He explained that the choir currently loans a keyboard from Kinlochleven Primary School. Community council members pledged the £500 to help buy the digital piano subject to the choir raising the rest of the money.

Members were also keen that the instrument would be available for wider community use, should the occasion arise.

MORAG MacNeil has stood down as chairwoman of the community council.

Jonathan Baxter was proposed by Dave Shepton and seconded by Alison Wallace and unanimously voted in to succeed her. Members decided against electing a vice-chairman.



Duror primary pupils at the Scottish Parliament with MSP Fergus Ewing.

CHILDREN from Duror Primary School got out of the classroom for the day to visit Scotland's capital city.

Pupils from P4 to P7 recently visited Edinburgh Castle, the Scottish Parliament and the statue of Greyfriars Bobby during the day trip as part of their class project on Scotland.

The Kinlochleven Community minibus took the kids plus teacher Mrs McLeod, classroom assistant Liz MacLauchan and parent Ailsa Shepton to Edinburgh. The group first visited the castle where they saw the Honours of Scotland, Mons Meg, St Margaret's Chapel and St David's Tower. They then travelled down the Royal Mile to the Holyrood parliament building, where they were met by Lochaber MSP Fergus Ewing. After a talk with Mr Ewing, the children were given a tour of the building, including a trip to the debating chamber.

To complete their day in Edinburgh, the children were then taken to Greyfriars to see the graves of little Bobby and his master, John Gray. The children had recently been writing stories of Bobby as part of their project.

Enchanted by the grave and having stood at the statue commemorating the dog's life, the children ended their trip with a meal before the return journey to Duror.

The following day the children gave presentations to the infant class who responded with questions and much laughter at their wide ranging photographs. Their afternoon was spent putting together a display of their trip, which they intend to share with their parents and local community.

LOCHEARNHEAD

PLANS have been submitted to build an extension to a house in Lochearnhead.

The plans for the alterations to Cul Beag, Stroneslaney Road, will be considered by Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority in due course.

KILLIN

STIRLING Council's chief executive, Bob Jack, will visit Killin Community Council this month to discuss plans to devolve local services to rural communities.

The meeting will take place on Monday, March 21.

CRIANLARICH

CUSTOMERS of the Crianlarich Hotel helped raised £320 for the village church funds at their recent bingo night.

GLENORCHY

PAM GIBSON gave Glenorchy SWRI a talk about her travels.

This was an open night on February 23 with a sales table in aid of funds and was well attended.

Pam explained how she and her family came to Argyll for holidays and fell in love with the beautiful scenery, and decided to move to this area.

Eventually, the dream was realised and her family bought a little house in Inveraray, which has been her home for the past 25 years.

Both she and her husband joined a photographic club and, thanks to this, the members were treated to some beautiful slides of Glenorchy and Argyll.

Competition results: Limerick - 1 Pat Villani, 2 Sandra Boardman, 3 Kathleen McLennan and Betty Spalding. Article with 50 grams of knitting wool - 1 Sandra Boardman, 2 Helen Gibson and June Taylor, 3 Kathleen McLennan and Pat Villani.

TAYNUILT

TAYNUILT SWRI president Jessie Servant welcomed 16 members and five visitors to the meeting held in the village hall on February 9.

Speakers for the evening were two of the institute's members, Alice Campbell and Jean Gillies. Jean told how useful a slow cooker was for a working mother and gave many tips on its uses. Alice demonstrated microwave cooking, making mushrooms in a sauce, salmon in a curry and steam pudding and custard.

Members enjoyed a taste of the dishes and a lovely tea was provided by hostess Jessie Servant.

Mary Livingstone gave the vote of thanks.

Competition winners: Pair of knitted mittens - 1 Doreen Penswick, 2 Alice Campbell. Pair of beaded earrings - 1 Doreen Penswick.



Bonniest Baby Competition 2011

Please note - entries for this competition are now closed



Ruan Kemp
Oban, 12 months



Lacie Henderson
Oban, 8 months



Calum Semple
Bowmore, 11 months



Joseph Christie
Oban, 19 months



Jenson Gardiner
Newton Mearns, 12 months



Michael Christie
Oban, 3 months



Amber Campbell
Oban, 7 months



Danaidh MacEachern
Lochgilphead, 9 months



Ann Marie Campbell
Oban, 5 months



Danielle Campbell
Oban, 20 months



Tyler Stoddart
Ft William, 13 months



Holly McNaughton
Bunessan, 26 months

Gaelic Medium Education

available across Argyll and Bute for 3-18 year olds

Tiree, Mull, Appin, Oban, Dunoon, Islay

For further information please contact Donald Macleod Education Officer
donald.macleod@argyll-bute.gov.uk
01631 564908

GAELIC matters



Gaelic Education – Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Learners

Gaelic Medium Education (GME) has been offered to families in Argyll for over 20 years and has expanded successfully within this time. Recent research has highlighted the cognitive benefits of GME and bilingualism. Whether it be that you wish to choose GME for your children because of these benefits or because of heritage and culture, or because of family links to the language, or because you feel strongly about the revival of the language there is always a good reason to opt for GME and bilingualism. Schools that offer GME in Argyll and Bute benefit from access to Gaelic provision for pre-school and continuity into associated secondary schools. At present there are opportunities to further develop Gaelic language skills to Advanced Higher level in school and to progress further into colleges and universities across Scotland. Gaelic Learners' Education (GLE) has a long and successful history in Argyll with many young people experiencing language learning and Gaelic heritage and culture in Argyll Schools. Over the last 10 years primary teachers in Argyll and Bute have participated in the nationally recognised Gaelic Learners in Primary Schools (GLPS) initiative. Pupils in over 45 schools now access GLPS provision. GLE is currently offered in 5 of Argyll and Bute's secondary schools, Dunoon, Islay, Oban, Tobermory and Tiree. Pupils can access qualifications throughout the framework to Advanced Higher and Gaelic (Learners) holds equal

standing with other languages in relation to university and college access.

Community Services: Education, through Argyll and Bute Council's Gaelic Language Plan, is committed to developing, improving and promoting Gaelic Education at all levels. For further information contact: Donald MacLeod Education Officer - Gaelic donald.macleod@argyll-bute.gov.uk 01631 564908



Lorn Gaelic Partnership

Lorn Gaelic Partnership is a community based organisation and is open to anyone with an interest in the development of the Gaelic Language and Culture. Its primary aim is the continued revitalisation of Gaelic in the Lorn area. New membership is always welcomed and anyone interested in joining or anyone who would like to find out more should contact lorngaelic@gmail.com or Donald MacLeod on 01631 564908. The Partnership has now forged links with Argyll College and this will allow for the delivery of the very successful Ulpan method of learning Gaelic through their Learning Centre in Oban. Ulpan Level 1 and Level 2 are being offered and will begin in the next month. The Lorn Gaelic Partnership also operates a very successful Saturday morning Ulpan course with students making good progress having completed Level 1. Contact Lorn Gaelic partnership at - lorngaelic@gmail.com Find us on Facebook – Co-roinn Ghàidhlig Latharna

Thigibh còmhla rinn!

Situated in an area of outstanding natural beauty on the southern peninsula of Sleat on the Isle of Skye, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig has been running short courses in the Gaelic language and traditional music for over 35 years. The College has an international reputation and attracts students from across Scotland and the world over who come year after year to enjoy a week of culture, tuition and a good old cèilidh. Courses include Gaelic for complete beginners, a Gaelic family learning week, Gaelic song, accordion, guitar, ùille, button box, piping & drumming, digital photography and painting. Five day courses run at Easter and throughout the summer months,



with the option of staying on campus with views across the Sound of Sleat. The College also has a Gaelic-medium childcare facility for parents wishing to attend courses. If you would like further information on the range of courses available at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig telephone 01471 888246 or visit the College website www.smo.uhi.ac.uk



Lorn Gaelic Partnership

Learn Gaelic through Ulpan

- Level 1 for beginners
- Level 2 from Unit 21

Argyll College Learning Centre, Oban

Twice weekly

For more information email lorngaelic@gmail.com To register phone Argyll College on 01631 559000

SABHAL MÒR OSTAIG
Ionad Nàiseanta Cànan is Cultar na Gàidhlig

www.smo.uhi.ac.uk

Short courses in Gaelic language & traditional music

Cànan Càirdeas is Cèol

CÙRSAICHEAN GOIRID

Nach tig sibh còmhla rinn airson seachdain eireachdail a chur seachad san Eilean Sgitheanach ag ionnsachadh mu cheòl, mu chultar agus mu chànan na h-Alba. Le cùrsaichean fad còig latha a' ruith aig a' Chàisg agus as t-samhradh tha sinn an dòchas gum faic sinn ann sibh.

Your opportunity to discover Scottish Gaelic

Spend a week on Skye and find out more about the Gaelic language, culture, music, song and dance of Scotland. We offer a variety of five day courses at Easter and throughout the summer months and welcome adult learners from all over the world year after year.

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goirid@smo.uhi.ac.uk



Provost backs Mallaig ferry link

LOCHABER provost, Councillor Allan Henderson, has reiterated his support for a Mallaig-Lochboisdale ferry link following a series of meetings in the Outer Isles to discuss the move.

The public consultations, hosted by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) came out broadly in favour of the link – although Barra residents expressed a strong desire to retain their existing services with Oban.

Councillor Henderson said the talks had ‘once again raised the profile of the campaign for a daily Lochboisdale ferry service to Mallaig onto a higher level’.

Welcoming the continued support of Storas Uibhist for Lochaber’s quest to reintroduce the service, he said: ‘With the continuation of the Road Equivalent Tariff scheme (a Scottish Government initiative to cut ticket prices) and the increase in ferry traffic as well as last year’s Barra Oban ferry breakdown, it is vital that the Lochboisdale to Mallaig service is put in place.’

‘This would then augment both the north run, Lochmaddy to Uig, and the south run, Barra to Oban.’

‘This is the 21st century and all the island communities should have decent and similar services to allow fresh produce to be traded on an equal footing.’

Mallaig Harbour Authority, Councillor Henderson said, also intend to have a mainland meeting, with all interested parties, to advance the argument for the service, given that the ferries review consultation paper was overdue.

Highland Council has also reaffirmed its support for the link.



Hitting the high notes: Francesca Rose and Erin Nicolson won their classes at Lochaber Music Festival on Tuesday. 10_11music01

Young talent to the fore at Lochaber Music Festival

FRANCESCA Rose of Lochaber Music School and Erin Nicolson from Lady Lovat Primary in Morar were among the winners at the five-day 37th annual Lochaber Music Festival on Tuesday.

Erin, aged nine, played two contrasting pieces of her own choice, Brahms’ Waltz and Handel’s Bourree, scoring 87 marks

to win the Strings Solo (Primary) Violin or Viola Elementary class.

Francesca, aged ten, played Howard Blake’s Dance of the Snowman and Stanley’s Allegretto grazioso to score 88 marks for first place in the Strings Solo (Primary) Cello or Double Bass

Intermediate to Grade 3+ section.

Adjudicator Jeffrey Wynn Davies praised both girls for their high quality of musicianship.

A sizeable and appreciative audience enjoyed a series of fine solo strings performances in the morning session at Fort William RC Primary School.

Parts delay stalls Fort bus scheme

Long-awaited real-time information system won’t be finished until middle of May

EXCLUSIVE REPORT by RICHARD HADDOCK fort@obantimes.co.uk

THE LONG-AWAITED real time bus information system for Fort William has been delayed again – and is now not expected to be in finished until the middle of May.

HiTRANS, the body responsible for implementing the scheme, previously told *The Oban Times* the project would be completed by the end of March. The latest hold-up is being blamed on difficulties in getting parts delivered from China.

The first stage of the project, an electronic information display to provide up-to-the-minute timetable information to travellers, was set up at Fort William bus station nearly two years ago. But a series of delays has meant it has been out of order ever since and has been defaced with graffiti.

HiTRANS partnership manager Randal Robertson said work

has been done on the scheme in recent weeks and will resume in April.

He said: ‘We should get deliveries to our depot next week, and we will aim to start the work during the school holidays. Some buses will be taken out of service during the work and that’s the time it will cause least disruption.’

The £18,000 ‘Lochaber real-time information project’ will also see the installation of two new information screens on Middle Street and electronic displays on nine local buses, as well as a text messaging service that will give passengers the latest travel information.

A free ‘app’ to deliver the information to smart phones is also being developed.

It is hoped the information screen at the bus station will be operational by the end of April, and the rest of the system up and running by mid-May.

Last year HiTRANS received £15,000 of extra funding from the EU to complete the scheme after a number of issues had delayed it.

Mr Robertson said the system will be a great benefit to passengers once it is fully operational. ‘Real time information has been shown to be very well received by users,’ he said.

‘We will be monitoring with bus operators to see if passenger numbers grow, and by how much.’

He added: ‘But even if it doesn’t increase passenger numbers, hopefully it will increase passenger satisfaction.’

Operating theatre closes for renovation

THE OPERATING theatre at Belford Hospital in Fort William is to close for 10 days to allow renovation work to take place.

The hospital is currently undergoing a £300,000 upgrading process to improve the building for patients and staff. The theatre will close from April 7 to 18, but the endoscopy room will remain in use.

Clinical services manager Marie Law said plans were in place to try to avoid patient disruption. She said: ‘All major elective surgery will be undertaken in the week before the theatre is closed, and the high dependency unit will be converted for use as an emergency operating theatre.’

Among the improvements already carried out are new bedside cupboards and chairs, new flooring and new trolleys for accident and emergency.

Widespread delight as music centre is saved

COMMUNITY, cultural and political leaders in Lochaber and Lochalsh have warmly welcomed news that the National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music at Plockton has been saved.

Education secretary Michael Russell visited the centre on Tuesday to announce that the Scottish Government was putting in an extra £200,000 a year until 2015 under a partnership deal with West Highland College UHI and Highland Council.

Lochaber National Mod 2007 convener Charlie MacColl said: ‘This is brilliant news for the Highlands. Our area has been well represented at the school and quite a few people have got qualifications

from being up there. We are having so much heartache just now with so many things closing, so it is just fantastic that Plockton is going to continue. If it had gone, all we would have had as a centre for traditional music would have been Sabhal Mòr Ostaig.’

Plockton Community Council chairman Charlie MacRae said without the huge public outcry from across Scotland and beyond, the outcome might have been very different.

He told *The Oban Times*: ‘Without a doubt the campaign played a major role in what is an election year. Almost 10,000 people signed the petition and so many were involved in saving the school

– it just showed the strength of feeling there was all over the country.’

‘It was terrible news when we heard it was to close, especially because it was at such short notice.’

‘We had a community council meeting last night and our local councillor Audrey Sinclair agreed the whole thing was badly handled by Highland Council. But it’s great that it is going to be saved.’

Provost of Lochaber Allan Henderson was ‘delighted’ at the government announcement – but was scathing about how the entire issue had been handled by the council.

He told said: ‘Office bearers should

be embarrassed that the centre’s budget was not examined, long before the decision to close was taken. A perfectly workable budget model was available to the administration, but it was chosen to attack and vote to close the centre in a clumsy, disrespectful, ham-fisted fashion.’

‘You cannot use brinkmanship and expect the centre to function normally. Respect must be shown to pupils and staff.’

‘With careful management the centre will go on to make the Highlands proud of our support for Scottish culture, and as a result, a better place to live in.’

West Highland College chairman

Norman Gillies said the funding announcement provided ‘further vital resources’ to the college to broaden access to further education. He said:

‘Building on the proven core facilities at the National Centre and the High School, funded directly by Highland Council, we would seek to expand learning provision in a subject area of local strength and distinctiveness.’

‘I look forward to bringing this exciting plan before the college board, and with their support and endorsement we shall then strive to make a success of this initiative such that Government is convinced of the value of long-term funding.’

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Triathlon organisers forced to scale back event as centre remains closed

THE ORGANISERS of this weekend’s Fort William cross country triathlon have been forced to reduce the event to a duathlon after being told the town’s leisure centre will not be re-opened in time.

The contest, run by No Fuss Events, was due to incorporate a 400metre swim in the refurbishment of Lochaber Leisure Centre the ‘Wee Triathlon’ will now consist of a short run followed by a 13km cycle and a final 3.8 km run.

Work on the centre was originally due to be finished before Christmas, but the finish date was pushed back a number of times and is now March 28.

Leaks from the roof, bad weather and procurement problems have been cited as the main causes for the longer than anticipated closure.

Fraser Coupland of No Fuss told *The Oban Times*: ‘A percentage of our runners have dropped out but we’ve still got about 70 people taking part.’

‘We’re disappointed, but we understand it’s been a pretty tough winter.’

Councillor Donald Cameron expressed disappointment that the refurbishment had been beset by delays.

He told *The Oban Times*: ‘I would be critical of the way the job has been managed and how that has resulted in a three month

delay and a loss of revenue to Highland Council. However, the good news is that while councils up and down the country are closing leisure centres, Highland Council is investing in Lochaber Leisure Centre to provide a higher level of service to the public.’

The project team in charge of the leisure centre upgrade met on Tuesday to update councillors on progress.

Speaking after the meeting, Councillor Cameron said he ‘was given every reason to believe’ the project was still on schedule to open on the projected date.

But he warned: ‘However, I hope that is still the case.’

Rural education trust appeals for volunteers

LOCHABER Rural Education Trust is appealing for volunteers to help it run activities for local schoolchildren.

The trust has a busy spring coming up with a gardening project and regular school visits to its centre at An Clachan near Torlundy.

Four primary schools – Banavie, Fort William, St Mary’s RC and Lochyside RC are taking part in the ‘Seed to Supper’ scheme to grow their own vegetables.

LRET trustee Isabel Campbell said: ‘With so many activities taking place at An Clachan, the trust is looking for more volunteers to help. It is most enjoyable and rewarding work and anyone interested can phone me on 01397 703819.’

The trust is holding its family fitness event The Leanachan Challenge with Active Schools co-ordinators tomorrow.

Corran Halls
Upcoming events

NLP Theatre Company Presents **“Singin’ I’m No A Billy, He’s A Tim”** Saturday 26th March
Doors 7.30pm / Tickets: £13 / Reserved Seating / 16 years +
Back by phenomenal demand old firm humour for all football fans

Rapture Theatre Presents **Gagarin Way** Monday 28th March
Doors 7.30pm / Tickets: Adults £8 Conc £6 / Age 14+

Musical Puppets Presents **Oscar & The Highland Castle** Saturday 2nd April
7.30pm (doors 7pm) / Tickets: Adults £12 Conc £10 / Reserved Seating
Following Oscar on his latest adventure.

Opera Bohemia Presents **La Boheme** Wednesday 6th April
7.30pm (doors 7pm) / Tickets: Adults £12 Conc £10 / Reserved Seating

Folding Puppet Theatre Presents **The Snow Queen** Friday 15th April
2pm (doors 1.30pm) / Tickets £4
A treat for all ages

Scottish Comedy Agency Presents **Sean Hughes** Monday 18th April
8pm (doors 7.30pm) / Tickets: Adults £14 Conc £12 / Age 16+ / Reserved Seating
Ducks & Other Mistakes I’ve Made

The Singing Kettle Presents **Funny Farm** Saturday 21st May
Doors 4.30pm / Tickets: All £10.50, Family £38 (4 tickets minimum 1 Adult) Groups 10+ £8
“Come dressed as a Farm Animal”

Corran Halls, Oban Box Office: 01631 567333

10 Years Ago

Those Were The Days
The Oban Times
Thursday, March 15, 2001

Prestigious Seaside Award for Ganavan Sands
A YELLOW flag will be flying at Ganavan Sands this year following the recent Seaside Awards. Ganavan, less than two miles north of Oban, is one of only three beaches on Scotland’s west coast to have won the prestigious award and is the only resort beach to have done so. The Seaside Awards are given to designated beaches by Keep Scotland Beautiful and the Tidy Britain group, and follow a rigorous assessment carried out during the bathing season (May 1-September 30). Beaches are required to pass checks on water quality, cleanliness, facilities for visitors, safety measures, supervision, access and clear public information, with 29 checks for resort beaches and 13 for rural beaches. John Summers, National Director for Keep Scotland Beautiful, said: These results are extremely welcome and show that where appropriate management and investment is made in our Scottish beaches, they can offer high standards and a good visitor experience. ‘The Seaside Awards relate to areas where a degree of management is in place to ensure good standards.’

No room at Mod for choirs
A SHORTAGE of suitable accommodation has been blamed by the majority of Argyll choirs who are giving the Royal National Mod in the Western Isles a miss this year. Oban Gaelic Choir and Carradale Gaelic Choir have decided not to make the trip this year and a host of children’s choirs will not be taking part either. Adult choirs from Taynuilt, Tarbert, Lochgilphead and Mull will be going. Taynuilt and Lochgilphead choirs are only able to go because choirs from elsewhere have pulled out making accommodation available. Mike Hopkin, of Oban Choir, said: ‘We decided not to go this year not so much because of the distance or the expense, but because of a problem with accommodation.’ Mull Gaelic Choir has no problems with accommodation, but only because conductor Riona Whyte booked in 1997! Mull will hopefully also be represented in the children’s choral competitions, although the Mod committee has still not announced the running order. ‘They may have to spend an extra night on the island or catch the ferry at 4.30am on Monday morning,’ said Riona.

Bonawe Quarry liaison group to expand membership
A LIAISON group which monitors the relationship between Bonawe Quarry, on the north shores of Loch Etive, and the local community is to expand its membership. This follows a meeting to discuss the voluntary Code of Practice set up by the then Gardner Thistle, now Enstone Thistle, when permission was given by Argyll and Bute Council to extend the quarry’s life. The Code of Practice grew out of concerns over road safety with HGVs using the Bonawe to North Connell road on a daily basis. It includes avoiding using the road at the beginning and end of the school day, avoiding convoys of lorries, not stopping on the road for a break, speed restrictions, courtesy to other road users, slowing down for pedestrians and sheeting overloads. Also included was the setting up of a liaison group by the company, which asked Ardochattan Community Council to nominate representatives for the group and Councillor Campbell Cameron was asked to chair it. There has been some confusion on whether the group is a sub-committee of the community council.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

Across

- Beseech (4)
- Dislike of women (8)
- Park watchers (7)
- Secretive set (5)
- Marked with body fluids (12)
- Protect with inclines (6)
- Egyptian water-plants (6)
- Daydreamer (12)
- Offspring (5)
- Sharp plough blades (7)
- Weakly (8)
- Flightless flock (4)

Down

- Illustrative stories (8)
- Shortened prenatal test (5)
- Undisturbed (2,4)
- Sometimes (4,2,1,5)
- Bad behaviour from youths (7)
- Central part (4)
- Star (7,5)
- Sharp fruit (8)
- Epic poem (7)
- Computer language (6)
- Catarh (5)
- Ditch (4)

Last Week’s Solution

P	R	B	P	S	E	P						
B	R	O	A	C	H	I	P	O	S	T	A	L
A	R	Y	E	P	L	E						
P	Y	R	E	S	E	L	F	R	U	L	E	
P	R	O	D	U	C	E	S	S	A	V		
I	S	O	S									
W	O	S	E	F	R	O	N	T	S			
P	H	O	D	F								
T	H	E	R	E	A	L						
C	O	V	E	R	O	P						
L	U	C	E	N	T	A	T	O	N	A	L	
T	L	H	D	K	N							

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OT

Road to the Isles reduced to single lane

THE A830 Road to the Isles will be reduced to a single lane for the foreseeable future after inspections of the railway bridge west of Glenfinnan found severe deterioration of concrete underneath the arch.

A Scotland Transerv spokesperson told *The Oban Times* severe weather over the past two winters has exacerbated the problem and stabilisation works were carried out on Sunday. Work will carry on for at least two months to assess the damage and effect repairs, he said.

Meanwhile, traffic lights and a temporary barrier have been installed to confine traffic to the eastbound lane. Scotland Transerv is working with specialist subcontractors and will review the traffic restrictions once works are complete.

Motorists should allow extra time for their journeys and pay attention to advisory signs throughout the works.

Record turnout at Fusion Youth Lazertag night

THE LATEST activity night for Fort William youngsters attracted a record turnout of young people on Friday.

A free 'Lazertag' night was held in the Fusion Youth Space in the Nevis Centre with 145 taking part. Lazertag, a game like paintball without the bruises, was provided by Inverness-based Tazball. The youngsters also had the chance to use a mobile skate park outside the centre.

The 'Fusion Nights' series of events culminates with the Fusion Under 18s Youth Festival at the Nevis Centre on April 22.

Glenfinnan Gun Club shoot

VERY cold weather and heavy sleet and snow showers greeted a good turn out of 21 guns for Glenfinnan Gun Club's shoot on Saturday.

Winners were: Sweep - Gordon Mathewson, Kilmalcolm; First competition - Gordon Shankland; Tennant Shield - Graham Nairn, Fersit; Local Trophy and Donnie Strang Memorial Quaich - Michael Rhoden, Fassfern; High Gun for the day and Glenfinnan Gun Cup - Graham Nairn, Fersit; Double rise and Dewar Cup - George Nairn, Fersit; Local Double rise and D Stoddart Cup - Michael Rhoden, Fassfern; Under 18 Glenfinnan House Hotel Shield - Aaron McGhee, Fort William.

Highlands part of national crackdown on irresponsible dog owners

HIGHLAND councillors will today be asked to appoint three 'authorised officers' under a national crackdown on irresponsible dog owners.

In a report to the transport, environmental and community services committee, the roads and community works manager will state the posts required under new duties placed on the council by the Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010.

The act, introduced to address the problems of irresponsible dog ownership and reduce attacks by dogs of all breeds, gives local authorities extra powers to punish owners of out of control dogs.

The officers will have the power to serve a written Dog Control Notice (DCN) on owners failing to keep their dogs under proper control or if the dog's behaviour alarms and threatens the safety of other animals and people.

Any breach of a DCN could land the irresponsible dog owner with a fine of up to £1,000.

The authorised officers will be appointed from within existing staff resources.



Tuning up for the future: music students, left to right, Catriona Bullivant, Ruth Green, Conal McDonagh, Nikki Goldmann and Lee MacKintosh welcome Tuesday's announcement with music school director Dougie Pincock and Plockton High School rector Duncan Ferguson. Photograph courtesy of Niall MacLeod, head boy, Plockton High School.

Students tune in as top music school is saved

STUDENTS could be studying for a national certificate in traditional music at Plockton music school as early as August, following education secretary Mike Russell's announcement this week that its future was secure.

Mr Russell visited the National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music (NCETM) on Tuesday to pledge an additional £200,000 per year government funding until 2015 in a partnership deal with West Highland College (WHC) UHI and Highland Council.

The move effectively lifts the closure threat to the world-renowned school.

If the college and the council agree their part of the bargain, the centre will open its doors to WHC students and broaden its activities.

Mr Russell said the partnership would allow older music students 'to take advantage of the quality teaching and outstanding legacy'

By STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

Plockton has provided.

He said: 'Investment from the Scottish Government will make this partnership a reality and assist the bodies concerned in funding the school in these times of financial constraint over the coming years.'

Council leader Michael Foxley told *The Oban Times* 'a positive and constructive' package had been put together.

He said Highland Council would put in about £165,000 and the Scottish Government £200,000 annually until from 2012 to 2015, while efficiency savings of 'at least' £40,000 this year and £105,000 each year thereafter would be made.

Accommodation and fees generated by more students using the centre would bring in up to another £50,000 each year, boosted by sponsorship,

scholarships and bursaries through the tie-up with West Highland College.

He said: 'The additional finance will allow an expansion of training at Plockton involving both the music school and the high school, while West Highland College will be responsible for a new national certificate in traditional music, to be delivered at Plockton.'

'We are hoping that if we can get all funding made available in time, we may see a few students starting the national certificate in August this year, with perhaps 10 or 12 joining the course in August 2012 - and yes, the number of students would increase.'

He added: 'All this is, of course, subject to approval by the West Highland College board later this month and by Highland Council at its budget meeting in May. There needs to be a lot more detailed work done on the budget over the next few weeks.'

Plockton High School rector

Duncan Ferguson said: 'This is an encouraging statement from the Cabinet Secretary whom we were pleased to welcome to Plockton and we are confident that working with Highland Council and West Highland College, our very successful National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music can be secured for the benefit of Scottish creative arts education and our national culture.'

NCETM director Dougie Pincock described the announcement as 'great news'.

He said: 'We are delighted the Scottish Government have responded the way they have. We are equally happy at the message coming out from the council that they want to stay part of the thing.'

'All our successes have been built on our partnership with the council - we are, after all, part of Plockton High School.'

He added: 'There's a lot to be done to make it all work, but we have the time and we have the money.'

'I would just like to say thank you to everybody who demonstrated their support for the place. Without question, the campaign was effective.'

"We are delighted the Scottish government have responded the way they have."
Dougie Pincock.

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig to host Sorley MacLean celebration

ISLE OF Skye Gaelic college Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (SMO) is to host a 'centenary celebration' of the life and works of renowned Gaelic poet Sorley MacLean this summer.

Islanders, poets and musicians, Gaelic-speakers, scholars and other figures with an interest in promoting Scottish literature and identity will travel to the college for the June 15-18 gathering.

The Scottish Centre for Island Studies at the University of the West of Scotland is co-hosting the event, named *Ainmeil Thar Cheudan* (Renowned over Hundreds).

SMO principal Professor Boyd Robertson said: 'This will be more than just an assembly of scholars, important though that is. It will be a celebratory gathering of poets, musicians and artists who have been inspired by Sorley MacLean's internationally acclaimed poetry.'

'It will also be an opportunity for the community to come together to share memories, reminiscences and perceptions of a fellow islander and multi-faceted Gael. Sorley is fondly remembered as a man who both as a person and a poet was deeply embedded in his native island community and culture.'

Scots Makar Liz Lochhead, Scotland's recently appointed new national poet, will lead the distinguished array of local, national and international contributors.

MacLean's poetry and translations, she said, 'we



Scotland's Makar Liz Lochhead: headlining the Sorley MacLean celebration at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in June.

ourselves have come to love very much.'

Skye Gaelic poet Aonghas MacNeacail, who will also attend, said: 'By standing against extinction of the language, and placing its creativity on the same plane as the international literature of his time, Sorley MacLean achieved renewal of the Gaelic language while raising our literature to global significance.'

Keynote speakers will include Professor Douglas Gifford, Timothy Neat, Professor Maire Ni Annrachain and Christopher Whyte.

Anyone wishing to attend can visit www.smo.uhi.ac.uk or contact Sabhal Mòr Ostaig on 01471 888000.

Forestry Commission Scotland's language plan wins approval

FORESTRY Commission Scotland's (FCS) Gaelic Language Plan has been approved by Bord na Gaidhlig.

The five-year plan for 2010 to 2015 sets out how the Commission will promote and use Gaelic in communicating with the public and key partners.

FCS director Bob McIntosh said the plan looks at a wide range of ways in which Gaelic language would be used, including corporate identity, on-site signage, leaflets and publications and the Commission's website.

He said: 'Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland's heritage, national identity and cultural life - and even our geography.'

'It draws many of its letter names from the names of some of our native trees and it also describes many of the features of our landscape.'

'We are pleased that we can now get on and step-up our contribution to the country-wide effort to revitalise the language, enhance its status and encourage more people to learn and more people to use Gaelic.'

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Fort hosts fèis training and workshops

FORTY representatives of the Fèis movement throughout Scotland gathered in Fort William last weekend for two days of training in Gaelic and music.

Workshops dealing with child safety, the law, and a running a fèis also featured in the Saturday and Sunday event, held at the Alexandra Hotel.

Delegates enjoyed a cèilidh with Achnaba on Saturday evening.

Councillors back switch to new charitable company

HIGHLAND Council is to hand over its community learning and leisure services to a new charitable company on October 1 to save cash.

Education, culture and sport (ECS) committee councillors backed the transfer after hearing the move would save the authority £1 million per year.

The decision affects more than 1,000 Highland Council staff, about 124 properties and an annual budget in excess of £15 million.

Workers moving to the organisation will have existing wage levels and pension entitlements guaranteed.

The new organisation will

be run by a board of directors with business and community expertise.

ECS chairman Bill Fernie said: 'By creating an arms length organisation Highland Council will be able to find £1 million savings without further reduction in community learning and leisure service delivery or closure of facilities.'

The new organisation could pursue alternative sources of funding and increase income by expanding catering and merchandising, Mr Fernie said.

Highland Council will decide the name of the company, which will be limited by guarantee with charitable status, on May 12.



Heading for Edinburgh: Kinlochleven High School S4 pupils read up on 'Blood Brothers' before they left yesterday morning for the Edinburgh Playhouse. 10_111b0001

Trip brings Blood Brothers studies to life

A GROUP of Kinlochleven High School fourth year English students travelled to the bright lights of the capital yesterday to see the smash hit Willy Russell musical *Blood Brothers*.

The party, accompanied by English teacher Lynn Cairns, took their seats in a packed Edinburgh Playhouse for the afternoon matinee. The youngsters, who had

read up on *Blood Brothers* beforehand as part of their English studies, left Lochaber at 9am and arrived home at 8pm last night. Head teacher John McGilp told *The Oban Times*: 'The play is part of their Standard Grade English. The trip was nicely timed for their exams in six weeks time and the musical gave them a good visualisation of what they have already studied.'

Gaelic society gears up for annual concert

THE GAELIC Society of Inverness will host its Annual Gaelic Showcase at the Eden Court Theatre in Inverness tomorrow evening.

The concert, entitled *Guth na h-Òige* (Voice of Youth), will reflect some of the confidence which Scotland's Gaelic community has in the future of its language.

The 2011 programme will include singers Jenna Cumming, Kirsteen MacDonald, Darren MacLean and Steven MacIver (all four of them are Mòd Gold Medalists); Canntaireachd (youth singing group led by Eilidh Mackenzie); the Monach Isle Cèilidh Band, and young prize-winning piper Brighde Chaimbeul.

For the first time, the event will be co-hosted by a member of Canntaireachd and the society's chairperson, Allan Campbell.

The concert will be presented, as usual, in Gaelic. There will be a simultaneous translation to English by powerpoint presentation, illustrated with photography by Caillean MacLean.

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Underdogs do the double at Nevis Centre

Underdogs, winners of the ten pin bowling league at The Nevis Centre, celebrate with their trophies last Monday night. They were named champions after winning both the scratch and handicap leagues. See sports pages for full report.

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Party time at Atlantis Leisure

GET READY to party at Oban's Atlantis Leisure! The complex is to host a Super Jam tea party between 2pm and 5pm on Friday, March 25. The tea parties are run by the charitable arm of Super Jam, the Edinburgh company started by 14-year-old Fraser Doherty selling his gran's jam, and which now supplies supermarkets nationwide. Fraser visited Oban recently to tell his story to local business people and Oban High School pupils and the idea of a tea party was drawn up by Atlantis board members. The plan for Oban is that high school pupils and young volunteers will chat and play music for the tea party guests and ensure they have an entertaining afternoon. Older folk from local nursing homes, sheltered housing and the community in general are invited to come along for tea, scones and, of course, Super Jam. For further details, contact Atlantis Leisure.

Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club

THE MARCH meeting of Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club, held in the Royal Hotel, Portree, got off to a flying start with lively Shetland reels and hornpipes from the fiddle of Cairna Campbell, of Portree, accompanied on keyboards by Claire Jordan, of Oban.

Claire stayed on stage to accompany local accordions John Cameron, John MacGilvray and drummer Donald John Campbell who served up marches and Gaelic waltzes. Again Claire stayed on keyboards while Cairna Campbell returned to join one of her young pupils, ten-year-old Ellie MacPherson, of Achachor, on fiddle for a medley which delighted the audience. The club welcomes and encourages young players to attend.

Ronnie MacRae put his vocal chords to good use with a couple of well-chosen songs followed by a fine selection on accordion by Rebecca MacDonald of Portree.

The final local musician to entertain was Wendy Riva of Kilmuir with her usual well-prepared selection on fiddle which took the evening up to guest artist time.

The Craig Paton Scottish Dance Band was to entertain the audience for the rest of the evening, and this they did in sizzling style. The band comprised Craig Paton of Milnathort, currently Senior Scottish Traditional Accordion champion, leading on piano accordion, Maggie Adamson of Shetland on fiddle and Andrew Gibb of Biggar on drums.

This trio of exceptional talent blended so well together and captivated the appreciative audience with a varied programme. Special mention must be given to fantastic solos from all three band members, including Andrew Gibb who swapped drums for accordion. *John Grundy.*



Best foot forward: teacher Eric Finley leads the class at the 50th weekend school organised by the Lorn branch of the Royal Scottish Dance Society.

Scottish country dancers mark 50th anniversary weekend in Oban

A BUMPER crowd of dancers headed into Oban last weekend for a very special occasion.

Almost 200 people flocked to the 50th weekend school organised by the Lorn branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

Staged at the Corran Halls, dances were held on Friday and Saturday nights while classes were organised on Saturday morning.

Sue Porter, Lorn branch secretary, said numbers were up a good 60 on last year, and with about 150 people staying in local hotels and B&Bs, the event had given a boost to the visitor sector.

'For a number of those coming to the weekend school for the first time, it was also their first time visiting Oban,' she said.

'I think part of its popularity is that people tend to look for different things to go to and there was also the combination of two of the top bands which played at the dances and one of the top teachers and pianists.

'Several people who have been here before brought friends along with them this time as well.'

At Friday night's event, Marian Anderson's band provided the music and there was also a performance by the Oban High School Pipe Band before those present tucked into a supper provided by the members of the Lorn branch.

Tutor Eric Finley, from Ayr, accompanied by Jennifer Wilson, from Elgin, on piano, put the dancers through their paces on Saturday morning and the weekend school concluded on Saturday evening with dancing to David Cunningham's band.

'It was the first time Eric has been to Oban. We bring in a different teach each time to give a bit of variety,' added Sue.

The Lorn branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society meets on a Monday evening at Park Primary School.

Anyone interested in taking part can contact Sue on 01631 563103.

New Canadian bid to solve Glencoe photo mystery

A LOST photo album thought to be from Glencoe is stirring up quite a buzz in Canada.

Containing photographs of weddings, holidays, men in uniforms and even a pet cat called Blinkie, the album left in the Inn at Laurel Point, British Columbia, sometime in the early 1980s is proving quite the mystery.

The clues to its ownership lie in the photographs themselves - with many taken in and around Glencoe - and the name David Stark, which is emblazoned across the front of the leather and string-bound album.

The 203 photographs date from 1914 to 1946. Staff have tried, but failed, to trace the owners since, but there is renewed hope that they can be found thanks to the internet and photo sharing website, Flickr.

So far, the new approach has attracted significant attention in the country, with daily newspaper, the Times Colonist, leading the search for the owner.

However, so far unsuccessful, the paper turned to *The Oban Times* in a bid to highlight the album directly to locals of Glencoe.

The manager of the hotel, Scott Hoadley, is hoping that this approach will prove successful.

He said: 'We believe we found it about 30 years ago and it has been passed from hotel employee to hotel employee.

'The trail is stone cold, so we thought we would try to experiment with social media.'

There are numerous clues hidden in the pictures. An address, identified as 31 Wickham Road, features prominently, as is a Mrs Turner, also referred to as Aunt

Helen, and someone known as J.T.S. There is also a photograph of an old yew tree named Adam-and-Eve.

A Canadian connection is first seen with a dashing young man in Canadian Army uniform identified as Tom Andrew.

Later there's a photo of Drew Anderson of the Royal Canadian Navy.

The post-war photos also show visits by a family identified as the 'Mailes of Canada'.

Mr Hoadley said: 'I think this is the beginning of the post-war chapter of their lives. It appears some Canadian entered their lives and somehow the pictures ended up in Victoria.'

So far, a number of clues have been unearthed by the Canadian appeal.

One of the most concrete leads came from a woman in the British Columbian town of Kelowna, who graduated from Victoria High School in 1965. She says she had a Scottish teacher named David Stark.

There are other possibilities too.

Some locals have contacted the paper pondering financial possibilities, with a posting on the Times Colonist website claiming to have lost the photo album in 1982 with a large amount of cash stuffed inside hidden compartments.

But there are no solid leads so far.

If you have any information that could lead to the owner of the album or are the rightful owner, log on to the hotel's website at www.laurelpoint.com to see some photographs of the album and contact staff.



'The trail is stone cold, so we thought we would try to experiment with social media.'

Inn at Laurel Point manager Scott Hoadley.

Left: One of the photographs in the Album, taken at Argyll House and identifying JTS and Jessie, who are enjoying their first motorcycle.

The Paradox launch new mini-album at BA Club

FORT William-based metal/punk combo The Paradox will launch their new mini-album 'F*** Your Comfort Zone' in the BA Club on Saturday night.

Local bands Russian Ninjas and We are Soul also feature on the bill as special guests.

BBC Radio 1 has already featured

three songs from the new EP and given the band a slot on air in a 'lethal' live session. The Fort boys have played King Tut Wah Wah Hut in Glasgow three times and have been chosen for BBC Radio 1's free download feature twice. Rock Radio has also given the band airtime - alongside Metallica, ACDC and Iron Maiden.

Local Producers Market

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The cast of Spotlight Musical Theatre's 'Guys and Dolls'.

Broadway comes to Oban

PACKED audiences at the Corran Halls were transported back to 1940's New York for Spotlight Musical Theatre Group's latest all-singing, all-dancing spectacular production of the musical 'Guys and Dolls'.

The show, inhabited by a cast of gangsters, dancing girls and Salvation Army-like missionaries, is chock full of memorable songs and side-splitting comic set pieces and Spotlight rose to the occasion to deliver an evening of great entertainment.

Oban librarian Kevin Baker was fabulous as Nathan Detroit whose exploits, in trying to organise an illicit dice game without his long standing fiancée Adelaide finding out, form the core of the story.

Miss Adelaide was delightfully and hilariously captured by Morven Wright in a part that she took on halfway through rehearsals when the original actress had to pull out. To raise some vital funds Nathan bets fellow gangster Sky Masterson that he can't get the leader of the missionaries, the buttoned up Sarah Brown, to accompany him to Havana.

Sky, winningly played by Ian Henry, manages to charm Sarah, the super Kate McGregor, into the trip and, after a few cocktails, her inhibitions begin to break down, the couple fall in love and the evening moves towards a suitably happy ending.

There were excellent comedy moments throughout especially from the hapless gangster trio of Nicely Nicely, Benny and Rusty Charlie (fantastic performances from

John Robinson, Michael Wall and Calum Thomson) and Big Jule commandingly and comically played by Roddie MacEachern.

There were many strong supporting roles including Fiona Brydon as General Cartwright, Lesley Duncan as Agatha and Bill Matthews as Harry the Horse. Special mention too for Mike Rowell who played several parts in the show including scene stealing turns as an effervescent night club announcer and a rumba dancing cocktail waiter.

As usual the singing in a Spotlight show, under the musical direction of Kevin Baker, was of the highest standard with excellent part singing during the big chorus numbers (including a show-stopping, roof-raising 'Sit Down you're Rockin' the Boat' powerfully led by John Robinson's Nicely) and strong solos (particularly from Stuart Smith as Arvidie Abernathy).

Choreographer Louisa Hyde can also be proud of the spectacular dance numbers including a stunning 'Luck Be a Lady Tonight' from the (mostly) male cast and numerous dazzling turns from the marvellous 'Hotbox Dancing Girls'.

Costumes and sets looked great and Director Stephen Day had the nearly 40 strong cast members moving the whole show along at a cracking pace.

Congratulations to him and the whole of Spotlight for another wonderful night at the theatre.

As reviewed by 'Toastie'.

Beauty, Health and Well-being

Most women and some men fight a daily battle with unwanted hair growth on their faces and bodies. Areas that can be considered particularly troublesome are chin, upper lip, breast, abdomen, lower back and thighs.

Excess hair is far more common than you might think, since there is such a social stigma attached, we can go to great pains to remove or remove it. This is the reason that many women think they are the only ones with the problem, believing they are one of few instead of one of many.

So what can be done? First choice should be electrolysis, since tweezing and waxing can make the hair stronger, and IPL/laser has very unreliable results usually only making the hair softer. Electrolysis has been around for over 100 years, it is the only medically and scientifically proven method to remove hair permanently. The most advanced system on the market today is a new

generation epilator - Apilus Platinum Pure which uses an ultrarapid 27 MHz frequency twice as fast as any other unit, making hair removal faster and much more comfortable, indeed Apilus is referred to as gentle electrolysis.

Electrologist, Mairi Hawkes qualified in 1992 and became a member of the British Institute and Association of Electrolysis in 1993. Mairi grew up in the Oban area, though has been away for 20 years with the last 12 being

located in Sydney, where she opened Nicolson's Electrolysis Centre. 'I grew up in the Oban area, and probably like a lot of younger folk I looked forward to getting away and travelling. However now being a few years older!! I can appreciate this stunning location, and way of life. It is lovely to be nearer to my family.'

Mairi has now opened Argyll Electrolysis Centre in Connel Surgery. Consultations are confidential and free of charge, so whether it's just a few hairs on your chin or full legs Apilus electrolysis will help remove it gently and effectively. Facial capillaries, skin tags and milia (whiteheads) can also be successfully treated.

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gig argyll your essential guide to live music in argyll

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Thursday 17 March >	St Patrick Day Party
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Non members welcome £10 (£8) under 18 - free
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COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

An Comunn Gaidhealach MEUR CHRUACHAIN (Cruachan Branch)
Last CEILIDH of the winter season
Saturday, 19 March in Taymull Village Hall at 7.45pm
Oban High School Pipe Band • Gold Medalists Iain MacLean, Kirsteen Grant and Joy Dunlop • The Harpies - Ladies' Clarsach Group • Fuaim Ghlaschu Folk Group • Eilidh MacInnes Dancers
Fear an Taigh: John MacFarlane
At the Ceilidh the RNLI Royal Wedding Scroll will be available to sign and your donation to the RNLI gratefully accepted.
Admission £3.00 £2 for Members & Children 5-16yrs including Tea
A Warm Welcome Extended to All
(Funds collected promote The Gaelic Language, Music and Culture)

Oban Art Society
Demonstration by Ian Gowdie
Painting with mixed Media within a Pleasing Composition
Friday 18th March 2011 in The Lorn Resource Centre Soroba Road, Oban
7.30pm to 9.30pm
Visitors welcome

North Argyll House
Daffodil Tea
Glencruitten Church Centre
Thursday 24th March
2pm till 4pm
Admission by Donation
Baking Stall

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Meur Lochabair
SKYE CEILIDH DANCE
West End Hotel, Fort William
Saturday, March 26 @ 7.30pm
Singers: Calum Ross, Catriona Fair, Donald Murray, Rebecca MacDonald
Piper: Calum MacColl
Faire an Tigh: Alan Campbell
Guest: John Farquhar Munro MSP
Music: Robert Nairn Ceilidh Band
Admission £8

A Fundraising
SOUP LUNCH
In aid of
OBAN PIPE BAND
Oban Pipe Band Hall
Shore Street
Saturday 19th March
From 12 noon - 2pm
Admission £3
ALL WELCOME

Comunn Gàidhealach an Òbain
Local Interest Evening (in English)
Evening with **Duncan Bàn MacIntyre The Argyll Bard**
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Roddy MacLeod
Singer: Calum Ross
Free Church Hall
Friday 18th March, 2011 at 7.30pm

DAFFODIL TEA
Rockfield School
Saturday 26 March
10am - 12 noon
Entry Adults £2
Children £1
Teas, Coffee, Homebaking, stalls, face painting, competitions
Everyone welcome

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Make do and mend

WHAT at first appears to be a good news story - the benefits to Argyll brought by the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) - in fact masks deeper concerns of those at the institution.

In a report commissioned by the UHI and carried out by consultants Biggar Economics to gauge the impact of the university, we are told Argyll is £26 million better off for having it here. Some 350 jobs are supported as well.

So far so good. But not good enough.

College principal and vice-chancellor James Fraser is out with the begging bowl, asking for a greater share of public funding 'to generate the academic and financial strength to grow our activities'.

While there can be no doubt the presence of the UHI in Oban and elsewhere in Argyll can only be of benefit to the area, the university, in common with all other publically funded bodies, must surely rein in its ambitions in these straitened times.

Do you feel lucky...?

IT'S not exactly Dirty Harry, but fed up community councillors are literally gunning for speeding motorists.

The village is not convinced drivers are doing an average 31mph along the main A85 - so have bought their own speed gun to carry out their own survey. The results should be interesting.

GLASGOW LETTER

GG concert

GLASGOW Gaelic Musical Association - the GG - took to the stage as part of the annual concert season of the city's Gaelic choirs.

As in the past few years, it continued with the format of informality which has served it well. There was a large attendance in Partick Burgh Hall to hear selections from the whole choir, the ladies and the male voice with the successful selections from last year's National Mod again being performed.

Soloists were Donald Iain Brown, Eilidh Davies, Fiona MacIntosh and Ruairidh MacIntyre and accordion selections were played by choir member Iain MacInnes at the start of both halves.

During the concert, choir members sang verses of some old favourites to allow audience participation during the chorus and this was well received.

With two choir concerts now completed, and two successes, it is now down to the Govanites to complete the hat-trick.

Local association ceilidhs

AS WELL as having to cope with a general decline in attendances, Clydebank Highlanders and Comunn Taobh an Iar had additional problems for their respective March ceilidhs.

For the 'Bankies' there was the clash with the above mentioned GG concert and for those in Milngavie it was the severely inclement weather.

Despite this both managed to have enjoyable evenings.

I had the pleasure of chairing the Clydebank concert which featured piper Andrew Caulfield, singers Mary C MacLean, Isla MacVean, Alasdair Whyte and singer/fiddler Satunum McIlroy.

Alasdair also sang in Milngavie where he was joined by Iain MacLean, Kirsteen MacDonald and Linda MacLeod, accordionist Robert Nairn and piper Graham Richardson in an excellent programme.

Next up for Clydebank is its final ceilidh on Friday, April 8, in Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick, which is its charity evening for Erskine Hospital.

Piping competition

AT THE Uist and Barra Piping Competition held last weekend in the College of Piping, principal prizewinners were Iain Spiers in the Ceol Mor and Niall Stewart in the Ceol Beag and Puirt Cruinn.

Census 2011

SO THAT a true record of Gaelic speakers is recorded, special attention should be paid to questions 16 and 18 on the

forthcoming return form as this will impact on proposals for the development of the language.

Gaelic at Stow College

THE COLLEGE is currently undergoing a review of the timetables for its Gaelic classes and is asking any interested party to complete the questionnaire which can be found at www.surveymonkey.com/s/NJ2VPTH.

Govan Choir concert

AFTER an absence of a few years it is pleasing to see that the annual concert of Govan Gaelic Choir will take place in the Gaelic School on Wednesday March 23 at 7.30pm.

I am sure the choristers and their conductor Donald Feist will be keen to perform at the level which resulted in success at last year's National Mod.

East Kilbride Mod

THE SYLLABUS is now available for the local Mod to be held in East Kilbride on Friday June 3 and Saturday June 4.

To obtain a copy please contact Peggy Darroch, telephone 01355 26067.

Diary dates

Thursday March 17: Live at the Star, St Andrew's in the Square, 8pm, Anarkali.

Saturday March 19: Highlander's Club Dance, Partick Burgh Halls, 8pm, Mhairi Coultts Trio.

Wednesday March 23: Govan Choir concert - see above. Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Traditional Students Concert, arranging and composing songs, 7.30pm.

Thursday March 24: Live at the Star, St Andrew's in the Square, 8pm, Eddie Walker/Fraser Spiers.

Friday March 25: Glasgow Sky Association Youth Concert, Partick Burgh Hall, 7pm. Uist and Barra Association Ceilidh Dance, Crawford Hall, Beith Street, Partick, 9pm to 1am.

Saturday March 26: Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association Ceilidh, Partick Burgh Hall, 7.45pm. Clann Gaidhlig Gaelic Day, University of West Scotland, 10am. Hallaig, Tolbooth, Stirling, 1.30pm.

Pub scene

NORRIE MacIver will be playing in the Islay Inn on Friday with Crooked Reel on Saturday while in the Park Bar it will be Gunna Sound on Saturday and Sunday with Willie Cameron on Friday.

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

YOUR LETTERS

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not be printed. Please write or fax to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Fax: 01631 568001. Email editor@obantimes.co.uk.

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WE AT The Oban Times do our utmost to make sure that all our reports are fair, accurate and balanced, but we accept that, on occasion, mistakes can occur in the hectic process of producing the biggest local newspaper in the West Highlands. It is the policy of The Oban Times Group to correct any errors in print. If you find an error of fact on our pages please write to The Editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB giving your day-time telephone number where possible. This statement of policy will appear on this page every week along with any corrections or clarifications. The Oban Times adheres to the Press Complaints' Commission's Code of Conduct. The views expressed in The Oban Times are not necessarily those of this newspaper.



Lochaline, Morvern, in days gone by

This week's flashback photograph, submitted by an *Oban Times* reader, is of Lochaline, Morvern, in days gone by. We invite readers to send in flashback photographs. Please send prints to *The Oban Times*, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing their prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

Letters to the editor

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www.obantimes.co.uk

Telephone: 01631 568000
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What is a veteran?

Sir
During preparations for Lochgilphead Armed Forces Day, June 18 2011, it has become apparent that many ex-service personnel do not think of themselves as 'veterans'.

A veteran is anyone who has served their country and has a service number. The length of service and age of person is immaterial.

If any veteran does not have a veteran's badge please contact me and I can arrange for a form to be forwarded to you.

Betty Rhodick, 'Cruachan', 2 Bank Park, Lochgilphead, PA31 8NX.

Spotlight spot on with first class show

Sir,
As a member of the audience at Spotlight Musical Theatre Group's show 'Guys and Dolls' I would like to offer my congratulations to everyone concerned for an absolutely first class performance.

So much talent and enthusiasm was in evidence that nothing but success could be the outcome. Romance, comedy and good music all served to provide superb entertainment with excellent contributions by the four leads, namely Sky Masterson, played by Ian Henry, Sarah Brown, played by Kate MacGregor, Miss Adelaide, played by Morvern Wright and Nathan Detroit, played by Kevin Baker, in both very good singing and dialogue.

Much hard work, time and enthusiasm has obviously gone into this fairly long show, which called for each of the four principals to show their mettle.

Well done to them and the whole cast.
Elizabeth Mitchell, Fife.

How council funding is allocated

Sir,
In his letter last week, Councillor Freeman showed that he does not understand how funding is allocated to councils.

COSLA advises the Scottish Government, but it's the Scottish Government which takes the actual decision.

The SNP Government did not need to take COSLA's advice.

The decision to cut Argyll and Bute's grant by more than any other council in Scotland was taken by the SNP Government, not their advisers in COSLA.

Alan Reid MP, 95 Alexandra Parade, Dumoon, Argyll, PA23 8AL.

Constant correction required

Sir,
It was encouraging seeing the letter from Councillor George Freeman in last week's *Oban Times* so comprehensively and forensically tearing apart Alan Reid's attempts to excuse the role of Argyll and Bute's representative to COSLA, Lib Dem hopeful Alison Hay, in the matter of Argyll and Bute's grant

application from that body.

Mr Reid's desperation to absolve his own party's participation in central government actions and his regular ploy of laying blame on the Scottish Government for the level of cuts requires constant correction.

That is far better to be seen to be coming from an external, impartial and well-informed critic like Councillor Freeman.

Members of the present administration at Argyll and Bute Council will, in due course, have to answer for their own actions but is useful in the interim for a 'still small voice of calm' and for that we all owe thanks to George Freeman.

Kenneth MacColl, secretary, Argyll and Bute SNP.

Ombudsman in the spotlight

Sir,
From the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's published statistics for the years 2008-9 and 2009-10, 82 complaints were made to the Ombudsman against Argyll and Bute Council.

Also from the statistics, none of those complaints was upheld by the Ombudsman and reported on to the Scottish Parliament and the public.

The only case which was the subject of a formal report was that of a 'not upheld' complaint.

Whether or not the Ombudsman succeeded in delivering justice to Argyll and Bute Council users during those two years is far from clear.

Indeed, eight years after being established the Ombudsman's value to the Scottish people is increasingly being questioned.

Nine recent public petitions to the Scottish Parliament calling for a review of the effectiveness of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman were rejected on what appears to many to be little more than the untested assumption/hope that the Ombudsman is doing a good job.

In view of the Parliament's rejection of the calls for a review, the campaigning association Integrity4Scotland has undertaken to compile an independent report on the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and would welcome for possible inclusion in the report readers' accounts of their experiences - good or bad - of making complaints to the Ombudsman.

Anyone who wishes to help with this project may either write to me at the address below or email Secretary@Integrity4Scotland.org giving a brief outline of their case.

Arthur McFarlane, Mount Pleasant, Tarbert, Argyll, PA29 6TU.

Check your dictionary

McCaig

Sir,
McCaig should revisit his dictionary for the meaning of the words 'independent' and 'democracy'.

'Independent' means to stand alone as far as elections are concerned. Democracy does not mean of the party, for the party and by the party.

Little wonder we question SNH's support of aerial spraying while urging us to plant more wild flowers in the garden to protect bees, or the RSPB's slogan 'For Birds, For People, For Ever' when Scotland's hill farms, hill sheep,

and hill men are disappearing. **M V Armstrong, Clachan of Penninghame, by Baltersay, Newton Stewart, Galloway.**

Midway warning bad news for tourism

Sir,
I have just read an article in a news magazine headed 'If you're planning a trip to rural Scotland this summer you might want to think again'.

Apparently the harsh winter with heavy snow has acted as an insulating layer for midge larvae and midge attacks are set to be 800 times worse than usual.

Prepare to be 'bombarded' advises the researcher. Bad news for tourism. Good news for midge repellent manufacturers!

Rosalind Gordon, Rockmount, Glenruitten Road, Oban.

Engage with local people over cuts

Sir,
As spending cuts start to bite across the country, the Countryside Alliance has written to the leaders of all local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales.

Local authorities are currently setting their budgets for the next year and we have urged them to ensure that the unique needs of rural areas will not fall victim when the difficult financial decisions are taken.

Our message to local authorities is clear: engage with local people and respond to what they need. Any significant changes or cuts should be subject to genuine consultation.

The Countryside Alliance would like to see a more intelligent approach to service provision. This could include sharing resources with neighbouring authorities and making it possible to access local government services throughout the Post Office network.

Vibrant rural communities with a strong support network are too precious to lose and the Countryside Alliance campaigns vigorously to promote and defend them.

Local authorities are alive to the challenges of isolation and vulnerability that can affect many living in remote rural areas and we would hope that is reflected in the debates taking place in town halls across Britain.

Alice Barnard, Chief Executive, Countryside Alliance, 367 Kennington Road, London.

Kayak rescue thanks

Sir,
I understand *The Oban Times* ran a story recently about an incident I had when kayaking off Dunstaffnage.

I would like to thank those who saved me: the gentlemen on the coast, the Coastguard, ambulance, staff at Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital and the gentlemen who found my paddle, which had drifted a great distance from the spot of the incident.

I was truly lucky to have such helpful and brave people on that day and I thank them all greatly.
Christopher McCabe, 50 Longdale Crescent, Oban.



Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

AN RUD A CHÌ AN LEANABH 'S E NÌ AN LEANABH!
Sin firinn bunaitheach gach seòrsa teagais ach tha e cuideachd fìor nach iad leanabain a- mhàin a tha fo bhuaidh eisimpleir fheadhainn eile. Tha sin furasta gu leòr fhaicinn ann an caismeachdan fianais far am bheil mi-rìan aon neach ' sgapadh mar fhalaig agus mas eil fios agad dè tha tachairt, tha ùpraid a' dol. Chunnacas leithid sin ann an Lunnainn bho chionn dìreach beagan mhiosan nuair a bha na h-oileanaich a' togail fianais an aghaidh àrdachadh ann an cisean foghlaim. Agus an dèidh lèimhe, chunnacas màthair a' brathadh a mac fhèin airson rabhadh a thoirt dha daoine eile air mar a dh'fhaodadh e bhith air cuideigin a mharbhadh nuair a thig e inneal-smàlaidh bho mhullach togalach. Cha b' e droch dhùine a bha seo idir ach òganach a bh' air a bheò-ghlacadh le teas na h-ùpraid a bha ma thimcheall.

Tha an saoghal air a bhith air a bheò-ghlacadh leis na th' air a bhith a' tachairt as an Ear-mheadhanach is an slugh ann an dùthaich ma seach ag èirigh an aghaidh deachdaireachd agus riaghladh fòrmeartach. Tha muinntir dhùthchannan an iar a' guidhe soirbheachadh leis na daoine sin agus gum faigh iad riaghaltas democratach. Tha e cur uabhas oirnn gum biodh leithid Gaddafi a' murt a chuid dhaoine fhèin gus cumhachd a ghleidheadh agus tha sinn làn ionracas a thaobh chòirichean dhaoine a bhith beò ann an sìth gun gheur-leamhainn de sheòrsa sam bith.

Nach iongantach ma tha gum bheil uimhir de dhaoine "foghlamaichte" agus "glic" a' cur às an corp an aghaidh nam feadhainn a tha a' cronachadh luchd-stiùiridh agus cluicheadairean Rangers agus Celtic airson an cuid giùlain mi-rìanaid. Their iad nach eil an seo ach an teas a thig a' spòrs is nach eil cron ann. Chan eil ciall aig an argamaid sin nuair a chithear a' bhuaidh a th' aig an t-suidheachadh am measg a' mhòr-shluaigh agus ma tha ball-coise agus na sgiobaidhean mòra sin gu bhith dìleas dhan luchd-taice, tha còir aca eisimpleir sheasmhach shoilleir a thoirt an aghaidh gràin-cinnidh agus gràin-creideimh. 'S e nàrachadh a th' ann nach eil a h-aon seach aon aca air sin a dhèanamh fhathast! 'S e nàrachadh a th' ann cuideachd gum bheil pàrantan ag ionnsachadh gràin dhan cuid cloinne an lùib taic dha na sgiobaidhean ball-coise sin 's gun fhios aig dàrna leth nan inbheach sin carson a tha iad ga dhèanamh!

IT IS HYPOCRITICAL to condemn racial and religious discrimination elsewhere while tolerating perpetuation of idiotic prejudice and even hatred among Old Firm football fans. Thus far neither team has done much to tackle the mindless aggression on and off the field, and it is disheartening to hear otherwise rational people seek to play down disgraceful misbehaviour as merely the sort of sparks which sport generates. Peer example is a basic form of educating young and old, and it is critical that sports leaders and practitioners recognise this.

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

A view from the tower

by McCaig

'Who am I and who are you?'

NO, I'M not about to reveal my true identity.

I'm taking a look at the 'big business' that has grown up around tracing ancestors, seeking out where the family really comes from and, in a few cases, getting hot under the collar about apparent injustices that seemed to have happened to innocent crofters or tenant farmers or labourers who were treated as little more than chattels by 'nouveau riche' landlords or, even worse, by those who were lairds of some standing who wanted to acquire an enhanced status but didn't have the cash to do so.

Sheep gave a much better cash return when sold than the pittance of crofters' rents, with perhaps a bag of tatties thrown in, especially when times were hard and rents were paid late, or not at all. Those who wanted to become 'lairds' were prepared to pay for some pretty poor land and in many instances it was sold to them.

With this breaking up of the close family unit it depended on those left behind to keep up the ties of kinship across the seas to far flung parts of the world or, not to bother. Some did disregard those who endured terrible hardships to find a place to create a new homestead and make a living if they could. And, in a great many instances, were highly successful in so doing. Home sickness had to be banished from all but fleeting recollections and correspondence was rare. But, 'still the heart is Highland and we, in dreams, behold the Hebrides'. Those who emigrated have been successful and have time to wonder how those left behind are getting on and those who didn't go but are having a slightly easier life as the state assists with a minimum wage, a free health service and other benefits.

And there is time and ease of communications to assist searches for long-lost cousins - 42nd at least - but providing roots in 'the old country'.

Alistair Moffat and James F Wilson have just had published: 'The Scots A Genetic Journey' which is essential reading for anyone on the ancestor trail and why the letters 'DNA' now have a significant place in our vocabulary. If I tell you that 'DNA' stands for 'Deoxyribonucleic Acid you will appreciate why the letters are always used in references to this vital discovery. Anyone who is interested in tracing their ancestors should have this book as an essential tool in their hunt. It gives the basis on which to search for and understand the science of genetics. As the authors say: 'We have until recently overlooked the fact that an

almost limitless archive of history lies hidden inside our own bodies, and that the ancient story of Scotland is carried around with us.'

'The Scots A Genetic Journey' by Alistair Moffat and James F Wilson is published by Birlinn Books at £16.99.

'Who are our unemployed?'

IT IS said there are 2.5 million unemployed in Britain; it's not quite true as that figure includes what are said to be the 'unemployable' who are in most cases not to blame for their inability to work through physical or mental disability.

Nevertheless, if we accept that up to half a million people are not able to work that leaves two million who are officially 'looking for work'. Why is it then that the UK's largest supermarket chain are looking for potential managers in Slovakia? A Tesco spokesman explained 'it was not always possible to recruit trainees locally to fill the vacancies'. There is something wrong if we have this vast pool of those unable to get a job yet a major company seeking trainees and generally reckoned to be a 'fair and reasonable employer' cannot get people to work for them. Is it the case that no matter how much bluster may emanate from our coalition government the strictures of 'docked dole' and other 'punishments' are being ignored by our unemployed? According to Premier Cameron those not taking an offered job on three occasions are 'out of the benefits system. How come none of some two million will work as a trainee for Tesco and be allowed to get away with it?'

Is Sudoku an addictive drug?

AN EDINBURGH councillor is to be disciplined for trying to solve the latest conundrum to replace noughts and crosses and the Rubik's Cube - a Sudoku puzzle - while attending a committee meeting of Edinburgh Corporation.

He openly admitted to the 'offence' which took place during another seemingly futile meeting of a committee looking into how 'The Gathering' lost a lot of money for a considerable number of small companies who are the 'fall guys' for an event that was destined to lose money from its initiation. I don't blame the councillor but I do blame the First Minister for not seeing that those who lost money on an event demanded by him are paid in full.

McCaig

Western Isles social enterprise bags national award

A WESTERN Isles business is celebrating after being named Scotland's Social Enterprise Start Up of the Year.

Hebridean Chocolates, based on Stornoway and a subsidiary of Third Sector Hebrides, received the accolade at the Social Enterprise Scotland Awards 2011 last week.

The business helps bring people with learning difficulties into employment, firstly as clients, then as full time staff. Currently, nine clients work at the factory, with two of the eight full-time staff former clients.

While there is a dedication to producing top-quality products, the emphasis for the business is on helping as many clients as possible.

As winners, Hebridean Chocolates will receive up to £5,000 in business support advice and will go on to compete against winners from Wales, England and Northern Ireland at the UK grand final - Voice '11 - at the O2 in London on March 30.

Oban social enterprise, Soroba Training, was highly commended in the same category.

Manager of Hebridean Chocolates Anne Soby said: 'It's the result of a lot of hard work over the last few years.'

Hebridean Chocolates was established in April 2009 and started with just three members of staff.

It now turns over £120,000 per year and produces around one and a half tonnes of chocolate per month.

Mainly distributed and sold in the Western Isles, the company intend to 'export' more chocolates to the mainland, this year, also hoping to move into profitability within the next few months.

The main objective is the social aspect of the enterprise though. Anne said: 'One of the most important things about the business is the clients.'

'By the end of this year, we want to have capacity for 20 clients and support workers. 'It's the first thing in our mind,' she added.

Leader of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Angus Campbell said: 'To be recognised in this way, at a national level, is a fantastic achievement and highlights the excellent work taking place in our community. This only serves to demonstrate that this is a sustainable social business which has a positive impact on the economy and which also delivers community benefit through training, placements and employment.'

'I wish the company every success as it continues to develop and also wish them luck in the national awards.'

Firm directs its energy at expanding services

REPORT
by STEVEN FLANAGAN
sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk

BARCALDINE firm Renewables Now is hoping to expand rapidly after officially opening its new premises last week.

Argyll and Bute MSP, Energy and Business minister Jim Mather, dropped in to the newly renovated building at the Marine Resource Centre on Friday to cut the ribbon, with business partners Will Currie and Ann Rowan.

Watching on were those businesses that transformed the derelict building into a modern, efficient and renewably heated office space, as well as those firms that will work with the company in future to help install green energy sources to new builds and existing households.

Wreck
Will said: 'This building was a wreck. Now it's got new windows, looks the part and is heated with an air source heat pump.'

'During the construction, we were almost constraining ourselves to a smaller size; we had to get the groundwork right to be successful, without having to go back later and make revisions to the building.'

'We're now hoping to pick things up quite quickly.'

As well as giving potential customers a location to visit for impartial advice, Renewables Now will soon offer training courses to local architects, builders and other associated businesses on the benefits of renewable energy sources.

'It's about putting the right



Will Currie, left, and Ann Rowan of Renewables now at the opening of their new premises at Barcaldine's Marine Resource Centre with Energy and Business minister, Jim Mather. 15_111renew1

people together too so they can work in the same direction.

Unbiased
'Because we're independent, we also offer completely unbiased advice so people know, whether it's a business, builder or an end user, that the information we hand out isn't influenced by any supplier.'

Mr Mather said: 'This is important as it means more of pounds spent in Argyll and Bute

stay in Argyll and Bute. 'From a global perspective, we've got four major areas like America in the world now, who consume fuels and want computers and all the accoutrements that come with that. Over the next few decades, we'll have four more, all with a reliance on finite resources like oil.'

'In addition, when I was born, the world's population was

2.5 billion, by 2050 there will be 9 billion people.

'That's why renewable energy sources are so important. Spike
'From the local point of view, the vagaries in the market cause problems. Look at Libya, where the trouble is causing a massive spike in energy costs, which we see all too well when we go to the petrol pumps.'

'Renewable energy sources

bring a stability to those costs and that will be increasingly important in the future.'

Will said: 'I'd like to thank everyone, both existing customers for their patience through this period of development, and everyone who has helped us out.'

'There's been a lot of hard work here, a lot of favours and good will and it is very much appreciated.'

Prince's Trust marks achievements of young entrepreneurs

VOLUNTEERS of the Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust (PSYBT) gathered in Oban last week to celebrate the achievements of young businessmen and women in the area.

Delegates had the opportunity to network with other businesses and discuss ways to progress their collective businesses at the event, held at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls.

Speakers included the regional chairperson Murdo McLean, regional manager Sharita Padaruth and head of operations Geoff Leask.

Valuable
Sharita said: 'Basically, the event gives a chance for the volunteers to get together and for us to thank them for their efforts.'

'The businesses gather too so they can see how valuable their help is, and for businesses to help network and help each other out.'

'We were very pleased with the event and the turnout.'

One of the more interested guests was Michael Forbes, of Forbes Boat Care, in Barcaldine. It was thanks to grants from the PSYBT that he has been able to start his own business and make it

the success it is today. Describing itself as 'the original boat babysitting service', Michael will check on the condition of boats moored in Argyll throughout the season, also carrying out repairs, services and replacements when necessary.

The business has established quite a reputation and is growing in popularity all the time.

Grateful
Michael, who is now 30, is grateful to PSYBT for its help, from the very first year of the business in 2005.

He said: 'I came back from travelling as a graduate engineer, but there wasn't much call for that then in the area.'

'I described myself as self employed and started working away.'

'I started looking at getting some equipment though and that's when PSYBT helped me out.'

'The first £1,000 came at the right time and it gave me the opportunity to expand at a good rate.'

'I then received growth funding in 2009 to help buy a shop.'

'I've also received support and advice every couple of months which was a great help.'



The main speakers at last week's meeting at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls, from left: Michael Forbes, Sharita Padaruth, Murdo McLean and Geoff Leask. 15_111psybt1

Seminar will focus on benefits of renewables

PROPERTY owners and landlords in and around Oban are being invited to a seminar in Dunbeg this month on how to benefit from renewable energy.

The event, organised by land agents Bell Ingram, is designed to cut through the confusion surrounding small scale renewable schemes and microgeneration projects.

Hundreds of pubs, hotels, guesthouses, farms and private

estates are eligible for lucrative government incentives to produce sustainable energy from wind, hydro, biomass, anaerobic digestion and solar schemes.

The seminar will be held at the Scottish Association for Marine Science's base at Dunstaffnage, led by microgeneration consultants Nigel Benson and Joe Fergusson. Additional advice will be provided by Ian Clark of the Clydesdale Bank's AgriBusiness

department. The event will cover three main areas; taking advantage of feed in tariffs, funding for wind and hydro microgeneration and renewable heat incentive schemes.

Paul Nicoll, director for Bell Ingram's Oban division, said: 'The drive towards renewable energy is showing no signs of abating.'

'I believe this region has great scope to contribute in a major

way to the rural renewables revolution.'

Attendees at the event will have the chance of winning a pre-feasibility survey, through which experts can determine if a planned renewables project is viable.

The seminar will be held on Tuesday March 22 from 12.30pm-2.30pm, at the Scottish Association for Marine Sciences (SAMS) in Oban.

Luxury accommodation boost for visitors to Iona

IONA'S tourism will receive a boost this spring as two new luxury properties open their doors thanks to £400,000 of funding from Bank of Scotland.

Less than a five-minute walk from the world famous Iona Abbey sits Ardoran House, which offers bed and breakfast accommodation with a spa and the Ardbeg, a self-catering lodge for parties of up to 10, complete with an outdoor hot tub.

Both properties were built and are owned and operated by Iona-based firm Gordon Grant Limited. The project was made possible with the support of the funding package from Bank of Scotland. Both are the first new major tourist accommodation to be built on Iona for a decade.

The company was established in 1971 by Helen and Gordon Grant but is now operated and managed by their daughters Sheila, Catriona and Eilidh.

The family has lived and worked on Iona for generations and are well known within the community, thanks to the number of businesses they run there, including a restaurant and two shops.

Sheila said: 'Iona is an enchanting, magical, special place with 140,000 people visiting each year. This is an exciting project that further enhances the island's tourist offering.'

'There has been a real lack of luxury accommodation for tourists to stay on this amazing island, with many people visiting for the day, but unable to find a place to stay during peak summer season.'

'The buildings that were previously on site had been used as a smaller self-catering block that weren't up to the standards that Iona now needs to attract people.'

'We have replaced them with high quality bed and breakfast and self-catering accommodation with the most wonderful views over the Sound of Mull and spa.'

'The investment is really working and I've been delighted with the level of interest and enquires received so far.'

Craig McNaughton, West of Scotland Area Director for Bank of Scotland Commercial, said: 'The two new places to stay give the Iona economy a welcome boost and are sure to bring in new visitors to the island in 2011 and beyond.'

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Oban sale cattle average rises 4p per kilo as hoggets sell to £90

CALEDONIAN Marts (Stirling) Ltd had forward 121 store cattle, 37 young bulls, breeding and OTM cattle, plus 738 sheep at Oban Livestock Centre.

Bullocks averaged 170p (+6p) and sold to 198p per kg for a 220kg Aberdeen Angus from Snishival, South Uist and £685 for a 440kg Simmental from Blargour, Dalmally.

Heifers averaged 163p (+2p) and sold to 171p per kg (twice) for a 360kg Charolais from Balliemeanach, Dalmally and Upper Largie and £615 for a 360kg Charolais from Balliemeanach, Dalmally.

Bulls averaged 144p and sold to 155p per kg for a 220kg Aberdeen Angus from Snishival, South Uist and £470 for a 340kg Simmental from Stroneskar, Lochgilphead.

Hoggs sold to £90 for Texels from Barguilean, Taynuilt while feeding ewes sold to £126 for Suffolks from Tiraghail, Isle of Mull.

Tups sold to £102 for a Suffolk from Achnacreemore, North Connel.

Prime sheep trade still rising

UNITED Auctions sold 7,627 prime sheep including 5,992 hoggs averaging 196p/kg (+7.5p) and 1635 ewes and rams at Stirling last Thursday Texel lambs from Newton Of Collesie and Suffolks from Old Mill sold to £130, with Cheviots from Guardswell to £109.50. Ewes sold to £136 for Suffolks from Oldmill and Texels from Connachan.

Bracken spraying chemical gets reprieve from EC ban

WEST coast farmers and conservation groups have breathed a collective sigh of relief after the European Commission withdrew a proposal to ban Asulam.

However, the controversial motion to prohibit use of the chemical – the only known treatment for bracken that can be sprayed from the air – could yet come back to the table, despite a blocking minority of six member states prompting a turnaround by the commission.

The National Farmers' Union Scotland (NFUS), supported by bodies such as Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Government, DEFRA, and Scottish MEPS George Lyon and Struan Stevenson, say they are delighted at the reprieve, but will continue to campaign for the proposal to be permanently dropped.

Marketed as Asulox, the chemical targets bracken and dock without harm to other species of flora

or fauna – except some other types of fern – when sprayed from the air. The EC's concerns centre on the potential side effects of using the chemical on spinach.

Oban agricultural consultant with the Scottish Agricultural College, Niall Campbell, is keeping his fingers crossed that a workable solution can be found.

He said: 'I suppose for the west coast it's back to business as usual. It allows farmers to try and

manage their ground to the best of their ability.

'I hope the EC see common sense at the end of the day.

'There's no problem in using the chemical to treat bracken so you would think that, if there is potential for problems with spinach, there could be a selective ban.

'There are certain products that are banned for use on certain crops so you'd think they could do the same here.'

NFU Scotland vice-president, John Picken, said: 'It may well be a temporary reprieve, but it is certainly a welcome step in the right direction.

'Farmers and land managers attempting to control bracken value Asulam highly, and we appreciate the additional time to apply pressure for its retention.

'Asulam is in widespread use within the UK, particularly for the purpose of bracken and dock

control, and the removal of it from the market would be a real blow to those using it as a method to control the rampant spread of bracken. Asulam is particularly important to those living in areas where bracken is dense and would, without the product, overtake crucial grazing land.

At this point we've bought some time, we need to keep up the pressure to ensure the product continues to be licensed for use.'

Market reports

ISLAY United Auctions

Bullocks
Aberdeen AngusX: £710(5) Craigens £700(10) Aoradh £700(8) Craigens £690 Knockkrome £660(8) & £650(8) Craigens £645 Ardarnal £635(10) Craigens.
British Blue X: £915 Ardbeg £795(3) Starchmill £710 Ardbeg £680 Starchmill £660(2) Dunlossit Estate. Charolais X: £840, £835(2) & £830(2) Aoradh £820(8) Brybruech £805(3) Aoradh £800(17) Eorrabus £760 & £755(7) Aoradh £700(2) Eorrabus £690(4) Aoradh £650(3) Eorrabus £635 & £620 Carrabus £615 & £600(2) Aoradh.
LimousinX: £940 Kilchiaran £920 Ardbeg £875 Tallant £855 Kilchiaran £845 Brybruech £830 Neriby £820 Ardbeg £800 Starchmill & Ardbeg £785 Lossit £765 Eorrabus £760 Brybruech £755 Starchmill & Aoradh(3) £750 (7) Eorrabus £740(9) & £735(9) Aoradh £735 Ardbeg (2) & Eorrabus (4) £730(7) Ardbeg £725 Lossit £700 Ardbeg, Lossit(2) & Eorrabus £695 Ardbeg £685 Aoradh (9), Tallant (2), Dunlossit Estate (3) & Neriby (3) £675(9) Eorrabus £660(5) Dunlossit Estate £655 Mulindry(3) & Carrabus £645 Aoradh(6), Eorrabus(3), Grul-

inbeg & Lossit(5) £635 Ardbeg(3) & Dunlossit Estate(11) £630(2) Starchmill £625 Ardbeg(7) & Neriby(2) £620(9) Dunlossit Estate £615 Carrabus £605(5) Aoradh £605 Ballytarsin £600 Aoradh. MontbeliardEX £775 Brybruech SimmentalX: £865 & £795 Kilchiaran.
Heifers
Aberdeen AngusX £555(2) Ardarnal British Blue X: £690 Neriby £565 Ardbeg.
Charolais X: £915 Eorrabus £810(2) Aoradh £735(4) Brybruech £720(4) Eorrabus £695(5), £690(7), £675(3) & £630(8) Aoradh.
LimousinX: £850 Eorrabus £795(2) Kilchiaran £765(2) Lossit £745 Starchmill £740 Ardbeg & Kilchiaran £725 Kilchiaran £690 Aoradh & Neriby(2) £675(3) Eorrabus £670 (3) Ardbeg £660 Tallant £655(4) Neriby £645 Ardbeg(5) & Lossit £635(6) Dunlossit Estate £625 Starchmill £615(4) Neriby £610 Ardbeg(4) & Eorrabus(4).
Breeding cattle
In-calf heifers £900 Knockkrome
Prices per kilo
Bullocks
Aberdeen Angus X: 186p(10) Aoradh 183p(2) Calumkill. British Blue X: 201p Ardbeg 184p Starchmill(3) & Dunlossit Estate(2). Charolais X: 213p(4) Aoradh

210p(4) Calumkill 209p & 205p Carrabus 199p(3), 198p(9), 192p(2) & 190p(2) Aoradh.
LimousinX: 203p(7) Ardbeg 202p(9) Dunlossit Estate 200p(9) Aoradh 198p Ardbeg 194p (5) Carrabus 193p(9) & 192p(9) Aoradh 192p(7) Ardbeg 190p Starchmill. SimmentalX: 210p(3) Calumkill.
Heifers
British Blue X: 197p Ardbeg Charolais X: 222p(2) Aoradh 204p(4) & 196p Calumkill 195p(3) & 190p(7) Aoradh.
LimousinX: 223p & 197p Ardbeg 195p Sarchmill 191p(3) –Ardbeg. SimmentalX: 204p & 196p(4) Calumkill.
OBAN Caledonian Marts (Stirling) Ltd
Bullocks: 0-250kgs - £460 Turnault, 198p Snishival; 251-300kgs - £580 Balliemeanach, 193p Balliemeanach; 301-350kgs - £615 Lurginish, 189p Upper Largie; 351-400kgs - £645 Ballymeanach, 175p Snishival; 401-450kgs - £685 Blarghour, 156p Blarghour.
Heifers: 0-250kgs - £385 Knockvoalagan, 157p Knockvoalagan, 251-300kgs - £460 Annat, 159p Upper Largie;

301-350kgs - £590 Upper Largie, 171p Upper Largie; 351-400kgs - £615 Balliemeanach, 171p Balliemeanach.
Sheep
Hoggs: Cheviot: £82 Cailaich; Blackface: £78 Soroba; Suffolk: £88 Ardshellach; Mule: £71 Creich; Continental £77 Achavaich; Texel £74 Keepers Park.
Ewes: Texel: £100 Inion; Mule: £80 Clonaig; Cheviot: £78 Shenavallie; Cross: £76 Lagganulva; Greyface: £70 Strongorm.
Tups: Suffolk £100 Creich; Texel: £80 Rhuilios; Cheviot: £76 Dunmore; Blackface: £56 Creich.
DINGWALL Dingwall and Highland Marts
Lambs: Suffolk: Lentrin, Inverness, £86; TexelX: 5 Ordan, Spinningdale, £86; Cheviot: 199 Lednairichen, Dornoch, £84; Blackface: Moy Mains, Tomatin, £78.50; SuffolkX: Easter Rarichie, Tain, £77; Cross: Wester Cairnglass, Nairn, £67.

In lamb ewes: Cheviot 24 Borve, £110; Cross: 4 Edinbane, Portree, £82; TexelX: 4 Edinbane, £79; Mule: 116 Birch Drive, Maryburgh, £78.
In lamb gimmers: Cross: 4 Edinbane, £89; TexelX: 4 Edinbane, £80; Blackface: 24 Borve, £70.
Ewes: CharollaisX: Meikle Geddes, £110; Cross: Lentrin, £109; Suffolk: Greenfield, Invergarry, £106; TexelX: Borowston Mains, £103; Texel: Lentrin, £100; HalfBred: Viewhill Croft, £100; Bluefaced Leicester: Lentrin, £98; SuffolkX: Lairgandour, Daviot, £94; Cheviot: Wester Moy, Urray, £91; Mule: Wester Cairnglass, £89; Blackface: Lairgandour, £72.
Widders: Cross: Dalchork, Lairg, £136; SuffolkX: 42 Bernisdale, Skeabost Bridge, £112; Cheviot: 27 Portgower, Helmsdale, £95; Mule: Wester Cairnglass, £78; TexelX: Gateside, Alves, £72.
Rams: Cheviot: Ardchronie, Ardgay, £106; Texel: Wester Cairnglass, £96; Zwarbles: Moy Mains, £83; Charollais: Wester Cairnglass, £70.

Ardbeg Limousin heifers sell to 223p per kilo in Islay

UNITED Auctions held their annual early Spring sale of all classes of cattle at Islay Auction Mart last Saturday when 578 head were sold.

Bullocks averaged 176pence per kilo or £659 per head whilst heifers averaged 171pence per kilo or £585 per head.

In keeping with current mainland trends these values reflect a decrease on last year's high levels.

Bullocks sold to £940 for Limousin crosses from Kilchiaran and heifers sold to £915 for Charolais crosses from Eorrabus.

Ardbeg led the prices per kilo when their Limousin heifers sold to 223pence and Aoradh led the bullock prices per kilo when their Charolais crosses sold to 213pence.

Breeding cattle from Knockkrome, Isle of Jura sold to £900.

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Heavy snow returned to the west coast last weekend resulting in increased pressure to ensure that all types of livestock received adequate levels of feeding. With many flocks on the verge of lambing, sheep farmers will be keeping a close eye on the weather forecast over the next few weeks.

New online guide to conservation

FARMERS managing protected nature conservation areas can now access a new online guide to their responsibilities and funding sources. Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) produced the guide, entitled 'Farming, SSSIs and Natura sites', in collaboration with the National Farmers' Union of Scotland (NFUS). It is now available on both the SNH and NFUS websites.

The guide is for farmers in Scotland who own, tenant or manage land that is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) or Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It summarises the requirements of farmers in relation to protected areas as well as sources of funding for conservation management.

Stewart Pritchard, policy and advice manager with SNH, said: 'Many farmers across Scotland are keenly involved and take pride in managing important nature conservation sites.'

'It is important that they have access to the right information and that the right help is available to them to do this effectively. That is what this new guide is there for. We hope many farmers will find it useful in making them aware of the expectations associated with managing these sites. Equally it lets them know about funding that may be available to help cover the costs of any additional conservation management.'

Further information: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/C280938.pdf> and <http://www.nfus.org.uk/uploads/Files/Campaigns/SNH.pdf>.

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RECRUITMENT

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

We are currently recruiting for the following vacancies located at our Marine Site on the Island of Mull:

Senior Marine Operatives (Ref SMO/SM/11/03-A)
(Salary £21,630 to £24,720 per annum dependant on experience)

The ideal candidate will have experience in fish husbandry and have the capability to lead a small team in the day-to-day operations. This position would suit someone who is self-motivated, with good communication and organisational skills and be able to demonstrate prior experience in working within a small, focused team in a constantly changing and challenging environment. They should also have a good understanding of Health and Safety requirements and the awareness of environmental issues. Experience of aquaculture and boat handling is essential for this post, the Company can also offer further development opportunities. Applicants should also have good IT Skills.

Marine Operatives (Ref MO/SM/11/03-B)
(Salary £15,965 to £19,570 per annum dependant on experience)

The ideal candidate will be enthusiastic, self-motivated, have good communication skills and be able to demonstrate prior experience of working within a small, focused team in a constantly changing and challenging environment. Previous aquaculture and boat handling experience is desirable but not essential as the company will also offer further development opportunities through its in-house training and also through external providers.

Working hours are normally 40hrs per week Monday to Friday, with weekend working required on a rota basis. Overtime is paid at enhanced rates.

A full, clean driving licence is also essential for both these positions.

In return, the Company offers a comprehensive pay and benefits package including entry into the Company Pension Scheme after the qualifying period.

For an application form and job description, please contact:
HR Department, Ardkinglas Estate, Cairndow, Argyll, PA26 8BH.
Tel. No. 01499 600 435 Email: cairndowhr@scottishsalmon.com
Closing date for applications: 5.00pm Friday, 25th March, 2011
Visit our website at www.scottishsalmon.com

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

We are currently recruiting for a key individual to assist with the management of our Processing Plant at Cairndow in Argyll:

Plant Processing Assistant Manager (A/PROC/CW/004)
(Salary £23,000 - £26,600 per annum dependant on experience, based on a 40 hour week)

The ideal candidate must have knowledge and proven experience of working within the food processing industry, which will include having several years' practical experience. You will be required to support the Plant Processing Manager, in all aspects of the day to day running operations of the department efficiently and effectively. In addition to co-ordinating product processing, packing, dispatch and supervision and maintenance of all equipment within your area of control, the successful applicant will assist in all aspects of staff management to ensure that the processing process is carried out to the highest of hygiene and quality standards ensuring best practice as well as customer satisfaction is reached. The candidate will have good management skills, able to demonstrate team leadership and interpersonal skills, with strong IT, communication and organisational skills are all important for this position, as is the ability to work well within the existing team. Applicants will have the ability to problem solve, motivate staff therefore achieving the best results through applying your leadership skills and abilities to manage a large already existing team successfully.

A full, clean driving licence is also essential for this position.

In return, the Company offers a comprehensive pay and benefits package.

For an application form and job description, please contact:
HR Department, Ardkinglas Estate, Cairndow, Argyll, PA26 8BH.
Tel. No. 01499 600 435 Email: cairndowhr@scottishsalmon.com
Closing date for applications: 5.00pm Friday, 25 March, 2011
Visit our website at www.scottishsalmon.com

Part time carer required for elderly lady in Tarbert
Telephone
07590 751679
email
e.r.m.stuckey@googlemail.com

ACHA
Argyll community housing association
Community Support Assistant (2 posts)
Caledonia Court, Ardrishaig (7hrs) and Lochgair Place, Tarbert (5hrs)
Can either be two separate posts or combined to one £15,399-£17,111 (pro rata)
To apply visit our website at www.acha.co.uk;
Tel 01546 604098 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk
Closing Date: 12 noon Friday 1st April 2011
Interviews for these posts will be held in April 2011

Childcare and Education Worker – Temporary
£19,271 - £20,457 (Pro Rata)
17.5 hrs per week
Pre Five Unit
01369 708546
Arinagour Primary School
Ref: CSE30980
Argyll & Bute COUNCIL
Closing date: 1 April 2011.
To apply visit our website
www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs

Argyll & Bute Community Health Partnership
NHS Highland
Kintyre Locality
Maintenance Craftsperson Engineer (Fitter), Band 4 with RRP
£18,152 - £21,798 per annum
37.5 hours per week
Campbeltown Hospital
The Maintenance Craftsperson will be required to assist, through the Estates Operational Officer, in the provision of a reliable, responsive and cost effective maintenance programme for the Hospitals and Healthcare Premises owned and operated by NHS Highland Argyll & Bute CHP. The post is based at Campbeltown Hospital and covers the Kintyre & Islay area.
You will have completed a full term apprenticeship in an appropriate mechanical engineering or plumbing trade. Ideally you should possess a City & Guilds certificate or approved equivalent with appropriate experience in estates maintenance and installations.
Experience of all types of mechanical and plumbing works with experience of multi skilled working is desirable as well as the proven ability to work as part of a small team. An ability to communicate with all levels of hospital operations staff is required.
A working knowledge of Office Systems and Computerised Maintenance Management Systems is desirable. A current clean drivers licence is essential. You must live within 30 minutes of Campbeltown to participate with the Estates Emergency On-call rota.
Informal enquiries to: Mr Kevin Willan, Estates Officer, Tel: 01546 60604.
Application packs are available from HR Department, NHS Highland, Argyll & Bute CHP, Aros, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8LB - Tel: 01546 606788 (24 hour answering service) or Email: recruitment.ab@nhs.net
Please quote the appropriate job reference.
The closing date: 1 April 2011.
www.nhs.uk

marineharvest
excellence in seafood
COOK
(25 hours per week)
We currently have a vacancy for a cook within our Blar Mhor Processing Plant in Fort William.
The main duties of the applicant will be to prepare meals and snacks, plan menus, monitor budgets, control & order stock and general canteen duties such as clearing tables and stocking machines. Applicants must possess an Elementary Food Hygiene certificate.
The successful candidate will be required to work 25 hours per week on a rotational basis Monday to Saturday.
If you are interested in this post, please apply in writing to: Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Manager, Marine Harvest (Scotland) Limited, Business Resource Centre, Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 7PT no later than Friday 25th March 2011.

Workshop Assistant / Tyre Fitter
required to assist with maintenance of Commercial Vehicles & Trailers at Darloch/Cairnbaan Depot (possibility of apprenticeship)
Please contact :-
Peter McKerral & Co Ltd
Darloch Yard, Kilkenny, By Campbeltown, PA28 6NT
Please apply in writing to above address, or Telephone: 01586 820 258
Mobile: 07717 531 242

Lochgilphead Golf Club requires an experienced grounds person to assist with the maintenance of the golf course. Technical experience, in particular working on golf greens will be an advantage.
The post is part time minimum, 12 hours per week.
Salary is negotiable depending on experience
Contact John Downie 01546 606531 (evenings)

ASSISTANT MANAGER LAGA BAY
Salary – £23,283 - £25,400 plus overtime
Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd is currently seeking a highly motivated and strong individual for the post of Assistant Manager at our Seawater site at Laga Bay.
Applications are invited from individuals who are genuinely interested in developing their career within the organisation. Potential candidates should have at least two to three years practical knowledge and experience of fish farming. Initiative, the ability to manage and motivate personnel, good planning, organisation & computer skills and a proven ability to achieve results without close supervision are some of the necessary skills required for this post.
The successful candidate will be expected to attend the necessary training courses to gain sufficient knowledge on feed & stock management, harvest & grading planning, asset management, performance and HSEQ management.
If you consider yourself to have the commitment, enthusiasm, willingness and underlying capability to become a Manager then please apply in writing, no later than 31st March 2011 to: Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Manager, Marine Harvest (Scotland) Limited, Business Resource Centre, Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William PH33 7PT.

CONTRACTS ADMINISTRATOR
Fixed Term Appointment (maternity cover) for 8 months
Clerical Grade 3/4 (£16,750-£22,126)
We currently have a vacancy for a Contracts Administrator who will assist with the administration of contracts at The Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS).
The Contracts Administrator will have a key role in delivery of the above-mentioned service. The main duties are to:
• Maintain an up to date archive of all contract information
• Liaise with scientists and finance staff to ensure all relevant project information is collected
• Assist with submissions of routine financial information to funders
Good numerical and communication skills are essential, as is the ability to manage your workload, meet tight deadlines and work quickly and accurately.
For a full job description and to apply for this job online, go to: www.sams.ac.uk. Alternatively, please write to: Human Resources, Contracts Administrator, Job Ref D13/10.DB, The Scottish Association for Marine Science, Scottish Marine Institute, Oban, Argyll PA37 1QA or e-mail recruitment@sams.ac.uk
The closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 1st April 2011
SAMS is a registered Scottish charity (SC 009206), has an equal opportunities policy and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Oban Times RECRUITMENT
Clark Thomson Insurance Brokers Limited
GENERAL INSURANCE BROKING
Clark Thomson Insurance Brokers Ltd have Offices throughout Scotland.
Due to continuing business growth, we require to recruit a self motivated and efficient person to join our small friendly team in Oban.
The ideal candidate for this post will possess good interpersonal skills, the ability to work in an organised efficient manner and be eager to develop a career within the Insurance Industry,
To apply, please forward your CV along with a covering letter in support of your application to:
Sally Turnbull
Office Manager
Clark Thomson Insurance Brokers Ltd
19 Airds Crescent
OBAN PA 34 5SJ
Email: sturnbull@clarkthomson.co.uk
Clark Thomson Insurance Brokers Ltd is regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Lynn of Lorne Care Home
PART OF ARGUS CARE GROUP.
Require the following
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Full /Part Time/Bank hours available.
And Experienced Bank Care Staff
Good rates of pay
You can contact Arlene Campbell, RGN, Manager on e-mail: lynnoflorne@arguscare.co.uk or phone 01631 720278 for more details.
Please also visit our website: www.arguscare.co.uk.

YOUR LOCAL PAPER
51% of people turn to their local newspaper first when looking for a new job.
Source: Recruitment Choice, The Newspaper Society 2006
Regional Press
closer to home

Oban Times Oban Times RECRUITMENT RECRUITMENT

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

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

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

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description	Alternative locations where application may be inspected
11/00424/FUL	Land 50m North East of Roshinish House Bollaichulish	Section 42 application to develop land without complying with Condition 5 of permission reference 10/00054/FULLO to erect a house; condition 5 being the improvement of visibility splay prior to works starting on site	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00660/FUL	Stanton Villa Annapoint Ardhalieu Fort William PH33 7NN	Extension to house	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00791/FUL	Land South West of 2 Ghan Ghorm Bollaichulish	Section 42 application to add condition 5 from planning reference 10/00054/FULLO (erection of house) onto 09/00143/OUTLO (demolition of 2 existing and erection of 2 replacement houses) - (improvement of visibility splay prior to works starting on site)	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00801/FUL	15B Grange Terrace Fort William PH33 6JQ	Alterations and extension to house	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00808/FUL	Lochaber Housing Association 30 Fassifern Road Fort William PH33 6XQ	Partial change of use (ground floor) to form cafe/drop-in centre and installation of oil tank	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: elplanning@highland.gov.uk

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

PLANNING
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Take notice that the applications in the following schedule may be inspected during normal office hours at Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR and the location detailed below between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and by logging to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications. Anyone wishing to make representations should do so in writing to Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR within 21 days of the appearance of this notice. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION PLANS
● Ref No: 11/00384/PP
Applicant: Mr And Mrs D M Fairbairn
Proposal: Erection of 15kw wind turbine (19.98 metres to blade tip)
Site Address: Land 200m North West Of Crossapoll House Isle Of Coll Argyll And Bute PA78 6TB
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Isle of Coll

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Applications for planning permission listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be examined at Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR and the location detailed below between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and by logging to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications. Written comments for the following list of applications may be made to Planning and Regulatory Services Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR by the 07/04/2011

● Ref No: 11/00272/PP
Applicant: Dr George Hannah
Proposal: Erection of two storey rear extension and formation of first floor balcony.
Site Address: Finlaggan Clachan Seil Isle Of Seil Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4TL
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

● Ref No: 11/00283/PP
Applicant: Mr Iain S Maclean
Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of new access.
Site Address: Land North West Of Achraconce Croft Appin Argyll And Bute PA38 4BA
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office, Ledaig

● Ref No: 11/00302/PP
Applicant: Mr Jeremy Armitage
Proposal: Change of use and alterations of former craft shop and workshop/storage to form dwellinghouse.
Site Address: Former Craft Shop/Workshop 3 Kenoway Isle Of Tiree Argyll And Bute PA77 6UJ
Location of Plans: Tiree Area Office

● Ref No: 11/00312/PP
Applicant: Mr and Mrs I Gibson
Proposal: Erection of extension to dwellinghouse
Site Address: Old Schoolhouse Glenironan Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 40E
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

● Ref No: 11/00358/PP
Applicant: Mr Neil Lamont
Proposal: Erection of detached garage
Site Address: Five Anchors House Balemartine Isle Of Tiree Argyll And Bute PA77 6UA
Location of Plans: Tiree Area Office

● Ref No: 11/00362/PPP
Applicant: Mr And Mrs A Piggott
Proposal: Site for the erection of a croft house
Site Address: Land South East Of Gate Cottage Airds Bay Taynuilt Argyll And Bute PA35 1JR
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Taynuilt

Argyll and Bute Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST. An extant list of planning applications can be viewed on the Council's website www.argyll-bute.gov.uk.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST and Argyll and Bute Council Libraries.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Applications for planning permission listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be examined at 67/69 Chalmers Street Ardstrathig PA30 8DX and the location detailed below between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and by logging to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications. Written comments for the following list of applications may be made to Planning and Regulatory Services 67/69 Chalmers Street Ardstrathig PA30 8DX by the 07/04/2011

● Ref No: 11/00276/PP
Applicant: Stephen And Glynis Florence
Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of new access.
Site Address: The Lodge Lussagiven Isle Of Jura Argyll And Bute PA60 7JL
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Craighouse Isle of Jura

● Ref No: 11/00323/PP
Applicant: Mrs Jean Thomson
Proposal: Erection of croft house and attached garage, installation of septic tank and formation of access
Site Address: Land South West Of Craigan Uragai Isle Of Colonsay Argyll And Bute PA61 7YT
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Isle of Colonsay

Argyll and Bute Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST. An extant list of planning applications can be viewed on the Council's website www.argyll-bute.gov.uk.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST and Argyll and Bute Council Libraries.

Any letter of representation the council receives about a planning application is considered a public document. Please therefore note that representations will be made available for public inspection and, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, will be copied on request. They will also be published on the council's web site.

The author of such a representation is solely responsible for its content and accuracy. Anonymous representations will be 'shredded' and those marked confidential will be returned to the sender. Neither will be taken into account when the application is being considered.

Details of representations we receive on planning applications can be viewed on the council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/publicaccess

crofters commission
ughdarras nan croitearan

The following decrofting Directions have been granted:

Part Croft

160 Kentra, Ardnamurchan & Sunart.
Direction dated 8 March 2011 granted to Mrs Hughena MacPhee.

Area ext to 0.099 ha.
Conditions: 1. Purchase within 5 years.

2. Complete enclosure of the land with a stockproof fence within 4 months of purchase.

3. Maintenance of the fence by each successive owner or occupier of the land.

Case Number: 4.86.26950.

1, 2, 3 & 4 Kilvaree, Ardchattan & Muckairn.

Direction dated 11 March 2011 granted to John A Blomfield. Area ext to 0.064 ha.

Conditions: 1. The land is used for a house site. 2. Complete enclosure of the land with a stockproof fence within 4 months of completion of the proposed development.

3. Maintenance of the fence by each successive owner or occupier of the land.

Case Number: 4.86.28838.

The granting of these Directions may be appealed to the Scottish Land Court within 42 days from the date of this advert. Information on how to appeal is available from the Scottish Land Court.

COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949
SCIENTIFIC STUDY:
LOCH EIL/LOCH LINNHE

Notice is hereby given that Marine Scotland Science has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by section 36 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988, to carry out a scientific study by deploying 22 buoys with acoustic receivers at the following locations:

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Upper Loch Eil: 1	56 51.450N	05 19.578W
Upper Loch Eil: 2	56 51.244N	05 19.684W
Lower Loch Eil: 3	56 50.725N	05 10.404W
Lower Loch Eil: 4	56 50.759N	05 10.000W
Fort William: 5	56 50.338N	05 08.089W
Fort William: 6	56 50.176N	05 08.089W
Fort William: 7	56 49.662N	05 05.882W
Fort William: 8	56 49.443N	05 07.400W
Fort William: 9	56 49.350N	05 06.881W
Fort William: 10	56 49.133N	05 06.857W
Upper Loch Linnhe: 11	56 48.369N	05 08.885W
Upper Loch Linnhe: 12	56 48.157N	05 08.245W
Upper Loch Linnhe: 13	56 48.731N	05 11.377W
Upper Loch Linnhe: 14	56 46.461N	05 10.353W
Upper Loch Linnhe: 15	56 45.557N	05 13.076W
Upper Loch Linnhe: 16	56 45.246N	05 11.734W
Upper Loch Linnhe: 17	56 44.006N	05 15.055W
Upper Loch Linnhe: 18	56 43.684N	05 13.919W
Corran Narrows: 19	56 43.046N	05 14.798W
Corran Narrows: 20	56 42.979N	05 14.479W
Corran Narrows: 21	56 42.976N	05 14.901W
Corran Narrows: 22	56 42.892N	05 14.484W

(WGS84)
Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Fort William Library, Airds Crossing, High Street, Fort William, PH33 6EU.

Objections relating to safety of navigation in respect of the application should be made in writing to: Gordon Hastie, The Scottish Government, Ports and Harbours Branch, Area 2G North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ within 28 days of the date of this notice quoting reference: 2SPC(4)(5)15

Marine Scotland Science, Freshwater Laboratory, Faskally, Pitlochry, Perthshire

Proposed Let of a Croft

Mrs Elizabeth Henderson and Mrs Helen Clarke are applying to the Crofters Commission for consent to let the tenancy of the croft at Craigmore, Gruline, Isle of Mull to Mr Jeff Moore of Little Hill House Farm, Oxenhouse, Keighley, West Yorkshire. If you are a crofter, shareholder or owner of a croft in the township or if the Commission consider that you have a direct interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or other permanent form to the Crofters Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (e-mail: info@crofterscommission.org.uk) by the 14th April, 2011.

Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry. Frivolous, vexatious or unreasonable comments cannot be accepted.

KILMALLIE HALL COMMITTEE
Is inviting expressions of interest for the following two tenders:

1. Carry out the upgrade of the building's roofs
2. Installation of a wood pellet heating system with radiators and relevant pipe work

For further information and detailed drawings which can be emailed to applicants by contacting: dmeec@davidmee-architect.co.uk

Closing date for return of tender
March 25, 2011 to:

Mr J MacDonald
(Chairman Kilmallie Hall Committee)
Merchiston, Banavie
Fort William PH33 7LX
Tel 01397 772443



This project is being part-financed by the Scottish Government and the European Community Highland LEADER 2007-2013 Programme

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OBAN HIGH SCHOOL
Pathways Programme
2011-2012

Volunteer Providers wanted
For further information contact:
Morven Cook, Pathways Administrator on
01631 564231

WATER ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES (SCOTLAND) ACT 2003
WATER ENVIRONMENT (CONTROLLED ACTIVITIES) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2005
APPLICATION FOR AUTHORISATION
ARMADADDY HYDROPOWER SCHEME, ARMADADDY ESTATE, OBAN

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with regulation 13 of the above regulations, that an application has been made to the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) by Charles Struthers for authorisation to carry on controlled activities at, near or in connection with Armadaddy Hydropower Scheme, Armadaddy Estate, Oban

Description of controlled activity	Waters affected	National Grid Reference
Construction of impoundment 10.4m high	Eas nan Ceardach	NM 7935 1645
Abstraction of 840 m3/day from 1 sept 2011	Eas nan Ceardach	NM 7935 1645
Return of abstracted water approx 0.86 km from abstraction point	Eas nan Ceardach	NM 7860 1625

SEPA considers that the above controlled activities has or is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the water environment or the interests of other users of the water environment.

Any person affected or likely to be affected by, or having an interest in, the application may make representations to SEPA in writing within 28 days beginning with the date of this advertisement, at the following address, quoting reference number CAR/L1090295:

Registry department, SEPA, Grassier House, Fodderty Way, Dingwall Business Park, Dingwall, IV15 9XB

A copy of the application may be inspected free of charge, at the above address, between 9.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (except local and national holidays) and by prior arrangement: 2 Smithy Brae, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA312 8TA, 01546 602876.

Written representations received by SEPA within 28 days of this advertisement will be taken into consideration in determining the application. Any such representations will be placed in a public register unless the person making them requests that they should not be. Where such a request is made SEPA will include in a statement in the register indicating that representations have been made which have been the subject of such a request.

When ready to determine the application, SEPA will serve notice on any person who has made a representation within 28 days of this advertisement, informing them of SEPA's proposed determination and giving them the opportunity to notify Scottish Ministers in writing that they object to SEPA's proposed determination within 21 days of the notice being served.

NOTICE OF ELECTION
SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ELECTION
ARGYLL AND BUTE CONSTITUENCY

A poll is to be held for a Member to serve in the Scottish Parliament for the above Constituency. Nomination papers may be delivered to the Returning Officer at the Election Office, Council Offices, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8RT between the hours of 10.00 am and 4.00 pm Monday to Friday after the date of this notice, but not later than 4.00 pm on Tuesday 29 March 2011.

Forms of nomination may be obtained at the place and times mentioned above. The Returning Officer will at the request of any elector prepare for signature a nomination paper.

A person shall not be validly nominated as a candidate for return as a constituency member unless the sum of £500 is deposited by him/her, or on his/her behalf, with the Returning Officer at the place and during the time for delivery of Nomination Papers. The deposit may be made either (a) by the deposit of any legal tender; (b) by means of a banker's draft; or (c) with the Returning Officer's consent, in any other manner including by debit or credit card (a transaction fee of 1.89% will be charged in respect of the use of a credit card).

If the election is contested, the poll will take place between the hours of 7.00am and 10.00pm on Thursday, 5 May 2011.

Postal or Proxy Voting
Applications to cancel or alter existing postal and proxy votes, or to change from postal to proxy voting MUST reach the Electoral Registration Officer, Kilbrannan House, Bolgarn Street, Campbelltown PA28 6HZ, by 5.00pm on Thursday 14 April 2011.

New applications to vote by post MUST reach the Electoral Registration Officer at the above address by 5.00pm on Thursday 14 April 2011.

New applications to vote by proxy MUST reach the Electoral Registration Officer at the above address by 5.00pm on Thursday 21 April 2011.

If as the result of a disability an elector becomes incapacitated after 5.00pm on Thursday 21 April 2011 an application to vote by proxy due to that disability MUST reach the Electoral Registration Officer at the above address by 5.00pm on the day of the poll.

For advice on postal or proxy voting contact the Electoral Registration Office 0800 980 0470.
Sally Loudon
Returning Officer
Council Offices
Kilmory
Lochgilphead PA31 8RT
11 March 2011, Tel: 01546 603264
Fax: 01546 606874, E-mail: elections@argyll-bute.gov.uk
Web: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/elections

Note
The attention of candidates and electors is drawn to the rules for filling up nomination papers and other provisions relating to nomination contained in the Scottish Parliamentary Election Rules at Schedule 2 of the Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2010.
Every person guilty of a corrupt or illegal practice will, on conviction, be liable to the penalties imposed by the Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2010.
Nomination Papers may also be downloaded from www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/elections. The website gives other election information.

The Annual General Meeting of Oban Hospice Limited

Will be held in the Undercroft, Church of Scotland Centre in Glencruitten Road, Oban on Monday 11th of April 2011 at 7.30pm. The meeting is public and all interested parties will be warmly welcomed.

Papers for the AGM can be examined on or after Monday 4th April, during normal business hours, at the Hospice's Registered Office:
R A Clements Associates,
5 Argyll Square, OBAN, PA34 4AZ
Q. Goldie OBE, Secretary

Oban Times Oban Times
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Comann Eachdraidh Lios Mòr
And Taic Comann Eachdraidh Lios Mòr



Lismore Historical Society
A Company limited by guarantee No. SC234832
AIREAMH CARTHANNAIS/Charity No. SC023503

CELM
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 19th March 2011
12.00

In the Museum Room
Followed immediately by
TAIC CELM AGM

J Baker, Secretary 01631 760360



AGM

Will be held on 28th March 2011 At 7pm in the Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre (Oban) Ltd Glencruitten Road, Oban Argyll PA34 4PU
Telephone/Fax 01631 566602
e-mail oban.msc@btconnect.com

Proposed Let of a Croft

George Porter and Mrs Moyra Porter are applying to the Crofters Commission for consent to let the tenancy of the croft at Lagstoban, Bridgend, Islay, Argyllshire (No. C/9592) to Alasdair Stanley Porter of East Carrabus, Bridgend, Islay, Argyllshire, PA44 7PX

If you are a crofter, shareholder or owner of a croft in the township or if the Commission consider that you have a direct interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or other permanent form to the Crofters Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (e-mail: info@crofterscommission.org.uk) by the 14th April, 2011.

Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry. Frivolous, vexatious or unreasonable comments cannot be accepted.

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10 Renault Laguna Dyn, 2.0 DCI 150, Grey, 2500 miles	£15,350
10 Peugeot 207s, SWHDI Estate, Black, 19,000 miles	£10,250
59 Renault Clio Exp. Dci Sport Tourer, silver, 11,000 miles.....	£10,795
59 Renault Clio Dyn, 1.5 DCI, 5Dr, Silver, 17,000 miles.....	£9,750
09 Renault Koleos Dyn Dci 4WD, black, 13,000 miles.....	£14,995
09 Ford C-Max Style. 1.6, 5Dr, Blue, 12,650 Miles	£8,500
08 Renault Megane Sport Tourer Dyn Dci 130 auto, black, 21,000 miles....	£8,950
08 Nissan Note Tekna, Auto, 1.6, 5Dr, Black, 18,000 Miles.....	£6,850
08 Renault Twingo Dyn 1.2, 3dr, black, 17,500 miles.....	£6,550
57 Renault Clio Dyn, 1.2 TCE, 5Dr, Black, 18,000 miles	£6,750
07 Renault Megane Extreme 1.4, 5Dr, Hatchback, Silver, 18000,	£5,650
07 Renault Scenic Dyn, DCI 106, Silver, 26,500 Miles	£6,950
07 Renault Clio Campus l'Music, 1.2, 3Dr, Blue, 25,000 Miles	£4,500
06 Suzuki Ignis GL, 1.4, 5Dr, Red, 43,000 Miles	£3,500
55 Renault Laguna Dyn, 2.0, Red, 38500 Miles	£4,950
55 Renault Clio Exp, 1.2, 5 Dr Black, 19,200 miles.....	£3,750
54 Rover 45 1.8 auto, grey, 31,000 miles.....	£3,350
04 Ford Focus Flight, 1.6, 5Dr, Grey, 70,000 miles.....	£3,250
04 Ford Ka Style, 3dr, blue, 42,000 miles.....	£2,650

COMMERCIALS

57 Renault Traffic SL27+, DCI 115, Silver.....	£8,000 + vat
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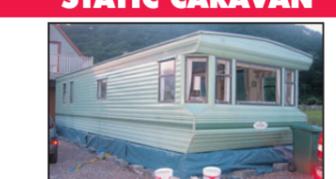
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love Hicky, Willie, Dawn & Lisa xxx

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The Oban Times

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

PEOPLE do not like being told what to do.
We rebel when others try to push us around.
There is a bolshy streak in us that is wary of authority.
An example of this is seen in some people's reaction to important health messages given out by government or whoever.
Whilst we all know that smoking is dreadful for our health, many of us don't like being told to quit.
Folk think: 'Of course I should stop - just don't make me feel guilty!'
Did you notice that national No Smoking Day fell on Ash Wednesday?
Now there is a big hint about what to give up for Lent, and beyond.
Or is it? For the Christian faith should not be about instilling guilt to manipulate behaviour; and giving up this or that does not curry favour with God.
Rather, across the Christian denominations and practices there is awareness that simplicity, space, time and clarity open us to the spiritual. So Lenten observance offers us the opportunity to focus on the positive of faith, rather than the negative of giving up. May Lent be a breath of fresh air for us all.
Rev Dugald Cameron, Kilmore and Oban.

Pedal power in aid of Palestine youth group



Liam Griffin, from Lerags, Oban, who is cycling from Oban to Glasgow this Friday and Saturday. 16_1111iam

A CYCLIST from Lerags is praying to St Jude for help during his cycle ride to raise cash for a youth club in the West Bank.
Setting out this weekend on a 150-mile trip to Renfield St Stephen's Church, in Glasgow City Centre, Liam Griffin hopes he can show support for children living in the heart of the war torn state.
Liam, a professional diver, said: 'I am praying to St Jude, the patron saint of hopeless causes, to make sure I get down to the city on time.'
'I am setting out on Friday and I hope to make it to the Scottish Friends of Palestine Conference on the situation in the Middle East by Saturday.'
'I plan to get to Stirling by Friday night and finish the journey the next day.'
'I am raising money for an ecumenical youth club which brings hope to many children and young people in Palestine.'
'People are already offering me sponsorship and they have been very generous.'
'If anyone else would like to support me I would be happy to take a pledge by email at hydrotask@sky.com or by mobile phone on 07753 007342.'

DEATHS

FLATT - Peacefully at the Mid Argyll Hospital on March 13, 2011, the Reverend Canon Roy F Flatt, loved and loving husband of Andrina Ferguson, father of Andrew and Alexander, a brother, uncle and great-uncle to the family, Rector of Christ Church Lochgilphead, St Columba's Poltalloch and All Saints Inveraray, and former Dean of the Diocese of Argyll and The Isles. Funeral service to be held at Christ Church Lochgilphead on March 22, 2011 at 1.30pm followed by interment in the church grounds to which all family and friends are respectfully invited.

MACDONALD - Suddenly, on Wednesday, March 9, 2011, at the Lynn of Lorne Nursing Home, Benderloch, in her 91st year, Jane Livingstone, (Jean), formerly of "Inverdale", Lonan Drive, Oban, loving sister, sister-in-law and aunt to Douglas, Anne and Mairi.

MACKINNON - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on Sunday March 13, 2011, in her 85th year, Nancy nee MacFadyen, beloved wife of Alexander, much loved mother of John, Alexander and the late Charles and a loving grandmother. Funeral service will take place from St. Modan's Church, Benderloch on Monday March 21 at 1.00 pm, thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery.

McGREGOR - Peacefully at the Glenaray Ward, Mid Argyll Hospital, after a short illness, on March 14, 2011, Bet McGregor, of Blarbuie Farm, Lochgilphead. Beloved wife of the late Dermid and loving mother of Christine, Jimmy, Katrina and the late Eleanor. Much loved granny of Carole, David, Kyra and Lorne. Dear mother in law of George, Carol and Willie. A dear friend to many. Funeral service will be held in Lochgilphead Parish Church, on Friday March 18, 2011 at 1pm, thereafter to Achnabreac Cemetery. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to Marie Curie Cancer Care.

SWEENEY - Peacefully at home in Ford Spence Court, Benderloch, on March 9, 2011, Mary MacKenzie, beloved wife of Pat, mother of Evan and Hughie and grandmother of Eilidh and Jamie.

IN MEMORIAM
CAMPBELL - In loving memory of my dear mother and grandmother, Betty Lyall, who died on March 19, 1979.
Never a day but in our thoughts.
- Inserted by her loving daughter Ann, Angus, Lorne, Gordon, Gillian, Ardness Tiraghoil, Bunesan, Mull.

GILLIES - Treasured memories of our dear daughter, sister, mother and auntie, Phemie McCallum who passed away on March 17, 1979.
Loved and remembered always.
- Mum and all the family, Islay, Drymen and Kilmarnock.

HAY - In loving memory of Jimmy, who died March 18, 2006. Much loved and missed
- Johanna, Donald, Anthea, Iain and families.

HOGG CAMERON - Alastair, died March 17, 2008.
Dearest Alastair as we loved you so we miss you
In our memories you are ever dear
Loved, remembered, thought of always

MACGILLIVRAY - In loving memory of Hector, a devoted husband and father who died March 18, 2007. Always in our thoughts.
- Love Mora and Joy.
MACLEAN - Jennifer - precious mum and nana goo, who died March 17, 2008.
Thought absent you are very near
Still loved, still missed and very dear
John Jnr, Lindsay, Finlay and Dexter xx
MACLEOD - In loving memory of our dear Auntie Annie MacLeod, Tobermory, Mull, who died March 17, 1987.
Your life was unselfish
For others you lived
Not to receive
But always to give
Forever in our thoughts
And always in our hearts.
And also remembered loved ones gone before and after.
- Inserted by Ann, John, Alastair, Patricia, Rosyth, Fife.

MACPHAIL - Precious memories of John, a much loved son who died on March 15, 1995.
Simply the best
- x Dad and Mary x.
NICHOLSON - In loving memory of Jessie who died March 11, 2000, wife of the late Malcolm.
We lost a mum with a heart of gold
How much we miss her can never be told
Loved and remembered every day.
- The Nicholson families.
ROBERTSON - Mary Elizabeth (Rennie). In loving memory of dearest mum, one time of Oban.
The memory of your lovely smile
Your eyes and how they shone
Our hearts still hold your gift of love
To us you've never gone.
- Inserted by her loving daughter Angela and son-in-law David (Troon)

ROWAN - In loving memory of our grandmother Teeny, passed away March 15, 2009.
You were so loving and kind
And we miss you everyday.
- Lots of love from Sean and Scott.

ECCLIASTICAL NOTICES

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION
Sunday 20 March 2011
Lent 2
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Communion08.00
Sung Eucharist.....10.15
Sunday School and Crèche
Loop System
Large Print Hymn Books
All Welcome
Norman MacCallum, Provost.
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St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Mattins.....11.00
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist.....08.00
Evensong.....20.00

LORN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Sunday
Oban High School
Main Hall
10:30am
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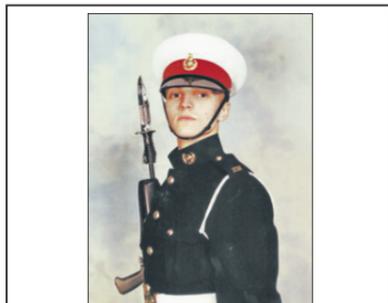
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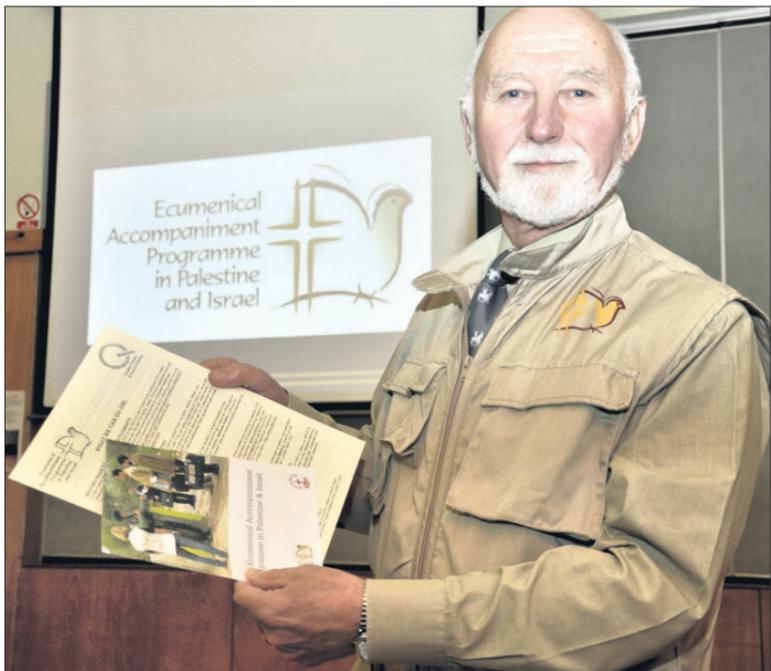
Brian L. McMahon has passed out on March 11, 2011 as a Royal Marine Commando. Commando training is deemed the longest and hardest basic training in the world. Brian is the son of Naomi Laird and Brian McMahon, Oban and grandson to David and the late Susan Laird, Oban. Brian is a former pupil of Rockfield and Oban High School. Brian is to be drafted to 40 Commando in Taunton, Somerset.



Marine John W. Georgeson, former pupil of Dunbeg Primary and Oban High School. Passed for duty for service in the Royal Marine Commandos on January 28, 2011. Son of proud parents John and Susan Georgeson, Dunbeg and grandson of Billy and Carolyn Rayns, Ardrishaig, and Flora and the late Hugh Georgeson, Oban.

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Spreading the word: David Mitchell prepares to give his presentation at Glencruitten Church Hall. 15_1111davidmitchell01

Oban given a taste of life on the West Bank

THE SIGHTS and sounds of life under occupation were explained in vivid detail at a talk in Oban on Sunday.
More than 70 people packed Glencruitten Church Hall to hear David Mitchell speak about the three months he spent in the occupied West Bank as part of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI).
The programme invites people from around the world to spend time in the West Bank and provide up-to-date and reliable information on the situation there.
David began his stint at the begin-

ning of October last year, returning on December 27, and is now involved in the final phase of the programme by hosting a number of public meetings to tell people of his experiences.

Interest
He said his involvement with EAPPI came about through general interest in the situation in Israel.

'After retiring a couple of years ago, I decided it was time to do some of the things I could not do when I worked,' he said.

He said the idea of holding public presentations about his time there was to give a true picture of the situation.

'It is not biased or filtered through any political view - people can make up their own minds.'

David has another four presentations lined up and said he was happy to give his illustrated talk to any group which wishes to hear it.

Return trip
As for the future, he and wife Sheila have been asked to put their names down for a return trip to the West Bank should any sudden vacancies in the EAPPI programme crop up at short notice.

They also plan a short holiday back in the area.

Coffee morning boost for church funds



The miserable weekend weather couldn't dampen the enthusiasm of organisers of Oban Congregational Church's monthly coffee morning. A cuppa and selection of tasty cakes were on offer as was a lunchtime bowl of soup. The church is gearing up for one of its main events of the year - the spring fair - which takes place on Saturday April 2 from 10.30am to 3.30pm. Pictured ready and willing to serve at last Saturday's coffee morning are, from left, Anna Maughan, Lilian Wren, Lottie Wilson, Gary Gladman and Lyn Meldrum. 15_1111coffee01

Guest appearance for Island Parish's Father Roddy

FATHER Roddy MacAulay, one of the stars of BBC2's Island Parish programme, will be making a guest appearance at St Columba School's computer fundraiser this weekend.
The chicken keeping priest will open The Big Funday at Rockfield Campus this Saturday from noon until 4pm.
Frances Parkinson, of the parent council, said: 'I don't know if he is bringing his chickens but we are really looking forward to meeting him.'
'There will be plenty to do for all the family.'
Entry is by donation.

Redevelopment of Campbeltown Old Quay on hold

CASH for the redevelopment of Campbeltown Old Quay was removed from the council's capital spending programme at a meeting last week.
The item was sidelined, with the loss of more than £1million earmarked for the project, after Argyll and Bute Council officers said they did not have a business case for the project.
Sandy MacTaggart, director of development and infrastructure, said: 'This item was placed in the capital programme without a business case.'
'This is no longer in line with how we go about our business in Argyll and Bute.'
'In future we require projects to have a design/feasibility stage so we have a real cost and a real set of options that we can design to.'

'We do not have figures for a project at Campbeltown Old Quay.'
'It is my intention to put the project forward for such a case in the future.'

After the meeting, Councillor Donald Kelly said: 'Given the significance of the Old Quay to Campbeltown, I felt it important to establish why the proposed capital sum allocated to this project has been cut from previously 1.9million to 0.8million.'

'The response from Sandy MacTaggart and his reassurance that this project will move to a full business case has given me some comfort in the short term,' he added.

'However, I would stress that this work requires to be carried as a matter of urgency.'

Council support for all-weather sports pitch

AN ALL-weather playing field has formed part of the CHORD programme in Campbeltown.

Argyll and Bute Council backed plans for the pitch, saying otherwise the town may miss out altogether on charity funding.
Diverting funds totalling £480,000 from a proposed marina project, councillors argued that without a promise of the cash Sports Scotland would walk away from the project.

Council Leader Dick Walsh said: 'The all-weather pitch is on the cards and we reacted to bring the project forward.'

'The CHORD project is about making things happen.'

'We are being realistic and are looking forward to see the all-weather pitch and looking for support from our colleagues to make that happen.'

'I hope that we do not hear a request for a delay.'
'We want to get on with these projects.'

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SHINTY ROUND-UP

Raring to get back in action after snow wipes out fixtures

AFTER enforced inactivity due to the wintry blast last Saturday, the region's shinty players will be chomping at the bit.

In the Scottish Hydro Premier Division, **OBAN CAMANACHD** travel to Camanachd cup holders Fort William buoyed by their opening day win against Kilmallie.

However, Andrew Pearson, who was injured in that 3-1 win, is still out and David MacMillan is also missing due to a hamstring problem.

Oban Camanachd president Nigel Evans said: 'Fort will be a very difficult game for us but we take heart from the result against Kilmallie and we are going into the game with confidence.'

FORT WILLIAM, mean-

while, had hoped to prepare for Saturday's clash at An Aird with a comparatively easier game against Glenorchy last weekend - but snow wiped out the fixture.

The postponement means Fort remain without Adam Robertson, John MacDonald and Liam MacIntyre, who are still suspended.

Coach Peter MacIntyre is under no illusions the Oban match will be a test - and is likely to stick with the young players who performed well in the 3-0 win against Glenorchy in the opening game of the season.

'We played Oban twice last season and beat them 3-1 on both occasions,' he told *The Oban Times*.

'They were both close games and we are expecting a really hard match.'

'Oban are a big, strong team and they will be on a high after beating Kilmallie in their opening game.'

David Girvan's twisted knee is still keeping him out of action, Neil Reid will miss the game due to a groin strain and Lewis McLennan has work commitments.

Jim said: 'We usually give them a good game at home, but we still need to get consistently good results against them.'

'They always score a lot of goals so if you make a mistake you'll get punished. Keeping it tight at the back is key.'

KINGUSSIE will travel to Drumnadrochit without injured

attacker Ronald Ross.

It will be Kingussie's first match for two weeks after their home game against Kilmallie was postponed on Saturday, as the Dell was covered in snow and the pitch unplayable.

There are no new injury worries for Kingussie manager Steven Borthwick, but Ross' injured ankle is expected to keep him out of the starting line-up for at least another two weeks.

Steven told *The Oban Times* the trip to Blairbeg Park was always difficult.

He said: 'It'll be a tough match up there, it always is. Not a lot of teams come away from the Drum with anything to show for their efforts.'

'The pitch is tighter than normal and you feel a bit hemmed in. The key for us is for our defence to perform as well as they did in the first game and for our young boys to create a bit of space up front.'

KILMALLIE will look to post their first points in the Scottish Hydro Premier League at The Eilan on Saturday in a tasty looking encounter with champs Newtonmore.

The Blues should have a full squad at their disposal, but will have to improve on what was a lacklustre showing in the 3-1 loss to Oban Camanachd in their opening game of the season at Canal Parks.

With the game against Kingussie at The Dell snowed off last weekend, Kilmallie chairman Hugh MacIntyre reckons The Eilan is the perfect place for the new boys to show what they can do.

'It will be difficult, but Newtonmore did not do so well last week against Lovat, which gives us more hope,' he said.

'If we can get up to the pace of the game from the start, I think we can do quite well.'

'As far as I know we will have a full team available and nobody is injured. We just have to get stuck in like Lovat did - and they put three past their defence.'

'I think we should be able to do something, although the forwards have to start playing together as a unit and not as individuals as they did against Oban.'

NEWTONMORE travelled to Lovat last weekend only to find the pitch covered in snow, but playable. Both sides decided to go ahead with the game but as the snow continued to fall, the referee called a halt to proceedings at half time.

Despite the conditions, the two teams put on a great show with the match poised at 3-3 when the snow became too much.

Newtonmore's Danny MacRae will be more disappointed than most after seeing his first half hat trick wiped from the record books.

Newtonmore manager Norman MacArthur had no complaints about the cancellation.

He said: 'It was the right decision. There was a fair bit of snow on the pitch before we started but both teams wanted to play.'

Norman feels Saturday's game against Kilmallie will be a tough test for his side.

He said: 'They're a pretty good side; I was surprised when (Oban) Camanachd beat them last week. We've not played Kilmallie for about a year and a half, but they've got a lot of good players and we'll just have to take it as it comes.'

LOVAT will make the five-hour coach journey south to Kyles Athletic on Saturday without lynchpin full centre Ewan Ferguson and wing forward Iain Nicolson.

Lovat coach John MacRitchie admits that Kyles has never been the happiest of hunting grounds for the Kiltarity men - but is not without hope after his team held champs Newtonmore 3-3 at Balgate Park until heavy snow forced ref Evan MacRae to abandon the game at half time.

John said: 'We will miss Ewan in the middle of the park, big style - he is our most experienced player.'

'We have always struggled down there and if we take anything from the game we will be very fortunate. I think Kyles will be one of the teams to beat this year, without a doubt.'

Even before Saturday's match got underway conditions were

difficult - and Newtonmore made their point by building a snowman in the middle of the park before the throw-up.

Mr MacRae saw the funny side - but the man in white was sent packing before play got underway.

A Danny MacRae hat-trick for Newtonmore cancelled out Lovat's goals from James Macpherson, Greg Mathieson and Owen Ferguson before the snow closed in.

Leading the league after the first round of games, **KYLES ATHLETIC** may prove to be the surprise package of the Scottish Hydro Premier Division.

This Saturday the free-scoring Tighnabraich outfit host Lovat, who struggled against Kingussie on the opening day of the season.

INVERARAY'S long trip to Drumnadrochit to play Glenorchy last weekend was cut short after they met a 'blizzard' of snow at Tyndrum.

It is therefore a welcome tie at home this weekend against one of their nearest shinty neighbours, Glenorchy.

Out this Saturday are the influential Davy Robertson and talisman Gary MacPherson but Russell McKinlay, Euan McMurdo and Ruairidh Graham are welcomed back into the fold.

Manager John Smylie said: 'Although Dalmally is close by I don't think this has ever been considered a derby match for us. However, they have a young team who I expect will be really up for it against us.'

'Saying that, I think we will be a strong team at home this season and if we take our chances on Saturday we should be okay.'

GLENORCHY'S injury worries don't seem to have eased ahead of Saturday's away trip - just as well they only have to go 15 miles over Cladich Hill for the tie.

The Dalmally men still have key players missing for what will be a difficult tie at the Royal Burgh.

Manager Allan MacKechnie said: 'We are expecting Inveraray to be on the front foot for the first 20 minutes or so and we will be looking to counter that.'

'The boys will know what to expect; they have got quick strikers and they try to pull your defence around the pitch.'

'We know it will be a tough game.'

Both teams endured heavy defeats in their opening games but Glenorchy will be hoping to avoid a repeat of the 8-0 defeat they suffered at the hands of Kyles Athletic.

In Marine Harvest North Division 1, **SKYE CAMANACHD** coach Nui MacDonald says he is resigned to working with a comparatively inexperienced squad well into the season.

Injury and key players moving to the mainland to work has left Skye with a distinctly youthful line-up.

Speaking to *The Oban Times* ahead of Saturday's game at Lochcarron, he said: 'I think we are going to have the same story for the next few months. We are missing a few players and there are a lot of changes from last year.'

'But that's maybe not a bad thing, because we brought in a few young guys. Lochcarron are notoriously hard to break down and it will be tough - but we are a young team compared to them and I think that could be to our advantage.'

Despite last week's weather, **LOCHCARRON** and Strathglass battled to try to finish their game last weekend, but eventually the snow became too much, forcing the game to be abandoned after 23 minutes.

With the score at 0-0, both sides agreed the conditions were too bad to continue, and the tie will be rearranged later in the season.

Lochcarron's next game is at home to Skye this weekend. Skye were expected to be one of the stronger sides in the division but surprisingly lost their first game of the season 2-0 to Strathglass.

Lochcarron drew their first game with Inverness, and will be looking to use their home advantage to get the win on Saturday.

LOCHABER manager Michael Delaney says winning

Results

Scottish Hydro Premier Division
Lovat 3, Newtonmore 3 (match abandoned at half time due to snow). All other fixtures postponed.

Marine Harvest North Division 1
Beauly 5, Inverness 2 (match abandoned after 79 minutes due to snow). Strathglass 0, Lochcarron 0 (match abandoned after 23 minutes due to snow). All other fixtures postponed.

Marine Harvest South Division 1
All fixtures postponed.

Marine Harvest North Division 2
Kinlochshiel 3, Skye 0; Lochaber 4, Glenorchy 1. All other fixtures postponed.

Marine Harvest South Division 2
All fixtures postponed.

Marine Harvest North Division 3
Aberdeen University 4, Lochbroom 0; Ardnamurchan 1, Beauly 7. All other fixtures postponed.

Fixtures

All throw ups 2.30 unless stated

Scottish Hydro Premier Division
Fort William v Oban Camanachd (Ted MacDonald); Glenorchy v Kingussie (Billy Wotherspoon); Inveraray v Glenorchy (Dunkie Kerr); Kyles Athletic v Lovat (Deek Cameron); Newtonmore v Kilmallie (Charles Young).

Marine Harvest North Division 1
Inverness v Caberfeidh (Graham Cameron); Kinlochshiel v Beauly (John Angus Gillies); Lochcarron v Skye (Graham Irving); Strathglass v Lochaber (Evan Macrae).

Marine Harvest South Division 1
Bute v Oban Celtic (Euan Pearson); Kilmory v Glasgow Mid Argyll (Dougie Cameron); Lochside Rovers v Ballachulish (Graeme MacMillan); Taynuilt v Kyles Athletic (Ronnie Campbell).

Marine Harvest North Division 2
Kilmallie v Newtonmore (John MacLeod); Kingussie v Glenorchy (Jock Matheson); Lochaber v Gleggarry (Colin MacDonald); Lovat v Kinlochshiel (Innes Wood); Skye v Fort William (Robert Morrison).

Marine Harvest South Division 2
Aberdour v Bute (Douglas Ferguson); Ballachulish v Inveraray (Robert Baxter); Glasgow Mid Argyll v Col Glen (Gus Campbell); Tayforth v Strachur (Ewan MacDonald).

Marine Harvest North Division 3
Aberdeen University v Lewis (Kevin Cheeseman - 12.30pm throw-up at Braevie Park, Beauly); Ardnamurchan v Lochcarron (Jim Innes); Beauly v Boleskin (Willie Macrae - 3pm throw-up); Caberfeidh v Strathglass (Iain Kennedy); Lochbroom v Inverness (John Sloggie).

First Shinty League winners crowned

THE indoor shinty league has been completed for another year - and it's congratulations to Ben Lora, Taynuilt and St Columba's, who won their respective leagues.

Organisers of the league said thank-you to all the coaches and referees as well as all supporters.

League	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
'A' League							
St Columba	24	12	8	4	41	23	56
Achadh Na Creige	24	7	10	7	27	26	48
Park	24	9	6	9	37	38	48
Rockfield	24	5	6	13	20	38	40
'B' League							
Taynuilt	16	11	0	5	29	11	38
St Columba	16	8	2	6	18	18	34
Lochnell	16	3	2	11	8	26	18
'C' League							
Ben Lora	24	17	5	2	41	13	63
Rockfield Rovers	24	17	3	4	42	8	61
Park Sparkies	24	12	4	8	27	20	52
Taynuilt	24	10	6	8	29	17	50
St Columba	24	8	4	12	21	35	44
Salen	24	4	1	19	10	34	33
Rockfield Rockets	24	4	1	19	6	49	33



Terrific Taynuilt were winners of the B League in this year's indoor shinty league.



The young stars of Ben Lora were all smiles after finishing top of the C League.

Rugby players are well turned out



Well turned out: Oban Lorne RFC's first XV have been cutting a dash this season in new tracksuits thanks to sponsors the Waterfront and Markie Dans. 15_109rugbytracksuits01

With the game against Kingussie at The Dell snowed off last weekend, Kilmallie chairman Hugh MacIntyre reckons The Eilan is the perfect place for the new boys to show what they can do.

'It will be difficult, but Newtonmore did not do so well last week against Lovat, which gives us more hope,' he said.

'If we can get up to the pace of the game from the start, I think we can do quite well.'

'As far as I know we will have a full team available and nobody is injured. We just have to get stuck in like Lovat did - and they put three past their defence.'

'I think we should be able to do something, although the forwards have to start playing together as a unit and not as individuals as they did against Oban.'

NEWTONMORE travelled to Lovat last weekend only to find the pitch covered in snow, but playable. Both sides decided to go ahead with the game but as the snow continued to fall, the referee called a halt to proceedings at half time.

Despite the conditions, the two teams put on a great show with the match poised at 3-3 when the snow became too much.

Newtonmore's Danny MacRae will be more disappointed than most after seeing his first half hat trick wiped from the record books.

Newtonmore manager Norman MacArthur had no complaints about the cancellation.

He said: 'It was the right decision. There was a fair bit of snow on the pitch before we started but both teams wanted to play.'

Norman feels Saturday's game against Kilmallie will be a tough test for his side.

He said: 'They're a pretty good side; I was surprised when (Oban) Camanachd beat them last week. We've not played Kilmallie for about a year and a half, but they've got a lot of good players and we'll just have to take it as it comes.'

LOVAT will make the five-hour coach journey south to Kyles Athletic on Saturday without lynchpin full centre Ewan Ferguson and wing forward Iain Nicolson.

Lovat coach John MacRitchie admits that Kyles has never been the happiest of hunting grounds for the Kiltarity men - but is not without hope after his team held champs Newtonmore 3-3 at Balgate Park until heavy snow forced ref Evan MacRae to abandon the game at half time.

John said: 'We will miss Ewan in the middle of the park, big style - he is our most experienced player.'

'We have always struggled down there and if we take anything from the game we will be very fortunate. I think Kyles will be one of the teams to beat this year, without a doubt.'

Even before Saturday's match got underway conditions were

the midfield battle is key to beating Strathglass on Saturday.

Lochaber's trip to Strathpeffer to play Caberfeidh last weekend was called off early on Saturday morning after heavy snow left the Castle Leod pitch unplayable. Michael agreed it was the right decision and said he was happy his players were saved from making a long and fruitless journey.

The Spean Bridge side should have a full squad available for Saturday's game. Michael described Donald MacRae's return to the team after being unavailable due to work commitments as 'a big boost'.

He said he expected Strathglass to be tough opponents. 'They had a very good result in their first game of the season against Skye,' he said, 'so they've obviously improved.'

'If we can control the middle of the park we'll be all right. We've got plenty of goals in our team. They were maybe a little bit rusty last week, but now that they've got a game under their belts hopefully that rust will be gone.'

KINLOCHSHIEL are looking to consolidate their fine start to the season against Beauly at Balmacara.

Beauly were 5-2 up against Inverness last Saturday before a blizzard halted proceedings with just 10 minutes left, while the weather put paid to Shiel's derby match with Skye Camanachd when the Pairc nan Loch pitch failed an inspection.

'Shiel coach Johnston Gill knows the green and whites will be no pushovers after their strong start to the season - especially having played almost a full match last Saturday.'

'Beauly were lucky enough to get 70 minutes under their belt on Saturday,' he said.

'The more games you get at this stage of the season the better and unfortunately we did not get any time at all against Skye last Saturday.'

'We are two players down, but we can handle that. The team is big enough and strong enough to do a job for me.'

'We are definitely a summer shinty team so at this stage of the season we will just play safe and do what we have to do.'

Moving on to Marine Harvest South Division 1, it may have been snowing, but **OBAN CELTIC'S** game against Kilmory last Saturday was cancelled only after both teams made it to Ganavan for the tie.

The Oban side face arguably their toughest game this season when they travel to Bute but will be buoyed by the return of Lee Askew and Neil Carmichael to the squad.

Manager Davy Hamilton said: 'It was disappointing that the game was cancelled last week. The field was fine until noon but after that the snow started falling and you couldn't see the lines.'

He added: 'We are expecting a tough game this weekend because Bute have almost the same team they had in the premier league last season. If we get anything down there, it will be a bonus.'

'Lee and Neil should travel with us but they are not fully fit, so I doubt they will start.'

TAYNUILT coach Fraser Inglis says his side have no expectations for the season ahead, refusing to be drawn into predicting this Saturday's result against league newcomers Kyles Athletic.

Having had one season in division one under their belts, Fraser insists the young Taynuilt side is still finding its way at this level.

He said: 'Kyles' first team has a number of star players but the rest of the team is made up of very competent players and that will make them a competitive team.'

'As a result, their second team will be a stronger outfit.'

'We are still at the stage where we are looking to find some consistency, as this is only our second season in this division. We're not thinking about who we should, and shouldn't, be beating. We'll go into this game looking to win but the boys are still learning.'

Fraser is selecting the team this Saturday in the absence of team manager Davy Thomson, but expects to have close to a full squad to pick from.

LOCHSIDE ROVERS co-manager David McInnes admits he doesn't know much about a rejuvenated Ballachulish side but is all too aware of the threat posed by veteran forward Dougie Rankin, who has been re-signed from Skye Camanachd.

'I have played with Dougie a few times before,' he said.

'He is a very skilful player and we'll be watching out for him but I don't know much else about Ballachulish.'

'We have a full squad available and are confident going into the match on Saturday.'

One player who will be missing for Lochside on Saturday will be Ewan MacCorquodale, who has left the club by mutual consent.

A confident **BALLACHULISH** will face a stern test at Mossfield against Lochside Rovers.

Manager Willie Sutherland admits the young Lochside team will be a difficult prospect for his side on their home turf.

He said: 'I think they beat us down there last season and they are a very good young team. It's a game I'm looking forward to because it will be a real test of my team.'

Darren Sutherland and Scott Rodger will be missing for Ballachulish this Saturday.

Last weekend's game against Aberdour was postponed despite the Ballachulish pitch being playable. However, the weather prevented the visitors from travelling.

Got a Story? SEND US THE DETAILS BY VISITING www.obantimes.co.uk 24 hours a day 365 days a year

Young Skye swimmers come home with the medals

TWO YOUNG swimmers from the Isle of Skye have returned home from the North District Age Group Championships at Inverness Aquadome with an armful of medals.

Rebecca Smith and Ruth Gordon, who swim for Portree-based club Skye Dolphins, faced a gruelling schedule of heats and finals over Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th March.

But Broadford girl Rebecca and Ruth, from Kensaleyre near Portree, came through with a series of outstanding performances to the delight of club coaches and supporters.

Swimming in the girls' 13-14 year-old section, Rebecca's results scored: 100 Freestyle - 5th in final; 200 Freestyle - Silver; 400 Freestyle - Silver; 800 Freestyle - Gold; 1500 Freestyle - Gold; 100 Butterfly - 4th in final; 200 Butterfly - Gold; 100 Backstroke - Silver in final; 200 Backstroke - Gold; 200 Individual Medley - Silver in final; 400 Individual Medley - Silver.

Ruth, meanwhile, also claimed her share of success in the pool, breaking the North District record in the 200 breaststroke to take gold.

Swimming in the 10-12 year-

SWIMMING

old section, Ruth's other results were: 100 Freestyle - 6th in final; 200 Freestyle - 4th; 400 Freestyle - Bronze; 800 Freestyle - Silver; 100 Butterfly - Silver in final; 200 Butterfly - Silver; 100 Breaststroke - Gold in final; 200 Individual Medley - Gold in final; 400 Individual Medley - Gold.

Ruth was also placed first in her age group and was awarded the Grampian Television Rosebowl for having accumulated the most points.

Delighted club secretary Peter Gordon told The Oban Times: 'This meet was against the cream of north swimmers taking in all the Aberdonian clubs and up to Shetland. It was a fantastic achievement by both girls considering the accumulative total of swims each of them had.'

'They are an inspiration to the other kids, who see what can be achieved. Skye Dolphins are really highly thought of now. We are going to an awful lot of meets now compared to when we started, and bigger ones too.'

Coached by Rod Hall, the Dolphins have made something of a splash in the north swimming scene in recent years. The 40-member club boasts several outstanding swimmers, including Rebecca and Ruth, who are regularly challenging rivals from much bigger clubs such as Nairn and Elgin for honours.



Skye Dolphins swimmers Ruth Gordon and Rebecca Smith show off their medal haul from the championships.

Local businesses sponsor new shinty strips

BALLACHULISH Shinty Club second team and Kinlochleven High School shinty team are the proud possessors of brand new strips - thanks to local businesses The Ice Factor and Lochside Garage.

The school has strong ties with their local club - several pupils play for Ballachulish and school shinty players regularly attend club training sessions - and that bond was strengthened when the new kit was unveiled at Ballachulish's opening game of the season against Strachur at Jubilee Park.



Kinlochleven High School head John McGilp, front right, shows off the new strip with Ballachulish second team.

SHINTY

Head teacher John McGilp lined up with the Ballachulish squad in their new kit.

He told The Oban Times at the photocall: 'I think this an ideal example of a local sports club, the school and local businesses working together in the community.'

Mixed fortunes for Fort William

Highland League Deveronvale 9 Fort William 0

FORT WILLIAM will be looking to bounce back from their 9-0 humbling against Deveronvale when they host Strathspey Thistle in the Fosters Highland League Cup on Saturday. The Lochaber side were missing eight first team regulars for the trip to Banff, forcing manager Calum MacLean to name two young trialists in his starting eleven.

One of the players missing was goalkeeper John Campbell, whose

U17s Football Fort William 9 Strathspey United 1

FORT WILLIAM U17s restarted their season after the winter break with a bang, thrashing Strathspey 9-1 at Claggan Park on Sunday. Despite the wintry conditions both sides started with real intent but the home side made the breakthrough after five minutes when Logan Barker slotted in after a one-on-one with the Strathspey keeper.

Fort were soon two goals ahead when Martin Munro scored from

a Lewis Campbell cross. Good defensive work from the Lochaber youngsters prevented Strathspey getting back into the match, and the game was effectively over as a contest after 30 minutes when Raymond Munro scored a quick-fire double. The scoreline got even better for Fort before half time. Andy McLean scored arguably the goal of the game with a diving header before Munro completed his hat trick to make it 6-0 at the break. Fort made five changes in the second half after Strathspey

FOOTBALL

injured back may also keep him out of action this weekend. Defender Stephen Hendry is likely to miss the match as he has not yet fully recovered from broken ribs, but the other absent players should be back in the team.

Assistant manager James Annette said the team were looking forward to the cup game. He told The Oban Times: 'I think it's going to be a good game. It was close last time we played them, and we're relishing the opportunity to have another go at them.'

Then it's back to regular league action on Wednesday when

Fort play their rearranged game against Rothes at Claggan Park. The sides drew 3-3 when they last met back in September, and James is hoping his side can go one better and get the win that would move them off the bottom of the league. He said: 'If we can get a result against Rothes we can move above Strathspey. Rothes have a much better goal difference than us but we can put ourselves up there with them. That's what we're hoping for.'

scored early on. But further goals from Darren Kennedy, Barker and a fourth from Munro meant a comfortable home victory.

Fort's next game should prove more of a challenge when they take on unbeaten Wick Academy at Claggan Park on Sunday.

Team: Bradley Cameron, Paddy Toal, Kieran Lopez, Darren Kennedy, Farquhar MacRae, Martin Munro, Lewis Campbell, Andy McLean, Chris MacLeod, Logan Barker, Raymond Munro, Cameron Melrose, Gordie Jamieson, Dale MacFadyen, Connor Wilson, Scott MacLean.

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Snowbonanza: Glencoe Mountain owner Andy Meldrum at the car park restaurant - after it had been dug out.

'Fantastic' conditions at Lochaber ski centres

AS LOWER alpine resorts lose their snow cover in spring sunshine, Lochaber's ski centres are boasting beautiful powder conditions after last weekend's blizzards.

Both Glencoe and Nevis Range received half a metre of new snow to provide a late season bonanza for skiers.

Marketing manager Heather Negus reported on Monday afternoon that conditions were 'fantastic'.

'Overnight there was more snow and drifting on westerly side of fences,' she said. 'All runs are complete. It is possible to ski anywhere across the mountain. Grooming is coming up very well. Back Corrie is unpatrolled until avalanche risk reduces which is currently high.'

Up at Glencoe, marketing manager Daniel Loots said an 'incredible' amount of snow had fallen - almost burying the restaurant at car park level.

He told snowsports enthusiasts: 'All runs have masses of fresh and

SKIING

drifted snow. And we have the best conditions of the season so far. 'We are still digging on the mountain so bear with us. All lower slopes are open, main basin t-bar now running and upper slopes are in good condition.'

Elsewhere at Glencoe, Main Basin and Happy Valley are filled with wind packed powder, but Flypaper is closed due to high avalanche risk. Skiers report the run down to the car park as being 'awesome'.

Glencoe Mountain manager Angela Dingwall told The Oban Times on Monday: 'We are quite busy today and have around 350 people on the mountain. Our operations director Bobby Munro says he has never seen so much snow on the plateau. We are hoping for a fabulous weekend.'

He told snowsports enthusiasts: 'All runs have masses of fresh and

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Underdogs are the champions

TEN PIN BOWLING

UNDERDOGS have been crowned champions of the Lochaber Building Supplies winter 10 pin bowling league.

They finished top of both the scratch and handicap divisions after a close battle with Alleycats, who ended up second in both leagues by just two points. Council came in third in the scratch league whilst Rotavators were third in the handicap division.

The season's highest scratch game and highest scratch two-game series both went to Alleycats with 669 and 1,232. Underdogs had the top handicap game with 908.

Alleycats' Pam Weller was the top individual player with the top scratch average of 146, with Council's Brian Stewart second on 144.

The top scratch game went to Matt Ball of Underdogs, who rolled 221, followed by Ardtoe's Tim Attack with 216. Tim also had the top handicap game with 278 and the top two-game scratch series with 382.

A singles league will now start at the Nevis Centre and run into May.

Livercaol increase their lead

INDOOR FOOTBALL

LIVERCAOL have increased their lead at the top of the Ali Young Winter League to seven points after beating NGTW 3-1 on Sunday night at the Nevis Centre.

Nearest rivals Lochaber Leisure's game was postponed after their opponents Caley Jags showed up late. Goon Squad took advantage and moved into second with a 3-2 win over All Trades.

Funky Five are fourth after a 3-1 win against Ballachulish.

HW Energy moved further clear of the bottom of the league with a 3-0 victory against Achintore FC. Crazy Crofter, who lost 3-0 to Caol, are now seven points adrift.

Lovat Ladies

LADIES SHINTY

LOVAT Shinty Club have announced they now have a ladies team, who will be entered into North Division 2 development league.

New recruits Gemma Bell and Gillian Currie will be taking the team and are currently holding training sessions.

Any ladies in the area are welcome to come along, so please get in touch. Training is on Sundays at Balglate Park from 2pm and on Thursday evenings in Tomnacross Primary 7.30 to 8.30pm.

Endurance series

MOUNTAIN BIKING

FORT WILLIAM-based No Fuss Events have announced Llandegla in north Wales as the venue for the third of its Benromach 10 hour mountain bike endurance series. The move represents the company's first foray south as their portfolio of events increases.

No Fuss have welcomed former trial world champion Ben Savage on board to help promote the Welsh leg on August 20.

Spot the SHINTY BALL Competition



WIN £800

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...

All you have to do

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void. Prizes will be shared between those submitting correct entries.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to reach 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition Rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery. The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.

The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.

Employees of The Oban Times Limited, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.



I enclose £1 (note) for 20 crosses (tick box) The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules.

How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1.

Name _____

Address _____

Tel No. _____

Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:
D Smith, Port Charlotte, Islay and J Burt, Millpark Avenue, Oban

RUGBY ROUND-UP

Business boost for rugby development in region

TWO OBAN businesses have stepped in to help make up a shortfall in funding for rugby development in Argyll and Bute.

The position of rugby development officer in the county, currently filled by Billy Thomson, has been funded by Argyll and Bute Council, the Scottish Rugby Union and Scottish Schools Club, however, the Scottish Schools Club is withdrawing funding at the end of this month.

Support

Financial support from the Dave Sturrock Yachting and AMP Electrical Services has been topped up by the lottery grant body Sports Match Funding.

Sponsor Dave Sturrock is also chairman of Argyll and Bute Rugby Football Club.

He said: 'Billy is trying to reach areas of Argyll and Bute where children perhaps haven't been exposed to rugby before, so we are only too happy to help.'

Billy added: 'This sponsorship is essential if the post is to continue and we are to carry on the developing the sport in the area.'

'My aim is to now try to reach some of the most rural parts of the county.'



Argyll and Bute rugby development officer Billy Thomson, centre, is pictured with Argyll and Bute RFC chairman and sponsor Dave Sturrock, left, and Scottish Rugby Community Coach Allan Wright.

Mull push league leaders to the end in tight game

Determined islanders pipped by Paisley

**West League 2
Mull 10, Paisley 12**

SATURDAY saw Mull entertain league leaders Paisley - a game that was in jeopardy not from the cold weather conditions but by the allocated referee missing the ferry.

After some frantic phone calls between the two sides, local referee Donald Morrison rescued the fixture and took charge of what turned out to be a frustrating game for the home team.

Mull welcomed back several players to the starting line-up and began the match with intent, forcing pressure onto a sluggish Paisley side.

Most of the opening 20 minutes was played with Mull on the attack, although they were unable to unlock a resolute defence, and all Mull could muster from this

period of pressure was a Patrick Carmichael penalty after Paisley handled in the ruck.

Mull continued the half on the attack but could not find the final pass to cross the line.

From the restart Mull were determined to force the game and after a gathered kick, full back Sean Black returned the ball from the Mull half leaving the Paisley defence in tatters to score a great individual try which Carmichael converted to make the score 10-0.

But on big moments games are won and lost and Mull allowed Paisley a foothold in the game when a kick in behind the defence was poorly dealt with.

The ball was intercepted by the Paisley backs, who ran it in for a soft converted try.

Mull pressed on through their forwards and were starting to

gain the upper hand when an ill-placed off load was intercepted by Paisley and finished in the corner with the conversion missed.

Mull still had time to rescue the game and spent the last five minutes of the match camped on the Paisley line, but no matter how much they tried they could not breach the visitors' defence.

The final whistle saw the visitors claim a narrow win, although Mull will feel that they did enough to win the game, just lacking the correct decision making at crucial times.

THE Mull RFC under 16 squad recently took delivery of a new set of strips courtesy of local diving and marine contract specialists North West Marine.

The company, which is an Argyll based firm, offers a

range of services to the marine industry, such as mooring and pontoon installation and pier and slipway maintenance, and was happy to offer support to the efforts made by the players and volunteers at Mull RFC.

Youth coach Gerry Ralston said he was delighted that Tony and Nicky Ratcliffe, of North West Marine, had offered this sponsorship as the youth side have had to make do with an old set of senior strips that were literally falling apart.

He said: 'Our players now not only play the part they also look the part.'

'If any youngster would like to get involved with the Mull youth section, they train on a Thursday afternoon at Tobermory High School and at Garmony on a Sunday morning.'



Inter-school athletics held at Atlantis

SIX teams of primary pupils from schools in and around Oban were leaping, crawling, rolling and running as part of last week's Atlantis Leisure Inter-school Athletics Championship.

The pupils of P4 and P5 were operating at full tilt as they demonstrated their abilities at the sport centre for the event's fifth year.

Competing in groups of eight were teams: Rockfield A and Rockfield B, Park A, North Lorn A, Dalmally and Easdale.

The winning team, by the narrowest of margins, was Rockfield A, with Park A only just missing out on the top prize.

Legends help raise £10,000 for Ryan fund

REPORT

by STEVEN FLANAGAN
sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk

THE Ryan MacPhail Memorial Fund had its most successful fundraiser ever at its sportsman's dinner in Oban on Friday, raising £10,000.

The capacity crowd at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls enjoyed tales from guest speakers, former Rangers player, ex-SFA president, pundit and football agent Gordon Smith, and Frank MacAvennie, the former Celtic player most famously lampooned by comedian, Jonathan Watson.

Also at the top table were Neil Horne, the chairman of Oban FM and past secretary of the Argyllshire Gathering Games, and local councillor, Roddy McCuish.

Ryan's mother, Amanda, said the family were delighted with the turnout.

Proud

She said: 'We are so proud that the evening was a sell-out and that everybody seems to enjoy helping us keep Ryan's memory alive and to whom and where all the money raised goes.'

'I still have money coming in, but we are near the £10,000 mark, and yes, that is the most money raised in one single event.'

'Frank MacAvennie did a great impersonation of Jonathan Watson impersonating Frank MacAvennie, Gordon Smith had some great Old Firm Stories and Councillor Roddy McCuish had the hall in stitches as usual with his hilarious tales featuring local characters.'

Alan and Amanda MacPhail set up the fund in 2005 after their son Ryan died in a tragic sledding accident in 2003.

The fund has helped numerous local groups and causes since it was founded, handing out over £25,000 in grants as well as funding as funding a number of children's parties.



Pictured at Friday's Ryan MacPhail Memorial Dinner are, from left, Neil Horne, Gordon Smith, Alan MacPhail, Frank MacAvennie and Roddy McCuish.

Jim leads the way as table tennis league season starts

THE Fort William Table Tennis leagues are well underway and in the third division, Jim Hinchley is well in the lead, but having said that he had to fight hard for his lead last Monday as George Rogers took him to five closely fought games.

George Rogers then went on to

beat George Harper 3-2.

Division 2 leader Chris Diain has only suffered one defeat so far, to Peter McCrae in an epic match. Peter eventually won 3-2.

In Division 1, last year's winner Monte Bleasdale leads the table followed closely by John Grant,

who has a comfortable lead over third placed Angus MacDonald.

Next Monday evening, March 21, sees the start of the annual open for singles and doubles. The action gets underway at 6.30pm and continues through to 9pm. All are welcome.

Saints seniors top premier division

FOOTBALL

OBAN Saints are top of the Scottish Amateur League Premier Division albeit they have played more games than anybody else, because they were knocked out of all the cups in the early rounds this season.

This was very disappointing considering they reached the quarter finals of the Scottish cup twice in the last four years.

The Oban side have the points on the board and a superior goal difference, so it's up to the other teams to win their games and catch them. Kilpatrick and Greenock look to be the main threat, but Aikenhead could make a late challenge for the title.

Saints were awarded the three points in an abandoned game against Thorn Athletic which is not included in this league table as the team from Johnstone may appeal against the decision.

The Oban side have no game this Saturday.

SCOTTISH AMATEUR LEAGUE - PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Oban Saints	13	7	4	2	33	17	25
Kilpatrick	8	6	1	1	18	11	19
Greenock HSFP	10	5	2	3	14	13	17
St Josephs	10	5	0	5	16	23	15
Castlemilk	8	3	1	4	14	16	10
Arkleston	5	2	2	1	13	11	8
Thorn Athletic	7	2	1	4	11	18	7
Aikenhead	4	1	2	1	8	5	5
Cambria	8	1	1	6	6	11	4
Inverclyde	7	0	2	5	11	19	2

Saints youth results and fixtures

YOUTH FOOTBALL

ALL games involving Oban Saints youth teams were cancelled last weekend due to the weather.

This weekend's fixtures: Under 13s v Dalvair; Clydebank BC v Under 14s; Under 15s no game; Largs Colts v Under 16s.

Over-35s Indoor League

FOOTBALL

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Trialists	7	7	0	0	21
Taynuilt	7	6	1	0	19
Teachers	9	5	1	3	16
Hydro	7	5	0	2	15
Spartak	8	4	0	4	12
Emergency	9	3	2	4	11
WCM	8	3	1	4	10
Seil	8	3	0	5	9
Clan Trees	9	1	0	8	3
Owen Sails	8	0	1	7	1

Results: Clan Trees 7, Teachers 10; Emergency 4, Owen Sails 4.

RUGBY

OBAN Lorne ladies will play their final home match of the season at Glencruitten this Sunday at noon against Grangemouth.

The Argyll Girls U18s will contest the final of the Brevin Dolphin Scottish Girls Bowl at Murrayfield on the March 27.

TWO OBAN High School pupils represented Glasgow Warriors under-17s in a grudge match against Edinburgh last Wednesday.

Lock forward Magnus Bradbury and centre Angus MacCallum both started in the 26-7 defeat.

Glasgow's next match is this Wednesday at Murrayfield against Caledonia and Magnus is expected to start at number five.

Weather

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Thursday

Light rain.
 Winds moderate, westerly.
 Temperatures -1°C to 6°C

Friday

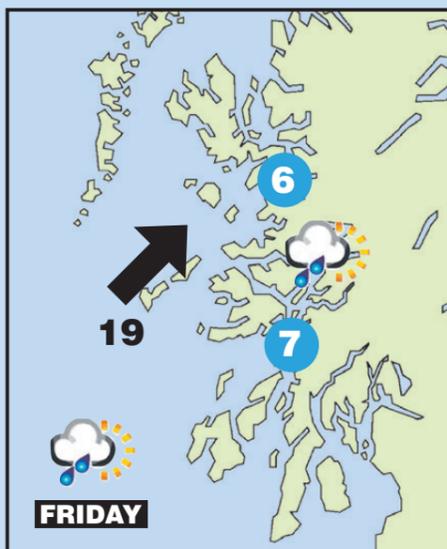
Light rain.
 Winds moderate, south, south westerly.
 Temperatures -1°C to 6°C.

Weekend Outlook

Sunny intervals and scattered showers.
 Winds moderate, south, south westerly.
 Temperatures 6°C to 7°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist - Moderate
 Oban to Coll/Tiree -Moderate
 Kennacraig to Islay - Moderate



Tides

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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, March 17, 2011** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	03.54 3.6 10.24 1.1 16.31 3.6 22.14 0.8	
Fri	04.36 3.9 11.06 0.7 17.06 3.8 23.01 0.4	
Sat	05.15 4.1 11.45 0.5 17.39 4.0 23.45 0.1	
Sun	05.53 4.3 12.23 0.3 18.14 4.1 *** **	
Mon	00.29 0.0 06.31 4.3 13.01 0.3 18.50 4.1	
Tues	01.13 0.1 07.08 4.1 13.40 0.4 19.27 4.0	
Wed	01.57 0.2 07.46 3.9 14.21 0.6 20.07 3.8	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Lochboisdale	+0.30
Campbeltown	-5.30	Mallaig	+0.25
Crinan	-0.47	Portree	+0.55
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Tobermory	+0.16
		Dover	+5.30



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