

The Oban Times

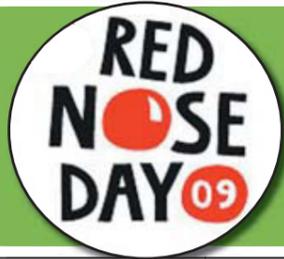
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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RED NOSE ROUND UP

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FUNDING WITHDRAWN FROM BUDDING YOUNG ATHLETES

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Let's make Oban top for tourists, urges group

OBAN will be a top destination for tourists this year thanks to its unique selling points of scenery, heritage and seafood.

That is the thinking behind setting up a working party, Oban Forward, to get the town ready for Easter.

A 12 point-plan has been put together to paint, polish and place signs to alert people to the wonders of Oban as a destination for a holiday.

Neil McLauchlan, chairman of the group, said: 'We want everyone to get behind our plans for tidying up.'

'If people have a little time or money to offer then it will help to set up Oban for the thousands of visitors who come into the town every week. If people would like to donate a bench or a lamp, or indeed some bunting, they should contact their councillor.'

'The 2009 Homecoming is an ideal opportunity to get people into the town, and let's hope they have such a good time that they will want to come back for more.'

'It is up to everyone to make our visitors welcome by tidying the place up.'

For full story turn to page 5.

New late licence bid

A FORMER soldier is appealing for his new neighbours to give him a chance as he applies for a new late licence for O'Donnell's Bar in Oban.

Under its previous management the bar had its licence cut from 2am to 11pm closing due to a series of disturbances and complaints from neighbours in Breadalbane Street.

Full story page 3.



The beautiful National Trust garden at Arduaine near Kilmelford faces a race against time to remain open.

Arduaine hopes a benefactor can prevent closure

GARDEN lovers and the surrounding community are planning to set up an action group in response to the proposed closure of the National Trust's attraction at Arduaine after discovering that it may be closed by May.

Staff at Arduaine Garden near Kilmelford were told last week of the proposed closure by the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) after a dramatic

fall in the trust's revenues. Despite the trust not confirming the closure date an insider has revealed that it may be as early as May that doors close on the horticulturally significant garden.

Gardeners and the local community have decided to set up a group backing a bid by Maurice Wilkins, head gardener at Arduaine, to find a generous benefactor who

would keep the site open.

Mr Wilkins said: 'Once closed, successful re-opening of the garden seems unlikely. To survive the garden needs a considerable injection of cash. If a wealthy benefactor or group could be found to finance Arduaine then perhaps that would secure a good financial base for the future.'

Jamie McGrigor MSP said: 'Everyone I have spoken to is

horrified by the possible closure which would purely be on economic grounds.'

'Visitor numbers have fallen since the 1990s but this factor could be easily remedied with serious marketing.'

'I will be writing to the Prince of Wales and the ministers for tourism and the environment on this special issue.'

A spokeswoman for the

Prince said: 'We are unable to comment. Charles will respond to the MSP when he returns from his overseas trip.'

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'We have not been approached by the NTS to ask for funding for the gardens. But there is a high likelihood that we would be able to offer advice in looking for sources of funding if an action group is formed.'

Argyll's jobs despair

1,600 people chase just 52 vacancies

SHOCK new figures show it is harder to find work in Argyll and Bute than almost anywhere else in Scotland.

More than 30 job-seekers are lining up for every vacancy – three times the Scottish average.

Jobcentre figures for January showed that 1,630 people on the dole were chasing just 52 jobs in Argyll. The odds were worse only in the Western Isles, with 13 positions on offer and 578 jobseekers.

The devastating numbers, compiled by the Scottish Trade Unions Congress, underline the pressure on unemployed people to move out of the area in search of work.

Blackspot
Oban councillor Roddy McCuish said Argyll's employment blackspot status was a blow for those out of work or concerned about job security. He said: 'The ripples of the credit crunch are starting to hit here and these figures are very disappointing.'

Argyll and Bute MSP and Scotland's enterprise minister, Jim Mather, said people wanted to live on the west coast, putting pressure on jobs.

He said: 'My reading of the data is that it also reflects a historically low level of business start-ups.'

'Scotland still has lower unemployment levels than south of the border, and the

Report by CHRISTINE MCCARTNEY
Scottish government is doing everything in its powers to help families and businesses weather the downturn with our six-point recovery plan.'

Research by Highlands and Islands Enterprise confirmed that the numbers signing on in the region rose by 35 per cent in the year up to January 2009. Only Mull and Islay bucked the trend with a fall in the number of jobseekers.

A spokesman for Jobcentre Plus in the region claimed the statistics did not tell the whole story. He said some claimants had been able to find 'hidden vacancies' and jobcentres had been stepping up co-operation with employers to offer recruitment help and more options to the unemployed.

He said: 'We can offer a raft of services to employers, like incentives to take on unemployed staff, work trials and open days. What we do not want is the labour market to become inactive as we saw in the last recession.'

As of this week, he added Oban job centre had details of 78 vacancies in the area and Campbeltown a further nine.

The STUC said the government must accept that unemployment, now at two million in the UK, was being matched by an equally shocking decline in vacancies and was a 'national emergency'.

Seven staff face axe after Oban care centre loses funding

SEVEN jobs could be lost in an Oban carers centre after the Quarriers charity withdrew its financial support.

The social care charity withdrew its funding to North Argyll Carers Centre this week, saying funding of the centre was no longer sustainable.

Staff at the centre have vowed to fight on and are to organise a committee to look for new funding streams.

David Williams of Quarriers said: 'It is extremely disappointing for us that we have got to the point where there is no choice but to make this

decision to withdraw as the managing agent.

We have been delivering the service for the better part of 10 years and despite our best efforts to improve the funding position we have failed to achieve that.'

Quarriers says its funding of

the centre will finish in June.

North Argyll Carers Centre manager Ruth Moodie said: 'We have been trying to get a committee together to go independent, but three months is not long to get everything organised. However the committee are dedicated and very

keen to try.' One volunteer who did not wish to be named said: 'I find it shocking and very sad, it's just such a lovely set up. So many carers use the place and can pop in any time and have a chat. It will be a huge worry to everyone if it closes.'



A CELEBRATION OF WHISKY, FOOD & WEST COAST CULTURE!



SPIRIT OF THE WEST
INVERARAY CASTLE, SAT 16TH - SUN 17TH MAY 2009

SPIRIT OF THE WEST is a fantastic weekend family event held in the grounds of Inveraray Castle, Argyll. Whisky, food, drink, music, dance, drama, arts & crafts and much more. With a line-up that includes The Red Hot Chili Peppers and Nick Naim – it's one festival not to be missed! **TICKETS ON SALE:** Call 0871 230 5580 or book online at www.seetickets.com/spiritofthewest. Book tickets by 30th April 2009 and receive 10% off listed ticket prices! Quote promotion code: SOTWPROMO when booking with seetickets

WWW.SPIRITOFTHWEST.CO.UK

'Outstanding' teenager dies in road crash

A SMALL Argyll community is devastated this week after a teenager was killed in a car accident.

Fraser Black, aged 18, died when the car he was driving crashed into a tree on the A828 near Appin last Friday at around 3pm.

Mr Black, whose parents and two brothers live in Appin, was a student at Glasgow Nautical College studying naval engineering.

Donald Hutchinson of Kinlochlaich Gardens said the community is 'shattered' at the death of Fraser who had just begun a career in the merchant navy.

Mr Hutchinson, who spent 17 years at sea and wrote a letter of recommendation to the college on Fraser's behalf earlier this year, said: 'He was an outstanding young lad.'

Mr Hutchinson added that Fraser's parents had asked mourners to wear bright clothing to Fraser's funeral and to 'remember him as he was'.

A remembrance plaque is also to be placed at Kinlochlaich Gardens where Fraser had worked after leaving school.

Argyll firefighters are busier with road accidents than fires – see page 3.



Lorne Cousin from Campbeltown is joined by Sean Connery of Pilton at the US Senate.

Lorne is a star with the stars

A WEST COAST piper blew into White House celebrations for President Obama and came home with some celebrity fans.

Lorne Cousin from Campbeltown was invited by Alec Salmond to a reception in the US Congress to celebrate Barack Obama's first speech to senators.

Lorne, joined on stage by singers Sandie Thom and Margaret Bennett, was the star-turn when X-Factor

judge Dannii Minogue, Madonna and Jackie Collins all claimed to be fans of the piper.

Lorne said: 'One of the senator's wives called me the second most popular man in the room – with Sean Connery being the first. It was a great night. I think President Obama is a big fan of the pipes.'

Lorne is a member of band DRAM! – look out for a CD review in the next few weeks.

Argyll beaches set to be even more beautiful

BEACHES in Argyll will be a little more beautiful thanks to a series of community events.

Beach cleans by community groups and schools are to go ahead at Ganavan Sands near Oban, Luss Bay and Machrihanish.

The beach cleans will be organised by the Argyll and Bute Beach Forum thanks to a £4,000 grant from Keep Scotland Beautiful.

Louise Robertson, project officer for the forum which is run by the GRAB Trust, said: 'The trust is very proud of Argyll and Bute's designated bathing waters and is delighted to receive this funding from Keep Scotland Beautiful.'

'We are looking forward to arranging these events to raise awareness of the potential impacts of litter.'

The grant will be used to organise a beach scavenger day at Ganavan, a workshop and poster competition at Luss Bay and a beach clean-up event at Machrihanish.

John Summers, chief executive of Keep Scotland Beautiful, said: 'We hope that these small grants encourage these communities to raise awareness of the impacts of coastal litter on the environment.'

Beautiful Bedrooms

Check out the fabulous range of beds & bedroom furniture on show

Tweedmill, Soroba Road, Oban.
Tel: 01631 565195

Colonsay's two-year search for nurse

A VACANCY for a community nurse on the Isle of Colonsay is being advertised for the fourth time in two years.

Applications for the part-time nursing post are being sought by tomorrow (Friday), after NHS Highland held interviews in January but was unable to appoint.

So desperate is the situation that an appeal has gone out to the community to house the new nurse, as accommodation is believed to be a big stumbling block in attracting applicants.

A year ago, Argyll and Bute Council leased Kilchattan schoolhouse to the health board for a nurse on the island and remain willing to discuss this option with the NHS.

A spokeswoman said: 'The council will lease the schoolhouse to the NHS for as long as the schoolhouse is not required by the council in connection with the provision of accommodation for teaching staff.'

Islay inn is island hotel of the year

BOWMORE'S Harbour Inn on Islay has won the Island Hotel of the Year award at the Scottish Hotel Awards.

The awards were presented by the Scottish parliament's presiding officer Alex Ferguson at the Crown Plaza, Glasgow.

Hotel owner Neil Scott said: 'We are hopefully playing our part in keeping Islay firmly on the tourist map during these challenging times.'

School AGM

TOBERMORY High School annual general meeting will be on Wednesday, March 28 at 7pm in the school. All parents are welcome.

Proposals for charges in Tobermory may go to a hearing Parking protest grows

OBJECTORS to parking charges in an island town hope to prove Argyll and Bute Council has no right to charge the fee.

Tobermory on Mull has been given notice of the council's intention to impose parking charges for the Main Street and for the Ledaig area.

With many residents agreeing with the initial plans for parking charges for the on-street parking alongside the shops, there has been an outcry at the intention to charge for parking in the harbour area at Ledaig.

Brian Swinbanks, speaking on behalf of Tobermory's car parking charges protest group, said: 'Ledaig was a unique project conceived and fought for, and recently finished, by the harbour association.'

Difficult 'Charging at Ledaig is very difficult because this is Crown land and it may even be that Argyll and Bute which leases the land may not have a right to impose charges there.'

'In the long run this will be a loss of revenue to the exchequer because people will simply not come into Tobermory

to do their shopping. 'Will the revenue from this project really be worth the downturn for local business?' A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'The parking charges are being introduced into Tobermory for traffic management reasons.'

'In 2004 the Oban Lorn and the Isles Area Committee decided that charges should be applied in Ledaig Car Park. This was confirmed later that year by the strategic policy committee.'

'An order was promoted which attracted a large number

of objections, many on the basis that charging at Ledaig without charging on street would cause traffic problems with drivers driving up and down Main Street looking for a free parking space rather than pay at Ledaig.'

Listened 'We listened to what the objectors were saying and withdrew the proposed order until we could also introduce on street charging. We are now in the process of promoting traffic orders to allow the introduction of charges both on street and at Ledaig.'

'Other than Tobermory we have no plans to introduce charges elsewhere in Argyll and Bute.'

Hearing Councillor Mary-Jean Devon said: 'The closing date for objections will then be passed to operational services. If there is a significant number the proposal will go to a hearing.'

It is understood that a number of organisations, including the police, have voiced objections against the proposed charges.

New restaurant will dish up its own freshly caught fish

A NEW restaurant opening on Mull next month is promising the freshest fish possible.

Owner Carla Lamont will be supplied with the best crab, lobster as well as more unusual catches such as sea urchin and octopus by her fisherman husband, Johnny.

Carla, 44, originally from Canadian, is looking forward to the challenge of creating delicious dishes for her guests at her newly-built £220,000 restaurant outside the small village of Fionnphort.

New recipe

'I have just planned a new recipe for sea urchin roe as a delicious spring roll - it tastes like the ocean,' she said. 'I have worked in Iona and Fionnphort as a chef for 15 years. I never for a moment dreamt we would be able to open a restaurant.'

'Johnny will be catching dinner and then will be on hand to explain exactly where it came from.'

'We will be also growing our own produce in the garden. I hope that we will be able to resource the majority of what we serve to customers as close to Mull as possible.'

'I like to put my stamp on things, I am a bit over the top at times but in a good way.'

The restaurant was built with help from the Highlands and Islands Enterprise to convert the Lamont's family croft into a restaurant at Bruach Mor.



Restaurateur Carla Lamont picks up the catch from her husband's boat.

Bus pass gets Fiona to wedding on time

A MULL pensioner on her way to a wedding was devastated when she got to Glasgow Airport to discover she had left her passport in a drawer in Tobermory.

Quick-thinking Fiona Jappy - on her way to a wedding in Ireland of fellow

Gaelic choir member Hank Bonne - decided to chance her luck by using her bus pass as ID for the flight.

Officials at the airport decided that the free transport pass was good enough, because it was issued by the government, and Fiona was

able to make her way to the lavish wedding in Cork.

She said: 'After being frisked due to a metal plate in my knee I managed to make onto the flight.'

'It was a brilliant wedding and so good to see my friend getting married.'

No place like roam for Kinder

AN ADVENTUROUS pet is back home safely on the Isle of Colonsay after going on the run for a second time.

Owner Jane Rose decided to re-settle her cat, Kinder, with family in Cheltenham after he spent 18 months living wild on Colonsay. But he did not take to

city life either, and disappeared again after a matter of weeks.

This time he was found in a barn four miles out of town and handed over to the Cats Protection League.

Jane said: 'He was none the worse for his adventures. It's good to have him home.'



Beachd Ailein

Thachair dà rud air an t-seachdain seo chaidh a chuir dragh agus tàmailt ormsa, agus tha mi glè chinnteach air mòran eile cuideachd.

Nochd ghealb de luchd-taice phoblachdach ann an Èirinn a Tuath, agus le mort brùideil dhearbhadh iad gum bheil luchd nan gunnaichean is nan spreadhadairan fhathast gun tur cheannasachadh an sin. An dèidh na dh'fhulaing a' choimhearsnachd sin thar còrr air deich bliadhna fheadh le call beatha agus am bròn ga leantainn, cha bheag an t-iongnadh gum bheil daoine a' gabhail uimhir a thoileachas as an t-sith. Chan annas gum bheil impidh air a dhòl air luchd poileataigs cùisean a rèiteach eatorra is an sluagh air an claidh le aimhreit. Theagamh nach bu chòir dhuinn iongnadh a ghabhail gum bheil amadain ann a tha airson an cogadh a chumail a' dol oir tha an leithid sin daonnan air an iomall. 'S e tha na adhbhar uimhir a dhòchas is misneachd gum bheil na pàrtaidhean poiliteagach, agus a mhòr-chuid den choimhearsnachd a-rèir coltais, air daingneachadh an aghaidh ùrachaidh sam bith den ar-a-mach a bh' ann. As a' bhàrr na 's dòcha dearbhadh air rùn airson sith fù's nas treasa na bha e riamh.

Ann an Alba, a dh'aindeoin a h-uile rannsachadh is sgrùdadh thar uimhir a bhliadhnaichean, agus fù's an dèidh Achd Gàidhlig a chruthachadh gus fear de phrìomh chànanan dhuilich-chasach na dùthcha a dhìon, tha Ministear Riaghaltais airson bacadh a chur air soighnichean-rathaid Gàidhlig air sgàth 's gun cual' e fathann gun robh iad nan cunnart dha dràibhear-an! Tha amharas ann gur e fìor dhroch comhairle a chaidh a thoirt air a' Mhinistear an seo ach rinn esan amadan dheth fhèin a' gabhail ris gun cheist, agus mar is luaithe a' chuireas e a' chùis air a' chùlaibh 's ann as fheàrr dha fhèin agus dhan Gàidhlig! Tha faisg air ceud bliadhna bhon a chaidh soighnichean a' chànanach suas ann an Èirinn, agus tha iad air a' bhith as a' Chumrigh agus air feadh na Roinn Eòrpa is Canada iomadh bliadhna cuideachd. Nam biodh iad nan cunnart bha sinn air cluinntinn mu dheidhinn! 'S e tha seo ach gràis beag de sheirbheisich-chatharra a th' air seasamh a-rithist 's a-rithist an aghaidh soighnichean Gàidhlig. Tha an t-àm stad a chur orra!

It is always depressing to see regression and in the past week many of us would have shared a sense of sadness.

Politicians in Northern Ireland recognise that their electorate now demand that they find political solutions, and in the tragedies of the latest murders there is hope in the unity which the majority has demonstrated for peace.

Concurrent with its own Draft Gaelic Plan going to public consultation the Scottish Government Transport Minister cites 'anecdotal evidence' as justification of an extended review, and effectively a delay in any expansion of Gaelic trunk road signage. Transport officials have raised safety issues with successive ministers, but why should what demonstrably works safely in countries across the globe be different in Scotland?

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

Volunteers in road plea

TIREE'S fire and ambulance volunteers say they are getting stuck behind drivers on single track roads, delaying them when dealing with emergencies.

Despite volunteers switching on head and hazard lights, drivers are failing to respond. One said: 'The Highway Code requires that drivers should pull over when another vehicle wishes to pass them on a single track road.'



Islay Pipe Band - crowned 2008 grade 4A champion of champions.

Pipe band faces funding challenge after loss of sponsor

ISLAY Pipe Band's 2009 season has started with a wrong note with the news that one of their main sponsors has withdrawn support due to the financial crisis.

A spokesman for Black Bottle Whisky has confirmed that the firm will continue to support the band, which is in its first season as a Grade 3B band, by supplying kit and raffle prizes, but that they will not be able to cover the cost of travel to competitions.

This leaves band members with the unenviable task of having to raise the thousands of pounds needed to cover transport and accommodation costs to five events at a time when they are working extremely hard to learn the new and much more complex material needed to compete at their new level.

Lindy MacLellan said: 'Many band members are giving up their own time to tutor potential new pipers and drummers - a very successful initiative which has seen 16 Islay youngsters, aged from eight to 22

years old, beginning to learn since the end of last year.

'After last year's incredible performance, when the band rose to the challenge of their first promotion to finish champion of champions at Grade 4A, there is no question of not giving it their all in 2009.'

'To help take some of the strain, a motley crew of family members, friends and supporters of the band are launching a fund raising bid to help plug the gap.'

The band are holding a money bingo event in Portnahaven on April 3 and intend to resurrect its 100 Club with a cash prize every month.

Lindy added: 'In addition, any local business wishing to have its details displayed on the pipe band bus over the summer can do so by contributing to the cost of hire - all donations, large and small, are welcome and will be acknowledged.'

Anyone who would like to help with fundraising can contact Sheena MacMillan (01496 860279) or Andrew MacEachern (01496 850271).

Tobermory's new store and cafe opens next month

SHOPPING will not be 'free' in a former church in Tobermory but it is hoped that it will serve the community well.

Spar has taken over the lease of a converted Free Church on the Main Street. Owner Duncan Cattanaich has transformed the building, which has been a retail outlet since the 1960s, into a modern supermarket with a cafe.

Connections

Duncan has more connections than most to the building. His father and mother, Archie and Sybil, were the last people to be married in the church in the late 1940s and Duncan's great-grandfather was a master mason who helped to build the church in the 19th century.

He said: 'I am hoping that the store will be the centre of the community of Tobermory.'



The interior of the Spar store and coffee shop due to open at the end of this month.

The official launch will be on Friday, April 10 where customers will be able to sample a range of Spar products and enter a free prize draw to win prizes under the preserved stained glass window.

Advertisement for Oban Mica Hardware featuring a testimonial from Alan Murdoch: 'During 2008 Oban Mica Hardware took the decision to advertise heavily within The Oban Times newspaper and leaflets therein. We found we had an extremely good response to this campaign and were delighted with the results and help we received with new ideas for prominence in the paper.'

Advertisement for Scottish Field magazine: 'We're springing into April with a great new look. More of the things you want to read about in a brighter, fresher magazine packed with even more stunning images of Scotland. ON SALE NOW. bigger... brighter... surprise... special... new... challenge...'

Tiree trust holds open day

TIREE is celebrating five years of its community trust with an open day.

The event, from noon on Saturday, will give participants the opportunity to get involved in making plans for the island's future as well as finding out about services offered.

Groups who will have stalls during the day will include Tiree Rural Development, Young Scot, Tiree Renewable Energy, Tiree Environmental Action and Argyll and Bute Volunteer Centre. A free lunch will be provided.

Boatyard owner may quit over thefts

THE OWNER of an Argyll boatyard, who has been robbed twice in the past five months, is considering shutting down the business.

Donald Wilson's Lochawe Boatyard, Ardbrecknish, had around £2,000 of fishing equipment, a pick-up vehicle worth £2,000 and £200 in petty cash stolen during a robbery last week. It follows a break-in theft last October.

Mr Wilson's employee Sebastian Kudlachzek was tied up by a group of four men while they stole the property at around 1.45am last Wednesday.

Mr Wilson said: 'I am seriously thinking of giving it up. I brought this employee in to help free me up but now I just wonder if it's worth it.'

It is believed that a break-in at Inverawe Smokehouses, which occurred hours earlier, may be connected to the Ardbrecknish robbery.

Drugs woman fined £180

A WOMAN caught with a Class A drug aboard a Glasgow to Oban train was fined £180 at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

The court heard Laura Gow, aged 34, of 1 Ferryfield Road, Connel had been of good behaviour since her sentence was deferred nine months ago after she admitted the offence.

British Transport Police found last June that she had two packages of Diamorphine in her possession.

Sheriff Douglas Small told her: 'It does seem that you have made good progress.'

Walk this way for paths

IF YOU walk, cycle, use a wheelchair or enjoy horseriding or non-motorised water sports, Argyll's core paths consultation would like to hear from you.

The paths will include walking and cycling paths and launching points for canoeing, diving and sailing.

A series of consultation events are being held throughout Argyll including Oban's Corran Halls on March 25, Bowmore Hall on Islay on April 7, Bunnassan Village Hall on April 29 and the Aqualubrium, Campbeltown on May 21.

Licencee charged

POLICE were called to an incident at an Oban restaurant on Saturday night, and the licencee charged with breaking the conditions of the licence.

Four men accused of breach of the peace

FOUR men fighting opposite the police station in Campbell Street, Oban, were apprehended by police and charged with causing a breach of the peace on Sunday afternoon.

Culvert covers finally replaced in Dunollie

CULVERTS that transport water underneath Dunollie are due to have covers replaced today (Thursday).

Ken Geldard, who has been protesting against the culverts lying open for a number of years, said: 'It is great something is finally being done.'

At a meeting of Dunollie Residents Association it was agreed that regardless of who was liable for the cost of replacing the covers that Argyll and Bute Council would replace them immediately and the cost shared out later.

Responsible Councillor Neil MacKay said: 'It doesn't matter who is responsible for paying for the covers. We will sort that out later.'

'The covers will be replaced immediately and negotiations will take place between Argyll and Bute Council, Dunollie Estates, Argyll Community Housing Association and West Highland Housing Association to identify who the owner



O'Donnell's new owner Ruari Armstrong. t12ruar03

New late licence bid by O'Donnell's

A FORMER soldier is appealing for his new neighbours to give him a chance as he applies for a new late licence for O'Donnell's Bar in Oban.

Under its previous management the bar had its licence cut from 2am to 11pm closing due to a series of disturbances and complaints from neighbours in Breadalbane Street, Oban.

New lease-holder Ruari Armstrong, a former soldier and security specialist has worked as a bar steward at O'Donnell's in the past and said he has met with the previous objectors and listened to what they have to say.

Mr Armstrong, who spent 10 years in the army with five operational tours to Iraq and the Far East, said: 'For the last 14 months there have been no disturbances at all, not even one small incident.'

'I have also been cleaning up empty bottles and litter from the street, not just outside the pub. 'the clientele in the pub has also changed, it's an older more mature crowd. In the past O'Donnell's was seen as a late venue, but if we get the late licence, which is only for 1am closing on Fridays and Saturdays, it will be a start of the night venue.'

Ruari, who left Oban aged 15 to

join the army, said he was also looking at raising the entry age for the bar to 21 years old.

He added that the bar had been given a 1am licence for seven days over the festive period and it had been a success.

'I am hoping people in Oban give me a chance,' he added. 'The previous management don't own the name O'Donnell's. I bought it and lease the bar.'

The Oban Times was this week unable to contact any of the previous objectors, who had complained about noise disturbances under the previous management, to find out their views.

Huge boost for hospice supporters

THE FRIENDS of Oban Hospice group held a very successful sale at Benderloch Equestrian Centre last weekend and, despite adverse weather conditions, raised an amazing £1,055.

Following on from this success, the group have taken over a charity shop in Oban's George Street by courtesy of shop owners the Di Ciaccia family. The shop aims to be open from March 14 - 28 and has already attracted considerable interest.

The Friends of Oban Hospice will hold their annual general meeting tonight (Thursday) at 8pm in the Undercroft of the Church Centre, Glencruitten Road, Oban when presentations will be given by Sister Rosie Robinson of Ward C of Lorn and the Islands District General Hospital, Oban on her vision for the future of palliative care within the hospital, and representatives of the Lippen Trust, the charity responsible for fundraising for Strathmore Hospice in Forfar. Strathmore is a custom-built unit operating within the local GP-run hospital and is similar to the aspirations of the Friends of Oban Hospice group within Lorn and the Islands District General Hospital.

Anyone interested in the hospice movement is welcome to attend tonight's meeting.

Shock road accident figures revealed

Firefighters attend more car crashes than blazes

FIREFIGHTERS in Argyll and Bute are now attending more road crashes than fires. A top fireman has described a league table, which puts Argyll and Bute at the top for road crashes in the Strathclyde area, as 'distressing'.

Commander Paul Connelly was addressing Oban, Lorn and the Isles area committee last Wednesday where he also revealed that the county had one of the lowest incidences of fires.

Commander Connelly said: 'We had nine road traffic collision (RTC) fatalities last year in Argyll and Bute.'

'Argyll and Bute is at the top of the Strathclyde Fire and Rescue league table for RTCs but we are at the bottom of the league tables for fire casualties.'

'What's most distressing for us is the road traffic collision figure.'

By EUAN PATERSON

Argyll and Bute firefighters have consistently been the most likely to attend a RTC and for the year 2007/08 attended 10.4 RTCs per 10,000 head of population. The nearest figure was 8.2 in East Ayrshire and the lowest was 5.3 in North Lanarkshire.

The situation is most severe in the Oban North and Lorn ward, where Strathclyde Fire and Rescue attended 34 RTCs for the year 2007/08, compared with the next highest, Mid Argyll, with 18.

This is compared to a reduction in the number of deliberate primary fires (buildings, vehicles and outdoor structures) over the past five years. In the year 2007/08 Argyll and Bute had 3.6 per 10,000 head of population, compared with West Dunbartonshire, which had 18.6.

Argyll and Bute group commander Stuart MacLean said: 'We deal with more RTCs than fires but we are prepared for both and it is important we continue to lower both these figures. 'We are trying, along with our partners in the emergency services, to educate drivers in road safety.'

Another statistic where Argyll and Bute is markedly higher than the national average is for chimney fires. Since the year 2003/04, 40 per cent of all chimney fires reported to Strathclyde Fire and Rescue have come from Argyll and Bute.

Conversely, Argyll and Bute has by far the lowest incidence of primary fires, malicious false alarms and acts of violence against firefighters. In the past five years there has only been one recorded act of violence against a firefighter in Argyll and Bute.

Reaction grows over PC's retrial

A 52-YEAR-old trainee will be brought in to replace Oban's most popular policeman who was forced to retire - at the age of 54.

For the past two years PC Raymond Law had taken advantage of Strathclyde Police's 30+ scheme, which allowed experienced police officers to extend their standard 30-year careers up to four years.

However, the constabulary's new chief constable Stephen House has turned down Raymond's request for a further two years on the beat.

Oban Police Station, which is now eight officers short, will instead be getting a train-

ee replacement only two years Raymond's junior.

Raymond was reluctant to raise the issue at the time of his retirement but public reaction to the refusal of his contract extension has sparked widespread shock among residents of Oban and the surrounding area.

Challenged Argyll and Bute's councillors, MP Alan Reid and Highlands and Islands MSP Jamie McGrigor have challenged the decision and Argyll and Bute MSP Jim Mather has raised the matter with justice secretary Kenny MacAskill and Strathclyde's chief constable.

Mr Mather said: 'My motivation is clearly based on Raymond's enthusiasm, the local support he has and the benefit of continuity, local knowledge and experience in policing the area. On top of that I am a policeman's son and know the positive difference that committed, well-liked police officers can make.'

In a letter to Mr MacAskill, Mr McGrigor said: 'Local people who were served so well by constable Law are frankly aghast and incredulous that such a useful community policeman should not be allowed to continue his service.'

Youth put on sex offenders' register

AN OBAN teenager who had unlawful sex with a 13-year-old girl in a garden shed has been put on the sex offenders' register.

Andrew Smith, aged 17, of 2 Islay Road, Oban admitted committing the offence between January 1, 2009 and February 28, 2009 at an address in Oban.

Oban Sheriff Court heard that a mobile phone was found by the victim's father with text messages from Smith revealing that they had sex.

Relationship Procurator fiscal Justin Farrell said: 'The victim believed she was in a relationship with Smith at the time and told the police he had led her to a gar-

den shed in Oban where they had sex.

'When interviewed by police it became clear Smith was aware of his victim's age.'

Smith was put on the sex offenders' register and sentence was deferred until April 14 for reports when a plea in mitigation will be heard from Smith's defence agent.



Alan Cumming spoke to the Oban Times before making his way onto the Mull Ferry. t12cum01

Alan knows where he is going

HOLLYWOOD A-lister Alan Cumming made a brief appearance in Oban on Monday before heading off for Mull to make a documentary.

The Bond movie star, who has also been in many TV costume dramas, stayed on the island for two days for a BBC production on the Michael Powell film 'I know where I am going'.

The 1940s romantic comedy film features Wendy Hiller and Roger

Livesey and is set almost entirely on the island of Mull.

Mr Cumming visited original settings for the film such as Carsaig, Tobermory and Ben More. He then presented the film at The Western Isles Hotel, a location for the movie, and spoke to locals who were living on the island when the film was being made.

The celebrity and crew stayed at The Western Isles Hotel.

Strong response to play park appeal

COMMUNITIES in Oban and the surrounding area have answered a plea from Atlantis Leisure to save its play park.

The popular play park was deemed unsafe this month, because of wear and tear on the equipment, and had to be closed.

However, following an appeal through The Oban Times two weeks ago, the community-owned Atlantis Leisure has raised half of the £4,000 needed to refurbish the park.

Atlantis Leisure manager Nick Wesley said: 'Within a week of our

appeal going public we had received more than £2,000 from Glensanda, the Lions Club, anonymous donations and our own funds. We are very grateful to everyone who has helped.'

'Tradesmen have even offered to help with the refurbishment. 'I would like to specially thank the schools that are looking to raise money through raffles.'

He added that they were in discussions with other funders about grants and he is hopeful the target will be reached soon.

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Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB) is calling on willing volunteers across the country to help blitz Scotland as part of National Spring Clean 2009. The annual campaign provides those who are annoyed by litter and love being outdoors with the chance to head out into the fresh air and make a difference by getting involved in a litter pick during the month of April.

Last year an overwhelming 20,000 volunteers took to the streets, parks and countryside to clean up their local environment during April - and even more are expected to sign up this Spring! To find out what's happening in your area, or to put your own event on the map and receive a free Clean Up Kit, please visit

www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/springclean

Or you can register by completing the attached form and returning it to: National Spring Clean 2009, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Islay House, Livlinds Lane, Stirling FK8 2BG.

National Spring Clean 2009 - Registration form

Name of organiser _____
 Address of organiser (including postcode) _____
 Tel: _____ Email: _____
 Date and time of clean up (April only) _____
 Location of clean up (including postcode) _____
 Show on online map (please tick)
 Local council _____
 Groups involved _____
 No. of adults involved _____ No. of children involved _____
 No. of adult tabards required _____ No. of child tabards required _____
 See www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/springclean for terms and conditions

Keep Scotland Beautiful is an operating name of Environmental Campaigns (Scotland), Scottish Charity Number SC030332

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Body of missing man found

THERE is 'overwhelming sadness' on South Uist following the discovery of the body of Simon MacMillan, according to a local priest.

Father Michael MacDonald, vice chairman of Stòras Uibhist and colleague of Mr MacMillan's father Angus, Stòras chairman, spoke of the community's unstinting efforts to find the 21 year old, missing since leaving a minibus two miles from his Ardmere home early on Boxing Day morning.

The discovery ended weeks of organised searching by locals, weeks after police ended their efforts to trace Mr MacMillan.

A party of five women, including two of Mr MacMillan's aunts, found Mr MacMillan's remains on Sunday morning on the shores of Loch Bee, a huge area of brackish fresh water connected to the sea by a narrow channel at high tide.

Services for Mr MacMillan were held at St Michael's at Ardkenneth, Lochdar and St Peter's in Daliburgh on Monday evening.

A post mortem will be carried out and a report sent to the procurator fiscal.



Kirsty MacIntyre excelled on the fiddle at the Lochaber Music Festival. (12music03)

Kirsty shines at Lochaber Music Festival

KIRSTY MacIntyre of Kinlochleven High School was in fine form at the 35th Lochaber Music Festival on Saturday.

The talented fiddler won the Violin Solo Scots Advanced competition with her own choice slow air and march, and Strathspey and reel.

Fifteen-year-old Kirsty went through to

the Premier Scots Traditional Award later that afternoon, where she was pipped to the title by Robert Robertson in a very high standard competition.

Celebration

The competitive part of the festival finished yesterday, but the celebration of Lochaber's young musical talent con-

tinues tomorrow (Friday) night with a Grand Festival Concert and trophy presentation at Lochaber High School.

The evening will feature some of the best performances from the five-day event.

See page 3 for festival report, results and pictures.

Grants cut puts projects at risk

Affordable homes plans in jeopardy

SAVAGE cuts in government grants and extortionate borrowing rates are threatening to wreck affordable house projects in the West Highlands, *The Oban Times* can reveal.

Lochaber Housing Association is trying to salvage some kind of home-building programme in April 2009-10, and is locked in talks with Highland Council and government officials in an attempt to ease spending constraints.

Ironically, LHA says its prospects for building desperately-needed homes have never been brighter, with land and sites available – but schemes at Claggan, Lochyside and elsewhere will remain on the drawing board unless the log-jam can be broken.

Crisis

LHA's management team is meeting today (Thursday) to discuss the crisis, which has seen government grant per house fall by an estimated £7,000 at a time banks are demanding extra security for loans.

LHA director Blair Allan, through local MSP Fergus Ewing, is seeking to meet new housing minister Alex Neil to restore grants to previous levels, which would allow the association to borrow less money and get houses built.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'While we are desperately trying to put together a programme for the next financial

EXCLUSIVE
by STEPHEN NORRIS

year – we have been unable to accept any new offers of grant this year – this is proving extremely difficult to achieve.

'The rental income for each house does not even cover repayments, far less cover our own management and maintenance costs.'

'In addition, the conditions being attached to potential loans by banks are extremely onerous and involve surrendering additional security.'

'We want to build 22 houses at the Newco and old fire station site at Claggan, but the lenders say the 22 houses are not enough security and that the value of the property does not cover the loan.'

'We either have to give them cash from our reserves to reduce the amount of borrowing, or give up additional properties as security.'

'For every three properties that we build, we would have to find another house which we have no borrowings on to put into the pot. That means for Claggan we would have to find another seven houses from our stock as security which we have no borrowings on. That is very expensive and apart from that we need that security to attract funding down the line for our maintenance programmes.'

Mr Allan said government had only partially restored

grant recently removed. 'They have only cut back by 50 per cent,' he said. 'This obviously means we have to borrow more in an extremely unfriendly financial environment.'

Schemes are Arisaig, Heathercroft Phase 1 in Fort William, Glenacross Farm at Morar and at the former Acharacle Primary School are going ahead, but 21 homes at Claggan and 16 at Lochyside will not be built if the money situation is not eased.

Three Highland housing associations, LHA, Lochalsh and Skye, and Pentland are to meet further with Highland Council leader Michael Foxley, Mr Allan said.

He added: 'This is all happening at a time when the association has the potential to deliver on sites in numbers that have never before been possible.'

'At Heathercroft we have plans for 150 units over time and at the Blar there is potential for 100 more.'

'We just need our grant levels restored to the level they were less than a year ago.'

Housing minister Alex Neil told *The Oban Times* next year's £32.1m funding for the Highlands would make 'a huge difference for many people and their families to get decent homes that they can afford'. He added: 'We are working with Lochaber Housing Association on the issues they have raised.'

Trust takes aerial view

SLEAT Community Trust Forestry Group members have taken to the air to view woodland they have expressed an interest in purchasing.

Members flew over the 1,080-acre forest by helicopter to view how the woodland could be utilised for community benefit. Road access to the land-locked forest is practically non-existent.

• Do you have a story? Call **The Oban Times** reporters on 01631-568000

Glencoe ski centre put up for sale

GLENCOE ski centre has been put on the market in the hope a new owner will provide money for ambitious development plans.

It has enjoyed a fairly successful season, but Glencoe Mountain chairman and main shareholder David Campbell has decided it is time for a big investor to step in.

The ski centre, rescued from bankruptcy last year, has plans to rival Nevis Range by installing a gondola system and double visitor numbers to 50,000.

Speaking on behalf of shareholders, Mr Campbell said:

'The business is operating smoothly and there are good people in all the key positions. What is needed now is a new investor or owners. With ambition and drive they can take the resort forward over the next decade. The building blocks are all in place.'

'I have been here for five years and we have brought the place from closure to a seven day a week operation. Now it's up to somebody else to take the place forward.'

'It's been hard work. It's been taking up all my time and I can't keep doing this. I'm based in Glasgow and

that means a lot of driving. If you are up there every weekend you are away from your family a lot. Also my folks are in North Tolsta on Lewis, so that's another aspect.'

'I would back anybody keen on seeing the place getting better – even if it meant accepting a lower offer.'

Highlands and Islands Enterprise is already aware public sector funding could be requested in any revamp.

Robert Muir, HIE area manager, said: 'The sale of Glencoe Ski Centre is a great opportunity for an investor or investors to take part in the

development of the centre as an year-round destination for outdoor activities.'

'Highlands and Islands Enterprise is a key player in providing support to ensure the continued success and growth of the ski centre.'

Resort manager Bobby Munro said: 'We are looking towards more summer facilities, mountain bike tracks, accommodation and the like. We have a lot of plans.'

Glencoe Ski Centre employs 28 seasonal and 10 full time staff. Expressions of interest are being sought via e-mail by March 31.

Marina despair at sign hitch

By CHRISTINE McCARTNEY

A BUSINESSMAN at the forefront of tidying up Oban is in trouble with planners for replacing tatty signs with new ones.

Neil McLauchlan, managing director of Dunstaffnage Marina, said last week that planning red tape was costing his business and the town money. Just days after one planning order standing in the way of the marina's development was lifted, another notice was served by planners. Yet, the signage which caused them concern was erected five months ago.

Mr McLauchlan said: 'I got the last breach of condition removed on Friday; I got a



Neil McLauchlan is disappointed planners objected to new signs five months after they were put up. (12mar01)

new one served on Tuesday. 'The old signs have been there for 12 years. They were looking pretty decrepit and we placed the new ones with the help of Transport Scotland officials.'

Consent

Planners believe he broke regulations on the control of advertisements by not seeking consent for the new design.

He said: 'I'm surprised they have the time and the energy to do this, when they should

perhaps be supporting businesses.' Mr McLauchlan added it would once again postpone his plans to add 70 berths to the marina, bringing new visitors and investment into Oban.

Mr McLauchlan, who is chairman of Oban Forward, a coalition of businesses seeking to improve the town's image, said steps like improving signs would make the town more attractive to residents and visitors.

Delight as forestry leasing plan axed

HUNDREDS of forestry workers across Argyll and the Highlands are delighted after the Scottish government abandoned plans to lease publicly-owned forests to private companies.

Environmentalists and political opponents also welcomed the news.

Environment minister Roseanna Cunningham confirmed last week that the proposal to lease parts of Scotland's forests, which included almost all of Argyll's woodlands, would not happen.

Her predecessor Mike Russell had hoped the plan for a 75-year-lease of forests would raise £200 million to boost planting rates and help meet tough carbon emission targets.

Roy Laird, a Forestry Com-

mission Union representative in Lochgilphead, said: 'We can now all look forward to a brighter future with the commission and working in partnership with the community.'

'I'd like to thank the public for all their strong support over the past few months.'

Dan Convery, of the Dairiada Branch of the SNP, who fiercely opposed the plans, said: 'I'm delighted that pressure from the low level Scottish National Party has been successful in getting the Scottish government to alter its attitude to the whole question.'

Ms Cunningham said: 'Argyll's national forests are vital to its infrastructure and contribute significantly to the economic, social and environmental aspects of the region. 'Forest leasing was an innovative idea – but for many it was also a controversial one. That's fine, a consultation is there to get views so that we can collectively come to a decision that works best. After serious consideration, I decided to rule out the leasing option. Instead, we will move on and find different ways to fund woodland creation for climate change.'

Victory

Alan Reid, Liberal Democrat MP for Argyll and Bute, said: 'This is a tremendous victory for the community in Argyll and Bute which had strongly opposed the SNP plans to sell our forests.'

'The SNP only abandoned these plans after they realised that they couldn't get their sell-off plans through the Scottish parliament.'

Highlands and Islands MSP Jamie McGrigor said: 'Having attended the packed forestry public meeting in the community centre in Lochgilphead in Argyll earlier this year, I believe this to be the right decision.'

Director of Conservation for the Scottish Wildlife Trust, Jonny Hughes, said: 'This decision is right for the security of our forests and the wildlife that can thrive within them.'

Prospect, the union for specialist staff in the Forestry Commission, also welcomed the announcement. Prospect's National Secretary, Anne Douglas, said: 'These proposals were likely to result in the loss of several hundred good quality jobs in some of Scotland's remotest rural areas.'

Ballachulish Community Council was one of many in the West Highlands to express concern about Mr Russell's plans.

Chairman Mel MacAskill told *The Oban Times*: 'We are very happy about the decision to scrap this. We put a letter in during the consultation because the idea to us appeared to be bad news.'

'It shows the government is listening and is prepared to make a u-turn – not all returns are a bad thing.'

Danny Alexander, MP for Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey said: 'Scotland's forests provide vital employment in communities across the Highlands. As well as jobs, this campaign was about protecting vital leisure facilities and public amenities.'

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Firms helped to win council contracts

WESTERN Isles Council is to run a seminar later this spring for local firms to help them win council contracts for goods and services.

The move is the latest strand of the Comhairle's Keep Trade Local campaign to sustain the Outer Hebrides economy during the recession, which has seen hundreds of local jobs lost in the fish processing and construction sectors alone.

The Comhairle and its community planning partners have already brought forward capital projects to keep construction firms ticking over.

Initiative

The Keep Trade Local drive follows business seminars hosted by the Comhairle in Stornoway and Balivanich earlier this year, which identified a 'buy-local' initiative as one way of halting 'leakage' to mainland businesses or the internet.

Chairman of sustainable development, Archie Campbell said: 'As well as helping to sustain the economy by buying locally, there are clear benefits for shoppers.'

'Perhaps surprisingly, local shops in general are actually not more expensive than online businesses or mainland shops.'

All local firms are being urged to add their details onto a local free on-line directory of businesses based in the Outer Hebrides, www.businesshebrides.co.uk.



Winning young writer Stuart MacArthur of Invergarry Primary School with classmates, from left, Callie Rodgers, Rhian Dempster, Taylor Rodgers, Ruth Stewart, Megan Stewart and Fergus Fraser, who were all commended in the competition. (12stuar01)

High standard in school writing competition

LOCHABER children have excelled in the 2009 John Muir Trust Wild Writing competition at the Fort William Mountain Festival.

Budding young writers submitted entries to a 'very high' standard following a series of workshops for teachers from the Scottish Poetry Library and lesson plans from

the John Muir Trust and the Nevis Partnership, said organiser Alison Austin.

Congratulations go to the following pupils: English category, P1-3: 1, Stuart MacArthur, Invergarry Primary; 2, Ailsa MacDonald, Spean Bridge Primary; 3, Jamie Edmondson, Ar-

dgour Primary. P4-7: 1, Thomas Rae, Strontian Primary; 2, Fiona Gilmour, Mallaig Primary; 3, James Dunn, Strontian Primary. Gaelic category: 1, Eilidh Jenny MacArthur; 2, Eilidh MacLellan, 3 equal, Ben Campbell and Lewis Macrae, all Roinn Sgoil a Gaidhlig a Ghearrasdan.

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Pair deny thefts

TWO Oban men have denied breaking into a flat in the town and stealing money, a mobile phone, alcohol and a remote control.

Donnie Lopez, of 14 Soroba Road, and Duncan Richard McWhirter, of 3A Castle Road, faced the charges when they appeared at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

It is alleged they broke into the flat at Craig an Airm on March 7. Trial was set for April 6.

Youth struck shop assistant

A YOUTH has been found guilty of punching an Oban shop assistant and breaching the peace when he returned the next day to apologise.

Charles Anthony Smith, aged 18, formerly of Innellan by Dunoon and now living in Greenock, denied both charges when he appeared from custody at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

Smith was found guilty of assaulting the female assistant at Soroba Shop on McCaig Road on July 13 last year. Sheriff Douglas Small deferred sentence until March 31 for reports.

Open day looks at open spaces

AN OPEN day is being held in Oban's Corran Halls to display the results of a survey on the town's open spaces.

The event will run from noon till 8pm in the McCaig Suite in the Corran Halls on March 25.

Visitors will have the chance to meet the consultants and most importantly to share views on parks, play areas, sports fields, recreation and amenity areas around Oban.

Oban piper in anthem final

AN OBAN piper was a recent finalist in a competition to choose a new anthem for East Lothian.

Donald MacFarlane wrote 'East Lothian Homecoming' for the competition which was judged by top pipers Gary West and Rob MacKillop.

Winner of the competition was Bruce Thomson from Crieff with his tune, 'The Haddington Turnpike'.

School sets itself £30,000 target

PARENTS at Oban High School are hoping to raise £30,000 for computer equipment.

The idea is to have a full set of laptops all contained within a moveable trolley which can be taken to classrooms that do not have a full set of computers. The project is called Classroom in a Box.

Head teacher Peter Bain said: 'The additional computers are to provide an enhanced facility across many departments to make sure Oban High remains an educational establishment of renown.'

'Thanks to the enthusiastic support of our parents, our local community and Argyll and Bute Council I believe that we will be able to deliver a level of education for all our pupils which is fit for the 21st century.'

The school's first fundraiser will be the collection of old mobile phones. Phones, in any state of repair, can be handed in at the reception area at the school. For every phone collected the school will receive £2.50. A car boot sale will be held between 10am and 3pm on Sunday March 29.

• Do you have a story for **The Oban Times**? Call our reporters on **01631-568000**

Man suffers broken ribs in assault at work golf outing

A MAN suffered broken ribs after being assaulted by a colleague at a work golf outing in Oban.

The incident happened after a tournament for staff of the Northern Lighthouse Board at Glencruitten Golf Course on August 22 last year.

At Oban Sheriff Court last

week, John Duncan Gibson of 10D Colonsay Terrace, Oban, who was a temporary employee with the board, denied assaulting Lindsay Wilson, a safety officer.

A trial heard that after a boisterous day on the course, around 30 employees retired to the clubhouse for food and drinks.

Mr Wilson said during the evening Gibson attacked him without reason.

He said: 'On my way out of the toilet, he grabbed me around the neck and started banging my head against the wall.'

Another man pulled Gibson away.

Mr Wilson said he was left with fractured ribs, a torn cartilage and bruising to his back and head. He was treated in Oban Hospital.

Drinking
Asked if he had been drinking, Gibson said he had 'maybe one or two drinks at every hole'.

He added he could not clearly remember the exchange but be-

lieved he was struck first and acted in self-defence.

He said: 'I have never knowingly in my life attacked a man.'

The 32 year old lost his job after an inquiry by the NLB. Sheriff Douglas Small found Gibson guilty of the assault and deferred sentence until March 31 for background reports.



Holding one of the Arctic buoys is Dr Jeremy Wilkinson joined by Leanne Morrison, Emily and Ellis Hunter, Ewan and Claire MacPherson, Erin McIntyre, Matthew Moore and Lucas and Anya Griffen. ©11sams03

Buoy, it's a lot of fun at SAMS!

A COMPETITION held at Dunstaffnage saw children vying to name a buoy which is being sent to the Arctic Circle.

Children and adults from all over Argyll came along to an open day at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS). Children were given

the opportunity to name one of six buoys that will be sent to the polar ice cap to monitor any movement of the sea.

A spokeswoman explained: 'The ice is important because it cools down the temperature on the planet.'

'The six buoys are the first of their kind to send informa-

tion back to the centre here in Oban.

'The winners of the naming competition will be able to track the devices on Google Earth.'

A wide range of stalls and activities explained the work of the Scottish centre of excellence.

Let's clean up this town

Push is on to boost tourism

COUNCILLORS and town businesses are determined to knock Oban into shape before the arrival of Easter tourists.

They have come up with a 12-point plan aimed at transforming Oban and Lorn from a 'grey and down on its heel gateway-to-somewhere-else' to a prime holiday destination.

A joint meeting between Argyll and Bute councillors and four business representatives was held on Monday afternoon.

The group named *Oban Forward* has already identified projects to improve the town for visitors.

The eight-strong working party was chosen from more than 100 people who attended a Kick Start for Oban tourism meeting in the Gathering Halls last week.

Realistic
Councillor Duncan MacIntyre, the driving force behind the meeting, wants to set realistic goals to improve the look and presentation of the town before Easter.

'We need to get positive changes into place as quickly as possible to ensure we are presenting our town in the best light for 2009.'

'If shops are empty, let's see if there is anything we can do to make them look better or make them into promotional shops for The Mod and the Camanachd Cup.'

'I would like to see Oban as a place that people come to spend their holiday, not just as a gateway to somewhere else.'

By LOUISE GLEN-LEE

One early improvement could be large road signage for Oban, branding it as The Seafood Capital or The Water Sports Capital.

Paul Sloane, a member of the group and owner of Cuan Mor restaurant, said: 'This is a great opportunity to tidy up the town. Oban and Lorn Tourist Association members have regularly paid out of our own pockets to tidy up the Esplanade and have flowers planted.'

'The fact councillors are taking steps to support the tourist industry in the town is fantastic.'

'There are businesses in the town that are letting the rest of us down. There is no need for any manager in town not to take pride in how their store looks outside.'

'If we all work together we can show Oban off to its best.'

'Oban is a brilliant town with so much to offer, but we cannot take our foot off the gas. This year will be a make or break time for tourism. Oban should be on the agenda for any tourist to the country.'

The group are planning measures costing in the region of £20,000 including floral baskets, Victoriana lampposts around the bay, 25 new seating benches, regular pressure washing and Oban arrival signs.

Councillors stressed there is no allocated budget for the plans but were willing to look at what money could be made available from other budgets.



MEMBERS of Oban Camera Club heard last week from a Dumfries woman who had enrolled on a photography course after taking early retirement.

Members turned out at the Regent Hotel, Oban to see a presentation by Margaret Elliot, a member of Dumfries Camera Club.

After being introduced by vice-president Jim Kirkpatrick, Margaret said that after taking early retirement and selling her hairdressing and beautician's business, she enrolled on an HND course on photography.

Jim said: 'Margaret then took members on a tour of the river valleys around Dumfries showing some very nice images of the area. She was thanked by Peter Cleave.'

THE LORN Garden Club met on March 10 at the Lorn Resource Centre, Soroba Road.

A large gathering of members listened to a fascinating and humorous talk given by Louise Bustard, assistant curator in charge of education, at Glasgow Botanic Garden. Members were not only treated to a colourful array of slides extolling the wonderful gardens and glasshouses open to the public, but also photographs showing an amazing variety of plants on show all year round; the garden is even open on Christmas Day!

Botanic collections grown on the site, range from the primeval-looking tree ferns to flamboyant orchids, to the children's favourite - spine tingling insectivorous plants. An arboretum and the River Kelvin are also part of the gardens.

Louise also explained the ideas behind the development of other areas, including a new herb garden. This collection of plants is grown for informing visitors of the many intriguing and essential benefits of plants to man.

The Lorn Garden Club will meet for a walk around Arduaine Gardens, Saturday and possibly Sunday, March 21 and 22. Please contact club secretary for further information and future meetings on 01852 300563

THERE was a large turnout of members of the Argyll Member's Group of the National Trust for Scotland at Loch Fyne Hotel, Inveraray on March 7.

The speaker was Mary Sandilands who told tales of her travels around the world illustrated by some excellent pictures. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed her amusing talk.

Members were stunned and dismayed to hear that the Trust was proposing to close Arduaine Gardens and agreed to protest at this decision by, in the first instance, writing to the NTS chairman.

Woman brandished a knife at her new husband

A DUNBEG woman who threatened her husband and brandished a knife just days after their wedding day found herself in Oban Sheriff Court last week.

Danielle Turner admitted breaching the peace on December 18 last year when she threatened her husband, Daniel, with violence as well as punching, kicking and striking

the bedroom door behind which he was hiding.

Mr Turner had left their home at 25 Castle Road, Dunbeg to buy alcohol. After he returned later than expected, having called on a colleague, his wife became angry and began drinking heavily.

Procurator fiscal Justin Farrell said when argument developed,

she said she was going to leave and her husband retreated upstairs to a bedroom, shutting the door.

He added she had followed him and 'kicked the door off its hinges. At that point, Daniel Turner noticed she had a knife. He believed that the intention was to use the knife on him.'

The 23-year-old woman told the

police she planned to use the knife to remove the door and not to attack her husband.

Her defence agent said she was horrified by the incident and the couple's home life was much improved.

Sheriff Douglas Small deferred sentence until September for good behaviour.

New chairman at Aquapharm

A NEW non-executive chairman of Aquapharm Biodiversity at Dunstaffnage, near Oban, has been appointed. Steve Harris will take over from Ron James who is retiring.

Mr Harris has more than 40 years experience in the pharmaceutical and biotech industry and will guide and contribute to the development of the company.

Sandy McDougall has also been

appointed as chief financial officer of the company.

Dr Andrew Mearns Spragg, chief executive of Aquapharm, said: 'We would like to thank Ron for his highly valued contribution. Over the past six years under his guidance, the company has progressed significantly and we now stand in a good position to welcome Steve and Sandy.'

Young entrepreneurs celebrate 20 years of trust success

SOME OF Argyll's most successful entrepreneurs were in Oban this week to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust (PSYBT).

More than 300 businesses have been assisted in Argyll since 1989 and chief executive, Mark Strudwick, joined regional chairman Murdo MacLeod, of Lochgilphead-based M and K MacLeod at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls along with several young businessmen and woman who have gained success over the past few years.

Speakers
Guest speakers at the event included musician and broadcaster, Mary Ann Kennedy, Angus MacPhail, who founded Skipinnish Records, and Pauline Foster, who set up Pure Shores PR in Oban last year.

Eilidh Macinnes began her business, Something Special, in Oban in 1995 from a small side-street shop before moving in 2004 to Oban's main shopping centre in George Street.

Eilidh said: 'The main thing for me was the low interest loan, that was so beneficial. I was able to buy up stock and set up the business.'



Pictured from left are young entrepreneurs Eilidh Macinnes, Ross Angell and Iain Duncan with musician and broadcaster Mary Ann Kennedy. ©12youth01

The PSYBT was very good and Donald Melville used to come to the shop and showed an interest in the business.'

Nicola Kelsey started her landscape photography business, NK Photography, last year in Oban and in her first year won an award

for her commercial awareness.

Twenty-year-old Iain Duncan, who started ICD Trees in Tarbert in August 2008 and offers tree surgery and felling services, said: 'It's not too much about the money but afterwards and the advice they give.'

Ross Angell, a qualified cabinet maker, started Angell Antique Artisan in 2007.

Specialised
With the help of PSYBT Ross invested in more specialised tools and transport enabling him to take on larger scale work.

Ross said that business was now coming in thick and fast.

'Business has been really steady,' he said. 'I'm getting bigger jobs and branching out and now hold a bigger stock.'

PSYBT Argyll chairman, Murdo MacLeod, said: 'Having been the regional chairman for nearly 17 years, I have had the privilege of meeting many of the clients we have supported and I am still impressed by their enthusiasm and determination in setting up their own business.'

Argyll jobs safe, says Ennstone

ENNSTONE Thistle, the aggregate company which employs around 100 people in quarries in the west Highlands, has been sold by its American parent company.

Ennstone plc announced that Ennstone Thistle, which as recently as September 2008 invested £2 million in a new asphalt plant at Bonawe, was sold to a new company, Bredon Holdings, headed by Ennstone founder Vaughan MacLeod, along with Ennstone's

operations in the English Midlands and Poland.

Ennstone says the sale will safeguard 1,000 jobs, including 100 positions in quarries at Bonawe, Furnace, Dunbeg and Benderloch in Argyll and Banavie in Fort William.

Administration
Ennstone, which is in administration, has also had its listing on the London stock exchange cancelled. A statement from the Ennstone

board said that the present economic conditions had prevented it from raising the money it needed to resolve its financial problems.

Ennstone spokesman Mark Garraway said: 'This is a significant change. The new company is controlled by the banks but Vaughan MacLeod remains as chief executive.'

'The company has made it clear that the jobs in the west Highlands have been secured.'

Breach of the peace man fined £180

AN OBAN man who shouted and swore at his wife and son in the family home was fined £180 last week for a breach of the peace.

At Oban Sheriff Court, Allan Gillies, aged 54, of 3 Ardtornish Place, Oban, also admitted trying to overturn the kitchen table on December 22 last year.

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Loch Melfort Hotel & Restaurant

The finest views on the West Coast

EXCITEMENT is in the air as visitors approach the newly refurbished 25-roomed Loch Melfort Hotel – something is happening here that is very special.

Set in the hillside above Loch Melfort overlooking the harbour at Craobh Haven and beyond to the islands of Shuna, Luing, Scarba, towards Knapdale and the Paps of Jura, there is more than the view to please the eye.

Rachel and Calum Ross have transformed what was a rather tired building into a luxury, fresh, contemporary Scottish country hotel using Scottish fabrics and local designers. Rachel says that she also took advice from the invaluable local tradesmen and women who helped the couple with their project.

The bistro, for example, has been completely refurbished and renamed Chartroom II, an update on its original name. They have had bespoke blinds made with charts and maps of the surrounding area.

The popular bistro will continue to serve a wide range of food for lunch, teas and evening meals all year round – both contemporary and traditional, yet only a 25-minute drive from Oban – no reservations required. A popular Scottish music night is held on the first and third Friday of the month, encouraging locals to bring their instruments in and sing or just come and listen.

Langoustines, lobster and crab are landed at the beach next to the hotel by local fisherman Nick Milton and these are complemented by more traditional homemade Scottish fayre such as mince and tatties and local haddock and chips – a menu to suit every budget. Ask for a coffee and you'll get the finest homemade tablet you will ever taste. Children are welcome, with high chairs and toys provided, as well as kids meals.

The elegant AA 2 Rosette Arduaine Restaurant is open daily for dinner between 7 and 9pm – reservations required – for a high quality dining experience, with the kitchen headed up by talented head chef Matt Mitchell from Kilmelford. A new private dining and meeting room is also available in the old wood panelled library for parties of up to 14 people.

In the grounds are the beginnings of what will prove to be a small stock farm. Two black Highland cows will soon be jostling with hens and ducks on



the nearby pond. With a children's play park arriving in April there is plenty for both kids and adults to admire.

Rachel said: "The cows are only the beginning, we want to understand the heritage of all the products we are serving to our customers. The ethos of our hotel is knowing we have the best quality products alongside the highest level of sustainability possible."

"We are aiming to be the greenest hotel on the West Coast mainland within the next few years."

The couple, who both have plenty of hospitality experience, have guest satisfaction at the heart of what they do in Loch Melfort Hotel, providing top class service within a warm and friendly family run hotel environment.

Calum, aged 44, from Glasgow, has taken fishing holidays in Scammadale Glen since he was a child, with his grandparents hailing from Lochgilphead. The couple, who were working for a large food organization in Brazil prior to taking over the hotel, could not believe that the perfect hotel location would come onto the market just as they decided to invest and put down roots in a place they both see as home.

Despite the challenges of transforming the hotel in such a short space of time, Calum and Rachel are both looking forward to their next big project – marketing the hotel as a stunning wedding venue. With breathtaking views and a capacity of up to 100 guests in the dining room, or 150 on the lawn in a marquee, this news is sure to be received with excitement by newly engaged couples. Indeed the first locals are getting married there in May, arriving by boat at the shore to the sounds of a piper and spending the night in the spectacular honeymoon suite.

There is so much that delights the eye at this country hotel; simple walks along the coast, smooth rich coffee with a slice of tablet, feeding the cows or just absorbing the view in front of the fire -take a drive out to Loch Melfort Hotel to see it for yourself.



Loch Melfort Hotel re-launched its bistro with a champagne and canapé party held in luxurious surroundings in Arduane near Kilmelford.

Owners Rachel and Calum Ross were on hand to meet friends old and new and show off the recently refurbished hotel.



Amelia Inglis of Raera, Kilninver



Patrick Cadzow of Duachy, Kilninver with Tooti Cadzow of Luing and Charles Struthers of Ardmady Castle



Jane and Falcon Scott of Craobh Haven with Christine Roberts of Kilmelford

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Fergie's Folk



by Fergie MacDonald

John Carmichael

WE CAN all refer to John Carmichael with the affectionate term 'The Godfather of Scottish Dance Music'.

Anyone who has an interest in traditional music anywhere in the world will be aware of John's music. The good thing, of course, is that he is as west coast inclined as one could possibly imagine. This does not happen by chance.

On his father's side we have the Carmichaels of Tree. Then we have his wife Freena who is one of the famous MacFadyen piping family from Bunessan, Isle of Mull.

Although John was brought up in Glasgow, it proved to be no obstacle to get roped into the music scene. You see, in the '60s, there were ceilidhs and dances taking place in the city every night of the week.

Bands and musicians had to be top line - John was top line and broke into the scene quickly. Having served his apprenticeship with bands like Andy MacColl, Lex Keith and Iain MacDonald's Claymore Dance Band, he formed his own band when he was around 20.

John's command of music reached a standard where he was in such demand with other musicians that it took control of a period of his life.

Apart from albums, television, radio and various other high profile recordings, he toured the world with such illustrious names as Jimmy Shand, Iain Powrie, Jim Johnstone, Bobby MacLeod, Andrew Rankine, Calum

Kennedy, Andy Stewart and many more. Young accordion players of today emulate John's style of play. It could be described as controlled, all-action Scottish traditional dance music. It's got a lift to it. You can dance to John's music. You see, he can give you a night of strict tempo Scottish country dancing, or a night of all-action, no holds barred ceilidh dance music. The majority of band leaders can excel at one or the other, but seldom at both.

It is always a pleasure being in John Carmichael's company. His wit and sense of humour are priceless. Mind you, I asked him the other day how he was getting on with the tuning and renovation of my Shand Moreno accordion.

He said: 'I'm just putting the final touches to it.'

He has had it for four and a half years!

He is so much 'at home' on stage that he makes the perfect compere. John's latest 'gong' was being inducted into Scotland's Traditional Music Hall of Fame last year in recognition of a lifetime at the very top. Well done John.

Hit parade

- 1 Paul McCallum, Echoes of the Bay, 2 Eddie Reader, Songs of Robert Burns.
- 3 Run Rig, Everything you See.
- 4 Blair Douglas, Stay Strong.
- 5 Duncan Chisholm, Ferra.
- 6 Fergie, Live from Lochinver
- 7 Face the West, The Wishing Stone

Fish cull sparks stand-off

By STEPHEN NORRIS

A POWER company is facing a huge compensation claim after thousands of farmed salmon contaminated by diesel spilling into a South Uist sea loch had to be destroyed.

Fuel from onshore diesel tanks at the Scottish and Southern Energy South Uist power station leaked into Loch Carman in November, tainting young stock at Loch Duart Ltd's fish farm nearby. Since the incident LDL reared the salmon towards maturity, but recent taste tests and residue analysis confirmed that the fish, which were not yet ready for sale, were contaminated. LDL then took the decision to cull the young salmon, a task completed over recent days. The move sparked a stand-off

over need for a mass kill. LDL claims SSE blanked requests for 'financial reassurance' on compensation, while SSE said it had been working with LDL to avoid a cull, which it described as 'premature'. A spokesperson for SSE said the clean up operation had been successful and since then the company had taken 'every possible step' to reduce local environmental impacts. 'We have been working very closely with the management team at Loch Duart to identify every possible solution and practical step to avoid any farmed fish being destroyed,' she said. 'We take our environmental responsibilities extremely seriously. The incident is still under investigation, so it is surprising and

disappointing to hear that Mr Joy has decided to cull the fish stock prematurely.'

Loch Duart managing director Nick Joy said the episode was 'crushingly sad' and highlighted why radical action was required to maintain the company's strong brand image in key markets. He told *The Oban Times*: 'We have a residue of diesel in our fish, full stop. Back in 1990 one bottle of Perrier water entering the US was found to contain a trace of diesel. By 1992 Perrier's world sales had fallen by one half and the company was close to bankruptcy. I will leave you to draw your own conclusions.'

Mr Joy said the spillage 'would affect the lives of all of our staff, our customers and our

suppliers for the coming year' adding 'every step necessary' would be taken to ensure the episode had no impact on the future success of the company. 'Whilst there have been good relations with SSE employees on the ground in trying to minimise the effects of the diesel on our fish, there has as yet been no significant response from SSE to any of our approaches for financial reassurance about compensation to us for this spill and the action we are having to take,' he said. 'We are disappointed that a company that lauds its environmental approach appears to be slow to deal with the consequences of this episode. We continue to hope that SSE will acknowledge the recompense due to us.'

35th annual Lochaber Music Festival gets off to a fine start with 144 performances

Robert wins top traditional award for second year running

THE 35th annual Lochaber Music Festival got off to a fine start last Friday and Saturday with 144 different performances of Scots traditional music from young musicians playing bagpipes, chanter, clarsach, fiddle, accordion, piano and in folk groups.

The three adjudicators, Donald MacIntyre, piping, Rachel Hair, clarsach and folk groups, and Sarah Naylor,

fiddle, accordion and Scots piano, were impressed with the high standards, reflected in the fact that 13 performers were given marks in the 'outstanding' category - a mark of 90 or more.

The two days culminated in the Premier Scots Traditional Instrumental Award competition, contested by the top performer in each category: Carolyn McKee on bagpipes, Rebecca Hill on clarsach, Kirsty MacIntyre on fiddle and Robert Robertson on Scots piano.

Robert was also nominated for accordion.

After four fine performances by these excellent players, Robert was announced as the winner of the trophy for a second year.

Monday saw speech classes all day in Duncansburgh Hall and string classes in the evening at Lochaber High School.

A full programme of music and dancing classes on Tuesday and Wednesday completed the competitive

elements ahead of tomorrow (Friday) evening's Grand Festival Concert at Lochaber High School, when some of the best performances will feature.

The trophies will be presented at the end of the concert, which begins at 7pm.

Results

First, second and third place are given for each class. 'Outstanding' performances, 90+ marks, are shown with an asterisk *

Chanter: Age 10 and Under: 1 Meghan Rodger*; 2 Laura Paterson; 3 Kayleigh MacMillan. Age 12 and Under: 1 Sarah Clelland; 2 Rachel MacGillivray; 3 Eilidh Moynihan.

Piping: Novice - March: 1 Lee-Anne Russell; 2 Roslyn Oliver; 3 Ewan MacQueen. Intermediate - March: 1 Leah Philip; 2 Kayleigh Graham; 3 Callum Mercer. Age 15 and Under - March: 1 James Rosie*; 2 Andrew Hepburn*; 3 Pamela MacLeod. Age 15 and Under - Strathspey and Reel: 1 Pamela MacLeod; 2 James Rosie; 3 John Beagrie. Ages 16 to 18 - March, Strathspey and Reel: 1

Carolyn McKee*; 2 Eileen Innes; 3 Laura MacDonald. 1st Year Piobaireachd: 1 Leah Philip; 2 Rebecca Robertson; 3 Callum Mercer. 2nd Year Piobaireachd: 1 Sandy Cameron*; 2 Laura MacDonald. 3rd Year Piobaireachd: 1 James Rosie; 2 Andrew Hepburn; 3 Karla Marshall. Senior Piobaireachd: 1 Carolyn McKee; 2 John Beagrie; 3 Donnie MacDonald. Age 18 and Under - Jig: 1 Carolyn McKee*; 2 Sandy Cameron*; 3 James Rosie*. Bagpipe Quartet - 18 Years and Under: 1 Lochaber Schools' Pipe Band Quartet A*; 2 LSPB Quartet B; 3 LSPB Quartet C.

Scots Violin: Beginner/Elementary: 1 Eilidh MacPherson; 2 Rachel Melrose; 3 Anna Beradelli and Stacey MacGillivray. Intermediate: 1 Kayleigh MacDonald*; 2 Hannah MacRae*; 3 Catherine Jones.

Advanced: 1 Kirsty MacIntyre*. **Accordion:** Beginners: 1 Liam Stewart-Stevenson; 2 Lewis Robertson. Elementary: 1 Ruari Edmond; 2 Ronan Cameron; 3 Donald Livingstone. Intermediate: 1 Callum MacDonald; 2 Innes MacKintosh. Advanced: 1 Robert Robertson.



Isobel Tilling and Kerry Harkins, winners of their age group in the clarsach duets. (f2music01)

Scots Piano Primary: 1 Fergus Munro; 2 Ben Callans. Secondary: 1 Robert Robertson*.

Clarsach Beginners: 1 Rebekah MacPherson; 2 Roslin Wilkinson; 3 Jennifer MacPhee. Elementary: 1 Heather MacBeath; 2 Naimh Henderson; 3 Emma MacFadrig. Intermediate: 1 Pippa Dempster; 2 Jessica Baker; 3 Pietermel Baak. Advanced: 1 Rebecca Hill.

Duets - Primary: 1 Charlie Phlemming and Kate Bradley; 2 Katie MacLean and Kate Townsend. Duets - Secondary: 1 Kerry Harkins and Isobel Tilling.

Folk Groups Age 13 and Under: 1 Buidhinn Feis Lochaber; 2 Ruby Tilling, Ciara MacDonald and Abigail Woods.

Premier Scots Traditional Music Award: Robert Robertson, piano.

Trophy winners: Alec MacDonald Memorial Quaich, Robert Robertson; Elizabeth Findlay Memorial Trophy, Kirsty MacIntyre; Lydia Jackson Trophy, Rebecca Hill; Lochaber Cup for Chanter, Meghan Rodger; William MacLeod Trophy, Sarah Clelland; Kenny Nicholson Memorial Trophy, Lee-Anne Russell; David MacGregor Cup, Leah Philip; Archie Kennedy Memorial Trophy, James Rosie; Alexander MacDonald Cup, Pamela MacLeod; James Grace Memorial Trophy, Carolyn McKee; Evan MacRae Trophy, Leah Philip; Lochaber Piping Society Trophy, Sandy Cameron; David MacGregor Trophy, James Rosie; John MacCallum Trophy, Carolyn McKee; Lochaber Pipe Band Trophy, Carolyn McKee; Alec MacDonald Memorial Trophy, Lochaber Schools' Pipe Band Quartet A.



Robert Robertson, Premier Scots Traditional Award winner. (f2music05)

WHAT'S ON

at ATLANTIS LEISURE

LOOPY HOOPS

Why not come in and join one of our Loopy Hoops Gymnastics sessions which run every Friday during term time?

Classes run for children aged between 1 years old - 8 years olds

Times of the classes are as follows:
 10am - 10.45am - Parent & Toddler - 1 - 3 years olds
 11am - 11.45am & 1pm - 1.45pm - 3- 5 year olds
 4pm - 5pm - After school class 5 - 8 year olds

Research has shown that children who take part in activity before the age of 5 will stay active throughout their lives. Loopy hoops Gymnastics is a fun, enjoyable activity which stimulates the development of the mind and body. A good gym experience can provide social, physical and creative awareness and improve concentration, competence and confidence.

Children practice basic skills such as crawling, walking (running), rolling, hopping, throwing and catching. Use their imagination through games and play and listen and move to nursery rhymes, song and music.

Our after school class offers the next level of gymnastics where we begin to add in extra skills to our classes working on balance, jumping, headstands, cartwheels and lots of other activities.

EASTER ACTIVITIES

EASTER CAMP (8 to 12 yrs)

Mon 6th to Fri 10th April - 9am to 3pm

Some of the activities on offer:
 Fun fit, Climbing, Swimming, Badminton, Tennis, Pool Inflatable & Football.

ACTIVITY SESSIONS (5 to 8 yrs)

Tue 14th, Wed 15th & Thur 16th - 1 to 3pm

Fun & Fit Athletics
 Climbing & Mini Tennis
 Football & Badminton

PRE-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Wed 15th 1 to 1.45 3 to 5 yrs Pre-school Football
 Fri 17th 11 to 12 noon 3 to 5 yrs Pre-school Games

TENNIS CAMP (8 to 12 yrs)

Mon 13th & Tue 14th 1pm to 3pm

FUNKY DANCE CAMP (8 to 12 yrs)

Wed 15th - Fri 17th 2.30 to 4pm

POOL FUN SESSIONS (8 to 12 yrs)

(must be able to swim 25 metres)
 Every Tuesday and Friday 11.15 to 12 noon

ROLLER DISCOS (6 to 12 yrs)

Every Saturday 4 to 5pm (no skate hire available)

JUNIOR DANCE

TERM TIME ONLY

HIGHLAND DANCE

Monday 4.15 to 5pm 3 - 6 yrs

MUSIC & MOVEMENT

Tuesday 4.15 to 5pm 4yrs & P1 - P3

BALLET

Wed 4.15 to 5pm S1 to S6

TAP DANCING

Tuesday 5 to 6pm S3 to S6

HIP HOP

Wed 4 to 4.55pm P4 to P7

STREET JAZZ

Wed 5 to 6pm P7 to S2

JAZZ DANCE

Wed 5 to 6pm P5 to S1
 Thur 4 to 4.55pm P2 to P7

MUSIC & CHOREOGRAPHY

5.15 to 6.30pm S3 to S6

HIP HOP

Fri 4.15 to 5.15pm P4 to P7

BALLET

Sat 10.30 to 11.10am 3 to 5 yrs
 11.15 to 12 pm 6 to 8yrs
 12.00 to 12.45 pm 9 to 13yrs
 12.45 to 2.15 pm Age 14+

Play Sports continue to provide Football, Athletics, Badminton, Squash, Funfit, Tennis, Climbing and Pre-scholl Football for more information on all the above Visit www.atlantisleisure.co.uk
Tel 01631 566800

School News



Lochaber High School sixth year pupils brighten up the London Eye.

Lochaber sixth years enjoy London visit

EIGHTY-ONE tired but happy sixth years from Lochaber High School, accompanied by ten members of staff, enjoyed a long weekend of educational visits, sightseeing and activities in London.

The group left Lochaber High School at 6am on Thursday February 26 in two coaches to travel to the capital where they stayed in two city centre hotels, the Royal National and the Columbia, with meals out at Carluccio's in Covent Garden, Hard Rock Café, Pizza Express and TGI Fridays.

The pupils were given a range of visits and activities to choose from with groups selecting The National Gallery, Arsenal's Emirates Stadium, The Natural History Museum, The Imperial War Museum, Madame Tussauds, St Paul's Cathedral, The Tower of London and the Cabinet War Rooms.

One group took a 'Big Bus' tour of the city and were surprised to catch a glimpse of The Queen passing in the royal car. Evening activities included West End shows 'Chicago' and 'The Lion King', a visit to the cinema or high-energy LaserQuesting in Guildford.

A highlight for some was a guided tour of the Houses of Parliament, which was arranged by MP and former Lochaber High School pupil Charles Kennedy. For others, the highlight was the opportunity to shop in Oxford Street, to travel on the Underground or simply to see the famous landmarks of the capital and soak up the atmosphere of a busy, cosmopolitan city.

The trip ended with the entire group taking a flight on the London Eye.

The subsidised trip was a reward for those sixth years who have met the requirements of their contract and will be the last main social event for them before they leave school in May.

Head teacher Jim Sutherland said: 'It was a real pleasure to go on this trip with such a pleasant group of young people. Everyone clearly enjoyed the trip and will be left with many happy memories.'

Portree first aid group pass course

Fifteen Portree High School pupils, pictured right, successfully completed a 'First Responder' course delivered by Vince Walker of Coaching Highland. The pupils, members of the first aid group, learned how to apply potentially life-saving techniques in emergencies, including cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.



Inverlochty primary youngsters catch 'grow your own' bug

Inverlochty Primary School has become the latest to catch the 'grow your own' bug at the Lochaber Rural Education Trust centre at An Clachan, Torlundy. Pupils were given a tour of the complex before going inside from the snowy conditions to plant new tatties in buckets and onion sets in trays. Spear Bridge and Lochside pupils will be planting a range of vegetables outdoors come the spring. fl2nat01



Pupils gear up for garden fun

Ballachulish Primary 6/7 pupils along with nursery three and four year-old pupils will be busy in their garden this spring. The children collected 4,200 Morrisons vouchers, which they exchanged for gardening equipment.



Old jumpers transformed into blanket

PUPILS at an Oban primary school got to know more about recycling recently by getting together to create a blanket from old woollen jumpers.

The project, by pupils from St Columba's Primary in Oban, will help the school as it works towards its Eco Schools Green Flag status.

Parents and teachers helped out by boiling the jumpers in a washing machine to make

them shrink to half the size. The jumpers were then cut into squares, decorated with hand-sewn bobbles and sewn together.

The pupils involved were Angus MacLean and Jade MacEachen from primary three; Robert Krolkowski and Eve Beaton from primary four; Duncan McGrath and Jamie McAllister from primary five and Daria Kibitlowska and Kieran Hendry from primary six.



Rockfield pupils got to dress up during a visit to Stirling Castle.

Gaelic medium pupils tour castle

PRIMARY four and five pupils at Oban's Gaelic Medium Unit had a tour of Stirling Castle in the native tongue.

The tour was part of the pupils' project on Mary Queen of Scots and they were fascinated

to see how people lived during her reign. It was followed by a session with Historic Scotland staff where the children and their teachers dressed up in costumes and learnt dances that Mary Queen of Scots would have done.



Let's get growing and win more awards

St Bride's Nursery pupils are all ready for the spring planting season after they cashed in vouchers for gardening equipment in the Morrisons Let's Grow voucher scheme.

St Bride's pupils thank the local Nether Lochaber community for its great support during the voucher collection process. After their success at last year's Nether Lochaber Produce Show, the nursery hopes to win even more awards for vegetable growing with the help of their new equipment.

Joy and despair for Oban High School teams in latter stages of Scottish competitions

OBAN High School Gymnastic Squads travelled to West Lothian on February 26 to participate in the Scottish Schools Floor and Vault Heats.

Four squads were entered into the competition, two teams at Level 1 and two teams at Level 2. The Level 1 squads included: Bethany James, Nicola Cawthera, Christie MacKechnie, Lauren Buchanan, Rebecca Sims and Catherine MacFarlane. The Level 2 squads included: Sally Anne Bramely, Rachel Broadfoot, Leigh Eisler, Kenna Barrow, Jenny Livingstone, Sophie Colborn, Rebecca MacKinnon and Katy Sims.

All four squads successfully qualified for the Scottish Schools Championships in Perth on March 22.

The hard work and commitment of the gymnasts was reflected in their individual scores over the course of the competition. Christie MacKechnie and Catherine MacFarlane excelled in their floor routine in Level 1, with Bethany James cutting a mark above the rest with an outstanding straddle vault.

Level 2 teams were setting remarkably high standards with noticeable improvements from previous years. Rachel Broadfoot, in particular, was consistent in setting an excellent standard for her team in both floor and vault sections. This was followed closely by Leigh Eisler with a fantastic floor sequence and Kenna Barrow with a breathtaking vault.

The day was a great success and everyone wishes the girls the best of luck in competing in the championships later this month.



The Oban High School gymnasts who were successful at the Scottish Schools Floor and Vault Heats.

Rugby

OBERMORY, a combined Oban and Tobermory under 15 rugby team beat Jedburgh High School 36-0 to reach the final of the Scottish Bowl, as reported in *The Oban Times* of March 12.

Senior girls football

OBAN High School's senior girls footballers travelled to Selkirk last week for the quarter final of the Scottish Cup.

With only 11 players and a five-hour journey to contend with, the girls were up against it but they got the dream start when Kelsey McMahon fought her way through two challenges and coolly slotted the ball past the approaching goalkeeper after only two minutes. The girls doubled their lead on six minutes when Kayleigh Tennant hit a speculative shot from 20 yards which managed to creep past the goalkeeper.

After their early domination, the Oban girls let Selkirk back into the game when they failed to deal with a free kick played high into the box. The ball fell kindly for the Selkirk striker who made no mistake with the finish. The rest of the first half action was confined to midfield as both sides tried to outbatter each other until a clever through ball cut open the Oban back line and with more clinical finishing the half ended at 2-2.

The second half started as the first had finished with both teams working hard without creating any good scoring opportunities.

Then Cherrmaine MacLaughlan collected the ball on the half way line on 60 minutes. She dribbled past two defenders with ease and whilst stretching past the third defender she calmly struck the ball into the corner of the net. The Oban girls' delight was short lived though as the match was level again within 60 seconds when the girls were still reliving the last goal and allowed the centre midfielder from Selkirk to walk almost unchallenged through the heart of the team to draw the match level.

With six minutes to play and the match looking certain for extra time, Oban was dealt the cruellest of blows when a seemingly harmless ball was cut back from the touch line into the six-yard box. No-one in a black strip took responsibility for the ball and the Selkirk striker nipped in for the winner.

The final whistle blew with the Oban girls devastated having led three times in the game.

The girls can be proud of themselves for their performances with special mentions to Lisa McKenzie, Kelsey McMahon, Kayleigh Tennant, Frances Young and Cherrmaine MacLaughlan for tireless running and determination.

Ethco Challenge success

FIVE third year girls from Mr Gillespie's Skills for Work class decided to write a song for the Ethco Challenge run by Strathclyde University - and won.

The judges were highly impressed and they emerged outright Scottish winners. The song will now feature as the theme song for the Ethco Challenge as it rolls out across Scotland and beyond. The Ethco Challenge is a government-backed initiative being developed by Strathclyde University to reflect the millennium goals for sustainability of our planet and the development of ethical goals in politics and commerce globally.

The girls attended the launch of the project at Glasgow City Chambers where they performed their song. They have also recorded the song locally at Nutshell Music.



On song: the winning Oban High School Ethco Challenge composers.

School News



Pupils Jennifer McPhee, Robert Pawson, Caitlin Gray and Catriona Mackie organised the auction. (t11auc01)

Oban High School exchange trip auction raises £1,000

OBAN High School pupils held an auction to raise money ahead of this year's Laurinburg exchange trip.

For more than a decade Oban High School has taken part in the exchange with Scotland High School, Laurinburg, North Carolina, and returning Oban pupils have often described it as 'the trip of a lifetime'.

This year the usual application process has altered, with pupils having to prove their suitability for the exchange through a series of tasks.

Last Thursday's auction was one such task and will, in turn, raise money for activities organised for the American pupils when they come to Oban in June.

Pupils Jennifer McPhee, Robert Pawson, Caitlin Gray and Catriona Mackie had three weeks to organise the auction and had to collect lots from local businesses and drum up publicity for the event, which raised more than £1,000.



World Book Day fun at Happy House

Children from Happy House Christian Nursery enjoyed World Book Day by dressing up as their favourite book characters. The main aim of World Book Day in the UK is to encourage children to explore the pleasures of books and reading. Children who take part in the event will be issued with a voucher so they can buy a book of their

OWN. (t11book01)



Ruth Gibson, left, and Briony Nelson: on course for Advanced Higher maths. (t12maths01)

Pupils do their sums at 'maths camp'

TWO SIXTH year students at Kinlochleven High School have completed a 'maths camp' at Lagganlia outdoor centre near Kingussie as part of their Advanced Higher studies in the subject.

Ruth Gibson and Briony Nelson joined fellow maths Advanced Higher applicants from Lochaber High School, Ardnarmurchan High School and other Highland schools for the course, which included a talk from BBC weatherwoman and meteorologist Heather Reid on the use of maths in weather forecasting. Other guest speakers explained how maths was useful in almost every situation, while team building games and problem solving formed a major component of the course.

One task saw Ruth and Briony figure out how to build a bridge over a river using barrels, wood, rope - and maths of course!



Taynuilt Gaelic Choir and Appin Gaelic Medium Unit pupils share the stage at a ceilidh in Port Appin.

Appin Gaelic Interest Group ceilidh boosts choir and Mod

DONATIONS were made to Taynuilt Gaelic Choir and Oban Provincial Mod following a ceilidh in Port Appin Village Hall.

The ceilidh, organised by Appin Gaelic Interest Group, featured a full programme of musicians and singers. There were songs by Taynuilt Gaelic

Choir, Appin Gaelic Medium Unit pupils Aimee MacDonald and Eilish Thomson, Mary MacDougall, David and Audrey Paterson, Laura Cook,

Helen Watt, Ann MacLean, Kirsty MacLaren and Moira Thomson. Music was by Gregor MacCormick on accordion and Ann Barlow, fiddle.

Islay

Your correspondent is Susan Campbell: 01496 850215

Feis Ile in Homecoming 2009

ISLAY'S Feis Ile, the island's annual Festival of Malt and Music, is to be part of Homecoming 2009's Whisky Month celebrations in May.

Following hard on the heels of the new 'Spirit of the West' Scotch whisky festival planned for Inveraray on May 16 and 17, the month will offer a feast of whisky events in Argyll for worldwide malt fans to enjoy.

Feis Ile events take place at Islay's distilleries and other venues from May 23 through until May 31, with daily and nightly Scotch whisky-related and traditional music experiences on offer.

International goose conference

FIFTY bird conservationists and government policy-makers gathered at Islay's Machrie Hotel from February 24 to 26 for a conference organised by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Greenland White-Fronted Goose Study Group.

Delegates discussed their concerns over reducing

breeding productivity and population numbers of the geese.

Participants came from Eire, Iceland, Scotland and Greenland, whose countries play a part in the Whitefront geese's annual migrations.

The academics debated the current reduction in numbers of these birds. Hunting has been stopped, so it is not understood why this situation has come about. Might there be territorial pressure in Greenland on nesting sites? Is it habitat reduction or is it connected with global warming?

Rumour has it most of the delegates themselves flew to Islay. Maybe they're not quite so concerned about global warming when their own travel is concerned?

Public sessions were held on Wednesday February 25 in Bowmore Hall. The afternoon session was concerned with managing wintering sites - farmers' grazing land - and the evening session was an informal presentation with slideshow about the Greenland White-Fronted Geese.

Although suddenly diminishing bird populations are of concern, possibly as a marker to environmental problems which are not obvious to many, to a non-specialist observer there appears to be plenty of Greenland White-Fronted and other geese in Islay this and every winter.

When one sees them gathered in multitudes grazing in fields

or on their evening flights it's a real spectacle.

But the natural world in a long-term and global sense is full of change and cyclical events, and to expect Greenland White-fronted geese or any other species numbers to remain the same or to continually increase does not seem realistic.

'It's Your Community' awards

THE 02 It's Your Community awards support projects that bring people together and benefit local communities.

The awards are independently judged and administered by charity The Conservation Foundation for 02.

Organisations and individuals can apply for small grants worth up to £1,000. Awards are granted every month. The awards will fund sustainable projects that help local communities and are small enough to benefit substantially from a £1,000 award. The awards will not fund one-off events or workshops, fund-raising activities or school projects that don't involve the wider community.

Further information can be found at www.itsyourcommunity.co.uk.

Arisaig Community Council report

Work on LHA houses - Mr Leslie was not present to give an update on the work. There was discussion about the need for better signposting of the present road closure and a question about the possibility of this continuing through the Easter break. Mr MacDonald offered to follow this up with Mr Leslie.

Some discussion took place about the lack of progress on a housing needs assessment. It was agreed that the priority of the community council is the housing of the people it represents and to encourage people from the area to return to the village.

Lochailort - Mrs Collins and Mrs Fairley were welcomed to the community council. There were no matters arising.

Other - Miss McColl reported that the recent ALCC meeting was not quorate, so no business took place. There was a discussion about how community councillors could be attracted to attend these meetings. Ms Martin reported back on the findings of the trunk road survey.

There were three points raised: the bollards on the road are of a height which would obscure the presence

of people in wheelchairs, the problem of buses replacing trains not going up to the station to check if people are waiting there and not sticking to the times of the trains and that the sign showing the footpath down to the village opposite Station Road is not clear.

Use of the enhancement grant from the Highland Council - Ms Martin suggested that some of the money could be used to improve the flower beds at the entrance to the village, including the possibility of planting palms.

It was agreed to find out the cost of doing this and contacting the garden club to see if it would be interested in taking this on.

Councillors Clark and Hunter said that the Highland Council may be able to help supplying plants.

Community Development Trust - Ms Martin reported on the meeting held on Thursday February 12. It was well attended and the idea of

a community development trust was well received.

Twelve people have volunteered to be part of the steering group to set up the Trust.

The development of the playing field would be the first project.

It was suggested that a waiver of the right to buy the field ought to be included in the lease.

Dr Gartshore replied to the request for a change to a four day use of the medical centre at reduced hours.

He said that it was considered and not seen as practicable at the moment. He will continue to keep the option in mind.

AOB - Congratulations will be sent to Diana MacDonald for becoming the first female train driver on the West Highland Line.

Could it be arranged for the monthly skip to be placed at the top of the village as well as in the car park opposite the Spar?

Around the Rurals

Kilbrandon

PRESIDENT Linda Brown welcomed members to the March meeting of the Kilbrandon branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute, held in Seil Island Hall.

As the speaker for the evening was not able to attend, a beetle drive was held. As on previous occasions, any observer would have been amazed at the transformation from sensible citizen to obsessive dice thrower which overtakes members at such events.

Competitive streaks fully exercised, members went on to enjoy tea and refreshments to round off a sociable evening.

Linda reminded members that at next month's meeting, to be held on April 7, a cookery demonstration will be given by Pampered Chefs.



Snow roll catches Duncan's eye

Bridge Of Orchy Hotel manager Duncan Walker snapped this unusual 'snow event' on Sunday March 8 outside the hotel. Duncan tells us the car was parked on a downward slope and because of melting snow conditions and the angle of descent, the snow formed into a swiss roll and curled gently down the windscreen. He said: 'I am sure that this is a very rare sight and I'm positive your readers would find it fascinating - a first for Argyll perhaps?' Have you any unusual weather photographs? Email them to editor@obantimes.co.uk. (t12snow1no)

February report from Provost of Lochaber Allan Henderson

ONE OF the biggest and most significant changes to the area took place at the beginning of the month with the opening of the new road and finally dualing for the A830.

This was done in an understated way on the first Tuesday.

Later in the month the contract was awarded for the extension of the Loch nan Uamh layby and the new one close to the canteen bridge.

Support for my petition to have laybys, from the Outdoor Capital of the UK group and Geopark, was much appreciated. Unfortunately I haven't been successful with the banking but I am sure we will learn to live with it when the vegetation grows.

The exhibition and display of the proposals and consultation for a marina in Mallaig Harbour certainly aroused a lot of positive interest. I and my colleagues are doing everything possible to secure funding.

Talking of water, my colleagues and I were able to secure £5,000 for Mallaig and District swimming pool to buy new equipment.

I finally managed to meet up with Small Isles Community Council.

This was an extremely productive meeting along with David Taylor of Caledonian MacBrayne who is exploring ways of expanding the summer itinerary to benefit islanders and tourists.

One problem, which was flagged up, has unfortunately turned out to be true. Problems with the new build hostel have arisen and while the builder is willing to address them, the building will again face delays.

Two transport reviews are doing the rounds, one a local transport strategy consultation, which is nearing draft stage. This can still be fed into by getting in touch with me or Cameron.kemp@highland.gov.uk.

The second is a ferries review which will be having consultative talks in Fort William/Mallaig, Skye and Thurso/Scrabster towards the end of March - dates to be confirmed.

This is particularly important as nothing is ruled in or out of this review and will set the pattern of ferries for the next generation. Small fast ferries for the Small Isles, Knoydart and Armadale?

Again I am happy to take your views to the table if you are unable to attend.

A trip to a board meeting of Knoydart Foundation found them all gearing up to the 10th anniversary celebrations. Who would believe 10 years have passed since Iain Wilson was photographed punching the air in delight?

The foundation goes from strength to strength dealing with bigger and more complex issues as it redevelops the area.

The forming of the new community trust in Arisaig can only be heralded as good news. I hope Henry Mains' infectious enthusiasm is harnessed to good use.

Thanks to the Kirk Session of North West Lochaber for the invitation of the dedication of the organ and the Church Hall. This is a wonderful resource for the area and I am sure it will be well used.

Send your community news to The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or email editor@obantimes.co.uk.

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Give hope to the common man with commonsense

IS THERE something we ordinary folk miss when we see a simple and commonsense solution to a problem? Almost weekly for months now we have watched the UK government being prepared to throw endless billions the country clearly cannot afford into that bottomless pit called the banking system. And to what end? So far it appears to have failed miserably in an attempt to reverse the country's slide into a deep economic recession or even depression. In the meantime, we have a construction industry that has almost ground to a halt, an ever-growing queue of people desperate to work and an acute shortage of affordable homes. Why then is the UK government not chucking huge sums of money at a house-building programme? Unlike the banks, it would be guaranteed to yield positive returns: desperately needed housing and people back in work and not claiming benefits.

As two of our main stories show this week, the dire shortage of jobs and affordable homes are no more obvious than in Argyll and the Highlands and islands. How long can you stay jobless and positive when you have been on a housing waiting list for years and learn there is approximately one vacancy, often low paid, for every 30 people out of work in Argyll?

There are two things the past year has made clear: banking bosses never did merit huge wages and bonuses; and politicians are not any smarter than the ordinary man with commonsense.

Glasgow Letter

Aye Write in Gaelic

DO YOU have a mental image of the Mitchell Library in Glasgow being an austere building with dark wood panelling and perhaps staff who are equally austere?

If so, you are mistaken. For the past couple of weeks the library, with its bright entrance and bustling café, has been home to the Aye Write Festival, a hive of bustling activity.

Many authors appeared and An Lochran, as part of its responsibility for promoting and developing the Gaelic arts, decided, over two evenings, to feature the Gaelic Rings, Cearcail na Gaidhlig.

This small book, an extremely easy read, consists of six personal journeys round the beautiful west coast of Scotland and over the two evenings four of the contributors, Brian Wilson, Mairi MacArthur, Donald Meek and Angus Peter Campbell, attended. I was only able to be present on the second evening, which was not so well attended, but here the audience was treated to thoughts and personal experiences which implanted a longing to head for the north west at the first opportunity.

There is no doubt in my mind that this book could be a wonderful advertisement for use by VisitScotland, Caledonian MacBrayne and local authorities as an attraction for visitors, particularly in this the year of Homecoming Scotland. Well done An Lochran once again for organising this event.

Sgoil Gaidhlig concert

AFTER six months of fund raising, the school has bought its new baby grand piano and as a celebration it is hosting a special concert to thank everyone who helped raise the money.

It will take place on Wednesday March 25 at 7pm.

As well as pupils from both the primary and secondary departments, there will be a special performance by Aleksander Kudajczyk who became the subject of worldwide media attention when, working as a cleaner at the University of Glasgow, his musical talent was discovered.

Glasgow Fèis

FOR THIS event, which will take place in the Royal Scottish Academy of Music

and Drama, the youngsters, aged 4 to 16 years, will be divided into four broad age bands.

Costs for the Fèis are £50 per week for the first child, £40 for the second child and £35 for the third child.

The week will also include a tutor/family ceildh on the Thursday evening and a participants showcase on the Saturday.

The contact to book a place or for further details is Aillie Fleming - aillie.flemming@csglasgow.org. Telephone 0141 287 8510.

Malcolm Jones

I AM SURE all his fans will wish Malcolm Jones of Runrig a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing him back on stage in the near future.

Diary dates

Friday March 20: Clydebank and District Highlander's Association ceildh, Lesser Town Hall, 7.30pm. Sgoil Gaidhlig Glaschu ceildh dance, Yarrow's Recreation Club, Anniesland Road, close to Helensburgh Drive, 7.30pm with Gunna Sound.

Saturday March 21: Clann Gaidhlig concert, Auchenback Resource Centre, Barrhead, with Largs Gaelic Choir and friends. Highlander's Club Dance, Partick Burgh Halls, 8pm, with Fraser McGlynn's Band.

Wednesday March 25: Sgoil Gaidhlig Glaschu concert, 7.30pm - see above.

Friday March 27: Glasgow Skye Association Cothrom na h-oighridh Youth Concert, Partick Burgh Halls, 7pm. Glasgow Uist and Barra Association ceildh dance, Whitefield Community Hall, Ibrox, 8pm. Helensburgh and District Highlander's Association ceildh dance, Commodore Hotel, 7.30pm, with Marion Anderson's Band.

Saturday March 28: Glasgow Tìree Association, Ten Pin Bowling, Springfield Road.

Pub scene

GUNNA Sound will be busy this weekend playing for Sgoil Gaidhlig on Friday and then Saturday and Sunday in the Park Bar.

Ballochmyle will be in the Park Bar on Friday while music in the Islay Inn will be provided by the Keelies on Friday and Crooked Reel on Saturday.

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



The Oban Times hits all the right notes in Slovenia thanks to Argyll-based band

Damijan and Borut, staff at the Hotel Mitra, Ptuj, Slovenia, catch up on the latest news in Oban and the West Highlands, courtesy of Argyll-based band *Pigtown Fling*. The band was invited to host a special Scottish week during Kurentovanje Carnival where ceildhs, traditional music and even the Highland Fling were introduced and demonstrated to great effect. The week was a resounding success and the band has been invited back next year to host an even bigger range of events. You can find out more from the band's blog at www.pigtownfling.co.uk. We would like readers to send in flashback photographs and photographs of *The Oban Times* being read in far flung places. 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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Ganavan - a public area

Sir, I have to offer my support for the proposed café and toilets at Ganavan Sands car park, Oban.

Well done Argyll and Bute Council.

It's about time the public aspect of this area was reinforced.

With the new housing development giving an overall formidable impression of exclusivity, the new café and toilet block, together with the proposed seating area, will offer an air of welcome.

After all, it would be replacing that lovely old pavilion that was so tragically demolished.

Ganavan resident, name and address supplied.

Provide a dog bin

Sir, Like many Oban residents, I walk my dog on the waste ground near Genshellach.

Recently the council has put up signs warning dog walkers that if their pets are allowed to foul they will be liable for a fine.

This is fair enough but the council should place a bin in the vicinity so responsible dog owners can clean up after their pets. A general rubbish bin in the area also might encourage a cleaner environment.

I don't think a dog waste bin is too much to request and might help to eradicate a problem.

Jon Freeman, Braeside Guesthouse, Kilmore, by Oban.

Repair existing Mull roads first

Sir, I found it extraordinary to read that 'only a handful' of complaints had been received about the state of the Mull roads.

I know quite well that of the residents of the 22 houses which are down my mile of side-road a great many more than a 'handful' of complaints have been sent.

Let me describe just how difficult driving is here. It is down to two factors. The first is, there are many potholes, a lot of which are really deep, and it is not always possible to see which are potholes and which are simply a wet piece

of fairly flat road when the holes are full of rainwater.

The other is that the state of the roads is now so bad that the position of a lot of these holes is exactly opposite one another, so that on these single-track roads, they cannot be avoided. In places, even dropping right down to bottom gear, the effect on the car is far worse than going along my own farm tractor road.

When my car was only a year old, I had to have the wheel straightened as it had been knocked out of alignment because of the state of the roads, and I assure you, I am not a fast driver.

I wonder if other people are as incensed as I am when reading of the plans to upgrade the Tobermory to Salen road, while ignoring the fact that the existing roads need any available money spent on proper repairs, first. The road to Croig has had a 100 yard stretch titivated three times in the last three years.

If enough people refused to pay their road fund licence, until the roads were made useable, the authorities might sit up and take notice.

However, it would take a brave person to refuse to pay this licence, for one sees in the papers that one's car will be taken away and crushed, without compensation. Are we becoming a Fascist state? **Jill Galbraith, Croig, Dervaig, Isle of Mull.**

Help holiday makers with car parking charges

Sir, Many thanks for publishing the article on Oban car parking charges.

The reply you got from Argyll and Bute Council says it all.

According to them, 'three hours parking only costs 30p more', but for holiday makers it now costs £7.20 a day - very expensive if you are coming to Oban for a week.

Also, the car park signs are inadequate, implying that you must pay 70 pence an hour, when I was in Oban in February, meaning holiday makers were returning to their cars every hour to feed the meter.

This meant I couldn't go to a church service on a Sunday or go for lunch because I would

have had to nip back and feed the meter.

It appears that Argyll and Bute Council does not want visitors to support local businesses. Please will the public of Oban ask their council representatives to seek and get residents parking permits for holidaymakers when they are staying in Oban.

I have been in touch with the council and did get one reply from them but another email has been left unanswered. **Peter A Smith, Lancashire.**

Housing needs government support

Sir, In the March 5 edition, *The Oban Times* reported only three of 600 families in the Lochaber area received keys to a rented home in February.

The reality of this dire housing shortage, as Councillor Donald Cameron points out, means that hundreds of families could be stuck on waiting lists for many years, with nowhere to call home.

Councillor Cameron calls for the Scottish government to write off Highland Council's housing debt and increase grants to housing associations to help solve the problem.

However, what we need to see is significant further investment overall in affordable housing from the government to really tackle homelessness and provide better housing for those on waiting lists. Shelter and other organisations have also been calling on the UK government to give housing a greatly needed shot in the arm by investing in housing in the April 22 budget. This could mean £600 million, resulting in an estimated 6,000 homes over the next two years for Scotland. We need an increase in funding for housing overall to help ensure the 2012 homelessness target is met and that families across the country have not only the right to a home but the keys to one as well.

Graeme Brown, Director, Shelter Scotland.

Fishing boat photo date

Sir, I get *The Oban Times* every week and I noticed the picture of the fishing vessels in the

edition of February 19. At a good guess, I would say the picture was taken post WWII, 1955 to 1962.

The reason for this deduction is the radio masts on the fishing vessels are simplex, not duplex. I was born and bred in Oban and visit often. **S R Yeoman, Perth.**

Scottish Water

Sir, I refer to Dave Petrie's comments, letters, *The Oban Times*, February 26 about Scottish Water. We are pleased to report that the average household water bill in Scotland - still less than £1 a day - is lower than the average bill in England and Wales. With regard to Mr Petrie's comments on our infrastructure, we have 47,000 kilometres of water mains and scattered populations supplied from long lengths of pipe. We are improving this vast infrastructure at a record rate but it should be remembered that England and Wales began to tackle their issues almost three decades ago. Mr Petrie will hopefully be pleased to learn that in the past two years we have significantly reduced leakage and this current year we are on track to save a further 120 million litres a day. Scottish Water is committed to outperforming leakage targets. He might also be interested to know that on the issue of pumping and treating surface water, we recently gave evidence to the Scottish Parliament for the Flooding Bill. Our recommendations included encouraging more sustainable systems such as green roofs and grey water recycling, along with minimising impervious areas and disconnecting surface water from combined sewers. Our regulator recently reported that we are the fastest improving water company in the UK. We are proud to serve Scotland and welcome comments via our website www.scottishwater.co.uk. **Helen Lennox, Head of Corporate Affairs, Scottish Water, Dunfermline.**

Thanks
Sir, I would like to thank the person that found my key for the electricity meter and placed it between two stones on the cycle path. **Catherine MacInnes, Cawdor House, Oban.**

A VIEW FROM THE TOWER
By McCaig

The never ending battle against evil

IT TOOK a very long time to get a Northern Ireland Assembly off the ground because of bitter old men with evil prejudices who eventually found it in their hearts to speak to each other and shake hands - but we were not fooled.

There is a power-sharing Assembly with Protestants and Catholics putting a veneer of respectability on it to allow civic government to operate on a day-to-day basis but without too much thought about a long-term solution to the minority demand for a united Ireland.

This begged the question what would the hotheads on both sides do to feed their evil, sectarian prejudices to keep conflict and instability festering?

And we should not forget that there is a new generation which couldn't care less about a united Ireland in religious terms.

They demand that anarchists and terrorists use old prejudices to build their new vision of a world that is based on no rule of law but on their own as a way to seize power to do in Europe what the Taliban are doing in Afghanistan.

If they could destabilise Northern Ireland by murdering the armed forces they could establish a 'socialist' enclave from which to strike into Europe though the Irish Republic and Britain through Scotland to create a fertile breeding ground for anarchy to seize control and maintain it by the power of the gun.

Not a pleasant scenario, but one which is possible unless they and their supporters are weeded out immediately.

Strathclyde Police chief under fire

SINCE Stephen House became Chief Constable of Strathclyde there has been growing anxiety that he doesn't understand, or want to understand, how to operate sensible rural policing.

So long has he been away from the force where he started his career that he seems to have lost the common touch and become immersed in the dubious politics of the Met.

It is alleged that after coming back to Strathclyde the top job in that force suddenly became available and he sought to apply for it but was not allowed to do so.

However, he is about to find himself at odds with the Scottish Justice Minister Kenny MacAskill over the actions of one of his newly appointed minions who refused ex-PC Raymond Law's application to continue in the force for another 12 months under the 30-year plus scheme devised by the

aforsaid Minister of Justice to meet the crisis caused by the number of officers leaving the force on completion of their 30 years service.

We all know what an exemplary officer Raymond Law has been and are not surprised there has been a public outcry about the way he has been treated. Numerous complaints to Argyll and Bute Constituency MSP Jim Mather and to Tory List MSP Sir Jamie McGrigor have required them to seek meetings with the Justice Minister Kenny MacAskill to put to him the feelings of their constituents, especially in Oban, Lorn and the Isles.

At the same time, there is the point raised by former Chief Inspector Fred Hall, another officer who was publicly admired for his approach to policing his scattered manor.

He made no bones about the fact that he felt he was operating with one hand behind his back as in the short time he had been in charge of policing here he had lost seven officers for various reasons, none to do with his management style, but none were replaced.

There can be no doubt that this precipitated his decision to retire earlier than he intended.

Maybe Chief Constable House should be moved to the Inspectorate of Constabulary where he wouldn't lose face but would free up his present post for someone who understands man management and the complexities of a large urban police force which also has a large rural force that has different criteria to those of urban Scotland.

Good result for Alan Reid MP

FROM the outset of the 'consultation' exercise on the Scottish government's proposals to lease a large chunk of the Forestry Commission Estate to a merchant bank, local MP Alan Reid fought hard to obtain a 'no' vote for it.

When Mike Russell, the Environment Minister, who proposed it, was moved/promoted to be Culture Minister the writing was on the wall as not only did the Tories come out against the idea but the very strong trade union lobby stated it was implacably opposed to it.

Alex Salmond's strategic retreat was masterminded by the new Environment Minister 'Red' Roseanna Cunningham who wasn't going to let her union colleagues down.

One man who will see it as a victory is Alan Reid MP who fought from the very beginning to stop the proposal.

McCaig

Keep the local news coming

Sir, I am a subscriber to *The Oban Times* and love hearing news from Argyll, in particular Coll, where I grew up.

The Around the Rurals section is welcome since it includes news that perhaps would otherwise not make it into print. Updates on community issues and projects are also of particular interest. I am aware how often local correspondents are required to produce news updates for you but would like to convey to them how important their updates are to us and to keep them as regular as possible.

Lauchlan Maclean-Bristol, Lytham.

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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Loss of funding for Sportshall activities will impact on area's budding stars, it is claimed

Young Argyll athletes are left trailing

BUDDING athletics stars in Argyll are furious at being left behind in the starting blocks for the final of a national event.

By LOUISE GLEN-LEE
They are among Scottish competitors missing out of Sportshall activities after fund-

ing was withdrawn by Scottish Athletics.

It decided that the regional and national events no longer met the organisation's priorities, but those involved with Sportshall at grassroots level are not happy.

Sportshall, an indoor training programme for young people, has long been seen as a vital feeder organisation for up and coming athletes from rural and island areas.

Bill MacCallum, a volunteer trainer of the group who makes a round trip between Lochgilphead and Mull most Tuesdays, said: 'Scottish Athletics has dropped this type of activity, but it is perfect for training athletes from rural communities because it is indoors and able to go ahead every week regardless of the weather.'

'This decision will not only affect athletes on Mull but throughout Argyll. I understand that Highland Council has continued to fund its Sportshall athletes.

'We have produced two under-20s national track and field stars in Mathew Turner and David Clunie from Argyll who have both made a remarkable contribution to Scottish athletics.'

'There are also boys and girls in the pipeline from Argyll that have the potential to make a tremendous contribution to sport. 'But due to this funding situation there is a definite risk that Sportshall on Mull, or indeed throughout Argyll, will not go ahead. We have lost a big incentive to continue.'

Nicky McClymont, a Mull mum, is challenging the decision from Scottish Athletics. She said: 'We just cannot lie down and accept this news. With the London Olympics and Glasgow Com-

monwealth Games within our sights, where do they expect our young people to train? 'Mull has provided more than its fair share of under-13 and under-15 national champions in track and field events thanks to Sportshall.'

'Some of them have gone onto compete for Scotland, but I am very concerned for the future for island kids because there will be nowhere for them to get started in athletics without Sportshall events.'

'We will continue to train children but what motivation will there be when there is no regional or national competitions?'

'This year will be the first time there will not even be a team from Scotland competing at the national finals in

England.'

Nicky's son, Cullen, aged 12, was Argyll Under-13 in a competition in January. He aims to be performing at the Olympics in the future.

Already the young Muileach can outclass children in older age groups with his six metre 79cm personal best in the standing triple jump. He said: 'I want to go to the Olympics but without Sportshall I won't have anywhere to practise. When you go to the national finals they play *Flower of Scotland* and it feels great to be competing on behalf of your country. I have also made loads of pals from all over the country that are competing in the same events.'

Jamie McDonald of Scottish Athletics said: 'The Sportshall

programme does not complement the Long Term Athlete Development Framework of Scottish Athletics.'

'The programme has become increasingly for club-based athletes and not set up for the original purpose as an introductory programme. There is no evidence that the programme is aiding athletic retention or raising general standards.'

Bill MacCallum added: 'Rural areas have a lack of outdoor facilities for young people to train. Added to the fact that Argyll does not have the indoor centres that towns and cities have to train young people, we are letting them down.'

'How can young people go on compete in top events when they have not been

able to train properly. Children from rural areas, such as Tobermory, will not have that vital foothold that allows them to pursue the dream of becoming Olympians.'

'Sportshall is a relatively cheap way to give youngsters essential skills. It has been maintained from day one by volunteers, costing only £1 or £2 to take part.'

'England, Ireland and Wales continue to support Sportshall but not Scottish Athletics. Do our administrators know something that these other countries don't?'

'It is very sad that Scotland will be missing from the national competitions, and my fear is that our youngsters will miss out on the likes of the Commonwealth and Olympic games as a result.'



Junior members of Mull Athletic Club pictured with Geoff Wightman, chief executive of Scottish Athletics, centre, at Tobermory High in 2007.



Young athlete Cullen McClymont from Mull, an Argyll champion in the triple jump, could see his training sessions cancelled due to lack of funding. t09craig01

Adventurer Karen inspires Oban audience

A YOUNG adventurer gave a little bit of inspiration to Oban last week at an event organised by the H20 group.

Karen Darke was paralysed from the chest down in a rock-climbing accident in 1993 while just 21 years old.

Since then she has hand-cycled over the Himalayas, kayaked in Alaska and skied across Greenland. Karen was at the H20 Centre in Oban as part of a nationwide tour giving motivational talks to schools, businesses and charities.

Neil Matheson of H20 said: 'We first came across Karen when she came to Oban to do a leadership development training course. She's a remarkable young lady and very passionate about young people.'

Free Karen, who provided the talk free of charge with the money raised going towards H20 funds, says: 'In 1993 I had a rock-climbing accident in which I broke my back and became paralysed from the chest down.'

'The life I knew came to an end. It took time, inspiration from others, good friends, family and a lot of trial and error for me to figure things out. 'I couldn't have imagined hand-



Karen Darke gave a talk at the H20 Centre. t11talk01

cycling over the Himalayas or scaling mountains again.

'I've been lucky enough to experience all this, and in the process learn that the mind is our biggest obstacle to living and achieving our wildest aspirations.'



Photographer Philip Price with Strath of Appin schoolchildren.

Putting focus on Argyll

AN ARGYLL photographer represented Scotland at an awards ceremony in the House of Lords this week.

Philip Price, who set up his Loch Visions business three years ago, won Scottish Countryside Alliance best rural enterprise award this year. The 29 year old, who takes people on wildlife photography tours, is being sponsored for the trip by Argyll and Bute Council and the Prince's

Scottish Youth Business Trust. The awards ceremony took place yesterday (Wednesday) at the House of Lords in London.

Philip said: 'Thanks to the sponsorship I can now go down there and talk to ministers about Argyll.' Philip recently visited Strath of Appin Primary School where he showed pupils the specialised equipment he uses including cameras, camouflage and a birdhide.

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DAILY		8.45
HE'S JUST NOT THAT INTO YOU	Cert 12A	129mins
DAILY 6.15 FRI-SAT 9.00		
SAT/SUN MATINEES		2.15
VICKY CRISTINA BARCELONA	Cert 12A	100mins
DAILY		4.45, 7.00
SAT/SUN MATINEES		12.00
HOTEL FOR DOGS	Cert U	100mins
SAT & SUN ONLY		12.00, 2.00, 4.00
DOUBT	Cert 15	104mins
MON-THURS		4.00, 9.00

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GRAN TORINO - 15 • THE UNBORN - 15
MONSTERS VS ALIENS PREVIEWS - U

At the Cinema

The International
CERT '15'

When a fellow agent is murdered, Euro-cop Louis Salinger (Clive Owen) and New York assistant district attorney Eleanor Whitman (Naomi Watts) join forces to entrap one of the world's largest banks. Crossing the globe, they learn the full extent of its corruption. A timely fast paced thriller from the director of Run, Lola, Run, Tom Tykwer

Hotel For Dogs
CERT 'U'

When dynamic siblings Andi and Bruce find themselves in a foster home with a strict "no pets" policy, Andi has to use her quick wit to help find a new home for their dog Friday. Despite warnings to stay out of trouble from their sympathetic social worker, the kids stumble upon a derelict hotel and begin transforming it into the perfect home for Friday and all the strays in the city - running the risk of being separated if they're caught. In no time, the kids have transformed the old hotel into something truly magical: a home for both the dogs and for themselves.

He's Just Not That Into You
CERT '12A'

A group of interconnected, Baltimore-based twenty- and thirtysomethings navigate their various relationships from the shallow end of the dating pool through the deep, murky waters of married life, trying to read the signs of the opposite sex--and hoping to be the exceptions to the "no-exceptions" rule. Based on the New York Times best seller book "He's Just Not That Into You: The No-Excuses Truth to Understanding Men" by Liz Tuccillo and Greg Behrendt.. This smash hit. Comedy has a fantastic cast which includes Jennifer Aniston, Scarlett Johansson & Ben Affleck.

Vicky Cristina Barcelona
CERT '12A'

Just as New York City was the backdrop in Woody Allen's "Manhattan," the stunning city of Barcelona is the setting for the romantic adventures of Vicky and Cristina. These two young Americans spend a summer in Spain and meet a flamboyant artist (Javier Bardem)

and his beautiful but insane ex-wife (Penelope Cruz). Vicky (Rebecca Hall) is straight-laced and about to be married. Cristina (Scarlett Johansson) is a sexually adventurous free spirit. When they all become amorously entangled, the results can only be described as chaotic. Finally Woody Allen is back on form and Penelope Cruz bagged herself a Best supporting actress Oscar.

DOING SOMETHING FUNNY FOR MONEY

FOR RED NOSE DAY 09

Primary Football League team Oban Saints Under 8s, pictured below, held a sponsored football fun night on Friday March 13 instead of their usual training. All the players collected money from friends and family and together with the proceeds from a Comic Relief football quiz that was sold round the town, the raised £320.



Left: Taynult Nursery children dressed in red to raise money for Comic Relief. They also sampled red food and played with red games. They raised a total of £25.



Right: To mark Red Nose Day, staff and children at Oban's Happy House Christian Pre-School wore pyjamas for the day and held a pyjama party in the morning and afternoon sessions.



Ardochattan Primary School staff and children had fun dressing up and raising funds for Comic Relief. Staff being splatted with custard pies was a particular favourite with pupils! High teas and home-baking were served. Around £80 was raised.



Left: Staff at Energie Fitness in Oban were red in the face last week when they cycled 660 miles - the distance from Oban to Land's End - on an exercise bike in aid of Comic Relief. Completing the task in a matter of days, staff proved that they were up for a challenge. (122en01)



Duror Pre-School held a coffee morning on Friday March 13 to raise money for Comic Relief. Children and staff dressed up and the children sang songs and told jokes. Everyone enjoyed the home-baking provided by the children, parents and members of the community. A total of £97 was raised.



Tobermory High School, Isle of Mull, raised more than £1,800 for Comic Relief through a series of events including dressing in something funny, above, and a 'Pose with a Nose' competition, right.



Easdale Primary School held a Comic Relief fund-raising day with children coming along to school dressed in red.



Not Quite Girls Aloud took part in Park Primary School's talent show in aid of Comic Relief. (122ed02)



Children from Lochnell Pre-Five Nursery went to school in pyjamas on Red Nose Day to raise money for Comic Relief. The children, who raised more £36, are pictured with staff Sheila Davies, Jayne Campbell and Jenna McCuish.

Talent show cash boost

PRIMARY seven boys at Park Primary School, Oban, showed their commitment to Comic Relief by getting in touch with their feminine side.

In a *Stars in Their Eyes* style makeover Stewart Twort, Alex MacCallum, Calum MacLean, Sean Sutherland and Innes MacColl became 'Not Quite Girls Aloud' for the showcase Park's Got Talent.

They were pipped to the title, however, by rapper and dancer MC Ben.

While the judges from Argyll College were deliberating on the final decision, five members of staff, including head teacher Gillian Carney, danced to the Abba song Dancing Queen.

In other fund-raising efforts, pupil Caitlin Rydings ordered and sold red noses, as well as taking part in a sponsored trampoline jump; Laura MacCallum did a sponsored run and Clare MacCallum and Caitlin Witherspoon were paid to spend the day in silence.

Erin Cameron and Robert Kennedy added to the school's Comic Relief total of £664.85 by running an origami stall.



Staff at Oban's Atlantis Leisure Centre joined in the fun of Red Nose Day 2009 and raised £380. Children and staff at the centre's Loopy Hoops Gymnastics Club all wore pyjamas for the day and raised money by guessing the number of sweets in a jar, painting red noses on the children and making red nose cakes. Nick Wesley, centre manager, pictured below, and Paul Lopez had their legs waxed and Kevin Turner got his chest waxed.



Smarties Playgroup, which meets at Atlantis Leisure, Oban, dressed for bed to raise money for Comic Relief. The children had a great day, raising £20.62. (122mar01)

Your Stars with Patrick Arundell

ARIES Mar 21st - Apr 20th
Mars continues in a potentially tricky area, so don't let any frustrations go unattended. Yet pleasantly, with the Sun and Mercury arriving in your sign, you can be much less introspective or bogged down by hard to fathom fears. If there has been a sense of drift, this will soon make way for a dynamic new phase in your year. You're back, and how so! Call now for more astral advice...

TAURUS Apr 21st - May 21st
You can find yourself thinking back over the events of the last twelve months, or even beyond. This is because you sense that there may be some major issues for you to come to terms with. Some of these can be happy events, some maybe about endings. But by going through this stage you are readying yourself for the next big cycle of activity. Call your special prediction line for more...

GEMINI May 22nd - Jun 21st
There's little doubt that Mars is giving you considerable leadership potential. If you tend not to see yourself in this way, ok, but this extra clout can work in an everyday sense, and see you more desirous of people's respect. With the Sun and Mercury now adding sparkle to your natural talent for networking, a week of real opportunity lays in store. Call me now for more news and astral advice...

CANCER Jun 22nd - Jul 23rd
Pluto plays a major role this week in that it clashes, astrologically, with both the Sun and Mercury. The suggestion is that you may find yourself challenged by the very people you need to keep on-side. To circumnavigate this, it's going to be essential to be straightforward and honest in your approach. Someone important is watching how you react. Call me now for your in-depth forecast...

LEO Jul 24th - Aug 23rd
People have expectations of you. These have probably been shaped by you when over time you have played a role or been dull, and it was something that they got used to and now relate to. You, on the other hand, may feel that you have had enough of being such a good egg, and are in the mood to make a bid for freedom. This may ruffle some feathers. Call your special prediction line for more...

VIRGO Aug 24th - Sep 23rd
Things can get a bit intense this week. There has been a lot of chat, but with Mars now becoming more established in your opposite sign you may be less patient of the perceived failings of others. Yet all of this may not result in a particularly logical way. What's more likely is that you are set to be driven by a deeper less obvious, depth of emotions. Call now for more astral advice...

LIBRA Sep 24th - Oct 23rd
The Sun powers into the most competitive sector, joining with Venus which has spent time here since early February. The chances are in that time, there's been lots of tantalising conversation - not least romantically, which may have got seriously flirty. Now however, you are urged to make your mind up about anyone you fancy - or take on rivals directly. Call now for your love scope in full...

SCORPIO Oct 24th - Nov 23rd
Your energy is looking good and you're encouraged to direct your attentions towards applying this around work, health and fitness issues. Good intentions are one thing, but actually putting them into practice is another. Feeling lively is a good thing but too many late nights chasing the bright lights could squander your surplus quicker than you think. Call your special prediction line for more...

SAGITTARIUS Nov 23rd - Dec 21st
Things take a positive turn for the better, which is not to say that they've been bad, as much more focused on deeply personal or emotional considerations. Your bubbly humour and energy are set to make a comeback and this can put you in a more outgoing frame of mind. If you have been feeling slightly tongue tied, this is a chance to reconnect! Call me now for more news and astral advice...

CAPRICORN Dec 22nd - Jan 20th
There can be more interaction with family members, but with Mars building up speed in your sector of words, you need to be conscious that if there are differences of viewpoint, you could represent yours with all the cutting edge of a political journalist and in so doing create a bit of jagged edges. On the upside, home improvements can take a step forwards. Call me for your in-depth forecast...

AQUARIUS Jan 21st - Feb 19th
If you work within the media, the internet, teaching, training or social work spheres, expect a lot of action. In fact, if you are one of those Water Carriers who thrives on lots of coming and going, you can be in your element. You can also find yourself at the fulcrum of a local campaign. This could be for a better road crossing, street lighting or cleansing. Call me now Aquarius for more advice...

PISCES Feb 20th - Mar 20th
Your equilibrium may have been shaken recently, but this week is going to give you lots of opportunities to get more grounded. Spending time walking in the countryside, close to nature, would be a super way to approach your leisure time, but at home or work, you'll be in the mood to achieve tangible results. By the week's end, fortune beckons. Call now for more news and advice...

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What's On Guide

Various art courses available at Airdeny Chalets, contact Jennifer on 01866 822648

Thursday 19th March
Local Producers Market, Kintallen Farm, Benderloch 10am - 3pm

Saturday 21st March
NCT Nearly New Sale, Glencruitten Church Hall, Oban, 11am - 2pm

24th - 27th March
North Lorn Drama Festival, 7.30pm, Appin Village Hall

Friday 27th March
Red Hot Chilli Pipers, Corran Halls, 8pm

WHAT'S ON GUIDE CONTACT - 01631 568000

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Four out of five adults use their local paper to find out what's on

Theatre come to Caol with Yellowmoon

CAOL ARTZ have in the past brought some entertaining theatre to Lochaber.

So I was looking forward to seeing TAG Citizens Theatre's *Yellowmoon* by David Greg at the Caol Community Theatre.

As soon as I walked into the hall I knew I was in for something special. The chairs were arranged in a square for the audience to be right round the performance.

The four players walk into the square and it starts. Intro over, 'One' calls the lead player and the first chapter of the story unfolds. No props apart from four chairs. No costumes. Only a soundtrack and the spoken word conveys the images we see before us. This is theatre in the raw. It's a story told quickly and aggressively but touching for all that.

Shabana Bakhsh plays Leila Suleiman, who you may have seen in River City, Ken Loach's film *Ae Fond Kiss* or more recently on Waterloo Street.

Pauline Knowles plays Jenni MacAlinden and Holly Malone, and has had numerous stage appearances as well as Taggart and Wolf: Man Hunter, for the BBC.

Keith MacPherson (Billy Logan and Drunk Frank) appeared in the Film *My Name Is Joe* and countless stage appearances.

Jordan McCurrach plays Lee MacAlinden, or Stagger Lee as he likes to be called, a boy who runs wild around

town while his mother lies in bed with depression.

Stagger Lee meets Silent Leila, a quiet clever doctor's daughter who keeps herself to herself as she is an outsider, a foreigner.

They become friends when something terrible happens and run away together to the Highlands where Lee reckons he will find his father living in the big house of the estate.

The acting is superb and the story dark and haunting. When the play ends the applause is loud and long but the audience sits and waits wishing the story would go on.

Rarely have we seen theatre so good in Lochaber.

Caol Artz have more up and coming events planned. On Monday, May 18 there is a chance to see 'The Last Cuckoo' by BAFTA nominee Nigel Forde. Actor Andrew Harrison's solo performance moves and stirs the heart and provokes laughter, intrigue and enjoyment for all.

Friday, June 5 sees Home-Made Shakespeare bringing a very unusual act to Caol Community Centre. It's not Shakespeare for the purist or the faint hearted. It is mime, puppeteer and stand up comedy and experienced story telling.

Caol Artz has funding support from the Highland Council and Awards For All. Come along to the next event and I'm sure you will be well rewarded.

- Lachie Mor MacDougall



The ladies of the chorus line danced the night away (11crazy11)

Spotlight go crazy

OBAN'S Spotlight Musical Theatre Group promised their most ambitious show yet and they didn't disappoint in the singing and dancing spectacular "Crazy For You" at the Corran Halls.

The tale of stage struck and love struck Bobby Child, excellently played by John Robinson, wooing theatre owner's daughter Polly Baker - the marvellous Linsey McGlone - was full of fantastic Gershwin songs and show stopping dance routines.

Indeed, the dancing was worth the price of admission alone and several of the big numbers, with a stage full of glamorous dancing girls and swaggering cowboys, had the

audience cheering for more.

Choreographer Louisa Hyde should be applauded for the extremely high standard of dancing the whole cast attained throughout the show.

Laughs were to be had too with saloon bar owner Lank's (Roddy MacEachen) and the fish out of water Englishman Fodor (played by last minute replacement Ben Redfearn).

All aspects of the show-sets, costumes, acting, singing and particularly dancing were extremely professional and Spotlight certainly provided, once more, a wonderful evening's entertainment. 'Toastie'

dressed up as himself, with false beard and wig, and mirroring his every move, was a joy to behold.

The show whizzed along with one memorable song after another and laughs aplenty from the supporting cast, especially the splendidly ditsy Patsy (Morven Wright) and the fish out of water Englishman Fodor (played by last minute replacement Ben Redfearn).

All aspects of the show-sets, costumes, acting, singing and particularly dancing were extremely professional and Spotlight certainly provided, once more, a wonderful evening's entertainment. 'Toastie'



The 'Crazy' pink dancers with mascot Megan Day (11crazy23)

Argyll bands attend unique piping test

CHILDREN from pipe bands across Argyll attended Dumbarton Pipe Band's unique juvenile quartet piping competition.

This was the second year and the event was supported with more than 100 children attending from pipe bands in Kintyre, Oban, Inveraray and Dunoon.

Quartet piping competitions were run by the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association up until the 1980s and were discontinued because of the costs of hiring large indoor premises. This meant that young pipers were unaware of the discipline.

The Band also decided to offer a contest for novice pipers to play a traditional March, Strathspey and Reel which they do not normally get to play until they move up the grades. The bands were fortunate to have the world famous Pipe Major Robert Mathieson of Shotts and Dykehead as the adjudicator for the day.

- Results:
 Novice Juvenile
 Selection of Marches
 1 Dumbarton and District C
 2 Oban High School A
 3 Dumbarton and District A
 Novice Juvenile
 March, Strathspey and Reel
 1 Milngavie A
 2 Kintyre Schools B
 3 Dumbarton and District B
 Juvenile Medley
 1 Kintyre Schools A
 2 Kintyre Schools B
 3 Oban High School A
 Juvenile March, Strathspey and Reel
 1 Kintyre Schools A
 2 Kintyre Schools B
 3 Dumbarton and District A

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Netherlorn pipers line up top name for final recital of the season

NETHERLORN Piping Society have been fortunate in persuading Fred Morrison to be the guest player at their final recital for this season.

Fred, a well-known musician who is in great demand not only in Scotland but throughout the world, will play the Highland bagpipes plus reel pipes and whistle. Supporting Fred will be Pipe Major Angus MacColl and Oban High School Pipe Band, who will have three bands playing on the night for the first time.

The recital takes place on Wednesday, March 25 and, as usual, will be in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls starting at 7.30pm



Alex South, clarinet, Matthew Brown on piano and soprano Shuna Scott Sendall delighted at Oban Music Society's recent recital. (12ed801)

Oban Music Society host Eisd Trio

A PIANO, clarinet and voice trio was the latest guest of Oban Music Society when they visited the town last week.

The Eisd Trio delighted the audience in St John's Cathedral with a varied programme of arrangements by pianist Matthew Brown, taking in classical, contemporary and folk pieces.

Along with clarinettist Alex South and soprano Shuna Scott Sendall, Matthew formed the group in Wales five years ago.

The trio members have all recently worked with a host of prominent music groups, including the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Opera and the Scottish Clarinet Quartet.

Scottish Ballet
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 The Associate Programme provides a classically based training for boys and girls from P6 through to S5.
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MOTHER'S DAY LUNCH
 3 course lunch
 free glass of sparkling wine
 £23.00 pp
 Sunday 22nd March

COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

Lochawe Village Hall
TABLE TOP SALE
 Saturday 21st March
 12 - 4pm
 Baking and Bottle Stalls
 Teas, Raffle etc.

APPIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 Historical Perspective of the Marine Life of Loch Creagan:
 Terry Donovan
 (also book signing)
 Saturday 21 March
 Port Appin Hall
 2.30pm
 All welcome!
 www.appinhistoricalsociety.co.uk
 Reg. Scottish Charity No. SC029411

The UK's leading charity for parents nct
Nearly New Sale
 Glencruitten Church Hall, Oban,
 Saturday 21st March 2009
 11am - 2pm
 Strictly babies, young children and maternity goods
 Contact Sarah Edwards
 01852 200555
 For table bookings

North Argyll House
DAFFODIL TEA
 In the house
 Thursday 26th March
 2.30 p.m.
 Raffle, Flowers, Baking.
 Admission by donation

Comunn Gaidhealach on Obain
CEILIDH
 Masonic Hall, Albany Street, Oban
 Saturday 28th March 7.30pm
 Mary Catherine MacNeil MCM
 Dan R and Steven MacIver
 David and Audrey Paterson
 Piper Donald Morrison
 Music by Michael and Joanne Garvin
 and Ruiridh Morrison
 Fear an Taigh: Donald Morrison
 Adm £5

An Comunn Gaidhealach
MEUR CHRUAICHAIN CEILIDH
 In Taynuilt Village Hall
 Saturday 21st March
 at 7.45p.m.
 Inveraray & District Pipe Band
 Atomic Piping:
 Deasach Quartet
 Siobhan Anderson - fiddle
 Fear an Taigh: Rev. Brian Wilkinson
 Adm. £3: Members & Children £2

Fun & informal
Charity Speed Dating
 Royal Hotel, Oban
 Proceeds to Leonard Cheshire Disability
 Sat 28th March • 7pm • £15 pp
 info/places tel/txt
 Lorna 07766056771
 Rosanne 07725812728.
 Don't be shy come along - all ages!

Annual Boat Jumble & Car Boot Sale
 In Craignish Village Hall, Ardfern
 Saturday March 21st from 10.30am - 2pm
 Nautical & non-nautical bargains; new and nearly new items.
 Bring all the family for a great day out!
 Entry - £2 (includes refreshments).
 Details - 01852 500689

Meur Lochaber
HARRIS NIGHT CEILIDH DANCE
 in West End Hotel, Fort William
 on Saturday, March 28th @ 7.30pm
 John Murdoch Morrison, Archie MacKillop,
 Chrissie MacVicar, Janet Campbell
 Faire an Tigh: Alastair MacCuish
 Music by Ian Angus MacLeod's Band
 Admission £8

Netherlorn Piping Society
 Performance by
Fred Morrison
 Supported by
 Pipe Major Angus MacColl and Oban High School Pipe Band
 In the Argyllshire Gathering Halls
Wednesday 25th March 2009 at 7.30pm
 Admission: Adults £3 Children: Free
 All proceeds go towards the development of piping in Oban & Lorn

The Oban Times Social Scene

To buy photos, contact The Oban Times office on 01631 568000

LOCHABER High School hosted a Gaelic primary education open day to give local parents a flavour of the benefits a Gaelic medium primary school in Fort William could bring.



Left: Pictured are members of the Sradagan Gaelic Youth Club. The club is presently looking for a Gaelic play leader to join them. Contact Caterina Gordon on 01397 708630 for more information. (11gaelic04)



Eileen O'Rua with nursery pupils from the Gaelic Medium Unit in Fort William. (11gaelic01)



Above: Parent Catherine Spence with pupils from the Gaelic Medium Unit in Fort William. (11gaelic02)

Left: Margaret Bruce, play leader in Gaelic Play Group, Alison Heger, Gaelic Primary School teacher and Colm O'Rua, Gaelic teacher at Ardnamurchan High School. (11gaelic03)

Savour Scotland

Savour Scotland is a feature running in The Oban Times highlighting some of the best local places to eat out.

To put your restaurant on the map call Tamara on 01631 568000

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 Homemade specialities
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 WWW.OBANTIMES.CO.UK

SNH to re-open sea eagle scheme

SCOTTISH Natural Heritage (SNH) has re-opened its sea eagle management scheme for West Highland crofters and farmers in areas where the birds are present. SNH says it recognises 'the continuing demand for the support the scheme provides to land managers' and will operate the scheme for a year. When SNH last ran the programme between January 2006 and 2008, 20 eligible land managers signed up. Farmers and crofters whose holdings are close to sea eagle nests are eligible. SNH say it will shortly be contacting them to detail how the scheme can offer payments for specific activities aimed at benefiting the eagles and assisting with stock rearing. Following strong anecdotal evidence sea eagles were taking lambs, SNH is working with crofters and the RSPB in Wester Ross 'to establish a clearer picture of the impacts' the birds are having on sheep flocks. Potential applicants can contact Stephen Varwell at SNH Portree Office on 01478 613329.

Collie pups Off good working parents Ready now Telephone 07881 642 801 / 01880 760219

COVENTRY for FENCING Scotland's No. 1 WIRE, STOCK FENCING, BARBED, HIGH TENSILE, MILD STEEL - BEST PRICES March 27, 2009 at 1pm. Blackhill farm, Glenlochrie, Moneydie, by Bankfoot, Perth. PH1 4PX Telephone 01738 582 422

AUCTION Pheasant Rearing Equipment Full range of equipment capable of 20 thousand birds being auctioned March 27, 2009 at 1pm. Blackhill farm, Glenlochrie, Moneydie, by Bankfoot, Perth. PH1 4PX Telephone 01738 582 422

Lorn ploughing match this weekend

PLOUGHING enthusiasts will gather at Achnacloch Estate, between Connel and Taynuilt this Saturday, March 21, for the Annual North Lorn Ploughing Match. Although there are no horses entered for this year's competition, there will be plenty of tractor-driven entrants testing their skill between the furrows for a variety of trophies and prizes. Refreshments will be available on the field and entry is by donation, with monies raised going to boost the funds of local charity ABCD (Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease). The event starts at 10am.

Neriby Limousin bullocks sell to 226p per kilo on Islay

UNITED Auctions held their annual Early Spring Sale of 730 store cattle and suckled calves at Islay Auction Mart last Saturday.

An excellent show of quality bred cattle were on offer. A strong force of mainland buyers were present and all stock was easily cleared at levels above

seller's expectations. The 490 bullocks averaged £633.34 per head and 184.6 pence per kilo, while the 240 heifers averaged £583.98 per head and 176.3

pence per kilo. Bullocks sold to £905 twice for Limousin crosses from Lossit Farm and to 226 pence per kilo, also Limousin crosses, this time from Ner-

iby Farm. Heifers sold to £810 twice for Charolais crosses from Knocklearach Farm and to 221 pence per kilo for British Blue crosses from Ardbeg Farm.



'This will be welcome news to those who use the market and to many who may now wish to use it in the future.' - Jamie McGrigor MSP

UA show commitment to west with £250,000 Dalmally market upgrade

UNITED Auctions (UA) is to spend over £250,000 on an upgrade to Dalmally Auction Mart in a move which it says shows a further commitment to farming in Argyll and the islands.

roof of the mart. Dalmally Mart was bought by UA Auctioneers in September 2007 after it was put up for sale by Elphinstone Group, which had completed a management buyout of UA earlier that year.

Donald Morrison, managing director of UA's west coast operations, which includes Argyll and the islands, said the substantial investment at Dalmally was an indication of the company's continued commitment to farming in the area.

Mr Morrison said 'We want to emphasise that the company is looking to the future. You don't

spend money in this economic climate, when stock numbers are certainly not increasing, unless you are committed to the area.

The upgrade to the mart, which is one of the most important seasonal markets in Scotland, will include a new sale ring, brand new metal penning, concrete resurfacing, a new washing system and digital weighing equipment. In an eco-friendly addition the new overhead washing system will use water collected on the

changes to legislation 'We are committed to the auctioneering of livestock at Dalmally and hope we are putting out a signal to our customers that we are here to serve them in the years to come. 'We are making this investment to ensure that the market will meet any future changes to legislation. We are classed as market leaders and are looking to the future and looking to

wards biosecurity measures and health and safety aspects.' Highlands and Islands MSP, Jamie McGrigor, who as a farmer himself uses the mart, congratulated UA for understanding the importance of Dalmally.

Mr McGrigor said 'I wrote to the cabinet secretary Richard Lochhead last year requesting assistance for Dalmally Mart and am glad to see that this assistance has been forthcoming and that the improvements to Dalmally are to go ahead. 'This will be welcome news to those who use the market and to

many who may now wish to use it in the future. 'Hopefully more buyers will be attracted to Dalmally because of this new investment and I can only encourage them to come there as the standard of livestock is extremely high.

'Dalmally Market must also be one of the most beautiful settings of any market in Scotland and I am so pleased its facilities are being upgraded. Let us hope that the future of Dalmally Mart is now secured which will give a boost to the confidence of the farming industry throughout the west of Scotland.'

Suffolk ewes fetch £89 at Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 3,225 store lambs, breeding and feeding sheep at Dingwall last Wednesday when strong hogs and fleshy ewes continued to sell at recent high rates while keeping sheep tended to be easier on the week.

Lambs averaged £50.17 and sold to £78 for Cheviots from East Clyne, Brora. Ewe lambs averaged £45.84 and sold to £75.50 for Cheviots from No. 7 Achrimsdale, Brora. Ewes averaged £43.14 and sold to £89 for Suffolks from Strathskiach, Evanton, while gimmers averaged £34.65 and sold to £50 for a Mule from Flichty Mains, Farr.

Rams averaged £38.31 and sold to £86 for a Texel from Lower Park, Evanton. Gimmers in lamb averaged £56.36 and sold to £60 for Cheviots scanned with twins from Woodburn, Lairg, while ewes in lamb averaged £47.22 and sold to £89 for Cheviots scanned with twins to a Cheviot also from Woodburn. Blackface ewes scanned with singles from Lochbuie, Newtonmore sold to £38.

Hoggs sell to 217p per kilo at Stirling

UNITED Auctions sold 4,791 prime sheep including 2,982 hoggs and 1,809 ewes and rams at Stirling last Thursday.

Texel hoggs from Old Leckie sold to 217p per kilo. Guardswell sold Texels to £98 with Beltex hoggs from Head of Moulin fetching £91.50 and 200p per kilo. Blackface hoggs from St Mungoes sold to £79 and 188p per kilo.

Suffolk ewes from Braughy sold to £99, with Texels from Corsehope to £94 and Cheviots from Kinaldy to £74. Farm, £85; SuffX - Drakies House, Inverness, £81; Cross - Druid Temple Farm, Inverness, £79; BDM - Tighnahinch, Alcaig, £78; Tex - Bunchrew Farm, Inverness, £76; TexX - Kirkton Farm, Golspie, £72; Chev - Kirkton Farm, £71; HB - Little Croy Farm, £70; Lly - Clynelish Farm, Brora, £59; BeltX - Mariain, Evanton, £57; Mule - Little Croy Farm, £56; CHM - Greenlands, Arabella, £54. Gimmers: TexX - Easter Dalziel Farm, Dalcross, £48; Chev - Proncy Farm, Dornoch, £43. Rams: Char - Braehead Farm, £47; BF - Braehead Farm, £47; BF - Little Croy Farm, £47; Cross - No. 6 Woodside of Cul-loden, £71; CHM - Lochdhu, Nairn, £65. Ewe lambs CHM - No. 15 Balnadelson, Lairg, £72; Chev - Carrol Farm, Brora, £69; TexX - Ballachraggan Farm, Kildary, £63; BF - Gesto Farm, Struan, £53.50. Ewes: BL - Ashton Farm, Inverness, £87; Suff - Ashton



IACS 2009

IACS surgeries will be held as follows

Table with 2 columns: LOCATION, DATES. Lists various locations and their corresponding dates for IACS surgeries.

Appointments by booking only SAC Glencairn Road Oban Argyll PA34 4DW Telephone: 01631 563093 Fax: 01631 565074 email: fbsoban@sac.co.uk

TIMESFORUM Have your say on the forum at WWW.OBANTIMES.CO.UK

Market reports

ISLAY United Auctions

Bullocks Aberdeen AngusX: £820 Lorgba £735(2) Aoradh £725 Lorgba £710(5), £685(12), £675(7) Craigs £645 Rockside £615(8) and £610(7) Craigs £605 Rockside and Craigs (6). British BlueX: £790, £760(3) and £725(3) Ardbeg CharolaisX: £850 Aoradh £820 Knocklearach £790(6) and £785(2) Aoradh £775(10) Eor-rabus £765(6), £715(3) and £710(2) Aoradh £705 Octofad (2), Aoradh and Brybruih(4) £680 and £620 Cattadale. LimousinX: £905(2) Lossit £885 Brybruih £840 Ardbeg (2) and Eorabus £835 Neriby £830(2) Tallant £820 Octofad (2) and Ardbeg (4) £815 Blackrook £810(2) Lorgba £800 Neriby £785 Aoradh (9), Ardbeg and Lossit(4) £780 (2) Aoradh £775 (2) Brybruih £765 (2) Carrabus £755 (4)

Octofad £750 Carrabus £745 Aoradh (8) and Leorin (3) £735 Octofad (2) and Brybruih (2) £730 Lorgba £725 Ardbeg and Kilbride £705 Eorabus (4) and Blackrook (2) £700 (8) Aoradh. SimmentalX: £870 and £715 Cladville £700 Octofad. Heifers Aberdeen AngusX: £570(3) Rockside British BlueX: £610 Ardbeg £570 Blackrook CharolaisX: £810(2) Knocklearach £750 (5) Eorabus £720 Knocklearach £690 (7) and 675 (3) Aoradh £675 (2) Brybruih £665 (3) Aoradh £655 (3) and £650 Eorabus £620 (2) and £600 (2) Aoradh £585 (6) Knocklearach £580(6) Brybruih. LimousinX: £790 Brybruih £750 Lossit £745 (2) Ardbeg £715 Eorabus £710 (2) Octofad £705 Lorgba £690 Aoradh; £675 Octofad and Aoradh £670 Ardbeg (5) and Eorabus (4) £665 Aoradh £655 (6)

Neriby £650 (3) Eorabus £635 Octofad (4), Carrabus (2) and Ardbeg (4) £630 Carrabus £625 (4) and £620 (10) Octofad £610 Ardbeg £605 Aoradh (12) and Blackrook (2) £600 (2), £590 (8) Aoradh £590(5) Neriby £585 Octofad (2) and Sunderland (8) £570 Octofad (9) and Blackrook (6). SimmentalX: £605 Cladville. Prices per kilo Bullocks Aberdeen AngusX: 207p(4), 206p(4), 195p (2) and 194p (2) Calumkill. British BlueX: 193p(4) and 191p(3) Ardbeg CharolaisX: 209p and 207p(10) Knocklearach 205p(6), 203p(2), 201p, 194p (2), 193p and 191p Aoradh 190p Eorabus (10) and Cattadale. LimousinX: 226p Neriby 221p (7) Leorin 219p(4) Ardbeg 216p(3) Neriby 215p (5) Starchmill 212p(2) Carrabus 210p(4) Aoradh 210p(12) Knocklearach 208p (2) Tallant 207p (2) Ardbeg 206p(9)

Leorin 205p Aoradh (6), Tallant (6), Leorin (2) and Neriby (2) 204p Octofad (4), Ardbeg (4) and Knocklearach (14) 203p(2) Ardbeg 202p Carrabus and Dunlossit (4) 201p Octofad (7), Aoradh and Tallant (4) 199p Aoradh (8) and Brybruih 198p Aoradh (8), Tallant (4) and Neriby 197p(3) and 196p(5) Aoradh 196p(6) Blackrook 195p (8) Aoradh 194p(2) Starchmill 193p Ardbeg, Blackrook (2), Leorin (2) and Knocklearach (5) 192p Octofad (2), Starchmill (3), Carrabus (2), Blackrook and Leorin (5) 191p Starchmill, Aoradh (2) and Carrabus 190p (5) Kilbride. SimmentalX: 207p, 206p and 194p Calumkill. Heifers Aberdeen AngusX: 199p (4) and 197p (2) Calumkill British BlueX: 221p Ardbeg CharolaisX: 201p (7) and 200p (5) Knocklearach 191p (3) and 188p (7) Aoradh. LimousinX: 198p Brybruih 194p (5) Ardbeg 193p(8) and

191p Aoradh 188p Starchmill (4) and Aoradh 187p (12) Aoradh 186p Neriby (6) and Blackrook (2) 184p(5) Neriby 183p (2) and 182p (2) Ardbeg 181p (10) Knocklearach 180p (2) Octofad. SimmentalX: 181p Cladville. DINGWALL Dingwall and Highland Marts Lambs: SuffX - No. 13 Nether Inshes, Inverness, £77; Tex - East Clyne, £75; BF - View-bay, Munloch, £74; Chev - Dalchiel, Dornoch, £73; TexX - Little Croy Farm, £72; Cross - No. 6 Woodside of Cul-loden, £71; CHM - Lochdhu, Nairn, £65. Ewe lambs CHM - No. 15 Balnadelson, Lairg, £72; Chev - Carrol Farm, Brora, £69; TexX - Ballachraggan Farm, Kildary, £63; BF - Gesto Farm, Struan, £53.50. Ewes: BL - Ashton Farm, Inverness, £87; Suff - Ashton

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15 Years Ago

Those Were The Days

The Oban Times

Thursday March 17, 1994

Crucial time for tourism

THE WEST Highland and Islands of Argyll Tourist Board faces the most important two years in its existence.

This follows a difficult year which saw the board manage to turn a trading loss of under £100,000 into a profit of £31,000.

Addressing the annual meeting in Oban's Highland Theatre on Tuesday, chairman Mike Shaw said 'People should pull together in the lead up to any changes in 1996.

'We have had to be sensible grown up people and get on with the job.'

He was backed by director of tourism Jim Wilson who said 'I think it is important that we are working together to secure a decent end for tourism in the area.

'It is very important that we make the best of the area and keep it in the public eye.'

Irish ferry link

ANOTHER consultants' report was expected to be commissioned this week into the possibility of a KintyreNorthern

Ireland ferry link. Argyll and the Islands Enterprise (AIE) was expected to be commissioned a fresh feasibility study into the project earlier this week.

AIE's Kintyre development officer Ian Brown announced the new study at a meeting forum organised by the Kintyre Marketing Group in Campbeltown on the future of tourism in the area.

The new report follows a study carried out last year into the link which suggested Ballycastle would provide the best site for the Northern Irish Terminal.

Talks have also been held with Strathclyde Police, the Department of Transport and a firm of private companies about the security implications of the link.

Mr Brown said security costs could account for as much as 20 per cent of the running costs of the service.

If the service goes ahead Campbeltown will have to be designed as a port of entry under the terms of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The plans would however create jobs for around 200 people.

Talking peace

INTERNATIONAL peace campaigner Bruce Kent has urged people of Argyll to press the authorities to find out what would happen to them in the event of a nuclear submarine reactor accident off Kintyre. Mr Kent, vice president of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), was speaking at a public meeting in the town hall last weekend.

Afterwards he said 'The effects of a nuclear reactor accident involving a submarine would be catastrophic, so I think people should be told what to do if one happens.

On the move

A Calmac ferry carried out a Hebridean flitting to and from the only house on the fouracre island Rhudha 'Chruadh near Oban this week.

The couple who have lived on the island for 31 years were moving back to the mainland.

Ross and Ann McMahon moved to the isle, at the northeasterly tip of the Kerrera, after building the only house on the island in 1963.

The Oban Times GENERAL KNOWLEDGE DOUBLE CROSSWORD No. 579

Crossword grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes clues like 'Karlheinz, German avant-garde composer born in 1928 (11)' and 'The trunk of the human body (5)'.

SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK GENERAL KNOWLEDGE - Across: 1 Capybara; 5 Adam; 9 Argo; 10 Schumann; 11 Azaña; 12 Amphora; 13 Live and Let Die; 18 Pakistan; 19 Pudu; 20 Tennis; 21 Horae; 22 Kiss; 23 Devonian. Down: 2 Abruzzi; 3 Yaounde; 4 Richard Hadlee; 6 Diamond; 7 Mondale; 8 Purple; 13 Lipetsk; 14 Vikings; 15 Austin; 16 Typhoon; 17 Indiana. QUICK - Across: 1 Fireside; 5 Chic; 9 Isle; 10 Assassin; 11 Sloth; 12 Imitate; 13 Trading vessel; 18 Athletic; 19 Safe; 20 Stealth; 21 Merry; 22 Tier; 23 Admitted. Down: 2 Insular; 3 Ejected; 4 Distinguished; 6 Hussars; 7 Conceal; 8 Famine; 13 Transit; 14 Achieve; 15 Ideals; 16 Suspect; 17 Enforce.

Advertisement for Wallace Optometrists. Text: 'Sponsored by Wallace Optometrists For people who really care about their eyesight Call today and book your comprehensive eye examination Wallace Optometrists 0845 230 EYES (3937)'



As part of our ongoing commitment to continual improvement West Highland Housing Association Ltd. and its subsidiary are looking for people who would be interested in joining the Committees of these organisations.

We are looking for people with

- Enthusiasm and a positive attitude;
- An interest in housing and people;
- Specific skills in one of the following:
 - being on a Committee or having experience of Committee work
 - understanding finance;
 - working in or a good knowledge of building
- A desire to work as a Team to solve problems
- An interest in the services and responsibilities of the Committee

Committee Members receive:

- Support, training and development
- Out of pocket expenses
- The opportunity and satisfaction of giving something back to the community

We hold our Management Committee meetings on a Friday morning and sub-committees are generally held in the evening.

West Highland Housing Association welcomes applications from all members of the community, if you are interested in obtaining an application pack, please contact Ruby Campbell at West Highland Housing Association, Crannog Lane, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

Telephone: 01631 566451
E-Mail: mail@westhighlandha.co.uk

Closing date for applications is Friday 27 March 2009
Registered Charity in Scotland No. SCO17357

VACANCY ON OYSTER FARM NEAR BENDERLOCH

Wet weather gear and training provided

Driving licence preferred

Tel 01631 570222 evenings after 7pm.



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Tele Sales

Full time permanent position
Office experience would be beneficial but not essential as full training will be given.
Applicants must be able to demonstrate good communication skills and telephone manner.
Immediate start.
Cameron McDonald,
01631 563711

Our friendly team are looking for seasonal staff for both full time and part time positions.



We are looking for 3 team members to join our Shoreline Coffee Shop, 1 to work in our gift shop and 1 in our Front of House admissions area.

For these positions we require applicants who are friendly and approachable, have strong customer focus and high personal standards.

We also have a position working closer alongside the Animal Care Team as an Entertainments Person who will be in the Displays area talking and interacting to our customers. Undertaking this role needs an outgoing, enthusiastic person able to make a crowd cheer!

We will be holding an open evening for applicants on Friday 20th March at 6:00pm.

To apply for a position please forward a covering letter and CV to
Alastair Law, Scottish SEALIFE Sanctuary, Barcaldine, By Oban, Argyll, PA37 1SE

ENABLE Scotland is a dynamic and vibrant organisation dedicated to improving the lives of people with learning disabilities across Scotland.

OBAN

Team Leader (Ref: B/009)
Salary: £20,500 - £23,575 per annum, pro rata. 35 hours per week.

This role is entirely focused on the development, delivery and leadership of practice and has been designed to enable post holders to dedicate their time almost exclusively to the support and delivery of truly person-centred services.

The successful candidate will work closely with the local managers, taking responsibility for designated services and forming an integral part of our management team. They will be expected to work closely with all team members, especially the Support Co-ordinators, who will undertake the majority of the administration and financial tasks required.

Sessional Workers (Ref: B/010)
Salary: £6.67 per hour plus holiday pay.
(Hours of work are flexible to meet the needs of the service).

We are also looking to recruit enthusiastic Sessional Workers to provide flexible support to people with mental health problems or learning disabilities to be included in the community and to get the most out of their lives. If you would like a new challenge and are able to work at short notice this may be the ideal opportunity for you.

As an organisation, we are committed to developing all of our staff, providing an extensive training and development programme and career opportunities within ENABLE Scotland. We offer positive terms and conditions, including a contributory pension scheme.

For further information, or to request an application pack, please contact: 01631 565 062 or email: oban.sl@enable.org.uk (We particularly welcome applications from disabled candidates and make our forms available in alternative formats.) To view and apply for all our vacancies, please visit: www.enable.org.uk
Closing Date: 3 April 2009

ENABLE Scotland is an equal opportunities employer. ENABLE Scotland, Charity No. SC009024 and company limited by guarantee Reg No. 278976 Scotland.

Lynn of Lorne Care Home

require the following

FULL/PART TIME/BANK CARE ASSISTANTS

Day duty

Car transport from Oban can be provided
Telephone 01631 720278
Sandra or Brenda for details

Countryside Ranger/Maintenance Warden

Fort Augustus, (Countryside Ranger, £18,091 - £20,402 pro rata) (Maintenance Warden, £15,798 - £17,818 pro rata), ref: 1/168/09

Find out more from Lynda Dodd, tel (01320) 366633 or 07786 612168. Application forms online or tel (01463) 724372.

Closing date: 3 April 2009



www.highland.gov.uk



Lighthouse Caledonia is a leading independent producer of high quality Scottish salmon. The company is engaged in all stages of the value chain of farming Atlantic salmon, from smolt production through to harvesting, processing, packing and sales and a principal player in the Scottish aquaculture industry. We are committed to high standards of animal welfare, sustainable operations and promoting a responsible environmental policy.

We are currently recruiting for Marine personnel in the Loch Fyne and Gigha areas of our South Production Region:

MARINE SITE(S) MANAGER - (Ref: SLFSM1/09)
MARINE OPERATIVES (5 Posts) - (Ref: SLFGM01/09)
YARDMAN - (Ref: SSTYM1/09)

Candidates will be enthusiastic, self-motivated and be able to demonstrate previous experience in working in small, focused teams. Applicants for the position of Marine Site(s) Manager must be able to offer extensive experience in aquaculture and fish husbandry combined with management of personnel. Previous aquaculture experience is desirable for the other posts but not essential as the company can offer further development opportunities through its in-house training scheme. The role of Yardman requires candidates to hold current fork-lift truck certificates for all-terrain and masted vehicles.

In return, the Company offers a comprehensive pay and benefits package including entry into the Company pension scheme after the qualifying period. A full, clean driving licence is also essential.

To apply, please write enclosing an up-to-date CV and a covering letter to:
Veronica Anderson, HR Officer, Lighthouse Caledonia Ltd., Ardkinglas, Cairndow, Argyll, PA26 8BH
Closing date for applicants: 27 March 2009

Visit our website at www.lighthousecaledonia.com



VOLUNTEERS WANTED
Lochgilphead Contact Centre

Family Mediation Argyll & Bute currently runs contact centres in Dunoon, Helensburgh and Oban and is expanding its network of centres to include Lochgilphead. We are looking for volunteers to assist in running our Lochgilphead Contact Centre.

A Contact Centre is somewhere parents who no longer live with their children can meet them. Contact Centres aim to benefit children by protecting them from parental conflict.

Volunteers will be expected to provide a warm, friendly atmosphere for families using the centre and to show an understanding of family situations. The centre will normally be open on Saturdays and on the occasional Sunday. Volunteers will work on a rota basis and must be prepared to undergo the Scottish Network of Child Contact Centre Training.

These posts are subject to Enhanced Disclosure checks.

Applications for our Oban, Dunoon and Helensburgh centres are welcome.

Further information, job descriptions and application forms can be obtained from Cathy Paterson, Service Co-ordinator, Family Mediation Argyll & Bute, 26 Alexandra Place, Oban, PA34 5PU
Email: fms.argyll-bute@btconnect.com
Telephone 01631 570101. Charity No. SC032952 Company No. 227571

LEADING PLUMBING MERCHANT COMING TO THE AREA

We will be recruiting for the following positions:

Branch Manager
Assistant Branch Manager
Warehouse Person/Drivers

Please apply in writing to box number 31 with copy cv to The Oban Times Ltd, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB

ARGYLL & BUTE VALUATION APPEAL COMMITTEE

Seeks Members to sit on the above Committee dealing with Council Tax and Rateable Value Appeals for property in Argyll & Bute.

No formal qualifications are required as full training will be given. Appointments are subject to approval by the Sheriff Principal and references may be required. This is an opportunity to serve your community. The post is unpaid but travelling and subsistence expenses are reimbursed.

The Panel meets on average four times per year and Members are selected to attend on a rota basis. Meetings are held in mid-Argyll in a location which has ready access for those with disabilities.

Further information from and written applications only to Alan M. Urquhart, Secretary, Argyll & Bute Valuation Appeal Committee, 2 Millburn Drive, Kilmacolm PA13 4JF; tel: 01505-872458 or e-mail: alan.urquhart@gmail.com



Fisheries Biologist

Salary from 22 - 28k, Subject to Experience

In an exciting development, the Argyll Fisheries Trust seeks an experienced biologist to fill a new post created to allow AFT to meet its objectives towards the sustainability of wild fish and their habitats in Argyll.

Based at the AFT office at Inveraray, the person will be part of a team developing programmes to restore and support wild fish populations underpinned by monitoring and research. The AFT undertakes a wide range of projects in partnership with stakeholders, conservation bodies and local communities where developed people/communications skills will be required. The Trust is part of the Scottish Government's Tri-partite Group Area Management Agreement initiative and a familiarity with aquaculture practices would be an advantage.

As well as holding a degree in a scientific or environmental discipline with further practical experience working outside academia, AFT is looking for a person who is enthusiastic, aspires to develop, is self motivated, able to manage projects and has an innovative approach to the Trust's development, including fundraising.

Qualification to SFCC team leader standards in electro fishing, a familiarity with GIS mapping programmes and an understanding of Catchment Management Planning are desirable.

A full job description is available from **Jane Wright, Manager AFT, Woodbank, Cove, Helensburgh, Argyll and Bute, G84 0NU**

Tel No 01436 84 2312 e-mail jms.wright@btinternet.com.

Applications with a CV should be at the above address by March 22nd



Marine Site Manager Loch Eriboll

Scottish Sea Farms wish to recruit a proven and exceptionally skilled salmon farm manager to develop and strengthen our new marine production site situated by Durness in Sutherland. Loch Eriboll is a unique and challenging marine environment with exceptional potential and sensitivity. Candidates must demonstrate excellence in all aspects of fish husbandry including fish health and welfare, feeding optimisation, containment, infrastructure maintenance and skilled seamanship. If successful you will be hard-working, focused on achieving your own key performance indicators and developing the potential within your staff.

To be considered you must already be a leading site manager in the aquaculture industry with more than 3 years experience. You will have excellently developed risk assessment skills and be able to demonstrate your commitment in developing a strong safety culture. You will be open, honest and communicate with ease at all levels. Your ability to plan ahead will be matched by close attention to detail.

Scottish Sea Farms Ltd site managers are already expected to be industry leading - with competence in finance, budget control and planning, stock management, stakeholder interactions, personnel management and promotion of health and safety. Throughout your career we will commit to support your development through training and close mentoring. If you feel you have a passion for aquaculture and the skills to deliver, please contact Claire Scott on 01786 445521 or claire.scott@scottishseafarms.com for more information.

Closing date for applications is Monday 13th April 2009.

Rio Tinto Alcan

Alcan Aluminium UK Ltd Lochaber Smelter

Production Operator

Applications are invited for the post of Process Operator to work within the Lochaber Smelter.

We are looking for persons with the ability and desire to work within our company. Candidates should be able to demonstrate practical working skills, and able to train to a recognised national qualification.

For further information and an application form, please contact:

E Stewart
Safety, Training and Communications Officer
Alcan Aluminium UK Ltd
Lochaber Smelter
Fort William PH33 6TH

Closing date for applications is Friday 3rd April 2009.

Alcan Aluminium UK Ltd is an Equal Opportunities Employer

Lynn of Lorne Care Home

Full Time Cook
Required for Care Home

40 hour week
Good basic cooking and baking skills required
May suit person with school experience
Qualification 7061 / 2 or equivalent required but not essential
For further information and application form please contact

The Manager
Lynn of Lorne Care Home
Benderloch, By Oban
PA37 1QW
01631720278



Scottish Ambulance Service

South West Division

Ambulance Care Assistant

Campbeltown
£13,299 - £17,732 per annum, Agenda for Change Band 3

You will assist in the delivery of high quality care and safe transportation of patients. A full licence with C1 and D1 categories are required for vehicle crew staff. Three Standard Grades or equivalent are desirable, preferably in English, a numerical and a science subject.

If selected, you will be required to sit Retention and Recall test, a driving assessment and fitness test.

You may be required to work at any location within the Division and therefore must be able to demonstrate a flexible approach to changing work patterns.

Application forms can be obtained by writing to Katrina Cornelius, Training Administrator, Scottish Ambulance Service, Maryfield House, Maryfield Road, Ayr KA8 9DF, alternatively email swtraining@nhs.net. Please quote reference SW3191. Completed application forms should be returned to Katrina at the above address.

If you do not hear from this department within three weeks of the closing date, then please consider your application unsuccessful on this occasion.

NHS SCOTLAND Closing date midday on Friday 27th March 2009 **Stonewall**

Lord of The Isles
Craobh Haven

Restaurant Manager & Bar Staff required

Good Rates of pay, please call
07979522216

FARM WORKER WANTED FOR LARGE STOCK FARM.

Good C.H. and D.G. 2 Bedroom House available if required.
Please telephone
01586 830241

TARBERT YOUTH GROUP
require a **MANAGER**
for our After school care based in **TARBERT**

Working as part of a team to help provide a safe, fun and stimulating environment for the children in our setting.
20 hours per week at £9.00 per hour
Session Times: Mon to Fri 3pm til 6pm, school term time.

SVQ Level 4 in childrens care, learning and development, experience preferred, but enthusiasm and ability to relate well with children is more important. You must be willing to undertake relevant training.

For more information and an application form please phone Heather on 01880821480
Closing Date: 2nd april 2009

This post is exempt from the **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by the Exclusions and Exceptions (Scotland) Order 2003** and the successful applicant will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure Scotland application and register with the Scottish Social Services Council. Tarbert youth group is an equal opportunities employer.

Care Solutions
Support Worker required

Could you be the person we are looking for?

We are recruiting support workers in the Lochgilphead and Campbeltown areas, part time and bank work

You will be part of a skilled team who support service users to lead an independent and active life.

All training will be given and the opportunity to study for SVQ 3 in Social Care. Current hourly rate of £7.05.

Please call for an application to **Marion Hutton on 01546 600227.**

Mark the spark

Mark Sutherland Electrical Contractor
requires experienced Electricians

Covering Oban area
please contact 01631 566642

TIMES FORUM

We want to hear your views.
Contact us at
WWW.OBANTIMES.CO.UK

Find all these jobs online at our new website

West Coast Jobs www.westcoastjobs.co.uk



Argyll & Bute Community Health Partnership

NHS Highland

Kintyre Locality

Chaplain - Band 6

£24,103 - £32,653 pro rata
5.6 hours per week, Permanent
Campbeltown Hospital

We are currently looking for an adaptable and motivated person with a friendly disposition to provide spiritual and religious care to patients, staff and relatives in Campbeltown Hospital in accordance with NHS Highland's own Spiritual Care Policy. You will be expected to provide high quality spiritual and religious care to patients, relatives and staff, of all faiths, and of no particular faith, as appropriate to the individual's needs.

Informal enquiries are welcomed by Alana Straughan, Clinical Services Manager on 01546 462090.

Application forms and job descriptions are available from the HR Department (Helenburgh), Argyll & Bute CHP by contacting Tracey McAllister at tracey.mcallister@nhs.net or Helen Cameron at helen.cameron2@nhs.net Tel. 01436 655059.

Nursing Auxiliary - Band 2

£12,922 - £15,950 pro rata
30 hours per week, Permanent, Job share considered
Acute Services, Campbeltown Hospital

This post is based within the Acute Services of Campbeltown Hospital which covers the acute ward, A&E and outpatients. You will provide social and nursing care to patients under the supervision of a registered nurse and assist the registered nurse within the A&E environment. A requirement to be flexible to accommodate the need of the service is essential. You will have excellent people skills and a good standard of education including English. Informal enquiries are welcomed by Iain MacPherson, Acute Services Manager on 01586 555820.

Oban, Lorn & Isles

Catering Assistant - Band 1

£12,517 - £13,617 pro rata
30 hours per week, Fixed Term For 6 Months
Lorn & Islands District General Hospital, Oban

Working as part of a team, you will assist in all aspects of food preparation, service, wash up and cleaning duties related to the provision of a high quality catering service to patients, staff, visitors and functions. You will have an Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate and knowledge of cleaning standards. Experience of working in a catering or similar environment is desirable.

Informal enquiries are welcomed by John Thomson, Kitchen Superintendent on 01631 788914.

Application packs are available from the HR Department, NHS Highland, Argyll & Bute CHP, Aros, Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8LB, call 01546 606788 (24 hour answering service) or email: recruitment.lab@nhs.net

Closing date for receipt of applications: 3rd April 2009.

Working with you to make Highland the healthy place to be. www.nhs.uk

CROFTERS COMMISSION

Proposed Assignment of Grazing Shares

Mr Ewen MacLean Campbell, Dykelands, Camaghall, Fort William, shareholder is applying to the Crofters Commission for consent to assign the tenancy of three of the grazing shares in the Corrach, Banavie, Camaghall & Lochside common grazing pertaining to the croft at 15 Corrach, Kilmalie to Mr Ewen Campbell of 18 Lochiel Road, Inverloch, Fort William.

If you have any objection to the proposal, you may submit representations in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofters Commission, Castle Wynd, Inverness IV2 3EQ by 19th April 2009, specifying your interest in the application and your reasons for objecting. A copy of any representations made will be forwarded to the applicant.

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

Kevin Heads trading as Kevin Heads Transport of Unit 10, Kiln Square, Port Ellen, Isle of Islay, Argyll PA42 7AF is applying to change an existing licence as follows. To keep an extra 1 goods vehicle and 1 trailers at the operating centre at Unit 10, Kiln Square, Port Ellen, Isle of Islay, Argyll PA42 7AF. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

Construction firms encouraged to invest

CONSTRUCTION firms in Argyll are being encouraged to invest in training to help the region deliver a skilled, safe workforce.

Argyll Construction Training Group (ACTG), which held its annual general meeting in Inveraray this week, is comprised of construction employers who identify the core training required by companies in the area and source delivery at a subsidised rate for members.

It also regularly provides updates on training required as a result of changes in legislation, as well as offering businesses the opportunity to meet with companies facing similar training challenges in the area.

With areas of the construction sector facing challenging times, group members believe that this is a key time for companies to look at their training needs and plan accordingly.

Company development advisor, Aileen Thorpe, said: 'In the current economic climate, the initial instinct is often to focus on the job in hand, and long term planning can be difficult to commit to.

'We fully recognise this, however there are a plethora of services available to help businesses develop and support their staff in order to meet the current and future needs of the sector.

'Argyll needs a well trained, skilled workforce, so that we can not only service existing contracts but have the right infrastructure in place for the economic upturn.

'But it's not about training for training's sake. By joining the group members are encouraged to actively identify areas for training, which makes it a much more fluid process, which we can closely align to their current and projected business needs.'

Kenny MacLeod, chairman of ACTG said: 'We consider skills shortages and recruitment difficulties a bigger threat to performance than the present decline in consumer spending.

'Apprenticeships are a prime source of intermediate skills in craft, technician and associate professional occupations, required both for economic growth and the replacement of employees with specialist skills.

'Employers who provide apprenticeships and training aid businesses across all sectors by offering a route to harness fresh talent. Without those employers and their trainees the building trade would grind to a halt.'

Scottish Natural Heritage is the leading public body responsible for advising Ministers on matters relating to the natural heritage. The natural environment is a key asset that underpins Scotland's wealth, health and quality of life. Our job is to conserve this resource, to promote its sustainable management and to encourage people to access and enjoy it responsibly.

Area Officer - Lorn & North Argyll

£18,770 + benefits, Oban, (Ref: 071-017)

(Six month contract with possibility of extension)

You'll join us in working with farmers, landowners and land managers to look after and protect designated sites including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation. You will work with Argyll and Bute Council, Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and non-governmental organisations to protect and enhance the natural heritage in the wider countryside and marine environment. You will be a key contact for grant aid through which you will encourage awareness, understanding, enjoyment and access to our natural heritage. You should have an understanding of the legislation associated with designated sites and the protection of European Protected Species.

You will have a relevant diploma/degree and work experience. You may, alternatively, have gained significant relevant work experience through passed employment in this field of work. You will have knowledge of the habitats and ecology of Argyll. You will be comfortable using IT, have a capacity for accuracy and attention to detail whilst being innovative and responsive to change.

We're as supportive, committed and proud of our people as we are of the natural world around us. Find out more, and apply, online. Alternatively, call 01463 725182.

Closing date - 2 April 2009.

get closer snhjobs.co.uk

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

PLANNING

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997, RELATED LEGISLATION 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 the location given below, at 67 Chalmers Street, Ardrishaig and by logging on 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 the undersigned within 14 or 21 days of the appearance of this notice, whichever is applicable as indicated below. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF PLANS

- Ref No: 09/00138/DET
Applicant: Alistair Smith
Proposal: Erection of dwelling house and installation of sewage treatment plant.
Site Address: Land South West Of British Telecom Telephone Exchange Upper Kilchattan Isle Of Colonsay Argyll And Bute PA61 7YR
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Isle of Colonsay
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 09/00277/DET
Applicant: Airwave Solutions Ltd
Proposal: Installation of antenna and ancillary equipment
Site Address: Fire Station Flora Street Bowmore Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Bowmore Area Office Isle of Islay
Development in Conservation Area 21 Days
- Ref No: 09/00279/DET
Applicant: Airwave Solutions Ltd
Proposal: Installation of antenna and ancillary equipment.
Site Address: Fire Station Main Street Port Charlotte Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Port Charlotte
Development in Conservation Area 21 Days

Area Team Leader Development Control, Planning Services, 67 Chalmers Street, Ardrishaig, PA30 8DX

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997, RELATED LEGISLATION 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 the location given below, at Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban and by logging on 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 the undersigned within 14 or 21 days of the appearance of this notice, whichever is applicable as indicated below. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF PLANS

- Ref No: 09/00291/DET
Applicant: Mr J Paterson
Proposal: Proposed erection of single storey (room in roof) detached dwelling
Site Address: Plot 7, Land North Of Forestry Cottages Sallachy Aros Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Saleen
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 09/00282/DET
Applicant: West Highland H.A. Ltd
Proposal: Erection of new progressive care facility and 3 staff houses and associated works
Site Address: Land North East Of Java Houses Craignure Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Craignure
Section 34 and Article 9 Advert 14 Days
- Ref No: 09/00276/OUT
Applicant: Glen MacDonald
Proposal: Site for erection of dwelling house
Site Address: Site East Of Onocoran Isle of Iona Argyll and Bute PA76 6SP
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Isle of Iona
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 09/00271/DET
Applicant: Mr and Mrs S Croft
Proposal: Extension, alteration to dwelling and garage construction
Site Address: The Bield Clachan Seil Isle of Seil Oban Argyll and Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Balvicar
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 09/00155/OUT
Applicant: Michael MacQueen
Proposal: Site for erection of dwelling house
Site Address: Aisling Challein North Connel Oban Argyll and Bute PA37 1RD
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Leidaig
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days
- Ref No: 09/00080/OUT
Applicant: KMC Anderson
Proposal: Site for erection of dwellinghouse
Site Address: Site South Of Roc Bunker North Connel Argyll
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Leidaig
Article 9 Vacant Land - 14 Days

Area Team Leader Development Control, Planning Services, Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT CONTRARY TO DEVELOPMENT PLAN) (SCOTLAND) DIRECTION 1996

The following planning applications have been lodged for determination with Argyll and Bute Council and are available for inspection during normal working hours at the local area office/Post Office identified below and by logging on to the Council's Website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications. The proposals contained in the application are considered to be a departure or potential departure from the Development Plan for the area concerned.

Anyone wishing to make representations about any of the applications identified below should do so in writing within 21 days from the date of publication of this notice to the Area Team Leader Development Control at the address below.

Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

- Ref No: 09/00276/OUT
Applicant: Glen MacDonald
Proposal: Site for erection of dwelling house
Site Address: Site East Of Onocoran Isle of Iona Argyll and Bute PA76 6SP
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Isle of Iona
A18 Local Plan Potential Depart Adv (21)
Potential Departure from Policies RUR1 and RUR2 of The Mull, Coll and Tiree Local Plan
- Ref No: 09/00080/OUT
Applicant: KMC Anderson
Proposal: Site for erection of dwelling house
Site Address: Site South Of Roc Bunker North Connel Argyll
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Leidaig
A18 Local Plan Potential Depart Adv (21)
Potential Departure from Policies RUR 1, RUR 2 and RUR 3A of the Lorn Local Plan

Area Team Leader Development Control, Planning Services, Lorn House, Albany Street, Oban, PA34 4AR

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



Partners in the beaver trial and volunteers turned out at last week's meeting: Karen Judd of Scottish Natural Heritage, Philippa Revell, Forestry Commission, Jenny Holder, field officer, Diane Thomas and Pat Batty, both volunteering with the project, Simon Jones, trial project manager and John Keith, volunteer. A128a01

Countdown to beaver release

FINAL preparations are being made to release 17 beavers in Argyll in May, despite rumours that some of the quarantined creatures might be pregnant.

The Scottish Beaver Trial, run by the Scottish Wildlife Trust and the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, will be the first time a native mammal is re-introduced to the UK. New field officer, Jenny Holden, who visited the Norwegian beavers in quarantine last week, acknowledged there was a slim possibility of pregnancy, but said: 'We have got no evidence that the beavers are pregnant, we think it doubtful.'

She confirmed the creatures were doing well in captivity, but with young kits already in tow, the adult beavers were not expected to mate: 'It is a bit tough on them; six months is a long time for an animal that's used to roaming around on the water. But they are being well looked after by experienced staff.'

She said the four family groups will be released at different lochs at the North Knapdale Forestry Commission-owned site: 'They will be released into lodges which they will have to break out of. As soon as they see the water, I expect they will be absolutely overjoyed,' Jenny added.

Visitors to a public information meeting in Cairnbaan last week saw video footage of the beavers' capture, information about the release, samples of wood gnawed by the creatures and life-sized models.

Simon Jones, project manager, said they were committed to an ongoing dialogue with the local community. He said: 'There is a range of public opinion as we would expect in something like this.

'Most people have made up their minds and now its time to see what actually happens.'

The first signs of beaver life should be apparent in the autumn, as summer foliage dies back. He added that once the beavers settled in, there could be future opportunities for visitors to view them.

Project Office Administrator

Fixed Term appointment for 4 years

Clerical Grade 3 - £16,750 - £19,203 per annum

Are you looking for an exciting opportunity to establish your career at SAMS?

We are seeking an enthusiastic individual who enjoys a challenge. The successful candidate will provide support on one of our scientific projects. The ideal candidate will be an administrator who has worked in a similar environment with good communication and interpersonal skills. You will have general accounting skills and be able to work to deadlines.

Further information and application form are available on-line at www.sams.ac.uk or by contacting The Human Resources Department, Project Office Administrator, D21/08.DB, The Scottish Association for Marine Science, Dunstaffnage Marine Laboratory, Dunbeg, Oban, Argyll, PA37 1QA or by e-mail to recruitment@sams.ac.uk.

Closing date for applications is **Friday 3rd April 2009**

SAMS has an equal opportunities policy and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Find all these jobs online at our new website

West Coast Jobs

www.westcoastjobs.co.uk

Regional & local press advertising gets the job done.

TIMESFORUM

Have your say on the forum at WWW.OBANTIMES.CO.UK

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

Neil Angus Reid & Derek Wallace Stephen trading as R & S Distribution of Dhurnish, Polvinister Road, Oban Argyll PA34 5TN is applying to change an existing licence as follows: To keep an extra trailer at the operating centre at c/o John Allan Motors, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, Argyll PA34 4PL. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Scottish Traffic Area, Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

69% of the business community read the regional press

The Scottish Government

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

THE A83 TRUNK ROAD (INVERARAY) (30MPH AND 40MPH SPEED LIMITS) ORDER 2009

THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS hereby give notice that they have made the above Order under sections 84(1)(a) and 124(1)(d) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

The effect of the Order is as described in Notice 1501/122 in the Edinburgh Gazette number 26448 and Argyllshire Advertiser on Friday 2nd May 2008 and The Oban Times on Thursday 1st May 2008. The Order comes into force on 20th March 2009.

A copy of the Order as made, together with the relevant plan and a copy of the Order being revoked may be inspected free of charge until 23rd April 2009 during normal working hours at the offices of Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF and Inveraray Post Office, Main Street South, Inveraray PA32 8XD.

G EDMOND
A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers
Transport Scotland
Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF.

The Scottish Government

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

THE A828 TRUNK ROAD (KENTALLEN) (40MPH AND 50MPH SPEED LIMITS) ORDER 2009

THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS hereby give notice that they propose to make the above Order under section 84(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which will have the effect of imposing 40mph and 50mph speed limits on the following lengths of road:

40MPH SPEED LIMIT
That length of the A828 Connel to South Ballachulish Trunk Road at Kentallen from a point 110 metres or thereby northeast of the extended southwest gable of the property known as Tigh na Mara extending in a southwesterly direction to a point 84 metres or thereby southwest of the extended southwest gable of the Holly Tree Hotel, a distance of 600 metres or thereby.

50MPH SPEED LIMIT
That length of the A828 Connel to South Ballachulish Trunk Road at Kentallen from a point 84 metres or thereby southwest of the extended southwest gable of the Holly Tree Hotel extending in a southwesterly direction to a point 150 metres or thereby south of the extended centreline of the unclassified road to Ardsheal, a distance of 1.388 kilometres or thereby. Full details of the proposal are contained in the Order together, together with a plan showing the length of road involved, and a statement of the Scottish Ministers' reasons for proposing to make the Order, may be examined free of charge during normal business hours from Tuesday 17th March 2009 until 21st April 2009 at the offices of Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF; Scotland Transvers, Fort William Depot, Annat Point, Corrach, Fort William PH33 7NN and Duror Store, Duror PA38 4BW.

Any person wishing to object to the proposed Order should send details of the grounds for objection in writing to Chief Roads Engineer, c/o Anthony Morris, Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF quoting reference NW/A9/Kentallen/AM by 21st April 2009.

G EDMOND
A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers
Transport Scotland
Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF.

KEIL COMMON GRAZINGS

A meeting will be held in the Victory Hall, Benderloch, on Monday 30th March, at 7.30pm for the purpose of electing a new grazing committee.

Proposed Let of a Croft/Part of a Croft

Mr Ewen MacLean Campbell, Dykelands, Camaghall, Fort William is applying to the Crofters Commission for consent to let the tenancy of part of the croft at 15 Corrach, Kilmalie, to Mr Ewen Campbell of 18 Lochiel Road, Inverloch, Fort William.

If you have any objection to the proposal, you may submit representations in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofters Commission, Castle Wynd, Inverness IV2 3EQ by 19th April 2009, specifying your interest in the application and your reasons for objecting. A copy of any representations made will be forwarded to the applicant.

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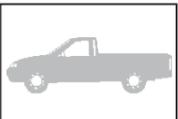


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West Highland Times

THE REGIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE WEST HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS AND ARGYLL

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Funeral service on Wednesday, March 18, at Falkirk Crematorium at 2pm to which all friends are respectfully invited. Family flowers only. Donations in lieu to RNLI.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ANDERSON - The family of the late Catherine (Rena) Anderson would like to thank everyone for their kind words, expressions of sympathy, phone calls, cards, flowers and letters received following the loss of Rena. Special thanks to all hospital and medical staff at Peebles Hospital Tortola, British Virgin Islands. Sincere thanks to the Rev Dugald Cameron for a lovely caring service. Many thanks to Major Connie MacCallum (Salvation Army) for a very special tribute to our mother. To D and A Munn for their caring and professional funeral arrangements. To all who paid their respects at the graveside and Rowanree Hotel. Also the generous donations which raised the sum of £830 for the Peebles Hospital Tortola, British Virgin Islands.

ANGUS - Isobel, Neil, Laura and family of the late Harry Angus wish to thank relatives, friends and neighbours for letters, cards and flowers received. Thanks to Professor Evans and all at The Beatson Centre, Mr D Scobie and all staff at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, patient transport staff, Mr I MacInnes Jnr and D and A Munn and Rev Dugald Cameron. Special thanks to Dr Colin Wilson, district nurse and Lorn Medical Centre for dedicated and unfailing attention.

CLARK - Peggy, Morag, Dugie, Donald, Gavin and the extended family of the late, Angus Ross Clark (formerly of Colonsay), would like to thank everyone for all their love, comfort, support and strength that they provided during their recent sad loss. For the numerous cards, letters, phonecalls, flowers and visits. To everyone who travelled to the island to attend the funeral, and for those who attended at the church and graveside, for the overwhelming amount of beautiful floral tributes. In particular, we would like to thank the Rev Bob Gilmore, of South Queensferry who conducted the comforting funeral service, all cash tributes were donated to his supported charity for under privileged children. Lady Hilary Menzies for her beautiful poem reading, Grace and Will Plowden for playing the bagpipes and chanter at the church, Eleanor for playing the organ, Aunt May and the ladies who helped with the catering, and the men whom attend to the graveyard. A special thank you to Annie and Bill Lawson, who along with the Binnie and Cook families provided us with accommodation.

MACFADYEN - The nieces and nephews of the late Donald MacFadyen, would like to thank all friends and neighbours for their many kind expressions of sympathy received following their recent sad loss. Thanks to staff and doctors of Ward B, Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, to Bishop Toal, Hamish Hoey and Son Funeral Directors and the Lancaster Hotel for catering. Special thanks to the staff at Lynnside Day Centre for their kind support over the years, and to his friends at the Centre. The retreat collection raised £198 for the Friends of The Oban Hospice.

MACINNES - The family of the late Barbara MacInnes would like to thank relatives and friends for their many kind expressions of sympathy following their sad loss. Thanks also to all those who attended both at the graveside and the Service of Thanksgiving. The sum of £220.00 was collected for North Argyll House, Oban.

MACKINTOSH - The family of the late Ann V MacKintosh wish to thank sincerely Dr M Foxley and other medical staff of Craig Nevis Surgery, Dr Huiks and staff of Ward Eleven, Raigmore and especially the doctors and nurses of the Medical Ward, Belford Hospital. Thanks also to the staff of Lloyds Pharmacy and Morrisons. Our sincere thanks to Msgr Donald MacKinnon for his constant attention to Ann and also to Father John Paul MacKinnon for their concelebrated Requiem Mass to Jimmy Forsyth

organist to Ewan, Alex and Theresa for their sensitive and efficient funeral arrangements and to the Roads Department for cleaning the road to the cemetery. Our grateful thanks go to all who sent gifts, flowers, telephone calls, Mass cards and messages of sympathy to us. Thanks also to Stronlissit Hotel for their excellent catering. The sum of £842 was collected for Cancer Research and the Highland Hospice.

MCCALMAN - The family of the late Donald McCAlman would like to thank all family, neighbours and friends, for cards, flowers and kind expressions of sympathy at this sad time. Special thanks to hospital Chaplain and Rev Alan MacKenzie for their spiritual comfort, A & E at Monklands Hospital for kind care and support, Joseph Potts for his help and support with all the funeral arrangements, Bruce Medical and the Marie Curie Carers.

MARTINDALE - The family of the late John Walker Martindale, Dalmally, would like to thank everyone for their sympathy and kindness at this sad time and for generous donations to RNLI. Thanks to nurses and doctors of Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, Oban, D and A Munn for funeral arrangements and Rev Liz Gibson for words of comfort.

PAGE - The family of Jean, Gruline, Isle of Mull, would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their many cards and expressions of sympathy received after our sad bereavement. In particular we would like to thank the staff of Dunaross Hospital, Salen Surgery and Mull Home Carers who all took such great care of Jean. Thanks also to Reverend G McCormick for a comforting funeral service. Mr Billy McClymont for sensitive and efficient funeral arrangements, the organist of Achmaba Church, and Mr Neil MacCallum for his expert piping at the graveside. Many thanks also to those who attended at the church and graveside.

ARMSTRONG - In loving memory of my dearest mother, who passed away March 23, 1975, also remembering dear friends Tootsie and Marie Campbell, Mrs Madge MacIsaac and Rev John MacLeod, also Donnie Ferguson a very kind and caring vet. Also remembering John Alan MacNeil, Barra.

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.

GREEN - In loving memory of Isobel (Ibbie) of Inverness, formerly of Carradale, Argyll. Beloved wife and lovely Mum. October 6, 1931 to March 19, 2008. Words can't express how much we miss you. Remembering all the love and all the laughs. In our thoughts and our hearts every day.

HAY - In loving memory of James, who died March 18, 2006. Always in our thoughts, forever in our hearts.

KELLY - In loving memory of my dear grandson and our nephew, Charles, who died March 16, 2007. R.I.P. - 118 Kilmallie Road, Caol.

MACBETH - Treasured memories of my dear husband, Jimmy, died March 18, 1990, in his 79th year. RIP. You are always by my side. Our Lady of Fatima pray for him.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of Lachie, dearly loved husband, dad, father-in-law and papa, who passed away March 21, 2002. Treasured memories of my beloved husband. - Effie. Thinking of you today and always. - Neil and Mairi-Anne. Remembering our papa. - Kieran, Kyle and Ryan. Remembering also my dear brother Neil, who passed away January 14, 2006. - Effie. Also remembering those gone before and after.

MACGILLIVRAY - In loving memory of my dear husband Hector, who died March 18, 2005. Always in our thoughts. - Your loving wife Mora and daughter Joy. **MACLEAN** - In loving memory of Jennifer Hazel MacLean (née Duncan) who was called to rest on March 17, 2008, a special daughter and dear friend. Remembered with love each day. - Chrissie x **MACLEOD** - In loving memory of our dear aunt Annie MacLeod, Tobermory, Mull, who died March 17, 1987. They say in time you do forget. To some that may be true But no morning dawns No night returns Without a thought of you. And also remembering loved ones gone before and after. - Inserted By Ann, John Alistair, Patricia, Rosyth, Fife. **PATERSON** - In loving memory of my dear wife Betty, passed away March 17, 2008. Quietly remembered every day. - Sandy. **SCOTT** - In loving memory of Jimmy, a dear brother-in-law. Missed every day. - From Pat and Malcolm. X

CHURCH NOTICES

LORN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
Sunday 10a.m.
The Well, Lochavullin, Oban
All welcome
Telephone 07876 735 794

ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN
Campbell Street Church
Sunday 22 March 2009
11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.
Phone-In 'Worship Link' available
Rev. Archie McPhail MA, MTh
☎(01631) 567076
All welcome

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION
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Mothering Sunday
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Communion 08.00
Sung Eucharist 10.15
Sunday School and Crèche
Loop System
Large Print Hymn Books
All welcome
Norman MacCallum, Provost
☎(01631) 562323
St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Mattins.....11.00
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist.....08.00
Evensong.....20.00

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Obituary
James Devine BEM



JAMES Devine BEM (Jimmy) will be remembered by many people, in many locations, and for many different reasons. He was a talented mechanic, an enthusiastic and caring auxiliary coastguard whose knowledge of the west coast and willingness to help others was greatly respected, and a jovial and social character whose Irish charm and wit made him friends wherever he ventured. Jimmy was born in Claudy, Co Londonderry, Northern Ireland in February 1923 and he was one of 11 children being brought up on the small family farm. He was to leave his native isle at an early age when his family moved to the west of Scotland but Jimmy was never to lose either his soft accent or his love for his birthplace.

A strong and life-long connection with the sea started when Jimmy joined the Royal Navy at the beginning of World War 11. He served on motor torpedo boats in the Mediterranean Sea and it was during these War years that he met Flora, who was to become his life-long companion and wife of 63 years. They married in 1945 and were blessed with four children - one daughter and three sons. Jimmy Devine had a natural flair and understanding of anything mechanical. He became a popular and far-travelled member of the Post Office garage team based in Oban, before taking early retirement and joining Scottish Gas.

He was also a stalwart of the west coast's auxiliary coastguard team, where he became Auxiliary in Charge and was awarded the British Empire Medal following years of exemplary service. Never a man to sit still for long, when not found in a boat, Jimmy could be found in his garage helping others with their mechanical problems - and expecting only friendship in return. Always the family man, James Devine liked nothing better than a family gathering - the bigger the better. Even in later life he retained his love of music and dancing. He would be the first man on the dance floor and the last to leave, with any opportunity in-between to play his mouth organ eagerly accepted.

His popularity could, in some small way, be measured by the large gathering at Jimmy's funeral mass within St Columba's Cathedral, Oban, with people travelling from throughout the UK, Ireland, and as far afield as Dubai, to pay their last respects.

Perhaps the measure of a man is not that he is remembered, but how he is remembered. Those remembering Jimmy Devine are the ones with the smile on their faces. SMK

Appin Gaelic success

A GAELIC pre-school group in Appin is celebrating an increase in numbers and a promise of continued funding. Croileagan Apainn, taken by Mod-medal winner and gaelic speaker Ann Maclean of North Connel, is a small playgroup but has seen its numbers increase from three to 11 pre-school children. It received funding from Bord na Gaidhlig up until the end of March this year but has now heard that the board will award it more funding in principal for the following year. Any pre-school children from the area are welcome to attend.



From Australia to Appin is search of their roots

VISITORS from Australia are hoping to catch up with their ancestors when they make a trip to Scotland's west coast in May of this year. Jan Jackson and Marilyn Monsour have written to *The Oban Times* asking for any relatives of Angus McNicol Cameron of Coelade, Appin born in 1886, son of Peter Cameron, born 1851 and Mary Ann McNicol, daughter of Angus McNicol, born 1813, and Janet McCorqudale, born 1824, of Inverfolla Farm to get in touch with them via the newspaper. The women have sent a photograph with two cousins that they have already met. Ken and Alison Cameron join Jan and Marilyn when they met up last year.

Church NEWS

Please keep sending in the news about your church!
Church News, The Oban Times, PO Box 1
Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB or FAX: (01631) 568001

What in the world is happening, or rather what is happening in the world?

Recently the deputy prime minister proclaimed Gordon Brown a 'great world leader'. Her words not mine.

There was once a great world leader called Nimrod, and we know what happened to his civilisation. He had the same ideas and aspirations as we have now, one language, one currency all agreeing to one purpose, to make a name for themselves, a global plan if you will.

However, it was all based on human wisdom, like the present plans, to gain material wealth and financial riches, but without taking God into account, in short idolatry.

However the Bible declares that the 'revelational fear of God is the beginning of true knowledge and true wisdom,' which is infinitely greater than mere human wisdom. It goes on to say in Proverbs ch 16 v16 'How much better to get (true) wisdom than gold and (true) understanding from God than silver.'

What is happening in the world is that we

are still following Nimrod's wisdom and ideas which resulted in the building of Babylon and other cities in rebellion against God. (Incidentally, Nimrod means rebel.)

As it is 4,000 years since Nimrod's world system collapsed, maybe it is time now that we as a nation took the wise advice that God gave Solomon at the dedication of the temple. 2 Chronicles ch 7 v 14: 'If my people that are called by my Name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways: then will I hear from heaven and forgive their sin and will heal their land.'

After all we are supposed to be a 'Christian' country (nominally at least). Finally as individuals, we could take on board the advice of Jesus Christ who was and is 'a greater than Solomon' to see to it that we build our 'house' on Him who is the Rock, and not on sand, which will eventually collapse and fall.

J A Elliott



Pupils from St Columba's Primary School with the new Activote keypads (11remot601).

TV gameshow inspires school lessons

TECHNOLOGY used on TV gameshows like Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? is being used during lessons at an Oban primary school.

Activote pads, similar to the devices used by the audience on the popular gameshow, are being used by pupils to answer questions on a variety of subjects including maths and science.

The keypads are used in conjunction with an interactive board in the classroom which allows pupils to answer questions instantly. One pupil said he like the new system as he

did not have to use a pencil and jotter! Acting head teacher Siobhan Evans said: 'The system covers a range of different curricular areas and can challenge the children in maths and science.'

'We can also design and create our own questions and answers. It's basically a new way of assessing children's abilities, and it's fun and motivational.'

The school raised money for the project in a series of events including a recent Italian-themed night at the Cuan Mor restaurant in Oban which raised £650.

Around the Rurals

Taynuilt

On Wednesday February 11 members were joined for their open night in Taynuilt Village Hall by visitors from Oban, Glenorchy and Lochawe Institutes as well as from Taynuilt itself.

They had all come to hear Robert Campbell Preston speak on the Inverawe Smokery and on Laura's Trust.

This was a most interesting and informative talk, illustrated by slides on the smoking methods used at Inverawe and on how the business had started and developed to its present state. He went on to tell us how Laura's Trust had

been set up and how it was used to help educate children in the area of Africa where Laura had been working.

The raffle and sales table were well supported - the proceeds going to Laura's Trust and the evening ended with a most welcome cup of tea and home baking provided by the committee.

The vote of thanks was given by Cathie Reid. Members of Taynuilt SWRI were joined by a number of local visitors at their meeting on March 11 when President Jessie Servant introduced Brigadier John MacFarlane

Lochawe

The March meeting of Lochawe Institute took place on Wednesday March 4 2009 in Lochawe Village Hall.

Mrs Terry Orr Secretary introduced Mrs Ann Hay Portsonachan demonstrator for the evening who gave a very interesting talk on making sugar paste flowers - demonstrating how to form such

delicate flowers and leaves for cake decorations.

The finished flowers were so realistic that one was tempted to smell them as the real thing! All present enjoyed the demonstrations enormously.

Competition: Flowers (small sprung arrangement - 9x9x9) judged by Mrs Hay. J Ogden - Gold, P MacLeod

- Silver, V Williams - Red, J Wylie - Red.

An enjoyable tea was provided by hostesses for the evening J Wylie and M MacKenzie.

The next meeting - business and general discussion - will take place on Wednesday April 1 2009 at 7.30pm in Lochawe Village Hall.



Serving up a lovely cup of tea are Marjorie Milton, Irene MacMillan, Elizabeth MacCallum and Babs MacIntyre. The coffee morning held by Oban and Kilmore Guild raised money for church funds. (11tea01)

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Shinty fixtures

Shinty

Premier Division
 Inveraray v Glenorchy
 John MacPhee
 Kyles Ath v Fort William
 David Mitchell
 Newtonmore v Kingussie
 Graham Cameron
 Oban Caman v Glen/quhart
 Duncan Kerr

North Division 1
 Caberfeidh v Kinlochsheil
 Charles Young
 Kilmallie v Lovat
 Donald MacRae
 Inverness v Strathglass
 Ronnie Campbell
 Skye v Beaulieu
 Russell Ross

South Division 1
 Ballachulish v Inveraray
 Billy Witherspoon
 Oban Celtic v Kilmory
 Ted McDonald
 Tayforth v GMA
 Colin MacDonald

North Division 2
 Fort William v Kilmallie
 John Sloggie
 Glengarry v Newtonmore
 Jock Matheson
 Kingussie v Skye
 Graham Irving
 Kinlochsheil v Glen/quhart
 Evan MacRae
 Lovat v Caberfeidh
 Daniel MacRae

South Division 2
 Aberdeen v Taynult
 George O'Rourke
 Col Glen v Ballachulish
 Robert Baxter Jnr
 12.00 Throw Up
 GMA v Strachur
 Jim Innes
 Glenorchy v Kyles Athletic
 Euan Pearson

North Division 3
 Ardnamurchan v Inverness
 Dougie Cameron
 Boleskine v Lochaber
 Roddie MacLennan
 Kincaig v Strathglass
 Neil Ferguson
 Lochbroom v Aberdeen Uni
 Innes Wood
 Lochcarron v Beaulieu
 Derek Cameron

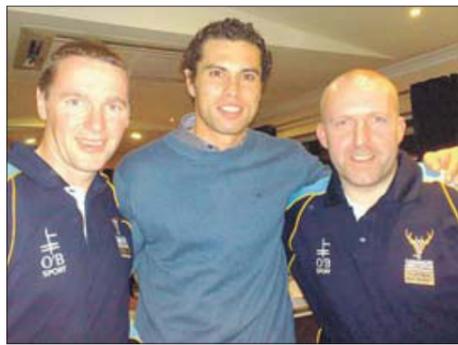
Beaulieu win derby match

Shinty

A BARRIE MacDonald penalty after an hours play decided the first of this season's North Division One derby between Beaulieu and Lovat at Braeview Park.

In a hotly contested affair, both teams were reduced to 11-men when Beaulieu's Jamie MacLennan and Lovat's Lorne MacKay were sent off. Meanwhile Kilmallie got the top of the table following a 4-1 away win against Inverness thanks to two goals each from John Stewart and Trevor Jackson.

New Scotland manager want hurling's All-Stars



New Scotland manager Fraser Mackenzie, right, and new coaching assistant Kenny Ross, left, join Cork's Sean O'hAilpin, centre, Ireland's 2004 Hurler of the Year and hurling All-Star after last year's victory at Kilkenny.

'My personal goal is to play the full All-Stars team and, if we can get that, it will give the whole international fixture a platform from which to build'

- Fraser Mackenzie

NEW Scotland shinty manager Fraser Mackenzie believes luring Ireland's hurling All-Stars to Scotland could revive the annual shinty/hurling contest.

The 35-year old former Lochcarron manager was last week handed the sport's top job until after the 2011 international with Ireland. Immediately, he set out his blueprint for the future and, interestingly, his vision extends beyond the mere swinging of sticks. Mackenzie wants to ensure Scotland preserves its unbeaten run but he has a wider ambition to see the cross-codes about become a major sporting event.

In the past, the occasion enjoyed higher profile because both the Scots and Ireland chose the very cream of their shinty and hurling players. Selections have been watered down in recent times but, in 2008, the Irish fielded three players who had been capped for the All-Stars.

Becoming an All-Star is the highest honour in hurling and the team has played games

Shinty/hurling

in Dubai, Buenos Aires and Arizona. Mackenzie feels winning assurances from the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) that Ireland will field more, if not all, their All-Stars in future will raise the fixture to a new level.

'I feel we sell ourselves short with the international in both countries,' said Mackenzie, who succeeds Lochaber's Ally Ferguson as national coach.

'Last year, Ireland selected Cork's Sean O'hAilpin, Ireland's 2004 Hurler of the Year, and guys like Eddie Brennan, Derek Lyng and Tommy Walsh, who are All-Stars. My personal goal is to play the full All-Stars team and, if we can get that, it will give the whole international fixture a platform from which to build. If the GAA worked on that, we could really start building the crowds at these games.'

Should there be a will within the GAA to have their All-

Stars team fly to Scotland, it would be a mouth-watering prospect for both shinty and hurling fans.

This year is the 125th anniversary of the Irish hurling association, which has its home at Croke Park, and both countries wish to mark the occasion. MacKenzie knows doubters would give the Scots little chance, but he feels this is unfair.

'People would say the All-Stars would destroy us but those who think that are being disrespectful to shinty. We have some fantastic players who are suited to this type of game and that has been one of the key reasons for our success in recent years.'

Mackenzie would like to see funding for the event move towards a long-term deal with a major sponsor. He says lessons can be learned from the growth of hurling in Ireland, after brewing giants Guinness threw its weight behind the game.

'We should be looking at getting, perhaps, a three year sponsorship deal to cover the international rather than running around at the last minute every year. If we were more pro-active in finding bigger sponsors, we could really build the international.'

'We should be working on this as soon as one international is finished.'

In order to get the Scottish players to value the international again, Mackenzie wants to add to the experience of what it means to wear the dark blue. Already, he has approached former Inverness Caley Thistle sports psychologist, Donald McNaughton, about working with the players.

He also wants to integrate hurling into the Scots' training. 'The players should see wearing their country's colours as the biggest honour. I would have swam to Ireland to play. To build that mentality again, we have to make sure they take something major from the experience and take that back to their clubs.'



Kingussie's Ronald Ross loses his boot in a tussle with Kyles' defenders Peter Currie, left, and Roddy MacDonald. Picture - Ern Emmett



Fort William's James Clark was allowed little room by James MacRae at Spean Bridge on Saturday as Lochaber scored two early goals to take full league points. Picture - Ernie

Kyles and Lochaber show the way with surprise results at Dell and Spean

FEW pre-match pundits would have favoured Kyles Athletic to travel to the Dell and break Kingussie's undefeated run on their own turf. Fewer perhaps, other than the Spean faithful, would have predicted that the 2009 Fort William title challenge would falter at the first hurdle at the hands of a Lochaber side which has always threatened but seldom lived-up to full Premier potential.

At the Dell, a young Kyles team appeared to want the win more than the home side and they showed little respect as they played some entertaining and skilful shinty amid

their desire to challenge for every ball.

Kingussie have for several seasons relied on scoring more goals than they lose but on this occasion a first-half double from Ronald Ross and a late strike from Paul Gow simply wasn't enough as Kyles countered with a double from Tom Whyte, plus goals from Duncan Kerr and Grant Irvine to deservedly win by the odd goal in seven.

Kyles will now aim to maintain this early form for this Saturday's home fixture at Tighnabruach against Fort William, where another Kyles victory would create the most

open early season Premier league for a year.

Kingussie face Newtonmore at the Eilan where they will be keen to show that last Saturday was but an off-day, while their opponents will have noted the character and style of the Kyles' performance.

Lochaber's derby tie against Fort William started with a bang as Zander Ferguson and Hugh Innes had Lochaber ahead with two well-taken goals inside the opening 10 minutes.

Fort William seemed stunned by the early blister-

Shinty

ing pace and Lochaber noticeably grew in confidence over the first 20 minutes. When they then relaxed, the visitors' midfield took full advantage with John MacDonald drawing a goal back for Fort after 26 minutes.

But the home side then sparked back to life and showed a determination and self-belief that was lacking in previous seasons. They blunted Fort's sharp-passing attack, with James MacRae maintaining a very tight rein on goal-threat James Clark throughout the 90 minutes.

Although Lochaber may feel they should have added to their goal-tally over the course of the match, the rapturous applause they received from jubilant supporters at the final whistle must have filled them with satisfaction that the job had been well done.

Lochaber's match against Bute has been postponed this weekend as the Spean club had called for the date to be set aside for a local wedding.

At Mossfield Park, Oban, Inveraray took an early lead when Neil Campbell put Inveraray in the driving seat after 10 minutes but Oban Camanachd came back to

equalise through Ian MacMillan on the half-hour mark. The tie looked to be heading for a score-draw until David Devine ensured that full Premier points would stay in Oban with a goal 15 minutes from time.

Camanachd are back at Mossfield this Saturday when they meet Premier newcomers Glenurquhart in what could be a very interesting tussle, while Inveraray have a local derby against Glenorchy at the Winterton.

Last Saturday's other scheduled ties at Dalmally and Drumnadrochit were victims of the weather.

Leagues

Shinty

Premier Division	
Newtonmore	PWDLFAP
Kingussie	1100502
Kyles Athletic	2101962
Oban Camanachd	1100432
Lochaber	1100212
Bute	2101472
Glenorchy	0000000
Fort William	0000000
Inveraray	1001120
Glenurquhart	1001120
North Division 1	
Kilmallie	2200724
Beaulieu	2110213
Skye	1100402
Kinlochsheil	1010111
Lochcarron	0000000
Strathglass	0000000
Lovat	1001010
Caberfeidh	1001130
Inverness	2002180
South Division 1	
GMA	1100502
Ballachulish	1100422
Inveraray	1100422
Lochside Rovers	1100322
Oban Celtic	0000000
Tayforth	2002480
Kilmory	2002280
North Division 2	
Glenurquhart	2200524
Kingussie	2200534
Fort William	2101552
Lovat	2101222
Caberfeidh	0000000
Kilmallie	0000000
Kinlochsheil	0000000
Newtonmore	1001120
Glengarry	2002350
Skye	1001130
South Division 2	
Aberdour	2101632
Strachur	1100302
Kyles Athletic	1100202
Ballachulish	0000000
GMA	0000000
Glenorchy	0000000
Taynult	0000000
Bute	1001020
Col Glen	1001060
North Division 3	
Aberdeen Uni	2200524
Inverness	2101832
Strathglass	1100512
Lochcarron	1100302
Ardnamurchan	1100322
Lochbroom	1100102
Beaulieu	2101112
Boleskine	2002240
Lochaber	2002270
Kincaig	2002010

Results

Premier Division
 Glenorchy P Newtonmore P
 Glenurquhart P Bute P
 Kingussie 3 Kyles Athletic 4
 Lochaber 2 Fort William 1
 Oban Caman 2 Inveraray 1

North Division 1
 Beaulieu 1 Lovat 0
 Inverness 1 Kilmallie 4
 Kinlochsheil P Lochcarron P
 Strathglass P Caberfeidh P

South Division 1
 Ballachulish P Oban Celtic P
 Lochside Rovers 3 Kilmory 2
 Tayforth 2 Inveraray 4

North Division 2
 Caberfeidh P Newtonmore P
 Glenurquhart 2 Kingussie 3
 Kilmallie P Kinlochsheil P
 Lovat 0 Glenurquhart 1
 Skye 1 Fort William 3

South Division 2
 Col Glen P Bute P
 GMA P Glenorchy P
 Kyles P Ballachulish P
 Strachur 3 Aberdour 0

North Division 3
 Aberdeen Uni 2 Lochaber 1
 Boleskine 0 Beaulieu 1
 Inverness P Kincaig P
 Lochbroom P Strathglass P
 Lochcarron P Ardnamurchan P

Spot the SHINTY BALL Competition



WIN £1250

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 on 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: M Wade, Bayview, Bunessan, Isle of Mull and M Forgieve, 9 Dalrigh, Oban

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Tel: 01586 554975 Email: staff@krispprint.co.uk
www.krispprint.co.uk

Oban boys are winter winners

WITH the Oban Saints boys having all but secured top spot the chase was on for runners up in the junior section of Oban Express Primary Football.

The Sharks posted their early intentions with a comfortable win over the Galaxy and then recorded a significant victory over the Saints under 8s thanks to goals from Carla

Football

Miller and Lauren Angus who scored in both matches.

They were narrowly defeated by a solitary goal from Saints Martin Rennie and their hopes were dealt a huge blow with a goalless draw against Ben Lora and a final win over K-Oz was not enough.

The Saints under 8s started the day in second place and doubles from Lennon and Lewis Campbell put K-Oz to the sword, but they came unstuck with that defeat to Sharks and then to the Dolphins before sharing the points with Thistle.

Benderloch were hot on their heels with a Craig McMillan hat trick over K-Oz and kept up their challenge with an important win over the under 8s but were held to a draw by Thistle.

They were almost derailed by Saints Cameron Scott scoring with a header from a corner but they had done enough by that point to finish the best of the rest.



Oban Saints Boys.



New ladies team formed by Oban Saints

Oban Saints Ladies pictured with club secretary David Buchanan and Argyll and Bute Football Development Officer Dylan Kerr, who took their first training session last Wednesday night in horrendous weather conditions at the community pitch. The team are looking for friendly matches at the moment and are hoping to join a recognised league next season. The ladies are also looking for qualified coaches to help out.

Loopy runners for Easter fun on Mull

Bunessan event includes shorter course, races for children and prizes

ORGANISERS of the Bunessan Easter Sunday Fun Run are hoping that they will be favoured with good weather and a large turnout on Sunday, April 12.

The Bunessan Easter Run is run annually on Easter Sunday and covers a course of 11km around Bunessan in the Ross of Mull.

This year a shorter course of approximately eight kilometres will also be run, cutting out the first loop around Suidhe and Fountainhead.

This race will be called the 'Loopy Run' and will cover a course from the village of Bunessan up to Knockan and

and three quarters long and was won last year by Kate Burke.

David Cameron won the under 10 trophy. Organiser Lynda MacCallum said: 'Spectators will be entertained by a piper and representatives from the Isle of Mull Rugby Club will be in charge of the barbecue.'

'We are hoping for a good turnout of runners of all abilities and ages with plenty of spectators to offer encouragement.'

The road race will be followed by a duck race from the front of the Ross of Mull Historical Centre.

The Fun Run, for the juniors and pupils of primary school age, is approximately a mile

Athletics

Various prizes, donated by local businesses, will be presented to the winners in the Argyll Arms at 2pm.

Runners can register on the day and the cost is £5 for adults and £1 for the children's race.

The Fun Run, for the juniors and pupils of primary school age, is approximately a mile

Rally crew are joint top

Motor Sport

TWO Oban cars were among the starters at the Scottish Tarmac Championship at Craill in Fife with one team finishing the day at the top.

Among the 92 starters were Shaun Sinclair and Scott Burnett, seeded seventh and Neil Munro and Iain (Buffy) Donaldson starting at 39.

Thanks to the support of an excellent service crew both cars ran well throughout the day without any major problems.

Sinclair/Burnett finished 7th overall, giving them a win in Class 5, leaving them joint leaders of the registered drivers for the championship.

Munro/Donaldson finished 29th overall. Shaun Sinclair, with co-driver Chris Hamill, will be competing in the second round of the Scottish Rally Championship at Jedburgh this weekend, supported by Fusion Marine and Cuan Mor.

Tides

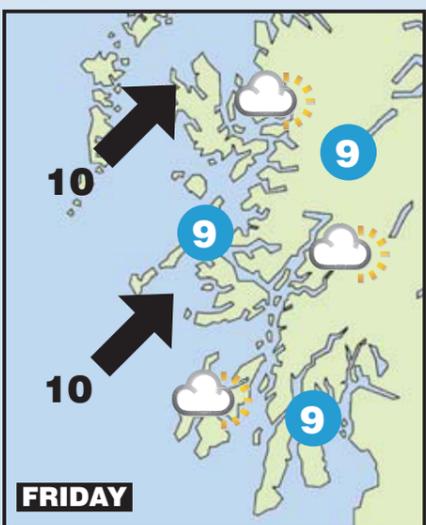
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday, March 19, 2009 are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm	**	**
Thur 05.10	2.0	10.10	2.6	18.00
Fri 00.12	2.7	06.29	2.1	14.39
Sat 02.33	2.8	09.05	2.0	15.29
Sun 03.24	3.1	09.56	1.7	15.53
Mon 04.01	3.3	10.26	1.4	16.20
Tues 04.34	3.6	10.55	1.2	16.50
Wed 05.07	3.8	11.24	0.9	17.20

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrihaig	-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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the weather

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Thursday

Expected to be dry with sunny spells. Winds light to moderate south-westerly. Temperatures 2°C to 12°C

Friday

Again expected to be dry with sunny spells. Winds south-easterly. Temperatures 4°C to 11°C.

Weekend Outlook

Saturday and Sunday will be cloudy with sunny spells. Winds moderate north-westerly. Temperatures 3°C to 10°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist - Slight
Oban to Coll/Tiree - As above
Kennacraig to Islay - As above

Sponsored by **NANCY BLACK** Ships' Chandler 01631-562550

Juniors earn new grades

Judo

YOUNG brothers Josh and Ruairidh Nickell passed their junior black belt grading and Ben Robinson passed his third kyu brown belt at Senshi Do kickboxing.

The boys went through a gruelling two-hour test of their skill and stamina to earn their new grades at Oban martial arts centre.

Good luck to Obermory in Scottish bowl final

JOINT Oban and Tobermory team, Obermory under-15s, will compete in the Scottish Schools Bowl Final in Glasgow tomorrow.

The game will take place at New Anniesland, home of Glasgow Accies, at 2pm on Friday, March 20.

To reach the stage the team have played schools from all over Scotland including Harris Academy from Dundee and Belmont House School from Newton Mearns in Glasgow.

In the quarter and semi finals they claimed two of the bigger names in school rugby with a home win against Boroughmuir from Edinburgh and an away win played in Perth against Jedburgh Academy from the Borders, coached by ex-Scotland scrum half Roy Laidlaw.

Rugby

This will be the first time ever that an Argyll team has reached the finals of any Scottish schools competition and if they win it will be a just reward for the amount of effort both players and coaches have put in over the past six months.

Argyll's rugby development officer Billy Thomson, who is also involved with the coaching of the team, said: 'It proves that there are young players in Argyll who can compete with the best in Scotland.'

To add to the atmosphere there will be three buses of supporters from the various schools making their way to Anniesland to cheer on their team in what should be a day to remember for all those involved.

Diamond day for Connel angler

Eighteen-year-old Ashley Davies from North Connel caught this diamond back Sturgeon at Maggots Lake near basildon in Essex. The monster 14 pound fish was caught only three feet from the bank using spam as bait. The fish was returned to the lake.



Saints can't see wood for trees in west cup

Football

West of Scotland Cup Fifth Round
Eddlewood 5
Oban Saints 1

SAINTS travelled to Hamilton to take on last season's Scottish Amateur Cup winners Eddlewood in the fifth round of the West of Scotland Cup.

Unfortunately the Oban side were in one of their charitable moods which meant Eddlewood didn't have to work all that hard to get their goals.

The teams have been drawn against each other in the quarter finals of the Scottish Cup and surely Saints can't play as badly again.

They allowed the Central League side to dictate the pace of the game and were out-muscled in almost every

department by the experienced and well drilled Hamilton outfit.

Saints took the lead in the 21st minute when good work in midfield by Ross Graham and Joe Lopez resulted in the ball being played wide to Donald Campbell, who wasted no time in despatching a great right foot curler past the helpless David Cormack.

The home side drew level in the 32nd minute with a con-

troversial penalty. Joe Lopez and John Paul Kerr seemed to collide at the edge of the box and the ball spun out for a throw in, but to everybody's amazement the referee pointed to the penalty spot, which seemed a harsh decision.

Stephen Wedlock took the spot kick and buried it behind Graham Douglas to make the score 1-1. Saints were stung by this goal and Eddlewood sensed

it and came storming forward netting a second goal five minutes before the interval.

Just when Saints were getting back into the game they lost a poor third goal midway through the second half.

The game was killed stone dead with ten minutes remaining when Myles McAuley failed to clear his lines and the ball fell kindly for Allan Barret, who made the score 4-1.

With the final whistle about to blow a long through ball was misjudged by Jamie Graham which allowed Eddlewood to make it 5-1.

Manager Iain Jackson was bitterly disappointed at his team's performance.

He said: 'Eddlewood are probably the best amateur team in the country and you can't give away goals the way we did today. The boys learned a harsh lesson.'

Saints are at home to Busby on Saturday in the second round of the Marshall Trophy with the match kicking off at 2pm at Glencruitten with David Mitchell in charge.

Islay results

Golf

Islay Golf Club Junior Results
March Medal
1 Bailey Freeman
2 Ross MacLean
3 Harry Thomson
Junior Competition
1 Robbie Thomson
2 Bailey Freeman
3 Harry Thomson
4 Brandon Freeman
5 Rachael McKim

Youth team results

Football

ON SATURDAY Oban Saints under 16s beat Glenbrae Colts by four goals to three with Steven Delebecque, Connor Crawford and Shaun Cooke scoring for Saints. The games involving East End v Under 17s, Clydebank Phoenix v Under 13s and Renton v Under 14s were all postponed.

This Saturday's fixtures:
Under 13s no game
Under 14s v Kilpatrick
Under 16s, no game
Glenbrae Colts v Under 17s.

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