

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Business update

DAVE SWITCHES ON TO DIGITAL MUSIC RECORDING

- Mixed response to budget
- Community recycling in Soroba
- £3.5 million distillery boost



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Also inside this week: Bonnie Babies 10 finalists • Jura ferry plan sunk • Argyll rugby girls lift National Bowl

'Big hitters' head to tourism summit

A TOURISM summit will highlight all that is best in Argyll and the Isles.

The day-long event held, today (Thursday) in Oban's Corran Halls will see some 'big hitters' of the tourism and trade world host workshops and master classes.

On the bill are Royal Yacht Britannia's chief executive Bob Downey, former Marriot boss Mike Story and Mike Cantley, chairman of VisitScotland.

Councillor Neil Mackay, who is part of the organising committee, said it was the first of its kind in Argyll and the Isles. He is hopeful there will be outcomes and actions from the day to strengthen the sector.

School campus safety concerns

COMMUNITY councillors are urging police to take a look at the Oban Primary School Campus entrance.

The call came after reports of staff and parents still using the entrance gate of the school as an exit. Marri Malloy, chairwoman of the community council, told officers: 'It is an accident waiting to happen. It has been brought up at the parent council again. Mark my words something will happen if this is not sorted out.'

Clampdown on speeding drivers

NEW SHIFT patterns at Oban Police office have allowed officers to keep a closer eye on speeding cars.

Two initiatives at Connel and Kilniver have seen a number of drivers fined or brought before the courts, members of Oban Community Council were told this week. A police spokesman told members these initiatives would be continuing.

Course teeing off

WORK on a new golf course at Connel, which has been under starters orders for more than five years, could begin imminently.

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre told Oban Community Council he understood that Saultmore Golf Club was going ahead this spring. He said: 'This is positive news. It will be a great asset to the area.'

Wheely good news for school cyclists



Primary one pupil Fergus Taylor, left, primary seven Ben Collins and primary four Katie MacCorquodale were among the Barcaldine pupils taking part in The Big Pedal. 15_113barcbike01

PEDAL power has thrust Barcaldine Primary School pupils into the reckoning for a national cycling award.

All 23 pupils took part in The Big Pedal, a 15-day virtual cycle of Britain, by cycling to and from school for three weeks and taking part in a school cycle to Creagan Bridge and the Sealife Centre last Thursday.

Such was the effort from the pupils at

Barcaldine, they have finished fifth out of more than 1,000 schools in the UK rankings and second in Scotland. The speed by which each school completes any one of the 15 stages of the virtual cycle is calculated by what percentage of pupils use their bikes each day.

Head teacher Jeannette Morrison said: 'Using the Sustrans cycle paths, some of our pupils cycle to school every day from as far away

as Creagan Bridge. It has been a brilliant experience for both pupils and parents. Before The Big Pedal three of the children could not cycle, but now they can. It has also encouraged parents and staff to get back on their bikes.'

The school thanked Kevin Whitehead of Bikefix for servicing the bikes at the start of the project.

Candidates line up for Scottish election battle

CANDIDATES for the Scottish Parliamentary Election on May 5 have been confirmed after the closing date for nominations passed on Tuesday.

In Argyll, Mike Russell takes over from the retired Jim Mather, the constituency's former MSP, as the SNP candidate. Liberal Democrats will be represented by Alison Hay, who has been a

councillor for a number of years. Former Conservative list MSP Jamie McGrigor once again stands for the Argyll seat and Mick Rice will be standing for the Scottish Labour Party. George White is representing the Liberal Party and George Doyle is standing as the only independent candidate in Argyll.

The new constituency of

Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch will be contested between former Highlands and Islands list MSP Dave Thompson of the SNP, Alan MacRae of the Liberal Democrats, Labour's Linda Stewart, Kerensa Carr of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party and Independent Ronnie Campbell.

Meanwhile, in the Western

Isles, voters will have their choice of four candidates from the four main parties: Alasdair Allan of the SNP, who is looking to retain the seat he won in 2007; Donald Crichton, the Scottish Labour Party's representative; Charlie McGrigor of the Scottish Conservatives; and Peter Angus Morrison of the Scottish Liberal Democrats.

Resistance to proposed move of dental services

DENTAL services in Oban should not be moved into the town's hospital, claim community councillors.

Members fear moving the service into Lorn and Islands Hospital will limit the service's growth and restrict the treatments available.

At its meeting on Monday, the community council heard of the new plans to situate NHS dental

services on the top floor of the hospital rather than in the former Hollywood Bowl building on Shore Street, Oban.

Disappointing

Councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'I cannot tell you how much it disappoints me. It will stunt the growth of the hospital. I don't think it [the dental service] should be here. I think it should be outwith the hospital.'

'At the rate the town is projected to grow, we will need that facility here.'

'Money will be invested outwith Oban if we do not have the facilities here.'

'There are things we should have here, such as real dialysis.'

It is a shame they are now going to move it into the hospital.'

Duncan Martin, chairman of the public partnership forum for Argyll, said alterations to the Nelson Ward and Cruchan Ward would mean space was available for the dental service.

'They will have an extra room to improve training facilities for any developments they would like to do,' he said.

Two-way traffic on the Esplanade?

New-look sea front envisages pedestrianised George Street

'VISIONARY' thinking about Oban's Esplanade could see a two-way sea front road developed in double-quick time.

A plan being discussed at the highest level would allow traffic to come straight from the Bealach-an-Righ, at the top of the town, onto the Esplanade.

Designs, still at an early stage, would see Stafford Street and part of George Street pedestrianised with an all-weather canopy creating a shopping precinct along the stretch of road.

Area committee chairman Councillor Duncan MacIntyre said rock drilled from the proposed development road would be used to shore up and widen the Esplanade.

He believes it is possible to build a substantial breakwater with the bore stone providing a sheltered harbour allowing a marina on the north side of the North Pier.

Councillor MacIntyre said: 'This is visionary thinking - we need to look towards Oban's future.'

'There is £6.9 million in the CHORD programme set aside for improvement. If the town is to continue to grow, then a development road is essential to future plans for the town. This would be a project beginning sooner rather than later working

REPORT
by LOUISE LEE
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from the centre of the town out. With the development of 800 houses between Dunbeg and Oban there will be at least 800 extra cars in the town. We need some way of taking extra vehicles away from the town centre. A development road between the east end of the town and Pennyfuir in the north would allow us to do this.

'I would like the road along the Esplanade to be a two-way street for its full length. From a tourism point of view this would be a real asset.'

'Entering Oban on the sea front makes perfect sense. It is a beautiful view that tourists don't get to see until they leave.'

'The rock from the proposed

development road will make a suitable infill to increase the width of the road along the Esplanade.

'Any bottle neck, such as that at the Columba Hotel, would need to be smoothed out altogether. I would like to think that improvement could be completed early in the project.'

Townfolk will remember that in the 1960s there was a plan to make a car park by infilling Oban Bay with rock brought from the tunnel at Cruchan Power station. The site of that plan is now the footprint for the Oban Bay Marine transit marina.

It was suggested to Councillor MacIntyre that any 'smoothing out' of the road would involve infilling part of the bay and this may or may not scupper plans for the marina.

He confirmed he was keen to see a marina in the town. 'This plan,' he said, 'would allow us to develop the north side of the pier.'

'Development has to happen - we are a growing town. We have been struggling with lack of parking and road congestion for years. I think providing a two-way road along the Esplanade and extra parking will ease this.'

'I am interested in hearing people's views about all these matters.'

"This is visionary thinking - we need to look to Oban's future."

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre.

Wardens may transfer to council

TRAFFIC wardens may be transferred to Argyll and Bute Council - but not in the coming financial year.

Oban currently has two wardens employed by Strathclyde Police. Last year they were told their positions were part of an annual review.

Argyll and Bute Council has

revealed it was considering the costs of keeping a presence in the town. However, a letter from Strathclyde Police said it had been agreed to maintain a service until dissolution from 2012.

Oban Community Council heard that Strathclyde police employ seven traffic wardens. A factor in reviewing the positions was that

most of the money collected by traffic wardens does not stay with police but is collected by the local authority.

Councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'We have been co-operating with Strathclyde Police. We heard they are interested in handing the service to another operator - Argyll and Bute Council.'

Planners urged to back proposals to allow redevelopment of dilapidated Argyll Hotel

THE PEOPLE have spoken: the Argyll Hotel should be demolished.

The Oban Times was out and about canvassing opinion on the Esplanade building prior to a Planning and Protective Services (PPSL) meeting of Argyll and Bute Council on April 20.

The meeting will discuss an application by owners Calum and Alan MacLeod to demolish the hotel and replace it with a modern boutique hotel.

Overwhelmingly, people said something should be done about the building and the majority urged the PPSL to allow it to be demolished.

On the street, Colin Cameron, of Oban, said: 'I think it would do the town good if we were to get shot of

this eyesore. We need an attractive boutique hotel here. The council and planning department have too much say. If it is not for their benefit it is not on the agenda.'

Jack MacGregor, of Seil, added: 'The building needs to be demolished. I don't know how impartial the council are being when it comes to these developers. If they were looking objectively they would let it be demolished.'

George Berry, a former firefighter, said: 'I have personal concerns about the building. Through no fault of the developer, the council has delayed progress on the building for so long it is in fear of falling down on top of someone. It will be the council to

blame if this happens.'

However, Ruth MacLeod, of Glencoe, said: 'Everything these days seems to be thrown away. I wish they would try to save it.'

Marri Malloy, Duncan Martin and Kenny MacIntyre, all of Oban Community Council, agreed, for once, that the building should be pulled down.

Mr Martin said: 'This decision should have been made a long time ago. This has been going on for yonks - it should be demolished.'

The debate continued on The Oban Times' facebook page, where Jim MacKay commented: 'Pull the thing down and put up something new. They could even replicate the

original facade for posterity, but the town must move on and grow or it'll die.'

Another blogger, Claire Francis, wrote: 'The Argyll Hotel is a beautiful building and part of Oban's heritage. It would be a great shame to see it lost. Could it not become a luxury boutique hotel while retaining much of what makes it special?'

Developer Callum MacLeod said: 'I understand the sentiment of keeping the original facade, however, financial constraints would not allow us to do so. If we had very deep pockets we would like to retain it. If we get our planning permission we hope to give Oban something they will be proud of.'

Unique Licensed Restaurant Opportunity in Argyll

Melfort Village seeks new tenant for renowned restaurant.

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Pauline appointed Wyvex Media's promotions consultant

WYVEX Media Limited - better known as *The Oban Times* Group - has appointed Pauline Clifford as promotions consultant.

This is an important new role for the company whose popular titles include regional newspaper *The Oban Times* and Scotland's leading lifestyle magazine *Scottish Field*.

Previously director of Pure Shores PR & Marketing in Oban, Pauline will take on a stream

of marketing projects during her initial contract, including a celebration programme to mark *The Oban Times*' 150th birthday this year.

Dedicated

Based at *The Oban Times*' head office in Oban, the appointment also brings a new dedicated competitions and promotions division to the firm.

Pauline is settling into her new role this week following a

successful three years running her own PR and marketing business which earned her the title of Entrepreneur of the Year at the 2010 Princes Scottish Youth Business Trust Regional Business Awards.

Delighted

Alister Bennett, group managing director, said: "We are delighted to welcome Pauline to the company with her professional knowledge and

marketing experience which will add even more value to our increasing range of quality products.

Positive

"This is a positive move for the company and a great addition to our existing talented and dedicated team."

Since the first copy of *The Oban Times* was published in 1861, the company has gone from strength to strength.

Acquired from Johnston Press in 1983, the now independent company *The Oban Times Limited* was eventually renamed Wyvex Media Limited in recognition of its growing diversification.

Today the company runs a range of products including regional newspapers, glossy lifestyle magazines, marine publications (B2B), tourism maps, brochures and websites.



Promotions consultant Pauline Clifford.

Helensburgh gets nod for multi-million pound improvement plan

PLANNING approval has been granted for the multi-million pound plan to transform Helensburgh's town centre and waterfront.

The news marks a major step forward in the bid to regenerate the town centre and West Bay Esplanade.

An exhibition of the approved design - together with details of the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) required to implement it - will be on display in Helensburgh Library from April 11 to 15. Residents and visitors are encouraged to visit the library to view the plans.

On Thursday April 14, members of the design team will be at the library to answer questions.

Sea eagle scheme spreads wings across Scotland

SCOTTISH Natural Heritage has confirmed it will expand a three-year breeding scheme throughout its breeding range in Scotland.

The initiative will encourage farmers, crofters and others to further bolster Scotland's biodiversity and tourism. An advisory panel will be set up to move forward the work of the scheme.

Conservation areas to gain fast-track approval

VITAL nature conservation areas are set to benefit from the introduction of a new fast-track approval process for selected Rural Priorities projects.

From May 1, people will be able to apply for permission for agri-environment projects worth up to £50,000 in Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Natural Sites without having to wait for funding rounds.

Plans are also in place to temporarily suspend the management of hedgerows option in the next Rural Priorities funding round, allowing spend to be targeted towards other critical projects.

NEWSDESK
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Jim and Richard with a copy of *The Oban Times* on the Sedco 706 drilling ship, currently based in the South Atlantic Ocean, 500 miles from the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro.

Riggers could be our most remote readers - or do you know otherwise?

Deepwater drillers search for *The Oban Times* every week - wherever they are in the world

CURRENTLY based on a deepwater drilling vessel 500 miles from Rio de Janeiro, Jim MacDonald and Richard Edwards could be *The Oban Times*' most remote readers.

The pair have been working together since October 2007, when they were both assigned to Singapore for the construction of the ship they still work on, the Sedco 706.

Brazil

And while they are now working on different shift patterns, a copy of *The Oban Times* always seems to find its way to them - no matter where they are.

Richard, chief engineer on the Sedco 706, takes up the story.

"Jim and I have been colleagues for three-and-a-half years, first meeting

while being assigned to Singapore for a new deepwater drilling project destined for Chevron in Brazil. In fact, Jim and I travelled from Oban and Fort William respectively via buses the same day, then onwards to Amsterdam and Singapore.

"We were met by our company agent and, recognising the accents, we soon found out our common travel arrangements and residences.

"We subsequently spent 18 months working in Singapore during the construction of our drilling vessel, then a voyage to Cape Town and again onwards to Rio De Janeiro via the southern Atlantic.

"Over our years of working offshore, Jim and I have had copies of *The Oban Times* in many areas of the world,

from the far east to West Africa, from South Africa to South America and many other locations.

"It is great to have local news when you're more than 100 miles offshore, one internal flight and three further international flights away from home with nearly 8,000 miles travelled each 28 days."

Jim, who is captain of the Sedco 706, had a special reason to get the February 3 issue of the paper as his daughter Sophie was featured for finishing runner up in a Europe-wide competition to design the EU Parliament's 2011 calendar.

Thankfully, Jim didn't miss out. Richard said: "A copy of *The Oban Times* always makes it into the crew change luggage!"

LEADER funding boosts Lochgilhead hall upgrade by £149,000

Rothsay, Kilmore and Arrochar receive financial aid for projects

COMMUNITY groups throughout Argyll and Bute are to benefit from more than £500,000 of funding following the latest tranche of LEADER funding grants to be announced.

Argyll and the Islands Local Action Group (LAG) held its 13th decision-making meeting this month, approving a total of £539,380 to projects across the county.

Lochgilhead Parish Church, received £148,960 towards the upgrade of its hall, while the local authority's Rothsay Townscape Heritage Initiative received £107,839 to revamp the town centre.

Other projects to receive funding include Kilmore Village Hall (£23,500), Argyll Voluntary Action (£22,396), Bute Conservation Trust

(£12,900) and Arrochar and Tarbet Community Council (£37,344).

A spokesperson for LAG said: "Since it began allocating funds in May 2008, this funding programme has distributed £5,415,869 to community groups and organisations. The total value of these projects is £14,315,981 including the match-funding.

"This represents a substantial cash injection for communities across Argyll and the Islands." The LEADER funding programme will run until 2013.

Full details can be found at www.argyllandtheislandsleader.org.uk. The next funding meeting will be held on June 16. Applications must be in by April 28.

North Connel man fined £720 at Oban Sheriff Court

AN OBAN man who ran from police attempting to search him for drugs, assaulting one officer in the process, has been fined £720.

Appearing at Oban Sheriff Court last week, Alan Andrew Kerr, aged 40, of 3 Lora View, North Connel, admitted fleeing from officers on Fladda Road, Oban, on November 15 last year after placing a suspect package in his mouth.

In the process of trying to evade the police, he twisted one officer's arm, causing it to strike a car.

The court heard the package, which was not recovered, contained 15 of cannabis resin and that Kerr was jailed for four years in 2005 for an analogous offence committed in 2004.

Unemployed Kerr will pay the fine in fortnightly instalments of £10.

Oban driver loses licence attempting to avoid ticket

AN ATTEMPT to avoid a parking ticket has cost an Oban man his driving licence after he was caught driving whilst double the legal alcohol limit.

James Muir, aged 50, of 3A Glencruitten Drive, represented himself when he appeared at Oban Sheriff Court last week, pleading guilty to the offence he committed on Stevenson Street on March 11 this year.

Muir was moving his car from the old Rockfield Primary School to his home address when he was caught. He was fined £340 and disqualified from driving for 15 months.

North Argyll Carers Centre benefits from People's Postcode Trust

LUCKY postcodes across the west coast have netted North Argyll Carers Centre £1,082.

The cash, given through the

People's Postcode Trust, will pay for creative art therapy sessions. Project manager Ruth Moody said "We are so pleased to have been successful in

our application. A massive thank you goes to the People's Postcode Trust as this will be a wonderful opportunity for carers in the area."

Lack of support sinks Jura ferry plan

THE AWARD-WINNING Jura passenger ferry service will not run this year because of a lack of support from the local authority and government, say the ferry operators.

The three-year pilot project to run a passenger ferry service between Craighouse on the Isle of Jura and Tayvallich on the Argyll mainland, was voted a huge success, despite not becoming a profit-making enterprise.

Jura Development Trust, which ran the project, said the island economy flourished with the extra traffic to the island; for every £1 spent on subsidy, £3 was generated within the community.

However, the service needed a bail-out of more than £37,000 from the council to finish the 2010/2011 season.

A statement from the trust said: "The inability to run the service has been caused by the unwillingness of public bodies to provide the necessary operating subsidy."

Indifference

"Direct appeals to Argyll and Bute Council and to the recent Scottish Government have met with indifference."

The trust said the only clear response from the council was that it had no money but considered the response from the recent Scottish Government to be worse and accused it of 'sidelining' appeals for help.

The Jura Development Trust statement added: "An island without a direct ferry service is an island without a heart."

Transport Scotland should recognise this and enter into discussions on finance for the ferry.

"They should not dismiss the Jura ferry as being insignificant and unimportant and should be willing to discuss openly why they will not fund this vital ferry."

Transport Scotland, on behalf of the dissolved Scottish Government, said it was aware of the issues on Jura and would ensure these were considered as part of the Ferries Review.

A spokeswoman for the council said: "We have made no commitment, as yet, to provide financial support to any public transport initiative for financial year 2011/12."

Decision

"At its budget meeting in February 2011, the council reluctantly took the decision - in view of the extent of the financial restrictions it faced - to cut the funding available to support discretionary transport projects from £750,000 to £275,000 for the next financial year.

"Since then, officials have been evaluating all previously funded projects to assess them for factors such as value for money, patronage levels, strategic importance and social impact.

"This exercise is now nearing completion. It is hoped that recommendations regarding the distribution of the available funding will be presented to the Executive for decision early in the next financial year."

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Woman stole two days after release

A WOMAN with a criminal record 'akin to a phone book' was sent back to prison for stealing beer, only days after being released from prison.

Patricia Maguire, aged 46, was sentenced to 30 days in prison for the theft when she appeared before Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

Maguire, of 5 Combie Street, Oban, pled guilty to stealing a case of Tennent's lager from the Tesco store, on Lochavullin Drive, on March 25 - two days after she was released from prison.

Defence agent Stephen Macleod appealed to the sheriff that Maguire's sentence be deferred whilst she pursued psychiatric help.

But Sheriff Douglas Small said: 'As soon as she gets out she goes shoplifting again. What am I supposed to do?'

Maguire was also ordered to serve an additional 44 days in prison for unexpired sentences.

Motorist drove too fast for conditions

A MAN has been fined £315 and had five penalty points placed on his licence after appearing at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

Christopher Davidson, 24, of 38 The Glebe, Oban, admitted driving 'too fast for the prevailing weather conditions' on the A816 between Kilmelford and Oban on October 25 last year.

The court heard that Davidson was travelling at speeds between 60 and 65 miles per hour on the 15-mile stretch of road, which was described as 'damp' and having 'icy patches'.

Defence agent Duncan Durbin told the court that Davidson, who has served three years as a soldier with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, had learnt to drive whilst in the army with methods more robust than those used in a civilian environment.

Popular town pub put up for sale

AN ESTABLISHED Oban pub, the Tartan Tavern, has been put on the market for offers over £300,000.

Current owner Allan McKie said he and his family were looking for a change and are looking at other business opportunities, although not necessarily in the licensed trade.

Mr McKie said: 'We will miss the Tartan Tavern. The place has been very good to us but I have never stayed at one place for too long.'

In December 2009 the McKies refurbished the Tartan Tavern, which opened for trade in 1953.

As *The Oban Times* went to press there had been no firm offers for the business by agents Colliers International.

Lorry sheds load of logs on A83

A MAJOR clear-up operation got underway on Monday after a timber lorry shed its load on the A83 Inveraray to Glasgow road.

The fully-loaded lorry, from the McKerrall timber haulage fleet, was travelling to Dunoon when it overturned on the road, three miles north of Inveraray, near Dunderave Castle, at 4pm.

The road was closed for eight hours as police managed a recovery operation, which saw the lorry winched up right and tonnes of logs retrieved.

Glasgow commuters were redirected onto the A819 Inveraray to Dalnally road.

The road fully re-opened at 2am on Tuesday morning.

The 51-year-old driver of the lorry was taken to Dunoon hospital where he received treatment for minor injuries.

He has since been released.

Benches thrown into Oban Bay

POLICE have been informed of an incident in George Street involving three benches and a feat of strength.

The benches ended in Oban Bay and a member of the town's community council helped to recover them.

Councillor Andy Birnie said: 'They have a lot of weight in them. They are hefty pieces of equipment.'

A police spokesman present at the community council meeting on Monday said he would ensure the matter was looked into.

Cinema group's bring and buy sale

CAMPAIGNERS hoping to bring Oban's Phoenix Cinema back to life are hosting a bring and buy sale at the Corran Hall on Saturday April 2 from 12 noon until 4pm.

All the family are welcome to come along and enjoy 35 different stalls with a bouncy castle, glitter tattoos and face painting.

Organisers are hoping for a big turnout from townsfolk.

Lyndsey follows in family footsteps

A DESCENDANT of the late Gaelic poet Sorley MacLean has continued the family tradition by winning an Argyll-wide writing competition.

Gaelic learner Lyndsey MacLean, aged 16, from Oban High School, won her age category in the competition run by the McCaig Trust to encourage written Gaelic among school pupils.

This year marks the centenary of the famed Raasay poet's birth and Lyndsey said she was keen to continue learning Gaelic by attending Skye's Sabhal Mor Ostaig when she leaves school. Lyndsey's great, great grandfather, Sorley's brother John MacLean, was rector at Oban High School between 1950 and 1966.

Lyndsey said: 'I've definitely caught the literary bug and it's probably from the MacLean side of my family. But I only entered the competition as practice for my Gaelic exams. I didn't expect to get anywhere with it.'

Lyndsey was encouraged to enter the competition by her Gaelic teacher Catriona MacGregor and her prizewinning article covered the topic of school.

Donald MacLeod, a member of the McCaig's Trust, which awards bursaries and scholarships to Gaelic students, said the judges were very impressed with the quality of the written work submitted from Argyll schools.

Prizewinners: Gaelic Learners (primary school) - 1 Ceri Powell, Taynuilt Primary School; 2 Holly Ferguson, Taynuilt Primary School.

Gaelic Medium Pupils - 1 Bethan Sexton, Salen Primary School; 2 Murdo MacLennan, Salen Primary School.

S1 and S2 - Shona Galbraith, Tobermory High School (learner); Ashleigh Cassidy, Dunoon Grammar School (fluent).

S3 and S4 - Lyndsey MacLean, Oban High School (learner); Kirsten MacLean, Tobermory High School (fluent).

Tobermory High School has been awarded the £300 prize for the high level of pupil participation and commitment to the competition.



Oban High School pupil Lyndsey MacLean, a descendant of the late Sorley MacLean, won the McCaig Trust writing prize. 15_131lyndsey01

NHS pledges to tackle high cost of locum cover

NHS HIGHLAND has made huge payouts for locum doctors over the last four years to provide emergency cover in hospitals.

Bosses say they are reviewing the practice to ensure costs for locums are kept to a minimum.

Even the proposed introduction of a doctor's staff bank for Scotland may not lessen the multi-million bill on the west coast because of the isolated nature of the hospitals at Oban, Fort William and Lochgilphead.

Agency doctors can cost the NHS up to £100 per hour more than internal staff, depending on grade and time of shift.

One consultant in Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital who retired last year returned to 'cover' until a replacement doctor was found - a practice that is not unusual in the NHS.

In Oban, locum doctors are regularly used to cover staff sickness, holiday cover and study leave. All cover includes a premium payment for working in the evenings and over the weekend.

One doctor, who did not want to be named, but regularly covered shifts in the hospital a few years ago, said: 'Many doctors who are near retirement can fund a very good quality of life on locum doctor shifts.'

In Oban and other rural areas, claimed an insider, 'there is simply no choice.'

'In bigger hospitals there is always someone who can help out.'

NHS Highland said: 'We are aware that we must live within our budget and keep costs down and we are currently undertaking an assessment of locum use to identify ways to reduce our spend as much as possible.'

It is also important to highlight that locums can be required to cover a range of circumstances such as vacancies, annual leave, sick leave, maternity leave and study leave and it can also be difficult to attract doctors to some areas and locum cover is then required for a considerable period of time to maintain services.

'In addition, because of the fact many of our doctors work in small teams we may need to employ a locum as cover when one of them is off.'

Hard up council to sell off iconic landmark

KILBOWIE House, one of Oban's most iconic buildings, is to be sold by Argyll and Bute Council, but staff being moved elsewhere say it has been neglected.

In preparation to put the 19th century Baronial former mansion on the open market, all departments that currently operate from Kilbowie House, including the authority's transport unit, the GRAB Trust and Ali Energy, are being moved out this month to other premises within Oban.

Argyll and Bute Council stands to make a healthy profit from the building on Gallanach Road, which it bought for just £5,000 in 1955.

However one employee there, who does not wish to be named for fear of losing his job, says barely any money has been spent on maintaining the B-listed building in recent years - and it has suffered as a result.

He said: 'It's very run down. There's pieces of plasterboard falling down from the ceilings onto people's desks and things like that all the time. It's a beautiful building, but inside it's an eyesore. They've just been running it into the ground.'

The council disagrees. 'The property has been maintained by the council to an appropriate standard for continuing use as an office building and the council is unaware of any dry rot or collapsing ceilings.'

'The council is clearing Kilbowie House as part of an office rationalisation exercise to save on running costs.'

'We are currently compiling pieces of information which may be relevant to a future sale and will formalise a strategy regarding its disposal in the near future. There have been no expressions of interest in the building as yet but the property has not as yet been advertised for sale.'

Kilbowie House received its listed status in 1995, with Historic Scotland inspectors saying at the time that the building had been well looked after by the council, which maintained the original fittings when converting it for office use.

Plan unveiled for new Oban Gaelic centre

OBAN is to have a dedicated Gaelic Learning Centre as part of a £280,000 grant for the town from the Scottish Government.

Argyll and Bute Council said few details were available at this early stage of when the centre would be opened, or what it would look like, but *The Oban Times* understands it would likely be housed in an existing building. A grant of £195,000 has been set aside for its development.

The Gaelic Centre would provide education opportunities for all ages. It would also be a base from which to promote the development of Gaelic and help consider the feasibility and sustainability of a Gaelic school in Argyll and Bute in the future.

The council has been awarded an additional £85,000 to create a multi-media suite within Oban High School to provide training and work skills to all young people in Argyll and Bute considering a career in the Gaelic media.

A spokeswoman for the council said the new Gaelic Learning Centre would be in addition to the current Gaelic Medium Units in the area and could offer classes for families who wish to use Gaelic in the home. It is also envisaged the centre could become a hub for national Gaelic organisations.

Gaelic ambassador Anne Lorne Gillies, a native of Oban, said: 'This is heartening news for Argyll and for Gaelic.'

'These imaginative new projects address some of the most important challenges facing Gaelic today - including the encouragement of Gaelic use within the family and the provision of engaging, relevant contexts for secondary school pupils to maintain and advance their language skills.'

'I'm sure Oban's new Gaelic Centre will quickly become a crucial catalyst for future development - especially the provision of an all-Gaelic school of the kind that has proved so effective in Glasgow and Inverness.'

Argyll and Bute spokesman for rural and island affairs, housing and Gaelic Councillor Robin Currie is delighted at the funding announcement.

He said: 'This is a fantastic opportunity for pupils at Oban High School to learn the type of skills needed to work in the Gaelic media. They'll be better equipped when it comes to looking for a job in the sector and will contribute to keeping the Gaelic language alive.'

The funding made available to Argyll and Bute Council is part of more than £1 million provided by the Scottish Government to help meet demand for Gaelic education across Scotland, as it has noted a steady increase in the uptake of Gaelic Medium Education.

REPORT
by EUAN PATERSON
epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

Community councillors barred from sitting on Common Good Fund

COMMUNITY councillors can 'write to the man in the moon' but it won't change the fact they cannot sit on the Oban Common Good Fund committee.

Oban Community Council was told it was unable to be a part of the group due to confidential information shared at the meetings.

However, resolute community councillors told elected members they do not agree and will be writing to Argyll and Bute Council's chief executive.

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre had written to the community council to say he had taken advice from legal advisors who said that many issues that come up at the meetings are confidential. They advised that community councillors should be excluded.

Councillor Roddy McCuish told the meeting there was one space on the common good fund and it would make sense that a member elected to the community council should take up that place.

Duncan Martin, community council secretary, said: 'It is called Oban Common Good Fund - are we not trusted?'

'If there were a conflict of interest then we would simply walk out the room.'

'We have all sat on boards and you know that things are confidential. We are not stupid.'

Marri Malloy, chairwoman, added: 'I do not think we should let it go. There is a vacancy on that committee and it makes sense that we should fill it.'

Councillor MacIntyre replied: 'You can write to the man in the moon if you like - it will not change things. Common good funds all over Scotland have debated these issues.'

'It is in statute - you will get the same answer, it has to be an elected member. It would be nice if a member of the community council could sit on it but it cannot happen.'

Community councillor Andy Birnie asked: 'What is the difference between you and me?'

Councillor MacIntyre replied: 'I am bound by a Code of Conduct and the point is you are part of the public.'

The next Common Good Fund meeting is on April 1 - the venue has yet to be decided.

Extra £200,000 needed for sewage plant

WORK to make right the botched £1.5m sewage treatment plant in Bonawe will cost Scottish Water an extra £200,000.

The utility operator now says it only has to replace the secondary treatment process to fix the system, which failed because the village could never provide the level of use it required to work.

Scottish Water technicians are set to be on site within days to commence the replacement. But Ardhattan Community Council understand the remedial work may not finish until August, taking in the total time Scottish Water has spent installing the plant to more than two years.

A spokesperson for Scottish Water said: 'A complete replacement of the system is not required. We are changing part of the secondary treatment process.'

'We estimate the cost of the project will be about £1.7m. This will include costs related to the change in part of the treatment process. This has negated the potential savings that we hoped to realise on this project.'

'There are no secondary funding arrangements associated with the Bonawe project and any loss of efficiency on any individual project must be off-set by efficiencies made elsewhere in the business.'

The spokesman said the use of a secondary system that was untried in a community the size of Bonawe was an attempt to be 'innovative' to save cash.

'This has negated the potential savings that we hoped to realise on this project,' the spokesperson said.

He added that the extra work won't result in increased water rates or charges in the future, with the cost to be offset by reductions in budgets elsewhere.

The chairman of Ardhattan Community Council, Iain MacDonald, said: 'I hope it will now work because they are reverting to tried and tested technology.'

'I'm happy because they have now gone for a system they've said will work.'

'My only concern now is that they get the system in without any more problems. It will soon be over two years since they started working on this plant.'

Karl plots a route out of Libya for friends caught up in troubles

WHILE he escaped much of the Libyan troubles, Trec's Karl Hughes was instrumental in plotting a path for his friends from the country during the rebel uprising.

Karl was expecting to return to his job as a tribal liaison officer for oil companies in Libya when he returned home for a holiday on February 8, but the civil rebellion less than two weeks after his return has effectively ruled that out.

He was, however, able to help guide his friends and colleagues out of the country by charting a path south through Sudan.

While they escaped safely, it certainly wasn't the smoothest of journeys, as Karl explains.

'I spent seven years in Libya and while I got out before things went bad, I did spend two weeks trying to get my lads out of there,' he said. 'I charted a path south for them out through Sudan and was in touch with them regularly.'

'Unfortunately, it was a case of out of the frying pan into the fire.'

'Sudan is still going through a lot with the war in Darfur and to go into a place where everything is gone or destroyed is not easy.'

'They started off with a convoy of six vehicles and ended up with three, as they had to swap vehicles for cash for fuel.'

'It was anything but straightforward.'

Karl, on the other hand, says he would have stayed in the country despite the rebellion. 'I worked with the southern tribes, known as the Touareg, or Blue People. They use mud as sun screen and it turns their skin blue. They're a huge tribal group and very friendly.'

'I would have stayed as where I was working there would have been no trouble. I was 400 miles from the nearest road.'

'However, there has always been a huge split between the east and the west of the country and I wouldn't be surprised if it splits right down the middle as a result of this.'

Karl is now hoping to find a new job elsewhere, but wouldn't rule out a return to Libya if the tensions ease.

Search begins for top Gaelic community and business

THE hunt to find the Gaelic community and business of 2011 has begun, with Comunn na Gàidhlig now inviting nominations.

Run in conjunction with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the winners in each category stand to win £3,000, runners up £1,500 and third placed nominations £500 each. To win, nominees will have to demonstrate their dedication to the language or progress towards using it every day.

To apply, by June 30, go to the website at www.cnag.org.uk.

use green heat

RENEWABLE HEAT INCENTIVE (RHI)

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

There will also be support for householders.

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

- April 18th**
Strachur Memorial Hall, 4pm to 7.45pm
- April 19th**
Stagecoach Inn, Cairndow, 2pm to 7.30pm
- April 20th**
Aqualibrium, Campbeltown, 3pm to 8pm
- April 21st**
Glencruitten Church Hall, Oban, 3.30pm to 7.45pm

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

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Mull Lines

A TEAM of surveyors, engineers, architects and regeneration consultants has now been appointed to conduct a feasibility study into the future of the Aros Hall, Tobermory.

The hall committee was successful in securing funding from BIG Lottery Awards for All Scotland and Argyll and the Islands LEADER fund to help with feasibility study costs. The study, which will take place over the next six months, will be delivered jointly by Glasgow-based DO-Architecture and Mull-based Dr Sam Jones.

Information regarding the progress of the work will be displayed in Aros Hall and public consultation events will be held in the summer.

The Aros Hall has been owned by the local community since 1949 and is a registered charity. The hall remains an important resource for the local area but has poor access, some structural damage and is in need of redevelopment.

A YOUNG man from Fionnphort, Isle of Mull, has made it into the final line up for a national award.

Young Scot, the national youth information agency for Scotland, announced that Craig Rutherford, aged 20, has been nominated for the Sunday Mail Young Scot Awards 2011, in association with The Co-operative Foundation. Craig is a finalist in the Enterprise category. He was recognised for establishing his plant operating business on the Ross of Mull. He began trading in 2009 and quickly won the confidence of local customers. His firm has helped underpin the construction and farming sector in the local area.

When Craig spoke to *The Oban Times*, he said he was keen to grow a business that would be helpful for local people.

Young Scot has worked with the Sunday Mail for the last six years to recognise and reward the achievements of young people from across Scotland. The awards celebrate unsung heroes, aged between 11 and 22, who have made a positive impact on their local or wider communities, and have been an inspiration to Scotland and its people.



The midwives of Mull and Iona are putting the finishing touches to a plan for ante and post natal care for women and their families on the islands of Mull, Iona and Ulva.

THE INAUGURAL Mull Cycloportive will take place on Sunday June 12, starting at 8am in Tobermory.

The event is a gruelling 85-mile route on roads round the island in aid of the RNLI Tobermory Lifeboat and Help for Heroes.

The idea was conceived by Charlie Corbett and Jonathan Moseley who both took part in the first Help for Heroes Big Battlefield Bike Ride in France in 2008, an event that sparked their passion for cycling.

Linda and Alasdair McLaren, who lost their son Robbie during active service in Afghanistan, have agreed to start the ride.

Jonathan said: 'It is an early start, not only because it is a long way but also to try to avoid the morning ferry traffic. There will be several feed stations en route, one in Glen More and the second at Ulva Ferry School. This will be an opportunity to take on board some much-needed refreshments and boost energy levels.'

'Mull Cycling Club (MCC) will be very much involved, spearheaded by Jim Keenan. John Clayton of The Mull Car Club and from Killiemore will be co-ordinating the communications to cover the event including first aid and back-up support.'

MCC is hoping that the ride will encourage many on the island to have a go; do get in touch with the following MCC members to plan your training now.

Help will be provided by Jim Keenan, Davy Graham, Ewan Baxter, Bruce Blackadder or Steven MacInnes in Tobermory and Alan Noble or Sam Downing in Salen.

For details of the route and further information visit www.mullicycloportive.co.uk.

Lifeboat trace 'mystery' radio transmission to Luing

INTERFERENCE on an emergency shipping channel took Oban's Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) crew on a mystery voyage to trace a 'mystery' radio signal.

Pat MacLean of the local RNLI explained: 'Since March 18 there has been troublesome transmissions on channel 16 VHF, the calling and distress channel, and the Coastguard was concerned that this could prejudice the ability of any vessel to call in with a problem.'

'As the RNLI lifeboats carry equipment which can 'direction find' (DF) on VHF transmissions, Oban Lifeboat was tasked with trying to locate the rogue transmissions. The lifeboat was launched and initial readings suggested that the problem transmissions were south of Oban.'

'When the lifeboat was south of Easdale the transmissions, which were now becoming strong, suddenly ceased.'

A crew member, who recalled that the problem usually started at 0715 hours, suggested that the culprit might be the Luing ferry, *Belnahua*, and the lifeboat proceeded to Cuan Sound in time to spot the ferry crew returning ashore.

'It was swiftly established that the transmissions had stopped at the exact time that the VHF aboard the *Belnahua* had been switched off.'

'The crew returned to the ferry, switched on the radio, and confirmed beyond all doubt that a faulty VHF radio had been the problem as the lifeboat's DF equipment confirmed by going off the scale.'

Another mystery solved.

Oban path row escalates

Retail store won't back popular plan to improve town public right of way

TESCO supermarket has failed to back plans for a 'substantial improvement' on a public right of way in Oban.

Despite pressure from a housing association and a path campaigner, the retail giant would not give the go-ahead.

Tesco was simply to say it welcomed plans for a 'proper path' between the store's car park and High Street. They said: 'Our estates department is currently looking into this matter.'

However, in a phone call between protester Cat Newsheller and an estates manager, he said they would not be willing to look at securing the path as the company had 'expansion plans' for Oban.

Ms Newsheller has been trying to do something about the path before 'someone falls and breaks their neck on it'. She found out from Scottish Land Registry that West Highland Housing Association and Tesco PLC predominantly own the pathway, often used as a shortcut, between High Street and the store.

She has gained support from West Highland Housing Association but, she says, Tesco said it wasn't prepared to help. She added: 'People of all ages use the path. One morning I counted a dozen people on the path every 10 minutes. Yet there is no proper path.'

'People should be able to walk on it without fear of falling. It is a public right of way.'

Elizabeth Clark, of Oban, said: 'I have known this path to be in place for 35 years. As long as I have known Oban, this has been a shortcut.'

The Oban Times understands the path has been included on the Core Paths Network - a scheme undertaken by the council to identify all the rights of way

EXCLUSIVE REPORT by LOUISE LEE lee@obantimes.co.uk

"It's a public right of way. People should be able to walk on it without fear of falling." Cat Newsheller.

in Argyll. Councillor Roddy McCuish added: 'This is a vital path for many users. I want to know that if a path is built here it will be maintained properly and I have been given those assurances. I will do anything I can to look at funding to build a sustainable path that links the High Street with the Tesco car park. It would open up this end of the town.'

Graeme Bruce of West Highland Housing Association said: 'We would love this path to be done. It is a short cut irrespective of what you do to block it up.'

'We own 35 High Street. We have previously tried to get funding but we were unable to get all the partners in the land on board. We are supportive of anyone, including Cat Newsheller, bringing forward a plan to sort it out.'

'We would like to see a bona fide path with good access. If we could get agreement then we could try to attract funding. We cannot be the principal funder but we would be willing to make a small contribution.'



Councillor Roddy McCuish, Elizabeth Clark and Cat Newsheller who are campaigning for a proper path for a decade's old shortcut. 16_112path1

Police success in drug and violent crime detection within Oban and Lorn

POLICE investigations into violent crime have been given top marks after the Oban achieved a 100 per cent detection rate in 2010/2011, in the Oban North and Lorn area.

Figures revealed to *The Oban Times* show that crimes of violence, serious assaults and robbery continue to be rare in the area.

But, if they do happen, police generally manage to find the culprit and bring them before the courts.

Crimes against women and complaints against young people are also on the decline. There were a higher number of crimes detected involving the possession of drugs and offenders brought to justice for supplying drugs.

Chief Inspector Glen Bland puts the higher numbers down

'Lost' cap drops through letterbox after 10 months

A NORFOLK man who lost his tweed cap in Oban 10 months ago found it drop through his letterbox last week - and now it fits.

Ian Keymore lost the tweed cap during a summer holiday in and around the Argyll town with his wife Janet last May, only discovering it was missing when they returned to their home in Melton Constable.

Disappointed, he wrote it off and bought a new one, taking account of the fact that the missing cap was slightly too big for him in the first place.

It seems, however, that ten months in Oban's balmy climate coupled with a 360 mile journey has effectively shrunk it to fit, and he's absolutely delighted.

Ian is now hoping to thank the person who recovered the tweed cap and refund the postage.

He said: 'I've never lost a cap before and it is quite an expensive cap, so I was really disappointed when I realised I'd lost it.'

'Then, 10 months after we got back from our lovely holiday to Oban, it turned up in a package, with a note saying 'found in the west coast of Scotland'. There was no clue to who found it.'

'It's also the first time I've ever stuck a label with my full name and address inside a cap. I did it because my wife Janet said I should because it's a really nice cap. Amazingly it's still in really good condition. It's a bit smaller than it was, but it now fits perfectly as a result. I'm very, very grateful to whoever it was that made this very thoughtful and generous gesture.'

'It's nice to know that there are some people that renew your faith in humanity.' If you know who found and returned the cap and would like to get in touch with Ian, email sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk.

ALZHEIMER Scotland will be going that extra mile for people affected by dementia in Oban after announcing that it is Tesco Charity of the Year for 2011.

Along with Tesco and the Alzheimer Society, Alzheimer Scotland plan to raise £5million to fund essential research and bring dementia information, advice and support to communities all over the UK, helping to build a better future for people with dementia.

The Charity of the Year partnership, launched last week, will fund dementia advisors and a dementia community road show, which will combine to provide information, advice and direct support to people with dementia and their families in Oban and the rest of Scotland.

NLB quick to quash 'moving from Oban' rumour

THE NORTHERN Lighthouse Board has quashed rumours it is thinking of moving away from Oban.

The organisation, which has a base on the South Pier, was shocked this week when *The Oban Times* asked if it was considering a move.

A Northern Lighthouse Board spokeswoman said: 'We have operated a base at Oban since 1904 and in 2000 it underwent a £4.2 million redevelopment.'

'The Northern Lighthouse Board remains committed to its base in Oban which offers both a very efficient buoy yard and engineering facility and a geographically perfectly placed base for its ships. There is no intention to move to any other location, nor has there been any consideration to do so.'

Antiques expert comes to town

OBAN Phoenix Cinema is soon to welcome Anita Manning, the well-known personality on TV programmes *Flag It*, *Antiques Road Trip*, *Bargain Hunt* and *The Hour*, from Great Western Auctions Limited.

Anita will be on hand with her team of valuers to offer expert advice on the following items: paintings, jewellery, silver, ceramics, coins, medals, militaria, collectors' items, glass, textiles and works of art.

The entrance fee is £5 for a maximum of three items to be valued. Tea, coffee and biscuits are included in this price. All money raised from this event will go directly to the Save the Oban Phoenix Cinema fund.

The Antiques Valuation Day will be held on Saturday April 9 from 11am until 4pm at The Caledonian Hotel, Station Square, Oban.

Man denies Oban knife charge

A MAN accused of brandishing a knife during an assault in the town was released on bail after appearing in private at Oban Sheriff Court last week.

Appearing from custody, Michael MacLellan, aged 27, who lives in Oban, denied all the charges against him, including committing a breach of the peace and being in possession of a knife.

He is now fully committed to trial.

Hollywood is watching us

OBAN'S webcam is being watched in California and they seem to like what they see.

The camera installed at the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) has brought the town centre into focus.

D Stewart Farquhar, of Hollywood, California, said: 'I must say that the new cam at the TIC is way and beyond better placed than the previous one.'

'It shows so much more of the personality of the centre and the activity of visitors.'

Tesco back dementia group

ALZHEIMER Scotland will be going that extra mile for people affected by dementia in Oban after announcing that it is Tesco Charity of the Year for 2011.

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New community nurses for Lorn

MENTAL health will benefit from the appointment of four community psychiatric nurses in Oban, Lorn and the Isles.

The appointees, along with a primary care mental health worker and cognitive behavioural therapist roles, will be in place from April.

Caroline Henderson, community nurse manager, said: 'This will enhance the level of community service in the area and we should see the benefits of that.'

Jura couple celebrate 60 years together

A JURA couple celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary on March 15 with a gathering of 70 guests in the Jura Hotel.

Jack and Rhona Paton, who are originally from Bridge of Weir, moved to Jura permanently in 1968 after spending holidays there.

Rhona, a former domestic science teacher, had been coming to the island with her family since she was a child; her father was a cousin of the Fergusons, who once owned Jura Distillery. Jack flew in World War II and worked for the family firm, William Paton Ltd, making shoelaces but upon moving to Jura he set up a lobster fishing business, which he ran for 10 years.

Rhona explained the secret to a long marriage was simply 'tolerance and a sense of humour'.



Jack and Rhona Paton with their card from HM the Queen on their diamond wedding anniversary.

Argyll and Bute Council to improve Freedom of Information response

AN AUDIT on the Freedom of Information practice in Argyll and Bute showed there was 'limited assurance' that people were getting the data they wanted.

Audits in December 2009 and June 2010 show the council still have measures to put in place in regard to record keeping and records management.

Executive director Douglas Hendry said: 'We have identified a number of measures about how we will improve the system.'

'Our compliance with records management is low.'

'We do not have a corporate management records function. As a council we have had to prioritise areas that we have wanted to do and be good at - and this area was not top of the list.'

'Looking ahead there is an ongoing review across the council.'

Councillor Bruce Marshall asked:

'How important is this? I mean does the information commissioner ever enforce? Did they have concerns about us, is that why they came out to do an audit?'

Mr Hendry replied: 'If we said we would not comply with the law they would not doubt name and shame us, and that would damage the council's reputation. There is also a possibility any non-compliance may be referred to government ministers.'

'We can comply, but we will never be a paragon of virtue in this area. We do not have the capacity to reach the top echelons of the law.'

Council leader Dick Walsh added: 'We want to comply with the law and this will be a standing issue until the matter is resolved.'

The Scottish Information Commissioners Office said until the final report on Argyll and Bute Council was published they would be unable to comment on the authority.

Connel man joins singing star Susan Boyle for Lent on Wee Box Big, Change campaign

CONNEL resident Andreas Wolff is joining a host of Scottish stars from the worlds of music, television, sport and business who are giving up a favourite treat for 40 days in Lent in support of the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund's (SCIAF) Wee Box, Big Change campaign to help people living in poverty in developing countries.

Andreas will be joining global singing sensation Susan Boyle who launched the campaign on Wednesday and others including Harry Potter actress Katie Leung, singer songwriter Eddi Reader, Scotland football captain and Manchester United player Darren Fletcher, businesswoman Michelle Mone, broadcasters Kaye Adams and

Sally Magnusson and Charlie and Craig Reid of The Proclaimers.

In Argyll and Bute last year, generous SCIAF supporters raised an incredible £14,116.

Andreas said: 'I wanted to show Christian solidarity with some of the most disadvantaged people in the world. SCIAF empowers families in poor countries to generate an income for themselves. The Wee Box, Big Change campaign focuses on Haiti this year where 80 per cent of the population are unemployed and 86 per cent live in slums.'

'I will give up chocolate for Lent and donate the proceeds to SCIAF. I feel it is important to make a small sacrifice so that we're aware of the wealth we've got.'

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 568000

White Building to be sold off

A CLOSING date will shortly be set for the sale of the White Building in Oban. At a meeting of Lorn and the Isles area committee last week, councillors decided to sell the building. MacQueen Brothers Charitable Trust is currently using the North Pier building as a charity shop. An Argyll and Bute Council spokeswoman said: 'The committee considered an update report on the expressions of interest received in respect of the White Building. Councillors agreed that a closing date be set for receipt of offers, and that it would be appropriate to give at least six to eight weeks notice. The specific date has not yet been set.' Graham MacQueen said: 'We appreciate we have had it over the last year-and-a-half and it has proved to be of great benefit to the community. If we were left in the building as a charity shop we would raise £500,000. There are many people who look to Ganavan and wish we had not sold it - I think it would be the same with this building. It does not have to be sold. There is the option of leaving it in the ownership of the community.'

A report on the former Rockfield Primary School building and its subsequent sale was put on the agenda for a future meeting.

Housing group aims for more funding

WEST Highland Housing Association (WHHA) is hoping to secure further funding to support its Wider Role projects. The announcement came after the association welcomed the Wider Role Fund team from the Scottish Government's Housing and Regeneration Division to hear presentations from local projects that have benefited from its support. Among those businesses and organisations represented were Stramash Enterprise, Lorn and Oban Recycling Initiative (LORI), H20 Oban Young Mums Support Project, the WHHA Energy Project and Constructive Communities - Village Halls Project.

Police appeal to be vigilant about drugs

A POLICE sergeant warned Oban Community Council that people should be vigilant about drugs. He said: 'People should continue to be vigilant about drugs in this community. We want to know what you know about drug dealers. If there are people you speak to who give you information then pass it on - no matter how trivial it seems. With the whole community's help we will have success in tackling these problems.'

Shape of things to come?



How the view from Sandaig beach, towards Ceann a' Mhara, could look if the Argyll Array goes ahead, according to No Tthree Array.

Campaign group draws up montages of turbines

COULD this be the view from Tthree if the Argyll Array goes ahead within its current boundaries? Campaign group No Tthree Array (NTA) has produced its own montages of how it claims the proposed development could affect the beauty of the island because Scottish Power Renewables (SPR), a subsidiary of Spanish firm Iberdrola, has so far failed to do so. And NTA members are horrified at the results. The montages have been produced using recognised, professional techniques and do not show the worst case scenario. While the array's boundary actually comes to within 4.7kms of Tthree's shore, no turbine in the images comes within 6kms of the island. The number of turbines is also significantly lower than the 500 the array could accommodate.

REPORT by STEVEN FLANAGAN sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk

Releasing the images, NTA chairman Robert Trythall warned that the proximity of the turbines could have a 'devastating impact' on the local economy. He has once again called for the boundary of the array to be moved to 35kms from the shore. Images produced by the group for this distance demonstrate that the turbines would be all but invisible to the naked eye. Mr Trythall said: 'The island is increasingly dependent on tourism; it's now the biggest sector of Tthree's economy - about 40 per cent of its income. The array could have a devastating impact on its sustainability, as these pictures show. From its first meeting on the island in February 2009, we've

been asking SPR for montages of what the array could look like. Yet we've seen nothing from them. Then we asked why aren't you doing them. They said 'because at this stage in the project they could be misleading'. That's why we've produced our own. 'Once again, we're not opposed to the wind farm. We are opposed to its location. It is too close and an inshore - not offshore - array.' He believes the reason SPR has not produced montages of the array is that it is afraid of the kind of negative public reaction that put to an end plans to establish a similar array in Kintyre. Mr Trythall said: 'The visualisations of the proposed Kintyre array showed people what it would be like and inspired a huge community response. They were highly significant in it being rejected and caused Scottish Natural Heritage etc to oppose it. 'They're worried images of this development will create the same response.' NTA has now invited islanders and interested parties to submit their own requests for montages of how the array will look from any location on the island. Meanwhile, SPR has said it will present its own projections of what the Argyll Array will look like from the island and its neighbour Coll at public information days in June. A spokesman for the company said: 'We'll present our initial photomontages on Tthree and Coll in June at public information days and these visuals will be left on display on Tthree for anyone who can't attend these events. 'We welcome all constructive feedback and look forward to hearing people's views and their suggestions for future photomontages. Until recently it was too early to present a realistic representation of the development and we have been working to better understand the area and identifying where turbines might go. The submission of a planning application is still at least 12 months away, providing considerable time for consultation with all parties.'

"The island is increasingly dependent on tourism. The array could have a devastating impact."

Robert Trythall, No Tthree Array.

Lady Evelyn restoration scheme stalls

PROBLEMS sourcing legs has hindered attempts to move the Lady Evelyn from Oban's north pier, but it's hoped the boat will be upright this weekend. Owner Derek Grier has fitted high-tensile steel bars to the vessel, but without the required legs to mount them on - effectively telegraph poles - it cannot be set right before towing. While Derek has bought lighter legs - which may or may not hold the weight of the Irish 59-foot former fishing boat - he's reluctant to use them lest they collapse and cause more damage or injure someone. With a tow available from Friday, he's set himself a tight deadline. He said: 'I feel that the lighter legs are strong enough for a temporary fix, but they would be dangerous long term and the tow

is not available until April 1. 'In her present position, where children and adults often have a walk about, I wouldn't be able to supervise the vessel all the time and it doesn't bear thinking about if they gave way. 'On a more positive note, it does give me an extra couple of days to try to source the elusive telegraph poles. 'I intend to try to get her upright next weekend, as these days have tides where I should be able to get on the boat and fit the legs. 'If that fails then it will be the following week before the tides are favourable again. 'Once floating, Derek will move the boat to the Gallanach side of the Sound of Kerrera. Derek's appeal through The Oban Times for assistance in restoring the boat resulted in some promising responses - including

the donation of a three-inch pump and pipe. He said: 'This was very kind of him and gratefully received. You can never have too many pumps! 'The three people who approached me were a carpenter from Dalnally, a retired engineer from Benderloch and a chap who just has a general interest in boats. 'All three of these people will be very useful and I am grateful for them for offering their time. I intend to meet them to see what we can organise to move the project forward. Derek has started a blog to chart the progress of his repairs and is still keen to hear from anyone who can help, be it in kind or with telegraph poles to help get the boat moved. You can find the blog at rebuildalittlefish.blogspot.com.

Islanders warned of cuts to ferry service

FERRY services to the island of Luig will meet the needs of islanders - because they will be involved in planning them. That was the message from transport spokesman Councillor Duncan MacIntyre at a special meeting of the island's Ferry Users Group. However, ferry manager Martin Gorrington told the meeting he had to make 20 per cent cuts from services. When Mr Gorrington was asked whether this might mean the cancellation of evening services, he replied: 'That is not my initial target. All of the services to islands are considered lifeline. 'I am not going to say this service or that may be targeted, but I will say that there will be a 20 per cent cut over all services

under my control and something of the same order next year.' He continued: 'I would say we do prioritise lifeline services. If you compare what we provide here and what others provide elsewhere it is favourable. Islander Julie MacQueen said: 'But on most of these islands people do not commute every day to work.' Mr Gorringe replied: 'There was a potential for the government to take over the local authority run service. That would have a serious impact on the service for the island. The ferry bosses did agree to looking at fundamental changes in the operation of the service such as an 'on demand' evening service between 7.30pm and 10pm.'

Lorn Lines

MEMBERS of Lorn Garden Club enjoyed a breathtaking botanical tour on Tuesday March 15 with speaker Paul Matthews, curator of Glasgow Botanic Gardens. 'Around the world in 80 plants' was a fascinating whistle-stop tour of flowers, plant parasites and trees from every corner of the world with Paul's insatiable insight to the habitat of the flora. The talk was supported by beautiful slides. Paul also brought his wealth of experience on plant hunting to an appreciative audience. The talk was followed by tea, coffee and home-baking. Lorn Garden Club's AGM will be held on April 19 at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start at St John's Cathedral, Oban. There will also be a plant and seed swap. Non members always welcome. Please contact David Croucher for further information on 01852 300563.

OBAN Photographic Club held its AGM in the Regent Hotel, Oban, on Monday March 21. The following office bearers were elected: President - to be decided; vice president - Stephen Lawson; secretary - Katy Weir; treasurer - Nevin Blackwood; competitions secretary - Maurice Wilkins; Committee - Tim Haynes, Peter Cleave, Jane Lobb, Jim Kirkpatrick, Ronnie McKillop, Alex Clark, Eric Shaw. Web master/consultant - Steve Cross. The competitions for 2011/12 are: - Open, landscape/seascape; Abstract, Mellow yellow. The subject for the Argyll Trophy is 'Argyll Weather'.



Community councillor Kenny MacIntyre looks at some of the entries for a logo for the Oban Bicentennial celebrations. The logos can be seen in the windows of the MacQueen Brothers Charity Shop on the North Pier. Entries should be made to oban200@hotmail.com. 16_1120oban2001



ATLANTIS Leisure hosted a 'Superjam' tea party for local pensioners last week, the first step in establishing regular activities purely for Oban's older residents. The event was inspired by an earlier meeting with preserves entrepreneur Fraser Docherty who started his own Superjam brand at just 14 years of age from his Edinburgh home. While the preserve featured prominently on each of the tables, complete with scones, cakes, teas and coffee, entertainment was the order of the day with pupils from Oban High School playing music and putting on a display of Highland dancing, much to the delight of the gathered crowd. Roger Elliot, who organised the Superjam day, said: 'While this is a one-off, what we're trying to do is see if we can ask for ideas of what Atlantis can do regularly for the older generation, whether that be carpet bowls, whist drives or something else. 'We'll take that away then see what we can come up with.' Pictured at the event are, from left, Evelyn Christine, Graham MacQueen, who supported the event and arranged transport to Atlantis, event organiser Roger Elliot, Atlantis director Neil Matheson and Maimie Nicholson. 07_113mathel



Write-on! Pupils finish own books

BUDDING authors were hard at work at Rockfield Primary School last week, putting the finishing touches to their very own storybooks. Pupils across the school were hard at work writing and binding their own books on subjects as diverse as the Highland clearances, ancient Egyptians and fairy tales. Oban High School's head of English, Aileen Jackson, was joined by departmental colleague Rob Harrington in looking through the books, praising the children for their efforts. Pictured is Matthew Binnie, who devised one of the most original and entertaining books on show - complete with sock puppet - 'Yum!' 15_113rock1

Pedal power raises £1,200 for West Bank

A CYCLIST from Lerars got on his bike to Glasgow and raised more than £1,200 for a humanitarian charity on the West Bank. Liam Griffin, a local diver, decided that he would ask his friends to sponsor the 100 mile ride, asking The Oban Times for help in getting his message out. Doing the trip in two stages, Liam tackled a route between Stirling and Glasgow first - before taking on the mammoth Oban to Stirling run. Liam said: 'I took my time. The challenge was to finish, not to race. After all I am not 21 anymore, or even 61.' Liam finished his marathon journey with friends at a conference for Scottish Friends of Palestine - finding out where his money would go to help children in the war torn country. Liam would like to say 'thank you' to all his sponsors.

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Bonniest Baby Competition 2011 - the 10 finalists



Keira Carney
Oban, 5 months



Struan Irvine
Tobermory, 8 months



Taylor Clark
Tillicoultry, 24 months



Hannah Vick
Taynuilt, 13 months



Rebecca Fitzsimmons
Inveraray, 15 months



Arran MacGregor - Anderson, Oban, 13 months



Amber Campbell
Oban, 7 months



Liam Fox
Oban, 8 months



Emma Quinn
Bearsden, 21 months



Hollie McLean
Mossiesburn, 18 months

ISLAY

AT A meeting to be held tomorrow (Friday) at ICCL, Islay and Jura Council of Voluntary Services will propose changing from being simply a CVS to becoming a community-owned organisation, provisionally called 'Islay Initiative'.

The new organisation will still undertake existing CVS roles and will also have additional scope to develop new social enterprises, generating income for redistribution back into Islay and Jura communities.

IJCVS has already secured feasibility study funding for a community bakery, and this will also be discussed on the day. This event will provide further information and collect your views on whether this is a productive way forward for the communities, and answer questions. More information can be found on www.islay-initiative.org.uk

If this new organisation goes ahead, it will continue to deliver core CVS functions.

and Hannah from ReJIG have been hard at work collecting rubbish washed up on the beaches during the winter.

If your group wants to organise a larger-scale area clean up, please get in touch on 810880. If you'd like to get involved with ReJIG in other ways, don't hesitate; volunteers are always welcome.

KEILLS Primary School's Parent Council would like to thank everyone connected with the school and community, who have helped by showing their support over the last few very testing months.

Keills is now in a great position to move forwards, with lots of plans for improving the school for Kilmeny children attending Keills Primary now and in the future.

Plans include the imminent erection of the new polytunnel, updating the playground with community help on a 'Day of Action', investigating replacement of draughty windows and insulating the loft space.

THE Finlaggan Venison Supper 2011 prepares the way for the re-opening of the historic site in April, which will soon be with us. The venison supper has been held yearly since 1989.

This year guests were welcomed to a hall softly lit by candles, red and white table settings and vases of just opening daffodils. A complimentary dram courtesy of Diageo or glass of Finlaggan Ale from the Islay Brewery was much appreciated by guests and committee.

Guests declared this year's Supper to be as good as ever; venison donated by Islay Estates was prepared by Billy MacFarlane and cooked to perfection by Donald Bell, the fresh vegetables were from Angus Ferguson, and Catriona McGilivray

donated her delicious home made outcakes. Soup, salads and trifles were prepared by committee and friends.

John Barford ran the bar and Alison, Jennifer, Lesley and Sheena waited the tables.

Andrew MacCowan not only sang but had his first taste of being MC and did splendidly, both on the night and in gathering such a wealth of talent for the evening. There were also performances by Grahame Allison, Eoin Brown, Bronwen Currie, Iseabail MacTaggart, Fergus Muir, Ellie Macgregor, Libby Morris, Niall Oliver, Scott MacDermott, Becky Williamson and the Hannahs.

If you wish this year's supper, remember to keep the last Saturday in February 2012 free for the next one.

PORT Ellen Bowling Club will hold its annual meeting on May 28 at 7pm in the Columba Hall, Port Ellen.

As attendances at meetings have dwindled during the last couple of years, it is imperative that all in the community who have an interest in local bowling turn up and support the bowling club.

Club member Andy Hope said: 'Without local support, the club will cease to operate. We need members past and present, as well as new members to attend the meeting and show that they are willing to play an active part in running the club.'

Anyone who wishes to take part but cannot make this meeting, please contact Andy or any of the regulars to let them know of your interest.

COMANN nam Pàrant Ìle is Dhiùra AGM was held on Tuesday in Duffies, Bowmore.

THE GLASGOW Islay Association is planning to publish

a book of recipes submitted by members, friends and supporters as part of its 150th anniversary celebrations.

The organisers are inviting submissions of recipes from local litch as well as from those further afield.

Typed copies of favourite recipes should be sent without delay to immediate past president Peter Campbell, 108 George Street, Dunblane FK15 9HF, or emailed to info@glasgow-islay.org.uk

LEWIS

AN EXHIBITION opened at An Lanntair, Stornoway last week exploring storytelling in its many forms.

An Lanntair has been working with Ian Stephen for more than a year, to make and commission new work as an exploration of how a story can exist in many different versions. A range of works has been made by individual artists and by linked artists in collaboration. But all of these artists are essentially storytellers in the project.

The Shiant Islands and the St Kilda archipelago feature strongly. Traditional stories from the Hebrides and from further islands from along the sea-route are the basis of all the varied works.

As the exhibition has been built, a series of workshops has been held with Lewis schools. Two new films both have the Shiant Islands as a focus but they are completely different in their approach to a story. Both films use new music from the Lewis based pianist and writer Peter Urpeth. He is joined by the internationally renowned vocal improvisation artist Maggie Nicols. The films were shown on the big screen last Saturday with live music. The exhibition is open to the public and runs until May 7, 2011.



1st Fort Augustus Guides and Brownies celebrated the end of their centenary year with the unveiling of their plaque and birdbath. The event coincided with the retirement of the Church of Scotland minister Rev and Mrs Varwell who are due to retire in April and move to Drumadrochit. They were presented with a girloguiding vase, card and flowers by guides, guides and brownies as a token of their appreciation for all that they have done for girloguiding in the community in the last 10 years.

LUING

THE ISLAND Cafe will be open from Saturday April 9 until Sunday April 17 in the primary school.

Volunteers are still required for each day. The cafe will be open from noon until 3pm for hot drinks, soups and cakes.

Local suppliers of food and drinks are still being sought. Anyone interested in the cafe should contact Fiona Cruickshanks on 01852 314375.

THE PRIMARY school on the Isle of Luing is ringing with music and song as a Singing for Enjoyment club for adults got underway this month.

Mhairi Ritchie, chairwoman of the school's parent council, has brought together people of the Island from all ages, and backgrounds to join in their common joy of singing. The first

two sessions have concentrated on traditional songs, but Mhairi, who provides guitar accompaniment with the help of Kirsty MacLachlan, plans a variety of songs to learn together and even promises karaoke.

Everyone is welcome to join the group, and new members will be made very welcome every Tuesday night in Luing Primary School.

EASDALE

ISLANDERS have become very concerned over a missing large pet spider in the Ferry Hut.

The Tarantula spider, kept as a pet by one of the residents, was given a home in the ferry shed when it was realised it had to be kept at a certain temperature.

However, one morning when the men went to work - they realised the large spider had escaped.

Anyone with details of its whereabouts should use the phone in the hut to contact its owner. Ferryman Willie said: 'It is black and moves very quickly.'

APPIN

APPIN SWRI president Doreen Evans welcomed more than thirty members and visitors to the March meeting.

After the usual business she introduced Janette MacDonald from Port Appin, who gave a talk and demonstration on vegetarian cookery.

This was very informative and members were able to taste the delicious dishes that had been made.

Liz MacNeill gave Janette a warm vote of thanks. After tea, the raffle was drawn and the competitions judged. Competition winners Children's Novelty Slippers: Gold - Doreen Evans, Silver -

Barbara Carmichael. Savoury Cheesecake: Gold - Agnes Thomason, Silver - Barbara Carmichael, Jessie MacKenzie and Doreen Evans.

KILMORE

KILMORE SWRI president Isabel Smith welcomed members to the March meeting.

After business, a brilliant Beetle Drive was held, which was won by Margaret Whittin.

Competitions: Dessert in a Glass: 1 Fiona Dickie 2 Ann Robertson. Easter Bonnet: 1 Ann Robertson. 2 Isabel Smith.

Teas were served by Mairi Morrison and helpers.

GLENORCHY

A SERIES of events will be held in the Glenorchy area to mark the bi-centenary of Glenorchy Kirk.

The church was opened in Dalmailly in July 1811 and among the events scheduled for later this year will be dedication from the Church of Scotland Moderator and a visit from Sir Malcolm and Lady MacGregor.

There will also be a three-day flower festival in August and a play written and performed by the local drama group among the numerous other events.

The total cost of events will be in the region of £5,500 and funding applications have been made, however, the bi-centenary committee is also seeking donations from the community. Glenorchy and Inishail Community Council has already pledged £300.

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Charity commissioned by council for night care in Argyll and Bute

Carr-Gomm Scotland to take over services in Oban, Lochgilphead, Campbeltown, Rothesay, Dunoon and Helensburgh

PEOPLE relying on night care can rest easy in their beds thanks to improvements in the service in Argyll and Bute.

Carr-Gomm Scotland, a charity which provides support for those needing help with day to day living, have been commissioned by Argyll and Bute Council to take responsibility for the service at six centres.

Community alarm calls

The arrangement means that people requiring care or support can now nominate the trained care staff in the night teams to respond to community alarm calls between 11pm and 7am in six centres - Oban, Lochgilphead, Campbeltown, Rothesay, Dunoon and Helensburgh.

Denise Murdoch, the operations manager in charge of the project said: 'Many people who depend on this type of service may have nominated an elderly neighbour or a relative as the person to be contacted in the event of something happening to them overnight.

'As a result they may be reluctant to contact the telecare service for issues they consider to be 'minor.'

'Having professional staff, who will make a visit during the night, hopefully makes it easier for those who need support, to feel less inhibited about making a call.'

Councillor Andrew Nisbet, Argyll and Bute's spokesperson for social affairs said: 'We are delighted to commission Carr-Gomm Scotland to provide this overnight response service as part of the development of our community services for older people.'

'In conjunction with our NHS partners the council is committed to looking after as many older people as possible, as safely as possible - in their own home - and the night teams along with additional availability of Telecare technology is an important step towards realising this goal.'

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DOWN YOUR WAY

This week - Sleat

SLEAT hoteliers are looking forward to a return of busier times now that the CalMac ferry from Mallaig to Armadale is back on its summer schedule.

Assistant manager at the Ardsvar Hotel Derek MacDonald told *The Oban Times* he was 'quite optimistic' of the year ahead after the cold, dark months. 'Winter for us was

not too bad. We pushed our winter breaks, we had students from the Gaelic college up the road and a hard core village trade, which all kept us going,' he said.

'But people will have more flexibility now with regard to ferry times, so hopefully that will work in our favour. Going by advance bookings, I think it's looking okay.'



Bunsgoil Shléite Eco Committee, together with Mrs Beaton and Mrs Finlayson, recently organised a successful garden action day in and around the school grounds. Trees, shrubs and hedgerows were planted, paths were restored, bug hotels were built and the litter pick-up was very successful also. Head teacher Gwen Culbertson said: 'Many parents turned out on the day and we are very grateful for their contribution and their help.' The eco committee hope to hold another such day soon to carry on improving and developing the school grounds. Pictured are P4/5g pupils with the apple tree they planted.

□□□

CAMUSCROSS AND Duisdale Initiative is hosting a photo competition on the theme of 'Crofting in Camuscross and Duisdale'.

Winning entries will be used for a celebratory crofting calendar, to be unveiled at the Crofting Olympics on June 11.

The competition is open to anyone from Sleat and beyond. The photographs could have been taken any time but must be from either of the two townships. There will be two categories: adults and under 16s. The first prize for each category will be a professionally printed and framed copy of the picture. The first six from each category will be made into a calendar for 2012 and

each winner will be given their own copy. Entries must be high resolution digital images and be sent digitally (jpeg or tif) to arrive before April 29 at 5pm.

Winners will be announced at the Crofting Olympics on Saturday June 11.

Organiser Siusaidh Nicneill said: 'We are really keen to see entries from young people. Interpret 'Crofting in Camuscross and Duisdale' in your own way but try to use a high resolution setting for finished quality, otherwise we will not be able to use your image for the calendar.'

Send photographic entries to siusaidh.nicneill@gmail.com.

□□□



Bunsgoil Shléite pupils made vehicles from household junk to learn about low-carbon living.

BUNSGOIL Shléite (Sleat Primary School) welcomed a party of German students from the University of Flensburg for a fun day of learning about eco-friendly lifestyles.

The visiting students, who had arrived in south Skye as guests of community group 'Clean Sleat' to research Sleat's carbon footprint, dropped into the school to get the recycling message across.

The Flensburg students organised a

competition in which teams of three or four pupils had to collect junk materials from home and re-use them to make a vehicle in school. They then judged each vehicle on three levels - creativity, stability and function - before the pupils enjoyed an afternoon of exhibiting and racing their makeshift creations.

Head teacher Gwen Culbertson said: 'Much fun was had by all of the pupils.'

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AFTER an unplanned-for absence in 2010, the famous Camuscross and Duisdale Crofting Olympics returns this year in a new expanded format.

Taking place on Saturday June 11 in Duisdale, the daytime programme will be followed by an evening dance with the Cast Ewe Ceilidh Band.

The Crofting Olympics will take place in the field below Duisdale Hall and will again take a light-hearted theme of crofting.

Field events will include races and challenges for children, the five-legged-race and the one tonne sack race for teams of two and four people, as well as the inter-village tug of war for men, women and youth teams.

The hill race for both men and women will follow a less challenging route than in previous years to encourage more

contestants to take part and will feature a final sprint along the shore to allow the crowds to witness the finish.

Exciting new events for 2011 include a raft race with teams being invited to take part in a challenge to sail, row, paddle - or possibly glug - from the Duisdale shore to pick up a team member 'stranded' on Eilean nan Each by the safety boat. Whichever raft makes it back to shore with their team intact will win. Also making a first appearance in Skye, with sponsorship from the Co-operative Group, will be the People Powered Flour Mill - the bicycle-powered mill designed by Camuscross man Fergus Walker. More events will be announced in the coming weeks.

For more information, contact Mary Logan or Siusaidh Nicneill, or any of the other CDI directors.

Next week DOWN YOUR WAY visits Ardferrn with reporter Louise Lee.

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

EASDALE



Easdale Primary School pupils are enjoying a course in bike riding delivered by Robin Morton of Energie Fitness, Oban.

ACHARACLE

ACHARACLE Primary School pupils last week competed in the nationwide Climate Week Challenge.

Fifty two P1 to P7 pupils made recycled shopping bags, recycled paper products, a swap shop to re-use toys and a woodland trail from recycled items.

Head teacher Lyndsay Bradley said: 'We were delighted with the quality of entries from pupils and impressed by the enthusiasm with which the challenge was met. We will definitely take part again next year.'

LISMORE

KERR Macgregor of Macgregor Solar is a self confessed solar power missionary and travels all over Scotland, including to many islands, helping people make their own solar panels to heat hot water.

He first realised how simply this could be done when working in Africa where people had no hot water despite the abundance of sun. The result was the prototype of what was to become his DIY solar panel which is within the grasp of almost everyone to make from the simplest materials available at any DIY store.

On his recent two-day visit to Lismore, he instructed two classes how to put together aluminium sheets painted black, insulating sheets, a length of garden hose, polycarbonate glazing material and, after several hours, take home a large solar panel. Unfortunately the group he tutored on the Sunday were unlucky to have to work in a very cold hall as heavy snowfall resulted in a two-day power cut. Despite this, they too produced panels.

The weekend was organised by Lismore Energy Group and soup and sandwiches were provided by Beth Campbell. Because Kerr came with all the necessary materials, the finished product cost a fraction of an off-the-shelf solar panel and the final installation can also be done very cheaply by sending for a kit containing all the necessary gadgetry to connect the panel to an existing water supply.

□□□

DURING the second weekend of March the south end of the island had heavy snow and high winds resulting in two power poles coming down and a power failure which lasted almost two days.

The north end had far less snow and their power was connected after 14 hours.

□□□

THE NEW community trust is currently seeking members who will vote in the full trust board at the annual general meeting on June 9.

Membership forms have been circulated to all households and should be completed and returned to Mandie Currie, the company secretary, Achuaran Farm. There are three categories of membership and Mandie or any interim board member can be contacted with any queries. Nomination forms for directors will be available from mid May.

TOBERMORY

WOOLY Wednesdays got underway last night (Wednesday) in An Tobar, Tobermory. The informal evenings are for all things single-ply, double-ply and ungraded and everyone is welcome to attend.

The sessions for anyone interested in knitting, crocheting, hand embroidery, cross-stitch or any other textile projects that can be done by hand should attend between 7pm and 9pm.

The group will have no formal tutor; the idea is that those interested will learn from each other where they can.

Or you can just get on with your own project while you enjoy a coffee and a chat in the cafe.

The cost will be £2 for the evening and coffee, tea and cake will be for sale in the cafe.

Look out for posters or call 01688 302211 for more details.



Rear Admiral John Tolhurst presents a long service medal to RNLI crew member Creon Carmichael.

Long service medal for Tobermory lifeboatman

RNLI Tobermory lifeboat's second mechanic Creon Carmichael has been honoured for his long service to the station.

Creon has been on the crew for 20 years, almost since the station re-opened in 1990, and is one of Tobermory RNLI's longest-serving crew members. For much of that time he has been one of the station's mechanics. He was presented with his long service medal by the chairman of the RNLI Operations Committee, Rear Admiral John Tolhurst, during a visit to the station by the RNLI Coast Review Committee on March 17.

Tobermory RNLI's full-time Mechanic Jock Anderson said: 'Creon is an invaluable member of the crew over so many years and so many shouts. He's always been there when I've needed him and it was great to see him get his medal.'

PORT ELLEN

PORT Ellen ferry terminal has now closed for ferry traffic as McLaughlin & Harvey carried out reconstruction work on the pier.

The work is being done ahead of the arrival of the new Islay ferry, *MV Finlaggan*. Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited, which owns the pier, has also stated it is 'reaching the end of its serviceable life'.

Work started last Friday for nine months, however the terminal building will remain open to the public throughout the works. All ferry journeys to and from Islay will now operate from Port Askaig.

PORTREE

PORTREE High School pupils were given a first-hand experience of police drug abuse enforcement when Northern Constabulary officers took a sniffer dog to the school last week.

They visited a number of classes, answering questions and giving demonstrations of the dog's capabilities. Sergeant Andrew Shaw said: 'Visits such as this are a regular occurrence around the Highlands and Islands. It must be stressed that this visit was not a reaction to a problem, but a pro-active educational measure, aimed at preserving our area's relatively low crime rate.'

ARISAIG

HELEN Race gave an interesting demonstration of Batik at the Arisaig SWRI meeting in Astley hall on Thursday March 17. Members made cards from their wax and dye designs.

Competitions: Cream jug: 1 Margaret MacEachern; 2 June Cairns; 3 Daphne Heaps. Cold sweet: 1 Margaret MacEachern; 2 Helen Lamb; 3 Anne Cameron. Raffle winners were Helen Lamb and Winnie MacDonald.

BROADFORD



Hair-raising: Broadford Co-op worker James.

A FORMER Broadford Primary School pupil has sacrificed his flowing locks to help cut down on vandalism at his old school.

Part-time Broadford Co-op worker and Portree Learning Centre student James Wildgoose raised £500 in sponsorship towards the installation of a CCTV system. Broadford Co-op manager Marjorie Fraser said a raffle and buckets at the till had all helped to meet the £2,600 cost, but 17-year-old Duanan lad James' hair-raising stunt was the best yet. She said: 'We are very proud of James and we all think he looks great.'

Broadford head teacher Gordon Wyness said the new playground was being using as a 'drinking den' by local youths and broken glass from smashed bottles was posing a threat to the children.

ISLAY LETTER

Guardsman remembered

FOUR members of the Hamilton family from Port Ellen attended a special ceremony at the Palace of Holyrood on March 18 where they were presented with the Elizabeth Cross and Scroll marking the tragic death of their brother George, a Scots Guardsman, killed while on active service in Northern Ireland in 1971.

George was among the first of the British soldiers to be killed in the province and his death cast a dark pall over the island community and the village of Port Ellen in particular where his parents and siblings lived.

Attending the Holyrood presentation were George's brothers Alastair, now resident in Langbank, Renfrewshire, Islay, who lives in East Kilbride, Andrew, a staff member at Laphroaig Distillery, and their sister Nancy, who now lives in Elgin. The Cross and Scroll were handed over to the family by the Duke of Kent, Colonel in Chief of the Scots Guards.

The Elizabeth Cross was inaugurated by the Queen in 2009 and is granted to the next of kin of servicemen and women who died during operations or were killed by terrorist activities since the Second World War.

Families receive a large version of the Cross and a pin-on miniature, along with a Memorial Scroll signed by the Monarch. While the Hamilton family continue to mourn the loss of a well-loved brother, they take further comfort from the fact that George's supreme sacrifice is not forgotten.

Postmistress honoured

PORT Ellen's postmistress Florence Gray has been looking after the postal needs of her customers for the past two decades.

Her dedication has now been recognised by the Royal Mail with the presentation of a plaque and pin badge marking her 20 years' diligent service.

Florence's efforts have also been poetically praised by award-winning Islay-born poet James Knox Whittet who has presented her with a poem specially penned in her honour.

The postmistress first operated from the Post Office premises at the junction of Charlotte Street and Frederick Crescent. Ten years ago, she bought the former grocery outlet owned by the MacTaggart family in Frederick Crescent and while Post Office services have greatly altered in that time, her interest, friendly advice and assistance have remained unabated. Florence is also a talented artist and illustrator and is the current chairperson of the Féis Ile committee which organises the annual Festival of Music and Malt.

Church renovations

ST COLUMBA'S Episcopal Church at Bridgend, better known locally as the 'Red

Church because of the colour of its distinctive roof tiles, is undergoing renovation.

So far, the work has entailed the refurbishment of the roof, the installation of a new heating system and internal alterations to comply with disability access. This first phase has cost around £50,000, the majority of which has been generously donated by the Schroder family of Dunloskit.

Currently ongoing is the second phase of the renovation which includes building an extension to house a disabled toilet, a small kitchen and external disabled access. This work is likely to cost £15,000 and a number of fundraising events are planned to help pay for it. The first of these will be a 'Hymns of the Season' programme in the church on April 15 at 7pm.

The admission is £3 and the singing will be accompanied on the Compton Extension organ recently gifted to the church by the Cathedral of the Isles in Millport on the Isle of Cumbrae.

When the renovations are completed, it is hoped the church will be used by the wider community as well as for eumenical purposes. The 'Red Church' presently hosts worship for the island's Roman Catholic congregation.

Leabhar Mòr exhibition

TWENTY artworks from 'An Leabhar Mòr', the Great Book of Gaelic, will go on display at Ionad Chaluim Chille Ile as part of the international tour of the specially commissioned works.

The official opening of the exhibition takes place tomorrow, April 1, and among those attending, including singers and instrumentalists, will be award-winning Gaelic poet and one of the project's key contributors Aonghas Dubh Mhic Neacail.

The Leabhar Mòr has been constantly touring throughout the world since it was launched nine years ago by Proiseact nan Ealan. It features the works of more than 200 Gaelic poets, visual artists and calligraphers from Scotland and Ireland and provides a major contemporary artwork in the form of a visual anthology. More information on the local exhibition can be obtained from Proiseact nan Ealan or by contacting ICCI manager Neil Woodrow at niall.woodrow@groupwise.uhi.ac.uk.

Silver wedding

SINCERE congratulations to Elizabeth, nee Crawford, and Malcolm Campbell, both of Bowmore, who celebrated 25 years of marriage on March 27. Now living in Erskine, they are both well-known in Highland circles in Glasgow and beyond. Elizabeth is an accomplished singer and member of Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir while Malcolm is the current president of the Glasgow Islay Association. Everyone wishes them many further happy and healthy days together. Blessings.

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

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Election candidate victim of racist remarks

AN OBAN man who shouted racist abuse at Labour's candidate in the Scottish election, Mick Rice, during a rally in the town on Saturday has been fined £400.

Andrew Harper, aged 22, pled guilty to a racially aggravated breach of the peace when he appeared before Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

The court heard that Harper swore, shouted and repeatedly uttered racist remarks to Mr Rice, who is originally from England, as he addressed a crowd at Station Square in the town centre.

Harper, of 6F Scalpay Terrace, Soroba, Oban, also attempted to disconnect the microphone Mr Rice was using.

Defence agent Duncan Durbin told the court Harper was not a political activist and had no previous dealings with Mr Rice.

Mr Durbin said Harper had a lot to drink before the incident.

"It started off as heckling but went far beyond that. He became increasingly aggressive, showing animosity towards Mr Rice, which escalated."

"Mr Harper is shame-faced and embarrassed of what he said."

In fining Harper, Sheriff Douglas Small said he regarded any kind of racist comment as a matter of great seriousness.

Carrier creates new 'gateway'

LOGANAIR has created a dedicated 'Gateway to the Highlands and Islands' at Glasgow Airport, consolidating the entire operation in one area.

From Monday, all of the Flybe franchise carrier's flights will depart from gates one, two and three, including the Twin Otter flights to Barra, Campbeltown and Tiree, which formerly flew from gates 18 and 20.

Jonathan Hinkles, Loganair's chief operating officer, said: "The changes at Glasgow are all part of Loganair's commitment to offering the highest standard of service to our customers."

Group's delight at hats and headwear

OBAN and District Needlework Group met in March to hear an interesting talk by Yvette Jelks, of Edinburgh, designer of couture hats and headwear for celebrities and royalty.

Yvette covered the background of how she became interested in this field and the history of hats through the ages, as well as the various techniques of construction.

Light relief came as she had everyone trying on various hats, explaining why they were chosen for a particular style.

The next meeting, on Tuesday April 12, at 7.30pm, at the Guide Hall, on Soroba Road, takes the form of the annual general meeting, with a talk being given by June Stowe entitled Stitches through Magazines 1900 - 1970. Everyone welcome.

Volunteers tackle 'junk' woodland in Soroba

Residents' efforts earn police praise

A TEAM of volunteers has been making sure residents are seeing the wood for the trees in Soroba.

After years of putting up with drinking and possible drug abuse in the woodland next to their homes, residents decided enough was enough.

The results of all their hard labour is a safer place for children to play and a nicer environment to live in.

Ringleader George Berry said: "We have a dream here for this area next to Colonsay Terrace."

"We want it to be a place of safety where children can play and neighbours can meet. Up until we started this work it was a dumping ground."

"We decided to do something because week after week something untoward was happening right next to our houses."

"We didn't know what it was

REPORT
by LOUISE LEE
llee@obantimes.co.uk

because the trees were so thick and there was so much junk lying about.

"A team of us got together to move all the extra trees and pull out the junk. It has given us a sense of pride about the place."

George and his team worked all

"We want it to be a place of safety where children can play."

George Berry, Soroba resident.

the way up to Gillies Rock where they found a few surprising items. George said: "There was a drinks cabinet, a table and chairs and a double bed up there. I daren't think what they were used for. We have found endless bottles of alcohol and some evidence of people using drugs."

Chief Inspector Glen Bland, of Oban Police, said: "I would like to praise the residents of Soroba for getting this project off the ground. They have made an incredible difference to the whole area."

"I can confirm that officers will be paying particular attention to the area all the way up to Gillies Rock. We will be putting on extra patrols especially over the weekend. Anyone discovered breaking the law will be prosecuted."

Argyll and Bute Council has agreed to come and flatten down the area.



Volunteers Darryl McLaughlin, Nathan Cummings, Bob Brady and George Berry tackle woodland on Colonsay Terrace. 16_113soroba1

Defendant's behaviour was caught on camera

A MAN who 'terrorised' the neighbours of a house he frequently visited and stole jewellery has narrowly escaped a prison sentence.

Scott MacCallum was placed on probation for a year, fined £990 and ordered to carry out 180 hours of community service when he appeared before Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

MacCallum, aged 28, of 11a Longdale Terrace, Oban, admitted uttering threats of violence and behaving in an abusive manner causing fear and alarm on two separate occasions in October last year.

He also pled guilty to stealing jewellery from a house in Oban on January 4.

The court heard that MacCallum had repeatedly behaved in an antisocial way towards a family outside their Oban home, causing them to fit a camera to the exterior of their property to record his behaviour.

Defence agent Duncan Durbin told the court that the offences occurred when MacCallum, who is currently receiving treatment for drug addiction, went 'off the rails'.

In sentencing MacCallum, Sheriff Douglas Small said MacCallum's actions were "not acceptable behaviour in a civilised society."

Classical pianist to support Steinway fundraising bid

ONE OF Scotland's finest classical musicians is to play a recital at Crear, near Kilmory, in a bid to help the studio keep one of the finest pianos in Britain - a 9ft 6in Steinway D concert grand - in Mid Argyll.

Steven Osborne, a critically acclaimed concert pianist, will give a fundraising recital on the piano on Sunday April 3.

The charity, which has had the piano on loan for the last six years, has been asked to buy it outright or lose it.

Faced with a bill of £36,000, Mr Osborne offered to perform at Crear's studio, where he will play Schubert's last three piano sonatas.

Helen Maddox of Crear said: "It will be a unique privilege to hear an exceptional pianist like Steven Osborne play these wonderful works on Crear's exquisite piano in its intimate and spectacular setting. What better way to highlight the piano's extraordinary qualities and raise the support needed to keep this special instrument in Mid Argyll?"

"Another report was from a driver from Derbyshire who was forced to brake suddenly because the driver of the suspect car had carried out such a dangerous overtaking manoeuvre it nearly caused a head-on smash."

"There is no doubt in my mind that this person has no regard for the safety of other road users and it is only going to be a matter of time before his luck runs out and he causes a serious accident which could well end up with a fatality."

Anyone with any information should contact Central Scotland Police on 01786 456000.

There were concerns that, after the second bad winter in a row, some species may have suffered declines, but rather than disappearing from the gardens, many species have become more visible, suggesting signs of a good breeding season and access to food.

Locals spotted an average of 13 chaffinches per garden and were present in 95 per cent of gardens.

Also spotted in Argyll and Bute were, in declining order of frequency: house sparrows, blue tits, blackbirds, great tits, starlings, robins, coal tits, dunlocks and goldfinches.

Alcoholic 'ashamed' of his behaviour

A MAN who placed a woman and her two children in a state of fear and alarm has been fined £370.

George Kennedy, of 43 Achlonan, Taynuilt, pled guilty to a breach of the peace when he appeared at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

Kennedy, aged 34, admitted to kicking a door, shouting abuse and behaving in a threatening manner at a house in Barcaldine on March 24.

Kennedy, who is receiving treatment for an alcohol addiction, told the court: "I am ashamed and embarrassed by my behaviour that night."

Coll salmon farm 'would boost island economy'

THE BURGEONING salmon industry could deliver a major jobs boost to the islands of the Minch thanks to a £40million expansion programme by Marine Harvest.

Demand for Scottish salmon is growing by eight per cent per annum, and is set to increase even more thanks to a historic trade agreement with China permitting imports of the fish.

And with an estimated 190,000 tonne undersupply recorded for 2010, the need for expansion is growing.

Fifteen open seawater sites in the Minch are currently being assessed by Marine Harvest as part of the programme, designed to up production by 20,000 tonnes per annum.

Already, two locations have been identified as preferred

locations, at Hellisay and South Uist, with planning applications submitted.

The isles of Muck and Canna have been marked as having suitable conditions for a farm, while Coll and Barra could also be prime sites for developments.

Demand
Business support manager at Marine Harvest Steve Bracken said: "The demand is there and it is global. There's no doubt about it - the Chinese market is huge."

"The plan would be that by the end of next year, we'd have all the permissions in place. It's quite a lengthy process though."

"We've identified 15 potential locations and for a while now we've been going out and monitoring these sites for suitability."

"Now it's a case of whittling the

list down to see which sites are best."

"The expansion will increase our output from 40,000 tonnes per year to 60,000."

Representatives from Marine Harvest visited Coll this month to give a presentation to the community council on the potential benefits of a farm on the north east of the island.

They say a farm on the island could create six full time and two part time jobs, bringing at least £250,000 in wages to the island economy alone.

The farm would ideally have a shore base on the island, while there could be potential for an island smokehouse, or other associated business, while services required by the farm will be met by local enterprise.

A community fund could also be established with an annual donation from the company, while regular visits to the island from Marine Harvest employees, auditors etc would increase the number of visitors to the island that require accommodation, such as bed and breakfasts.

Update
The company will return to the island in May to deliver an update.

Community council secretary Alex Maclean-Bristol said: "The jobs would be fantastic for the island and the farm would be pretty much out of sight, north east of Arnigour."

"That's also where two lobster boats fish though, so they may have concerns but it's too early to say what will happen."

Hunt continues for Killin danger driver

POLICE say it is only a matter of time before someone is killed if the motorist wreaking havoc between Killin and Callander isn't stopped.

The car, described as a dark coloured and relatively new hatchback similar to a Ford Focus or Vauxhall Astra, has been at the centre of a number of complaints from drivers who have nearly suffered a potentially deadly accident by the way it is being driven.

The driver, thought to be a man in his 20s, travels the road most nights, but particularly on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays between 7pm-9pm.

However, even off-duty police officers have been unable to note the registration, so bad was the driving.

Lochearnhead's community police officer Andy Ward has first hand experience of how dangerous the man's driving is, as does his Killin colleague Iona Frickleton.

He said: "Whilst off duty and travelling south along the side of Loch Lubnaig, a car fitting the description went past me so fast I was unable to see the registration plate. The manoeuvre the driver took was to drive straight across all the bends."

"On another occasion when PC Frickleton was off duty, she was almost blinded by a driver as he tailgated her through Glen Ogle to such a degree that she was only able to obtain a partial registration number."

"The driver - again - overtook on a blind corner."

Reports from innocent motorists who have had close shaves with the driver have been even more alarming.

PC Ward said: "On one occasion, having over-taken another car in a dangerous place, the driver of the second car had to stop for five minutes to get over the shock."

"Another report was from a driver from Derbyshire who was forced to brake suddenly because the driver of the suspect car had carried out such a dangerous overtaking manoeuvre it nearly caused a head-on smash."

"There is no doubt in my mind that this person has no regard for the safety of other road users and it is only going to be a matter of time before his luck runs out and he causes a serious accident which could well end up with a fatality."

Anyone with any information should contact Central Scotland Police on 01786 456000.

New rules could prove costly to boat operators

RULES due to come into force in late 2011 will mean sea vessel operators are required to spend huge amounts of cash on safety equipment.

New regulations will affect all small commercial vessels carrying 12 passengers or less which currently operate under one of the blue, red, yellow or brown code.

The rules will involve all passengers and crew travelling in passenger vessels in waters of a sea surface temperature of 10°C or less.

They will now be required to wear an

approved immersion suit, dry suit or other efficient garment onboard.

Mark Towl, of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Policy Unit, told Argyll Charter Boat Association (ACBA) the new regulations would "reduce the likelihood of hypothermia should the wearer enter the water."

A spokesman for ACBA said: "We fully recognise passenger safety is a major priority however we have asked the MCA to justify the reasons for these draconian and perhaps

unworkable regulations. All small commercial vessels are required to have a suitable life raft aboard and suggest a life raft should be the first line of defence during an incident.

A life raft is a closed environment having individuals jump into the water is illogical.

"ACBA is unaware of any major incident in recent years where a small commercial vessel has required passengers to enter the water."

Sea temperatures in Scotland are generally 10°C or below from mid/late November to mid/late May.

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Dalmally's new centre opens its doors

AFTER a few 'hiccups', Dalmally Community Centre got off to a flying start with two open days last weekend.

Volunteers said that representatives from the whole community had turned out to see the new hall.

The hall's completion certificate was issued only a week ago. Since then the whole community has rallied round to throw open the doors.

Even a few passing tourists got in on the act to see the inside of the Tardis-like hall and all the facilities it has to offer.

Excited
Graham Mckechnie, community company chairman, said: "We have a really good turn out from the whole community."

"People are really excited to see the hall open at last. There have been a few hiccups in getting the building open."

"Already people are signing up for clubs and activities that will take place inside the centre."

"We are looking at anything from a badminton club, cinema nights, carpet bowling - we will consider almost anything."

"Everyone who has helped with this project should be pleased with their efforts. It is an absolute credit to the village."



These young lads took a break from a game of badminton to pose with volunteers outside the Dalmally Community Centre. 16_113dalmally1

Another volunteer said: "We will need 14 days a week if we are to fit in all the activities people would like to have in the hall."

Residents in Dalmally should be rightly pleased with their efforts to open the hall. It replaced a dilapidated building that was no longer fit for purpose.

The plan was initially to build it in the year 2000 as a Millennium project.

To book the hall or for more details phone Rory MacKinnon on 01838 200696 or visit www.dalmally.org.

£900,000 UHI project could establish Western Isles as wave power centre

THE Western Isles could be set to become a centre of excellence for wave power thanks to a £900,000 University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) project.

Led by Lewis Castle College on the Isle of Lewis, part of the UHI, the project aims to determine the potential of marine energy to the west of the Outer Hebrides.

The UHI will undertake seabed surveys, log wave dates - both near and offshore - and create models showing the interaction of multiple devices and their impact on the electrical grid.

The project is funded by the Scottish Funding Council and will be carried out in conjunction with a number of stakeholders, including Aquamarine Power, SSE Renewables, Scottish Power, E.ON, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and the Galson Estate Trust.

Martin McAdam, chief executive of lead industry partner Aquamarine Power, said: "This research will identify clearly the wave energy potential to the west of the Hebrides and highlight some of the medium-term constraints, such as electricity-grid infrastructure."

CHILDREN'S COMPETITION

Design our **150th anniversary logo!**

It's the 150th anniversary of The Oban Times this year and to celebrate we want you to design a special anniversary logo.

There are two categories, under 12s and under 16s. An overall winner and a winner from each category will be chosen. As well as prizes for the winners and their school, the logo will appear in The Oban Times for the rest of the year!

To enter, please send your design on an A4 sheet with your name, age, school and contact details to Oban Times Logo Competition, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB or by email to competitions@obantimes.co.uk by Monday May 9.

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Bid to save Caol centre 'off to a flying start'

VOLUNTEERS working on a masterplan to ensure Caol Community Centre (CCC) continues as a major social resource are reporting solid progress.

At their second full meeting last week, the 12-strong CCC Steering Group heard 'very positive' reports from its four-member lunch club, activities and buildings sub-groups on how new activities and opportunities could transform the closure-threatened facility.

The project will now move forward to consider a full feasibility study and business plan. Voluntary Action Lochaber is supporting the group, while further expertise will be drawn in to ensure the steering group and the wider community have the information they need to find a sustainable way of operating the centre in the long term.

Acting steering group chairperson Bill Clark said the project was off to 'a tremendous start'.

'We will be now be taking

advice from a wide range of professionals to ensure that whatever structure is chosen will offer the best possible chance for the community to manage and control the future of this key building.'

Councillor Clark confirmed that a new chairperson would be elected from within the 12 group members at the end of April.

Paying tribute to all those involved, he said: 'The group is made up of young energetic residents and those who have spent a lifetime supporting their communities, all with excellent ideas. Their enthusiasm, abilities and sheer determination will, in my view, provide a much improved Caol Community Centre.'

Cash-strapped Highland Council is looking to offload CCC - the only one in the Highlands funded by social work services.

The council wants local people to take over the venue and the old folks lunch club, which cost £120,000 to run annually.



Mark Taylor of Rio Tinto Alcan and Lochaber Archaeological Society members David MacFarlane and Robert Cairns inspect the bomb that hit Lochaber Smelter but failed to explode. 10. 113bom01

Indoor pitch plans score highly with local clubs

THE NEWLY formed Lochaber Sports Association (LSA) is formulating plans to create a major new indoor training facility in Fort William.

Officials say they are responding to a 'very urgent need' expressed by several local clubs for an alternative playing surface and training area during harsh winter weather, and have been given permission by Highland Council to look into the viability of a site in central Fort William.

The planned astro turf pitch will be 60metres by 40metres and suitable for football, shinty and rugby, as well as a variety of other sports such

as athletics, archery and golf practice.

LSA is canvassing support for the idea by issuing a questionnaire to all 41 member clubs to gauge their interest.

LSA chairwoman Jane Blanchard said: 'We are confident that we will be able to find the funding to build a suitable facility, but our challenge will be to maintain and sustain it during the years that follow.'

'We will not be able to afford staff, so we are looking at ways that we can run it using existing administrative structures and a system of volunteers.'

Archaeologist gives last talk of season

LOCHABER Local History Society will welcome Lochaline resident, archaeologist Jennie Robertson, for the last talk of the season next Thursday.

Ms Robertson's talk, entitled 'From hunter-gatherers to charcoal burners - Archaeology in Morvern' will focus on several sites the society will be visiting on its annual outing on Saturday May 14.

Everyone is welcome to the lecture in the Alexandra Hotel, Fort William, at 8pm.

Archaeology society's smelter war project nears completion

LOCHABER Archaeology Society (LAS) has almost completed a project uncovering military installations designed to protect the British Aluminium Company Lochaber smelter during the war.

Society volunteers have mapped out gun positions and army camps around the factory and a decoy factory site at nearby Torlundy, where extensive metal detecting surveys were carried out. The decoy plant was built to draw German bombers away from the real works but was not totally successful, LAS chairman Robert Cairns told *The Oban Times*.

He said: 'During December 1940 a German bomber crew dropped several 500kg bombs on the aluminium smelter, one of which went through the power house roof and landed next to No.5 generator.

Fortunately it failed to explode and the shell of the bomb now sits next to the entrance to the power station.

'On March 13, 1941, a large amount of bombs were dropped.

'Several exploded in the River Lochy and one bomb destroyed the air raid shelter at the BA Club. Two bombs exploded near the factory road end and several exploded at the rear off the powerhouse on the moor.'

LAS will now produce a pamphlet detailing the findings for distribution throughout Lochaber.

Mr Cairns thanked the Scottish Community Foundation, Richard Wallis and Mark Taylor, of Rio Tinto Alcan, and Kenneth Knott, of the Forestry Commission Scotland, for their support.

Crown Estate under fire over seabed control

CROWN Estate 'exploitation' of the Highlands has to end, Highland Council leader Michael Foxley told a high-powered UK Government delegation at Inverness this week.

Councillor Foxley, who has argued for three decades that Highland communities should control their local seabed, told Scottish select affairs committee members Ian Davidson, Alan Reid, Fiona O'Donnell and Lindsay Roy the Crown Estate's failure to consult local people could not continue.

Others at the Kingmills Hotel summit joined the chorus for change, including the Tenant Farmers' Association and Community Land Scotland.

The Crown Estate, which claims the rights to 6,000 miles of Scotland's coastline and seabed out to the 12-mile nautical limit, takes in millions of pounds of income annually from diverse interests such as Lochaber Yacht Club and Marine Harvest.

New offshore renewable energy schemes, Councillor Foxley says, will make the Crown Estate a

By STEPHEN NORRIS
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

mint - while leaving coastal communities excluded.

He told *The Oban Times*: 'The time has come for major change. The Crown Estate is making commercial decisions only to maximise their profits.'

'The seabed is a Scottish public asset, therefore the Crown Estate should come and discuss with local communities whether they are interested in owning or operating a tidal scheme themselves, or in partnership with a commercial operator. Currently they have not, and are not, doing that.'

'At Kylesha, if the local community was heavily involved with the financial benefits of the scheme and their children could get jobs in the future, they would be able to resolve any infrastructure problems such as how power lines make landfall and connect to the grid. These issues profoundly affect local crofters, farmers and estates.'

He added: 'We want jobs for the

current generation and training for the next generation, so people have work in their own communities. We need to make these jobs available throughout the Highlands and Islands for the current and future workforce. If we don't get these sorts of local benefits it is only exploitation.'

'I think local people will be antagonised if they are not involved. We have had hundreds of years of this in the Highlands.'

Headed: 'I think the committee listened very carefully and I'm sure our criticisms of the current activities of the Crown Estate will be fully investigated.'

'The committee will come back to the Highlands and visit examples of [Crown Estate] good and bad practice in late spring or early summer.'

The Glenelg and Arnisdale Development Trust told *The Oban Times* in December they were never consulted over the proposed tidal turbine scheme off Kylesha.

The Crown Estate was unavailable for comment at the time of going to press.

Fort William gardeners gear up for spring with allotment open day

GREEN FINGERED locals in Fort William are gearing up for spring with an open day at their allotment area, when they will unveil their new polytunnel.

Local growers' group Sunny Lochaber United Gardeners (SLUG) co-ordinated the project to turn a barren hillside above Plantation into a patchwork of vegetable allotments and garden sheds last year.

The open day at the Cow Hill site this Saturday will allow anyone with an interest to have a look at the facilities, which include sheds on each allotment, a store/office/meeting area cabin, a car park and toilets with a special compost-making unit.

The day will also see new willow shelter fencing being erected around the 18 plots.

All the allotments have been assigned, and there is a waiting list of eight or nine names. SLUG committee member Kirsty Mann told *The Oban Times* expansion of the site is on the cards, but not for a while yet. She said: 'There's probably not going

to be any expansion this year, we're just going to concentrate on consolidating what we've started.'

'The biggest benefit I think has been to families and to retired people. They're learning a useful skill, socialising with local people and it's healthy.'

'It's got quite a few folk out in the garden, because a number of them don't have their own gardens and now they're fulfilling a life long ambition of growing their own vegetables.'

A number of local groups who are setting up similar schemes have visited Cow Hill to get tips, including people from Lochaline, Skye and Mull. A group in Inverlochy are in the early stages of setting up an allotment scheme of their own and have been in touch with SLUG. 'We're just part of the whole wider allotment movement', Kirsty said, 'and there is definitely still the enthusiasm there.'

SLUG will hold an election to vote in a new chairperson this week as previous chair Martyn Calum recently resigned from the post.

Cuillin climbers' fundraising group reaches milestone

A FUNDRAISING drive to erect a bronze sculpture in memory of two famous Cuillin climbers has passed the £85,000 mark.

The cash means the Collie and Mackenzie Sculpture Group can landscape the gateway into the Cuillin at Sligachan this summer.

Fundraising is ongoing for paths, a stone seat with bronze relief panel and the sculpture itself.

Scouser man John Mackenzie and climbing companion Norman Collie brought international fame to Skye through their daring exploits in the Cuillin. More information at www.skysculpture.com.



Bruno Berardelli celebrates his firm's success at the awards ceremony.

Innovative Lochaber energy firm wins top industry award

A LOCHABER company has beaten off competition from much bigger rivals across the UK to land a major industry award.

Torlundy-based HWEnergy, which specialises in helping customers reduce carbon emissions and heating bills through biomass heating, was named Building Services Company of the Year at the prestigious Specialists Awards 2011 in London last week.

The packed awards ceremony at the Park Lane Hilton Hotel, saw HWEnergy defeat six other companies to claim the top prize.

The award, based on a conversion of Hanover Housing's Walter Cameron Way, in Corpach, from oil fired to biomass heating, reinforces HWEnergy's credentials as one of Scotland's most innovative

renewable energy businesses. A delighted managing director Bruno Berardelli said: 'We had a great night in London. For us to win the award was superb recognition for what we have achieved.'

'The recent announcement about the Renewable Heat Incentive, which will pay non-domestic customers for switching to biomass heating, is extremely exciting and will help our business grow to be even more successful in future.'

'This award also recognises Hanover Housing's proactive approach to rising oil heating costs, and their commitment to cut carbon and help alleviate fuel poverty for their residents.'

The Specialists Awards are run by Construction News.



Members of the Oban and Lorn Tourist Association enjoyed a day out at Arduaine Garden and Loch Melfort Hotel. 16. 1130at1

Tourism operators to spread the word

A LEAFLET exchange is set to provide an easy way for those who are in regular contact with visitors to brush up on what's new in Oban and Lorn.

It will be held in the Sports Hall of Atlantis Leisure from 10.30am on Sunday, April 17, when a range of 2011 leaflets and flyers from key visitor attractions, activity providers,

restaurants, tours and taxi firms will be available.

Open to all

The event is open to anyone in tourism - entry is by business card or leaflet and the hall will be open from 9am for anyone who wants to set up a stall or simply drop off their leaflets.

Linda Battison chairwoman of Oban and Lorn Tourist As-

sociation said: 'This is a golden opportunity for businesses familiarise themselves with all that's on offer for 2011. We hope that everyone involved in tourism will pop in from 10.30am until 1.30pm.'

For further information please contact Linda Battison on 01631 564501 or l.battison@oban.org.uk.

NEWSDESK
01631 568000

5 Years Ago

Those Were The Days The Oban Times

Thursday, March 30, 2006

Globetrotter Michael Palin backs £50,000 charity bid

THE CELTIC Pillage 2005 has been backed this year by Monty Python and globetrotter Michael Palin in a bid to raise £50,000 for a children's charity.

The Pillage Malt is a combination of 12-year-old whiskies from all Islay distilleries as well as Jura and Bushmills Distillery in Northern Ireland.

The Celtic Pillagers, made up of a crew of modern-day Vikings, pillaged each distillery for 40 litres of 12-year-old cask strength whisky. The whiskies were then left to marry over several months and was bottled at Bruichladdich Distillery last week.

The crew rowed and sailed with their precious cargo to Northern Ireland's Antrim coast, 20 miles from home, in force eight gales across the North Channel.

There are 50 numbered bottles of the exclusive Pillager Malt and organisers hope to raise £50,000 for Children's Hospice Association of Scotland (CHAS) and the charity based in Northern Ireland.

Mr Palin said: 'This is the drink that gives

pillaging a good name.

'There are few things I'd row through force eight gales for but a malt whisky from Islay, Jura and Ireland are three of them.'

Mr Palin got a taste of bottle number one. He said: 'This Pillage Malt is terrific stuff. Never has more trouble been taken to provide a fine whisky.'

He added: 'Do whatever you can to pillage the 2005 Pillaged Celtic Malt and make a lot of children happy too.'

Hospital to remain open after nurses increase their hours

GLENCOE Hospital is to remain open for the next three months after nurses agreed to increase their hours.

The geriatric unit was last week threatened with a six-month closure because of staffing shortages and problems recruiting staff.

This week, after talks with NHS Highland, nurses at Glencoe Hospital agreed to increase their contracted hours for three months to help keep staffing levels safe for patients.

Heidi May, nursing director for NHS Highland, said: 'I am very impressed by the commitment

shown by the staff. I am grateful to them and their local managers for their sterling efforts and hard work in the past few days, to achieve safe staffing levels.'

Work on Oban's new school campus delayed

WORK on Oban's new shared primary school campus has been delayed and Drummore Learning Centre will not be moving into a new building in May.

Argyll and Bute Council's Public Private Partnership (PPP) with ABC Schools project will see Rockfield and St. Columba's primary schools share a campus with Drummore pupils. As *The Oban Times* went to press an Argyll and Bute Council spokesman admitted that the work was 'not proceeding at the pace anticipated by the construction timetable.'

The spokesman said: 'The council was advised that the planned decant of Drummore Learning into the new campus on May 5 will be delayed.'

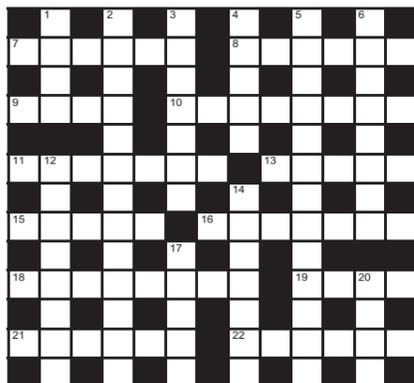
'The council is awaiting a detailed revised schedule for completion.'

The new Oban campus will see each of the schools maintain separate identities.

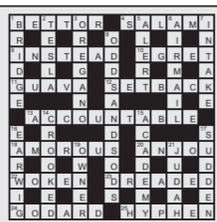
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

- Across**
- 7 News office (6)
 - 8 Chewy sweet (6)
 - 9 Strengthen (up) beast? (4)
 - 10 Decision on your preference (8)
 - 11 Defamatory statement (7)
 - 13 Mineral (5)
 - 15 Iron (5)
 - 16 Citrus fruit (7)
 - 18 An early French settler (8)
 - 19 Willingly (4)
 - 21 Ballroom dance (6)
 - 22 Pulse (6)

- Down**
- 1 Square of a square (4)
 - 2 Aware of one (4-9)
 - 3 Pleasing to the ear (7)
 - 4 Bury (5)
 - 5 Endocrine (8,5)
 - 6 Severe attack (8)
 - 12 Primitive (8)
 - 14 Feeling (7)
 - 17 Butter up? (5)
 - 20 Give off, as light (4)



Last Week's Solution



Nurse Julie's dedicated service wins top award

A HIGHLAND Hospice nurse's dedicated service has earned her one of the profession's top awards.

At the International Journal of Palliative Nursing Awards 2011 in London last week, Julie Bishop, aged 49, of Avoch, was named Palliative Care Nurse of the Year for her work in expanding the charity's services.

Julie has been lead nurse in a pilot project to take the Hospice's day patient service



Highland Hospice nurse Julie Bishop: Palliative Care Nurse of the Year.

to four communities across the Highlands for the past two years. She and her team set up four Day Hospice services - in Fort William, Portree, Thurso and Invergordon - each tailored to the community it serves.

Julie ensured the service would complement existing provision and spent many hours meeting with healthcare professionals, potential patients and voluntary organisations.

As a result, the outreach services are different depending on location and are delivered at places varying from hotels to a flat to the local community hospital.

Julie said: 'I am absolutely thrilled to have won this award. I am so passionate about my work at Highland Hospice, and I have found my time on the outreach project extremely rewarding. I work with a fantastic team and am really proud of what we have achieved in the last two years.'

Senior Sister at Highland Hospice, Susan Smith, said Julie's work had made 'a real difference' to the lives of patients who live in remote and rural areas.

'We are all very proud of her achievement,' she said.

Council leader's fight to save tugs continues

HIGHLAND Council leader Michael Foxley has written to UK Shipping Minister Mike Penning to suggest ways of retaining emergency towing vessels at Stornoway and Lerwick.

The council has already expressed fears the tugs' withdrawal could see ships in distress drifting ashore in the absence of suitable towing vessels.

Councillor Foxley says if the tugs are axed, North Sea towing vessels - the nearest available - would be one to two days steaming distance away from

Scotland's Atlantic coast and may not arrive in time to prevent a major human and environmental disaster. Alternative funding, Councillor Foxley suggests in his letter, could come from the Crown Estate's lucrative renewable energy portfolio; increasing salvage fees from 15 to 50 per cent and extra light dues from the General Lighthouse Authority, which is understood to have ring-fenced cash available for aids to navigation. The UK Tory-LibDem Government claims the tugs do not provide value for money to the public purse.

Climate cash bonanza gives community groups a boost



Staff and committee members from Sustainable Uist, who were among the groups to receive a grant from the Climate Challenge Fund.

Mallaig hall lifeline to cut big bills

MALLAIG Community Centre may be well used - but the committee running it was being crippled with high energy bills, writes Stephen Norris.

Now a £14,659 lifeline grant from the Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) will allow the popular venue's management to make a host of energy-saving improvements.

Loft spaces will be re-insulated and low energy bulbs installed. While movement sensors will automatically switch off lights in rooms not in use. New sensory timers will cut out heating systems once optimum room temperatures are reached.

Even fly smokers from the adjoining West Highland College building are being targeted in the energy-saving drive.

The nicotine addicts were

allowing precious heat to escape by leaving the centre's back door open in all weathers - but an alarm will be fitted to stop the practice.

MCC chairwoman Jacqueline MacDonald said the CCF bid was only lodged after initial plans for wind turbines next the hall met with a frosty response locally. With the grant approved, big savings are in the pipeline.

'People felt energy usage in the hall was quite wasteful and felt it would be better to try to save energy rather than try to generate our own,' she told The Oban Times.

'In the worst year we had a bill of £10,000. This year it was £7,000, but only because we were very careful.'

'Now we reckon that once we make these improvements we

will save two tonnes of carbon per year and save at least 15 per cent. That would bring our bill down to £6,000 - and that's a conservative estimate.'

Ms MacDonald said the hall was busy - but only because the committee chose not to reflect full electricity costs in their charges.

She said: 'The whist club meets on Monday night and they're lucky if they get 12 folk. If they all pay in £1 and we charge £12 that's fine - but if we doubled prices it would stop pretty soon.'

'We don't want to put prices out of people's league. So we have to become more energy efficient. People were switching on the convector boost in the rooms and leaving it on when there was no need for it, so we will put in sensory timers which cut out after a certain amount of time. It

will be the same in the hall, where there are eight 3KW heaters.' She added: 'We think also that people will be more aware of the need to save energy. People coming in through from the college next door to smoke outside had got into the habit of leaving the back door open, irrespective of the weather.'

'But a piercing alarm every time they open the door should put a stop to that. With the door closed the hall will be warmer, and we will be able to turn down the heating and save even more money.'

The upgrade will also see all 150-watt bulbs and strip lights through the building replaced with 20 low energy bulbs using one fifth of the electricity. All the work should be completed by the winter, Ms MacDonald said.

Funds will cut energy use and promote local food production

COMMUNITY initiatives across Lochaber, Wester Ross and the Western Isles have landed almost £500,000 from a Scottish Government fund designed to cut energy use and promote local food production.

The Climate Challenge Fund, which started in 2008, has handed out more than £8million to groups across the country to help them with their future initiatives in its latest round of grants.

Nine local organisations claimed a share of the grant money, with Barra and Vatersay Community Ltd being awarded £79,800.

Local development officer Gerard MacDonald told *The Oban Times* the group could now progress a number of plans.

He said: 'We want to make improvements to some of the houses on the island. Some houses are very expensive to heat and don't meet the government guidelines to qualify for grants. So we're going to try and look for a novel solution for insulating these homes.'

'We also want to encourage people to use recycling bins on the island more, and to take as much recyclable items out of the rubbish as possible.'

Mr MacDonald continued: 'We plan to go to schools and instil the recycling message in the young people.'

Lochaber Environmental Group was awarded £46,304. Project manager Justine Dunn said they would use the money to continue their RENEW project.

She said: 'We will provide

support to encourage the use of local renewable fuel and energy sources and provide information on insulation and other home energy saving methods.

'We will also create projects to raise awareness with the use of home energy monitors and thermal imaging techniques.'

Sustainable Uist meanwhile received a grant of £153,677, more than any other initiative in the area. They say they will use the money to encourage local food production, improve the energy efficiency of hard to heat houses on the island and improve the transport infrastructure.

Chairman Steve Carter said the group hoped the money could also bring extra employment to the island. He said: 'This is a real endorsement of the hard work that Sustainable Uist has done over the past 12 months. It will move us closer to the ultimate aim of Uist becoming carbon neutral and therefore becoming more environmentally and economically sustainable.'

Other beneficiaries included Applecross Community Company (£57,000); Harris Development Ltd (£28,786); The Knoydart Foundation (£28,241); Morvern Community Development Company (£19,517); Mallaig and Morar Community Centre Association (£14,659) and North Uist Development Company (£10,000).

Police probe possible theft of heating oil

POLICE on Skye are investigating the possible theft of heating oil from an address in the Rhenetra area by Kensalryre, north of Portree, sometime during March.

Further investigations are ongoing and police are appealing for anyone with further information to contact Portree Police Station on 01478 612888 or anonymously or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Upper Achintore paint party appeal

THE UPPER Achintore Regeneration Group in Fort William is looking for local residents to join its 'painting party' on Saturday to help complete its £11,000 amenity area and playground at Banff Crescent.

The group, now into its third year of community projects, hopes as many neighbours as possible will give as little as half an hour of their time to help paint the fence, benches and picnic table.

All materials and equipment will be provided and refreshments will also be on

hand. Group chairman Andrew McHale said: 'We really do need a good turnout on the day to help us finish this job. This is a good, well used community asset and we need to ensure it is well maintained and cared for.'

'The painting event will start at 10am and will run through until 1pm. The council and the Highland Leader project have been very generous in helping us and we are grateful to Councillor Donald Cameron for his ongoing support.'

Bowmore Ben Nevis Challenge

TEAMS of disabled and non-disabled people will set out to scale Ben Nevis in aid of Capability Scotland on Saturday, June 4.

The 2011 Bowmore Ben Nevis Challenge follows the success of the original Challenge in 2008, which saw Britain's first wheelchair-led ascent of the mountain.

The event was the brainchild of BBC TV presenter and ex-SAS major Ken Hames, who will offer his support and expertise to the 12 teams of six led by disabled people with a variety of impairments.

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Showstoppers switch to the catwalk

LOCHABER Showstoppers are taking an evening off their rehearsals for their production of 'Sweet Charity' to appear on a different stage - the catwalk at the M&Co store in Fort William.

Tomorrow evening's charity fashion show will see cast members and friends model everything from beach wear to evening wear in aid of Cancer Research UK and Lochaber Showstoppers.

Doors open at 6pm for a 6.30pm start and tickets are available in store at M&Co.

'Sweet Charity' runs at the Nevis Centre from May 12 to 14.

Bands tune up for spring concert

LOCHABER schools junior and senior wind bands will be performing their spring concert next Wednesday, April 6 in the main hall at Lochaber High School.

The programme will also feature the Big Band as well as many groups and soloists from the school.

Admission is free and a raffle will be held to raise funds for all the bands.

The event, which starts at 7.30pm, will feature the music of, amongst others, Philip Sparke, Bruce Fraser, the Beatles and Deep Purple.



Fort friends dance the night away

Members and supporters of Friends of the Old Fort - FOOF - danced the night away to the strains of Eriskay Lilt at The Moorings Hotel in Banavie on Saturday. The main purpose of the evening was to raise local and national awareness of the Friends' activities and to generate further interest in enhancement projects being carried out voluntarily by FOOF at the Old Fort. The group is pledged to conserve the remains of the 17th century Fort William, a military base built by Cromwell and fortified by William of Orange as the new monarch sought to pacify the Highlands.

All 84 people in attendance on Saturday - several from Edinburgh and North Queensferry - 'had a ball'. As a result, the Friends' coffers benefited by more than £800.

Lochaber Yacht Club gets season underway

LOCHABER Yacht Club got its season underway on Saturday - with Loch Linnhe almost flat calm.

'The barely sighing wind made racing a surprisingly relaxed affair,' member Martin Faulkner said. 'Apparently somebody in one of the dinghies fell asleep!' The club also welcomed Raymond

Leaper of the International Fund for Animal Welfare, who talked on his high seas adventures aboard a whale research yacht. Donnie and Marie Meldrum in B flat won the racing. The club has a few spaces left on its Learn to Sail courses in May. To find out more phone 01397 702370 or 702724.

Music School stars take the stage for spring concert

ST MARGARET'S Church in Roy Bridge will host Lochaber Music School's Spring Concert on Sunday at 3.30pm.

Stars of the show will be the ensembles and soloists who performed so successfully at the recent Lochaber Music Festival.

Lochaber Young Musician of the Year

Helena Rose will play pieces by Bach, Grieg and Tchaikovsky while foot-tapping traditional music from the talented youngsters will also feature. A raffle and baking stall will help raise funds towards the music school's busy programme of classes for over 100 children of all ages.

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New screening test on offer

EXPECTANT mums in the Highlands are to be offered a new screening test for sickle cell and thalassaemia - conditions requiring lifelong specialist care.

Mums to be are being encouraged to contact their midwife as soon as they find out they are pregnant. NHS Highland's Sally Amor said having the tests could inform 'decisions about your care and the care of your baby, both before and after the birth'.

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The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Oban to lead Argyll Gaelic revival?

NEWS that a Gaelic Learning Centre in Oban is in the offing will be widely welcomed.

Many in the Highlands and Islands wish to see their native tongue protected, as the increasing uptake of Gaelic Medium Unit places suggests.

An Argyll-based centre, such as the one proposed for Oban, would fill a gap in the area's Gaelic education provision and give Argyll-based learners easier access to modern resources.

But perhaps in these days of austerity, the use of £280,000 in Oban, as part of a £1m Scottish Government spend on developing the language, will split opinion more than it would have done before the country's recession.

In these times of cuts and financial restraint there will be those who see the plans as a luxury, rather than a necessity.

The chance to make a real difference

THE weight of public opinion seems to be firmly behind plans to redevelop the rundown Argyll Hotel, on Oban's Esplanade. The rapidly deteriorating state of the building has been a bone of contention for quite some time.

Many will question why, when there is a developer ready and willing to carry out the work, it is taking so long to progress a scheme which will undoubtedly improve the seafront.

Argyll and Bute Council's planners now have the chance to listen to the will of the people and allow the scheme to progress. It really is a chance to make a noticeable difference to the town.

GLASGOW LETTER

New and old at choir concert

IT WAS a night of 'new' and 'old' at this year's annual concert of Govan Gaelic Choir held recently in Sgoil Gaidhlig Glaschu.

This was its first concert under the baton of new conductor Donald Feist, its first concert at this venue and the first time the concert had been held midweek. Perhaps it was also 'new' in that it was the first time in 30 years that the concert was not introduced by president Mairi MacKenzie.

'The Govan' was obviously ahead of its time and instead of being like other organisations in the city having to recycle stalwarts back into the position of president for second or third terms of office, they simply kept Mairi in the job. Well done Mairi who, along with a few stalwarts, was responsible for ensuring that the choir stayed in existence through very difficult times in the past few years.

New president Calum MacDonald will be hoping he does not have to serve such a long time in office! It was Calum's pleasant duty to introduce the chairman for the evening, recently retired from the choir Finlay MacDonald, who had served for 40 years and reminisced about many happy memories and much fun and success.

If Finlay was part of the 'old', it is very much a case of looking forward for the choir which at last year's Mod in Caithness featured on the prize lists. The risk of having the concert on a Wednesday evening was justified and there was a good attendance to hear the varied programme provided. As well as various selections from the choir, the soloists were Calum MacDonald, Sheena Walker, George Fergusson, Fiona Ross, Cameron MacKichan and Calum Ross and Mairi Fernandes-Ares who along with Fiona Ross also sang a duet. Calum Ross was the piper and as at previous concerts the choir had invited guests, on this occasion Jessica Burton, from Orkney, on clarsach, and Grant MacFarlane, from Paisley, on accordion, both third year students at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

They were terrific, playing well together, and yet again showing there is no shortage of young musical talent coming through our education system. At a time of declining numbers attending functions in the city and the huge costs of hall hire, many other organisations would have been interested in the Govan choir's choice of venue which proved to be very suitable. Mind you there was a short time when the noise from the heating system brought back memories of being in a huge tent during high winds in Portree at the last Skye Mod!

They were terrific, playing well together, and yet again showing there is no shortage of young musical talent coming through our education system.

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Charity ceilidh

THE EVER popular charity ceilidh organised by Clydebank and District Highlander's Association, in aid of funds for Erskine Hospital, will take place in Napier Hall, Old

Kilpatrick, on Friday April 8 at 7.30pm.

The evening will be chaired by Murdo MacDonald, a great friend of the association. He will also sing and the other singers will be both the Mod Gold Medalists from Mod 2010, Joy Dunlop and Iain MacLean, and Sandy Sinclair. John Carmichael will be the accordionist with Kirsteen Grant as accompanist. Over the years the association has donated huge sums of money to the hospital and I would encourage as many as possible to go along and support this worthwhile cause while at the same time enjoying what looks to be an excellent programme.

Stirling Gaelic Choir

THE ANNUAL concert of Stirling Gaelic Choir will be held in the Victoria Halls, Dunblane, on Friday April 1.

As well as the senior choir, it will feature the junior choir and guest artists Fiona Hunter and Mike Vaas.

Piping tuition

EASTER courses will be held at the College of Piping from April 4 until April 8 and from April 11 until April 15, telephone 0141 334 3587 and at the National Piping Centre from April 11 to April 15, telephone 0141 353 0220.

Weather

A QUICK mention of the weather and in particular the way in which it can change so quickly.

I experienced this for myself by travelling to Inverness to visit new grand-daughter Eilidh Anna in the worst possible weather of sleet and snow and returning the following day in total sunshine and blue skies.

One country and two climates but in any case congratulations to Iain and Morag and little sister Kirsty.

Diary dates

Thursday March 31: Live at the Star, St Andrew's in the Square, 8pm, Janet Russell.

Friday April 1: Stirling Gaelic Choir Annual Concert - see above.

Thursday April 7: Live at the Star, St Andrew's in the Square, 8pm, Other Roads.

Friday April 8: Clydebank and District Highlander's Association Erskine Hospital Charity Ceilidh - see above. Acoustic Affair with Ewan Robertson and Rua MacMillan, City Halls, 8pm.

Saturday April 9: Paisley and District Highlander's Association Ceilidh Dance, Elderslie Village Hall, 7.30pm. Last date for entries for the CLASP competition to be held in the National Piping Centre on April 16.

Pub scene

MONACH Isles will play in the Park Bar on Friday with Deoch Dorus on Saturday and Sunday still to be confirmed while in the Islay Inn it will be Crooked Reel on Friday and the Andrew MacDonald Ceilidh Band on Saturday.

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



Salen Church Sunday School picnic at Calgary - June 1961

Anne MacGregor of Tobermory, Isle of Mull, sent in this week's flashback photograph of the Salen Church Sunday School picnic at Calgary in June 1961. Included in the photograph is: Nancy MacFadyen; Sandra MacFadyen; Mrs Fraser; Sandra Brown; Janetee Campbell; Marie Campbell; Mrs MacPhail; Catherine MacIver; Lachlan MacLean; Anne MacGillivray; MacSporrain; Peter MacPhail; Sarah (Walker) Campbell; Anne (Cattanach) MacDonald; Anne MacGillivray; Ishbel MacPhail; Chrissie MacLean; Donald MacLean; Marie (MacLean) Dunning and Margaret (Fraser) MacLean. We invite readers to send in flashback photographs. Please send prints to *The Oban Times*, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing their prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

Letters to the editor

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Too much being spent on cycle paths

Sir, I imagine I may not be alone in failing to share Mr McNulty's enthusiasm for the cycle track which continues to urbanise our lovely countryside.

What may be appropriate for Manchester is not necessarily so for other areas.

As the track progresses I am increasingly annoyed by the high cost involved in providing a presumed facility for what must be an incredibly small percentage of the population when I am sure the money involved could be put to much better use for the good of the greater community.

In particular, it is shameful to see money being wasted on nonsense such as the recent erection of large reflective signs stating that sections by Duror and Creagan will be open this spring, which is here already; construction of a section of track at Appin alongside a perfectly usable and already surfaced layby just north of Stalker Brae and ripping up and relaying a slightly worn section of perfectly good Tarmac path at the northern end of Creagan Bridge, not to mention all the fancy metal barriers.

How long will it be before we get traffic lights installed at the various crossing points followed by street lighting to complete it?

Also, how long will it remain 'scenic' bearing in mind the complete lack of toilets.

It will no doubt surpass the West Highland Way which is known to locals as the longest toilet in Britain.

The irony of it all is that, from what I have heard, a large number of 'proper' cyclists won't use it anyway as they prefer to remain on the road.

Never mind, it's no doubt all part of a grand scheme to get us all to go by bike when fuel costs become impossible and the roads unusable because of potholes and so I guess we should be grateful.

Name and address supplied.

Apply planning policies fairly

Sir, At a meeting of the planning committee on March 11, Argyll and Bute Council approved an application by a local landowner, who lives in Devon, for the building of two houses on an area of open countryside on the East side of the Kames peninsula, in an area designated, according to the council's own published local plan, as an 'Area of Panoramic Quality'.

This was the first permission to be granted on the Kames Peninsula since 1992, when one house was allowed on the basis of occupational need in the face of opposition by the then council's planning officers and strong objection from local residents.

At the time I thought the March 11 decision was a local aberration, then I read in *The*

Oban Times of March 24 that an application has been allowed for the construction of 22 new houses at Barran, Kilmore, a community of 32 existing houses. There the applicable planning policies were different but the result was the same, speculative development inflicted on a small community against its wishes and in apparent disregard of policies.

These decisions do share another factor, in that they are both within areas identified in the plan as 'Potential Development Areas'.

These were introduced as a concept, I believe, because under previous plans it was virtually impossible for anyone to discover in advance which areas might be available for building purposes.

The emphasis was to be on the word 'potential' because the plan makes it clear that any development must still comply with the planning policies in force.

Ordinary citizens cannot appeal against the granting of planning consent but this doesn't mean we can do nothing. We can try to persuade our councillors to understand the policies they are obliged to uphold and apply them fairly, not just in the interests of speculative developers.

I have also set up an online petition where those who feel as I do can add their signatures. It can be found at www.gopetition.com/petition/44163.

Ewan G Kennedy, Kilmelford.

Marvellous folk of Lochaber

Sir, Over the last 12 years I have had the honour to be the MSP representing Lochaber and over that period have made many friends and had good times indeed.

Above all, in my regular monthly surgeries at the service point at the High Street and the Community Centre at Caol, I have made the acquaintance of some marvellous folk from Lochaber, and will remain friends to them and to the place.

Sadly, the boundary commissioners have carved up the Highlands.

I have therefore had to choose to stand in the seat which contains Inverness and Nairn, and where I am based, with Fiona and our daughter Natasha, at Boat of Garter.

It is with great sadness that I will no longer be the MSP for Lochaber and huge thanks go to everyone I have met and done my best to help.

Fergus Ewing.

Call for common sense at Craignure

Sir, It seems ridiculous to me that Argyll and Bute Council is placing extraordinary measures on the community building at Craignure.

Not only has the council demanded that a pipe be buried into Craignureite, one of the hardest rocks known to man, but

it wants it done during the start of the busy tourism season.

Where is the help and support for this community?

Can anyone please tell me why such draconian conditions are being placed on this group when no more than 50 metres down the street the council is pouring sewage from the public toilets into the water.

I think there needs to be some common sense here. The community should be able to open its new building and the pipe should be allowed to be sorted during the winter when we do not have hundreds of thousands of tourists watching the shameful operation of the council's planning department.

Name and address supplied.

United Nations appeal

Sir, I am acting on behalf of the authorities at the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan, South Korea, where more than 800 British servicemen are at rest.

The authorities wish to obtain photographs of those servicemen interred there and also those who died but have no known grave.

These photographs will be attached to their records and also displayed in the cemetery hall of remembrance.

The following are just a few of the young men from Scotland who gave their lives in Korea: Alexander Leslie; Kenneth G Murray; Thomas S Campbell; Arthur Buchan; Robert A Rennie; John Nicoll; Kenneth Ford; John Murphy; Hugh Cox and Robert Kemp.

Any family who lost a loved one in the Korean War 1950-53 and wish to take part can send the photograph to me at the above address or contact me by phone for further details.

James Grundy, 102 College Croft, Eccles, Greater Manchester, M30 0AN. Telephone 0161 789 7633.

Thriving school population on Gigha

Sir, I was pleased to read about the 'remarkable improvement' and 50 per cent increase in the population of Gigha.

I wonder if the population would have seen such a dramatic increase if Argyll and Bute Council had decided to shut Gigha Primary School in 2004 when it only had six pupils or in any of the years before, when

pupil numbers were low. Today it has a thriving school population. I urge the councillors who voted for the pre consultation to think again and not to condemn other rural communities by voting to shut rural schools with low pupil rolls.

Maikie Staneby, Clachan.

Great end to Netherlorn Piping Society season

Sir, What a great end to another season for Netherlorn Piping Society.

Guest piper was Fred Morrison, who we thoroughly enjoyed, with our grandson, who is a piper. And there was world champion piper Arthur Gillies who first formed Netherlorn Piping Society in 1978. It first met in the Netherlorn Hotel, Taynuilt, now known as Brander Lodge.

In 1980, the guest piper was 17-year-old Fred Morrison. The late Arthur Gillies and the late Dougie McColl saw the potential in this young piper. In these days if we had an audience of 12 to 15 Arthur would say that was a good turnout Gilbert.

Being former committee members we would like to thank Angus McColl who was a young piper back then and is doing tremendous work with young pipers today.

Alistair Dewar and his committee must be commended too for all their hard work fundraising for the society.

Piping has come along in leaps and bounds and any young pipers who win medals can feel honoured as competition is so much stronger today.

We wish the bands all the best for their future competitions. We are sure Arthur will be listening to every note.

Gilbert and Chrissie Muir.

Pothole concern

Sir, Rick Potter's advice to Argyll and Bute Council not to warn us of potholes assumes that drivers are familiar with them.

Visitors and tourists aren't, and even locals can get caught out - especially after dark and in the rain. Perhaps Mr Potter is concerned at the cost to the council of providing warnings, but surely most people are more concerned at the potential cost of fixing damage to their cars.

Robert Wakeham, Craigard Cottage, Castleton, by Lochgilphead.



Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

FÀS! FÀS! FÀS! Theagamh nach b' e annas sam bith a bh' ann cluinninn gur e seo ceann-teagais an t-Seansalair nuair a dh' fhoillsich e mar a tha e dol a riaghladh sporan na dùthcha. Chan eil e na annas seach gum bheil riaghladh na co-bhanntachd seo air a bhith a sior nochdadh ghearraidhean ann an ionnhas poblach agus a' cur earbsa ann an roinn phrìobhaidh airson cosnadh ura a dhèanamh dhan fheadhainn a tha a' call beòshlaint ri linn nan gearraidhean. Gu ruige seo, cha robh innleachd de sheòrsa sam bith air nochdadh bhon Riaghladh air ciamar a bha an roinn phrìobhaideach dol a dh' fhàs gus na h-obrachean seo a chruthachadh.

Tha feallsanachd an Riaghaltais an urra ri cearcall na margaidh. Ach ma tha tionnsgalan prìobhaideach dol a dh' fhàs, feumaidh iad taic airgid airson leudachadh agus chan eil seo idir furasta ruigheachd air a dh'aindeoin na taice a thug an sporan poblach dha bancaichean. Dh' fheumadh cuideachd margaidhean fàs gus bathar nam buidhnean sin a cheannach agus chan eil dearbhadh sam bith gum bheil sin a' tachairt, fhasthast co-dhù.

Seall air gnìomhachas togail thaghean mar eisimpleir. Tha mòran bhuidhnean nan eigin le cho beag de thaghean 's a tha gan ceannach agus tha sin air mìltean a chur a' cosnadh mar-thà, le mòran eile ann an cunnart mura tig atharrachadh air an t-suidheachadh. Chan e nach eil daoine ag iarraidh taghean a cheannach ach gum bheil ionnhas margaids air fàs cho doirbh fhaotainn is gum bheil cùisean an ìre mhath air stad. Ach fiù 's ged a thigeadh faochadh air suidheachadh margaids, tha dìth misneachd cuideachd a' sgaoladh is daoine draghail mun cuid chosnadh agus chan eil daoine gum chinnt air tèarainteachd an cuid obrach idir cho buailteach a dhol ann am fiachan le bhith ceannach dachaigh ùr.

Tha e uile a' tilleadh gu ceist an airgid agus mar a tha cùisean a' coimhead, chan eil gu leòr ann d'heath gus innleachd-leasachaidh an Riaghaltais a thoirt gu buil. Sin is coireach gum bheil mi fhìn a' creidsinn anns an argamaid gur coir na caomhnaidhean poblach a dhèanamh nas slaodaiche agus daoine a chumail ann an cosnadh san cadar-ama.

THE GOVERNMENT'S 'growth' mantra is particularly difficult to realise against the background of the swinging cuts which it has imposed on the public sector.

Until now there was no apparent plan as to how the private sector would grow to absorb the thousands made redundant by the public sector.

Things still look uncertain where industry cannot readily access funds for expansion and where markets are also in the doldrums. In the building industry alone thousands have already lost their jobs as the market ground to a virtual halt due to draconian mortgage conditions. And even if this eased, people's lack of job security deters them from taking on new debt.

This circle is not closing, which is why I believe that slower cuts, with people kept in employment, makes more sense.

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

A view from the Tower

by McCaig

Budget blunder

NO-ONE appears happy with last week's Budget but, I suspect, no-one really expected to be as our current government revels in 'punishing' the electorate for its alleged faults and for the acceptance of statements from the last Prime Minister that 'prudence' was his watchword.

'There would be', he assured us 'no boom or bust'. He would pursue the 'prudent' policies that he had when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer - which turned out to be anything but 'prudent', just hidden in an aura of secrecy.

Given such a scenario, it was obvious the opposition parties would have a golden opportunity to seize power even although the outcome of the last General Election was far from a clear endorsement of 'Tories for No.10'. Indeed, for several days after the result was declared it looked as though the coalition was going to be Lab/LibDem rather than Tory/LibDem but the Tories, and David Cameron, in particular, were prepared to give way to every LibDem demand, even to Nick Clegg's most absurd ones.

Dr Michael Droop

THE SCOTTISH Association for Marine Science lost one of its most distinguished scientists last week at the age of 92.

Although retired, Dr Droop was still active in his particular fields of research where he had a world-wide standing. His discoveries made at Dunstaffnage are still seminal to various branches of microbiology. He very nearly did not become a scientist as his father of German origin wanted him to become a doctor. To placate 'pa' he did start a medical course but found it so unpalatable that he skipped his first professional exam, going to the opera instead! After World War Two he returned to academic life, graduating with 1st Class Honours from Liverpool University. While still completing his PhD thesis at Cambridge he joined the staff of the SMBA at Millport where he did his early microbiological research, moving to Dunstaffnage when the new laboratory was opened there. He stayed until he 'officially' retired but continued to play an active part for many years.

The undertaker's friend?

WHEN George Osborne became Chancellor of the Exchequer most of us feared the worst as austerity would be his watchword.

He could well be entitled to do so when 'prudence' had been Gordon Brown's, allegedly. We got a taste of what was to come earlier in the brief history of this government and the 'merchants of gloom' were right to warn that when his Budget proper was presented there would be measures that would shock and appal all of us as there would be no sector of public finance free from scrutiny. Is it any wonder that hundreds of thousands of protestors marched in London last weekend? 'Yes, there was the usual 'rent a mob' faction who turned out regularly for every left-of-centre cause but there were also many who had lost their jobs or were about to do so, and there were senior citizens who had been shocked to have their winter fuel allowance reduced rather than increased.

It can be argued that the £50 payment 'stolen back' by Mr Osborne was never properly part of the Winter Fuel Allowance as it was a 'special grant' by the last Labour government but it was continued by George Osborne when he moved into No 11 Downing Street. No senior citizen would deny it was necessary last winter, one of the coldest on record. If he had

not been available I wonder just how many old people would have died directly or indirectly from living in houses they could not afford to heat?

Do we now see George Osborne's true colours? The plight of the elderly, the poor and of students is immaterial as long as his scrooge-like economic strategy is enforced ruthlessly.

There is a glorious opportunity, however, to send a brutal message to Mr Osborne and his government colleagues that at least the Scottish electorate won't tolerate never-ending cuts of such magnitude that only the undertaker appreciates the business they will bring.

And don't listen to the SNP's Father Christmas, Alex Salmond, who is currently throwing millions of cash he hasn't got at the Scottish electorate in the hope they will re-elect him on May 5.

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A very talented painter - he turned down a scholarship to the Slade, one of Britain's most prestigious art colleges - in favour of science. But he painted throughout his long life in oils which he exhibited locally and in Edinburgh, gaining favourable comment. He was for a number of years president of Oban Art Society and was always willing to discuss 'art' in its widest sense as he had a great love of music as well. He is survived by his three sons and their families.

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Spring Gardening

April Gardening tips



SHRUBS create the structure in a garden so it's important to keep them in good condition with regular pruning. This will improve a plant's shape and encourage flowers and fruits.

Pruning cuts are essentially wounds to the plant where disease could enter so use sharp, clean tools and make clean cuts without leaving snags. Cut close to buds, but not into them, and always above. Early pruning helps establish a shapely shrub with vigorous, balanced growth. Most evergreen shrubs do not need thinning or formative pruning. However all shrubs benefit from shortening any excessively long shoots and cutting out weak or damaged growth. Deciduous shrubs are more likely to need pruning into shape; this is known as formative pruning. Young shrubs often grow lots of shoots so you will have to thin them early on. Correct lopsided growth by lightly pruning longer shoots and hard pruning weak stems. Shrubs such as forsythia and buddleja can soon accumulate masses of old, dead wood in the centre if they are not pruned regularly. The best way to rejuvenate these plants is to cut them back during the dormant season. First cut out dead, diseased and crossing stems, and then thin the number of remaining stems by half.



Shrubs that respond to severe pruning, such as ribes and philadelphus, may be cut almost to ground level to re-establish a framework of new shoots. If the shrub is old and it's hard to predict a successful revival, take cuttings just in case. Once a container shrub reaches maturity it is usually best repotted annually in spring, or every other year, using the same or similar sized container. If you find the plant is very pot-bound, this is a good time to lightly prune the roots. Prune about one-third of the thicker non-fibrous roots back to the intact rootball, but avoid damaging the fibrous feeder roots. Repot in fresh compost and finish by pruning the top growth by about one-third to balance the root loss. Shrubs grown for their colourful stems or foliage, such as dogwood, need to be cut down every spring to 4-5 buds to encourage new growth. This is known as coppicing. If you want to keep a framework of older stems, cut down one-third of stems. A similar technique is called pollarding where stems are cut back to the same point a single stem or framework of stems. This is often seen on London plane trees and can be used on eucalyptus. After pruning, make sure you feed and mulch the plant.

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May Gardening tips

MAY IS a busy time for gardeners. The danger of frost should be past and the weather nice enough to work outside.

By this time, the flowering bulbs you planted in the autumn should be flowering. It is time to prepare your flower and vegetable gardens for the summer harvest. Timing is important to successful gardening, so know what tasks to perform in May:

Weeding

Start weeding perennial flowerbeds. There may be small seedlings mixed among the weeds that you don't want to pull. Pull what you know are weeds and add a layer of topsoil. Do additional weeding when the plants are bigger. Pull the weeds around your early flowering bulbs and spring vegetables.

Divide Plants

Perennials grow every year and may eventually become too big for the space in your garden. Inspect your perennial beds and divide winter iris and late-summer and autumn perennials, such as delphinium. Create new flower gardens with the divided plants, while keeping the original plants healthy with expanded room. As beets and lettuce get thicker, thin them out by separating plants from a cluster. Move the small plants to other parts of the garden that aren't densely crowded. Cut off small lettuce plants to eat. New lettuce grows in the place of harvested lettuce.

Mulching

Mulch helps to retain soil moisture and warmth and prevents weed growth. It also makes a garden look better. All the flowerbeds in your garden should receive a few inches of fresh mulch. Mulch new trees and shrubs, as well as the space between rows of our vegetable garden. Add fresh straw among strawberry plants to keep the berries clean and retain moisture in the soil.

Harden off

Harden off your indoor starter plants, such as tomatoes and peppers. Leave them outdoors in the sun during the day but bring them inside at night. This helps them adapt to outdoor conditions.

Planting

Sow outdoor vegetables in late May or when your area is at least two weeks past frost danger. Plant anything from runner beans to parsnips. Leave plenty of room between each planting to give the plants space to grow. Transplant hardened off indoor starter plants at this time. Allow at least 18 inches between tomato plants that will be staked and about 36 inches between the plants if you use a cage. Plant herbs, although some, such as mint, may quickly take over the garden. Keep them in a large container.

Potatoes

Potatoes are traditionally planted between late March and mid-April. By May, you should be able to see potato shoots through the soil. Use a garden hoe to pull soil up in a mound around each potato plant to guard them against light.



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BOOK Review
 Dasher John and Noreen Steele
 THE ROYAL Navy aircraft carrier HMS Dasher sustained a horrific internal explosion on the March 27, 1943. The massive explosion blew holes above and below the waterline. The 528 crew did not have to wait for the captain to give the order. Within five minutes the ship had slipped beneath the waves and settled upright on the seabed - 379 lives were lost.
 At long last many questions are answered: Why were all details withheld from the 379 bereaved families? What caused the horrific explosion? Who was to blame? Why were Dasher bodies buried without coffins and unregistered in a deep pit in Ayrshire? And many, many more. The real life drama tells of ingrained government secrecy and is a moving and compelling story that undoubtedly will be read, re-read and cherished for many years by those who value social and military history.
 £11.50 includes p and p from j. steele2@talktalk.net

JUMBLE TALES by Steve Morris
 Short stories have been tarred with a bit of a bad reputation - but Morris breaks the surface and allows out a jumble of little gems that are full of humour, irony and sublime wit. Each story is penned in a matter-of-fact style that is synonymous with Morris' writing; but it is not all gushy and good - there are dull and dusty tales among the gems.
 If you are looking for a tea break book or a quicky to banish waiting room boredom, here it is. Think of You've Been Framed or the Oop TV of books: a veritable jumble of entertaining fun shorts.
 NEW BEGINNINGS by Fern Britton
 This book falls into the growing tradition of stories about women who have to juggle family and career, and it's a good one. Main character Christie is easy to identify with as the mother coming to terms with her husband's death and what it means for her family. Fern Britton catches those little domestic details that makes Christie's relationship with her children and mother real. Something also rings true about the television career woman, obviously it should when written by an author in the profession. Some of the details might be lost on people who aren't in the industry. The story develops on two tiers, past and present, which works well, and the storyline maintains interest as it coasts along nicely. It is perhaps a little light and could have done with some deeper sub-plot but the writing is clear, familiar and easy to settle into - a comfortable read.

THE POISON TREE by Erin Kelly
 Erin Kelly's first novel, is a stunning debut. Perfectly paced, it starts with a bang and is bursting with twists and turns that will keep you guessing right up to a clinical conclusion. Kelly ratchets up the suspense, constantly causing readers to reappraise their thoughts as each dark and dirty secret is unearthed.
 This is a book that reminds us just how rewarding and fun a really good book can be. You will want to read from cover to cover.

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Smiles all the way at Lorn festival

'Pure moments of comedy'

LORN Drama festival was a hilarious success. That was the verdict of this year's adjudicator David Bennet.

David, a performer of 40 years, said in his round up that he was looking for glimpses of brilliance throughout the performances.

He said it was difficult not to go along with the reaction of the audience to a performance but he had to look beyond that to the many elements that made up the play. He was looking for the setting, the movement between sets, the use of mise-en-scene and the full resonance of the performance.

David said: 'There were some pure moments of comedy - some of them rehearsed, others less so.'

David had advice for those people who want to act but suffer from stage fright. He told the audience: 'Sometimes it is a good idea to keep yourself busy on stage. If you are doing something and not standing still then it is much easier to be on stage.'

Linda Robb, chairwoman of Lorn Drama Club, said this year saw a good turnout with a great adjudicator. She said: 'Thank you to everyone involved. It was very interesting to have all comedies, however black they were.'

Trophies were awarded to: 1 - The Robin Banks Trophy: Meat and Two Veg by Lochgilphead Drama Club Team J; 2 - The Chambers of Oban Quaich: The Atkinsons Affair by Accent Players; 3 - The Oban Times Salver - Fidelity Farce by Appin Players; Highest Marks for Stage Set - The JR Smith Trophy: Accent Players; Stage Management Cup - The Lorn Drama Festival Trophy: Lochgilphead Drama Club Team J; Adjudicator's Award - The Ardentallen Trophy: Calum Thomson; A Moment in Theatre - Oban FM/Ian MacKay Memorial Trophy: Robert Black; A Moment in Comedy - The Anne Broughton Memorial: Calum Thomson; Junior Section - The Lorn Drama Festival

REPORT
 by LOUISE LEE
 llec@obantimes.co.uk

Trophy - Accent Juniors; Highest marks for Dramatic Productions: Lochgilphead Drama Club Team J.



Members of the Appin Players, who won the Oban Times Salver with their show Fidelity Farce. 16, t13appin1



From left: husband and wife Jim and Ruth Morrison, Duncan Berndt and Jenifer Phillimore, who produced first placed Meat and Two Veg. 16, t13lornadrama1

Society welcomes 'Jimi Hendrix'!

A MUSICIAN described as 'the Jimi Hendrix of piping' because of his modern take on old piping tunes entertained a Netherlorn Piping Society audience with both traditional and alternative sets.

The internationally-renowned Fred Morrison comes from a well-known Uist piping family and has won various solo piping championships. His father, Fred, and uncle Ronald both wrote The Oban Times' piping scene.

But Fred is more widely known for his improvisation on traditional piping tunes.

Speaking at the piping society's final winter recital in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls last Wednesday, he said: 'After my years of competing I began moving in a different direction.'

'I would improvise on an old piece but I was always aware of its Gaelic roots.'

'About 25 years ago, when I first started playing around with the old tunes, it was frowned upon.'

'A lot of people turned their noses up at it but now it seems to have opened doors for pipers.'

Following a first class demonstration of traditional piping in the first half of the evening, Fred played Uilleann pipes and whistles in the second half.

Introducing Fred, chairman for the evening, Angus MacColl, told the audience: 'I remember one year Fred won the gold medal at the Northern



Fred Morrison with members of Oban Pipe Band, including Pipe Major Euan Dewar, right. 15, t13fred01

Meeting in Inverness after being away from competitive piping for four years. The reason I remember is because I was second.'

Band
 The recital was also the first 'gig' for the new-look Oban Pipe Band, which has not competed for four years.

Pipe Major Euan Dewar said: 'It's good to get going again and we've all been practising very hard. I think this is the biggest band there has ever been;

we have 43 band members altogether.'

Also on the programme were some of Angus MacColl's pupils from Oban High School, including Kerry MacLeod and Shannon McCuish on chanter and pipers Ryan McInnes, Grant MacNiven, Ruairidh MacKinnon and Kyle Orr.

Netherlorn Piping Society chairman Alistair Dewar thanked everyone who supported the piping recitals and said he was looking forward to October when the recitals will begin again.

Dining out

This month's focus... Cuan Mor

A warm, friendly welcome awaits all at Cuan Mor. The restaurant and bars are creatively designed using only natural and reclaimed Scottish materials, such as Ballachulish slate and greenheart timber beams from the lighthouse pier.

The heart of Cuan Mor is the busy front bar and restaurant. The staff pride themselves on the ambience they have created in the restaurant/bar, with its natural materials and stunning view over Oban Bay. However the ambience wouldn't be enough without good home-cooked food. Portions are good, food is fresh and delicious and there is a wide choice to suit all tastes and budgets.

Cuan Mor also has its own brewery - The Oban Bay Brewery - where they brew four types of ale, available both casked and bottled. The brewery has its own bar, the Brewery Bar which has a selection of approximately 100 whiskies, as well as the usual selection of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.

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Dancers put through their paces by top choreographer

CHOREOGRAPHER to the stars Tim Noble came to Oban's Atlantis Leisure to put some of the area's budding dancers through their paces.

As well as teaching adults and children dance moves, Tim, who was joined by his Purestar Productions colleague Karlito Grey, told the dancers stories about his work with Kylie Minogue, Madonna and Gwen Stefani, to name but a few.

'The children were also pleased to hear that JLS were nice boys,' said Atlantis Leisure dance and fitness instructor Larni Wright, who organised the event.

'The end of the day came around too soon and parents, friends and family arrived to see the dances and stunts people had picked up throughout the day and everyone left shattered but very happy.'

'It was fantastic to have a world-renowned dance choreographer in Argyll and Bute and with the promise of his return next year we hope to have more people taking part, resulting in more Purestar dancers coming to our area.'

The course, held on March 13, was attended by about 60 dancers.

The day began with Tim teaching commercial dance and revealing the industry secrets to success, whilst humouring everyone participating and parents watching.

Then Karlito, a Brazilian free-style and break-dancer based in Clydebank, took over and taught capoeira, hip-hop and break-dancing.

Larni added: 'There was lots to learn and some of the routines were quick paced but the children and adults all handled it well and embraced the day. I'm looking forward to organising next year's event!'

Ruth unveils first anthology



A RETIRED head teacher from Corpach has published her first anthology of poems in aid of Macmillan Nurses Lochaber.

Ruth Miller, pictured left, has already sold 35 copies of 'Living and Loving' and has placed the remainder in Fort William Library for sale.

Ruth, who was head teacher at Achaphuill Primary School for 19 years, told The Oban Times she chose the charity after being attended by a MacMillan nurse after undergoing surgery at Raigmore Hospital.

'I think it is a very good cause,' said Ruth, who is planning to publish a bigger poetry collection, Lyrics of a Lifetime, within the next year.

New boys' Gaelic choir aims to encourage youngsters

THE OBAN Times understands the National Youth Choir of Scotland (NYCoS) is to announce plans for a National Boys Gaelic Choir within the next week.

The choir will be formed with the aim of encouraging young boys to continue singing after primary school, at an age when many of them give up, and will include other partners such as Bord na Gaidhlig.

Govan Gaelic Choir conductor Donald Feist, who hails from Port Charlotte on Islay, will conduct the young choir. Donald, aged 21, is a former member of

NYCoS. Association of Gaelic Choirs secretary Audrey Paterson said: 'The idea was put to us at our AGM and, in principle, we were very supportive of the idea.'

'Anything that encourages people to think about joining a Gaelic choir is a positive and I think this would have a beneficial knock-on effect for existing choirs. As well as holding onto the best traditional singers, I think it would attract a more contemporary feel too.'

It is envisaged that a girls' equivalent could be formed, depending on the success of the boys' choir.

US dates for Skerryvore

SKERRYVORE will be performing at Scotland Week in New York City.

The event in April will see the band taking part in the world famous Tartan

Week Parade as well as performing at the Post Parade Party in Stout NYC.

The band will also be performing in Canada en route to New York City.

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Global accolade for Harris Tweed boss

HARRIS Tweed Hebrides (HTH) chairman Brian Wilson has been named as Scotland's Global Director of the Year.

And the go-ahead island firm made it a double when the Institute of Directors (IoD) also named Mr Wilson as Highlands and Islands Director of the Year at its annual awards ceremony in Glasgow.

The twin success is the latest recognition of how the Shawbost-based company has transformed the industry's prospects since producing its first fabric just three years ago.

Mr Wilson was nominated for the awards by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, which has worked closely with the company from its inception.

The Global Award, given to the individual voted top for furthering their firm's prospects and Scotland's reputation overseas, recognised HTH's creative approach to breaking into markets in countries such as Brazil and Russia.

The citation for the IoD awards said: 'Harris Tweed Hebrides has led to a revival in the Harris Tweed industry. Since its formation in 2007, the company now accounts for over 90 per cent of Harris Tweed production, exports to more than 50 countries and has revitalised the industry, taking the product up-market and re-establishing its place as a key player in the competitive fashion and design sector.'

Mr Wilson paid tribute to backers HIE which, he said, had

REPORT

by STEPHEN NORRIS
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

been 'extremely supportive' from the outset when the outlook for Harris Tweed looked distinctly gloomy.

Mr Wilson said: 'Nobody need be gloomy now. This has been a complete team effort by everyone involved in Harris Tweed Hebrides, led at Shawbost by chief executive Ian Angus Mackenzie.'

Reward

'Our real reward is the fact that there are now more than 50 people employed in what was a derelict mill while 120 home weavers are being kept busy, all on a year-round basis.'

Appropriately enough for a Global Director of the Year, Brian had to leave the Glasgow ceremony early to connect with a flight to Sao Paulo, Brazil, where HTH was featuring in a UKTI British Lifestyle event organised by United Kingdom Trade International and Scottish Development International.

HTH creative director Mark Hogarth said: 'This is part of our programme of targeting the BRIC countries of rapid-economic growth - Brazil, Russia, India, China - in partnership with UKTI and SDI. It is a strategy for the future, which complements our work in the main markets and has already generated a lot of excellent coverage for Harris Tweed both in Brazil and the UK.'

Mixed response to chancellor's budget measures

REPORT

by STEVEN FLANAGAN
sflanagan@obantimes.co.uk

IT WAS supposed to be the budget that 'put fuel in the tank of the economy', but local firms don't agree.

Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne announced his budget last week and drew the headlines by announcing an unexpected cut in fuel duty of one pence a litre, but VAT on fuel was not altered.

He also cancelled the fuel duty escalator for the rest of the current parliament and delayed other planned duty increases.

Oil companies have been told they will pay billions of pounds in supplemental taxes as long as a barrel of oil is above \$75 to meet the shortfall in a measure to 'stabilise' fuel costs.

Meanwhile HGV drivers will not face a road tax increase.

Forecasts for growth were downgraded, from 2.1 per cent to 1.7 per cent for 2011 and down from 2.6 per cent to 2.5 per cent for 2012. No figures were given for successive years.

The chancellor said inflation was set to remain between four and five per cent for 2011, dropping to 2.5 per cent next year.

What effect then on businesses across Argyll and Bute?

Norman Carmichael is a partner of Argyll Taxis, based in Oban, having joined in 1999.

'He's seen fuel prices rise by eight pence per litre in recent weeks, so was news of a one pence cut on fuel duty welcome?'

'It's laughable,' he said. 'We were hoping for a cut but one pence is nothing.'

'It's not doing anything for us at all. They've already pocketed the difference in the last eight weeks.'

'If the tax was going to go up it

would have been by five pence per litre, so why not drop by that?'

'We've only just been given a rise in the rates we can charge by Argyll and Bute Council; 20 pence.'

'That's the first rise in three years and it doesn't cover what the fuel has gone up in that time.'

'It's the hardest times I've seen for the taxis and this does nothing to help.'

'I don't think the budget has actually helped anyone.'

Rory MacKail, chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses' (FSB) for Argyll and the Islands, gave a lukewarm response to the measures announced in the budget.

He said: 'More could be done to help stimulate growth and help small businesses create jobs.'

'In particular, the spiralling cost of fuel is a major headache for small businesses, harming their ability to plan the growth of their businesses and take on employees. The effect is magnified in our rural areas where car travel is essential.'

'It is obvious that the chancellor

"It's the hardest times I've seen for the taxis and this does nothing to help."

Norman Carmichael.

has listened to the FSB regarding the heavy cost of fuel. The key question is whether or not it will stabilise at a level sustainable for Scottish small businesses.'

'Other measures, such as the mileage allowance increase from 40p to 45p per mile, will go some way to help those businesses who use their own vehicles for business travel, but it does not go far enough.'

Mr MacKail was more positive about the moratorium on new red tape for small business and new-starts, which he said will be of significant assistance.

A warmer welcome to the budget was given by the chief executive of Islay's independently-owned Bruichladdich Distillery, Mark Reynier.

He said: 'I think this is the right budget, but I think we all need to be more realistic about where we are.'

'If anything, they've been too timid.'

'I don't know what people expect - abolishing fuel tax? We can't do that. The country's coffers are empty.'

Mr Reynier described Mr Osborne's proposal to impose extra tax on oil companies when prices are high as 'a neat solution', adding that people will have to think about investing in more economical vehicles.

'It's not just about fuel. Oil is used for everything from plastic, fabrics, construction materials, packaging and shipping,' he added.

Furthermore, the planned increase in alcohol tax by two per cent above inflation will not impact his business. He said: 'It doesn't matter really. Ninety per cent of whisky is exported any-

way.' New enterprise, he said, was the key to escaping the financial crisis the country finds itself in. While he hopes the moratorium on new red tape for small and new businesses will help, it is attitudes that have to change for the country to progress.

He said: 'The moratorium is definitely the right thing,' he said. 'Will that help the economy though? I don't know.'

'Enterprise is the key and that means getting people off their backsides. Things are not hard enough yet for people to realise where we are. It's too cushy. We've all got to help ourselves.'

However, Steve Ham, general manager of The Underwater Centre in Fort William, which trains commercial divers working in the oil industry, has warned that the measures imposed on oil companies could cost jobs.

'If the increase in the tax revenue from oil companies leads to changes to investment decisions, jobs will go elsewhere in the world and the growth we have seen in the UK will slow.'

'This tax has the potential to hurt the UK industry and impede the growth of companies like ourselves in the UK market.'

"I think this is the right budget. If anything, they've been too timid."

Mark Reynier, Bruichladdich Distillery.

Business reporter:
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01631 568021

Business Advertising:
Claire Firth
cfirth@wyvexmedia.co.uk
01631 568013

Dave switches on to digital music recording

A RETIRED Oban High School music instructor, who admits he couldn't even turn a computer on five years ago, has now digitally composed an album of songs to be sold online.

Dave Mason, who retired last June, has just released his first album, *Sounds of the Orient*, on Red Admiral Records after gaining a publishing deal with Cringe Music.

The 62-year-old, who hails from Dunstaffnage but lives in Oban, said: 'The album is all done on computer using Sibelius and Garritan programmes.'

'I sit at the keyboard and play the music into it using Sibelius, then I have to arrange it for a 40-piece orchestra. Garritan gives me all the sounds from a full orchestra.'

But the irony is Dave, whose sons both work in IT, had no interest in computers while teaching until Morven McCerrell, Oban High School's principal teacher of music, sent him on a Sibelius course.

'I didn't know how to switch a computer on at that point,' he said. 'But by the end of the course I was hooked and I got Sibelius 4. They've brought out fifth and sixth editions since then.'

Dave said he was astounded that his album could feature on download sites across the world and was thrilled to see *Sounds of the Orient* on iTunes.



Oriental sounds: Retired music teacher Dave Mason.
15_112mason01

He added: 'The record companies are looking for packages, not individual songs, so I had a look at the kind of stuff I had written after I retired.'

'Unwittingly, I had written three pieces with a very Eastern sound, one of which I had composed while on holiday in Thailand. I'm not trying to write Eastern music, perhaps it's an Obanite's take on music from China and Japan.'

Cringe Music has asked Dave to do second album with a South American sound.

Green group's meeting

A GROUP dedicated to implementing Argyll and Bute's Renewable Energy Action Plan (REAP) held its first meeting this month.

Argyll and Bute Renewable Energy Alliance (ABRA) brings together key partners, including the local authority, the Scottish Government, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Power Renewables, Marine Scotland, Scottish and Southern Energy, Crown Estates and Skills Development Scotland to develop

a strategic overview of renewable development for the area.

Chairman of ABRA is Argyll and Bute Council leader Dick Walsh.

He said: 'Through the commitment and enthusiasm displayed by partners, I am confident that ABRA will positively build on the proactive approach already established within Argyll and Bute, through the development of the Renewable Energy Action Plan and the strong history of partnership working.'



A recycling pod has been delivered to Soroba and was used almost instantly by residents. 16_112pod01

Community recycling in Soroba

A COMMUNITY recycling pod in Soroba will save residents the long trek to the supermarkets with cardboard, plastic and tins.

The Group for Recycling in Argyll and Bute (GRAB) Trust, along with Argyll and Bute Council, Soroba Residents Association and Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA), are behind the project.

Caroline Askew, The GRAB Trust's project worker, said: 'Anyone with any questions about what should or should not be recycled should give us a call on 569188.'

'For a long time people have wanted a recycling facility in Soroba,' said Iona MacPhail of ACHA. 'This is a great opportunity for residents. I would encourage people to use it and prove it will be of benefit to residents.'

Councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'We were approached by residents in Soroba to make recycling facilities available. They have been provided for a six-month period and I hope it will be well used.'

The facility will be emptied by the council on a regular basis. Any misuse should be reported to Peter McLuckie on 01631 569185.

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Cashing in on unwanted books

AN OBAN-based recycling group has made a profit of £400 by selling four unwanted books on ebay.

Lorn and Oban Reuse Initiative (LORI) mainly takes donations of furniture to help homeless people in the area but has begun to take in bric-a-brac and books.

Normally, unwanted books are tossed aside as rubbish but book expert Mary Campbell advised the group that the David Eddings first editions were worth holding onto. The book titles were: Pawn of Prophecy, Queen of Sorcery, Castle of Wizardry and Enchanter's End Game.

LORI volunteer Kristine Owen said: 'Fortunately, Mary helps us with our books and she advised that we sell them on ebay to attain the true value.'

'After postage, LORI made £399.70 from the sale, which is pretty impressive.'

All the money raised will go back into the business to cover overheads and materials to restore furniture for re-use.

Kristine added: 'It just goes to show that the old adage 'one man's rubbish is another man's treasure' really is true.'

£3.5 million distillery boost

ISLAY'S famous whisky industry has received a major boost with the announcement that Diageo is to invest £3.5million in expanding and upgrading its Caol Ila distillery.

Production capacity is set to be increased by 700,000 litres per year to 6.4million litres per annum, while an extension of the distillery will see two new 62,000 litre washbacks - the vessels in which the fermentation process takes place prior to distillation - installed in addition to the eight already on site.

Key equipment will also be upgraded, including the replacement of the distillery's mash tun, a crucial piece of the distillation process, and a new control system installed in the stillhouse.

The work will be carried out by local contractors and builds on the £3million already invested by Diageo in upgrading its Port Ellen Maltings on Islay over the past three years.

The refurbishment work is scheduled to take six months beginning in June. The distillery will be closed to public tours for that period, however, the distillery shop will remain open to visitors.

Great news

Kevin Sutherland, Diageo's senior site manager on Islay, said: 'This is great news for Caol Ila and great news for Islay. An investment of this scale is fantastic for the local economy and it signals Diageo's deep-rooted commitment to the Islay whisky industry.'

'Caol Ila is a wonderful distillery of which we are very proud and I am delighted we are going to be able to produce even more fantastic single malt as well as contributing to the growth of Johnnie Walker and Diageo's other leading global Scotch brands.'

Commitment

Bryan Donaghey, managing director of Diageo Scotland, said: 'The expansion of Caol Ila demonstrates our commitment to another of Scotland's great whisky-making locations.'

'The success and growth of our Islay distilleries is central to our ambitions for the Scotch whisky industry and demonstrates again our confidence in and commitment to the future of Scotland and Scotch.'

Talks on mackerel stocks deadlocked

SCOTTISH fisherman have called for sanctions against Iceland and Norway after talks aiming to reach an agreement on north-east Atlantic mackerel stocks ended in deadlock.

The Scottish, EU and Norwegian fishing industries have blamed the failure of the seventh round of talks on the unrealistic demands and irresponsible behaviour of Iceland and the Faroe Islands.

Ian Gatt, chief executive of the Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association, said: 'We are bitterly disappointed that the totally unrealistic and intransigent stance taken by Iceland and the Faroes during these latest talks has meant that it was not

possible to reach an agreement. It is now more essential than ever that the EU imposes meaningful sanctions against Iceland and the Faroes, including putting accession talks with Iceland to join the EU on hold.'

Concern

Scottish Fisheries Secretary Richard Lochhead said: 'It's unclear whether further talks are possible.'

Iceland has announced another inflated mackerel quota for themselves for the year ahead and my concern now is that the Faroes will follow suit.

'This situation makes clearer than ever that meaningful, robust action needs to be taken

by the EU against states acting outwith international fishery agreements and undermine the effect of responsible fisheries management.'

Links

Meanwhile, the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Group has placed more pressure on Iceland after alleging that a lot of Icelandic fish comes from companies with close links to the whaling industry.

Sue Fisher, who leads the group's whaling campaign, said: 'We think the UK wholesalers and retailers who buy Icelandic fish from whalers should be encouraged by the public to look elsewhere.'

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Capercaillie number crash in Argyll

ARGYLL could be losing the fight to save one of Scotland's most iconic woodland birds.

Scotland's capercaillie population has become 'critically low', according to Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) with Argyll, Moray and Perthshire recorded the highest declines in capercaillie population in the past two decades.

A recent study found that the rare bird's decline related to changes in weather conditions and increasing numbers of predators such as the pine marten.

Both the capercaillie and the pine marten are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 but research points to the predatory marten as a possible culprit in the capercaillie's further decline.

The study was carried out thanks to a partnership of SNH, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust, the Forestry Commission and the RSPB.

The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust found capercaillie breeding success had declined between 1991 and 2009. In January of this year, SNH estimated that the birds had become virtually extinct in most parts of the country and were now largely confined

to woodland in Strathspey.

The organisation estimated that there were only some 2,000 individual capercaillie left in Scotland, although some experts placed the figure as low as 500.

Previous studies have linked the fortunes of capercaillie with the deaths of full-grown birds following collisions with deer fences and high numbers of foxes and carrion crows, which can prey on eggs and chicks.

The new research has repeated a 1995 survey of predators in key capercaillie forests and investigated how changes in predator evidence and weather might be related to breeding success over the 18 years.

Rob Raynor of SNH, said: 'The work carried out so far points to an increase in pine marten evidence in woodlands occupied by capercaillie, but it is far from certain to what extent this might be a contributory factor in capercaillie productivity. More work is required to establish which, if any, of these factors actually influence capercaillie numbers.'

Scottish capercaillie became extinct around 1785 and were reintroduced from Sweden in 1837.



Argyll recorded one of the highest declines in capercaillie numbers in the past two decades

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Store cattle trade eases at Stirling sale

UNITED Auctions sold 1,507 store cattle and 174 cows and 598 store sheep and grit ewes at Stirling last week when trade for both bullocks and heifers eased on the week.

Bullocks averaged 177.2p (-2.84p) and sold to 210p per kg for a 331kg Charolais cross from Skelmorlie Mains and £1,120 for a 649kg Charolais cross from Auchengarth.

Heifers averaged 171.18p (-2.9p) and sold to 205p per kg for a 322kg Charolais cross from Shutterflat and £1,025 for a 636kg Simmental cross from Ardornish.

Cast cows averaged 121.21p and sold to 168.4p for a British Blue cross from Upper Auchenlay and £1600 for another from the same home.

Hoggets sold to £77 for Texel cross from New, with Kirkland selling Jacobs to £76 and Ben Lomond selling Blackfaces to £64.50.

Grit ewes from Little Raith sold to £99 for Bluefaced Leicesters with twins and £68 for singles. Blackface feeding ewes from Struck sold to £52.50.

Cheviot ewes with lamb at foot sell to £149 at Dingwall

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 3,511 sheep of all classes at Dingwall last week when store lambs met a firm enquiry, with an excellent show of prime and feeding ewes selling extremely well.

Lambs averaged £59.03 and sold to £95.50 for Texel crosses from Alvie Estate, Kincaig, while in lamb ewes averaged £97.51 and sold to £128 for Cheviots from the Coulags, Strathcarron.

Ewes with lamb at foot averaged £132.55 and sold to £149 for Cheviots from Dell Farm.

Ewes averaged £76.05 and sold to £142 twice for Texels from Torgorm, Conon Bridge, and Crosses from Peallaig, Dingwall.

Rams and feeding sheep averaged £80.83 and sold to £130 for Texel rams from Woodside Cottage, Aberarder.

Cheviot ewes with lamb at foot sell to £149 at Dingwall

UNITED Auctions sold 6,609 prime sheep including a small entry of spring lambs averaging 231.7p/kg and 5,613 hogs averaging 210p/kg (-1.2p) plus 996 ewes and rams at Stirling last Thursday.

Beltex lambs from Luckenburn sold to £119.50, with Texels from Easter Ochtermuthill selling to £111.

Carskies sold Mules to £97, with Blackfaces from East Bracklin and Glenrath fetching £96.50.

Cheviot ewes from Langside sold to £168, with Suffolks from Glenrath to £162.50.

Suffolk rams from Parkhead sold to £154 with Texel rams from Moleigh selling to £140 and Blackfaces from the same home fetching £90.

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PLANNING

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Take notice that the applications in the following schedule may be inspected during normal office hours at 67/69 Chalmers Street Ardrishaig PA30 8DX at the location detailed below 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 67/69 Chalmers Street Ardrishaig PA30 8DX within 21 days of the appearance of this notice. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

SCHEDULE - DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION PLANS

● **Ref No: 11/00386/PP**
Applicant: Mrs Helen and Alasdair Gillies
Proposal: Erection of conservatory.
Site Address: 89 Main Street Bownmore Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA43 7JH
Location of Plans: Bownmore Area Office Isle of Islay

● **Ref No: 11/00394/PP**
Applicant: Mr And Mrs James Brown
Proposal: Formation of 3 new window openings and enlargement of 2 existing window openings
Site Address: 1 Shore Street Port Charlotte Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA48 7TR
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Port Charlotte

● **Ref No: 11/00399/PP**
Applicant: Mr Stuart Anderson
Proposal: Demolition of workshop and erection of new dwellinghouse and formation of new vehicular access
Site Address: 146 Frederick Crescent Port Ellen Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA42 7BD
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Port Ellen

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Applications for planning permission listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be examined at 67/69 Chalmers Street Ardrishaig PA30 8DX and the location detailed below between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and by logging to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications. Written comments for the following list of applications may be made to Planning and Regulatory Services 67/69 Chalmers Street Ardrishaig PA30 8DX by the 21/04/2011

● **Ref No: 11/00359/AN/SC**
Applicant: Ms M. Vicens - Roseira
Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse, detached double garage, formation of vehicular access and installation of oil storage and septic tank (Approval of conditions 2,3,4,5,6,7 relative to Planning Permission in Principle Consent reference 09/01674/PPP).
Site Address: Plot 8 Portantruan Farm Port Ellen Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA42 7DS
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Port Ellen

Argyll and Bute Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST. An extant list of planning applications can be viewed on the Council's website www.argyll-bute.gov.uk.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST and Argyll and Bute Council Libraries.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Applications for planning permission listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be examined at Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR and the location detailed below between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and by logging to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk and clicking on Online Planning Applications. Written comments for the following list of applications may be made to Planning and Regulatory Services Lorn House Albany Street Oban PA34 4AR by the 21/04/2011

● **Ref No: 11/00017/PP**
Applicant: James Haslam
Proposal: Alterations and extension to dwellinghouse.
Site Address: Tigh Na Crois Portnacraigh Appin Argyll And Bute PA38 4BL
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Ledaig

● **Ref No: 11/00049/PP**
Applicant: Ms M. McCall
Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse and installation of septic tank
Site Address: Land North East Of Mid Farm South Achinuin Isle Of Lismore Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Lismore

● **Ref No: 11/00260/PP**
Applicant: Dr Timothy Bowles
Proposal: Erection of extension to dwellinghouse
Site Address: 36 Balvicar Isle Of Seil Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4TE
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Balvicar

● **Ref No: 11/00341/PP**
Applicant: TSL Contractors Limited
Proposal: Formation of commercial pier and associated access, hardstanding and bunded oil tank.
Site Address: Jetty Fishish Gravel Pit Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Aros Isle of Mull

● **Ref No: 11/00390/PP**
Applicant: Mr D Howe
Proposal: Erection of dwellinghouse
Site Address: Land North Of Brageenbeg Farmhouse Kilniver Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4UU
Location of Plans: Oban Area Office

● **Ref No: 11/00409/PPP**
Applicant: Mr And Mrs D Orr
Proposal: Site for the erection of dwellinghouse and installation of septic tank
Site Address: Land North Of Seabank Farmhouse Benderloch Oban Argyll And Bute PA37 15B
Location of Plans: Sub Post Office Ledaig

Argyll and Bute Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST. An extant list of planning applications can be viewed on the Council's website www.argyll-bute.gov.uk.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST and Argyll and Bute Council Libraries.

Any letter of representation the council receives about a planning application is considered a public document. Please therefore note that representations will be made available for public inspection and, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, will be copied on request. They will also be published on the council's web site.

The author of such a representation is solely responsible for its content and accuracy.

Anonymous representations will be "shredded" and those marked confidential will be returned to the sender. Neither will be taken into account when the application is being considered.

Details of representations we receive on planning applications can be viewed on the council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/publicaccess

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

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

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

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description	Alternative locations where application may be inspected
11/00728/FUL	Land 130m West of Catriona Roshven Glenish	Erection of house - alternative proposal to 10/04183/FUL	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00875/FUL	500m South West of Lognaha Farm Duror	Construction of cycling and walking route	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00928/FUL	Loch Tall Brewers Fyrie Airds Way Fort William	Extension to restaurant	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00942/FUL	In Garden Ground at Beinn Bhan West Loch Ballachulish	Erection of house and garage with ancillary letting unit above	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00943/PIP	110m North of 3 South Cuil Duror Appin	Erection of house	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00956/PIP	Plot No 1 Land 40m North East of Schoolhouse Bunavullin Drimmin	Erection of house	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00957/PIP	Plot No 2 Land 60m North East of Schoolhouse Bunavullin Drimmin	Erection of house	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00965/FUL	45 North East of Curlew Cottage Inchloggan Invergarry	Construction of a 50KW water turbine generator	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/00966/PIP	Land 40m South West of Sunart View Kilchoan Acharade	Erection of house	Acharacle Service Point (14 days)
11/00992/FUL	Unit 3 Cool Industrial Estate Cool Fort William	Change of use from former printworks/office to furniture showroom.	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/01003/FUL	2 Bohemie Roy Bridge	Erection of garage	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)
11/01010/FUL	Land to West of Coirebreac Lower Inveroy Roy Bridge	Erection of 3 houses (renewal of 07/00393/OUTLO)	Lochaber Area Planning & Building Standards Office (14 days)

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

Our contact details are changing!

With effect from **MONDAY 4TH APRIL 2011**, the following telephone numbers should be used to contact staff at the Association's offices:

Office/Address/General Email Address	Telephone Number
Mid Argyll Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, PA31 8ST housing.midargyll@acha.co.uk	01546 605800
Kintyre Old Quay Head, Campbeltown, PA28 6ED housing.kintyre@acha.co.uk	01546 605880
Oban, Lorn & Isles Menzies House, Glenshellach Business Park, Oban, PA34 4RY housing.lorn@acha.co.uk	01546 605930
Mull Breadalbane Street, Tobermory, PA75 6PX	01546 605930
Report a Repair at:	0800 028 2755

ACHA
Argyll community housing association

Education Scotland
CHARLES AND BARBARA TYRE TRUST SCHEME 1979

In implementation of the objects of the above Trust, the Governing Body may in each financial year award grants of such annual value as they think fit to assist applicants of either sex:-

- to obtain qualification additional to a degree associateship, diploma or certificate of a University or other institute of further or higher education ready obtained.
- to train in a trade or profession other than in which they are at present trained.
- to undertake a course provided by the Open University for which they have registered or are about to register.
- to undertake training in leadership and initiative.
- to benefit from recreational holidays in cases of physical or mental disability, whether permanent or temporary.

In accordance with the wishes of the donors, the Governing Body shall:-

- satisfy themselves that the applicant is a Protestant, has completed his/her school education, but is not at the time of award, more than 25 years of age, and is ordinarily resident within the area of the former County of Argyll.
- Associate the names of Charles and Barbara Tyre with each award made under the scheme.

Further details and an application form may be obtained online at www.charlesand-barbaratyretrust.org.uk or from the Clerk to the Governors. Completed applications must be received no later than 31 May 2011, and applications received after the closing date will not normally be considered except in exceptional circumstances. Please note application forms will be accepted before results are received.

Clerk to the Governors, Charles and Barbara Tyre Trust, Loch Awe House, Barmore Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TW
Tel: 01880 820 277 Fax: 01880 820 722

North Argyll Eventide Home Association

AGM

27 April 2011 at 7pm
To be held in North Argyll House

crofters commission
ughdarras nan croitearan

John MacFarlane has applied to decroft part of the croft at 11 Airds Bay, Ardchattan & Muckairn extending to 0.0107 ha. Ref: 4.86.30249.

If you are a crofter, shareholder or owner of a croft in the township you may submit comments in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofters Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW or info@crofterscommission.org.uk, by 18 April 2011 quoting the above case number.

If you are interested in obtaining the tenancy of this croft, should it become available, please make your interest known to the Crofters Commission at the above address by the date shown above.

Please note any comments provided are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Comments will also be released under any Freedom of Information enquiry.

COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949 DEPLOYMENT OF SENTINEL CAGES: LOCH LINNHE

Notice is hereby given that Marine Scotland Science have applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by section 36 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988, to carry out a scientific study in Loch Linnhe, deploying sentinel cages at the following locations:

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Site 1	56 50.145N	05 07.348W
Site 2	56 44.143N	05 14.949W
Site 3	56 42.612N	05 15.509W
Site 4	56 42.032N	05 12.783W
Site 5	56 40.992N	05 20.919W
Site 6	56 38.876N	05 19.122W
Site 7	56 35.254N	05 23.049W
Site 8	56 36.546N	05 30.021W
Site 9	56 28.959N	05 27.667W
Site 10	56 30.841N	05 37.955W
Contingency site	56 42.292N	05 17.684W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at [insert address of the building where the plans are deposited].

Objections relating to safety of navigation in respect of the application should be made in writing to: Gordon Hastie, The Scottish Government, Ports and Harbours Branch, Area 2G North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ within 28 days of the date of this notice quoting reference: 2SPC\4\5\17

Marine Scotland Science
375 Victoria Road
Aberdeen

crofters commission
ughdarras nan croitearan

The following decrofting Direction has been granted:

Part Croft

1 Caoles, Tiree.
Direction dated 23 March 2011 granted to Mrs Iona Larg. Area ext to 0.3025 ha.

Conditions: 1. Purchase within 5 years. 2. The land is used for two house sites. 3. Complete enclosure of the land with a stock-proof fence within 4 months of completion of the proposed development. 4. Maintenance of the fence by each successive owner or occupier of the land.

Case Number: 4.86.29079.

The granting of this Direction may be appealed to the Scottish Land Court within 42 days from the date of this advert. Information on how to appeal is available from the Scottish Land Court.

COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949 SCIENTIFIC STUDY: TIREE

Notice is hereby given that Scottish Power Renewables have applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by section 36 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988, to deploy four wave rider buoys 4 km off the west coast of Tiree:

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Wave rider: 1	56 29.750N	07 10.850W
Wave rider: 2	56 26.600N	07 04.233W
Wave rider: 3	56 21.233N	07 11.933W
Wave rider: 4	56 32.283N	07 04.100W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at: Registration Offices for Argyll and Bute Council (Tiree), Crossapol, Isle Of Tiree, Argyll and Bute, PA77 6UP Arinagour Post Office, The Isle of Coll, Argyll, PA78 6SY Oban Public Library, 77 Albany St, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4AL

Objections relating to safety of navigation in respect of the application should be made in writing to: Gordon Hastie, The Scottish Government, Ports and Harbours Branch, Area 2G North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ within 28 days of the date of this notice quoting reference: 2SPC\4\5\16

Scottish Power Renewables
4th Floor
1 Atlantic Quay
Glasgow

crofters commission
ughdarras nan croitearan

NOTIFICATION OF COMMISSION DECISIONS ON APPLICATIONS TO CREATE NEW CROFTS

1. Application by Marius Huysamer, owner of Laggan View, Drumlemble, Campbeltown, Argyll. **Approved.**

Parties with an interest in any of the above applications may appeal our decision to the Scottish Land Court, within 42 days. Information on how to appeal is available from the Crofters Commission.

krisp print

For a hassle free service throughout Argyll call Krisp Print on 01631 568015

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Lochavullin Industrial Estate
Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB
email: sales@krispprint.co.uk
www.krispprint.co.uk

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Please send CV & covering letter to: Christopher Chisholm, Branch Manager, William Wilson Ltd., Unit 3, Ben Nevis Ind Est, Fort William PH33 6RU or email chris.chisholm@williamwilson.co.uk



Caley Group

South Pier, Oban, PA34 4LS

Office Administrator/Book-keeper

To work in their office Part-time (20 hours per week)

The Candidate will require strong administration and Book-keeping Skills. A knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite is essential. A knowledge of Pegasus Suite would be advantageous but not essential as training will be given.

Please apply in writing, enclosing a CV to:- Mr P Tosh, Manager, Caley Fisheries, South Pier, Oban, PA34 4LS

Cleaning Operative required for Toilet Blocks at Crinan Canal, Lochgilphead

27.5 hours per week flexible times. £6.35 per hour plus fuel allowance.

Own transport required.

Contact Fiona on 0808 168 0100

Argyll Timber Transport Group

Argyll Timber Transport Group, a voluntary Forestry group seek expressions of interest in the provision of services, including project and liaison work between our partner organisations, Forestry Commission Scotland, Argyll & Bute Council, private forestry sector, hauliers, local communities and others, in the strategic development of the road networks and transportation systems involved in the movement of timber from Argyll.

Knowledge of the Argyll Forests and local geography is important, with some practical experience in the forest industry. The ability to communicate well, recognise and find workable solutions to operational problems and in the development of future strategy will be essential.

The work can only be assured at 2 days per week, and this will require flexibility in communicating with others who may be available on a five day basis. Initially the contract will run for twelve months to the end of March 2012, but with the possibility of an extension. Terms and conditions are negotiable.

Interested persons should contact:

Ian Arnold
M/Tel: 07810 710 112
ianarnold1@btinternet.com

Quantity Surveyor

We have a full time vacancy for a Quantity Surveyor, preferably with a minimum of 2 years experience, to be based at our office in Campbeltown, Argyll. Consideration will also be given to a Civil Engineering Technician/Graduate with some measurement experience.

Duties to include:-

- preparing quotations for tenders, with and without Bills of Quantities
- dealing with a range of Conditions of Contract and Specifications
- on site measurement as required
- preparing weekly costings for contracts from operative and plant timesheets and material records
- prepare Interim and Final Valuations and liaise with clients
- allocate work to subcontractors, value work completed and issue payments

Salary:-

• The post will offer a very competitive salary and benefits package commensurate with the ability and experience of the successful applicant.

Applications:-

• in writing providing details of experience and expected salary to contact details given below:-

McFadyens Contractors (Campbeltown) Ltd
Glebe Street, Campbeltown, Argyll, PA28 6LR
e-mail: info@mcfadyenscontractors.co.uk



Strathclyde Fire and Rescue are recruiting for Firefighters Retained Duty System (RDS) for Oban station. Interested in helping to provide an invaluable emergency service for your local community? available to respond to emergency calls day or night within 5 minutes, aged 18 or over, physically fit and in good health, unaided vision and colour perception? Applications are processed only through the On-Line Recruitment Portal at:

www.myjobscotland.gov.uk
Closing date 08/05/11

BLUE TRIANGLE (GLASGOW) HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

We work with people affected by homelessness, providing person-centred support and quality accommodation Oban

Full & Part Time Housing Assistants

£13,548 - £15,513 (pro-rata based on 35hrs/week) Ref: OBANHA0411
These posts are with the Association's Housing Management service in Oban and you will be based in the newly refurbished property we own in Shore Street.

You will work to ensure the safety and security of the accommodation, along with maintaining minimum standards of hygiene in all communal areas, both internally and externally.

The normal working week will be over 7 days covering the core hours between 8.00 a.m. and 10 p.m. with rotating shift patterns.

Applicants should preferably have experience of working in residential settings with vulnerable people as there is the requirement to liaise with our Housing Support Service staff in Oban.

Relief Workers required for Lochgilphead & Oban projects

£7.61 per hour (ad hoc shifts) Ref: OBANRW0411

To apply tel: 0141 221 8365 or email recruitment@btha.org.uk quoting reference number. Closing date: 12 noon on 14th April 2011.

The successful applicant will be required to join The Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme.

www.btha.org.uk



John MacLachlan Group

HGV Driver Class 1 or 2 - Oban

HGV Driver Class 2 - Mull

Applications to: John MacLachlan Group, Torran Gorm Industrial Estate, Oban, Argyll PA34 4PL or e-mail pam@jmaclachlangroup.co.uk. Tel 01631 566370 Fax 01631 566758

Fèisean nan Gàidheal

a' toirt ar dualchais do ar n-òigridh

Cothrom air leth a tha seo a bhith ag obair ann am buidheann stèidhichte agus a' cur ri iomairt shoirbheachail.

OIFIGEAR LEASACHAIDH Development Officer

Cùmhnant làn-ùine ann an Loch Abar: £21,678 - £23,082

Full-time contract based in Lochaber: £21,678 - £23,082

Thathar a' sireadh Oifigear Leasachaidh a bhios stèidhichte ann an Loch Abar agus a bhios ag obair còmhla ri sgioba bheag, ann a bhith a' toirt planaichean-leasachaidh Fèisean nan Gàidheal gu buil ann an co-bhonn ri na fèisean ann an Loch Abar agus ann an sgìrean eile.

Gheibhear barrachd fiosrachaidh mun dreuchd air an làrach-lìn agus bu chòir tagraidhean a bhith againn ro 5f, Dihaoine 15 Giblean 2011.

www.fèisean.org/obraichean.html

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.



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You must have experience of working with ponies, deer management, extraction and larding techniques, experience/familiarity with HASAW Act. A driving licence and a reasonable level of physical fitness is required to be able to work in upland areas and adverse weather.

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: 10 April 2011.



get closer snhjobs.co.uk

BritishRedCross

Transport & Escort Driver

Salary: £7.12 ph / Hours: 25.5 hrs pw / Fixed term until March 2012 / Location: Arran

The British Red Cross helps vulnerable people in crisis, wherever and wherever they are.

The British Red Cross are looking to appoint an experienced and enthusiastic driver to provide a first class service to people in crisis. You will be responsible for ensuring that passengers are safely transported between their home and their destination, where appropriate you may also be required to provide emotional support to passengers and their carers.

Educated to Standard Grade or equivalent, you will be able to demonstrate experience in a similar role and be aware of the health and safety legislation relating to passenger transport. In addition, it is crucial that you have a flexible approach and hold a full driving licence with category D1 Certificate.

For further information and to apply please visit: www.redcross.org.uk/About-us/jobs or email wrk4us@redcross.org.uk Alternatively please send an A4 69p stamped addressed envelope, quoting reference SNI/IOM/1153/DR, to HR Dept, 4 Nasmyth Place, Hillington, G52 4PR.

Closing date for receipt of applications: Tuesday 12 April 2011.

We are committed to welcoming people from the widest possible diversity of background, culture and experience. The Red Cross undertakes CRB checking of all individuals who have regular contact with children and vulnerable adults.

The British Red Cross, incorporated by Royal Charter 1908, is a charity registered in England and Wales (220949) and Scotland (SC037738).



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From 11th April 2011.

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56 MITSUBISHI L200 Trojan, Double Cab Pick Up, Leather, E-pack, Black, 39k	£8,950
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58 NISSAN Navara Longwaydown, limited edition, Double cab pickup, Sat Nav leather, 6 speed, all extras black 19k	£14,750
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57 NISSAN Navara Adventura, Double Cab pickup, Sat. Nav. 6 speed, full spec. leather, black	£11,950
08 NISSAN Navara Outlaw, Kingcab pickup, Cruise Control, Met Blue, 50k	£10,950
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57 TOYOTA Hi-Lux HL2, Double Cab Pickup, manual, canopy, E-Pack, Air Con, Met. Silver	£9,950
08 Vauxhall Vivaro 2.0CDTI 115 van 6 speed, remote locking, white 60k	£8,250
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58 VAUXHALL Astra Club, CDTI Van, White, 39k	£5,250
57 VAUXHALL Astra van club model, alloy 6 speed, cd, met silver 60k	£4,950
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ELECTRIC UNDERBLANKET

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Rosemary Cameron, The Old Store, Onich - Following my recent illness, I would like to express my thanks to all the medical staff at Belford Hospital, Fort William, the Retrieval Team and helicopter and ICU of Western Infirmary, Glasgow, for the care and attention I received. I would also like to pass on a big thank you to all relatives, neighbours and friends for their kind wishes and help during my hospital stay and thanks also go to Fr Donald and Fr Francis.

Oban Times PERSONALS

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Oban Times PERSONALS

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Oban Times PERSONALS

DEATHS

BAILEY - Suddenly on March 16, 2011 in her 67th year, Louise Bailey, 40 Toberonochy, Isle of Luing. Wife of John Bailey, mother of Elke-Mai and Erik and a much loved grandmother.

CAMERON - Peacefully on Wednesday, March 23, 2011 at his home Strathmore Terrace, Crianlarich, Duncan Matheson Cameron, beloved husband of the late Effie, last surviving member of the family of the late John and Annie Cameron, Portnellan Farm, Crianlarich.

CAMPBELL - Peacefully at the Campbelltown Hospital, on March 27, 2011, Alexander McLean Campbell (Alex), in his 85th year, Ardconnel, Hutcheon Court, Campbelltown, dearly beloved husband of Lillian C. Wright, much loved father of Fiona and Stuart, father in law of John and Mairi and a dearly loved grandpa of Julie, Jennifer, Laura and Lindsey.

FLETCHER - Peacefully at Bowmore Hospital on Saturday March 26, 2011, with her family around her, Peggy (nee MacDonald), Beloved wife of the late Alastair, loving mother of Alastair, Colin, Dan, Margaret and Ronald and the late Jessie and Dougie. Dearly loved grandmother and mother in law.

MACDOUGALL - Peacefully at the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, on March 24, 2011, in his 84th year, Duncan, loving husband of Mae, much loved father of Deborah and Colin, loving father in law of Sandy, devoted grandpa to Harriet and Finlay, beloved son of the late Katie Dawson and treasured brother of the late Andrew, Catherine and Tom. Sadly missed.

MCCALLUM - Suddenly at the Golden Jubilee Hospital, Clydebank on March 18, 2011, Alasdair, much loved brother, uncle and friend to all who knew him. Funeral Service was held in Kilmeny Church on Friday March 25 followed by interment at Kilmeny Cemetery, Islay.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MACKINNON - The family of the late Nancy MacKinnon (4 Benmore View, NorthConnell) would like to thank everyone for their kind messages of sympathy, shown to them by way of cards, letters, flowers and phone calls. Special thanks to staff of Ward B and C and North Argyll Eventide Home. Thanks to Hamish Hoey, undertakers, and to Rev MacCormack for his comforting service. The sum of £404 was raised for the stroke and heart foundation.

MCCALLUM - The family of the late Alasdair McCallum would like to thank friends and neighbours for their kind expressions of sympathy, cards and flowers following our sad loss. Grateful thanks to all Doctors, Nursing Staff and Paramedics at Islay Hospital and Golden Jubilee Hospital, Clydebank. Our thanks to Jean and Donnie of MacAfferFuneralServices for efficient and caring funeral arrangements. Thanks also to Scott Carroll Reader, Marsali Thomson organist and the elders of Kilmeny Church. A very special thanks to John MacIntyre who spoke so fittingly of Alasdair. Our sincere thanks to all who attended funeral and to Lorna and her staff at Bridgend Hotel for excellent purvey.

REFFIN - The family of the late Annie Reffin would like to thank family, friends and neighbours for their kind expressions of sympathy, cards and flowers following their sad loss. They also wish to thank all the staff at Cruachan Ward for the exceptional care shown to Annie and her family especially during her last illness. Thanks also to the staff of Carers Direct, Home Care and Medico who looked after Annie so well at home, to Taynuilt Surgery, to Hamish Hoey and Sons for efficient arrangements and to Taynuilt Hotel. Special thanks to the Rev Robert Brooks for a comforting service and for all his care and compassion over the last year and to all who attended the funeral and gave so generously to the British Heart Foundation. The sum of £709 was raised.

IN MEMORIAM

BIRD - Nan (née McCuish). In loving memory of my dear wife who died on April 2, 1999. My thoughts are always with you

Your place no one can fill
In life I loved you dearly
In death I love you still
I know you walk beside me
And when my life is over
I pray that God will take my hand
And lead me straight to you.

- Loving husband Terry x **BIRD** - In loving memory of Nan, our dear mum, nannie and great gran who died April 2, 1999. Time may pass and fade away

But silent thoughts and memories stay.
Ruthie, Murdo, girls Kyde and Cully

CAMERON - Precious memories of Hugh, devoted husband, dad, father-in-law and grandpa, who passed away March 31, 2002. Someone too special to ever forget
Bella and family.

HEAP - In loving memory of our darling son and brother Edward Alexander (Eddie) accidentally killed at work on April 4, 1979, aged 18 years.

We can't get over losing you
No matter how we try
You'll always be within our hearts
Until the day we die.
- Your loving Mum, Dad and Family xx
Loved and remembered every day.

- Aunties Peggy, Mary and Family.
MACDONALD - Cherished memories of our dear neighbour and friend, Margaret, died April 3, 2009. Always in our thoughts.

- Bill and Chrissie.
MACDONALD - In loving memory of our dear mum and nana Morag who died March 31, 2005. Sadly missed.

- Inserted by her family, Bunnassan, Mull and Oban.
MACGREGOR - In loving memory of Annie Mac, who died March 23, 2000. A dear friend and godmother, sadly missed and always in my thoughts.

- Archie.
MACKINNON - In loving memory of my dear wife Bella, who passed away on March 29, 2010. A year has gone since you were here

But in my eyes there is still a tear
In my heart you will always stay
Love and miss you every day.

- From loving husband Donald.
MACRAE - George. Who died March 26, 2009. Cherished memories of George, loving and dearly loved husband, dad, dad-in-law and papa.

Forever in our thoughts and prayers. Rest in Peace. Marion and family, 1 Altour Gardens, Spean Bridge.

McKNIGHT - In loving memory of our dad William, who died March 23, 1991 and our sister Margaret, who died April 6, 1991.

Gone but never forgotten Agnes, Sheena, Ina, Tommy and Lilian.
McLEOD - Precious memories of Chrissie (née MacLean) who passed away 20 years ago on March 29, 1991. Her children (Kenny, Martin, Anne and Pete) remember, love and miss her dearly. Her beauty, intellect and humour live on in her wonderful grandchildren.

Aig fois na dachaigh ann an solas fhlathanas.
McPHAIL - In loving memory of my dear wife Mary McPhail who died April 3, 2004, devoted mother to John, Sheona and Drew. Sadly missed, forever in our thoughts

A light is from our household gone
A voice we loved is still
A place is vacant from our hearts which never can be filled.

- Inserted by her husband Charlie, Dalmally. Love and miss you always
Granny
- Elizabeth and Andrew xxx

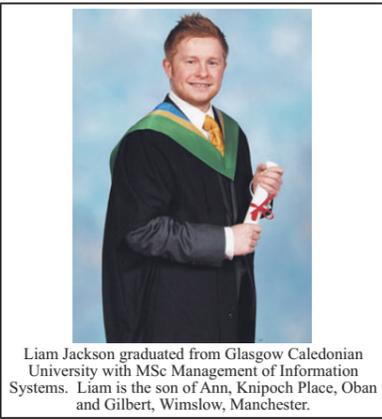
WALKER - In loving memory of our dear father, Archibald who died March 29, 1996.

Forever in our thoughts.
- Inserted by Donald and Morag, Airport Cottage, Islay.

WALKER - In loving memory of our father and grandfather Archie, who passed away March 29, 1996
Always in our thoughts Allan and family, Islay, Gartmore and Blanehead.

WALKER - In loving memory of my dear father Archie, who died on March 29, 1996. Sadly missed.
- Inserted by his loving son.

GRADUATIONS



Liam Jackson graduated from Glasgow Caledonian University with MSc Management of Information Systems. Liam is the son of Ann, Knipoch Place, Oban and Gilbert, Wimslow, Manchester.

ECCLESIASTICAL NOTICES

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION
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Lent 4
Mothering Sunday
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Communion08.00
Sung Eucharist.....10.15
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Large Print Hymn Books
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St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Mattins.....11.00
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist.....08.00
Evensong.....20.00

LORN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
Sunday
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10:30am
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www.lorncf.org.uk

ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN
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Rivers in the Classroom project manager Hazel Stanworth helps children from Inveraray Primary School release their trout alevins back into the river.

Something fishy is going on at the loch!

PUPILS from six schools near Loch Awe have been taking part in a project to learn more about the loch's ecosystem and wildlife.
Children from Kilchrean, Dalmally, Furnace, Kilmichael Glassary, Kilmartin and Inveraray schools hatched trout eggs taken from Allt na Cuile Riabhaiche, Arbrecknish, in their classrooms and over the past week have been returning the trout alevins to the river.

REPORT
by EUAN PATERSON
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Loch Awe Improvements Association (LAIA) has funded the scheme, with the support of Argyll Fisheries Trust, and appointed project manager Hazel Stanworth to co-ordinate the schools' work.
LAIA treasurer Richard MacKenzie said: 'It is important for the next generation to appreciate the river and everything within it.
'The health of the river is a barometer of the health of the local environment.'

Inveraray's 22 primary four and five pupils released their alevins on Monday. Teacher Gemma Young said: 'The children have loved this project and have been updating their diaries every day. Hazel came in once a week to do lessons on food chains and habitats and really brought science to life.'
All schools involved will be invited to produce a scrap book of their work and the best entry will receive a prize at the LAIA open day on August 7.

Trip to Castle Toward looking good



A fundraising bonanza for Rockfield Primary School's residential trip to Castle Toward has put pupils well on the way to their holiday. A fashion show held at Mackays to raise money for the Castle Toward trip raised £294.66 and bag packing at Tesco raised a further £464.82.

Netherlorn churches host World Food night

AT A WORLD Food Night in Craignish Church, parishioners heard that if a farmer in Malawi can sell 90kgs of rice at a fair price, then he would have sufficient income to send one of his children to high school for a year.

This was the message which John Riches, founder of 'Just Trading Scotland', gave to members of Netherlorn Churches, when he spoke at a 'World Food Night' and fair trade sale, organised by Craignish Parish Church and held in Craignish Village Hall.

Timed to coincide with Fair Trade Fortnight, the aim of the evening was to launch the '90kg Rice Challenge' whereby Just Trading Scotland challenges churches, schools and community groups to sell 90kgs of the delicious Malawian Kilombero rice, thus helping subsistence farmers to educate their children and expand their businesses.

Professor Riches explained: 'It does not matter how much rice a farmer grows if there is no market for it. By providing such a market, individuals and small local groups in Scotland can make a real difference to the lives of the Malawian farmers.'

All those attending the event had brought along a dish to share so, following John Riches' talk, everyone enjoyed an excellent meal with the accompanying Kilombero rice being pronounced particularly good. Fair Trade foodstuffs, crafts and cards from Malawi, Sri Lanka, Madagascar and Palestine were on offer with the stallholders reporting excellent sales.

Further information on Just Trading Scotland and the 90kgs rice challenge can be found at www.justtradingScotland.co.uk

Fundraiser nets £200 for church

Ladies who lunch: Margaret MacLean and Christine Pearson served up a cup of tea at Kilmore and Oban Parish Church's annual fundraiser. The volunteers raised more than £200 for church funds.



Crowds flock to Craignish boat jumble



Guy Neville with daughter Kay is joined by Larrissa Madden for the Boat Jumble.

FINE weather brought the crowds from far and wide to Craignish Village Hall last Saturday for the 13th annual Boat Jumble and Car Boot Sale.

Organiser Jan Brown, from Craignish Community Company (C3), said the event was the biggest to date, with a total of 38 stalls and car boots from as far afield as Northern Ireland, Malaga, Edinburgh and Ayrshire, with a total of 265 bargain hunters passing through the doors.

Jan said: 'There were plenty of bargains to be had and customers could be seen leaving the hall clutching all sorts of wonderful bits including lengths of rope, fishing gear and tools, not to mention various indeterminate items which would, surely, come in useful some day. There was plenty for the non-nautical customers too, with books, toys, clothes and bric-a-brac.'

She also expressed her delight at the way the day had gone and thanked all those who had helped and donated prizes to the raffle. More than £1,000 was raised for C3 of which the proceeds from the raffle, £500, will go towards this summer's Craignish Arts Festival.

Discover the Lost City of Atlantis!



Grace Thompson was the winner of a competition to name the new soft play area at Atlantis Leisure, which opens Saturday. Grace came up with 'Lost City of Atlantis Soft Play'. The state-of-the-art facilities, which replace the old climbing wall, are open between 9am and 5.30pm, with a 30-minute session costing £2.

Leagues

	P	W	D	L	P
Scottish Hydro Premier Division					
Kyles	3	3	0	0	6
Newtonmore	2	2	0	0	4
Fort William	2	2	0	0	4
Oban Camanachd	3	2	0	1	4
Kingussie	3	1	1	1	3
Inveraray	2	1	0	1	2
Glenurquhart	2	0	1	1	1
Kilmallie	2	0	2	0	0
Lovat	2	0	2	0	0
Glenorchy	3	0	0	3	0

	P	W	D	L	P
Marine Harvest North Division One					
Kinlochshiel	2	2	0	0	4
Lochaber	2	1	0	1	2
Caberfeidh	2	1	0	1	2
Beaulieu	2	1	0	1	2
Strathglass	2	1	0	1	2
Lochcarron	1	0	1	0	1
Inverness	2	0	1	1	1
Skye	1	0	0	1	0

	P	W	D	L	P
Marine Harvest South Division One					
Lochside Rvrs	3	3	0	0	6
Bute	2	2	0	0	4
Kyles	3	2	0	1	4
GMA	1	1	0	0	2
Taynuilt	3	1	0	2	2
Balachulish	3	0	1	2	2
Kilmory	3	1	0	2	2
Aberdour	2	0	0	2	0
Oban Celtic	2	0	0	2	0

	P	W	D	L	P
Marine Harvest North Division Two					
Kingussie	3	3	0	0	6
Glenarray	3	3	0	0	6
Fort William	2	2	0	0	4
Newtonmore	3	2	0	1	4
Lochaber	4	2	0	2	4
Lovat	2	1	0	1	0
Glenurquhart	4	1	0	3	2
Kinlochshiel	4	1	0	3	2
Skye	4	1	0	3	2
Kilmallie	3	0	0	3	0

	P	W	D	L	P
Marine Harvest South Division Two					
Tayforth	3	3	1	0	5
Bute	3	2	1	0	5
Strachur	3	2	0	1	4
ColGlen	3	2	0	1	4
GMA	3	1	0	2	2
Inveraray	3	1	0	2	2
Balachulish	3	1	0	2	2
Aberdour	3	0	0	3	0

	P	W	D	L	P
Marine Harvest North Division Three					
Aberdeen U	4	4	0	0	8
Beaulieu	4	3	0	1	6
Caberfeidh	3	2	0	1	4
Lochcarron	2	2	0	0	4
Boleskine	3	2	0	1	4
Lochbroom	3	1	0	3	2
Strathglass	3	0	1	2	1
Lewis	3	0	1	2	1
Inverness	2	0	0	2	0
Ardnarmurchan	3	0	0	3	0

Fixtures

SHINTY

Saturday April 2
All throw-ups at 2.30pm unless otherwise stated

Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup Preliminary Round
Strathglass v Aberdour
Daniel MacRae 3pm
Lochaber v Balachulish
Graham Irving
Bute v Caberfeidh
Robert Baxter

Scottish Hydro Premier Division
Inveraray v Kyles Athletic
Ted MacDonald
Glenorchy v Kilmallie
Colin MacDonald
Lovat v Fort William
John MacLeod
Newtonmore v Glenurquhart
Billy Wotherspoon
Oban Camanachd v Kingussie
Charles Young

Marine Harvest North Division One
Beaulieu v Skye
Donald MacRae
Kinlochshiel v Inverness
Jock Matheson

Marine Harvest South Division One
Kyles Athletic v Kilmory
Duncan Kerr
Oban Celtic v GMA
Ronnie Campbell
Taynuilt v Lochside Rvrs
George O'Rourke

Marine Harvest North Division Two
Fort William v Kinlochshiel
Robert Morrison
Glenarray v Lovat
Graham Cameron
Kilmallie v Glenurquhart
John Sloggie
Kingussie v Newtonmore
Derek Cameron
Skye v Lochaber
Innes Wood

Marine Harvest South Division Two
Balachulish v Bute
Jim Innes
Col Glen v Aberdour
Dougie Cameron
Strachur v Inveraray
Gus Campbell
Tayforth v GMA
David Mitchell

Marine Harvest North Division Three
Aberdeen Uni v Lochcarron
Evan MacRae
Ardnarmurchan v Lewis
Graeme MacMillan
Boleskine v Caberfeidh
J A Gillies
Inverness v Beaulieu
Iain Kennedy
Strathglass v Lochbroom
Willie MacRae 12 noon

Oban Camanachd mark their card with victory at the Dell

Kyles' goal surge continues at Dalmally to maintain Premier title challenge

WITH MANY teams involved in first round cup ties in both North and South areas, Kyles Athletic took the chance to firm their grasp at the top of the Scottish Hydro Premier Division table with a convincing 7-1 away win against Glenorchy.

Kyles have now scored 22 goals in three games ahead of a mouth-watering league tie at Inveraray this Saturday.

However, the weekend headlines were all about the only other top league tie to be played on Saturday, with Oban Camanachd's victory over Kingussie at the Dell resounding around the shinty world within minutes of the final whistle.

At Dalmally, Roddy MacDonald put visitors Kyles ahead within three minutes with Grant Irvine extending the lead three minutes from the interval.

Glenorchy came back with a Kenny MacDougall goal immediately after half-time but the home side's momentum was lost when Tom Whyte, Irvine and Fraser MacDonald netted three times for Kyles in a seven minute spell. Irvine then claimed his hat-trick with 20 minutes left to play and the scoring was rounded off when Robbie MacLeod scored Kyles' seventh after 77 minutes.

At Kingussie, Ryan Borthwick fired the home side into a 16th minute lead but within two minutes Oban Camanachd were level when goalkeeper Andrew Borthwick turned a Daniel MacIntyre effort into his own net.

On the half-hour, Aiden MacIntyre gave the visitors a deserved lead and, despite Kingussie's best efforts, they couldn't break down a well organised Oban defence and the visitors held out for a memorable victory.

The teams meet again this Saturday, this time at Mossfield Park, Oban.

Kingussie manager Steven Borthwick hinted he might make some changes to his side for this weekend's match.

He told The Oban Times: 'We'd like to think we could overturn the result. Most of our players can play in a number of positions, so we might change things around a bit to see if we can get a bit more bite up front.'

'Oban competed very well but I thought both sides played well - we just couldn't break down their defence. We took a lot of positives out of the game.'

Oban Camanachd co-manager Andrew Pearson said: 'It was a hard fought game but we were confident of getting something up there. I think this team has under-achieved over the past couple of seasons and if we keep everyone fit we can finish well up the table.'

'There was a great atmosphere and the game was end to end. We came under a bit of pressure towards the end but the defence played really well. It was a great team effort.'

'We are keen to get a result



Kilmallie's John Stewart leaves Glenurquhart defender Ali MacIntosh in his wake as he surges forward in Saturday's MacTavish Cup tie at Canal Park. Stewart scored twice in extra time to help his team into a quarter-final cup tie against near-neighbours Lochaber 10_13shinty10

against them at Mossfield this Saturday to prove it wasn't a one off and we are expecting another exciting and hard fought game. The boys will take a lot of confidence from the result up there.'

In the Glasgow Celtic Society Cup first round ties at Inveraray and Glasgow, both matches produced evenly balanced encounters and eventual victory for the home sides.

Gary MacPherson put Inveraray ahead within the first minute but Bute's Hector Whitelaw drew the teams level before the half-hour. Stuart Strathie then had the visitor's ahead just before half-time until MacPherson was again on target for the home team.

SHINTY

With 15 minutes remaining, the cup tie was then settled with two Inveraray penalties - Russell MacKinlay netting the first and MacPherson securing a hat-trick with the second.

Inveraray manager John Smylie says this weekend's opponents, Kyles Athletic, have the ability to challenge for the title this season and has warned his team to be on their guard at Winterton Park.

John said: 'Kyles have been scoring goals for fun this season; they are a good team that could be challenging Newtonmore for the title.'

'However, this is probably the first and only time I'll have a full squad to pick from this season.'

There was also a first minute goal in Glasgow last Saturday as Oban Celtic's Lee Askew found the net against Glasgow Mid Argyll.

However, Andy Mathie equalised five minutes later and the game then swung one way then the other as Alan Duffy's 12th minute strike regained Celtic's lead and David Hill appeared to give the visitors a cushion when he netted Celtic's third after 23 minutes.

But, Craig Anderson and Alan Duncan then took less than three minutes to get the home side level again, with Fulton Ross snatching what was to prove the winner for GMA on the hour.

With eight minutes remaining, Celtic's Ian MacKechnie was sent off after two yellow card offences.

Oban Celtic manager Davy Hamilton cursed his team's luck against GMA: 'It wasn't a bad game but we should have taken more out of it. They had two deflected goals and we were 3-1 up at one point. Saying that, the boys were like the walking wounded on Saturday and I just hope everyone will be fully fit for this weekend. We look forward to hosting GMA and will give them a better game this weekend. We are looking to get something from it.'

Kilmallie and Glenurquhart required extra time to separate them in their Cooperative MacTavish Cup tie at Canal Park with the teams locked at one-goal apiece after 90 minutes.

Michael Rodger's 36th minute goal looked to be enough to take Kilmallie through to the next round until the final minute when Glenurquhart's Neale Reid equalised to take the tie into added time.

In a hectic extra time, John Stewart struck twice for the home side with new signing Liam Girvan scoring for the Glen - but Peter MacIntyre gave Kilmallie a 4-2 lead after 118 minutes and Glen couldn't recover.

Kilmallie now face a local cup derby after they drew Lochaber in the quarter-finals.

Glenurquhart manager Jim Barr

struggling to find our form this season.'

This Saturday, Kilmallie aim to bank their first Premier league points at Glenorchy after finding form in the forwardline against Glenurquhart - and not a moment too soon, according to Kilmallie chairman Hugh MacIntyre.

John Stewart got a couple on Saturday, so we are hoping that's him in form now,' Hugh told The Oban Times.

'Glenorchy have been letting in a lot of goals and it's up to us to make sure that continues on Saturday. Given our form at the moment we should be able to account for them.'

'I think the boys are more settled now that they have Saturday's win under their belts. We have no injury worries and we will have Iain Robertson back available for selection after being absent last weekend.'

Kilmallie will be without Johnnie Morrison, who is in Canada for four weeks with work commitments.

The cup tie between Premier league Lovat and North Division One side Kinlochshiel at Kiltarity was always going to be close and 'Shiel snatched a vital early lead when Finlay MacRae opened the scoring after 10 minutes. Kinlochshiel enjoyed more than their share of pressure in the second 45 minutes and they almost increased their lead when David Falconer's fierce drive struck the post. But it was 'Shiel goalkeeper Graham Kennedy who stole most of the post-match accolades after he produced an inspired performance including saving a Greg Matheson penalty to take the North Division One side through to another tough test in next round of their cup when they face Kingussie at the Dell on April 23.'

'Shiel could switch their home game against Inverness to Bught Park this weekend to ensure they keep their momentum at the top of North Division 1.'

The Kirkton pitch cut up badly during 'Shiel's second team match last weekend and may not recover in time for Saturday's match and coach Johnston Gill is desperate to keep his in-form team playing.

'They way things are with the pitch at Kirkton, it's not looking great - so we may be looking to change the game to Inverness,' he told the Oban Times. 'We have a head of steam going now and we want to keep that going.'

'Inverness are a Jekyll and Hyde team - you just don't know what you are going to get with them,' he said.

Steven Callander, Graham Morrison and Zander Grant are likely to feature in the 'Shiel side after being unavailable through work commitments last Saturday.

Skye found Newtonmore far too powerful at the Eilan and ended-up on the end of an 11-0 thrashing as Danny MacRae netted four times, Glen MacKintosh three times, plus two each for

Newtonmore away to Beaulieu. Newtonmore manager Norman MacArthur thinks in form attacker Danny MacRae could be a key player for his side this season. MacRae scored four times on Saturday to take his season's tally to nine in just three games.

'The last couple of years we've only had him for part of the season because of injuries,' Norman said. 'He is definitely key for us.'

'Skye were never really in it. They didn't have their full team and obviously missed the guys who weren't playing. But we still had to go out there and do it.'

On this Saturday's visit by Glenurquhart, MacArthur said: 'They're a different kettle of fish. They got a good result against Kingussie and we struggled to beat them last season, so I think it'll be a tough game.'

Beaulieu hit five without reply at Inverness after James Ross put through his own goal in the opening minutes.

Jack MacDonald had Beaulieu further ahead by half-time, with Connor Ross, Sean Stewart and Connor Cormack sealing the victory with second-half goals.

Two goals in each half gave Caberfeidh victory over Lochcarron with Stewart Krysanowski and Kevn Bartlett scoring in the first 45 minutes - Bartlett and Ali MacLennan making the result certain in the second-half.

Caberfeidh will now be away to Fort William in the quarter-final. Lochcarron president Henry Dalgety said: 'We weren't happy with our performance at all. We've been a bit stop-start this season and we're frustrated because we just haven't got going yet.'

Fort William and Strathglass shared eight goals at Cannich as



Oban Camanachd's Aiden MacIntyre scored his sides' winner at The Dell as the Oban team came back from a goal down to become one of the very few sides to come away from Kingussie with full points in recent seasons. Picture - John MacTavish

could also be available.'

He added: 'There's definitely no easy two points in this league and Beaulieu is no exception. We are going into every game with the same mind set knowing we have to give our all to get any kind of result.'

The next round sees Newtonmore away to Beaulieu.

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Fort William and Strathglass shared eight goals at Cannich as

but equalised almost immediately courtesy of a long range Willie Neilson rocket.

Kilmory took their first points of the season thanks to a 2-1 away at Taynuilt. Kilmory's Hal Jones opened the scoring but Taynuilt's Willie Neilson equalised within a minute. In the second-half, Taynuilt failed to find the form that gave them a league victory the previous week against Kyles and Kilmory found the match winner through Adam Johnstone. 17_1131day02

Fort went into the second round thanks to a double from Gordie MacKinnon and Gary Innes, plus goals from Bryan Simpson and Ewan Campbell.

Fraser's, Gordie and Les netted for Strathglass in a fast moving cup tie that boiled over resulting

a 3-1 home win over Balachulish, while David Devine scored the only goal of the game as Lochside Rovers took two away points against Aberdour.

At Taynuilt, the home side found themselves a first-half Hal Jones goal down against Kilmory

divisions, Michael said he knew a bit about the opposing side.

He said: 'They played our second team twice in pre-season, so we got a good look at them then.'

The Spean Bridge men haven't played a competitive game for two weeks after getting a bye for last weekend's MacTavish Cup round one.

They will have nearly a full squad to pick from for the game, with Donald MacRae available again and Neil MacDonald back from injury.

Results

SHINTY

Co-operative MacTavish Cup

1st Round

Caberfeidh 4 Lochcarron 0

Inverness 0 Beaulieu 5

Kilmallie 4 Glenurquhart 2 AXT

Lovat 0 Kinlochshiel 1

Newtonmore 11 Skye 0

Strathglass 2 Fort William 6

Glasgow Celtic Society Cup

1st Round

Inveraray 4 Bute 2

GMA 4 Oban Celtic 3

Scottish Hydro Premier Division

Glenorchy 1 Kyles Athletic 7

Kingussie 1 Oban Camanachd 2

Marine Harvest South Division One

Aberdour 0 Lochside Rovers 1

Kyles Athletic 3 Balachulish 1

Taynuilt 1 Kilmory 2

Marine Harvest North Division Two

Balachulish 3 GMA 1

Bute 2 Inveraray 1

Strachur 5 Col Glen 0

Tayforth 8 Aberdour 1

Marine Harvest North Division Three

Ardnarmurchan 0 Aberdeen U 7

Beaulieu 0 Caberfeidh 4

Lochbroom 0 Boleskine 5

Lochcarron P Inverness P

Strathglass 2 Lewis 2

but equalised almost immediately courtesy of a long range Willie Neilson rocket.

Kilmory took

Fort miss too many chances

'Nothing was going our way'

TEN-MAN Fort William just failed to claim a deserved draw at Claggan Park after missing a handful of chances in the first half against Brora Rangers.

Fort could – and should – have been two or three clear to the break but only had Sean Grant's leveller to show for their efforts.

Brora had gone ahead through MacKain's 16th minute strike but Fort were in control for the first 45.

Sent packing

The game evened up after the interval, but when Iain Foggo was sent packing for hauling back MacKain Fort were up against it.

Brora squandered several gilt-edged chances but then Fort's

Andy MacLean fired wildly over from 18 yards when more composure would surely have brought a winner.

Latched

With the ref beginning to check his watch, Ronnie Jones latched on to a clever low ball from the right and finished from two yards to break Fort hearts.

Manager Calum Maclean said: 'We started off well. We hit the post after five minutes and that set the tone for us, nothing was going our way.'

'The changing point in the game was Ian Foggo's sending off. We stuck at it after that and nearly won it ourselves, but their winner was a sickening blow. It was the

same old story for us - another glorious defeat.'

Fort played fifth-bottom Clachnacuddin at Claggan Park last night (Wednesday) hoping to leapfrog second bottom Strathspey Thistle. Defender Andy Martin was the only player missing

MacLean is hopeful he can have a full squad for Saturday's trip to high-flying Buckie Thistle.

'It's a big, big game,' he said. 'They're going for the title, so we'll need our experienced boys back for that one,' he said. 'We've just got to go there and try our best.'

FOOTBALL



Fort's Andy Martin, right, does just enough to put off Robbie Stephen from getting his shot on target.

Open knockout tournament

TABLE TENNIS

THE FORT William Table Tennis League held its first competition of the year, the open knockout tournament, in the Nevis Centre last Monday night.

Monte Bleasdale emerged as the winner, but it was not all plain sailing for the champion.

During his semi-final match with John Grant, after taking a 2-0 lead he was pulled back to 2-1 and only narrowly took the fourth game after a very spirited fightback by John.

The final against Angus MacDonald was no easier, with Angus taking the first game comfortably. Despite then taking the next two games, Monte had to fight back from 8-4 down in the fourth game to take the title. During the earlier rounds there were good performances from Peter MacRae and Kenny Gillespie.

In the leagues, several players continue to improve, notably Derek Cameron, George Robertson and Dee Walker. The league hopes to hold its handicap knockout tournament next month.

Sports council pays out over £7,000

SPORTS COUNCIL

SKYE and Lochalsh Sports Council paid out £7,122.50 of grants to 14 clubs covering 10 sports over the past year, members heard at their AGM in Portree last Tuesday.

Some £700 was awarded to Dornie Youth Club and Skye Dolphins on the night, which also saw the group's 26th AGM.

Chairman Charlie M MacRae, vice-chairman Drew Millar and Peter Gordon were all re-elected to head the 15-strong committee.

SLSC faces a 20 per cent grant cut from Highland Council this year and carries over a £66 overspend. Some 42 clubs joined the organisation last year.

Kieran plays for North of Scotland

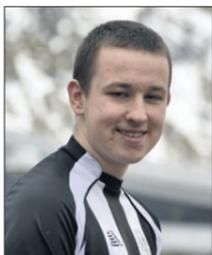
FOOTBALL

A TALENTED Lochaber High School footballer played for the North of Scotland under-15 team against Ayrshire in the National Schools Cup Final on Tuesday afternoon.

Striker Kieran Voisey was a member of only the second North team ever to reach the final.

The North beat Stirling, Fife and Angus in earlier rounds, then in the semi-final against Lanarkshire Kieran scored the winner in the penalty shoot-out.

The result of the final being played at Alloa Athletic's Recreation Park was still in doubt as The Oban Times went to press.



Kieran Voisey: played in final.



Left to right, Camanachd Leodhais player Donald Lamont, Harris Tweed Hebrides chairman Brian Wilson, club manager Paul Duke, HTH chief executive Ian Angus Mackenzie, and club treasurer Daniel Gallagher in the Shawbost mill of Harris Tweed Hebrides.

Island shinty club lands Harris Tweed sponsorship deal

SHINTY

CAMANACHD Leodhais and Harris Tweed Hebrides (HTH) have announced a three-year sponsorship agreement to help the club secure a firm financial footing in its early days.

The deal comes as the fledgling Lewis club brings national league shinty to the island for the first time.

Club treasurer Daniel Gallagher, manager Paul Duke and Donald Lamont visited the company's Shawbost mill to display the new strips, bearing the HTH logo and the company's Gaelic title, for the first time. Mr Duke said HTH's support was 'a massive boost' for the club in its first season in the league.

He said: 'We thank the company for their enthusiasm for shinty in Lewis and Harris and believe it is an ideal partnership between two groups dedicated to re-invigorating old traditions. "Staggering the deal over three years allows us to plan sustainably as a club for the future. We also hope that having an internationally recognised brand as our shirt sponsor will encourage

other businesses to support the club.'

'In this day and age it is important to develop a community of sponsors, both large and small, to help meet the costs of equipment, travel and youth development.'

'The strips look great and we have already had lots of interest from people wanting to get their hands on one. We are also the only shinty club to have an entirely Gaelic kit. Unfortunately, having them made out of tweed would have been just a little bit too impractical.'

HTH chairman Brian Wilson said: 'We are delighted to support Camanachd Leodhais at this crucial stage of their development. Shinty, Gaelic and Harris Tweed are all part of the same culture, so it is a very appropriate sponsorship.'

The company will host a reception for Camanachd Leodhais on May 14 to mark their first-ever league appearance to be played on home soil.

Phoenix boys fight for Scotland

BOXING

LOCHABER Phoenix Boxing Club's reputation was further enhanced at the weekend when two of its fighters were chosen to compete for Scotland in Belfast.

Stephen Cameron and Aidan Donnelly both boxed for a Scotland Select side against a Northern Ireland Select. The fighters added to their own growing reputations with fine performances, and this experience together with a lot of hard work in the gym is helping to bring the Fort William-based club more and more to the fore of Scottish boxing.

Cameron is gaining a large following in Scottish boxing circles and set out to prove just why in his bout against southpaw Glendon Matthews.

The opening round saw Cameron time one of his hooks to perfection, knocking his opponent to the deck. Inexplicably, the referee did not issue a count but nevertheless Cameron had issued a statement and for the remainder of the bout Matthews refused to move forward.

Domination

In the next two rounds Cameron's domination of the fight continued as he refused to give his opponent a foothold in the contest in any way, shape or form.

Cameron thoroughly deserved his unanimous decision victory and was the only Scottish boxer to gain a decision victory from the Irish judges on the night.

Aidan Donnelly earlier took on Daniel McShane, who proved to be a strong, powerful puncher.

After a very close first round Donnelly took control of ring centre and started landing scoring blows. The bout was being fought at breakneck speed, and Donnelly continued his strong performance into the third round.

After three scintillating rounds the Scottish team were confident of a verdict but were stunned to discover that McShane was given a majority decision by the home judges.

Reign pipped at the post

BASKETBALL

LOCHABER Reign – Lochaber High School's senior basketball team – just lost out to Culloden Academy in an electrifying Highland Schools Basketball final at Glenurquhart.

Towards the end of the first quarter Culloden began to build a lead and were ahead at the end of the first ten minutes.

After the short break, though, the Lochaber boys came out fighting and a succession of powerplays turned a nine-point deficit into a 10-point lead at half time, with George Mallison leading by example with his very direct drives to the basket.

Culloden came out very strong in the second half and looked a different outfit. Fouls mounted up amongst the Reign and defending became a real challenge.

With key players on four personal fouls, Culloden could drive to the basket much more easily.

Later Stages

As the game approached the later stages the score was even, but Culloden just edged ahead and won by the slightest of margins, proceeding to the National Quarter Finals with a 72-68 victory.

George ended up top scorer for the team, breaking his own

record.

Lochaber Reign's Neil Donald said: 'This was our third final in three years and we are gutted to have lost, but with a strong team still here for next season and a few new faces who look very promising, we are very hopeful of future success.'

Lochaber had progressed to the final with a perfect record after wins over Alness, Sgoil Lionacleit and Fortrose. The highlight was the game against Fortrose, when the boys mounted a very spirited comeback to win 49-34.



Lochaber Reign: went so close in final.

Livercaol are winter league champions

INDOOR FOOTBALL

LIVERCAOL have won the Ali Young indoor football winter league after a thrilling 2-2 draw with All Trades at the Nevis Centre on Sunday.

In one of the games of the season, All Trades went 2-0 up and were bossing the game. But after they missed a number of chances to kill the match off, Livercaol fought back to get the point which secured the title.

With one game left to play, challengers Lochaber Leisure's 5-1 win over Achintore FC leaves them four points behind the champions.

Funky Five moved ahead of Goon Squad into third place with a 3-0 victory over Crazy Crofter, who remain rooted to the bottom of the league. Goon Squad failed to show up so their game with Caol was cancelled.

Caley Jags recent run a good form came to a shuddering halt as they were humbled 8-2 by NGTW, and HW Energy defeated Ballachulish 3-0.

Livercaol will be presented with their trophy on Sunday, when the final fixtures of the season will be played.

Shona takes South Ross singles

BADMINTON

THE SOUTH Ross badminton area championships held on Tuesday March 15 saw Shona Jones of Plockton beat Amy MacPherson from Broadford in the women's singles to take the title 21-10, 21-8.

In the gents' singles, Josh Holder from Lochacarron overcame Stuart Johnstone from Kyle 21-14, 21-13 to win the championship.

In the mixed doubles Josh and Laura Mackay from Lochacarron had a real battle with David Macleod and Susan Hunter from Plockton, but eventually prevailed 21-19, 13-21, 21-10.

Stephen Culbertson from Sleat and Douglas Strachan of Breakish defeated David Macleod and Mickey Thien of Lochacarron 19-21, 21-11, 21-12 to win the men's doubles, while in the ladies' doubles final Susan Hunter and Amy MacPherson beat Kathleen Henderson and Sheena Finlayson 21-13, 21-16.

Bowling them over

TEN PIN BOWLING

THE TEN pin bowling singles league is underway at the Nevis Centre, with a number of local men and women taking part.

After two weeks Les McFarlane leads the men's scratch division with 46 points, followed by Bob Coleman on 44 points. Tim Attack is a further point back in third. Bob Coleman leads the handicap division, with Tim Attack in second and Graeme Robertson and Les McFarlane in joint third.

Laura Brown has an early lead in the ladies scratch division with Pam Weller in second place. Laura Brown also leads the handicap division.

Bob Coleman rolled a 224 to score the best individual men's score, with Brian Stewart's 197 second best and John Friel's 192 third best. The top ladies individual scores were Pam Weller with 165 and Laura Brown with 162.



Spot the

SHINTY BALL

Competition

WIN £900

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...



All you have to do

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void. Prizes will be shared between those submitting correct entries.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to reach 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition Rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.

The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.

Employees of The Oban Times Limited, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

I enclose £1 (note) for 20 crosses (tick box) The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules.

How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1.

Name _____

Address _____

Tel No. _____

Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are: D Cruickshank, Kames, Tighnabraich and E MacInnes, Foyers Road, Kinlochleven

Argyll girls lift National Bowl

Scottish Schools Under-18 Bowl Final
Argyll and Bute 106 Ellon 0
 ARGYLL AND Bute U18 Girls rugby team lifted the Scottish National Bowl at Murrayfield on Sunday after they steamrollered their opponents from Ellon Academy.
 The victory provided Argyll and Bute with its first ever National Competition Trophy.
 The Argyll side, made up of players from Oban and Tobermory high schools, had never played a full 15-a-side fixture together, with the majority of their games being friendlies or smaller sided competitive fixtures at local festivals.
Outstanding
 However, the Argyll team has some outstanding individual players, who were allowed to display their talent in an open match. Argyll and Bute took control of

the match immediately, with Rebecca Sims, Shannon Reynolds, Katy Montgomery, Kitty Raven and Jane Carson all touching down more than once in the first half. This was the result of some fantastic rucking from the Argyll girls and also a steady scrum that gave them the platform to provide the scores that were all finished clinically with considerable pace.
 Kelly Lamont added one conversion with some impressive kicking from flanker Hannah Rokitta, who added another four through the uprights, giving a score of 52-0 at halftime.
 This scoreline was put down as the official score for the final with any second half points not counting towards the eventual outcome.
 However, the Argyll onslaught continued in the second half, with Kitty Raven scoring her third of the afternoon.

After 10 minutes of no scoring, the Argyll girls turned the try machine back on and added another seven tries and five conversions. The tries came from Hannah Rokitta plus three conversions, Kelly Lamont, Shannon Reynolds, Hannah Croucher and Lucy Langford pushing the scoreline to 106-0.
Superb Work
 In addition to some more fantastic tries the second half also saw some superb work at the lineout and again at the breakdown showing that the players had all taken in what had been taught to them by their coaches Murray Hamilton, Babs Whyte, Dee Bradbury and Allan Wright in the build-up to the game.
 Credit must go to the Ellon side who battled until the final whistle.
 Coach Allan Wright said: 'This is a huge achievement for girls rugby in the region.'



The victorious Argyll and Bute team with the Scottish Schools Bowl.

Oban Lorne return from the Bonnie Banks with comprehensive win

Hydro Electric West League Division One
Loch Lomond 9 Oban Lorne 33
 OBAN Lorne resumed their great league form this season by scoring five tries away to Loch Lomond.
 This is never an easy ground to get results and the win keeps Oban in second place in the league behind Strathendrick.
 After a scrappy start to the game, Oban made the first breakthrough with stand-off Angus MacCallum cutting through a gap on halfway and beating a few Lomond defenders to touchdown under the posts. The Glasgow Warriors under-17 player added to his score with the conversion to

give Oban a 7-0 lead. The men in green continued to pressure the home try line but failed to take several opportunities to extend their lead until two scores in quick succession from Robin MacQueen and Corrie Louw gave Lorne a 19-0 lead with a further conversion from MacCallum.
 Loch Lomond got on the scoreboard with a penalty but Andy MacDougall secured the bonus point for Oban before half time with a superb try to give a 26-3 halftime score.
 Oban dominated the opening exchanges of the second half but were undone with some poor decision making and individual errors. Loch Lomond took advantage of this and

clawed back at the deficit with two neat drop-goals to reduce the score to 26-9.
 Fullback Radu Teodoru completed the scoring for the day; he kicked the ball cross-field and chased the kick into the Lomond 22 before intercepting a poor pass from the quick lineout and scoring beneath the uprights. MacCallum kicked the conversion to complete his tally of 13 points on the day.
 This also sets the team up nicely for this Saturday's 'double header' at home to Strathaven when league points for both home and away fixtures are on offer.

Catherine shoots her way to the top

SHOOTING



OBAN'S Catherine Fraser won the ladies section at the Highland Deephaven Clay Pigeon Club Winter Series, which took place near Evanton in Ross-shire.
 Catherine finished on a score of 812 (ex 900), a full 80 points ahead of the second lady and an impressive 13th place overall.
 Catherine will now compete in a series of selection shoots in an attempt to gain her 16th consecutive Scottish cap for the Home International and British Championships which this year are being hosted by Northern Ireland in July.

Jordan gets on his spare bike

MOTOCROSS

JORDAN Kerr of Benderloch defied the odds to finish strongly in the first round of the 2011 Scottish Youth Motocross Championships held at Tain Motocross Track on March 19 and 20.
 Jordan realised through the week that there might be a problem with his new kxf 250 bike. Trackside, on the Friday night, a mechanic said the bike was not rideable, so on Saturday he had to get his spare bike out.
 His kx 125 struggled a little to start with but with racing now over two days, Jordan got himself back on track with two firsts and a second on the Saturday and two firsts on the Sunday, giving him first overall for the week.

Senior league goes down to the wire

PRIMARY FOOTBALL

THE OBAN Express Primary Football League gathered on the warmest day so far to wrap up the winter league on Sunday.
 In the seniors league Lochgilphead Warriors went into the final round of fixtures one point behind leaders Saints Boys under-11s. Both teams set up a deciding match by winning their opening fixtures with Saints Boys defeating Tralee 3-0 and the Warriors recording the same scoreline against Wolves.
 With the Warriors having a superior goal difference the Saints Boys only had to avoid defeat to clinch the title in the match with the Warriors but it was the Lochgilphead boys who opened the scoring early in the match. With Saints chasing the game they were left exposed at the back and the Warriors took full advantage scoring a further goal in each half without reply.
 The Warriors had one match to go to ensure the title and after Saints Boys had defeated Thistle they knew any result against Oban Saints under 12s would bring them the trophy. A goalless draw ensured the league title went back down the A816 with them.
Fantastic
 The juniors' day started with runners-up elect Lochgilphead against the Galaxy who showed they were in no mood to lie down. It took two fantastic individual goals in either half from Lochgilphead's Rhys Casci to put the match beyond doubt.
 Champions elect, Saints U9s got the day going with a game against Benderloch.
 The U9s got themselves on the front foot from the start and had chance after chance to break the deadlock. The U9s Jude Bain managed to open the scoring with a fine half volley and striker Lennon Campbell quickly added a second after some great work from Euan Logan. Lewis Campbell then finished well from a pin-point pass from Aiden

Argyll rugby boys selected to play for Glasgow Warriors

RUGBY

ARGYLL rugby prospects Ciaran Whyte and Ruairidh Aitken have been selected to represent Glasgow Warriors U16s in the national identification fixtures against Edinburgh, Caedonia and the Borders.
 Ciaran, from Mull, and Ruairidh, who lives in Kilmartin, started the selection process last September when more than 100 players attended the initial selection tournament in Glasgow.

Rory kicks his way to Black Belt

KICKBOXING



RORY Fleming of Senshi Do Kickboxing, Oban passed his 1st Dan Blackbelt Grading following a gruelling three-hour test covering all elements of kickboxing.
 The final part of the test is 30 continuous full-contact fights with Rory facing a new opponent every minute.
 Sensei Iain Rodger, pictured, said: 'Rory did the club and himself proud and passed with just enough energy left to make it to the pub to celebrate.'
 Senshi Do Kickboxing is on every Wednesday at Oban Martial Arts Centre above Stoddarts. Juniors are from 6.30pm until 7.30pm and adults are from 7.30pm until 9pm.

Oban Saints seniors back in action

FOOTBALL

OBAN Saints senior team get back in league action this Saturday after a three week lay-off when they take on Cambria.
 The game will be played at Glencruitten with a 2pm kick-off. Referee in charge is Gordon Kelso from Greenock.
 Manager Iain Jackson hopes to have a full squad to choose from apart from Myles McAuley who is still out injured.
 This has the makings of a close encounter as the teams drew 0-0 in Glasgow a few weeks ago, but if the Oban side have aspirations of retaining their league title then they will be looking to pick up all three points from this match.

Easter shinty camp

SHINTY

BUDDING shinty players are being invited to come and try shinty at Mossfield Stadium, Oban on April 11 and 12.
 As well as a training camp for shinty players, there will be an open come-and-try session for girls who have never played the sport.
 The camps are open to anyone aged between seven and 14. Anyone interested in attending should contact Argyll and Bute shinty development officer Darren Reid on 07824 367996 or darren.reid@shinty.com.

Islay golf

GOLF

THE Mrs MacIntyre Trophy was played on Sunday, March 27. The result was: 1 Ruairidh MacIntyre 8up, 2 Callum Davey 5up, 3 Andrew Bauld 3up. Cst70.

Saints youth results and fixtures

YOUTH FOOTBALL

WEEKEND results: EDFC Thistle 3, Under 13s 2. Ross MacMillan scored both Saints' goals. EDFC 1, Under 14s 2. Netting for Saints were Stewart Twort and Jamie Easton. League Cup quarter final - Westerton United 2, Under 15s 1. Saints goalscorer was Rory Bruce. Under 16s no game.
 This weekend's fixtures: Castle Rock v Under 13s; Under 14s v Ardencaple; Under 15s v Riverside; Under 16s v Blair Thistle.

Tobermory golf

GOLF

TOBERMORY Golf Club's Opening Fours tournament in support of the British Heart Foundation took place in pleasant spring-like conditions on Sunday.
 Two trophies were contested; Jim Laverty Trophy for gents playing with ladies or juniors, and the 'Hairy-Legs' Trophy for gents pairs.
 Scoring was competitive and Ross MacCrone completed a hat-trick of wins in the J Laverty along with Iain Wilshire, the club's vice-captain.
 John Wilshire won the 'Hairy-Legs' with partner John Weir.
 The winter prizegiving provided a third Wilshire win, young Lewis with the new prize for junior winter champion, whilst evergreen Dodo MacLean won the gents equivalent.



Under 13 regional squad launched

ARGYLL and Bute Council's football service has been running football trials for the first ever Argyll and Bute Select football team at the 13's age group over the last few months.
 There were more than 38 players from across Argyll and Bute who attended the trials with a view to be selected for the squad.
 The squad was the idea of football development officer Martin Rae who felt there was a need to bridge the gap for football provision and give these players further opportunities to

develop in the game. The players, from Campbeltown, Rothesay, Dunoon, Helensburgh, Oban, Tarbert and Lochgilphead, will be training weekly with their own clubs, then twice a month with the regional squad with a view to playing games against Scottish Premier League and Scottish Football League youth initiative teams.
Progress
 It is then hoped the players from Argyll and Bute will get picked up by the senior teams and given the opportunity to progress

YOUTH FOOTBALL

up the footballing ladder with these teams and this would then give other players from Argyll and Bute the opportunity to fill the gap in the squad left by any players who move on.
 The squad have a new playing kit and all the players have been given their own training kit, only to be used when the are training with the regional group.
 The squad's first game is planned for the middle of May in Campbeltown.

Weather
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 Telephone: 01631 562550

Thursday
 Heavy rain.
 Winds light, northerly.
 Temperatures 8°C to 10°C

Friday
 Light rain.
 Winds moderate south westerly.
 Temperatures 7°C to 11°C.

Weekend Outlook
 Heavy Rain.
 Winds moderate north, north westerly.
 Temperatures 4°C to 10°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States
 Oban to Barra/South Uist - Moderate
 Oban to Coll/Tiree - Moderate
 Kennacraig to Islay - Moderate

FRIDAY

Tides
 Sponsored by **NANCY BLACK Ships' Chandler**
 Telephone: 01631 562550

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, March 31, 2011** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	03.58 3.4 10.26 1.3 16.22 3.2 22.38 1.1	
Fri	04.30 3.6 10.58 1.1 16.47 3.5 23.12 1.0	
Sat	05.03 3.7 11.27 1.0 17.17 3.7 23.44 0.9	
Sun	05.36 3.9 11.56 0.9 17.46 3.8 **** **	
Mon	00.13 0.9 06.07 3.9 12.26 0.9 18.14 3.8	
Tues	00.42 0.9 06.37 3.9 12.56 0.9 18.41 3.8	
Wed	01.09 1.0 07.05 3.8 13.24 1.0 19.08 3.8	

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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