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Whistleblower says hospital staff stressed and overworked

SANDY NEIL
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AS LEAKS revealed secret plans for 'terrifying' cuts in Argyll and Bute's health and social care to save £13 million this year, more revelations have emerged from a whistleblower at Oban's Lorn and Islands Hospital, who claims wards are chronically short-staffed due to stress, with dead patients still being left overnight in the wards.

'Departments are always short-staffed with people off sick,' the hospital worker claims in a letter to *The Oban Times* and Oban Community Council. 'The simple fact is staff are so stressed out, overworked and not appreciated by the management.'

'The domestic department is short of staff [and] the hospital is not getting cleaned properly, despite the great effort of the women that do the job. In all the years I have worked there, I have never seen morale so low. Staff cannot wait until they retire or find another job.'

The anonymous source added: 'A few months ago, a patient who had died was left overnight in A&E because the managers had stopped porters being on call. This story was in the papers, with the management stating this would be resolved.'

'The situation is still the same, with patients who have passed away having to stay on the wards anything up to 12 hours, as the porters are not on call. So any patient passing away after 9pm, the wards have to wait until the morning before the deceased person is taken down to the mortuary.'

'There is never enough staff on duty at night to allow staff to go off ward and take the deceased

person to the mortuary. The ward staff were never given or offered any training as to how to do this task and fill in any paperwork.'

The hospital worker said ward staff weren't consulted when the decision was made, and so they did not have a chance to express their concerns.

'Management know the problem is still on-going, but like most things that happen in the hospital hope that by sticking their heads in the sand the problem will go away.'

The whistleblower also claimed 'bins of expired drugs [were] left for a few days at a time in an outside unlocked shed, [with] easy access to members of the public'.

Money was also being wasted, they said, adding: 'Thousands of pounds are being paid out for the use of taxi services. Sometimes calling a taxi is necessary, but many other times a taxi is called because a department has forgotten to send something, or due to the lack of looking ahead.'

'The amount of equipment that gets dumped in skips every week with very little wrong or damaged is getting to the ridiculous stage.'

'The hospital ordered more than £10,000 of new bedside cabinets to replace ones on the wards, which most agree have very little wrong with them. They are now stored in an external store, as we hear they have been ordered wrong.'

'Unfortunately for the hospital and staff, the management structure will always cover for each other no matter how many mistakes they make, or how they just ignore problems.'

A spokesperson for Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) responded: 'We are always looking at ways of improving our services and



Wedding day joy for Billy and Yvonne

Beaming smiles from newly-weds Billy and Yvonne Irving after they tied the knot in Paisley. Surrounded by family and friends, the happy couple were married in St Peter's Church before enjoying a drinks reception in the church hall and a reception at the St Peter's Working Men's Club. Just five months ago the marriage would have seemed impossible for the Connell man and his fiancée as Billy had just entered his fourth year in captivity as one of the 'Chennai Six', wrongly convicted of possessing illegal weapons and illegally straying from international waters into Indian territory. See page nine for full story and photographs.

hospital managers welcome and encourage feedback from staff and the public on any issue. The vast majority of the claims are inaccurate.

'The decision to stop on-call porters was made over a year ago and all the relevant staff were consulted. Our senior nurses are appropriately trained and if a transfer to the mortuary is required overnight, a decision will be made by the senior nurse on duty if it is appropriate to carry it out.'

'All expired drugs are stored in appropriate containers within a secure locked area. The use of taxi services is reviewed on a regular basis and no inappropriate use has been identified.'

'The old cabinets were identified as an infection control risk and new cabinets were ordered as replacements. These have now arrived and are being placed on the wards this week.'

'Lorn and Islands Hospital has very good cleaning standards and regular audits of these standards are carried out to ensure they meet the necessary requirements. Local management also monitor and address any issues with staff shortages.'

On claims equipment is dumped in skips, the HSCP said: 'Only community equipment that is broken or damaged is disposed of.'

Man ordered to pay £3,000 compensation after assault

A 20-YEAR-OLD man from Oban has to pay £3,000 in compensation after assaulting three people.

As well as paying each of the victims £1,000, Craig MacIver of Lorne View, Ardconnell Road, has been ordered to carry out 200 hours of unpaid work and isn't allowed to enter a licensed premises for 12 months.

MacIver pleaded guilty to three counts of assault and was sentenced at Oban Sheriff Court on Tuesday March 27. He admitted punching a woman on the head, as well as headbutting a man and spitting on another.

In MacIver's defence, his solicitor Laura McManus said although her client had a 'bad record for someone of his years, he is in a very different place now'.

Mrs McManus explained: 'He had no recollection because he was so intoxicated. He has therefore recognised he has a difficulty with alcohol.'

Sheriff Patrick Hughes said: 'You do have a bad record and this is a deeply disturbing offence, in particular, spitting on someone is a uniquely disgusting thing to do. You are at a stage in life where you could go either way.'

In addition to compensation and being banned from pubs and hotels, MacIver is to attend social work meetings for 12 months to address alcohol problems. Sheriff Hughes said these were a direct alternative to custody.



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Staff rebel to save disability centre

IN A direct appeal to the First Minister, a council-run learning disability centre in Argyll is fighting back against plans to close it, claiming it would be 'completely abhorrent and irresponsible' for its managers to shut the 'highest scoring' service 'without consultation', writes Sandy Neil.

Staff at Lochgilphead Resource Centre, as employees of Argyll and Bute Council, couldn't form a protest group, but still joined 40 parents, carers and volunteers at an emergency meeting to oppose closure plans by Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP).

HSCP officials proposed more than 400 job cuts and closing council-run care homes, day care and disability centres to save £13 million to balance this year's budget.

The governing Integrated Joint Board met yesterday (Wednesday March 28) to decide which cuts to adopt. But some of the deepest, such as risking 275 redundancies by shutting council-run care homes like Eader Glynn, Gortanvogie, and Tigh a Rhuda, were to be decided in private.

The health minister has criticised the HSCP for its lack of transparency, and urged it to reconsider (see page three).

The centre's staff compiled views from disabled people. 'I can't live without it,' one commented. 'My confidence is growing by the day,' said another. 'I don't know what I'd do without this place,' another added. 'I don't know what I would do at home. I'd feel depressed.'

One staff member said: 'This appears to be a done deal waiting to be rubber-stamped which is already having an adverse emotional impact on staff.' Another asked: 'If this is at the proposal stage, then why is [staff redeployment] to commence prior to the meeting of the IJB?'

They were also anxious about how private providers could match the centre's services, arguing: 'Private providers have in the past and likely will in the future pull out of obligations. Who will be there to bail these services out? How can private providers realistically provide these services when they already struggle to recruit?'

The HSCP told *The Oban Times*: 'We are aware that speculation over the proposals has been unsettling and we will make sure that staff, our local communities and other interested parties are promptly informed of the outcome from the meeting and that appropriate engagement/consultation processes are carried out as required.'

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Tobermory high in top 50 schools

TOBERMORY High School again has been included in the top 50 Scottish schools in a national newspaper league table.

Every year, The Herald compiles a list of the top performing state schools in Scotland based on their performance in Higher exams. An impressive 48 per cent of pupils in Tobermory High School are achieving five or more Highers by the time they leave.

The school wrote on its website that it was committed to providing appropriate opportunities for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural values.

Mary-Jean Devon, councillor for Oban South and the Isles, said: 'It's fantastic. It's a terrific wee school. It has a great teaching ethos. It's a shining example to the rest of Argyll and Bute.'

Mary-Jean added the school encouraged older pupils to get involved in the teaching process and help younger pupils.

Part-time Post Office re-opens

THE POST Office has re-opened a part-time outreach service at 23 Shore Street, Portnahaven, Islay.

The restored service was launched on Monday March 19 and is operated by the postmaster from Bowmore Post Office. The service will be available every Monday from 10am till noon.

Customers are able to collect benefits in cash using the Post Office's everyday banking services or Post Office card account.

Kenny Lamont, Post Office network operations area manager, said: 'We are confident this outreach service at the heart of the local community will meet customer needs.'

Topping out at new fish plant

AN OFFICIAL topping out ceremony has been held at a pioneering new fish feed plant on the isle of Skye.

The factory, at the Allt Anavig quarry at Kyleakin, is being built by Robertson Group on behalf of Marine Harvest, Scotland's largest salmon farming company. Robertson Central East began work in June 2017 and has made significant progress. The new plant, costing £93m, is due to be completed towards the end of this year and is expected to create 55 full-time jobs.

Wildlife filmmaker sets his sights on Mull sea eagles

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WILDLIFE filmmaker Tom Campbell is packing his bags for Mull this summer to make a movie he hopes will be screened at film festivals, on TV and possibly at his mother's cathedral in Oban.

The Bristol-based filmmaking student, whose mother Margi Campbell becomes the new provost of St John's Cathedral in June, will be hiring a campervan to follow where eagles dare with his camera.

The film, about the pros and cons of living alongside white-tailed sea eagles on Mull, is part of his Masters Degree in wildlife filmmaking which has links to the BBC.

He wants to capture how the giant predator birds live on Mull and to tell the stories of the people who share the island with them, coming in direct contact with the UK's largest bird of prey - but to make the ten-min-

ute documentary he needs to crowdfund £3,000.

He is nearing £1,000 but is hoping to trade-off perks from bundles of postcards to photographs and film credits to bring in the rest of the funds.

'Without people's help it would be impossible to do this to the high standard needed for it to be broadcast. I'm hoping it might go on to film festivals, possible TV and I'd love it to be shown locally to Mull, maybe at St John's cathedral as well,' he said.

It was on family holidays exploring the Highlands that his fascination with film, first with a stills camera, began.

White-tailed sea eagles were declared extinct in the UK in 1918 but were reintroduced to Rum in the 1970s and then spread across different areas of the Highlands including Mull.

The island became home to the first wild-bred chick in the UK for around 70 years and now the eagles are thriving in Britain once again, said Tom who is also

working as a freelance camera assistant and camera operator for the BBC and other production companies.

'I want to explore the lives of the sea eagles on Mull and talk to the people that live alongside them. How have they benefited the island and its community through eco-tourism and how have they caused issues and challenges for the hill farming community? I'd like to hear from anyone who is interested in getting involved,' he added.

One contributor already signed up to help the project is Dave Sexton, the Royal Society for the Protection of Bird's Mull officer, who watched over the first sea eagle chick when it made its appearance on the island in 1985.

To find out more about Tom's Where Eagles Dare project go to indiegogo.com/projects/where-eagles-dare, facebook.com/whereeaglesdare2018 or Instagram atinstagram.com/whereeaglesdare2018



Wildlife filmmaker Tom Campbell is heading to Mull.

The Argyll cuppas fit for a president

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THE UK consumes 165 million cups of tea every day, mostly grown in the humid climes of Sri Lanka, India or China.

But now a few island crofters on Lismore, Mull and Arran are diversifying into tea plantations and even spreading their love of tea to The White House in Washington.

Clare Haworth and Mike Hyatt, who run the Lismore Bunkhouse and Campsite at Bevevolan Croft, started their new venture called Isle of Lismore Teas last year, successfully growing Scotland's first sencha tea: Japan's most popular green tea, where processed whole leaves are infused in hot water.

'We are known as a fertile island,' Mike said. 'We are looking to develop crops that are high value but low weight. There's no point growing potatoes when you can buy them on the mainland. This is something we are experimenting with. Against all the odds, it has grown reasonably well.'

Clare and Mike planted the hardiest of the only two varieties of tea, *Camelia sinensis*, which

can cope with temperatures as low as minus 15C for long periods. The stress of Scotland's relatively hostile climate is said to give tea leaves a sweet flavour, though it makes for a shorter, less handsome tree which takes longer to grow.

'The bushes are still very small, about knee-high,' Mike said, 'but they pretty much look after themselves. It is not without its challenges. My biggest challenge is the voles. They burrow underground through the roots. Wind is the major issue; temperature is not. We have planted hedging to give them shelter.'

Last year's yield was very small, between 200g and 300g harvested from 500 plants, laid in lazy beds to give them the drainage they need.

Mike explained: 'We pick the top two leaves and central leaf, which is like a needle, in mid to late May, then three or four pickings during the year, every six weeks with a new growth coming through. It is all about how you process it.'

The fresh tea leaves are processed into sencha tea by the Fife-based Wee Tea Company, which sells home-grown teas from around Scotland. Seven



Lismore Tea's lazy bed system for tea plants.

years ago Tam O'Braan sowed Scotland's first tea plantation, The Wee Tea Plantation, 750m up in Highland Perthshire on a former sheep farm at Dalreoch near Dunkeld. It isn't so wee anymore, growing from 2,000 to 14,000 plants.

There are now more than a dozen tea growers in Scotland, including Dalguise tea in Perthshire, Guisachan tea in Invernesshire, Grey Mare's tea in Peebleshire and Orkney teas. But Argyll can boast one more plantation: Isle of Mull Tea.

Reverend Liz Gibson, a Church of Scotland minister, and her husband Martyn, a tour guide at Duart Castle, harvested Scotland's first matcha (a fine powdered green tea) last year, picked from 100 or so bushes on their tiny 10-acre croft. Their first tea, Isle of Mull 'Scottish Antlers' stem tea, was presented to President Barack Obama as a gift from First Minister Nicola Sturgeon during her visit to the US in 2015.

The Isle of Arran Tea also had its first pluck in May last year of roasted, nutty Japanese green tea Hojicha from its plantation at Whiting Bay.

Although India, Sri Lanka, Kenya and China grow 75 per cent of the world's tea, Scotland has long been involved in the industry. Clippers were built on the River Clyde - Cutty Sark, launched in 1869, brought tea back from the Far East - and Scots planted most of Darjeeling's tea estates.

Kincardineshire's James Taylor and the Glaswegian Sir Thomas Lipton created the Sri Lankan (Ceylonese) tea industry, famously planting the first seedlings of Ceylon tea in the Looecondra estate in 1867.

Long term plans to cut a Lismore ferry

A NEW Islay ferry, cutting Lismore's ferries from two to one and an extension to Craignure Pier are part of a new ferries plan debated by councillors on Tuesday.

Argyll and Bute Council's Argyll Islands Strategic Group met to discuss Transport Scotland's Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan (VRDP), published last month.

The plan states that, while the Islay route was the busiest for freight, it had 'limited opportunities for expansion'. So Caledonian Maritime Assets plans to extend its ports at Kennacraig and Port Ellen for 'larger vessels to berth alongside'.

The plans also recommend that CalMac's next major vessel be allocated to the Islay service to replace the MV Hebridean Isles.

CalMac also plans to deploy the MV Hebrides as the primary summer-season vessel on the Oban to Craignure route, with the MV Isle of Mull or MV Isle of Arran as the secondary vessel.

However, 'the costs for works to berth these vessels overnight at Craignure will be considerable,' the plans said, while announcing a consultation on options for Craignure Pier.

The council's report added: 'Initially, the ferries plan noted that two services operated to Lismore and there was an intention to work towards one service only.'

'The VRDP now notes this is a long-term aspiration and that the original appraisal will be subject to review. Currently the council is working on improvements at Port Appin and Point on Lismore.'

'The ferries plan sets out a long-term proposal to construct berthing at Fionnphort which would allow for a longer operating day and provide a more suitable overnight berth in terms of crew access.'

'The council has engaged a consultant to consider the feasibility of providing a new breakwater at Iona and overnight berth at Fionnphort.'

Newsdesk
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Overdue first edition returns to Stornoway library

WHEN Alastair McIntosh ordered a second-hand book on eBay recently, he was thrilled to get a first edition with the dust cover still intact for £7.49.

However, he was less impressed to find that the volume had within its covers a Western Isles Libraries stamp. There was no official stamp to say it had been withdrawn.

On enquiring with the library, he found the book was down as long overdue.

He said: 'I hugely value the library's collection and the helpfulness of its staff. Like many people, I rely on that oasis of learning in the heart of Stornoway for my research as a writer. I am therefore very glad to be able to see this copy returned.'

The book is called Father Allan's

Island by Amy Murray which Mr McIntosh describes as 'an elegant and elegiac account of life on the Isle of Eriskay in 1905'.

Its author was a young American musicologist. She had visited the island for a summer and recorded village life as it surrounded Father Allan McDonald, the renowned parish priest.

In 2002, the Gaelic scholar Ronald Black published a bilingual collection, The Poems of Fr Allan McDonald (Mungo Books, Glasgow). Black describes Murray as having been 'a competent and sensitive transcriber of folk music'.

She is not to be confused with another visitor, Miss Ada Goodrich Freer, who, in 1894-5, had also visited the Hebrides. She milked Father Allan of his

stories of the second sight, but failed adequately to attribute them to him.

That debacle, including the original case studies from Father Allan's notebooks, is documented in a book by John Lorne Campbell and Trevor H Hall called Strange Things: The Story of Fr Allan McDonald, Ada Goodrich Freer, and the Society for Psychical Research's Enquiry into Highland Second Sight (reprinted by Birlinn, 2006).

Remarking on his chance recovery of Murray's book, Mr McIntosh pointed out that it had not necessarily been stolen, but added: 'In school days, the fine for being overdue at Stornoway library was tuppence a day. Were that to be collected now, after so many years, and with interest added, it would give the library staff a happy day.'



Alistair McIntosh ordered the book on ebay only to find it belonged to Stornoway Library.

More flights agreed for Tiree and Barra

MORE flights are to be added between Glasgow and Barra and Glasgow and Tiree.

To increase capacity, Humza Yousaf, Minister for Transport and the Islands, announced the following measures will begin in the summer:

■ 22 additional return flights from Glasgow to Tiree through a re-deployment of capacity from winter 2018-19 to summer 2018.

■ 22 additional return flights from Glasgow to Barra in May and early June.

■ Up to 40 additional return flights from Glasgow to Barra from late June to October through a re-deployment of capacity from winter 2018-19, subject to ongoing discussions with the Barra community.

Mr Yousaf said: 'We have consulted with the communities of Tiree and Barra to see how we can improve their air services and address capacity concerns over the summer months. These additional services will ensure we are maximising the potential of these services during the busiest time of year, supporting local economies and improving connectivity for these remote communities.'

'The majority of extra flights will be created by moving a bank of rotations from the winter timetable, while still meeting demand during that

time of year. This will create more capacity during the summer and reduce the number of empty seats across the year.'

'We are also providing around £18,000 in additional funding to bring in the additional Barra flights in May and June. We are committed to supporting our remote communities and these improvements will help do that.'

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar chairman of transportation and infrastructure Councillor Uisdean Robertson said: 'The comhairle is very pleased to hear of the announcement by the minister for transport and the islands that air services between Glasgow and Barra are to be further enhanced.'

'Consistent with the preferences expressed by the community on Barra, greater connectivity and capacity on this route is something the comhairle has been pursuing with the airline for several years and, with the assistance of HITRANS, provided financial support for the provision of additional flights during the peak periods of summer 2014 and 2015 on a trial basis.'

'The success of this persuaded Transport Scotland to add the additional flights to its PSO service on a permanent basis. The latest development demonstrates the continuing commitment that

both Scottish Government and the airline have to the service.'

Na h-Eileanan an Iar SNP MSP Alasdair Allan also welcomed the news. 'I am pleased to see the Scottish Government working constructively with the community in Barra to increase flight capacity during the busy summer months,' he said.

'Barra is easily one of the most attractive places in Scotland for tourists to visit. These changes should help benefit the local economy, while making it easier for residents to get to and from the mainland.'

Councillor Donald Manford added: 'A decision to support a continued increase in flights between Barra and Glasgow, particularly in this economic climate, is phenomenal. The confidence the Scottish Government has in our resolve to grow our economy and our community is inspiring.'

'The freedom to increase summer flights even further by re-deploying some winter flights will be given careful consideration. On winter days, when it is clear two flights cannot be achieved, the freedom to re-deploy them is a significant development. On other flights we must be extremely alert not to curtail the enormous economic opportunity to continually expand our travel season.'

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Nikki Warham in hospital with baby Aneela.

Parents' Justgiving plea to be with their baby girl

THE PARENTS of a baby girl born seven weeks early weighing just under 4lbs are crowdfunding so they can be by her cot-side in hospital 90 miles away from home.

Aneela was delivered by emergency caesarean at Paisley's Royal Alexandra Hospital on Thursday March 15 and needed to go straight into an incubator.

The tot, whose family are from Benderloch, is now out of special care but still needs to be monitored by nurses and doctors which means her mum and dad James, who already have four-year-old David and Benjamin aged two, are being torn between being at home and being with their new baby.

'We face being torn between staying with Aneela and being home for our boys. Family and friends are already being very supportive but finances are weighing heavy on our minds,' said Ms Warham who set up a fundraising page to help. Well-wishers are on target to reach the £400 goal.

'For now we are travelling

up and down the road and staying in hotels to be with her and with our boys back home. We as a family can honestly not thank everyone enough for their generosity and messages of support,' she added.

The family were told about charity Ronald McDonald House that provides accommodation for families in their situation but spaces are limited. 'It looks unlikely they will have space for us. For that reason we have increased our target as we will be having to pay for accommodation every time we need to be with Aneela,' said Nikki.

But baby Aneela is making progress, Ms Warham told *The Oban Times*: 'Aneela has now taken her first bottle feed which is a huge milestone.'

To make a donation go to justgiving.com/crowdfunding/nikki-warham-baby-aneela.

The Gem Box, Corran Esplandade, Oban, is also raffling tickets for £1 to win a pendant and earrings to help the family.

Minister urges board to shelve health cuts

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SCOTLAND'S health minister has told officials to drop their secret plans to cut 400 jobs and close care homes, day care and disability centres across Argyll, until they engage 'fully and transparently' with local people.

Argyll and Bute's Health and Social Care Partnership is proposing closing all its council-run older people's care homes, including Eadar Glinn in Oban, Tigh a Rhuda on Tiree, Gortanvogie on Islay, Ardfenaig in Ardrishaig, day care centres including Lynnside in Oban and Campbeltown's Woodlands Centre and learning disability centres including Lochgilphead Resource Centre to save £13million to balance this year's budget.

Its overseeing Integrated Joint Board (IJB) faced 'very difficult decisions' on Wednesday whether to adopt the cuts. An online petition asking the IJB

to withdraw the proposals until a 'robust agreed alternative' is in place gathered 1,250 signatures by Tuesday. 'The most vulnerable in our community deserve the greatest support,' wrote one protester.

Trade union UNISON was 'inundated' by members expressing 'dismay and fears, both for their own jobs and the services they provide', regional manager Simon Macfarlane said: 'The people of Argyll and Bute know only too well the dangers of outsourcing services. In the last 18 months we have seen independent providers go bust, walk away or be shut down due to appalling standards. It is incredulous the IJB is being asked to privatise all home care services.'

Health Secretary Shona Robison intervened, writing to Argyll and Bute Council leader Aileen Morton. Earlier the minister met HSCP senior officers and IJB chairman Robin Creelman to raise her concerns about their 'capacity to engage

fully and transparently with people living in the area about service redesign'. Ms Robison said she wasn't told about the 'savings proposals' and her offers of 'practical support' were rebuffed.

She urged the IJB to reconsider what further work it must complete to agree its plan for next year, 'instead of finalising financial decisions that are not yet informed by thorough consideration'.

Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell said it was incredible the HSCP left the minister in the dark: 'We now discover they never even mentioned the impending financial crisis, still less the drastic list of cuts they had drawn up. There appears to be no explanation except an intention to hide the true situation as long as possible, even from a Government minister who was offering to help.'

'The IJB were, of course, intending to go on hiding the true situation this week with

their plan for a private meeting to consider private papers. Courageous leaks to the press put paid to that.

'It does not have to set a final budget this week - it can simply roll over its budget whilst, as a matter of urgency, it addresses the failings in its management and governance that have led to this disastrous situation.'

Eleven SNP councillors, opposing the 'damaging and ill conceived cuts' also called on the IJB 'to consult with staff and communities and put a stop to the proposals, which will decimate local jobs and frontline healthcare services'.

The HSCP said it welcomed the Ms Robison's 'valued feedback and offer of help and support': 'The IJB has to make difficult choices and, as pointed out by the Cabinet Secretary, we need to do more to explain the case for change to our communities and look forward to working with the government and all our stakeholders to do this.'

Man jailed

A 29-YEAR-OLD man has been jailed for 18 weeks after assaulting a woman in February.

Lukasz Ostrouch, of no fixed abode, admitted at Oban Sheriff Court on Tuesday repeatedly punching the woman on the head to her injury as well as seizing her by the hair, before pushing and pulling her.

Prosecutor fiscal Eoin McGinty told the court that at 3.20am on February 4 in an Oban hotel, Ostrouch had been drinking with the woman before the attack.

Solicitor Laura McManus said her client accepted this was completely unacceptable behaviour and that he reacted violently after waking up and finding his laptop damaged.

Mr McGinty claimed there was no evidence of damage to property. Sheriff Patrick Hughes backdated Ostrouch's jail term to February 5.

Driving ban

AN OBAN man has been banned from driving for three years.

Gavin MacColl, of 5 Lorn Avenue, Dunollie, also received a £600 fine and will have to carry out 225 hours of unpaid work.

The 35-year-old pleaded guilty at Oban Sheriff Court on Tuesday to driving dangerously through George Street, Oban, on January 2 of this year by driving too fast, losing control and colliding with a bollard, narrowly avoiding a collision with a pedestrian.

He also pleaded guilty to driving a car while unfit through drink or drugs and struggling with police constables.

In MacColl's defence, his solicitor Laura McManus said her client had struggled with drugs in the past and relapsed over the festive period, but was now completely drug free.

Council facing legal threat over 'discrimination'

THE PARENT group of a Catholic primary school in Oban have threatened Argyll and Bute Council with legal action for 'discrimination', after it denied pupils seats on the school bus.

The MacGregor family from Ardconnel Farm have attended St Columba's Primary School for generations without difficulty, until 10 years ago when they learnt the council had reduced the school's catchment area, denying their children free transport to their nearest Catholic school. Since then they have paid the council thousands

of pounds to take their two daughters to school on the bus.

But earlier this month the council told the MacGregors there was no longer space for their daughters or three other St Columba's pupils, because they were being given a 'privileged' ride. Other children in the area are entitled to the seats free, because they attend another primary school in the same building.

Maggie Anderson, Roman Catholic representative on Argyll and Bute Council's community services committee, told

councillors on the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee: 'We believe Catholic education is being discriminated against.'

Helen McGuigan, chairwoman of St Columba's Primary School Parent Council, said its campaign to reinstate the catchment area has been resisted by the council: 'For every reason, the parent council has proved facts and evidence that their excuses are invalid. Then last week Ann Marie Knowles, the council's acting executive director of community services, told parents, "There has been no

material change in circumstances. Therefore, there will be no review of the catchment area for St Columba's Primary School".'

Ms McGuigan added: 'We are also in contact with the Scottish Catholic Education Service legal team and are working towards starting legal action against the council on grounds of discrimination.'

Bishop Brian McGee of the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles said: 'I hope the council will work with the parents of St Columba's to ensure this situation can be resolved amicably.'



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OT

Ferry linkspan upgrade plan

CALEDONIAN Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) is looking for a contractor to replace a linkspan at Oban ferry terminal.

The linkspan, which is like a drawbridge, is used to transport vehicles on and off predominately the Mull ferry service.

CMAL has published an 'invitation to tender', which will see construction take place in February and March next year.

Ruairidh Campbell, senior civil engineer at CMAL, said: 'This contract is part of our ongoing programme of harbour upgrades and modifications across our network. Interested suppliers can find out more and ask questions at our supplier information day later this month. We are always mindful of the impact of harbour upgrade work on ferry services and the people who use them. While berth one will be closed for the duration of the work to replace the linkspan, all services will run from berth two.'

Get active at Ganavan Sands

START the weekend with a walk, jog or run along the Ganavan to Dunbeg cycle path.

Ganavan Sands Parkrun takes place every Saturday at 9.30am. The 5km route is timed, but people are welcome to walk, jog or run along the course.

Times are posted to the event's website every week.

The volunteer run event is open to all ages and abilities but please visit www.parkrun.org/ganavansands/ to register and print out a barcode or your run won't be timed.

Enjoy a post run coffee at the mobile cafe in the summer or Oban Chocolate Shop on the Esplanade.

Parkrun relies on volunteers so anyone interested in helping is urged to email ganavansandshelpers@parkrun.com

Easter Monday coffee morning

OBAN Congregational Church is holding a coffee morning on Easter Monday, April 2.

The event, in the church hall at the top of Argyll Street, is from 10.30am until 12.30pm and will include tea, coffee and home-baking. Donation at the door, £3, with all proceeds going to church funds.

Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/obantimes

Oban High School's big flit

SANDY NEIL

sneil@obantimes.co.uk

OBAN'S old high school building closed on Tuesday as pupils walked out the doors at home time.

The Scottish Government has given the school an extra four days in the Easter holidays to move into the new £32m Oban High School building, which opens at 9am on April 18.

However, a world record attempt on its last day, to dress up more than 676 past and present pupils and primary schoolchildren as Harry Potter, has been postponed until June.

Oban High School posted on its Facebook page: 'Upon reflection and after some feedback we have decided it would be a good idea to postpone the Guinness World Record attempt until the primary transition days in June. This gives us the opportunity to invite former pupils and parents to participate in the



Inside a classroom in Oban High School's new £32m building.

event at our new school and will allow for more primary schools to participate.

'We want this to be a huge event and hosting it in June allows us to have as many people as possible involved.'

The bigger, four-storey Oban High School has a capacity for 1,300 pupils based on school roll forecasts – more than the old building's capacity of 1,150 – which will give plenty of floor space, 13,761 sq m to be exact,

for this year's school roll of 886 pupils. The new classrooms, equipped with state-of-the-art interactive whiteboards, are arranged around a roof-lit central atrium, with dance, music and drama studios and a gym.

The new school was built in the grounds of a grass rugby pitch, which will be replaced by a new one at Mossfield.

The council-owned site at Dalintart was selected following a public consultation in November 2013 and the designs approved in September 2015.

The first phase of construction, which began when the first turf was cut in June 2016, was due to finish on schedule on March 23.

An update presented to the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee told councillors: 'The Scottish Government has granted additional time (exceptional pupil closure days) to enable staff to pack all resources for the move and ensure classrooms are prepared and ready for pupils.'

'In order to make this move, there will be four additional days when staff will be present, with pupils on authorised leave.'

'Oban High School will be completely closed to all pupils

on the following four additional days: Wednesday March 28, Thursday March 29, Monday April 16 and Tuesday April 17.

'With these closure days being so close to the National Qualification examinations, the school has emphasised to pupils and their parents that senior pupils should be mature enough to ensure they use this time productively and study at home.'

Phase two – the external works, construction of the car park, bus stop and the demolition of the old school building – will run from April until February next year.

Oban High School opened in 1890. Former teachers include Iain Crichton Smith and John Mackay, Baron Mackay of Ardbrecknish, and its former pupils include TV architectural historian Dr Anna Keay, racing driver Susie Wolff, rugby union player Magnus Bradbury and Mary's Meals founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow.

Bricks piled high for first Lego club

OBAN'S first Lego club starts on Saturday for a month-long trial, after people from around Argyll donated Lego bricks.

The Master Builders – Lego and Creative Construction Club Facebook group now has 400 members and is still appealing for unused Lego. So far 15 people have donated six full tubs and six box sets of Lego bricks – enough to start building.

Mum-of-two Fiona Shaw will host three meetings at Oban's Rockfield Centre between 10am-2pm on Saturdays March 31, April 14 and April 21. If it proves popular, and wins funding in a public vote, the club can continue into the summer.

'I want to make this a regular event so we can get children along and make new friends. Parents will meet parents from other backgrounds. One lady said she felt awful because she does not have any Lego but she wanted to help so she lent her dishwasher to wash the pieces. Some of it is 50 years old and very dusty. We could be close to finding some of the original stuff.'

Fiona is seeking donations via a GoFundMe page and funding via the public vote in Argyll and Bute Council's Supporting Communities Fund. She is also organising a table top sale at Oban's Corran Halls from 10am to 1pm on Saturday April 7.

Rockfield Centre Community Charity Shop opens



Volunteers at the opening of the new charity shop at the Rockfield Centre.

Blethering about sport

PEOPLE from as far as Dunoon made the trip to attend the Rockfield Centre's monthly blether.

This month's theme was sporting stories and, while enjoying a cuppa, people flicked and discussed sporting accomplishments.

Alfie MacKenzie talked the group through older photographs, as well as showing off memorabilia including the golf bag Robert MacIntyre used in this year's Walker Cup.

Alasdair Black also brought in prized shinty sticks and told stories of his father, who played



This month's monthly blether in the Rockfield Centre centred on sport. 16_t12_Heritage02

for Oban Camanachd and Oban Celtic. Eleanor MacKinnon of The Rockfield Centre said: 'This is a heritage group. We have a monthly blether about various topics.'

Eleanor said the group was open to other suggestions and was always on the look-out for participants and volunteers.

To get involved, email heritage@therockfieldcentre.org.uk

THE ROCKFIELD Community Centre Charity Shop opens today (Thursday March 29) replacing the former White Building, which was demolished to create the new marine centre on Oban's North Pier.

Over the seven years the charity shop was situated in the White Building, it attracted thousands of visitors from all over the world and raised more than £500,000 for local charities.

The organisers hope to continue that success in the new shop at the Rockfield Centre. It will also feature an information point so that visitors can keep up with the events at Rockfield as it expands its monthly programme of activities, workshops and classes.

Graham MacQueen, a director of Oban Communities Trust which runs the Rockfield Centre, said: 'This is going to be the greatest asset Oban will have ever had.'

'The community sorely missed a community charity shop. Since the White Building closed, there has not been one week where we have not had requests to re-open the community shop.'

'The money raised here is entirely for the Rockfield Centre. It is entirely run by volunteers. Every penny that comes into the till will go to the community. It is hugely important for the Rockfield Centre that we start generating income to make it sustainable: somebody has to

pay the electricity bills.' The Rockfield Community Charity Shop will be run by the same group of volunteers from the White Building. Graham MacQueen commended the volunteers for once again giving their time free of charge for the community.

Alison Chadwick, also a director, added: 'People love old things and bric-a-brac.'

'It will become an information hub and a focus for a community share offer starting in May.'

Gordon McNab, chairman of Oban Communities Trust which is spearheading the fundraising for the centre, said: 'Opening the shop comes at a dynamic time for the Rockfield Centre.'

'We are about to launch the sale of community shares in May which will form the final push for the funding package to 'get the lights on' and the centre operating fully.'

The Rockfield Community Charity shop will be supported by MacQueen Bros Ltd and MacQueen Bros Charitable Trust.

Anyone wishing to donate items to the Rockfield Community Charity Shop can contact MacQueen Bros Ltd on 01631 564848 for free uplift and transport of the items.

To find out more about the Oban Communities Trust visit <http://www.obancommunitiestrust.org.uk> and to find out more about the activities on offer at Rockfield, visit www.therockfieldcentre.org.uk

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Knitted chicks go 'cheep' for charity

KNITTERS at Oban's New Hope charity have been clicking their needles to make Easter chicks and raise funds.

Basketfuls of the little woolly creatures, hiding chocolate cream eggs, have been selling like hot Easter buns for £1.50 each at the town's Made In Argyll shop.

Stasiu, 7, and sister Danusiu Gluchy, 6, who were visiting Oban at the weekend from Grangemouth with their parents were all smiles when they posed with the cute knitted chicks for *The Oban Times* photographer.

Proceeds from sales of the chicks will go to the charitable work of New Hope in Soroba Road.

Easter weekend excitement - and lots to do in Oban

KAY MCDONALD
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EASTER weekend is here with all the excitement it brings, especially for children. I've always thought of Easter as a family time, much like Christmas, where those who live in other parts of the country return home to be together and the church celebrations of a risen Christ tie in with all the new life springing up around us. It's a lovely, joyful time of year.

There is also so much to do at this time of year, from the Oban High School Pipe Band Concert tonight (Thursday) in the Corran Halls to the Easter Funday in Waterstones on Saturday from 10am to 11am.

Events in the Rockfield Centre include a Lego Masterbuilders Club from 10am to 11am and Sand Art from 2pm till 4pm

WHERE IS THIS?



and the Sealife Centre at Barcaldine has its Chocolate Easter Egg-stravaganza at 12.30pm on Sunday.

Dunstaffnage also has an Easter Explorer Trail from Friday until Monday and we have Dunollie re-opening on Friday just

in time for a really busy weekend.

Last week's column has prompted some lovely replies from people who have moved to Oban and love living here, despite the weather.

Martin moved here from Hong Kong. It has been a huge change and he loves it. Alan, who has lived here for so long I thought he was born and brought up in Oban, is actually from the United States. His message brought back lovely memories of the Argyll Hotel and the Gateway in my youth, long, long ago.

I'm still eager to hear from everyone - locals, visitors or even people who would like to be local. Whatever your experience of Oban, it makes for some interesting conversations.

Last week's photograph was taken at The Lorne in Stevenson Street and this week's isn't too far away.

Tyndrum

A STIRLING MSP met with businesses and residents in Crianlarich last week to discuss changing the speed limit into the village to 40mph.

Bruce Crawford MSP spoke to businesses who have experienced high speed traffic as they merge onto the road from their premises.

Speaking about the talks, Mr Crawford said: 'It is clear from the conversations that the desire for a 40mph speed buffer coming into the village extends beyond those who contacted me. Other businesses and residences in the area are impacted by cars coming into Crianlarich off a 60mph road.'

'There are a number of entrances/exits to and from premises on the 300-400 yard stretch before the 30mph zone begins and it is clear the current speed limit causes hazards to road users. I am pleased Transport Scotland is open to discussing this following my correspondence and I will be reaching out to Police Scotland to provide as much incident information as possible as we build the case for a speed buffer into Crianlarich.'

Oban

OBAN charity Hope Kitchen is hosting a quiz night on Tuesday April 3, 7pm until 10pm.

The fun-filled night will see teams of up to six people compete against each other.

Hope Kitchen is committed to providing a safe and fun space for members of the community. In a post on its Facebook page it said: 'Looking for an alcohol and drug free night out? Come along to our quiz.'

Everyone is welcome, but there are limited spaces so visit the Hope Kitchen Facebook page or phone 01631 565730 for more information.

Hope Kitchen also accepts donations at www.hopekitchen.org.uk

Appin

MEMBERS of the Appin branch of the Scottish Women's Institute met on Thursday March 15 in Port Appin Hall.

Speaker for the evening was home economics teacher Helen Murray.

Helen demonstrated how to make three delicious sweets: posset, tiramisu and a meringue roulade, all of which members took great delight in sampling.

Helen was thanked for an entertaining evening by Helen Downie.

Competition results: Poppy, any craft: Gold - Alison MacCorquodale; Silver - Brenda MacLeod; Red - Jessie Gilkes; Blue - Helen Downie. Three Pineapple Tarts: Gold - Brenda MacLeod. Mrs Ross's baking competition: Catriona MacKenzie.

Islay

ONE OF the best known companies on Islay has changed hands, marking the end of an era.

D and N MacKenzie has been trading for more than 90 years, starting out as a shop, post office and filling station in Port Charlotte. In 1997, the company expanded to Glenegedale, offering car servicing and car hire.

The MacKenzie family will now take a well-deserved retirement. The company has been taken over by David John Cresswell and will trade as Cresswell Cars Ltd.

A COUPLE from Islay have launched a gin infused with wild heather from the island.

Husband and wife Audrey and John Gow launched Islay Gin Ltd's 'Nerabus' earlier this month during Fèis week. The dry gin is being produced in batches of 500 bottles and the labels were designed by their son George.

Kilmore

A QUIZ night and raffle which packed Kilmore Village Hall on Saturday March 17 raised £560 towards a new kitchen.

Kilmore Community Council thanked everyone who donated dishes for the buffet supper and organised tables and chairs for the many teams. 'You missed a real treat if you couldn't make it,' the group said: 'It was good to see youngsters with families there.'

The night's quizmaster Dr Jules Hodge said: 'Thanks go to everyone who attended to help raise funds for a new kitchen in the village hall. For further events check the Facebook page Kilmore Community Council Argyll and Bute.'



Taynuilt Shinty Club in its new kit funded by Dawnfresh.

Shinty club secures new sponsorship deal

TAYNUILT Shinty Club has secured a three-year sponsorship deal worth £4,500 from fish farming company Dawnfresh.

The money will be shared out over three years and to kick start the 2018 season, Dawnfresh set the team up with new tangerine and black strips.

A Dawnfresh spokesperson said: 'Most of the Dawnfresh team are from the local area so they feel a deep connection to the community, which

Taynuilt

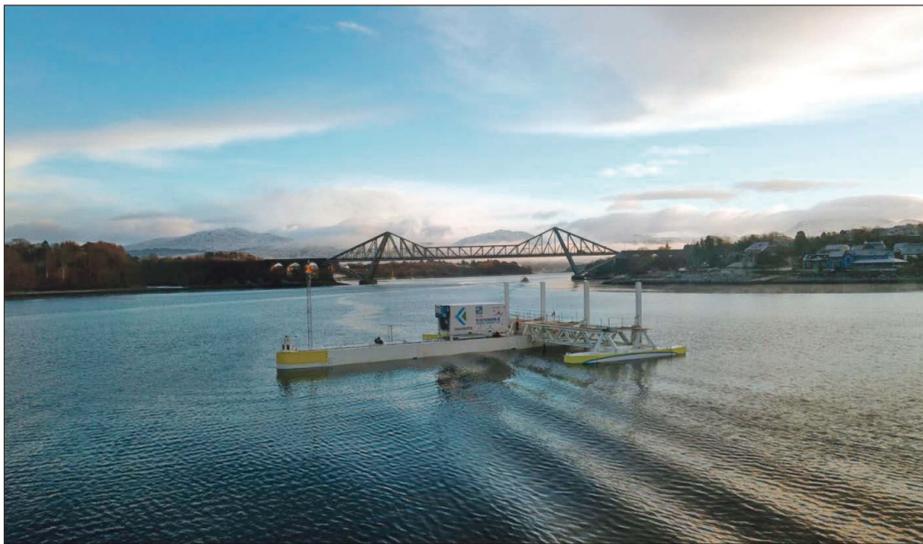
is why the company is always exploring new ways to support community organisations.'

Shinty club chairman Dave Thomson said: 'It's great to get the sponsorship because it means we're financially in a good position. It takes the pressure off.'

It costs between £8,000 and £10,000

a year to keep the South League Division 1 club running with player insurance, transport, match entry and pitch maintenance all mounting up. Just putting on a home match can cost the team £175. The Taynuilt team started up about 70 years ago, with a couple of breaks in that time, but it restarted 10 years ago and is now going strong, added Mr Thomson.

'We appreciate all the help we get,' he said.



The tidal turbine in Loch Etive.

Tests end for 'game-changing' tidal turbine

AN EXPERIMENTAL tidal turbine in Loch Etive will cease testing in April.

The 'game changing' PLAT-1 platform was installed in the Falls of Lora near Connel Bridge in November 2017 by the Orkney and Leith-based company Sustainable Marine Energy (SME).

It promises 'low-cost' power for island and coastal communities which currently rely on diesel, generating up to 280kW.

The floating three-hulled vessel, assembled at Dunstaffnage Marina 1.5 miles from the site, has four underwater turbines suspend-

Connel

ed underneath, which can harness clean energy from the world's tides and rivers.

SME explains on its website: 'The PLAT-1 is designed for inshore tidal sites to provide power at a community scale and proves tidal energy is a viable clean energy alternative for coastal and island off-takers with limited infrastructure.'

The turbines spin with the incoming tidal flow and generate power. The platform is moored to the seabed using four mooring lines and anchors. The

platform then rotates about the moorings with the wind and tide - like a boat. It will not be exporting power, so the platform is entirely self-contained. There are no cables linking PLAT-1 to the shore.

Once tests are concluded in the tidal race at Connel, the PLAT-1 will be disassembled and transported to the Philippines or Canada, where it will be connected to the grid to demonstrate its commercial viability.

John McGlynn, SME's commercial lead in platform systems, said: 'We do not have a licence beyond the end of April. The plan is

to decommission the system and clean up the site in the very near future.'

According to the Scottish Government: 'Scotland possesses huge wave and tidal energy resources and the potential exists to generate more electricity than we currently need from the waters around the Scottish coast.'

'Scotland has a third of the UK's tidal stream resources and two thirds of the UK's wave resources. The Scottish Government believes that wave and tidal energy will make an important contribution to our future electricity needs.'

Wild about Argyll bus enthrals primary school pupils

PUPILS from Dalmally, Park, Dunbeg, Kilniver and Easdale primary schools hopped on board the Wild about Scotland double-decker bus last week to discover the wonders of Scottish nature.

The Wild about Scotland team is travelling the length and breadth of the country, engaging children with Scotland's amazing native wildlife and connecting children with the nature on their own doorstep.

The award-winning programme is run by the Royal Zoological Society for Scotland (RZSS) and is supported by Clydesdale Bank.

The pupils took part in interactive, fun sessions focusing on Scottish native species, their habitats and how RZSS is helping to conserve them.

Topics included the successful re-introduction of beavers to Scotland, efforts to protect the endangered Scottish wildcat, mini-beasts and how to help wildlife.

Barbara Smith, chief executive officer of RZSS, said: 'Our Wild about Scotland bus is a great way to get people involved with conservation and protecting native wildlife.'

It is vital we teach and engage with young people about the abundance of native species on their doorstep and how we can help preserve them.'

Helen Page, group innovation and marketing director at Clydesdale Bank, said: 'This helps to create a lifelong appreciation and respect for wildlife and the environment, which is a huge part of our work. RZSS makes a vital contribution to the conservation of Scotland's wildlife, through direct preservation and its commitment to educating the public on endangered species, habitats and ecosystems.'

'Since its first trip in 2014, more than 75,000 people have experienced the Wild about Scotland bus, including more than 1,400 from Argyll and Bute.'

'We're proud to be supporting the campaign, particularly as the bus gives communities the chance to engage with experts from RZSS on Scottish conservation.'

To find out which schools and venues the bus is visiting or to book a visit to your local primary school, visit www.cbonline.co.uk/wildaboutscotland



Pupils from Park Primary School on board the Wild about Scotland bus last week.



Pupils from Dunbeg get ready to hop on to the bus.



The bus stopped at Dalmally Primary School as part of its tour.



Pupils from Kilniver and Easdale beside the bus.

Killin

KILLIN'S annual community auction will be held on Easter Saturday, March 31, in the McLaren Hall.

The auction starts at 6pm, with viewings available from 4pm.

The event is hosted by local Masonic Lodge members to raise funds for worthy causes in the community and is well supported by locals and visitors.

This year donations include lots from house down sizing and some surprising items.

There is a Cape Buffalo Skull with a horn span of more than three feet, items of antique china and stoneware as well as more modern items and many collectibles.

There are some photos on the lodge web site and on Facebook which show a selection of what is on offer. The wine and ale bar will help the craic and the kitchen will provide snacks and hot drinks.



Are you ready to get MAD with Atlantis Community Leisure?

Saturday 19th of May see's our first one0off Muddy Atlantis Day. With gallons of mud, icy water and some shocks along the way. We are creating a 10k cross country assault course designed to challenge and test you. Get a team together or go solo and join in on a fun filled and crazy challenge right here in Oban.

The MAD team are creating some gruelling obstacles up some gut-busting hills, over craggy cliffs and through the chilly west coast sea. Keep your eyes peeled for sneak peaks of what they have in store for you.

Entry is £25 (plus booking fee) per person for age 16+

All money raised is going towards Atlantis Community Leisure 25th Birthday Fundraising campaign to upgrade the original facilities in the centre.

Raise extra money for our community centre and collect sponsors; download a sponsorship form or set up a sponsor page.

Build your team; grab your friends, work colleagues or gym buddies and attack this together. Looking for some team mates? Head to our Facebook group (MAD-Teams) and find like-minded comrades.

We also have our wee MAD event for 8-16-year-olds. The course involves loads of obstacles over a shorter distance and is taking place between 9-10am before the adults set off. Entry is £10 (plus booking fee).

There will be spectator areas and it is completely free to come and watch.

At Random

MARTIN LAING
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Potholes pose a danger

I HAVE written here on a number of occasions recently about the state of the roads across Argyll.

As you all know only too well, they are shockingly bad. Now, as we report this week, there are fears they could pose a deadly risk to the many cyclists who will compete in the Oban Sportive on Sunday April 22. No kidding.

The countless number of potholes are a real danger to all road users in the area and have been for weeks, if not months.

Argyll and Bute Council recently allocated an additional £5.5 million to its roads budget and BEAR Scotland announced a further £4 million for trunk roads. That is a welcome start but the work needs to be done urgently.

I travelled at the weekend between Oban and the central belt and the roads are scary in places. Indeed, there are stretches on the A85 where you are forced to slow to a crawl to avoid damaging your vehicle or bursting tyres.

The five miles or so of road from Tyndrum to Crianlarich are among the



Argyll's roads are shockingly bad.

worst anywhere and there is a patch just north of Tyndrum that is almost impassable.

But those are just a couple of examples. The menace of the potholes is almost beyond description.

If the harsh reality of the threat to the Oban Sportive finally prompts some urgent action, it will not be before time.

Well done to Oban's spring cleaners

SCORES of people turned out at the weekend to take part in the Oban spring clean.

These people were of all ages and backgrounds but were united by a common purpose: to improve the town for everyone.

It is heartening there are so many community-minded folk in Oban who clearly care for their environment. What a contrast to the morons who dump their rubbish. It was surprising what was picked up. As well as plastic bottles and food cartons, waste items included supermarket trolleys, a lawn mower, a pregnancy test, a cycling helmet and fire extinguishers.

It highlighted how widespread the problem has become but I fear there is no long-term solution other than heavy-handed enforcement and severe penalties. Well done to the organisers for setting up the initiative.

What do you think?

WRITE to me at mlaing@obantimes.co.uk or The Oban Times, Crannog Lane, Oban, PA34 4 HB.

The deer stalker's chief mourner

MORVERN LINES
IAIN THORNER
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THE A82, where it runs alongside the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond between Ardlui and Tarbet, is such a busy and pot-holed road these days, that you dare not risk taking your eyes off it even for a second. But if you are travelling south and the traffic is light, ask one of your passengers to look out for an upright stone standing a little way away from the carriageway, a few hundred yards before the Inveruglas visitor centre and the spectacular Loch Sloy power station.

The stone, about two-feet high, has a Gaelic inscription which you won't be able to read from your vehicle. To do that you must park at the visitor centre and make your way back along the shore to find it again. There is no pavement, so don't attempt to walk along the road!

The inscription reads: MAR CHUIMNEACHAN AIR IAIN MOR MACDHOMHNUILL SEALADAIR FHIADH A CHAIDH A MHRBHAI DH ANNS AN IONAD SO MIOS SAMHNA 1900 (To the memory of Big Iain MacDonald, deer stalker, who met his death at this spot in the month of November 1900).

Iain MacDonald was a game-keeper on Ardvorlich estate owned by Sir James Colquhoun of Luss, the fifth Baronet, whose father, also James, was drowned in a sudden storm on Loch Lomond in 1873 when he and others rowed out to bring back a deer for a Christmas feast.

John, or Iain, as he was known locally, used to cycle once or twice a week to Tarbet, a distance of 12 miles, for food and other provisions. He set off on the morning of Thursday November 30 accompanied by his dog. He, apparently, did not leave Tarbet till late and was last seen alive at about 10 o'clock that night on the road home.

All seems to have gone well until he came to the small

bridge crossing the Allt an Ardain, about a mile from his destination. Colliding with one of the parapets in the dark, Iain was catapulted into the burn below. It was thought that he must have been going at a great speed, as his face was apparently so badly lacerated that his features could not be distinguished. There is, however, a local story that poachers put a wire across the bridge to get their own back for some incident.

The death certificate gave the cause as wounds from falling off a bicycle; the post mortem examination report submitted to the procurator fiscal by Dr Charles Edward Salmon, Tarbet, was more specific. 'Asphyxia and shock, the result of fall about 11 feet from [the] bicycle into the said burn. Death immediate'.

It wasn't until the following morning that a walker, crossing the bridge, found Iain's body lying in the burn with his faithful dog still by his side, and relayed a message to the police. The body was taken away to Tarbet. I have no knowledge of where Iain was buried. He was a strong man of 36 and left a widow and two children.

Instances of dogs remaining with the bodies of their owners at the scene of an accident, or by their graves for years afterwards, are not unusual. The best-known, perhaps, is Greyfriars Bobby, a Skye terrier belonging to John Gray, who worked for the Edinburgh City Police as a night-watchman. When John Gray died he was buried in Greyfriars cemetery in the Old Town of Edinburgh.

Bobby is said to have sat by the grave for 14 years until he died himself on 14 January 1872 and was buried just inside the cemetery gate, not far from John Gray's grave. A year later, an English philanthropist Lady Burdett-Coutts, was so taken by the story that she commissioned the sculptor William Brodie to produce a fountain topped with Bobby's statue which can still be seen opposite the entrance to the churchyard.



The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner, left, Photograph the Victoria and Albert Museum; and below, Iain MacDonald's memorial stone near the spot where he died in 1900, Photograph Iain Thorner

he painted display human feelings and characteristics. One of the important aims of British art of the day was to illustrate love and affection in paintings.'

The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner hangs in a darkened and crowded hallway of one of the galleries at the V&A. It would be easy to miss if you were not looking for it. The protective glass over the painting actually makes it difficult to see.

Although the label is factually accurate, it leaves out a large portion of the story, namely that it became an important part of animal welfare campaigns in the 19th century. For example, in March 1881, it was reproduced in the magazine of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Here, in a transposed image of human grief, a Highland collie rests its head on the plain wooden coffin containing the body of his companion, the "old shepherd". That this dog refuses to leave his master's side – even after death – highlights the bond that these two had.

The closeness of the dog's breast against the coffin; the clinging of the legs, which has dragged the coarse woollen blanket off the trestle; the utter hopelessness in the eye; the spectacles marking the place where the Bible was last closed; the sprigs of sweet-scented bog-myrtle on the pall and on the floor; the quietness and serenity of the small room, is about as emotional and powerful as it gets. It is not difficult to imagine a similar scene the night before Iain Mor MacDonald of Ardvorlich was buried.

Robert Henry Johnson, a little known mid-19th-century poet and gold miner, of Tambaroora in New South Wales, Australia, must have experienced the loss of a favourite companion when he composed a lovely poem, The Dog at his Master's Grave: 'There's a mourner that mourns in that old churchyard, for he sleeps on that cold damp grave; he heedeth not winter stern and hard, no shelter doth he crave; nor while life shall last, will his memory fail for his old friend dead and gone. He sheddeth no tear, he maketh no wail, but his long night watch keeps on'.

At Meoble, near Loch Morar in West Inverness-shire, there is a grassy mound marking the grave of the son of a local laird, on which his favourite deerhound kept her lonely vigil following his early death. For many years her ghost returned

when any of her master's family were about to die.

Sir Edwin Landseer, the Victorian artist, is best remembered for his stirring painting of a magnificent stag called, the Monarch of the Glen, and four monumental bronze lions guarding Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square. For me, his finest and best picture is the Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner. John Ruskin, one of the most famous art critics of Landseer's day, praised this 1837 work, describing it as 'one of the most perfect pictures which modern times have seen'.

Whenever I am in London I visit the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) in South Kensington to see it. The gallery label tells viewers: 'This scene of the sentimental devotion of a dog won praise and popularity for its famous artist, Edwin Landseer. The animals



Iain Thorner
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John Beveridge and Jonathan McColl with the original ship's wheel following the news that the Maid of the Loch has been awarded £950,000 from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund.

Maid of the Loch celebrates 65th birthday with new lease of life

THE SCOTTISH Government has awarded Balloch-based 1950s paddle steamer, the Maid of the Loch, £950,000 through its Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) to help with the vessel's full restoration, creating jobs and boosting tourism visits to Loch Lomond.

Loch Lomond Steamship Company's chairman John Beveridge, who has driven the restoration project for the last 22 years, explained: 'This is a major milestone moment for the Maid of the Loch. It is absolutely wonderful news and a complete game changer for The Maid's full restoration. This takes us significantly closer to reaching our £5.5 million target, but we still have a way to go.'

A&J Inglis of Pointhouse, The Maid is the only known example left in Britain of an 'Up and Doon' ship – where she was built and launched right away in the shipyard, and then disassembled and transported to her final destination of Loch Lomond, being rebuilt, riveted and then launched into Loch Lomond in March 1953.

The Maid of the Loch was given to the Loch Lomond Steamship Company in 1996 and this project is the culmination of 22 years of voluntary effort to get her sailing again. The £5.5 million project will restore her to her 1950s condition, but with 2018 safety and comfort. She will offer cruises from Easter to October and be open as an events and function

venue the rest of the year. Mr Beveridge added: 'This is the culmination of 22 years' hard work by a dedicated team of volunteers, our board, our sponsors, our supporters, and the public who have given time and money to get where we are. I cannot thank everyone enough. 'The Maid of the Loch was launched 65 years ago, in March 1953 – what a fabulous birthday present. No retirement for her, but a new lease of life.'

The restoration of the Maid of the Loch is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Scottish Enterprise, Forth Valley & Lomond LEADER, West Dunbartonshire Council, The Wolfson Trust, The Hugh Fraser Foundation, and a recent public crowdfunding campaign.

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Volunteers 'Keep Oban Beautiful'



Sally Thomson, Julie Fairbrass, Adele Knox, Derek Laidler and Shadow the dog at Ganavan picking litter after Saturday's park run.

KATHIE GRIFFITHS
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

OBAN is looking more beautiful than ever after volunteers dedicated a weekend to collecting more than 300 bags of rubbish.

Organisers of the town's first Keep Oban Beautiful weekend have hailed it a huge success, praising the teams of volunteers who put in hours of hard work.

Most of the haul was made up of drink cans, plastic bottles, food wrappers and takeaway containers but other grimy finds included six supermarket trolleys pulled from the Black Lynn, a lawn mower, a hoover, a cycling helmet, fire extinguishers, a pregnancy test and a wallet.

'While that highlights the hard work put in by a good number of volunteers, it also shows we all have a lot to do to engender more pride in Oban. It may be stating the obvious, but the only reason so many people agreed to give up their weekend to get tired, sore and dirty is that a minority of the population think nothing of dumping their litter wherever it seems convenient,' said Maurice Wilkins from the Keep Oban Beautiful group.

And he added: 'We have a huge task in front of us simply to clear the rubbish and eradicate the invasive exotic plants, let alone get the message over that putting rubbish in the bin prevents it sailing out into the ocean, but it will be worth it in the end.'

'We would like to thank the crowd of volunteers of all ages who rallied to the cause.'

Derek Laidler was part of the team from the Saturday morning park run at Ganavan



Dog walker Maureen Mair was out on Saturday and Sunday doing her bit along the Black Lynn to Keep Oban Beautiful.

Former Oban In Bloom organiser Andy MacDowell, 85, who was part of the MacQueen Bros team near Glenshellach Industrial Estate, found three bags each full of around a dozen empty Tennents tins. 'It's disgusting. Someone had deliberately thrown them onto the roadside. I worry about the mess we are leaving for future generations. We have to stop this and stop it now.'

Ben Lawlor, 12, was out with Oban Youth Forum tackling the footpath which runs from Tesco up a muddy bank to the High Street.

'I sometimes think about global warming and how we are harming where we live. We need to try and stop pollution,' he said. The litter-pick was part of the forum's GIVE idea where young people volunteer in the community in return for activities as a thank you.

Beach cleaners swept their way along the town's beaches led by marine environmentalist and campaigner Janie Steele who was logging all their finds as part of a survey charting the mountains of waste that end up on the shores.

Oban woman Lee McKillop was up at the Hydro and collected 21 bin bags of litter - that is more than 90 since the start of this year.

Her litter-busting efforts so far have raised £659.25 in aid of the Sophie North Charitable Trust.

There were lots of others out and about over the weekend doing their bit to keep Oban Beautiful, including Faisal Jewel from Argyll and Bute Council who gave up his weekend chasing around the town picking up people's bags to fill the skip which he organised at Rockfield Community Centre.



The Oban Times crew made a team effort cleaning up Lochavullin Road. The team included editor Susan Windram, Lesley McKerracher, Kathie Griffiths, Chris Bennett, Andy Bruce and Jack Bruce, 9. Also taking part was Robert McKerracher, not pictured.



Oban Youth Forum members were out with Scott Douglas to clean up the footpath behind Tesco to the High Street.



Above: Litter busters Graham MacQueen, Andy MacDowell, Stuart MacQueen and Donnie MacPhee found bags filled with empty lager cans and a giant traffic cone.



Mary and Luize Vinkalne stashed their litter haul from Glengallan Road near the hospital in an abandoned shopping trolley.



Lee McKillop in her Cookie Monster onesie filled 21 bin bags from the Hydro area of town, fundraising for the Sophie North Trust.



Adrian Beard and Frankie Lanos brave the muddy bank at the back of Atlantis Leisure Centre to clear rubbish.



Marine environmentalist Janie Steele and volunteers filled buckets and bags of rubbish from Wee Ganavan.

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The Oban Times is committed to reducing the use of plastics in Argyll. If you are a local business or individual who shares our commitment, we would love to tell your story. Contact us on 01631 568000 or email editor@obantimes.co.uk

“A lot of what we found could have been recycled”

Mary Vinkalne
Litter pick volunteer

Right: SAMS student Jake Ainscough was helping pull years of litter from the Black Lynn.



Left: The Salvation Army team cleaning in Stevenson Street were Jane and Hass Sanie and Mark Sheldrick.



Billy and Yvonne Irving with their son William and all their wedding guests. 25_c131rving149

Yvonne marries her 'prince'

EXCLUSIVE WORDS AND PICTURES BY MARK DAVEY
 editor@obantimes.co.uk

AS SKIPINNISH played the opening chords of Billy Irving's Indian prison composition *First Dance*, he whirled his wife Yvonne round a Paisley dance floor at their wedding reception.

It was a fairytale beginning to a marriage which would have seemed impossible five months ago for the Connel man, as the Chennai Six entered their fourth year in captivity.

Before the day came, last Saturday, 'courageous' campaigner Yvonne had battled to free her ex-paratrooper fiancé from a prison in the former city of Madras, after he was wrongly convicted as one of the Chennai Six.

Speaking at the reception, after a wedding service in front of about 140 family and friends at St Peter's Church in Paisley, Billy, 37, his voice cracking with emotion, said: 'In my time in India, Yvonne fought so hard. Yvonne has changed my world since I met her.'

The couple met just after Hogmanay 2011 on the Isle of Barra, where Billy had been piping at the Castlebay hotel.

'As soon as I saw him, I thought, "I want to marry you"', Yvonne told *The Oban Times* reporter, as she completed her wedding preparations at her sister Jacquelynn's flat.

'I am so glad the day has finally come. I always knew it would happen,' added Yvonne.

In the following seven years, Yvonne proved her love time and time again both before and after Billy became a pirate hunter, eventually joining five other ex-British servicemen and a crew of Estonian, Ukrainian and Indian nationals on AdvanFort's ship Seaman Guard Ohio.

The nightmare began in October 2013, as the vessel plied the Indian Ocean protecting cargo ships from Somali pirates.

An Indian coastguard claimed the vessel had strayed 1.2 nautical miles from international waters into Indian territory and everyone on board was arrested.

Despite having all the correct paperwork for the 35 assault rifles and 5,000 rounds of ammunition on board, the former soldiers were charged with possessing illegal weapons.

In the next four years, Yvonne galvanised support for Billy's release, organised an online petition



Yvonne and her bridesmaids during preparations. 25_c131rving88

of nearly half a million signatures, met politicians in Downing Street, appeared on television and made numerous trips to India.

Until the 2016 trial, which saw Billy sentenced to five years in prison, he was held on house arrest and during one of these visits their son William, three, was conceived.

While under house arrest and thinking about the day he would eventually marry Yvonne, Billy used an online designing programme to amalgamate the Irving and MacHugh tartans.

Later in prison, the musician, who learned to play the pipes while at Campbeltown Grammar School, managed to get hold of a guitar and composed *First Dance*.

Back in 2011, the love-struck pair knew nothing of what was to come.

Yvonne said: 'We both lived in Glasgow at the time but there was no contact for four weeks. We met again by chance at a Skerryvore gig in Glasgow and afterwards became inseparable. Billy asked me out to the Park Bar. He said that it was just a drink but any girl would class that as a date.'

'When Billy first became involved in maritime security, I thought he was making it up.'

'He was away for about two months and when he came back he took me to France to meet his parents.'

'We moved in together and, because Billy loves Argyll, we moved to Connel just before his fateful trip.'

Billy said: 'My military background has helped me through but I was most concerned about Yvonne and William as I could not control anything of what they faced.'

'In prison, we received cards and letters, from friends and family, that meant so much to us.'

'There are some people in the

similar or worse situations who have no-one backing them up.'

Preparations for the wedding have been extensive, including Yvonne's mother, Janette, using Billy's design for his wedding outfit, her grandson William's trows and waistcoat, and dresses for bridesmaids Jacquelynn and Lindsay.

Sheena Martin, from Campbeltown, made a traditional three-tier cake with sponge layers of coconut and lime and passion fruit and a bottom layer of traditional fruit.

As guests arrived at the church, including 28 from Kintyre, they were handed orders of service by ushers from Campbeltown, Shaun McDaniel and Iain Martin.

Outside, as Yvonne stepped out of a Bentley in bright spring sunshine, a pair of Campbeltown pipers, Mark McCormick, 26, and Alan McCormick, 24, both taught by Billy, played.

Janette gave Yvonne away and best men were Billy's brothers, former marine Jamie, 42, and Colin, 41, who is a Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers' sergeant-major.

The service was conducted by Canon Edward Cameron with readings from Katie Mary MacNeill and Julia MacIssac.

As Yvonne and Billy left the church,

the pipers played *Mairi's Wedding*. After a drinks reception in the hall next to the church, the whole party walked down the road to the St Peter's Working Men's Club where a meal included choices of baked chicken or steak.

Speeches by Yvonne's brother Phil MacHugh – a former BBC Gaelic presenter – Billy and his best men were made before the meal.

Among many reminiscences Phil recounted how Yvonne, a Gaelic speaker, once told Hearts owner Vladimir Romanov he was an a***** in Gaelic and he wished her all the best in Russian.

Phil said: 'When Billy got a major starring role in a Bollywood movie, the true hero was my sister.'

'Yvonne showed courage, willpower, strength and determination to bring back Billy.'

He added that Yvonne's strong stance was a result of their upbringing by Janette who taught them to 'stand strong and never give up'.

'Yvonne, I am so proud of you, you look absolutely stunning,' Phil said. 'Billy, I am delighted to welcome you into our family.'

Writing to friends on Monday Yvonne said: 'On Saturday, I married my prince and can honestly say it was the best day of my life.'



The first dance as Skipinnish play Billy's song *First Dance*. 25_c131rving35



Mr and Mrs Irving process down the aisle. 25_c131rving143



Left to right are Yvonne's mum Janette MacHugh, bridesmaids Lindsay MacDonald and Jacquelynn MacHugh, Phil MacHugh, Yvonne and Billy Irving, Colin Irving, Margaret Irving, Jamie Irving, Jim Irving and Canon Edward Cameron. 25_c131rving138



Billy signs the marriage certificate watched by bridesmaid Jacquelynn MacHugh, Yvonne and Canon Edward Cameron. 25_c131rving134



Billy is in trouble again during the speeches. 25_c131rving43



Yvonne and Billy seal it with a kiss. 25_c131rving123

OT

Viewpoint



Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

There have been many headlines in the past week regarding the crisis facing Argyll and Bute's Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP).

Last week we reported the 'terrifying' prospect of as many as 400 redundancies, the privatisation of services and swingeing cuts as the Integrated Joint Board (IJB) wrestles with how to close a staggering £13 million black hole in its budget.

The proposals were condemned roundly from across the political spectrum and by trade unions. The revelations prompted one whistleblower to contact

The Oban Times anonymously with a list of allegations that make extremely concerning reading.

As we report today, the crisis in health and care provision appears to be worsening.

None of this is to level criticism at front-line staff, whose morale is alleged to be at rock bottom by the whistleblower. And the vast majority of people in the area would attest that the care provided is superb.

The HSCP refutes the claims, saying some are inaccurate. What is clear is that IJB and HSCP managers still have some explaining to do.



Days gone by – 1920s

Peter White from Sunderland sent us this photograph of a Crossley car built between 1920-22/23 and registered in County Durham, England. It was a model 19.6, with a top speed of 60mph and it did 20 miles to the gallon.

Mr White said: 'Crossley made the chassis and engines and front assembly, while the cabins were to the customer's requirements. The 1924 Crossley tourer is the same with an open convertible top. The photograph shows the car loaded on a single rotating deck car ferry about to land on a jetty, but I'm not sure where the jetty is? Glenelg to Skye comes to mind, but I'd love to know for sure.' Can any of our readers help him? Let us know.

MacPhail

ANGUS MACPHAIL
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WHETHER it is conditioning of the environment in which I've lived or because of the general craving for diversity from which I suffer, I am unsure, but I relish the feeling of the moving seasons.

With the changing of the clocks last weekend being welcomed with some of the best weather of the year, the lifting of the winter cloak was in the air and in the minds and mood of most.

As I conveyed in an article in October while heading towards the winter, the seasonality of the climate is one of the great advantages of living in this part of the planet.

As the transition from autumn to winter is welcomed with looking forward to the long cosy nights by a warm fire, the move from winter to spring brings with it the prospect of long light evenings and bright early mornings.

By the time this piece is published we may have returned to being covered in ice and snow but, for the time being, it

is sunny and warm and I am going to pretend it's going to last!

The world opens up in spring and land and light flourish and grow with every day.

For such a predictable aspect of life, it is surprising how far away spring can feel while in the depths of winter.

The seasons are far less important to the general population of the world than they once were. In our pampered lives protected from the elements, with little dependency on home-grown food and many safeguards against failed crops, harsh winters or poor harvests, we have become immune to the cycles of the earth in recent years.

I am, of course, not advocating voluntary return to risking our lives by giving up our comfortable homes and food security, but the lessons of nature should not be forgotten along with our lack of reliance on it.

A very supportive and regular reader of this column whom I hold in the highest regard, recently commented that my articles are becoming very philosophical. I promise to move to

more pragmatic approaches in coming weeks, but in the meantime I'm going to philosophise about the cyclical nature of life.

Of the many lessons we can take from Mother Nature and apply to our own existence, one of the most important is that everything moves in cycles - from one season to another, as it were. The pendulums of life will swing back and forth through good times and bad and most often the swing in one direction is matched by a mirrored swing in the other. Unlike the seasons, the travel and timing of these swings are never predictable, but they will happen.

It is, therefore, good to remember and be constantly aware that when we may feel that our lives are stuck in the depths of winter, if we have patience, spring will come again and the darkness will lift. Similarly, when it feels as if we are blessed with eternal summer, we should be aware that this may not last and therefore be thankful for it, ride the wave and make the most of it, because cold winters will come again when we least expect them.



Elaine Boslem: 'Fantastic congratulations to you both 'n' here's to a new beginning.'

Maureen O'Hanlon: 'Wonderful, you both look gorgeous and handsome! Best wishes.'

Katy Beaton: 'Beautiful couple. Congratulations. That's one proud man just there.'

Louise Duff: 'A long time coming!! Congratulations and enjoy the rest of your lives together.'

Anne Wilson: 'Congratulations and best wishes for a very happy future together.'

Lisa MacNeil: 'Wow... you both look amazing! Wishing you all the love and happiness in the world!!!'

Calor Gas attitude sparks fury

Sir,
Your article ('Calor Gas customers get cold treatment', March 15) on delays in Calor Gas deliveries is shocking but not surprising.

For the past nine years as a Calor Gas customer, I have struggled to secure timely deliveries.

Each time my gas levels are low, I have to make multiple telephone calls, often demanding to speak to supervisors, just to get a gas delivery for which I have already paid.

On one occasion I was told that the problem was that I lived in a remote location - but if I lived in a city centre I wouldn't need to be reliant on tanker deliveries. Another time I was told that 'they were overwhelmed', and only delivering to people who had run out.

When I first signed up as a Calor Gas customer, I was given a written undertaking that deliveries would be made within five working days.

Calor Gas offers no such undertakings now.

The deterioration in the level of service is unacceptable.

Every year, it seems to take Calor Gas by surprise that customers will need to use more fuel during the winter months.

To be told that 'people should use what they have more sparingly' is insulting: does Calor Gas really think that its customers would go to the expense of heating their homes to tropical temperatures during Scottish winters? I'm sure that all customers use gas sparingly, not least because of its high cost.

Calor Gas needs to get a grip. Name and address supplied.

Thank you to the litter pickers

Sir,
Well done and thanks to the team who have done a fantastic job of clearing the mountain of litter that has been accumulating on our roadsides between Tynnuilt and Oban.

Thanks must also go to the chap who has done a great job of edging both the pavements and roadside verges.

What a difference this has made. And fingers crossed that the 'big spring clean' in Oban, organised by Maurice Wilkins, has been a huge success.

It's a sad reflection on our society that so many still think nothing of throwing litter from their car windows or dropping it in the street.

John Hay,
Tynnuilt.

Postcode woes lead to delivery difficulties

Sir,
We refer to your recent article regarding delivery difficulties to this area.

Those Oban and the surrounding area residents with postcodes PA34 5** are listed as living in the Highland region and our names do not appear

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL
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'S NEÒNACH MURA CANADH cuid gur e aon de chomharran na h-aoise a th' ann gum bheil mi air a bhith a' smaoinichadh bho chionn ghoidid mu cho cudromach 's a tha e gum bi plana aig buidhnean de gach seòrsa airson leantainneachd rian nan tachradh gum cailleadh iad cuideigin aig àrd ìre.

Co-dhiù is e comataidh ionaltraidh baile cruite neo bòrd-stiùiridh buidhne mhòir a th' ann, saoilidh mi gum bheil còir aig iar-neach- dreuchd a bhith a' cumail taic ri cathraichean, is leithid sin, gus gum biodh iad sin comasach air uallach na dreuchd a ghabhail nan tachradh nach b' urrainn dhan neach gum bheil misè cho daingeann na mo bheachd gur còir iar-chathraiche, iar-neach- gairm, neo iar-cheann- suidhe, a stèidheachadh air gach comataidh is bòrd-stiùiridh.

Tha mi cuideachd a' creidsinn nach bu chòir uallach nan àrd-dhreuchdan sin leantainn air an aon neach seachad air ùine àraid agus anns an dòigh sin

in the Argyll and Bute telephone directory.

In addition to this anomaly, we have been refused delivery of an internet purchase on one occasion and we are charged additional delivery fees on most internet purchases all because some jobsworth in Post Office HQ has not bothered to refer to a map of this area.

We have tried, along with one or two other Oban residents, to have this ridiculous state of affairs rectified but it is impossible to find in which department this jobsworth has his/her desk.

Contact has therefore been made with our MSP Donald Cameron to try to resolve this issue so we urge all those residents with the postcode PA34 5** to contact his office in George Street (telephone 01631 563474) to complain about the situation.

Hopefully, the Post Office can be made to see the error of its ways and put the other half of Oban back into Argyll and Bute.

K Oxland,
Oban.

Storytelling for Year of Young People

Sir
As part of Year of the Young People 2018, Argyll and Bute Youth Services team is launching a storytelling project called 'Once Upon a Time'.

We are collecting stories about Argyll and Bute and we will then collate them into an ebook for future generations to read. If you have any stories you would like to share then send them via email to youths@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Hannah Nicolson,
Lochgilphead Community Education Centre,
Manse Brae, Lochgilphead.

Motorists pay the price for inaction

Sir,
Shockingly, 30 per cent of A-roads in Scotland are now classed as red or amber, meaning they are in need of inspection or requiring work.

These figures have a huge knock on for motorists who face increased damage to their cars, vans and motorbikes.

Ultimately, the SNP has failed to improve the situation in any real sense and motorists are the ones paying the price for inaction.

When you include the challenges that rural constituencies such as Argyll and Bute face, with the large upcoming spike in logging tonnage on our roads and the continued growth of heavy freight from our world famous distilleries. It's clear that a piecemeal approach to road maintenance is not enough.

Argyll and Bute council has stepped up to the plate with plans to spend £15 million on roads over the next two years.

Now it's time for the SNP at a national level to act.

Councillor Alastair Redman,
Islay.

Barriers are needed near to Kilmelford

Sir,
It is very commendable that crash barriers are now being erected on the A85 between Pennyfuir and Dunbeg but why has a similar barrier not been placed at Loch Drimnin, outside Kilmelford village?

It is approaching two years ago when there was a horrific accident there that saw a car go off the road and into the loch, resulting in the deaths of two children.

It is a disgrace that a barrier was not erected immediately after the accident.

Come on, Argyll and Bute roads department: do something about this dangerous spot before there is another fatality.

Ishbel Banks,
Ardconnel Road, Oban.

Where is money to come from for HSCP?

Sir,
Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell shows breathtaking hypocrisy in his comments on the budgetary crisis facing the Health and Social Care Partnership in his constituency.

Where does he suggest the money comes from? Central government? The Scottish Government? Argyll and Bute is a large area with a very scattered population, making all service provision particularly challenging.

In light of Mr Russell's obvious concerns, perhaps the Scottish Government could give some extra millions to the HSCP. After all, it has given £4 million to a few folk on Ulva.

Ranee Davidson,
Tigh nan Eilean, Ardfern.

Great success for Oban spring clean

Sir,
Our first Oban spring clean is over and must be considered a great success.

We would like to thank the crowd of volunteers of all ages who rallied to the cause and turned out to make our spring clean so worthwhile. I would like especially to thank our secretary, Claire Rizos, for organising the event and for dealing with the equipment hand outs and returns, also Janie Steele for her dedication and involvement with the beach cleans, and Faisal Jewel from Argyll and Bute Council for giving up his weekend to chase around the town picking up the bags to fill the skip which he'd organised at Rockfield. We should also thank the MacQueen Bros Charitable Trust for buying litter pickers for us, BID4Oban for helping to circulate our information to the business community and the GRAB Trust, for lending equipment. Thanks also to the kind folk at the Bridge Café who gave the Black Lynn volunteers free coffee and cakes.

We need to tackle the root cause of the littering and we hope that the community will continue to assist and encourage us in this.

Maurice Wilkins,
Keep Oban Beautiful.

Ailean Caimbeul

gun tèid daoine eile a bhrosnachadh a dhol an sàs oir tha sinn uile mothachail cho doirbh is a tha e daoine a thàladh gum comataidh sam bith gum iomradh air prìomh uallach a ghabhail. Fàgaidh sin aig amannan aon neach a' giùlan dleastanas nas fhaide na dh'ìarradh e neo i ach chan eil còir leithid de shuidheachadh stad a chur air iomairt gus duine ùr a thàladh chun na h-obrach. Tha e na adhbhar iomagain a bhith a' faicinn cheannardan cuid de rìoghachdan mòra an t-saoghail a' gleidheadh cumhachd leantainneach.

POWER tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Lord Acton wrote these words in 1887 but they are no less true now, and the world might understandably be concerned by processes which on one hand appointed Xi Jinping as president for life in the People's Republic of China, and similarly delivered a fourth term to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

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

Social media

There was an outpouring of good wishes for Yvonne MacHugh and Billy Irving after they were married on Saturday.

Siobhan MacInnes: 'Fantastic. A real life happy ending. So happy for you both. May you have an eternity of happiness and love together.'

Rita Hargey: 'Many congratulations Yvonne & Billy ... a real happy ending to the horrendous yrs waiting for this special day.'

Eileen Duncan: 'Congratulations To You Both. This Was A Long Time Coming. Hope William Jnr Had A Fantastic Day. May You Have A Long And Happy Life Together.'

Michelle Gallagher: 'This has made

my day! So happy for you guys! A happy ending after all.'

Walter Crumme: 'Fantastic, your song is Stand by your man.'

Helen Daniels: 'So wonderful! Congratulations Yvonne & Billy.'

Caroline Cartwright: 'Congratulations! Wishing you many years of happiness.'

Olive Thomson: 'Congratulations. Good health and happiness to you both and your little boy for the future.'

Lizzie McMillan: 'So happy for you both wish you all the happiness in the world you both deserve it.'

Catherine Morrison: 'Massive congratulations to u both.'

Mike Story: 'I love a happy ending!! Congratulations.'

Press policy

WE AT The Oban Times endeavour to ensure that all our reports are fair and accurate and comply with the Editors' Code of Practice set by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). We realise, however, that mistakes happen from time to time.

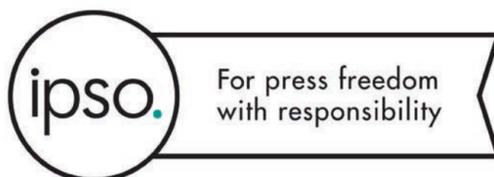
If you think we have made a significant mistake and you wish to discuss this with us, please

let us know as soon as possible by any of the three methods: emailing editor@obantimes.co.uk; telephoning the editor on 01631 568046; writing to the Editor at The Oban Times, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin estate, Oban, PA34 4HB.

We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timeous, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with

our response, you can contact IPSO, which will investigate the matter. You can either telephone IPSO on 0300 123 2220 or email inquiries@ipso.co.uk. IPSO is an independent body which deals with complaints from the public about the editorial content of newspapers and magazines.

We will abide by the decision of IPSO.



Your letters

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page.

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

is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not be printed.

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



10% OFF LOVE OBAN Gift Vouchers

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14th April

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Buying Love Oban Vouchers are the ideal way to ensure that your gifts of vouchers are used in Oban to benefit local business's that participate in the scheme. To support local business's BID4Oban are selling LOVE Oban Vouchers at 10% off the face value of Love Oban Vouchers. Minimum voucher spend is £20.



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buy £100 for the discounted rate of £90,
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Love Oban vouchers make ideal wedding gifts, birthday presents of anniversary gifts. Support your local business's give the gift of love Oban Vouchers.

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| Anglers Corner | Highland Fasteners | Ora Rosa |
| The Ark Hairdressing | Highland Photo | Orsay |
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| Craigard Decor | McDougalls of Oban Ltd | Stramash Social Enterprise |
| Cuan Mor | Me, Myself & I Beauty | Tartan Tavern |
| David Graham Cycles | Millstone Wholefoods | Trail West |
| Dunollie Museum, Castle and Grounds | Norries Fish and Chip Shop | Trinity Hairdressing |
| Etive Restaurant | The Oban Bay Fish Bar and Restaurant | Websters of Oban |
| Fancy That | Oban Cyles | Photographic Centre |
| Flor Beauty | The Oban Inn | The Wee Gallery |
| The Flower Basket | Oban Music & Books | The Wool & Needlecraft Centre |
| Fonehouse | | Wynne & Son |

Arena

> radio and what's on listings > leisure ideas > local events

WHAT'S ON IN OBAN

In partnership with
Oban Town Diary
bid4oban.co.uk



Thursday 29th March	Friday 30th March	Sunday 1st April	Monday 2nd April
Kilmore and Oban Church of Scotland Maundy Thursday 7pm	Intermediate Food Hygiene Argyll College 9am-11am	EASTER SERVICES Oban Congregational Church Sunrise Service at Pulpit Hill 8am All Age Morning Service 11am	Intermediate Food Hygiene Argyll College 9am-11am
Intermediate Food Hygiene Argyll College 9am-11am	Oban Dance Academy - Cheerleading Glencruitten Church Hall All Day	Visitation At Taynuilt Sunday Mass 11am	Easter Camps (P4-P7 2nd April - 13th April) Atlantis Leisure Full Day 9am-4pm Half Day 9am-noon / 1pm-4pm
FREE workshops PRODUCING ENGAGING ONLINE CONTENT West Highland Housing Association 9.30am - 12.30pm To book a place, contact the Business Gateway team on 01546 808363	Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans Live Music with Sandra MacBeth & Lorna Thomas from 9pm. Free entry Open till 1am	St Columba's Cathedral, Oban Easter Sunday Mass 10.30am	Junior Multi Sport Sessions (P1-P3 2nd April - 13th April) Atlantis Leisure 10am-noon
Oban Health Walk Oban Congregational Church Hall 10am - 11.30am	Whisky Tasting Evening Oban Whisky and Fine Wines Stafford Street, Oban £10pp from 8pm.	St Mary's Catholic Church In Fort William Easter Sunday Mass 10.30am	Pool Inflatables Fun Sessions (3-5 yrs Every Mon, Wed, Friday) Atlantis Leisure 11.15am-noon
Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans FREE JUKEBOX EVERY THURSDAY	Saturday 31st March EASTER SERVICES	Kilmore and Oban Church of Scotland Easter Breakfast and Egg Rolling 9.45am All-Age Celebration 10.30am Kilmore Easter Worship 12noon	Tuesday 3rd April Pre-School Sessions (3-5 yrs Every Tuesday & Thursday) Atlantis Leisure 12.15pm-1pm
Stations of the Cross (up the hill behind Craig Lodge, Dalnally) 10.30am For further details please call 01838 200216 All welcome	Visitation At Taynuilt Easter Saturday Vigil 9.30pm	Chocolate Easter Egg-Stravaganza Scottish Sealife Sanctuary 12.30pm	Intermediate Food Hygiene Argyll College 9am-11am
Prayer & Meditation Oban Congregational Church 2-4pm	St Columba's Cathedral, Oban Easter Saturday Vigil 8.30pm	3 Course Lunch Manor House Oban 12pm-2pm	Irish Dancing Classes St Columba's Cathedral Hall 4.15pm-5.45pm
Visitation At Taynuilt 3pm	St Mary's Catholic Church In Fort William Easter Vigil 8pm	Intermediate Food Hygiene Argyll College 9am-11am	Wednesday 4th April Intermediate Food Hygiene Argyll College 9am-11am
St Columba's Cathedral, Oban, 3pm St Mary's Catholic Church In Fort William Good Friday Service 3pm The Way Of The Cross 7pm	Intermediate Food Hygiene Argyll College 9am-11am	Hill Walk Glen Creagan All Day	Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban Lorne Pub Quiz Starting at 9pm £25 bar voucher prize and free pizza at half time
	Oban Dance Academy - Cheerleading Glencruitten Church Hall All Day	Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans QUIZ NIGHT at 9.30pm £1 per person, max of 6 per team Win £20 bar voucher	
	Easter Sand Art Workshop Rockfield Centre, 2pm-4pm	WHAT'S ON IN OBAN WHAT'S ON IN OBAN	
	Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans Live Music with Chunks from 10pm Free entry Open till 2am		

Oban Symphony's world premiere is a trumpeting success

AN ORCHESTRA performed the world premiere of Oban Symphony last Tuesday in front of hundreds of people at the Corran Halls.

It took Norman a decade to write the piece and after the concert, he received a quaiich from Argyll and Bute Council for his commitment to music in Oban.

Norman wrote the symphony for the Oban Bach Orchestra, who were accompanied on the night by Bass Tracks, the Dohnayi Trio and Oban Bach Choir.

Elaine Robertson, councillor for Oban South and the Isles, said: 'It's a pleasure and a privilege to present Norman with a quaiich from Argyll and Bute Council for all the years of commitment and for his huge contribution to music and culture in the area.'

Elaine said: 'Norman has given us amateurs of Oban the opportunity to play in an orchestra.'

'He was commissioned to write Oban Symphony a number of years ago and he has done an amazing job.'

'It's a very complex piece, but enjoyed by all, and we enjoyed playing it. It was exhilarating. I felt very proud of Norman.'

Norman said: 'I am very pleased to have written a symphony for



Norman Nicholson spent 10 years writing Oban Symphony, which was performed for the first time last Tuesday. T13_obansymphony.

Oban and to have had it so well received. I also feel greatly honoured to be presented with such a magnificent quaiich from the council.'

Speaking about the performance, he said: '[The orchestra] did very well. I am very proud of them and how they rose to the occasion.'

Norman said it was rewarding to see the piece he had been writing for a decade come to life.

'It's nice to perform the piece, which was well received by the town,' he added.



Norman Nicholson received a quaiich from Councillor Elaine Robertson for his commitment to music and culture in Oban. 16_t12_ObanSymphony01

The Oban Times supports local charities and not-for-profit event organisers

Let us know about your forthcoming event to appear for free in our listings, in association with Oban Town Diary.

We have reduced our community noticeboard box adverts to just £10 plus VAT (where VAT is applicable)

Put your event in front of 25,000 readers and also see what we can offer you by promoting your event online – we have more than 11,000 followers on Facebook and 36,000 monthly visitors to www.obantimes.co.uk

It pays to advertise with The Oban Times – first for community news, business news and events throughout Oban, Lochaber and the West Highlands.

Contact Nadine or Rhona on 01631 568000



Events may charge. Please visit

www.obanwhatson.co.uk for more details.

To list your event, please call **01631 568000**

What's on at **The Nevis Centre**

Superbowl
open everyday from
12 noon until 10pm



Spectrum soft play area
Suitable for children of all ages. Baby area 0-2 years, toddler area 2-5 years and older children can be let loose in all the other areas.

The Nevis Centre An Aird, Fort William
Tel: 01397 700707 www.neviscentre.co.uk

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club

Thursday 5th April 2018

(Last night of the season)

7.30pm

Royal Hotel. Admission £4

Guest Artist: Pentlands Ceilidh Band

All Welcome!



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01631 568000



DIARDAOIN 29 MÀRT
THURSDAY 29 MARCH
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
19.00 **Turas a' Bhradain** (rpt)
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** – News
20.30 **UR | NEW: Eòrpa**
21.00 **UR | NEW: Dùbhan an Data**
22.00 **UR | NEW: Belladrum 2017:** Sister Sledge
22.35 **UR | NEW: Luinegan Lannsaireachd** – medics changing lives in West Africa
23.20 **Binneas – Na Trads** – tunes from the Scott Wood Band (rpt)
23.25 **Mach à seòl** (rpt)

DIHAOINE 30 MÀRT
FRIDAY 30 MARCH
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
18.35 **Machair** (rpt)
19.00 **An Là** – News
19.25 **Fraochy Bay** (rpt)
19.30 **UR | NEW: Pro 14 Live** Rugby – Connacht v Edinburgh

21.25 **Binneas – Na Trads** – Lori Watson (rpt)
21.30 **Cuimhneachan** (rpt)
22.00 **Na Worlds 2015** (rpt)
23.00 **The Munich Games** – Munich '72 (rpt)
23.45 **Belladrum 2016: Cridhe Tartan** – Rachel Sermanni (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 31 MÀRT
SATURDAY 31 MARCH
16.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
17.35 **Machair** (rpt)
18.00 **UR | NEW: Scottish Premiership** – Kilmarnock v Hamilton Accies
20.00 **From Harris With Love: Chi mi'n Tìr** (rpt)
20.30 **Leugh Mi** (rpt)
21.00 **Ceòl Eithne Nì Uallachàin**
22.00 **Luinegan Lannsaireachd** (rpt)
22.45 **Ceòl Bho Perthshire Amber** – music from Mairead Green and Ross Ainslie (rpt)
22.55 **Scottish Premiership** – Kilmarnock v Hamilton Accies (rpt)

DIDÒMHNAICH 01 GIBLEAN
SUNDAY 01 APRIL
16.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
18.30 **Seachd Là**
19.30 **Alleluia** – featuring Mairi MacInnes and James Graham (rpt)
20.00 **Eòrpa** – final programme of the series (rpt)
20.30 **Fuine** – recipes for something different (rpt)
21.00 **Frances: A' Strì ri MS** (rpt)
22.00 **Bho Mhinistear gu Modàratair** (rpt)
23.00 **Custer's Last Stand** (rpt)

DILUAIN 02 GIBLEAN
MONDAY 02 APRIL
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
19.00 **Innsean an Iar - Hebrides** (rpt)
19.25 **UR | NEW: Binneas – Na Trads** – The Shee (rpt)
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** – News
20.15 **Binneas – Na Trads**

20.30 **UR | NEW: Dealbhan Fraoich** – Heather Dewar draws a charcoal portrait of teacher Janet MacDonald
21.00 **Trusadh – Croitearan Leòdhais** – A look at one of the busiest shops in the islands (rpt)
22.00 **Ceòlmhor @ Piping Live** – featuring Angus MacColl (rpt)
22.30 **Opryan an Iùir** – featuring Brendan Shine (rpt)
23.30 **Fonn Fonn Fonn** (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 03 GIBLEAN
TUESDAY 03 APRIL
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
19.00 **Turas a' Bhradain** – Salmon fishing in the(rpt)
19.30 **Binneas – Na Trads** – Loi Watson (rpt)
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
19.55 **Binneas – Na Trads** – The Shee (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** – News
20.30 **Fuine** – recipes for something different (rpt)

21.00 **Bho Mhinistear gu Modàratair** – A year following Angus Morrison, moderator of the Church of Scotland (rpt)
22.00 **Trusadh – Slàinte na Sgìre** – Alderney (rpt)
23.00 **Ar Duain** – featuring Robert Robertson (rpt)
23.00 **Alleluia** (rpt)

DICIADAIN 04 GIBLEAN
WEDNESDAY 04 APRIL
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
19.00 **Innsean an Iar** (rpt)
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** – News
20.30 **Leugh Mi** – with guest Dolina MacLennan and Helen MacInnes (rpt)
21.00 **Opryan an Iùir** – music from Brenda Shine (rpt)
22.00 **UR | NEW: Mach à Seòl** – an action-packed weekend in Tìree
22.30 **Ceòlmhor @ Piping Live** – music from Havanti and Dàimh (rpt)
23.00 **DIY le Donnie**

23.45 **Binneas – Na Trads** – featuring Tryst (rpt)

DIARDAOIN 05 GIBLEAN
THURSDAY 05 APRIL
17.00 **Prògraman Chloinne** – Children's programming
17.50 **UR | NEW: FIFA Women's World Cup Qualifier** – Switzerland v Scotland
20.00 **An Là** – News
20.30 **Ceann an Rìgh** (rpt)
21.00 **UR | NEW: Am Fear Cinnidh Òg**
22.00 **UR | NEW: Belladrum 2017:** First Aid Kit
22.30 **Luinegan Lannsaireachd** – Medics changing lives in West Africa (rpt)
23.15 **Ceòl Bho Perthshire Amber** – Music from Mairead Green and Ross Ainslie
23.30 **Seòid a' Chidsin** (rpt)

A century of childhood at Dunollie

OVER the years, the Dunollie Archive has revealed so much. With articles dating as far back to the 1400s, you can easily become captivated by the fascinating history that surrounds the ancient site.

Some of the most heart-warming papers held within the archive are the letters written from the MacDougall children to their parents.

This correspondence has been the inspiration behind a new exhibition at Dunollie Museum, Castle & Grounds, titled My Dear Papa.

My Dear Papa has been created by a team of four volunteers from

Dunollie's curatorial, archive and textile groups, who have literally put in hundreds of hours of work, meeting every Wednesday since early 2017 to start gathering ideas together.

Gillian Campbell, Dunollie's marketing and promotions manager, said: 'This fantastic team have developed every inch of the new display, from sourcing the letters and planning the room layout to writing the interpretation of the display.'

The exhibition follows three generations of MacDougall young during the Victorian and

Edwardian eras. Toys, books and games from the Dunollie collection can be seen on display, alongside the letters written (and received) by the children.

Items of original costume from this time also bring this vibrant display to life.

The first display relates to the family of Vice Admiral Sir John MacDougall, 25th Chief over 1830s-40s, who had six sons and three daughters. The next features the family of Henry MacDougall 28th Chief, who served as an officer in the Indian Medical Service during 1870s-80s.



Jean MacDougall (born in 1912) taken in 1917.



Coline Helen Elizabeth MacDougall (born 1904) photograph taken 1906, aged one year and eight months.

Finally, there is Alexander MacDougall, the 29th chief, who followed his father into the medical profession and joined the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1896. He had three

daughters - Coline, Jean and Hope - who bring the story up to the 20th Century. Jean was the mother of the present chief, Madam Morag MacDougall, for whom Dunollie remains

the ancestral home. My Dear Papa has been created through the Dunollie Links community programme with funding from the People's Postcode Lottery, to celebrate the

Year of Young People 2018.

This new exhibition will be open to visitors from Friday March 30. For opening times and ticket information, visit www.dunollie.org.

Sharing the love through Argyll anthology

STUDENT'S Homeless-Awareness Raising Enterprise, ArgyllSHARE, is inviting submissions for its forthcoming creative arts anthology.

Based in Lochgilphead, the organisation is working with local schools, community groups and churches to raise awareness about Scotland's rural and hidden homelessness issues.

The anthology of published work will be made available for free later this year.

People can submit written work and also photography and art

too. There is no word count. The theme is Rural Homelessness.

Argyll SHARE supports New Hope Kitchen, Oban, and also promotes details of help available across all areas of Argyll. Its mission is to challenge and change negative perceptions that people who experience rural homelessness often have to deal with, and help to end the stigma around hidden homelessness.

For more information email: sharon@argyllshare.co.uk or visit www.argyllshare.co.uk

Joy Dunlop on the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival

WITH preparations for the 35th Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival well underway, *The Oban Times* takes a look back at a well-known competitor.

The festival takes place throughout Oban from May 4 to May 6, and one person who isn't a stranger to the competition is Connel's Joy Dunlop.

Joy, who won the coveted Gold Medal at the Mòd in 2010, was brought up singing Gaelic when it was maybe not the coolest thing to do, but that didn't stop her from catching the traditional music bug.

Speaking about the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival, she said: 'The festival was a great

performing opportunity for me - as a soloist and also in both choirs and our folk group - and the competitive side of it gave us a focus to work towards.'

'It didn't matter if we won or not, just having the opportunity to take part made us work harder and I am sure that the competition helped my confidence too.'

'More importantly though, we had great fun doing it - it was something that we looked forward to every year and it gave us material and skills that we could further develop.'

'Music and singing have given me so many new opportunities that I would never have thought possible in my career to date - and it's very encouraging

to see that the interest in Gaelic singing and traditional music is growing every year.'

Joy now works in a variety of Gaelic-related fields, such as performing as a solo singer, as well as with her band LAS, delivering cultural arts projects and she is involved in Gaelic television and radio work, in addition to teaching Gaelic language and Gaelic song at a range of educational institutes, including Glasgow University and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig.



Joy Dunlop was an adjudicator at last year's Royal National Mod in Lochaber.

T13 HIMDF_joy_dunlop

Uist Book Festival calls for interest

THE ORGANISING groups of last year's 'Toradh/ Harvest' festival of food and writing are preparing a Uist book festival in November.

'As an Tobar/Well-springs' will build on the success of last year's Gaelic-medium

literature festival, organised by Ceòlas Uibhist, expanding the array of events to also include English-medium literature.

It is to take place during Book Week Scotland from November 19-25. A writ-

ing competition will take place, with focus on the Year of Young People, for both English and Gaelic poetry and prose. There will also be an adult category.

Organisations will host events individually but the festival

will be coordinated to share resources and avoid clashes.

The organisers would like to invite any interested people or organisations who would like to take part to the next meeting at Cothrom on April 12 at 11am.



LOCHGILPHEAD

Lochgilphead Baptist Church
Union Street/ Argyll Street
Mondays 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Rhona 07880 878 906

OBAN

Glencruitten Church Hall
Glencruitten Road
Wednesday
9.30am, 11.30am, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040 803

CAMPBELTOWN

Masonic Recreational Lodge
St John Street
Tuesdays 1pm, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Rhona 07880 878 906

slimmingworld.co.uk
0344 897 8000



Your local radio listings

OBAN FM Community Radio - your local radio station
Tune in to 103.3 or listen live at www.obanfm.com

For requests, competitions or questions please email: studio@obanfm.org.uk or call us on 01631 570057

MONDAY: 08.00 AM on FM, 08.10 Breakfast Show, 9.00 Monday Morning with Stephen, 11.00 Ian Simmonds on Monday, 17.00 Drivetime, 19.00 Rosie's Highland Fling with Rosie Macoll, 20.00 John McLuckie's Show, 21.00 David Cullen show, 23.00 Station close down

TUESDAY: 08.00 AM on FM, 08.10 Breakfast Show, 10.00 Ken Hunter's Tuesday Morning, 13.00 Macky on FM, 17.00 Drivetime Jim Lynch, 19.00 Highest Praise - Stuart Chalmers, 20.00 Archie Darlings Mix, 22.00 Clyde 2

WEDNESDAY: 08.00 AM on FM, 08.10 Breakfast Show, 09.00 Sound Scottish Repeat, 10.00 Comfort Zone, Doug Carmichael, 11.00 Comfort Zone, 12.00 Comfort Zone, 15.00 The Wednesday Jukebox with Michelle 17.00 Drivetime with Campbell, 19.00 Country Meets Rock & Roll - Len + Ken, 20.00 Country Meets Rock & Roll, 21.00 Gordon's Grooves with Gordon Macintyre

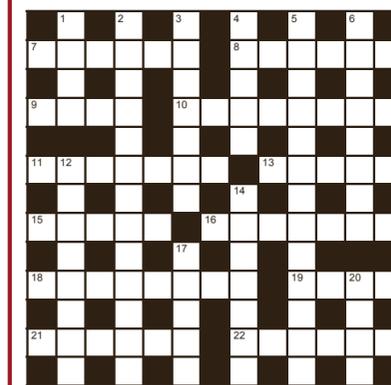
THURSDAY: 08.00 - 11.00 Breakfast with Andy and Sarah, 11.00 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 13.00 Molly's Mix, 15.00 Drivetime with Stephen, 17.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 18.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 19.00 Christines Collection, 20.00 Christine's CD Collection, 21.00 Ann's Ceilidh, 22.00 Margo Till Midnight, 11.00 Margo Till Midnight

FRIDAY: 08.00 Breakfast Show with Laura, 10.00 Teeny and Tiny, 17.00 Drive Show with Jim Lynch, 17.30 Drive Show, 18.45 Sports View, 19.00 Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig, 20.00 Lewis Bingham, 21.00 Peter Rainnie

SATURDAY: 08.00 Breakfast Show with Stephen 10.00 Sat Morning Live, 11.00 Saturday Morning, 12.00 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crowsher, 12.03 Sat Morning Live, 12.05 Saturday Morning Live, 13.30 Clyde, 18.00 Sports View - Dream Team, 19.00 Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling, 20.00 Dave Lewis, 22.00 Margo Till Midnight

SUNDAY: 09.00 Sunday Morning With Breege, 10.00 Sunday Morning, 11.00 Sunday Brunch With Archie, 12.00 Sunday Brunch, 16.30 Archie Darling, 18.00 Ken's Friends - Ken Hunter, 19.00 New Country Show - David Entwistle, 21.00 Drum & Bass - Graham Scott, 23.00 Station Close Down

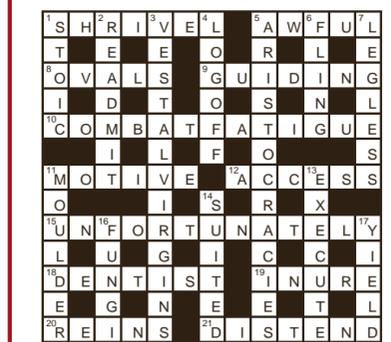
THE OBAN TIMES GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Lower the value (6)
 - 8 Glowing with bright natural light (6)
 - 9 Frisbee (4)
 - 10 Almond flavoured cake wrap (8)
 - 11 Noisy party (7)
 - 13 Made up of small parts (5)
 - 15 Steal (5)
 - 16 Not in use any more (7)
 - 18 Programmes where viewers and listeners can contribute their opinions live (5-3)
 - 19 Rise and fall of a voice... (4)
 - 21 ...brightly coloured bird with a musical voice (6)
 - 22 Quit (6)

- Down**
- 1 Food shop for fresh and unusual items (4)
 - 2 Cog mechanism (4,3,6)
 - 3 She swims in the sea (7)
 - 4 A loan sharks' practice (5)
 - 5 Self-reliant (13)
 - 6 Intended to give moral guidance (8)
 - 12 Tree with red berries and spikes (8)
 - 14 Criticize severely (7)
 - 17 One who plummets underwater (5)
 - 20 Standing devices (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



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Arena

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Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON
robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



The Real Robert!

WHAT a lovely day I had last week in Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu (the Glasgow Gaelic School) listening to rehearsals for their concert last Thursday and, in particular, to primary two's rendition of a Gaelic translation of my and Angus MacPhail's song, Walking on the Waves.

I hear the concert went extremely well and that is no surprise to me now that I have seen first hand the enthusiasm of the children and teachers for singing Gaelic songs.

One young lad in particular made me laugh when he ran up to me and asked if I was the real Robert. Caught slightly off guard and unsure how to react, I hesitantly nodded some kind of confirmation.

'Wow!' he exclaimed. 'I thought you were dead!' Again, I laughed, and he ran off leaving me totally confused but equally amused.

Later that evening, I heard from one of the teachers that the young lad had actually thought I was none other than Robert Burns!

Tide Lines Glasgow show

I am in the middle of

the Tide Lines Scottish tour at the moment and, as I write this letter, we have just finished our show in Dundee and will be heading off to Tobermory tomorrow.

The whole tour finishes up with a sold-out show in Glasgow on Saturday night which we are really looking forward to.

The venue is The Garage on Sauchiehall Street, which is the biggest capacity venue

on the tour.

It is really exciting that Glasgow gigs for all Highland bands are so well supported at the moment.

Bands such as ourselves, Skerryvore, Skipinnish, and Mán-ran have all had great attendances in the city in the past few months. Glasgow is an exciting place to play and hear live music.

What's on

Saturday April 14: Ceilidh dance in the Partick Burgh Hall at 8pm.

Friday April 20: Clydebank and District Highland Association ceilidh at 7.30pm in the Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick.

Friday April 27: Helensburgh and District Highland Association dance in the Commodore Hotel at 8pm.

Friday April 27: Glasgow Uist and Barra Association

dance in the Crawford Hall at 9pm.

Saturday April 28: Glasgow Skye Association annual spring concert (Wee Skye) at 7.30pm in the Crawford Hall.

Tuesday May 8: Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association annual general meeting at 7pm in An Léanag on Mansfield Square.

Thursday May 10: Comunn an Taobh-an-iar annual general meeting at 7.30pm in the Ellan-

gowan Social Club.

Thursday May 17: Comunn Gàidhlig Ghlaschu annual general meeting at 7.30pm in the Glasgow Gaelic School.

Friday May 25: Helensburgh and District Highland Association annual general meeting and dance in the Commodore Hotel at 8pm.

Thursday May 31: Glasgow Uist and Barra Association annual general meeting at 7.30pm

in Lourdes Secondary School

Pub scene

Islay Inn.

Friday March 30: Twist of Fate.

Saturday March 31: Bad Influence.

Friday March 30: Deoch 'n' Dorus and Martin Pottinger.

Saturday March 31: Dodgy Ground.

Sunday April 1: Scott Harvey.

malt OF THE month

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Boswell and Johnson on whisky

'I really love drams like a savage,' wrote Scotland's greatest biographer James Boswell. 'I said that of all human arts, I valued distilling the most.' Boswell or 'Bozzy', and his subject Dr. Samuel Johnson, a true-born Englishman and author of the first dictionary of the English language, toured

the Hebrides in 1773.

Johnson's first encounter with whisky came in Argyll, as Boswell recounts: 'We got at night to Inveraray, to a most excellent inn. ... We supped well; and after supper, Mr Johnson, whom I had not seen taste any fermented liquor during all our expedition, had a gill of whisky brought to him. 'Come,' said he, 'let me

know what it is that makes a Scotsman happy.'

Johnson himself wrote: 'The word whisky signifies water, and is applied by way of eminence to strong water, or distilled liquor. The spirit drunk in the North is drawn from barley. I never tasted it, except once for experiment at the inn in Inveraray, when I thought it preferable to any English

malt brandy. It was strong, but not pungent, and was free from the empyreumatic taste or smell. What was the process I had no opportunity of inquiring, nor do I wish to improve the art of making poison pleasant.'

On Skye, Johnson observed: 'A man of the Hebrides, for of the women's diet I can give no account,

as soon as he appears in the morning, swallows a glass of whisky; yet they are not a drunken race, at least I never was present at much intemperance; but no man is so abstemious as to refuse the morning dram, which they called a skalk.' The *Oban Times* also understands a glomach is the first dram of the morning before you get up.

After 'the best goose here that I ever eat', Boswell noted on Coll: 'Whisky was served round in a shell, according to the ancient Highland custom.' Johnson had no whisky, but drank some water out of the shell. '... Whisky is plentiful: there are several stills on the island.'

Aboard a small boat sailing from Coll to Tobermory

on Mull in the October weather, Boswell recorded: 'Mr Johnson grew sick, and retired under cover, as it rained a good deal. I kept above, that I might have fresh air. I eat bread and cheese, and drank whisky and rum and brandy. ... I exulted in being a stout seaman, while Mr Johnson was quite in a state of annihilation.'



Oban Unsigned 2018

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE OBAN TIMES AND OBAN LIVE

Will you be playing Oban Live 2018?

With the abundance of local talent right here on our doorstep, Oban Live and The Oban Times, the event's media partner, have teamed up to give one local band or artist the chance to perform at Oban Live 2018. The winner will join an impressive list of artists from trad-stars Skerryvore and Skipinnish to Ireland's hottest band Hermitage Green.

Performing to thousands at Argyll's biggest live music event, taking place at Mossfield Stadium, Oban, June 8 & 9, the winning act will get their very own slot to showcase their talents. Last year's event attracted 7,800 attendees to the two-day concert. As well as benefiting from on-stage exposure and publicity from The Oban Times and Oban Live, the winning act will also receive weekend VIP tickets, backstage access (on performance day) and a merchandise goody bag

Enter today at
www.obantimes.co.uk/obanunsigned

Terms and conditions apply. The closing date for entries is 10am, April 5, 2018. Good luck!



Oban Live project pays homage to late stars

AN IMPRESSIVE line-up of 24 top names in the Scottish traditional music industry will come together at Oban Live 2018 in an exclusive collaboration named 'Sons of Argyll'.

Performing on Friday June 8 at the two-day festival, it will pay homage to late inspirational figures from the region who played a key role in the lives and music of the performers involved.

Musicians from Tide Lines, Skipinnish, Skerryvore, Blazin' Fiddles, Trail West and Gunna Sound, as well as this year's Mòd gold medallists Rachel Walker and Alasdair Currie, members of Oban Gaelic Choir and world class pipers Angus MacColl, Angus J MacColl and Stuart Liddell, are included in the project line-up. Also involved are Marie Fielding, Phil Cunningham, Craig and Hector MacFadyen, Sileas Sinclair, Mary Catherine MacNeil and Archie and Alex McAlister.

Sons of Argyll, founded and co-ordinated by Trail West's Ian Smith, pays particular tribute to the recently passed Norman MacLean (Tiree/Uist), Ian's father Bernie Smith (Tiree), Murdo MacLeod (Lochgilhead), Angus MacColl (Mull), Nonny MacInnes (Oban), Colin Campbell (Oban), Calum MacLean (Tobermory) and more.

Oban Live said: 'Throughout the generations, Argyll and the Isles have produced many men of wit, talent and character. Join us in paying homage and remembering some of the Sons of Argyll who we have lost in recent years and who have helped shape the Argyll we know today.'

Women of Argyll will be honoured too in a performance of Andy M Stewart's song Queen of Argyll, performed by former member of Silly Wizard, Phil Cunningham and Robert Robertson of Tide Lines.

The project will also remember ex-service men and women, as 2018 marks 100 years since the end of the First World War, and those lost at sea.

Ian said: 'I've been a travelling musician since the age of 16 and without a doubt my favourite part of the job is the opportunity I've had to meet so many different people throughout Argyll and the rest of Scotland. In the past few years, Argyll has lost many well-known characters, many of whom I counted as good friends, including my own father, Bernie. I'm delighted and honoured to have the opportunity to organise this performance.'

Daniel Gillespie, artistic and managing director for Oban Live, said: '2017 saw some very special people taken too soon. These were not only great friends but also people who were hugely passionate about Argyll and the Isles, our culture and, in particular, our music.'

'Although they are no longer with us, their legacy lives on and this was the foundation of the Sons of Argyll concept that is set to be an unforgettable tribute to all these inspirational characters.'

More acts have been announced for Oban Live 2018 including Irish musician Sharon Shannon, featuring multi-instrumentalist and composer Michael McGoldrick and Irish singer/songwriter Susan O'Neill, Irish duo Hudson Taylor and Oban band Chunks.

Oban Live takes place on Friday and Saturday, June 8 and 9, at Oban's Mossfield Stadium. It won best Outdoor Event/Festival Excellence at EventIt's E Awards in Glasgow last week. The line-up additions will join Skerryvore, Skipinnish, Hermitage Green, Heron Valley, Blazin' Fiddles and Oban High School Pipe Band. Tickets are on sale now at www.obanlive.com.



Ian Smith is organising the Sons of Argyll homage to late musicians, including his father Bernie.



Chunks are playing Oban Live this year.



Sharon Shannon will be a top draw at this year's Oban Live.

BUSINESS NEWS

TO ADVERTISE IN OUR BUSINESS SECTION PLEASE CALL OUR SALES TEAM ON 01631 568000

Former physio's handiwork success thanks to fairy magic

A FORMER physiotherapist with a lifelong love of sewing has set up her own business designing and creating an exclusive collection of handmade bags.

Thistle Fairy Designs has grown steadily since Shona Jennings first began selling her products three years ago and now exports 50 per cent of its unique bags to America.

Shona decided to focus on the business full time in July last year after she moved to Oban with her husband. With support from Business Gateway Argyll and Bute, Shona is now selling online via her own website and Etsy, to customers across the UK and Europe.

Shona is working with small, independent weavers who specialise in limited edition tweed to create one-off creations, giving her customers a rare and special product.

She said: 'Thistle Fairy



Shona Jennings loves running her own business, Thistle Fairy Designs.

Designs began as a hobby, initially selling to family and friends, but through word-of-mouth, fairs and Facebook, it started to snowball. Somehow I managed to continue with my physiotherapy job, but when my

husband was offered a new job in Oban it was the right time to turn Thistle Fairy Designs into a full-time business.

'I knew I had to get really serious about running the business, so in order to up the ante

I went to Business Gateway for support. I attended a number of DigitalBoost workshops focusing on digital marketing strategy and social media, as well as other seminars on selling online and ensuring my website was fit for purpose. This allowed me to introduce an online shop which I felt was the natural next step for the business.'

Thistle Fairy Designs create a range of handmade bags mainly made from Harris Tweed or the environmentally and vegan-friendly cork leather. With stockists in Perthshire, Oban and Appin, Shona is keen to target more sales and attend bigger trade shows. She is also opening the doors to her studio to allow visitors to see how she works and touch and feel the fabrics for themselves.

Shona added: 'By using cork leather we're producing environmentally-friendly bags that are colourful yet allow the nat-

ural beauty of the Harris Tweed and leather to be the centre of attention.'

'I had no idea that my love for sewing would result in people in America buying my products but it's wonderful as I love running this business.'

Angela Vernel of Business Gateway said: 'Shona has taken advantage of our fully-funded workshop calendar and DigitalBoost programme to learn the skills needed to run a successful venture.'

'As Thistle Fairy Designs grew, Shona knew she had to look at improving her digital knowledge and ensure her website was suitable for online selling.'

For more information visit www.thistlefairydesigns.co.uk

To find out more about how Business Gateway can help you set up and develop your own business call 01546 808363 or visit www.bgateway.com/argyll-and-bute

Argyll and Bute business owners urged to brush up on new laws

BUSINESSES across Argyll and Bute are being urged to find out more about the new data protection regulations before they come into effect on May 25.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will apply to all businesses and organisations that are offering goods and services to EU citizens, or to those monitoring the behaviour of EU citizens or who are processing personal data.

Business Gateway has introduced a new GDPR online tutorial and guide, a crucial addition to the DigitalBoost portfolio, which will help business owners to easily and efficiently comply.

GDPR is a complete update and overhaul of the existing data protection regime now including new data storage invention, giving greater protection and rights to individuals on how personal information can be used by organisations holding it.

Failure to comply with the new GDPR regulations will result in significant fines being applied for infringements, which could be as much as €20million or four per cent of a company's global turnover.

Business Gateway's top tips on things SME's need to be doing right now to prepare include:

Review it now – Preparing for GDPR will need your full attention and it will take time to implement new processes and procedures across your business.

Understand the new changes – Many of them will impact your current processes, such as an individual's right to be forgotten and subject access requests. You may need to draw up a plan for responding to such requests as with most cases under GDPR you only have one month to reply.

Map out what data and personal data you store – It is essential that you understand where it is stored, what systems you use, and how you use it.

Consider whether invasive

means of collecting personal data are used and if the data is processed fairly and lawfully. This means informing people about the purpose and use of personal data collected and how your business will process that. At this stage you may want to consider a privacy impact assessment.

Securely delete old data – If you are storing data that you no longer require (and are not legally obliged to keep) then securely delete it. Disposing of unnecessary data will help reduce risk. But make sure you securely erase it with specialist equipment and software.

Let your employees and suppliers know – Make sure all your employees and suppliers are aware of any changes to your processes and procedures that may impact them.

Find out more – Visit the links below at Business Gateway's website:

Online Tutorial - bgateway.com/online-tutorials

Online Guide - bgateway.com/gdprguide

Hugh Lightbody, lead officer, Business Gateway National Unit said: 'At Business Gateway's website, you'll find comprehensive online guides to help you get to grips with the GDPR. Our DigitalBoost programme is already a success and adding GDPR training to the programme will allow business owners to continue to make best use of digital and importantly help them to protect their business.'

Dates for a GDPR workshop will be confirmed soon – to register your interest in attending contact the local office on 01546 808363.

DigitalBoost is funded by Digital Scotland and delivered by Business Gateway.

To find out more about how Business Gateway can help you set up and develop your own business call 01546 808363 or visit www.bgateway.com/argyll-and-bute

Businesses urged to check guidance on advertising signs

BUSINESSES across Argyll and Bute are being reminded to check whether they need permission to put up advertising signs.

Argyll and Bute Council has produced a new set of guidelines to give clear advice to local firms and residents.

People planning to install new or replacement signs are being urged to check with the council before going ahead.

Policy lead for planning, housing and regulatory services Councillor David Kinniburgh said: 'Signage, whether it's on a building or a sandwich board on the street, comes under the control of the council.'

'While some types of signage may not need permission, in many cases businesses will need to apply for planning consent or pavement licenses before going ahead.'

'That's why we have produced this guidance – it's clear, straightforward advice on the circumstances in which permission is needed, and what's required when making an application.'

'The policy aims to ensure advertising is appropriate, in the right location and has a positive impact on the area.'

The new signage policy can be viewed by logging on to the council website: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/ldp

Four Argyll firms among winners at rural awards

FOUR Argyll businesses are celebrating following award wins at the 2018 Scottish Rural Awards last Thursday.

Forward-thinking biotechnology company XanHELLa, based in Oban, was overall winner in the Rural Enterprise and Innovation category, with judges praising its exciting work to create renewable electricity from algae.

Other Argyll wins included Ninth Wave Restaurant in Fionnphort, which took home runner-up spot in the Rural Hospitality category and Arden-based Luss Estates which received a Highly Commended award in the Business Diversification category.

There was also good news for relative newcomer Wild Thyme Spirits based on Colonsay, as it landed a Highly Commended award in the Business Start Up category.

Finalists from the Argyll area included Campbeltown distillers Beinn an Tuirc (Artisan Drink category); Inverawe Smokehouse in Taynuilt (Artisan Food category); Food From Argyll at the Pier (Business Start Up category); Oban-based Back of Beyond Broadband (Rural Enterprise and Innovation category); and The Crinan Hotel in Lochgilphead (Rural Hospitality category).

The Scottish Rural Awards are the ultimate benchmark of success in Scotland's countryside, highlighting the enterprise, skill and innovation of those who live and work in rural areas.

Last night's event, held at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh, is the culmination of a fourth year of partnership between Scottish Field magazine and the Scottish Countryside Alliance to host the awards, in association with the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland (RHASS). The awards are backed by category sponsors including Barclays, Chiene + Tait and HW Energy.

Veteran broadcaster Dougie



Dougie Vipond with XanHELLa's Dr Douglas McKenzie and Bárbara Guimarães, and Alan Laidlaw from the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland.

Vipond took to the stage as compere for the evening, hosting more than 400 guests and presenting three awards in each of the 13 open categories – a highly commended, runner-up and overall winner.

Nominations for the 2018 Scottish Rural Awards officially launched in September 2017, with more than 200 entries.

Those who have made special contributions to the Scottish countryside were honoured with two separate accolades last night – the Rural Hero Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Rural Hero award was collectively presented to the team behind 'Are Ewe Okay?' a mental health campaign aimed at young farmers, while the Lifetime Achievement accolade was awarded to Douglas Watson, senior project manager with the Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society.

Richard Bath, editor of Scottish Field, said: 'More than ever before, Scotland's rural communities are displaying a quite remarkable amount of energy, innovation and imagi-



Dougie Vipond with Ninth Wave's John Lamont and Clara Lamont and Bruno Berardelli from HW Energy.

nation as they diversify existing businesses and create new and exciting opportunities from scratch. As a magazine we are constantly writing about the rural entrepreneurs who are bringing wealth and jobs to the countryside, so it's exciting for us to be able to honour the men and women who are doing so much to make the economy of rural Scotland a true success story.'

Jamie Stewart, director of the Scottish Countryside Alliance, added: 'Land-based businesses

contribute over £2billion to the Scottish economy. Despite the multiple challenges they face, they are hugely valuable brand ambassadors for Scotland, and many provide vital support to their local communities. These awards give Scotland a chance to recognise the resilience, innovation and contribution that rurally-based people and businesses make to its success.'

Browse the full list of Scottish Rural Awards winners at www.scottishruralawards.org.



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Family says 'thanks for the memories'

WORD about Oban's 'fantastic community spirit' is about to wing its way to New Zealand.

Teacher Eilir Campbell moved to the town from the Wirral with her physiotherapist husband Leon and their baby Oakley Lion in January while waiting for visas to be issued - and could not have picked a better place for a young family to be, said the mum-of-one.

They flew out to New Zealand on Sunday to start their new life in Wellington but will be taking up lots of happy memories of Oban with them.

'We'll be sure to tell everyone just how wonderful Oban is. Our experience was truly amazing and the people of Oban have been so welcoming, helpful and kind. Not only this, but Oban is such a beautiful town full of

character and idyllic scenery,' said Mrs Campbell.

She said she was overwhelmed by the number of parent groups and praised facilities including Atlantis Leisure Centre and the Lorn Medical Centre.

'It has been a joy to have experienced living in Oban and to have had the opportunity to visit local islands. It is lovely to see so many small businesses and privately-owned shops, there is such a fantastic community spirit. We would just like to say thank you to you all, thank you for making us feel at home, thank you for making our time here such a happy experience and we can only hope New Zealand provides us with as many happy memories like we have made here in Oban,' she said.



Eilir Davies with partner Leon Campbell and their baby Oakley Lion Davies-Campbell in Oban.

Gardening project needs community support to grow

STUDENTS at SAMS are hoping to turn an overgrown corner on their campus into a vegetable garden but they need the community to dig in and help them.

Marine science undergraduate Daniel Haan came up with the idea after admiring a friend's parents' potato plot in France.

Now he has rallied a group of fellow students to help transform a patch of ground at the Dunbeg site but they need donations of gardening equipment to make a start on it.

'We are starting this from scratch - at the moment the plot is just an over-grown corner.

'We're looking for tools and

supplies, from hoes, trowels and pitchforks to pallets and pots. Anything unwanted that people have stashed in their sheds would be a huge help,' said Daniel.

One supply they won't be short of is seaweed. Daniel said: 'Using seaweed in the garden isn't a new idea but we'll be experimenting with it to see just what we can make happen with it.'

'Hopefully we'll get things growing soon and then we plan to eat it.'

Anyone with tools or supplies to spare should message Daniel Haan on Facebook.

STEVE lights up Ardnamurchan



ARDNAMURCHAN stargazer Ellen Kammerath was delighted last Sunday when she witnessed - and photographed - a mysterious aurora.

The remarkable phenomenon has been dubbed STEVE

- Strong Thermal Emission Velocity Enhancement - and was seen during displays of the Aurora Borealis overnight.

Scientists are trying to learn more about the rare sight, and NASA is funding a citizen

science project, asking stargazers about their sightings of STEVE.

Ellen told *The Oban Times*: 'I saw a few rare pics on Facebook and I couldn't believe my eyes as I saw it last Sunday. The

pillar of light stood for more than an hour, straight up with a wee bit of movement and colour changing.

'The pillar reached very high. I photographed the light show from Loch Shiel pier at Achar-

acle and was also able to see it at home in Salen as well.

'We were very lucky that night with a very clear sky meanwhile most of other parts of the UK were covered in clouds.'

Pilgrimage follows Dalmally saint's way

MARTIN LAING
mlaing@obantimes.co.uk

PILGRIMS following the footsteps of Dalmally's own saint all the way to Iona, will set off in April.

So far seven people have signed up to walk St Conan's Pilgrim Way to be organised by the Craig Lodge retreat centre. This is only the second time the pilgrimage has been held.

St Conan was part of the monastic tradition established by St Columba on Iona and in the Dalmally area, so it was a fitting name for the 70-mile route which for some of the way traces an ancient pilgrim

route through Glen Lonan. The walk will take the pilgrims five days to reach Iona Abbey, starting on April 23 and passing through spectacular scenery.

There is still space for five more people to join the pilgrimage, with hot showers and accommodation provided in bunkhouses along the way.

The way leaves Craig Lodge, going from its gates over to Loch Etive via Glen Noe and on to Taynuilt. After that, it is on to Oban and then over the sea to Mull before taking to land once again and heading for Fionnphort and the crossing to Iona.

Lisa Beckett From Craig Lodge will be chief cook during the pilgrimage, taking charge of meals and making sure the walkers are greeted with a hearty meal at the end of each day's walking.

St Conan's Pilgrim Way was created to celebrate Craig Lodge's 25th anniversary after the house of prayer noticed more and more walkers were coming 'off the hills' to drop in on them.

Ms Beckett said: 'There seems to be an upsurge in interest in Iona and we wanted to come up with a route that would be accessible for people wanting to go from here to

there. This year we have made a few changes along the way to give people more of a chance to reflect. People come with their own thoughts and intentions for being a pilgrim.'

Two guides will lead the way - no stress, no map-reading involved for those following them - and luggage will be transported for them.

Ms Beckett added: 'It's a good experience for people regardless of their age or walking experience.'

'The unifying thing is a common goal to get to Iona and share the spiritual experience of walking together.'

'Craig Lodge is famous for its

hospitality and great welcome, and that is what we will be extending during the pilgrimage. We hope more people will come to join us on it.'

During this year's pilgrimage, the guides will be looking out for best locations to place waymarkers.

'That's the idea for this year and then look at how to get permission to do it. We are thinking cairns would be a natural way of doing it, pilgrims could add a stone as they pass,' said Ms Beckett.

To find out more about the pilgrimage, go to craiglodge.org or you can email mail@craiglodge.org



Birdwatch results reveal golden year for goldfinch

THE latest results from the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch have revealed a golden year for the goldfinch along with a number of other small birds after a surge in sightings in gardens across the country.

Now in its 39th year, the Birdwatch is a chance for people of all ages to count the number of bird visiting their garden helping RSPB Scotland build up a picture of how they are doing. This year, more than 29,000 people in Scotland took part counting 521,428 birds.

The event held over the last weekend and Monday of January revealed an increase in sightings of some smaller birds - goldfinch, long-tailed tit and siskin - that can usually be seen visiting gardens and outside spaces in mixed flocks. Recorded sightings

of the brightly coloured, sociable finch rose by 14 per cent on 2017 figures and its bright red face was seen in more than a third of gardens. Other small birds that also recorded an increase in sightings include long-tailed tit (+16 per cent), and siskin which saw an increase of 93 per cent and flew up six places into the top 20 to number 19.

However, other small birds saw their numbers take a tumble with sightings down of chaffinch (-5 per cent), blue tit (-6 per cent), great tit (-7 per cent) and coal tit (-11 per cent).

While many birds will have benefited from good conditions for their breeding season in 2017 the colder weather in the run up to Birdwatch may have played a part in what birds were seen most.



THIS WEEK'S WALKS

LOCHABER AND LORN RAMBLERS

The walk leader is to be contacted beforehand for meet-up and start times. Car sharing usually possible and people can try before they buy. Further information at www.lochaberandlorn-ramblers.org.uk. Lochaber and Lorn Ramblers Group can be contacted by email on info@lochaberandlorn-ramblers.org.uk.

Today, Thursday March 29 Eastern volcanic rim, Ardnamurchan

A circuit of the Eastern Rim of the Great Ardnamurchan Volcanic

Ring giving very fine views of the volcano and the Small Isles.

Start on the Kilchoan-Sanna road at NM472669. Climb the deer fence and ascend the obvious gully to the summit of Creag an Airgid, 257m. Follow the ridge E over several tops to reach Meall an Tarmachain, 405m. Descend steeply NE and re-cross the deer fence. Keeping to the highest ground of the NW/SE watershed make for the summit of Meall nan Con, 437m, marked by a trig point 2.1km distant.

Descend steeply WNW past some lochans and climb to the summit of Meall Meadhoin, 388m. Follow

the crest of the ridge NNW to an unnamed summit, 262mEX, 1.7km distant. Turn W to reach Meall an Fhir-eoin, then descend a steep, narrow gully and head NW to Lochan Dobhrain.

Follow the burn issuing SW from the lochan to reach the path to Glendrian. Follow the path S to the road and back to the start.

Grade: M+; Distance: 12Km; Height to climb: 800m Map(s): LR47, EX390; Meet at: Corran Ferry slip NN021635 for 0850 sailing.

Start of walk at 1045 Leader: Andrew Gilbert 07808 924722.

Saturday March 31 Loch Dochart, Glen Shira

A pleasant walk in a remote glen with forest, river and mountain scenery. A couple of kilometres of rough off-path walking and a river crossing add to the adventure.

Start from the CP just south of Victoria Bridge, NN270418. Head W on the forest track, past the monument, to its end at Doire nan Taghan. Continue W in a ride to the forest boundary and reach the Allt Sùil na Curra. Cross the river where it bifurcates around an island with Old ShielingsEX.

Head N down the slope to join the path beside the Abhainn

Shira and follow it W to the shore of Loch Dochart. Return E along the path and cross the bridge at NN232417. Continue E to cross the Allt Ghabhar (the bridge is missing) near where it flows in to the Abhainn Shira and follow a faint muddy path along its N bank to join the track at the bothy, Clashgour HutEX. If it is not possible to cross the Allt Ghabhar, follow it upstream to cross on the bridge at NN232426 and reach the house at Clashgour. Follow the well made track E past the bothy and continue to Victoria Bridge. Head S back to the CP.

Grade: L; Distance: 14Km; Height

to climb: 130m; Map(s): LR50, EX377; Meet at: Glencoe Village CP at 0930; Start of walk at 1015; Leader: John Nicol 01852 300360 Mentor: Marilyn Drummond

NEVISHILLWALKING CLUB

Please see full walk details at www.nevishillwalking.club. If anyone would like to go out on the walk please contact club secretary Suzanne Theobald on 01397 701783 or email enquiries@nevishillwalking.club.

Sunday April 1 Loch Creran/Finlay's hill

This is a long, broad and undulating ridge running between

Glen Etive and Loch Creran with good views out to sea and inland towards Glencoe and Glen Etive.

Park at end of public road in Glen Creran at NN036488. Follow track across River Creran to Glenure and turn NE towards the plantation. In the trees take the path right uphill and follow on above a small stream on the right. Continue up the ridge, passing the two lochans and on to the summit which is marked with a large cairn and trig point.

Return via the same route. (15km, 1000m ascent) Suggested by Ken Stevenson; coordinated by Suzanne Theobald.

Spring Property REVIEW



Happy, happy HPI talks!

Property prices are on their way up in Scotland, say the number crunchers

THE latest publication of the monthly UK House Price Index (UK HPI) shows that the average price of a property in Scotland has increased 7.3 per cent in 12 months to £148,512.

The UK average is £225,621; an increase of 4.9 per cent on the previous year.

Janet Egdell, of Registers of Scotland, said: 'Average prices in Scotland continued their upward trend in January with an increase of 7.3 per cent when compared to January 2017. Average prices have been steadily increasing each month since March 2016, when compared with the same month of the previous year.'

She added: 'Residential sales volumes decreased in November. The annual decrease of 1.9 per cent when compared with November 2016 in Scotland is in the context of larger decreases across the rest of

the UK. The cumulative volume of sales for Scotland for the financial year to date - from April to November 2017 - was 72,842. This is an increase of 7.9 per cent on the equivalent year to date position for November 2016.'

Across Scotland, all property types showed an increase in average price in January 2018 when compared with the same month in the previous year. Detached properties showed the biggest increase, rising by 8.6 per cent to £261,291. The average price of flats showed an increase of 5.6 per cent to £105,590, the smallest increase of all property types.

Scotland's house price index (HPI) is produced by Registers of Scotland. Together with partners the Office of National Statistics, HM Land Registry, Land and Property Services Northern Ireland and the Valuation Office Agency they produce the UK HPI. The numbers quoted are from the statistical review of Scottish residential property 2017 published this month



Average prices have been steadily increasing each month' - Janet Egdell, Registers of Scotland.



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3 THE CAIRN KILMARTIN



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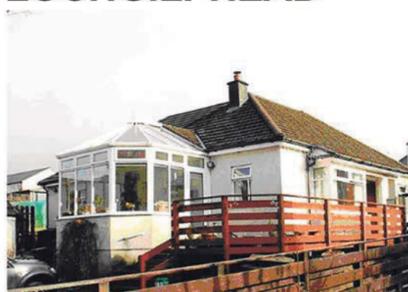
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Buying for the first-time ? avoid these big mistakes

BUY with your head, not your heart and always pay attention to the home report

THERE is nothing as wonderful as turning the key in the door and walking into your first home. There is also nothing as potentially terrifying. This is the biggest financial decision of your life and it will influence the way you live: where the kids will go to school, future holidays, cars and even your career decisions. The winning post is the home you want and enjoy at a price you can afford.

Priority

Think long and hard about what you need your home to do:

- Be close to your job or can you afford, or face, a commute?
- How many bedrooms, will one be an office/hobby/music room?
- Open plan?
- Garage or not? On or off street parking?
- Size of garden?
- Do you have the skills to renovate, or ability to live in a house being renovated over time as cost allows, or would you be better buying new or renovated?

Money

Don't break your heart by finding your dream home only to discover your credit score isn't good enough; get a pre-approved mortgage so you know what you can afford and stick within that budget.

Once you know this don't go to the very top of your budget. You need wiggle room.

Wiggle room

The cost of buying a house is more than a mortgage. It can be stamp duty or legal fees. You could well have a removal bill to pay, building and contents insurance and money set aside for repairs when they arrive, and they will!

Plus any new appliances you will need like a cooker, fridge or washing machine.

This is before you have bought a can of paint or a stick of furniture.

Go in headfirst

Make sure you buy with your head, not your heart. If you fall in love with a property don't let that love be blind!

One of the biggest blind spots for a first-time buyer would be to not heed the home report. Anyone selling a property in Scotland has to provide a home report. This is a pack of documents that provides more information about the property for potential buyers: a single survey, an energy report and a property questionnaire.

Read it from cover to cover and heed what it says because this report highlights structural problems and things like rot, rising damp and woodworm. All things

which will make you fall out of love pretty fast. You need to be calm, cool and collected and able to walk away if the house is unsound or too expensive.



Mortgages



The proportion of homeowners income spent on mortgage payments is now one of the lowest in 10 years according to the Halifax.

Typical mortgage payments accounted for less than a third of homeowners' disposable income at 29 per cent in the last three months of 2017 which

is down from almost half, 47 per cent during the same period in 2007; house purchasers would have to look back to the 1990s to find a lower percentage.

UK finance, the banking and finance industry body, says there were 8,800 new first-time buyer mortgages completed in Scotland in the last

quarter of 2017 which is 3.5 per cent more than in the same quarter in 2016 - up almost 10 per cent to £1.01 billion. The average loan was £106,000.

SINCE 2007, the Low-cost Initiative for First Time Buyers (LIFT) shared equity schemes have helped over 12,000 people to buy a home.

It gives people a step up via the open market shared equity Scheme with funding for 10 per cent to 40 per cent of the purchase price. The scheme is aimed at first-time buyers, social rented tenants, disabled people with a housing need, armed forces personnel and recent veterans or their widows or widowers.

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TO LET

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Ferry House
Guide Price £270,000 **SOLD**

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Six Bedroom Guest House In Oban

The Old Manse, Dalriach Road, Oban, PA43 5JE, Argyll

Offers Over
£499,000

Key features

- Award winning 4-Star (STB) Victorian villa with spectacular views across Oban Bay to Mull.
- Positioned on an elevated and prominent trading location in the popular tourist town of Oban.
- Trading 6 letting bedrooms seasonally just below the VAT threshold.
- A charming property providing an easy-to-operate "home and income" lifestyle opportunity with sound profitability.
- Spacious ground floor private owners' accommodation comprising of 2 bedrooms, lounge, kitchen, office and bathroom.
- Beautiful grounds to the front and private patio area to the rear of the property.

The Old Manse Guest House is a beautifully restored, detached Victorian Villa.

The business trades successfully on a seasonal bed and breakfast basis just below the VAT threshold. The development of year-round trading would enable new owners the capacity to trade above the VAT threshold. With six well-appointed en-

suite letting bedrooms, one of which has the facilities to expand into a family suite, there is no doubt that this property presents a remarkable prospect for first-time guest house operators or experienced proprietors. The property is currently trading with a 4-Star STB rating. This well-maintained property which is presented in excellent

condition, combined with exceptional trading prospects, represents a truly superb business opportunity.

Generous owner's accommodation is located on the ground floor with private access and includes a spacious lounge overlooking the harbour.

For further details of this and other properties - please refer to www.asgcommercial.co.uk



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Charming Guest House near Oban

Braeside Guest House, Kilmore, Oban, PA34 4QR, Argyll

Offers Around
£349,000

Key features

- Traditional 4-Star guest house within a prominent trading location on A816 coastal route near popular tourist town of Oban.
- Charming property providing an easy-to-operate "home and income" lifestyle opportunity overlooking Loch Feochan.
- Includes 5 most attractive en-suite letting bedrooms and spacious public rooms plus small bar area.
- Attractive owner's accommodation, comprising private lounge and double bedroom along with a basement area suitable for extended family or further development.
- Benefiting from year-round trade with sound profitability.

Braeside Guest House is a charming Visit Scotland 4-Star rating Guest House located on the A816 coastal route, 10 minutes' drive from the popular town of Oban. The property enjoys views over open countryside to Loch Feochan and is an attractive business. Operating year-round, Braeside Guest House offers bed and breakfast service in 5 well-appointed en-suite bedrooms, configured as twin, double and family

sized rooms. Guests can also be catered for with the provision of an evening meal service and, as the Braeside is licensed, served with some nice wines. The Guest House enjoys a good level of both repeat trade, and passing trade in the main tourist months, however most accommodation is booked online using the businesses own website or other portal agencies such as booking.com, late rooms etc. All the accommodation is

located on the ground floor which is a popular choice. All rooms are en-suite with telephone, tea and coffee making facilities and televisions provided. There is a generous guest dining room/lounge and a well-stocked bar, boasting a fine selection of single malt whiskies and an extensive wine cellar.

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Add value to your home



When it comes to adding value to your home, for your own family to enjoy or make it a more attractive to buyers, these are the figures property experts agree.

Loft conversion
Living space in the loft costs an average £10k-£30k and you can expect it to add around 12% to the value of your property

New bathroom
Always a good bet, it will add just under 3% to value for an outlay of under £2.5k

New windows
Add between £5k-6k to a property's price

Central heating
Complete new system or new boiler and controls will add £5k

New kitchen
Difficult one to call. Average cost only £10k but only adds around £5k to value and you need a buyer with same taste in kitchens. Great if you are staying put but perhaps spruce up existing and tempt buyers in with a lower price?

Conservatory, extension, garage
Prices can vary widely but a job well done will add 11% to property value. Do some serious calculations.

Garden
Glass patio doors, decking and a well-kept garden will add up to £5k or 1% to value.

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Mr & Mrs C, Struchur

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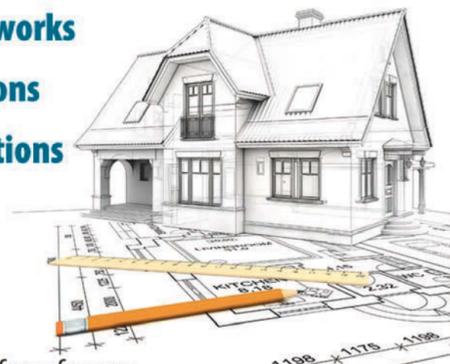


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Dun Toiseach, Ford, PA31 8RH

Price Guide £375,000



OCCUPYING A PRIME, elevated position, with spectacular views sweeping over the surrounding countryside towards Loch An Lodan, the sale of Dun Toiseach offers an exciting opportunity to purchase a most desirable, Architect designed villa with garage, set in spacious garden grounds.

Situated on the outskirts of the picturesque village of Ford in the heart of mid Argyll, Dun Toiseach forms a stunning, substantial detached villa set in generous garden grounds and enjoying superb, open views to the surrounding countryside towards Loch An Lodan. In immaculate order throughout and beautifully presented, the property was completed by the current owners in 2007 and has been designed and built to capitalise on the elevated and peaceful, rural location. Benefiting from double glazing, an oil fired wet central heating system, underfloor heating to the ground floor and an impressive double sided open fire, the property would be ideally suited as an excellent family home, idyllic holiday retreat or premium self-catering business opportunity.

In excellent order throughout and beautifully presented, the property has been thoughtfully designed to create fantastic and versatile living space and boasts many impressive features including the stone frontage, "Cathedral-style" windows, superb split-level open-plan lounge, kitchen and dining area with solid oak kitchen with granite work surfaces and integral appliances, double sided stone fireplace, exceptional mezzanine sitting room with decorative glass balustrade, feature beams and bird's eye view of the lower lounge area, striking fully tiled shower wetroom and master suite with dressing room to name but a few.

The property is approached by a private, gravelled driveway which leads to the integral garage and rear, providing ample parking and turning space. Laid to a mixture of lawn and gravel for ease of maintenance, the grounds are offset with mature shrubs and bushes, a raised decked entertaining area, paved patio and a feature decked planting area.

- Spectacular Loch Views
- Lounge
- Kitchen/Diner
- Dining Room
- 4 Bedrooms
- Study
- Bathroom & Shower Room
- Detached Garage
- Landscaped Garden
- EPC Rating: E 41



9 Bail Ur, North Ballachulish, PH33 6SB



- Desirable Mid-Terrace Dwellinghouse
- Convenient Village Location with Mountain Views
- Requires Modernisation
- Lounge/Diner & Kitchen
- 3 Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Double Glazing & Solid Fuel Central Heating
- Private Garden Grounds
- EPC Rating: E 43

Price Guide £125,000

Grianan, Corriebeg, Kinlocheil, By Fort William, PH33 7NP



- Charming Detached Property
- In Excellent Order
- Desirable Rural Location
- Lounge & Sitting Room
- Kitchen/Diner & Utility
- 3 Bedrooms (Master En-Suite)
- Study/4th Bedroom
- Bathroom & Cloakroom
- Oil Fired Central Heating & Double Glazing
- Mature Garden with Garage
- EPC Rating: D 57

Price Guide £280,000

32 Banff Crescent, Fort William, PH33 6TP



- Desirable Mid-Terrace Dwellinghouse
- Convenient Central Location
- Lounge & Kitchen/Dining Room
- 3 Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Cloakroom
- Double Glazing & Electric Heating
- Garden
- EPC Rating: E 44

Price Guide £100,000

Tigh an Beag, 14 Upper Inverroy, Roy Bridge, PH31 4AQ



- Desirable Detached Dwellinghouse
- In Very Good Order
- Views to the surrounding Mountains & Countryside
- Spacious Lounge with Open Fire
- Kitchen/Diner & Utility
- 5 Bedrooms (Master En-Suite)
- Bathroom
- Garden & Large Garage
- Double Glazing & Oil Fired Central Heating
- EPC Rating: E 44

Price Guide £260,000

Tigh Na Geal, Kingie, By Invergarry, PH35 4HS



- Charming Detached Cottage
- Stunning Countryside Views
- In Very Good Order
- Lounge/Diner & Kitchen
- 3 Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Double Glazing & Oil Fired Central Heating
- Garden & Wooden Garage
- EPC Rating: E 51

Price Guide £140,000

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BIRCHWOOD, SPEAN BRIDGE, PH34 4EZ



The sale of Birchwood offers an opportunity to purchase a substantial and imposing period property. Dating back to around 1902, the property still retains some of its original features such as a charming pitch pine staircase, moulded corning and picture rails. Positioned in the heart of Spean Bridge village with stunning views over its grounds to Aonach Mor and the Grey Corrie Mountains, the property currently makes a superb family home.

Spean Bridge is a very desirable location offering a wide range of amenities for a village, including a local Spar shop, hotels, cafes, bistro, restaurant and golf course. The village connects to the rest of The Highlands through its own train station, bus links and main "A" road. Additional amenities are available in Fort William, 10 miles away. The local area provides the opportunity to access a wealth of outdoor activities including the Great Glen and Nevis Range Ski Area, downhill and cross country mountain bike riding, hill walking, sailing, or exploring the footpaths along the Caledonian Canal only a few minutes drive from the property. Fort Augustus and the famous Loch Ness are about a 30 minute drive north.

- Superior Detached Period Property
- In Very Good Order with Stunning Views
- Lounge & Sitting Room
- Dining Room
- Kitchen/ Diner & Utility
- Four Bedrooms
- Bathroom, Shower Room & Cloakroom
- Oil Fired Central Heating
- Sash & Case Windows
- Generous, Landscaped Garden Grounds
- EPC Rating: F 31

Price Guide £385,000

BRAES OF THE LOCH, MORAR, BY MALLAIG, PH40 4PB



Easter Special Price - £550,000
for two weeks only (ending Thursday 12th April 2018 at 5pm)
£50,000 below Home Report Valuation

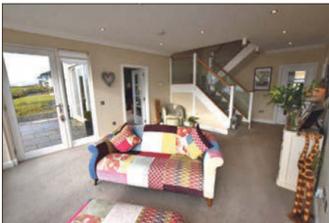


Peacefully situated, with stunning views towards Loch Morar and the surrounding mountains and countryside, and in close proximity to the world famous Silver Sands at Morar, Braes of the Loch forms an extraordinary detached villa, set in generous and beautifully landscaped garden grounds with detached double garage. Completed by the current owners in 2008, the setting is further complemented by this exceptionally built property, which has been thoughtfully designed with many unique features and exhibits a light and bright contemporary interior, creating a wonderful modern home. The property's layout provides the owners with flexible accommodation and offers a fantastic family home, however it would also be ideally suited as an idyllic holiday home, as an opportunity to use as premium self-catering accommodation in a very buoyant holiday letting market or as an impressive guest house.

- Superior Architect Designed, Detached Villa
- Expansive Entrance Hallway
- Magnificent Kitchen & Dining Room
- 2 Sizeable Lounges
- Sun Room & Utility
- Family Bathroom & Cloakroom
- 6 Bedrooms (3 En-Suite)
- Fully Double Glazed & Air Source Underfloor Heating
- Detached Double Garage
- Newly Built Stone Outbuilding
- Rating: C 78

Price Guide £598,000

HAMNAVOE, FASSFERN, KINLOCHEIL, BY FORT WILLIAM, PH33 7NP



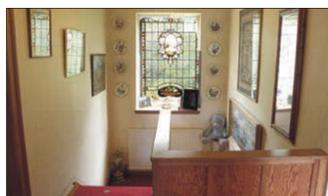
Occupying a superb elevated position, with magnificent views over Loch Eil to the surrounding countryside, the sale of Hamnavoe offers an exciting opportunity to purchase a superior detached villa located in this exclusive development. Finished to a very high specification the property boasts a Tenby kitchen, bespoke staircase, feature picture windows, air source heating and under floor heating to the ground floor.

Peacefully situated, with panoramic over Loch Eil to the surrounding countryside, Hamnavoe is set in generous and beautifully landscaped, private garden grounds. The setting is further complemented by the property itself which was designed to be a superb modern family home, created to take full advantage of its position.

- Superior Detached Villa
- Panoramic Views to Loch Eil
- Desirable Location & Beautifully Presented
- Lounge, Sitting Area & Sun Room
- Kitchen Diner & Utility
- 4 Bedrooms – 1 en-suite & 1 with Balcony
- Bathroom & Shower Room
- Air Source Central Heating (Underfloor Heating to the Ground Floor)
- Generous Landscaped Grounds with Detached Garage & Outbuilding
- EPC Rating: C 72

Price Guide £450,000

HINAIDI, ACHINTORE ROAD, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6RN



Enjoying a privileged, elevated position with stunning views over Loch Linnhe to the Ardour Hills and surrounding countryside, the subjects of sale form a desirable detached dwellinghouse. Offering deceptively spacious accommodation over two levels, the property benefits from oil fired central heating and double glazing (excluding two beautiful stain-glass windows). The property itself is complimented by the attractive, well-maintained landscaped grounds and private mono-bloc driveway, while the detached garage is a superb, useful addition.

Situated on the desirable Achintore Road and in close proximity to the centre of Fort William, the subjects of sale are well placed to take advantage of all the amenities the area has to offer. The town of Fort William is now recognised as the 'Outdoor Capital of the UK' and benefits from outdoor pursuits available throughout the year. These include walking, mountain biking, mountaineering, skiing, sailing, fishing and sight-seeing – not forgetting schools, shops etc.

- Desirable Detached Dwellinghouse
- Spectacular Loch Views
- In Very Good Order
- Lounge, Kitchen/Diner
- Dining Room
- 4 Bedrooms & Study
- Bathroom & Shower Room
- Oil Fired Central Heating
- Double Glazing (excluding stain-glass windows)
- Detached Garage & Landscaped Garden
- EPC Rating: E 41

Price Guide £270,000

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Calls for removal of income bar on grants

THE BOARD of Smallholding Scotland has called on Fergus Ewing, the cabinet secretary for rural economy and connectivity, to remove the income bar on the Small Farm Grant Scheme (SFGS).

According to the chairwoman of Smallholding Scotland, Rosemary Champion, the scheme is a welcome addition to the current round of CAP.

Ms Champion said: 'But the imposition of an income bar has prevented many smallholders from accessing the funding to improve their holdings. With only a limited time period remaining, we're asking Mr Ewing to remove it, making the resources more accessible and bringing the scheme into line with other CAP schemes.'

No other CAP scheme, including the Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme on which the SFGS is based, has an income bar for applicants.

The SFGS was introduced in 2015 but uptake has been poor. In the 22 months of operation from January 1, 2015, to the end of October 2016, less than two per cent of the money available



Rural Secretary Fergus Ewing.

was allocated, although uptake in the subsequent period is believed to have improved slightly.

Ms Champion added: 'Many smallholders are already excluded from agricultural support because of the three-hectare minimum area. Further exclusion on the grounds of income

limits their capacity to invest in small farm businesses.'

'Many smallholders must have off-farm employment to pay the bills - just like crofters - so the same rules should apply. The Scottish Government has said that it supports small-scale farming so we're confident that

it will step up to the mark and do the right thing.'

Smallholding Scotland is a Scottish charitable organisation, set up in 2017 to support and represent Scottish smallholders. More information can be found on the organisation's website smallholding.scot.

Around the markets

STIRLING - Caledonian Marts on Monday March 26 sold 341 native bred store cattle at its spring show and sale, which was kindly sponsored by Hugh O'Neill and Sons, Ayr, and supported by the Shorthorn Cattle Society and Morrisons supermarkets.

The judge was John Ramshay, Garth House, Dalton, Thirsk, and the following were his awards:

Champion was a yearling Shorthorn bullock from Niall Bowser, Argaty, Doune which sold for £1,180 to J Paterson, Garrionhaugh, Lanark. Reserve Champion was a Luing heifer from R McNeel Ltd, Woodend, Armadale, which realised £960 to Jim Brown, Gandyhead, Airdrie. Champion pen of four in the yard were Shorthorn bullocks from J Dunlop, Blackwater, Kilmacoll which sold for £1110. Aberdeen Angus bullocks sold to 273p for a pen of 11 from M McDonald, Beachmenach, Tayinloan to average 248ppkg. Shorthorn bullocks sold to 263p (twice) from RSPB Lochgruinar and AG Simpson, Portend, Port of Menteith to average 223ppkg. Luing bullocks sold to 222p from R McNeel Ltd to average 217ppkg.

Hereford bullocks sold to 254p from A J Mackie, High Belltrees, Lochwinnoch to average 244ppkg.

Belted Galloway bullocks sold to 216p from W Glover, Cladville, Isle of Islay to average 202ppkg. Aberdeen Angus heifers sold to 240p from Beachmenach, Tayinloan to average 220ppkg. Shorthorn heifers sold to 236p from RSPB, Isle of Islay to average 202ppkg. Hereford heifers sold to 243p from AG and ME Bateman, Langholm, Campbeltown to average 234ppkg.

STIRLING - United Auctions on Thursday March 23 sold 8,221 prime sheep comprising of 34 new season lambs selling to an average of 269.91p and 6,293 old season lambs selling to an average of 229.64p and 1,852 ewes and rams.

New season lambs (34) - Wood (Suff) £138; Langside (Char) £126; Whitehouse (Zwa) £133; Balgonar (X) £126; Castleton (Hamp) £120.

New season lambs (34) - Langside (Char) 300.0p; Wood (Suff) 285.0p; Balgonar (X) 280.0p; Whitehouse 277.0p; Castleton (Hamp) 259.00p.

Old season lambs (6,293) - Langside (Tex) £136; Harviesmailing (YFSUG), resulting in 23 NESUG and 58 YFSUGs applications being approved.



The spring show and sale at Stirling on Monday.

Moulin (Mule) £114; Dalchalloch (X) £114; Easter Craigduckie (Char) £101.

Old season lambs (6,293) - Head of Balglass (Tex) 338.0p; Harviesmailing (BTex) 307.0p; Over Kellie (Chev) 272.0p; Clunbeg & Boghall (Suff) 253.0p; Kaemuir (X) 251.0p; Henderston Farms (Mule) 240.0p; Easter Craigduckie (Char) 237.0p; Kilmundie (BF) 236.00p.

Ewes (1852) - Chalmerstone (Suff) £158; Broomknowes (Tex) £152; Drumharrow (Dor) £116; Chalmerstone (BFL) £114; Mid Gallowhill (X) £113; Townhead (Mule) £111; Berrydyke (BTex) £108; Gartness (Zwa) £106; Millhouse (BF) £83. Rams - Broomknowes (Suff) £152; Townhead (Tex) £142; Townhead (BFL) £128; Berrydyke (BDM) £113.

STIRLING - Caledonian Marts on Thursday March 22 sold 185 cattle comprising 91 prime bullocks, heifers and young bulls, and 94 cast cows and bulls. A smaller show of cattle would be dearer on the week, and many more could have been sold.

Prime bullocks averaged 212ppkg. Prime heifers averaged 222ppkg. Young bulls averaged 184ppkg. Cast beef cows averaged 143ppkg. Cast dairy cows averaged 120ppkg.

Bullocks topped at 258ppkg from Learielaw, Broomburn purchased by T. Johnston Butchers, Falkirk and to £1,635 from the same farm. Heifers topped at 255p from Learielaw to Hugh A Black and Sons and to £1,632 from Mains of Cultmalundie, Perth to Hugh A Black and Sons.

Bulls sold to 228p for a Charolais from Lower Crowthree Farming to J F Findlay and Co, Wishaw and to £1,709 from Cairnbog, Kilsyth to CM Kirkpatrick. Leading prices: Bullocks ppgk; 248p Faskine 245p Balquharrage, Dullomuir and Learielaw, 242p Balquharrage, 238p (Twice) Meadowend and Bankhead (Kerr), 235p

Dullomuir and Learielaw, 228p Droverhall, 222p Ramornie and Easterton (Owen).

Heifers ppgk; 248p Turniemoon, Rathillet and Over Inzevar, 245p Faskine, Meadowend and Learielaw, 242p Rathillet, 240p Mains of Cultmalundie, Rathillet, Mains of Throsk and Over Inzevar, 235p and 230p Rathillet, Balquharrage and Auchmuir, 228p Easterton and Mains of Throsk, 225p and 222p Turniemoon and Mains of Cultmalundie

Also forward were 94 cast cows and bulls.

Cows would be dearer on the week, with a poorer show for quality forward.

All classes needed on a weekly basis, please contact Oliver Shearman on 07730 046252 for more information.

Beef cows averaged 143ppkg selling to 165p for a Limousin from W and R Thomson, Cairnbog and to £1,480 for a British Blue from R and M Paterson, Upper Auchenlay.

Dairy cows averaged 120p selling to 144p from A W and J Broom, Solsgirth and to £1040 for the same beast.

Bulls sold to 155p for a Limousin from A Morton, Lochend and to £1305 for the same beast.

Other leading prices: Beef cows per head: £1,360 Easter Dullatur £1,350 Mains of Throsk £1,330 Lochhead £1,300 Mosshall £1,240 Lochhead

Beef cows per kilo: 190p RSPB (Islay) 189p Balliemartin 188p Eorabus (Islay) 180p Airthrey Kerse 175p Lochhead, Eorabus (Islay) and Easterton (Purdon) 171p Mains of Throsk 169p Eorabus (Islay)

Dairy Cows per head: £1,030 Solsgirth £980, £950 and £920 Bonnyhill £920 Dalfoil £910 Solsgirth Dairy cows per kilo: 128p Solsgirth 124p Dalfoil and Bonnyhill 122p Blairmains 120p Bonnyhill

Crofting Commission appoints new assessors

THE CROFTING Commission this week has announced the appointment of a new panel of assessors for the organisation.

Crofting Commission convener Rod Mackenzie said: 'The commission is pleased to welcome a new panel of assessors. The assessors have been appointed to work for the commission and for crofting as a whole.'

'Each assessor will bring with them a different skill set and their own particular skills can be utilised for the benefit of crofting in all crofting areas.'

'My fellow commissioners and I look forward to working with the new assessors, who have been appointed until the spring of 2023 and are based in areas from Shetland down to Argyll.'



'Our panel of 23 volunteers will provide a highly valued link between the commission and crofting communities and we are keen to see this strengthened through the

appointment of this panel. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing panel of assessors.'

'We are very grateful to them for all the time and commitment they have shown to the commission over the years and I'd like to wish them all the very best for the future.'

'The assessors' role is varied and includes passing on relevant crofting information locally, being able to signpost crofters to the services offered by the commission and to provide to the commission with any relevant information on matters which might arise in their own areas.'

£4.2 million in grants to support new farmers

RURAL Secretary Fergus Ewing MSP has confirmed £4.2 million in grants will be made available to support new farmers to pursue a career in agriculture. The latest award sees 81 applicants receive a share of the funding, which will help to create and develop their businesses.

Announcing the funding, Mr

Ewing said: 'It's vital to the sustainability of agriculture in Scotland that we do everything in our power to encourage new entrants to farming.'

'With the average age of Scottish farmers currently close to 60 years old, there is, of course, an emphasis on encouraging young people to farming, but

new entrants of any age are welcome and can help to drive innovation and improve best practise across the industry, while contributing to the economic vitality of the sector.'

'Today's funding announcement brings the total funding from EU and Scottish Government to more than £13.8

million, supporting the development and creation of almost 256 new farms across Scotland.'

The funding is part of the New Entrant Start-Up Grant (NESUG) and Young Farmer Start-Up Grant schemes (YFSUG), resulting in 23 NESUG and 58 YFSUGs applications being approved.

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An excellent opportunity has arisen for an IT Support Technician based in our Oban office but travelling to Campbeltown, Lochgilphead, Edinburgh, Arran and Fort William as required.

Reporting to the IT Manager you will work with every department throughout Wyvex Media providing support, troubleshooting, repairs, advice, training and development.

You will require:-

An HNC/HND in computers or related suitable technical subject.

At least 3 years experience in an IT Support Helpdesk or similar, Cpanel, Wordpress, Apache, Microsoft Office (2000 to latest version Word/Excel/Powerpoint), ISDN and IP Telephone systems (AVAYA preferred), Phone cabling/wiring/Broadband configuration. Server 2009 – 2016. Windows 7 – 10 (Some legacy OS systems and a thorough understanding of CLI or Powershell).

A sound knowledge of networking, switches, testing routers, configuring and maintaining VPN and IP configuration/troubleshooting is essential. Knowledge of Survey Monkey/Wufoo/Mailchimp, building and maintaining Wordpress Websites an advantage as would some experience of Adobe Products (Indesign, Photoshop), experience with Digital SLR cameras and video equipment/editing with Adobe Premiere or similar.

A keen interest in legacy, existing and emerging technology.

Ability to troubleshoot and make diagnosis and repair quickly.

Ability to work under pressure.

Ordered working methods – and the ability to work on your own initiative when required.

An excellent telephone manner and ability to convey technical issues clearly to members of staff, customers and 3rd party suppliers/contractors as well as clear and concise report writing.

The right candidate will be able to help shape the use of technology and systems moving forwards within Wyvex Media in the future.

In addition to salary we offer group personal pension plan, life and medical insurance.

A current full, clean driving licence is essential for travel to other sites, on a regular and "as required" basis.

Please send your CV and a letter of application to Alison Arden, Wyvex Media, Crannog Lane, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB or email ali@wyvexmedia.co.uk



Electrical Shift Electrician- Glensanda Quarry

This is an exciting opportunity to join the leading global construction materials and solutions company - LafargeHolcim. You will work at Glensanda quarry on the west coast of Scotland. Not only is Glensanda a dynamic fast-paced environment that is operational 24 hours a day, it is also the largest granite quarry in Europe. You will join an enthusiastic team of Engineers who maintain and develop the electrical systems on site.

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The ideal candidate will be a time served Electrician with BS7671 to the 17th Edition who is IT literate. It would be desirable if you have had previous experience of an industrial environment and equipment. Knowledge of control and automation would also be beneficial; however, this is not essential, as first class training will be provided as part of our ongoing personal development program. A full UK driving licence is necessary for this position.

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As part of our commitment to talent development we are now accepting applications for our 2018 Apprentice Programme which commences in August 2018 for you to join as a **Water Treatment Modern Apprentice** based in the Fort William and surrounding area.

Who are we looking for?

We're looking for people who are self-motivated, team players who enjoy being outdoors. You should be practical, well organised and a good problem solver with a positive attitude and the ability to work on your own initiative. You'll have five National 4 or 5 Qualifications (English, Maths and Science are advantageous but not essential) and a full UK driving licence (or currently be working to achieve this) as you'll typically be working across a number of our sites.

If you're interested in starting your career in the water industry as an apprentice, we'd love to hear from you!

The closing date – 12 April 2018 – Please note – direct applications won't be considered. We are not in a position to accept emailed CV's.

For further information and how to apply please visit www.scottishwater.co.uk/careers



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Ref: 581-SG

Applications are invited for the position of Seaman Purser to sail within CalMac Ferries Limited Small Ferry Division.

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Responsible to the Skipper for maintenance of the vessel and complying with requirements of the Company Management System, car marshalling on deck, issuing travel tickets and collecting fares, counting and recording numbers boarding the vessel and ensuring that these comply with passenger certificates will fall within your remit.

Applicants should possess as a minimum STCW'95: PST, PSSR, Fire Prevention & Fire Fighting, Elementary First Aid, Watchrating Certificate and a valid ENG1 Medical Certificate. Possession of a Boatmasters Tier 1 Level 2, cash handling and technical experience would be an advantage.

You must be customer focused, have a clear understanding of the customer interface, have a proactive approach to customer care and be disciplined at all time.

A shift pattern will apply and this will normally consist of one week on/one week off.

This role will run during our summer season which is between March and October 2018. Not all contracts will run for the full summer season. You must have no holidays booked within this time.

If you are interested in this role, please apply online at <https://www.calmac.co.uk/article/5988/581-SG-Seasonal-SeamanPurser---FionnphortIona>, no later than 5 April 2018.

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Interviews for the above post will be held on 26th April 2018 in Campbeltown.

Lettings Assistant, Mid Argyll

17.5 hrs £9,858 - £11,598

Interviews for the above post will be held on 27th April 2018 in Lochgilphead.

For more information on both posts, contact Sarah Campbell on 01546 605881 or email Sarah.Campbell@acha.co.uk.

HR Modern Apprentice, Lochgilphead

£10,886 to £16,151 per annum depending on age
35 hours per week

Interviews for the above post will be held in Lochgilphead on Wednesday 18th April 2018

For more information on the MA post, please contact Marina Macarthur on 01546 605860 or email marina.macarthur@acha.co.uk

Closing Date for all posts: 12 noon on Friday 6th April 2018.

For further details and to apply visit the recruitment section of our website www.acha.co.uk. CVs are not accepted. If you are unable to access the website contact the Recruitment Team: Tel 01546 605917 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk



Port Assistant

Seasonal until 21 October 2018

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Various Hours

Ref: 1137-SB

Applications are invited for the position of Seasonal Port Assistants based at Oban Ferry Terminal.

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- All duties relating to port/vessel interface.
- Customer enquiries.
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- Cash handling.
- Use of VHF and PA Systems.
- Control of passengers and vehicles embarking and disembarking from vessels.
- Any other duties required by the Port/Harbour Manager.

You must be computer literate, with excellent verbal and written communication skills. You are expected to have a flexible approach to working, as shift and weekend work will be involved. You must be customer focused, have a clear understanding of the customer interface and have a proactive approach to customer care.

The successful candidate must be able to commute to Oban Ferry Terminal on a daily basis.

If you are interested in this vacancy please apply online at <https://www.calmac.co.uk/article/5972/Ref-1137-SB-Seasonal-Port-Assistant---Oban> no later 5 April 2018 than 2018.

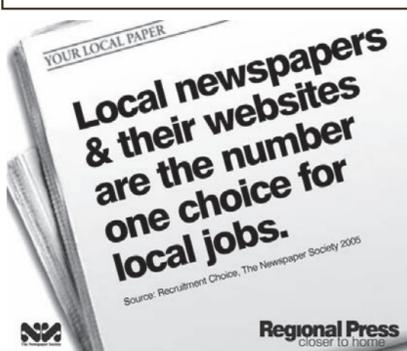
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Clerk to the Governors, Charles and Barbara Tyre Trust,
Loch Awe House, Barmore Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TW Tel: 01880 820 277

Charles And Barbara Tyre Trust, SC031378

A meeting of the members of the Bohuntin Township Codes 455/206 and 203 will be held in the Roy Bridge Hall on Sunday April 15, 2018 at 3pm.
Ronald J Campbell
Ex chairperson.

Oban Times

AGM and Appointment of Grazings Committee
Bohuntin Common Grazings
Thursday 12th April 8.00pm
Taigh na Sgoile Roy Bridge
Meeting called by: A MacKinnon

Proposed Assnigation of a Croft
Allan MacColl is applying to assign the tenancy of the croft at 234 Gorteneorn Ardnamurchan PH36 4LE to Kirsty MacColl, 234 Gorteneorn, Ardnamurchan PH36 4LE. If you consider you have a relevant interest in this application you may submit comments in writing to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW or email info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk within 28 days from the date of publication of the advert. Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry.

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D Colthart
4 Ardconnel, Kilmore & Kilbride
0.2 ha – Site for a dwelling house
87368

D Cameron & K Cameron-Sutcliffe
86 Portuairk, Mo Dhachaidh, Ardnamurchan & Sunart
0.059 ha –Existing house site
87360

G MacArthur
3a Caoles, Tiree
0.08 ha – Site for a dwelling house
86212

Written comments from any member of the crofting community within the locality of the croft and any expressions of demand for the croft (which may be made public), may be sent to the Crofting Commission by 26/04/2018. Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk

www.highland.gov.uk

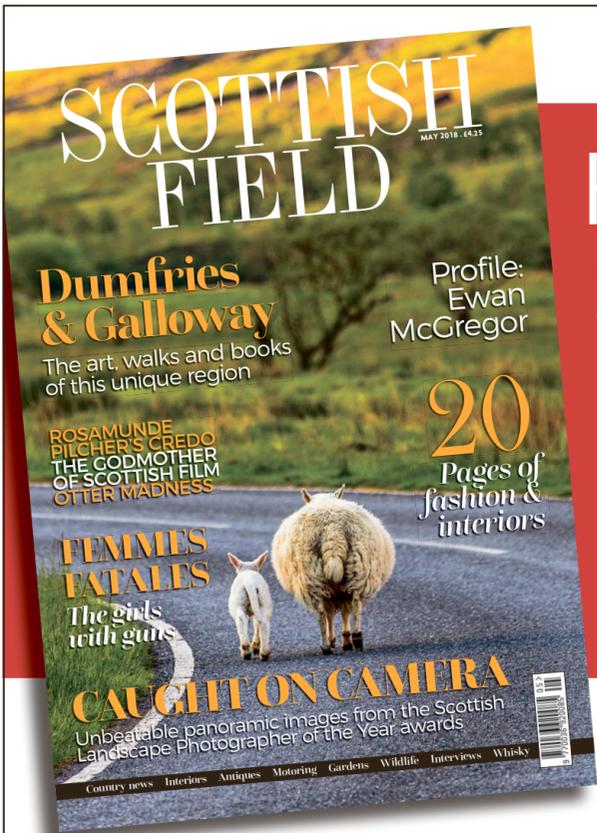
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk> or electronically at your nearest Service Point. You can find your nearest Service Point via the following link https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a_to_z

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
18/01291/FUL	Loch Leven Hotel	Old Ferry Road North Ballachulish Onich, Fort William	Installation of camping pods
18/01009/MSC	Land 30M South East Of	Robren Glenfinnan	Erection of a dwelling house

Time period for comments is 14 days
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The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Oban Hospice will be held in The Dove Centre on Thursday 19th April 2018 at 7.30pm. All Welcome

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES
Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

First Registration of a Croft
Joan MacGillivray has registered her croft 56, 58 & 59 Banavie (share), Kilmallie on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by November 28, 2018.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C4894.

First Registration of a Croft
Donald MacLellan has registered their croft 1 Cuartaig, Cuartaig, Arisaig and Moirdart on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by December 5, 2018.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C4913.

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PERSONAL

Ian Fraser Happy 80th birthday



Love from **Chrissie and all the family xx**

CAMPBELL - GRANT
Bunessan, March 29, 1968



Congratulations Uncle **Ronnie and Auntie Sheila** on your Golden Wedding. With much love your nieces and nephews, the Johnstons, Johnstones and Campbells.



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GOLDEN WEDDING

CAMPBELL - GRANT - At Bunnassan Parish Church on March 29, 1968 by Rev R MacPhail, Ronnie to Sheila, Uisken Croft, Bunnassan, Isle of Mull.

MACFARLANE - MACLENNAN - On March 30, 1968 at Strathfillan Parish Church by Rev I U MacDonald, John to Jessie, Balindore, Taynuilt.

MACKAY - WALKER - At Inveraray Parish Church on March 29, 1968 by Rev David Kellas, Jake MacKay to Jane Walker, Glen Aray View, Inveraray. 'So Far, So Good'.

MACLEAN - CAMERON - At Duncansburgh Parish Church, Fort William on March 29, 1968 by Rev Dr A.K. Robertson, Allan to Mary, Janika, Bunree, Onich. Love and congratulations from all the family.

DEATHS

GILLIES - Peacefully, at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, on March 23, 2018, in his 97th year, Kenneth (Kenny), beloved husband of the late Catherine (Rena), much loved father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Funeral service will take place at Oban Parish Church, Glencruitten Road, Oban on Tuesday, April 3 at 1.00 p.m. Thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery.

MACKINNON - Peacefully at his home in Llandybie, South Wales, on Monday March 19, following an illness borne with dignity and courage, Lachlan John MacKinnon, aged 60 years, formerly Hillcrest, Isle of Tiree, beloved husband of Lorraine, devoted father of Lachlan, Scott and Lauren and grumps to Lachlan, Sophia and Harper. Also a much loved father-in-law, brother and uncle. Interred Llandybie Cemetery. Deeply and sorely missed.

MATHER - On March 25, 2018, peacefully, at Mid Argyll Hospital, Lochgilphead, Willie, aged 69 years, elder son of the late Bill and Cathie Mather, Cairndow, loving father of Lesley, a much loved grandad, great grandad, brother and uncle. Funeral ceremony will take place at Cardross Crematorium, G82 5HD, on Tuesday, April 3 at 11.15am, to which all friends are respectfully invited. Family flowers only please, donations if desired to Mid Argyll Cancer Care Endowment Fund (Chemotherapy Suite).

SMITH - Peacefully at home on Friday March 23, 2018, after a brave battle with cancer, Callum Ian, in his 72nd year, loving husband to Morag and devoted father to Mairi, Christine and Callum. A retired maths teacher OHS, he was a dear friend, colleague and teacher to many. Funeral service will be held on Wednesday April 4, 2018 in Oban Free Church at 1pm, to which all are respectfully invited. Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired, to Macmillan Cancer Support and Pancreatic Cancer Scotland can be given at the church door or forwarded to D & A Munn Ltd Funeral Directors, Breadalbane Street, Oban PA34 5NZ.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GILLIES - Peacefully, at Belford Hospital on Wednesday, 15th March 2018, Archie 'Gus' Gillies, aged 78 years. Loving husband of Janet, devoted dad of Donald-John, Steven and the late Archie, proud Papa Gus of his 5 grandchildren and 1st great-granddaughter. - Janet and family would like to express

their sincere appreciation to all relatives, friends and neighbours for the kindness and sympathy shown to them following their sad loss. Special thanks to Fr. Roddy McAuley and Iain MacLear for their comforting Mass. Grateful thanks to Scott at John McLellan Funeral Directors for his personal and dignified service, thanks to Caol Community Centre for providing the catering. Finally, thanks to all those who attend Mass and generously donated £607.94 which will be divided between the Parish of St. John's and Craig Nevis Surgery.

KENNEDY - Angus and Allan would like to thank everyone for all their kind expressions of sympathy follow the loss of their mother Morag. Thanks to Fr Roddy McAuley for his moving and comforting Mass, Dr Brian Tregaskis and staff of Ward 1, CAU and A&E at Belford Hospital. Special thanks to John McLellan Funeral Directors for their professional services, The Corpach Hotel for providing the catering and David Robertson for his piping tribute. Sincere thanks to Craig Nevis Surgery, especially Dr. John Wallace who has cared for Morag over the years with such kindness and compassion. The sum of £758.80 kindly given and will be donated to Marie Curie.

MACDONALD - Lorraine, Jamie, Jean and family would like to thank all friends, neighbours, and relatives for their cards, letters, phone calls and flowers received in the sad passing of Ewan. Sincere thanks to Rev. Richard Baxter for his comforting service. Thank you to Scott and colleagues at John McLellan's for their help and support with the funeral arrangements, and to McDonald Brothers for the lovely flowers. Special thanks to Glen Mor GPs, district nurses, ambulance crew and all the staff in Belford Hospital A&E, CAU and Raigmore Hospital. Finally, thank you to all who donated so generously the amount of £371.43 which will be shared between Raigmore's HDU and Renal Unit.

MAC KENZIE - The family of the late Ian Mac Kenzie, 25 Balliemore, Kilmichael-Glassary, would like to thank everyone for their condolences upon his passing in his 96th year on March 1, 2018. Special thanks to the following: his home and personal carers; all staff and doctors at Mid Argyll Community Hospital; Rev Cliff Acklam for a most appropriate and personal funeral service, Hamish Hoey & Son Ltd-Funeral Director; Aulays Bar in Oban; Kilmartin Hotel; Morna Shaw (Flowers); Shona Brechin (Registrar). Following a long and full life, Ian will be sorely missed by all who knew him, particularly Eva, his wife of 62 years.

MACLEOD - Donald M, (Islay). Alasdair, Jane, Fiona and families would like to offer most heartfelt thanks to relatives and friends for your kindness following the passing of our dear father Donald. We were truly overwhelmed by the support shown by all, especially our own local neighbours. At times like this the true Islay spirit of friendship comes to the fore. Moran Taing a'chairdean. Thank you to the kind and professional staff who supported Donald so well at home, through the Rhinns Medical centre and District and during his brief and restful stay in Islay

Hospital. Sincere thanks to Reverend Valerie Watson for her uplifting sermon which captured dad so well. Having Alasdair Currie the current National Medalist to sing 'Eilidh' in the church and pipe and sing thereafter was perfect and poignant. Thank you to Jean and Craig MacAffer for such caring and professional handling of all funeral arrangements. Our gratitude to Niall Kirkpartick for his beautiful accordion playing; to Fiona Doyle for stunning floral tributes, and to An Tigh Seinnse for the fine purvey. The truly talented singers and instrumentalists in the Hall afterwards created a memorable 'Ceilidh' in the original sense of the word - thank you all. Thank you to the many who came to say goodbye. The £1200 you donated will be shared between the Mission for Seafarers and Help for Heroes. Moran Taing. Thaiad Comhlagu Siorruidh.

MICHIE - Malcolm, Colin, Teresa and all the family, would like to thank Hamish Hoey Funeral Directors for their professionalism and understanding regarding the arrangements, Rev Fulcher for her kind words and compassion. The Rowantree Hotel for the refreshments and a big thank you for those who attended the church and Pennyfuir. We would also like to say a special thanks to the staff at Eadar Glinn, for their wonderful care shown to Nana. The collection for Eadar Glinn raised £400.

SMITH - Angus, Marjorie and family would like to thank friends and neighbours for all their help and support in their recent sad loss of Flora. Grateful thanks to the staff of Care at Home, Dail Mhor and Lynn of Lorne for their great care. Thanks to Fr Francis and Fr Stan for a lovely service. To Jamie from McFalls for handling the funeral arrangements, Margaret for her beautiful singing and Donald for piping both at Church and the Island. Thanks to everyone who attended the service and gave so generously to the collection which came to £520 which will be divided between MS Society and Macmillan Nurses.

MEMORIAMS

ARMSTRONG - In loving memory of my dearest mother who passed away March 23, 1975. Also remembering dear friends Tootsie and Marie Campbell, Mrs Midge MacIsaac and the Rev John MacLeod and his dear wife Dolina, a very kind and caring vet. Also John Allan MacNeil, Barra and dear friend Nancy Duffy and also Pat Fountain. Inserted by Mrs Mary Lamont, Craigvarran House.

CAMERON - In loving memory of my dear husband Archie (Ginger), who died March 29, 2015. Never a day but in my thoughts. - Inserted by his loving wife Margaret.

CAMPBELL - In loving memory of George Duncan Campbell a much loved husband and a devoted dad who passed away on March 27, 2017. Loved and remembered always. - Margaret Ann and Colin.

CLARK - In loving memory of Effie, a dear sister and aunt, who died March 26, 2009. Loved and remembered today and every day - until we meet again. - From loving sister Mary and niece Mary.

MACKINNON - In loving memory of my dear wife Isabella, who passed away March 29, 2010. Memories of days together Live within my heart forever And also remembering loved ones gone before and after. - Your loving husband Donald.

MACNICOL - In loving memory of Seumas (James) who passed away March 20, 2015. Greatly missed and lovingly remembered by his family and friends. Nar cridheachan gu bràth.

McNICOL - Loving memories of dear parents and grandparents, Janet, died March 24, 1986 and Duncan, died November 29, 1987. Also remembering loved ones gone before and since then. Sadly missed. - Nellie, Tommy and family.

MOYES - In loving memory of Flora dearly loved wife of the late Ted Moyes and treasured mum, mother in law and granny, who passed away on March 30, 1990. Always in our thoughts Forever in our hearts. - Anne, Caroline, Ted and families.

PROSSER - In loving memory of our dear mother, gran and great-gran Mary, who died on March 26, 1997. Always in our thoughts, forever in our hearts. - Betty and all the family.

SMITH - In loving memory of a dear husband and dad Bernard Devlin Smith, who sadly passed away April 3, 2017. God saw you getting tired And a cure was not to be He put his arms around you and whispered come with me. A golden heart stopped beating Hard working hands now rest God broke our hearts to prove to us He only takes the best. Forever in our hearts. - Margory, Ian and Bernie xx

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 memory of our father Archibald, who died March 29, 1996. Forever in our thoughts. Inserted by Donald and Morag, Islay Airport Cottage.

Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

GRADUATION



ALEXANDER FLETCHER

Congratulations to Alexander Fletcher on his graduation from The University of Western Australia with a BSc Degree awarded with a Major in Engineering Science and a second degree in Computer Science. Alexander will now undertake his Master's Degree in Professional Engineering, specialising in Software Engineering. Alexander is the grandson of Margaret Fletcher of Oban, and a former student of Rockfield Primary School. He presently lives with his parents, Bobby and Vicki Fletcher, in Perth, Australia.

Mary's Meals now feeding more than 1.25 million mouths every school day



Mary's Meals are providing nutritious school meals to 1,257,278 children each day.

MARY'S Meals school feeding programme that reaches some of the world's poorest countries is now providing daily meals to more than 1.25 million hungry children.

The charity announced this week that it was feeding 1,257,278 youngsters, thanks to the continued generosity of supporters from around the world.

In the first few months of this year, the programme has been feeding an extra 20,822 vulnerable children in Zambia and Ethiopia.

Mary's Meals has also started feeding 14,606 children at 34 schools in Mambwe in Zambia and 6,216 children at nine schools in the Tigray region of Ethiopia.

The charity works alongside poverty-stricken communities across four continents to set up community-run school feeding programmes, encouraging children, who otherwise may be forced to work, beg or forage for food, to come to school and be fed which helps them concentrate on studies.

From feeding just 200 children in Malawi in 2002, Mary's Meals has grown

into a global movement providing life-changing meals to children in 15 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean every school day.

Mary's Meals' founder and chief executive Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow of Craig Lodge Catholic retreat at Dalmally said: 'Today, we share the wonderful news that we are now reaching 1,257,278 children with Mary's Meals.'

'This beautiful work of ours is only possible thanks to the love and dedication of our supporters and volunteers around the world who give their time, money, skills and prayer to help children find hope in the classroom.'

'With 61 million children still out of school and many more too hungry to concentrate on their lessons, our work is only just beginning. 'We are determined to keep our promise of a nutritious daily meal in a place of education to those children already benefiting from our school feeding programme, while - as funds allow - reaching out to the next hungry child waiting for Mary's Meals. 'Together, our journey con-

tinues - one step at a time, one meal at a time, one child at a time.'

Mary's Meals is owned and run by local communities where it works and is run by thousands of volunteers, including more than 80,000 in Malawi alone who give up their time to cook and serve food for their children.

Robert Zulu is a volunteer cook at Uyoba Primary School, one of latest schools to sign up. He said: 'I come and cook to help the school because I am a parent and my children will start school next year. The children are always full, they think the porridge is tasty.'

'The children come to school eagerly with their cups in their hands. School is important because when they are educated they will have knowledge and will become better in the future.'

Research shows that in schools where Mary's Meals are provided, enrolment increases, attendance improves, drop-out rates fall and children are happier, get better results and find it easier to concentrate in class.

To find out more or to donate, go to marysmeals.org.uk

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Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

Argyll schoolchildren get active



Rockfield primary ran out comfortable winners at the Active Schools' primary athletics competition. 16_T13_Athletics01

Rockfield come out on top in school athletics competition

PUPILS from Rockfield Primary School ran out comfortable winners last Thursday in a school athletics competition at Atlantis Leisure.

In total eight teams took part in the event: Dalmally, Taynuilt, Dunbeg, Rockfield B, St Columba's, Lochnell, Park, and Rockfield A.

And in the end, St Columba's and Lochnell shared third place, Park finished second and Rockfield A were the winners.

Best

At the prize giving ceremony, Atlantis Leisure's Kevin Keen said: 'Some of the athletics that I saw

today were some of the best that we have seen in years.'

The event was organised by both Atlantis Leisure and Active Schools. Gillian Walker, Active Schools coordinator, said: 'It was great. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed themselves and the standard was good.'



Winners of this year's primary school gymnastics competition 16_t12_Gymnastics01

Park primary win Oban, Lorn and Isles gymnastics festival

MORE than 100 primary school pupils leaped, rolled and flipped around Oban High School's sports hall last Tuesday for the annual Oban, Lorn and the Isles gymnastics festival.

Pupils from primaries across Oban, Lorn and the Isles took part in the

Active Schools event, however, it was Park 3 that were crowned the best group.

Second

In second place was Ardgour and Park 1 finished in third place.

Joshua Lane was awarded the best boy accolade, while Cairistiona

McAloon was chosen as the best girl.

Dawn Horsburgh, sports manager of Active Schools, said: 'It's nice to see boys and girls and a mixture of ages. This could not happen without the volunteers and all the dedicated people who give up their time and make the training happen.'



All the competitors who took part in the athletics competition. 16_T13_Athletics 2



More than 100 primary pupils took part in the recent Oban and Lorn Isles gymnastic festival. 16_T13_Gymnastics02

Kyokushinkai Karate

PREPARATIONS are under way for the Kyokushin Cup tournament on April 7 and the Irish Open on June 23. Serious training also begins now for the next grading test which will be held in June.

Anyone interested in learning Kyokushinkai Karate, should contact Iain Rodger on: 07584 166542 or iain@ikku.co.uk

Shukokai Karate

ARGYLL Martial Arts are holding a grading test on Sunday April 29 in Dalmally Community Centre. There will also be a mini tournament on the same day for the junior students.

Parents and friends are invited to watch and refreshments will be available throughout the afternoon. Anyone looking for more details should contact

MARTIAL ARTS WITH IAN RODGER

Kenny Gray on: kenni.gray@btinternet.com or 07884 183905.

BJJ

OBAN BJJ had its first seminar of the year on March 17 with head coach Marcos Nardini.

This seminar covered gi chokes from bottom guard. This well-attended seminar was an introduction to some newer students to head coach Marcos, who also gave them an opportunity to see what it's like to spar with a BJJ black belt.

Classes continue to grow and students' levels of ability and confidence are growing at a

great rate with different abilities and body shapes helping everyone's game.

Anyone looking for more information about BJJ and MMA classes should contact club coach Iain (Coogie) Potter on coogiepots@gmail.com

Kickboxing

SATURDAY March 24 saw Senshi Do Kick Boxing students grading for their next belts.

Head coach Wullie Rodger said: 'All the students worked hard, some even managed not to talk the whole time. I'm really happy with the progress being



Senshi Do kick boxing students at their grading on March 24.



A back kick demonstration by Kieran Denholme. Holding the pad is Rebecca Palmer.

made by the students. They all showed what they are capable of and Alfie Byers stood out especially and will have a great future in martial arts if he keeps applying himself as he does now.'

Results are as follows: achieving Orange Belt 8th Kyu - Ruairidh McInnes and Ondrije Carpenter. Green Belt 7th Kyu - Callum Morrison, Callan May and Daniel May. Blue Belt 6th Kyu - Alfie Byers, Cully Ahmed

and Joe Roberts. Purple Belt 5th Kyu - Kyde Ahmed. Brown belt 3rd Kyu - Archie Palmer. Brown belt 1st Kyu - Adam Bratton.

Training is now focusing on the Kyokushin Cup Tournament April 7. Sessions continue as normal Wednesdays 4.30pm juniors 6pm Seniors, Fridays Juniors 4.30pm and Sunday 11am Juniors. For more details, contact Wullie Rodger on 07588 513618, shihanwill@gmail.com, or pop along to the club.

Oban Otters receive funding from Oban Common Good Fund

OBAN Otters has received £2,814 from Oban Common Good Fund to replace 20-year-old equipment.

The money will be used to buy anti-turbulence ropes and a storage trolley, which will enable swimmers to concentrate on their technique in less choppy water and the club anticipate improved race times.

At the Argyll and Clyde Swim Team Head to Head competition in Dunoon all Oban swimmers achieved at least one personal best in the back crawl, freestyle and individual medley races.

This was the first competitive swim away from home for Ewan Dowd, Abby Docherty, Megan

Swimming

Carré, Juliette Main and Alex Elliott.

The increase in the number of swimmers competing is due to the recent change in focus for the club, with the Learn To Swim programme being run by Oban Swim School, while Oban Otters concentrate on competitive club swimming which requires membership of the Scottish Amateur Swimming Association.

Otters anticipate that the increase in the number of competitive swimmers will continue, especially with the investment in equipment by the Oban Common Good Fund.



Members of Oban Otters who competed in Dunoon.



Members of Oban BJJ who attended the first seminar of the season with head coach Marcos Nardini. Back row, left to right: Dan Richards, Ruairigh Black, Gregory Black, Dawid Loukil, Mateusz Grabiec, Pawel Sczencia, Craig Cameron, Gru Chochlik and Martin Currie. Middle row, left to right: Paul McGhee, Lee Williamson, Liam Roberts, Sean Rowan, Drew MacCallum, Ewen Weir, Callum Weir and Callum Galbraith. Front row from left: Coogie Potter and Marcos Nardini.

Double delight for Inverlochly youth shinty teams at national finals



The victorious Inverlochly P5 and P7 winning teams.

THE TRAVIS Perkins National finals brought together more than 200 of the best young players from across Scotland all vying for the coveted National P5 and P7 titles.

The P7-and-under tournament was played at the Nevis Centre, Fort William recently in front of a large and noisy crowd. The standard of play throughout the day was of the highest order with all the 14 teams giving a great account of themselves.

Section A saw the impressive Bute primaries top the group on maximum points with another

south team, Kilmory, two points behind, claiming the runners-up spot.

Section B was dominated by the excellent Inverlochly side topping the group, with Taynuilt clinching second spot on goal difference from Aberdour.

The semi-finals were hotly contested, with the two section winners proving too strong in the end, with Bute defeating Taynuilt 4 - 0 and Inverlochly edging past Kilmory by the same scoreline to set-up an intriguing final.

The final started with Inver-

lochly on the attack and they took an early lead through the classy Rhys Kennedy.

Bute responded and went close to equalising, only for Inverlochly to score again with a well-taken goal by Ben Britton.

Deadly duo

Inverlochly scored a further two goals from the deadly duo of Rhys Kennedy and Ben Britton to win the P7-and-under National First Shinty Championships 2018.

Willie MacDonald the Camanachd Association's youth director presented the trophy

and medals to all the players.

The Fair Play Award went to Drakies Primary School in Inverness.

The P5-and-under competition took place at Lochaber High School and the large crowd was entertained with an afternoon of fantastic shinty.

Inverlochly and Taynuilt/Lochnell schools qualified from a highly competitive Section A, with Portree and Newtonmore primary schools qualifying from Section B.

The semi-finals were close affairs with the impressive

School shinty

Inverlochly defeating a young Newtonmore side 3-1 and Taynuilt/Lochnell edging Portree Primary 4-1 to set up an exciting final.

The final was a highly competitive encounter with the talented and impressive Inverlochly side proving too strong in the end for a gallant Taynuilt/Lochnell side by running out worthy 3 - 1 winners.

The Fair Play Award went to Newtonmore Primary.

Saints get back to winning ways

Oban Saints	4
Hillington	1
SAFL Premier Division	

A BRACE from Shaun MacIver at Glencruitten last Saturday book-ended strikes from Craig MacEwan and Willie Gemmell to avenge Oban Saints' opening day of the season defeat at the hands of newly promoted Hillington.

Sadly for Hillington the defeat, their 13th of a difficult season, confirms their immediate return to Premier Division One for next season.

Saints skipper Donald Campbell had the first sight of goal in the second minute but sent a tame effort straight at Hillington keeper Gordon Phillips when sent clean through by Craig MacEwan.

MacEwan set up a second Saints chance in the fourth minute with a run up the left touchline from deep inside his own half. MacEwan played the ball up to Donald Campbell on the 18-yard line and his lay-off found Matthew Kelly who, unfortunately, was closed down by Ian McFadyen and Neil Walsh before he could get his shot away.

The visitors turned defence into attack with a quick counter where Willie Gemmell had to look lively to cut out a Scott Gold through ball for Aaron Boyle.

The visitors forced the first corner of the match in the ninth minute but Stuart Asht-

on's delivery from the left was too high for Aaron Boyle at the back post and drifted harmlessly behind.

Saints opened the scoring from the goal kick with Myles McAuley winning a header in the centre circle which Matthew Kelly seized upon. Kelly quickly played Shaun MacIver in behind the Hillington back four who, from the corner of the box, drilled a low shot past the advancing keeper and into the net.

Saints slackness in possession was punished in the 29th minute when Aaron Boyle pounced on a misplaced pass and raced through on goal. Graham Douglas came off his line to try and cut out the danger but slipped on the soggy Glencruitten turf.

Clipped

Boyle took the ball around the prostrate keeper but, with the Saints defence getting back in numbers, was clipped from behind by Paul Carmichael giving referee Jimmy Litster an easy decision to award a penalty kick. Stuart Ashton made no mistake sending Graham Douglas the wrong way from the penalty spot, giving the visitors what was a deserved equaliser at the stage.

There was a large slice of good fortune attached to Saints' second goal in the 37th minute. Matthew Kelly played a long ball over the top looking for Donald Campbell whose run was matched by Craig

Phillips, who played the ball back to his goal keeper on the corner of the 18-yard box. The keeper then fired his attempted clearance straight at Craig MacEwan who, unfortunately for the Hillington number one, was able to get the ball quickly under control and lift it over the stranded keeper and into the unguarded net.

Saints stretched their advantage with five minutes of the first half remaining. Steven Cunningham felled Matthew Kelly on the edge of the D giving Willie Gemmell an opportunity to add to his already impressive goals tally.

The Saints dead ball expert didn't disappoint and found the bottom corner bending the ball around the five-man Hillington wall and beating the despairing left hand of Gordon Phillips.

Young Hillington striker Aaron Boyle continued to make a nuisance of himself and pressured Paul Carmichael and Graham Douglas into a slip at the back in the 42nd minute. The keeper's hurried clearance from Carmichael's pass back was charged down by Boyle with Douglas having to scamp back to smother the ball on his goal line.

Mr Litster brought a high tempo first half to an end with the visitors slightly unlucky to find themselves two goals behind.

Saints kicked off the second half attacking the Mossfield end and were quickly on the attack through Scott Maitland on the left. Maitland's run opened up space for Craig MacEwan who tee'd up Kerr Newbigging for a shot from 20 yards. Gordon Phillips could only parry Newbigging's shot into the path of Donald Campbell who, under pressure from Lee Wales, couldn't re-direct the ball on target.

Willie Gemmell handed Hillington set-piece expert Adam Nisanci a chance to exhibit his talents after he upended David Murdoch on the edge of the Saints box in the 49th minute. Nisanci fired a good effort inches over the crossbar with Graham Douglas well beaten.

The action moved to the other end where Donald Campbell won a corner on the Saints left. The skipper's delivery to



Willie Gemmell put Saints 3-1 in front with a well-taken free kick. Match report and photos: Derek Black

the back post was headed back across the face of goal by Shaun MacIver but with no takers in navy blue. The visitors could only partially clear the danger and, from the corner of the 18-yard box, Kerr Newbigging picked out Myles McAuley on the penalty spot who could only find the gloves of Gordon Phillips with his header.

Mr Litster very harshly penalised Shaun MacIver on the corner of the Saints 18-yard box for what appeared to be a perfectly legitimate challenge on Stuart Ashton. However, the visitors failed to capitalise on the referee's generosity and Adam Nisanci sent the free-kick into the grateful arms of Graham Douglas.

Dangerous area

Thorn-in-the-side Boyle won another free-kick for the visitors in a dangerous area in the 68th minute but once again the Saints defence stood firm with Kerr Newbigging heading away the delivery from Nisanci.

Saints put the final outcome beyond any doubt in the 69th minute with Shaun MacIver cutting in from the left and firing a low shot across Gordon Phillips and into the bottom corner for his second and Saints' fourth goal of the afternoon.

Myles McAuley was denied a fifth for Saints two minutes later from a Scott Maitland throw-in on the left. Donald Campbell ran in behind the Hillington defence and sent a cutback to Craig MacEwan who tee'd up McAuley for a shot from 18 yards which Ian McFadyen did well to block.

Shaun MacIver's afternoon came to a premature end when he picked up an ankle knock in the 76th minute. MacIver was replaced by young James Ford making his home debut. Saints gaffer Alex Craik made it a double change withdrawing Jamie Graham and giving another run-out to youngster Ruaridh Horne.

Ford's trickery was probably not what the tiring Hillington defence wanted to see at this late stage of the game and the Saints substitute gave them a few anxious moments in the final 15 minutes or so.

After holding off the close attentions of Scott Gold, Adam Nisanci and Neil Walsh, Ford sent a dipping 80th minute effort inches over the Hillington crossbar.

Fellow substitute Ruaridh Horne was also just the wrong side of the woodwork two minutes later when sent through by Craig MacEwan. With the Hillington defence pressing high up the pitch Horne had acres of space to run into on the right and was given a perfect cross-field ball by MacEwan. The youngster beat the advancing keeper but could only find the side netting with his clipped effort from 18 yards.

Saints gaffer Alex Craik made his final change with five minutes remaining replacing Scott Maitland with another Saints youngster Craig MacMillan.

As the clock ticked down another James Ford run on the right won a corner kick which the youngster swung over himself. Myles McAuley



Saints striker Shaun MacIver, who scored two goals, takes on Hillington defender Neil Walsh.

won a knock down into the path of Donald Campbell who was denied the back post by yet another timely Lee Wales interception.

Adam Nisanci joined Paul Carmichael in referee Litster's notebook for hauling back Matthew Kelly in the 90th minute.

Saints played the free-kick short with Matthew Kelly and Myles McAuley working an opening for Donald Campbell, who will be disappointed not to have added to the scoring with a tame effort from 14 yards.

Referee Litster decided he had seen enough and blew the full-time whistle.

The result lifts Saints to seventh place in the league table

Football

but the defeat means Hillington are relegated.

Unfortunately, however, they must now endure an enforced free weekend while the Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division takes the Easter holiday and potential Scottish Amateur Cup quarter final opponents Sandys and Goldenhill replay their seventh round tie in Drumchapel.

Manager Alex Craik will travel to watch this game and run the rule over Saints' opposition for the Scottish Cup quarter final which will take place on Saturday April 7.



James Ford takes on Adam Nisanci and Neil Walsh.

Oban win league title at first attempt

Clydesdale 5s	1
Oban 1s	19
West District Men's Div 4	

OBAN Men's 1 met second from bottom team Clydesdale Men's 5 on Saturday. The difference in league standing was soon apparent.

Oban knew that a win would see them league champions so right from the outset they were on the front foot. This

Team	Played	Points
Oban	11	25
Ayr	10	17
Hillhead	10	16
Giffnock	10	13
Dumfries	10	13
Clydesdale	11	5
East Kilbride	10	3

was no foregone conclusion as availability of players for a club's fifth team is always uncertain. On this occasion Clydesdale fielded many young players who although skilful and determined were no match for the Oban team. They would always be second when it came to speed and stamina. In addition Clydesdale opted to use a kicking back goalkeeper which left them more vulnerable in defence.

It took only a couple of minutes before the Oban passing and movement created a shot at goal: it went wide of the post. A minute or so later another shot went the wrong side of the upright. Was this going to be one of those games where all

the chances went begging?

Eventually the endeavour paid off and the Oban account was opened. Throughout the first half Oban pressed and converted most of their on-goal chances. Clydesdale were not bad in possession and while they did venture into the Oban half the solid defence regained the ball and initiated fluent passing back towards the opposite D.

Clydesdale demonstrated that they were not overawed by the onslaught and towards the end of the half scored probably the goal of the match; a reverse stick shot under pressure from the defender on the edge of the D which flew at head height into the back of the net.

Hockey

At half time Oban had netted eight goals to Clydesdale's one.

In the second half there were fewer misses and the eventual tally for the half was 11.

Scorers were Ali Burton - 7, Stuart Head - 7, Lorne Binnie - 3, George Gauley - 1, Theo Andrews - 1.

Man of the match went to Lorne Binnie, one of Oban's new players - new to hockey this season - who scored a first-half hat trick.

This was a dominant Oban display, but the attitude and clubhouse welcome of the Clydesdale players was a credit to them.



Action from last weekend's convincing win over Clydesdale 5.

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competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

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SHINTY

Best for all shinty news, results and fixtures

Marine Harvest Media Award winners 2016

Kingussie win Badenoch derby

KINGUSSIE won their first Badenoch derby since 2014, Kyles Athletic missed the chance to close the gap on Marine Harvest Premiership leaders Kinlochshiel and Oban Celtic stay top of the Marine Harvest National Division following the shinty action on Saturday March 24.

Marine Harvest Premiership

Newtonmore 0 Kingussie 1

The first Badenoch derby of the season took place at The Eilan where Kingussie upset the odds to win 1-0.

Newtonmore's Glen MacKintosh was back in the starting line-up after missing his side's opening league fixture win against Oban Camanachd through suspension. He started in attack with Evan Menzies, Fraser MacKintosh and Ewen Fraser. Steven MacDonald remained out. Paul MacArthur, Neil Stewart and Iain Robinson made up a strong bench.

Kingussie were still without the injured Fraser Munro. Captain Rory MacGregor was unavailable as was Calum Grant and injury ruled out Lee Bain. Louis Munro and Sandy Elrick returned to the side though with the former at full forward and the latter starting on the bench. James Hutchison, who came on as a substitute against Glenurquhart a week earlier, took his place at full centre.

The only goal of the game came on 12 minutes. Rory MacKeachan played a free hit out of defence, down the Kingussie right flank. Roddy Young gathered the ball and found James Falconer with a good pass. Falconer turned and his shot was saved by Kenny Ross in the Newtonmore goals but wing centre Savio Genini had made a great run forward and he got to the rebound ahead of Drew MacDonald to tuck the ball home from close range.

The young Kingussie defence of Robert Mabon, Rory MacKeachan, Kieran MacPherson and Alexander Michie stood up well to the challenge of the more physical Newtonmore forward line. Kingussie keeper Craig Dawson had several saves to make and he always looked in control.

It was Kingussie's first win in this fixture since August 1 2014 when they won 3-2 in the first of the televised Friday evening games.

Andy MacKintosh was one of the few Newtonmore players to gain passmarks and PJ MacKintosh's side will look to bounce back in this weekend's cottages.com MacTavish Cup first round, a repeat of last year's final when Newtonmore came out on top.

Lovat 1 Kyles Athletic 0

Kyles Athletic missed the opportunity to close the gap on Kinlochshiel at the top of the table when they lost 1-0 against Lovat at Balgate.

Lovat boss Fraser Gallacher had a selection headache ahead of this match. Captain Lewis Tawse was getting married and Craig Mainland and Duncan Davidson were guests. Lorne MacKay was still missing and Martin Mainland remained injured. However, Daniel Grieve had recovered sufficiently from a knock to be able to take up his usual place in defence. Ryan Ferguson, making a comeback to the senior squad to help out, and manager Gallacher, were Lovat's only substitutes.

Kyles Athletic manager James Perlich had Sandy MacKenzie back from suspension and he started on the bench along with Innes MacDonald and Ross MacRae. Donald Irvine was unavailable, Grant Irvine was abroad and Rupert Williamson was left out of the squad. Thomas Whyte went to centre, with Gordon Whyte and Robbie MacLeod either side of him.

The Lovat defence had to endure a period of early Kyles' pressure but, with Drew Howie and Mark Kelly excellent at the back, and Daniel Grieve and Callum Cruden playing their part too, they kept the visitors at bay.

Kyles had the breeze at their backs during the first half and keeper John Whyte had little to do. However, such was the dominance of the Lovat defence, keeper Stuart MacDonald only had one save of note to make, using his feet to keep out a shot through a ruck of players.

Kyles suffered a blow on 33 minutes when Roddy MacDonald had to go off. He had hurt his back in training and had to leave the field after a tangle with Callum Cruden.

While Kyles had the wind advantage in the first half, it started to get stronger in the second period and Lovat came more into the game.

Lovat called for a penalty on 62 minutes, claiming Callum Miller stopped the ball on the line with his arm but goal judge Alan MacPherson waved away their claims.

Kyles suffered another injury blow on 75 minutes. Keeper John Whyte came off his line to usher the ball out of play for a goal-hit. However, he went over on his ankle awkwardly and had to be helped from the field. Former Scotland U17 keeper Innes MacDonald took over between the sticks.

With 10 minutes remaining, Ryan Ferguson came off the Lovat bench with Fraser Gallacher introduced a couple of minutes later. The changes seemed to spur Lovat on and Innes MacDonald did well to save a first-time effort from Gallacher having earlier stopped another effort from the same player.

It looked like a draw was on the cards. Lovat danger-man Greg Matheson was well-policed by Kyles' defender Andrew King. Matheson showed just why he is one of the game's top forwards on 87 minutes though when he got away from King to run onto a Marc MacLachlan ball on the

Lovat left. With very little back-lift, Matheson shot goalwards and whilst Innes MacDonald got a foot to the strike, the power of the shot took the ball high into the net to give Lovat both points.

Dunkie Kerr collected the game's only yellow card when he was booked by referee Andy MacLean for not retreating five yards at a free-hit.

Lovat go second in the division ahead of this Saturday's league match away to Oban Camanachd.

Kyles are also in league action as they travel to play Glenurquhart.

Glenurquhart 1 Lochaber 1

After three Saturdays without a game, Lochaber took the field for the first time this season when they travelled to play Glenurquhart in a 3pm throw-up at Blairbeg.

Glenurquhart's David MacLennan served a one-match suspension as his booking against Oban Camanachd a fortnight earlier took him through the disciplinary points threshold. Fraser Heath was also missing, but James MacPherson was back.

New Lochaber boss Neil MacDonald has keeper Callum MacDonald sidelined after suffering an accident at work so Ally MacDonald was between the sticks. Brian MacDonald served a one-match ban carried forward from the end of last season.

After a goal-less first half, Shaun Nicolson fired Lochaber into the lead on the hour mark.

However, five minutes later, Connor Golabek ran in to turn home a ball from the left from inside the 'D' to earn Glenurquhart a share of the points.

Skye Camanachd 1 Caberfeidh 5

Skye Camanachd and Caberfeidh, both promoted from the Marine Harvest National Division last season, battled it out at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree, with the visitors claiming two valuable points following a 5-1 win.

Skye boss John MacLeod was without keeper Iain MacLeod so Ryan Morrison deputised between the sticks. Stewart Grant was also missing so Ally 'Spod' MacLeod came into the squad and started on the bench with Connor Gilpin taking Grant's place in defence.

Caberfeidh's manager Jodi Gorski had Scott MacLachlan and Jamie MacKintosh back from injury and both started on the bench. Ryan Symonds was still missing.

Will Cowie gave Skye the lead on five minutes when he produced a great finish following a Ruairaidh MacLeod corner on the right.

Two Kevin Bartlett goals had Caberfeidh ahead at the break though. First, Bartlett struck the ball low across the keeper after Ally MacLennan had won possession. Bartlett then cracked the ball high into the net from



Newtonmore's Ewan Fraser jumps out of the way as Kingussie's Alexander Michie and Newtonmore's Evan Menzies start swinging.

Photograph: Neil Paterson.

an almost impossible angle on the left to leave the visitors 2-1 ahead at the break.

Craig Morrison added two more goals after the re-start. His first came on 47 minutes when his shot from the left deceived the keeper. Morrison got his second, and Caberfeidh's fourth, following a free-hit at the edge of the 'D' with 52 minutes played. His initial attempt was blocked by Connor Gilpin but Morrison hammered the re-bound into the net.

Skye had the ball in the net midway through the half but goal judge Donnie Martin ruled the effort offside.

Kevin Bartlett blasted home a penalty on 87 minutes to complete his hat-trick after referee Calum Girvan penalised a Skye defender for falling on the ball inside the 'D'.

Caberfeidh manager Jodi Gorski will be pleased to have amassed three points already this season, especially as his first two matches were against Kinlochshiel and Kyles Athletic. Caberfeidh have a very good core to their side with full back Martin MacDonald outstanding at the back before he was forced off injured and Blair Morrison turning in another assured performance at buckshee back.

Ally MacLennan prompts the midfield, whilst Kevin Bartlett and Craig Morrison pose an obvious threat up front.

Skye are without a fixture for the next two Saturdays.

Kinlochshiel P Oban Camanachd P

The match between league leaders Kinlochshiel and Oban Camanachd was postponed as Kirkton was ruled unplayable.

The field was playable on Friday evening but an 8am Saturday morning inspection led to a call-off.

For Oban Camanachd manager Ian Hay, it will allow an extra week to ease his injury list ahead of this weekend's home meeting with Lovat. Garry Lord and Willie Neilson picked up knocks in the previous week's draw with Glenurquhart whilst Gavin Stobbart is also recovering from injury. However Scott McKillop and Aidan MacIntyre are now rated longer term absentees.

Kinlochshiel boss Johnston Gill will have been disappointed to miss the opportunity to keep his side's winning momentum going. However with title challengers Kyles Athletic and Newtonmore both losing, he will have had worse days.

Marine Harvest National Division

Strathglass 3 Oban Celtic 4

League leaders Oban Celtic stay top of the table after they came from behind on three occasions to finally see off Strathglass 4-3 at Cannich.

Michael Stokes returned to



Glenurquhart's Connor Golabek slots the ball past Lochaber keeper Alistair MacDonald to make it

1-1. Photograph: Donald Cameron.

boost Strathglass. Neil Carmichael and Andy Hunt returned to the Oban Celtic squad but, with Rory Bruce and Fulton Ross already missing, Daniel MacMillan was a Saturday morning call-off so manager Kenny Witherspoon travelled north with just 14 players. This didn't affect the spirit and effort the away side put in however.

Strathglass went ahead on six minutes when a clever Darren Reid finish found the corner of the Celtic net.

Celtic pressed to get back level and equalised on 17 minutes when an Andy Hunt corner from the right found Ross MacMillan and his shot looped over the keeper and into the net.

Strathglass forward Scott Douglas was causing Michael MacKinnon all sorts of problems and he put Strathglass back in front with a cracking strike on 27 minutes.

Daniel Madej's goal on 30 minutes made it 2-2, only for Scott Douglas to produce another fine finish to see the home team go in at the break 3-2 ahead.

A positive and encouraging half-time team talk from Kenny Witherspoon seemed to do the trick as the Oban side bossed the second half and Ally McKerracher's performance at full centre made him the man of the match.

Celtic made changes on the hour as Calum MacLean and Andy Hunt made way for Dylan Cooke and veteran Iain MacKechnie. The moves proved significant as Celtic levelled for the third time on 70 minutes. A low drive from Andy MacDonald beat the keeper to make it 3-3.

A couple of minutes later, Celtic went ahead for the first time in the match and it was no more than they deserved. Ally McKerracher's long ball from his own half found full forward Daniel Madej who controlled the ball well. Madej played an intelligent ball, finding the advancing Ross MacMillan who fired past the keeper to make it 4-3.

The win and never-say-die

attitude keeps Oban Celtic top of the table - a point ahead of Kilmallie.

Oban Celtic now begin preparations for this Saturday's Glasgow Celtic Society Cup first round tie at home to Bute.

Fort William 2 Kilmallie 3

It was also derby day at An Aird where Fort William and Kilmallie locked horns.

Fort William went into the game on the back of a good win at Inveraray, whilst Kilmallie had suffered the disappointment of a home defeat to Inverness.

Sean Cameron, Sean Cruickshank and Graham Campbell all returned for Fort William.

Kilmallie's Liam MacDonald was still injured but Michael Rodger and Craig MacIsaac were free of suspension. Rodger started, whilst MacIsaac came off the bench during the second half. Innes Blackhall was free to play for Kilmallie but he will miss this weekend's cottage.com MacTavish Cup tie against Newtonmore through suspension.

Fort William got off to a great start when Arran MacPhee bagged a spectacular opener on two minutes, volleying the ball over his head and into the net.

Daniel Stewart levelled against his former club on 21 minutes and it remained all square until the break.

Kilmallie made a powerful start to the second period and Michael Rodger shot from distance into the bottom corner of the net on 49 minutes to make it 2-1.

Just 60 seconds later, the visitors extended their lead when Daniel Stewart stuck the ball high into the net, also from distance, to make it 3-1.

Graham Campbell slammed home a re-bound on 63 minutes to make it 3-2, but Kilmallie stayed in front to claim the local bragging rights, lifting the 2017 Mod Cup in the process.

Glasgow Mid Argyll 1 Beaulieu 1

Glasgow Mid Argyll and Beaulieu drew 1-1 at Yoker.

GMA's John Don MacKenzie was free of suspension, whilst Finlay MacMillan and Ewen Murray also returned.

Liam Girvan was still missing for Beaulieu.

Craig Anderson put Glasgow Mid Argyll ahead on 72 minutes. Anderson took his goal well, beating a couple of defenders before firing a well-struck 18 yard shot past Josh Grant in the Beaulieu goal.

Beaulieu equalised 10 minutes from time. A loose ball out of the GMA defence fell for Sean Stewart outside the 'D' and his well-taken snap-shot beat the keeper to make it 1-1.

There was a lot of hurried hitting in the game and a lack of goal-mouth action, although it took a good save from Robert Dunnington to stop Beaulieu getting a second.

Inverness 1 Inveraray 2

Inveraray made the long journey north to the Bught Park, looking for their first win of the season against an Inverness side in confident mood after their impressive win at Kilmallie the previous week.

Inverness were without Ewen Neilson, but Jason McLeod and James MacKenzie returned, whilst the visitors travelled without six players including the suspended Allan MacDonald.

Clear-cut first half chances were hard to come by with both defences well on top. Inveraray were especially well-marshalled by half back John Kennedy and the teams went in at the interval locked at 0-0.

There were strong words in the Inveraray changing rooms at half-time and they finally took a grip of the game and, on the hour mark, were unfortunate not to take the lead when veteran David Robertson, who was returning to the team to help cover the list of absentees, smashed a powerful shot against the upright from 20 yards out.

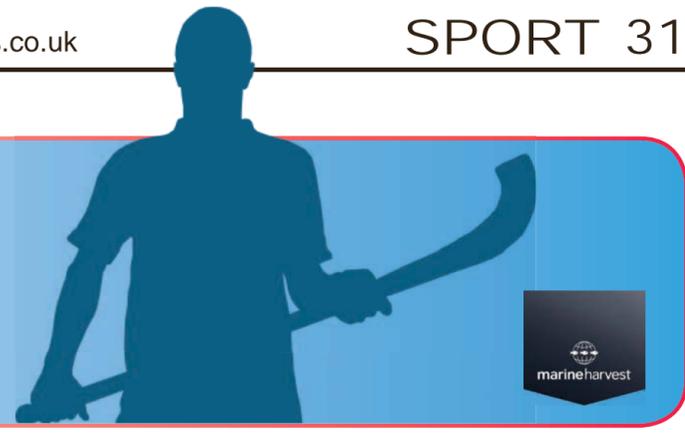
The breakthrough came on 67 minutes, albeit from an unlikely source. Nicholas Crawford hit a speculative 40-yard lob which



Lovat keeper Stuart MacDonald making another save watched by teammate Daniel Grieve and Kyles Athletic's Dunkie Kerr. Photograph: Donald Cameron.

Camanachd Cup Macaulay Cup MacTavish Cup Celtic Society Cup

Sutherland Cup Balliemore Cup Strathdearn Cup Bullough Cup



took an awkward bounce in front of the keeper and ended up in the net. It was Crawford's first goal for the Inveraray senior side and it came at a good time.

To their credit, Inveraray upped their game and went in search of an equaliser. They got their reward on 76 minutes when Inveraray keeper Scott MacLachlan brought down the onrushing James Cameron and referee Archie Ritchie pointed to the spot. Inveraray claimed the infringement was just outside the 'D' but the referee was in no doubt. Inverness veteran Dougie Rankin, who had a fine game throughout, hit a powerful penalty, low into the corner of the goal, giving the keeper no chance.

Inverness had James MacKenzie red-carded five minutes from time and a draw looked the likely outcome until the fourth minute of stoppage time. The goal came from a disputed free-kick and the ball broke kindly for Lewis Montgomery who rifled a shot home from the edge of the 'D' to give Inveraray the win.

Inverness will be hugely disappointed not to have taken anything from the game but Inveraray deserve credit for claiming the win with so many regulars out.

Marine Harvest North Division 1

Kingussie 2 Newtonmore 5

The reserve team derby between Kingussie and Newtonmore at The Dell was brought forward to 11.30am to allow local supporters the chance to attend this game and the senior match later in the afternoon.

Russell Menzies and Dylan Borthwick came into the Kingussie side which lost to the Skye reserves a week earlier.

Newtonmore had Iain Richardson at full back with Iain Robinson in attack but there was no Chris Sellar who got a hat-trick in the win over the Glenurquhart seconds a week earlier.

Newtonmore's Calum Stewart opened the scoring and he could have had a couple more, hitting good opportunities over the top. Kingussie fought back and scored twice within a couple of minutes through Chris Hollysong and Dylan Borthwick to take a 2-1 lead, perhaps against the run of play.

Newtonmore got back on level terms before half-time with Neil Stewart scoring a long-range screamer.

Craig MacLeod, Somhairle Thomson and David Fraser all scored for Newtonmore in the second half to seal a deserved win.

Owen Fraser bossed the midfield for Newtonmore, whilst Scott Chisholm also played well. **Aberdeen University 0
Skye Camanachd 4**

The Skye Camanachd reserves leap-frog Aberdeen University to go second in the table following their impressive 4-0 victory over the students at Balgownie. Skye created several chances before Martin Pringle gave them the lead on 27 minutes with a superb low shot from outside the 'D'.

Ross Gordon added a second on 36 minutes after some good

Skye pressing. Chris Rose, back in the side after a three-year absence, came off the bench to make it 3-0 three minutes into the second half when he drilled a low shot into the net after Aberdeen keeper Willie Hunter had made a save.

Skye introduced Marcus Scott, making a return to shinty after a 20 year absence, and he almost grabbed a debut goal but his long range effort went just over the bar.

The Skye forwards combined to set up Ross Gordon for his second goal of the afternoon on 60 minutes.

It wasn't Aberdeen's day and former Skye player Jamie Beaton had a chance to pull a goal back when he got free in the box. But Murphy Henderson, in goal for Skye in place of Ryan Morrison who was with the first team, saved with his hand before clearing the danger.

Skye deserved the win. Brothers John Angus MacInnes and David MacInnes ran the midfield along with the tireless Ian MacPherson.

Glengarry 3 Fort William 1

Glengarry go third in the league after they beat the Fort William colts 3-1 at Craigard.

Raymond Robertson scored after 10 and 16 minutes to give Glengarry an early advantage.

Fort William, who were without the suspended David Wright, pulled a goal back through Greg Kelly a minute into the second half.

When referee Ronnie Campbell awarded Glengarry a penalty on 65 minutes, Raymond Robertson took responsibility to complete his hat-trick, giving Glengarry two wins from two games.

Glenurquhart 0 Kinlochshiel 2

The Glenurquhart reserves and the Kinlochshiel reserves were both after their first points of the season when they met in a noon throw-up at Blairbeg.

And it was the visitors who took both points.

Young Finlay MacRae gave Kinlochshiel the lead on 10 minutes and, when referee Steven MacLachlan awarded the Kirkton side a penalty a couple of minutes into the second half after Duncan Matheson had been brought down inside the box, Ally Nixon stepped up to score.

Marine Harvest South Div 1

Lochside Rovers 3 Aberdour 0

Lochside Rovers had to work hard to notch their first win of the season, beating Aberdour 3-0 at Mossfield.

With Oban Camanachd's first team match postponed, manager Gareth Evans was able to recall Cameron Sutherland in goal, whilst Daniel Sloss played up front. There was also a place for Daniel MacCuish on the wing, with Craig MacDougall starting on the bench so it was more like the 2017 Lochside Rovers title winning side.

Aberdour were short of players, so much so that Roddy MacColl came out of retirement to play in goal and regular keeper Tom Bowerman started out



Lochside's Lewis Buchanan opens the scoring against Aberdour at Mossfield last Saturday in a game the red and blacks won 3-0. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn.

field. There was a sign of things to come on five minutes when Roddy MacColl made a great save to deny Ross Campbell.

Lochside did go ahead on 30 minutes though. A Scott Robertson corner came over the top and broke to Lewis Buchanan who made enough space around the penalty spot and sent a well-struck, head-height shot past an unsuspecting MacColl in the Aberdour goal.

Lochside continued to play well for the remainder of the half but lacked an end product.

Roddy MacColl saved a 30 yard Daniel MacCuish shot with his chest just a couple of minutes into the second half.

Lennon Campbell made it 2-0 on 60 minutes.

Ross Campbell did well, closing down the Aberdour defence to prevent them clearing their lines and he won possession before setting up Lennon Campbell to score.

The hosts made it 3-0 a couple of minutes later when referee Graham Cameron awarded them a penalty after Ross Campbell had been barged in the back. Michael MacQueen made no mistake from the spot.

Aberdour were never out of the game and came close to pulling a goal back when David MacKenzie volleyed a rebound over following a Cameron Sutherland save.

Lochside introduced Craig MacDougall to shore things up and, with Daniel Sloss and Ross Campbell catching the eye along with full back Jack Rippon, they looked the sharper side and were worthy winners.

Kilmory 2 Bute 3

Bute had to battle all the way to eventually overcome a determined Kilmory side 3-2 at MacRae Park.

The match was originally to take place at The Meadows but was reversed on Friday giving the islanders two away fixtures.

A spectacular Alister MacArthur volley got Kilmory off to a great start with a goal after just two minutes.

Iain MacDonald made it 1-1 on eight minutes.

Bute's Robert Walker, who missed the defeat to Col Glen the previous week, scored twice for the visitors on 39 and 43 minutes, to leave them 3-1 ahead at the turnaround.

Andy Cunningham made it 3-2, finishing well on 70 minutes but Bute stayed in front to take both points.

Ballachulish 1 Col Glen 3

Col Glen go second in the division after they came from a goal down to beat Ballachulish 3-1 at Jubilee Park.

Neither team could break the

deadlock during the first 45 minutes. However Pat MacLean put Ballachulish ahead three minutes into the second half.

Conor Kennedy drew Col Glen level on 62 minutes and Jamie MacVicar on 70 minutes and Willie MacVicar on 84 minutes completed the 3-1 win.

Col Glen sit behind leaders Kyles Athletic seconds only on goal difference but they are also just ahead of third-placed Bute on goal difference.

Tayforth 1 Taynuilt 1

Tayforth and Taynuilt drew 1-1 at Levenhall Links.

Tayforth took the lead when Brendan Duggan found the back of the net on 55 minutes. Zander Kilmurray drew Taynuilt level with 15 minutes remaining.

Inveraray P Kyles Athletic P

The reserve team derby between the Inveraray reserves and the Kyles Athletic reserves at The Winterton was postponed on Friday because of an unplayable field.

Marine Harvest North Div 2

Caberfeidh 1 Lochcarron 1

The Caberfeidh seconds and Lochcarron shared the points in a 1-1 draw at Castle Leod.

The sides went into the match occupying the top two places in the division; with Caberfeidh ahead on goal difference.

Both goals came early in the game with David Mellis giving Caberfeidh the lead on minutes lead and Angus Urquhart equalising on 14 minutes to leave the sides first and second in the division.

Boleskine 2 Lovat 1

Boleskine came from a goal down to defeat the Lovat reserves 2-1 at Smith Park.

Raymond Rennie gave Lovat the lead on 10 minutes which they took into the interval.

Former Inverness player Ross MacKinnon levelled five minute into the second half with his first goal for Boleskine.

Stevie Bone got the winner with six minutes remaining so Boleskine stay third in the table.

Strathspey Camanachd 6 Inverness 0

Strathspey Camanachd rattled in six goals without replay against the Inverness second team in their 2pm throw-up at Grantown Grammar School.

Dane Taylor and Martin Taylor both bagged doubles for Strathspey with Donald Colville and the impressive Arran MacBean getting the others.

as The Canal Parks was ruled unplayable on Friday.

The Lochaber second team were without a fixture in this 11-team division.

Marine Harvest South Division 2

Oban Celtic 0 Glasgow Mid Argyll 1

The Oban Celtic second team finally got their season under way, going down 1-0 to the Glasgow Mid Argyll second team at Ganavan.

This was also the GMA seconds first outing of the season and Mark Bain, originally from Oban and a former Oban Celtic player, scored to give GMA victory.

Strachur 4 Glenorchy 1

Strachur stay top of the division after they overcame Glenorchy 4-1 at Strachurmore.

The sides had each won their opening league fixture so both went into the clash with confidence.

Ian MacLennan put the hosts ahead on 34 minutes with what was the only goal of the first half.

Sam Bulloch made it 2-0 on 55 minutes only for Graham MacKenzie to pull a goal back on 65 minutes.

The outcome remained in the balance until five minutes from time when Ian MacLennan scored twice in two minutes to complete his hat-trick and seal a 4-1 win.

Aberdour 1 Bute 6

A Chris McGowan hat-trick helped the Bute colts to a 6-1 win over an understrength Aberdour colts side at Silversands.

Chris McGowan grabbed a hat-trick, whilst Stuart Stirling senior, Steven Dunn and James Dunn got the others.

Brandon Marshall was on target for the home side.



Fixtures

Saturday March 31

Marine Harvest Premiership
Oban Camanachd v Lovat
David Mitchell
Glenurquhart v Kyles Athletic
John Angus Gillies - 3pm

National Division
Glasgow MA v Inveraray
Robert Baxter

Marine Harvest North Division One

Glenurquhart v Glengarry
John Angus Gillies - noon
Newtonmore v Kinlochshiel
Innes Wood - noon
Kingussie v Aberdeen Uni-
Calum Girvan
Fort William v Skye
Des McNulty

Marine Harvest South Division One

Inveraray v Ballachulish
Alex MacVicar
Kyles Athletic v Kilmory
Neil MacDonald
Inverness v Boleskine
Ronnie Campbell
Kilmallie v Caberfeidh

Marine Harvest North Division Two

John Matheson
Lochaber v Lochcarron
Steven MacLachlan
Lovat v Beaulieu
Iain Kennedy
Strathglass v Lewis
John Wood

Marine Harvest South Division Two

Bute v Strachur
Lachie Wood
Oban Celtic v Aberdour
Graham Fisher

Cottages.com MacTavish Cup

1st round
Beaulieu v Lochaber
Archie Ritchie
Caberfeidh v Strathglass
Martin MacLean
Kinlochshiel v Inverness
Scott McNeil
Newtonmore v Kilmallie
Andy MacLean - 3pm

All throw-ups 2.30pm, unless stated.

Results

Saturday March 24

Marine Harvest Premiership
Kinlochshiel P v P Oban Cam
Unplayable field
Lovat 1 v 0 Kyles Athletic
Newtonmore 0 v 1 Kingussie
Skye 1 v 5 Caberfeidh
Glenurquhart 1 v 1 Lochaber

National Division

Fort William 2 v 3 Kilmallie
Glasgow MA 1 v 1 Beaulieu
Inverness 1 v 2 Inveraray
Strathglass 3 v 4 Oban Celtic

Marine Harvest North Division One

Glenurquhart 0 v 2 Kinlochshiel
Kingussie 2 v 5 Newtonmore
Aberdeen Uni 0 v 4 Skye
Glengarry 3 v 1 Fort William

Marine Harvest South Division One

Ballachulish 1 v 3 Col Glen
Kilmory 2 v 3 Bute
Inveraray P v P Kyles Athletic
Unplayable field
Lochside Rovers 3 v 0 Aberdour
Tayforth 1 v 1 Taynuilt

Marine Harvest North Division Two

Beaulieu 3 v 0 Strathglass
Caberfeidh 1 v 1 Lochcarron
Kilmallie P v P Lewis
Unplayable field
Strathspey 6 v 0 Inverness

Marine Harvest South Division Two

Aberdour 1 v 6 Bute
Oban Celtic 0 v 1 Glasgow MA
Strachur 4 v 1 Glenorchy



An unorthodox attempt at a block as Inveraray's Nicholas Crawford challenges Dougie Rankin from Inverness. Inveraray won by the odd goal in three. Photograph: Stephen Lawson.



Kilmallie's Stevie Stewart shields the ball from Fort William's Gaeme Campbell. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

WCA National Cup draws

The Women's Camanachd Association held their live National Cup draws at Marine Harvest's Stob Ban Offices in Fort William last Friday evening.

The Women's Camanachd Association are indebted to Marine Harvest for their continued sponsorship of their Valerie Fraser Camanachd Cup and their Challenge Cup.

This year's finals are to be held at the Dell in Kingussie on Saturday September 1.

Steve Bracken and Jayne MacKay, from sponsors Marine Harvest, made the cup draws.

This year eight teams entered the Valerie Fraser Cup giving four quarter final games, the four top placed teams from National Division last season were seeded and the draw was as follows

Fort William v Lochaber
Aberdour v Badenoch & Strathspey
Glasgow Mid Argyll v Ardnamurchan
Skye v Strathspey

These games will be played the weekend of April 28 and 29 throwing-up at 2.30pm

In the Marine Harvest Challenge Cup, 14 teams entered. The draw was for six preliminary, rounds leaving two teams getting a bye into the quarter finals.

The draw is . . .
Cowal & Bute v Glenurquhart

Skye v Dunaad
Glasgow Mid Argyll v Kinlochshiel
Lovatt v Glengarry
English Shinty Association v Strathglass

Oban Lorn v Inverness

Lochaber and Ardnamurchan received byes into the quarter finals.

These games are scheduled for the weekend of April 21 and 22.

Four new records at Argyll Sports Hall Athletics final

THERE was an entry of just over 100 young athletes at the Argyll final of Sports Hall Athletics held at Atlantis Leisure in Oban last Sunday. The final was the last in a series of five competitions held in Argyll over the winter months promoted by Mid Argyll Athletic Club.

During almost five hours of intense competition four Argyll age records were broken and one equalled. Young athletes from the Oban area and Kintyre mainly dominating in the boys' events and Mull and Mid Argyll were to the fore in the girls' events.

The top performance of the day was arguably by Jodie Robertson from Ardrishaig, who was the under 17 champion, breaking the Argyll age record in two events and was also close to breaking the record of 1.52m in the high jump when she made a good attempt to clear 1.55m. Earlier in the day Jodie broke the record set in 1996 in the standing long jump clearing

2.33m and then went on to break a more recent record by 5cm in the standing triple jump reaching out to 7.03m.

Twin sisters Jemma and Jorja MacDonald from Lochgilphead were the other record breakers competing in the under-9 age group. Jemma was the champion but only two points ahead of her sister. Jemma won four events and excelled in the triple jump setting a new Argyll age record with her 5.11m leap. Jemma won the two-lap race and later won the high jump and long jump coming very close to the age records in both these events. Jorja won the speed bounce and the javelin, throwing 15.25m and adding almost two metres to the Argyll age record. In the same age category, newcomer Eleni Pistonas from Skipness won the four-lap race in 60.5seconds.

Mull girls from Salen Primary won both the under-7 and under-11 contests. Sienna Munro was the under-7 champion winning three of the six events.

Sienna won the two-lap race, speed bounce and triple jump.

In the same contest runner-up Emma Innes from Lochgilphead won the long jump with Carla Renton from Castlehill winning the javelin and Neve Bowden from Lochgilphead was the winner in the four-lap race.

Ellen MacRae from Salen was the under-9 champion last year and succeeded in winning the under-11 contest on Sunday.

This was a very competitive age group and Ellen's dominance in the running events ensured overall victory. Ellen won the two-lap race in 25.3 which was only a fifth of a second slower than the record and then the four-lap race in 56.1 seconds. Mia Campbell from St Columba's was runner-up just ahead of Violet Campbell from Castlehill in Campbeltown. Mia won the javelin with a 14.50m throw and Violet won both the long jump and triple jump. Other event winners in this section were Nicola Duncan from Park in the speed bounce and Ruby-Jo Philips from Glassary Primary in Mid Argyll won the high jump.

Kirstin Blair from Crinan was the under-13 winner just ahead of another Mid Argyll girl, Izzy Crawford from Furnace, with Anna Gemmill from Carradale third on points. Kirstin excelled in winning the high jump and both the long and triple jumps and shared first place in the speed bounce with Eilidh Cameron from Inveraray. Izzy impressed in winning both the two-lap and four-lap races and was not too far off the record in the shorter event. Anna Gemmill was the winner in the shot putt.

Abbie Cato from Fionnphort was the under-15 champion ahead of two girls from Ardrishaig, Karis Kidd in second place



The prizewinners after they were presented with their trophies

and Hazel Selfridge in third. Abbie impressed by winning all her events.

Lewis Cattanaich from Tobermory won three events to ensure being under-7 champion ahead of Ethan Kerr from Tighnabruaich. Lewis won the long and triple jumps and speed bounce and Ethan impressed in winning the four-lap race in 65.4 which was only 0.2 of a second slower than the age record. Kian Gibson from Salen primary and Riley Anderson from Rockfield shared third place on overall points. Riley won the two-lap race and javelin.

Jack Green, from Dalintober primary in Campbeltown, won the under-9s, winning both running events in addition to the long and triple jumps. Jack was the under-7 champion in 2017 and did well to repeat his success in the older age group.

Jack's mother (then Laura Paterson from Carradale) was the under-9 Argyll champion

in 1994, which was the first year the indoor competitions were held in Argyll. Runner-up Marco MacGregor from Rockfield won the high jump clearing 1.12m and shared first place in the speed bounce with Ryan Johnstone from Castlehill. Conan Burns from St Columba's won the javelin in this age group with 15.25metres.

The under-11 boys contest could not have been closer with only half a point between first and second and the same margin between second and third.

Jacques Coates from Park won overall ahead of George Pagan from Rockfield with Oliver Reid from Dalintober in third place.

George won the two running events in 25 seconds and 55.3 respectively and also the high jump at the end of the afternoon.

George cleared 1.30m which equalled the Argyll age record set by another Oban boy Scott Black in 2010. Jacques Coates won the speed bounce and

Athletics

placed highly in all the other events while Oliver Reid won the triple jump. Rockfield boys James Muir won the javelin and Rhys Millar won the long jump.

Lewis Gilchrist from Rhunahaorine primary in Kintyre was the winner of the under 11s with success in five out of the seven events. Lewis won both running events and the long and triple jumps and also the shot putt. Runner-up Murray MacDonald from Lochgilphead won the speed bounce and third placed Finlay MacLean from Oban won the high jump. Fraser Inglis from Oban won the under-15 contest and Shaun Doy from Lochgilphead was the under-17 champion.

The organisers wish to thank all the young athletes and parents for supporting all the local competitions and the Argyll final last Sunday.

Scottish Amateur FL results and fixtures

Football

LAST Saturday's results: Premier Division - Oban Saints 4, Hillington 1; Premier Division One - Rosehill Star 1 Campbeltown Pupils 3; Premier Division Two - Lochgilphead Red Star 1, Castlemilk 0; Tarbert v FC Argyll, postponed.

This Saturday's fixtures: Provisional - Premier Division Two - Duntocher v Lochgilphead Red Star. All the other Argyll teams have no fixtures due to the Easter holiday weekend.

Saints' youth teams results and fixtures

Youth football

RESULTS: Dumbarton Riverside 2, Under 13s 5. Saints scorers were Kyle Cooper (3), Ewan MacTavish and Ruairidh Buchanan.

Dumbarton Riverside 4, Under 14s 1. Scoring for Saints was Thomas McCrindle.

Under 15s 7, Cambuslang 0. Netting for Saints were Connor Moore with a double hat-trick and Adam Munro.

Under 16s v Ardencaple, postponed.

Under 17s 12, Dunoon 1. Saints goalscorers were Keir MacLean (4), Cammy Kerr (2), Ben Smith (2), Cammy Hill (2) and Rory Dowd (2).

The youth team will now take a break for the school Easter holidays.

Subscription Medal at Taynuilt

RESULT of the Subscription Medal played at Taynuilt on the March 25: 1 Andy Ronald 70-6=64; 2 Alex Needham 79-14=65; 3 Keith Cameron 86-21=65.

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Jack Green with his mum Laura, who was under-9 champion in 1994.

Heavy defeat for the Green Machine



Oban Lorne coach Corrie Louw.

Carrick	87
Oban Lorne	18
BT West Division 1	

OBAN Lorne made the familiar trip to Maybole in Ayrshire on Saturday to take on West Division 1 leaders Carrick RFC.

The teams have not met so far this season with both scheduled home and away matches being postponed due to the weather.

For Oban Lorne it has been a frustrating season with the team languishing in 11th place in the table, propped up by only the very lowly Helensburgh who sit on -4 points.

This season has seen a much smaller pool of players for Oban Lorne Coach Corrie Louw to choose from than in recent years along with a huge backlog of fixtures, mainly due to the weather which has severely disrupted the team's season thus far.

Healthy squad

Oban travelled with a squad of 17 players on Saturday but were without key individuals such as Tommy Sutherland, Connor Kerr, Jack Strachan, Richard MacKay, Lorne MacLachlan, Cammy Smith and David McLaughlin. Despite the missing players, a healthy squad was assembled for the game.

Carrick were full of confidence going in to

Rugby

Saturday's game and fielded their strongest possible lineup. The school playing field in Maybole was swelled by a big crowd with the club celebrating their 40th Anniversary.

The home team ran Oban Lorne rampant in a one-sided first half as Carrick ran out convincing 49-6 leaders at halftime. Despite the heavy scorline Oban were competing well in the match and made the hosts work for every possible score.

Handsome

The second half fell more in Oban's favour with the score still, however, favouring the hosts at 36-12 giving a final tally of a handsome 87-12 win.

Oban Coach Corrie Louw and captain Craig Wright were left happy with the overall performance despite the disappointing result that leaves the team 10 points adrift of 10th placed Cambuslang in the battle against the drop to Division 2.

Oban Lorne will hope to cut Cambuslang's advantage down as the Green Machine welcome league strugglers and Argyll rivals Helensburgh to Glencruitten this Saturday.

Kick off is scheduled for 3pm at Glencruitten in what is a must-win game for Oban Lorne.



Oban Lorne minis attended a Dalriada Festival in Lochgilphead last weekend.

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TIDAL INFORMATION
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday March 29, 2018 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm	Ardrishaig	Mallaig
Thur	04.17 3.7 10.49 0.8 16.53 3.6 22.43 0.7	Ardrishaig -5.35 Mallaig +0.25		
Fri	04.56 3.9 11.30 0.7 17.27 3.8 23.27 0.5	Campbeltown -5.30 Portree +0.55		
Sat	05.33 4.1 12.08 0.6 17.59 4.0 *** **	Crinan -0.47 Tobermory +0.16		
Sun	00.09 0.4 06.07 4.1 12.44 0.6 18.31 4.0	Islay Port Ellen 2.00 Dover +5.30		
Mon	00.49 0.4 06.41 4.1 13.19 0.6 19.03 4.0	Lochboisdale +0.30		
Tues	01.27 0.5 07.13 4.0 13.52 0.8 19.33 3.9	Ferry Crossings/Sea States		
Wed	02.02 0.7 07.44 3.8 14.26 1.0 20.04 3.7	Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate		

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

WEATHER

Thursday	Sunny intervals Breezy from the east south east Temperatures 3°C to 8°C
Friday	Cloudy Breezy from the east Temperatures 3°C to 8°C
Weekend Outlook	Cloudy Breezy from the east north east Temperatures 3°C to 9°C

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Residents grill GFG boss over alloy factory impact

NEILL BO FINLAYSON
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

CONCERNS over housing, transport and schools were in the spotlight on Monday night as residents in the Kilmallie area grilled the head of GFG Alliance's estate and public officials about the impact of the new alloy wheels factory to be built in Fort William.

Almost 40 people attended a special Kilmallie Community Council (KCC) meeting to pose questions to Duncan Mackison, chief executive officer of Jahama Highland Estates, the property arm of GFG Alliance, which owns the Lochaber smelter.

A raft of concerns were raised at the meeting, with issues ranging from housing and school pressures to the storage of gas at Corpach.

Mr Mackison was also joined at the meeting by Alastair Nicolson, Lochaber programme manager for Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), and Tim Stott, principal planner at Highland Council, to give an update on developments after the factory plans were approved earlier this year.

With the new factory set to employ up to 400 workers and production due to start in 2020, an overarching issue at the meeting was whether Lochaber would cope with the influx of so many new people and their families.

In terms of housing, the panel confirmed that around 300 houses would need to be built in the area, with Blar Mhor one of the main areas earmarked for development.

Mr Stott outlined that the

initial phase of building would include 80 or 90 houses on Blar Mhor, with further phases of construction taking this total to 200.

However, Lochaber Housing Association board member Alex Farquhar voiced concerns over the construction timeframe.

'If the factory is going to be up and running in three to four years, all these properties will be built in a very short time,' he said.

'I know there's the will to do it but I don't think there's the infrastructure to do it.'

Mr Mackison responded by saying that GFG was working on solutions to carry out the necessary building works and that 'the scale of activity will require a different model, something that this area hasn't seen before.'

The issue of school numbers was also raised by those attending, with Mr Stott explaining that, although some existing schools had the ability to expand, the council would need to look at ways to increase capacities.

He said: 'We've looked ahead to see how many new houses will be built and projected existing primary and high school numbers and there is an issue. The current schools won't cope initially.'

Transport links and networks also dominated the evening's discussions amid fears of another summer of severe traffic congestion in Fort William.

Once fully operational, seven or eight lorries a day are expected to leave the factory, which Mr Mackison says may pose a challenge around peak traffic

times with commuter traffic.

One frustrated Corpach resident questioned whether the roads could cope and called for immediate action.

'You really are underestimating how difficult it's going to be to get around,' he said. 'The first thing you need to do is sort the roads before you try to build anything.'

The future of the port at Corpach was also discussed at the meeting, with the panel suggesting there was potential for it to be used to transport, and possibly store, liquefied natural gas for use at the smelter.

The panel confirmed that an engineering study, led by Highlands and Islands Enterprise with support from Liberty, had been commissioned which would explore whether a deep-water port could be developed at Corpach.

'There is quite a lot of work being done in the background but if it looks feasible then there would be a full master-planning exercise of the entire area which would require much wider consultation,' Mr Nicolson added.

However, a Drumfada resident, who lives directly opposite the harbour area, said he had 'real concerns' over shipping and storing liquefied gas at Corpach. 'Storing high pressure liquefied gas as close to the accommodation of as many people as that?'

'I am starting to get anxious already,' he said. 'I have concerns about this situation.'

Mr Nicolson said that these issues would be addressed in the port study and again in any future public consultation.

Family affair as Roy Bridge man is ordained



It was a family affair at St Andrew's Cathedral in Glasgow last week when the Rev Vincent Toal, who hails from Roy Bridge, was ordained as Scotland's newest priest. Pictured is the 'laying of hands' during the ordination by Deacon Toal's brother, Joseph Toal, the Bishop of Motherwell. Full story - page two.

Lochaber autism charity closes

IT WAS a day of 'mixed emotions' on Monday as a Lochaber charity aimed at supporting young people with autism and other communication disabilities closed after three years.

Fort William-based Active Health Achieving Futures (AHA Futures), which helped 15-to-20-year-olds with autism or a similar communication disability, ended this week after its funding stopped.

Launched in 2016, the charity aimed to support young people and their families in transition from leaving school to adult life and provided them with a range of experiences, which included running a community shop in Ardgor and operating a cafe at the Lochaber Rural Complex.

Lynn MacAllister, of the AHA Futures project, said: 'For most of the young people, this was their first experience of staying away from family and offered much-needed respite for families constantly in a caring role.'

'Friendships from school have been maintained and staff have developed close bonds with families and each other. For me personally, the best thing has been watching friendships develop and blossom and the hope for some of the young people if possible to move on to employment where they can earn money and feel good about themselves.'

The project was initiated through a partnership between the Highland Council, NHS Highland and a number of third sector and voluntary partners, who awarded £25,000 of funding for a three-year spell.



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'Creepy' man banned from Highland

A MAN who showered a waitress with unsolicited letters, flowers and gifts and also approached her at her home and work had his behaviour described at Fort William Sheriff Court this week as 'frankly creepy'.

Sheriff Gary Aitken heard that James Dennis was living at Glen Nevis Cottages, Fort William, at the time of the offence between May 1 last year and February 10 this year, but now lived in Wales.

Dennis, 37, who was described as a first offender, pleaded guilty last month to behaving in a manner likely to place someone in a state of fear or alarm. Sentencing had been deferred

for preparation of a criminal justice social work report.

Procurator fiscal Robert Weir said Dennis and the woman had met when they were both employed at a Lochaber restaurant.

The woman had started finding letters left on her car after work, inviting her to go out with Dennis. 'At some point she told him she was already in a relationship and not interested,' said Mr Weir. 'Events progressed and the accused had then traced the address of the witness and was familiar with her car. He left further messages and notes. The witness by this point was quite concerned.'

Mr Weir said that in one note

Dennis had tried to assure the woman he was 'not a maniac' and professed he was in love with her. 'The police were subsequently notified,' added Mr Weir. 'It is only fair to the accused to say that no malice was intended but it did cause some upset.'

Defence agent Hamish Melrose told the court it was on being interviewed by police that Dennis had realised and accepted his actions had frightened the woman. 'At this stage, the penny dropped,' added Mr Melrose.

'Quite understandably, his job's gone as a result, as has his tied accommodation, and he is now staying with friends in

Wales and seeking alternative employment. And he assures me he has no intention of troubling this young lady again.'

Sheriff Aitken told Dennis it was a serious offence. He said: 'Behaviour of this kind is frankly creepy and entirely unacceptable. I hope you realise it was entirely inappropriate and the effect it had on the lady in question.'

Deferring sentence for six months for Dennis to be of good behaviour, Sheriff Aitken added a further condition to the existing bail order already banning Dennis from approaching the woman, which stipulated that Dennis must also not enter the Highland Council area.

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FW

WHAT'S ON in Lochaber

Off Beat Bikes is organising another open water swim on Friday March 30. Swimmers will meet at the Old Fort by the college at 10am. Wet suits recommended.

Lochaber Schools Pipe Band will be performing in the High Street and Cameron Square from 3pm to 4pm on Saturday March 31. The band are hoping to raise funds to help finance a visit to Belgium and France in July. The band will be performing in both countries as part of their visit.

On Saturday March 31, from 2pm to 4.30pm, Lochaber Sensory Care is having an Easter awareness and small fundraising event with a 'scavenger hunt' in the 19 shops taking part on Fort William High Street. 'Hunters' will have to find the individual letters of Lochaber Sensory Care which will be placed in the shops. There is also an optional quiz with a prize for the winner. Full instructions will be given when you collect the entry form at Fort William Town Team Hub in the Parade, starting at 2pm. Entry is £5 for a group of four, £2 per adult and £1 per child.

It looks like the Easter bunny has visited Glen Nevis and Lochaber Countryside Rangers are organising a hunt to follow his tracks, find the clues and solve the puzzle he has left. This is a family self-led Easter hunt. Event is by donation only. Meet at Ben Nevis Visitor Centre, Glen Nevis, Fort William. From 1pm to 3pm.

The next meeting of Fort William Scottish Women's Institute will be on Monday April 2 at 7.15 pm in the Montrose Centre, Inverloch, when Liz Robertson will take the members through a gentle exercise routine.

Staff and volunteers from Caol-based Lochaber Sensory Care for sight and hearing support will be visiting Mallaig Medical Centre on Tuesday April 3. From 1.30pm to 3pm, LSC representatives will offer support and advice to local people with a sight loss or hearing loss.

The last of this season's local history society talks sees author Di Alexander speak on 'My Rural Housing Journey: from Colonsay to present day'. He started Lochaber Housing Association 30 years ago. Di recently published a book about his formative years. Come and hear from the man who has changed many lives. All welcome at 8pm on Thursday April 5 at the Ben Nevis Hotel.



Archbishop Philip Tartaglia took part in the service to ordain Father Vincent Toal.



Lochaber man is ordained as Scotland's newest priest

MARK ENTWISTLE
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IT MAY have taken a gap of three decades, but Lochaber native Father Vincent Toal says now was the right time for him to return to his original spiritual calling as a member of the priesthood.

Father Toal, whose family hails from Roy Bridge near Fort William, has just become Scotland's newest priest.

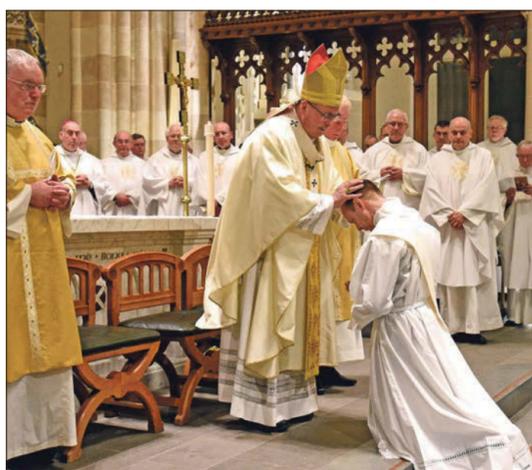
Father Toal is a younger brother of the Bishop of Motherwell, the Rt Rev Joseph Toal, who was the former Bishop of Argyll and the Isles.

Father Toal, whose mother still lives in Roy Bridge, was ordained as a priest for the Archdiocese of Glasgow in a special ceremony in the city's cathedral on the evening of March 19, the Feast Day of St Joseph, by Archbishop Philip Tartaglia.

The ceremony was attended by a large number of Father Toal's family, including his 90-year-old mother, Mary, while his nephew Sean Cameron piped guests into the cathedral and his brother John gave a reading.

Father Toal was actually ordained as a deacon 30 years ago, but only ordained as a priest in last week's ceremony in Glasgow.

Writing in a recent edition of the Scottish Catholic Observer, Father Toal, who was



Laying on of the hands by Archbishop Tartaglia, and right, Father Toal's family were there to support him. Photograph: Paul McSherry

editor of Flourish, journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow for 18 years until this time last year, explained how he had drifted away from his original plans to join the priesthood some 30 years ago.

'I have suggested elsewhere that I took cold feet towards the end of my seminary formation, 30 years ago, and put the brakes on any immediate plans for ordination.'

'It is fair to say that I was both coasting along and drifting away,'

he writes.

'Outwardly, everything seemed fine; but, inwardly, I was struggling in critical areas of my life, which forced me to question my readiness for ministry as a priest.'

'Working as a journalist within Catholic media, with the responsibility of editing a diocesan newspaper, exposed me to the wealth of church teaching and examples of heroic living out of the Gospel in some very trying circumstances.'

'I reassessed my critical outlook while taking stock of my own life with its inner contradictions.'

'The hypocrisy and ruthless arrogance evident in much of the mainstream secular media stimulated a renewed regard for the enduring message of Christ - revealing what is true, good and beautiful - and a fresh desire to contribute more to the "new evangelisation" which successive popes have insisted on.'

Speaking to the *Lochaber Times*,

Father Toal, who is one of nine siblings, said his decision to give up journalism for the priesthood had been based on his feeling that it was now the right time.

'I felt I was in the right place mentally and spiritually now,' he explained. And he laughed, adding: 'It was time to put the collar back on!'

Father Toal said the ordination event in Glasgow had been made extra special by the presence of so many family members and by the

fact his brother was involved in his role as Bishop of Motherwell.

'It was a great day - really joyful and wonderful, made all the better by having family there, including my mother and brother in his role as bishop.'

Now an assistant priest at a parish in the east end of Glasgow, Father Toal has lived away from Lochaber for more than 30 years.

But he added: 'That being said, I have always considered Lochaber to be my home.'

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Nevis Radio bags £2,000 from Tesco



NEVIS Community Radio has bagged £2,000 from Tesco's Bags of Help community grant scheme.

Bags of Help is run in partnership with environmental charity Groundwork, and sees grants raised from the sale of carrier bags awarded to thousands of community projects every year.

Since launching in 2015, Bags of Help has provided more than £48 million to over 13,000 local community projects.

Nevis Radio says it intends spending the cash on a much-needed

studio refurbishment for the station, which will include new soundproofing for the walls and ceiling.

'Nevis Radio is a registered charity so we are reliant on funding from organisations such as Tesco to keep going,' said Simon Abberley, sustainability manager at Nevis Radio.

'We are thrilled to have secured this amazing amount of money and would like to extend our thanks to everyone who voted for us and, of course, Tesco.'

'We'll be spending the money on upgrading our studio, making it a nicer place for our volunteers and staff to spend time.'

Tony McElroy, Tesco's head of communications in Scotland, commented: 'Bags of Help has been a fantastic success and we've been overwhelmed by the response from customers.'

'It's such a special scheme because it's local people who decide how the money will be spent in their community. We can't wait to see the projects come to life.'

View from the Chamber

LAST week we welcomed Charlotte Wright, chief executive of Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), as guest speaker at our members' networking breakfast at the Lime Tree Hotel, Fort William.

Thirty people from local member businesses came along to chat over bacon rolls and hear directly from the top about HIE's vision for the future of the region; and the part it plays in supporting economic growth and communities.

As a Scottish Government agency, HIE's role is to lead regional growth and development across the Highlands and Islands, supporting the rural economy and improving competitiveness to help build a fairer, more inclusive society.

Charlotte gave us an interesting overview of HIE's work to deliver on the key themes of investment, innovation, internationalism and inclusive growth. The presentation was followed by a lively Q and A session where chamber members were able to ask questions on the topics they



felt most strongly about and share concerns and suggestions across a wide range of business issues. These are exciting times for Lochaber: the large-scale development coming at Liberty British Aluminium is the biggest manufacturing project in a generation. The subsequent increased need for supporting businesses, housing, transport and community infrastructure will mean huge opportunities for our community - but also challenges. Lochaber Chamber of Commerce's role is to speak up for the needs of all member businesses, small as well as large, and to help ensure that everyone benefits from the coming developments. These networking events are an



Charlotte Wright addresses the networking breakfast.

integral part of the chamber of commerce's remit to connect businesses and are also a great way for the chamber team to hear directly from members about what is important to them.

With so much going on in our local business world, it's a great time to

become a member of Lochaber's only dedicated business organisation and make sure your voice is heard. At Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, we're committed to helping our members achieve their business goals. If you'd like to join, call on 01397 705 765 or visit www.lochaberchamber.co.uk.

Candidates grilled at hustings

MARK ENTWISTLE
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FOUR of the six candidates contesting the Caol and Mallaig ward by-election were grilled by the public on everything from independence and Brexit to car parking charges in Fort William at a hustings event on Friday.

The event was staged in Caol Community Centre before a 40-strong audience and chaired by well-known local community advocate, honorary sheriff and chairman of West Highland College, John Hutchison.

Denis Rixon (Lib Dem), Colin Wood (Ind), Catherine MacKinnon (Ind) and Alex MacInnes (SNP) were the candidates in attendance, while both Ronald Campbell (Ind) and Ian Smith (Con) were unable to be present.

Each of the candidates gave a brief introduction to themselves.

Alex MacInnes: Originally from North Uist and a native Gaelic speaker. From a long line of fish farmers and crofters. Mr MacInnes has spent his whole life living and working in the Highlands and islands in the seafood industry. He lives in Achintraid, Kishorn, and is married with three children. He says he knows the Caol and Mallaig ward well, having lived and worked during his career in Invergarry, Lochailort and Corpach.

Denis Rixon: Mr Rixon has lived in Mallaig for more than 40 years and was a teacher at the primary and secondary schools. He also ran his own business in the form of a small bookshop.

Catherine MacKinnon: A native of Glen Roy, she has 26 years of experience working with and for public agencies and assisting individuals, businesses and communities throughout Lochaber. She came to Lochaber in 1992 and among her achievements are being involved in the establishment of the rural learning centre at Lochaber College.



Around 40 people turned out to hear the candidates voice their opinions on a range of topics. Picture: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

Colin Wood: Mr Wood has lived in Lochaber for 14 years. Born and bred in Inverness, he comes from crofting stock on his mother's side and from fishing folk on his father's. He moved to Corpach in 2004 to help run the family caravan park and also has a small croft.

One of the questions came from Gillian Sloan, who has a business in Fort William High Street, and wanted to know how the candidates felt about new parking charges being brought in by Highland Council.

Mr Wood felt the High Street was already suffering from the impact of out-of-town centre retail parks and said either parking should be free or charges should be introduced at retail parks.

Mr MacInnes felt there was an access problem to Fort William town centre and this would not

be improved by parking charges.

Mr Rixon said the needs of town centre users had to be looked at and that people with maximum needs should be a priority.

Another question was on whether the candidates saw benefits or drawbacks from Liberty's plans for a new alloy wheels plant in Fort William on the Caol and Corpach areas.

Mr Rixon said: 'It would be difficult not to welcome so many new jobs. But I would rather see 1,000 new small businesses employing one person each than one business employing 1,000 workers.'

Mr MacInnes said it was good news: 'It is to be welcomed but will bring its own challenges from the population growth involved. But we can't knock it back, as we need a diverse economy and we definitely need Liberty.'

Mrs MacKinnon also felt it was

good news: 'It will see a huge influx of people and bring opportunities. But we need to look at the bigger picture of how facilities will cope. We need employment but we also need to be aware of the impact this will have.'

Mr Wood said the major initial benefit was the hundreds of jobs saved. 'While there is full employment in Lochaber these are not always proper jobs, with proper wages,' he said. 'The obvious drawback, however, will be the increase in traffic.'

Other questions lodged by voters included asking about candidates' political heroes, with answers ranging from the late Labour politician Tony Benn and SNP legend Winnie Ewing to former prime minister Lloyd George.

Candidates were also asked about how they would secure residential care facilities for the

elderly, especially in the wake of the recent controversial closure of the Dail Mhor care home at Strontian.

All four candidates said this was a major issue. Mr MacInnes called it 'worrying', while Mr Rixon said such provision had to be properly budgeted.

Mr Wood commented: 'People are falling through the net. It will be one of the biggest challenges and we have to fight it as a community.'

Mrs MacKinnon said care for the elderly had to be prioritised more when it came to budgets. 'Everyone needs to shout loudly about this.'

The candidates were grilled on how they had voted in both the referendums on independence and Brexit.

Mrs MacKinnon opted to 'sit on the fence' over this question, saying as Scotland was not inde-

pendent the question was now a historic one and, as for Brexit, the UK was leaving Europe and she wanted to see what Brexit would look like.

Mr Rixon described himself as an 'unreconstructed unionist' and a 'remain voter'. 'On Brexit, I think we'll take an economic hit but in the long term will be fine - although no doubt with a few difficult years ahead.'

Mr MacInnes said obviously as an SNP member he had voted for independence and for remain - the latter because of Europe's importance as a market for Scottish seafood. 'I don't know what Brexit will do to my industry.'

Mr Wood said he had voted for independence and to remain. 'I don't think it's going to be all good,' he said on Brexit.

Voting will take place on Thursday April 5, with polling stations open from 7am to 10pm.

Pensioner fined £300 after crash

A SPEAN Bridge pensioner was fined £300 for his first motoring offence in more than 60 years of driving when he appeared this week at Fort William Sheriff Court.

Ronald MacLennan, of West Tirinorish, admitted a charge of careless driving on the A82 at Spean Bridge on September 24 last year, when his car collided with a stationary Fiesta car in front at a junction, shunting it into a second car in front of that.

Procurator fiscal Robert Weir told the court that two women in the Fiesta were injured, with one having to be cut free by firefighters.

MacLennan, 89, who obtained his driving licence in 1956, had voluntarily surrendered his licence after the accident, and Sheriff Gary Aitken heard that the accused had no intention of driving again.

The court also heard the accident occurred on a Sunday and defence agent Stephen Kennedy told the court that MacLennan had been on his way to church at the time. 'There was a convoy of eight vehicles and Mr MacLennan's car was the last in this line. In front of the two vehicles in front of Mr MacLennan was a van which had braked quite sharply to turn right into the entrance of a farm,' explained Mr Kennedy.

'But then it did not turn in and there was some confusion and the result of all of that was that the Fiesta in front of my client ran onto the verge and he was unable to stop in time and collided with the rear of the vehicle.'

Mr Kennedy said MacLennan accepted he was perhaps too close to the vehicle in front and added that his information was that the two women in the Fiesta had made a full recovery. 'But Mr MacLennan's car was written off completely,' added Mr Kennedy.

Sheriff Aitken added three penalty points to any licence he may hold in future.



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FW

Library book 36 years overdue is returned

WHEN Alastair McIntosh ordered a second-hand book on eBay recently, he was thrilled to get a first edition with the dust cover still intact.

However, he was less impressed to find that the volume that had cost him £7.49 had within its covers a Western Isles Libraries stamp and was 36 years overdue.

There was no official stamp to say that it had been withdrawn. On inquiring with the library, however, he found the book was down as long overdue and had actually been taken out in 1982.

'I hugely value the library's collection and the helpfulness of its staff,' he later said. 'Like many people, I rely on that oasis of learning in the heart of Stornoway for my research as a writer. I am, therefore, very glad to be able to see this copy returned.'

The book is called *Father Allan's Island* by Amy Murray, first published in 1937. Alastair describes it as 'an elegant and elegiac account of life on the Isle of Eriskay in 1905'.

Author Amy was a young American musicologist. She had visited the island for a summer and recorded village life as it surrounded Fr Allan McDonald, the renowned parish priest.

In 2002, the Gaelic scholar Ronald Black published a bilingual collection, *The Poems of Fr Allan McDonald* (Mungo Books, Glasgow).

Black describes Murray as having been 'a competent and sensitive transcriber of folk



Alastair McIntosh with the long-overdue book.

music' (p. 508). She is not to be confused with another visitor, Miss Ada Goodrich Freer, who, in 1894-5, had also visited the Hebrides.

Remarking on his chance recovery of Murray's book, Alastair pointed out that it had not necessarily been stolen and could simply have been a case of somebody who had passed away and their belongings, library books and all, being cleared by dealers.

But he added: 'In school days, the fine for being overdue at Stornoway library was tuppence a day. Were that to be collected now, after so many years, and with interest compounded, it would give the library staff a happy day.'

Commenting on what the fine would be if levied, a spokesman for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, said the fine would have amounted to £374. 'But we are just happy to get the book back,' he told us with a laugh.

Crofting mortgages decision is welcomed

A DECISION by the Rural Economy Secretary to write to the Royal Bank of Scotland urging them to give fair mortgage offers to crofters has been welcomed by MSP Kate Forbes.

Currently, those in receipt of the Croft House Grant have been unable to secure an RBS mortgage because the bank fears, in the event of insolvency, that the Scottish Government's rights to recover monies under the scheme would rank ahead of the financial institution's right to recover the home loan.

The saga came to light after crofters on Skye raised the matter with Ms Forbes, MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch.

She then wrote to cabinet secretary Fergus Ewing raising these concerns, particularly in light of the positive response in the Highlands and Islands to the Croft House Grant scheme.

As a result, Mr Ewing replied

pledging his support and promising to write to RBS. In his response and letter to RBS, Mr Ewing noted that 'a misperception' had been created because the government's rights are held against persons, whereas the bank's are held against the property.

Ms Forbes said she had been extremely concerned on discovering two of her constituents had been unable to secure mortgages because they were receiving Croft House Grant assistance.

'It is highly likely that there are others like them who have been denied a bank mortgage because of a misplaced perception about what happens in the event of insolvency,' she continued.

'The Croft House Grant scheme is really beneficial for crofters across the Highlands and Islands, and it would be deeply unfortunate if anything undermined that progress.'



The team enjoy a break with beer and bacon rolls thanks to supportive locals.

Skye clean-up nets 10 tonnes of trash

NEILL BO FINLAYSON
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

A 30-STRONG team of volunteers on Skye have cleared a remarkable 10 tonnes of waste from Skinadin (Sgianadin) Bay in a three-day litter pick.

Working from a base in the Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES) car park just outside Broadford, the team gathered up items ranging from domestic and garden waste to car parts and gas bottles.

Volunteer Matt Harrison said: 'There was a great sense of community spirit and the funny thing was, although the task was fairly thankless – and disgusting in places – there was not a single passenger. Everyone turned up, saw the job at hand and got on with it.'

One team member supplied everyone with tea, coffee and



biscuits and, on the last day of the litter pick, a local brewery sent up a box of beer, while a local cafe brought along bacon rolls.

'It's been a very rewarding experience and we hope that our example will encourage and inspire other people and communities across the island to do the same. It's perfectly feasible that the Isle of Skye could make a name for itself

as the cleanest location in Britain,' Matt continued. 'It's amazing how big a difference a small group of people can make to their area.'

The next stage for the community is working to prevent the littering from happening. As well as greater community vigilance and educating people about the impact of litter, the team will be looking at erecting more signs and will be working

with Forest Enterprise Scotland to get more fencing in place.

In response to their efforts, local FES forester Bruce Taylor said: 'We'd like to sincerely thank the team who carried out this tidy-up. It's made a huge difference to Skinadin Bay and the car parking area.'

'We are looking to upgrade the area next year but we were looking at a chunk of our budget going towards getting contractors to clean up the site. This community effort has been an immense help to us and means that we can now focus our limited resources on improving the immediate area for local residents and for tourists.'

Forest Enterprise Scotland is now looking at installing new fencing that will both allow access but prevent further fly-tipping and dumping in the future.

Skye distillery opens to public

A DISTILLERY on Skye is looking forward to welcoming guests from across the world after the island's second distillery opened its visitor centre to the public last week.

Torabhaig Distillery's visitor centre, at Teangue, Sleat, opened last Monday, although the distillery has been fully operational since January 2017 making single malt whisky.

Distillery staff announced: 'We are thrilled to announce that the Torabhaig Distillery visitor centre is officially open.'



More flights agreed for Tiree and Barra

MORE flights are to be added between Glasgow and Barra and Tiree.

To increase capacity, Humza Yousaf, Minister for Transport and the Islands, announced the following measures will begin in the summer:

□ 22 additional return flights from Glasgow to Tiree through a redeployment of capacity from winter 2018-19 to summer 2018.

□ 22 additional return flights from Glasgow to Barra in May and early June.

□ Up to 40 additional return flights from Glasgow to Barra from late June to October through a re-deployment of capacity from winter 2018-19, subject to ongoing discussions with the Barra community.

Mr Yousaf said: 'We have consulted with the communities of Tiree and Barra to see how we can improve their air services and address capacity concerns over the summer months.'

'These additional services will ensure we are maximising the potential of these services during the busiest time of year, supporting local economies and improving connectivity for



Humza Yousaf MSP.

these remote communities.

'The majority of extra flights will be created by moving a bank of rotations from the winter timetable, while still meeting demand during that time of year. This will create more capacity during the summer and reduce the number of empty seats across the year.'

'We are also providing around £18,000 in additional funding to bring in the additional Barra flights in May and June. We are committed to supporting our remote communities and these improvements will help do that.'

Chairman of transportation

and infrastructure at Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Councillor Uisdean Robertson said: 'The comhairle is very pleased to hear of the announcement by the minister for transport and the islands that air services between Glasgow and Barra are to be further enhanced.'

'Consistent with the preferences expressed by the community on Barra, greater connectivity and capacity on this route is something the comhairle has been pursuing with the airline for several years and, with the assistance of HITRANS, provided financial support for the provision of additional flights during the peak periods of summer 2014 and 2015 on a trial basis.'

'The success of this persuaded Transport Scotland to add the additional flights to its PSO service on a permanent basis. The latest development demonstrates the continuing commitment that both Scottish Government and the airline have to the service.'

Na h-Eileanan an Iar SNP MSP Alasdair Allan also welcomed the news. 'I am pleased to see the Scottish Government

MP issues warning on fishing

POWER over fishing needs to be given to Holyrood to prevent Scottish interests in this industry being negotiated away any further says Na h-Eileanan an Iar MP Angus Brendan MacNeil.

Fishermen had previously been assured that they would regain full control over the country's fishing waters on Brexit day, March 29 2019. Instead, a decision has been taken that means the UK will be consulted on fish quotas during the interim period, while remaining in the Common Fisheries Policy.

Last week, Mr MacNeil, SNP fisheries spokesperson at Westminster, called on the secretary of state for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Michael Gove, to clarify what implications Brexit will have on the Scottish fishing industry and to urge that Westminster resists a power-grab of Scottish fisheries.

Mr MacNeil said: 'Fisheries must be handed to the Scottish Government and not power-grabbed by Westminster, as Westminster is likely to negotiate Scotland's fisheries away during the Brexit negotiations.'

'Brexit is going to be damaging what control over fisheries was one bit of hope in a very gloomy landscape. Now we see the Tories selling out the fishing industry. This is a massive betrayal to fishermen who were promised by the Tory Government they would regain control.'

MSP backs move to help BiFab

MSP Alasdair Allan has backed a cross-party approach to have the Kincardine Offshore Wind Farm Project awarded to BiFab, which operates a yard at Arnish, near Stornoway.

Mr Allan, Na h-Eileanan an Iar MSP, said: 'I have continually highlighted the importance of Arnish to our island economy.'

'I am pleased that the Scottish Government remains committed to investigating long-term solutions for the yard and is working with BiFab to identify future investors.'

'I have also backed a cross-party approach to the Kincardine Offshore Wind Farm Project to award the fabrication project to BiFab.'

'Awarding this contract to BiFab would not only provide some short-term certainty to the yards but it would also demonstrate a commitment to the Scottish economy.'

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MP's refugee families bill gets over first hurdle

NA H-EILEANAN an Iar MP Angus MacNeil's bill to reunite refugee families and ease the UK government's 'inhuman' immigration rules passed its first major hurdle last week in Westminster.

Despite the UK government's opposition, the bill passed its second reading in parliament

with the backing of SNP, Conservative, Labour, Lib Dem, Plaid Cymru, Green and DUP MPs. The bill will now proceed to committee stage for further scrutiny and amendments.

The Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill looks to ensure that:

□ Child refugees in the UK would have the right to sponsor

their close family to come to the UK, so they can rebuild their lives together and help them integrate in their new community.

□ An expansion of who qualifies as a family, so that young people who have turned 18, and elderly parents, can live in safety with their families in the UK.

□ The reintroduction of legal

aid, so refugees who have lost everything have the support they need to navigate the complicated process of being reunited with their families.

The Private Member's Bill has been backed by the Refugee Council, the UN Refugee Agency, Amnesty UK, the British Red Cross and Oxfam GB.

Pupils power ahead with ideas

MARK ENTWISTLE
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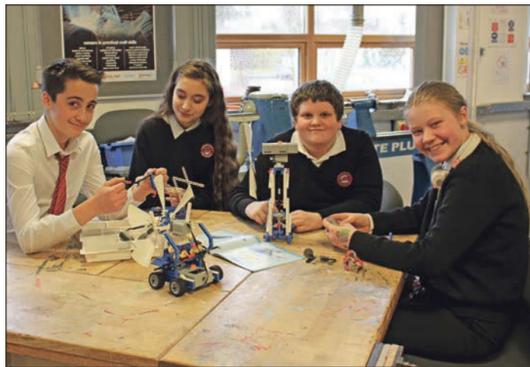
IS IT a wind turbine? Is it a racing robot? Or is it a means to generate green energy from hillwalkers in Lochaber?

Well, if you are a pupil at Kinlochleven High School, it could be all three.

Over the past few months, S1 and S2 pupils at the school have been powering ahead with green energy ideas – using Lego to build prototypes and try out their blue-sky thinking.

In February, the S1 team entered a robotics race challenge for Scottish schools – and produced the fastest-ever self-powered Lego robot in the UK, covering four metres in just 1.66 seconds.

This led to the UK-wide Tomorrow's Engineers Robotics Challenge final in Birmingham last week, where the Lochaber team's robot went head to head



Left to right are S2 pupils Danny Cockerill, Hanna Olah, Hugh Purvis and Daisy Baldwin.

with 44 other schools from across the country.

They didn't win – this time – but they have now been invited to attend the Scottish Big Bang event

in Perth on June 12 as Scottish champions.

And, not happy to rest on their laurels, the school's S2 pupils are about to launch a Green Energy

Manifesto – using Lego models to showcase ideas on how green energy can be used to transform the area.

They have already invited the local MP, MSP and councillors to a launch 'energy expo' on April 20, where they hope to generate enthusiasm and support for their manifesto ideas – which include a hillwalker-powered generator and a tourist attraction which uses green energy to take folk up and down the hill.

'The whole initiative was sparked last year when local councillor Andrew Baxter suggested we visit the new 2MW Loch Eilde Mor hydro scheme being built by Green Highland Renewables just outside the town,' explained Kinlochleven head teacher Rebecca Machin.

'Their project manager, Colin Gilmour, has been helping the school with STEM projects, and he got us thinking about green

energy and how important it is in the local economy.

'We then applied to the Royal Society for support, with Green Highland as our industrial partner, and this resulted in an award of £3,500 to buy technical Lego,' Rebecca says.

On the back of this success, the school then entered the robotics race challenge for Scottish schools, which gained them another £2,000 worth of Lego. They are now using these building blocks to fuel their green energy ideas.

'It's a really exciting time for our school,' said Rebecca. 'In many ways, Lochaber has been built on renewable energy. Everyone knows the history of hydro, and it's been terrific to see the pupils become so enthused and embrace the opportunities that have come their way.'

'Going to see a new, operational hydro scheme makes their

learning very relevant and has encouraged them to be creative and put their experience into practice, and we are all really proud of what they are doing,' Rebecca concluded.

Commenting on the scheme Colin Gilmour, project manager at Green Highland Renewables, said: 'It has been a real pleasure to work with the pupils and talk about the engineering challenges and opportunities offered by green energy.'

'The children are just full of ideas and it is wonderful to see these taking shape through all of the school's initiatives.'

'We plan to bring them back up to see our second turbine being installed.'

The Kinlochleven High School energy expo show will take place on April 20, to which all parents, local employers and politicians are invited.

Body of hillwalker recovered

POLICE have confirmed that a body has been recovered during further searches for a missing hillwalker in Wester Ross.

Brothers Neil and Alan Gibson were reported missing on Thursday February 8 by their family after they failed to return from a planned walk in the Achnashlach area of Strathcarron.

The body of Alan, 56, was recovered from the Beinn Liath Mhor area on Saturday February 10 following extensive searches and later the remains of their black Pointer dog, Archie.

Another body was recovered yesterday and has now been confirmed as that of 63-year-old Neil.

Since February extensive searches have been on-going involving members of Torridon Mountain Rescue Team, Kintail MRT, Glenelg MRT, RAF Mountain Rescue Team, SAR-DA dogs and the Coastguard helicopter.

Community welcomes grant

KINLOCHLEVEN Community Council would like to thank Liberty British Aluminium for its £1,200 grant which will benefit the children of Kinlochleven and their on-going use of the Astro-turf pitch.

With the support of this funding, the community council can now pay for the use of the pitch for young children in the village, in partnership with High Life Highland.

Music festival draws to a close

THE five-day Lochaber Music Festival drew to a close on Thursday evening with the final concert held at Lochaber High School.

The audience were entertained by a selection of performances from youngsters ranging from beginners to advanced. There were recitations of poetry by prize-winners, including Daniel Parfitt from Inverloch, who gave a colourful rendering of Burns' Address tae a Haggis. Included in the programme were music and singing from a range of styles.

Each year the festival incorporates the young musician of the year competitions sponsored by the Rotary Club of Lochaber. Winners this year were Francesca Rose, Lochaber Music School (senior), and Ailsa Janzen, Kinlochleven High (junior).

Also performing on Thursday evening was the premier instrumental award winner Molly Cameron, Lochaber High School, along with premier junior vocal award winner Jake Sessions, Lochaber Music School, and the premier Scots traditional award winner Cameron MacIsaac, from Lochaber High School. Unable to attend was Anna Gregory from Appin, who won the premier senior vocal award.

The prizes at the end of this year's concert



All the award winners from the Lochaber Music Festival. JP F13 Lochaber Music Festival 2018 winners. Photo: Abrightside Photography.

were presented by David Thomson from the Rotary Club of Lochaber. David has, for many years, been an interested and valuable supporter of the festival.

The attendance of Rhona MacKintosh, formerly a festival winner herself, was welcomed and she presented a piano trophy in honour of her late mother Joan, to Emma McColl from Fort William.

The festival committee paid tribute to all the young people who took part last week and to the teachers, parents and members of music and dance organisations who work hard to ensure a high standard of performance in the classes during the course of the week.

The committee also acknowledge the sponsorship of the Burns Club of Lochaber and Liberty

British Aluminium, as well as the many members and patrons who regularly contribute to the event. It always welcomes new members and patrons.

Lochaber Music Festival is there for entrants from all areas of Lochaber and beyond and it is hoped to sustain the entry profile for the 2019 festival, which will take place between March 15 and 21.

Local pipers blow hot at youth competition

LOCHABER Piping Society's annual youth competition attracted young pipers from across the Highlands to Lochaber High School, in Fort William, on Saturday.

Adjudicators for the event were Euan MacCrimmon, John Don Mackenzie, Iain Hurst, Bill Geddes and Duncan Nicolson.

Society committee member Rona Cameron said there was a good turn-out for the competition, although organisers would always like to see more young pipers competing for the trophies.

'Local Lochaber pipers did well, which is always good to see, and we had super judges,' Mrs Cameron said. 'We are also very grateful to all of our sponsors for their support and backing of the event.'

Local winners were among those picking up trophies. The Hugh MacPhee Memorial Quaich for the Lochaber boy or girl with the highest points in events one, two and three went to Connie MacLennan.

The Buchanan Shield for the Lochaber boy or girl with the highest points in events 4a and 4b went to Struan Robertson.

The Fort William Town Council Cup for the Lochaber girl competitor with the highest points in all events except one, two, three and four went to Laura Robertson.

The John MacLellan Trophy for the Lochaber boy competitor with the highest score points in all events except one, two, three and four went to Andrew Orr and Ronnie Macintosh.

The Evan MacRae Trophy for the Lochaber competitor with the highest points in event 10 (Piobaireachd 15-18 years) went to Amber MacDonald.

The Roddie MacDonald Memorial Quaich for the Lochaber competitor with the highest points in either event eight or 11 went to Laura Robertson.

Full results were as follows:
Chanter – 10 and under – march – 1 Rosie MacLennan; 2 Fraser Lindsay; 3 Shaughn Paul Dunlop. Chanter – 11-13 – march – 1 Connie MacLennan. Chanter 14 and under – march – 1 Grace Kelman; 2 Charles MacLennan; 3 Connie MacLennan. Bagpipes – novice – march – 1 Struan Robertson; 2 Jac Currie. Bagpipes – novice – slow air – 1 Struan Robertson. Bagpipes – under 16 –



Top: young pipers Jac Currie, Connie MacLennan, Grace Kelman, Rosie MacLennan and Struan Robertson with judge Iain Hurst; left: Amber MacDonald wowed the judges in the piobaireachd event to lift the Evan MacRae Trophy; and Laura Robertson, Andrew Orr and Ronnie MacIntosh. Pictures: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

slow air – 1 Gregor MacDonald; 2 Ciaran Kellet; 3 Rhuaridh Brown. Bagpipes – under 15 years – march – 1 Gregor MacDonald; 2 Hector Finlayson; 3 Laura Robertson. Bagpipes – under 15 years – march – (best local) – 1 Laura Robertson. Bagpipes – under 15 years – Strathspey and reel – 1 Gregor MacDonald; 2 Ruaridh Blyth; 3 Hector Finlayson. Bagpipes – 14 and under – piobaireachd – 1 Gregor MacDonald; 2 Calum Dunbar; 3 Laura Robertson. Bagpipes 15 and under – jig – 1 Gregor MacDonald; 2 Ruaridh

Blyth; 3 Laura Robertson. Bagpipes – 18 and under – march – 1 Angus MacPhee; 2 Tomas Young; 3 Rhuaridh Brown. Bagpipes – 18 and under – piobaireachd – 1 Rhuaridh Brown; 2 Angus MacPhee; 3 Ciaran Kellet. Bagpipes 18 and under – jig – 1 Angus MacPhee; 2 Rhuaridh Brown; 3 Tomas Young. Piobaireachd – ground – 1 Hector Finlayson; 2 Ruaridh Blyth; 3 Eilidh MacPhee. Bagpipes – piobaireachd (Donald MacLeod) – 1 Angus MacPhee; 2 Ross Conner; 3 Ciaran Kellet.

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Acharacle Community Council meets

ACHARACLE Community Council met on Tuesday February 27, the first meeting of the council after its reformation.

Among the items discussed were:
Co-option of councillor: David Ogg noted that David John Cameron has previously been a co-opted member and has indicated his willingness to continue in that capacity. David John Cameron confirmed and David Ogg proposed that he is formally elected at the next meeting. David Ogg invited further nominations as the community council can have up to two co-opted councillors and Shona Ritchie came forward. Both will be formally co-opted at the next meeting. David Ogg thanked them for their service to the community.

Moidart Communications Group: David Kirkham gave a review of the project so far, including the potential to provide a service for Kilchoan. The review included confirmation that Kate Forbes MSP has received a letter from BT Openreach setting out its criteria for the siting of new fibre-enabled cabinets in the middle of communities to service the maximum number of customers. A response has now been sent back asking why the central siting of the Salen 4 cabinet in the village has not led to connections being made. David Ogg thanked David Kirkham for his continuing efforts for the benefit of the community.

Police update: PC Kevin Swift was unable to attend the meeting but, via David Ogg, stated there was nothing much to report at present, just to remind people to beware of bogus salesmen and telephone contractors, particularly anyone calling at their home. He also reminded residents that pot holes and other road damage should be reported directly to Highland Council. Geoff Campbell asked whether there had been any progress on stopping fly-tipping at Blain. None so far, but David Ogg to action.

Community services: Andrew Baxter advised the Highland Council capital expenditure budget includes funds for 750m of the Kentra Road and the school road to be resurfaced this year. Dot Fergusson offered to find out what part of Kentra road is to be worked on.

It was noted the Dorlin road is currently in a very poor state. David Ogg will report to Highland Council. The pot-hole reporting service on the Highland Council website works well and residents are encouraged to make use of it and report problems as soon as possible.

Dot Fergusson advised that the manner in which road verge maintenance work is undertaken is determined by speed and cost alone. It was reported there had been cases of local flooding where the discarded debris had been washed into drains and ditches, which then required further Highland Council attention. Dot Fergusson will look into this.

It was asked whether it would be possible to have a bus shelter installed at Salen, as there are currently 12 pupils getting the school bus from there. Dot Fergusson will take the matter forward.

A request for the 30mph limit to be extended in Salen to the cattle grid has been made. Joanne Matheson requested it is also extended in Acharacle, north to Shiel Bridge. David Ogg will submit both requests

Any other business:
Dail Mhor House, Strontian: David Ogg provided a review of what has happened.

Two members of the action group and Strontian Community Council are due to meet with Andrew Baxter to discuss solutions. David Ogg claimed, under the circumstances, it was difficult to avoid concluding NHS Highland had no intention of ever re-opening Dal Mhor. David Ogg will continue monitoring and report to Acharacle Community Council. Further input or questions were invited for the next meeting. Roy Cattle asked what the status was for respite care locally and was advised there was currently no respite provision in Lochaber.

Local B&B notices: A community councillor had received questions from two residents about the B&B notice attached to the tree between Salen and Acharacle. It was thought the sign was likely to require either planning permission or advertising approval. There is an enforcement link on the Highland Council website for reporting this.

Date of next meeting: The community council will meet on the second Tuesday of each month, subject to review. Dates were set for Tuesday April 10 and Tuesday May 18. Dot Fergusson noted it would need to have an annual general meeting before the end of June.



Cameron Highlanders' Association disburses funds

With the recent disbandment of the Cameron Highlanders' Association, the decision was made to split the remaining funds between two local service organisations – Lochaber branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland and Sea Cadets unit TS St Christopher, with each receiving £850 at a handover ceremony at Fort William War Memorial. Pictured are association members Danny Munro, front left, and Tommy Campbell, who presented cheques to Kevin Lane, right, Legion chairman, and Derick Campbell, commanding officer of TS St Christopher.

Photograph: Iain Fergusson, The Write Image. IF F13 CamHighdonation

Lundavra primary's nursery granted £1,000

LUNDAVRA Primary School Nursery in Fort William has been granted £1,000 towards its play projects.

The Highland Play award was presented to Pamela Hamilton and Sharyn Morgan by Dr David Alston, chairman of NHS Highland, at the opening of the Play Highland Conference on Thursday March 15.

The Highland Council, in association with Play Highland, offers this annual award to the group, organisation or community that has done the most to promote self-directed free play with daily access to the outdoors in the region.

Sandra Harrington, chairman of the Play Improvement Group at Highland Council, said: 'This year our focus was on inclusive play in line with Highland's Year of Young People's chosen themes. We received a large number of entries, the standard of which was very high. Many congratulations to Lundavra Primary School Nursery in Fort William.'

Lundavra primary is a new-build school. Staff consulted with children and parents to see what they would like put in place for nursery play and how they could contribute.



Pamela Hamilton and Sharyn Morgan receive the award from Dr David Alston, chairman of NHS Highland.

The use of 'loose parts' play toolkit in their garden has encouraged co-operation among children while ensuring inclusion of all children. This includes those with English as an additional language and those with additional support needs.

The children are able to communicate their ideas to each other using the loose parts rather than language and this has promoted a

high level of interaction and inclusiveness. Many of the children attending the nursery live in flats with limited access to the outdoors.

The Play Improvement Group looks forward to seeing even more development at Lundavra Primary School Nursery in future.

The Highland Play Conference 'Eat, Sleep, PLAY, Repeat' welcomed more than 100 participants with a mixture of teachers, early

years practitioners, social workers, primary mental health workers and UHI students among delegates.

The conference was organised by The Highland Council's Play Improvement Group to inspire inclusion and equality in the planning and delivery of play. The conference was opened by Dr David Alston, chairman of NHS Highland, who was a founding member of the Play Improvement Group.

Fort bank staff get on their bike for charity

HEADWAY Highlands Lochaber group has received a donation £423, raised by the staff of the Trustees Savings Bank (TSB) in the High Street, Fort William.

The funds were raised by three members of staff and a friend of the group by pedalling an exercise bike a total of 216 kilometres without leaving the bike. The impressive distance represents the same as cycling the A82 to Inverness and back to Fort William.

The Fort William members thanked the TSB fundraising team of Lynsey MacPherson, Amanda MacDougall, Brian Foster and Tony Weldon.

If anyone with an acquired brain injury is interested in joining Headway Highland, it meets on the first Monday of each month, from 7pm to 9pm, in An Drochaid, Claggan. For more information, call 07748 013507.



The TSB team of Lynsey MacPherson, Amanda MacDougall, Brian Foster and Tony Weldon raised almost £500 for Headway Highland.

RETRO Roamer

More items from the Retro Roamer columns of 30 years ago

□ Donald was having a dram. And Donald was enjoying himself fine. Into the volley came a taxi driver. 'Taxi for DC!' He shouted. DC was not happy. Taximan persisted. 'Your missus sent me here and she's paid me the fare in advance'. DC was even less amused. 'Well, here's a pound,' he volunteered. 'Now go away and find another passenger.' Exit bemused driver, having been paid full fare and tip to go nowhere and a pound on top of that. And DC's missus? To use a right royal phrase: 'She was NOT amused.'

□ There was this august meeting in the council chambers last week, 'august' in March, that is. As the proceedings progressed there was a 'ratatata' on the floor. Yes, the floor, not the door. The 'First Lady's' pearls had worked loose and, one by one, were skiting off the round table and onto the parquet floor. This caused the other councillors much mirth. So much so that the committee chairman's laughter loosened the gold cap on one of his front teeth. It, too, hit the deck via the table. Aye, there was a wealth of minerals being recovered from the meeting room floor that day.

□ Tough luck on the scores of motorists, van drivers and lorry drivers who were allowed to travel on the A82 from Inverness as far as Letterfinlay on Tuesday. Only to find that the road was impassable because of flood damage. Nary a 'closed' sign to be seen en route for the south. Not even an attempt by the region men operating a single-line system at Fort Augustus to enquire if the southbound drivers were heading for Fort William. No - let them get to Letterfinlay and find out for themselves that they'd have to go all the way back to Inverness to use the 'alternative' - the A9. Will the region pay their fuel bills? It might be worth a try when the various council departments re-open after the holiday.

□ In the meantime it was water, water, everywhere. And in places where we thought the recent technological and engineering advances had ensured there would be no localised flooding in and around the Fort. Like when they removed the Puggy Line bridge over the main road at Claggan Roadend to give us height clearance and a raised road surface at the same time. The only thing that rose - apart from the drivers' temperatures - was the depth of the water on the road. Aye, and opposite Belhaven Ward we were provided with an outdoor paddling pool once again, thanks to officialdom paying no heed to warnings from locals.

□ It didn't take long for the rumours to spread through Caol following the torrential rain in the early hours of Saturday morning. The huge pool which formed in front of the Lochaber Bar was, apparently, to be turned into a fish pond. However, a local wag was quickest off the mark and set up a 'No Fishing' sign. And the flood, which covered most of Caol, certainly made the going 'soft' for punters heading to the bookies.

□ The time and motion team was doing a study of the single queue system at Fort William Post Office on Thursday. Or, if you were 'in from the country' that day - the Post Office. I'll keep you posted.

□ Malky was coming over to the Fort 'from the other side of the loch'. Among the ferry passengers were a mother and daughter from Holland. Malky got speaking to them during the crossing, just to be the sociable Highlander. Later in the day, he was having a wee read at the paper. Turned to the racing pages. Horse running called 'Double Dutch'. Malky resolved to have a wee flutter on that one. Because he couldn't get away from work for a while he gave a couple of quid to an Inverlochly pal who was hovering around the pier and asked him to back 'Double Dutch'. Malky also told a few others about the topical tip. Aye, well, you've heard it all before - but it did happen. This way. His pal 'forgot' to put on the bet. Double Dutch won at 8-1. As if that wasn't bad enough, Malky lost his wallet in the NUPE Club that evening. He went back in on Saturday to see if it had been handed in, as he wasn't entirely sure he'd mislaid it there. Sure enough, Maureen leaned down behind the bar and produced Malky's wallet, intact, and all the money - which would have been £16 more if he'd got that bet put on - was safely inside. 'Well, I'm a Dutchman,' Malky declared as he thanked Maureen and the NUPE for restoring his faith in human nature.

□ You've got to hand it to Fort William Football Club for foiling the rain at Saturday's home match at Claggan by introducing a new line in club fundraising - waterproof raffle tickets.

□ All that talk about the rain compels me to reintroduce Johnny Wilson's poem, 'Ode to My Oilskin':

'Now's the day, and now's the hour,
See approach Lochaber shower,
And the clouds above Ardgour -
Oilskin coat for me.
If I should trust that patch of blue,
Or blinking sun an hour or two
I'd get a soaking through and through,
So oilskin comes wi' me.
What tho' the stars be shining bright,
When I retire at dead of night,
Fair, false, deceiving is the sight.
Oilskin bides wi' me.
Black the clouds and black the day
Be it April, June or May.
Morning bright or morning grey,
Oilskin comes wi' me.
Mists are gathering in the sky,
Blotting out the sun on high,
Downpour's coming is pretty nigh,
But oilskin covers me.
Corry Chearail's gloomy grey,
Not a day for corn or hay.
For better times I watch and pray,
And oilskin stays by me
Tho' pessimistic be my lay
I try to see a sunny ray,
To face whatever comes my way
But oilskin's aye near me.



A quiet day in the High Street in days gone by.



Are you ready to get MAD with Atlantis Community Leisure?

Saturday 19th of May see's our first one0off Muddy Atlantis Day. With gallons of mud, icy water and some shocks along the way. We are creating a 10k cross country assault course designed to challenge and test you. Get a team together or go solo and join in on a fun filled and crazy challenge right here in Oban.

The MAD team are creating some gruelling obstacles up some gut-busting hills, over craggy cliffs and through the chilly west coast sea. Keep your eyes peeled for sneak peaks of what they have in store for you.

Entry is £25 (plus booking fee) per person for age 16+

All money raised is going towards Atlantis Community Leisure 25th Birthday Fundraising campaign to upgrade the original facilities in the centre.

Raise extra money for our community centre and collect sponsors; download a sponsorship form or set up a sponsor page.

Build your team; grab your friends, work colleagues or gym buddies and attack this together. Looking for some team mates? Head to our Facebook group (MAD-Teams) and find like-minded comrades.

MAD
We also have our wee MAD event for 8-16-year-olds. The course involves loads of obstacles over a shorter distance and is taking place between 9-10am before the adults set off.
Entry is £10 (plus booking fee).

There will be spectator areas and it is completely free to come and watch.



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The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

There was a heartening turn-out at the election hustings held on Friday evening in Fort William for the vacant seat in Caol and Mallaig.

As we report on page three this week, some 40 people formed the audience to hear the candidates voice their opinions on a range of issues.

Four of the six hopefuls graced the event, though it was regrettable that the other two were unavailable.

After opening statements from the four candidates, chairman John Hutchison opened the event to questions from the floor and there were some excellent points

put to the panel. Among the subjects of concern to the electorate were parking charges in Fort William, merits or demerits of the proposed alloy wheel plant in the town and the provision of secure residential care facilities for the elderly.

The responses from those standing in the election were interesting, with, perhaps surprisingly, some concerns being raised about the number of new jobs likely to be created by Liberty's new alloy wheel factory.

The poll now takes place next Thursday, April 5, and we would urge all voters to exercise that right.



Days gone by – 1920s

Peter White from Sunderland sent us this photograph of a Crossley car built between 1920-22/23 and registered in County Durham, England. It was a model 19.6, with a top speed of 60mph and it did 20 miles to the gallon.

Mr White said: 'Crossley made the chassis and engines and front assembly, while the cabins were to the customer's requirements. The 1924 Crossley tourist is the same with an open convertible top. The photograph shows the car loaded on a single rotating deck car ferry about to land on a jetty, but I'm not sure where the jetty is? Glenelg to Skye comes to mind, but I'd love to know for sure.' Can any of our readers help him? Let us know.

MacPhail

ANGUS MACPHAIL
angusmacphail@yahoo.co.uk



WHETHER it is conditioning of the environment in which I've lived or because of the general craving for diversity from which I suffer, I am unsure, but I relish the feeling of the moving seasons.

With the changing of the clocks last weekend being welcomed with some of the best weather of the year, the lifting of the winter cloak was in the air and in the minds and mood of most.

As I conveyed in an article in October while heading towards the winter, the seasonality of the climate is one of the great advantages of living in this part of the planet.

As the transition from autumn to winter is welcomed with looking forward to the long cosy nights by a warm fire, the move from winter to spring brings with it the prospect of long light evenings and bright early mornings.

By the time this piece is published we may have returned to being covered in ice and snow but, for the time being, it

is sunny and warm and I am going to pretend it's going to last!

The world opens up in spring and land and light flourish and grow with every day.

For such a predictable aspect of life, it is surprising how far away spring can feel while in the depths of winter.

The seasons are far less important to the general population of the world than they once were. In our pampered lives protected from the elements, with little dependency on home-grown food and many safeguards against failed crops, harsh winters or poor harvests, we have become immune to the cycles of the earth in recent years.

I am, of course, not advocating voluntary return to risking our lives by giving up our comfortable homes and food security, but the lessons of nature should not be forgotten along with our lack of reliance on it.

A very supportive and regular reader of this column whom I hold in the highest regard, recently commented that my articles are becoming very philosophical. I promise to move to

more pragmatic approaches in coming weeks, but in the meantime I'm going to philosophise about the cyclical nature of life.

Of the many lessons we can take from Mother Nature and apply to our own existence, one of the most important is that everything moves in cycles - from one season to another, as it were. The pendulums of life will swing back and forth through good times and bad and most often the swing in one direction is matched by a mirrored swing in the other. Unlike the seasons, the travel and timing of these swings are never predictable, but they will happen.

It is, therefore, good to remember and be constantly aware that when we may feel that our lives are stuck in the depths of winter, if we have patience, spring will come again and the darkness will lift. Similarly, when it feels as if we are blessed with eternal summer, we should be aware that this may not last and therefore be thankful for it, ride the wave and make the most of it, because cold winters will come again when we least expect them.



Elaine Boslem: 'Fantastic congratulations to you both 'n' here's to a new beginning.'

Maureen O'Hanlon: 'Wonderful, you both look gorgeous and handsome! Best wishes.'

Katy Beaton: 'Beautiful couple. Congratulations. That's one proud man just there.'

Louise Duff: 'A long time coming!! Congratulations and enjoy the rest of your lives together.'

Anne Wilson: 'Congratulations and best wishes for a very happy future together.'

Lisa MacNeil: 'Wow... you both look amazing! Wishing you all the love and happiness in the world!!!'

Calor Gas attitude sparks fury

Sir,
Your article ('Calor Gas customers get cold treatment', March 15) on delays in Calor Gas deliveries is shocking but not surprising.

For the past nine years as a Calor Gas customer, I have struggled to secure timely deliveries.

Each time my gas levels are low, I have to make multiple telephone calls, often demanding to speak to supervisors, just to get a gas delivery for which I have already paid.

On one occasion I was told that the problem was that I lived in a remote location - but if I lived in a city centre I wouldn't need to be reliant on tanker deliveries. Another time I was told that 'they were overwhelmed', and only delivering to people who had run out.

When I first signed up as a Calor Gas customer, I was given a written undertaking that deliveries would be made within five working days.

Calor Gas offers no such undertakings now.

The deterioration in the level of service is unacceptable.

Every year, it seems to take Calor Gas by surprise that customers will need to use more fuel during the winter months.

To be told that 'people should use what they have more sparingly' is insulting: does Calor Gas really think that its customers would go to the expense of heating their homes to tropical temperatures during Scottish winters? I'm sure that all customers use gas sparingly, not least because of its high cost.

Calor Gas needs to get a grip. Name and address supplied.

Thank you to the litter pickers

Sir,
Well done and thanks to the team who have done a fantastic job of clearing the mountain of litter that has been accumulating on our roadsides between Tynnuilt and Oban.

Thanks must also go to the chap who has done a great job of edging both the pavements and roadside verges.

What a difference this has made.

And fingers crossed that the 'big spring clean' in Oban, organised by Maurice Wilkins, has been a huge success.

It's a sad reflection on our society that so many still think nothing of throwing litter from their car windows or dropping it in the street.

John Hay,
Tynnuilt.

Postcode woes lead to delivery difficulties

Sir,
We refer to your recent article regarding delivery difficulties to this area.

Those Oban and the surrounding area residents with postcodes PA34 5** are listed as living in the Highland region and our names do not appear

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL
ailean@obantimes.co.uk



'S NEÒNACH MURA CANADH cuid gur e aon de chomharran na h-aoise a th' ann gum bheil mi air a bhith a' smaoinichadh bho chionn ghoidid mu cho cudromach 's a tha e gum bi plana aig buidhnean de gach seòrsa airson leantainneachd rian nan tachradh gum cailleadh iad cuideigin aig àrd ire.

Co-dhiù is e comataidh ionaltraidh baile cruite neo bòrd-stiùiridh buidhne mhòir a th' ann, saoilidh mi gum bheil còir aig iar-neach- dreuchd a bhith a' cumail taic ri cathraichean, is leithid sin, gus gum biodh iad sin comasach air uallach na dreuchd a ghabhail nan tachradh nach b' urrainn dhan neach gum bheil misè cho daingeann na mo bheachd gur còir iar-chathraiche, iar-neach- gairm, neo iar-cheann- suidhe, a stèidheachadh air gach comataidh is bòrd-stiùiridh.

Tha mi cuideachd a' creidsinn nach bu chòir uallach nan àrd-dhreuchdan sin leantainn air an aon neach seachad air ùine àraid agus anns an dòigh sin

in the Argyll and Bute telephone directory.

In addition to this anomaly, we have been refused delivery of an internet purchase on one occasion and we are charged additional delivery fees on most internet purchases all because some jobsworth in Post Office HQ has not bothered to refer to a map of this area.

We have tried, along with one or two other Oban residents, to have this ridiculous state of affairs rectified but it is impossible to find in which department this jobsworth has his/her desk.

Contact has therefore been made with our MSP Donald Cameron to try to resolve this issue so we urge all those residents with the postcode PA34 5** to contact his office in George Street (telephone 01631 563474) to complain about the situation.

Hopefully, the Post Office can be made to see the error of its ways and put the other half of Oban back into Argyll and Bute.

K Oxland,
Oban.

Storytelling for Year of Young People

Sir
As part of Year of the Young People 2018, Argyll and Bute Youth Services team is launching a storytelling project called 'Once Upon a Time'.

We are collecting stories about Argyll and Bute and we will then collate them into an ebook for future generations to read. If you have any stories you would like to share then send them via email to youthservices@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Hannah Nicolson,
Lochgilphead Community Education Centre,
Manse Brae, Lochgilphead.

Motorists pay the price for inaction

Sir,
Shockingly, 30 per cent of A-roads in Scotland are now classed as red or amber, meaning they are in need of inspection or requiring work.

These figures have a huge knock on for motorists who face increased damage to their cars, vans and motorbikes.

Ultimately, the SNP has failed to improve the situation in any real sense and motorists are the ones paying the price for inaction.

When you include the challenges that rural constituencies such as Argyll and Bute face, with the large upcoming spike in logging tonnage on our roads and the continued growth of heavy freight from our world famous distilleries. It's clear that a piecemeal approach to road maintenance is not enough.

Argyll and Bute council has stepped up to the plate with plans to spend £15 million on roads over the next two years.

Now it's time for the SNP at a national level to act.

Councillor Alastair Redman,
Islay.

Barriers are needed near to Kilmelford

Sir,
It is very commendable that crash barriers are now being erected on the A85 between Pennyfuir and Dunbeg but why has a similar barrier not been placed at Loch Drimnin, outside Kilmelford village?

It is approaching two years ago when there was a horrific accident there that saw a car go off the road and into the loch, resulting in the deaths of two children.

It is a disgrace that a barrier was not erected immediately after the accident.

Come on, Argyll and Bute roads department: do something about this dangerous spot before there is another fatality.

Ishbel Banks,
Ardconnel Road, Oban.

Where is money to come from for HSCP?

Sir,
Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell shows breathtaking hypocrisy in his comments on the budgetary crisis facing the Health and Social Care Partnership in his constituency.

Where does he suggest the money comes from? Central government? The Scottish Government? Argyll and Bute is a large area with a very scattered population, making all service provision particularly challenging.

In light of Mr Russell's obvious concerns, perhaps the Scottish Government could give some extra millions to the HSCP. After all, it has given £4 million to a few folk on Ulva.

Ranee Davidson,
Tigh nan Eilean, Ardfern.

Great success for Oban spring clean

Sir,
Our first Oban spring clean is over and must be considered a great success.

We would like to thank the crowd of volunteers of all ages who rallied to the cause and turned out to make our spring clean so worthwhile. I would like especially to thank our secretary, Claire Rizos, for organising the event and for dealing with the equipment hand outs and returns, also Janie Steele for her dedication and involvement with the beach cleans, and Faisal Jewel from Argyll and Bute Council for giving up his weekend to chase around the town picking up the bags to fill the skip which he'd organised at Rockfield. We should also thank the MacQueen Bros Charitable Trust for buying litter pickers for us, BID4Oban for helping to circulate our information to the business community and the GRAB Trust, for lending equipment. Thanks also to the kind folk at the Bridge Café who gave the Black Lynn volunteers free coffee and cakes.

We need to tackle the root cause of the littering and we hope that the community will continue to assist and encourage us in this.

Maurice Wilkins,
Keep Oban Beautiful.

Ailean Caimbeul

gun tèid daoine eile a bhrosnachadh a dhol an sàs oir tha sinn uile mothachail cho doirbh is a tha e daoine a thàladh gum comataidh sam bith gun iomradh air prìomh uallach a ghabhail. Fàgaidh sin aig amannan aon neach a' giùlan dleastanas nas fhaide na dh'ìarradh e neo i ach chan eil còir leithid de shuidheachadh stad a chur air iomairt gus duine ùr a thàladh chun na h-obrach. Tha e na adhbhar iomagain a bhith a' faicinn cheannardan cuid de rìoghachdan mòra an t-saoghail a' gleidheadh cumhachd leantainneach.

POWER tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Lord Acton wrote these words in 1887 but they are no less true now, and the world might understandably be concerned by processes which on one hand appointed Xi Jinping as president for life in the People's Republic of China, and similarly delivered a fourth term to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

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

Social media

There was an outpouring of good wishes for Yvonne MacHugh and Billy Irving after they were married on Saturday.

Siobhan MacInnes: 'Fantastic. A real life happy ending. So happy for you both. May you have an eternity of happiness and love together.'

Rita Hargey: 'Many congratulations Yvonne & Billy ... a real happy ending to the horrendous yrs waiting for this special day.'

Eileen Duncan: 'Congratulations To You Both. This Was A Long Time Coming. Hope William Jnr Had A Fantastic Day. May You Have A Long And Happy Life Together.'

Michelle Gallagher: 'This has made

my day! So happy for you guys! A happy ending after all.'

Walter Crummev: 'Fantastic, your song is Stand by your man.'

Helen Daniels: 'So wonderful! Congratulations Yvonne & Billy.'

Caroline Cartwright: Congratulations! Wishing you many years of happiness.'

Olive Thomson: 'Congratulations. Good health and happiness to you both and your little boy for the future.'

Lizzie McMillan: 'So happy for you both wish you all the happiness in the world you both deserve it.'

Catherine Morrison: 'Massive congratulations to u both.'

Mike Story: 'I love a happy ending!! Congratulations.'

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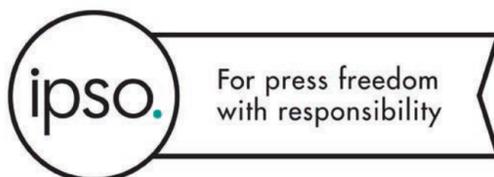
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Your letters

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The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith.

A daytime telephone number

is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not be printed.

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

Wick hit the Fort for six

Wick Academy	6
Fort William	1
Highland League	

FIVE second half goals sealed a comprehensive league victory for Wick Academy after a nervy first half at home against Fort William.

With just one goal separating the sides at half-time, Fort William went on to concede five goals in a devastating 20-minute spell in the second half, consigning the Lochaber team to their 23rd defeat of the season.

Wick's six-goal winning margin somewhat flattered the home side, however, as for much of the game they were matched by a dogged Fort William side.

Hopes of a Fort William upset were almost cast aside early on as Wick Academy took the lead after just six minutes courtesy of a deflected Steven Anderson goal.

The Fort were undeterred by this early setback and as the tempo of Wick's build up play dropped, the visitors were able to assert some influence on the match, creating a number of chances of their own.

Wick were unable to build on their early goal and lacked any real intensity going forward, which was largely down to the Fort's resilient defence.

However, the Lochaber men were unable to take advantage of their hosts' lacklustre first half display and came up against Wick goalkeeper, Danny McCarthy, who was in fine form.

Encouragement

With the score at 1-0 at half-time and little to separate the two teams, Fort William could take encouragement from their performance having set up an opportunity to get some points on the road.

Just seven minutes into the second half, however, Wick Academy again scored early in the half when Richard Meadie dispatched a penalty to double the home side's advantage.

This prompted a flurry of goals for the home side as, soon after, Andersen netted his second of the match on the hour mark before Michael Steven got on the scoresheet two minutes later.

Davie Allan marked his comeback for Wick after a 15-month lay-off through injury with a goal on the 71st minute.

Two minutes later, Grant Steven made it six for the Scorries and completed the day's scoring.

Despite that debilitating 20-minute scoring spree, Fort William never stopped working and continued to push for their own chance to score but couldn't find a way through the Wick defence.

As the sides began to tire, Fort William were able to close out the match without conceding again, which left the Wick attackers frustrated at times.

That win moves Wick up to 13th in what has been a relatively disappointing season so far for the Scorries, while Fort William remain rooted to the bottom of the league.

The Fort are at home to runaway league leaders Cove Rangers this Saturday (March 31).

Second half Hyndland comeback denies Lochaber win on the road

Hyndland	34
Lochaber	30
BT West Division 3	

A RESURGENT Hyndland side snatched a late victory against Lochaber after a hard-fought, high-scoring encounter in Glasgow on Saturday.

Lochaber squandered a 16-point lead at half-time thanks to a rousing second half performance from Hyndland, which saw them the score three tries, leaving the visitors with just two bonus points to take back to Banavie.

Lochaber edged the previous meeting between these two sides in a tight 20-14 encounter and were expecting another hard-fought match.

It was Lochaber who started brightest with Jonathan McCook kicking a penalty to open the scoring. Lochaber thought they had got their first try of the afternoon when some quick hands put winger Peter Carmichael free but the Hyndland scrum half made the tackle and held the ball up over the try line. From the resulting scrum, however, Christopher Simpson was able to get over the line for his first try of the game.

Lochaber continued to dominate early on and when Hyndland did attack, the defence held strong. Lochaber's backs were finding all sorts of space through the mid-field with Jonathan McCook and Callum Boyd both breaking tackles in the middle of the park to score under the posts.

Fortunately for Lochaber, McCook had packed his kicking boots as he slotted home a 45-metre penalty with relative ease to further extend the visitors' lead.

Hyndland did come back into the game and their hard work was awarded with their first try of the game, giving them some confidence before the half-time break with the scores at 23-7.

Polar opposite

The second half turned out to be a polar opposite of the first half with Hyndland coming out the stronger side and managed to do everything which Lochaber had been doing well in the first half.

The Glasgow side scored two more tries to slash Lochaber's lead and really put pressure on the visitors. Lochaber did respond with Simpson scoring his second try, and Lochaber's fourth, to ensure a bonus point.

But a pivotal moment in the match came late on when Lochaber were reduced to 14 men after James Lucas was yellow



Lochaber RFC.

carded for repeated penalties inside the 22. Hyndland took advantage of the extra man and, with less than five minutes left, they stretched the Lochaber defence and scored out wide to take the lead for the first time with a slender one point advantage.

Lochaber were able to win the ball back from the restart but immediately gave away a penalty just inside their own

half, which Hyndland's fly half duly converted.

The game restarted with 90 seconds still on the clock and after some Lochaber pressure, Hyndland were able to secure the ball close to their own try line.

With time up it seemed like Hyndland would simply kick the ball out but they passed it to a forward on their own line.

Lochaber prop William Stew-

art tackled him back into his own try area but was unable to rip the ball and score a late try.

Instead, Hyndland were able to hold the ball up and the resulting scrum meant the end of the game, with Hyndland edging the result.

The battling performance from Lochaber didn't leave them empty handed, however, as their free-scoring attacking play and dogged defence earned

Rugby

them two bonus points which could prove important as the season draws to an end. With only a few games remaining, Lochaber are chasing Shawlands in fourth place while Cowal sit just below them in fifth.

Lochaber's next game is at home to Bishoptown on April 14; 3pm kick off.



Medal winners from Friday's races. Front row, left to right: Ailsa Janzen, Kinlochleven, Anne MacPherson, Lochaber, Breagha Miller, Mallaig, and Rosie Sinclair, Kinlochleven. Back row, left to right: Danny Cockerill, Kinlochleven, Ben Mackinnon, Lochaber, Alex Jamieson, Portree, Freddy Fulford, Lochaber, Neil Minnis, Kinlochleven, and Jamie MacConnel, Lochaber.

Lochaber High wins cross country shield

THE LEANACHAN Challenge took place last Friday at Torlundy, with young athletes from across the West Highlands taking part in a variety of cross country races in the Lochaber forest.

This year secondary school runners came from Kinlochleven, Mallaig, Lochaber and Portree high schools courtesy of a huge effort from school staff and volunteers who helped to organise and transport teams.

S1/2 runners ran a distance of 2.9km, while those in S3/4 ran 5.5km through Leanachan Forest, along a genuine 'cross country' path complete with mud, tree roots and narrow bridges.

There were medals for all the runners taking part with trophies for the first, second and third boy and girl in each

category, a cup for the fastest boy and girl and a shield for the overall winning team.

This year the school shield went to Lochaber High School. The cup for fastest girls went to Breagha Miller from Mallaig High School who ran the 2.9km route in 12.57 minutes, while the cup for fastest boy went to Alex Jamieson from Portree High School who ran the 2.9km route in 10.24 minutes.

Girls S1/2: 1 Breagha Miller, Mallaig; 2 Alice-Anne MacPherson, Lochaber; 3 Ailsa Janzen, Kinlochleven.

Boys S1/2: 1 Alex Jamieson, Portree; 2 Ben Mackinnon, Lochaber; 3 Danny Cockerill, Kinlochleven.

Girls S3/4: 1 Rosie Sinclair, Kinlochleven.

Boys S3/4: 1 Freddy Fulford, Lochaber; 2 Neil Minnis, Kin-

Cross country

lochleven; 3 Jamie MacConnel, Lochaber.

This annual cross country running race is hosted by the Rural Education Trust in memory of the late Peter English. The event is organised by the Rural Education Trust with support from High Life Highland Active Schools team and volunteers from across Lochaber.

Bridget Thomas, active schools coordinator Fort William, added: 'A special thank you goes to the Rural Education Trust and all the volunteers who helped to put on a lovely lunch, also to all the volunteer marshals and timers and Nevis Range for use of their trails.'

New sponsors give gymnasts a bounce

YOUNG members of the Lochaber Gymnastics Club will have an extra spring in their step thanks to the support of Liberty British Aluminium whose sponsorship is helping them buy a new vaulting table.

The company which runs the smelter at Fort William sent representatives Rosie Flannigan and Cara-lyn Gray along to the Nevis Centre to see some of the agile youngsters in action and to hand over a cheque for £500 towards the new equipment.

The popular club, which boasts about 200 members aged one to 17, is busy putting the

Gymnastics

gymnasts through their paces in preparation for the big club competition in May and hopes to send some of its athletes forward for regional and all-Scotland events later in the year.

A spokesperson from the club said: 'The young people really enjoy their sessions at the club and it's important that we keep investing in new equipment in order to give them every opportunity to develop their skills. The support of local businesses in achieving this is very welcome and much appreciated.'



Rosie Flannigan, right, and Cara-lyn Gray present Lochaber Gymnastics Club with a cheque for £500 towards the new equipment. Photo: Abridge Photography.

Lochaber club lotteries

Lottery numbers

THIS week's Fort William Golf Club lotto numbers were 2, 5 and 14. There was no winner so the jackpot for the draw today (Thursday March 29) will be £1,000.

Numbers drawn in the Caol Regeneration lotto were 5, 13 and 15. There were no winners this week so the jackpot for next week will be £400.

Ballachulish Shinty Club's lottery numbers for this week were 6, 10 and 13. There were no winners this week. Next week's draw will have a prize of £1,400.

Caol Community Centre's bingo lotto numbers for this week were 1, 10 and 16. There were no winners this week so next week's jackpot will be £400.

Saints in Scottish Cup quarter final

Football

OBAN Saints have reached the quarter finals of the Scottish Amateur Cup and await the winners of the Sandys v Goldenhill replay which takes place on Saturday.

The Oban side have reached the semi-finals for the past two seasons, so they will be hoping to go one better this year and reach the final which takes place at Hampden Park at the end of May.

SPONSORS OF THE OBAN TIMES WEATHER AND TIDES

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Chain, shackles, buoys all available to purchase in Oban

Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva Ferry and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday March 29, 2018 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm	Ardishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Thur	04.17 3.7 10.49 0.8 16.53 3.6 22.43 0.7		Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Fri	04.56 3.9 11.30 0.7 17.27 3.8 23.27 0.5		Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Sat	05.33 4.1 12.08 0.6 17.59 4.0 *** **		Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Sun	00.09 0.4 06.07 4.1 12.44 0.6 18.31 4.0		Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Mon	00.49 0.4 06.41 4.1 13.19 0.6 19.03 4.0		Ferry Crossings/Sea States			
Tues	01.27 0.5 07.13 4.0 13.52 0.8 19.33 3.9		Oban to Barra/South Uist			Moderate
Wed	02.02 0.7 07.44 3.8 14.26 1.0 20.04 3.7		Oban to Coll/Tiree			Moderate
			Kennacraig to Islay			Moderate

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

WEATHER

Thursday Sunny intervals
Breezy from the east south east
Temperatures 3°C to 8°C

Friday Cloudy
Breezy from the east
Temperatures 3°C to 8°C

Weekend Cloudy
Outlook Breezy from the east north east
Temperatures 3°C to 9°C

