

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Death of Oban tourism pioneer - David Webster

DAVID Webster, one of Oban's proudest adopted sons and a pioneer in attracting tourists to the town, passed away on Sunday. He was 87.

Mr Webster was originally from Tunbridge Wells but moved to Argyll in the 1950s, firstly to Dunoon, before relocating and settling in Oban in 1956.

He was first elected to Oban Town Council in 1966, starting a political career that would last more than 30 years.

He was a leading figure in Scotland's tourism and was a founding member of the Oban, Mull and District Tourism Association, before going on to work with the Argyll, Isles, Loch Lomond, Stirling and Trossachs Tourist Board.

An active businessman, he revamped the Phoenix Cinema, renaming it the Highland Theatre for its opening in 1988. He continued to run two camera shops in the town.

He is survived by his wife since 1980, Margaret, and children Roger, Paul, Karen and Gavin.

The funeral will be held in Cardross Crematorium today (Thursday).

Oban gains faster broadband link

MORE than 5,600 homes and businesses in Oban should now have access to faster broadband, BT has announced.

The upgrade of copper lines means download speeds of up to 20Mbps should now be available.

Dunoon councillor dies after illness

DUNOON councillor, Alistair MacAlister, has died after a prolonged illness.

The 81-year old was a popular figure in the area and had declared his intention to defend the seat he won in 2007 during this May's local council election.

He passed away in the early hours of Friday morning.

A spokesperson for the SNP, who he represented, expressed the party's 'great sadness' at his passing.

The Toy Cupboard, which hosts play sessions and acts as a toy library, received a cheque for £1,000 from West Highland Housing Association last week.

The charity's chairwoman, Sally Weaser, gratefully received the funds.



Harrison Hornby, 3, Bethan Neil, 2 and Alfie Byers, 3 are delighted their group can keep going. 16_114toy01

Toy Cupboard gains welcome boost

CHILDREN in Oban can rest a bit easier after the town's favourite playtime organisation received a big boost to its funding.

The Toy Cupboard, which hosts play sessions and acts as a toy library, received a cheque for £1,000 from West Highland Housing Association last week.

The charity's chairwoman, Sally Weaser, gratefully received the funds.

"a lifeline to parents who need support - or even just friendship."

chairwoman
The Toy Cupboard

She said: 'This will really help

with our running costs, it takes about £11,000 a year to keep the Toy Cupboard going.'

Sally, who has been attending the play sessions the charity holds twice a week for the past six and a half years, described the Toy Cupboard's work as a 'lifeline' to parents who need support - or even just friendship.

She added: 'You know when you walk through the door there

will be a friendly face and a cup of tea. The children love playing with each other and it is a really great place to meet people in the same situation as you.'

The Toy Cupboard is open to everyone and membership is just £5 a year with play sessions from as little as £1. But Sally is keen to stress that money is not a barrier: 'If you can't afford it, you don't pay,' she says emphatically.

Rare species stall Tiree's offshore plans

Windfarm blown off course by environmental issues

PROTECTED species such as the corncrake, great northern diver and basking sharks have blown the controversial Argyll Array off course.

Protected species
Scottish Power Renewables, owned by Spanish energy giant Iberdrola, this week announced a minimum 18-month delay to the proposed 180 - 300 turbine wind farm, with planning permission now not being sought until late 2014.

No reason was initially given for the delay and speculation remains the move is due to the approaching independence referendum.

However, the company has now said it has postponed its plans to allow further discussions with statutory consultees, the RSPB and Scottish Natural Heritage,

EXCLUSIVE REPORT by STEVEN FLANAGAN
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over the presence of protected species.

Their concern stems from the Special Protected Area (SPA) designations existing in the area the Argyll Array would be built.

'Show-stopper'

Karl Hughes, from campaign group No Tiree Array, says the presence of internationally important species in the vicinity could be a 'show-stopper'.

Responding to Marine Scotland's scoping opinion document on the Scottish Government's Environmental Impact Assessment, RSPB said Tiree's population of corncrakes,

an endangered species, would be 'likely' to pass through the area in large numbers, having 'potential for impact on SPAs for this species'.

Tiree is also described as the core holding of the species, with more than 30 per cent of the UK's population resident there.

Meanwhile, the shallow waters off Tiree are home to 42 per cent of the wintering population of the great northern diver, a sea-bird listed as red on the endangered species list.

The RSPB points out that surveys by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) indicate the species is likely to be found in numbers that meet the threshold for SPA designation and that SPR should proceed as if the site was proposed as such.

A review of potential sites is currently underway and could see the great northern diver's Tiree habitat designated as a proposed SPA (pSPA) in the coming months.

Simply proposing a site grants it full protected status until government ministers can make a ruling. Their decision can only be based on scientific evidence.

Scottish Natural Heritage, meanwhile, points out the area should be considered a home for marine mammals, such as hump-back and fin whales, and is an important breeding ground for basking sharks.

Mr Hughes said: 'The big issue here is the avian population. The great northern diver far exceeds the criteria to become an SPA and that should be taken into account.'

A spokesperson for SPR said: 'The delay is to do with the statutory consultees - there is more work to be done.'

'It is nothing to do with independence referendum.'

Toploader and Red Hot Chilli Pipers to headline Tiree fest

HAVING sold more than two million records and recorded one of the most recognisable songs ever released, Toploader will headline this year's Tiree Music Festival.

The band responsible for Dancing in the Moonlight will be joined at the festival by the Red Hot Chilli Pipers, who shot to fame in 2007 after winning primetime TV talent show, When Will I Be Famous.

Toploader's triple platinum album, Onka's Big Moka, was released in 2000, with singles Achilles Heel peaking at eight in the charts.

It was Dancing in the Moonlight, however, that made the band's name, reaching number seven in the charts. The band had split in 2003,

but reformed to release a third album last year, Only Human.

The Red Hot Chilli Pipers, meanwhile, have enjoyed global success, taking their own brand of 'bag-rock' to the world.

Joining the headline acts at TMF will be Scottish Traditional Music Awards' Live Act of the Year, Skerryvore, and fellow award winners, RURA, rated the STMA's Up and Coming Act of the Year.

Barra's popular Vatersay Boys will make their first ever trip to the island. Other acts include Gunna Sound, Skipinish, Trail West, Emily Smith and Donald MacDonald and The Islands.

This year's festival takes place on July 21-22.

Argyll and Bute Council denies access to information on its Facebook and Twitter networking 'spy' accounts

ARGYLL and Bute Council has refused a freedom of information request by *The Oban Times* relating to its social media activities, saying the information is not in the public interest.

Independent investigation
The local authority last month commissioned an independent investigation led by former Audit Scotland chief, John Clayton, to look into allegations its head of communications, Jo Smith, had established 'spy' accounts to monitor public opinion on websites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Utilising freedom of information legislation, *The Oban Times* asked the council for e-mails sent between Jo Smith and council officers with regards any information obtained

from social networking sites. We also asked for e-mails between all council officers referring to opinions expressed on social networking sites and a list of social networking groups joined by council staff using work accounts.

Responding three days after the 20 day statutory time limit expired, the council's governance officer, Iain Jackson, said he was refusing our request on two counts.

No public interest
Firstly, on the basis that 'if the information came into the public domain prior to completion of the investigation then the outcome of the investigation may be prejudiced.'

This, however, is subject to the 'public interest test'.

He said: 'This can be described as 'something which is of serious concern and benefit to the public' and whilst it might be suggested that the recently reported social media issues is something which is of serious concern to the public, I am not convinced that there would be any benefit to the public, in releasing any information which falls within the terms of your request into the public domain at this time as it would be likely to prejudice the outcome of that investigation.'

The Oban Times has appealed against the decision, arguing that not only is the subject matter in the public interest as the trust of the county's residents may have been breached by an employee of the local authority, but that the content

of emails cannot affect the outcome of the investigation as they cannot be changed.

Argyll and Bute Council must respond to our appeal within 20 working days.

We also asked the local authority for a list of usernames used in an official capacity in the past three years and for a copy of its policy on social networking.

Responding, Mr Jackson said: 'Education has authorised the use of Twitter feeds and a number of schools have taken up this option. The council's official twitter site is @argyllandbute.'

He confirmed no policy on social networking was in place, but one was being developed and will be published online soon.

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More than £50,000 bottle of whisky to come to Oban

A UNIQUE whisky bottling that is expected to have attracted bids well in excess of £50,000 will be on show in Oban's Whisky Shop this autumn.

by Dalmore Distillery, which is sited by the Cromarty Firth. The bottling is made up of precious stocks of three very old vintages: The Dalmore 1964; The Dalmore 1951 and a historic Dalmore distilled in 1926.

A silent auction for the bottling has been taken, with the bidding starting at £50,000. A percentage of the winning bid will be donated to The British Red Cross.

The bidding war can win a five centilitre sample of Dalmore Zenith by completing a competition form in Oban Whisky Shop. The real bottle will be available for viewing at Oban Whisky Shop from September 25 - October 8.

Rare whiskies from Dalmore have sold for very high sums in the past. The Dalmore Tinitas was the first whisky to sell for more than £100,000 a bottle, when three bottles of the 64-year-old malt were released in 2011.



Orphaned otters Roy and Linnhe have been thriving under Scottish SPCA care

Orphaned otter cubs to go back to wild together

TWO ORPHANED Lochaber otter cubs found in a post office and restaurant will be released together after becoming the best of friends in Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA) care.

The adventurous pair, named Roy and Linnhe by the charity's staff, were rescued after they wandered into the Crannog restaurant in Fort William and Caol Post Office in February. It is likely their mothers had been killed or frightened off.

The four month-old otters continue to thrive at the Scottish SPCA's wildlife rescue centre at Middlebank, near Dunfermline.

Uist host first ever eco-schools conference at Daliburgh



Kathy Biss teaches demonstrates to art of making butter to island schoolchildren

Starling numbers continue to fall say RSPB

A GARDEN favourite is in decline on the west coast of Scotland - according to a nationwide survey by the RSPB. The starling, famed for their iridescent colouring, squabbling bird-table behaviour and breath-taking murmurations is often regarded as one of the

most commonly spotted garden visitors. But new findings by the charity show a worrying decrease of 17 per cent in sightings in the west of Scotland. Keith Morton, Species Policy Officer at RSPB Scotland, said: "It's great to see so many

people stepping up for nature by taking part in the Big Garden Birdwatch. The results are an important piece of the jigsaw when monitoring garden birds numbers and a vital tool in flagging up any underlying problems, such as the trend we are seeing with starling numbers.

All Argyll ready for new exams

'Curriculum for Excellence will be delivered' - MSP Mike Russell

SCOTLAND'S education minister, Michael Russell, MSP for Argyll and Bute, claims not to know of 'any school' that isn't ready for the new National 4 and 5 exams.

Speaking after hosting a question and answer session at Oban's Park Primary School recently, with pupils grilling him on why he thinks independence would benefit the country, his background and whether he likes Alex Salmond Mr Russell said: 'I don't know of any school that uses it that isn't ready for the exams.'

Extra training He has further claimed every school in Argyll and Bute should be ready for the exams after last week agreeing a deal with the EIS to allow individual schools to delay the first National exams - set to replace standard and higher grades - for one year if they are not ready, after pressure from teachers and parents.

'One local authority, East Renfrewshire, said they wanted to do things a different way and they have done that because they don't present for Standard Grades.'

Teachers will get two extra days training to prepare for the nationals, with £3.5million set aside for supply teachers to cover classes. The move was a u-turn for Russell, who had previously told MSPs any delay to the exams was not viable as it would be disruptive for 54,000 pupils in S2 who are being taught using CFE and set to take the first Nationals in two years.

'The agreement I've reached with the EIS gives schools additional support and help if they need it.'

At the time, it had emerged East Renfrewshire Council had decided to delay the exams for one year - something Mr Russell described as a 'special case'. A number of private schools followed East Renfrewshire's lead shortly afterwards.

Schools across his own constituency are ready, he said, and would receive the same level of support extended to schools across the country. Mr Russell defended the curriculum, which has come under fire from teachers and rival politicians. He said: 'I don't think there's any doubt that Curriculum for Excellence will be delivered. I'm certain it is the right way to go; you only have to look at the confident, well informed pupils here today to see an example of that.'



Rupert Grint is pictured during filming at Loch Awe last month.

Harry Potter star in 'stay at home' holidays promotion

HARRY Potter star, Rupert Grint, will be regularly seen enjoying the surroundings of Kilchurn Castle, Loch Awe, over the next two months as part of a national advertising campaign.

The VisitBritain commercial was put together by VisitEngland in co-operation with counterparts across the UK. Costing £5million, it is aimed at inspiring UK residents to take a holiday at home during the year of the Olympics. Mike Cantlay, Chairman of VisitScotland: "I think most people will agree that this advert sums up a general mood that is sweeping the UK at the moment. With so much to see and here at home, we hope that the advert will cast its spell over potential staycationers to make a visit to Argyll and the surrounding area."



Beachd Ailein Ailean Caimbeul

CHA ROBH MI RIAMH a' tuigsinn cionnas a b' urrainn dha Ball Pàrlamaid a sheas fo bhrathart partaidh àraid air choreigin, am partaidh sin fhàgail uaireigin tron Phàrlamaid agus a bhith fhathast den bheachd gum bheil còir aige neo aice fuireach as an dreuchd. Tha fhios ma sheas cuideigin an ainm partaidh gum bheil an neach sin a' dèasadh phoileasaidhean àraid ris nach eil 's dòcha partaidhean eile a' cur taic agus tha na slugh a' bhòtadh gus an cuid creideis fhèin as na poileasaidhean sin a dhearbhadh. Ma thèid an neach sin a thaghadh mar Bhall Pàrlamaid, faodaidhe gabhail ris gur iad na poileasaidhean aig a' phartaidh dha bheil an neach sin a' seasamh an fheadhainn as fheàrr leis a' mhòr-chuid a' roghnaich bhòtadh san roinn phàrlamaid sin. Ach aon uair 's gum fàg am Ball Pàrlamaid sin am partaidh a bha e neo i a' riochdachadh nuair a chaidh an taghadh, tha fhios nach eil iad tuilleadh a' coileanadh na cùmhnan a gheall iad nuair a chaidh an taghadh. Mar sin, na mo bheachd-sa tha còir aig an neach sin an dreuchd fhàgail gum dèil. Ach chan ann mar sin a tha cùisean!

Cha mhòr nach eil seo mar gum biodh, can, neach-teagaisg eaglaise a' sgaradh bhon eaglais sin ach fhathast a' smaointinn gum faod e leantainn na dhreuchd le còir air tuarastal agus gach sochair eile a tha an cois na h-obrach!

Saoidh mi gur còir suil às ùr a thoirt air na riaghailtean a tha co-cheangailte ri dreuchdan luchd-poilitigs a tha a' riochdachadh an t-sluaigh aig gach ìre, gus gum bi luchd-bhòtadh cinnteach gum bi ìmpidh air riochdaire leantainn leis a' phartaidh dhan do bhòt iadsan. Faodaidh e bhith gum cuir am partaidh sin an riochdaire às a' phartaidh air adhbhar air choreigin ach a-rithist, chanainn-sa far an tachair leithid sin gum bu chòir dhan Bhall a dhreuchd a leigeil dheth as a' bhad. Chan eil e idir ceart gum biodh luchd-bhòtadh gam mealladh le geallaidhean sònraichte agus an uairsin cùl ga chur ris na gheallaidhean agus an dreuchd a ghlèidheadh. Tha e dona gu leòr a bhith a' faicinn dhaoine gun cur fhèin air adhart mar thagraichean neo-eisimeileach is fios aig mòran gum bheil iad a' taobhadh ri partaidh poilitigeach. Cha ghabh leithid sin leasachadh ach ann an taghadh ach gum teagamh, tha còir tomhas de chumhachd a bhith aig luchd-bhòtadh riochdaire a chur a dreuchd far am bheil e neo i gu follaiseach air a' cùmhnan eatarra fhèin 's luchd-bhòtadh a bhriseadh.

IT SURELY CANNOT BE RIGHT that any elected representative should be permitted to continue in post when he or she ceases to represent the political allegiance for which voters opted at the election.

It may be challenging to produce an employment contract for elected representatives but voters should surely have interim powers to de-select representatives who are manifestly in breach of what they promised to deliver when seeking election.

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



Ronnie Cameron's holiday break competition win is the latest in a run of good luck for the Ardrishaig man. 08_013competition01

Congratulations Lucky Ronnie wins stay at luxurious hotel Ardrishaig man is on a run of good luck after competition win

LUCKY Ronnie Cameron has won a trip to luxurious Taychreggan Hotel on the shores of Loch Awe after winning another 'getaway competition' within the Wyvex family of newspapers. Ronnie, from Ardrishaig in Argyll, who described the win as 'brilliant,' admitted it was not the first time he had won a competition in his local paper. He said: 'It's not very often I do the competitions, but I won a trip to a superbike competition in the Argyllshire Advertiser many years ago.' Ronnie correctly answered the question 'in which county will you find Loch Awe' to win the competition, which featured in newspapers on March 9. Despite enjoying a streak of good luck, Ronnie said: 'When I got the phone call I thought is this one of these wind-up calls because there seem to be a lot of them about.' But he added: 'Needless to say, I'm collecting tokens for the next one, and I'll be checking my lottery numbers very carefully.'

Advertisement for Abbey House Hotel. Includes text: WIN! A four night stay for two in South Lakeland - worth £500. Collect token 3 today see page 11. Image of the hotel building.

Woman who robbed blind pensioner is jailed for eight months

A GAMBLING addict who lied to steal a purse from a blind 92 year old woman's Oban home has struck six times before.

Admitted stealing

Homeless Alice McNeil, 56, was jailed for eight months when she appeared at Oban

Sheriff Court on Monday after previously admitting stealing a purse containing £70 from the woman's home on March 12.

Sheriff Ruth Anderson heard McNeil told her victim she was having heart trouble and asked to come into her home for a

glass of water.

After McNeil left the home, the occupant, noticed her purse had been stolen and contacted the police.

Strathclyde Police had previously said she was arrested at Tyndrum on the Glasgow bound

train. She told officers the £70 had been gambled away.

Before sentencing McNeil, Sheriff Ruth Anderson said: 'It's absolutely appalling. Deceiving and stealing from elderly people in their own homes - you can't get much lower than that.'

'It takes away their trust and makes them feel uncomfortable and not safe in their own homes.'

Defending his client, agent Gordon Seaton said her gambling addiction had cost her more than just her liberty,

having been previously given a 13-month combined custodial sentence for breaches of bail and community service, of which she served five months.

Referring to McNeil's latest offence, he said: 'There is no doubt this would have had a

significant effect on the elderly woman, but it's had a significant effect on my client as she has no family left.'

McNeil's sentence was reduced from one of 12 months because she pled guilty at the earliest opportunity.

Police presence to be more visible

EFFORTS are being made to make community policing in Oban more visible after concern was raised by locals.

Local inspector, Brian Auld, told Oban Community Council that recent surveys clearly showed there was a lack of a visible and contactable officer. In response, he has amended the shift patterns of five community constables to be more 'user friendly'.

He said: 'Hopefully, the new patterns will be better for everyone. The new shift patterns commence on April 16.'

Meanwhile, there will be a 'police in the community' event sometime in the next three months at Oban's Corran Halls.

50 hours unpaid work follows racist abuse charge

AN OBAN man was found guilty of uttering racist abuse when he appeared at the town's Sheriff Court on Monday.

James Hendry, 30, committed the offence on July 17 last year in Soroba Road, when he shouted, swore and directed racial insults at his victim, the court heard.

Hendry, currently residing in Ross House, Breadalbane Street, was sentenced to 50 hours of unpaid work to be completed within six months.

Western Ferries raise rates

WESTERN Ferries has announced a four per cent increase in fares, coinciding with the publication of its new summer timetable.

The only fares not to increase are those under the SPT Ferry Concessionary scheme and the National Entitlement Scheme for the blind or partially sighted.

Managing director, Gordon Ross, said: 'Despite this increase, Western Ferries' fares are, for the majority of passenger tickets, cheaper than the subsidised alternative.'

Police on watch for stone throwers

POLICE will be diverting extra officers to Dunollie after a number of complaints about stone throwing youths in recent weeks.

Oban Community Council heard one motorist was given a fright after 'reckless' youths threw stones at his car while it was moving.

A greenhouse was also smashed in a separate incident the following night and police will be taking steps to ensure there is no repeat.

Inspector Brian Auld said: 'Throwing stones at a car that was being driven at the time was particularly reckless.'

Islay and Colonsay mobile mast repair

VODAFONE is attempting to fast-track repairs to its signal mast serving the islands of Islay and Colonsay.

The phone company says it was first made aware there was no mobile phone service on Colonsay and parts of Islay on March 23.

However, islanders say they have had no service for more than two weeks.

The repair is scheduled to be carried out on April 12 but Vodafone told *The Oban Times* it is attempting to bring this date forward.

Banks slow to back Argyll homes plan

Housing association 'link' may solve Dunbeg project funding

FUNDING restrictions are forcing West Highland Housing Association (WHHA) to look to Edinburgh's Link Housing Association to meet a shortfall in paying for the Dunbeg Corridor.

£2.1million bridging loan

The association is hoping to start construction of the first 50 houses in May, but reluctance from the banks to grant a required £2.1million bridging loan for such projects has forced WHHA to consider other ways to fund the build.

Early discussions have taken place with Link Housing in a bid to secure some finance, but chief executive, Lesley McInnes, says

nothing is final yet.

She said: 'We're in the same position as everyone else in that banks are proving difficult in terms of loans.'

'Important'

'All we are doing is looking at different avenues and we have had discussions with Link. Essentially, it would be a loan.'

'What is certain is these houses will be built in Argyll, hopefully by Argyll contractors for Argyll people.'

'It is important these houses are built.'

While Scottish Government funding of £1.9million has been allocated to the Dunbeg Corridor, the money would or-

dinarily be paid retrospectively. Negotiations are ongoing to have a portion of this sum paid in advance.

A bridging loan of £2.1million is still required though, be that from a bank or Link Housing.

Lesley said: 'It may be possible for the Scottish Government to pay some of that money in advance.'

'We need to make a decision fairly soon on how to fund this, and we are looking at the banks again.'

'There are various other options, but there's not a huge amount of money about.'

'We are, however, confident about being able to secure it.'

1,100 respond to community survey

Cinema, crumbling roads and dog dirt highlighted

MORE than 1,000 locals responded to a community survey to find out what people really want sorted in Oban.

The Oban Community Planning group spent weeks consulting locals at events and through letter drops to ask what they thought needed attention in the town; what was good, what was bad - and what was ugly.

Approximately 1,100 responses were received and while responses are yet to be collated by the independent group of local volunteers, some key points have already been identified.

Speaking at Oban Community Council's latest meeting, member Lorna Elliot said: 'There



Brian Fisher from Quantum Pharmaceutical celebrates with Jacqueline Johnston, Sandra Melville and Catherine Hunter, from Lorn and Islands Hospital in Oban, after they were named the Hospital Pharmacy Team of the Year. Missing from the photograph is Pam McGuire.

Lorn hospital team lift top pharmacy award

THE PHARMACY team from Lorn and Islands Hospital in Oban has scooped up a top award at the glittering Scottish Pharmacist Awards ceremony held in Edinburgh.

The Argyll team fought off extremely tough competition from throughout Scotland to win the Hospital Pharmacy Team of the Year Award at the third annual Scottish Pharmacist Awards, hosted at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. The Award was supported by Quantum Pharmaceutical.

The team, led by Sandra Melville, includes clinical pharmacist Pam McGuire and medicines management technicians Catherine Hunter and Jacqueline Johnston.

Sandra, clinical pharmacy manager at Lorn and Islands Hospital, said: 'It's a real honour to receive this award, especially as there are so many examples of excellent practice in Scottish Pharmacy.'

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OT

Canadian driver who hit tanker on A85 near Taynuilt fined and banned

A CANADIAN man who was heading to the Isle of Iona on a 'pilgrimage' found himself in the dock of Oban Sheriff Court last week on a charge of careless driving.

Colm Conneely, 53, was on holiday in London visiting relatives when he made the trip north.

Running late for the ferry at Oban he made an 'error of judgement' in overtaking according to defence agent, Laura Russell.

Conneely, from Ontario, was travelling on the A85 between Taynuilt and Oban in a hire car when he attempted to overtake another car and a fuel tanker.

Conneely's vehicle crossed double white lines and was approaching a blind corner when he met an oncoming vehicle. Conneely tried to pull back over to his own side and hit the tanker, the court heard.

The sheriff disqualified Conneely for two months from obtaining a driving licence or driving a vehicle in this country.

He was also fined £400 which had to be paid immediately.

Tasty recipes take to the streets of Oban to promote food safety

STATION Square in Oban was the setting for a food roadshow - promoting healthy easy to cook recipes and food safety.

Chef Brian Gunn was carrying out cooking demonstrations and serving up samples of his delicious dishes to hungry passers by last week.

The recipes were designed with rural communities in mind, using ingredients that are easy to access.

The event was promoted by Argyll and Bute Council and the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

Charles Milne, a director at FSA said: 'This is an exciting opportunity for us to take healthy eating and food safety messages straight to the high street.'

'Tasty recipes presented in an entertaining way will provide the perfect backdrop for some important messages about nutrition and avoiding cross-contamination, which are essential for good health.'

Argyll and Bute waste disposal sites end industrial action

NO FURTHER strike action will be taken at Argyll and Bute's waste disposal sites after employees ended their dispute. Staff were upset that the company operating the sites

on behalf of the local authority, Shanks, said pay would be increased by four per cent over three years, in return for a one third cut in sick pay entitlement.

However, striking firstly for two hours and most recently for two days, the union members have accepted the company's argument and will formally accept the new arrangement in

the coming days.

The surprise move comes with the new financial year approaching and staff warned by the GMB and Unite unions they could lose out if the pay offer

wasn't accepted by April 1.

Under the agreement, sick pay will still be cut by one third. A staff member from the Oban site said: 'They told us now that's as far as they can

go because of the contract they have with the council.

'To be honest, it's a bit of a relief for some of the boys. Non members will move onto the same terms as well.'

Local tunes promised for fiddlers' rally

TUNES with a local flavour will be prominent at this year's Fiddlers' Rally Concert on April 21 in the Corran Halls.

The late Charlie Hunter was the founding conductor of the Oban and Lorne Strathspey and Reel Society and his beautiful melody entitled 'The Hills of Lorne' will open the concert, coupled with his march 'The Road to Glenmore'.

The track down the Glen was a favourite Sunday afternoon walk for the Hunter family. Alistair Hunter's tune 'The Arigian Fiddler' pays tribute to Calum MacInnes and his popular band, affectionately known as 'The Arigian Hayseeds'.

The orchestra greatly misses long-standing fiddler and bass player Duncan Campbell, and as a tribute will be playing Willie Lawrie's composition 'Duncan Campbell of Oban'. The revered older composers are not forgotten and 'John MacFadyen of Melfort' by Master Piper John MacColl of Oban will also be featured. Mod gold medalist Mary Catherine MacNeil is to be the guest singer this year, and the audience can be assured of outstanding music from fiddle maestro Maurice Duncan, while young pipers James MacPherson and Aaron Hossain will also be getting toes tapping with their own style of playing.

The Oban orchestra will be augmented by musicians from kindred societies all under the baton of conductor Helen Jordan, ensuring a spectacular night of traditional Scottish music.



New 'old' sweetie shop opens

THERE'S a new business in town - The Sugar House, on Albany Street, opened its doors recently to a 'sweet' reception.

Joanne and Michael Wright, who also own Albany Stores, have embarked on the new venture after seeing how much pick 'n' mix sweets they were selling to adults. Michael said: 'It was just a natural progression from what we were doing already.'

The couple chose their daughter Anna and head teacher of Dunbeg Primary School, Sine McVicar, to cut the ribbon and officially open the new shop.

Old fashioned feel
Michael added: 'We chose Sine as the school was so good to us when we moved here. It is such a great school and it is really important to recognise Sine's efforts.'

The sweetie shop has an old fashioned feel to it with large jars of sweets and a hanging chandelier. The smell definitely brings you back in time.

Michael said: 'It was Joanne who had the idea for the place and she had a very clear picture of how she wanted the shop. Traditional was very important and I think it is just about how she imagined it.'

Guides could make new Ocean Challenge symbol

Argyll guides, Brownies and Rainbows to take up challenge from Festival of the Sea

GUIDES, Brownies and Rainbows in Argyll could help create a new Ocean Challenge badge for counterparts across the UK thanks to May's Festival of the Sea.

The new badge will be launched at the start of this year's festival, May 18, with the design to be created by budding local artists as part of a competition.

Girlguiding Scotland will then review the success of the badge and how well local participants rated the activities before deciding if it will be introduced UK wide.

If it is, it would be the first badge of its kind in the UK and the winning designer could find their creation adorning the arms of Guides, Brownies and Rainbows all over the country.

The Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS), which runs the festival, is creating the badge in conjunction with Girlguiding Argyll.

Announcing the pilot, festival co-ordinator, Helen McNeill said: 'Education is a big part of the festival programme and we are delighted Girlguiding has responded so positively to our proposal.'

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

'We're in the process of writing up four separate resources for use, food from the sea, sounds of the sea, sustainable seas and ocean geography.'

Girlguiding units across Argyll have been asked to submit their designs, with entries to be in by Saturday.

Helen said: 'We are really looking forward to seeing all the marine badge competition entries.'

Margaret Winter is the chair of Girlguiding Scotland's development committee and is excited at the prospects the badge offers.

She said: 'It's one of the things where Girlguiding UK has a huge range of badges available but we don't have anything for marine or seashore activities.'

'It's a new direction for us and quite possible this badge could be introduced across the country.'

MSP goes back to school

PARK Primary School welcomed the Argyll and Bute's SNP MSP Mike Russell on Monday, with pupils from P5-7 grilling him on his political background.

Mr Russell should have been joined by Conservative MSP, Jamie McGrigor, on the day, but his colleague had to call off due to a bout of whooping cough.

Pupils used the visit of the country's education minister to grill him on subjects as diverse as the voting age, the pros and cons of independence, faster broadband for rural areas and his reasons for entering politics.

Right - Argyll and Bute MP Michael Russell answers questions from the floor during a visit to Oban's Park Primary School on Monday. 15_t13mikerpark1



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Lorn Lines

AT THE March meeting of the Oban and District Classic Vehicle Club, held in the Lochnell Arms Hotel, North Connell, members enjoyed a presentation on the subject of 'Austin 7s to Denmark' which was given by Alan Hill from Barcaldine.

Telling the story of how Alan and a group of friends set out in a convoy of various classic cars, including a number of Austin 7s, to tour Denmark during the 1980s. All the route planning, accommodation bookings, ferry travel, etc, had to be done by telephone and letters, due the absence of e-mails and sat-nav.

The talk was very interesting, well presented, and accompanied by a large selection of slides, and was enjoyed by all.

The annual club dinner was held at the end of February, when a large number of members and their partners enjoyed a lovely meal at the Lochnell Arms Hotel, their regular meeting place.



THERE was a good turnout at Oban Photographic Club's AGM on Monday, March 26. Summing up the past year, Vice President Stephen Lawson said it had been a good year for the club with good attendances for the weekly meetings.

Speakers had given members helpful guidance on how to improve their images. Stephen went on to thank everyone for all their help during the year.

Main office bearers for the coming year are: - President - Stephen Lawson; Secretary - Katy Weir; Treasurer - Nevin Blackwood; Competitions secretary - Maurice Wilkins

Competitions for the coming year are: - 1. "Open"; 2. Black and White prints only; 3. Cameron Harris Trophy - "The Kitchen"; 4. "Landscape/seascape"; 5. "Isolation"; 6. A new trophy for "Sport" sponsored by Kevin McGlynn; 7. "Night Time".

There will be the "Subtle Humour" evening as well as the Argyll Trophy the subject this year being "Argyll Harbours".



Children from Happy House Christian Pre-School enjoyed a visit to Oban Police Station as part of their topic 'People Who Help Us'. Showing the children around was PC Andrew Simpson.



VOLUNTEERS were 'springing' into action in Oban last week as part of an awareness day organised by a local charity.

Argyll Voluntary Action (AVA) held the event at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls last Thursday and invited the other third sector partners in the town along.

Eleanor MacKinnon, Community Empowerment Manager with AVA, said: 'Today is about voluntary organisations supporting each other and raising awareness of third sector voluntary opportunities and activity in the town.'

'Like David Millward, from Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, who was there promoting free fire safety checks in homes and the installation of smoke alarms if required.'



'FISHING About in the Dark' was the intriguing title of a presentation given by John Gordon to the Scottish Wildlife Trust's Lorn and Mid-Argyll Members' Centre in March.

John talked about the early days of the Scottish Marine Biological Association, as it was then, and his involvement over many years with Fish and Fisheries Research, beginning, he said, in Loch Etive and ending on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. His pictures included several surprising denizens of the deep oceans and the talk was much enjoyed by all.

The Trust AGM will be held at Dunstaffnage on April 19 and the speaker that evening will be Terry Robilliard from Seil, who will be presenting his show 'Through the Lens of a Birdwatcher'.

All welcome.



LORN Garden Club members met recently to hear Douglas Boatman, of Scotplants in Ayrshire, pass on a bit of 'Heather Blether'.

A very enthusiastic grower of heathers, Douglas is keen to see a revival of this once more popular group of plants. He brought a good selection of plants for sale in many shades and shapes and showed slides of some of his planting designs.

The show was not limited to heathers, however, and he discussed companion planting and ways of keeping a colourful garden all year round.

The next meeting will be the AGM on April 17 in St John's Cathedral Hall when after the usual business there will be a plant and seed swap.

All welcome.



Councillors cleared by Standards Commission

THREE Argyll and Bute councillors have been cleared of lying after an independent body rejected a complaint by the area's MSP, Michael Russell.

In January, the SNP's education minister lodged a complaint with the Commission for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland alleging the council's deputy leader, Ellen Morton,

and senior councillors Duncan MacIntyre and Robin Currie, misrepresented him.

The complaint stemmed from a motion lodged by councillor Currie on November 24 last year, seconded by Duncan MacIntyre, alleging Mr Russell had, six months previous, promised on behalf of the Scottish Government to help with the future

funding of the Jura passenger ferry.

Mr Currie's motion was in reaction to notes taken at the meeting by the council's deputy leader, Ellen Morton.

Mr Russell argued he would never make such a promise, as transport is outside his remit, and he lodged a complaint.

However, the Commission

has ruled that there was no case to answer and has cleared the councillors' names.

A spokesperson for the Commission said: 'The Public Standards Commissioner for Scotland decided that the matter raised did not amount to a breach of the code of conduct.'

Mr Russell said he was 'happy' the Commission's investigation

had run its course, despite his complaint being rejected.

He said: 'I'm happy the investigation is complete and I hope the councillors involved have learned a lesson.'

'As it happened I worked very hard to get the resources for the Jura ferry and that eventually worked out. What I cannot abide is people being misrepresented.'

Scottish ferries plan could affect CO2 emissions

A PROPOSAL in the Scottish Ferries Draft Plan to operate more ferries for more hours off the west coast would fly in the face of the Scottish Government's environmental targets.

That is the claim by CalMac's parent company, The David MacBrayne Group, in its response to the draft ferries plan in which it states carbon dioxide emissions would increase by five tonnes for every additional hour of operations.

The company based the figure on its current fleet, adding that the introduction of *MV Finlaggan*, two hybrid ferries and a new Ullapool to Stornoway ferry should make a positive contribution to meeting the government's target of reducing transport carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent by 2020.

However, the company adds: 'To enable a change in emissions to be achieved, further investment in new vessels which have environmental benefits designed-in is required.'

The David MacBrayne Group published its response to the plan on Monday and, while it widely welcomed the production of a draft plan, also expressed concerns about port infrastructure.

The response reads: 'For ports and harbours our sole concern is that they are fit for purpose and that we can be assured that the considerable sums we pay in berthing dues and landing fees to different authorities are being used towards the cost of maintaining and improving the ones we depend on.'

The company also called on a specific review on infrastructure management procedures to ensure a consistent approach to funding across the network.

To view the full David MacBrayne Group response see www.david-macbrayne.co.uk/reports.



Kebabish's Shaukat Chaudhry accepts the Eat Safe award from the council's environmental health manager, Iain MacKinnon, extreme right, and Argyll and Bute Council's environmental health officer, Sue Stefek, left. 15_114kebabish1

Oban takeaway first to win Eat Safe award

OBAN takeaway, Kebabish Curry House, has become the first business of its type to receive the Eat Safe award for outstanding hygiene and food safety.

The George Street restaurant and takeaway accepted the award last week as it welcomed a delegation from Argyll and Bute Council to celebrate its success.

Owner, Shaukat Chaudhry, said he was pleased to win the award and said the popular eatery would strive to maintain the high standards that saw it pick up the Eat Safe award in the future.

Presenting the award to Mr Chaudhry was Argyll and Bute Council's environmental health manager for west Argyll, Iain MacKinnon.

He said: 'The Eat Safe award is designed to promote excellent food safety and those businesses that get it meet very exacting standards.'

Good practice
'Mr Chaudhry and his team have displayed the good practice required to achieve those standards.'

'Kebabish is the first business of its type to get this award

and I'm delighted to be able to award it.'

Welcoming the award, Mr Chaudhry said: 'We're very happy to receive this award and I'm very proud to receive it.'

'What I believe is this is not hard to achieve, but hard to maintain. It is in our interests to maintain these standards and we will work hard to ensure we do.'

Dunbeg woman to pay victim compensation

A DUNBEG woman who assaulted a barmaid who asked her to leave a licensed premises in Oban has been ordered by a court to pay her victim £50 in compensation.

Pauline Johnston, aged 49, of

5 Etive Road, Dunbeg, admitted on Monday at Oban Sheriff Court to assaulting the woman by grabbing her by the hair and clothing and forcing her to the ground on January 28 this year.

Johnston had entered the

town public house that she had previously been barred from on Saturday, January 28.

She paid for a drink in the bar but, after being reminded she was barred, was asked to leave and had her drink money

refunded.

As she was escorted off the premises by the member of staff, Johnston, who had been drinking, claimed she lost her temper during a verbal exchange with the barmaid.

Rockfield PTA gains Scotmid community grant

ROCKFIELD Parent Teacher Association has received a £250 cash donation from the Scotmid Co-operative Community Grant Fund.

Scotmid operates 142 Semichem stores throughout Scotland, Northern Ireland and the North East of England, which includes the Semichem branch on Shore Street, Oban.

The grant has been allocated to support the children of Rockfield Primary School in a Swim Safe Project, organised by the PTA to teach increased water confidence and safety to children in both indoor and outdoor settings.

Fewer computing teachers than four years ago

THERE are four fewer computing teachers working in schools across Argyll and Bute than there were four years ago.

Figures obtained under Freedom of Information legislation and published online show that, since 2007, Dunoon, Oban, Rothesay and Tiree secondary schools have each lost a computing teacher.

Currently, Dunoon Grammar, Hermitage Academy and Oban High School have the most teachers in the subject, with three each. Secondary schools at Rothesay and Tiree have the lowest, with one each.

Oban accident driver left scene

AN ELDERLY driver has been charged with failing to stop and report an accident following an incident on Lochavullin Drive last Monday.

The 86 year old is accused of driving off after an alleged road traffic incident at around 4.30pm.

Wallet theft

A 39-YEAR-old man has been arrested and charged with theft after being accused of stealing a wallet from Tesco Oban.

Arrest made after Oban assault

A 21-YEAR-old man has been arrested and charged for an alleged assault on a 25-year-old man in Oban in the early hours of March 25.

Woman driver charged

A CAR had to veer off the carriageway at Kilniver last Tuesday to avoid colliding with another car, driven by a 68-year-old woman.

The woman has been charged with careless driving and leaving the scene of an accident without reporting it to police. There were no injuries to anyone involved in the incident.

She is accused of attempting a number of unsafe overtaking manoeuvres.

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Isle of Skye under threat - from rabbits

ONE OF Skye's most famous landmarks is crumbling faster than expected - because of burrowing rabbits.

A new report also says the pests are nibbling fragile alpine plants along the scenic 15-mile Trotternish Ridge, which runs north from Portree to Flodigarry.

Erosion

In the study for Scottish Natural Heritage, Macaulay Institute researchers said fewer sheep would reduce erosion rates - but warned if too many were removed tall grasses would eventually smother protected rare plants.

However, slowing erosion on rocky slopes in the Special Area of Conservation was judged more important than plant protection - but culling rabbits could prove costly.

The researchers said: 'It is recognised that controlling rabbit numbers could be an expensive exercise which would require an ongoing commitment of manpower and finance.'

'The possible benefits, in relation to the costs of rabbit control on a scale that would achieve noticeable benefits therefore require greater consideration before further action is taken.'

'In order to reduce levels of animal related erosion on screes and bare erosion scars, it is considered appropriate to reduce sheep stocking rates across the site from around 0.6 sheep per hectare at present to around 0.25 sheep per hectare. It was 'unclear' which townships the sheep belonged to, the report added.

The rabbit problem is particularly bad around the ridge's highest point, The Storr. It is thought the animals were introduced in the 19th century.



Brothers Bryan, aged 12, Jay, aged eight and two-year-old Alfey Donaldson enjoyed getting their sledges out again in Upper Achintore, Fort William. 20_f14snow01

Winter returns to the North

AFTER basking in sunshine last week during an unseasonable heat wave, much of the west Highlands woke up to a thick covering of snow on Tuesday morning.

At Roy Bridge, Father Tom Wynne reported three inches of the white stuff while the higher parts of Fort William received a similar covering. Main roads were kept clear after gritters were sent out on Monday night.

With the schools closed for the Easter holidays, youngsters were free to build snowmen, go sledding and have snowball fights.

The return of wintry weather follows the warmest March ever recorded in Scotland.

Mr Seccombe said his contract, with the Nevis Partnership, the Outdoor Capital of the UK (OCUK) and other organisations, was to gauge opinion on extending 'partnership working' in the Ben Nevis area to Glencoe and Rannoch Moor.

One option would be creating a single management structure for the entire Nevis and Glencoe National Scenic Area (NSA).

The NSA covers much of eastern Lochaber, a slice of western Perthshire and Ben Starav in Argyll, north of Dalmailly.

Better co-ordination of activities such as funding bids and

tourism initiatives within the NSA could result, Mr Seccombe claimed. 'We are still at a fairly early stage,' he said.

But community council chairman Mel MacAskill slammed the lack of consultation from Fort William-based OCUK, Nevis Partnership, Scottish Natural Heritage and the other groups behind the move.

He said: 'The first meeting to do with this was way back in 2010 - it was 2012 before anybody in this area knew about this.'

'We should have been consulted from day one.'

'More than half Lochaber had no say in this and that to me is downright disgusting.'

'A lot of damage can be done in two years - such as less will to get involved.'

'They did not want our opinion in the first place, so why should we be involved now?'

Ballachulish oppose 'national park' option

South Lochaber 'being ignored' claims community council meeting

CONTROVERSIAL proposals to combine parts of scenic Lochaber as a single entity to rival Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park have been given a frosty reception in Ballachulish.

Ignored

Consultant Peter Seccombe of Gloucestershire-based Red Kite Environment outlined the move to Ballachulish Community Council (BCC) on Tuesday night - but had to field accusations that south Lochaber had been ignored.

Mr Seccombe said his contract, with the Nevis Partnership, the Outdoor Capital of the UK (OCUK) and other organisations, was to gauge opinion on extending 'partnership working' in the Ben Nevis area to Glencoe and Rannoch Moor.

One option would be creating a single management structure for the entire Nevis and Glencoe National Scenic Area (NSA).

The NSA covers much of eastern Lochaber, a slice of western Perthshire and Ben Starav in Argyll, north of Dalmailly.

Better co-ordination of activities such as funding bids and

EXCLUSIVE

REPORT by STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

'I think there's justification in the view that South Lochaber is not given much thought by Fort William. My understanding is that Glencoe is not any happier than we are.'

Mr Seccombe said: 'This has made my job much more difficult because clearly not enough communication has taken place. You should have been consulted before this.'

Mr MacAskill suggested another reason for the park move - a lack of money.

'Nevis Partnership are short of funds, and if they create a national park it would allow them a revenue stream along with the OCUK,' he said.

'We have deep concerns about turning the area into a national park.'

'The Loch Lomond National Park objected to the gold mine - there's an example of a national park hindering local jobs. It's another quango telling people what they can and can't do.'

'We don't have a national park agenda,' Mr Seccombe said. 'We want to maximise the options for your livelihoods.'

BCC member, refrigeration engineer Kevin Smith said: 'It has taken them two years to consult five of their own local communities.'

'I wonder what's behind that - why have they kept us out of the loop?'

Mr Seccombe replied: 'I think I would like to know that as well.'

Meanwhile, Glencoe and Glen Etive Community Council will hold a meeting on April 24 to gauge local opinion.

Chairman Alister Sutherland told *The Oban Times*: 'This initiative comes from Fort William interests. They have contacted the community councils in this area to see if there's an interest from our point of view.'

'It will come down to the people who may be in line to get grants and people who may feel their activities might be affected in some way.'

John Riley, chairman of Strathfillan Community Council, which covers the Tyndrum and Crianlarich area, will speak on life within the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

Duror and Kentallen call for better bus links with Fort William

RESIDENTS of Duror and Kentallen have called for the villages to get an improved bus service to Fort William.

No Sunday service

Local woman Connie Anderson told a meeting of Lochaber Transport Forum in Lochaber House only two buses a day run to and from Fort William, and none on Sundays.

She contrasted that with

nearby Kinlochleven, which is serviced by 14 buses a day and three on Sundays.

'Very difficult'

Ms Anderson said: 'If we get the bus to Fort William in the morning we can either spend 50 minutes in town, which isn't much time, or we can spend eight hours, which is far too long.'

'It's very difficult for people

who don't drive or who want to drive less to get their groceries.'

She added: 'If the buses were more user friendly, or there was more of them, I'm sure a lot more people would use them.'

David Beaton, Stagecoach operations manager in Skye and Lochaber, said many of the Kinlochleven buses were Highland Council subsidised routes

which his company could not change.

He said: 'I will have a look at our daytime services and see what I can do, but I can't promise anything.'

Meanwhile the meeting in Lochaber House also heard a 'green' transport scheme launched in Mallaig last year has more than doubled its membership since July - and is

planning to spread out its reach across west Lochaber.

Expanding

West Wheels car club, which has two vehicles based at the Lochaber port, now has 42 members and corporate deals have been set up with local accommodation providers to involve tourists in the scheme. Club representative Mick Rodgers told delegates the

club was looking to build on achievements so far.

He said: 'We're looking to expand over the next four or five months.'

'We want to get another car to cover down to Arisaig.'

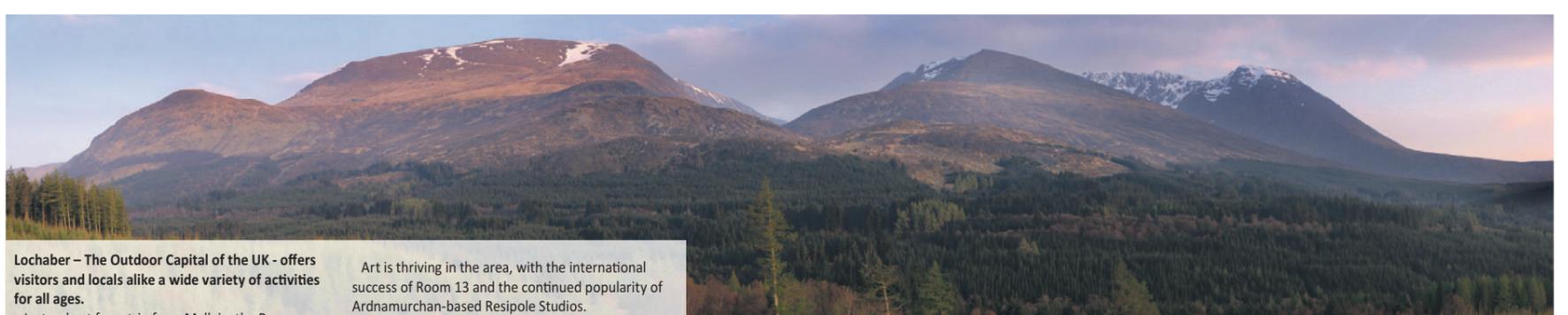
'Then hopefully we can have four or five cars in the community - to south Skye, Mallaig, Morar, and as far as we can.' Club members have access to

a Ford Focus and a Ford Fusion, which they are able to book out when they need it, with the club taking on the responsibility for ownership, maintenance and insurance.

Mr Rodgers also said the club will have full ownership of the two cars by the end of next week, and plan to get an extra car for every 15 new members that join the scheme.

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Out and about in Lochaber | Food & Drink | Art | What's on



Lochaber - The Outdoor Capital of the UK - offers visitors and locals alike a wide variety of activities for all ages.

Just a short ferry trip from Mallaig, the Rum National Nature Reserve offers guests the chance to experience wildlife in the area with the seabird boat trip this Saturday. It will be followed by a performance of local songs and stories and after a barbecue the evening will end with a guided walk to the nearby shearwater colony.

Lochaber also offers a number of high-class eateries and places to stay. Situated next to the world famous Caledonian Canal at the Neptune's Staircase locks, Banavie's Moorings Hotel has fantastic views and offers a tranquil atmosphere and quality experience. The hotel will host the Highland Wedding Show on Saturday April 15, a free event giving those planning to get married a chance to pick up tips, advice and great deals for the big day.

The Stables Restaurant on Bank Street, Fort William offers a wide range of Italian food to suit a variety of tastes and an extensive wine list.

Art is thriving in the area, with the international success of Room 13 and the continued popularity of Ardnamurchan-based Resipole Studios.

Room 13 started in Caol Primary School in 1994 and has since spread as far as India, Canada and South Africa. It recently opened a new studio in Caol Youth Centre which gives people of all ages the chance to get involved and try their hand at creating art.

Based at Resipole on the shores of Loch Sunart, Ardnamurchan, Resipole Studios provides an exciting new space for artists to develop, exhibit and promote their work. The studio's spring exhibition opens this weekend.

So as winter gives way to spring, why not get out and about and see what Lochaber has to offer.

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www.nnr-scotland.org.uk

Disqualified driver caught near Spean Bridge is sent to prison for a year

A MAN who was caught driving on a Lochaber road while disqualified for a fourth time has been jailed for a year and banned from driving for eight years.

Gilbert MacAulay, pled guilty to driving on the A82 at Achnabonane, near Spean Bridge while disqualified and without insurance in the early hours of March 26.

Harthill, Shotts, also admitted failing to provide two breath specimens at Fort William Police Station, Fort William Sheriff Court heard.

The 43-year-old gave a positive breath specimen at the roadside but refused to give another at the station, claim-

ing the machine had not been properly calibrated. Defence agent Hamish Melrose said the car belonged to MacAulay's son.

He said: "The car was sitting at his house and he used it for his weekend work in Lochaber. "He clearly should have known better."

Sentencing MacAulay, Sheriff Mungo Bovey said: "You will understand the situation you find yourself in is extremely serious."

Special constables required in Lochaber

NORTHERN Constabulary is looking to recruit special constables in Lochaber to provide backup to regular officers.

The Special Constabulary is a reserve of men and women trained in basic police duties.

Sergeant Andy Bilton of Fort William police said: "It is a highly valued role within our communities and one that is both challenging and rewarding."

For further information contact Sgt Bilton on 01397 702361 or visit http://www.northernconstabularycareers.co.uk/special_constables/the_special_constabulary.aspx.

Celebrating 12 years of Room 13

ROOM 13 – the international arts studio network which began in Lochaber – is celebrating 12 years of Room 13 Nepal at Caol Youth Centre this evening.

Schools and villages throughout Nepal now have Room 13, thanks to expedition teams involving young people from Caol, Lochside and Lochaber High School.

Members of former Nepal Expedition teams will be guests of honour at the event, which is being hosted by Caol Youth Centre's Duke of Edinburgh volunteers.

Fire threat court case postponed

THE TRIAL of a Fort William man accused of threatening to set fire to a police officer's car has been postponed until May 24 to allow the defence team more time to prepare.

Antonio Sabiu had been due to stand trial at Fort William Sheriff Court last Thursday. Appearing from custody, the 54-year-old pled not guilty to behaving in a threatening and abusive manner by telling a woman he was going to burn the officer's car during a phone call to Inverness Prison from his home.

The charge also alleges he made threats of violence towards the constable in the presence of other officers.

Sabiu, of The Willows, Achintore Road, was on licence after being released from prison two weeks previously after serving three years for supplying class B drugs, the court heard.

Sheriff Mungo Bovey released Sabiu on bail to his father's house at 4 Place of Bonhill, Alexandria.

Beinn Mhor windfarm rights are acquired

INTERNATIONAL Power has announced it has acquired the rights to develop the Beinn Mhor wind farm on Lewis.

The 39-turbine development will have a capacity of up to 140MW, equivalent to providing electricity to 100,000 households.

Construction is expected to start by 2013 and the wind farm will be fully operational in 2016. The project includes a commitment to the Western Isles transmission link to the mainland, which will be commissioned in 2015 to improve security of supply to the islands.

Lottery draw

A JACKPOT of £900 is up for grabs next week in Fort William FC's weekly lotto draw. Numbers this week were 1-10-16.



New future for crofting: Environment minister Stewart Stevenson meets the Crofting Commission board for the first time

'A new dynamism' at heart of Crofting Commission

First meeting of newly elected body of commissioners

DEMOCRATIC accountability and 'a new dynamism' will be the new Crofting Commission's guiding principles, commissioners vowed at their first board meeting in Inverness on Tuesday.

The nine commissioners reaffirmed that the panel of assessors and local grazings committees – effectively the commission's eyes and ears on the ground – were vital to ensure the crofting communities it serves were kept in touch with its work.

The commissioners, six of whom were directly elected by crofters last month, will consult widely on their their aims and policies this summer.

Chief executive Nick Reiter said:

"The commissioners were adamant that today marks a new start for crofting regulation, with transparency, consistency and energy as its core. They are determined to make a real and positive difference to crofting and crofters."

The commissioners also welcomed environment minister Stewart Stevenson's assurance during their first meeting with him on Monday that he would appoint a convener from among them as soon as possible.

All were unanimous in committing to working closely together for the benefit of crofting.

Mr Stevenson said: "This is a momentous day for crofting as we drive forward the reform

agenda which will secure a sustainable future for crofting. "The majority of commissioners have been democratically elected by crofters, putting the power directly in the hands of crofters themselves. "Crofting is part of Scotland's history and culture and the Crofting Commission will ensure that it is also part of Scotland's future."

The commission, established on April 1, supersedes the Crofters Commission and is charged with meeting the needs of crofters in the 21st century.

It can regulate crofting to ensure crofts are occupied and worked or, if not, made available to those wishing to take up crofting.

The elected commissioners

are Kathleen Sinclair, Shetland; Arnie Pirie, Orkney and Caithness; Donnie Ross, East Highlands; Murdo MacLennan, Western Isles; Ian Macdonald, West Highlands and Colin Kennedy, South West Highlands. They join Susan Walker, William Swann and Sandy Cross who were appointed to the board by the Scottish Ministers.

The Crofting Reform Act 2010 places a duty on the commission to tackle absenteeism and neglect, and address speculation on croft land.

It also establishes a map-based crofting register to define what is croft land and who has rights and responsibilities for that land.

New Zero Waste website goes live

A WEBSITE to help cash-conscious householders in Lochaber and Skye save up to £430 per year by cutting food waste has gone live.

And volunteers from the local Zero Waste Scotland volunteer group are urging residents to go online to see how throwing away food is simply throwing away cash.

Zero-waste volunteer co-ordinator for Lochaber and Skye Annette Meehan is working with Lochaber Environmental Group to promote the initiative.

She told *The Oban Times*: "Scottish households throw away around 566,000 tonnes of food each year, two-thirds of which was perfectly good food that could have been eaten. Simple steps, such as better planning of meals, correct storing of food, and preparing and cooking the right portion sizes, could save the average household as much as £35 per month – money which could be used to fill up the family car with petrol, or pay the electricity bill."

For more information visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com.

Camera club invite to first meet

LOCHABER Photographic Society is inviting keen photographers of all ages to its inaugural meeting in the Nevis Centre Studio next Tuesday at 7pm. The idea has met with an enthusiastic response and hopes are high for a good turnout on the night. More information from Kirsteen Bell at kirsteenbell@gmail.com

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Argyll Community Health Partnership

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Annual Volunteer Awards 2012 nominations are now open – this is your opportunity to reward an individual or group you value for their voluntary work.

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 Health Volunteer of the Year sponsored by NHS Highland and Argyll Community Health Partnership

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For nominations, please visit your local AVA office, call 01631 564839, email Antonia@argyllvoluntaryaction.org.uk, or download at www.argyllcommunities.org. Nominations close 4th May

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European 'war games' head for west coast

EUROPE'S largest 'war-games' exercise will be held off the coast of the Isle of Mull this month, with military units from eight different countries participating.
Sea and air-borne units
 From April 16-26, Exercise Joint Warrior will see some 32 separate naval units take part in a massive training exercise, hosted by HM Naval Base Clyde.
 Sea and air-borne units from the UK, USA, Germany, Holland, France, Norway, Denmark and Canada are all contributing, with the Royal Navy flagship, HMS Bulwark, hosting the Commander United Kingdom Task Group and Commander Standing NATO Maritime Group One.
 The Royal Navy and RAF personnel from the Joint Tactical Exercise Planning Staff (JTEPS) will manage and co-ordinate events.
 Meanwhile the UK's Joint Force HQ will deploy to practice its command function afloat on the High Readiness Helicopter



The Royal Navy flagship, HMS Bulwark, will be at the centre of this month's multi-national military training exercise, which takes place off Mull's coast.

and Commando Carrier, HMS Illustrious.
 The aim of the exercise is to provide the highest quality training for all three armed services and the numerous visiting forces from allied nations.
 A number of scenarios will be played out, including dealing with drug smuggling, piracy, territory disputes, state sponsored terrorism and counter insurgency. The scenario develops over the two-weeks of the exercise, beginning with a period of military and political tension and evolving into simulated war fighting and potential state on state hostilities.

Ulva school looks to long term

PROMINENT politicians converged on Ulva last week for a meeting with the community about the future.
 The Ulva School Community Association (USCA) hosted key stake-holders and politicians in the school to consider the many issues and opportunities facing this small dispersed community.
 Carolyne Charrington, Convenor of USCA, said: 'Jim Mather, our former MSP, did a fantastic job of chairing the discussion. His energy was contagious and it was wonderful for us to come away from the meeting with generous pledges of support from those attending.
 'We are all very aware that Friday's meeting was really just the start and things cannot happen without hard work and commitment.'
 Michael Russell MSP, said: 'It was a very exciting day full of enthusiasm for the long term sustainability of Ulva.'
 Alan Reid MP said: 'The community have a great many skills and the determination to rise to the challenge. I will give them my full support in their efforts.'

Mull man becomes 'wolf' man for TV

A MULL born cameraman has filmed a new series on wolves - tracking down the first pack to set up home in the Cascade Mountains, in America's North-west.
 The BBC Series, which airs today and tomorrow, shows how wolves are coming back from the brink of extinction and returning to our doorstep.
 And cameraman Gordon Buchanan, asks: 'Is that ancient battle between man and wolf going to be reignited?'
 He will travel with a team of wolf experts and scientists to see if the wolves can gain a foothold in the Cascade Mountains and establish a healthy population.
 If so they could continue south down the mountain range - a wolf highway - all the way to California.
 Gordon has spent 20 years filming top predators, but this is the first time he has tried to film the wolf.
 He braved blizzards and minus 30 degree conditions to reach the heart of wolf territory and track down these pioneer wolves.



Gordon comes face to face with a wolf.

Gaelic meeting comes to Craignure

THE FUTURE of Gaelic on Mull and Iona will be up for discussion in Craignure soon.
 A meeting, set up by the Gaelic Partnership, will take place in the village hall on April 24 and be chaired by Donald Morrison of Comunn na Gàidhlig.
 It is hoped that a plan for the language can be developed and a steering group formed to take things forward.
 Interested parties are invited to attend and share their thoughts.

Pied Piper to play at Aros Hall

THE CAST has been selected for a school musical on Mull to take place later this year in the Aros Hall.
 Tobermory High School will put on a rendition of The Pied Piper of Hamelin by Malcolm Sircorn on June 14 and 15.
 Nearly 40 youngsters auditioned for the musical and the school now has a large cast list consisting of both primary and secondary pupils.
 Rehearsals are to be led by Mr Lowe while Mr Maries will be the vocal coach. Those involved hope the show will add a human dimension to the already famous story of the Pied Piper.
 With a script full of humour and the musical score lyrical and varied, it promises to be another great school event so get the date in your diary now.

Mull linked to international forests of the future project

THE ISLE of Mull is soon to have something in common with the Azores in Portugal. Not the weather unfortunately, but an international forestry programme.
Planting
 Forest Research, part of the Forestry Commission in the UK, is taking part in a project to identify alternative tree species that could be planted in the future climate.
 This means that Mull, along with only one other site in Scotland, will be part of 'Reinforce', seeing 30 tree species planted on the island.
 The programme, which will also take place in a further 36 locations

on the west Atlantic, is funded by the European Union.
 It aims to identify species that are likely to be more resilient to pests, diseases and most likely to thrive in the warmer climates predicted as a result of climate change.
 The last decade has seen trees affected by an increase in the number of tree pests and diseases such as Dothistroma needle blight and bleeding canker which has spread among horse chestnut or 'conker' trees.
 Dr Hugh Williams, Head of Operations at Forest Research, said: 'Despite the uncertainties surrounding climate change, it is expected

to have a significant impact on our forests over this century.
 'In southern and eastern Britain hotter, drier summers may lead to greater risk of drought stress. Conversely a warming climate may make it easier to grow species that were previously thought to be too tender for southern and western Britain.'
 The 30 tree species to be planted in the research include familiar trees like English oak, Scots pine, silver birch and sweet chestnut as well as less usual species such as Atlas cedar and Macedonian, Maritime and Monterey pines.

Lifeboat crew brings sea safety workshop to Tobermory High School pupils

TOBERMORY High School pupils were getting their sea legs last week in workshops with volunteers from the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).
 The 51 pupils were getting sea safety tips from three members of the lifeboat crew who also carried out other workshops for youngsters from primary schools around the island. The event, which took place on the high school's Health Day, showed children how to enjoy and stay safe near, on and in the water.
 Tobermory volunteer crew mem-

ber, Dr Sam Jones, who presented the workshops along with fellow crew members Paul 'Gunny' Gunn and David McHaffie, said: 'With summer fast approaching, this was a great opportunity to talk to local youngsters about how to stay safe whilst enjoying the waters around the island, as well as teaching them about how the RNLI and its volunteer crews save lives at sea.'
 Almost 90 pupils attended the workshops which included demonstrations of safety equipment and screening of rescue footage.

Janice Mitchell, acting Head Teacher of Tobermory High School said: 'This was a very valuable workshop for our pupils. Growing up on an island is a great experience and the presentation from the RNLI crew has taught the young people how to make the most of their natural surroundings, but to be aware of safety precautions as well.
 'The RNLI crew are very much part of our local community and for the pupils to get a chance to appreciate the vital role they play was also very worthwhile.'

Dervaig Post Office enters new era

A MULL Post Office closed its doors for the last time last week - but opened other ones to bigger and better premises at the weekend.
 Dougie Allen, subpostmaster at the Dervaig office, is relocating the Post Office to The Old Village Hall, just behind the current premises.
 He said: 'It will be a Premier Store and will include the Post Office. It will be one of the biggest on the west coast at 1200 sq ft.
 'I'm going to increase the variety of stock and the store will be much bigger and brighter - and hopefully busier!
 He also commended the support of Mull residents: 'If it wasn't for local support this wouldn't be happening at all.
 'We will be employing about three more staff and with the season starting this just seemed like the right time to do it.'
 The Post Office Ltd are 'confident that the new service is suitably located and will meet the needs of customers in the local community'.
 A spokesman said: 'The main feedback from the community centered on the appreciation of the hard work and commitment made by the subpostmaster without financial help from other sources.
 'This move will secure Post Office services to the local community in the longer term.'



Beach clean at Lochbuie

LOCHBUIE beach was getting a 'scrub up' last week as pupils and staff from Lochdonhead Primary School organised a mile long clean.
 Sixty bags of rubbish were collected in the clean last week, which was done alongside Caroline Askew of GRAB.
 Those at the school would like to thank everyone for their hard work and Pennygown for the use of a skip.

Son of Ulva becomes Father of Australia

THE REPUTATION precedes the man.

Innovator, military strategist, the Father of Australia, Lachlan Macquarie was born on the Isle of Ulva, a small island off the west coast of Mull, in 1761 and became a well-known name around the globe.

Yet few people in Scotland have any knowledge of this son of Argyll.

Macquarie – intentionally written with a small q and one r as he decreed it should be – has echoes of himself all over modern day Australia.

His work in the country, including choosing the name Australia, is now revered as having shaped the former colony from a dumping ground for convicts into a civil society. But it wasn't always that way.

Lachlan Macquarie joined the army, buying an officer's commission, to escape a life that was declining into poverty.

Since his island of birth was becoming overpopulated and people were struggling to survive on the meager output from their farms, the Highland regiments were an invaluable asset to those with little other option.

Lachlan secured his first commission as a Lieutenant at the age of 16. He sailed to Canada in 1776 and encountered an attack on route. It was battled successfully and Lachlan was rewarded with half a guinea for his efforts.

Jane Macquarie (nee Jarvis)
Lachlan drifted around military service for the next few years until in 1788, while serving in India, he met the woman that was to become his wife.

Jane Jarvis wed Lachlan in 1793, she was a rich heiress and her family disapproved of the match, placing her wealth in a trust fund, firmly out of Macquarie's reach.

But Jane did not share their concerns and the couple moved away from Bombay in order to live comfortably within their means.

Alas Jane did not cope well with Lachlan's lifestyle. She pined hopelessly for him when he was posted away on campaign and fell seriously ill in his absence.

The marriage lasted less than three years. Jane died while on the way to China with Lachlan, plunging him into depression.

He was left a wealthy man after her death but despaired at the prospect of life without his love. His longed-for retirement now seemed futile.

Instead, Lachlan decided to devote his time to helping others – and it was a move that would change the course of his life.

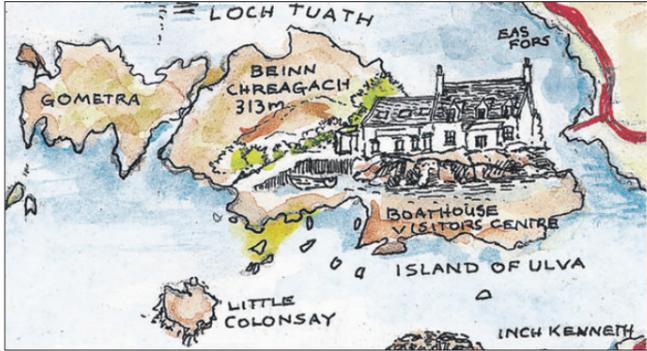
He offered junior commissions in the army to deserving families on Mull, freed slaves in India and Antigua and ensured that servants were given an education.

Macquarie restored contact with his family and this seemed to help lift his depression.

After several more years military service he returned to London in 1802, where he was swept up into the whirlwind of high society. Lachlan was also appointed Assistant Adjutant-General for the area.

It was during this time Macquarie outdid himself with his

The death of Lachlan Macquarie's first wife, Jane, was to change his life forever



efforts to help those on Mull. He provided places for five lieutenants from the island as well as furthering the careers of both his own brother and his brother-in-law, George Jarvis.

He even pulled strings for a military income for the former chief of the Macquaries – who was struggling in poverty in his latter years.

Oskamull
Lachlan's mother still resided at Oskamull and in 1804 – after 16 years without contact – he visited her in her little cottage and found himself to be completely removed from his old life.

Nevertheless he ensured his mother was well looked after, ordering repairs and improvements to her home and making sure she had all the comforts she desired.

While on this trip home Lachlan took possession of his new lands – on which he dreamed of building a grand home. He

But shocking news came to Lachlan in December 1808. He had his hopes pinned on staying in Britain and enjoying a quiet – and well earned – retirement on Mull with Elizabeth.

Instead the pair set off on May 22 1809 for Lachlan to take up his new post of Governor of New South Wales.

The country the pair were headed for had descended into mutiny. With alcoholism rife – and encouraged – rum was being used as a currency and the resident Governor had retreated to live aboard his ship. Macquarie had the unenviable task of restoring order.

He was installed as Governor on January 1 1810 and immediately set about restoring the moral fibre of the community.

He urged marriage, closed 75 per cent of the public houses and stressed Sunday observance. Lachlan genuinely believed that improving the infrastructure

came to believe that convicts could become fully contributing members of society and was free with pardons and probationary tickets of leave for skilled men who arrived.

Son
This policy did not go down well with the free settlers in the area who considered themselves to have the right to select convicts for use as servants and farm hands. And it was the disassociation of himself with this group that would eventually be Macquarie's downfall in the colony.

His son, also Lachlan was born in March 1814 and cemented his belief that those born in New South Wales should have a stake in it's future.

Young Lachlan enjoyed a privileged life in the colony but Macquarie did not see a future there for him – instead intending to return to Scotland so that he might take up his place as heir of

Macquarie found himself accused of the very abuses he had fought so vigorously against.

Lachlan's Governorship was the focus of an enquiry in 1819 by John Bigge. Bigge spent over a year in the colony preparing a damning report. He ignored Macquarie's views while noting unsworn evidence from his detractors.

Macquarie, although demoralised, worked on for a further two years until his replacement, Lord Brisbane, arrived late in 1821.

Lachlan set sail for England with his family in January 1822. He left behind him a colony unrecognisable to the one he had found. It had over three times the population and had thrived

ily – and restoring his reputation – surprisingly, things had moved on and Macquarie found himself once again welcome in the Capital.

Ignoring several bouts of ill health he embarked on an active social life – but as a means of saying goodbye to everyone – and was granted an audience with King George IV.

But only two short days later on June 11 1824 he entered his final illness. Elizabeth rushed to London with their son and arrived in time to allow the family to spend a precious few days together before Lachlan passed away on July 1.

On Macquarie's monument in Sydney, Australia, the plinth reads: 'His genius for administration and concept of the future of the colony led to considerable development in organised finance, public works and manufacturing, inland exploration and settlement, fine architecture and patronage of the arts and literature.'

Macquarie is also well remembered in many other places in Australia. There are many buildings, parks and streets among other places that still bear his name – although to be fair he named a lot of things himself – these include Macquarie Lighthouse, the first and longest operational navigational light, Mount Macquarie, the highest point in Blayney Shire at 1100 metres above sea level and Macquarie River, a significant inland river in New South Wales.

But there are far fewer traces of Macquarie on Mull these days. His mausoleum at Gruline is owned by the National Trust for Australia who restored after Salen.



Major General Lachlan Macquarie of Jarvisfield.



The inscription on one end of the mausoleum lets visitors know Macquarie is buried with his second wife and their two children. 16_t13macquarie02



Macquarie's mausoleum at Gruline is owned by the National Trust for Australia. 16_t13macquarie01

"His genius for administration and concept of the future of the colony led to considerable development in organised finance, public works and manufacturing, inland exploration and settlement, fine architecture and patronage of the arts and literature."

Macquarie Monument, Sydney, Australia

decided on a site at Gruline and would name both house and estate Jarvisfield in honour of his departed wife Jane.

But it had been years since the death of Jane and Lachlan's mind started to turn to thoughts of a new wife. He settled on Elizabeth Campbell, she was 27 years old and the sister-in-law of the late Murdoch MacLaine.

MacLaine had been the brother of Lachlan's mother and had taken good care of Lachlan and his brother as children, bringing them to Edinburgh for an education which enabled an army career.

Lachlan and Elizabeth married in November 1807 and joined his regiment in Perth. A return to Mull the following year saw plans put in place to build the village of Salen.

would improve the self-respect among residents. He ordered buildings to be rebuilt on proper streets, the proper control of livestock was made compulsory and people were banned from washing their laundry in the river.

Lachlan also established a police force outwith military control and planned for free schools and public buildings.

But his expenditure did not go down well in London, with the Colonial Secretary, Lord Liverpool, returning an official disapproval of his financial accounts.

Macquarie though was not to be derailed from his projects, he sent a reply explaining his policies and felt this would make him better understood. Through time Macquarie

a Mull estate.

The return was to be sooner than perhaps expected. Lachlan and Elizabeth sought to ease the tensions between ex-convicts and those who had come to New South Wales through the army, church or as free settlers – a group known as the exclusives.

They invited them to mixed dinner parties but the plans were boycotted and Macquarie became estranged from his own regiment and the one sent to replace it.

He became more determined in his policies and authoritarian in his methods, while supporting the theory of a civil law he found it difficult to face the prospect of having his own powers limited.

Meanwhile the exclusives chorus of complaints had finally found ears in London, and Mac-

Scotland Australia Cairn

1988 marked the 200th anniversary of 11 ships of the First Fleet arriving at Botany Bay with 1,468 Britons who became Australia's first European settlers.

The Scotland Australia Bicentennial Committee celebrated the special relationships between Scotland and Australia with the erection of a traditional cairn in Sydney, New South Wales.

The 'Scotland Australia Cairn' stands 10 feet high, consists of 1,745 stones, one from each parish in Scotland. The monument was dedicated to Lachlan Macquarie 'the Father of Australia'.

The pinnacle stone, carved as a Celtic cross, and bearing the Gaelic motto of the Macquarie clan, came from the Isle of Ulva off Mull, where Macquarie was born.

The monument was officially unveiled on St Andrew's Day by the Duke of Argyll.

COMING SOON

The next edition of Scots Magazine

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BALLACHULISH

BALLACHULISH Community Council is still reporting issues regarding broken bottles, litter and anti-social behaviour in the children's playpark, the underpass and other areas in the village.

The council has raised the problem with police and more policing in these areas on Friday and Saturday nights was requested. The matter was on the agenda again at Tuesday evening's meeting in the Jubilee Pavilion.

GLENCOE

THE NEXT meeting of Glencoe and Glen Etive Community Council will take place in St Mary's Church Hall, Glencoe on Tuesday, April 17 at 7.30pm. Chairman Alister Sutherland will preside.

GLENFINNAN

GLENFINNAN Gun Club's latest shoot was held on March 10 in mild and damp with a good turn out of 24 guns.

Winners: First competition - Gordon Mathewson (Kilmacolm); Second competition - 'Tennent shield' - Angus Cameron (Achnacarry); Member's Trophy 'Donnie Strang Memorial Quaich' - Gordon Mathewson (Kilmacolm); High Gun for the day 'Glenfinnan Gun Cup' - Gordon Mathewson (Kilmacolm); Double rise 'Dewar Cup' - Stuart MacDonald (Achnacarry).

LOCH EWE

THE LOCH EWE-based Russian Arctic Convoy Museum Project group is to hold a six-day commemorative event next month as part of its fundraising efforts.

'World War II and the Arctic Convoys' from May 7-12 will see the local crofting honouring American servicemen involved in the sinking of the SS William H Welch on 26th February 1944 off Loch Ewe, the anchorage for the Arctic convoys.

Local crofters battled through snowstorms carrying flasks of tea and blankets for the few merchant marines and navy crewmen who survived the shipwreck. Some 74 Americans died and 12 were saved.

John Murdo McKenzie, who still lives on the same Wester Ross croft, ensures US stars and stripes flags are placed on unnamed graves of five victims of the disaster.

On the organised walk on May

7 his daughter and five year-old grandson John will hand a wreath over to a coastguard helicopter crew, who will throw the wreath into the sea during a commemorative flypast at the wreck site.

Full details of the week at www.russianarcticconvoymuseum.co.uk.

LISMORE

STAFF and pupils of Lismore primary school invited islanders to an open evening in which we saw displays of their work, heard about their various projects, took part in a raffle and, after tea and cakes, saw a preview of their North Lorn Drama festival performance of 'A Native American Tale'.

The evening started with the children singing a group of brightly delivered songs accompanied on the guitar by primary 7 pupil Shona Wright and Head Teacher Catherine Davies.

The primary seven girls then talked about their photography project in which they hope to photograph as many islanders as possible for an archive at the museum which will be of great interest in years to come. They are currently practising using a camera on loan from Scottish Natural Heritage.

They also spoke about the visit from a group of teachers and pupils from Oban High including head teacher Mr Bain, who was not only able to tell them about their imminent transfer to high school, but also to answer all their questions.

A raffle and a cake sale raised £85 for Mary's Meals on the night and we were told that Argyll and Bute are donating 10p for every school dinner sold in one week to this excellent cause.

THE school now has a textile

recycling bin as part of their eco schools and global citizenship commitment and all unwanted items including clothing, shoes (tied together) soft toys, blankets, underwear and household textiles can be left either in one of the bags they provided or a black bag tied well.

CONGRATULATIONS to the school pupils who, the following evening, were placed second at the North Lorn Drama festival for their play 'A Native American Tale'.

They came away with two cups; one for second place and the other for costumes and scenery.

SUNDAY 25 March was not

only a beautiful spring day but also the day when seven new members were welcomed into the Lismore Parish Church, also known as The Cathedral Church of Saint Moluag, by the Rev Roderick Campbell and his parishioners.

Becoming a member of such an ancient congregation which has been worshipping in some form on the island since the sixth century, is to ensure the continuity of the backbone of the island's community.

Those who have joined are Flora Maclean, Lorraine King, Jim MacCormick, Laura MacDougall, Peter MacDougall, Eileen Carmichael and Marie Carmichael.

Congratulations to all.



Lismore's new church members L-R: Peter MacDougall, Lorraine King, Rev Roderick Campbell, Eileen Carmichael, Marie Carmichael, Laura Cook and Jim MacCormick and Flora Maclean.



Lismore Primary School won two trophies at North Lorn Drama festival for their play 'A Native American Tale'



Pupils from Eoligarry Primary School show off some of the recycled-fashions created during eco-week.

Eoligarry primary goes 'green'

BARRA

GREEN pupils from Eoligarry Primary School gathered 18 bags of rubbish from Traigh Eais as it rounded off its Eco-week.

Energy efficiency workshop During the course of the project, 22 pupils took in a wealth of environmentally friendly information, with representatives from a host of organisations coming to speak about how they make the environment a safer place.

JURA

SCHOOL pupils on Jura have been shortlisted for the Climate Week Challenge - heading off thousands of other entries.

Youngsters from Small Isles Primary School, in Craighouse on the Isle of Jura, competed against 130,000 other people from schools and workplaces across the country.

The country's biggest environmental competition, Green Your Space, took place last week with judging by Blue Peter's Helen Skelton, Autumnwatch's Kate Humble and Spooks' star Sophia Myles.

The youngsters won the 7-9

KILLIN

THE NATIONAL Park's local plan has been adopted by the National Park Authority. The plan will guide new developments and investment within the National Park up to 2015 and will be the principal document used for determining planning applications.

The adopted plan replaces

Al Friend and Ronnie MacNeil from Scottish Water explained to pupils how water was purified and made safe, while the council's education energy efficiency manager, Ruaraidh Ferguson, took the pupils through a home energy efficiency workshop.

Nick Brannigan visit from Barra and Vatersay Community Ltd as part of their Island Carbon Compass Project, also discussing energy awareness and helping pupils complete a waste audit.

One of the more popular visits though was from Donny and

Dillon, the local council binmen, who explained how the island's waste was processed.

Pupils also enjoyed taking part in several recycling activities. They made bunting from scrap materials, made solar powered models from a kit, and produced their own eco-fashions.

As part of the schools Enterprise project pupils took part in a competition to design an eco-friendly shopping bag. Primary 7 pupil, Abaigeal MacNeil saw her design chosen to be printed on a sturdy jute shopping bag, which will be on sale soon.



Left to right: James Kitching, Andy Macdonald from Islay Energy Trust, Finlay Macdonald, Kate Brown class teacher, Dyllan Batey and Scarlet Fletcher.

year old age category with their entry, the Water School. It is a floating school that is powered by the elements - rain, wind and sun. The boat-like school uses solar panels and a windmill to store and create the energy needed to power the school.

Kevin Steele, Chief Executive at Climate Week, said: 'The Climate Week Challenge enables young people to develop their skills of innovation and team-working as well as their knowledge of sustainability.'

'Many of the ideas developed by this year's 130,000 participants were utterly brilliant. The emerging generation has what it takes to combat climate change.'

existing local plans covering the National Park and identifies locations for new housing, tourism opportunities, transport and economic development.

The plan supports small scale renewable energy schemes that meet the needs of the communities and businesses. It also contains policies that will protect the environment to ensure that any development does not damage the outstanding natural

JURA

BIOLOGISTS have undertaken a study of the Sound of Jura to find out more about some of Scotland's most important marine wildlife.

Undersea footage

A team of marine biologists from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) surveyed underwater wildlife and habitats of high conservation value, including horse mussels, the rare but beautiful fireworks anemone and burrowed mud, an internationally important habitat home to burrowing animals.

The scientists planned to update existing knowledge about marine life in the survey area, which covers the Sound of Jura, including Loch Sween.

They used a drop-down video camera to capture undersea footage, with 'grab' samples taken from the seabed for more detailed analysis.

Funded by Marine Scotland, the survey was part of the Scottish Marine Protected Area (MPA) project, an extensive programme of work carried out by Marine Scotland, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), SNH and Historic Scotland.

The findings will be used to advise the Scottish Government and others on conservation and development in the marine environment.

we have thriving communities across Loch Lomond and the Trossachs. This plan is seen as a blueprint that will encourage tourism, business and housing development opportunities that will contribute to the local and national economy.

The plan can be viewed on www.lochlomond-trossachs.org at local libraries and at National Park offices in Balloch and Callander.

35 Years Ago

Those Were The Days

The Oban Times



Thursday, April 8, 1982



Colonsay airstrip re-opens

COLONSAY'S airstrip, on Machrins Farm, was re-opened last week after two years of closure because of the ravages of rabbits.

The field became so badly eroded by rabbit holes that it was unusable, but it has recently been improved at a cost of £2,000 by the islanders with HIBD help.

The holes having been filled in, the chairman of the HIBD Mr Robert Cowan was able to make a smooth landing there last week to open the new strip formally.

Colonsay at present does not have any scheduled flights, and the strip is used for private planes and charters. But one of the important uses is for the Loganair air ambulance service.

Dr A Hall Gardiner, the local GP, said that over the last two years it had been necessary to use helicopters for ambulance flights in emergencies.

This is not only expensive, costing twice as much as the plane, but also means that the patient cannot be accompanied.

Farmer Alistair McNeill of Machrins, has been responsible for the restoration and upkeep of the strip, and an airstrip association has been formed on the island to make sure that it can be kept in use.

Oban man Falklands telex hero

THE LAST, interrupted Telex from the Falklands Islands was sent by a 44-year-old Oban man, Mr John Stewart.

His attempt to communicate further before the Argentinian invaders prevented contact failed and the days of silence which followed were days of anguish for his parents, Cathy and Jackie Stewart, 10 Hazeldean Crescent.

On Monday this week his parents received the first news of their son in a short telegram which read, simply: 'It's all right.'

Mrs Cathy Stewart was overjoyed. 'We had been so worried and felt so helpless,' she said. 'The Falkland Is-



Mr John Stewart.

lands department in London and our MP were very helpful but we had no means of getting in touch with John to find out if he was all right and he was unable to contact us.'

Tobermory pupils win poster competition

AT A special ceremony at Tobermory Post Office on Wednesday of last week, the head postmaster at Oban, Mr John Hunter, presented prizes of Rowney Paints to three Mull pupils who have recently been awarded places in a poster competition run by the Post Office.

Mr Hunter explained that there had been 209 entries for the competition, the area involved was the whole of Argyll, with the exception of Bute and Cowal, and the theme of the competition was Scotland.

The judge was Mr E Strachan, the head of the art department in Oban High School. In the over 11 section Nicola Bywater of Tobermory Secondary School was awarded first place, first in 5-11 group was Helen Leitch, a pupil at Ulva Primary School, and runner up was Jonathan MacGowan, a pupil at Salen Primary School.



Left to right, Mr J Hunter, Jonathan MacGowan, Nicola Bywater and Helen Leitch

Gaelic drama festival on Islay



Representatives of winning teams and officials at the Gaelic Drama Festival on Islay. Left to right - Donald MacLean, Tobermory; Donald MacLeod, Saturday Chairman; with Mrs Margaret Hopkin, Port Ellen; Hugh MacPherson, Oban 'B'; Donny MacLeod, Adjudicator; Al Carmichael and Elixabeth Crawford, learner team; Mrs C Crawford, Bowmore; Robin Banks, Acting Chairman, Roinn Earraghaidheal.



Sixer Alison Ramsay proudly shows the award won by her as 'Six of the Year' in the 4th Fort William Brownie Pack.

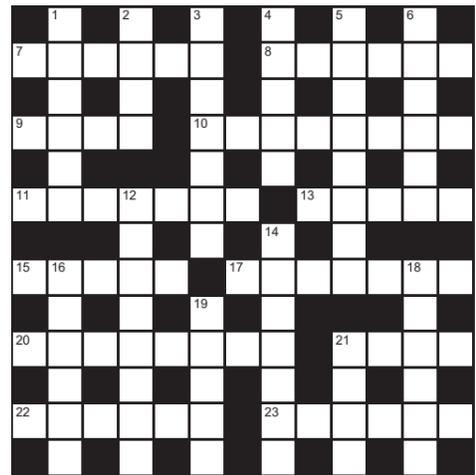
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

Across

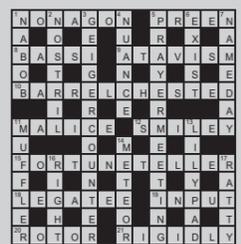
- 7 Shrew (6)
8 Clergyman (6)
9 Single item. (4)
10 May be a busy occupation before Ascot? (8)
11 How grain is sold (7)
13 Brothers' keeper? (5)
15 Acclamation (5)
17 Expire (7)
20 Not inland (8)
21 Mountain pool (4)
22 A great distance from (3,3)
23 Lengthen (6)

Down

- 1 Tropical plant from America (6)
2 Drift (4)
3 Malleable silver-white metallic element (7)
4 Fairy tale character (5)
5 Jot down rubbish (8)
6 Small jacket (6)
12 Backpack (8)
14 One who interferes if something isn't right (7)
16 Beach robe (6)
18 Released (6)
19 Cylindrical being with tentacles (5)
21 So long for now (2-2)



Last week's solution



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Down Your Way

Barcaldine, Benderloch and North Connel



PRIMARY pupils from Barcaldine and Ardchattan schools got on their bikes for charity recently raising over £80. The children, of all ages, cycled from Barcaldine Primary School to the Creagan Inn in their pyjamas for Sport Relief. The 25 youngsters and 10 adults took 45 minutes to complete the route while using the cycle path. The children all enjoyed their day which was also the last event of the Big Pedal in which Barcaldine was sitting second in the rankings. 16_114141a02



THE STORY of the first Italians to come to Scotland came to Victory Hall in Benderloch recently. Italia 'n' Caledonia by Mike Maran and Philip Contini tells the tale of Philip's Grandfather who perished on The Arandora Star among other Italians. The performance, which included home movies, was well received by the packed hall. The Italians came to find their fortune in Scotland and moved into business – leaving an everlasting trace on the streets of Scotland – ice cream and fish and chips! 16_114141a01



The pupils learn about fairies in the grounds of Dunollie Castle. 16_114141a02

PUPILS from Lochnell Primary School visited Dunollie Castle and the 1745 House recently in search of fairies. The Primary two group were there as part of a project on castles and fairies. They spent the morning learning about the history and looking around the castle. And in the afternoon they searched for fairies – including the special one connected to Dunollie that resembles a green woman – in the grounds. The children were the first school group to have ever visited Dunollie. But they won't be the last, their trip kicked off a two year schools programme led by Yvonne McHugh and Tara Coia, the attraction's learning and events team. Leader funding has enabled an upgrade of the facilities which means it is now suitable for schools to make trips to the castle. The pupils all enjoyed their day but we at *The Oban Times* have a feeling they missed something...



SUCCESS was in the air recently for a North Connel man who won the best local ploughman cup at the Lorn Annual Vintage Ploughing Match. Willie Buchanan, from Achnaba, was absolutely delighted to win the Dochie Buchanan Memorial Cup. He said: 'Of all the cups I wanted to win today this is the most important one. Dochie Buchanan was a full cousin of my father. I used to call him 'uncle'. The cup was donated by the Buchanan family in memory of their grandfather and presented to me by Dochie's grandchildren.' The 39-year-old also took home The Oban Times Ploughman's Perpetual Trophy, Argyll Agricultural Engineers Perpetual Cup for best rig plough and the Best Rigg by Mounted Tractor Plough cup. His final prize was the Alex McTaggart Trophy for best ploughman which he had previously won in 2007. The first name inscribed on the cup in 1960 was Willie's father Archie Buchanan.



Lochnell Nursery pupils, who took part in the gingerbread man project at the school.

GINGERBREAD men have been on the menu recently for youngsters in Benderloch. Nursery and P1 and 2 pupils at Lochnell Primary School came together to put on a show involving the story of the Gingerbread Man. They also made gingerbread men to raise funds for Mary's Meals during the charity's awareness week. The Victory Hall's smaller hall in the village was the venue for a packed out show before parents and grandparents, with actions by the nursery pupils and singing the song with the P1-2s, who then sold gingerbread men, raising more than £160. Teacher Joy Cameron said: 'As we had some gingerbread men biscuits left P1 opened a gingerbread tuckshop the following day so that children in the school could also support Mary's Meals through our gingerbread appeal. 'Our final total is not yet known but we hope to invite a representative from Mary's Meals to accept a cheque from the gingerbread team in the near future.'



Next week
Down Your Way
will bring you the news from the
Isle of Arran

ISLAY

SOME island farms seem to have gone back to the old ways, when lambing used to be held back until later in April. Risking an earlier lambing to have longer for lambs to grow before sale time must be weighed against the possibility of having wet and stormy spring weather for young lambs to cope with, and slower early growth in the grass available for lactating ewes. Dog owners are reminded to take extra care and keep their dogs under very close control, especially when walking near fields where young farm animals are kept.

A FRIENDLY gathering of Islay's native Gaelic speakers met for a 'copan agus craic' at Ionad Chalum Chille Ile on March 13, at the first meeting in a monthly series of informal get-togethers.

Peggy MacEachern had brought an album of old Islay postcards to show and discuss and these, along with other nostalgic photographs brought in, provided interesting conversation starters.

Further coineamhan will be held at ICCI with the next on April 10, followed by May 8 and June 12.

ISLAY Quilters' Easter Fair will be held this Saturday at the Quilters' workroom in Islay House Square, Bridgend. Handmade crafts produced by Islay Quilters will be displayed and for sale, and teas and coffees with home-baking will be available.

THERE IS some local interest in recording the history of working with wool and flax in Islay's homes in the past, either using a spinning wheel to make yarns or knitting the stitches or patterns which were used in hand-knitting garments or household items in the past.

If anyone has any information they'd like to share on the history of spinning and knitting in Islay, get in touch by emailing sc_islay@hotmail or phone 01496 850 215.

RUM

VISITORS to the Isle of Rum will have the chance to get close to one of Scotland's most special birds at a brand new event on Saturday.

'The return of the ocean wanderers' day on Rum National Nature Reserve will celebrate the Manx shearwater, which spend the summer on Rum and other remote west coast locations. Highlight of the event is a chance to 'meet the locals' on a special night time guided walk up to the shearwater colonies on Hallival.

The birds rear a single chick, before undertaking a winter migration to the Falkland Islands before returning to Rum by way of the African coast the following year – a round trip of more than 13,000 miles. Rum is home to almost one third of the world's population of Manx shearwater. Affectionately known as 'manxies' they nest in burrows high in the Rum mountains, only returning to nests at night.

Around the Rurals

Appin

THE MEMBERS of Appin SWRI enjoyed a musical evening in the company of Tynnuilt Bell Ringers at the March meeting in Port Appin Hall.

The group entertained with a varied programme, including Au Clair de la Lune, Lead Me Lord and The Iona Boat Song.

Conductor Margaret Millar soon had rural members joining in and having a go.

Rhona Dunn gave the bell ringers a healthy vote of thanks.

Mrs Ross' Competition was won by Margaret Massey. Three-flower arrangement: Gold – Brenda MacLeod and Jessie Gilkes; Silver – Linda MacLeod and Alison MacCorquodale; Red – Jessie MacKenzie and Myra Mac-

Lochawe

GRAHAM MacQueen and Linda Fraser of MacQueen Bros Charitable Trust were the guest speakers at the March meeting of Lochawe SWRI in Lochawe Village Hall.

The Trust is run from the Community Charity Shop, The White Building, on the North Pier, Oban and MacQueen Bros warehouse.

The charity is run entirely by unpaid volunteers. Money received from sales of donated items is allocated to various charities and good causes.

An excellent tea was provided by hostesses for the evening J Wylie, T Orr and C Milne. Competition

Taynuilt

TAYNUILT SWRI president Jessie Servant welcomed 20 members and two visitors to the meeting held on March 14 in Taynuilt Village Hall.

The programme for the evening was a demonstration by Alison MacCorquodale and Jessie MacKenzie showing how to bake Battenburg cake and individual Bakewell Tarts.

A very informative and interesting evening was had by everyone.

Members enjoyed a taste of the lovely cakes and a vote of thanks was given by Stella Huntingford.

The tea was provided by Celia Keenan and Tracey Sage. Competition winners

Three Pancakes: 1 Dolina Anderson, 2 Cathy Potter, 3 Doreen Penswick.

One Item Of Jewellery: 1 Alice Campbell, 2 Ann MacCallum, 3 Doreen Penswick.

Arisaig

ARISAIG SWRI met on March 15 when 11 members enjoyed a talk on rugs and carpets by John Bryden.

Competition

Small cushion - 1 Margaret MacEachern; 2 Anne Cameron; 3 Vera MacDonald. Jar marmalade - 1 June Cairns; 2 Helen Lamb; 3 Margaret MacEachern.

Tea was served by Vera MacDonald and Daphne Heaps

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Bowmore Primary School Ensemble

BOWMORE Primary Ensemble won the Instrumental Ensemble (primary) competition last Saturday at the Mid-Argyll Music Festival.

The group received 90 marks for their performance of Pachelbel's Canon with the adjudicator commenting, 'seven excellent

players combining to make a lovely noise. Notes very accurately played.

'Really enjoyed this! So much good work being done here!'

The school said it was incredibly proud of the boys and girls who brought home the first-place prize.

KINLOCHLEVEN



KINLOCHLEVEN High School Ski Club got cash from Lochaber Rotary Club and Youth Development for a race training day at Glencoe Mountain – but the mild winter means they have to wait until next year.

The club were raring to go, and had been watching the weather for a month to see if winter would return – but to no avail.

The training had been organised with the resort at a reduced rate to encourage local children to take up sport.

Despite the snow no-show, the club is keen to attend Glencoe Mountain for the training day during next year's ski season – weather conditions permitting!

The club is co-organised by acting deputy dead Jill Mills and High Life Highland Active Schools co-ordinator Roslynn Newman.

MORAR

MORAR Community Council's March meeting heard Network Rail has been contacted again regarding problems and dangers of broken fences and overgrown trees by the railway line.

The CC had not received a reply since bringing this to their attention in November 2011.

Network Rail have now confirmed that this stretch of fencing was not part of their repair/renewable work bank for 2011/2012 but also confirmed they would carry out a risk assessment in due course and will either repair or renew fences where necessary. In the meantime, they will continue to carry out patch repairs.

The Chair asked Cllr Henderson for any updates regarding the damage to the road between the railway crossing and Woodside and also to the burst water pipe at the top of the hill and down the brae towards Columba Road. Cllr Henderson has contacted Ian McLelland, Highland Council who has requested the Road Inspector carry out a full inspection of the damage to the road when he next visits Morar.

Mr McLelland has also logged a complaint against Scottish Water and asked them to repair the burst water pipe.

There is an Action Plan in place to ensure the maintenance of the core paths in the area with the help of volunteers and Angus McIntyre and the long term plan is to link the villages of Arisaig, Morar and Mallaig.

Morar Community Trust is to form a working party to clarify what is required in the demolition of the old hall.

There is a concern due to the asbestos roof which will have to be removed by a professional team and this will cost quite a bit of money.

When the roof has been removed, the Trust has suggested that the remains of the hall could be recycled such as the bricks, etc. secretary to write letter to Highland Council and ask them the implications for such a working group re health and safety issues and insurance cover.

APPIN



Pupils from Strath of Appin Primary School celebrated World Book Day on March 1 with a visit from Waterstones, a 'Book Swap Stall' and a visit to Oban Library where pupils learned how to use the library before becoming members and taking some books out on loan. Some of the school's senior pupils are pictured at Oban Library.

KILCHOAN

WITH the longer nights and unseasonable sunshine, Kilchoan Kayak Club have arranged their first evening paddle of the season for Tuesday. Local kayakers will meet at the jetty at the Ferry Stores at 6.30pm. The club's New Year's paddle had to be cancelled due to high winds, so the club member will be hoping the weather stays fair and allows them to get out on the water.

WIN!
A four night stay for two in South Lakeland Worth £500

Abbey House Hotel

TWO TO GIVEAWAY!

The Oban Times has teamed up with Abbey House to offer two lucky readers the chance to enjoy a wonderful four night stay for two at the hotel, bed and breakfast. Plus, winners will receive a glass of champagne and afternoon tea on arrival.

Only a fifteen minute drive from the southern tip of Windermere, Cumbria, lies the award winning Abbey House Hotel. Designed by world renowned architect, Sir Edwin Lutyens, the hotel is set in 14 acres of stunning grounds, with 61 individually designed bedrooms to suit every taste.

Only a fifteen minute drive from the southern tip of Windermere, Cumbria, lies the award winning Abbey House Hotel. Designed by world renowned architect, Sir Edwin Lutyens, the hotel is set in 14 acres of stunning grounds, with 61 individually designed bedrooms to suit every taste.

The Oban Times
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

3

TOKEN THREE

To enter, simply collect four tokens -
token one and two have already been printed.
Here is token three.
Token four will be printed April 12.
To order a back copy call 01631 568000.

Full details on how to send in your tokens will be announced April 12, 2012.

Terms & conditions: The prize is based on two people sharing a double or twin room, bed and breakfast only, subject to availability. The prize must be taken by September, 30, 2012. The prize is as stated. No cash alternative. The Editor's decision is final. Photocopied entries will not be accepted. The winner may be asked to take part in publicity and may appear in a Wyvex Media publication and website. This competition is not open to Wyvex Media and Abbey House Hotel employees and their families. This competition is open to readers of other Wyvex Media publications.

Reader Offer
Exclusive to readers of The Oban Times, Abbey House Hotel is offering bed and breakfast for only £75 per night based on two people sharing a double or twin room, subject to availability. The offer ends on September, 30, 2012. Please quote reference code OT when booking. For further information go to www.abbeyhousehotel.com or telephone 08448262095.



Lily Confield was presented with a Young Scot Quality Award

LOCHABER

A SIXTH year pupil at Lochaber High School won a Young Quality Scot Award for her work in supporting a local charity. Lily Confield was presented with the accolade at a ceremony in the Carnegie Conference Centre Dunfermline. Lily was nominated for the award by Lochaber High School in recognition of her work for 'Star for Harris', which was set up following the death of Lily's

nephew, Harris Ross, with the aim of Supporting Treatment and Awareness Raising of childhood cancer. The Young Quality Scot Award scheme recognises and rewards the efforts of young people to improve the quality of life in their communities. They are operated as a partnership between Quality Scotland, local authorities, YouthLink and voluntary youth organisations. More information on STAR can be found at www.starforharris.co.uk

DUNBEG

DUNBEG Primary School Pupils will soon have a much shorter walk in the morning - thanks to work starting on a new path. The route, which will connect the primary school with housing in the Lorn Road area of the village is about to get off the ground following the confirmation of planning permission and funding. The 200m route will include a timber bridge over a stream and will be suitable for bikes, buggies and walkers. It is scheduled for completion in mid-May. A spokesman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'This project was developed in response to requests from the community, the school and local members. The area around Dunbeg has been identified for mixed use development, so establishing good links within the village - particularly for walking and cycling - will be of great community benefit both now and in the future.'



Struan Smith starts to collect the grocery delivery for the Isle of Tiree from Oban Express drivers James Strachan, left, and Bob Smith. 15_113fuit01

RUM

THE ISLE of Rum Community Trust was awarded £19,475 from the Climate Challenge Fund to boost energy efficiency and sustainability. The trust wants the island to be 'a centre for environmental excellence' so its can make the most of its status as a National Nature Reserve. Projects include efficiency improvements to the community hall, a drive to encourage residents to grow more of their own food and making homes more energy efficient.

KILBRANDON

KILBRANDON SWRI vice president Shona Neil welcomed members and visitors to the March meeting of Kilbrandon SWRI, held recently in Seil Island Hall. Shona welcomed Kate Critchley of Paradise Kitchen, who gave a fascinating and lively talk entitled 'A Bit of a Pickle'. She recounted how she started her jam and pickle business, the sourcing of her ingredients and the marketing of the finished product. Her enthusiasm and passion for her craft impressed everyone present, as did the marvellous table of samples including home-made cakes and scones to accompany the preserves. Janice Baxter gave the vote of thanks.

COLL

BACKPACKS sent by pupils of Arinagour Primary School, on the Isle of Coll, to Palestinian refugees in Beirut in the Lebanon have arrived safely at their destination. The 13 backpacks, filled with school equipment, clothes, and even tennis balls, were shipped to Oban, where a MacQueen Bros vehicle, under the auspices of the MacQueen Bros Charita-

ble Trust, took the bags to the Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) in London. From London, the bags were taken in small batches by various volunteers on their journeys to the area. The transportation project was co-ordinated by Taynait's Joy MacWhannell and Graeme Pagan from Oban, both members of the Oban Concern for Palestine Group. Graeme said: 'What the wonderful pupils from Coll have done is a great way of bringing together people from different generations and different continents. That is where the future must lie. When the refugees in Beirut hear that people all over the world know about their plight, they take comfort from that.' Graeme added that although this project was not part of the Mary's Meals charity work, it was inspired by the Dalmally charity's work.

TIREE

A FLEDGLING sea taxi business has already had some strange delivery requests in its three-year history. But one of the more peculiar requests for Coastal Connection was a recent delivery of fruit and veg to the Isle of Tiree. After missing the ferry to Tiree on Thursday, March 22, haulage company Oban Express pulled out all the stops to ensure delivery to the island. 'We supply I&F MacLeod's Crossapol Stores and had to get their delivery to them that day,' said Lorraine Parrott of Oban Express. 'The next ferry wasn't until the Saturday, so we had to find another way.' The delivery was ferried by Coastal Connection's RIB in two hours. Speaking to *The Oban Times* as he collected the fruit and veg, Struan Smith of Coastal Connection said: 'This is the first time we've had a grocery run but we have had some strange requests in the past. We recently had to bring a mobile phone from Crinan to Oban.'

BARCALDINE

PRIMARY four and five pupils from Park School, Oban joined primary three and seven pupils from Barcaldine Primary for a visit to Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh. This trip enhanced their studies of the Polar Lands. Children explored the diversity of living things found in the Arctic and it helped them develop an understanding of

EASDALE

PUPILS at Easdale Primary School studied and recreated their favourite books as part of World Book Day. The youngsters also spent time learning about pricing and bar codes at the event at the start of the month. The school was transformed into a library for the day and every child told the school about their book.



LUING

LUING Primary School pupils are in the running for tickets to see the football at the 2012 Olympics. Head Teacher, Stephen Glen-Lee contacted the 2012 ticket share scheme and requested tickets for the island children to attend the games. Two tickets have been made available for pupils to represent their community at the event. Now youngsters who want a chance to win the tickets are preparing presentations to be judged by the staff and P7 children. The two lucky winners will head to the Olympics at Hampden Park in Glasgow on July. The pupils also won two awards at the Lorn Drama Festival last week. The children were a late entry but the festival organisers agreed to let them appear on Thursday evening. They performed 'The Dog Sitters' by Sarah Cowan, a comedy about a group of teenagers who agree to 'babysit' a dog, with disastrous consequences.

KILMELFORD

THE VILLAGE Hall in Kilmelford was packed recently with locals enjoying a curry and a quiz. The event, held to raise funds for the hall, was a success with quizmaster and organiser Antionette Mitchell at the helm. There were several rounds with varying levels of difficulty in questions and over £750 was raised on the night.

BALLACHULISH

BALLACHULISH and Kinlochleven primaries joined together last Monday for a day of eco-themed activities in Kinlochleven. The event, the first involving both school together, was supported by Education Scotland with a £500 grant towards transport and lunch costs. Workshops on the environment and sustainable living and production were followed by a salmon lunch courtesy of Marine Harvest and outdoor activities in the afternoon. Both schools have active eco-committees

Newsdesk
01631 568000
01397 703003

The Cockleshell Heroes

OPERATION FRANKTON

7 - 12 December, 1942

Lt J.W. MacKinnon, Royal Marines, Born, Oban 15 July, 1921 Executed by firing squad with three of his companions on the order of Reichsfuhrer Adolph Hitler in Paris on or about 23 March, 1943

JOHN Withers MacKinnon, known to the family as Jack, was born at 79 George Street, Oban on 15 July, 1921 the eldest son of John and Helen MacKinnon. After early years in Oban the family moved to the Glasgow area where John was later to be employed in a clerical position with a firm of coal merchants and from where he answered the Call to Arms early in World War 2 by enlisting in the ranks of the Royal Marines before earning a commission, passing out almost at the top of his course. Described as being of medium height with an athletic build, interested in sports and a particularly strong swimmer it was this standard of excellence that brought him to be a participant in what Admiral of the Fleet Earl Mountbatten of Burma, KG was to say "of the many brave and dashing deeds carried out by men of Combined Operations Command none was more courageous or imaginative than 'Operation Frankton'.



Lt J.W. MacKinnon, Royal Marines

Operation Frankton was designed by COHQ and the predecessors of today's Special Boat Section, Royal Marines with the aim of disrupting, so far as possible, enemy merchant shipping sailing to and from Bordeaux and in so doing evading the Allied blockade. Conventional methods of attack were dismissed as being likely to cause serious collateral damage and thus a seaborne Commando raid using six canoes each crewed by two Royal Marines would paddle up the River Gironde, a distance of about 75 miles, before attaching limpet mines to any shipping found in Bordeaux harbour. The canoes were to be carried by submarine as close as possible to the mouth of the Gironde before setting out on their own. After the raid, the Marines were to make their escape overland to Spain.

In overall charge of the operation was Major (later Lt. Col.) 'Blondie' Hasler D.S.O. and one other officer, in charge of No 1 Section was Lt John MacKinnon. All ranks were properly dressed in Royal Marines uniform with shoulder badges and rank insignia. Due to the particularly hazardous nature of the raid only two of the five canoes which left HM Submarine Tuna reached their objective, those commanded by Major Hasler and Cpl Laver, the remaining three coming to grief in various ways, that of Lt MacKinnon's by striking an

underwater obstruction opposite the Bec d' Ambes, at the confluence of the Garonne and the Dordogne. Lt MacKinnon and his crewman, Marine Conway, swam ashore and what happened thereafter is uncertain. What is certain, however, is that both men were eventually captured in the town of La Reole in the last days of December, 1942. Handed over to the German military authorities, Lt MacKinnon and Marine Conway were interrogated, no doubt in the most brutal fashion, until 23

March, 1943 when they and two comrades, Cpl. Laver and Marine Mills were executed by firing squad. A similar fate befell two others, Sgt Wallace and Marine Ewart who, following their capture on 8th December, were executed by firing squad during the early hours of 12 December, 1942. Throughout the interrogation ordeal none of these men betrayed their comrades nor divulged anything of their operation and met their deaths revealing nothing. It should be noted that although the word 'executed', is used here these were no executions, they were in fact cold blooded murders. The men, in full British military uniform, were shot in direct contravention of the Rules of War and the Geneva Convention on the express instruction of Adolph Hitler per his infamous 'Commando' Order issued on 18 October, 1942. As a result of this raid four enemy merchant ships were seriously damaged and, in the view of Winston Churchill, shortened the war by six months. Of the 10 Marines who disembarked from HM Submarine Tuna, two, Major Hasler and Marine Sparkes, returned home and were awarded the DSO and DSM respectively, six were shot by the Germans and two, Cpl Sheard and Marine Moffatt, were presumed drowned. Cpl Laver and Marine Mills were awarded posthumous Mentions in Dispatches. While many sons of Oban made the Ultimate Sacrifice in the service of their Country through the years none did so in circumstances more brutal or terrifying than John MacKinnon whose memory will live long in his native town. *Dileasgu Bas Faithful unto Death* By R.J Macbrayne

Council election round-up

Under starters' orders

CANDIDATES hoping to represent you for the next five years have officially started campaigning following confirmation of who is to stand for election on May 3.

To aid your decision on who gets your ballot, *The Oban Times* will ask each candidate in your prospective area to provide a brief statement explaining why they should be your next



councillor. Their answers and views will be presented in *The Oban Times* over the next few weeks in the run-up to the election date of Thursday, May 3.

Argyll and Bute

PROSPECTIVE councillors for Argyll and Bute Council were announced on Friday, with 75 individuals set to fight it out for the 36 seats available.

Of those, 17 are standing for the SNP, with 11 standing for the Conservatives, nine for Liberal Democrats and five for Labour. One Green Party candidate is standing, while 29 are standing as independent candidates.

Also standing is a representative of the Scottish Christian Party, while two candidates have put themselves forward with no description.

It is as yet unknown what will happen in ward five, Dunoon, following the death of SNP candidate, Alistair MacAlister, with a delay possible.

Argyll and Bute Ward One, South Kintyre

Three councillors to be elected. Anne Baird, SNP; Rory Colville, Scottish Liberal Democrats; Robert Graham, Independent; Deirdre Henderson, Independent; Donald Kelly, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; George Rahman, Independent; John Semple, SNP.

Ward Two, Kintyre and the Islands

Three councillors to be elected. Bob Chicken, Scottish Labour Party; Robin Currie, Scottish Liberal Democrats; Anne Horn, SNP; John McAlpine, Independent; Arthur McFarlane, Alastair John Redman, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; Ed Tyler, Scottish Green Party.

Ward Three, Mid Argyll

Three councillors to be elected. Charlotte Hanbury, Scottish

Conservative and Unionist; Alison Jean Hay, Scottish Liberal Democrats; Donnie MacMillan, Independent; Douglas Trevor Philand, Independent; Wendy Reynolds, Scottish Labour Party; Sandy Taylor, SNP.

Ward Four, Oban South and the Isles

Four councillors to be elected. Gordon Chalmers, Independent; Mary-Jean Devon, SNP; Fred Hall, SNP; Michael Hawke, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; Graham Kanes, SNP; Alistair MacDougall, Scottish Liberal Democrats; Neil MacIntyre, Independent; Sean MacIntyre, Independent; Roddy McCuish, SNP.

Ward Five, Oban North and Lorn

Four councillors to be elected. George Doyle, Independent; Louise Anne Glen-Lee, SNP; Iain Angus MacDonald, Independent; Duncan MacIntyre, Independent; Neil MacKay, Independent; Wilma McIntosh, Independent; Donald Melville, SNP; Gwyneth Neal, Independent; Elaine Robertson, Scottish Liberal Democrats; Roy Rutherford, Scottish Conservative and Unionist.

Highland Council

THE MAY 3 elections to Highland Council promise to be a hotly contested affair, with 170 candidates standing for 80 available seats in the 22 multi-member wards. The list of hopefuls includes 49 independent, 33 Scottish National Party, 22 Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party, 18 Scottish Liberal Democrat and 17 Scottish Labour Party candidates. The 'Scottish Christian Party, Proclaiming Christ's

Lordship' is fielding nine candidates, Scottish Greens four, UK Independence Party three, Labour and Co-operative Party, Scottish Liberal Democrat Focus Team and Scottish Anti-Cuts Coalition two each and the All Scotland Pensioners Party one. Eight candidates have no description.

Skye and Lochaber Ward 11 Eilean a' Cheò (Skye)

Four councillors to be elected: John Crews, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; Hamish Fraser, Independent; John R Gordon, Independent; Andrew Mackintosh, Scottish Labour Party; Drew Millar, Scottish Liberal Democrats; Ian Renwick, Scottish National Party (SNP); Moira Elizabeth Scobbie, Independent.

Ward 12 Caol and Mallaig

Three councillors to be elected: Bill Clark, Independent; Allan Henderson, Independent; Eddie Hunter, Independent; George Mitchell Kerr, Independent; Niall Alastair Rowanree, SNP; Elizabeth Shuna Sagers, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; Sally Semple; Susan Wallace Scottish Christian Party 'Proclaiming Christ's Lordship'.

Ward 22 Fort William and Ardnarnachan

Four councillors to be elected: Andrew Phillip Baxter, Independent; Davie Corrigan, Independent; Alexander Gillespie, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; Bren Gormley, SNP; William Keele MacDonald, SNP; Thomas MacLennan, Independent; Jamie Mackie, Scottish

Liberal Democrats; Brian Murphy, Scottish Labour Party

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council)

COMPETITION for 31 available seats on Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) is strong after 63 candidates put their names forward for the council elections on May 3. The list of hopefuls comprises 45 Independent, 14 Scottish National Party (SNP) and four Scottish Labour Party candidates, who are standing in nine multi-member wards stretching from Vatersay in the south to Ness on the northern tip of Lewis.

Ward 1 Barraigh, Bhatarsaigh, Eirisgeigh Agus Uibhist A Deas

Four candidates to be elected: David Blaney, Independent; Peter Carlin, Independent; Calum Macaulay, Independent; Angus Macdonald, Independent; Ronnie MacKinnon, Scottish Labour Party; Allan F Macleod, Independent; Gerry Macleod, SNP; Calum Macmillan, Independent; Donald Manford, SNP; Steele Donnie Independent; Eric Wallis, Independent.

Ward 2 Beinn Na Foghla Agus Uibhist A Tuath

Three candidates to be elected: Neil Macdonald Beaton, Independent; Archie Campbell, Scottish Labour Party; Michael Maclean, Independent; Uisdean Robertson, Independent; Martin Taylor, Independent; Andrew Walker, SNP.

Lorn musicians do well at Mid Argyll Music Festival

MUSICIANS, singers and choirs from north Lorn won a cache of silverware last week as they took part in the Mid Argyll Music Festival. The festival, now in its 33rd year, saw both young and old compete across more than 100 musical classes, over five days and at three venues. Benderloch's female choir Sequence stole the limelight at the competition last Friday evening, where they sang *Nightfall* and *She's Like the Swallow*. The women were

awarded The Ward Cup for their performance in the adult choir competition. Amelia Taggart, from neighbouring Lochnell Primary School, also lifted a trophy at the festival for her performance in the Scots folk song contest for primary four and five pupils. In the older age group, for primary six and seven pupils, Cara Blyth from Inveraray took first place. The 10-year-old impressed judges with her performance of *The Gypsy Rover*.



Amelia McTaggart of Lochnell Primary's singing career seems to be blooming following her victory in the Scots Folk Song category for primary 4-5. She took the Annabel Morrison Quach with her performance of *Mairi's Wedding*. 06_212music15

Skye and Lochalsh drama groups tackle Scottish community one-act festival

DRAMA groups from Skye and Lochalsh took the stage last weekend at the Highland Division final of the Scottish Community Drama Association's One-Act Festival 2012. Teams from Carboist, Portree High School, Kilmuir and Plockton were all bidding for a place in the national finals at the MacRobert Centre in Stirling on April 26-28.

With only two places available, competition was fierce over Friday and Saturday evening. In the end Kilmuir Dramatic Club just missed out, coming third with Harold Pinter's play, *Ashes to Ashes*.

Carboist Village Drama Group closed the festival with their comedy production of 'Custard and Disinfectant' by Jim Pinnock.

Carboist's cast of nine, the largest taking part and including actors aged between 17 to 'over 70', showed again their firm commitment to producing quality community drama, a point highlighted and admired by adjudicator Jill Colby in her final summing up.

The play, set in a rundown old people's home, revolved around the murder, or not, of a very nasty and unpleasant resident, Albert Macey, whom everyone wished to see dead.

The subsequent investigation into his death found it could have been by poison, overdose, stabbing and/or natural causes. With many comedy moments



Carboist Village Drama Group: took the stage at the Scottish Community Drama Association Highland finals with 'Custard and Disinfectant'. Clockwise from back left, Kaya Wilkinson, Bryan Foskett, David Hammond, Jan Lewis, Theresa Black, Tim Henderson, Jean Thomas, Mary MacKay and Fiona Johnston.

and a final plot twist which took everyone by surprise, the audience were well entertained by a talented group.

Although not winning through to the finals, the Carboist players won praise from Ms Colby for direction, staging, strong

performances and individual characterisation of the actors who complemented each other well.

Plockton Amateur Dramatic Society (North)'s rendition of 'Visiting Hours' by Jane Lockyer Willis also received high praise,

as did Plockton High School's performance of 'Seventeen' by Michael Gow.

Winners were Dingwall Players with 'Green Forms' by Alan Bennett and runners up were Thurso Players with 'I Am Hamlet' by Richard James.

what's on oban

Every Thursday > Ceilidh Night
Skipinnish Ceilidh House 9pm-11pm

Every Thursday > Club Night
Skipinnish Ceilidh House 11pm-2am

Every Saturday > Club Night with DJs
Skipinnish Ceilidh House 11pm-2am

Friday 6th April > 2 Can Dan
Markie Dans 9.30pm

Saturday 7th April > Oban Heart Surgery
Coasters 9.30pm til late

Saturday 7th April > Colin McEwan
Markie Dans & The Revolving Doors 9.30pm

Sunday 8th April > Stretch & Archie
Markie Dans 9.30pm

what's on lochaber

Friday 6th April > Nightclub with DJ Irish Al.
Fort William Skipinnish Ceilidh House Beat the Clock

Saturday 7th April > Nightclub 10pm till 2am
Fort William Skipinnish Ceilidh House Beat the Beats

Friday 13th April > DICK GAUGHAN
Sunart Centre, Strontian 8pm. www.sunartcentre.org

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Reg. charity SCO13211



Isla Hannigan and Lewis Bigham, above, were among those to wow audiences as part of Hope2Oban's fundraiser, at Oban High School last Thursday. 07_114talent1

Young artists star at ceilidh night

COMUNN Gàidhealach an Òbain's monthly ceilidh on Saturday got off to a rousing start with young Cameron Bennett on pipes in the Masonic Lodge.

The local singer was Morag MacNeil, a hard-working Committee member, with old friend Jimmy Cameron down from Fort William.

Murdo MacDonald was on a visit from Barra and he was roped in as an additional artist. Youngsters Finlay Bennett and Stewart McAllister pro-

vided some toe-tapping sets on fiddle and accordion with piper Cameron changing to the box for his set.

The programme was completed with the two Mòd Gold Medalists, Mary MacMillan and Steven MacIomhair who were a bit worried about following the young musicians but both delighted the audience with their singing of well-loved songs.

Peter Henderson from Taynuilt kept the evening running smoothly.



L-R Peter, Cameron, Morag, Finlay, Jimmy, Stewart, Mary and Steven. 15_114ceilidh01

Easter Sunday Lunch at Glencruitten Golf Clubhouse

Two Courses - £10.00 Three Courses - £12.50
Children under 12 - £7.50 Under 3s - Free

Home Made Soup or Home Made Pate and Oatcakes
Carvery featuring Scotch Sirloin of Beef, Argyll Venison and Pork, Yorkshire Pudding, Fresh Vegetables and Roast Potatoes. Home Made Desserts

Serving from 1pm until 4pm. All Welcome. Please call to book

Tel: 01631 562868

Soroba youngsters hunt for Easter eggs

A HUNT for eggs left by the Easter bunny was a day's work for the children at Soroba Young Family Group.

The youngsters spent the weekend making beautiful bonnets with their families to wear at their egg hunt in the community sensory garden on the Esplanade.

The children each received a chocolate egg and had a EGG-citing day out!



Learning Programme for 18-25 year olds in Oban and the surrounding area

Do you want to improve your prospects in the job market and beyond?

Perhaps you work full-time, part-time, or seasonally. Maybe you are not working at the moment. Do you dream of doing something different or being your own boss?

This opportunity could be right for you.

Starting in April, this fully-funded programme will be tailored to suit participants, with sessions possible in the daytime, evening or weekends.

The programme aims to widen your horizons, build on your strengths, develop your potential and boost your self-confidence, in ways that are both fun and relaxing, but also challenging!

To find out more about this free course, register your interest

/LearningProgramme1825Oban
Or text / call us on 07765426220

The programme will be delivered by tutors from the Social Enterprise Academy in partnership with the local "Bright Futures Group" youth work partnership.

"The Oban Times is read by over 40,000 people every week making it the largest selling newspaper in the Highlands & Islands"

(Source: Jigreg data as at 01/01/2011)

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COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Handel Messiah

Oban Bach Choir and Orchestra
Louise Childs, Soprano
Christopher Josey, Tenor
Simon Hannigan, Bass
Conductor Norman Nicholson

Sunday 8 April, 2012 at 7.30pm
St John's Cathedral, Oban

Seat with programme (obtainable at the door)
£8 (concessions £6.50)

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Licensed Bar

EASTER BRING & BUY SALE
with Easter Egg Hunt
Seil Island Hall
Monday, April 9th
11am - 2pm
Egg Hunt @ 12 noon
£1 per child
£5 per Table
Contact: Wendy
01852 300737

Charity Fashion Show
For all the family
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Argyllshire
Gathering Halls
Saturday 7th April 2012
Raising funds for our Heroes and Veterans
Doors Open at 7.30pm
Show to start at 8.00pm
Entrance £5 or a family £12.50
Organised by Oban Branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland
SC042395

Dunollie
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Sunday 8th April 2012
12.00 - 4pm
Adults £3, Children £1
Family Event
Egg & Spoon Races
Easter Egg Hunts
Daffodil Walks
Jewellery Workshops
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Advertise in the Community Notice Board for just £14.95 (plus VAT)

This section is available to charitable organisations with a charity number.

All AGM's will be placed on the Public Notice Page
Please ask for details

Inveraray & District
Accordion & Fiddle Club
Argyll Hotel, Inveraray
Wednesday 11th April
at 8.00pm
Guest Artists
From Edinburgh
Iain MacPhail & his SDB
Supporting players most welcome

A Fundraising SOUP LUNCH in aid of OBAN PIPE BAND will be held in Oban Pipe Band Hall Shore Street
Saturday 7th April 2012
From 12 noon - 2pm
Admission £3
ALL WELCOME

Comunn Gàidhealach an Òbain
COFFEE MORNING
Fund-raiser for Local Mod
Masonic Hall, Oban
Saturday April 7th
10 am - 12 noon
Admission £ 2



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WITH Easter on the horizon this time of year is all about the kids! It is holiday time, which means no school and plenty of play.

We can't rely on the weather in this part of the world but don't let grey skies leave you at home feeling morose, the sun is always shining with the amount of things on offer in Oban and Argyll to keep children entertained.

There is everything from ball pools to body zorbing – fun for big kids too – so there's no excuse for sitting at home watching SpongeBob SquarePants.

And you won't have to go as far as Greenland to have the young ones thinking all their Christmases have come at once – there are so many events on in Village Halls and at playgroups across the region – much more fun than finding a stapler in your stocking.

There are also toy lending libraries in the area, where for a small yearly fee your children can borrow all the toys they like.

If you're running low on things to keep the kids entertained there are thousands of ideas on activityvillage.co.uk – many perfect for when you're out and about in Argyll.

And if you want to head to a café or restaurant but you're worried they might not have facilities for babies why not check out

Oban's Baby and Toddler Friendly Guide which is available all around the area and will help put your mind at ease.

But whatever you choose to do, for the many, many 'Bonnie Babies' in Oban – put down the briefcase for the weekend, take some time for the whole family and go and have fun.

Your kids will thank you for taking the opportunity to spend valuable time with them and you could even get a family portrait while you're at it.

And after all the excitement the tired out young ones will be happily tucked into bed with a copy of Hairy Henry, surely the best reward of all – and it gives the adults time to relax.

Fun + Laughs + Exercise = Bodyzorb!
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 Time to party and have a Ball! Come and see what all the fuss is about!
 Argyll Fun Events
 01768 109788
 www.argyllfunvents.com
 Friday 6th & Saturday 7th April BB Hall, Bearsden 12 – 4pm
 Easter Sunday Yorkhill Charity Day at Atlantis Leisure 11am – 2pm
 Friday 13th April Nevis Centre Fort William 11am – 5pm
 Available for private hire, parties, school events etc. Look out for us at the Shows over the Summer. Face Painting & Glitter Tattoos

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- Coming to your Library in the summer – our popular Reading Challenge (watch this space!).

Argyll Bute COUNCIL

Smarties Nursery
 Our Smarties Nursery and Tweenies Creche – offering fun, educational activities including: Sand and water, construction, role play, arts and crafts, puzzles, songs and much much more!
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 Smarties Nursery - Registered for 20 spaces for 3 - 5yrs old. Sessions from Mon - Fri 9.30 - 12.00. We follow the Curriculum For Excellence within our planning throughout term time.
 Tweenies Monday, Wednesday & Friday 1pm - 2.30pm, £6 per session
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LAST CHANCE TO VOTE FOR YOUR TOP 8 FINALISTS!
ALL votes must be registered by 12 noon, Wednesday, April 11, 2012

How to Vote
 Readers can vote for their favourite baby by text or by post, using the coupon provided on this page. You can vote for as many babies as many times as you like until April 11, 2012 at 12 noon. Just make sure you quote the number that was stated on the child's photograph when voting.
BY TEXT (UK and Northern Ireland only):
 To vote by text, text the word **BABY** followed by a space then the three digit number that was stated on the top left hand side of the child's photograph to **88010**.
 Text messages cost £1 plus one message at standard network rate. Votes must be registered by April 11, 2012 at 12 noon. Votes registered after the closing date will not be counted but may still be charged.
BY COUPON:
 Complete the voting form provided on this page and send it to The Oban Times, Bonnie Babies VOTE, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB. Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted. Votes must be registered by April 11, 2012 at 12 noon.

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 I would like to vote for:
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 Or text the word **BABY** followed by a space then the baby's three digit number to 88010.
 Text messages cost £1 plus one message at standard network rate.
 *Baby number must be supplied.
 Votes must be registered by April 11, 2012 at 12 noon.
Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted and will not count as one vote.
 bonnie babies competition 2012

Terms & conditions: The winner must be willing to take part in publicity. Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted. Text messages cost £1 plus one message at standard network rate. Votes must be registered by April 11, 2012 at 12 noon. One coupon counts as one vote. The prize is as stated. No cash alternative. Full terms and conditions at www.obantimes.co.uk. Text votes from UK and Northern Ireland only. Text votes from overseas will not get through and will not be counted.

16,000 Easter eggs waiting to be found at Sea Life Sanctuary

A MASSIVE 16,000 chocolate Easter eggs are just waiting to be found this Sunday at the Scottish Sea Life Sanctuary in Balcaldine.

A fun day out perfectly suited for kids – big and small – there will also be a bouncy castle, face painting and chainsaw carving demonstrations.

Bring and Buy sale for new cinema

A BRING and buy sale was held at the Corran Halls last weekend in aid of the Oban Phoenix Cinema.

There was face painting, lots of homebaking and a variety of books, clothes and jewellery on offer.

The sale raised enough money to cover a month's worth of interest payments on the loan for the cinema.

Oban Pipe Band to hold soup lunch

OBAN Pipe Band will be hosting a soup lunch this Saturday as it steps up the fundraising drive for the competition season.

It will take place in the pipe band hall on Shore Street from noon to 2pm.

Town 'ambassador' to assist tourists

A 'TOWN ambassador' could be appointed by Bid4Oban not only to 'police' parking in the Oban town centre, but to direct and assist tourists.

However, any proposal to introduce the ambassador would not be possible for at least 18 months, the shortest period possible to decriminalise parking offences.

Atlantis Leisure host a weekend of family fun

FAMILY fun for all is on offer at Atlantis Leisure this weekend, when students from Argyll College host their Easter Fun Day in aid of Yorkhill Children's Foundation.

An Easter egg hunt will be the main attraction, with children tasked to search the Lost City for the tasty treasure.

Body zorbing will be on offer all day, while the swimming pool's inflatable will bring a touch of aquatic fun to the day.

Egg decorating skills will be judged with a prize for the best egg, while the grand prize raffle, pin the tail on the rabbit and beat the goalie events rounds off the day's competitive element.

Motorbike enthusiasts will no doubt be overjoyed to learn a Harley Davidson will be on display too, meaning there is genuinely something for everyone.

The event will be held between 11am-2pm this Sunday.

Inveraray Fiddle and Accordion Club enjoy full house

IT WAS 'full house' at the Argyll Hotel for the March meeting of the Inveraray and District Accordion and Fiddle Club.

Chairman, Niall Iain MacLean opened the evening by paying tribute to a much respected member of the club since its inception and one of the founders of Fyne Folk.

Duncan Crawford was laid to rest earlier in the day and the huge attendance at his funeral service was testament to this well loved, gentle man, family man, church man, sportsman and musician. He will be fondly remembered

and greatly missed by all at the club.

Fyne Folk, with Sally Hall and Jake MacKay on fiddle and Agnes Liddell on keyboard and joined by John Renton on accordion and Grant MacDougall on drums, went on to play a nice couple of pipe march sets.

Other supporting players were – James MacArthur on melodeon, Gerry Boxall on melodeon and drums; Alex MacKinnon and Craig MacFadyen on accordion; Charlie Saune on fiddle, Jake MacKay on 'moothie' and Donald MacLachlan

on drums.

Guest artists were the Balloch Accordion and Fiddle Club and they entertained for the whole of the second half, making up various bands.

Archie Gardiner acted as MC, and played accordion, and introduced the following players – Bill Butler, Wullie Scott, John Scott and Jim Robertson on accordion; John Strachan on keyboard; Jim O'Hare on 'moothie'; Neil MacGillivray and Jim Gunn on drums and all their selections were much enjoyed.

Craig MacFadyen and Agnes played a couple of sets to round off the evening, followed by a splendid stramash.

The Chairman gave resounding thanks to the Balloch Club and all supporting players for a great night's music.

Next week, on the final night of the season, the Club celebrates its 21st birthday with Iain MacPhail and his Scottish Dance Band taking the guest artiste spot – and one or two 'surprise guests' dropping in to join in the celebrations – not to be missed!



The winning producers with their silverware. 15_t14drama01

Campbeltown take top award at Lorn Drama Festival

A CAMPBELTOWN drama group won first place at the Lorn Drama Festival held at the Corran Halls, Oban last week.

Adjudicator, Nat Little, chose Accent Players as the winners of the Robin Banks Trophy for their performance of Some Mother's Son by Mark Rees.

Second place was snapped up by Duror and Kentallen Drama Group, who performed The Last Bread Pudding.

Mr Little said: 'I've had a ball, it has been an absolute treat to be here in Oban. The wonderful thing about it is one team and their supporters will love me.'

'You can't please everyone all the time but one out of 10 is not very good either.'

He chose Luing Primary School for his Adjudicator's Award and The Oban Times Salver went to Benderloch and North Connel Drama Club 'A' for third place.

LEISURE Desk
01631 568000
01397 703003

West Argyll

EASTER

Easter fun trail, Face painting, Make your own craft, Meet the magic forest bunny and the Funky Chicken! Choccy eggs

- Event held at Achnabreac car park, A816 out of Lochgilphead, follow the signs! Free parking
- Event Date: Easter Monday 9th April - Time: 12 until 2pm
- Warm clothing and outdoor footwear - No booking required. All activities free
- All children under 16yrs must be accompanied by an adult.
- Buggy/Wheelchair Friendly Trail

CARRADALE BUNNY HUNT

- Event held at The Network Centre Carradale
- Event Date: Easter Monday 9th April - Time: 11am to 3pm
- Warm clothing and outdoor footwear - No booking required. All activities free!
- All children under 16yrs must be accompanied by an adult.

Contact Forestry Commission on 01546 602 518 for more info and for other events in the area see local posters or check out our website at www.forestry.gov.uk/whatson

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18-28 MAY

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Email: Bookings@glendale-guesthouse.co.uk

Starters
Prawn Marie Rose with Brown Bread
Soup of the day with Crusty Bread
Duck & Orange Pate with Salad and Toast

Main Courses
Fish Pie with Greens and Carrots
Honey Roast Ham with Roast Potatoes and Fresh Vegetables
Poached Chicken with a Champagne Cream Sauce, Vegetables and Potatoes

Dessert
Peach Melba with Raspberry Sauce
Hot Apple Crumble and Custard
Chef's Home-Made Trifle

Three Course Lunch £15.00
Please call to book.
Free Easter Egg for Children

Now open for Evening Meals to Non-Residents

Cadbury Easter Egg Trails

The National Trust for Scotland has teamed up with Cadbury again to bring Easter Trails to 44 places across Scotland.

Follow the trail, collect the clues, solve the puzzle and win a Cadbury Egghead!

Each of the 44 trails is different – a great excuse to try your hand at more than one!

Crarae Garden
Inveraray
Fri 6 to Mon 9 Apr, 10am-4.15pm
Tel 0844 493 2210

Arduaine Garden
Oban
Fri 6 to Mon 9 Apr, 9.30am-4.30pm
Tel 0844 493 2216

the National Trust for Scotland
a place for Easter

Easter Egg Trail

For more information visit www.nts.org.uk/Easter

The National Trust for Scotland for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Fuel costs strike the food on our plate

STATISTICS released this week show that the price of food rose by 1.1 per cent during March, the largest recorded increase over the last 20 month period. The reason will come as no surprise to rural customers - escalating fuel costs affecting the transportation of foodstuffs.

While non-food items continue to fall in price as retailers are forced to discount heavily to counteract consumers simply cut-back on spending, food stocks need to be replenished on a regular basis therefore are more susceptible to transportation costs.

No where is this increase more sharply felt than on the Scottish islands where some of the highest fuel charges in Europe show no sign of reducing despite loudly acclaimed measures designed to halt the seemingly constant march upwards.

International oil prices have risen by 11 per cent since the turn of the year and this has been instrumental in forcing up transport and manufacturing costs, increasing food inflation.

Latest retail figures highlight that electrical goods, footwear and clothing experienced the biggest fall in price, driven by widespread promotions. This trend is expected to continue thanks to a sharp drop in the worldwide price of cotton, the growth in on-line shopping affecting the high street retail sector and the public closely monitoring falls in their disposable income.

The large supermarkets have been quick to use discounts and promotions on fuel pricing to lure shoppers back to their stores - but where does this leave the small, rural shopkeeper who is hardest hit by transport costs, while heavily dependant on local trade.

While a purchase of a non-food item is an option many of us will be able to resist, something as basic as more expensive body-fuel in the form of food leaves us all in the same basket.

GLASGOW LETTER

Comunn na h-oigridh

THIS year's Youth Concert organised by the Glasgow Skye Association and held in the Gaelic School was in fact the 20th anniversary of these concerts which were set up to give the increasing number of youngsters, in the city and surrounding area, taking part in Gaelic Medium education a platform to showcase their musical skills.

Bean an Taigh for the evening was Mairi MacArthur, Mod Gold Medalist and an enthusiast for the learning of the Gaelic language, and throughout the evening she ensured that the participants were not overawed by the occasion.

Sgoil Gaidhlig Glaschu pupils provided piping, fiddling, solo singing, and piano, accordion and clarsach selections while another major contribution to the entertainment came from Bunscoil Innis an Uil, Meadowburn Primary from Bishopbriggs, who as well as providing a choir, which sang with clarsach accompaniment, had Highland Dancers and clarsach players.

Ardsgoil Greenfaulds gave two drama performances, there was fiddle playing from a pupil of Bishopbriggs Academy and from the non educational system the Stirling Junior Gaelic Choir sang.

The youngsters from Stirling are looking to recruit some new members so that they have sufficient numbers to compete at the National Mod. It is difficult to believe that it is such a long time since the first of these concerts, which were the brainchild of committee member Mairi MacLeod who unfortunately was unable to be present on this occasion.

I am sure all her acquaintances in the city will be happy to join with me in sending best wishes to Mairi.

Na Cambeulaich

The Campbells of Greepe on the Isle of Skye need no introduction to Gaelic audiences worldwide.

Kenna, together with daughters Mary Ann and Wilma, brother Seumas and niece Maggie MacDonald have been entertaining at ceilidhs over the years while at the same time playing an important role as custodians of many traditional Gaelic songs.

Programmed as Na Cambeulaich they have performed over the past few years as a group and they have now produced

a CD, 'Fonn', which they will showcase at the following locations:- April 19th Douglas Studio, Edinburgh, April 20th Tolbooth, Stirling, April 21st Eastgate Theatre, Peebles, April 26th Empire Theatre, Eden Court, Inverness, April 27th Sgoil Gaidhlig Glaschu, April 28th Paisley Arts Centre, April 29th Woodend Barn, Banchory, May 4th Sabhal Mor Ostaig, Sleat, Isle of Skye and May 5th An Lanntair, Stornoway. An accompanying book is being produced by Acari Books and later on it is hoped to produce a CD of traditional material of previous generations.

Erskine Charity Ceilidh

For many years now the Clydebank and District Highlander's Association have organised as the highlight of their syllabus, a concert to raise funds for Erskine Hospital and this year's event will take place on Friday April 20th.

I shall provide further details at a later date.

Congratulations

The Central Hotel in Glasgow, very familiar for many years as the Festival Club for Celtic Connections, has in the past few years been renovated and renamed the Grand Central Hotel.

I can now confirm that its new name is very appropriate since it was the excellent venue for the marriage of my son, Fraser, and Jennifer Train from Kilmarnock. Jennifer spent a short time supply teaching in Treet during session 2009-10 and continued this island connection with Trail West providing the music for the wedding dance.

Many congratulations to Fraser and Jennifer.

Dates for Diary

Thursday April 5 - Live at the Star, St Andrew's in the Square, 8pm-Katrina Gilmore and Jamie Roberts.

Thursday April 12 - Live at the Star, No Meeting.

Saturday April 14 - Paisley and District Highlander's Association Ceilidh Dance, Elderslie Village Hall, 7.30pm-Archie Duncan's Band

Pub Scene

Robert Robertson and his band will play in the Park Bar on Friday evening. Monach Isles on Saturday and Willie Cameron/Martin Pottinger on Sunday while in the Islay Inn it will be Ragaels on Friday and Parting Glass on Saturday.

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 an email, 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.

PRESS POLICY

WE AT The Oban Times do our utmost to make sure that all our reports are fair, accurate and balanced, but we accept that, on occasion, mistakes can occur in the hectic process of producing the biggest local newspaper in the West Highlands.

It is the policy of The Oban Times Group to correct any errors in print. If you find an error of fact on our pages please write to The Editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB giving your day-time telephone number where possible. This statement of policy will appear on this page every week along with any corrections or clarifications.

The Oban Times adheres to the Press Complaints' Commission's Code of Conduct. The views expressed in The Oban Times are not necessarily those of this newspaper.



Lochaber's Lumber Jills working in Fuinary Forest - 1960's

Harvesting Lochaber's forests in days gone by were far from a male preserve, as this week's photograph shows. This group of girls were employed by the Forestry Commission in Fuinary Forest, Morvern, in the late 1960s. Known locally as the 'Lumber Jills' they are, left to right: Margaret Smith, Marlene Mackinnon, Elsie King, Mima Cameron, Peggy Maclean, Sandra Maclean and Catherine Cameron. Photo courtesy of Iain Thornber. Please send prints to The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB, or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing their prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

Letters to the editor

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Drug dealing in housing

Sir, In The Oban Times article on anti-social behaviour and drug dealing you attribute a comment to me that "evicting anti social tenants is not difficult".

Something must have been lost in translation.

My position is that eviction of drug dealers and those perpetrating serious anti social behaviour is entirely possible but only if the commitment, the legwork and the evidential case is built. That can be hard work, and is often not easy, and will involve trust and close liaison between landlords, communities and the Police.

Our experience as a landlord in courts throughout Argyll and Bute since 2007 has been that if you do the above and get the detailed evidential case into court then you will have a very good chance of success. Landlords, communities and Police have to be at the forefront of this issue because in all honesty no one else can. However, ACHA believes that if the current legislation with respect to homelessness gives any obligation on a local authority to have to prioritise rehousing anyone evicted after being found guilty of selling drugs from their current home, or causing systemic hell to their neighbours, then that should be changed.

The Scottish Government's welcome consultation, "Affordable Rented Housing: Creating flexibility for landlords and better outcomes for communities", which closes on the 30th April gives an ideal opportunity for representation on this issue.

I would encourage all parties with an interest in this area to make such representation. I would reiterate we can only make our communities safer if we work together to that objective; however, it would be made much easier if housing law could be on our side.

Alastair MacGregor
Chief Executive
Argyll Community
Housing Association

Wrong target for reply to letter

Sir, I would like to apologise to your correspondent Tony Dalton, who quite rightly took me to task last week (March 29) on your letters page for accusing him of comparing windfarm developers to tobacco company executives.

In fact that was a comparison made by Alan Thompson of Strontian in his letter in the same edition (March 1), and it should have been to Mr. Thompson that my remarks were addressed. Mr. Dalton's letter was in fact quite a reasonable look at the financial implications of renewable energy, although I might not agree with all his figures and premises.

Steal Gorge path

Sir, Re- Iain Thornber's letter (Letters, March 22). We are pleased to announce that thousands of people voted to support the John

Muir Trust project to repair the path to the Steal Gorge and we have won the competition run by the European Outdoor Conservation Association.

The £25,000 prize is a very welcome addition to our footpath maintenance funds. It's thanks to the passion and support of people who love Scotland's landscapes that fantastic paths, such as that at Steal Gorge, are able to be maintained so that people from all walks of life can enjoy the outdoors and benefit from the experience of being in wild places.

If Mr Thornber had contacted the Trust we would have been happy to advise him that our approach to footpath repair and maintenance is one of minimal intervention to enable people to gain responsible access with minimal damage to the natural environment.

Stuart Brooks, chief executive,
John Muir Trust

Natural gas charges driving up electricity prices

Sir, Tony Dalton (Letters, March 29) is rightly concerned about the impact of high electricity costs on households in fuel poverty. However, to assume that subsidies for renewable energy are a significant factor in this is mistaken.

In recent years, the large increases in UK electricity bills have been almost entirely due to volatile prices for natural gas, on which UK electricity production has become increasingly dependent over the last 20 years. The UK is now importing substantial quantities of gas as the declining North Sea output can no longer meet our needs. By becoming ever-more reliant on imported gas, we incur long-term economic risks in both price stability and trade imbalance.

DECC figures for 2010/11 show that the effect of the Renewables Obligation (the main subsidy mechanism for wind power and other renewables) was around three per cent on domestic electricity bills - less than £16 per year for the average household - split roughly 50-50 between wind power and all other renewables. Renewable energy is thus not having a significant effect on fuel poverty.

Wind power alone will not solve all our energy problems, but it has an important role to play. In the interests of creating long term price stability and UK energy independence, and thus alleviating fuel poverty, wind power and other renewables are not part of the problem, they are part of the solution.

McCaigs Tower

Plans to hold a large bonfire inside Oban's main tourist attraction are barely credible. The month of June is just the right time to destroy the gardens inside the tower, and leave the place a charred, burnt out shell, for visitors from all over the world to remember Oban by.

Who pays to restore the gardens, and clean all the stonework ruined by one big bonfire?

When you consider the cost of the original landscaping, not to mention the continuing maintenance by the gardeners, it beggars belief.

Nuclear renewables

I refer to the letters from Jill Galbraith and Nick Bowles (Oban Times, March 22) both of which I find unfaithful.

As part of her polemic against nuclear power Ms Galbraith states that the Japanese tsunami caused the meltdown of the nuclear plant at Fukushima 'resulting in many immediate deaths, plus terrible lingering deaths of countless more people from radiation sickness'. The mendacity of that statement is breath-taking but typical of the anti-nuclear scaremongering.

Ms Galbraith goes on to advise us that wind turbines pose no threat to creatures and pose no noise problems if properly fitted. Hmm! not much more accurate than the previous claims. Why do I get the distinct impression that this particular farmer is one of those who has already or hopes to earn a fortune from wind turbines on her land?

The contribution from Nick Bowles is, as pointed out by Tony Dalton on March 29, a very confused scribbling. He attributes a comment about the dishonesty of the tobacco executives to Tony Dalton, when it was in fact mine, then he goes on to credit me, falsely, with making various claims relating to the huge cost of wind energy. The claims to which he refers were actually those of Tony Dalton, though he unashamedly distorts these as well as the true contents of an Ofgem report.

Tony Dalton's letter was a very well presented, informed and accurate treatise on the absurdly expensive cost of wind energy. Mr Bowles, on the other hand seems to equate being anti-windfarm with being part of some sort of international Machiavellian conspiracy to deny climate change. What motive anyone could have for being part of such a plot he doesn't say.

Most wind energy supporters come from one of three camps; politicians, whose motives are purely political expediency, and whose views will change with the prevailing wind, environmentalists, who have been deluded by the spurious claims of those whose motive is financial gain and of course the landowners and developers themselves.

I'm not sure which of these groups Mr Bowles is part of but I'll wager he's not just an interested observer.

The jury is still out on the matter of anthropogenic climate change, but whether it is eventually proven or not, there is one certainty; wind energy will make absolutely no difference. That is the view of the increasing majority of independent scientists as opposed to the industry stooges.

Oban Airport

The use of money from parking meters in Oban to prop up the airport should be no surprise. Almost everyone I know regards the airport as a white elephant, and not the first use of considerable public funds spent without an prior consultation with those who provide the funds.

I hope that prospective candidates for the Council elections will let us know their position to help us decide how to vote. A better and more appropriate use of the parking meter income would be to fill-in the pot holes we now have to contend with.

Name and address supplied

Fossil fuels are not the answer

Sir, Whilst a single letter to The Oban Times advocating wind energy seems guaranteed to bring forth two or three NIMBY responses, we run helter skelter towards an uncertain future.

Older generations, especially those who have retired, will enjoy, at least for a while, the relatively stable climate we've had for the last few hundred years and this lulls them into a false sense of security. But their children and grandchildren will undoubtedly suffer deteriorating conditions that, eventually, might even make the west coast of Scotland less habitable. Indeed, the last few years have experienced increasingly unpredictable weather as the upper atmosphere Jet Stream - controlling as it does the tracks of surface weather systems - flips north and south for reasons that are not entirely clear.

But these are only minor consequences of having changed atmospheric chemistry by burning fossil fuels. Much worse is likely to come. Take, for example, the Atlantic Conveyor - the Gulf Stream - that currently keeps the climate of west-coast Scotland equable. Measurements show it to be weakening and this is attributed to the alarmingly demonstrable increase in the summer melt of Arctic sea-ice as the globe warms. Should the Conveyor shut down, life on the west coast will be very expensive energy-wise and very different.

At 56 degrees of latitude, Oban's average January air temperature is +5 deg C. In St John's, on the eastern seaboard of North America, 10 degrees further south and not enjoying the benefits of a warm ocean current, the equivalent is -5 deg C. Like the rest of us, the anti-wind-turbine campaigners get up each morning and expect to switch on the lights, boil the kettle, cook breakfast and run a hot shower. Each activity triggers the stoking of a boiler at a power station, the majority of which burn fossil fuels. To mitigate the impact, we need to increase reliance on nuclear and renewable energy sources and wind is a technology that can be exploited here and now. Yes, we don't need to spoil the best landscapes by the casual siting of turbines, but let's not react negatively and irrationally to each and every proposal.

Professor Ian Reid, Oban

Name and address supplied

Alan Cochrane

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH'S
SCOTTISH EDITOR



In the wars

Thirty years on, the Falklands War still resonates with those who fought and reported on it alike

Nobody who hasn't done it can possibly understand combat. And nobody who hasn't done it can possibly understand the hardship our servicemen put themselves through in order to be in a position to engage in that combat.

Although the terrible time 'our boys' are having in Afghanistan, and that they recently experienced in Iraq, are both still uppermost in the public's mind, the conflict that made the greatest impression on me was the Falklands War of 1982.

Not that I came within 8,000 miles of it, of course. I did, however, cover aspects of it - but only from the warmth and safety of the press gallery of the House of Commons and, on a couple of occasions, from the once-famous, now closed, Annie's Bar.

So, if you want to know what really happened in those far-off islands 30 years ago, read The Yompers by Ian Gardiner. Ian was then a company commander in 45 Commando, based in Arbroath, when his hoped-for Easter leave was cancelled as a result of the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands. Whilst he was heading for war, in my parallel universe at Westminster nothing much was happening.

Margaret Thatcher had established her War Cabinet as a result of the invasion but that, of necessity, was meeting in secret. It wasn't just that we didn't know what was going on, most Britons didn't even know where the Falklands were or with whom we were at war. This led, on one occasion, to a colleague from the Daily Mirror suggesting that we 'nuke' Rio de Janeiro - prompting an icy rejoinder from a Foreign Office mandarin that we had no quarrel with Brazil!

Down in Annie's Bar, in the bowels of the Palace of Westminster, all was serene until one Tuesday evening - 4 May, 1982 to be precise.

That night, the Commons was largely deserted when I came across the new Foreign Secretary Francis Pym in the Members' Lobby. Normally extremely polite, Pym waved me away and headed off towards the ministerial offices. I thought nothing of it and meandered down to Annie's - then the only bar in the building where lobby correspondents and MPs had equal rights - which was almost empty.

Half an hour later the massive figure of Spencer Le Marchant, Tory MP for High Peak and Pym's PPS, rose into view: 'The Sheffield's been sunk,' he exclaimed to the handful of incredulous hacks and MPs. I phoned my news desk on the old Daily Express, where the same tale had begun to filter through from the Ministry of Defence.

In fact the destroyer had been holed by an Exocet missile and eventually went to the bottom six days later. However, that night a group of British journalists and politicians were made to realise that what was happening in the Falklands really was war. Late that same night John Nott, the much-maligned Defence Secretary, made a statement to a hushed Commons about the Sheffield's loss.

Although each man was at least partly to blame for encouraging the Argentine aggression, Nott kept his job, whilst Peter Carrington resigned as Foreign Secretary.

What I now find fascinating is that whilst the Belgrano and the Sheffield were being destroyed, Ian Gardiner and his Royal Marines were still on Ascension Island, the mid-Atlantic stopping off point for the British Task Force and reading newspaper accounts of the conflict.

It wasn't until May 21 that he and his marines in X-Ray Company landed in San Carlos Bay and prepared to begin their now famous and ultimately successful 'yomp' to Stanley, the islands' capital, via a memorable victory in capturing the Two Sisters mountain.

I had colleagues - war correspondents - who took part, for at least part of the way, in that great trek but I find that it is Gardiner's description of what happened that most vividly recalls the events that took place exactly 30 years ago this month. And I also reckon that it is his summing-up of Britain's success then that best encompasses why our armed services are held in such high esteem.

He says: 'It is said that fortune favours the bold and the brave. It favours neither. Fortune favours the professional.' I'm bound to conclude that you can't really argue with that.

Times Diary



WITH the recent panic buying at the petrol pumps we're not surprised that some enterprising pub owners around Oban decided to get in on the act last weekend.

We can see their point, who needs petrol when you've got beer!

A COMIC, broadcaster and journalist who visited Oban recently was less than impressed to see a review he had written, for another shop, in the window of the Oban branch of The Pancake Place.

Tam Cowan, who writes weekly restaurant reviews for The Daily Record, had reviewed another branch of The Pancake Place and wasn't happy in the slightest when he saw his work displayed in the Oban restaurant.

He told The Oban Times he had come to the town 'to put a brick through the window of The Pancake Place'.

We think he was joking!

IT IS sometimes hard to imagine our hardworking MPs as anything other than dedicated politicians, we're sure!

But a website recently discovered by reporters at The Oban Times (on their lunch break of course) shows a 'sexier' side to those in the House of Commons.

In what has been termed as a 'Parliamentary beauty contest', www.sexymp.co.uk, asks members of the public to rate our politicians.

Alan Reid, MP for Argyll and Bute, is not faring so well on the site, a lowly 635 out of 648. Doing a bit better is Charles Kennedy, MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber, who is at 236. While Angus MacNeil, representing Na h-Eileanan an Iar, can claim to be the best looking MP in the West. His current ranking, 215.

Oban Airport

The use of money from parking meters in Oban to prop up the airport should be no surprise. Almost everyone I know regards the airport as a white elephant, and not the first use of considerable public funds spent without an prior consultation with those who provide the funds.

I hope that prospective candidates for the Council elections will let us know their position to help us decide how to vote. A better and more appropriate use of the parking meter income would be to fill-in the pot holes we now have to contend with.

Name and address supplied

YOU'VE heard of plants in greenhouses, but what about redhouses - or a red phonebox to be more precise. The village of Dalnally is embracing the Easter holidays by putting on a daffodil display inside their phonebox, which was sold to the community for £1. Martyr Gibson, who looks after the phonebox, shared his new horticultural exploits with The Diary.



new plot new home

FOR many, embarking on the first bold steps towards the base rung of the property ladder, building ones own home from scratch is, at least on paper, a tempting prospect.

Those who have already successfully achieved their self-build ambitions will confirm that there is a fine line between completion of a dream - or the arrival of a costly nightmare - but while it may be easy to measure the plus or minus of financial implications, how do you put a figure on the warm glow of self-satisfaction if your dream home becomes reality.

As well as embarking on a steep learning curve into the complex world of budgeting, legal jargon and the planning process, determined self-builders may find that they learn as much about themselves and their own character as they do about construction.

Along with the land, bricks and mortar, you will need large volumes of dedication, commitment and patience throughout the entire project. It will take longer than you thought. It will probably extend both deadlines and budgets so make a list in large lettering of the top three reasons of why you are constructing your own home - read it regularly, and put it in a prominent position that keeps you focused, especially when the going gets tough.

Remember that undertaking this self-build is to achieve the home of your dreams.

You will need to inspire others to have the level of enthusiasm for your project as you have. Having the right attitude will fundamentally affect your self-build plan in a positive way.

There are many ways in which you will locate your ideal plot of land. Estate

agents, advertisements in newspapers and word of mouth are probably the most common.

Land may also become available via auctions or on-line auction sites. These may appear as a cheap option. And they can be. But they come with their own complications.

Plots being auctioned are often the result of bankruptcy or other problems that make a quick sale desirable for the seller. They are traded on a 'sold as seen' basis. It is up to the bidder to ensure that the details being presented are accurate, suitable to the intended purpose and not without 'hidden' dangers.

If possible, visit any site for sale via an auction and make your own assessment - or better still pay an expert to survey the property or plot on your behalf. It may cost a little, but could save you a lot.

Whatever your chosen route to a piece of land, there are four basic areas to consider before embarking on a plot purchase - ground conditions, planning permission, utilities and services, and any legal considerations.

GROUND CONDITIONS

Ground conditions are important as it forms the foundations of your dream home. It may be necessary to employ a specialist to ensure that the plot of land is ideally suited for your project. Simple things like a high water table, while not insurmountable, need to be identified, as do more serious issues with potential flooding, industrial or agricultural pollution and, if the site has been subject to infill, what was it in-filled with? Building land may have been built on previously and what lies beneath the surface in terms of drains, pipe work, foundations, etc

may have cost implications that are not immediately obvious.

Something as simple as the incline of the proposed plot should also be noted as this may add extensively to the cost of groundwork prior to the first stages of construction.

When viewing a plot, bear in mind that the overall dimensions should not only be capable of containing the house but that planning authorities may also want evidence of sufficient space for parking or garages, turning vehicles, space for safe central heating fuel storage, if applicable, and other amenities in relation to the size of said home.

Don't take the sellers word as to the size of the plot.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the dimensions of the land for sale is as stated.

It would also be advisable at this stage to come back from the site and, if possible, view it from a distance - get the 'bigger picture'. This will give you a better feel for the surroundings or the neighbourhood.

PLANNING

Planning is often the biggest single obstacle that a self-builder has to negotiate.

Don't be put off by the multitude of nightmare scenarios that others will willingly relate to you. Learn from their errors and experiences, do the homework, and seek help from experts who do these often complex communications with local authorities on a daily basis.

Planning restrictions and interpretations may differ slightly from area to area so gain expert local knowledge whenever possible.

Plots with outline planning permission already granted will cost in the region of 500% more than land without. Obtaining planning from scratch may be time consuming and is not without its pitfalls, but it can also be rewarding if approached correctly.

There are also areas that come under the category of 'designated' - these are subject to complex planning and are probably best avoided by the inexperienced. Designated areas include Green Belts, which are not as the term suggests open green field sites, they will most likely have strict restrictions on sizes and styles of house building. National Parks, which are exactly what the name suggests, have few permitted developments and have rules regarding not only style of building but

also materials used. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) or National Scientific Areas (NSAs) which have rules relating to traditional architecture, plus Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), which are aimed specifically to protect wildlife and/or geological features.

UTILITIES AND SERVICES

All plots will require utilities and services at some stage.

Plots adjacent to other houses or existing buildings are often easier to get through the planning maze simply because water and power supplies may already be on-hand.

Rural and isolated locations are a very different proposal, with the cost of installing utilities becoming a major cost factor in negotiating the original purchase price of the land.

Considerable consideration should be given to the proximity of schools, shops and public transport. These may not be priorities in your dream location - but should you opt to move in the future, they may affect the resale value of your house - what you view as a positive asset could be a potential buyers idea of a real turn-off.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before agreeing to buy building land ask your solicitor to a pre-purchase check for any title issues, the legality of the boundaries, rights of access through, or indeed, on and off the site - there is little point in buying a site that you cannot then gain entry to.

This is particularly relevant if the plot is in a rural or remote location where access is via neighbouring land. Old or verbal agreements between previous landowners/friends/ neighbours mean nothing and must not be regarded as automatically transferable.

This is also true of shared access which can sometimes be a very grey area shrouded amid myth, lies and well-intentioned assumptions - an area that needs to be clearly defined in writing and map before money changes hands.

Shared access normally also means shared liability in relation to maintenance costs and shared liability for incidents or accidents that happen on that piece of shared land - ie trees falling onto neighbours' property, broken or damaged fences, injury to residents or visitors as a result of neglect to said shared access.

PLOTS FOR SALE

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WHEN: Wed 25th and Thurs 26th April 2012 from 10am
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Lorn Show fundraiser ceilidh

THOUSANDS of extra pounds are needed in order to hold the Lorn Show this year. The committee have been forced to find a new location to hold the show after the previous site at Dunstaffnage is being developed as part of a new science park. Christine Smith, Treasurer of Lorn Agricultural Society, said: "We have been forced to relocate to a new site near Tralee, Benderloch and there is lots of work to be done to make the new field fit for purpose. "It will be a really good site for the show when it is ready but we need an extra £4000 on top of what we would normally raise for the show

The Robert Nairn Ceilidh Band kicked off the first fundraiser. 16_114ceilidh01

The first fundraiser, a family ceilidh held in North Connel Hall, was well attended by all ages the Robert Nairn Ceilidh Band kept everyone entertained. The committee hoped to make £2000 towards the cost of the show that night and will be holding other fundraisers soon.

Ewes 'n lambs sell to £160

DINGWALL and Highland Marts sold 2,418 sheep of all classes at Dingwall last Wednesday when store hogs and feeding ewes continued to sell at recent keen rates, with heavy ewes dearer. Lambs averaged £65.59 and sold to £104 for Cheviots from 4 Culnaha, Nigg. Ewes and gimmers averaged £83.15 and sold to £150 for Texel crosses from Torgorm, Conon Bridge. Ewes with lambs at foot sold to £160 for a Mule ewe with twin Texel cross lambs from Dell Farm, Whitebridge. In-lamb ewes and gimmers sold to £83 for Cheviots from Drumbeie, Drumradrocht.

Blackface: Viewbay, £82; JacobX: Balfateath Estates, Cromdale, £80; Swaledale: Cawdor Estate, Nairn, £73. Ewes: SuffolkX: Torgorm, £140; Texel: Kilcoy, Killearn, £136; Cheviot: Kinnahard Farm, Contin, £132; TexelX: Torgorm, £132; Charmoise: Kinnahard Farm, £126; Cross: Redhill, Allanfean, £120; Suffolk: Ankerville, Nigg, £118; Beltex: Braes of Coulmore, North Kessock, £105; Mule: Torgorm, £101;

PUBLIC NOTICES

CHARLES AND BARBARA TYRE TRUST SCHEME 1979

In implementation of the objects of the above Trust, the Governing Body may, in each financial year, award grants to assist applicants -

- to obtain a qualification additional to a qualification of a University or other institute of higher education already obtained.
- to train in a trade or profession other than in which they are at present trained.
- to undertake a course provided by the Open University for which they have registered.
- to undertake training in leadership and initiative.
- to benefit from recreational holidays in cases of physical or mental disability.

In accordance with the wishes of the donors, the Governing Body shall:-

- satisfy themselves that the applicant is a Protestant, has completed school education, but is not, at the time of award, more than 25 years of age, and is ordinarily resident within the area of the former County of Argyll.
- Associate the names of Charles and Barbara Tyre with each award made under the scheme.

Further details and an application form may be obtained online at www.charlesandbarbaratyretrust.org.uk. Completed applications must be received no later than 31 May 2012, and applications received after the closing date will not normally be considered except in exceptional circumstances. Please note application forms will be accepted before examination results are received. Clerk to the Governors, Charles and Barbara Tyre Trust, Loch Awe House, Barmore Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TW
Tel: 01880 820 277 Fax: 01880 820 722

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS OFFICE, FULTON HOUSE, GORDON SQUARE, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6XY; online at www.highland.gov.uk and, where given, the alternative location(s).

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description	Alternative locations where application may be inspected and time period for comments
12/00758/FUL	Site 280M South East of Hillview Banowie Fort William	Erection of house and garage	(14 days)
12/00781/FUL	Carness Cottage Onich	Conversion of vacant steading to holiday letting unit (retrospective - amended design to 09/00319/FULLO)	(14 days)
12/00969/FUL	The Old Kinlochteacus Schoolhouse Morvem PABO SXE	Form generator and oil tank enclosure to rear of existing bathhouse	(14 days)
12/00995/PIP	Land 60M North of Inshgarth Invergarry	Erection of house	(14 days)
12/01006/PIP	Site 30M West of Shilo Morar Mallaig	Erection of house (renewal of 08/00497/OUTLO)	Mallaig Service Point (14 days)
12/01121/FUL	18 Lochell Road Inverloch Fort William PH33 6NT	Erect conservatory	(14 days)

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

STRONABA COMMON GRAZING, SPEAN BRIDGE

A meeting will be held on April 20, 2012 at 7pm within No 5 Stronaba for the purpose of selecting a new Common Grazings Committee. Andrew MacDonald Grazings Clerk.

PROPOSED LET OF CROFTS

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited are applying to the Crofters Commission for consent to let the tenancy of the croft number 3 at Langamull Woodland, Dervaig, Mull to Simon Paul Proud of Cill Bheag, Dervaig, Isle of Mull, PA75 6QN.

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited are applying to the Crofters Commission for consent to let the tenancy of the croft number 4 at Langamull Woodland, Dervaig, Mull to Mr Steve Maker of 36 Fairfax Crescent, Halifax, W. Yorks, HX3 9SQ.

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited are applying to the Crofters Commission for consent to let the tenancy of the croft number 5 at Langamull Woodland, Dervaig, Mull to Mr Iain Alexander Thomson of 1 Achleck, Torilisk, Isle of Mull, PH74 6NH.

If you are a crofter, shareholder or owner of a croft in the township, or if the Commission consider that you have a direct interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofters Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (e-mail info@crofterscommission.org.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. Frivolous, vexatious or unreasonable comments cannot be accepted.

To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

PLANNING

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AN, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location Of Plans
11/01915/PP	Construction of 1 No. 750 kilowatt wind turbine (77 metres to blade tip), crane handstanding, control building, temporary construction compound and formation of vehicular access	Gallanach Isle Of Coll Argyll And Bute PA78 6TE	Sub Post Office Isle of Coll
12/00271/PP	Amendment to hydro scheme approved under planning application reference 09/00527/DET incorporating an additional borrow pit and re-alignment of pipeline route.	Blarghour Farm East Lochawassie Dalriada Argyll And Bute PA33 1BW	Sub Post Office Dalriada
12/00533/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	(Plot 1) Land North West Of Knockalla Craignure Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA65 6BA	Sub Post Office Craignure
12/00534/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	(Plot 3) Land North West Of Knockalla Craignure Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA65 6BA	Sub Post Office Craignure
12/00576/PP	Erection of three 5 kilowatt wind turbines (10 metres high to hub height).	Land South West Of Community Centre Erraid Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA66 6BN	Sub Post Office Fionnphort
12/00599/PP	Use of land as community allotments including formation of access, car park, provision of passageways on site access, erection of storage building, polytunnels and ancillary structures.	Community Allotments Land North East Of Castle Croft Tobermory Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA75 6QA	Tobermory Area Office
12/00620/PP	Alterations to dwellinghouse and car port to form two balconies	Swiss Cottage Benvenullin Road Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 5EF	Oban Area Office

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location Of Plans
12/00662/CONAC	Demolition of existing dwellinghouse	18 Argyll Terrace Tobermory Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA75 6PB	Tobermory Area Office
12/00681/PP	Alterations and installation of replacement windows	22 Tobermory Isle Of Luing Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4UE	Sub Post Office Cullipool

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 67 Chalmers Street Ardrishaig PA30 8DX, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location Of Plans
12/00562/LIB	Replacement of existing roof covering from highland slate to natural spanish slate.	33 School Street Port Ellen Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA42 7DP	Sub Post Office Port Ellen
12/00653/LIB	Replacement roof covering, guttering and downpipes	Warehouse 5 And 6 Port Ellen Distillery Port Ellen Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA42 7AJ	Sub Post Office Port Ellen

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at Dalriada House, Lochnell Street, Lochgilphead, PA31 8ST, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location Of Plans
12/00678/PP	Formation of multi use/short stay transit marina, plus diesel berth, managers office, provision for small day boats/nbs and limited use for over wintering (amended scheme relative to planning permission 08/01049/DET)	Oban Bay Marine Ltd Railway Pier Oban Argyll And Bute	Oban Area Office

Argyll and Bute Council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: <https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk>. The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST. A weekly list of applications can be viewed at the above address and at all Council Libraries. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered.

ARGYLL AND BUTE CHILDREN'S PANEL

Scotland's unique children's hearings system relies on the involvement of around 2,500 people from all walks of life, who give their time and commitment voluntarily to train and serve as children's panel members. Children are referred to the hearings system because they are considered to be at risk or have offended. At each hearing, panel members work with the child, parent or carers and professionals to make decisions which are in the best interests of the child. Argyll and Bute Children's Panel are looking to recruit new panel members to sit on hearings held in Oban. For further information and recruitment pack please contact Fiona McCallum, Depute Clerk, Argyll and Bute Children's Panel, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT Tel: 01546 604392. Closing Date for Applications Friday 11 May 2012

OBAN, LORN & THE ISLES AREA COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the Oban, Lorn & the Isles Area Committee will be held in The McCaig Suite, Corran Halls, Oban, on Wednesday 11th April 2012 at 10.30am. Members of the public are welcome to attend. Public question time will take place during the meeting and questions for consideration should be submitted in advance to the Area Governance Manager, Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban. The agenda for the meeting is available to view at Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban, and at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Any enquiries should be directed to: Shirley MacLeod, Area Governance Manager (Tel. 01369 707134).

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West Coast Property Guide

West Coast Property Guide
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WANTED

Min. five bedroom house in Campbeltown for long term rent. Preferably furnished. Cat must be accepted.
Please reply to: Box No. 101, Campbeltown Courier, Main & Longrow South, Campbeltown, PA28 6AE.

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Oban Town Centre
Fully furnished
£380 per month
Ex Council Tax
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Fully furnished bedroom in spacious house, sharing lounge, dining room, kitchen and utility room.
£260 pcm. (including council tax). No smoking, Pets, or DSS.
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01397 772468 (after 6pm).

West Coast Property Guide

West Coast Property Guide
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ORMSARY FARMERS
Mechanical Maintenance Engineer

We have a vacancy for a mechanical maintenance engineer based at Ormsary Estate, near Lochgilphead.

The successful candidate will report to the Engineering Manager and be involved in all aspects of plant maintenance, including fish farm process equipment, wind and hydro power and water supply systems.

You will have a positive and enthusiastic manner, and be able to work in a small multi-skilled team with a flexible hands-on approach.

You will preferably have a recognised engineering qualification (time served or equivalent), a proven track record in Maintenance Engineering and the ability to plan and prioritise your workload on a day to day basis with the longer term objectives of the department in mind. For the right candidate additional training will be given where required.

The successful candidate will also possess a full driving licence, and be prepared to make their home at Ormsary and be available for on-call alarm duty rota responsibilities.

Ormsary Farmers offers an excellent employment package, including pension and family housing in a vibrant and scenic rural community, with a modern local primary school.

If you are confident that you can fulfil this role, please apply in writing by sending your CV along with details of your current salary package to Matt Donald, Engineering Manager, Ormsary Farmers, Ormsary, Lochgilphead PA31 8PE, or email mtdonald@ormsary.co.uk by the 1st May.



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Advertising Sales Executive

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Project Manager
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Closing date: 5pm, Thursday 19 April 2012.

Relief Housing Assistants
Days & Nights £7.65 per hour
Oban Ref: RELOB0412

To provide a quality Housing Management service and it would be desirable if you have experience of working with vulnerable service users as well as an awareness of drug and alcohol issues. Relief workers are required to cover shifts at short notice. The work is ad hoc and Relief Workers normally undertake shifts resulting from holiday and other absence.

Applicants for all these posts should preferably have experience of working in residential settings with vulnerable people. Successful applicants will be required to join the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme.

To apply tel: 0141 221 8365 or email: recruitment@btha.org.uk quoting the relevant reference number.

www.btha.org.uk

ACHA
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IT Officer Mid Argyll
Salary Grade 6 (£26,050 - £30,204) 35 hours per week

To apply visit our website at www.acha.co.uk
Tel 01546 605859
or email recruitment@acha.co.uk

Closing Date: 12 noon on Friday 20th April 2012

Interviews for this post will be held in Lochgilphead on Friday 4th May 2012

The Smiddy Bistro
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enclosing a CV and 2 references
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Smithy Lane, Lochgilphead. PA31 8TA
Closing Date: 14th April 2012

Argyll Holidays
Cleaner

Based in our Loch Awe Holiday Park, by Taynuilt we are looking for a cleaner to clean and prepare our caravans before they are rented to customers.

This role includes cleaning living areas, kitchens, shower rooms and bedrooms including making the beds and laundry. Previous cleaning experience would be advantageous however training will be given.

Working during the day including weekends, weekly hours can vary depending on how busy the park is but likely to be 16 hours plus each week. This temporary position will be reviewed at the end of October.

Catherine Hughes, HR Officer,
Loch Awe Holiday Park, Bridge of Awe, Taynuilt, Argyll, PA35 1HT. hr@argyllholidays.com

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Previous applicants need not re-apply

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To lead Worship at Morning Service
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Dunbeg, By Oban 01631 564437

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Laundry Supervisor

Due to sudden ill health we require a full time housekeeping/laundry supervisor for immediate start

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Supervising housekeeping team
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01852 200233 and ask for the Manager
Loch Melfort Hotel, Arduaine, Oban PA34 4XG

Inverawe Smokehouses
Visitor Centre Manager

Inverawe's Visitor Centre is a well known attraction in the local area.

It comprises of: produce shop, tea-room (hot and cold menu), fishing, play areas, woodland/wildlife walks and smokery exhibition.

We are looking for a hands on, natural retailer who will create a great place to shop and work, whilst managing every aspect of the financial and operational running of the Centre. You will be enthusiastic with lots of initiative and be focused enough to ensure the centre meets all aspects of food, health & safety standards.

Please send your C.V to Lucy Burke, Inverawe Smokehouses, Taynuilt, Argyll. PA35 1HU or email lucy@inverawe.co.uk

Campbeltown Motor Co.

Require qualified vehicle mechanic or suitably able person.

Please apply in own handwriting to:
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Campbeltown Motor Company
Snipefield, Campbeltown
Argyll, PA28 6SY

PORT APPIN SURGERY
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For more information contact Linda MacGillivray, Practice Manager on 01631 730271
Apply with CV to linda.macgillivray@nhs.net
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£12,701 - £13,869
35 hrs per week
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Witchburn Road, Campbeltown Ref: CTC00244

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CrossReach is one of Scotland's largest voluntary social work organisations, offering care and counseling. At Auchinlee in Campbeltown, our aim is to provide a quality of care for older people that incorporates the principles of privacy, choice, dignity, independence, rights and fulfilment and which encourages people to regain and retain the skills of living.

Senior Care Worker
£19,541 - £20,813 • Qualification bar applies
4 x 12 hour day or night shifts per week

In return for planning your shift, leading a team and being on-hand for service users, we'll give you the time and support to widen your experience, fulfill your potential and take up new challenges. We also offer a comprehensive benefits package, including a generous pension and holiday allowance. You will need at least an SVQ Level 3 or equivalent.

Care Workers
£14,764 - £16,945 pro rata • Qualification bar applies
Part Time, 30 hours per week

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£13,626 to £14,161 pro rata • Part Time, 2 nights per week

Providing assistance and support to our service users to enable them to maintain their independence, you will also assist the Key Worker in the care of designated individuals, planning, reviewing and maintaining the service delivery.

In return we offer a comprehensive benefits package, including a generous pension and holiday allowance. Applicants are required to have a Christian commitment and be able to uphold our Christian Ethos, which is an Occupational Requirement in terms of the Equality Act 2010. These posts are subject to PVG Scheme Membership.

For more information and to apply visit www.crossreach.org.uk/vacancies or call 01586 552568.
Closing date: 19th April 2012.
CrossReach is the Social Care arm of the Church of Scotland - a charity registered in Scotland SC011353.

crossreach.org.uk **CROSSREACH**

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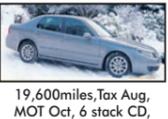
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BIRTHS

CAMPBELL - Duncan and Elaine (née Thomson), are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their beautiful son Finlay Lachlan on March 25, 2012. First grandchild for David and Carol, Taynuilt and third for Duncan and Liz, Dunbeg. Many thanks to all the Oban midwives.

MACFARLANE - Rona and Ewan are delighted to announce the arrival of Sandy Bell on March 3, 2012. A wee brother for Dallas, Skye and Kenna and another grandchild for Sandy and Deirdre, Taynuilt, and Helen and Alf, Inverness. Thanks to the midwives in Kingussie and Raigmore.

RUBY WEDDINGS

MACKECHNIE - STEWART - At Glencruitten Parish Church, Oban on April 8, 1972, Ian to Catherine

DEATHS

FORSYTH - Suddenly but peacefully after a long illness bravely borne, Willie Forsyth (Ex Oban Express), beloved husband of the late Mary, a dear father, father-in-law, grandfather and brother. Sadly missed. A service will take place at Church of Scotland, Corran Esplanade, Oban on Friday, April 6, at 1.00 pm. Interment will be at Arbroath. Family flowers only please. Retiring collection / donations if desired to Macmillan Nurses.

GILLIES - John Alexander (Iain), peacefully at the Southern General Hospital on March 29, 2012, Iain beloved son of the late Alasdair and Peggy, much loved brother of the late Norman, Mary and Hecky, cherished uncle and great uncle. Funeral service at Craigton Crematorium, Berrynknowes Road, Glasgow on Friday 6th April at 11.30am. Family flowers only please.

MACALISTER - Peacefully at Inverclyde Royal Hospital on Friday, March 30, 2012, Alister, beloved husband of Janette, dearly loved father of James, Alister and Lyn, loving grandfather to Val, Leanne, Sandy, Cameron, Sastre and Keaton and a loving great grandpa. The funeral service will take place at Kilmacdonald Church on Thursday, April 5 at 1pm and thereafter to Greenock Crematorium at 3pm, to which all are respectfully invited. Family flowers only please, but donations if desired, to Cancer Research.

MACDONALD - Flora Campbell (née Ferguson), died March 30, 2012, beloved wife of the late Murdo MacDonald of Port of Ness, Isle of Lewis, eldest daughter of the late Malcolm and Mary Ferguson of Bridgend, Isle of Islay, sister of Peggy and Calum and the late Allan and Isobel and much loved aunt of her many nephews and nieces. Flora's many years as a Queen's District Nurse took her to North Uist, Lewis, Fairlie, Bowmore, Helensburgh and Dumbarton. Funeral service at Cardross Crematorium Chapel on Wednesday, April 11 at 12.15pm followed by interment in Cardross Cemetery.

MACDONALD - Suddenly but peacefully on Monday, April 2, 2012 at the Belford Hospital, Kate MacDonald, Alderwood, Roy Bridge. Beloved mother of Eileen, Susan and Kenny. Funeral service from St Margaret's, Roy Bridge on Monday, April 9, 2012 at 12 noon, all family and friends respectfully invited.

MACEACHERN - Suddenly at home in Glenfield, Bruichladdich, Isle of Islay, Morag, daughter of the late Neil and Margaret Maceachern and beloved sister of the late Archie and Alex. She will be very sadly missed and lovingly remembered. Funeral service was held on March 29, 2012 at St. Kiarans Church.

TOMISON - Peacefully at Lorn & Islands Hospital, Oban on April 1, 2012, in her 101st year, Mamie, beloved wife of the late Hunter, a loving and loved mother, grandmother and great grandmother. A memorial service will be held at Kilmelford Church at a later date.

WEBSTER - Peacefully at Lorn & Islands Hospital, Oban, on April 1, 2012, David, husband to Margaret, dad to Roger, Paul, Karen, Gavin and families.

MEMORIALS

ANDERSON - In loving memory of a dear mum, granny and great granny Mary Hay, died April 6, 1999. Loved and remembered always. -Seonaid, Kenny and family.

BIRD - Nan (Née McCuish). In loving memory of my dear wife who died April 2, 1999. I miss you Nan and always will. You left a place no one can fill. You shared my life, smiles and tears. Thank you Nan for those precious years. - Your loving husband Terry x.

BIRD - Treasured memories of Nan, a loving mum, nannie and great-nannie, who died April 2, 1999. As we look upon your picture Sweet memories we recall Of a face so full of sunshine And a smile for one and all. - Ruthie, Murdo, Girls & Kyde & Cully

CLARK - Treasured memories of my darling son George, who died on April 7, 2006. R.I.P. George, to hold your hand and see your smile To sit and talk with you a while To be together in the same old way Would be my greatest wish today. - With all my love mum x.

CLARK - Remembering with love my fiancée George who died April 7, 2006. I will always love you. Jackie xx

DEAKIN - In fond memory of my dear son-in-law, John, died April 4, 2003. Time passes swiftly But loving memories never fade Miss you lots. - Margaret Childs x.

HEAP - In loving memory of our son and brother Edward Alexander (Eddie), accidentally killed at work on April 4, 1979 aged 18 years. There is always a face before us A voice we would love to hear A smile we will always remember Of a son we loved so dear. Loved and remembered every day. - Mum, Dad, Auntie Peggy and family xx.

HUME - Cherished memories of my dear husband Jim who died April 8, 2011. It broke my heart to lose you You did not go alone For part of me went with you The day God called you home. - Inserted by his loving wife Eala.

HUME - Loved and remembered every day. Sadly missed. - Caroline, Brian, Jim, Morvern and Fiona and grandchildren.

LAURIE - Loving memories of Bobby who died April 6, 2004. Always loved and remembered. - Isobel and family.

MACARTHUR - With loving memories of our mum Morag, who passed away April 6, 1991. - Lorna and Neil.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of Alister, passed away April 1, 1982 and Martha, April 13, 2003. Time may pass and fade away But love and memories forever stay. - Alister and Angus, Cath and family.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of Isabel died April 5, 2010, Caoil and formerly Tree, much loved sister, sister-in-law, aunt and great aunt. Dearly missed. - Janet, Charlie and family.

MACDONALD - Cherished memories of our dear neighbour and friend, Margaret, died April 3, 2009. Always in our thoughts. - Bill and Chrissie.

MACLENNAN - In loving memory of our dear parents and grandparents, John, who died April 3, 1984 and Cathie, who died April 11, 1989. Time may pass and fade away But silent thoughts and memories stay. - Inserted by daughter Catherine, son-in-law John and family, Craobhag, Spean Bridge.

MACLENNAN - In loving memory of our dear parents and grandparents, John, died on April 3, 1984 and Cathie, died on April 11, 1989. Loved and remembered always. - Ewen, Rosemary, Ewen and Ross, Tigh-na-Coille, Spean Bridge.

MATHESON - In loving memory of our dear Mum, Gran and Sister Peggy who died on April 1, 2011. Precious memories how they linger. Inserted by loving family.

McPHAIL - In loving memory of my dear wife Mary McPhail who died April 3, 2004, devoted mother to John, Sheonaid and Drew. Sadly missed, forever in our thoughts. A light is from our household gone A voice we loved is still A place is vacant from our hearts which never can be filled. - Inserted by her husband Charlie, Dalmally. Love and miss you granny. - Elizabeth and Andrew. xxx

McPHEE - In loving memory of my beloved husband, father, father-in-law and granda Willie, who died April 8, 2005. Loved and remembered today and always. - Betty and family. Forever loved and missed our dear Gran 'P'. - Marina, Cammy and Emma xx.

PROSSER - MAXWELL - In memory of my daughter Yvonne, passed away April 6, 1989. Love and remembered everyday. - Daddy.

PATERSON - In loving memory of Alec (Nab), a dear brother, brother-in-law and uncle who died April 7, 2006. They say it's a beautiful journey From the old world to the new. Someday we'll take that journey Which will lead us straight to you Miss you so much Nab - Love Rhonda and Curlyxx

A silent prayer keeps me in Touch with an uncle I loved And miss so much Simply the best. - Love Jacquelinexx

PROSSER - In loving memory of Mary, our dear mum, gran and great gran, who died March 26, 1997. Precious memories of a loving mum In our hearts and thoughts always. - Betty and family. Forever loved and missed our dear Gran 'P'. - Marina, Cammy and Emma xx.

PROSSER - MAXWELL - In memory of my daughter Yvonne, passed away April 6, 1989. Love and remembered everyday. - Daddy.

PROSSER - MAXWELL - In loving memory of my darling daughter Yvonne Elizabeth called to Jesus April 6, 1989. A flower, petals tightly furled, Was lifted from her mortal clay. And firmly planted in a world Where full blooms grow in rich array. - Love Mum and family.

SMITH - In loving memory of Iain (Smit), a dear son, brother and uncle, who passed away April 5, 2011. Though you were taken so suddenly We remember you everyday We miss your smiling face And memories of you are special. Loved and sadly missed - By Dad, Lorna, Maureen, Sheena, nieces, nephews and great nephews.

THOMSON - In loving memory of Douglas who died April 4, 1994. Always in our thoughts. - Grace and family.

WALKER - In loving memory of my father Archibald, who died March 29, 1996. Forever in our thoughts. - Inserted by Donald and Morag, Airport Cottage, Islay.



The volunteers get busy cleaning Jacob's Ladder. 15_t14clean01

Jacob's Ladder clean steps up BIDS drive

THE START of many projects BID40-ban are organising to improve the town kicked off last weekend with a clean of the steps up to McCaig's Tower. Nearly 100 glass bottles were picked up during the clean of Jacob's Ladder, with the use of equipment donated by the GRAB Trust.

One of the cleaners, Louise Glen-Lee, said: 'Everything has been cut back and

the steps have been cleaned and swept. We couldn't have done it without the support of the GRAB Trust. 'We've picked up so much rubbish, now people should come and enjoy the area.'

Witches Another clean, of the Witches in Dunoille, was carried out and there will also be a duck race at 4pm this Sunday

in the Black Lynn, starting at Bossards. The town will be having another go at the world record for Strip the Willow on July 14, a meeting will be held about the record attempt tomorrow, Friday, at 5pm in the back of Cuan Mor, all are welcome to attend. Anyone with other ideas to improve Oban is invited to submit them to the steering group.

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SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION

Thursday 5 April 2012
Maundy Thursday
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Eucharist..... 19.30
St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Holy Communion..... 19.00
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist..... 08.00
Compline..... 20.15
Friday 6 April 2012
Good Friday
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Children's Service..... 10.00
The Good Friday Watch..... 12.00-15.00
St Columba, Gruline, Mull
One Hour by the Cross. 14.00
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist..... 08.00
Compline..... 20.15
Saturday 7 April 2012
Holy Saturday
St John's Cathedral, Oban
The Easter Vigil..... 20.00
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist..... 08.00
Compline..... 20.15
Sunday 8 April 2012
Easter Day
St John's Cathedral, Oban
Holy Communion..... 08.00
Sung Eucharist..... 10.15
Loop System
Large Print Hymn Books
All Welcome
Norman MacCallum, Provost.
(01631) 562323
St James, Ardbrecknish, Cladich
Holy Eucharist..... 11.00
St Columba, Gruline, Mull
Holy Communion..... 11.00
St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona
Holy Eucharist..... 08.00
Evensong..... 20.15

WEDDINGS

HUTCHISON - QUINN
Colette Hutchison and Shaun Quinn. Ceremony was held in St Margaret's in Lochgilphead for their Crear Wedding.
Flowers by Gill Stewart of Crear Flowers, Photography by George Stewart of Crear Photography.

OBAN HOSPICE
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GRADUATIONS
Leanne Harris graduated from the University of Glasgow with a MSC (Medical Science) Degree in Human Nutrition specialising in Sport and Exercise Nutrition. Leanne is the daughter of Alan and Katie Harris, North Connel, grand-daughter of Janet and the late Bill Stephen formerly of North Connel and Alison Harris and the late Iain Harris, North Connel. Leanne is a former pupil of Lochnell Primary School and Oban High School.



Oban cathedral gets new provost

AN OBAN Cathedral has announced their new Provost who will take over later this year. The Rev Nicola McNelly, currently Chaplain at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh, will be installed as the Provost of St John the Divine Cathedral in August. She takes over from the Very Rev Norman MacCallum who has held the office of Provost since 2000.

The appointment of Nicola as the new Provost was endorsed by the Rt Rev Kevin Pearson, Bishop of Argyll & The Isles. He said: 'I am delighted that the Cathedral Vestry, having worked hard at putting together a profile for their new provost, have invited Nicola to lead them in this new chapter of the cathedral's life.' Nicola has been a Chaplain in Edinburgh since 2009 and

in preparing to take up her new post, said: 'I am thrilled and honoured to be appointed Provost of St. John's Cathedral in Oban and thank Bishop Kevin and the Vestry for their faith in me. 'There will be exciting challenges ahead and I look forward to journeying with the cathedral family and the diocese. I think my curacy at St. Mary's Cathedral will have prepared me well for the future.'

Thought for the week

Easter Greetings
WHEN I was at high school in Portree that charismatic preacher, Dr. George F. MacLeod, visited Skye during the year he was Moderator of the General Assembly. After over half a century I can still remember snippets of his dramatic sermon. But what struck me most was shaking hands with the preacher as we left the church. To each worshipper he said, 'Easter greetings'. To me at the time his words seemed odd.

It was June. Easter was long past. But as I got older I could see what was behind George MacLeod's greeting. To the early church every Sunday was the Lord's Day, a commemoration of that first Easter and the resurrection of Jesus. People sometimes say that it would be good if the spirit of Christmas could continue throughout the year. The keywords of the Christmas message are

- love, joy, peace. The first Christians believed in celebrating Easter every week. It would be good if we could take the message of Easter, of the risen Christ, with us throughout the year. It is a message of victory - the victory of life over death, of light over darkness, of love over hatred. Easter greetings!
Roddy MacLeod (Furnace)

Ballachulish church stalwart retires

AFTER 37 years as property convener and congregational board clerk of St Munda's Church in Ballachulish, Willie Macdonald decided it was time to retire. Joining him in retirement from church duties was Ronnie McLauchlan, who has been session clerk to the church for 13 years. Both gentlemen were rewarded with a celebratory lunch last Sunday in the Glencoe Hotel. Forty members and friends enjoyed the afternoon and the reminiscences of the two long serving members.



Ronnie McLauchlan and Willie Macdonald are pictured on their retiral from church duties with Rev Moira Herkes.

Pupils cook up a diamond treat

CHILDREN at St Columba's Primary School in Oban are hoping a menu they have designed gets the Royal seal of approval in a national competition to cook for the Queen's jubilee. To celebrate the Diamond Jubilee British Food Fortnight is inviting all schools in the UK to create a special menu featuring recipes that celebrate the best of British. The menu will be served to The Queen and The Duchess of Cornwall at a reception at Buckingham Palace in June. The top four winning schools will be invited to Buckingham Palace to see their recipes brought to life and help serve them at a reception attended by The Queen and The Duchess of Cornwall. St Columba's primary seven pupils, with the help of staff member Pamela Lockhart, have put together an eight-course menu, which was sampled and critiqued by guests to the school last Thursday, many of whom remember the Queen's Coronation. Oban resident Archie McGill was 24 years old



Helping to serve up dishes fit for a queen are pupils, from left: Jessica Swan, Ron Barra, Eve Beaton, Nathan Allan and Niamh MacKenzie. 15_11400001

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Lorne need to win last game of the season to avoid relegation

Oban side suffer bruising defeat at the hands of Strathaven



Oban Lorne need to beat Lenzie next Saturday to avoid relegation.

RBS West Division Two
Strathaven 27
Oban Lorne 10

OBAN LORNE will probably have to beat Lenzie in the final game of the season to avoid relegation after a bruising defeat to Strathaven last Saturday.

Lorne had the rare novelty of a travelling squad of 20 players for this crucial match but lost out in a largely scrappy encounter.

The men in green were boosted by the return of Tommy Suther-

land, David Hunter and Angus Munro and welcomed twins Angus and David MacLellan from Mull into the first team.

The home side dominated the opening period of the game and found themselves with territory in their favour thanks to the number of penalties Oban were giving away.

Eventually they scored the

first try of the game around five minutes in, a result of some poor Oban tackling, to lead 5-0.

Oban continued to frustrate themselves with poor discipline at the breakdown and an inconsistent lineup and after another period of sustained pressure the hosts again scored to extend the gap to 10-0. Both teams played out a scrappy and error-strewn half, apart from the last five

minutes, when Oban finally seemed to wake up and rose to the challenge.

The backs were being provided with some good ball thanks to scrum half MacLellan and stand-off Angus MacCallum.

However, the good play that the team produced could not be turned into points as the home side took a 10-0 lead into the break.

The start of the second half was largely uneventful until a superb individual effort from fullback Callum MacLachlan put Oban's first points on the board. MacLachlan collected the ball on the Strathaven 22 before single-handedly fighting off several defenders to cross the line.

Oban's short-lived comeback was quashed in the most brutal

fashion as Strathaven ran in three further tries.

Oban Lorne's Andy MacDougall had the final say, however, when he ran in a consolation try to finish the scoring.

Oban Lorne: M. Downie, R. MacQueen, T. Sutherland, D. Hunter, L. MacLachlan, S. Smith, A. MacDougall, C. Louw, A. MacLellan, A. MacCallum, C. MacLachlan, C. Smith, D. Ma-

Residential camp for Argyll and Bute youth footballers

FOOTBALL CAMP

ARGYLL and Bute Council's football development service ran their first ever summer residential camp last year which proved to be a great success.

Football development officer Martin Rae has announced that the camp will take place again this summer from 23 to 27 July, based at the school hostel in Oban.

The camp is open to any budding player aged 9 to 16 years who will not only be coached by SFA qualified coaches, but they will be given an introduction to sports science, including fitness testing, nutritional and hydration advice, sports psychology and lifestyle management as well as doing all the day to day chores that are expected of a full time professional youth player.

For further information on the camp please contact Martin Rae on 01631 572194 or e-mail him at martin.rae@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Islay rowers to compete at Portsoy

ROWING

ROWERS from Islay will be participating in the nation's biggest ever St Ayles skiff coastal rowing regatta at the Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Traditional Boat Festival will this summer.

The crew will battle it out with 18 other wooden boats from around the country.

The festival, now in its 19th year, takes place in the village of Portsoy on the north-east coast of Scotland on June 23 and 24 and is the country's biggest celebration of maritime culture and heritage.

For further information about the Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Traditional Boat Festival visit www.scottishtraditionalboatfestival.org.uk

SFA coaching courses

COACHING

ARGYLL and Bute Football Development Officer Martin Rae is hoping to run two SFA coaching courses within the next couple of months and is looking for names and possible dates.

The Level 1 Club Coach Certificate is the first course on the adult coaching pathway and Martin recommends that youth coaches should get this certificate as the SFA coaching pathway will be changing next year.

The second course Martin hopes to run is a Level 2 Goalkeeping course.

For further details contact Martin on 01631 572194 or e-mail him at martin.rae@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Dalmally Golf Club

GOLF

DALMALLY Golf Club Gents Section: April Medal Qualifier: 1 A MacGillivray, (13) 58; 2 S Livingstone, (13) 62; 3 B McKay (10) 63.

Scottish Hydro extend cup sponsorship

SHINTY will receive an injection of more than £150,000 over the next three years after Scottish Hydro signed an extension to its sponsorship of the Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup and various youth activities.

As well as the Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup, the sponsorship will also cover the Scottish Hydro Youth Development Camp for Under 17 players and the Scottish Hydro Youth Development Fund.

The fund, which was introduced in 2011, aims to support member clubs who wish to increase youth participation by providing a grant award in support of new or enhanced club initiatives that will deliver sustainable growth in the number of young people playing shinty.

First round (May 5): Glasgow Mid Argyll v Oban Camanachd / Glenorchy; Oban Celtic v Beaulie; Skye v Inverness / Caberfeidh; Strathglass v Aber-

SHINTY

dour; Lochaber v Lochcarron; Kilmory v Taynuilt.



National Shinty Development Officer Ronald Ross MBE and former Scotland rugby captain and Scottish Hydro sponsorship manager Jonny Petrie with the Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup.

Extending
He said: 'We are very proud to be associated with the game of shinty. By extending our sponsorship of the Camanachd Cup, and supporting both the Youth Development Camp for Under 17 players and the Youth Development Fund, we are reaching out to players at various stages in their journey through this great sport.'

Meanwhile Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup gets underway this weekend, with four teams involved in the preliminary round.

Preliminary round: Oban Camanachd v Glenorchy, Inverness v Caberfeidh.

Lewis wins gold at West of Scotland ski race



Lewis Kirsop

ON March 27 Snowsport Scotland hosted the 2012 West of Scotland schools ski race. Due to a lack of snow the venue was transferred to Xscape at Braehead Indoor Arena.

Argyll was represented by two primary teams, one team consisting of three pupils from three different primary schools: Lewis Kirsop, Dalmally Primary, Rory Chalmers and Findlay Gray. Their team was called the Argyll Coop.

SKIING

The other team was Isla Fowler and Ruairaidh Graham both from Lochgilphead.

Both teams put in an excellent performance with the Argyll

Coop taking first place with a combined time of 56.27 seconds and Lochgilphead taking second place with a combined time of 56.99 seconds.

Gartocharn Primary were third with a time of 57.32. Lewis Kirsop also took the gold medal for the fastest primary boy with a time of 18.04 seconds and Isla Fowler took gold for the fastest primary girl with a time of 18.07 seconds.

All of the Argyll teams are members of Glencoe ski club and the head coach is Angela Anderson.



New kit: Ballachulish FC line up at the all-weather pitch at Kinlochleven on Monday night.

New kit and new squad for Ballachulish

BALLACHULISH FC has rebuilt its squad after around a dozen players left to join a rival outfit.

Coach Kenny Hazelton regularly has 15 players at training and is 'confident' the team will be ready for Lochaber Welfare League football in the summer.

'Whether the welfare goes ahead or not, we can always arrange friendlies to keep the lads competing,' he told The Oban Times.

'We have been awarded £1,200 lottery money for a new kit and training equipment, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Kirsteen Hine at

FOOTBALL

the Leven Centre for securing these funds for the club.'

Mr Hazelton added: 'There will be no football this year in the Jubilee Park because A, our goalposts are not fit for use, and B the drainage work is still ongoing. However, we are at the early stages of discussing fund raising for a new set of goalposts.' The team will play at Island Park in Kinlochleven this season.

'Fitting out supper' at Lochaber Yacht Club

LOCHABER Yacht Club started the new season with a fancy dress 'fitting out supper' before the first dinghy race of the season the following day, Sunday March 25.

Keelboat racing does not get underway until April 23, when the 'Brass Monkey' race will be held. Racing continues throughout the summer, with keelboats every Monday evening and dinghies every Wednesday evening.

For those who don't wish to

SAILING

race, Thursday evenings are a good opportunity to use either their own boats or one of the club dinghies to get out on the water. A safety boat will be in attendance.

The R.Y.A. Beginners 'Learn to Sail' course for juniors aged 11 to 16 will be held over April 21, 22 and 28 with a briefing on the evening of Thursday 19 April. The three-day course should qualify students to RYA Junior Level one.

The same course for adults

will be held over May 5, 6 and 12 with briefing on the evening of May 3. The course should qualify people to RYA Level one standard.

There will be opportunities to continue learning on Thursday evenings at the club. Forthcoming events will include R.Y.A. (Level 2) courses on use of powerboats. Dates are still to be confirmed.

Get ready for the season

If you haven't already ordered your promotional printing for the 2012 summer season then now is the time to do so.

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All you have to do

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday. You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition Rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.

The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.

Employees of The Oban Times Limited, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

WIN £650

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...

This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

A Bradley & E Young
The Comm, Lochgilphead

D Pearson
Dalintart Drive, Oban

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I enclose £1 for 20 crosses (tick box) The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

Name

Address

..... Tel No.

Please tape your £1 coin here

Argyll rivals meet in Scottish Cup preliminary round

OBAN CAMANACHD will take on rivals **GLENORCHY** in the preliminary round of this season's Camanachd Cup.

As if the game wasn't important enough to both teams, the added spice of a local derby will make this one of the most anticipated matches on this weekend's fixture card.

While Glenorchy coach Allan MacKechnie will use the rivalry between the sides as fuel for his team, Oban Camanachd co-manager Diarmid MacMillan claims his players will treat it like any other game.

Diarmid said: 'We will go about our business as normal and try not to get caught up with the local rivalry, as it is always a closely contested match between the two sides.'

'We will go into this match on Saturday with a full squad to choose from. We have been training really hard and we hope our fitness will carry us through.'

Meanwhile, Allan MacKechnie knows his side will be underdogs at Mossfield - and may be missing the combative John Sartain, James Livingstone and Kieran McKay - but he is expecting a big commitment from the players who are available.

'This is one of the boys are looking forward to', he said.

'Camanachd have a good forward line but if we get our defence playing basic shinty and doing the simple things right, we have a chance.'

'I know we will create chances but if we gift goals we are not going to win.'

Glenorchy have been on cruise control in South Division One but got a reality check last weekend against Bute in the AJG Parcels Celtic Society Cup, going down 4-1.

In what Allan described as 'a mad five minutes' Bute hit three first half goals in quick succession to effectively end the Dalmally men's chances of progression.

It's top versus bottom in the Orion Group Premiership this weekend as leaders **NEWTONMORE** play host to Kilmallie at The Eilan on Saturday.

More manager Norman MacArthur will be wary of a Kilmallie side who are yet to win in the league this year, but who showed last season they can trouble any side on their day.

The 'More have a two-point lead at the top of the Orion Premiership following last weekend's dramatic 3-3 draw at home to Kyles Athletic. The home side led three times but were pegged back each time by a determined Kyles side.

Danny MacRae scored twice and Chris Sellar's 71st minute strike seemed to have handed

victory to the home side but Kyles rescued a point through a Norman Campbell own goal.

It may still be early in the campaign - but warning bells are ringing at **KILMALLIE** after last weekend's disappointing 2-0 home defeat to Inveraray.

The Blues are playing well enough, but finding the net has been their bugbear so far. With just a single point from four games and currently in bottom spot in the Orion Group Premiership, Kilmallie have another tough assignment when they take on champions Newtonmore at The Eilan.

Chairman Hugh MacIntyre told The Oban Times: 'We have a hard game on Saturday, but as far as I am aware all the squad should be fit.'

'We brought on Alan MacDonald 15 minutes from the end against Inveraray so he should be okay and Martin Stewart should be fit as well.'

'We need to get points soon. We are only one behind at the moment, but we have to get going soon. Newtonmore are a hard team to beat on their own ground - we need to get our forwards motivated again.'

Against Inveraray, Kilmallie were missing half-backs Stewart, MacDonald and Stephen MacAllister, meaning forward Michael Rodger had to be pulled back to fill the gap. The rejig took its toll as the home team failed to find the net.

INVERARAY manager John Smylie has heaped praise on his captain, and veteran full-back, Scott Robertson after his side left Lochaber on Saturday with two points and another clean sheet.

Robertson, who is approaching 40 years of age, has wound back the years this season and his good form correlates with a successful start to Inveraray's 2012 season.

An early goal from Garry MacPherson on Saturday set them on their way against Kilmallie and Neil Campbell continued his goal streak to secure the 2-0 win.

But John insists the defensive display from the Royal Burgh was what eventually won them the game.

'The whole defence played really well but Scott Robertson in particular was excellent. He was made captain this season and talks a lot of the younger boys through the games.'

'He is training three nights a week to keep up his fitness, so it is no coincidence that this is the best he has played for three or four seasons.'

Robertson has already stated his intention to retire from the first team at the end of the season

but John has expressed his desire to have him stay on.

This weekend Inveraray will have a full squad when they host Fort William, who boast a mean defensive record themselves.

John added: 'They are bringing in a few youngsters, so I'm not totally sure what we'll be up against.'

FORT WILLIAM players and coaching staff get back to Orion Group Premiership action on Saturday after celebrating defender Neil Robertson's marriage last weekend.

A tough looking away fixture to Inveraray will present a major challenge, not least because the Argyll men are putting together a decent string of results, the latest being a fine 2-0 win at Kilmallie last time out.

A win would keep The Fort right up alongside the title contenders and extend their unbeaten run to four games.

Having gained a reputation for their quick and mobile forward play last season **KYLES ATHLETIC** are well placed to pick out the same traits from this weekend's opponents Kinlochshiel.

The Orion Group Premiership's new boys won't be underestimated by last season's premier league runners-up as they prepare to match up.

Ahead of his team's trip north, Kyles trainer James Perlich told The Oban Times: 'They are a fast, mobile team, so our defence will have to be up to scratch. I think Kinlochshiel will cause slower defences big problems but our guys should be mobile enough to cope.'

'Saying that, we will give them the respect they deserve because they can score goals.'

In what is a welcome surprise for the Tighnabraich outfit, Donald Irvine and Sandy MacVicar, who were expected to be long-term injury casualties, could come back into the squad within the next fortnight.

Kyles will also be buoyed by a useful 3-3 draw at The Eilan last Saturday, in which 18 year old Ewen Campbell did no harm to his growing reputation by hitting a third goal in as many starts for his new club.

Thomas Whyte had scored Kyles' first goal but it took an own goal by Norman Campbell in the 87th minute to give the Tighnabraich club a point.

James added: 'It was a great game to watch last Saturday but that is four years in a row we have drawn up there.'

KINLOCHSHIEL welcome resurgent Kyles to Kirkton on Saturday for a match that could reveal much about their ability to keep up with the Premiership pacemakers.

According to 'Shiel coach Johnston Gill, it will be Kyles' first ever visit to Kirkton - but the park's narrow confines will do his team no favours.

'Playing at home does not suit us, but we just have to get on with it,' he told The Oban Times. 'You can see by Kyles' results that they will be coming up here hoping to take full points.'

'But we are growing up in this league and hopefully we will give them a good game on the day. We are capable of taking points off anybody in this league.'

'Shiel's physical, quicksilver game has impressed many so far - but last weekend Kingussie proved too big a hurdle in the 6-2 defeat. Keith MacRae's 20th minute strike cancelled out Martin Dallas' opener before Dawson and Dallas put Kings 3-1 up at the break.

'Shiel could only counter a second half Ronald Ross hat-trick with a Finlay MacRae penalty.

'We've got a good squad this year so we're not too bothered about missing one or two - so long as it's no more than that.'

SHINTY

GLENORQUHART will take on Bute at Blairbeg Park on Saturday looking to reverse recent fortunes having lost their last three league games. Glen did pick up a MacTavish Cup win last weekend against Inverness and joint team manager Drew McNeil told *The Oban Times* picking up two points this Saturday was vital for his side.

He said: 'It's a must-win game, particularly because it's a home tie. We can't afford to let anyone get a gap at this stage of the season. It could be a chance to pick up points on some of the teams you would expect to be around us at the end of the season.'

Glen found themselves 3-0 up after just 18 minutes against Inverness, with Ruairidh Cameron, Neale Reid and John Barr scoring the goals.

Inverness pulled a goal back in the 21st minute but Barr restored the three-goal lead within a minute. The North Division One side scored the only goal in the second half through Dougie Rankin in the 73rd minute.

McNeil said: 'The first half was a good performance, but the second half was poor. Fair play to Inverness, they played well, but we've got to be more clinical. You can't afford to play like that against the bigger sides.'

BUTE manager Barry Martin is as surprised as anyone at Glenorchy's indifferent start to the season but will take his team to Drumadroch with a cautious game plan.

The islanders have identified John Barr as the main threat but also expect to meet a well-drilled team.

Barry said: 'I thought Glenorchy would have been a force this year, when you consider how well they played last season, so we are staying cautious.'

'We never expect to get anything away from home but we will give it our best. We are still trying to find some consistency in team selection but we should have more or less the team that won in Dalmally.'

Robert Walker, Iain MacDonald, Ruairidh Sloane and Robert Ferguson scored in Dalmally to put Bute into the next round of the Celtic Society Cup.

KINGUSSIE take on unbeaten Lovat looking to build on last Saturday's cup win over Kinlochshiel.

Manager Steven Borthwick told The Oban Times Lovat would present a 'tough' opposition for his side.

He said: 'They had a bad result last weekend and they'll be looking to bounce back from that. But it's important we build on last week's result; hopefully it can kick start our season.'

Kings scored a surprisingly comfortable 6-2 win away to Kinlochshiel in the MacTavish Cup first round last weekend.

Martin Dallas scored twice and Craig Dawson once in the first half. Ronald Ross came off the bench at half time for his first appearance of the season and promptly helped himself to a hat-trick.

Borthwick told The Oban Times the win was 'badly needed'. He said: 'The boys' confidence was a bit low. It was a good performance even before Ronald came on. He was a sub and it didn't take him long once he got on.'

Borthwick said Ross would 'almost definitely' start against Lovat, although Iain Borthwick and Ali MacLeod may miss out due to injury.

'We've got a good squad this year so we're not too bothered about missing one or two - so long as it's no more than that.'



Kenny Wotherspoon of Oban Celtic outpaces Strachur's Alan Paterson during last Saturday's AJG Parcels Celtic Society Cup match held at Mossfield Stadium, which the green and whites won 4-0.

Photo: John MacTavish

High-flying **LOVAT** return to league action on Saturday after being dumped out of the Co-operative MacTavish Cup by local rivals Beaulieu.

Making a likely return to bolster the defence and the centreline will be twins Craig and Martin Mainland, whose absence in the 4-3 loss to Beaulieu was a telling factor.

Lovat coach told The Oban Times: 'They were at a christening last week and they are looking to come back into the reckoning.'

'We could have done with the two of them on Saturday. When we went 3-1 ahead early in the second half I think we took our foot off the gas in a way and maybe believed that we had won it.'

'But to be fair to Beaulieu they got back to 3-2 and that really lifted them. They took control of the centreline and our forwards were starved of the ball.'

'They pushed on from there - and we didn't. They deserved it, definitely.'

Against Beaulieu, an Owen Ferguson double and a Duncan Davidson strike had Lovat 3-1 up after 50 minutes, with Martin Davidson Beaulieu's scorer on 42 minutes.

But Martin Davidson's second after an hour proved a huge turning point and further strikes from Conor Cormack and Jamie MacLennan gave Beaulieu victory.

THE AJG Parcels Celtic Society Cup could be **OBAN CELTIC'S** best chance of silverware this season but survival in South Division One is the priority, says club spokesman David Hamilton.

Celtic hammered Strachur 4-0 on Saturday to advance in the south cup competition thanks to goals from Ally McKerracher, Kenny Wotherspoon (2) and Lee Askew.

David said: 'We are in the more favourable half of the draw and Glasgow Mid Argyll, who were the best team in our section, were knocked out by Aberdeen. We definitely have a chance of reaching the final but our priority is always the league.'

The league is very much on David's mind as his team travel to take on Taynuilt, who have struggled in their opening games.

'They have not started well but they have played all the big teams in the league,' said David of this weekend's opponents. 'They'll be no pushovers.'

TAYNUILT manager Davy Thomson will stress to his players the importance of winning their home game against Oban Celtic

this weekend. The Lorn side picked up their first point of the season last Saturday against Kilmory but an inability to convert chances again plagued the team.

The tangerines this weekend take on an in-form Celtic without the influential Willie Gillies, who was sent off after fighting with Kilmory's Ali Cunningham.

Davy told The Oban Times: 'It is important we get something from the game.'

'We have played the top three teams in the league at home and lost, so we are looking at winning our remaining home games, starting on Saturday.'

We have only scored three goals in four matches, which is just not good enough.'

Stuart Scott once again scored his side's only goal of the game on Saturday but Taynuilt should have scored more after a dominant performance.

The only unbeaten sides left in Marine Harvest North Division One will go head-to-head when **LOCHABER** travel to Braeview Park to take on Beaulieu on Saturday.

Lochaber are coming off the back of a 3-1 home win against Lochcarron in the MacTavish Cup last weekend, while Beaulieu took an impressive scalp defeating premier league side and local rivals Lovat 4-3.

Lochaber manager Michael Delaney told The Oban Times the Spear Bridge men were expecting a tough match.

He said: 'They are an experienced team. They score a lot of goals but they seem to concede a lot as well if you look at their last few games.'

'We're playing quite well at the moment and the boys are looking forward to it.'

Delaney said although both sides were among the favourites for the title, the result of this Saturday's match would not have a huge bearing on the race for promotion.

He said: 'It would be good to take something away, but when we're all playing each three times there's still a long way to go.'

Delaney expects to have a full squad of players to choose from for the tie.

LOCHCARRON travel to the Playing Fields in Cannich to take on bottom of the league Strathglass this Saturday.

Both sides remain without a league win this season, but Lochcarron manager Andrew MacKenzie was in bullish mood when he spoke to The Oban Times, saying he felt his side could take something from the game.

He said: 'We're not saying we're going to go there and win but I certainly think we can get something from the game.'

'Its more about getting goals - we've had five games so far and scored six goals. We need more goals.'

'There'll be another shuffle around up and we'll strengthen up the middle and see what happens.'

Lochcarron were missing a number of first team players for last weekend's 3-1 MacTavish cup loss away to Lochaber, but MacKenzie said Mark Sproule would be back in the squad for this weekend's game.

SKYE CAMANACHD have no game on Saturday as their Portree ground Paire nan Laoch is hosting the Gaelic shinty-hurling international Iomain Cholmille a Còig.

The Skymen went through to the MacTavish Cup quarterfinals last weekend courtesy of a solid 2-0 win at Strathglass with Jordan Murchison scoring just after the interval and Danny Morrison sealing the victory midway through the half.

Coach Willie MacRae said: 'We had 70 to 80 per cent of the pressure, but converting that into goals must be our next job.'

'We were very solid at the back and the midfield totally dominated.'

'Our forwards played well, but we did not have that killer instinct and that's something we will have to work on.'

Saturday's Gaelic festival is being supported by Colmille, the body set up to strengthen links between the Gaelic communities of Ireland and Scotland.

Two Scottish shinty teams, Alba and a Skye select, will meet in one semi-final while two Irish hurling teams, Micheal Breathnach and Fir Uladh from Ulster play in the other.

The winners go through to the shinty-hurling final.

Fines, we are told, will be levied on anyone speaking - or swearing - in English.

LOCHSIDE ROVERS maintained their 100 per cent record in South Division Two with a great 2-1 win over Ballachulish.

Daniel MacIntyre fired the home side into the lead but David MacPhee equalised for Ballachulish.

Spurred on by a good home support, Lochside grabbed the winner in the 85th minute through Lorne Dickie.

The win was ideal preparation for a challenging Aberdeen Considine Sutherland Cup tie with Kingussie this Saturday.



Results

Saturday 31 March

Co-operative MacTavish Cup 1st Round
Lochaber 3 - 1 Lochcarron
Glenorchy 4 - 2 Inverness
Strathglass 0 - 2 Skye
Beaulieu 4 - 3 Lovat
Kinlochshiel 2 - 6 Kingussie

AJG Parcels Celtic Society Cup 1st Round
Aberdour 1 - 0 Glasgow MA
Glenorchy 1 - 4 Bute
Oban Celtic 4 - 0 Strachur

Sutherland Cup 1st Round
Bute 0 - 2 Skye

Orion Group Premiership
Newtonmore 3 - 3 Kyles Ath

Kilmallie 0 - 2 Inveraray
Marine Harvest South Division 1
Kilmory 1 - 1 Taynuilt

Marine Harvest North Division 2
Aberdeen Uni 1 - 1 Kinlochshiel
Glenorchy 1 - 2 Kingussie
Glenorchy 5 - 2 Lochaber
Newtonmore 5 - 1 Lovat

Marine Harvest South Division 2
Glasgow MA 2 - 1 Aberdour
Kyles Athletic 7 - 0 Inveraray
Lochside 2 - 1 Ballachulish
Tayforth 6 - 0 Col Glen

Marine Harvest North Division 3
Lochbroom 1 - 3 Beaulieu
Caberfeidh 1 - 3 Boleskine
Inverness 0 - 1 Lewis Cam
Kilmallie 8 - 0 Strathglass
Dougie Cameron
Lochcarron 3 - 3 Strathspey

Fixtures

Saturday 7 April

(Throws-up 2.30 unless stated)

Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup Preliminary Round
Oban Cam v Glenorchy
Graham Irving
Inverness v Caberfeidh
Robert Morrison 3pm

Sutherland Cup 1st Round
Strathglass v Inveraray
Callum Duff - 3pm
Lochside Rovers v Kingussie
Robert Baxter
Aberdour v Lochaber
Al Hunter

Col Glen v Boleskine
Douglas Ferguson
Beaulieu v Tayforth
Kevin Cheeseman - 3pm
Kilmallie v Lochcarron
Jim Innes

Glenorchy v Kinlochshiel
Graeme MacMillan
Glasgow MA v Fort William
Gus Campbell
Aberdeen Uni v Newtonmore
David Mitchell
Inverness v Lovat
John Sloggie - 12 noon
Kyles Athletic v Lochbroom
Eric Morrison

Orion Group Premiership
Glenorchy v Bute
Innes Wood
Inveraray v Fort William
Ted McDonald
Newtonmore v Kilmallie
Evan MacRae
Lovat v Kingussie
Deek Cameron
Kinlochshiel v Kyles Athletic
Graham Cameron

Marine Harvest North Division 1
Beaulieu v Lochaber
Donald MacRae - 12 noon
Strathglass v Lochcarron
John Matheson - 12 noon

Marine Harvest South Division 1
Kilmory v Glasgow Mid Argyll
Billy Wotherspoon
Taynuilt v Oban Celtic
Iain Kennedy
Strachur v Aberdour
Euan Pearson

Marine Harvest South Division 2
Bute v Ballachulish
Lachie Wood

Alba Shinty Hurling International in Portree
Alba v Skye (Shinty) at 10.45
Fir Uladh v Micheal Breathnach (Hurling) at 12.00

Third / Fourth Place Play Off (Shinty/Hurling) at 1.30
Alba / Skye v Fir Uladh / Micheal Breathnach (Shinty/Hurling) at 3.15
Alba / Skye v Fir Uladh / Micheal Breathnach



Glenorchy's Fulton Ronald and Bute's Graeme Fisher tussle for the ball during last Saturday's Celtic Society Cup match at Park Park, Dalmally. The island side won the game 4-1. Photo: Kevin McEllynn

Newtonmore to resurrect veterans sixes tournament

SHINTY

'EXPERIENCED' shinty players are being encouraged to dust off their boots and camans as Newtonmore Camanachd plans to resurrect its popular six-a-side veterans tournament for 2012.

This year's event will be held on Sunday, August 26, with those attending getting free entry to the Veterans Sixes dance that evening and the derby match between Newtonmore and Kingussie the previous day.

In order to qualify to play, participants must be over 45 years old and no longer playing competitive shinty. Each team will have six players and an allowance of two substitutes, who will be used in a 'rolling' format.

Entries will be accepted from any clubs (as many teams as you like) and also any teams who may want to enter without entering under a particular club umbrella.

To express an interest, or to find out more contact Paul MacArthur on 07851808643 or 01540673234.

League Tables

The Orion Group Premiership

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Newtonmore	5	3	1	1	18	10	7
Kyles Athletic	4	2	2	0	15	9	5
Lovat	3	2	1	0	5	2	5
Kinlochshiel	4	2	1	1	10	9	5
Fort William	3	1	2	0	5	2	4
Inveraray	3	2	0	1	5	6	4
Bute	4	0	3	1	3	7	3
Kingussie	4	1	0	3	8	14	2
Glenorchy	4	1	0	3	5	11	2
Kilmallie	4	0	1	3	5	9	1

Marine Harvest North Division 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Beaulieu	4	3	1	0	13	7	7
Skye	4	3	0	1	11	6	6
Lochaber	3	2	1	0	13	3	5
Inverness	4	0	2	2	5	9	2
Lochcarron	4	0	2	2			

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Carpet Fitters retain league title

INDOOR FOOTBALL

THE CARPET Fitters retained the Atlantis Leisure Works League after a 7-3 victory over nearest challengers The Oban Times.

Atlantis Leisure and the Carpet Fitters will meet in the final game of the season and Atlantis must win by at least three goals to have a chance of leapfrogging The Oban Times into second place.

Oban High School have won the bottom league, following a split in the table.

Results: Carpet Fitters 7, Oban Times 3; Atlantis 8, RM Builders 3; Emergency Services 6, Oban Electrics 1.

The league cup semi-finals are still to be played: Oban Times v Atlantis and Carpet Fitters v Oban High School.

Group A	P	W	D	L	Pts
Carpet Fitters	9	8	1	0	25
Oban Times	10	7	0	3	21
Atlantis	9	6	0	3	18
RM Builders	10	5	1	4	16

Group B	P	W	D	L	Pts
High School	10	6	0	4	18
Emergency	10	4	0	6	12
Hotels	10	2	0	8	6
OES	10	0	0	10	0

Kilmore are just champion!

CARPET BOWLS

A SUCCESSFUL season for Kilmore saw them lift the Lorn Carpet Bowling League title and the Knockout Cup.

The Knockout Cup was played at league runners-up Cairnbaan on March 27 and Easdale were the beaten finalists by six points to two.

However, Cairnbaan prevented a Kilmore treble when they beat them in the final of the MacGregor Cup, played at Kilmelford on March 24.

Final league standings:

Kilmore	76
Cairnbaan	58
Benderloch	57
North Connell	49
Easdale	42
Connell	30
Taynuilt	24

Podium finish for Connell bike racer

'In the fast corners I could just reel people in so quickly'

CONNELL racer John McPhee kicked off the new CEV Buckler 250cc four-stroke Moto3 era with the best result of his career to date - a podium finish in the season-opening race.

The Racing Steps Foundation backed KRP rider mastered tricky damp conditions at the Circuito de Jerez last weekend to take a long-awaited podium finish in Spain and give his all-new KRP Honda M3-01 bike a fitting race debut.

McPhee, who qualified third yesterday, made a poor getaway when the lights went under dropping down to eleventh.

The tired start left the RSF rider mounting a determined comeback which paid rapid dividends and by the end of lap four he was up to fifth.

The 2011 CEV 125GP runner-up, Alex Marquez, was

dispensed with on the following lap, leaving McPhee free to close in on the Spaniard's Monlau team-mate Lorenzo Baldassarri.

The Italian took a further five laps to reel in and overhaul before high-siding out of contention altogether.

The clinical dismissal of the two Monlau riders left McPhee in no-man's land behind the runaway leaders.

From that point on the 17-year-old switched to safety mode, maintaining his concentration and race pace to take the chequered flag in third place.

Fellow RSF rider Wayne Ryan claimed 16th place after starting from 33rd on the grid. Team-mate Fraser Rogers, who was forced to pit with a down-on-power engine which cut out after three laps, eventually re-joined the race to finish 24th.

MOTOR CYCLING

McPhee - who has not finished on the podium since riding in the British 125GP Championship in 2010 - was quick to heap praise on the new KRP-designed bike.

'It was fantastic. It could maybe do with a couple of slight suspension adjustments but for a brand new chassis it was just brilliant out there today.'

'In the fast corners I could just reel people in so quickly. It's just really stable and great to ride. It's been a while now since I've stood on the podium; fifth in the CEV 125GP Championship was my best finish last year. So it was a great feeling to be back up there again today.'

'It was great to celebrate with my mum and dad and I want to thank them for everything they have done for my career.'



Thumbs up from Connell's John McPhee after his podium finish at the Circuito de Jerez. t14mcphee20

Top class show jumping training

SHOW JUMPING

EQUESTRIANS in Argyll were delighted to receive top class training recently from International show jumper Nigel Springer.

Nigel, who has successfully competed both overseas and at home in the UK, was at Lunga Stables in Craobh Haven to deliver his second masterclass in show jumping.

As a level two accredited instructor, Nigel was well equipped to deal with the high turnout of horses and riders, each with varying ages and abilities.

The training event was deemed a resounding success by both local horse riders and Nigel has now agreed to make his training in Mid Argyll a regular event.

The training is becoming so popular that two venues are now necessary to cater for the growing interest; in the north, riders are welcomed at the superb facilities of the Craig Family at Lettershuna Riding Centre, in Appin, and in Mid Argyll, at Lunga Riding Stables, with grateful thanks to owner Susan Wood.

Nigel's next event is booked for March 31 at Lettershuna Riding Centre, Appin, and April 1 at Lunga Riding Stables.

The training is open to anyone and spectators are very welcome. To book a training slot or for more information call Sara on 01852 500657 or email: westcoastequestrian@gmail.com

Saints youths - results and fixtures

YOUTH FOOTBALL

LAST weekend's results: Kipatrik 2 v Under 15s 5.

Saints scorers were Mattie Kelly (2), Fraser MacFarlane (2) and Paul McFatrige.

Under 13s, 14s and 16s had no fixtures.

Due to the Easter holidays there are no youth games scheduled for this weekend.

Tobermory golf

GOLF

JUNIOR April Medal: 1 Lewis Brown, 87-26-61; 2 Ross MacCrone, 82-20-62; 3 William MacCrone, 74-09-65.

Gents April Medal: 1 Iain Wilshire 80-17-63, 2 Donald Alan Maclean (Do Do) 85-19-66, 3 John Weir 81-12-69.

Ladies Winter Stapleford Final: Olive Brown, Winter Eclectic: Doris Hargreaves.

Taynuilt Golf Club

GOLF

TAYNUILT Golf Club ARC Shield played on April 1: 1 Lewis Hutchison, 42 pts (19); 2 Fraser Inglis, 38 pts (7); 3 Jim Cox, 37 pts (15).

Islay Golf Club

GOLF

MRS MacIntyre Trophy: 1 David Livingstone, 2 Colin Robertson, 2up; 3 Robert Shaw, 1up.

April Medal: 1 Iain MacCuaig, 76 less 7 net 69; 2 David Livingstone, 77 less 8 net 69; 3 Arthur Holyoake, 75 less 5 net 70. Css 71.

Oban High win South of Scotland tournament

OBAN High School clinched this season's South of Scotland Schools Tournament in the final round of the competition last Thursday on home turf.

Held at Mossfield Park, Oban were in the driving seat to win the S1 - S3 tournament, which is held over three venues.

Teams from Oban, Douglas, Inverkeithing, Lochgilphead and for the first time, Dunoon took to the field looking to overhaul Oban's lead from the first two rounds.

However in what proved to be the deciding game of the day

SCHOOL SHINTY

Oban battled back from one goal down to beat Douglas to win the tournament outright.

New South of Scotland Shinty Development Officer Euan McMurdo said the teams that participated demonstrated all that is good about shinty with some hard tackling, fine stickwork and exciting end-to-end action.

Euan thanked all the teams for competing and Active Schools for helping to organise the event.

Drastic medical procedure could allow shinty player an early return to the game he loves

AN ARGYLL shinty player has undergone a drastic medical procedure to allow a quick return to action.

Kyles Athletic star Sandy Macvicar has had nerves cut in his arm in a bid to numb the pain of a shattered wrist, which originally meant major surgery and a two-season spell on the sidelines.

Operation

The interim operation means the defender could be back playing shinty within a month.

The 20-year-old joiner said: 'If it means getting back on the

shinty pitch then it will be worth it.'

'It's fairly risk-free; it numbs the back of the wrist and hopefully if it takes the pain away then it won't be sore playing shinty and I might not have to have an operation until 10 years down the line.'

'I'll also be able to get back to work sooner.'

Sandy aggravated his injury last season by playing through the pain barrier in a bid to maintain his team's bid for league and cup glory last season. His exploits earned him the nickname 'Full

Shinty' within the Kyles dressing room.

Sandy will find out in a week's time whether or not the procedure has been successful, and if it is, Kyles fans could see the tough-tackling defender back on the park far sooner than expected.

Welcomed

Kyles have made a good start to the season despite suffering a number of losses to the squad, but the return of Sandy would be welcomed by the Tighnabruach faithful.

Sandy said: 'I feel our start has

SHINTY

been excellent; we've lost a lot of players but I rate our chances as good as ever.

'We went close last year and I don't see why we cannot be challenging again this season; the boys we have at the moment are doing really well.'

'If I don't get back soon then there won't be a place for me in the first team.'

Kyles currently sit second in the Orion Group Premiership after four games.

Athletic prove to be a Thorn in the flesh - again!

Scottish Amateur League Premier Division **Thorn Athletic 1 Oban Saints 1**

LOCHINCH, the Strathclyde Police Sports Fields in Pollok Park was the venue for this premier division league match between Thorn Athletic and Oban Saints.

The teams have played each other on numerous occasions over the last few seasons in both league and cup games with the Oban side still to record a victory over their Johnstone opponents. The games have always been close, normally ending in draws or Thorn winning by the odd goal. The teams drew 1-1 in Oban earlier in the season.

It was a determined Saints squad who travelled in the hope of recording their first win against their rivals, but again Thorn had the Indian sign over the Oban lads with the game ending in a 1-1 draw.

But Saints must be kicking themselves for not heading back up the road with all three points as they were the better team on

the day and Thorn have keeper Liam McWilliams to thank for a string of five saves.

The home side created a chance as early as the second minute but thankfully for Saints Craig McGlone's shot whistled inches over the bar. This was a warning the visitors defence took on board as after this they restricted the Thorn attack to very few scoring chances.

Saints took the lead in the eighth minute when Willie Gemmell fired in one of his trademark long throws which was met by Keith Millar and the Saints skipper glanced the ball high into the net past a helpless Liam McWilliams.

The game was evenly balanced as the half wore on, but in general the defences were on top although Thorn striker Paul Jamieson was unlucky to see an effort come back off the post before Marc MacCallum booted the ball clear.

The visitors had a great chance to increase their lead after some good work in midfield from

Myles McAuley, Keith Millar and Willie Gemmell resulted in the ball being played through to



Keith Millar

on-form striker Donald Campbell who raced clear on goals, but this time the Saints front man failed to find the back of the net after Thorn keeper Liam McWilliams made a great save with his legs, knocking the ball away for a corner.

Saints were in control of the

game, but they lost a bad goal in the 61st minute when Thorn were awarded a corner. The ball was fired across the face of the goals and in attempting to clear Chris Graham was unlucky to see the ball come off his head and end up in the back of the net.

Perhaps a shout from keeper Graham Douglas who was standing right behind him might have prevented the goal.

Saints were stung by this setback and Thorn were having the better of the game at this stage.

However, the Oban lads got back on track and started taking the game to their opponents and Thorn have their keeper to thank for a couple of good saves.

The home side lost the services of Euan Kiel, who had come on as a substitute with a nasty leg injury after an innocuous looking tackle. The ambulance was called for and it was later learned that Euan had broken his leg. Everybody at Oban Saints wish Euan a speedy recovery.

The Oban lads laid siege on the Thorn goal as the clock ran

FOOTBALL

down and came close on three occasions, the home side blocked a goal-bound effort on the line, Keith Millar fired over the bar and keeper Liam McWilliams, who had a great game, made another important save. Saints tried everything they knew to get the winner but the final whistle sounded and their bogey team had done it again.

Manager Iain Jackson was happy enough with the performance, but not the final result. He said: 'I thought we had the better scoring chances and were the better team on the day, but it's goals that count and we just couldn't get a winner. Thorn are our bogey team, and I suppose it was a point away from home against one of the sides who will be in the shake-up at the end of the season but as far as I'm concerned we should have won all three points.'

Saints have no fixture this Saturday due to the Easter holiday weekend.

Nine dinghies turn out for Oban Sailing Club's Icicle Series

SAILING

A MUCH cooler force 3-4 NW wind on the second day of Oban Sailing Club's Icicle Series on Sunday was a far cry from the previous week's summer-like weather.

Nine dinghies turned out and enjoyed two fast races over the afternoon.

In the Fast Handicap Class 3, Jamie Chapman in the Laser Radial 'Zzaap' continued his winning run from last week, winning both races from Chris and Rory Dowd in the Fireball 'Wind the Bobbin', with Cathy Winterton in her Laser Radial 'After 8' taking third place in the first race, and Ben Carter and Thomas Spence in the Buzz 'CKOne' in third in the second race.

In the Slow Handicap Class 4, Race 3 was won by Jamie

Snailair in his Laser 4.7 'Wave-length', with Tierney Carter in second place and Thomas Smith in third, both sailing Laser 4.7s.

In race 4 Tierney Carter found a bit more speed and won by a good margin from Thomas Smith with Jamie Sinclair in third.

Overall this puts Jamie Chapman in the lead in Class 3 for the series, with Chris and Rory Dowd in second and Ben Carter and Thomas Spence in third.

In Class 4 there is now a tie for first place between Jamie Sinclair and Tierney Carter.

Third place is very open with four boats in close contention.

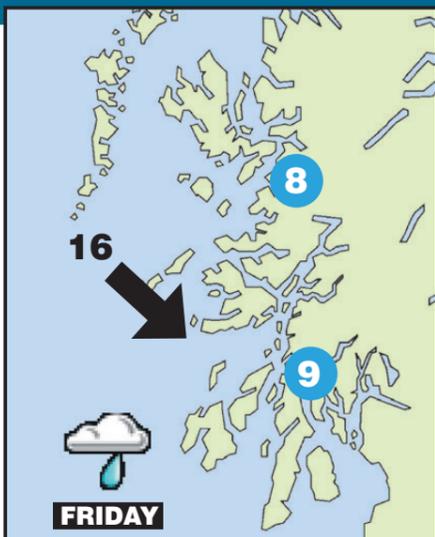
The Icicle series continues for the next two Sundays with a 2pm first start.

Weather

Thursday	Light rain Winds light west, north westerly Temperatures 7°C to 9°C
Friday	Light rain Winds moderate west, north westerly Temperatures 6°C to 9°C.
Weekend	Light rain
Outlook	Winds moderate west, north westerly Temperatures 8°C to 10°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate



Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, April 5, 2012** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur 04.30	3.8 10.59 0.8 16.58 3.8 22.55 0.5	
Fri 05.08	4.1 11.35 0.5 17.31 4.0 23.39 0.2	
Sat 05.46	4.2 12.12 0.4 18.06 4.1 *** **	
Sun 00.22	0.1 06.24 4.2 12.51 0.3 18.43 4.1	
Mon 01.08	0.2 07.03 4.0 13.33 0.4 19.24 4.0	
Tues 01.55	0.3 07.44 3.8 14.17 0.6 20.07 3.8	
Wed 02.44	0.6 08.27 3.5 15.06 0.8 20.55 3.5	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrisaig	-5.35	Portree	+0.55
Campbeltown	-5.30	Tobermory	+0.16
Crinan	-0.47	Dover	+5.30
Islay Port Ellen	2.00		
Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Mallaig	+0.25		

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The following pages are from the Fort William (Northern) Edition of The Oban Times.

The Oban Times prints two editions of the paper. There is the main edition as well as the Fort William (Northern) Edition.

Sometimes pages that appear in the Fort William edition do not appear in the main edition (and vice versa).

As an electronic subscriber you get the main edition plus the pages that appear in the Northern edition.

The Oban Times

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hotel break giveaway

Check out our new feature on page 14

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Isle of Skye under threat - from rabbits

ONE OF Skye's most famous landmarks is crumbling faster than expected - because of burrowing rabbits.

A new report also says the pests are nibbling fragile alpine plants along the scenic 15-mile Trotternish Ridge, which runs north from Portree to Flodigarry.

Erosion
In the study for Scottish Natural Heritage, Macaulay Institute researchers said fewer sheep would reduce erosion rates - but warned if too many were removed tall grasses would eventually smother protected rare plants.

However, slowing erosion on rocky slopes in the Special Area of Conservation was judged more important than plant protection - but culling rabbits could prove costly.

The researchers said: 'It is recognised that controlling rabbit numbers could be an expensive exercise which would require an ongoing commitment of manpower and finance.'

'The possible benefits, in relation to the costs of rabbit control on a scale that would achieve noticeable benefits therefore require greater consideration before further action is taken.'

'In order to reduce levels of animal related erosion on screes and bare erosion scars, it is considered appropriate to reduce sheep stocking rates across the site from around 0.6 sheep per hectare at present to around 0.25 sheep per hectare. It was 'unclear' which townships the sheep belonged to, the report added.

The rabbit problem is particularly bad around the ridge's highest point, The Storr. It is thought the animals were introduced in the 19th century.



Brothers Bryan, aged 12, Jay, aged eight and two-year-old Alfey Donaldson enjoyed getting their sled out again in Upper Achintore, Fort William. 20_f14snow01

Winter returns to the North

AFTER basking in sunshine last week during an unseasonable heat wave, much of the west Highlands woke up to a thick covering of snow on Tuesday morning.

At Roy Bridge, Father Tom Wynne reported three inches of the white stuff while the higher parts of Fort William received a similar covering. Main roads were kept clear after gritters were sent out on Monday night.

With the schools closed for the Easter holidays, youngsters were free to build snowmen, go sledging and have snowball fights.

The return of wintry weather follows the warmest March ever recorded in Scotland.

One option would be creating a single management structure for the entire Nevis and Glencoe National Scenic Area (NSA).

The NSA covers much of eastern Lochaber, a slice of western Perthshire and Ben Starav in Argyll, north of Dalmally.

Better co-ordination of activities such as funding bids and tourism initiatives within the NSA could result, Mr Seccombe claimed.

'We are still at a fairly early stage,' he said. But community council chairman Mel MacAskill slammed the lack of consultation from Fort William-based OCUK, Nevis Partnership, Scottish Natural Heritage and the other groups behind the move.

He said: 'The first meeting to do with this was way back in 2010 - it was 2012 before anybody in this area knew about this.'

'We should have been consulted from day one. 'More than half Lochaber had no say in this and that to me is downright disgusting.'

'A lot of damage can be done in two years - such as less will to get involved.'

'They did not want our opinion in the first place, so why should we be involved now?'

Ballachulish oppose 'national park' option

South Lochaber 'being ignored' claims community council meeting

CONROVERSIAL proposals to combine parts of scenic Lochaber as a single entity to rival Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park have been given a frosty reception in Ballachulish.

Ignored
Consultant Peter Seccombe of Gloucestershire-based Red Kite Environment outlined the move to Ballachulish Community Council (BCC) on Tuesday night - but had to field accusations that south Lochaber had been ignored.

Mr Seccombe said his contract, with the Nevis Partnership, the Outdoor Capital of the UK (OCUK) and other organisations, was to gauge opinion on extending 'partnership working' in the Ben Nevis area to Glencoe and Rannoch Moor.

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

Mr Seccombe said: 'This has made my job much more difficult because clearly not enough communication has taken place. You should have been consulted before this.'

Mr MacAskill suggested another reason for the park move - a lack of money.

'Nevis Partnership are short of funds, and if they create a national park it would allow them a revenue stream along with the OCUK,' he said.

'We have deep concerns about turning the area into a national park.'

'The Loch Lomond National Park objected to the gold mine - there's an example of a national park hindering local jobs. It's another quango telling people what they can and can't do.'

'We don't have a national park agenda,' Mr Seccombe said. 'We want to maximise the options for your livelihoods.'

'I think there's justification in the view that South Lochaber is not given much thought by Fort William. My understanding is that Glencoe is not any happier than we are.'

Mr Seccombe said: 'This has made my job much more difficult because clearly not enough communication has taken place. You should have been consulted before this.'

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'We don't have a national park agenda,' Mr Seccombe said. 'We want to maximise the options for your livelihoods.'

BCC member, refrigeration engineer Kevin Smith said: 'It has taken them two years to consult five of their own local communities.'

'I wonder what's behind that - why have they kept us out of the loop?'

Mr Seccombe replied: 'I think I would like to know that as well.'

Meanwhile, Glencoe and Glen Etive Community Council will hold a meeting on April 24 to gauge local opinion.

Chairman Alister Sutherland told *The Oban Times*: 'This initiative comes from Fort William interests. They have contacted the community councils in this area to see if there's an interest from our point of view.'

'It will come down to the people who may be in line to get grants and people who may feel their activities might be affected in some way.'

John Riley, chairman of Strathfillan Community Council, which covers the Tyndrum and Crianlarich area, will speak on life within the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

Duror and Kentallen call for better bus links with Fort William

RESIDENTS of Duror and Kentallen have called for the villages to get an improved bus service to Fort William.

No Sunday service

Local woman Connie Anderson told a meeting of Lochaber Transport Forum in Lochaber House only two buses a day run to and from Fort William, and none on Sundays.

She contrasted that with nearby Kinlochleven, which is serviced by 14 buses a day and three on Sundays.

'Very difficult'

Ms Anderson said: 'If we get the bus to Fort William in the morning we can either spend 50 minutes in town, which isn't much time, or we can spend eight hours, which is far too long.'

'It's very difficult for people who don't drive or who want to drive less to get their groceries.'

She added: 'If the buses were more user friendly, or there was more of them, I'm sure a lot more people would use them.'

David Beaton, Stagecoach operations manager in Skye and Lochaber, said many of the Kinlochleven buses were Highland Council subsidised routes which his company could not change.

He said: 'I will have a look at our daytime services and see what I can do, but I can't promise anything.'

Meanwhile the meeting in Lochaber House also heard a 'green' transport scheme launched in Mallaig last year has more than doubled its membership since July - and is planning to spread out its reach across west Lochaber.

Expanding

West Wheels car club, which has two vehicles based at the Lochaber port, now has 42 members and corporate deals have been set up with local accommodation providers to involve tourists in the scheme.

Club representative Mick Rodgers told delegates the club was looking to build on achievements so far.

He said: 'We're looking to expand over the next four or five months.'

'We want to get another car to cover down to Arisaig.'

'Then hopefully we can have four or five cars in the community - to south Skye, Mallaig, Morar, and as far as we can.'

Club members have access to a Ford Focus and a Ford Fusion, which they are able to book out when they need it, with the club taking on the responsibility for ownership, maintenance and insurance.

Mr Rodgers also said the club will have full ownership of the two cars by the end of next week, and plan to get an extra car for every 15 new members that join the scheme.

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Junior piping success at Fort William

YOUNGSTERS from across Lochaber gathered in Fort William on Saturday to compete in Lochaber Piping Society's junior competition.

The under 18s event at Lochaber High School drew an entry of 42 - slightly up on last year.

Chanter playing in the morning was followed by some closely contested bagpipe competitions going on until late in the afternoon.

Roy Bridge youngster Sandy Cameron picked up the trophy for scoring the most points on the day, while Laura Paterson was the highest scoring girl.

Lochaber Piping Society secretary Morag Melville said: 'It was a really excellent day, and there was a great level of piping. Sandy Cameron got 99 points in the piobaireachd, which is quite an achievement at that age.'

Full results in next week's Oban Times.

Winners in the chanter competitions: Kayleigh MacMillan, Michelle MacKinnon, Alistair MacRae, Ruairidh Shaw and Hamish Dreman. 20_f14pipe01

Police target uninsured drivers in national crackdown

NORTHERN Constabulary is this week targeting uninsured drivers as part of a national crackdown involving all Scotland's police forces.

Chief Superintendent Stevie Mackay said the dodgers were 'a danger' on the road.

He said: 'They have no respect for other road users and our experience has shown that they are more likely to be involved in other types of criminal activity.'

The campaign ends tomorrow.

Isle of Eigg pupils to get swimming lessons after councillors agree funding

LOCHABER councillors have awarded Eigg Primary School parent council £650 from their discretionary budget towards the Isle of Eigg Swimming Project.

The cash will help pay for swimming lessons.

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Disqualified driver caught near Spean Bridge is sent to prison for a year

A MAN who was caught driving on a Lochaber road while disqualified for a fourth time has been jailed for a year and banned from driving for eight years.

Gilbert MacAulay, pled guilty to driving on the A82 at Achnabobane, near Spean Bridge while disqualified and without insurance in the early hours of March 26.

Harthill, Shotts, also admitted failing to provide two breath specimens at Fort William Police Station, Fort William Sheriff Court heard.

area decided to pull MacAulay over because of 'the manner of his driving'.

ing the machine had not been properly calibrated. Defence agent Hamish Melrose said the car belonged to MacAulay's son.

his weekend work in Lochaber. 'He clearly should have known better.'

serious.' The sheriff sentenced MacAulay to four months in prison for failing to provide breath specimens and eight months for driving while disqualified.

Fire threat court case postponed

THE TRIAL of a Fort William man accused of threatening to set fire to a police officer's car has been postponed until May 24 to allow the defence team more time to prepare.

Antonio Sabiu had been due to stand trial at Fort William Sheriff Court last Thursday. Appearing from custody, the 54-year-old pled not guilty to behaving in a threatening and abusive manner by telling a woman he was going to burn the officer's car during a phone call to Inverness Prison from his home.

The charge also alleges he made threats of violence towards the constable in the presence of other officers.

Sabiu, of The Willows, Achintore Road, was on licence after being released from prison two weeks previously after serving three years for supplying class B drugs, the court heard.

Sheriff Mungo Bovey released Sabiu on bail to his father's house at 4 Place of Bonhill, Alexandria.

Beinn Mhor windfarm rights are acquired

INTERNATIONAL Power has announced it has acquired the rights to develop the Beinn Mhor wind farm on Lewis.

The 39-turbine development will have a capacity of up to 140MW, equivalent to providing electricity to 100,000 households.

Construction is expected to start by 2013 and the wind farm will be fully operational in 2016. The project includes a commitment to the Western Isles transmission link to the mainland, which will be commissioned in 2015 to improve security of supply to the islands.

Lottery draw

A JACKPOT of £900 is up for grabs next week in Fort William FC's weekly lotto draw. Numbers this week were 1-10-16.



New future for crofting: Environment minister Stewart Stevenson meets the Crofting Commission board for the first time

'A new dynamism' at heart of Crofting Commission

First meeting of newly elected body of commissioners

DEMOCRATIC accountability and 'a new dynamism' will be the new Crofting Commission's guiding principles, commissioners vowed at their first board meeting in Inverness on Tuesday.

The nine commissioners reaffirmed that the panel of assessors and local grazings committees - effectively the commission's eyes and ears on the ground - were vital to ensure the crofting communities it serves were kept in touch with its work.

The commissioners, six of whom were directly elected by crofters last month, will consult widely on their their aims and policies this summer.

Chief executive Nick Reiter said:

'The commissioners were adamant that today marks a new start for crofting regulation, with transparency, consistency and energy as its core. They are determined to make a real and positive difference to crofting and crofters.'

The commissioners also welcomed environment minister Stewart Stevenson's assurance during their first meeting with him on Monday that he would appoint a convener from among them as soon as possible.

All were unanimous in committing to working closely together for the benefit of crofting.

Mr Stevenson said: 'This is a momentous day for crofting as we drive forward the reform

agenda which will secure a sustainable future for crofting. 'The majority of commissioners have been democratically elected by crofters, putting the power directly in the hands of crofters themselves. 'Crofting is part of Scotland's history and culture and the Crofting Commission will ensure that it is also part of Scotland's future.'

The commission, established on April 1, supersedes the Crofters Commission and is charged with meeting the needs of crofters in the 21st century.

It can regulate crofting to ensure crofts are occupied and worked or, if not, made available to those wishing to take up crofting.

The elected commissioners

are Kathleen Sinclair, Shetland; Arnie Pirie, Orkney and Caithness; Donnie Ross, East Highlands; Murdo MacLennan, Western Isles; Ian Macdonald, West Highlands and Colin Kennedy, South West Highlands. They join Susan Walker, William Swann and Sandy Cross who were appointed to the board by the Scottish Ministers.

The Crofting Reform Act 2010 places a duty on the commission to tackle absenteeism and neglect, and address speculation on croft land.

It also establishes a map-based crofting register to define what is croft land and who has rights and responsibilities for that land.

New Zero Waste website goes live

A WEBSITE to help cash-conscious householders in Lochaber and Skye save up to £430 per year by cutting food waste has gone live.

And volunteers from the local Zero Waste Scotland volunteer group are urging residents to go online to see how throwing away food is simply throwing away cash.

Zero-waste volunteer co-ordinator for Lochaber and Skye Annette Meehan is working with Lochaber Environmental Group to promote the initiative.

She told *The Oban Times*: 'Scottish households throw away around 566,000 tonnes of food each year, two-thirds of which was perfectly good food that could have been eaten. Simple steps, such as better planning of meals, correct storing of food, and preparing and cooking the right portion sizes, could save the average household as much as £35 per month - money which could be used to fill up the family car with petrol, or pay the electricity bill.'

For more information visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com.

Camera club invite to first meet

LOCHABER Photographic Society is inviting keen photographers of all ages to its inaugural meeting in the Nevis Centre Studio next Tuesday at 7pm. The idea has met with an enthusiastic response and hopes are high for a good turnout on the night. More information from Kirsteen Bell at kirsteenbell@gmail.com

Special constables required in Lochaber

NORTHERN Constabulary is looking to recruit special constables in Lochaber to provide backup to regular officers.

The Special Constabulary is a reserve of men and women trained in basic police duties.

Sergeant Andy Bilton of Fort William police said: 'It is a highly valued role within our communities and one that is both challenging and rewarding.'

For further information contact Sgt Bilton on 01397 702361 or visit http://www.northernconstabularycareers.co.uk/special_constables/the_special_constabulary.aspx.

Celebrating 12 years of Room 13

ROOM 13 - the international arts studio network which began in Lochaber - is celebrating 12 years of Room 13 Nepal at Caol Youth Centre this evening.

Schools and villages throughout Nepal now have Room 13, thanks to expedition teams involving young people from Caol, Lochside and Lochaber High School.

Members of former Nepal Expedition teams will be guests of honour at the event, which is being hosted by Caol Youth Centre's Duke of Edinburgh volunteers.



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POLICE FILES

House theft

SOMEONE entered a house on Lovat Road, Kinlochleven around 4am on Tuesday, March 27 and stole items from within the premises.

All of the items were subsequently found and recovered, apart from a small amount of cash.

Vandalism

A GROUP of youths on Claggan Road, Fort William around 9.30pm on Tuesday, March 27 are believed to have damaged the driver's side wing mirror of a parked car, before running away.

Vehicle damaged

SOMEONE entered Heather Croft Motor Services compound, Ben Nevis Industrial Estate, Fort William between 6pm on 27 March 27 and 8.30am the following morning and caused extensive damage to a vehicle.

Anyone with helpful information on these incidents can contact Fort William Police Station on 01397702361 or confidentially on 01397702000.

Plantation community open day to view plan

PLANTATION Community Association in Fort William is holding an open day on April 12 at Plantation Community Hall from 2-8pm on plans for a new recreation space behind Pine Grove.

All welcome.

Carbost drama group host night at Portnalong

CARBOST Village Drama Group on Skye is performing 'Custard and Disinfectant and Other Entertainments' at Minginish Village Hall, Portnalong, on Saturday at 7pm for 7.30pm.

All proceeds will go to group funds and tickets will be available at the door. Refreshments are included.

NEWSDESK

01397 703003

International grant aid to boost Steall Gorge path repairs



Heavy use of the path through scenic Steall Gorge in Glen Nevis has caused erosion problems

ESSENTIAL repair works on a path through the Steall Gorge in Glen Nevis have received a boost after landowners the John Muir Trust won an international competition for grant aid.

The trust came top in an

online poll organised by the European Outdoor Conservation Association and scooped £25,000 for urgent repairs to the popular track up to Steall Falls. Fran Lockhart, the Trust's Nevis property manager thanked all those who voted for

the trust's bid.

She said: 'We had stiff competition, including a German charity with around a million members, so it's staggering to have received so much support. 'Steall Gorge is really important to a lot of people, which

is why it's vital to repair the path and keep it safe to use. This money will go a long way towards covering the cost of the work, and helping to protect the adjacent fragile woodland and montane habitats.'

The repairs on the Steall Gorge will reverse existing damage and strengthen spots where there could be a problem in the future.'

The mile-long path winds through Scots pines and birch woodlands in the remote glen south of Fort William.

Glencoe rescue team - saving lives for 50 years

REPORT by STEPHEN NORRIS

GLENCOE Mountain Rescue Team this week marks 50 years of lifesaving exploits since it was formed in early April 1962.

The team owes its existence to world-renowned Glencoe climber Hamish MacInnes and Dr Donald Duff from the Belford Hospital, who back in December 1961 called the first meeting to establish a mountain rescue committee for the Glencoe area.

Four months later the team was officially constituted - and since then has carried out hundreds of rescues in all weathers, night or day.

During its half century of dedicated service, GMRT has saved dozens of lives, bringing down injured climbers or walkers in extreme conditions - often at great risk to themselves.

On other occasions, retrieving people killed by avalanches or in falls has presented a more sombre task.

Many of the original members have sadly passed away, but their legacy lives on in the work of the present 30-strong team, which operates from its fully equipped HQ in Glencoe village.

GMRT leader John Grieve, a member for over 40 years, said while equipment in the 21st century is incomparably better, the ethos remains the same.

He told The Oban Times said: 'It was more dangerous in those days - now we have our own vehicles, helicopter cover and fantastic gear.'

'We have a boat and diving equipment to carry out river rescues and we have six or seven professional divers. And



Pictured above are members of the Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team during a rescue in Ravens Gully on Buchaille Etive Mor in the 1970s. The team had been called out late one night after a climber slipped and fell on the first pitch up the gully. The photo, taken around 3am the following morning, shows team members about 1,500 feet up. They are holding stretcher ropes while 50 feet above them team leader Hamish MacInnes and Bill Amos, an Edinburgh climber, manoeuvre the stretcher with the injured climber strapped into it out of the gully. Seen in the picture are, left to right: Glencoe man Ronnie Rodger, an engineer at the Lochaber BA works; Sergeant Sandy Whillans, the Scottish Police mountain rescue co-ordinator based at Glencoe; David Gunn from Glencoe; Larry Taylor, a forestry worker from Ballachulish; Constable Nigel Stafford (partly hidden) from Glencoe; Huan Findlay, a Glencoe sheep farmer;

everybody has radios now, so if somebody gets into trouble they can radio everybody else.

'On the medical side, now we take medical intervention onto the hill, just like the best-equipped ambulances would do.

'But the basic ethos has not

changed in that we are local volunteers carrying out a complete emergency service which would stand up against any of the statutory services.'

As volunteers, GMRT are not subject to health and safety rules, which often bind the hands of the

statutory emergency services' managers.

Mr Grieve said: 'You cannot take a certificate in mountain rescue, because it does not exist. If anything's slightly off the beaten track, we get the call.'

'From a local point of view, we

have 30 people in a small area like Glencoe who will turn out and go to the aid of anybody in trouble.

'All we have to do is throw the gear in the back of the vehicle - you never know when you can save somebody's life.'

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Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association's development at Burnside, Plockton

Skye and Lochalsh housing projects held as Scottish model

Award-winning Edinbane and Plockton small-scale rural housing developments regarded as inspirational

TWO LOCHALSH and Skye Housing Association (LSHA) developments are being used by the Scottish Government as examples of the kind of small schemes rural Scotland needs. The developments, at Edinbane and Plockton, are both featured

on a new government website set up 'to promote good quality housing design and placemaking throughout Scotland'. Sustainability LSHA's four affordable rent houses at Coishletter, Edinbane are the only Highland entry on

the website for rural, small-scale development. The homes, built to high standards of insulation and sustainability, won both a Saltire Housing Design Award and a Scottish Home 'Rural Development of the Year' Award in 2008. And 24 affordable rent and

shared equity homes at Burnside in Plockton is the sole example in the website's 'Masterplan - Rural' category. Burnside, described as 'a new typology for rural housing', sits in a sensitive position on the edge of Plockton and won the Scottish

Home 'Rural Development of the Year' Award in 2011. LSHA chief executive Lachie MacDonald said: 'We are delighted that our developments are providing inspiration for housing professionals, architects and individuals alike.'

'We recognise the important role that our organisation can play in contributing to the social, economic and cultural well being of the whole community and high-quality, well-designed, affordable housing is an essential element in that.'

North police solving more crimes than ever

NORTHERN Constabulary is solving more crimes than ever before, latest figures show.

From April 2011 to February 2012 the detection rate stood at 67.3 per cent - the highest ever achieved and one of the best in the UK.

Central Division - Ross and Cromarty, Western Isles, Lochaber, Skye and Lochalsh - saw the smallest increase of 0.93 per cent and the lowest detection rate in the force area of 64.59 per cent. The statistics also reveal 974 fewer crimes were reported, based on a three-year average.

On Highlands and Islands roads, 10 fewer people were killed. There were 37 fewer serious casualties and 157 fewer slight casualties.

The force has also achieved a 100 per cent detection rate of drug possession and supply offences, murder and

attempted murder. Chief Constable George Graham said: 'We are in the midst of reform at this time and during these challenging times for the force, it is a credit to the hard work and dedication of police officers and police staff that they have delivered such excellent results.'

Police are warning west coast residents about credit card fraudsters.

The alert comes after local people were targeted by callers pretending to represent one of the main high street banks. Scammers tell cardholders that cards are invalid, then ask for personal details including the PIN number. Police say under no circumstances should a PIN number be provided over the phone. Contact Fort William Police Station on 01397 702361 or confidentially on 01397702000.



Banavie Primary School held an Easter-themed design competition last Thursday. Children brought in a variety of cards, Easter eggs, hats, chicks and other colourful items for judging. Pictured above are Primary 2 children with some of the best entries from their class. 20_r14banavie01

2,300-year old harp found on Isle of Skye

Earliest stringed instrument find in Western Europe

THE REMAINS of the earliest stringed instrument ever found in Western Europe have been unearthed during an excavation on south Skye.

The wooden fragment, dating to more than 2,300 years ago, was discovered in the High Pasture Cave in Strath.

The precious artefact has been burnt and broken, but notches on the bridge where strings would have been placed are easy to distinguish.

Music archaeologists Dr Graeme Lawson and Dr John Purser studied the fragment and believe it was once part of a lyre.

Dr Purser, who is a Gaelic graduate of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and runs a croft on south Skye with his wife Bar at Drinan, near Elgol, said: 'What, for me, is so exciting about this find is that it confirms the continuity of a love of music amongst the Western Celts.'

'Stringed instruments, being usually made of wood, rarely survive in the archaeological record - but they are referred to in the very earliest literature, and, in various forms, were to feature on many stone carvings in Scotland and Ireland, and to become emblematic in both



Music from the past: Cabinet Secretary for Culture Fiona Hyslop holds up the fragment from the ancient lyre

countries. 'Such an instrument would traditionally have been used in a number of contexts, but in particular for accompanying song, declamation and recitation. The panegyric [public tribute to a person] tradition is deeply embedded in Gaelic culture, and within that tradition includes praise songs, funeral elegies, and incitement.'

Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop revealed the findings at AOC Archaeology, where the bridge is being conserved.

She said: 'This is an incredible find and it clearly demonstrates how our ancestors were using music and ritual in their lives. The evidence shows that Skye was a gathering place over generations and that it obviously had an important role to play in the celebration and ritual of life more than 2,000 years ago.'

Local MSP Dave Thompson said: 'The archaeologists and historians involved in this project are to be commended for their hard work and enthusiasm in uncovering our national, regional and local history.'

Fort William Sheriff Court

Man pleads guilty to defrauding train company of over £90,000

A MAN defrauded First Scotrail of more than £90,000 over two and a half years while working for a Fort William company.

Michael Durant, now working as a waiter in England, pled guilty to embezzling £91,447.75 between May 8, 2008 and January 25, 2011.

The 52-year-old was working for a company in Glen Nevis Business Park for whom he carried out services on behalf of First Scotrail, Fort William Sheriff Court heard.

Sheriff Mungo Bovey deferred sentencing Durant, of Mount Court, Citadel Road, Dover, until May 9 for reports.

Lochyside teenager remanded in custody after alleged assault

A LOCHYSIDE teenager has denied carrying out a violent attack on a woman in a house in Fort William.

Appearing at Fort William Sheriff Court from custody, Damian McAuley, of St John's Church House, St John's Road, pled not guilty to assaulting the woman on March 5.

The 19-year-old is accused of seizing her and banging her head against a toilet, throwing her against a wall, pushing her against a freezer, prodding her in the eyes, pulling at her mouth with his fingers, seizing hold of her by her clothing and pushing her about, all to her injury.

McAuley was kept in custody until his trial, which is due to be held on April 10.

Fort William man fined after racial row over Ballachulish parking

A FORT William man has been fined £270 after racially abusing a man during an argument over a parking space.

Ronald Plunkett, of 56 Lochaber Road, pled guilty to making a racially aggravated comment to the man at Cormorant Cottage, Lettermore, near Ballachulish on October 31.

The 57-year-old fisherman was also ordered to pay £300 compensation to his victim at Fort William Sheriff Court.

Plunkett's son William, aged 26, was cleared of a charge of headbutting the man during the incident.

Caol girl who stole purse fined

A CAOL teenager has been fined £300 and ordered to be of good behaviour for one year for stealing a purse at the BA Club.

Rebecca Denny, aged 17, of 9 Glendessary Terrace, had denied the theft on October 29, but was found guilty after a trial at Fort William Sheriff Court.

Fort William man told to behave for a year after drunken row

A FORT William man has been ordered to be of good behaviour for one year after becoming aggressive during a drunken row with his wife.

Appearing from custody, Latvian Olegs Ovsjankins, of 77 Kennedy Road, admitted behaving in a threatening or abusive manner by shouting, swearing and acting aggressively on March 27.

Fort William Sheriff Court heard the 25-year-old had been drinking most of the day and started arguing with his wife at around 10pm.

Fiscal Alison Wylie: 'The argument escalated, with him shouting and swearing and being aggressive towards her.' She said the woman was 'crying and nearly hysterical' when police officers arrived.

Shopmobility volunteers needed

SHOPMOBILITY Lochaber, a charity which helps people with mobility problems get around, is looking for volunteers to allow them to open on Saturdays.

The charity's centre in Fort William is moving to new summer opening hours from Monday, and will be open from 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday.

If you can help in any way call 01397 700051 or email at shopmobility1@madasafish.com

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Death of Oban tourism pioneer - David Webster

DAVID Webster, one of Oban's proudest adopted sons and a pioneer in attracting tourists to the town, passed away on Sunday. He was 87.

Mr Webster was originally from Tunbridge Wells but moved to Argyll in the 1950s, firstly to Dunoon, before relocating and settling in Oban in 1956.

He was first elected to Oban Town Council in 1966, starting a political career that would last more than 30 years.

He was a leading figure in Scotland's tourism and was a founding member of the Oban, Mull and District Tourism Association, before going on to work with the Argyll, Isles, Loch Lomond, Stirling and Trossachs Tourist Board.

An active businessman, he revamped the Phoenix Cinema, renaming it the Highland Theatre for its opening in 1988. He continued to run two camera shops in the town.

He is survived by his wife since 1980, Margaret, and children Roger, Paul, Karen and Gavin.

The funeral will be held in Cardross Crematorium today (Thursday).

Oban gains faster broadband link

MORE than 5,600 homes and businesses in Oban should now have access to faster broadband, BT has announced.

The upgrade of copper lines means download speeds of up to 20Mbps should now be available.

Dunoon councillor dies after illness

DUNOON councillor, Alistair MacAlister, has died after a prolonged illness.

The 81-year old was a popular figure in the area and had declared his intention to defend the seat he won in 2007 during this May's local council election.

He passed away in the early hours of Friday morning.

A spokesperson for the SNP, who he represented, expressed the party's 'great sadness' at his passing.

NEWSDESK
01397 703003



Harrison Hornby, 3, Bethan Neil, 2 and Alfie Byers, 3 are delighted their group can keep going. 16.114toy01

Toy Cupboard gains welcome boost

CHILDREN in Oban can rest a bit easier after the town's favourite playtime organisation received a big boost to its funding.

The Toy Cupboard, which hosts play sessions and acts as a toy library, received a cheque for £1,000 from West Highland Housing Association last week. The charity's chairwoman, Sally Weaser, gratefully received the funds.

"a lifeline to parents who need support - or even just friendship."
chairwoman
The Toy Cupboard

She said: 'This will really help

with our running costs, it takes about £11,000 a year to keep the Toy Cupboard going.'

Sally, who has been attending the play sessions the charity holds twice a week for the past six and a half years, described the Toy Cupboard's work as a 'lifeline' to parents who need support - or even just friendship.

She added: 'You know when you walk through the door there

will be a friendly face and a cup of tea. The children love playing with each other and it is a really great place to meet people in the same situation as you.'

The Toy Cupboard is open to everyone and membership is just £5 a year with play sessions from as little as £1. But Sally is keen to stress that money is not a barrier: 'If you can't afford it, you don't pay,' she said emphatically.

Rare species stall Tiree's offshore plans

Windfarm blown off course by environmental issues

PROTECTED species such as the corncrake, great northern diver and basking sharks have blown the controversial Argyll Array off course.

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

Protected species
Scottish Power Renewables, owned by Spanish energy giant Iberdrola, this week announced a minimum 18-month delay to the proposed 180 - 300 turbine wind farm, with planning permission now not being sought until late 2014.

No reason was initially given for the delay and speculation remains the move is due to the approaching independence referendum.

However, the company has now said it has postponed its plans to allow further discussions with statutory consultees, the RSPB and Scottish Natural Heritage,

over the presence of protected species.

Their concern stems from the Special Protected Area (SPA) designations existing in the area the Argyll Array would be built.

'Show-stopper'
Karl Hughes, from campaign group No Tiree Array, says the presence of internationally important species in the vicinity could be a 'show-stopper'.

Responding to Marine Scotland's scoping opinion document on the Scottish Government's Environmental Impact Assessment, RSPB said Tiree's population of corncrakes,

an endangered species, would be 'likely' to pass through the area in large numbers, having 'potential for impact on SPAs for this species'.

Tiree is also described as the core holding of the species, with more than 30 per cent of the UK's population resident there.

Meanwhile, the shallow waters off Tiree are home to 42 per cent of the wintering population of the great northern diver, a sea-bird listed as red on the endangered species list.

The RSPB points out that surveys by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) indicate the species is likely to be found in numbers that meet the threshold for SPA designation and that SPR should proceed as if the site was proposed as such.

A review of potential sites is currently underway and could see the great northern diver's Tiree habitat designated as a proposed SPA (pSPA) in the coming months.

Simply proposing a site grants it full protected status until government ministers can make a ruling. Their decision can only be based on scientific evidence.

Scottish Natural Heritage, meanwhile, points out the area should be considered a home for marine mammals, such as hump-back and fin whales, and is an important breeding ground for basking sharks.

Mr Hughes said: 'The big issue here is the avian population. The great northern diver far exceeds the criteria to become an SPA and that should be taken into account.'

A spokesperson for SPR said: 'The delay is to do with the statutory consultees - there is more work to be done.'

'It is nothing to do with independence referendum.'

Toploader and Red Hot Chilli Pipers to headline Tiree fest

HAVING sold more than two million records and recorded one of the most recognisable songs ever released, Toploader will headline this year's Tiree Music Festival.

The band responsible for Dancing in the Moonlight will be joined at the festival by the Red Hot Chilli Pipers, who shot to fame in 2007 after winning primetime TV talent show, When Will I Be Famous.

Toploader's triple platinum album, Onka's Big Moka, was released in 2000, with singles Achilles Heel peaking at eight in the charts.

It was Dancing in the Moonlight, however, that made the band's name, reaching number seven in the charts.

The band had split in 2003,

but reformed to release a third album last year, Only Human.

The Red Hot Chilli Pipers, meanwhile, have enjoyed global success, taking their own brand of 'bag-rock' to the world.

Joining the headline acts at TMF will be Scottish Traditional Music Awards' Live Act of the Year, Skerryvore, and fellow award winners, RURA, rated the STMA's Up and Coming Act of the Year.

Barra's popular Vatersay Boys will make their first ever trip to the island. Other acts include Gunna Sound, Skipinish, Trail West, Emily Smith and Donald MacDonald and The Islands.

This year's festival takes place on July 21-22.

Out and about in Lochaber | **Food & Drink** | **Art** | **What's on**



Lochaber - The Outdoor Capital of the UK - offers visitors and locals alike a wide variety of activities for all ages.
Just a short ferry trip from Mallaig, the Rum National Nature Reserve offers guests the chance to experience wildlife in the area with the seabird boat trip this Saturday. It will be followed by a performance of local songs and stories and after a barbecue the evening will end with a guided walk to the nearby shearwater colony.
Lochaber also offers a number of high-class eateries and places to stay. Situated next to the world famous Caledonian Canal at the Neptune's Staircase locks, Banavie's Moorings Hotel has fantastic views and offers a tranquil atmosphere and quality experience. The hotel will host the Highland Wedding Show on Saturday April 15, a free event giving those planning to get married a chance to pick up tips, advice and great deals for the big day.
The Stables Restaurant on Bank Street, Fort William offers a wide range of Italian food to suit a variety of tastes and an extensive wine list.

Art is thriving in the area, with the international success of Room 13 and the continued popularity of Ardnamurchan-based Resipole Studios.
Room 13 started in Caol Primary School in 1994 and has since spread as far as India, Canada and South Africa. It recently opened a new studio in Caol Youth Centre which gives people of all ages the chance to get involved and try their hand at creating art.
Based at Resipole on the shores of Loch Sunart, Ardnamurchan, Resipole Studios provides an exciting new space for artists to develop, exhibit and promote their work. The studio's spring exhibition opens this weekend.
So as winter gives way to spring, why not get out and about and see what Lochaber has to offer.

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www.nnr-scotland.org.uk
Isle of Rum Community Trust

Woman who robbed blind pensioner is jailed for eight months

A GAMBLING addict who lied to steal a purse from a blind 92 year old woman's Oban home has struck six times before.

Admitted stealing

Homeless Alice McNeil, 56, was jailed for eight months when she appeared at Oban

Sheriff Court on Monday after previously admitting stealing a purse containing £70 from the woman's home on March 12.

Sheriff Ruth Anderson heard McNeil told her victim she was having heart trouble and asked to come into her home for a

glass of water.

After McNeil left the home, the occupant, noticed her purse had been stolen and contacted the police.

Strathclyde Police had previously said she was arrested at Tyndrum on the Glasgow bound

train. She told officers the £70 had been gambled away.

Before sentencing McNeil, Sheriff Ruth Anderson said: 'It's absolutely appalling. Deceiving and stealing from elderly people in their own homes - you can't get much lower than that.'

'It takes away their trust and makes them feel uncomfortable and not safe in their own homes.'

Defending his client, agent Gordon Seaton said her gambling addiction had cost her more than just her liberty,

having been previously given a 13-month combined custodial sentence for breaches of bail and community service, of which she served five months.

Referring to McNeil's latest offence, he said: 'There is no doubt this would have had a

significant effect on the elderly woman, but it's had a significant effect on my client as she has no family left.'

McNeil's sentence was reduced from one of 12 months because she pled guilty at the earliest opportunity.

Police presence to be more visible

EFFORTS are being made to make community policing in Oban more visible after concern was raised by locals.

Local inspector, Brian Auld, told Oban Community Council that recent surveys clearly showed there was a lack of a visible and contactable officer. In response, he has amended the shift patterns of five community constables to be more 'user friendly'.

He said: 'Hopefully, the new patterns will be better for everyone. The new shift patterns commence on April 16.'

Meanwhile, there will be a 'police in the community' event sometime in the next three months at Oban's Corran Halls.

50 hours unpaid work follows racist abuse charge

AN OBAN man was found guilty of uttering racist abuse when he appeared at the town's Sheriff Court on Monday.

James Hendry, 30, committed the offence on July 17 last year in Soroba Road, when he shouted, swore and directed racial insults at his victim, the court heard.

Hendry, currently residing in Ross House, Breadalbane Street, was sentenced to 50 hours of unpaid work to be completed within six months.

Western Ferries raise rates

WESTERN Ferries has announced a four per cent increase in fares, coinciding with the publication of its new summer timetable.

The only fares not to increase are those under the SPT Ferry Concessionary scheme and the National Entitlement Scheme for the blind or partially sighted.

Managing director, Gordon Ross, said: 'Despite this increase, Western Ferries' fares are, for the majority of passenger tickets, cheaper than the subsidised alternative.'

Police on watch for stone throwers

POLICE will be diverting extra officers to Dunollie after a number of complaints about stone throwing youths in recent weeks.

Oban Community Council heard one motorist was given a fright after 'reckless' youths threw stones at his car while it was moving.

A greenhouse was also smashed in a separate incident the following night and police will be taking steps to ensure there is no repeat.

Inspector Brian Auld said: 'Throwing stones at a car that was being driven at the time was particularly reckless.'

Islay and Colonsay mobile mast repair

VODAFONE is attempting to fast-track repairs to its signal mast serving the islands of Islay and Colonsay.

The phone company says it was first made aware there was no mobile phone service on Colonsay and parts of Islay on March 23.

However, islanders say they have had no service for more than two weeks.

The repair is scheduled to be carried out on April 12 but Vodafone told *The Oban Times* it is attempting to bring this date forward.

Banks slow to back Argyll homes plan

Housing association 'link' may solve Dunbeg project funding

FUNDING restrictions are forcing West Highland Housing Association (WHHA) to look to Edinburgh's Link Housing Association to meet a shortfall in paying for the Dunbeg Corridor.

£2.1million bridging loan

The association is hoping to start construction of the first 50 houses in May, but reluctance from the banks to grant a required £2.1million bridging loan for such projects has forced WHHA to consider other ways to fund the build.

Early discussions have taken place with Link Housing in a bid to secure some finance, but chief executive, Lesley McInnes, says

nothing is final yet.

She said: 'We're in the same position as everyone else in that banks are proving difficult in terms of loans.'

'Important'

'All we are doing is looking at different avenues and we have had discussions with Link. Essentially, it would be a loan.'

'What is certain is these houses will be built in Argyll, hopefully by Argyll contractors for Argyll people.'

'It is important these houses are built.'

While Scottish Government funding of £1.9million has been allocated to the Dunbeg Corridor, the money would or-

dinarily be paid retrospectively. Negotiations are ongoing to have a portion of this sum paid in advance.

A bridging loan of £2.1million is still required though, be that from a bank or Link Housing.

Lesley said: 'It may be possible for the Scottish Government to pay some of that money in advance.'

'We need to make a decision fairly soon on how to fund this, and we are looking at the banks again.'

'There are various other options, but there's not a huge amount of money about.'

'We are, however, confident about being able to secure it.'

1,100 respond to community survey

Cinema, crumbling roads and dog dirt highlighted

MORE than 1,000 locals responded to a community survey to find out what people really want sorted in Oban.

The Oban Community Planning group spent weeks consulting locals at events and through letter drops to ask what they thought needed attention in the town; what was good, what

was bad - and what was ugly.

Approximately 1,100 responses were received and while responses are yet to be collated by the independent group of local volunteers, some key points have already been identified.

Speaking at Oban Community Council's latest meeting, member Lorna Elliot said: 'There

was support from the cinema, a lot of people are looking forward to that.'

'There was quite a lot about crumbling roads and dog dirt too. There are other things Biddoban will take forward too.'

The full results will be compiled later this month for later publication.



Brian Fisher from Quantum Pharmaceutical celebrates with Jacqueline Johnston, Sandra Melville and Catherine Hunter, from Lorn and Islands Hospital in Oban, after they were named the Hospital Pharmacy Team of the Year. Missing from the photograph is Pam McGuire.

Lorn hospital team lift top pharmacy award

THE PHARMACY team from Lorn and Islands Hospital in Oban has scooped up a top award at the glittering Scottish Pharmacist Awards ceremony held in Edinburgh.

The Argyll team fought off extremely tough competition from throughout Scotland to win the Hospital Pharmacy Team of the Year Award at the third annual Scottish Pharmacist Awards, hosted at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. The Award was supported by Quantum Pharmaceutical.

The team, led by Sandra Melville, includes clinical pharmacist Pam McGuire and medicines management technicians Catherine Hunter and Jacqueline Johnston.

Sandra, clinical pharmacy manager at Lorn and Islands Hospital, said: 'It's a real honour to receive this award, especially as there are so many examples of excellent practice in Scottish Pharmacy.'

Argyll Voluntary Action
NHS Highland
Argyle Community Health Partnership

Celebrating Voluntary Action in Argyll and Bute

Annual Volunteer Awards 2012 nominations are now open - this is your opportunity to reward an individual or group you value for their voluntary work.

- Categories for nomination
- Individual Volunteer of the Year
- Young Volunteer of the Year
- Voluntary organisation of the year
- Local Timebank Heroes
- This year 2 new categories!

Social Enterprise of the Year sponsored by Argyll and Bute Social Enterprise Network
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AWARDS TAKING PLACE 8TH JUNE AT KILMORY COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCHGILPHEAD

For nominations, please visit your local AVA office, call 01631 564839, email Antonia@argyllvoluntaryaction.org.uk, or download at www.argyllcommunities.org. Nominations close 4th May

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Nicolson nets three to dump Lochcarron

'The key to our success at the moment is our midfield'

REPORT BY

RICHARD HADDOCK
rhaddock@obantimes.co.uk

FOR THE second time in the space of seven days Lochaber and Lochcarron faced off in Spean Bridge, with the home side again emerging with the win.

Following a 5-1 victory in the league, Lochaber won the Co-operative MacTavish Cup first round tie 3-1 thanks to a Shaun Nicolson hat trick on a sunny Saturday afternoon.

The home side dominated the early exchanges, creating a number of chances to take the lead before Shaun Nicolson made the breakthrough with

a powerful shot in the 23rd minute.

A sweetly struck Nicolson shot from 20 yards flew into the top corner just two minutes later to leave Lochcarron keeper Kenny Ross with no chance and double Lochaber's advantage.

The movement and pace of forwards Nicolson, Stuart Callison, Ben Delaney and Zands Ferguson caused the Lochcarron defence all sorts of problems, but Lochaber were unable to increase their lead before half time.

Crisean Finlayson gave Lochcarron hope with a strike in the 59th minute pulling a goal back, but Nicolson completed his hat trick 10 minutes later to

SHINTY

secure the win and a place in the next round.

Manager Michael Delaney told The Oban Times he was happy with the performance and result. He said: 'It was a good win. We're playing quite well at the moment, although it's a bit hard to tell when you're playing the same team every week.'

Delaney singled out Neil MacDonald and Lachlan Campbell for praise, but said the whole side is playing well.

'The key to our success at the moment is our midfield,' he said. 'The forwards can only get chances if they are getting good



Lochaber's Martin Johnson was one of the standout performers during his side's 3-1 victory on Saturday. 20_f14loch01

service, and they are getting good service just now. They are trying hard and if they keep playing like that this weekend

we should do okay.' Lochcarron manager Andrew MacKenzie said: 'We still had a few players missing and there

was a wee bit of a shuffle about in the centre so it wasn't too bad a of result considering.

'Getting Nick Dalgety into the side is a positive for us. He's only 14 years old but he's holding his own at wing centre no problem at all.'

Fort at home to Fraserburgh

FOOTBALL

FORT WILLIAM FC welcome Fraserburgh to Claggan Park on Saturday looking to build on improved performances in recent weeks.

The Lochaber men kept two clean sheets in a row recently and were level at 2-2 away to high-flying Keith at half time last Saturday before eventually succumbing to a 5-2 defeat.

Manager Danny Conlon will be hoping to have a fuller squad to choose from after missing four key players for last weekend's game. Michael Gillespie served a one-match ban, while Chris Macleod, Robert Lewandowski and Sean Grant had work commitments. Logan Barker passed a late fitness test but was subbed half way through the first half.

Fort took the lead against Keith in the 19th minute when Danny Mackintosh picked up a loose clearance outside the box and beat the keeper with a powerful shot. But they could only hold on to the advantage for five minutes when Cammy Keith scored the first goal of his hat trick.

Cammy Keith then gave the home side the lead but Iain Maclellan beat the home goalkeeper in a one-on-one four minutes before half time to make the score 2-2.

The score stayed level until the 62nd minute when Keith took a 3-2 lead, and two minutes later Cammy Keith completed his hat trick. The Lochaber side lost a fifth goal deep into injury time at the end of the game.

Lochaber Leisure back on track

INDOOR FOOTBALL

CHAMPIONS Lochaber Leisure recovered from their first loss of the season last week to defeat Ballachulish 3-0 in the Ali Young Indoor Football league at the Nevis Centre on Sunday night.

TNF United remain 14 points back in second place after winning a high-scoring game with The Granite House 8-5, while Goon Squad are two points further back after beating HWEnergy 11-6. A 3-0 win against Steava Sookabreast kept Achintore FC level on points with Goon Squad.

Meanwhile, Stroke City defeated AA Young 6-4 and Livercaol won 3-0 against bottom side Bayern Bru.

The final round of games are due to be played this Sunday night.

Fort William GC

GOLF

FORT WILLIAM Golf Club's first competition of the season saw Keith Sangster win the April medal on a sunny Saturday.

Sangster's nett score of 69 gave him a two stroke victory ahead of John Martin, while Ian Robertson shot a nett 61 to win the senior medal on Sunday.

Results:
April medal - 1, Keith Sangster - 85-16=69; 2, John Martin 97-26=71; 3, Brian Gillespie 88-16=72.
Senior medal - 1, Ian Robertson 73-12=61; 2, Henry MacDonald 77-12=65; 3, Donnie Campbell 81-13=68.

Phoenix gear up for top class show

LOCHABER Phoenix Boxing Club hold their latest show at the Nevis Centre, Fort William this Saturday and it promises to be full of excitement with up to 12 bouts taking place featuring at least eight local boxers.

Topping the bill will be Chris Donnelly, who hopes to continue his rise through the Scottish heavyweight division as he faces

the vastly more experienced Alex Mullen Jr of Irvine Vineburgh ABC. Chris has been training like a demon for this opportunity and brings a special ferocity and desire to the ring when he boxes. Robbie Hall, aged 12, will make his debut in the square circle and looks a real talent for the future. Kevin Aitchison, who is the same age, will continue his

fistic education in only his third contest.

Fourteen-year-old James Aitchison faces Colin Stewart of Byron ABC in a contest between two Scotland squad members which promises to be of an exceptionally high quality.

Freshly crowned two-time Scottish champion Chris Bradley hopes to compete if an

BOXING

opponent can be found for him, and fellow 15-year-old, Igor Sliwinski, features against the first boxer to defeat him, Robert Reid from Lochee ABC. The club feel they have unearthed two gems in Liam Jordan and Scott Lawrie. Both will hope to continue their unbeaten records against opponents from the east coast. It's not merely the fact that they have started their boxing careers so well that has the club coaches so excited but the manner in which they are approaching training.

Light welterweight Aidan Donnelly may be in his 30s but has the energy of a teenager and his contest with Darren Foster should be a real crowd pleaser.

Special guests for the night are renowned coach Lee Beard who has trained Ricky Hatton amongst others, and unbeaten pro Craig Evans who is promoted by Frank Warren.

Tickets are still available from the venue (01397 700707), Niall Clark (07554 994744), Vince Lopez (07979 321025) or Steve Docherty (07767 069532).

Isle of Skye golf

GOLF

ISLE OF Skye Golf Club's first competition of the new season will be held on Saturday April 28.

The Sconser club decided to push the opening date back to the end of the month, unlike other clubs in the west Highlands, many of who started their seasons this weekend.

Lochaber finally get back to winning ways after a long six month wait

RUGBY

LOCHABER Rugby Club picked up their first league win since October by beating Banff 48-15 at Banavie on Saturday.

The team have struggled to play on their home turf this season due to the poor condition of the grass, but a recent spell of dry weather meant they were able to host the side who sit three places above them in the league. Chris Simpson scored a hat trick of tries, while Connor Taylor and Rory MacKay both crossed the line twice. Captain Kenny Turnbull also scored a try in the second half.

Turnbull told The Oban Times: 'It was a good performance all round. It was a bit scrappy overall but we put together some good bits of play.'

'It was a good confidence booster, but there's still a lot of work to do before the end of the season.'

The club's last league win came in a 43-3 victory over RAF Lossiemouth on October 15.

Lochaber will be looking to continue their winning ways when they take on Aberdeenshire 2nd XV at Banavie this Saturday, weather permitting. A win would lift Lochaber off the bottom of the RBS Caledonia Regional League division two north table with one league game left to play.



Lochaber's Ross McTaggart helped power his side to their first victory in nearly six months last Saturday.



Aidan Donnelly on the rampage against Jack Cullen in last year's Phoenix Club show. Donnelly will fight Darren Foster on Saturday. 20_f14box01

Weather

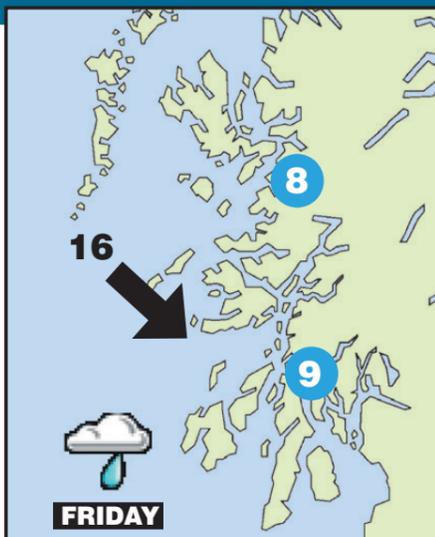
Thursday Light rain
Winds light west, north westerly
Temperatures 7°C to 9°C

Friday Light rain
Winds moderate west, north westerly
Temperatures 6°C to 9°C.

Weekend Light rain

Outlook Winds moderate west, north westerly
Temperatures 8°C to 10°C.

Ferry Crossings/Sea States
Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate



Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, April 5, 2012** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur 04.30	3.8 10.59 0.8	16.58 3.8 22.55 0.5
Fri 05.08	4.1 11.35 0.5	17.31 4.0 23.39 0.2
Sat 05.46	4.2 12.12 0.4	18.06 4.1 *** **
Sun 00.22	0.1 06.24 4.2	12.51 0.3 18.43 4.1
Mon 01.08	0.2 07.03 4.0	13.33 0.4 19.24 4.0
Tues 01.55	0.3 07.44 3.8	14.17 0.6 20.07 3.8
Wed 02.44	0.6 08.27 3.5	15.06 0.8 20.55 3.5

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Portree	+0.55
Campbeltown	-5.30	Tobermory	+0.16
Crinan	-0.47	Dover	+5.30
Islay Port Ellen	2.00		
Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Mallaig	+0.25		

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