

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Muir's Army

Retiree Gilbert Muir reminisces about life in the Home Guard during the Second World War



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OAP oblivious to police pursuit

A PENSIONER who had the police in hot pursuit of her speeding car for almost seven miles on Saturday, has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

The woman, 67, was clocked by police officers on the Arrivain straight, between Dalmally and Tyndrum. She is alleged to have been travelling at 74mph when the speed limit is 60.

In trying to stop the woman, police officers used flashing lights and sirens but were unable to get her attention.

Officers followed her for 6.8 miles before finally pulling alongside her and gesturing for her to pull over.

Pontoon plans move a step closer

WORK to ensure Oban's North Pier is at the heart of the town's maritime quarter has moved forward as a contract worth around £90,000 was awarded to Holequest to carry out investigation work on the seabed. A small drilling rig was installed on the pier on Tuesday with drilling due to finish on or before April 19. The contracted hours of work are 8am-8pm, Monday to Saturday.

Heavy horses make light work of competition



Despite the rain last Saturday, competitors put their hands to the plough at Lorn Vintage Ploughing Match at Kilmarnaig, Connel, with prizes for the straightest and levellest furrows. Above, overall winner John MacCormick from Appin, with his uncle Donnie MacCormick and watched by a young fan. See page 14 for more.

Staff shock as luxury store closes

SHOP staff at an Oban store were shocked to hear that they were about to lose their jobs when they turned up for work last week.

Luxury-brand store McEwens of Perth was taken into administration last Thursday (March 24) with no warning to staff, including the four full-time members in Oban.

The branch opened less than two years ago on Oban's George Street. The company's flagship store is in Perth.

Last Thursday, business owners John and Georgina Bullough, told *The Oban Times*: "It is with great sadness and regret that we have had to put McEwens of Perth Ltd into administration this morning. Since we purchased the business in 2008, we have battled against unprecedented challenges.

"These include the immediate credit crunch, a dramatic change in shopping habits, the rise of the internet, the growth of out-of-town shopping, plus low consumer confidence linked to political and economic uncertainty.

"Despite these difficulties we have worked hard with little to no working capital, but with fantastic and loyal staff, to make McEwens the very best it could be. Sadly, this has not delivered the increase in trade that was necessary to keep the business solvent.

"We have left no stone unturned trying to find a partner or a purchaser to take McEwens forward."

A statement from administrators said: "Unfortunately, we have had to make 64 employees redundant on appointment, with 46 employees, including the four in Oban, remaining to assist the joint administrators."

The stores in Oban and Ballylatter closed with immediate effect.

Police launch probe after traffic wardens abused on social media

LOUISE GLEN

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OBAN police have launched an investigation after religious and racist comments were made on social media about traffic wardens in Oban.

Concerned residents contacted *The Oban Times* after members of the public made inflammatory statements on a post to more than 5,000 followers of the closed Facebook group, You Are Not A Real Obanite, regarding parking tickets.

The initial discussion arose after people took to the Facebook page to complain about being

given a parking ticket while they attended an Easter service at St Columba's Cathedral.

The tickets were given to members of the public who had parked on double yellow lines without any disabled badges.

Over the course of the next 20 hours, more than 150 comments debated the situation.

But things turned nasty when the colour of the skin of one of the traffic wardens and the football team of another were mentioned. One of the comments claimed the move was an attack on Christians.

Comments about the colour of one of the traffic wardens' skin and expletives were later deleted.

Police Scotland acted quickly to condemn the messages.

Sergeant Alan Moore said: "We urge people to come forward when remarks are made that are racist or sectarian. Or actions that appear to be racist or sectarian.

"There is no place for these attitudes or comments in Oban, or in Scotland – they are criminal offences and shall be prosecuted as such.

"Racism is a very serious crime in our communities. We will not tolerate any derogatory comments to anyone.

"Scotland wants to provide a welcome to the world. There is no place for people to be victim-

ised because of their religion or the colour of their skin.

"We need to speak to people who see and hear of these incidents, whether in public or online, to make sure that we can bring any offenders to court here in Oban."

Some of the people taking part in the Facebook discussion, spoke to *The Oban Times* afterwards and raised concerns.

Keith Smith, of Oban, said: "I noticed the racist comment. Had my hackles up and I nearly replied but didn't want to draw attention to it.

"Think the admin removed that one."

While Obanite Lyndsay Mac-

Donald addressed the criticism of traffic wardens for doing their jobs head on.

She said: "I feel that it is about time something was done about inconsiderate people parking along the seafront yellow lines from roughly the Alexandra hotel often along to the youth hostel and even at the junction to Corran brae to attend the cathedral.

"It doesn't matter if it was Easter Sunday or not, the rules are the rules and if I parked there I would have expected a ticket. The rules remain the same for everyone, hopefully this will be the end of the havoc along there now."

The religious row was highlighted by Lynne Horn, also of Oban.

She said: "[People] expect compassion while effectively making it difficult for emergency services getting to Dunollie.

"As a driving licence holder it is our responsibility to follow the rules of the road. Nowhere on my theory test did it say 'unless you're off to church'.

"This isn't about religion. It's about the law. We all make mistakes or take a chance, but to do it, get caught then expect special treatment because it's Easter, and people are in church – that's nonsense."

Busy weekend for RNLI volunteers

OBAN'S volunteer lifeboat had one of its busiest weekends on record, spending more than 13 hours at sea on six callouts over Easter.

A diver with the bends in Lochaline, a medical emergency on a cruise ship, two medical evacuations from Mull, a boat that had broken its moorings and a Mayday call from the north end of Seil made for a hectic few days for the crew of the RNLI *Mora Edith Macdonald*.

A medivac on Thursday March 24 from Mull saw the lifeboat launched at 7.15pm to transfer a casualty from Craignure to the mainland.

On Good Friday afternoon, at the request of Stornoway coastguard, the lifeboat was called to a small motor boat at Airds Point, Loch Etive.

By 3.30pm the volunteer crew had located the boat. It soon became clear it had broken free of its mooring, with no-one aboard and no-one in danger.

With the owner informed, the lifeboat proceeded to tow the vessel back to its mooring.

The lifeboat launched on Saturday morning to investigate reports of a boat adrift out of Connel. The volunteer crew were at the scene by 10.10am and the vessel had been located off Ardmucknish Bay. On

investigation it could be seen that the small speedboat had been tied up somewhere, but had gone adrift. As a result, the lifeboat took the vessel under tow into Dunstaffnage Marina for the coastguard to inspect.

On Sunday the lifeboat launched after a 'Mayday' call was received from a yacht with two people on board. The crew arrived at the scene just after midnight to find the yacht dragging its anchor in strong winds. The lifeboat escorted the yacht back to Oban, securing it at the marina on Kerrera.

And finally, on Sunday evening at 5.20pm, the lifeboat was requested to launch by

Stornoway coastguard to help a diver suffering from decompression sickness in Lochaline. Once on scene, the diver was quickly transferred to the lifeboat.

A spokeswoman for the RNLI in Oban said: "We were fortunate to have our crew member Dr Colin Wilson on board who, with many years of experience working with divers in this situation, was there to assess the casualty throughout the journey back to Oban.

"The lifeboat arrived back in Oban by 6.41pm where the casualty was transferred to the care of paramedics and a waiting ambulance."

Screen Machine Scotland's Mobile Cinema

Tobermory Thu 31 Mar - Sat 2 April
Lochgilthead Mon 4 - Wed 6 April
Port Ellen Thu 7 - Sat 9 April

Dad's Army (PG) 100 mins
"This celebration of Dad's Army surpasses the original." Independent
31/03 at 5pm, 02/04 at 5.30pm, 06/04 at 8.30pm, 07/04 at 8.30pm, 09/04 at 5.30pm
National Theatre: Hangmen £14/£12
(15) 180 mins inc interval An encore screening of National Theatre's hilarious new play. Stars David Morrissey.
"Gripping, funny and dramatically tense." Sunday Times
31/03 at 7.30pm, 05/04 at 7.30pm
The Finest Hours (12A) 117 mins
"an old-school adventure" Rolling Stone
01/04 at 5.30pm, 02/04 at 8.30pm, 04/04 at 5.30pm, 07/04 at 5.30pm, 09/04 at 8.30pm
The Revenant (15) 156 mins
"DiCaprio delivers a barnstorming performance." Independent
01/04 at 8.30pm, 04/04 at 8.30pm, 08/04 at 8.30pm
The Peanut Movie (U) 93 mins
"Sweet, charming, lovingly rendered." Herald
02/04 at 2pm, 05/04 at 5pm, 06/04 at 5.30pm
Kung Fu Panda 3 (PG) 95 mins
"(N)oodles of charm and good humour." Independent
08/04 at 5.30pm, 09/04 at 2pm

Book now at: www.screenmachine.co.uk. Tickets also at the cinema 30 mins before screenings: Cash only, no cards. £7.50 Adults and £5.50 Concessions, (NT: Hangmen: £14/£12)



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Kilchurn Castle parking plans in jeopardy

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A BID by Dalmally Community Company to buy land for a safe bus park overlooking one of Scotland's most photographed castles has hit problems just before its conclusion, due to a 'mistake' by Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS).

Loch Awe's scenic Kilchurn Castle, once the powerbase of Clan Campbell, attracts thousands of tourists each year, who pull in at the best viewpoint on the busy A819 to take a snap.

But in 2014, nearby Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council grew concerned that, without a safe place for cars and buses to stop at the spot, this was an accident waiting to happen.

Consequently Dalmally Community Company (DCC) voted unanimously to propose an 'uncontroversial' development [without] any negative consequences.

Under the National Forest Land Scheme, in which Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) can sell National Forest Land to community organisations for public benefit, the DCC applied to buy two of six lots of Kinnachrean Woodland, comprising 1.82 acres, and raised the £7,500 valuation.

The DCC's application to FCS argued that the current roadside

car park was 'often crowded with cars and buses' with 'people scampering across the road to get a better picture of the castle', which 'the whole community regards as potentially dangerous as well as unsightly'.

Once bought, the application continues, the DCC development 'will likely consist of a hard car/bus park with safe dual access points [and] a raised area to allow viewing'.

DCC chairman Dr Kenneth Black picked up the story, praising FCS's support in the process, saying: 'They accepted our proposal, which includes buses. All went through and we were just waiting for documentation.'

But then, he added, it all went awry. He said: 'Our lawyer saw the document and said, "This is not what you want". We, as a third party, would only get access for light vehicles. They had ruled out heavy vehicles, and buses are heavy vehicles. They made a mistake, in our opinion, in not understanding the original agreement.'

FCS explained the application 'is ready to be concluded', but 'it stalled over the proposed use by tourist buses of a timber haulage route that is not part of the public highway'.

A spokesperson for FCS said: 'A Timber Haul Route Agreement in place for this access road allows cars but not buses

to make use of the road. For the proposal to progress further, the agreement would have to be amended, which involves two other woodland owners, but none of the parties is prepared to meet the cost of this.'

'There is also some concern over the safety implications of having timber lorries and public transport make use of the same road and the same access on to the public highway, and who would meet the costs of the long-term maintenance of the access road.'

FCS's Acquisition and Disposals Land Agent Donald McLellan wrote to DCC, saying: 'I do not wish to start incurring their respective legal expenses (and our own solicitors' legal expenses) for what we may never reach agreement on.'

'The options as I see it are therefore: You proceed to purchase as proposed [or] you decide to withdraw and we sell the area along with the current plantation.'

Dr Black responded: 'It is clear going ahead with the purchase in the hope of being able to negotiate a better agreement represents a high risk to Dalmally Community Company's very limited resources, with only a small prospect of achieving the project we proposed. We are therefore minded not to proceed.'



The Atlantic Islands Centre has very quickly become intrinsic to life on the island of Luing.

Luing community centre is 'inspiring' winner of award

A COMMUNITY building and visitor centre on the Isle of Luing has won the prestigious Scottish Civic Trust My Place Awards 2016.

The building, on the site of an old engine shed for the international slate industry based on the small island, was designed by Benderloch-based architect Shauna Cameron.

The awards were presented recently at The Lighthouse in Glasgow.

A spokeswoman for the Scottish Civic Trust said: 'The centre was developed to spear-

head sustainable development on the island. It opened in the summer of 2015 and has quickly become established as a focal point for community life.'

'The centre is a sustainable and inspiring example of community-led regeneration on a small island. It has greatly improved the quality of life on the island of Luing and made it a more attractive place to live, work and visit.'

Judges' comments were that: 'The centre is a model of community engagement,

benefit and cohesion. The beautiful island of Luing and its strong community have got behind this transformative project, which has provided jobs, increased tourism and given the island a focal point for meeting, talking and sharing.'

'It is an example of civic society in action, on a small scale but with imagination, passion and, above all, determination in the face of many challenges.'

'The Atlantic Islands Centre is a worthy winner of the My Place Awards 2016.'

Sea tourism is buoyant market for region, says VisitScotland

OPPORTUNITIES for tourism in and from the sea are estimated to amount to £3.7 billion per year, a market that Argyll must give a full-time commitment to, says VisitScotland's marine specialist.

David Adams McGilp, regional director for the national tourism company, was welcoming a report into the growth in the marine recreation and tourism market, the Scottish Marine Recreation and Tourism Survey, published last week.

The report stated: 'Marine recreation and tourism expenditure in Scotland is estimated to amount to £3.7 billion per year.'

'The Scottish Marine Recreation and Tourism Survey shows that £1.3 billion of expenditure comes from specialist marine activities, including wildlife watching, sailing, kayaking, surfing and angling, with expenditure on general recreation and tourism like beachcombing, short walks and coastal cycling amounting to £2.4 billion.'

'This survey covers 23 different recreation and tourism activities undertaken at sea or around the Scottish coastline.'

'General marine and coastal recreation, including beach activities, was found to be the most popular activity.'

Mr Adams McGilp said: 'This latest information on market value and consumer habits is really important and will help communities and destinations identify key opportunities for development and growth across the country.'

'Facilities, services and resorts have been improved, grown and even created in response to – and anticipation of – the growth in popularity of marine and coastal environments and activities; and this research should provide businesses and investors with the confidence necessary to take Scotland to the next stage – the absolute world number one maritime destination.'

'We have the raw material, the capacity and the capability – some infrastructure improvements here and there and full-time commitment to customer service are needed to realise that ambition.'

Daniel Steel, chief executive of Sail Scotland, said: 'This research confirms what we hear about our scenery, wildlife, and food and drink being a huge draw and underlines the contribution that marine recreation and tourism is playing in driving the Scottish economy.'

'The challenge through the Scottish Marine Tourism Strategy is for us to work collaboratively to grow this even further over the next few years.'

Deer bad press is misinformed, says DMGS chairman

A 'DRIP FEED' of misinformation on 'too many deer' in Scotland is misleading and should not be perpetuated by politicians, says Richard Cooke the chairman of the Association of Deer Management Groups in Scotland.

Last week *The Oban Times* reported that Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) believed there were too many deer on the land, causing bio-diversity and untold environmental damage (for the full story see www.obantimes.co.uk).

This week Mr Cooke replied to the piece, saying: 'Never let the facts stand in the way

of a good story, as they say. SNH is at least consistent in that it continues to assert there are too many deer in Scotland, doing irrevocable damage to the natural heritage and that a fully-regulated deer sector is the only way ahead.'

'In doing so, it simply repeats the drip feed of misinformation recited incessantly by some of the environmental organisations over many years.'

'To be fair there has been some justification for these assertions in the past, but those keen to judge must really take note that the deer sector has undergone, and is continuing to

undergo, radical change. SNH reported in 2013 that there were estimated to be 275,000 red deer in the open hill range, covering 32,600-square kilometres.'

'This represents a stocking density of 8.6 deer per square kilometre overall, obviously with local variation.'

'There is a winter sheep population of 815,000 breeding ewes to be found in the same area.'

'Using the formula to calculate livestock units and stocking density, if the population of breeding sheep and red deer are added together the total stocking density in the

Highland red deer range is 0.06 livestock units per hectare, just a fraction above the minimum stocking density required by the Scottish Government of farmers to qualify for the Basic Payment Scheme.'

Mr Cooke added: '85.3 per cent of designated site features where deer are present are in favourable condition, recovering due to management, or unfavourable but with site condition monitoring herbivore targets being met.'

'Thus deer impacts remain to be rectified on just 14.7 per cent of designated sites.'

'Deer were reported in the

media as being the main problem in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (Forestry Commission 2015), but ongoing analysis by SNH has identified that just half of the native woodland area, 161,000 hectares, lies within the red deer range and that only around a third of this is in unfavourable condition owing to herbivore impacts (not just deer).'

'Further analysis indicates that grazing impacts are no greater in importance as a threat to healthy regenerating native woodlands than introduced tree species.'

'Deer management has

become enmeshed with land reform. We really need to consider deer management, with the public interest very much in mind, objectively, and on the basis of evidence.'

'Deer in Scotland have been researched exhaustively and the facts are available and some of them are summarised above.'

'Furthermore the continuing obsession with single species management obstructs what all agree is necessary, which is to move to a landscape scale, holistic and adaptive approach to management to optimise economic, environmental and social outcomes.'

Scottish Field MAY ISSUE OUT NOW

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Hugh Smith's letter from ISLAY



A rare bottling from Kilchoman Distillery raised £10,000 for the Beatson cancer centre in Glasgow.

Distillery supports cancer centre

KILCHOMAN Distillery staff members Rosie MacLellan and James Wills recently visited the Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre in Glasgow where they handed over a cheque for £10,000 raised from the auction of a rare bottling by the island farm distillery.

At the end of last year the distillery auctioned the very first bottle of its 10-year-old Kilchoman. This was eagerly snapped up by an anonymous bidder whose £7,000 bid secured for him the much-prized and valued whisky.

The successful bidder's offer was topped up to £10,000 by the distillery owner and other generous individuals.

The distillery's managing director and founder Anthony Wills said that Kilchoman was delighted to support the Beatson centre which works tirelessly in the treatment, care and support of cancer patients and their families.

Kilchoman Distillery, situated at Rockside and overlooking Loch Gorm, was established as a farm distillery in 2005 and was the first distillery to be built on the whisky isle for 124 years.

Twins celebrate 90th birthday

I WISH many happy returns to twins Ian and Gilbert Carmichael who celebrated their 90th birthdays on March 26.

Ian is undoubtedly the better known of the brothers since he won the gold medal at the National Mòd in Stirling in 1961 and went on to enjoy a long and successful singing career in Gaelic and Highland circles. The twins were born at Tayvullin in the Gruinart area but moved to Keills in the Port Askaig district to begin their schooling.

Although the nonagenarians are now resident in Glasgow they will be returning to their native isle next month to continue the birthday celebrations.

This will involve visiting family and friends and ensuring that the island's most famous product is up to standard. And it is likely that Ian will throw in a Gaelic song or two for good measure.

Slàinte mhath dhuibh uile.

Golden wedding celebrations

CONGRATULATIONS are also due to local farmers

Robert and Elizabeth Cunningham of Nerby who celebrate 50 golden years of happy marriage.

Robert and Elizabeth, nee Sutherland, both members of well-known Islay families, were married in Bowmore's Round Church by the late Reverend John Muir Watson on the March 31, 1966.

It was a happy day for all involved and the newly weds were surprised and delighted when their wedding photograph appeared on the front page of *The Oban Times*.

Here's to many more happy years together.

40 years of service for Lillian

LILLIAN MACARTHUR has completed 40 years' service as the efficient office ad-

ministrator at Bunnahabhain Distillery and has received her certificate of merit from the distillery's owners.

Lillian is the daughter of Anne and the late Donald Anderson, who operated a well-patronised grocery outlet for many years in Bowmore.

Lillian and her husband Robert live in her native village and they have two daughters Linsay and Rhona. She is also a member of the MacEachern family of piping fame and it is fitting that her daughters are active in piping and drumming activities on the local pipe band scene.

We warmly congratulate Lillian who plans to score a half century at Bunnahabhain. Go for it!

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



Lillian MacArthur celebrates 40 years with Bunnahabhain Distillery on Islay.

Chirpy results from bird count

FEBRUARY saw a flock of farmers, gamekeepers and land managers join together to count their farmland birds.

With nearly 1,000 farmers spotting 130 species, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust's (GWCT) 2016 Big Farmland Bird Count (BFBC) has been an incredible success.

Taking half an hour to do a count, farmers, gamekeepers and land managers dusted off their binoculars to see just how much their conservation work is helping their resident birds.

In total, 130 different species were spotted, which is the highest number of species counted since the BFBC was launched in 2014. In addition, this year 25 Red List species were recorded, again beating the numbers spotted during previous counts.

It was particularly exciting to see six of these in the 25 most commonly seen species list: fieldfares, house sparrows, starlings, yellowhammers, song thrushes and skylarks.

Crime cash to boost youth

MONEY seized from criminals will be used to support projects helping young people get active.

Community organisations can apply for a share of the £2 million CashBack For Communities fund to upgrade equipment and improve facilities.

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Anger at delay to protect beavers

A DECISION on the future of beavers in Knapdale has been further delayed after ministers failed to make a plan prior to the dissolution of parliament, writes Louise Glen.

The Scottish Government is now being urged to 'stop procrastinating' and protect beavers after legislation to protect them has been delayed until much later in the year.

In the meantime, interim protection measures have been announced to address concerns about the health of beavers in Argyll.

Responding to the latest announcement, Harry Huyton, director of OneKind Scotland, said: 'This weak response further delays a decision on the future of Scotland's beavers until after the elections and will do little to protect them from continued persecution in the meantime.'

'The revelations earlier this year that pregnant and lactating beavers were being killed and that inappropriate firearms and munitions were being used were shocking. They demanded immediate and firm action, but instead the Scottish Government has merely offered further advice to land managers who are affected by the animals.'

Mr Huyton added: 'Intriguingly, however, the measures also threaten to use Nature Conservation Orders to protect beavers if evidence emerges that welfare concerns are being ignored.'

'Our view is that clear evidence of welfare concerns has already emerged and we see no reason to wait for further inhumane culling until action is taken. We want to see full protection from persecution for all beavers in Scotland.'

'In the meantime, if Nature Conservation Orders can be used to protect them during the imminent breeding season, then Government should stop procrastinating and introduce them immediately.'

Duncan Orr-Ewing, head of species and land management at RSPB Scotland, said: 'We are extremely disappointed by this further delay in ratifying the presence of Eurasian beavers in Scotland.'

'Whilst we fully understand that safeguards need to be in place to deal with the concerns of some land managers, there is widespread experience on how beavers and humans can successfully co-exist, including on or adjacent to farmland.'

'The Scottish Beaver Trial concluded its work almost a year ago and carried out an exemplary evaluation of the likely benefits and costs of beavers returning to Scotland, and we see no reason why the Government has delayed this important decision further.'

'The situation of unregulated culling and an absence of coordinated management support will now continue until after the election, to the detriment of the environment, landowners and, of course, the beavers themselves.'

'We encourage the new or reappointed minister to endorse the return of this iconic species to our rivers and lochs as soon as possible after the election.'

BBC Alba on the rise

BBC ALBA is set to move up the electronic programme guide (EPG) listings on Sky, Freesat and Freeview.

The channel will move up one place with the new EPG slots for BBC ALBA being: Sky 142, Freesat 109 and Freeview 7.

BBC ALBA will remain on Virgin Media 161 and will continue to be available on BBC iPlayer.

Young riders hope to get the jump on new facility

DAVID MCPHEE
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BIKERS in Oban would dig, build and jump at the chance to have somewhere in town to ride without being moved on.

Now, an online group has been set up to build a series of dirt jumps at the old hydro pathic hotel overlooking the town centre, where peddle-pushers can ride without fear of colliding with pedestrians and pavements.

Gareth Judson, a 19-year-old apprentice joiner from Taynuilt who co-founded the group, said: 'There has been a small group of riders from the Oban area trying to find somewhere to build jumps for a long time now. We have a spot in Taynuilt but it's too far out the way for most of the Oban boys.'

'We have been looking at building up at the old hydro in Oban as it's disused and out of the way.'

'We currently don't know who owns the land but we would like to speak with them and try to get



Bikers get some air at the location where the jumps could be built.

them on board with the idea.

'It's not really useful for anything but we could adapt it and make good use of it.'

'Currently the bikers in Oban have nowhere to ride. They were using the seating area that was built recently by the council but it's not a good idea riding there as it could cause some damage

to stone work or someone could have a serious accident. So finding somewhere out the way is really our priority.'

Gareth continued: 'The jumps would be built out of the dirt that's already up there, although we may need something else to add to it as that doesn't soak up water.'

'I've spoke to Sean [who co-founded the group] and he can get what we need free of charge.'

'So at the moment this project is cost free. Building the jumps would only require shovels, which we already have, and some willing boys to put in a graft, which we also have.'

'Sean and I first started the group but we want as many people to help as possible as it's not just for us, it's for everyone in town to use.'

Roddy McCuish, councillor for Oban North and Lorn, said: 'The hydro is in private ownership. It would be entirely up to the owner to allow this or not, but I personally think it is a great idea and would be more than happy to help.'

'They must talk to the skateboarding group in Oban as it would be very difficult to get funding for both projects, but there is an opportunity for partnership working that would benefit them both. I'm happy to facilitate a meeting if they want

to, but it is entirely up to them to progress this.'

'With all the construction work going on in Oban over the next few years, perhaps this is an ideal opportunity for some community payback from some of the contractors?'

Kevin Irvine, an assistant development worker, said: 'The Oban Skatepark (OSP) group are open to ideas about where a skatepark can be built and we heavily respect the initiative for someone to do it because there is a need for it.'

He continued: 'The Oban skatepark campaign group is working with West Highland Housing Association (WHHA).'

'It is supporting the group by supplying a community worker to help them with applying for funding and things like that.'

The Oban Skatepark Group is currently looking to set up a constituted group. Anyone who would like to help out and become a member can message the group on Facebook by searching for 'Oban Skatepark O.S.P.'

Cheers! Oban Live welcomes sponsors

OBAN Live has announced sponsorship from some of the world's most recognised drinks brands – with Moët and Chandon and Jägermeister coming on board as drinks' sponsors at this year's event.

VIP ticket-holders to the concert, which will take place at Oban's Mossfield Park on May 13 and 14, will be able to enjoy exclusive cocktails in the Jägermeister VIP Area, while Ice Cold Jägermeister will be available on tap at bars throughout the stadium.

Oban Live organisers have also arranged for an official Moët and Chandon bar, which will provide the world-famous Champagne, as well as other wines, after attendees at last year's Decade gig asked for the tippie to be on the menu.

The Champagne will also be available for VIP ticket-holders at a bar in the dedicated lounge.

School leavers

SCHOOL leavers in Argyll and Bute are exceeding the Scottish national average for moving on to employment or further education.

A report published by Argyll and Bute Council this week shows that 93.1 per cent of secondary school leavers moved on to college or university, apprenticeships or employment in 2015.

This is a 2.1 per cent increase on the previous year and is slightly higher than the Scottish national average of 92.9 per cent.

Labour of love – Highland midwives in spotlight

A BBC ALBA series is to provide a glimpse of the remarkable work of midwives across the Highlands – and includes unique, intimate footage of labour and birth filmed by midwives themselves.

Highland Midwives follows midwives in various locations and a variety of situations, as they go the extra mile to care for mothers and their impending arrivals.

With the Highland Health Board's midwifery team in Campbeltown given permission by new mums in their area to film the very moment of birth, viewers followed the journey of Susanna Fee and her husband, Daniel.

The couple attended hypnobirthing classes held by the midwifery team, and it was the midwives themselves who



Midwife Anna Northover hops on a quadbike to visit an expectant mum.

filmed Susanna giving birth to baby Saul in the inflatable pool at Campbeltown Hospital.

On the Isle of Skye, Claire and James MacQueen are delighted by the safe arrival

of their son, Casey, but realise they have tough times ahead of them as their new son has a cleft lip and palate and will need complex surgery.

Viewers follow the family as

they travel with Casey to Edinburgh where he undergoes a five-hour operation to address the condition.

Highland Midwives also follows the progress of baby Cole,

who was born 12 weeks prematurely to his mum, Kirsty.

The programme follows his progress at the Special Care Baby Unit at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness, including his first inoculations at eight weeks post-delivery.

Meanwhile, at Point on the Isle of Lewis, viewers can watch the midwives at work as they deliver baby Noah to parents Heather and Kevin Baillie via a home water birth.

Husband Kevin films the labour and subsequent birth – which takes place in their living room – on his mobile phone.

The series started on Thursday March 10, and runs on Thursdays from 8.30pm-9pm. It will be repeated on the channel each week and will also be available to view on BBC iPlayer.

No joke for owners who let dogs foul and don't pick up

OBAN'S newest councillor says new dog fouling penalties will 'empower' dog wardens.

Councillor Julie MacKenzie welcomed the Scottish Government rise in a fine to £80 from next week while recognising the problem is still causing concern in Oban.

Dog owners who fail to pick up after their pets will face a fine of £80 from April 1 – double the current fixed penalty rate.

The change, supported by the majority of responses to a Scottish Government consultation on dog ownership, brings the penalty for dog fouling in line with the fine for littering.

Ms MacKenzie, who led a successful Oban campaign to make a difference, praised the work of Mairi Bryce and her Facebook page, Oban Community Action on Dog Fouling.

Ms MacKenzie said: 'It's great to see the Scot-

tish Government taking another very positive step towards tackling the issue of dog fouling by doubling the fixed penalty fine.'

'It is, of course, especially welcomed by myself and many others in the local area, following all the hard work put in over the last year by Mairi Bryce and her Oban Community Action on Dog Fouling team.'

'The group members have been strong advocates for the introduction of harsher penalties and the £80 fixed penalty should help add even more strength to their campaign.'

'This increase should also help to empower our amenity wardens in Argyll and Bute, as the much heftier fine will send out a clear message to irresponsible dog owners to say that their antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated in our communities.'

Police launch safety campaign so bikers can 'live fast, die old'

MOTORBIKE fatalities on Scotland's roads have risen in the last year with overtaking accounting for one in three deaths, according to new figures.

Police Scotland data from 2015 highlights that male bikers aged between 40 and 49 are most at risk of being killed or seriously injured, with 27 per cent of all fatal crashes in 2015 taking place whilst overtaking. Failing to look properly and loss of control were the top two contributory factors reported in these collisions.

Further data released by Transport Scotland reveals that motorcyclists make up one per cent of Scotland's road traffic, but account for 15 per cent of fatalities, and throughout the biking season it is not unusual for someone to die every weekend. Riders are more vulnerable than other drivers and many overtaking fatalities are caused by head on collisions as the rider is exposed to the full force of impact.

Chief Superintendent Andy Edmonston, head

of Road Policing for Police Scotland, said: 'Many bikers will be preparing to get back out on the road to enjoy the wide range of rides and scenery Scotland has to offer. We understand the thrill of motorcycling and why people want to do it, but we also want them to keep themselves safe, especially when overtaking and negotiating left-hand bends.'

The Scottish Government and Road Safety Scotland, part of Transport Scotland, have launched a new campaign called Live Fast, Die Old aimed primarily at male bikers in this high-risk age group. The campaign features a short film showing older bikers enjoying themselves and living life to the full, while also taking it easy on their bikes. A Facebook page dedicated to the campaign includes YouTube videos and tips on biking techniques, route recommendations, upcoming events, and how to keep safe, while not giving up the freedom and enjoyment of riding bikes.

Plans to improve isles' mobile coverage

O2 HAS firm plans to improve coverage and bring 4G services to island customers, Angus MacNeil, Western Isles MP, was told this week.

Mr MacNeil met with Sarwar Khan and Paul James from Telefonica UK – the firm of which O2 is a subsidiary – to discuss the upgrade of services

across Na h-Eileanan an Iar. He said: 'I was delighted to hear about the plans Telefonica has to upgrade the islands' network.'

'It is aiming to upgrade 29 masts, to provide 4G coverage this year, which are situated throughout the islands chain. This will aim to bring 3G/4G

coverage to customers in parts of the isles from the Butt to Barra.'

Planning applications for many of the sites have already been submitted but the roll-out of the upgrade programme remains dependent on obtaining relevant permissions and having agreements in place

with site providers. Mr MacNeil added: 'I was very encouraged by this meeting and although Telefonica concede that the upgrade programme does present challenges, it gave a clear commitment that it is doing all it can to improve coverage for customers in Na h-Eileanan an Iar.'



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£27,500 shortfall for Ulva housing

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

A COMMUNITY interest company that plans to build two social-rented houses in a rural area of Mull is hoping the project doesn't fall at the last hurdle as it attempts to raise the outstanding amount that will enable building work to go ahead.

Ulva Ferry housing is a key project of Ulva School Community Association (USCA), which was set up after the area's school was threatened with closure in 2010.

The school serves an area bigger than the whole of some local authority areas, but housing has proved problematic for families.

The total cost of the housing project is £400,000 – building in the area is almost 20 per cent more than usual for building in a rural area due to the location on the west coast of Mull – and the group has only £27,500 left to raise.

Asked if Argyll and Bute Council would be able to release more funds from its Strategic Housing Fund – which has more than £7.672 million in reserves, a spokesman for the authority said: 'Ulva School Community Association (USCA) has al-

ready received £180,000 from the council towards its project. This equates to £90,000 per house.

'USCA recently contacted the council regarding a proposed application to the Scottish Government's Rural Housing Fund and we have advised the association that we will support their application.'

Helen MacDonald, housing project manager, said: 'We are very grateful to Argyll and Bute Council for its continued support of the Housing Project, including the Rural Housing Development Fund grant funding, and of our application to the Scottish Government's new Rural Housing Fund.'

'With our shortfall now reduced to £27,500 we are hopeful that continued public support for this vital housing provision for Ulva Ferry, along with our application to the Rural Housing Fund, will enable us to start work on site this summer.'

If anyone would like to make a donation, please send cheques payable to 'MICT' to Mull and Iona Community Trust, An Roth, Craignure, Isle of Mull, PA65 6AY, or donations can be made online at: www.justgiving.com/ulvaferryhousing.

CalMac launches increased service to Mull



MV Coruisk begins her new role as the second vessel on the Oban to Craignure run – increasing capacity for the Isle of Mull and making the mainland commutable for islanders for the first time.

Driving lesson will save you fuel – and cash

A SCHEME to help motorists drive more fuel efficiently saw more than 40 people on Mull reduce their fuel consumption by 20 per cent – and save cash on petrol.

The Fuel Efficient Driver Training Session, organised by Terry Hegarty of Mull and Iona Community Trust, is part of a wider project to reduce energy consumption on the island.

The course lasted for 40 minutes and was held in various locations on the island.

The *Oban Times* was invited to take part in an early morning

session in Tobermory. Reporter Louise Glen said: 'I thought I was a pretty good and fuel-efficient driver. It turns out I was completely wrong.'

'I was asked to drive from the Ledaig car park up to An Tobar and then along the road past the graveyard and toward the crossroads, then along the 'fast' road and back into town.'

'When we got back to the car park the instructor said that it was the 'longest 20 minutes of his life' and asked me to take the same route again. I had managed 32.4 miles per gallon.

'The instructor said this time I was to be aware of my driving and concentrate on listening to the car and being responsive to its needs.'

'After driving through the car park I was asked to remove my foot from its almost permanent position on the accelerator and let the car run on the energy already used.'

'I was encouraged to move up the gearbox quicker than I had been doing, meaning the amount of fuel going into the engine through revs was reduced.'

'He also asked me to think about a much smoother journey for passengers and consider moving up and down the gears to reduce the speed of the car – something I had not considered since I passed my driving test more than 20 years ago.'

'On return to the car park we were now using 46 miles per gallon of fuel – something that the instructor said would have a long-term impact on my fuel usage.'

'Already there has been a huge change in the amount

of fuel I am buying, although I have become a little bit obsessed with the gear changing. I have also gone from driving a little too fast at times to sticking rigidly to the speed limit to keep the miles per gallon at 50 or above.'

Terry Hegarty said: 'The opportunities for reducing fuel consumption are relatively simple and I would encourage everyone to think about taking a similar course.'

The training was part of a Scottish Government initiative to reduce fuel use by 2020.

Drama festival still shining bright as it celebrates 60th birthday

MULL Drama Festival celebrated its diamond anniversary in style last week in the Aros Hall, Tobermory.

Two of the first participants in the popular festival, held 60 years ago – Elizabeth MacIver and Cameron Fletcher – were on hand to celebrate what can now be considered as a Mull institution.

Festival organiser Ryan Lowe told *The Oban Times*: 'It's great to think that year after year, despite the distractions of radio, television, videos, the internet and computer games, people get together to perform one-act plays.'

'While there are no longer queues around the County Buildings eager to buy tickets for a five-night festival, there are still enough enthusiasts to put on two nights of unparalleled entertainment.'

Thursday night saw three junior plays, presented by Bunesan Primary School, Lochdonhead Primary School and the Gaelic Players of Tobermory High School.

The chairwoman for the night was Fiona Jappy.

Friday evening was chaired by Barbara White and there were three plays followed by adjudication and prizegiving.

The adjudicator for the festival was Jane Russell, who has produced and performed in many plays in previous drama festivals and who offered praise and advice in equal measure.



Jane Russell, adjudicator, presents Tobermory with their trophy for best primary play.

She also expressed a hope that the festival would continue for another 60 years and speculated on the possibility of queues stretching the length of the street when tickets go on sale.

Mr Lowe said: 'All praise is due to the committee, to the technical support from Fraser Mitchell, Corrie George Mac-

Kenzie and Fergus Reade, Rob MacDonald and Ian Nicol, Tackle and Books and Brian and Chris Swinbanks, and the Aros Hall committee.'

'Without the hard work of all these folk, there would be no drama festival, and Mull would lose a great community event.'

The prize winners were: Best Primary Play – Tobermory;

Juvenile – THS Gaelic Players; Best Adult Play – Sarah, Palmer and Graham Alexander; Runner Up – Tobermory Players; Best young male actor – Caleb Nonhebel and Samuele Coyle; Best young female actor – Emma Noble; Best costumes – Bunesan Primary; and Stage Presentation – Lochdonhead Primary.

POLICE FILES with Sergeant Alan Moore

Breach of the Peace charges

A HOLIDAYMAKER has gone home with more than he bargained for after being suspected of getting into a fight, making both racist and homophobic threats to staff in an Oban hotel.

Shortly after 6.20pm on Saturday, police were called to an incident in the town centre establishment where a 54-year-old man was arrested by officers.

The man was later charged with a racially-motivated breach of the peace, a homophobic breach of the peace, resisting arrest and assault.

A report has been made to the Procurator Fiscal.

Appeal for return of missing plaque

POLICE are looking for the thieves who stole a commemorative brass plaque from a community sports field in Tobermory, Mull.

The Kenny MacIntyre Memorial Sports Pitch was named after the political and industrial correspondent for BBC Scotland, who was born in Oban and educated at Oban High School before he moved to Tobermory. He died in 1999.

The community of Tobermory raised the money for the sports pitch in his memory. Last weekend, a mum noticed that the plaque was missing.

The community is appealing for its return.

Anyone with any information about its whereabouts should phone Sergeant Jamie Toal on 101.

Holidaymaker fined £350

A HOLIDAYMAKER was reported to the Procurator Fiscal for disorderly conduct in an Oban guest house last Thursday (March 23).

At an appearance at Oban Sheriff Court the following day, the man, aged 41, admitted the charge against him and was fined £350.

Possession allegation

A COUPLE who were suspected of being in possession of heroin, a Class A drug, have been reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

A man aged 38 and a woman, 30, were stopped and searched in Glenshellach Terrace, Oban, on Saturday March 26 at around 10pm.

Men stopped and searched in Oban

TWO men from Paisley have been reported to the Procurator Fiscal after they were suspected of being in possession of cannabis resin.

The men, aged 42 and 24, were stopped and searched on Breadalbane Street in Oban on March 23.

Reported to Procurator Fiscal

A 38-YEAR-OLD man who ran away and then struggled with officers after he had been asked to stop by them has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal for resisting arrest.

The incident happened in Tesco car park on Friday.

Witnesses sought after car scratched

POLICE are appealing for information after a green Mini Cooper was scratched down its entire length at Riverside Court in Tobermory, Mull. The incident happened between 7.30pm on March 23 and 11am on March 24.

Sergeant Jamie Toal can be contacted via the police station in the town or by calling 101.

To contact Oban Police, drop into the office on Albany Street, Oban or call them on 101

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Business is buoyant for five-star Seafari

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

MARINE wildlife tour specialist Seafari Adventures, based at Easdale near Oban, has won VisitScotland's top Quality Assurance award in recognition of the exceptional standard of the visitor experience it offers.

Seafari becomes one of only five wildlife businesses in Scotland to achieve top marks in the award scheme.

Three of the top five are based in Argyll and Bute.

Having had four stars for many years, it was new technology introduced by Seafari owners Tony and Jess Hill that gained them the final star.

The new technology allows customers to book trips on terminals set up in various locations and pick up tickets prior to their trip.

Tony worked with advertising company ADS to develop the screens in order to attract visitors from all over the world to his base in Ellenabeich at Easdale.

Mr Hill has 47 years of boating



Tony Hill, pictured with his team, receives Seafari Adventure's five-star award from David Adams McGilp.

and diving experience, as well as an extensive knowledge of both the west coast of Scotland and marine wildlife tourism.

Former teacher Mr Hill said: 'We're absolutely delighted that VisitScotland has increased our grading and awarded us its top standards rating in recognition of the quality of the visitor experience we offer.'

'Our five-star accreditation will be a great marketing tool to help us encourage more visitors to come to the area.'

'The award is a real testimony to the hard work and efforts of every member of our fantastic team who are absolutely committed to delivering the very highest standards and ensuring visitors enjoy an amazing experience here.'

David Adams McGilp, VisitScotland regional director, said: 'My congratulations go to Tony, Jess and everyone at Seafari Adventures on this very well-deserved award; their marine tours are second to none.'

'Their unique fleet of RIBs has been specially designed to ensure passengers get the best possible views of the scenery and wildlife as well as a fantastic trip out on the water.'

'The development work on the boats – and on Seafari's great new touch-screen booking system – definitely reflect the business's drive and creative resourcefulness, qualities we're celebrating in this Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design 2016.'

Tackling revenge porn

ACCESS to justice for survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence will be improved by a bill passed by the Scottish Parliament.

The Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm Bill tackles the way modern technology can be used to perpetrate abuse, creating a new offence of sharing private intimate images without consent, or so-called revenge porn.

The new bill also modernises criminal law and strengthens powers for the police, prosecutors and courts to take action against perpetrators of domestic abuse, harassment and sexual offences.

Under the new law, judges will be required to give juries specific directions when dealing with sexual offence cases, designed to improve juries' understanding of sexual violence.

Courts will have to take domestic abuse into account when sentencing an offender.

The bill ensures that child sexual offences committed in England and Wales by Scottish residents can be prosecuted in Scotland.

It also reforms the system of civil orders to strengthen protection for communities from those who may commit sex offences.

Fisherman's fury over key fob-off

AN OBAN fisherman is seeking a key to give him access to his work place, but CalMac says key fobs will not be issued to fishermen as they have no legal right of access, writes David McPhee.

David Fraser, who owns the fishing boat Primrose, has been requesting a fob since the barriers were installed at the pier near the railway station around five years ago.

Mr Fraser said: 'I have been requesting a key fob for essential access to my boat whilst she is berthed there.'

'This is not an unreasonable request, as I have to transfer groceries, spares and other vital equipment from my vehicles to the boat several times a day.'

'I was granted a meeting with the then port manager when the barriers were fitted and he promised to look at my request for a key fob.'

'No further personal communication took place, but I was told by a pier master shortly after that no key fob was forthcoming and I should just phone when I need access to the pier.'

However, David says this can be very frustrating, especially on a busy day.

He continued: 'Several businesses adjacent to the pier have been provided with numerous key fobs; there is a continuous

stream of delivery vehicles on to the pier all day, and at night 'hot hatchbacks' roam unimpeded, delivering take away food, and are all supplied with their very own key fobs.'

'I am a local businessman, employing local people; I pay pier dues without fail; I pay inordinate amounts of tax every year, contributing to the economy in a positive manner and yet I am considered unsuitable, or not responsible enough to have a key fob.'

'CMAL has clearly lost sight of the fact that this is a working pier and not a shopping mall or a car park for their own staff either.'

A spokeswoman for CalMac said: 'All tenants on the pier have a legal right to vehicular access to the pier for deliveries.'

'Fishermen using the pier have no such legal right, although we do try to accommodate them subject to port operations.'

'We have no plans to issue fishermen with fobs, the procedure is that the fishermen must contact the piermaster on 01631 565854 and arrange for them to have access, but as the piermaster has numerous other duties to carry out they may not be available immediately, so a call to arrange an appropriate time would help all concerned.'

LORN lines

Busy week of community events for Bids4Oban

BID4OBAN has had a busy week with a picture competition for primary schools and a number of events in the offing tonight and tomorrow, Thursday and Friday.

General manager of BID4Oban Derek Connery said: 'Firstly, a big thanks to all the artists and chick hunters who took part in our recent activity for local primary schools, and congratulations to Ruairi Cottier from Dunbeg on winning the top prize.'

'We hope all the entrants had as much fun taking part as we did looking at their pictures.'

Tonight (March 31), at 6.30pm at Oban Community Fire Station, there will be a presentation from the Scottish Business Resilience Centre, explaining what it does and then focusing particularly on Cybercrime which is a growing problem for SMEs.

Tomorrow (April 1) at 8.30am will see a hustings breakfast at the Great Western Hotel, it will be in a Question Time style format.

There will be three topics – The Rest and Be Thankful, Non-domestic Rates Review and Living vs Minimum Wage.

Anyone who wishes to attend should register with the office by calling 01631 569915.



Lorraine Kelly is heading up the STV Children's Appeal. It has donated £2,000 to an important Oban project.

Hope Kitchen receives cash boost from appeal

HOPE Kitchen in Oban has received £2,000 from the STV Children's Appeal to boost financial support for the project.

The small charity operates a soup kitchen and food bank for people in Oban and beyond who need support in times of difficulty.

In December 2015 the charity supplied 152 food parcels to children and parents, and during January and February 2016 it handed out a further 69 food parcels to families in need.

Service manager for Hope Kitchen Lorraine King said: 'Every penny we receive goes directly to support people in need.'

'I have seen first-hand how important a food parcel is to families who are struggling to feed themselves. Our goal is that no child in Oban should ever go hungry and with this grant from the STV Children's Appeal we believe we are meeting that goal.'

Nominations coming in for school Hall of Fame

OBAN High School's Hall of Fame, celebrating the alumni of the west Highland school, is attracting a fair few nominations for inclusion after it was announced last week.

Organiser and classroom assistant David Paterson, who started the scheme on the school's behalf, said the number of entries was 'encouraging'.

Mr Paterson, a former community police constable, said: 'So far I've received around 40 potential candidates for Oban High School's Hall of Fame – which is encouraging.'

'There have been nominations for pupils and ex-pupils in sport, music and various professions, although I haven't yet received any nominations for people attending the school prior to the 1950s. I guess going back 60 or 70 years may not be so easy.'

Mr Paterson is keen to see those folk who have been educated at the school be recognised for their achievements. He would like nominations for pupils and ex-pupils who have excelled in any particular field to a national or international level, for example sport, music and the arts, voluntary work, their field of employment or any other area.

To nominate someone contact David.Paterson@argyll-bute.gov.uk.

Cash boost for out-of-hours service

NHS HIGHLAND has welcomed what it has described as a 'major boost' to its development of health services outside normal working hours, writes Louise Glen.

The board was awarded £195,000 by the Scottish Government to test new ways of delivering out-of-hours services in its region.

The area has long been one where it has been unable to attract senior staff into crucial positions in health care.

In many areas the health board uses agency staff rather than permanent employees due to issues with retention of employees.

The board has been chosen as one of eight test sites across Scotland where new out-of-

hours models will be tested. Building on this testing programme, it is planned to develop a National Delivery Plan to transform urgent out-of-hours care.

Antonia Reed, NHS Highland's clinical lead for out-of-hours services, said: 'We're really excited to win funding to help take forward some of the ideas we have around transforming urgent care.'

'It's a major boost and means that we can test some things to find out what works, and expand other things that we already know work.'

Some of the money will be spent on purchasing equipment to give out-of-hours teams mobile and internet reception in communication 'dark spots'.

Furthermore, money will be spent on enabling direct access to a clinician for patients nearing the end of life.

Finally, cash will be used to develop community responders and up-skill fire crews to support a strengthened community response in remote and rural areas. This will involve the purchase of defibrillators and wireless diagnostic devices to improve care in emergency situations.

Ms Reed continued: 'We're pleased that the Scottish Government has chosen to fund initiatives which fit in with our overall direction of travel for out-of-hours urgent care in Highland: multi-disciplinary team-working, supported by a strengthened Highland Hub;

improved communications; a focus on quality and standards and joint working with colleagues in the ambulance and fire services.'

'These all add up to a big step forward to a more sustainable system which makes best use of all our resources in Highland.'

NHS Highland's out-of-hours project manager Evan Beswick added: 'We've got some real challenges around the provision of out-of-hours urgent care to all of our communities.'

'These initiatives are about thinking a bit differently as to how we move from an unsustainable model to one that takes advantage of the skills other professions have to offer, and of advances in technology and communications. It's all very exciting.'

Funding help pages

ORGANISATIONS and community groups are being encouraged to use the dedicated funding pages on Argyll and Bute Council's website.

Designed to help groups find their way through the funding maze, it shows people where they can get help to develop their project, receive assistance with completing application forms, and find sources of funding.

The pages also provide tips on free software and a monthly bulletin, Funding Alert, that has the latest funding information and deadlines.

Visit argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/grants-and-funding

Communities divide over Loch Awe status

LOCH Awe must be designated a National Scenic Area to guard against the constant threat from wind farm developers, argues a new campaign group, writes Sandy Neil.

But not everyone agrees. Community councils on the south and north sides of Loch Awe, considered one of Scotland's most beautiful lochs, are divided on how to protect it.

At last month's Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council meeting in Portsochan, councillors voted four to two against supporting Avich and Kilchrenan Community Council's application to Scottish Natural Heritage to designate Loch Awe a National Scenic Area (NSA).

Avich and Kilchrenan Community Council wants the designation in place to protect the landscape and its culture.

Christine Metcalfe of Avich and Kilchrenan Community Council, who is proposing the NSA, said: 'For an area steeped in the kind of history and legend as is Loch Awe, with its castles, monuments and islands, the justification for the request is clear.'

'Only designations of National Scenic Areas or Regional Park status offer anything like adequate protection from over-industrialisation.'

'Planning officers and departments all over Scotland struggle to fulfil an increasingly difficult role in provision of environmental protection involving renewable energy.'

'Despite hosting a Special Protection Area for Eagles, the area is under constant threat from wind farm developers – plus the recent proposal from Scottish and Southern Engery and Scottish Hydro for a very large substation. It doesn't take much to imagine the effect on the dependant local and wider tourism sector, residents and wildlife involved.'

John Kerr, secretary of Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council responded: 'Loch Awe is a scenic place. There is a polarisation of people who look at it as a beautiful place, and other people working the land.'

'We have to decide where the majority is. The bedrock of this community is in land management.'

'I want to see decision making made at a local level, where it affects people.'

'Pupils' positive destinations'

A RECORD number of pupils in Scotland are leaving secondary school to go into further education, training or employment, new data shows. Statistics published on Education Scotland's Parentzone website show that 93 per cent of school leavers in 2014/15 across Scotland left to go into these 'positive destinations'.

Regional Park status offer anything like adequate protection from over-industrialisation.'

'Planning officers and departments all over Scotland struggle to fulfil an increasingly difficult role in provision of environmental protection involving renewable energy.'

'Despite hosting a Special Protection Area for Eagles, the area is under constant threat from wind farm developers – plus the recent proposal from Scottish and Southern Engery and Scottish Hydro for a very large substation. It doesn't take much to imagine the effect on the dependant local and wider tourism sector, residents and wildlife involved.'

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'We have to decide where the majority is. The bedrock of this community is in land management.'

'I want to see decision making made at a local level, where it affects people.'

'Greylag goose extended shoot'

LICENSED greylag goose shooting is to be extended until April 16 on Lewis and Harris, the local goose management group has announced.

The extension will help volunteer hunters to meet the Lewis and Harris goose management pilot's agreed cull target for 2016.

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Everything ship shape at sea cadets

LOCHABER Sea Cadets came together for the 2016 Royal Naval Parade where they were presented with awards.

All sea cadet units must perform to a set of standards which are regularly assessed.

Firstly, all the stores and health and safety systems are checked. Next comes the checking of all the admin and training systems, then the management of the charity finances and legal obligations.

Every two years the cadets get the chance

to show what they can do. Their uniform, ceremonial technique and leadership abilities are examined. The event was held at the cadet hall in the Ben Nevis estate.

Award winners: junior cadet Rebekah Leslie, best junior; junior cadet Jay Calder and JC Sarah Harper took the anti-fidget award; OC Emma Watchman, cadet of the year, OC Gregor Linfield, best cadet and photographer; LC Hannah Calder, community trophy.



Portavadie

RESIDENTS in West Cowl and across Argyll and Bute are set to receive a major jobs boost as plans have been approved to redevelop a 'ghost village'.

This comes as a planning application by Portavadie Distillery Ltd for a whisky bonded warehouse was approved – the first step in a distillery – and residential housing development at Polphail village, Portavadie was also approved.

The village was built in the 1970s and was to be used to house up to 500 oil workers, but it was never occupied.

The site has been identified in the council's Local Development Plan (LDP) as an area suitable for tourism, leisure, housing and business.

The derelict village, which in 2009 was visited by Agents of Change, a group of 13 artists, who created a gallery of graffiti art on the abandoned site, will be upgraded in stages, starting with the construction of a 'relatively small' whisky bonded warehouse then, subject to demand, stage two will commence.

The second phase would see the construction of a distillery on the existing Polphail site, with the abandoned village being demolished immediately after the warehouses are finished being built.

The third phase would involve the development of a village, which would include 100 houses, local amenities, community facilities and a leisure centre being put in place.

In 2009, Agents of Change, a group of 13 artists, visited the village and created a gallery of graffiti art on the abandoned site.

Arisaig

ARISAIG SWI held its meeting on March 17. The speaker was Martin Carty who spoke about sea eagles and shearwaters. There were eight members and many guests for the talk. Tea was served to everyone before business got underway. Competitions: a wildlife/bird photo taken by member: 1 June Cairns; 2 Margaret MacEachen; 3 Anne Cameron. Bird ornament: 1 Daphne Heaps; 2 Helen Lamb; 3 Margaret MacEachen. The raffles were won by June Cairns and Anne Cameron. The next meeting will be held on April 21. Everyone is welcome.

Lewis

A COMMUNITY-LED project, which provides a range of support to people on the Isle of Lewis, is set to receive a share of £10.8 million in funding.

The Horshader Community Development Trust will use the funding, from the People and Communities Fund in 2016/17, to provide advice and support to those living in the area.

The project is aimed at giving communities the tools to deliver long-term solutions in tackling poverty.

Taynuilt

MEMBERS of Taynuilt SWI were given a demonstration on how to make a savoury pie earlier this month.

Fiona Dickie, who was 'very informative and helpful', gave the 13 members tips and tricks on how to make the pie, which she then entered into a raffle for one of the members to take home.

Ardnamurchan pupils praised for Syrian postcard project efforts

ARDNAMURCHAN High School's second-year geography pupils have been involved in the Postcards for Syria initiative.

Janie Patterson's entry was one of just 48 chosen from hundreds to be displayed on the project's online gallery to be auctioned off.

Janie said: 'The postcards were designed by us and all of them had something to do with home, hope or humanity. Some of them will be put online so people can bid on them and the money raised will go to Syrian refugees.'

'All of the postcards will be sent to the Red Cross headquarters in London and displayed. They've come from artists, refugees and pupils from different schools. We also have a little display of our own in our school canteen.'

Head teacher Chris Millar-Craig praised the work of S2 – and Janie in particular – for their excellent



Janie Patterson with her postcard for the Syria initiative.

work on supporting those in need. The project can be seen at: <http://www.red-cross.org.uk/What-we-do/Emergency-response/Current-emergency-appeals/Syria-Crisis-Appeal/Postcards-for-Syria>

In other news, the

school's eco committee, under the leadership of faculty principal teacher Mrs Rough, came up with suggestions for projects, which they put to a vote with the rest of the pupils in the school, to decide which one to take forward.

The result was to improve the school grounds with outdoor seating and, with technical teacher, Mr Hogg's help, they have produced two fantastic picnic tables which are now available for use at the front of the school and at the pitches to the rear.

Meanwhile, congratulations go to Jillian Anderson, who was the 2016 recipient of the Iain Cameron Memorial Award for community partnership.

Ardnamurchan high's third annual partnership event was held on March 16 to which all parents, staff and community partners were invited. Head teacher Chris Millar-Craig and deputy Simon Patterson shared the range of part-

nerships which facilitate the breadth of curriculum and wider achievement opportunities at the school.

Mr Millar-Craig also stressed the school's appreciation of all the voluntary support which parents, members of the community and staff offer the young people.

Mr Millar-Craig announced that, following an on-line voting poll, the award for 2016 would go to the school's new music teacher, Jillian Anderson, for her extensive after-hours work in support of musical activities, both curricular and extra-curricular. The event was also an opportunity to mark the retirement of former music teacher Sylvia Hehir, after more than 10 years at the school. Tribute was paid to retiring parent council chairperson Louise Cameron, whose inspirational efforts raised £6,000 from community donations to support the school's resources.

Glencoe

Staff find litter pick exhausting

STAFF from the Clachaig Inn in Glencoe filled bags full of rubbish during a voluntary litter pick.

They were picking up litter between the Glencoe independent hostel and the end of the road at Achtriochtan.

The biggest find was someone's exhaust lying in a ditch amongst general rubbish.



Inveraray

A SCIENTIST greeted pupils at Inveraray primary school after the school was picked out of more than 1,700 others across the UK as part of the project 'What's Under Your Feet'.

Dr Blaise Martay, lead scientist on the project, spent the day at the school helping students with fieldwork and soil experiments.

After an assembly for all 65 children, the pupils put on their coats and went outside to discover what actually was living under their feet.

They broke through the frozen ground and the children found more than 100 earthworms, with one of the worms measuring 12cm in length.



Ian Blackford MP, centre, with the Kinlochleven team, left to right, Mr Martin, technical education teacher, Jiero Viray, Ethan Hornby, David Murphy, Connor MacKenzie, Rhiona McLaughlan, Freya Ward and Mrs Clark, business education teacher.

Enterprising youngsters in London

YOUNG entrepreneurs from Kinlochleven High School competed in the UK grand final of the Coca Cola Enterprises Real Business Challenge in London.

As the Scottish champions, students were treated to an all-expenses-paid trip to the capital, including a trip on the London eye and a parliamentary reception.

Eleven schools from all over the UK competed for the prize of a 3D printer, ultimately won by a school from Cumbria.

Pupils from Kinlochleven completed three challenges, firstly in school, creating a new ethical drink for Coca Cola which promoted the aims of Keep Scotland Beautiful. In Edinburgh they created an anti-litter campaign and

finally, in London, where they designed a new and useful item made from recycled materials. At the parliamentary reception, Ian Blackford, MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber, met the group.

The group hopes to work with one of Coca Cola Enterprises' partners in this year's challenge, Keep Scotland Beautiful, to implement their campaign later this year.

Connor MacKenzie, chief executive officer of the group, said: 'I am so proud of our team's achievements.'

Head teacher Rebecca Machin said: 'I could not be more proud of our national champions or more grateful to the staff who have supported them.'

MORVERN lines

Scotland's shame: crimes against birds of prey on the increase

AS A NEW nesting season comes round, it is disturbing to hear that the number of crimes against birds of prey in Scotland is on the increase.

The latest figures for 2015, published last week, show that 18 birds, including buzzards, red kites, peregrine falcons, goshawks, osprey and hen harriers, were killed or tampered with. Poisoning was the most common but there were also five shootings, five cases of disturbance, three trapping, or attempted trapping offences, and one chick theft.

Detective Chief Superintendent Sean Scott, chairman of the Raptor Group for PAWS (the Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime Scotland), said: 'Police Scotland is committed to tackling wildlife crime and reducing the number of crimes against our iconic birds of prey. We will continue to work with partners and the public to protect Scotland's wildlife.'

This statement is encouraging but will it be enough to stop killings before many species are wiped out altogether? I doubt it.

According to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds there is clear evidence the persecution of golden eagles, peregrines and hen harriers is widespread in areas where field sports and sheep farming take place.

If a crime has been committed on an estate, farm or croft where single farm payments are due, it might make a difference if these cash incentives were withheld by the Scottish Government for a time, not only from the guilty party, but all other claimants in the immediate neighbourhood, peninsula or island.



The number of crimes against birds of prey is on the increase in Scotland.

Of course the persecution of birds of prey and other now rare species is nothing new in the Highlands and islands.

In 1818 a northern newspaper carried the following advertisement: 'The noblemen and gentlemen of the North, Middle and Eastern Districts of the County of Sutherland, interested in stock farming, want three fox and eagle hunters; the first to reside at Altinluard, in the parish of Farr; the second at Tomich, in the parish of Laig and the third at Kildonan Church, in the parish of Kildonan.'

'Each of them is to have a house and grass for two cows, a liberal allowance of meal and a money wage, besides premiums for the various vermin which they may kill, viz, for each pair of ears of a fox, proven by oath, before the Committee of the Sutherland Association Against Felony, to have been killed during the year from speaning time [when the lambs are removed from their mothers] 1817 to speaning time 1818, killed within the parishes of Creech, Dornoch, Laig, Rogart, Golspie, Clyne, Loth, Kildonan, Farr and Reay - seven shillings and six pence.

'For each pair of ears of a wild cat, two shillings and sixpence; for the talons of each fully grown eagle, 15 shillings; for the talons of each young eagle, five shillings; for the head and talons of each hawk or raven, one shilling.'

Osgood Mackenzie (1842-1922), the 12th Laird of Gairloch who established the world famous Inverewe Gardens and wrote one of the Highland's best-loved books *A Hundred Years in the Highlands* first published in 1921, recalls in his youth killing wildlife by their hundreds (literally) and then laments the fact they all now seem to be extinct.

In the early summer of 1865 the sheep farmers of Skye were complaining about a pair of golden eagles killing lambs in Glenbrittle where 10 were taken away in three days to the same nest.

An adult bird and one of the largest sea eagles ever killed in the vicinity, was shot and sent to Macleay and Son, an Inverness taxidermist, to be stuffed and mounted.

It was said that the nest was reluctantly destroyed as it was the first golden eagle known to have bred there for many years. Little wonder, as the Glenbrittle keeper was said to have accounted for upwards of 60 eagles in the previous few years.

An interesting and unusual encounter between a fox and an eagle in 1857 was reported in the short-lived Northern Ensign newspaper.

According to an eye witness, a fox was seen to spring at the king of birds while it was on the ground, probably feeding on carrion, and continued to hang on even after the bird succeeded in getting airborne which, given the weight of the fox, was no mean feat.

The fox firmly kept its grip and tried to bring the eagle down but the bird managed to rise to a considerable height. Tiring at last, the fox let go and falling to the earth was killed outright.

Lord Malmesbury, who had a 15-year lease of Achnacarry Deer Forest from Donald Cameron of Lochiel in the mid-1800s, recorded in his memoirs that when his son, Lord Edward Thynne, was out deer stalking on Gulvain above Loch Arkiga, he killed an eagle soaring fully 300 feet above him with a rifle and a single ball.

Scottish Government environment minister Aileen McLeod has rightly said: 'Wildlife crime poses a real risk to our natural heritage and has a detrimental effect on the people of Scotland who want to enjoy seeing Scotland's wildlife on their doorstep, but also more widely to Scotland as a whole.'

Iain Thornber
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CONSTITUENT SURGERY



IAN BLACKFORD MP FOR ROSS, SKYE AND LOCHABER WILL BE HOLDING THE FOLLOWING SURGERIES:

Tuesday 5 April 2016

11.30am – 12pm

Mallaig

Mallaig and Morar Community Centre

2pm- 2.30pm

Acharacle

The Acharacle Centre, Morrison Place, Acharacle

4.30pm-5pm

Kinlochleven

The Leven Centre
Riverside Road, Kinlochleven, Argyll

6.15pm – 6.45pm

Caol

Caol Community Centre

TO ALLOW CONSTITUENTS TO DISCUSS MATTERS THEY WISH TO RAISE
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Tel – 01349 866397, Email ian.blackford.mp@parliament.uk

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Town centre nightclub plan fails to win blessing of neighbours



LOUISE GLEN
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A NIGHTCLUB bid for Fort William town centre won't receive the blessing of its neighbours after the Free Church minister, whose church backs onto the site, said he will not support the application.

Plans for the club, lodged with Highland Council on March 15, would see a change of use of the former Everest restaurant on Fort William's High Street into a late night disco.

The application by Mr David Smillie, whose contact details have been redacted from his application, were proposed without any pre-planning advice from planners at Highland Council.

Papers shown to *The Oban Times* make it clear Mr Smillie does not appear to be the owner of the land as the premises at 140 High Street is owned by Messrs Haque. Due to planning law the owners were advised of the application on March 8.

“ There is an apparent conflict of interest ”

Drawings for both the location of the nightclub and plan in regard to access are shown to be via a narrow path.

Reverend Gordon Mair told *The Oban Times* and the planning authority: 'I have received a neighbour notification notice concerning an application for a change of use of the Everest restaurant to a night club.'

Rev Mair said: 'The outline plan given in the notice indicates that the lane running from the High Street towards the Everest site is included in the application. I would like the council to state clearly if

that lane is a right of way or not. If not, then it ought to be removed from the application. Is the lane in the possession of the Everest title; is the lane in the gift of the council to dispose of to another party?'

Rev Mair believes Highland Council has a conflict of interest in developing the site as it owns a property in the area.

He continued: 'There is an apparent conflict of interest in that the council has to reach a verdict on the planning application, but the council is also an interested party and will have to represent the interests of that site for the most attractive and profitable presentation and development for residential purposes.'

He added: 'The night club will be operating into the wee small hours of the morning and there is a question of adequate police cover for any disturbance which may arise.'

He said that foul odours may linger because the public toilets at the far end of the car park, to the rear of the church, are used by people 'urinating

against the wall of the toilets'. He said there is the potential for this to increase and consequently a foul odour to linger at the lower entrance to the church property.

He added that the area will be a 'further magnet for clients to linger with the possible build up in noise, movement of people, litter and alcohol drinking'.

Highland Council declined to comment on the application at this time, but encouraged others to make their feelings known about the matter.

At present one other person has objected to the nightclub due to noise pollution to neighbouring flats, safety concerns for people in nearby flats and not enough lighting in the area.

The application is due to be determined before May 15. Council officers rather than councillors are likely to make the final decision.

Attempts to contact Mr Smillie have not resulted in a response from the property developer.

TIMESLINE



Proud mum Rachel with little Isla.

Belford baby's special leap year arrival

BEING born on a leap year was made extra special for little Isla Grace Cameron's parents.

The tot is the first baby to be born on February 29 at Belford Hospital in Fort William for many years.

Expectant mums from the area would normally go to the maternity ward at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness.

Mum Rachel Macintyre, 23, also has three-year-old daughter Ava and son Hamish, who is about to turn two.

She said: 'We thought Isla was going to come early - she was due on February 24. I was hoping she would hold on until the 29. I thought being a leap year baby would be nice for her.'

'Isla arrived at 2.20am, weighing 8lbs 10oz.'

'The midwife said she was the first leap year baby born there for many years, but couldn't find out exactly how long. It was quite special.'



Sea loch flood wall too high say residents

BUILDING a six foot wall in front of a scenic sea loch to prevent flooding has not gone down well with residents.

Highland Council held public drop-in sessions last week to update residents on the flood protection scheme for Caol and Lochside.

The area has been hit by flooding in the past, most recently in 2005. The area is bordered by Loch Linnhe, the River Lochy and the Caledonian Canal.

There's a chance of severe flooding once every 200 years, which could impact on 300

houses in the area. A mock-up wall showing its height has been constructed on the shore. The scheme will also include a path and cycle way.

The overall cost of the scheme is estimated to be around £8 million.

While residents want protection measures, many feel that the wall is too big and will ruin their view.

Isobel MacPhee was among the first tenants in Erracht Drive. She said: 'I think the wall is an eyesore, it's far too high. If it was even four feet that would be better. I don't

mind if something goes up for protection.'

Joyce Vickers has experienced the floods, but also feels the wall is too high.

She said: 'In 1978 the water came in the front door and out the back. Some of us were put in a caravan for five weeks.'

Donnie Corbett, chairperson of the Caol Regeneration Company, said: 'The flood protection is needed. My concern is that the rock armour is going to get all the seaweed. Our group spends £4,000 cleaning up the beach each year.'

Another resident said: 'One hundred per cent something has to be done, but I'm pretty against what's being proposed. Views will be spoiled and that's a major selling point.'

Harry Jeffrey said: 'I've seen the tide coming in and half the height of that wall is not needed. We need something, but that's a bit much.'

Damian MacDonald, is helping lead plans to replace the children's parks in Erracht Drive as part of the scheme.

He said: 'We carried out a feasibility study to see where is best for a park and Banavie

Road got the most support. At the end of the day the scheme will make the area look nicer.'

Highland Council hopes to start building the project in 2018 after the completion of the statutory process and detailed design.

Garry Smith, the council's principal engineer, said: 'We want to build a robust scheme to protect 300 houses in Caol and Lochside.'

The sea levels are changing and rising. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) has a list of all the schemes in Scotland for flood

risk and Caol is quite high on that list.

'The Scottish Government can provide 80 per cent of funding for schemes. The damage caused by a flood event could cost in the region of £12.5m. The risk is real. If we get the wrong set of circumstances there could be a very severe flood.'

Mr Smith added: 'In terms of residents' views from their homes, they will still see Fort William and the Corran Narrows. The height of the wall has been reduced by 300mm to reduce the impact.'

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Customer service comes first for the A4 Audi team

Since A For Audi's inception 10 years ago this month, we have been committed to offering the highest level of customer service and technical knowhow and we have built our reputation on it. As a result of this we now have more than 12,000 returning customers.

Over the years we have expanded by adding P For Porsche and B For BMW using the same successful business model. We are committed to offering all of our customers the highest level of service and the best possible value. During this time our business has grown geographically, not just covering the Central Belts and Glasgow area but now regularly collecting cars from the Borders, Mull and Western Isles.

A major factor in the geographical expansion of our business was the realisation that people living outwith Glasgow find it very difficult to find a dedicated specialist who is able to work through complex problems associated with these brands. As a business we

are committed to not only solving the issue with the car but also making it easier for you to access our services. We have now expanded our fleet of courtesy cars and are more than happy to supply people in your area with a pick-up and delivery service and/or a courtesy car for the full duration of time that your car is with us. This is an addition to a service which we have now been providing for five years, which we call 'west coast customer'. This enables customers when booking to speak to a technician, allowing us to preorder parts therefore improving efficiency and increasing the likelihood of receiving your car back on the same day. This saves many customers costly hotels bills and further disruption.

If you like what you have read and have not used us already why don't you visit our website, send us an email quoting 'west coast customer' or simply give us a call and we would be more than happy to cater for any of your needs.



Muir's Army

as told to Michelle McAnally

Life in National Service may have been punishing and dull, and, at times, zany. But, especially when Gilbert Muir served, it was an important part of Britain's defence, with events such as the Suez Crisis and The Cold War casting a dark shadow over the country. He was among the 2.3 million men who proudly served their country as heroes of the National Service.



THE RECENT release of *Dad's Army* put Oban retiree Gilbert Muir in mind of his own days at Heathfield Camp in Honiton, Devon, where the television series and films about life in the Home Guard during the Second World War take place. He spent his National Service there from 1954-56, and while it wasn't all fun and games as in the TV series and movie, Gilbert, 81, had his share of adventures, both grim and madcap.

From 1949 to 1960, fit young men between 17 and 21 years were required to join the National Service for two years. Soon after his 19th birth-

day, the time came for Gilbert, who was starting his career in agriculture in Campbeltown, to do his patriotic duty. His preferred choice was the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

He said: 'As a young boy I had polio, and I overcame that, but they reckoned I wasn't fit enough for the Argylls.'

Hoping he might get a chance to travel abroad, he instead got assigned to ATS Training Camp Heathfield – not exactly the glamorous locale he had hoped for, but certainly exotic enough to a boy from the Highlands. 'Join the Army and see the world, they said!' he laughed.

You're in the Army now

GILBERT was assigned to the Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, or REME. The first order of business was a gruelling eight-week basic training. 'I don't think that forces today would be allowed to go through some of the things we did back then in national service,' Gilbert shared. 'I can assure you, it was nothing like *Dad's Army*, but we did have our good times!

'People with a trade, like electrician, were usually the types assigned to REME. The selection officer asked me what I did on Civvy Street, and when I said agriculture, he replied, "Well, I don't know what we'll do with you!" I laughed and said if there were any cattle or sheep, I'll look after them!

There were, sadly, no cattle or sheep to be looked after, so Gilbert volunteered for driving duty. 'But they showed me the long list of

everyone who also wanted to drive. Meanwhile, you had to do any job you were sent to until a spot in your chosen job came up. At times it was miserable, but not always.'

So Gilbert settled into life as a grunt – deliv-ering coal, cleaning toilets and peeling pota-tering toes. One day he was in the kitchen scrubbing pots and cleaning out drains with a fellow Scot, also an agriculturalist, when the lieutenant colonel, surrounded by his entourage, was to inspect. Everyone snapped to attention as he turned to Gilbert. 'Private 22993200, Sir, what did you do on Civvy Street?' he asked.

When Gilbert told him, the colonel turned to his adjutant and asked, 'Why are these men in the kitchen? They are immediately to be sent to work on the gardens and the camp grounds!'

From then on, Gilbert was in his wheelhouse, and

soon promoted to lance corporal in charge of the grounds. His most important duty, however, was looking after the lieutenant colonel's prized dahlias. Gilbert explained: 'He was daft for dahlias. The commanding officer would say to me "Muir, whatever you do today, take good care of those dahlias, because if the colonel's not happy with his flowers, we'll all get hell!"'

Gilbert obviously did a very good job on those dahlias, because when a posting came up for Gilbert in Tripoli, the colonel cancelled it. 'The sergeant told me he couldn't do that and I could go if I wanted to, but I just did my two years there in exotic Devon,' he said with a wry smile. 'Mind you, it is lovely countryside.'

The bullet is not for firing

WHILE life in the National Service was no joke, some aspects of life at Heathfield were as laughable as an episode of *Dad's Army*. 'When I became a corporal, one of my duties was to carry out night guard duty,' Gilbert Muir remem-

bered. 'The only person with a gun was the guard at the gate. We were armed, not with a rifle, but with a pick axe shaft – not even the axe, just the shaft. But, I'll tell you, the enemy wouldn't like a crack over the head with that!'



Gilbert Muir's granddaughter, Kirsten Bergant, 26, lives near Heathfield and recently visited the farmhouse where Gilbert enjoyed local cider. It's now a historic inn.



'Stupid-boy!'

More hilarity ensued when Gilbert Muir made friends with a local farmer named Bill, on whose land the camp was located. 'He used to come in each day to pick up the waste from the kitchens to feed his pigs – I think the pigs thrived better than the soldiers. When Bill found out I was in agriculture, he told me that he had his pals over on Saturdays, and I should come down. So one night I was free and headed out.'

When they left the camp, soldiers were given a number password, which they were required to give when they returned for 10pm curfew. Gilbert went over to Bill's farmhouse and joined the jolly group of locals who were already sitting around the fireplace, enjoying their host's delicious homemade cider.

'Whoever drank the last of the cider would go to the cellar and refill the bucket. I would have a wee extra when it was my turn. By the time I got back to the camp, I couldn't remember my number. So I was thrown in jail, lying on a hard bed with one wee blanket.'

At dawn, the guard bellowed, 'Muir, what's your number?' By this point, Gilbert remembered, so he was allowed to go back to his billet to sleep it off. 'I let it happen a second time and was given a warning, so I knew I would have to watch it. But one day I thought, since I'm in charge of the camp ground, I could see if there was another way to get out. Not far from my billet I saw a spot where I could get under the fence. I got away with that for quite a wee while, even though I could have been court marshalled if I were caught!'



Gilbert Muir, wearing his REME insignia, with his grandson, Jamie Killorn, 18, in his cadet uniform.

Mum takes on gruelling Munro challenge in daughter's memory

CAREN MCPATE
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A CARING mum is preparing for a gruelling challenge to run 24 Munros in memory of her stillborn daughter.

Helen Smith's first daughter Nicki died during labour on June 28 1995. This year would have been her 21st birthday and, like other milestone birthdays, Helen wanted to mark it by doing something special.

The 44-year-old will attempt to run 24 Munros in 24 hours, known as Ramsay's Round, but said she will be happy to complete it, however long it takes.

Helen's challenge is even more remarkable as she is in constant pain after her coccyx, the bottom portion of her spine, was broken during an incident while serving as a police officer.

Despite having her coccyx removed, Helen is still in pain, but finds her way to work through it.

She admits she used to hate running, but took it up in 2011 when she turned 40 and what would have been Nicki's 16th

birthday. That same year she completed four marathons, four half marathons and an ultra marathon, which is anything over a marathon in length.

Helen, who lives in Caol, said: 'I saw the Ramsay's Round challenge on the internet a couple of years ago and thought, that looks good. So few people have done it so that's a big challenge. Completing the round, I know I can do it. Whatever time it takes, I want to do it. I can't back down from a challenge.'

Ramsay's Round is named after Charlie Ramsay who, in July 1978, ran 24 Munros in 23 hours and 58 minutes, a distance of 56 miles and 28,500 feet of climbing. He set a record, which was to last for nine years.

Helen said that thinking of Nicki will help spur her on and she will leave a rose on each Munro during her run. She's decided to run anti-clockwise and finish on Ben Nevis.

She's supported by her partner Davie, daughter Sarah, 18, and Matt, 10.

Helen added: 'They think I'm



Helen at the Melantee hill, near Ben Nevis, in Fort William.

mad but are very supportive. I can't wait for it. Every time I now do a run I like to put a decent hill in it as practise. I'm not a great hill runner, it's normally trails I do, hence this is a biggie for me.

'Hopefully I can keep it going without sleeping. I know I can go that long without a nap, I've done it several times now, but I'll listen to my body.'

Helen retired early from the police force two years ago and now has her own business, Lochaber Embroidery And Printing (LEAP) in Fort William. She's a member of Lochaber Athletic Club (LAC) and is looking for help during the Ramsay's Round, including support runners and supporters. Some people have already volunteered.

Helen has organised a just-giving page to raise money for Lochaber Mountain Rescue: www.justgiving.com/Helensmith280616

She also wants to raise awareness of stillbirth and neonatal death. Anyone who would like to be put in touch with people who can help can contact Helen on 01397 708878.

Body discovered on island shore

A BODY was discovered on the shore of the island of Rum on Friday afternoon.

The body was reported by a member of the public before police officers, the RNLI and coastguard attended the scene and removed the body to the mainland for further investigation.

Police Scotland has informed the family of missing kayaker Jason Chung Wai Ho.

Jason, 39, from Glasgow was last seen with an inflatable kayak at Traigh beach, near Arisaig on January 13. A search for him involving search dogs and Lochaber and Skye Mountain rescue teams has been ongoing. Formal identification is ongoing and police have not yet said whether or not the body is that of Jason Chung Wai Ho.

Architects chosen for St Kilda centre

SKYE-based architects Dualchas, along with Norwegian partners, have been selected to provide the design master plan for the proposed Ionad Hiort/St Kilda Centre in Lewis.

The selection of Dualchas and their partners, Reulf Ramstad Architects (RRA) of Oslo, complements the recent announcement that consultancy firm Metaport has been given the remit of advising on the contents of the centre.

Iain Buchanan, chairman of Ionad Hiort Ltd, the charitable company behind the project, said: 'The vision presented by Dualchas and RRA was outstanding and we are confident that we have people of the highest calibre developing every aspect of the project, in close consultation with local interests.'

Skye tannery to expand premises

SKYESKYNs Ltd is to invest £100,000 expanding its premises.

The investment in the tannery has been supported by Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Dave Thomson SNP MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch said it was 'great news that this quality business is expanding'.

New competitive electricity tariff for the Western Isles

A COLLABORATION between Western Isles Council and a licensed UK Energy Supplier, means electricity consumers in the Western Isles may soon be able to take advantage of a significantly lower electricity tariff.

The comhairle has facilitated the establishment of 'Hebrides Energy', an independent energy supply company comprising representation from Hebrides Housing Partnership, Tighean Innse Gall, The Stornoway Trust, Community Energy Scotland and the comhairle.

Initially, Hebrides Energy will partner with a licensed UK energy supplier to launch a bespoke and competitive Hebrides Energy electricity tariff during the second half of 2016.

Meanwhile, Hebrides Energy is working with its partner to prioritise the early rollout of smart meters in the Western Isles.

These devices will allow consumers to view their real time electricity consumption in pounds and pence and will put an end to estimated bills and associated over-charging.



Rachel Slater and Tim Newton loved climbing.

Families of climbers killed on Ben Nevis pay tribute to rescue teams

THE FAMILIES of a couple whose bodies were found on Ben Nevis have paid tribute to them and everyone involved in the search.

Experienced climbers Rachel Slater, 24, and Tim Newton, 27, were reported missing on February 15 after failing to return home.

A huge search operation took place to find them. It's believed the couple, from Bradford, died in an avalanche. They were found on Wednesday March 23.

A statement from the families said that Ms Slater and Mr Newton said they were 'doing what they loved to do'.

It added: 'We would like to

thank the mountain rescue teams, climbing community, police in Fort William and all concerned for finding Rachel and Tim, bringing the news we have been waiting for and for their sustained efforts over the last six weeks.

'These brave and generous men and women have worked incredibly hard to find Rachel and Tim in difficult and dangerous conditions.'

'The Lochaber Mountain Rescue team, police, climbers, friends, family and wider community near and far have been overwhelmingly supportive, generous and kind throughout this difficult time.'

'Although much anticipated,

it still comes as a shock but we are thankful that we can now move forward with our lives in the knowledge that Rachel and Tim were doing what they loved to do. Climbing was their passion, they loved the mountains, wilderness and outdoor spaces.'

Lochaber Mountain Rescue commented on its Facebook page: 'I'm sure that everyone will join us in offering our thoughts and sincere condolences to the families and friends of Rachel and Tim.'

'They were well-known, experienced and respected climbers and their plight has touched so many people over the last few weeks.'

City cash deal concerns Lochaber

CONCERN has been raised that there is no mention of Lochaber and the west after the UK announcement of a £315million Inverness and Highland City Region deal.

Over the 20-year lifetime of the deal, around £1 billion of investment will be unlocked.

Dave Thompson, MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch, welcomed the agreement by the UK and Scottish Governments with Highland Council.

However, he said: 'There are considerable challenges faced in the west of the region. For example, sporting facilities in Lochaber and the Stromeferry bypass come immediately to mind, as does upgrade work on the critical trunk road the A82. I hope to see Highland Council acting for the whole region and investing these monies in both east and west.'

The Oban Times recently reported that members of Lochaber Sports Association had resigned. Highland Council decided last October to only award £200,000 to the group when it was believed it would be given £600,000.

Highland Council said that the £315m investment would benefit Highland-wide projects. The cash will go towards building roads, provide 6,000 new homes and to accelerate effective broadband and mobile coverage.

Steam train back on track

THE WORLD-famous Jacobite steam train will run as planned from May following safety concerns being addressed by operators.

West Coast Railways (WCR) was banned from running on the main line railway after the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) issued a prohibition notice to the company.

The decision was taken after concerns were raised about WCR's management of safety.

WCR operates the Fort William to Mallaig tourist attraction between May and October. On March 23, ORR lifted the prohibition notice and said it had 'received evidence that steps have been

taken to remedy the issues identified. These included the introduction of clearer governance structures with proper accountability for safety, more robust risk assessments and enhanced processes for managing staff, with a focus on safety culture'.

WCR recently announced that, in the event of the ban remaining in place for the start of the Jacobite excursion, it would give options to people who had booked tickets six weeks before their travel date, including a full refund.

The train crosses the Glenfinnan viaduct, a location made famous in the Harry Potter films, and brings thousands of tourists

to the area every year.

In a statement WCR said it was delighted with the announcement. It added: 'Our planned schedule for 2016 will go ahead, including the Jacobite, which starts on May 9.'

'Passenger safety is our primary concern and all efforts to ensure the safe and smooth operation of all our services have been made.'

'WCR thanks the ORR for its help and support over the recent weeks.'

ORR director of railway safety and HM chief inspector of railways Ian Prosser said: 'We shall continue to closely monitor WCR over the coming period to ensure that it fully complies with all the commitments it has made.'

Roadwork start is delayed

ROADWORKS in the centre of Fort William will take place from April 17 - not from this week as previously reported.

The work, likely to last for two weeks, will see a mini roundabout at the Inverloch junction constructed.

A spokeswoman for BEAR Scotland said: 'We're carrying out works to replace traffic lights with a mini-roundabout on the A82 at the Inverloch junction.'

'The works will begin on Sunday April 17 and are expected to last for two weeks. Beginning on Sunday at 9am, the existing junction traffic lights will be discon-

nected and will temporarily operate as a T-Junction. Following this, the remainder of the works will be carried out overnight from 7pm to 6am to keep disruption to a minimum.'

'The A82 will remain open during the day and overnight, however, temporary traffic lights will be in place for the safety of road workers and motorists during working hours. A closure of Earl of Inverness Road will be required each night during the first week with a short diversion in place.'

'The road closure will be lifted during the day and the temporary traffic

lights switched off, with the junction instead operating as a T-Junction until the mini-roundabout can be installed.'

'In the second week the Earl of Inverness Road will operate under temporary traffic lights during working hours.'

'We've taken steps to minimise disruption to motorists as much as possible by carrying out the works overnight, avoiding working at weekends and designing the works to avoid any closures of the A82. We'd encourage motorists to plan ahead and leave a little extra time for their journeys.'

Agreement reached on council re-design

A SHAKE-UP in the way Highland Council is run has begun.

A re-design of the local authority was agreed by councillors at a special meeting last week.

The decision to restructure follows a £40 million cut to the council's budget, part of which will see 400 employees taking voluntary redundancy.

A working group of 16 councillors will be created to take forward the plans with the first stage of recommendations

going before the council in December. A budget of £150,000 will be allocated for the work.

The council's chief executive Steve Barron referred to the Graph of Doom, produced by Barnet Council in 2012 of its predicted budget and has become used generally to apply to the whole of local government.

Mr Barron said: 'This is about aspiration and ambition for Highland Council, not a graph of doom.'

'The purpose of redesign gives us an opportunity to lead positive change for the future. A reduced workforce will require us to change our focus and ways of working. We need to listen to and value our staff, who are our greatest assets.'

The redesign is expected to renew the council's purpose and ambition; its priorities; to develop proposals for affordable services and delivery options; and to explore the best options for public participation.

DIGITALBOOST

power up your business

Business Workshops

DigitalBoost is run in conjunction with Business Gateway and partners to offer you fully funded workshops, advice and support.

WEBSITE DATA ANALYTICS
 Improve your website effectiveness and understand the role of Google Analytics
 20th and 22nd April 2016
 10am - 12.30pm, West Highland Housing Association, Oban
 10am - 12.30pm, Loch Fyne Hotel, Inveraray

DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY
 Learn the practical steps necessary to develop a digital marketing strategy
 20th and 22nd April 2016
 1.30pm - 4.30pm, West Highland Housing Association, Oban
 1.30pm - 4.30pm, Loch Fyne Hotel, Inveraray

BACK OFFICE SYSTEMS
 Learn how to arrange, manage and automate your online back office functions securely and effectively
 21st April 2016
 10am - 12.30pm, West Highland Housing Association, Oban

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The Oban Times
A WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Viewpoint

The Oban Times
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Established 1861 No 8216

Our front page story this week focuses on the Facebook comments made about the town's traffic wardens following a number of people receiving tickets for parking on double yellow lines.

There is no doubt the council's move to extend parking restrictions and introduce more charges in the town have not gone down well with many people, but the people who received tickets on Sunday were breaking the law – and the parking wardens were doing their job.

Some of the comments were shameful and many peo-

ple who saw them were rightly shocked. No-one should have to suffer abuse for doing their job, and the fact that the comments were made on a closed Facebook group's page is no defense.

On Tuesday, one of our reporters met one of the wardens on the street – he was accompanied by a council colleague because of fear of further abuse.

Following complaints, the police have now launched an investigation into the matter, because as Sergeant Moore rightly states, there is no place for these attitudes or comments in Oban.



Days gone by – steamers in Oban Bay

This week's flashback photograph was submitted by reader Mr T Loughray of Edinburgh. It features steamers Claymore and Chevalier which used to ply in and out of Oban Bay regularly. The postcard was produced by Hugh Macdonald Stationer. It was here school children were sent with a list from their teachers to buy their own books and pencils. Pens and ink were supplied by the schools. Digital versions of flashback photos for *The Oban Times* can be sent to editor@obantimes.co.uk or prints sent to the editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB. Anyone who wishes a print returned should include a stamped-addressed envelope.

Plans won't solve housing needs

Sir,
Anyone reading last week's *Oban Times*, 'Planning a better future for Morvern', might be forgiven for believing Morvern Community Development Company's planning application to build six new houses on the approach to Lochaline, along with a further development at the heart of the village, will solve the parish's long-term housing and social needs. It will not.

The community welcomes much-needed new housing but it should not be lumbered with poor quality buildings.

The ethos of affordable housing in Scotland was always to have equal status in size and site, but to their shame the local housing association and Highland Council planners appear to have actively encouraged this discrimination in Morvern. No tenant should be denied the highest possible living standards no matter what their means.

Both schemes have been shoe-horned into areas little larger than dog-runs. The first surrounded by trees and subject to flooding, the second beside a petrol station, a Calor gas depot and a garage and neither with any view.

Both applications have proceeded on the basis there are no other sites within the village. This is untrue. There are hundreds of acres of semi-derelict land around Lochaline which, with the passing of the recent Land Reform Act, can be purchased by the community for the community.

If it is to maintain its credibility, Morvern Community Development

Company must be neutral and move into the 21st century by taking a bolder step instead of creating ghettos.

Iain Thornber, Morvern.

Maiden song talk sparks memories

Sir,
With reference to recent correspondence regarding the song *Maiden of Morven* by Sir Harold Boulton, I have an LP record by Father Sydney MacEwan entitled the *Road to the Isles*, where he is accompanied by Duncan Morrison.

It is a compilation produced in 1989 by Conifer Records Ltd and Tall Poppy Transcriptions. The recordings in this collection are the earliest made by Father Sydney and include all the recordings he made between 1934 and 1936.

In an interesting biography on the cover of the LP, Ciobhan O'Dalaigh tells how Father Sydney's first public performance came in 1919 when the family were on holiday in Dunoon and he won a children's singing competition. He won a handsome prize of seven and sixpence, which kept him and his brother in rowing boats for the rest of the holiday.

He made overseas tours, most prominently to the United States and Australia, where he was given the welcome usually reserved for royalty or pop singers. His large earnings on these overseas trips were handed to the Church Extension Fund in the Diocese of Argyll.

By now he was parish priest of St Margaret's in Lochgilphead, which his singing had helped to rebuild. Hearing the song again has also

brought back memories of when my wife and I were members of Ballachulish Gaelic Choir. One of the tenors, George Robertson from Kinlochleven, often sang *Maiden of Morven* at ceilidhs and concerts along with another of his favourite songs, *Bonnie Dunoon*.

Alistair MacNeill, North Berwick.

Contribute to online royal birthday book

Sir,
It is remarkable that, as her 90th birthday approaches, Her Majesty the Queen is still working so passionately for our country and supporting the work of hundreds of charitable organisations.

In recognition of her incredible efforts, I am inviting readers to be part of a historic online commemoration at www.TheQueensBirthdayBook.com. The Queen's Birthday Book will form a huge digital collection of messages, photos and film to mark Her Majesty's special day on April 21, 2016. Anyone can contribute free by adding their birthday messages and personal stories of meeting the Queen. One of my own special memories is performing for the Queen and other members of the royal family at Her Majesty's 16th birthday celebrations at Windsor Castle, a night which I hope she remembers as fondly as I do.

As well as a great digital archive for future generations to look back on, we've created this book to raise vital funds for the charities the Queen is patron of, through the sale of specially-issued commemorative medals from the London Mint Office.

Dame Vera Lynn.

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



Glasgow sets off for Pan Celtic

EVERY year, a significant Scottish contingent travels to Ireland for the International Pan Celtic Festival.

Otherwise known as the Mòd abroad, this is a week of craic and competitions between contestants from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Brittany, Cornwall and the Isle of Man.

This year the competition is being held in Carlow and, as ever, a Glasgow representation is heading over.

I am looking forward to joining them for the first time this year. Previously, exams at this time of year have meant I couldn't attend.

For travellers from Glasgow, the official instruction every year is to be at the recycling bins at Asda Govan - the most glamorous of meeting places - to be picked up by the bus coming down from the Highlands and on its way to Ireland.

By the time this paper reaches the shelves, the competitions will be well and truly under way.

Scottish competitors in the Traditional Song Competition are Katy Graham, Joy Dunlop and myself.

Raymond Bremner and Alasdair Whyte have both entered bands for the group competition, and Alasdair Whyte is also Scotland's representation for the New Song competition.

There are a number of choirs singing: Riona Whyte's Bùrach, Raymond Bremner's Atomaig Piseag and a male-voice choir conducted by Joy Dunlop. I'm looking forward to the competitions and, particularly, to hearing the music of Robert Nairn in the evenings.

Good luck to all the Scottish competitors.

Ceòl Mòr Ostaig

CEÒL's Craic, Glasgow's year-round exponent of contemporary Gaelic culture, is to host a celebration of the vital contribution Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic College in Skye, continues to make to all aspects of contemporary Gaelic culture.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



Ailean Caimbeul

THA FHIOS GUN ROBH an aithis aig Buidheann-Sgrùdaidh a' Chùraim a nochd air an t-seachdain seo chaidh na tàmailt dha seirbheis slàinte nan Eileanan Siar is iad air an cronachadh air sgath 's nach eil iad air an ìre taice is aire iomchaidh a thoirt dha seann daoine.

Leis gum bheil an dleastanas sin cho bunaiteach dhan t-seirbheis slàinte 's dòcha gun canadh cuid gun do dh'fhàillig ceannardan gu tur ann a bhith a' leigeil le leithid seo tachairt.

A rèir coltais 'e bun na cùise gun robh seann daoine gan cumail san ospadal ro thrì air sgath 's nach gabhadh cùram a thoirt dhaibh nan dachaighean, is cha robh ionadan-cùram ann dam faodadh iad a dhol chun am biodh iad air chomas tilleadh dhachaigh.

Ach chan ann a-mhàin aig an t-seirbheis slàinte a tha uallach cùram sheann daoine, tha tomhas mhòr den dleastanas sin aig Comhairlean cuideachd, agus theagamh gur e rud as draghaile buileach nach robh a rèir coltais conaltradh neo co-obrachadh iomchaidh eadar luchd-stiùiridh na seirbheis slàinte agus a' Chomhairle.



The flag of the International Pan Celtic Festival, which takes place in Carlow this week, denoting all the Celtic Nations.

The evening, Ceòl Mòr Ostaig, is being held in the Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA), Sauchiehall Street, on Saturday April 16 beginning at 7.45pm with an instrumental set by Neil McDermott and Friends.

At 8.20pm, students from the BA Gaelic and Traditional Music Degree at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (An Cùrsa Ciùil) will take the stage to perform a selection of Gaelic songs and traditional airs.

An Cùrsa Ciùil showcase the fantastic level of musicianship being nurtured and developed at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig.

At 9.30pm, Kathleen MacInnes will perform, accompanied by long-term collaborators Mhairi Hall and Mike Vass. Mhairi Hall is one of the most sought-after pianists and arrangers working in Scotland today.

Mike Vass is primarily known for his virtuoso fiddle playing, but is also an accomplished tenor guitar and mandolin player. Tickets are £12, or £10 for concessions, for what looks like a great evening.

What's on

Friday April 1: Glasgow Uist and Barra Association ceilidh dance, Crawford Hall, Beith Street.

Friday April 8: Clydebank Highlanders' Erskine Ceilidh, Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick.

Tuesday April 12: Club Film at Ceòl's Craic in the CCA, Sauchiehall Street.

Saturday April 16: Ceòl Mòr Ostaig with Ceòl 's Craic, the CCA, Sauchiehall Street.

Friday April 29: Glasgow Uist and Barra Association ceilidh dance, Crawford Hall, Beith Street.

Saturday April 30: Glasgow Skye Association annual spring concert (Wee Skye), Crawford Hall.

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Park Bar: Friday April 1 - Scott Harvey. Saturday April 2 - Dodgy Ground. Sunday April 3 - Scott Harvey.

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Press policy

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

We realise, however, that mistakes happen from time to time.

If you think we have made a significant mistake and you wish to discuss this with us, please let us know as soon as possible by any of the three methods: emailing editor@obantimes.co.uk; telephoning the editor on 01631 568046; writing to the Editor at The Oban Times,

Crannog Lane, Lochavullin estate, Oban, PA34 4HB.

We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO, which will investigate the matter. You can

either telephone IPSO on 0300 123 2220 or email inquiries@ipso.co.uk. IPSO is an independent body which deals with complaints from the public about the editorial content of newspapers and magazines.

We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

Your letters

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

The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and

postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification.

Anonymous letters or those supplied without a

contact telephone number will not be printed. Please write or fax to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Fax: 01631 568001.

Email editor@obantimes.co.uk.



SCOTTISH RURAL AWARDS 2016

Gala Dinner & AWARDS

31 March 2016
Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh



Hosted by
FRED MACAULAY

- Fizz reception
- Three-course meal, including a half bottle of wine per person
- Network with inspirational businesses from across Scotland



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

Arena

£4.2m funding to save St Peter's Seminary Gateway to Argyll's culture

THE DERELICT St Peter's Seminary and the estate surrounding it is to be transformed into a unique arts venue and heritage destination thanks to an award of more than £4.2m.

Creative organisation NVA has been given Heritage Lottery funding of £3,806,000 to carry out the project while Creative Scotland confirmed a National Lottery funding award of £400,000 towards the work.

The seminary is currently the centrepiece of a sell-out public art event marking the launch of the Festival of Architecture and is a key highlight of the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design.

Regarded as one of Europe's greatest modernist buildings, St Peter's, based on the hillside above Cardross, opened as a

training centre for young priests in 1966. Its ground-breaking design was by Isi Metzstein and Andy McMillan of Gillespie, Kidd and Coia.

It closed its doors in 1980 and has laid abandoned since with the effects of the elements and vandalism contributing to its now ruinous state.

This major investment will see key elements of the building restored whilst others will be consolidated to allow the public safe access to large scale events and performances as well as to smaller community activities.

The triple-height chapel will be partially restored and converted into a 600-capacity venue, while the former sacristy and crypt will be a focal point for exhibitions.

The transformation will include the

104-acre rural estate surrounding the architectural masterpiece – an estate which includes the remains of the 15th century Kilmahew Castle.

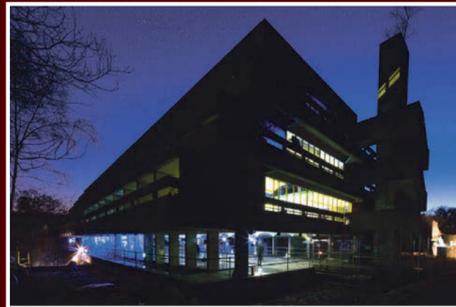
A path network based on the original 19th century designed landscape will be reinstated, historic bridges restored and the Victorian walled garden brought back into productive use, bringing the site back to life and encouraging new audiences to visit. It is expected that more than 200 people will become involved as volunteers.

Angus Farquhar, creative director of NVA, said: 'This is an historic moment in the life of St Peter's Seminary. We are now able to start work on its permanent transformation into an international cultural centre that will speak to the creative life of Europe.'

'After the overwhelming response to Hinterland, our first major animation of the site and the new name for Kilmahew/St Peter's, we have real hope that our vision for progressive, socially-focused art will connect strongly with people and together we will forge a new place for public art and its significance in the world.'

'We thank Heritage Lottery Fund and Creative Scotland for joining us in the vision and ambition for the site and investing in its future.'

NVA's Hinterland, a large scale light and music night-time event, launched the Festival of Architecture 2016 on March 18 at the St Peter's Seminary near Helensburgh, presenting a key highlight of the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design.



Broadcasting star wins Hands Up for Trad award

HANDS Up for Trad was happy, this week, to announce that its Services to Broadcasting Award 2016 is to be given to Iain Anderson.

Iain has been a part of Scottish broadcasting life since the early 1970s and so many have grown up listening to him and continue to be soothed by his beautiful voice many years later.

For more than four decades, three of them with BBC Radio Scotland, the richly mellow tones of Iain Anderson have presented an often eclectic range of music, from Celtic to classical, but particularly the work of singer-songwriters, from both sides of the Atlantic.

Iain's contribution was celebrated with a dinner on March 24 and included his induction to the Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame.



FLAUTIST Chelsea Anne McNab, aged 17, won the Argyll and Bute Council Cup for woodwind solo (secondary school, S4 to S6), her winning piece being Cantilena from Flute Sonata.

The Oban teenager also secured the Highland Year of Culture 2007 Award for the highest mark in solo woodwind.



MacPhail's MUSIC

A fond farewell and new beginnings

LAST week we announced the departure from Skipinnish of Robert Robertson and Ross Wilson and on April 9 at the Corran Halls in Oban they will perform their last gig as part of the band.

They are leaving to pursue other musical ventures and all of us in the band wish them the very best with this.

Since they joined, they have each made a considerable contribution to the progress and successes achieved in recent years.

Their replacements, lead singer Norrie MacIver and piano player Jonathan Gillespie, have very big shoes to fill but they are relishing the challenge and we are all looking forward to an exciting new chapter for Skipinnish.

Our multi-talented Ally Murray will be joining Andrew and Kyle on pipes and whistles and taking up the role of drummer will be Rory Grindlay.

Robert joined the band in 2011, Ross in 2013, and for us these years have been the most enjoyable and exciting period since myself and Andrew formed Skipinnish in 1999.

Robert was 17 and still at school when

he first performed as the Skipinnish lead singer.

Initial concerns that he might be too young and inexperienced were quickly dispelled after his first few gigs.

His confidence, stage presence, vocal prowess and performance energy were immediately apparent and have been developing ever since. Robert is a natural performer and his energy grows with the size of the audience. He also became an invaluable song-writing collaborator and we will be very much continuing this creative partnership.

Ross joined when we were recording Atlantic Roar and his musical and technical genius became apparent as he began to take the head role in the recording studio. His range in musical styles is wide and he can shift seamlessly from pop-style song accompaniment to a driving vamp rhythm of a 2/4 march.

Ross's other significant skill is with advertising, promotion and using social media to increase exposure.

The release of our singles, Walking on the Waves, December and The Island,

the production of the accompanying videos and the promotion of them were conceived and lead by Ross. This was a vital ingredient to the chart success and popularity of these songs and our resulting growth in popularity.

Robert and Ross's positive impact on Skipinnish has been huge and I hope in turn we have helped their respective musical careers.

Throughout their time with us they have been a pleasure to work with and have become our very close friends. Added to by existing members Alasdair Murray and Kyle Orr, the fun we have had over the last few years has been highly enjoyable!

It is testament to their character that they have helped choose our new members, helped them learn our repertoire and made sure we were totally covered musically before final decisions were made regarding the timing of their departure.

From all at Skipinnish we wish them a very fond farewell and we are excited for both their and our new beginnings.

April Business Gateway workshops in Oban and Inveraray

- Selling with Confidence** - 12 April, Inveraray - a workshop to give business owners a better understanding of why people buy, improve their persuasion skills and be more confident in using successful selling techniques.
- Reaching More Customers** - 14 April, Oban; 21 April, Dunoon - a one day workshop to help small craft businesses develop and reach more customers profitably. Help increase the scale of the business and widen markets.
- Becoming an Employer** - 14 April, Inveraray - a workshop to help businesses understand the process and create a structured plan for employing staff, covering legal obligations and good practice recruitment.
- Better Business Websites** - 27 April, Inveraray - What makes a good website? What does your design say about your business? Is your website content appropriate for your audience? And can people even find it? Some of the questions covered in this workshop for businesses who already have a website. Businesses will examine how to make their existing website better through its' design, content, usability and Search Engine Optimisation.

Call 01546 604555 or email business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk to book a place



Arena

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

Museums and galleries highlight their key role

MUSEUMS and Galleries Scotland (MGS) has been out and about to encourage politicians to champion their local galleries.

Doctor Alasdair Allan, for Western Isles, said: 'Comunn Eachdraidh Nis is a wonderful asset for the north of Lewis and it is always a pleasure to visit. I hear nothing but praise for how helpful the staff are and for the work the organisation does in the community. They also do a fantastic job in promoting the Gaelic language, as shown by their success in winning Gaelic Business of the Year a few years ago. Our islands are steeped in tradition and culture and we should appreciate the work that places like Comunn Eachdraidh Nis carry out to preserve this for future generations.'

Annie Macsween, chairwoman, said that Comunn Eachdraidh Nis was delighted Dr Allan had visited the historical society at the request of Museums Galleries Scotland. The community had been saddened by the closure of Cross School in 2011 but, shortly afterwards, Comunn Eachdraidh Nis,

which had been established in 1977, was able to secure ownership of the building and has developed it into a vibrant community historical and educational hub, catering for people of all ages and from all over the world.

Joanne Orr, chief executive officer of Museums Galleries Scotland, said: 'Museums play a vital role in the lives of individuals, families and communities across Scotland. Their learning and outreach work bridge inequalities in education and mental and physical health provision. They enhance the experience of visitors to Scotland and bring a positive economic impact. They connect people with their community.'

'As difficult decisions are being made about budgets across the country, it is vital that the true value of the sector is understood and that is why we have organised these visits.'

MGS delivers strategic development support to a sector of more than 450 museums and galleries. MGS will be visiting other museums and galleries with MSPs across Scotland over the coming months.



Comunn Eachdraidh Nis with their certificate of accreditation from Museums Galleries Scotland.

North Lorn Drama Festival a winner

THE North Lorn Drama Festival took place for the 62nd time earlier this month, with two shows held at Appin Hall.

The event took place on March 16 and 17 and winners were chosen in eight different categories.

The adult's Honorary Mrs Langton-Jones cup went to Benderloch and North Connell Drama Club's A team for ParentCraft and Benderloch and North Connell's B team won the Director's Cup for Jilted Lovers' Helpline.

Winners of the junior section's

Duncan Sutherland Trophy were Benderloch and North Connell Drama Club Juniors for The Chair and the Port Appin School Trophy went to Strath of Appin Primary School for Troy Story.

The adjudicator's junior Jack Skea Cup went to Calum McLuckie of Benderloch and North Connell Drama Club Juniors for his performance in The Chair.

The special endeavour Mr and Mrs Hugh Grant Trophy went to Strath of Appin Primary School for Troy Story.

In production, the Mr H J Dobson Trophy went to Benderloch and North Connell Drama Club A team for Parentcraft.

The Rab MacDonald Memorial Trophy went to the Appin team All Right on the Night for the nose job scene in Getting it Right and the Calum Thomson Memorial Trophy went to Strath of Appin primary school for the funeral candles scene in Troy Story.

The show was chaired by Pat Wyeth-Webb, adjudicated by Nat Little and the trophies were presented by Jessie MacKenzie.



PUT ON A SHOW: THE North Lorn Drama Festival in action.

Public votes for favourite artwork

THE WINNER of the People's Prize at the Moving Mountains - the Inspiration of Landscape exhibition has been chosen by the public.

James Hawkins, with his artwork 'Cul Beag from below Stac Polaidh' won by 36 per cent over the next favoured selection, Dot Walker's piece 'Coruisk Winter'. Mr Hawkins will be awarded £200 prize money by the An Ealdhain Trust.

The vote proved to be popular with viewers to the gallery, with more than 15 artworks receiving a high number of votes. It's hoped it will be an annual event for the Lime Tree Gallery in Fort William.

Overall winners of the exhibition, which runs until Sunday April 3, were selected by a panel of judges.



James Hawkins's artwork won the most public votes.

Calling all writers: 2016 Saltire Literary Awards now open

NOMINATIONS are now open for the 2016 Saltire Literary Awards and entries will be judged by an expert panel, convened this year by renowned journalist and former books editor at the Scotsman, David Robinson.

The call for nominations for this year's awards has been announced as the Saltire Society prepares to launch a busy programme of activities and events to celebrate its 80th year.

Widely recognised as Scotland's most prestigious book awards, the Saltire Literary Awards represent a long-standing commitment from the

Saltire Society to celebrate and support Scottish literary achievement and are run entirely on the basis of the voluntary commitment of the experts who make up the judging panel.

Categories
Having spent more than 30 years at the Scotsman, David will help the other judges on the panel to consider entries across six categories, which include Non-Fiction Book of the Year, Fiction Book of the Year, First Book of the Year, Research Book of the Year, History Book of the Year, and Poetry Book of the Year.

The winner of each book

category will receive a cash prize of £2,000 and go on to be considered for the top prize of £6,000, awarded to the Saltire Society Book of the Year.

All nominations and hard copies of books published between September 1 and March 31 must reach the Saltire Society by Thursday May 5 while books published between April 1 and August 31 must be received by Friday July 8.

The 2016 Awards shortlist will be announced mid-October with the Awards ceremony scheduled to take place on November 24 at Central Halls, Edinburgh.

Project wins global conservation competition

SCOTLAND'S only entry in a leading global conservation competition has won funding of more than £20,000 to address biodiversity loss and deforestation in the Highlands.

This will include planting 50,000 native trees and the

creation of habitats that will offer a lifeline to endangered and rare wildlife.

Trees for Life's Rewilding the Highlands initiative has won the Alpine category of the 2016 European Outdoor Conservation Association Conservation Vote,

securing more than 7,000 votes and widespread social media support in a tightly contested international online vote that was held between March 8 and 22.

For more information, see www.treesforlife.org.uk.

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23				24	

Across

- Indian chief (6)
- Lack of interest (6)
- Spanish stew (4)
- Very (8)
- Dispute (7)
- Aggressive pride (5)
- Pain (5)
- Natural (7)
- First flower of spring (8)
- Asinine (4)
- Casual top (1-5)
- Break (6)

Down

- Cart (4)
- Passageway for food (6)
- Emphasize importance (7)
- Cheap (5)
- Showy bloom (6)
- Force someone to do something (8)
- A life form (8)
- Flats divided into three (7)
- One who has just joined (6)
- Show evidence (6)
- Annoyed (5)
- Brood (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

O	C	O	T	O	C
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Social scene

Dunollie House, Oban

Weekend of fun at Dunollie

Easter event holds youngsters spell-bound with crafts and games



Sisters Olivia, 8, and Ashley Wood, 6, cast a spell with their Harry Potter wands.



Nicola Morden helps Jade Munro, 3, decorate her Easter bonnet.



Jamie Gray McInnes is helped to paint her egg by Sona Campbell.



Youngsters show off their handiwork.



Easter Bunny Gillian Campbell, Dunollie, leads the Easter bonnet parade.



Brother and sister Luca and Anaiya Kincaid.



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1 - 7 April

BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE | 12A | 170 MIN

Fri: 14.00, 19.00 Sat: 12.45 Sun: 11.30 Mon: 10.30 Tue: 11.00, 13.00 Wed: 11.00 Thu: 11.00, 13.00
3D Sat: 13.00, Mon: 14.00 Wed: 14.00

Fearing the actions of Superman are left unchecked, Batman takes on Superman, while the world wrestles with what kind of a hero it really needs. With Batman and Superman fighting each other, a new threat, Doomsday, is created by Lex Luthor. It's up to Superman and Batman to set aside their differences along with Wonder Woman to stop Lex Luthor and Doomsday from destroying Metropolis.

COMMUNITY SCREEN: THE SECOND BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL | PG | 138 MIN

Sun: 14.30
Community Screen - Concessions (age 60+) entry just £2.50! Includes complimentary tea.

As the Best Exotic Marigold Hotel has only a single remaining vacancy - posing a rooming predicament for two fresh arrivals - Sonny pursues his expansionist dream of opening a second hotel.

EDDIE THE EAGLE | PG | 125 MIN

Fri: 16.30, 19.15 Sat: 15.45 Sun: 17.00, 17.00 Mon: 16.00, 19.45 Tue: 16.15 Wed: 16.15, 19.45 Thu: 16.15, 18.30

The film details the inspiring exploits of Michael Edwards, better known as "Eddie the Eagle," the most famous ski jumper in British history. The film's portrayal of Edwards' never-say-die approach to the sport, celebrates the human spirit and resilience in the face of extraordinary odds and challenges. Taron Egerton, who made his feature film starring debut in Kingsman: The Secret Service, portrays Eddie the Eagle, and Hugh Jackman plays a ski jumping expert from Lake Placid who helps Eddie train for the Calgary Olympics.

IONA | 15 | 130 MIN

Fri: 21.30 Sat: 20.30 Sun: 19.15 Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu: 21.00

Iona takes her teenage son to the holy island where she was born so they can hide from a violent crime. As her son seeks forgiveness for what he has done Iona comes to terms with her loss of faith.

KIDS CLUB: BEAUTY AND THE BEAST | U | 88 MIN

Sat: 11.00
Childrens' Classic. Belle, whose father is imprisoned by the Beast, offers herself instead, unaware her captor to be an enchanted prince. Adults & Children £2 entry.

THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT | 12A | 141 MIN

Fri: 22.00 Sat: 18.00 Sun: 19.15 Mon: 18.20 Tue: 18.30 Wed: 18.30 Thu 18.30, 21.00

THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT is the third film in the 'Divergent' series, adapted from the young adult sci-fi novels by Veronica Ross. In this installment, a group of young people escape over the high wall surrounding Chicago and discover what lies beyond.

WHERE YOU'RE MEANT TO BE | 15 | 100 MIN

Sat: 19.30
Scottish cult-pop raconteur Aidan Moffat, former front-man of indie band Arab Strap - and best known for his no-holds-barred lyrics about sex, drugs and male anxiety - sets out to explore his country's past by rewriting and touring its oldest songs. Following the feature will be a live stage performance from Aidan Moffat.

ZOOTROPOLIS | PG | 128 MIN

Fri: 14.15, 17.00 Sat: 10.30, 16.15 Sun: 12.00, 14.30 Mon: 11.30, 13.45, 17.15, Tue: 10.30, 14.00, 16.00 Wed: 11.30, 14.00, 17.15 Thu: 10.30, 14.00, 16.00

In the animal city of Zootropolis, a fast-talking fox who's trying to make it big goes on the run when he's framed for a crime he didn't commit. Zootropolis's top cop, a self-righteous rabbit, is hot on his tail, but when both become targets of a conspiracy, they're forced to team up and discover even natural enemies can become best friends.

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COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club
Final night of the season
Thursday 7th April 2016
7.30pm Royal Hotel
Guest Artist:
Alan Small & Gemma Donald
Admission £4 All Welcome!

The Toy Cupboard
25th Birthday fundraising party.
Saturday 2nd April 2016,
2 - 4pm at the Corran Halls.
Kay's Vintage Tea, Police, Fire Engines, Pipers and various other activities.

The Great Western Crafters and Producers Market
Saturday 2nd April
11am - 4.30pm
Collection for Oban Playpark

FORT WILLIAM ACCORDION & FIDDLE CLUB
MUSICAL EVENING
on Tuesday, April 5, 2016 at 8pm
GUEST ARTIST: Gary Blair
Railway Club Inverlochey
All Welcome
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Extra
IN THE EVENT OF A LAST MINUTE CANCELLATION BY ANY GUEST ARTIST THE COMMITTEE WILL FIND AN ALTERNATIVE ARTIST

Oban U3A Monthly Meeting
Tuesday 5 April 2016 at 10:30 AM
Studio Theatre and Café area, Corran Halls, Oban

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'Telling the Castle Story' - Objects & Lifestyle

Dunollie Museum & Grounds is offering an exciting opportunity for young people in our community aged 11 - 25, to participate in **Arts Award**. The **Arts Award** qualification, managed by Trinity College London, is a fun way of developing creative talent.

Museum collections are inspiring and full of stories waiting to be unlocked. To gain your **Arts Award**, you will work with a small group of participants and our practitioners to create a digital projection of life at the castle.



Participants will develop photography skills by photographing objects from our collection that once had their home in the castle. You will research these objects and develop your own ideas to create a digital light, image and animation show for projection onto the castle walls as part of our 'Telling the Castle Story' event on 23rd September.

If you would like to find out more about taking part and gaining this qualification please contact melanie@dunollie.org or ring 01631 570550 for more information.

You can find more details of **Arts Award** by visiting <http://www.artsaward.org.uk>



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MONDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Monday Morning With Andy and Stephen, 1100 Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1700 Drivetime With Marcus, 1900 Rosie's Highland Fling, 2000 John McLuckie's Show, 2100 David Cullen

TUESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 1000 Ken Hunter, 1200 Memories are Made of This with Ken Hunter, 1500 Lesley Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drivetime with Jim Lynch, 1900 Sounds Scottish with Archie Cameron, 2000 Highest Praise with Stuart, 2100 Elaine Lamb, 2300 Northern Soul with Gordon Covey

WEDNESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Sound Scottish (repeat), 1000 Comfort Zone with Doug Carmichael, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Elaine Lamb, 1700 Drivetime with Campbell, 1900 Country Meets Rock with Len & Ken, 2100 Gordon's Grooves

THURSDAY: 0800 Morning show, 1100 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Gordon Covey, 1700 Drivetime with Stephen, 1900 Christine's Collection, 2100 Ann's Ceilidh, 2200 Margo Till Midnight

FRIDAY: 0800 Jean Ainsley Breakfast Show, 1000 Teeny and Tiny Show, 1300 -1500 Weekend Warmup with Ian Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drive Show with Jim Lynch, 1845 Sports View, 1900 Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig, 2000 Friday Night with Innes, 2100 TFI Friday with Jim Lawn

SATURDAY: 0800 Breakfast Show, 1000 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crosner, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1800 Sports View with the Dream Team, 1900 Marcus, 2000 Dave Lewis

SUNDAY: 0900 Sunday Morning with Breege, 1100 - 1400 Sunday Brunch, 1630 Archie Darling, 1800 Ken's Friends with Ken Hunter, 1900 New Country Show with David Entwistle, 2100 Drum & Bass with Graham Scott

Arena

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

Bodach

In this series, The Oban Times resident Bodach (Gaelic: old man, and by experience often a storyteller) looks through archive material for articles and pictures that preserve moments from the past. There is always a back story – and sometimes a future one.



Baking Tent, Inveraray Games July 1971

THIS picture captures two worlds. The fiercely competitive world of home industries competitions continues to move around the annual circuit of agricultural shows, festivals, gala days and all manner of charity fundraising events.

This is a serious business, demonstrated by the ladies' expressions of concentration. And the world of the child, who looks mildly distracted by the photographer, possibly more interested in tasting some of the exhibits than in their technical merits.

From the exuberant gateau in the foreground and the contrastingly drab clothing this particular event took place in the early 1970s, and readers will have their own memories of competitions just like this – as judges, entrants, interested observers or bored children.

The popularity of television programmes like The Great British Bake

Off testify to an enduring fascination with technical expertise and the chemistry of baking, and the spirit of intense competition.

What is now a broadcasting sensation has its roots in a long-established tradition of home-baking contests organised in communities up and down the country.

In other parts of the hall or in marquees, similar scenes will be played out but the centrepieces will not be cakes.

There might be home-grown vegetables, crooks and other sticks, basketry, dairy produce, plants, flowers and flower arranging, arts and crafts, and special sections that defy logic or context – the Best Gonk Made From Brillo Pads or Self Portrait In Pasta, for example.

We all know serial competitors – and those for whom a prize is a matter of significant pride – and that is part of the fun. Great

and established winners are occasionally toppled by upstarts, and that's how it should be in this or any other arena.

Archie Mor's onions shouldn't be expected to take the top slot every year, and the combination of rivalry and unpredictability is essential for any contest.

As for children, they can always be relied upon for imaginative interpretations of the rules. I hope the child in the picture found interest and entertainment beyond these exhibits. The opportunities for mischief at such events seemed endless to me then. They still do.



Skye Bridge 1992

CONSTRUCTION of the Skye Bridge started in 1992 and when it opened to traffic in 1995 it changed island access forever.

The tolls controversy and government mismanagement of the first major Public Finance Initiative capital project are well-known: bridge users were overcharged for nine years, until tolls were abolished altogether, and the government was forced to purchase the bridge from the consortium that built it for £27 million.

The consortium that built it has already collected £33 million in toll charges. This was not the smoothest way to introduce a fixed link, but in the years since the Skye Bridge has proved to be a critical asset.

The convenience of being able to drive uninterrupted to such a large, beautiful and renowned island is a huge advantage to the overwhelming

majority of islanders, visitors and the local business community. Skye remains, resolutely and incontrovertibly, an island: an island with dramatic scenery, diverse communities, history and culture, and all the mystique and drama it ever had, only it's easier to reach.

Not so long ago, another fixed link was proposed for the Isle of Luing. A causeway across Cuan Sound would have been cost-effective, but would undoubtedly have had environmental impact and some argued that it would destroy the island's character.

We will never know if it would have benefited the good people of Luing, or those that wanted to explore it, but making things easier for people moving to and from physically disconnected places shouldn't be regarded as a bad thing.

Only last year the chief

executive of HIE suggested that serious consideration be given to the future road network in Argyll and the Islands, and proposed investigating east-west main routes to add to the existing north-south ones.

A new network would rely on bridges, tunnels or causeways to cross sea lochs, and potentially use islands as stepping stones. It has been done before

in other places, and with great economic, social and environmental outcomes.

And this year Nick Ferguson, chairman of the Argyll and Bute Economic Forum, recommends a fixed link between Bute and Cowal to minimise reliance on ferry services. These projects may never happen, but how much better connected would we be if they did?



Tree-mendous effort as experts help to save Bhutan's 'Sacred Cypress'

A COLLABORATIVE conservation project has been set up between Bhutanese organisations and horticulturists in Scotland.

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) is working alongside officials in the Dangehu Valley area of Bhutan to create a conservation plan to protect the national tree of Bhutan, the Tsenden known to locals as 'Sacred Cypress'.

Botanic Gardens Conservation International, based in London, is funding this project.

One of the members of the team in Scotland, Tom Christian of RBGE's International Conifer Conservation International, said, "The Dangehu Valley is an important ecosystem and natural resource as it contains the largest known natural stands of Tsenden anywhere in the world. However, the forest is coming under increasing pressure as the result

of requirements for the construction and restoration of important cultural structures. Therefore, it is essential that these forests are very carefully managed if there is to be a sustainable supply in the future."

Mayor Sonam Dorji, one of the local officials in Bhutan backing the project has explained that the plan involves experienced tree climbers gathering Tsenden seeds, from which nurseries are set up and then public plantations.

The ultimate goal of this project is to generate a sustainable source of timber so that the natural Tsenden forests can be less heavily relied upon.

Throughout this project information will be gathered which will be passed on to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to aid them in the monitoring the conservation status of the Tsenden.

Ploughing match raises £600 for charity

THE Lorn Vintage Ploughing Match took place at Kilmarnonaig, Connel, last Saturday, by kind permission of the Nelson family, raising £600 for ABCD (Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease).

Judge for the day was Ian MacKerral from Islay, and prize-giver Mrs Georgina Nelson presented awards to: in the 8in class, first John MacCormick, second Willie Buchanan, and third Jim Fleming; in the 10in class, first Grant MacDonald, second David Veich, and third Gavin Reid; and in the trailing plough, first Charlie Campbell, second Rab Birrel, and third Maurice Blacklaw.

Appin's John MacCormick was crowned overall winner, receiving the Argyll Agricultural Engineers Trophy, The Oban Times Trophy, the Dochie Buchanan Memorial Trophy and the Brogan Fuels Trophy for the best start. The prize for the levellest and best finish was won by Willie Buchanan from North Connel.

The committee would like to thank all those who gave prizes and donations to support this year's event.



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And to our exhibitors...thank you for your hard work and effort and we look forward to seeing you again at The Oban Times Highland Wedding Show. All the best to brides and grooms throughout Argyll and Lochaber planning their very special day - don't forget to send us your wedding photographs to editor@obantimes.co.uk



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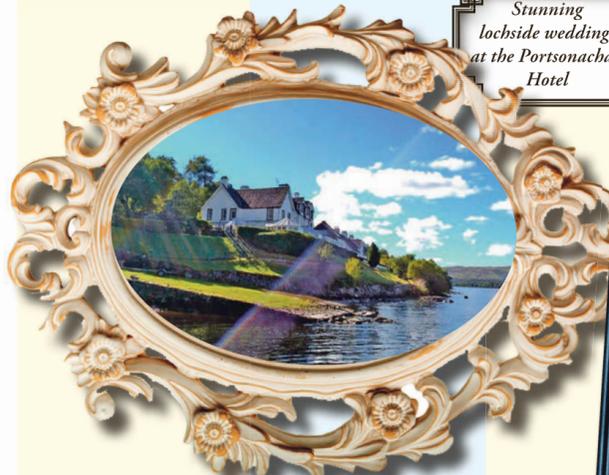
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Great entertainment from Ceilidh's Homet



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Inverlat Cottage, Barcaldine, PA37 1SF
A traditional and charming extended, detached cottage situated in a quiet rural setting. Inverlat Cottage offers adaptable accommodation across one floor including: entrance vestibule, lounge, hall, kitchen, two double bedrooms, family bathroom, rear fenced garden and parking opposite the property. Due to its rural location, the property will appeal to a variety of purchasers. The cottage has undergone various stages of refurbishment since 2012. This work includes the installation of engineered oak flooring in the hall, lounge and both bedrooms, new good quality floor tiles in the kitchen, rear porch and bathroom and a major over haul of the pitched and flat roof (including new slates, fascia boards, guttering etc). The car parking area has also been improved with the addition of a gravel and hard core mix base. The property is situated in a scenic rural area, close to Barcaldine Marine and is within easy travelling distance of Oban (11 miles).

GUIDE PRICE
£156,000

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Soroba Lodge, Oban, PA34 4SB
Substantial detached stone built two storey property situated in an elevated and peaceful location approximately 1 1/2 miles south of Oban town centre. Soroba Lodge, which was originally a Shooting Lodge is situated high in the Glenshellach hills enjoying commanding views over Oban and the surrounding countryside. Its position offering privacy and seclusion yet only a short distance from town, makes this sale a rare opportunity to acquire a unique family home. The accommodation comprises: entrance vestibule, spacious hall, four large public rooms, five bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom, cloak room, external boiler room, large attached garage, extensive fenced garden grounds extending to 1.20 acres or thereby.

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Highly Commended Award for Oban's MacPhee and Partners



Oban firm MacPhee & Partners was highly commended at a prestigious awards to celebrate the Scottish legal profession. Duncan MacPhee, managing partner, along with Helen MacLean and Katie Lamont attended the Scott + Co Scottish Legal Awards 2016 on Monday night and picked up the award. The firm was one of 35 finalists. The awards were presented by Dougie Vipond and Catriona Shearer.

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Online vs High Street - the true value of your estate agent

Many of us go online when searching for a house. The internet is a great 'shop window' and gives buyers unprecedented access to the entire market. But with an increasing number of online-only agents coming into the market, it is worth taking stock and reflecting on the value of the traditional high street estate agent.

The phrase 'local property expert' is often quoted, but what constitutes an expert and are they qualified by a recognised body? More often than not property owners are selling their most valuable commodity, so it would be wise to ensure that the agent advising you and representing your best interests is an experienced, qualified, professional property expert. You also want to make sure they are on hand to see the process through.

A good agent will be able to provide advice regarding all aspects of your property in order to ensure it is prepared for sale and presented at its best. They will ensure your property is advertised using quality marketing materials - including the internet - undertake viewings, negotiate the highest price, work alongside your solicitor to progress the sale through to completion, tackling any hurdles that arise, negotiate on any issues and ensure a smooth handover on the date of entry.

Agreeing a sale is only the beginning of the journey. The conveyancing process is an incredibly stressful and complex process filled with potholes and difficulties that can easily derail a sale. Ideally, your agent and solicitor should work together to tackle these problems as they arise, guiding you and the sale of your property through to completion in a jargon-free and understandable manner.

If you choose an online-only agent, it is important to be clear on what is offered as part of the service and to be aware of potential hidden costs; does your agent provide a free viewing service? Do you have to pay extra for certain services?

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Properties for sale

<p>Klondyke, Craignure, Isle Of Mull</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detached House 5 Bedrooms / 2 Bathrooms Beautifully renovated Stunning panoramic views Close to Craignure Ferry Terminal EPC Rating - D(67) <p>OIRO £285,000</p>	<p>Callicvol, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detached House 4 Bedrooms / 2 Bathrooms Elevated position Stunning views over Tobermory Bay Large decking EPC Rating - D (62) <p>OIRO £255,000</p>	<p>Creagard, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detached House 5 Bedrooms / 3 Bathrooms Lovely residential area in Tobermory Wood burning stove EPC Rating - E (41) <p>£249,000</p>
<p>Schiehallion, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terraced Cottage Conversion 4 Bed / 3 Bath / 1 WC Mature garden Close to Tobermory town centre Excellent B&B potential EPC Rating - C (74) <p>OIEO £225,000</p>	<p>Rowantree Cottage, Isle Of Lismore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detached Cottage 2 Bedrooms / 1 Bathroom In excellent condition Large private garden Located on the beautiful island of Lismore EPC Rating E(43) <p>OIEO £120,000</p>	<p>5 Craigard Road, Oban</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top Floor Flat 2 Bed / 1 En-Suite / 1 Shower Room Close to town centre Roof recently fully re-slatted Excellent rental potential EPC Rating - G (17) <p>OIRO £88,000</p>

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Closing date for applications is: Monday 18th April 2016

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Scottish Sea Farms wish to recruit a proven and exceptionally talented salmon farm manager to manage and develop our new £3m marine salmon farm at Westerbister, in the Scapa Flow region of Orkney.

Westerbister will be the regions second largest site with 16x100m cages and is due to be stocked in September 2016. Candidates must demonstrate excellence in all aspects of fish husbandry including fish health and welfare, feeding optimisation, containment, infrastructure maintenance and skilled seamanship.

Scottish Sea Farms requires significant financial investment for this new site and we require your energy and vision to help shape our success.

To be considered you must ideally already be a highly respected site manager within the aquaculture industry, and be able to demonstrate your commitment in developing a strong safety culture. You will be open, honest and communicate with ease at all levels. Your ability to plan ahead will be matched by close attention to detail. It is essential to value our unique Orkney identity and have the skills to grow premium-quality differentiated salmon for customers with the highest expectations.

Scottish Sea Farms Ltd site managers are already expected to be industry leading - with competence in finance, budget control and planning, stock management, stakeholder interactions, personnel management and promotion of health and safety. Westerbister will test and develop these skills; in return Scottish Sea Farms Ltd will offer an attractive salary package, company vehicle, pension support and production bonus. A relocation package will also be available.

All applicants are required to have a full, clean driver's license. Please contact Claire Scott on 01786 445521 or claire.scott@scottishseafarms.com for more information. Closing date for applications is Friday 22nd April 2016. Interviews will take place in Orkney on 3rd & 4th May 2016.

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Scottish Sea Farms Ltd require a Technician within our freshwater operation at Knock Hatchery on the Isle of Mull.

The successful applicant would be required to carry out a variety of tasks including:

- Routine stock husbandry
- Environmental monitoring
- Stock health and welfare monitoring
- Site and equipment maintenance
- Weekend working and alarm cover on a Rota basis

This position is for an initial period of 6 months, with the possibility of being extended. To obtain an application pack, please contact Claire Scott on 01786 445521 or email claire.scott@scottishseafarms.com.

For an informal chat about the position, please call Ian Fraser, Site Manager on 01680 300 454. For an application pack, contact Claire Scott on 01786 445521 or email claire.scott@scottishseafarms.com. All applicants must have a current driving licence.

Closing date: **Friday 15th April 2016**

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We currently have a vacancy for an Equipment maintenance/Hatchery Technician at our research Hatchery at Machrihanish, near Campbeltown. The post would be offered on a permanent full-time basis, working a 40 hour week.

The primary duty is to be responsible for the maintenance and well-being of all plant and machinery on site so ensuring all said equipment is working efficiently, safely and is fit for purpose. Other duties would include the design, construction, and installation of all new equipment

The Hatchery Technician element of the role is focused upon the development of wrasse as cleaner fish for the control of sea lice on salmon. By so doing, the candidate will help in the development of a sustainable farmed wrasse industry that avoids having to take fish from the wild. As a consequence the successful candidate will also be required to participate in normal husbandry duties as and when directed by farm management.

Beyond the nature of the role, the post holder would be expected to undertake over-time as required in order to accommodate the business needs of the Hatchery and, for the same reason, would be part of the site Alarm Rota. A driving licence is essential.

Full aquaculture training will be given but experience in basic mechanical engineering is an advantage.

Laboratory Manager

Marine Harvest Scotland is the largest producer of Atlantic salmon in Scotland. The Company employs a workforce of over 550 throughout the Highlands and Islands and produces over 50,000 tonnes of salmon annually. Our farming operations are based in Fort William and the Company prides itself in being a major employer of skilled people producing high quality, healthy and nutritious seafood in the most sustainable way.

An opportunity has arisen for the appointment of a Laboratory Manager, based at our processing plant in Fort William. The laboratory supports Marine Harvest Scotland's processing departments, carrying out all of its food safety and nutritional analysis testing of its products.

Reporting to the Technical Manager, the main responsibility of the post will be to manage the day to day running of the laboratory and its small team, ensuring compliance with written laboratory procedures, managing accreditation for the laboratories food safety function, maintaining acceptable and consistent working standards and where applicable be able to introduce new analysis methods.

The successful candidate should be qualified to degree level in a relevant subject, have a minimum two years' experience working in a laboratory environment and preferably have experience of managing a small team. Applicants must also be able to demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills, have the ability to work without close supervision and possess a high degree of computer literacy.

For both positions apply to <http://jobs.mmhrv.st>

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We are looking to recruit experienced Staff Nurses to join our experienced team at Lynn of Lorne Care Home.

Successful candidates will have good communication skills, be motivated to offer the highest standards of care, and be able to undertake all appropriate aspects of nursing care required. Responsibilities will include assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating care for specified residents to ensure continuity of care. There are excellent opportunities for career progression for successful candidates, in addition to ongoing training and competitive rates of pay.

Applicants will be qualified RGN / RMN and will have a genuine interest in working with the elderly. Communication skills are essential and applicants must be able to communicate effectively at all levels. Current NMC Registration is necessary and a PVG check also applies to this role. £14.50 - £16.00 per hour

Lynn of Lorne CARE HOME

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actArgyll Ltd are a company owned by the environmental charity Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust. We are currently looking to recruit two new members of staff to join our small and dedicated team.

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Salary £18,000
35 hours per week

We are looking to recruit an enthusiastic person to supervise and mentor our team of trainees that are based in Oban. The work will involve the supervision of our Oban team and assist them in carrying out a number of environmental improvement works in the Oban area.

Applicants for this post must hold a full clean driver's license

For further information on any of these positions please contact: Douglas Grierson on 01546 602755; douglas@act-now.org.uk; Closing date: 11 April 2016

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requires Fully Qualified Plumbing & Heating Engineer

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Apprentice Plumbing & Heating Engineer

aged 16 - 19 years preferably.

Driving licence not essential but applicant must show a willingness to learn.

Please contact John McMillan - ldwservices87@gmail.com or Tel. 07780 210369



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The Tree Shop, Cairndow, Argyll, PA26 8BL
info@thetreeshop.net Tel: 01499 600263/600100

public notices

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Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



PLANNING

These applications listed below may be inspected at Oban Lorn and Isles area office Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, between 09.00-12.30 and 13.30- 17.00hrs Monday to Friday and 10.00-12.30 and 13.30-17.00hrs on Wednesday or at the Mid Argyll Kintyre and Isles area office 1A Manse Brae Lochgilphead PA31 8RD between 09.00 - 17.00hrs Monday to Friday and at the alternative locations detailed below during their normal opening times or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Refval	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
16/00759/PP	Installation of external insulated render system	58 Jamieson Street Bowmore Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute PA43 7HL	Bowmore Area Office Isle of Islay
16/00692/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 12/01520/PP - Formation of roundabout to serve future development land north and south of the A85, Dunbeg, Oban	Land South West of Pennyfuir Cottage Dunbeg Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Dunbeg
16/00749/PP	Renovation of boat shed	Land To The East of 24 Easdale Island Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 4TB	Sub Post Office Balvicar
16/00760/PP	Installation of external insulated render system	72A-C Frederick Crescent Port Ellen Isle Of Islay Argyll and Bute PA42 7BD	Sub Post Office Port Ellen
16/00726/PP	Partial change of use of fish farm shed/ office to form accommodation unit (retrospective)	Scottish Sea Farms Kinlochspelve Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA62 6AA	Sub Post Office Craignure
16/00758/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of new vehicular access	Spring Tides Land South East of Kentallen Farm Aros Isle of Mull PA72 6JS	Sub Post Office Aros Isle of Mull
16/00642/PP	Demolition of existing commercial stone shed and erection of dwellinghouse	Store West Street Tobermory Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA75 6QZ	Tobermory Area Office

Written comments can be made to the above address or submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/land-and-comment-planning-applications> within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. 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. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed at all Area Offices, Council Libraries and on the Councils website.

COUNCILLOR'S SURGERY

Councillor Roddy McCuish (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)
Councillor McCuish will be holding a surgery on Friday 1st April 2016 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 3.00pm - 5.00pm.
He can be contacted by email - Roderick.McCuish@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 567854.

www.highland.gov.uk



TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk> or electronically at your nearest Council Service Point. You can find your nearest Service Point via the following link https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a_to_z

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development	Address	Proposal Description
16/00782/FUL	Land 100m NE of Pineapple House, Duror		Erect 6 single storey dwellings in 4 blocks (2 blocks detached and 2 semi-detached)
16/00920/PIP	Land 40m SE of Corner Cottage, Acharacle		Erection of dwelling
16/01018/FUL	The Old Manse, Station Road, Arisaig		Erection of traditional-style ancillary building
16/01254/LBC	Kiel House, Lochaline, Morvern, Oban		Conversion of steading to form part of existing dwelling and internal & external alterations

Time period for comments is 14 days. Application 16/01254/LBC is 21 days.
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

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- to undertake a course provided by the Open University for which they have registered.
- to undertake training in leadership and initiative.
- to benefit from recreative holidays in cases special needs.

Terms and Conditions Apply

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 2016**, and applications received after the closing date will **NOT** 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

Charles And Barbara Tyre Trust, SC031378

First Registration of a Croft

Moira Fisher has registered her croft 47 Ormsaigbeg, Ardnachan and Sunart on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland. Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 24th November 2016. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C2365.

First Registration of a Croft

Mr John Cameron MacIachlan has registered the croft 2 Unachan, Kilmonivaig on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland. Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 21 October, 2016. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C2157.

Mr Gavin Copland is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to assign the tenancy of the Brochmoir Croft in the parish of the Isle of Rum to Mr David Hair presently of 11/10 Western Harbour Midway, Edinburgh.

If you have an interest in this application you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (email info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk) within 28 days from the date of the publication of the advert.

Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry.

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High tech weapon unveiled in battle against farm vehicle thieves



Police officers at Tulliallan training centre undergoing training in the new CESAR vehicle security system.

Vehicle and plant thefts can cause disruption and distress on Scotland's farms

POLICE Scotland last week trained 12 road policing officers on plant and agricultural vehicle theft identification, giving them an expert witness qualification.

The two-day course was carried out in partnership with NFU Mutual and the specialist trainer AiTraining Services, and is the only course giving Institute of Motor Industry (IMI) certification.

These specialists now have the ability to detect and seize stolen agricultural vehicles and plant throughout Scotland's road network, and cascade their knowledge to colleagues.

Last month, 23 mechanics from agricultural ma-

chinery dealerships across Scotland were trained in the installation of the CESAR vehicle security system to deter the theft of plant, agricultural and construction vehicles. CESAR is an equipment registration and security scheme, using Datatag hi tech security markings

Statistics indicate that a CESAR-registered vehicle is four times less likely to be stolen - but if the worst happens, it is six times more likely to be recovered.

Thefts of this kind can have a significant impact on the day-to-day productivity of a farm or other business, and owners are being asked to ensure

plant and equipment is locked away when not in use and the keys removed.

They should also review and enhance the security of the shed or garage where such valuable equipment is stored, according to police.

Chief Superintendent Gavin Robertson, chairman of the Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime, said: "Our members have been very encouraged by the reductions in the theft of quad bikes and all terrain vehicles achieved so far, but the delivery of this specialist training is evidence of our drive to do more to prevent and detect this type of crime and further reduce its impact on

farms, estates, forestry and rural communities as well as the construction sector.

"Our vision is that, in the future, all new agricultural and industrial plant sold in Scotland will be fitted with CESAR as a first line of defence to deter thieves, and to reduce the desirability of stolen vehicles on the illicit market."

Anyone who suspects criminal activity is asked to call 101 for non-emergencies and general enquiries, or in an emergency to call 999.

Alternatively they can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or use the Crimestoppers website.

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Farmers invited to quiz election candidates

A SPECIAL hustings event with a farming flavour is to be held in Oban tonight (Thursday).

NFU Scotland is hosting the pre-Scottish election event at the Corran Halls to provide a platform for debate to allow its members to make an informed decision in the election on May 5.

The Oban event, open to all NFU Scotland members from Argyll and the islands, is one of nine being held across the country to engage members with political parties ahead of the Scottish Parliamentary election.

NFU Scotland's regional chairman for Argyll and the Islands John Dickson said: "This election comes at an unprecedented time for farmers in Argyll and the islands working in our industry. Global forces added to the well-versed problems concerning delivery of support payments have combined to create a perfect storm.

"We look forward to continuing close and very positive engagement in the new parliament."

Native breeds take centre stage at Stirling show

CALEDONIAN Marts Ltd sold 361 store cattle at the company's annual Stirling spring show and sale of native breeds on Monday March 28.

Judge for the day was Hugh Veitch, Reston and Berwick Farming Co, Shawbraes Farm, Reston.

The overall champion rosette went to H Dunlop, Holehouse, Ochiltree, for an Aberdeen Angus bullock which sold to J Gilvear and Sons, Graystale for £950.

Reserve champion went to H Dunlop again, this time for an Aberdeen Angus heifer which sold to J W Paul and Sons Ballingall Mill

Farm, Leslie, Fife for £870.

Beef shorthorn bullocks (31) averaged 188p/kg, selling to 202p/kg from W L Chambers and Son, North Moorhouse, Newton Mearns, and to £950 from J W Frame, Little Galla, Wiston, Biggar.

Aberdeen Angus bullocks (91) averaged 211p/kg, selling to 250ppkg from L Black and Co, Lephimore, Saddell, Campbeltown and to £950 from H Dunlop, Holehouse, Ochiltree.

Luing bullocks (56) averaged 199p/kg and selling to 250p/kg from WB and A D Robertson, Balneathill, Easter Balgedie, and to £1,060

from R McNee Ltd, Woodend, Armadale.

Highland bullocks (26) averaged 141p/kg and selling to 159p/kg K Laing, Lincluden, Islay and to £700 from G and A Kirkpatrick, Strathmore, Glengarnock.

Whitebred Shorthorn bullocks (39) averaged 182p/kg, selling to 192p/kg from I MacKay, Torloisk, Isle of Mull and to £580 from the same home.

Belted Galloway bullocks sold to 192p/kg and to £800 gross from H & N Sloan, Bankfoot, Oxtou.

Whitebred shorthorn heifers (37) averaged 195p/kg, selling to 215p/

kg from P J and W Cameron, Woodhall, Innerwick, and to £860 from the same home.

Aberdeen Angus heifers (54) averaged 195p/kg, selling to 224p/kg from W L Chambers, North Moorhouse, Newton Mearns and to £870 from H Dunlop, Holehouse, Ochiltree.

Nine other bullocks averaged 186p/kg, selling to 198p/kg for Simmental Luing from G Bannerman, Old Manse, Balmaha and to £520 from the same home.

Eighteen other heifers averaged 156p/kg selling to 198p/kg for a Luing from R McNee Ltd, Woodend, Armadale.

United Auctions sheep sale

AT STIRLING on Thursday March 24, United Auctions sold 3,247 prime sheep including 2,276 hogs - selling to an average of 180.8p/kg. Some 972 ewes and rams were also sold.

Leading prices: Hogs: Ballechin Farms (B'Tex) 277p; Coates (Tex) 233p; Milton (Suff)

£130; Groan (Tex) £115; Easter Ochtermuthill and Milton (Suff) £94; Upper Kidston and Over Kellie (Chev) £89; Fullarton (Mule) £78; Aikengall (BF) £89.

Hogs: Ballechin Farms (B'Tex) 277p; Coates (Tex) 233p; Milton (Suff)

198p; Over Kellie (Chev) 202p; Woodhall (Mule) 174p; Craignafeoch (BF) 190p.

Ewes (914): Stanley (Suff) £123.50; Dippen (Tex) £113.50; East Buchanty (B'Tex) £107.50; Broadleys (BFL) £104.50; Newmill of Inshevan (Mule) £89.50;

Mid Lecropt (Hamp) £80.50; Newmill of Inshevan (BF) £80; West Bank (Chev) £78.50.

Rams (58): Fintalich (Tex) £119; Croftintygan (Suff) £113; Crosswoodhill (BFL) £111; Newmill of Inshevan (Suff) £103; Upper Kidston (BF) £100.



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DIAMOND WEDDING

DUNCAN - MACKILLOP - On March 2, 1956 by Rev William MacDonald at Oban Old Parish Church, John to Helen. Present address: Alron, Ardconnel Hill, Oban.

DEATHS

CARGILL - Peacefully, at the Belford Hospital, on Saturday, March 26, 2016, David P. Cargill, aged 88 years. (retired PE Teacher - Lochaber High School). Beloved husband of the late Sheila, much loved father of Alan and Jane, also a loving grampa to all his grandchildren. Funeral Ceremony will be held on Tuesday April 5, 2016 at 1pm in Inverness Crematorium. Family flowers only please, donations if desired to the Belford Hospital can be given at the ceremony or forwarded to John McLellan Funeral Directors, Dudley Road, Fort William.

FOSTER - In loving memory of Robert, who passed away peacefully at the Belford Hospital on March, 28. A memorial service will be held at the Arisaig Hotel on Saturday April, 2 at 3pm to which all friends are respectfully invited. No flowers please. Donations, if desired, in his memory to the RNLI. Our heartfelt thanks for the support and compassion shown by the staff of the Belford Hospital and to Dr Iain Gartshore and Dr Katrina Geissel.

MACLELLAN - John, beloved husband of Lindy, proud and loving father of Rosie and Sandy, died at home in Port Charlotte, Islay, on Sunday, March 27, with his family at his side. A celebration of John's life will be held at Kilchoman Distillery on Saturday, April, 2 at 11.30am, to which all friends are invited. Donations in John's memory, if wished, may be made online to his Tribute Fund at the Beatson Cancer Charity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FRIEL - Mary, Carol and Roslyn would like to thank most sincerely relatives, friends and neighbours for cards, expressions of sympathy and kindness after the sad loss of Arthur. Special thanks to Dr Fattah and staff of Ward B at Oban Hospital. Their care and attention to Arthur was wonderful. Thanks also to Sheila and Lovat for their visits and support, Mags and staff at Carr Gomm Carers, Doctors and staff at Lorn Medical Centre, all who attended the funeral at Cardross and Catriona and the boys at Hamish Hoey Funeral Directors for arranging a very uplifting service.

McKINLAY - Elizabeth, Alistair and their families wish to thank their relatives, friends and neighbours for all the expressions of kindness following the sad loss of their mum and granny. Thanks to all staff at Muasdale Surgery, Oban and Campbeltown hospitals and Kintyre Care Home for their compassionate care over recent months. We are indebted to Agnes, Wilma, Charles, Ian and Catherine for their unfailing visits and thoughtfulness during Mum's time in Oban and to all her loyal friends within Clachan and the wider community for their companionship over the years. Special thanks to Rev Catriona Hood for two exceptional services fulfilling Mum's wishes, to Marjory Kelly and Ian McKerral for fitting musical tributes, to Stan Lupton for efficient funeral arrangements.

to everyone at church and crematorium for assistance and to the Commodore Hotel for excellent purvey. Finally, thank you to everyone who attended the funeral services, an overwhelming tribute to Cathy. A very generous £2,100 has been raised for Diabetes and MS Kintyre.

MEMORIALS

CAMERON - In loving memory of my dear husband Archie (Ginger) who died on March 29, 2015. The first lonely year without you the saddest I have ever known I treasure every thought of you When I am on my own Although I cannot see you I am with you night and day For the love that is between us Death cannot take away. - Your loving wife Margaret

CAMERON - Iain. In loving memory of Iain, dear son and brother who died March 31, 2014. Dearly loved and sadly missed. - Helen, Ann and family, Strontian.

CAMERON - Treasured memories of Hugh, devoted husband and dad, father-in-law and grampa who passed away March 31, 2002. Always on our thoughts. - Bella and family

CLARK - Euphemia Elizabeth. In loving memory of my dear Aunt Effie, who died on Thursday March 26, 2009. We miss you so very much and love and think of you every day.

- From loving niece, Mary, and her husband, Bobby.

HAY - In loving memory of James who died March 18, 2006. Always in our thoughts, forever in our hearts.

- Joan, Donald, Anthea, Iain and families.

KIRSOP - In memory of my dad Tommy, "Big TK", passed away April 4, 2013. I know you're watching over me, Looking down on me each day, I hope I make you proud dad, In my heart you'll always stay. - Your daughter Leigh.

MACKINNON - In loving memory of my dear wife Isabella, who passed away on March 29, 2010. I think of you in silence I talk about you too I have so many happy memories But I wish I still had you. - Your loving husband Donald.

MACLEAN - In memory of our sister and auntie, Mary, who died April 6, 2015. - Love from Charlie and family.

McLEOD - Precious memories of Chrissie (née MacLean) who passed away 25 years ago on March 29, 1991. Her children (Kenny, Martin, Anne and Pete) remember, love and miss her dearly. Her beauty, intellect and humour live on in her wonderful grandchildren. Martin, Eilidh, Christy, Anna, Helena, Lucas, Zara, Esme and Finn. Aig fois na dachaigh ann an solas fhathanas.

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. - Inserted by her husband Charlie, Dalmally. Love and miss you always Granny. - Elizabeth and Andrew xxxx.

MOYES - In loving memory of Flora, much loved wife of the late Ted, who died March 30, 1990. Fondly remembered. - Anne, Caroline, Ted and families.

Obituary - Phoebe Barrow, nee Allen, artist

June 21, 1930 – January 23, 2016

PHOEBE Barrow was born in Manchester on June 21 1930, the eldest of the five manse children.

After unhappy school days at Cheltenham College, Phoebe discovered her true metier and life-long passion for painting while studying at Manchester and then Birmingham Art School.

A slim, elegant young woman she found in her husband-to-be, John Barrow, a kindred spirit, sharing with him a religious background, pacifism and a generally unconventional outlook on life. They were married in 1954.

If Phoebe's passion was painting, John had an equal one for boats and sailing, and in 1972 the couple took the momentous decision to move, together with their four children, Edward, Anna, Harriet and Jessica, to the West Highlands, where John would turn his passion into a commercial venture in a sailing school.

At first the school was temporarily based at Dumbeg House on the north shore of Loch Leven but in 1977 they moved to their newly-built house in Glenahulish, the House in the Wood, overlooking the south-east corner of Loch Linnhe.

The sailing school had scarcely got up-and-running at its new base when tragedy struck.

John collapsed and died at one of the ceilidhs which celebrated the end of each sailing week.

Phoebe, a widow at 47, had to cope alone with the daunting prospect of looking after the welfare of her four children, then respectively 20, 18, 16 and 14, and running two businesses simultaneously, both the sailing school and the self-catering chalets built in the grounds. After two years' struggle she gave up the sailing business.

Relinquishing the demands of the sailing school allowed Phoebe more time to devote to her painting and to immerse herself in the wider community of artists in Lo-

chaber. In 1977 she became one of the founder-members of Lochaber Art Club, now known as Art Lochaber.

The intention was to provide annual exhibitions to showcase the work of Lochaber painters and weekend workshops for aspiring artists.

The words of Lorna Finlayson, the present director of Art Lochaber, who became a member in 1983, attest to the success of Phoebe's own workshops at the House in the Wood.

Ms Finlayson said: 'Her weekend workshops were always full and great fun, often spilling out into the garden, the hen-coop and the compost heap. She showed endless patience, warm hospitality and a keen interest in every participant.'

There could be no more eloquent testimony to Phoebe's artistic skills than these words of Alistair Smyth, a distinguished artist and for 40 years her friend:

Mr Smyth said: 'Phoebe's work encompassed a wide range of subjects but was characterised by her own distinctive style and interpretation of her subject.

'There is a timeless quality to it, a sense of the transcendental, which gave landscape, figure or still life a religious content.

'The ethereal quality, particularly of her later work, created in the viewer a sense of something beyond the mundane, physical reality.

At the same time there is a feeling of calm, of happiness and of hope. A reflection of the gentle, generous and warm-hearted nature of the artist herself.'

Despite the early loss of her husband in 1977, and of her daughter Jessica to cancer in 2007, she showed not a trace of self-pity, only kindness and generosity to others - nor was her engagement with life diminished when she was diagnosed in the early 2000s with Parkinson's, which with typical wit and light-heartedness she called her fidgets.



She continued to produce masterpieces in both oils and watercolours.

She continued to welcome both friends and strangers with the warmest hospitality - and to dispense to the privileged few her hard-won words of wisdom.

When I myself suffered a life-changing bereavement in 2004, she welcomed me into her hearth and home and I became a regular member of her Sunday lunch club.

Though painting was central to Phoebe's being, people were drawn to her above all by her personal qualities. She had a huge

range of admirers, her family, her friends, fellow-artists, climbers who rented the chalets, home-help who came to tidy the house all recognised her resilience, courage, youthful spirit, warmth, wit and wisdom.

A fitting epitaph for this great lady, who finally succumbed to her illness on January 23, 2016, is what she called, with typical humour, her funeral speech, which she dictated to Anna in May 2015:

May afternoon
Bluebells
Birds on nuts (tits)
Bats

Cat sleeping
Parkinson's fidgets
Edge of the sea
Which way to infinity
Owls hoot.

AC and Art Lochaber

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Thought for the week

THE Easter story is one full of emotions. Palm Sunday, we celebrated Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem sat on a donkey. Jesus was welcomed with shouts of praise and joy. But that was quickly followed by torture

and suffering and he was even denied by his closest friends on his journey to the cross. I am pleased to say that all through his ordeal the women in his life remained close and loyal.

It was the women who were at the foot of the cross

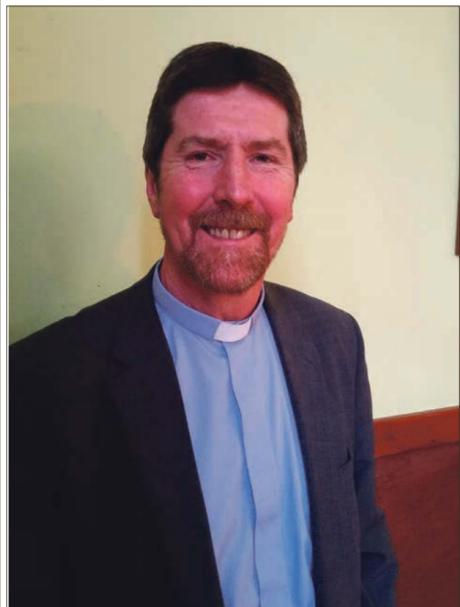
while the disciples watched from a distance and it was a woman, Mary Magdalene, who found the tomb empty. Can you imagine how she felt? She must have gone through sorrow, shock, horror, confusion, disbelief and fear. But that led to joy,

ecstasy and love when Mary Magdalene discovered that Jesus had risen, he was alive and calling her by name. Jesus calls us all by name and his love is for everyone. So as you continue to eat your Easter eggs, remember the empty

tomb, the risen Lord and the love he offers each and every one of us. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia! I wish you all a happy Easter.

**Nicki McNelly, provost
St John's Cathedral,
Oban**

New full-time minister joins parishes



Rev Sandy Stoddart - St Munda's and Duror new minister.

ST MUNDA'S and Duror Church of Scotland are appointing a new minister.

After four and a half years without a full-time minister the Rev Sandy Stoddart is coming to join the parishes as their full-time minister.

Sandy and his wife Moira have moved into the new manse which is in Kentallen and from there Sandy will conduct his ministry to both parishes.

Before being called to ministry, Sandy worked in both forestry and fish farming and so appreciates the issues which living in a rural area can present.

The induction service will be held in St Munda's Church, Ballachulish, at 5pm on Friday April 1.

Lochaber Presbytery as well as the congregations and the parishes will be extending a warm welcome to Sandy and Moira as they come to live in the area.

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Podium finish for Sinclair at Jedburgh

LAST weekend saw a host of Argyll competitors head for the forests surrounding Jedburgh for the second round of the ARR Craib Scottish Rally Championship.

Connel's Shaun Sinclair had been forced to hire a Focus WRC for this event due to his Subaru not being ready in time after its trials and tribulations in Inverness last month. Rumours had spread early on Friday that he was getting to grips with the unfamiliar car quickly, and he didn't disappoint come the stages on Saturday.

Sinclair set the second quickest time through Stage 1, only beaten by defending champion Jock Armstrong, then followed this with a third and fourth fastest in stages 2 and 3 respectively. Stage 4, Yair, saw Sinclair and co-driver Kirsty Riddick finally take the stage win that looked like it had been coming all day.

Unfortunately for Sinclair, defending champion Jock Armstrong in his Subaru and Duns local Garry Pearson in a Fiesta R5 were also absolutely flying through the Tweed Valley stages. Solid times for Pearson saw him finish the final stage on exactly the same time of 41 minutes and 17 seconds with Armstrong taking the title courtesy of his three stage wins to Pearson's two.

Sinclair picked up a well-deserved podium place, finishing only seven seconds behind the top two.

Other notables included Mull's John McCrone, who continued the learning process in the new car, running consistently in the top 10 stage times until a clamp broke on the turbo of the Fiesta R5, which ended his event.

Craig Rutherford and Chris Hamill pushed their Subaru WRX to a more-than-respectable 21st and a welcome return to the

Rallying

championship saw Stephen Lockhart in his Mitsubishi Evo secure a top 20 finish in 17th.

Amanda Morrison was happy to get a finish alongside David Hunter in the little 205 and Lochgilhead's Ian Parker, who is more at home on Tarmac, took his first run on gravel in a classic Talbot Avenger and, although taking last place, commented that a 'finish is a finish' followed pretty quickly by 'I have a new found respect for the guys at the front, a different class of nutters they are'.

The next round of the Scottish Championship is in Elgin where the Speyside stages will take place on April 23.

Next up is the second round of the Tarmac Championship, The DCC Stages, next weekend at Ingleston showground.



Connel's Shaun Sinclair finished third in his Focus WRC. Photographs: Eddie Kelly Motorsport Photography



The Talbot Avenger driven by Lochgilhead's Ian Parker.



Amanda Morrison in her Peugeot 205.



Steven Lockhart in action in his Mitsubishi Evo.



John Rutherford and Chris Hamill finished in a respectable 21st place.



John McCrone had to retire in his Fiesta R5.



Lorn Volleyball Club pictured at the Scottish District Cup.

Lorn Volleyball Club turn on the style in Scottish District Cup

LORN Volleyball Club put in a great performance during the Scottish District Cup in Dundee recently with 50 teams competing on the day.

The club came third in the District Plate competition, with five wins out of seven in very close games in the pool, just missing out on a place in the plate final.

The hard work of the squad during the season resulted in a performance with exceptional team spirit with long rallies, impressive blocking of the

Volleyball

big hitters and courageous defence of the court floor.

Next up for the club is the West Regional Conference on April 3 at Atlantis Leisure, Oban, starting at 1pm. The winner on the day progresses to the final in Edinburgh.

Feathers fly at under-19 badminton championships



Prizewinners at the under-19 badminton championships.

A TOTAL of 23 competitors from Oban, Lochgilhead, Campbeltown and Dunoon took part in the second Argyll and Bute Under-19 Badminton Championships held in Oban High School recently. The competition was sponsored by the Ryan MacPhail Memorial Fund

Results: Boys' singles - 1 Josh Coates, Lochgilhead; 2 Stuart Adams, Dunoon; 3 Craig MacCorquodale, Oban.

Girls' singles - 1 Elizabeth Stirling, Dunoon; 2 Kirsty MacArthur, Oban; 3 Nicole Thomson, Campbeltown.

Boys' doubles - 1 Josh Coates and Rhuaridh Brown, Lochgil-

The Heb - Race on the Edge, a new adventure through Benbecula, North and South Uist

A NEW, action-packed, two-day, 150-km adventure challenge on foot, mountain bike and kayak is to take place through the stunningly beautiful Uist islands chain in September.

Durty Events, organisers of award-winning multi-sport events throughout Scotland, has launched The Heb - Race On The Edge, a new and truly engaging two-day, multi-sport challenge through Benbecula, North Uist and South Uist, on Saturday September 3 and Sunday September 4, 2016.

Those who sign up to The Heb, competing as solos or in pairs, will find themselves on the ultimate 150-km journey, made up of mainly off-road running and mountain biking with a bit of kayaking and some sections of easy navigation, through the most incredible, culture-steeped, wild, beautiful and remote landscape off the west coast of Scotland.

With all the active adventure, excitement, camaraderie and fun to make it a tough but achievable and thoroughly enjoyable challenge, The Heb has been designed to suit everyone from seasoned racers and enthusiastic and fit newcomers to the world of multi-sport, to groups of friends and work mates ready to take on an active challenge at the next level.

Using the latest GPS tracking technology Durty Events are making it possible to follow the athletes live online as they progress around The Heb course.

From the comfort of their own home, on phone, tablet or computer, friends, family and supporters will be able to watch

all of the action as this exciting race unfolds.

At The Heb the athletes will be racing for two long days.

Benbecula will be the starting point for the 100-km route round North Uist on day one with a shorter 50-km route taking athletes to the southern most point of South Uist on day two in time for the event party celebrations.

However, to make it more achievable for everyone the race will be stopped at the end of day one at one of the island communities, allowing for a well-earned refuel and 'battery charge'.

Organisers will provide great hot meals on Saturday and Sunday nights; as well as a place

to pitch a tent for a good night's sleep on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights.

Multi-sport event

Designed Paul McGreal from Durty Events, organisers of The Heb - Race On The Edge, said: 'We have designed The Heb in such a way that it will be perfect for experienced multi-sport athletes, works and office teams and fit and active people wanting to give an endurance adventure event a go for the first time in the most stunning location in Scotland.'

He added: 'The massive potential of multi-sport events to showcase the huge range of both outdoor activities and cultural opportunities available to visitors

to the Highlands and Islands has attracted the vital partnership of Caledonian MacBrayne to The Heb.

'We want to thank them for their huge logistics support, in the transport of both people and equipment between Oban and all of the islands during the event.'

Entries are now open for The Heb - Race On The Edge by Durty Events.

Entry fees are £250 for solos and £500 for pairs.

For further information on The Heb event go to: <http://www.theheb.org/>.



Lochnell Football Club 2008s have been taking to the field recently at Oban Primary Football League in a brand new kit thanks to the generous sponsorship of Lochnell Arms Hotel. The squad are pictured with team coach Cammy Lowe and Ruud Van de Hee of Lochnell Arms Hotel in North Connel. The club, which recently achieved a Scottish Football Association Quality Mark Award, runs sections for all primary age groups and meets every Wednesday from 6.30pm at the North Connel playing field.

Jimmy Marshall Cup draw

THIRD round - St Joseph's FP v Easthall Star; Kings Park Rangers v Hillington; FC Clydebank v Oban Saints; Bridgewater v Jamestown.

Quarter finals - Kings Park Rangers or Hillington v FC

Football

Clydebank or Oban Saints; Ferguslie Star v St Joseph's FP or Easthall Star; East Kilbride RR v Bridgewater or Jamestown; Alba Thistle v Motherwell Thistle.

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Change of direction for MMA

WITH more than 50 jiu-jitsu medals under its belt, the former MMA (Mixed Martial Arts) club in Oban has decided to change its goals, as well as its name, and focus less on striking and more on grappling.

Ju-jitsu

probably been the highlight so far.

Oban BJJ recently held an 'in-house' tournament, with members taking on each other to raise money for charity.

The club raised more than £300 for CLIC Sargent - a charity that helps children and their families who are suffering with cancer.

Potter said: 'We've come a long way from two of us with a DVD player. I want the club to continue on the path it's going; get a lot more kids involved so there is younger guys coming through.'

'My biggest ambition now is to get members graded to the point where they are blue belts in the class and I think they are ready. A blue belt is a significant place to get to in the sport - it can take up to five or six years to get to blue belt standard sometimes.'

The club has come on leaps and bounds since its inception.

Before Potter had to travel to Glasgow to attend seminars, but he has now persuaded fellow martial arts enthusiasts to stay behind after kick boxing and karate classes to practice the Brazilian Ju-jitsu techniques he learned in the city.

He said: 'I made connections with a few of the guys that were fighters and had started their own gyms, and asked them if they would come up and do some seminars in Oban, so we created a link between us and the Grighthouse Gym in Glasgow.'

'We get one of their members up every four to six weeks to do a seminar and then we try out these drills until the next seminar comes round.'

Oban BJJ is open to everyone, with the best time for beginners on a Monday evening at 7.30pm, above Stoddarts, Oban.

To find out more and to stay updated, search 'Oban BJJ' on social media.



Some of the members of Oban BJJ.

Scottish Amateur Football League results and fixtures

Football

LAST Saturday's results: Premier Division - Oban Saints v St Joseph's FP, postponed; Division One - Dunoon Athletic v East End United, postponed.

This Saturday's fixtures: Premier Division - Campbeltown Pupils v Alba Thistle; Oban Saints v Goldenhill; Premier Division One - Drumchapel v Dunoon; Motherwell Thistle v Lochgilphead Red Star; Premier Division Two - Rutherglen v Tarbert.

Final league match for Loch Fyne sea anglers

LOCH Fyne Sea Angling Club took to the Firth of Lorne for its final league match of the season.

The strong tides, coupled with depths of up to 500 feet, made this a challenging event where a minimum of 24 oz weights were needed to hold the seabed.

Despite the testing conditions more than 100 fish were brought aboard the Creagallan with some spurs making double and treble

shots. Other catches included black-mouth dogfish, lesser-spotted dogfish and a juvenile skate of 15lbs.

In true angling tradition, there was the tale of 'the one that got away', and it genuinely did for John Byrne who hooked into an adult skate. On this occasion the skate won the battle when the line snapped setting it free to roam the depths.

Sea angling

All in all a good day's fishing to close the season. Top rod was Willie Shaw followed by John Mcallister and Steven MacBrayne.

There will be a trophy presentation following the club's AGM in April and the first venue of 2016 will be at Portpatrick in May.

Big shots at Glendaruel and Colintrave

THIS IS the third time the Spring Trophy competition has been held at the new Glendaruel and Colintrave Gun Club ground, which is now established as one of the premier venues in Cowal.

The cool dry weather gave good shooting conditions for the field of 31 senior and two junior guns.

The club has a tradition of welcoming visitors from a wide area to the open shoots, normally four a year. Looking at the prize list for this year shows that entrants are prepared to travel considerable distances, testimony to the excellent standards of the shoots.

The field competed for two trophies, the Dunans Challenge Open Trophy originally presented to the club in 1949, and the Ormidale Trophy, which is restricted to club members. A side pool trap competition off four pegs giving a more sporting type of target was used by many as a warm-up event.

The Dunans Challenge Trophy, open to all comers was won by Paul Chalmers, Cairndow, with a score of 146, only four points off the maximum possible of 150 points. Second equal with 145

Shooting

points were Archie McBride, Dunoon, and John Gilchrist, Campbeltown. In third place was Gordon Griffiths, Garelochhead, with 142. A further tie for fourth place took place between George Lynn, Dunoon, and Stuart McNeil, East Kilbride with scores of 141.

The final two places went to Ronald Robertson, Bute, and Derek Street, Dunoon, on 139 and 136 respectively. The Ormidale Trophy, which goes to the top scoring club member, went to Archie McBride, Dunoon, who was a joint second in the open competition. Archie, although still a junior, has made great strides in the last two years, and must now be classed as one of the best shots in Cowal.

Grateful thanks are extended to Pat Currie, Johann McBride and Annette Gray for their support with the catering. The club also thanked all those who donated items for the catering and prizes for the raffle.



Gordon Griffiths, Paul Chalmers, Derek Street, Archie McBride, George Lynn, and James Carter.



Steven McBrayne with a black-mouthed dogfish.

Argyll team do well in Wilson Rally

LOCHGILPHEAD'S Alister MacArthur, and Chris Robertson from Tarbert headed across the border and into the Lake District to compete in the 2016 Malcolm Wilson Rally.

This rally is run in the forests in the Grizedale, Keswick and Greystoke areas of this beautiful corner of Cumbria.

The Greystoke stage just west of Penrith is home to the official test stage for world renowned M-Sport and their Fiesta WRC machines.

The M R Motorsport prepared Talbot Sunbeam has been through a range of improvements and tweaks over the winter period and this was its first outing of 2016.

It was a very early start on Saturday morning with the first car in Stage 1 a little after 7.20am when it was barely light among the trees. The boys had a good quick run through the first few stages

and had improved their starting number of 78 by some 32 places sitting in 46th place overall after four of the eight stages.

A routine service with a quick spanner check and some new rear tyres was all that was required and then it was headlong into the second half of the day. Greystoke is run twice on the day, Stage 3 and Stage 8, the final test of the day. Alister and Chris managed

Rallying

to shave 15 seconds off their Stage 3 time on the second visit and this helped them along to a fantastic 27th overall and fourth in Class B11.

This is by far and away their best performance in the new car and has built expectations for the rest of the season.



Alister and Chris in their Talbot Sunbeam.

Finbar wins gold at Scottish championships

Athletics



Finbar Dunne

THE Scottish national indoor age group athletics championships took place at the emirates arena in Glasgow recently.

Finbar Dunne from Oban won the gold medal in the under-15 boys' shot put competition with a winning throw of 12.59m, nearly three metres ahead of his nearest rival.

Due to his recent success in the shot put, Finbar is now ranked number one in the UK in the under-15 age group.

Finbar is a member of Inverness Harriers and is coached in Inverness by lead throws coach, Duncan Flockhart.

He is also coached at Oban High School by Duncan MacIntyre from Ardrfern and is part of the Oban High School Athletics training squad.

Also taking part from Oban High School training squad was Grace Thompson, who came fourth in the under-15 girls' triple-jump. Emma Thompson was also competing in the under-20 women's high jump.

Archie crowned Spring Open Match champion

Shooting

A DUNOON man shot down the competition and was recently crowned the winner of the Dunoon and District Clay Target Club's (DDTC) Spring Open Match.

Archie McBride shot a near perfect score of 147 points, earning himself the Bradfield Trophy in the process.

The competition, which had 28 competitors, consisted of two 25-target rounds, with a maximum of 150 points available.

A hit with the first barrel scores three points; a hit from the second barrel scores two points.

The Bradfield Trophy was awarded to the top gun of the day and cash prizes were paid to the first nine places in the open competition.

David Mundell, also from Dunoon, came in second place and he was the only other competitor to break the 140 mark, with a score of 142, which would have been enough to win the competition last year.

Donnie MacPhail, Glendaruel, was third with 138. There was a three-way tie for fourth place on 136 points between James Carter, Bute; Alan Brown, Bute; and Richard Deane, Dunoon.

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SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT £2350

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

M MacIntyre
McIntyre Terrace
Lochgilphead

L Cameron
McKelvie Road
Oban

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.

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. No refunds will be given for entries received after the deadline.
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

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.

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 Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

Please remember to enclose £1 for 20 crosses. 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



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Camanachd Cup
Macaulay Cup
MacTavish Cup
Celtic Society Cup

SHI
Best for all shinty new

Half last weekend's shinty fixtures

WITH HALF the scheduled shinty programme postponed because of the wet weather, the shinty focus turned to cup action with the RBS MacTavish Cup and the Gregor Cameron Consultancy Glasgow Celtic Society Cup first round ties taking place on Saturday.

RBS MacTavish Cup – First Round

Newtonmore 3 Lovat 0

The tie of the RBS MacTavish Cup first round looked to be the meeting between Marine Harvest Premiership champions Newtonmore and Camanachd Cup holders Lovat at the Eilan. Newtonmore had to make a change in goal as Owen Fraser's red card in the 2-2 draw with Kyles Athletic the previous weekend meant he started a two-game ban. Boss Paul John MacKintosh persuaded Michael Ritchie to come out of retirement to deputise. Conor Jones was still out with a knee injury whilst Michael Russell, Jamie Robinson and Chris Sellar were also missing so Craig Ritchie started in defence.

Lovat's Lorne MacKay was free of his two-match suspension and he started in attack. Lewis Tawse and Craig Mainland were missing as was longer-term absentee Calum MacAulay.

With a wind blowing across the park, and the surface a touch slippery, Newtonmore settled well into the game and they took the lead after just four minutes when Fraser MacKintosh scored with a shot from wide on the right which beat Lovat keeper Stuart MacDonald.

Greg Matheson had a chance to level on six minutes but his shot, at the second attempt, was saved with his feet by Michael Ritchie.

Lovat knew they were in trouble when 'More buckshee forward Evan Menzies made it 2-0 with only nine minutes played. The home side had a shy on the right and Menzies stayed out of the goal area to leave space for full forward Glen MacKintosh. The shy was half-cleared with the ball falling kindly for Menzies who struck it on the run from around 35 yards out. The 'More hit-man caught the ball really well and it flew high into the net, giving Stuart MacDonald no chance.

Fraser MacKintosh met a ball in from the 'More left first-time on his back-hand but Stuart MacDonald made a good save with his foot, just inside the post.

A poor clearance from Stuart MacDonald on 28 minutes was controlled by Evan Menzies, who played in Neil Stewart but the Scotland keeper redeemed himself with a superb close-range

reflex save with his hand, low down to his left.

Newtonmore continued to stretch the Lovat defence and Evan Menzies crossed from the left on 33 minutes. Again, Fraser MacKintosh met the ball first-time on his back-hand but his strike went just wide of the base of the post.

The Lovat forwards were coming really deep in search of the ball. So much so that a Callum Cruden clearance out of defence on 35 minutes was swept clear unchallenged by Michael Ritchie around 20 yards from his goal.

There was still time in the first half for Ritchie to make a good save to deny Lovat and for 'More to add to their lead. The third goal came on the stroke of half-time when Fraser MacKintosh sent a ball in from the right to Glen MacKintosh. The Scotland forward, with his back to goal, jockeyed with Drew Howie before making just enough space to turn and he hit a low bobbling shot which beat the keeper to make it 3-0.

Newtonmore were strong in the tackle and they took more than their share of 50-50 challenges.

Their centre line of the dominant Norman Campbell, flanked by the speedy Drew MacDonald and the accurate passing of Paul MacArthur, had a grip of the game and their high-intensity first half performance didn't allow Lovat to play their usual passing game and they could have led to an even greater margin at the interval.

The home side withdrew Fraser MacKintosh, who has been nursing a groin problem, at the break with Darrin Fowler taking his place.

The lack of goals in the second half was a combination of a better Lovat performance coupled with Newtonmore taking their foot off the gas.

Graeme MacMillan replaced Euan Ferguson for Lovat on 70 minutes with Connal MacIllechi taking over from Lorne MacKay six minutes later. Newtonmore also made further changes as Iain Robinson was introduced in place of Evan Menzies on 75 minutes and Neil Stewart was withdrawn in favour of David Fraser with 10 minutes remaining.

Callum Cruden and Kevin Bartlett were best for Lovat although the former was given a tough time by Evan Menzies and the latter was well-policed by Andy MacKintosh.

Newtonmore were well-served by Norman Campbell who won tackles and distributed the ball superbly all afternoon. He seems to be revelling in his new midfield role. Steven MacDonald also impressed at full back where he is an excellent reader of the game

and a big hitter. Rory Kennedy turned in another stylish performance at buckshee back and he snuffed out the threat posed by Lorne MacKay. Fraser MacKintosh is also worthy of mention for his first half performance where he was involved in all his side's attacking moves.

Newtonmore now await an away day against the winners of the tie between Skye Camanachd and Kilmallie.

Kingussie 1 Fort William 0

Kingussie and Fort William met at the Dell for the second time this season. Kingussie came out on top in the league encounter with a 1-0 victory and they repeated that feat in this encounter.

Kingussie keeper Craig Dawson remained sidelined so Rory MacGregor continued in goal. In fact Kingussie were five players short because of injury and illness

Marine Harvest North Division 1 side Strathglass in the RBS MacTavish Cup quarter-finals.

Lochaber 4 Kinlochshiel 2

Lochaber sealed their place in the quarter-finals with a 4-2 victory over Kinlochshiel in a close contest at Spean Bridge.

Although the pitch was heavy, Spean Bridge once again beat the wet weather with many matches in the surrounding area postponed.

Lochaber boss Ally Ferguson had Zandz Ferguson, home for the Easter weekend, back in the squad and he started on the bench. Defender Jack Dignan was missing.

Kinlochshiel manager Colin Fraser gave last year's top scorer Jordan Fraser his first start of the season. Fraser joined the attack with Finlay MacRae dropping back to full back in a reshuffled

Kinlochshiel had created a number of chances during the second half but a couple of great stops from Callum MacDonald and a solid defensive play, in which young wing-backs Barry MacDonald and Duncan MacKinnon shone, kept the Kirkton side at bay.

As the home side broke forward, Stuart Callison got his second goal of the afternoon to make it 3-1 on 76 minutes. This was the goal of the match as Callison sent a blistering, well-struck 25-yard drive from the left high into the back of the net.

And Kevin Ferguson, now fighting back to full fitness with the help of club physio Jemma Docker, got his second to make it 4-1 just five minutes from time.

Ben Delaney flicked the ball past his marker to Ferguson who buried the ball in the far corner of the net from 12 yards out.

The visitors pushed Finlay MacRae into attack in the closing stages of the game and he narrowed the deficit on 87 minutes when the home defence were unable to clear a high ball which dropped into a muddy goal area and MacRae took advantage to make it 4-2.

Speaking after the game, Lochaber boss Ally Ferguson said: 'The win was a confidence-boost for us after a couple of mixed results. We've been creating chances in all our games this season and it was good to see us taking them against Kinlochshiel.

'There's a fine line between winning and losing these games and this was a real end-to-end battle.

'An injury to our captain Brian MacDonald is the only thing that takes the gloss off the win. It was a totally accidental challenge and Brian's cheekbone is fractured in four places and we send him best wishes from everyone at the club. We'll miss him but he's been in touch and he's in fine fettle.'

The win over Kinlochshiel sets Lochaber up for a RBS MacTavish Cup quarter-final with Beaulieu but Ferguson isn't thinking that far ahead. 'Beaulieu are going well,' he said. 'I know it's a cliché but we have to keep our focus on the league before the Beaulieu game, starting with a big match against Kyles Athletic at Spean Bridge this coming Saturday.'

Inverness 0 Beaulieu 4

Two goals in each half gave Beaulieu a 4-0 win over Inverness at the Bught Park.

Inverness were five players short when they travelled to Bute last weekend and the injured Craig Nicholson was still out for this one whilst former Newtonmore

and Ballachulish player David Campbell started a two-game ban for passing through the disciplinary points threshold.

Ryan MacKay was free to play for Beaulieu but he will miss his team's next outing as his booking against Glasgow Mid Argyll a week earlier means he passes through the disciplinary points threshold.

It only took Beaulieu's Jack MacDonald 10 minutes to record his tenth goal of the season.

MacDonald sprinted onto a long ball over the top of the full back and he hit it first-time, low and hard past Inverness keeper Allan MacLeod to make it 1-0.

Sandy Elrick made it 2-0 from close range with a low strike following a tussle involving four players inside the D on 37 minutes and the Braeview Park took this lead into the break.

There was no respite for Inverness as Connor Ross added a third with a well-worked goal on 58 minutes. All four Beaulieu forwards linked up and Ross finished off the move taking the ball on the volley from a tight angle.

With just eight minutes remaining, Beaulieu substitute Robbie Brindle, who had made an immediate impact following his introduction, rounded off the 4-0 win with a low, well-struck shot into the corner of the net.

Beaulieu's reward is a home meeting with Lochaber in the quarter-finals.

Skye Camanachd P Kilmallie P

Heavy rain on Friday evening caused the postponement of the

Willie MacDonald appointed Camanachd Association youth director

FORMER Ballachulish and Fort William player Willie MacDonald has been co-opted on to the Camanachd Association board of directors where he will fill the vacant youth direction position.

Willie was brought up in Ballachulish and he played for his local team from the age of 13. He moved on to play for Fort William 11 years later and his finest moment came when Fort William won the 1992 Camanachd Cup Final and he was awarded the Albert Smith medal for man of the match. He went on to win all senior competitions and also represented Scotland on 11 occasions, once as captain.

After finishing his playing career, he took up the position of assistant coach with Fort William, helping the club win the Camanachd Cup. He now referees on a Saturday afternoon and has coached at Inverloch Primary School (P1-P7) for five years.

Willie's late father, also William MacDonald, was a well-known and respected figure in the shinty community. He was a Ballachulish committee member for more than 50 years and he worked on various committees for the Camanachd Association over many years. Willie now aspires to follow in his father's footsteps and pass on his vast knowledge of the game to future generations.

The Camanachd Association has also made a second appointment to its board with Beaulieu's Steven MacKenzie co-opted as director for marketing and communication.

Steven MacKenzie started his shinty career at Beaulieu before spending 19 seasons with Aberdeen University where he is an Honorary President. He captained Aberdeen University to a Sutherland Cup win in 2005 and he authored a book on the club's history: *Keeping the Camanachd Flag Flying: 150 Years of Aberdeen University Shinty Club*.

His hard work was recognised with the Paterson Salver for volunteer of the year award in season 2011.

Steven has returned to the Highlands where he is back involved with Beaulieu Shinty Club as a committee member and he took on the role of club secretary in 2014. Steven recently completed his UKCC Grade 2 shinty coaching qualification aims to assist the current management team when time permits.

Both Willie MacDonald and Steven MacKenzie have been co-opted until the 2016 Camanachd Association annual general meeting when they can formally stand to be elected as a director.

with James Hutchison, Lee Bain, Rory MacKeachan and Fraser Munro also absent.

Co-managers Russell Jones and Davie Anderson fielded a young midfield with Ryan MacWilliam at full centre and Jake MacPherson and Robert Mabon, who was particularly effective, on the wings. Their revamped defence saw Garry Munro switch to full back, Calum Grant and Darren Hanlan as wing backs and PE teacher Louis Munro, who was home from Stranraer for the school holidays, slotting in effortlessly at buckshee back.

Fort William were without influential full centre Niall MacPhee, who served a one-game ban for passing through the disciplinary points threshold. They were also missing Sean Cameron from their defence.

The Kingussie defence dealt very well with the Fort William attack; so much so that there was an hour played before Rory MacGregor had to make a save of note, keeping the ball out with his feet by the post.

The Kingussie forwards pace and movement caused problems for the Fort defence but visiting keeper Paul MacKay was equal to their efforts, making a number of good saves.

With 20 minutes remaining, Kingussie replaced James Falconer with the more direct Chris Holleysong and put him to full forward. The switch paid dividends on 78 minutes when Holleysong was played in by Ryan Borthwick. The substitute had his back to goal and he held off Steven Stewart at the edge of the D before turning and drilling a low shot into the net to make it 1-0.

Kingussie saw out the closing minutes and they will now travel to Cannich to face in-form

defence which had Paul MacRae missing and an injured Conor Cormack only able to be listed as a third substitute.

Lochaber played with the wind at their backs in the first half and they took the lead after just 10 minutes. Brennan MacDonald played a cross from the right to the back post and Kevin Ferguson showed great anticipation to dart in and score from the edge of the D.

Lochaber suffered a blow when they lost buckshee back and captain Brian MacDonald midway through the half. MacDonald was hurt in an accidental coming together with 'Shiel's Gordie MacDonald which left the Lochaber man's cheekbone fractured in four places after colliding with his opponent's shoulder. Zandz Ferguson came on as a straight replacement for his first appearance of the season.

Some good goalkeeping from 'Shiel custodian Scott Kennedy restricted the home side to a single goal advantage at the end of the first 45 minutes and but it was the visitors turn to have the wind in their favour after the break.

Kinlochshiel equalised eight minutes after the restart. 'Shiel wing centre Gordie MacDonald picked up a clearance from Lochaber goalie Calum MacDonald and sent a shot into the postage-stamp corner of the net to make it 1-1.

However Lochaber, with Martin Johnstone on for Brennan MacDonald, regained the initiative with three goals in a lethal 15-minute burst which effectively won the tie. Ben Delaney and Kevin Ferguson combined to set up a chance for Stuart Callison and he sent the ball across the keeper for what was a well-worked goal with 20 minutes remaining.



Fort William's Sean Cruickshank and Kingussie's Ryan Borthwick in action during the match. Cruickshank won with the only goal of the game.



A delighted Chris Hollysong celebrates after scoring the winner against Fort William last Saturday. Photograph: Neil Paterson.

tie between Skye Camanachd and Kilmallie at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

The match has been rescheduled for this coming weekend.

The prize for the winners is a home tie with free-scoring Newtonmore in the quarter-final stage.

Gregor Cameron Consultancy Glasgow Celtic Cup – First Round

Col Glen 3 Ballachulish 1

The meeting between Ballachulish and Col Glen was the only Gregor Cameron Consultancy Glasgow Celtic Society first round tie to beat the weather and that took a fixture switch from an unplayable Jubilee Park to Col Glen's Otter Ferry.

And it was Marine Harvest South Division 1 side Col Glen who secured a place in the quarter-finals thanks to a 3-1 win over their Marine Harvest National Division opponents.

Ballachulish's Scott MacDonald was still on the suspension list.

A difficult surface made for tricky playing conditions but it was Col Glen who took advantage to race into a 2-0 lead. Their first goal came following a darting Conor Kennedy run with the ball.

Kennedy was stopped by two defenders but Steven MacKellar followed up and he smashed the ball into the roof of the net to make it 1-0.

Col Glen doubled their advan-

tage when Iain Wilson ran on to a lovely lay-off at the penalty spot and he drilled the ball low and hard into the bottom corner of the net. Balla's chances suffered a severe blow when talisman John MacDonald was sent off by referee John Wood for a second yellow card.

'Balla' pulled a goal back following a David MacPhee free-hit from the half-way line.

The Col Glen keeper allowed the ball to drop into the net but it had clipped a defender's caman on the way through so the goal stood.

It mattered little though as Hamish Harrison clinched the win when he made it 3-1. A direct ball from the wing dropped to Harrison on the edge of the D and he pushed it past the last defender before flicking the ball past Balla's keeper Cameron Sutherland.

Col Glen now have a home meeting with Marine Harvest Premiership high-fliers Oban Camanachd to look forward to in the last eight of the tournament.

Glenorchy P Oban Celtic P

Glenorchy and Oban Celtic will try again this coming Saturday after their first round tie was postponed as Mart Park was unplayable and there wasn't the option of switching the tie to a playable field in Oban.

Taynuilt P Aberdour P

The tie between Taynuilt and Aberdour was postponed as the heavy rainfall left the Taynuilt

NTY

vs, results and fixtures

Sutherland Cup
Balliemore Cup
Strathdearn Cup
Bullough Cup



postponed due to the weather



During last Saturday's RBS MacTavish Cup tie at The Dell, which the home side... Photograph: Neil Paterson

Marine Harvest North Division 1

Strathglass 5
Newtonmore 1

Strathglass topped the Marine Harvest North Division 1 table going into a difficult encounter with the Newtonmore second team and they showed that they are the team to beat with a 5-1 triumph at Cannich.

Newtonmore, who travelled without David Fraser and Neil Stewart as they'd been called up for the first team, made the better start and they pinned back their opponents in the opening minutes of the game.

However Scott Douglas gave Strathglass a 12-minute lead with a low drive into the net in what was the home side's first real attack of the match.

Scott Douglas got his and his side's second goal on the half-hour mark when he smartly turned his marker before beating the stand-in Newtonmore keeper to make it 2-0 at the break.

After Strathglass forward Josh Fraser smashed the crossbar early in the second half, it was Douglas again from 20 yards out who completed his hat-trick on 55 minutes to make it 3-0. It was a seventh goal in two games for the prolific striker.

Some neat link-up play on 70 minutes allowed Darren Reid to latch onto a Josh Fraser through ball and Reid's strike soared high into the net to make it 4-0 and effectively seal the win for Strathglass.

Newtonmore battled to get back into the game and a customary John MacKenzie turn and shot beat Strath keeper Adam Todd to make it 4-1 on 75 minutes.

To round off a satisfying day for the maroon and blues, the younger of the two Douglas brothers, Lewis, on from the bench, capitalised when Newtonmore failed to clear their lines and he made it 5-1 with 82 minutes played.

Newtonmore's Paul Hilson suffered a nasty knee injury during the game and the promising youngster will be side-lined for a number of weeks.

Strathglass are the only non-reserve team in this division and they have made good progress over the last 18 months under the guidance of boss David Balharry.

Lovat 0 Kingussie 2

The Kingussie reserves continued their good start to the season with a 2-0 win over the Lovat reserves at Balgate.

Lovat boss Martin Bell had full back James Grieve free of suspension. Kingussie co-managers Jimmy Gow and Ally MacLeod were without some of their youngsters such as Chris Holleyson who had to cover for first team absentees.

After a goalless first half, youngster Dylan Borthwick gave Kingussie the lead on 55 minutes.

Kevin Thain made it 2-0 with 15 minutes remaining so the Kings only trail league leaders Strathglass on goal difference.

Beaully 2 Glenurquhart 0

The Beaully second team beat

the Glenurquhart second team 2-0 at Braeview Park. There were no goals during the first 45 minutes but Rory Campbell put the home side ahead on 56 minutes.

Beaully full forward Martin Davidson sealed the win with a 72-minute strike.

This was the Beaully colt's first league win at the third time of asking.

Fort William P Skye Camanachd P

The clash between the Fort William and Skye Camanachd second teams was postponed on Saturday morning as An Air was deemed unplayable.

Marine Harvest South Division 1

Kyles Athletic P
Lochside Rovers P

The Kyles Athletic reserves and Lochside Rovers were left idle as their meeting at Tighnabruich was postponed because of an unplayable pitch.

Marine Harvest North Division 2

Caberfeidh 4
Inverness 2

Caberfeidh played host to Inverness last weekend with the home side coming out 4-2 on top thanks to goals from Colin MacLennan, Gavin McLaughlan, Calum MacCulloch and Ben MacDonald.

On target for Inverness were Rab MacAskill and Stuart MacRae.

Aberdeen University 9 Glengarry 0

Aberdeen University maintained their 100 per cent start to the season when they swept away Glengarry with a 9-0 win in difficult conditions at Balgownie.

Aberdeen player/manager Jamie Beaton has put together an extremely potent forward line which has already netted 16 times in the team's opening two league fixtures, with all four forwards scoring in the previous weekend's 7-0 win over the Lochaber seconds.

Glengarry's Scott Bremner was unable to play as he served the second game of a two-match ban.

It took the students just three minutes to take the lead with former Fort William player Alex Duncan scoring.

Stuart Cameron doubled their advantage on 15 minutes before Euan Fraser bagged a brace on 20 and 23 minutes to make it 4-0.

Stuart Cameron got his second on 35 minutes and the visitors led 5-0 at the break.

Stuart Cameron completed his hat-trick five minutes after the restart whilst Alex Duncan got his second on 65 minutes to make it 7-0.

A fourth Stuart Cameron goal on 75 minutes followed and Euan Fraser completed the scoring, and his hat-trick, when he netted four minutes from time with what was his eighth competitive goal since his switch from Boleskine.

The 9-0 win leaves Aberdeen University in second place in the table, a couple of points behind the Caberfeidh seconds who have played a game more. And the top two meet at Balgownie this coming weekend in what is sure to be a keenly-fought affair.

The match marked a return to the refereeing circuit for ex-Strathglass boss and former Camanachd Association Director Callum Duff.

Boleskine 2 Lewis Camanachd 1

Two goals from player/manager Jamie Matheson were enough to give Boleskine their first win of the season as they beat Lewis Camanachd 2-1 in their 1.30pm throw up at Farr.

Scott MacLeod had an early chance to put Lewis in front but his effort went over the bar.

Jamie Matheson got the opener on 33 minutes with what was the only goal of the first half.

Matheson got his and Boleskine's second when he crashed the ball into the roof of the net on the hour mark.

Lewis boss Duncan MacIntyre sent on Ally Lamont and Peter

Gregor Cameron Consultancy Celtic Cup Final returns to Tainuill

THE Glasgow Celtic Society is very pleased to announce that, following the outstanding success of the 2015 event, the Gregor Cameron Consultancy Celtic Society Cup Final will again be played at Tainuill, on Saturday June 25.

Duncan Cameron, president of the society, said: 'We are delighted that Gregor Cameron Consultancy Ltd is continuing sponsorship of shinty's oldest competition and that Tainuill Sports Council has agreed to make their excellent facilities available for our 112th cup final this year. In hosting last year's Celtic Cup final, and a Camanachd Cup semi-final, the Tainuill Sports Council demonstrated the economic and promotional benefits that can accrue to small communities through co-operative effort. We look forward to helping them repeat that success this year.'

Gregor Cameron said: 'Having had two televised matches broadcast live from Tainuill last summer boosted the profile of the Tainuill area. I'm very pleased to provide further support to the Glasgow Celtic Society and look forward to another great day for Tainuill on June 25.'

New Chief of Glasgow Celtic Society

The Glasgow Celtic Society is very pleased to announce that John M Boyd, CBE, QPM, has been appointed as the 24th chief of the society.

A native of Oban, John played in three Macaulay Cup winning sides for Oban Camanachd in the fifties and Camanachd Cup runners-up in 1958. He won two Celtic Cup winners medals with Glasgow Mid Argyll and shares the distinction, with Chic Turner of Kyles Athletic, of being the only players to score hat-tricks in consecutive Celtic Cup finals.

Gomez for Paul Duke and Scott MacLeod in a bid to change his side's fortunes.

Eoghan Stewart also came on for an injured Conor Chalmers and whilst he has been relieved of his stand-in goalie duties since Graham Cay returned to the side and the substitute showed that he could make a contribution outfield when he slammed home a rebound to make it 2-1 after a Will Church effort had come back off the post with 10 minutes remaining.

There was to be no Boleskine slip-up and they went on to record their first league victory.

Kilmallie P Lochaber P

The derby meeting between the Kilmallie and Lochaber colts was postponed early on Saturday morning as the Canal Parks was unplayable.

Marine Harvest South Division 2

Tayforth P
Bute P

The whole Marine Harvest South Division 2 scheduled was wiped out. There was disappointment for league leaders Tayforth as ferry difficulties meant the Bute seconds were unable to travel for the sides' meeting at Levenhall Links.

Kilmory P Glasgow Mid Argyll P

The encounter between Kilmory and the Glasgow Mid Argyll second team was postponed on Saturday morning as MacRae Park was ruled unplayable.

Oban Lorn P Dunoon P

An unplayable pitch at Ganavan caused the cancellation of the Oban Lorn and Dunoon match.

2016 South Area Qualifying Cup

FIVE Primary school teams from across the South area took to Tainuill Playing fields on Thursday March 24 in the first round of the South Area Primary Qualifying Cup (formerly Tulloch Cup).

Rockfield, Park and a combined Tainuill/Lochnell/Strath of Appin represented the Oban and Lorn area, while Bute Primaries and Glasgow Gaelic School travelled from Bute and Central areas respectively.

First up was Park and Rockfield, who fought out a goalless draw in a game that saw Rockfield come up against some inspired defensive and goalkeeping skills from Park.

Bute Primaries started strongly managing to beat home team Tainuill/Lochnell/Strath of Appin by three goals to nil.

Last up after a long journey from Glasgow was the Glasgow Gaelic school who won by the same three-goal margin and put four goals past Tainuill, who managed a late consolation.

Despite the sometimes typical Argyll weather all the teams managed to get some points on the board and will now travel to Strachur on the May 12 to complete the final round of games. The team accumulating the most points after this round will play against the winning North primary school prior to the summer holidays at a venue yet to be confirmed.

Euan McMurdo, west area development officer, said: 'I was delighted to see such enthusiasm for the primary game on such a wet day and despite this the quality of the skills and sportsmanship on show was particularly pleasing.'



Col Glen's Willie MacVicar beats Connor MacGregor from Ballachulish to the ball during last Saturday's Celtic Society Cup tie. Col Glen won 3-1. Photograph: Paul Paterson

Fixtures

Saturday April 2

Marine Harvest Premiership
Fort William v Lovat
John Angus Gillies
Kinlochshiel v Glenurquhart
Evan MacRae
Lochaber v Kyles Athletic
Archie Ritchie
Oban Camanachd v Kingussie
Lachie Wood

National Division
Glasgow Mid Argyll v Inveraray
David Mitchell - 3pm

North Division One
Beaully v Strathglass
Scott McNeil
Glenurquhart v Kinlochshiel
John Matheson
Newtonmore v Skye
John Wood

North Division Two
Aberdeen Uni v Caberfeidh
Neil Ferguson
Glengarry v Lochaber
Graham Irvine
Lochcarron v Kilmallie
Iain Kennedy
Strathspey v Lewis
Willie MacDonald

South Division Two
Glasgow MA v Oban Lorn
Jim Innes - noon
Aberdour v Dunoon
Jon Gallagher

Camanachd Cup Preliminary Round
Bute v Inverness
Robert Baxter

RBS MacTavish Cup
Skye v Kilmallie
Innes Wood

Gregor Cameron Consultancy Celtic Society Cup
Tainuill v Aberdour
Graham Cameron
Glenorchy v Oban Celtic
Deek Cameron

Aberdeen Considine Sutherland Cup
Boleskine v Bute
Andy MacLean
Kyles Athletic v Fort William
Ewan MacDonald

Results

Saturday March 26

RBS MacTavish Cup
Inverness 0-4 Beaully
Kingussie 1-0 Fort William
Lochaber 4-2 Kinlochshiel
Newtonmore 3-0 Lovat
Skye P-P Kilmallie

Gregor Cameron Consultancy Celtic Cup
Col Glen 3-1 Ballachulish
Glenorchy P-P Oban Celtic
Tainuill P-P Aberdour

Marine Harvest Premiership
Glenurquhart P-P Kyles Athletic

Marine Harvest National Division
Bute P-P Caberfeidh

Marine Harvest North Division 1
Beaully 2-0 Glenurquhart
Fort William P-P Skye
Lovat 0-2 Kingussie
Strathglass 5-1 Newtonmore

Marine Harvest South Division 1
Kyles Ath P-P Lochside Rovers

Marine Harvest North Division 2
Aberdeen Uni 9-0 Glengarry
Boleskine 2-1 Lewis
Caberfeidh 4-2 Inverness
Kilmallie P-P Lochaber

Marine Harvest South Division 2
Kilmory P-P Glasgow MA
Oban Lorn P-P Dunoon
Tayforth P-P Bute

Cup Draws . . . Cup Draws . . . Cup Draws

Following this weekend's first round ties, the draws for the latter stages of the RBS MacTavish Cup and the Gregor Cameron Consultancy Glasgow Celtic Society Cup are now as follows:

Saturday April 16, 2016
RBS MacTavish Cup – Quarter Final
Strathglass v Kingussie
Skye Camanachd/Kilmallie v Newtonmore
Beaully v Lochaber
Caberfeidh v Glenurquhart

Saturday April 16 2016
Gregor Cameron Consultancy Glasgow Celtic Society Cup – Quarter Final
Col Glen v Oban Camanachd
Kyles Athletic v Bute/Strachur
Tainuill/Aberdour v Inveraray
Glasgow Mid Argyll v Glenorchy/Oban Celtic

Saturday May 14, 2016
RBS MacTavish Cup – Semi Final
Skye Camanachd/Kilmallie/Newtonmore v Caberfeidh/Glenurquhart
Beaully/Lochaber v Strathglass/Kingussie

Saturday May 14 2016
Gregor Cameron Consultancy Glasgow Celtic Society Cup – Semi Final
Tainuill or Aberdour/Inveraray v Glasgow Mid Argyll/Glenorchy/Oban Celtic
Kyles Athletic/Bute/Strachur v Col Glen/Oban Camanachd

The 2016 RBS MacTavish Cup Final will take place at the Bught Park, Inverness on Saturday June 11.

The 2016 Gregor Cameron Consultancy Glasgow Celtic Society Cup Final takes place at Tainuill Sports Field on Saturday June 25.



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Saints just one game away from a Scottish Cup final appearance



'If we play the way we can, I'm quietly confident we can reach the final which would be a tremendous achievement not only for the club but for the town'

OBAN Saints travel to New Douglas Park tonight (Thursday) home of good friends Hamilton Academical for the most important fixture in the club's 56-year history. After 40-plus years of competing in Scottish amateur football's blue riband event Saints now stand within one match of an appearance in the final of the Scottish Amateur Football Association Challenge Cup competition.

Barring the path to the final which will be held at Hampden Park on Sunday May 22 are fellow semi-final debutantes Leven United from the Kingdom Caledonian Amateur Football Association.

Leven's route to the semi-finals has been an arduous one, including three replays and two penalty shoot-outs. Having won both of the Kingdom Caledonian League Cup competitions last season, Leven started their national cup campaign in confident mood making short work of first opponents Newcraighall Leith Victoria strolling to a comfortable 7-0 away victory.

Next up was another away trip to Victoria Locos who took Leven to a replay at King George V Park before the Fifers ultimately triumphed by seven goals to three.

Having successfully negotiated the early regional stages of the competition, Leven treated their home support to another goal glut in round three putting seven past Carluke without reply.

Round four included the novelty of a ferry journey across the Firth of Clyde for a hard-fought win over Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division One Dunoon Amateurs.

Leven took arguably their biggest scalp in round five knocking out Caledonian League Premier Division side Giffnock North in a penalty shoot-out after home and away 2-2 draws.

Round six again paired Leven with top quality opposition in the shape of East Kilbride YM. Once again Leven failed to capitalise on their home advantage and were taken all the way to a second consecutive penalty shoot-out before eventually booking their place in their first ever Scottish Amateur Cup quarter final against Linlithgow Thistle.

Decisive advantage
After an even opening 45 minutes, Leven were given a massive and ultimately decisive advantage when Thistle lost two players to red cards midway through the second half with Leven putting the extra space to good use stretching their disheartened opponents to clinch a 3-0 victory and secure a historic semi-final appearance.

Leven have used the extra momentum of their Scottish Cup run to good effect and have also won through to the quarter finals of the Fife Amateur Cup and the semi-finals of the Kingdom Caledonian League Cup.

Like most teams still involved in the later stages of the big cup competitions Leven lag well behind in terms of completed league fixtures and are currently in fifth place in the Kingdom Caledonian League 13 points behind leaders Bowhill Rovers.

However, with only five points dropped so far and 12 remaining fixtures, Leven look well placed to launch an assault on the league title which they last won in 2009. Saints run to the semi-finals

Football

may have featured only half of the number of fixtures faced by Leven United, however, the quality of the opposition faced rendered the passage equally difficult.

After a West section first round bye Saints enjoyed a comfortable 9-1 win over Millbeg Villa of Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division Two in round two which featured five goals from Craig MacEwan plus two from Donald Campbell and one each from Dean Smith and Allan Mackay.

This was followed in round three by a walkover due to the collapse of scheduled opponents Condorrat Club.

The fourth round began a run of fixtures against much-fancied opposition and a string of notable scalps for manager Alex Craik in his first season in the Saints hot seat. A solitary fourth round Donald Campbell strike edged Saints past three-time Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division winners Postal United now of the Central Scottish Amateur Football League.

The resumption of football following the Christmas and New Year break saw Saints paired with last season's beaten finalists Craigshill Thistle in round five.

Donald Campbell was on the score sheet again adding to a brace from Dean Smith and a sensational Willie Gemmill free kick giving Saints a thoroughly deserved victory over the Livingstone side.

The Oban boys repeated this score line in the sixth round away at Stirling City of the Central



New Douglas Park, home of Hamilton Academical, the venue for Thursday night's Scottish Amateur Cup semi-final. Inset: The Scottish Amateur Cup

Scottish Amateur Football League with a rare Keith Millar goal rounding off the scoring after Craig MacEwan, Donald Campbell and an unfortunate own goal had already put Saints in the driving seat.

It was back to Glencruitten for the sixth round visit of reigning Caledonian League Premier Division Champions Doune Castle who were put to the sword in clinical style with Scott Maitland joining regular goal scorers Craig MacEwan, Dean Smith and Donald Campbell on the score sheet in a 5-1 win.

Inexhaustible
Saints' debut in the Scottish Amateur Cup semi-final was earned two weeks ago with a narrow 2-1 win over the recently reformed and thoroughly revitalised Shortlees Amateurs from Kilmarnock. Another spectacular effort from Willie Gemmill's seemingly inexhaustible store of free kicks was cancelled out from the penalty spot by Keir Knapp

before Allan Mackay kept his nerve to slot home a late winner after a sensational run by Donald Campbell.

After a long absence, this year's final returns to its traditional home of Hampden Park. Awaiting Saints or Leven United in the showcase Hampden Park final are tournament favourites Colville Park or Possil YM of Central Scottish Amateur Football League Division 1A.

With the exception of long-term injury victim Martin Bonar and the suspended Dene Cassells, manager Craik will have a full squad at his disposal as he plots to lead Saints to the previously unscaled heights of the Scottish Amateur Cup final.

The manager said: 'This is a huge game for the boys, but they're up for the challenge and if we play the way we can then I'm quietly confident we can reach the final which would be great not only for the club but for the town.'

After the exertions of Thursday night in the Scottish Cup semi-final Saints are back on league duty on Saturday with a tough

home game against Goldenhill. The match will be played at Glencruitten with a 2pm kick-off. Referee in charge is Jim Rose.



Oban Saints manager Alex Craik.



Cambuslang elected to train rather than play against Oban Lorne. Photographs: Kevin McGlynn

Oban Lorne take on league leaders this weekend

Oban Lorne
Glasgow Academicals
BT West Division 1

OBAN Lorne welcome league leaders Glasgow Academicals to Oban on Saturday after a week off with last Saturday's match at home to Cambuslang being postponed at very short notice.

Accies are leading the division by four points over second-placed Newton Stewart.

Saturday's visitors had been unbeaten in the league until a surprise 25-18 defeat to mid-table Kilmarnock in the middle of March.

Oban Lorne are performing well in their first ever season in West Division 1. The Green Machine are hoping to maintain their fourth place in the table with five games remaining in the season.

Kick-off this Saturday is at 3pm at Glencruitten, depending on the weather.

Last Saturday's match against Cambuslang was switched from Glencruitten to Connel but the game was called off at the last minute with a good crowd of spectators present and both teams on the park ready to play.

The Cambuslang coach decided that a patch of ground behind the in-goal area at one end of the pitch was dangerous and after consultation with the match official and Oban captain the referee had no alternative but to call the game off.

Argyll and Bute
Police Scotland
BT West Division 4

Argyll and Bute take on Police Scotland in Oban on Saturday for the second meeting between the sides this season.

The Police side will be in confident mood after winning the league Championship over two weeks ago remaining unbeaten in the league so far this season.

Kick off is 3pm at North Connel TBC.



Oban Lorne's Allan Wright in front of the disputed area.

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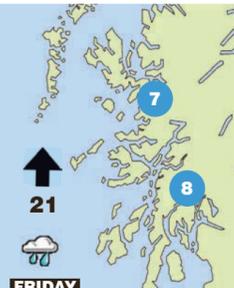
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WEATHER

Thursday Sunny
Winds light south south westerly
Temperatures 4°C to 8°C.

Friday Heavy rain
Winds moderate southerly
Temperatures 6°C to 8°C.

Weekend Outlook Light rain on Saturday
Light rain showers on Sunday
Winds moderate southerly
Temperatures 5°C to 9°C.



Stop Press: New pontoons recently installed by North West Marine at Kyle Lochboisdale for visiting yachts

TIDAL INFORMATION
Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday March 31, 2016** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour) BST)

Date	am				pm			
Thur	04.15	1.8	09.53	3.0	16.56	1.9	22.46	2.9
Fri	05.38	1.9	11.08	2.8	18.23	1.9	***	**
Sat	00.58	2.9	07.05	1.8	14.08	2.8	19.43	1.7
Sun	02.37	3.1	08.27	1.6	15.11	3.1	20.54	1.4
Mon	03.29	3.4	09.31	1.2	15.53	3.3	21.50	1.0
Tues	04.12	3.8	10.22	0.8	16.30	3.6	22.37	0.7
Wed	04.53	4.0	11.06	0.5	17.06	3.9	23.22	0.4

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate

Muir's Army

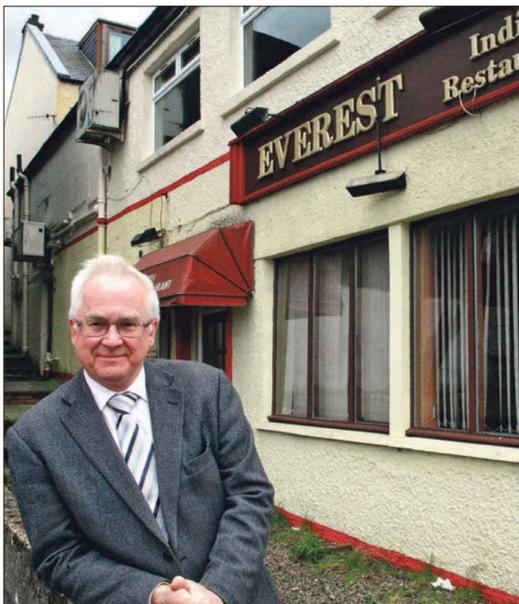
Retiree Gilbert Muir reminisces about life in the Home Guard during the Second World War



Mum takes on gruelling Munro challenge in daughter's memory



Town centre nightclub plan fails to win blessing of neighbours



The Reverend Gordon Mair is against plans to turn the former Everest restaurant into a night club.

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

A NIGHTCLUB bid for Fort William town centre won't receive the blessing of its neighbours after the Free Church minister, whose church backs onto the site, said he will not support the application.

Plans for the club, lodged with Highland Council on March 15, would see a change of use of the former Everest restaurant on Fort William's High Street into a late night disco.

The application by Mr David Smillie, whose contact details have been redacted from his application, were proposed without any pre-planning advice from planners at Highland Council.

Papers shown to *The Oban Times* make it clear Mr Smillie does not appear to be the owner of the land as the premises at 140 High Street is owned by Messrs Haque. Due to planning law the owners were advised of the application on March 8.

“ There is an apparent conflict of interest ”

Drawings for both the location of the nightclub and plan in regard to access are shown to be via a narrow path.

Reverend Gordon Mair told *The Oban Times* and the planning authority: 'I have received a neighbour notification notice concerning an application for a change of use of the Everest restaurant to a night club.'

Rev Mair said: 'The outline plan given in the notice indicates that the lane running from the High Street towards the Everest site is included in the application. I would like the council to state clearly if

that lane is a right of way or not. If not, then it ought to be removed from the application. Is the lane in the possession of the Everest title; is the lane in the gift of the council to dispose of to another party?'

Rev Mair believes Highland Council has a conflict of interest in developing the site as it owns a property in the area.

He continued: 'There is an apparent conflict of interest in that the council has to reach a verdict on the planning application, but the council is also an interested party and will have to represent the interests of that site for the most attractive and profitable presentation and development for residential purposes.'

He added: 'The night club will be operating into the wee small hours of the morning and there is a question of adequate police cover for any disturbance which may arise.'

He said that foul odours may linger because the public toilets at the far end of the car park, to the rear of the church, are used by people 'urinating

against the wall of the toilets'. He said there is the potential for this to increase and consequently a foul odour to linger at the lower entrance to the church property.

He added that the area will be a 'further magnet for clients to linger with the possible build up in noise, movement of people, litter and alcohol drinking'.

Highland Council declined to comment on the application at this time, but encouraged others to make their feelings known about the matter.

At present one other person has objected to the nightclub due to noise pollution to neighbouring flats, safety concerns for people in nearby flats and not enough lighting in the area.

The application is due to be determined before May 15. Council officers rather than councillors are likely to make the final decision.

Attempts to contact Mr Smillie have not resulted in a response from the property developer.

TIMESLINE



Proud mum Rachel with little Isla.

Belford baby's special leap year arrival

BEING born on a leap year was made extra special for little Isla Grace Cameron's parents.

The tot is the first baby to be born on February 29 at Belford Hospital in Fort William for many years.

Expectant mums from the area would normally go to the maternity ward at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness.

Mum Rachel Macintyre, 23, also has three-year-old daughter Ava and son Hamish, who is about to turn two.

She said: 'We thought Isla was going to come early - she was due on February 24. I was hoping she would hold on until the 29. I thought being a leap year baby would be nice for her.'

'Isla arrived at 2.20am, weighing 8lbs 10oz.'

'The midwife said she was the first leap year baby born there for many years, but couldn't find out exactly how long. It was quite special.'



Sea loch flood wall too high say residents

BUILDING a six foot wall in front of a scenic sea loch to prevent flooding has not gone down well with residents.

Highland Council held public drop-in sessions last week to update residents on the flood protection scheme for Caol and Lochyside.

The area has been hit by flooding in the past, most recently in 2005. The area is bordered by Loch Linnhe, the River Lochy and the Caledonian Canal.

There's a chance of severe flooding once every 200 years, which could impact on 300

houses in the area. A mock-up wall showing its height has been constructed on the shore. The scheme will also include a path and cycle way.

The overall cost of the scheme is estimated to be around £8 million.

While residents want protection measures, many feel that the wall is too big and will ruin their view.

Isobel MacPhee was among the first tenants in Erracht Drive. She said: 'I think the wall is an eyesore, it's far too high. If it was even four feet that would be better. I don't

mind if something goes up for protection.'

Joyce Vickers has experienced the floods, but also feels the wall is too high.

She said: 'In 1978 the water came in the front door and out the back. Some of us were put in a caravan for five weeks.'

Donnie Corbett, chairperson of the Caol Regeneration Company, said: 'The flood protection is needed. My concern is that that the rock armour is going to get all the seaweed. Our group spends £4,000 cleaning up the beach each year.'

Another resident said: 'One hundred per cent something has to be done, but I'm pretty against what's being proposed. Views will be spoiled and that's a major selling point.'

Harry Jeffrey said: 'I've seen the tide coming in and half the height of that wall is not needed. We need something, but that's a bit much.'

Damian MacDonald, is helping lead plans to replace the children's parks in Erracht Drive as part of the scheme.

He said: 'We carried out a feasibility study to see where is best for a park and Banavie

Road got the most support. At the end of the day the scheme will make the area look nicer.'

Highland Council hopes to start building the project in 2018 after the completion of the statutory process and detailed design.

Garry Smith, the council's principal engineer, said: 'We want to build a robust scheme to protect 300 houses in Caol and Lochyside.'

The sea levels are changing and rising. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) has a list of all the schemes in Scotland for flood

risk and Caol is quite high on that list.

'The Scottish Government can provide 80 per cent of funding for schemes. The damage caused by a flood event could cost in the region of £12.5m. The risk is real. If we get the wrong set of circumstances there could be a very severe flood.'

Mr Smith added: 'In terms of residents' views from their homes, they will still see Fort William and the Corran Narrows. The height of the wall has been reduced by 300mm to reduce the impact.'

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Skye fish feed factory jobs boost

FISH farming company Marine Harvest has announced that Kyleakin on the Isle of Skye is its preferred location for an £80m fish feed factory.

The company said the development on the site of an old quarry would create 55 full-time permanent jobs.

The plant will produce food for the firm's Scottish fish farms as well as those in Norway, Ireland and the Faroe Islands.

Marine Harvest hopes the new plant will be up and running by 2018.

The company made the announcement after consideration of a number of sites on the west coast.

The Kyleakin site is known as Altanavaig (Allt Anabhraig) quarry.

Ben Hadfield, managing director of

Marine Harvest Scotland said: 'We are delighted to have found a site which sits at the heart of our operations - one that is already an industrial site but which has not been fully utilised for some time.'

'We would like to have the chance to bring it back to life and provide well-paid jobs, as well as taking the opportunity to produce our feed in the most sustainable way. This is a large investment in Scotland and the development of a feed plant here is part of our overall drive to become a more efficient and sustainable business.'

Marine Harvest hopes to replicate the success of a similar plant in Norway which has provided a welcome boost to the local economy by providing jobs directly, as well as generating employment for local

contractors and suppliers. Construction of the plant will take between a year and 18 months.

About four acres of the site will be used to accommodate the buildings, which will include the processing plant itself, as well as raw material storage silos, product storage and packaging, a loading area and car parking. The existing pier will need to be extended.

Public exhibitions are to be held in Kyleakin Village Hall on Monday April 18 and Kyle Free Church of Scotland Hall on Tuesday April 19. Both exhibitions will be open from 11am until 8pm.

The exhibitions will explain the work the company plans to undertake to prepare its planning application.

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Mum takes on gruelling Munro challenge in daughter's memory

CAREN MCPATE
fort@obantimes.co.uk

A CARING mum is preparing for a gruelling challenge to run 24 Munros in memory of her stillborn daughter.

Helen Smith's first daughter Nicki died during labour on June 28 1995. This year would have been her 21st birthday and, like other milestone birthdays, Helen wanted to mark it by doing something special.

The 44-year-old will attempt to run 24 Munros in 24 hours, known as Ramsay's Round, but said she will be happy to complete it, however long it takes.

Helen's challenge is even more remarkable as she is in constant pain after her coccyx, the bottom portion of her spine, was broken during an incident while serving as a police officer.

Despite having her coccyx removed, Helen is still in pain, but finds her way to work through it.

She admits she used to hate running, but took it up in 2011 when she turned 40 and what would have been Nicki's 16th

birthday. That same year she completed four marathons, four half marathons and an ultra marathon, which is anything over a marathon in length.

Helen, who lives in Caol, said: 'I saw the Ramsay's Round challenge on the internet a couple of years ago and thought, that looks good. So few people have done it so that's a big challenge. Completing the round, I know I can do it. Whatever time it takes, I want to do it. I can't back down from a challenge.'

Ramsay's Round is named after Charlie Ramsay who, in July 1978, ran 24 Munros in 23 hours and 58 minutes, a distance of 56 miles and 28,500 feet of climbing. He set a record, which was to last for nine years.

Helen said that thinking of Nicki will help spur her on and she will leave a rose on each Munro during her run. She's decided to run anti-clockwise and finish on Ben Nevis.

She's supported by her partner Davie, daughter Sarah, 18, and Matt, 10.

Helen added: 'They think I'm



Helen at the Melantee hill, near Ben Nevis, in Fort William.

mad but are very supportive. I can't wait for it. Every time I now do a run I like to put a decent hill in it as practise. I'm not a great hill runner, it's normally trails I do, hence this is a biggie for me.

'Hopefully I can keep it going without sleeping. I know I can go that long without a nap, I've done it several times now, but I'll listen to my body.'

Helen retired early from the police force two years ago and now has her own business, Lochaber Embroidery And Printing (LEAP) in Fort William. She's a member of Lochaber Athletic Club (LAC) and is looking for help during the Ramsay's Round, including support runners and supporters. Some people have already volunteered.

Helen has organised a just-giving page to raise money for Lochaber Mountain Rescue: www.justgiving.com/Helensmith280616

She also wants to raise awareness of stillbirth and neonatal death. Anyone who would like to be put in touch with people who can help can contact Helen on 01397 708878.

Body discovered on island shore

A BODY was discovered on the shore of the island of Rum on Friday afternoon.

The body was reported by a member of the public before police officers, the RNLI and coastguard attended the scene and removed the body to the mainland for further investigation.

Police Scotland has informed the family of missing kayaker Jason Chung Wai Ho.

Jason, 39, from Glasgow was last seen with an inflatable kayak at Traigh beach, near Arisaig on January 13. A search for him involving search dogs and Lochaber and Skye Mountain rescue teams has been ongoing. Formal identification is ongoing and police have not yet said whether or not the body is that of Jason Chung Wai Ho.

Architects chosen for St Kilda centre

SKYE-based architects Dualchas, along with Norwegian partners, have been selected to provide the design master plan for the proposed Ionad Hiort/St Kilda Centre in Lewis.

The selection of Dualchas and their partners, Reuilf Ramstad Architects (RRA) of Oslo, complements the recent announcement that consultancy firm Metaphor has been given the remit of advising on the contents of the centre.

Iain Buchanan, chairman of Ionad Hiort Ltd, the charitable company behind the project, said: 'The vision presented by Dualchas and RRA was outstanding and we are confident that we have people of the highest calibre developing every aspect of the project, in close consultation with local interests.'

Skye tannery to expand premises

SKYESKYNS Ltd is to invest £100,000 expanding its premises.

The investment in the tannery has been supported by Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Dave Thomson SNP MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch said it was 'great news that this quality business is expanding'.

New competitive electricity tariff for the Western Isles

A COLLABORATION between Western Isles Council and a licensed UK Energy Supplier, means electricity consumers in the Western Isles may soon be able to take advantage of a significantly lower electricity tariff.

The comhairle has facilitated the establishment of 'Hebrides Energy', an independent energy supply company comprising representation from Hebrides Housing Partnership, Tighean Innse Gall, The Stornoway Trust, Community Energy Scotland and the comhairle.

Initially, Hebrides Energy will partner with a licensed UK energy supplier to launch a bespoke and competitive Hebrides Energy electricity tariff during the second half of 2016.

Meanwhile, Hebrides Energy is working with its partner to prioritise the early rollout of smart meters in the Western Isles.

These devices will allow consumers to view their real time electricity consumption in pounds and pence and will put an end to estimated bills and associated over-charging.



Rachel Slater and Tim Newton loved climbing.

Families of climbers killed on Ben Nevis pay tribute to rescue teams

THE FAMILIES of a couple whose bodies were found on Ben Nevis have paid tribute to them and everyone involved in the search.

Experienced climbers Rachel Slater, 24, and Tim Newton, 27, were reported missing on February 15 after failing to return home.

A huge search operation took place to find them. It's believed the couple, from Bradford, died in an avalanche. They were found on Wednesday March 23.

A statement from the families said that Ms Slater and Mr Newton said they were 'doing what they loved to do'.

It added: 'We would like to

thank the mountain rescue teams, climbing community, police in Fort William and all concerned for finding Rachel and Tim, bringing the news we have been waiting for and for their sustained efforts over the last six weeks.

'These brave and generous men and women have worked incredibly hard to find Rachel and Tim in difficult and dangerous conditions.'

'The Lochaber Mountain Rescue team, police, climbers, friends, family and wider community near and far have been overwhelmingly supportive, generous and kind throughout this difficult time.'

'Although much anticipated,

it still comes as a shock but we are thankful that we can now move forward with our lives in the knowledge that Rachel and Tim were doing what they loved to do. Climbing was their passion, they loved the mountains, wilderness and outdoor spaces.'

Lochaber Mountain Rescue commented on its Facebook page: 'I'm sure that everyone will join us in offering our thoughts and sincere condolences to the families and friends of Rachel and Tim.'

'They were well-known, experienced and respected climbers and their plight has touched so many people over the last few weeks.'

City cash deal concerns Lochaber

CONCERN has been raised that there is no mention of Lochaber and the west after the UK announcement of a £315million Inverness and Highland City Region deal.

Over the 20-year lifetime of the deal, around £1 billion of investment will be unlocked.

Dave Thompson, MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch, welcomed the agreement by the UK and Scottish Governments with Highland Council.

However, he said: 'There are considerable challenges faced in the west of the region. For example, sporting facilities in Lochaber and the Stromeferry bypass come immediately to mind, as does upgrade work on the critical trunk road the A82. I hope to see Highland Council acting for the whole region and investing these monies in both east and west.'

The Oban Times recently reported that members of Lochaber Sports Association had resigned. Highland Council decided last October to only award £200,000 to the group when it was believed it would be given £600,000.

Highland Council said that the £315m investment would benefit Highland-wide projects. The cash will go towards building roads, provide 6,000 new homes and to accelerate effective broadband and mobile coverage.

Steam train back on track

THE WORLD-famous Jacobite steam train will run as planned from May following safety concerns being addressed by operators.

West Coast Railways (WCR) was banned from running on the main line railway after the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) issued a prohibition notice to the company.

The decision was taken after concerns were raised about WCR's management of safety.

WCR operates the Fort William to Mallaig tourist attraction between May and October. On March 23, ORR lifted the prohibition notice and said it had 'received evidence that steps have been

taken to remedy the issues identified. These included the introduction of clearer governance structures with proper accountability for safety, more robust risk assessments and enhanced processes for managing staff, with a focus on safety culture'.

WCR recently announced that, in the event of the ban remaining in place for the start of the Jacobite excursion, it would give options to people who had booked tickets six weeks before their travel date, including a full refund.

The train crosses the Glenfinnan viaduct, a location made famous in the Harry Potter films, and brings thousands of tourists

to the area every year.

In a statement WCR said it was delighted with the announcement. It added: 'Our planned schedule for 2016 will go ahead, including the Jacobite, which starts on May 9.'

'Passenger safety is our primary concern and all efforts to ensure the safe and smooth operation of all our services have been made.'

'WCR thanks the ORR for its help and support over the recent weeks.'

ORR director of railway safety and HM chief inspector of railways Ian Prosser said: 'We shall continue to closely monitor WCR over the coming period to ensure that it fully complies with all the commitments it has made.'

Roadwork start is delayed

ROADWORKS in the centre of Fort William will take place from April 17 – not from this week as previously reported.

The work, likely to last for two weeks, will see a mini roundabout at the Inverloch junction constructed.

A spokeswoman for BEAR Scotland said: 'We're carrying out works to replace traffic lights with a mini-roundabout on the A82 at the Inverloch junction.'

'The works will begin on Sunday April 17 and are expected to last for two weeks. Beginning on Sunday at 9am, the existing junction traffic lights will be discon-

nected and will temporarily operate as a T-Junction. Following this, the remainder of the works will be carried out overnight from 7pm to 6am to keep disruption to a minimum.'

'The A82 will remain open during the day and overnight, however, temporary traffic lights will be in place for the safety of road workers and motorists during working hours. A closure of Earl of Inverness Road will be required each night during the first week with a short diversion in place.'

'The road closure will be lifted during the day and the temporary traffic

lights switched off, with the junction instead operating as a T-Junction until the mini-roundabout can be installed.'

'In the second week the Earl of Inverness Road will operate under temporary traffic lights during working hours.'

'We've taken steps to minimise disruption to motorists as much as possible by carrying out the works overnight, avoiding working at weekends and designing the works to avoid any closures of the A82. We'd encourage motorists to plan ahead and leave a little extra time for their journeys.'

Agreement reached on council re-design

A SHAKE-UP in the way Highland Council is run has begun.

A re-design of the local authority was agreed by councillors at a special meeting last week.

The decision to restructure follows a £40 million cut to the council's budget, part of which will see 400 employees taking voluntary redundancy.

A working group of 16 councillors will be created to take forward the plans with the first stage of recommendations

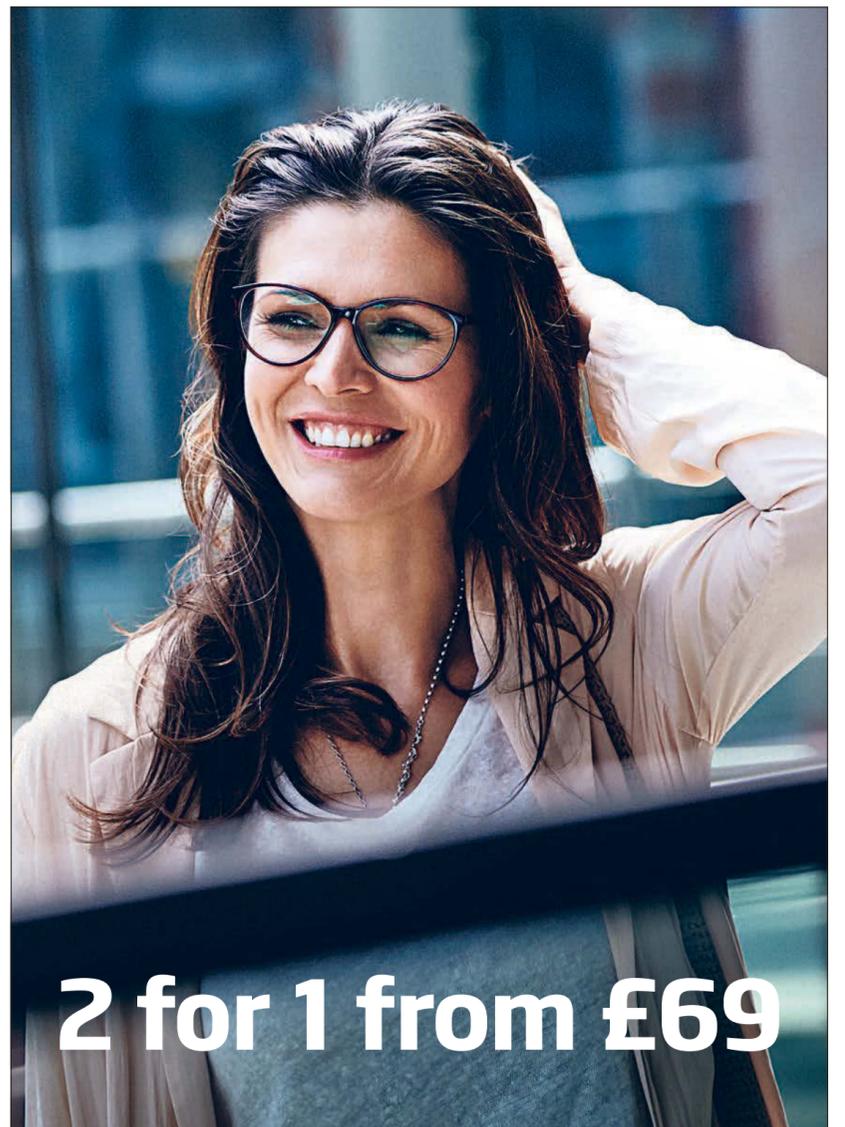
going before the council in December. A budget of £150,000 will be allocated for the work.

The council's chief executive Steve Barron referred to the Graph of Doom, produced by Barnet Council in 2012 of its predicted budget and has become used generally to apply to the whole of local government.

Mr Barron said: 'This is about aspiration and ambition for Highland Council, not a graph of doom.'

'The purpose of redesign gives us an opportunity to lead positive change for the future. A reduced workforce will require us to change our focus and ways of working. We need to listen to and value our staff, who are our greatest assets.'

The redesign is expected to renew the council's purpose and ambition; its priorities; to develop proposals for affordable services and delivery options; and to explore the best options for public participation.



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OAP oblivious to police pursuit

A PENSIONER who had the police in hot pursuit of her speeding car for almost seven miles on Saturday, has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

The woman, 67, was clocked by police officers on the Arrivain straight, between Dalmally and Tyndrum. She is alleged to have been travelling at 74mph when the speed limit is 60.

In trying to stop the woman, police officers used flashing lights and sirens but were unable to get her attention.

Officers followed her for 6.8 miles before finally pulling alongside her and gesturing for her to pull over.

Pontoon plans move a step closer

WORK to ensure Oban's North Pier is at the heart of the town's maritime quarter has moved forward as a contract worth around £90,000 was awarded to Holequest to carry out investigation work on the seabed. A small drilling rig was installed on the pier on Tuesday with drilling due to finish on or before April 19. The contracted hours of work are 8am-8pm, Monday to Saturday.

Heavy horses make light work of competition



Despite the rain last Saturday, competitors put their hands to the plough at Lorn Vintage Ploughing Match at Kilmaraig, Connel, with prizes for the straightest and levellest furrows. Above, overall winner John MacCormick from Appin, with his uncle Donnie MacCormick and watched by a young fan. See page 14 for more.

Staff shock as luxury store closes

SHOP staff at an Oban store were shocked to hear that they were about to lose their jobs when they turned up for work last week.

Luxury-brand store McEwens of Perth was taken into administration last Thursday (March 24) with no warning to staff, including the four full-time members in Oban.

The branch opened less than two years ago on Oban's George Street. The company's flagship store is in Perth.

Last Thursday, business owners John and Georgina Bullough, told *The Oban Times*: 'It is with great sadness and regret that we have had to put McEwens of Perth Ltd into administration this morning. Since we purchased the business in 2008, we have battled against unprecedented challenges.'

'These include the immediate credit crunch, a dramatic change in shopping habits, the rise of the internet, the growth of out-of-town shopping, plus low consumer confidence linked to political and economic uncertainty.'

'Despite these difficulties we have worked hard with little to no working capital, but with fantastic and loyal staff, to make McEwens the very best it could be. Sadly, this has not delivered the increase in trade that was necessary to keep the business solvent.'

'We have left no stone unturned trying to find a partner or a purchaser to take McEwens forward.'

A statement from administrators said: 'Unfortunately, we have had to make 64 employees redundant on appointment, with 46 employees, including the four in Oban, remaining to assist the joint administrators.'

The stores in Oban and Balmalcolm closed with immediate effect.



Police launch probe after traffic wardens abused on social media

LOUISE GLEN
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OBAN police have launched an investigation after religious and racist comments were made on social media about traffic wardens in Oban.

Concerned residents contacted *The Oban Times* after members of the public made inflammatory statements on a post to more than 5,000 followers of the closed Facebook group, You Are Not A Real Obanite, regarding parking tickets.

The initial discussion arose after people took to the Facebook page to complain about being

given a parking ticket while they attended an Easter service at St Columba's Cathedral.

The tickets were given to members of the public who had parked on double yellow lines without any disabled badges.

Over the course of the next 20 hours, more than 150 comments debated the situation.

But things turned nasty when the colour of the skin of one of the traffic wardens and the football team of another were mentioned. One of the comments claimed the move was an attack on Christians.

Comments about the colour of one of the traffic wardens' skin and expletives were later deleted.

Police Scotland acted quickly to condemn the messages.

Sergeant Alan Moore said: 'We urge people to come forward when remarks are made that are racist or sectarian. Or actions that appear to be racist or sectarian.'

'There is no place for these attitudes or comments in Oban, or in Scotland - they are criminal offences and shall be prosecuted as such.'

'Racism is a very serious crime in our communities. We will not tolerate any derogatory comments to anyone.'

'Scotland wants to provide a welcome to the world. There is no place for people to be victim-

ised because of their religion or the colour of their skin.'

'We need to speak to people who see and hear of these incidents, whether in public or online, to make sure that we can bring any offenders to court here in Oban.'

Some of the people taking part in the Facebook discussion, spoke to *The Oban Times* afterwards and raised concerns.

Keith Smith, of Oban, said: 'I noticed the racist comment. Had my hackles up and I nearly replied but didn't want to draw attention to it.'

'Think the admin removed that one.'

Donald addressed the criticism of traffic wardens for doing their jobs head on.

She said: 'I feel that it is about time something was done about inconsiderate people parking along the seafront yellow lines from roughly the Alexandra hotel often along to the youth hostel and even at the junction to Corran brae to attend the cathedral.'

'It doesn't matter if it was Easter Sunday or not, the rules are the rules and if I parked there I would have expected a ticket. The rules remain the same for everyone, hopefully this will be the end of the havoc along there now.'

The religious row was highlighted by Lynne Horn, also of Oban.

She said: '[People] expect compassion while effectively making it difficult for emergency services getting to Dunollie.'

'As a driving licence holder it is our responsibility to follow the rules of the road. Nowhere on my theory test did it say 'unless you're off to church'.'

'This isn't about religion. It's about the law. We all make mistakes or take a chance, but to do it, get caught then expect special treatment because it's Easter, and people are in church - that's nonsense.'

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If you like what you have read and have not used us already why don't you visit our website, send us an email quoting 'west coast customer' or simply give us a call and we would be more than happy to cater for any of your needs.

Anger at delay to protect beavers

A DECISION on the future of beavers in Knapdale has been further delayed after ministers failed to make a plan prior to the dissolution of parliament, writes Louise Glen.

The Scottish Government is now being urged to 'stop procrastinating' and protect beavers after legislation to protect them has been delayed until much later in the year.

In the meantime, interim protection measures have been announced to address concerns about the health of beavers in Argyll.

Responding to the latest announcement, Harry Huyton, director of OneKind Scotland, said: 'This weak response further delays a decision on the future of Scotland's beavers until after the elections and will do little to protect them from continued persecution in the meantime.'

'The revelations earlier this year that pregnant and lactating beavers were being killed and that inappropriate firearms and munitions were being used were shocking. They demanded immediate and firm action, but instead the Scottish Government has merely offered further advice to land managers who are affected by the animals.'

Mr Huyton added: 'Intriguingly, however, the measures also threaten to use Nature Conservation Orders to protect beavers if evidence emerges that welfare concerns are being ignored.'

'Our view is that clear evidence of welfare concerns has already emerged and we see no reason to wait for further inhumane culling until action is taken. We want to see full protection from persecution for all beavers in Scotland.'

'In the meantime, if Nature Conservation Orders can be used to protect them during the imminent breeding season, then Government should stop procrastinating and introduce them immediately.'

Duncan Orr-Ewing, head of species and land management at RSPB Scotland, said: 'We are extremely disappointed by this further delay in ratifying the presence of Eurasian beavers in Scotland.'

'Whilst we fully understand that safeguards need to be in place to deal with the concerns of some land managers, there is widespread experience on how beavers and humans can successfully co-exist, including on or adjacent to farmland.'

'The Scottish Beaver Trial concluded its work almost a year ago and carried out an exemplary evaluation of the likely benefits and costs of beavers returning to Scotland, and we see no reason why the Government has delayed this important decision further.'

'The situation of unregulated culling and an absence of coordinated management support will now continue until after the election, to the detriment of the environment, landowners and, of course, the beavers themselves.'

'We encourage the new or reappointed minister to endorse the return of this iconic species to our rivers and lochs as soon as possible after the election.'

BBC Alba on the rise

BBC ALBA is set to move up the electronic programme guide (EPG) listings on Sky, Freesat and Freeview.

The channel will move up one place with the new EPG slots for BBC ALBA being: Sky 142, Freesat 109 and Freeview 7.

BBC ALBA will remain on Virgin Media 161 and will continue to be available on BBC iPlayer.

Young riders hope to get the jump on new facility

DAVID MCPHEE
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BIKERS in Oban would dig, build and jump at the chance to have somewhere in town to ride without being moved on.

Now, an online group has been set up to build a series of dirt jumps at the old hydro path hotel overlooking the town centre, where peddle-pushers can ride without fear of colliding with pedestrians and pavements.

Gareth Judson, a 19-year-old apprentice joiner from Taynuilt who co-founded the group, said: 'There has been a small group of riders from the Oban area trying to find somewhere to build jumps for a long time now. We have a spot in Taynuilt but it's too far out the way for most of the Oban boys.'

'We have been looking at building up at the old hydro in Oban as it's disused and out of the way.'

'We currently don't know who owns the land but we would like to speak with them and try to get



Bikers get some air at the location where the jumps could be built.

them on board with the idea.

'It's not really useful for anything but we could adapt it and make good use of it.'

'Currently the bikers in Oban have nowhere to ride. They were using the seating area that was built recently by the council but it's not a good idea riding there as it could cause some damage

to stone work or someone could have a serious accident. So finding somewhere out the way is really our priority.'

Gareth continued: 'The jumps would be built out of the dirt that's already up there, although we may need something else to add to it as that doesn't soak up water.'

'I've spoke to Sean [who co-founded the group] and he can get what we need free of charge.'

'So at the moment this project is cost free. Building the jumps would only require shovels, which we already have, and some willing boys to put in a graft, which we also have.'

'Sean and I first started the group but we want as many people to help as possible as it's not just for us, it's for everyone in town to use.'

Roddy McCuish, councillor for Oban North and Lorn, said: 'The hydro is in private ownership. It would be entirely up to the owner to allow this or not, but I personally think it is a great idea and would be more than happy to help.'

'They must talk to the skateboarding group in Oban as it would be very difficult to get funding for both projects, but there is an opportunity for partnership working that would benefit them both. I'm happy to facilitate a meeting if they want

to, but it is entirely up to them to progress this.'

'With all the construction work going on in Oban over the next few years, perhaps this is an ideal opportunity for some community payback from some of the contractors?'

Kevin Irvine, an assistant development worker, said: 'The Oban Skatepark (OSP) group are open to ideas about where a skatepark can be built and we heavily respect the initiative for someone to do it because there is a need for it.'

He continued: 'The Oban skatepark campaign group is working with West Highland Housing Association (WHHA).'

'It is supporting the group by supplying a community worker to help them with applying for funding and things like that.'

The Oban Skatepark Group is currently looking to set up a constituted group. Anyone who would like to help out and become a member can message the group on Facebook by searching for 'Oban Skatepark O.S.P.'

Labour of love – Highland midwives in spotlight

A BBC ALBA series is to provide a glimpse of the remarkable work of midwives across the Highlands – and includes unique, intimate footage of labour and birth filmed by midwives themselves.

Highland Midwives follows midwives in various locations and a variety of situations, as they go the extra mile to care for mothers and their impending arrivals.

With the Highland Health Board's midwifery team in Campbeltown given permission by new mums in their area to film the very moment of birth, viewers followed the journey of Susanna Fee and her husband, Daniel.

The couple attended hypnobirthing classes held by the midwifery team, and it was the midwives themselves who



Midwife Anna Northover hops on a quadbike to visit an expectant mum.

filmed Susanna giving birth to baby Saul in the inflatable pool at Campbeltown Hospital.

On the Isle of Skye, Claire and James MacQueen are delighted by the safe arrival

of their son, Casey, but realise they have tough times ahead of them as their new son has a cleft lip and palate and will need complex surgery.

Viewers follow the family as

they travel with Casey to Edinburgh where he undergoes a five-hour operation to address the condition.

Highland Midwives also follows the progress of baby Cole,

who was born 12 weeks prematurely to his mum, Kirsty.

The programme follows his progress at the Special Care Baby Unit at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness, including his first inoculations at eight weeks post-delivery.

Meanwhile, at Point on the Isle of Lewis, viewers can watch the midwives at work as they deliver baby Noah to parents Heather and Kevin Baillie via a home water birth.

Husband Kevin films the labour and subsequent birth – which takes place in their living room – on his mobile phone.

The series started on Thursday March 10, and runs on Thursdays from 8.30pm-9pm. It will be repeated on the channel each week and will also be available to view on BBC iPlayer.

No joke for owners who let dogs foul and don't pick up

OBAN'S newest councillor says new dog fouling penalties will 'empower' dog wardens.

Councillor Julie MacKenzie welcomed the Scottish Government rise in a fine to £80 from next week while recognising the problem is still causing concern in Oban.

Dog owners who fail to pick up after their pets will face a fine of £80 from April 1 – double the current fixed penalty rate.

The change, supported by the majority of responses to a Scottish Government consultation on dog ownership, brings the penalty for dog fouling in line with the fine for littering.

Ms MacKenzie, who led a successful Oban campaign to make a difference, praised the work of Mairi Bryce and her Facebook page, Oban Community Action on Dog Fouling.

Ms MacKenzie said: 'It's great to see the Scot-

tish Government taking another very positive step towards tackling the issue of dog fouling by doubling the fixed penalty fine.'

'It is, of course, especially welcomed by myself and many others in the local area, following all the hard work put in over the last year by Mairi Bryce and her Oban Community Action on Dog Fouling team.'

'The group members have been strong advocates for the introduction of harsher penalties and the £80 fixed penalty should help add even more strength to their campaign.'

'This increase should also help to empower our amenity wardens in Argyll and Bute, as the much heftier fine will send out a clear message to irresponsible dog owners to say that their antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated in our communities.'

Police launch safety campaign so bikers can 'live fast, die old'

MOTORBIKE fatalities on Scotland's roads have risen in the last year with overtaking accounting for one in three deaths, according to new figures.

Police Scotland data from 2015 highlights that male bikers aged between 40 and 49 are most at risk of being killed or seriously injured, with 27 per cent of all fatal crashes in 2015 taking place whilst overtaking. Failing to look properly and loss of control were the top two contributory factors reported in these collisions.

Further data released by Transport Scotland reveals that motorcyclists make up one per cent of Scotland's road traffic, but account for 15 per cent of fatalities, and throughout the biking season it is not unusual for someone to die every weekend. Riders are more vulnerable than other drivers and many overtaking fatalities are caused by head on collisions as the rider is exposed to the full force of impact.

Chief Superintendent Andy Edmonston, head

of Road Policing for Police Scotland, said: 'Many bikers will be preparing to get back out on the road to enjoy the wide range of rides and scenery Scotland has to offer. We understand the thrill of motorcycling and why people want to do it, but we also want them to keep themselves safe, especially when overtaking and negotiating left-hand bends.'

The Scottish Government and Road Safety Scotland, part of Transport Scotland, have launched a new campaign called Live Fast, Die Old aimed primarily at male bikers in this high-risk age group. The campaign features a short film showing older bikers enjoying themselves and living life to the full, while also taking it easy on their bikes. A Facebook page dedicated to the campaign includes YouTube videos and tips on biking techniques, route recommendations, upcoming events, and how to keep safe, while not giving up the freedom and enjoyment of riding bikes.

with site providers. Mr MacNeil added: 'I was very encouraged by this meeting and although Telefonica concede that the upgrade programme does present challenges, it gave a clear commitment that it is doing all it can to improve coverage for customers in Na h-Eileanan an Iar.'

Plans to improve isles' mobile coverage

O2 HAS firm plans to improve coverage and bring 4G services to island customers, Angus MacNeil, Western Isles MP, was told this week.

Mr MacNeil met with Sarwar Khan and Paul James from Telefonica UK – the firm of which O2 is a subsidiary – to discuss the upgrade of services

across Na h-Eileanan an Iar. He said: 'I was delighted to hear about the plans Telefonica has to upgrade the islands' network.'

'It is aiming to upgrade 29 masts, to provide 4G coverage this year, which are situated throughout the islands chain. This will aim to bring 3G/4G

coverage to customers in parts of the isles from the Butt to Barra.' Planning applications for many of the sites have already been submitted but the roll-out of the upgrade programme remains dependent on obtaining relevant permissions and having agreements in place

Cheers! Oban Live welcomes sponsors

OBAN Live has announced sponsorship from some of the world's most recognised drinks brands – with Moët and Chandon and Jägermeister coming on board as drinks' sponsors at this year's event.

VIP ticket-holders to the concert, which will take place at Oban's Mossfield Park on May 13 and 14, will be able to enjoy exclusive cocktails in the Jägermeister VIP Area, while Ice Cold Jägermeister will be available on tap at bars throughout the stadium.

Oban Live organisers have also arranged for an official Moët and Chandon bar, which will provide the world-famous Champagne, as well as other wines, after attendees at last year's Decade gig asked for the tippie to be on the menu.

The Champagne will also be available for VIP ticket-holders at a bar in the dedicated lounge.

School leavers

SCHOOL leavers in Argyll and Bute are exceeding the Scottish national average for moving on to employment or further education.

A report published by Argyll and Bute Council this week shows that 93.1 per cent of secondary school leavers moved on to college or university, apprenticeships or employment in 2015.

This is a 2.1 per cent increase on the previous year and is slightly higher than the Scottish national average of 92.9 per cent.

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More success for Phoenix boxers in Huntly

LOCHABER Phoenix Boxing Club had another successful outing last Friday when three boxers travelled to Huntly to appear on a show hosted by Insch Boxing Club.

Fourteen-year-old Ewan Eason recently collected silver at the Scottish Open championships and his performance against the host club's Jimmy Laing highlighted the improvement and quality in his recent displays as he collected a points victory over an opponent who had previously beaten him earlier in the season.

Eason forced Laing on to the back foot immediately after the opening bell rang throwing straight shots to the body and head in combination.

This approach seemed to catch Laing off guard as he appeared bemused as to how to counter these tactics and it was a clear round for Ewan.

Laing came out with clear instructions in the second round to claim the centre of the ring and started this session really strongly but as the round progressed Eason worked his way back into things and there were some fierce exchanges as both boxers vied for control of the bout. This was a pick'em round as it was so keenly contested.

Round three saw Eason regain complete control as he

Boxing

began to vary his range from long to medium combining hooks to body and head with straight shots from range. The Fort William youngster has grit to go with his skill and made sure to keep up the pressure until the final bell and claim the points victory.

Seventeen-year-old Scottish Novice champion Lee Bruce also collected a good win at welterweight when he boxed Port Glasgow's Andy Redford. Possessing fast hands and quick feet Bruce peppered his oncoming opponent with jabs in round one, sliding away from the Glaswegian's powerful-looking hooks whenever any danger presented itself.

The next round gave the boxer from Port Glasgow another opportunity to look for a home for some of his bent arm shots as he bobbed and weaved in front of his opponent but the adroit footwork of Lee made sure he never left himself in a vulnerable position.

While the round belonged to Bruce again, he at times created too much distance between himself and his opponent.

He remedied this in the last round and with a greater control of distance began to punish Redford with straight shots through the middle from both hands. Lee



Huntly winners, Ewan Eason, left, and Lee Bruce. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

kept up a relentless workrate on the Port Glasgow boxer in this round and although his opponent was powerful and determined it was a landslide decision for the

Lochaber youngster. Senior light welterweight Igor Sliwinski made a welcome return to the ring after almost a year out when he engaged in a spirited exhibition

with Charlie Doig of St Francis Boxing Club. Due to a disparity in weights this was deemed as an exhibition so both boxers proceeded to showcase some of their

variety of skills with referee Joe Duffy ensuring things never got out of hand and the crowd were treated to a high level of pugilism for all three rounds.

Gary Cowan - the man to beat

Tenpin bowling

AFTER week six of the tenpin bowling singles leagues at the Nevis Centre, Gary Cowan still leads the scratch league with 109 points followed by Ben Weller with 100 points and Darren Duncan with 96 points.

Gary also maintains the lead in the handicap league with 100 points followed by Darren on 89 points and Brian Johnstone in third place on 86.

Gary still leads the chase for the Nevis Radio High Pin Trophy with 2,955 pins followed by Ben Weller in second with 2,898 and Darren Duncan in third with 2,777 pins.

There were a lot of good individual games again this week, the best coming from Ben Weller with a game of 210. Other good games came from Pam Weller with 202, Gary Cowan with 199 and 181, Nic Brooke with 175 and Brian Stewart with 171.

The top three-game scratch series this week was by Gary Cowan with 536. Nic Brooke rolled the top three-game handicap series with 690.

Winter league winners

Athletics

FORTY-EIGHT runners qualified for t-shirts this year in Lochaber Athletic Club's winter league including the category winners along with 10 marshalls and time keepers who were acknowledged with a t-shirt for their help throughout the league.

Prizewinners: Junior male - 1 Steven Burns 175; 2 Alistair Craig 155.

Male - 1 Aidan Donnelly 140; 2 Gavin MacMillan 118; 3 Barrie MacKinnon 115.

Female - 1 Kate Jenkins 160; 2 Vikki MacKinnon 135/175; 3 Keri Wallace 135.

Male veteran 40 - 1 Craig Mattocks 160; 2 Jon Gay 150; 3 Andy Craig 120.

Female veteran 40 - 1 Amanda Blackhall 175; 2 Lucy Prins 155; 3 Nix Forster 145.

Male veteran 50 - 1 Alan Smith 165; 2 Ali Kennedy 135; 3 Mark Willetts 117.

Female veteran 50 - 1 Emma Pearce 175; 2 Jane Oliver 150; 3 Kathy Tighe.

Male veteran 60 - Michael Connolly 175.

Male veteran 70 - Ernie Orr 140.

The 2015-2016 winter league is sponsored by Ace Enterprises.

£300 for charity

Horse riding

THE GRAND opening of a horse-riding centre in Kingussie raised a more than £300 for charity. Donations from the opening of Highland Horse Fun, which is a horse-riding and carriage-driving centre, raised £300.22 for the Cairngorms Riding for the Disabled (RDA) Group. RDA had a stand at the opening, which showed off the latest safety clothing and equipment and children were invited to 'pin the Easter bonnet on to the pony picture'.

Liz Wilson, who was one of Kingussie's original pony trekking instructors in the 1950s, cut the ribbon and declared the centre open for business.

Highland Horse Fun offers a series of opportunities for everyone such as saddle and pony club for kids, ladies club, riding for the disabled, pony trekking, carriage-driving trips and wildlife safaris.

Good away win for Fort William against Clach'

Clachnacuddin	1
Fort William	2
Highland League	

FORT William FC's home game against Cove Rangers last Saturday was postponed due to a waterlogged pitch with the fixture rescheduled for Saturday April 9.

However, the Fort travelled to take on Clachnacuddin in Inverness on Wednesday March 23, with the away side scoring two goals and taking home all three points.

Fort opened the scoring on the 23rd minute after Clach' goal-

keeper Aiden MacDonald fouled Marty Munro in the box and gave away a penalty.

Scott Davidson stepped up and slotted the spot kick into the back of the net.

The first half ended 1-0 and it was Fort who were the first to open the scoring in the second half with Davidson claiming his second of the day, making it 2-0.

But the two-goal cushion didn't last and Clach' were back in the game after Ian Penwright scored to make it 2-1.

Fort then had the opportunity to score for a third time, but Clach' keeper MacDonald kept

Football

his team in the game pulling off a great one-on-one save, but despite his efforts, the game ended 2-1 to the Fort.

This win closes the gap and puts the Lochaber side on 13 points - six points behind Strathspey Thistle.

Fort William have a busy week ahead, with a game against Wick due to take place last night (Wednesday March 30) and another home game against Turriff United on Saturday with a 3pm kick off at Claggan.



Fort William's Scott Davidson is mobbed by his team mates after scoring what proved to be the winning goal against Clach' in Inverness. Photograph: Donald Cameron



Team 1 from Kinlochleven won the secondary schools' competition.

Dodgeball festival in Lochaber

ORGANISED by High Life Highland's Active Schools Coordinators Tracey Jeffrey and Jane Bruce, an inaugural Lochaber-High Schools Dodgeball Festival took place last week.

The event saw fun and friendly competition by teams from Kilchuimen Academy, Fort Augustus, Kinlochleven High School, Mallaig High School and Lochaber High School. Each team consisted of six students from S1 and S2 competing to be crowned the first champions and win the school trophy.

Great opportunity
Bruce said: 'This event will be a great opportunity for the students of different High Schools to get together and play in a fun and friendly competition'.

She added: 'I would like to thank the staff and pupils who have been running practise sessions in each school in preparation for this event.'

The festival was part of the wider Lochaber Active Schools PE programme of festivals, which aims to encouraging children to take part in a range of different sports and activities.

Secondary school winners: 1 Kinlochleven team 1; 2 Kinlochleven team 2; 3 Mallaig.

Dodgeball

Primary school winners: 1 Ballachulish; 2 St Brides; 3 Glencoe. Taking part were Ballachulish, St Brides, Duror, Glencoe and Kinlochleven primaries at Duror community centre.



Ballachulish, in the blue and black strip, won the primary schools' competition.

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WEATHER

Thursday Sunny
Winds light south south westerly
Temperatures 4°C to 8°C.

Friday Heavy rain
Winds moderate southerly
Temperatures 6°C to 8°C.

Weekend Outlook Light rain on Saturday
Light rain showers on Sunday
Winds moderate southerly
Temperatures 5°C to 9°C.



Stop Press: New pontoons recently installed by North West Marine at Kyle Lochboisdale for visiting yachts

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday March 31, 2016 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour) BST)

Date	am			pm		
Thur	04.15	1.8	09.53	3.0	16.56	1.9
Fri	05.38	1.9	11.08	2.8	18.23	1.9
Sat	00.58	2.9	07.05	1.8	14.08	2.8
Sun	02.37	3.1	08.27	1.6	15.11	3.1
Mon	03.29	3.4	09.31	1.2	15.53	3.3
Tues	04.12	3.8	10.22	0.8	16.30	3.6
Wed	04.53	4.0	11.06	0.5	17.06	3.9

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrihaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Ferry Crossings/Sea States			
Oban to Barra/South Uist		Moderate	
Oban to Coll/Tiree		Moderate	
Kennacraig to Islay		Moderate	