

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Meet Oban's cat burglar

ALL THE FUN OF THE FEIS



WIN WIN WIN

A meal for two at THE MISHNISH, Isle of Mull

Budget austerity threatens jobs and front line services

LOUISE GLEN
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VITAL front line services protecting vulnerable adults and children could be slashed by 20 per cent as the council makes a desperate bid to balance the books.

Councillors heard last week that swingeing cuts to departmental spending was inevitable as Argyll and Bute council planned to implement draconian budgets for the next four to five years.

Opposition councillors admitted little could be done to ameliorate the proposed cuts and some believed the local authority's budget deficit may top £48 million.

Drastic savings are required by all Scottish local authorities – in part due to a reduced block grant cash settlement from the Scottish government and a commitment not to increase the council tax.

Councillors such as Dick Walsh, Sandy Taylor and James Robb all agreed that substantial job losses were inevitable.

A worst case scenario predicted job losses of between 500 – 1,000, as service budgets were slashed. They all say the council will 'change fundamentally' and will no longer be able to provide the 'extra' services it does at the moment.

A report compiled for the council's policy and resources committee detailed how 20 per cent could be cut from essential services. Addition teams, learning disability centres, mental health support, older people's funding, child protection, looked-after children, adult learning, community centres and community development, swimming pools, classroom assistants and Gaelic education are among the 69 services on the proposed hit list.

The council plans to invest in only four areas – economic



MIND THE GAP:
Councillor Dick Walsh

development, projects and renewables, air services and communication and marketing.

However, a council spokesman said these cuts were options under consideration and not policy as the local authority tries to claw back almost £27 million over the next two years.

Presenting the plans to fellow councillors, council leader Dick Walsh said: 'In order to meet the budgetary gap of £11.5 million in 2016 – 2017 and taking into account possible lead-in times for development, projects and renewables, air services and communication and marketing.

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ble to assume the worst case.

'To put that in perspective over the next two years, we will be making £4.3 million of potentially unnecessary cuts or losing 165 jobs, using the council's methodology.'

Councillor Sandy Taylor, leader of the council's opposition group, was less sanguine. He said: 'The cuts may be even higher than predicted – as much as £48 million.'

'These funding gaps have to be met, but instead of making cuts it would have been better to find them through innovation. We are working in an environment where the local authority as it stands will no longer be the same as it has been.'

'The funding cuts will mean massive job losses. In fact, it may be time for the local authority to consider taking away whole services that we are not required to provide rather than cut away at every service. It might be better to do some things well instead of running services we simply cannot afford to.'

Following the meeting on Monday, an Argyll and Bute council spokesman said: 'No decisions have yet been taken about specific levels of savings for services and how these will be achieved.'

'At this stage, services have been asked to explore options on how savings could be delivered.'

'Formal savings targets and options for services will be considered by the committee in early June; then, in October, the committee will look at detailed savings proposals. If agreed, these will go out to consultation.'

He agreed decisions taken could involve different ways of delivering services rather than job cuts, such as redeployment, voluntary redundancy and other measures to maintain jobs.

He continued: 'The council will continue to be a major employer and provider of services for people and communities across Argyll and Bute.'

A taste of the Big Apple



OBAN high school pipe band was hailed a 'credit to Scotland' by organisers when it made its debut performance at the Tartan Day Parade in New York city last Sunday.

Led by Benderloch piper Angus MacColl, the band marched behind the Honorary Grand Marshall, Tricia Marwick, the presiding officer of the Scottish parliament.

Event director of the 17th annual Tartan Day Parade, Camila Hellman, said: 'We were proud to have Oban with us and it was wonderful to see them enjoying themselves.'

TIMESLINE

Happy tale as lost dog Jax is found

A DOG that went missing when his owner was injured on a hill-walking trip in Argyll has been found.

Boxer dog Jax was left on Ben Vane on Sunday after his owner, from Glasgow, fell and had to be airlifted with help from Arrochar Mountain Rescue team. Rescuers couldn't find the dog at the time and had to leave with the injured man.

On Tuesday, Jax was found safe and well near the scene.

Business growth for new start-ups

TWENTY-nine new businesses have been supported by Business Gateway in Argyll since the start of 2015.

The survival rate of new businesses increased to 81 per cent, according to a report published this week. The new businesses had a combined annual turnover of £1.25 million and created 34 new jobs.

Call for decision on island ferry routes

THE FUTURE of ferry services to Luing, Jura, Easdale and Lismore has still not been decided – two years after operators Argyll and Bute council asked the Scottish government to take over the running of the island routes.

At a council meeting on Monday, it was decided to ask the government for a decision.

Planners achieve fast turnaround

PLANNERS at Argyll and Bute council achieved a better than expected turnaround rate of planning applications.

A report revealed that 95 per cent of applications were approved within 10 weeks, against a target of 12 weeks, which was one of quickest in Scotland.



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Ferry chaos propels island anger

STEVEN RAE
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TOURISTS travelling to Islay for the Easter holidays were faced with lengthy delays and cancellations after a ferry broke down.

With operator CalMac's MV Isle of Arran vessel out of action because of a propeller problem, the ferry service was cut from five crossings a day by two vessels, to three a day using only the MV Hebridean Isles, causing a traffic bottleneck which continued until Monday.

Richard Smith travelled to Islay from Edinburgh with his wife and two children on Friday, April 10, but with sailings cancelled, he was forced to send his son home on a flight on Saturday, costing £116, so he could make work that evening. 'We spent around 26 hours hanging around Port Askaig car park,' said oil industry worker Richard.

'Although we'd only come from Edinburgh, it felt like we'd travelled economy class to New Zealand by the time we got home.'

MSP for Argyll and Bute, Michael Russell, slammed CalMac's performance: 'The disruption over the past few days has been severe but also avoidable.'

'Many people have warned the company of the possible chaos that could accrue if there was a problem with either of the boats, when the much larger Finlaggan was not on the route.'

Mr Russell also said he had contacted Holyrood transport minister Derek Mackay to arrange a meeting with the Islay Ferry User Group, to ensure the island would not be left in the same situation again.

Jack Fleming, chairman of the Islay and Jura marketing group, said that the ferry disruption had cost the group's 80 members losses of around £20,000.

Mr Fleming, who owns a bed and breakfast establishment, said: 'Last year, CalMac managed our busy season perfectly - we even wrote and thanked them.'

'But this year, it's back to chaos. After last year's success, it has left a bitter taste in our mouths.'

A spokesman for CalMac said: 'We greatly regret any inconvenience caused by the withdrawal of the MV Isle of Arran on the Islay service due to technical issues last week and every effort was made to minimise disruption by running extra sailings where possible.'

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TIMESLINE

New phones will cost thousands

A TELEPHONE system, at the cost of tens of thousands of pounds, is being sought by cash-strapped Argyll and Bute council, a meeting of councillors has heard. The current system, which is only seven years old, is no longer functioning for the requirements of the local authority and 'it is not an option to do nothing'. The council's IT director Judy Orr told councillors: 'The upgrade is expensive and needs to be done. It allows Argyll and Bute council to become significantly better placed to help the council move forward.'

Oban lifeboat to rescue of yacht

OBAN RNLI lifeboat **Mora Edith MacDonald** was called to a yacht aground on Ledaig Spit, Connel, on Saturday morning. The volunteer crew arrived on scene at 10.15am, in a strong south-westerly wind, to find an 18-foot yacht firmly aground on a dropping tide. One person on board had made it safely ashore and had been assisted by a member of the coastguard team. Because of the position of the yacht and the conditions on scene, it wasn't possible for the vessel to be retrieved by the lifeboat.

Growing anger as phone signal fails again

MSP tells reporter Louise Glen Vodafone must improve or he will advise residents to switch provider

AN MSP is calling on mobile phone provider Vodafone to improve its service to customers or risk him advising constituents not to use its service. Michael Russell MSP made the call after a further fault on emergency pagers left an island community without its service for a fourth month. The pagers alert emergency first responders on the island of Luing to people who need health care and have been in and out of service since Christmas - forcing volunteers on call to sit by the phone rather than go about their normal lives. Michael Russell MSP called on Vodafone to fix the problem or admit it cannot provide the required service on the west

coast. In a hard hitting letter to Julie Pearson, Vodafone's head of government affairs, the Argyll and Bute MSP said: 'Luing first responders, who provide vital emergency cover on an island, were without the Vodafone pager service for three months owing to the complete inability of Vodafone to provide timely and necessary repairs to their own equipment. 'This was a shocking dereliction of your duty of care to customers as well as evidencing a cynical disregard for a vital remote and rural service. The service was eventually restored after much outcry from the community and its elected representatives, including myself. The excuses you gave for the length of time



SIGNAL WOES: Luing first responders Simone Van Dijn, left, and Fiona Cruickshanks continue to have pager problems

it took to effect the repair were barely credible but given the relief felt by the island, that issue was allowed to pass. 'The repair lasted barely 10 days. Leaving aside the issue of

why a piece of equipment should fail so quickly, your colleagues Paul Morris and Graham Dunn know I have expressed before my extreme frustration at the way in which my constituents are treated

by Vodafone. Despite repeated promises over a number of years, there has been little or no improvement in signal across the whole area and the time taken to restore service when it is lost is



FRUSTRATION: Michael Russell wants Vodafone to sort out island issues

far in excess of any reasonable expectation. 'I would also like to know from Paul and Graham [Vodafone directors] when their much-promised improvement will come into effect as the time is fast approaching when, if there is no improvement, I will be actively recommending to all my constituents that they change supplier, away from your company.' Fiona Cruickshanks, chairwoman of Luing first responders said: 'After four months we are no further forward. 'We provide a vital service for the island and we need Vodafone to play the part it should play in that.' A spokeswoman for Vodafone said: 'We're sorry our customers locally have been experiencing signal problems. 'Work to repair the mast has been escalated to the highest priority and we're doing everything we can to get the work completed this week.'

Band hits back at Mossfield damage claims

THE ACCORDION player in Celtic rock group Skerryvore has hit back at claims the band's gig at Mossfield Stadium in Oban will damage the shinty pitch. A letter in last week's *Oban Times* pointed out that with both the Macaulay cup and Camanachd cup finals to be played at the ground in August and September, there would be little time for the surface to recover. However, Daniel Gillespie said that the hire of protective equipment costing more than £20,000 would mean the pitch would remain unscathed during

the gig on May 30. 'The last thing we would want to do is damage the grass,' said Daniel. 'That's why we're working with the local authority and investing in this pitch cover. 'It's the same kind of cover that they use for gigs at Hampden. 'It wasn't our intention to cover the pitch when we signed up for the gig, so this is a big investment for us. We didn't think we'd have to shell out so much money, but we decided it was worth it so decided to take the hit.

'We're all big sports fans and have friends who are involved with shinty and we don't want to jeopardise the finals being held in Oban.' Graeme Bass, BID4Oban chairman, welcomed the move by Skerryvore. 'This demonstrates the commitment the members of the band have made to making this a memorable and safe event. 'It ensures the event has the best facilities available for the 6,000-plus people who will enjoy the gig this May in Oban.'

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Roast Chicken

What you'll need...

- 1.7kg-1.9kg (Large) Chicken
- 1tbsp salt and pepper (to season)
- 1 Lemon halved + segments for garnish
- 1tbsp Thyme (dried)
- 40g Butter (softened)

Method...

Pre-heat oven to temperature indicated on pack instructions. Have a shelf ready in the middle of the oven without any shelves above it. Season the cavity of the chicken liberally with salt and pepper, then stuff with the lemon halves and thyme. Sit the chicken in a roasting tin and smother the breast and legs all over with the butter, then season the outside with salt and pepper. Place in the oven and cook for time specified on pack instructions. To check the chicken is cooked, pierce the thigh with a skewer and the juices should run clear. Remove the tin from the oven and, using a pair of tongs, lift the chicken to a dish or board to rest for 15-20 mins. As you lift the dish, let any juices from the chicken pour out of the cavity into the roasting tin. Serve with roast potatoes and seasonal vegetables.

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'GENEROUS AND UNBIASED': The Reverend Dugald Cameron has praised those distributing the Oban Common Good Fund

Work of common good fund praised

AN 'INDEPENDENT' observer of Oban Common Good fund has said it has been 'generous and unbiased in its deliberations'. The Reverend Dugald Cameron, minister of Oban parish church, said he had the 'highest respect for the work of those responsible for the oversight, continuation and distribution' of the fund. Mr Cameron's comments came in the wake of criticism of the last round of awards which saw almost £15,000 given to organisations including Oban fencing club, Oban Communities Trust and West Highland yachting week when other groups had missed out as they did not meet the organisation's criteria. Councillor Neil MacIntyre, a trustee of the charity, last week argued smaller amounts of money should be made available to a larger number of groups.

Festival celebrates years of success

OBAN winter festival has published a report celebrating its fourth season. With 60 events over the 10-day festival, the group said the economic impact was worth £1.79 million with local businesses enjoying a 20 per cent increase in trade. It is estimated 21,000 people attended events including the lantern parade and reindeer procession as well as a light show. The majority of visitors came from Oban and the surrounding area but others came from overseas, the rest of Scotland and the UK. On average people spent £60 on a meal out and 61 per cent of people spent an average of £60. Pamela Lockhart of the festival volunteer committee said: 'The committee of seven are responsible for putting together the programme, liaising with media, business, charities, funders, schools, organising events, parades, workshops, ticket sales and marketing.' Next year the festival will run between November 20 and 29 with a Scottish-wide haggis festival.

Talks start on new ward boundaries

THE NUMBER of elected members in Argyll and Bute is likely to be reduced by three under Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland (LGBCS) discussions. LGBCS has begun its consultations with local authorities on proposed wards for each council area. A two-month consultation period with each council begins today and will be followed by a 12-week public consultation period. The commission expects to make its recommendations to Scottish ministers by May 2016 with the resulting wards in place for the Scottish local government elections in May 2017.

OT

Purdie's the 'purrfect' cat burglar, says owner Fiona

A CAT burglar who brings home socks, gloves, tea towels and cloths has become a celebrity on social media site Facebook.

Purdie, who lives with owner Fiona Campbell-Smith in a house above Pulpit Hill, Oban, has been bringing home 'odd' items since moving in four months ago.

Named after the shop on George Street, Purdie was very ill when he was born and was said to be days from death when Fiona, a cat lover, nursed him back to health.

Fiona said she has been amazed at the lengths Purdie has gone to in bringing home his 'swag'. Fiona, a home carer, said: 'At first I thought it was a fluke and that Purdie was just bringing home random things.'

'But after a couple of tea towels and various items, he came home with a rubber sock.'

'We laughed about it and wondered what he would bring home next, but low and behold a few days later he brought home the other one.'

'The same day he then brought home a rubber glove. At that point we wondered if he might bring home something more sinister.'

'But a week later, he came home soaking wet with the other glove.'

'He had obviously struggled to get it here because the glove was heavy with water.'

'It was so funny. He must have been thinking about that second glove for days.'

'It is nice he feels the need to bring home matching pairs of things - I wish my children had been able to do the same.'

Fiona would like to reunite the gloves and socks with their owners and also to find out where her cat goes to collect them.

She has put the story on her Facebook page and plenty of people have commented or followed the antics of Purdie.



It is nice he feels the need to bring home matching pairs of things

Fiona Campbell-Smith (pictured with Purdie)

Mull's roads will be 'one long car park', as RET is set to sail

LOUISE GLEN
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PLANS to increase the number of ferries between Oban and Mull will cause 'havoc' on the roads, a meeting of councillors heard on Monday.

Argyll and Bute council leader councillor Dick Walsh launched a scathing attack on the Scottish government over a 'lack of planning' for the extra 250,000 travellers predicted each year with the introduction of Road Equivalent Tariff (RET), which will dramatically reduce the cost of ferry fares to Mull.

However, the council roads boss Jim Smith said ferries left port only two thirds full and didn't think a £13 RET fare for a car journey would 'have a huge impact'.

An islands task force set up to 'smooth' issues over RET had yet to meet and many councillors claimed to be 'in the dark' about the introduction of the scheme.

Mull councillor Alistair MacDougall called the introduction RET 'an ongoing saga'.

He said: 'It has taken a long time to come forward with these proposals and with the only two high-sided vessels on the fleet coming onto the route, it will cause havoc.'

'This year we have had many cancellations because the high-sided vessels simply cannot get off the pier on Mull.'

'If another high-sided vessel is brought onto the route, what will happen? Both boats cannot be berthed in Oban - because no other vessel can then move in our out. This will cause chaos.'

'Are significant changes to the pier in Oban needed? None of these questions have been answered.'

'There are so many things the Scottish government has not thought about.'

'Mull and Oban's roads will be



CALL FOR TALKS: Holyrood transport minister Derek MacKay

one long car park. There is no mention of the impact of RET on Tiree and the state of the island roads. People couldn't get their own car onto the boat and they had to wait three weeks sometimes to get their car off the island.

'I understand that on some sailings they are going to stop the commercial vehicles.'

'These vehicles are the lifeblood of the island and many islanders think they should come first.'

But Jim Smith, head of roads, said he had been involved in discussions with Transport Scotland and a decision on the second boat had not yet been taken. Mr Smith said: 'They may bring an additional boat onto the fleet to meet demand.'

He continued: 'On Tiree there has not been an adverse impact on the island. There has been no detrimental effect.'

'In Oban and at Craignure, we are looking at holding vehicles at marshalling areas and we are working out the feasibility for that proposal.'

'It is widely predicted that Mull will get the bulk of the traffic in terms of RET.'

'RET should not have a huge impact because the ferries are often sailing 30 per cent below capacity.'

Councillor Dick Walsh said: 'We have concerns about the lack of planning and the vessels. I had hoped to meet Derek MacKay [Scottish government transport minister] when he was here recently but the boats were cancelled. We have argued for years for additional capacity to the islands and all these issues were discussed. There have been real problems with a lack of planning in bringing this forward.'

'We have raised them and hopefully they will be listened to. What is needed is a bit of reflection to smooth the way for the benefits that we all want to see.'

Argyll and Bute council has admitted it will be a major challenge to secure the multi-million pounds worth of investment required to accommodate two vessels at Oban and Craignure.

It has petitioned the Scottish government for the additional cash.

To date, no plans or costs have been drawn up - despite the service starting in October 2015.

TIMESLINE

Crackdown targets skiving employees

WORK-SHY employees who habitually take days off sick will come under the spotlight as the council cracks down on the rising cost of absenteeism.

Argyll and Bute council's development and infrastructure boss Pippa Milne reported to councillors on Monday that absence and sick days were increasing the costs of the roads and amenities services.

A report given on behalf of Ms Milne, who was herself off sick, said: 'The costs and impact of absenteeism on services are a key challenge.'

Affordable homes for Benderloch

ARGYLL-BASED TSL Contractors Limited has just won a contract to build 12 affordable homes in Benderloch.

The contract was awarded by West Highland Housing Association (WHHA) and will be funded by the Scottish government and Argyll and Bute council.

The development is of two and three-bedroom houses and one-bedroom flats.

On completion, all 12 houses will be available to rent through WHHA and will provide a massive boost for affordable rented accommodation in the area.

The project is due for completion in early 2016.

Traffic disruption set for two weeks

A SECOND fortnight of works on the A85 at Ardveich Woods, three miles east of Lochearnhead, will be carried out by BEAR Scotland later this month.

The improvements will take place between Sunday April 19 and Friday May 1, between 7pm and 7am, starting on the Friday night and finishing on the Sunday morning.

Previous work in the area was completed at the start of April. A diversion route is available, using the A822, A823, A9, A820 and A84.

Tiree islanders find space to grieve

LAST Saturday a church on Tiree 'gave a space' for the community to mourn the loss of a young couple who died after their aircraft crashed into an Argyll hillside.

Church elders organised an 'open door' meeting at Heylipol church and invited islanders to grieve the tragic death of GP Margaret Ann Rous, 37, and her husband of less than two years, David, 28, an engineer, was originally from Gillingham

in Kent. The couple died when their Cherokee Piper aircraft crashed into Beinn nan Lus, near Loch Etive, at around 1.30pm on Saturday April 3. They were flying from their home at Newport-on-Tay, Fife, to Tiree for the Easter holiday.

Margaret Ann was the daughter of Catriona Maclean and had one sister, Johann Maclean, who both live on the island.

The church sanctuary was opened for three hours. Many

of the people who gathered signed a book of condolence. Parishioners were told no date had been set for the couple's funerals.

Johann Maclean paid tribute to her sister in a message posted on Facebook.

Referring to the song 'Meet Me Halfway', by the Black Eyed Peas, she wrote: 'Big sister, it's our song. I am going to sing this to you every day for the rest of my life. You were my absolute

rock, and I promise to meet you halfway one day.'

'Today has been the hardest day of my life, I love you Minnie.' She thanked friends and family for their messages of sympathy.

Meanwhile, accident investigators used a helicopter to remove plane wreckage from the hillside last Thursday.

The wreckage has been transferred to Aldershot for examination.



'Kingmaker' Alex writes new chapter

FORMER first minister and potential 'kingmaker' at Westminster Alex Salmond was in Oban on Tuesday afternoon for a book signing session at the town's Waterstones store.

'I'm a firm believer that it's very important if you write a book about Scotland, you go to all of Scotland - not just a bit of it,' said Mr Salmond.

'I've got great memories of Oban. I used to come here all the time to visit and also to get the ferry to Colonsay to play golf, so I know Oban extremely well.'

His book, 'The Dream Will Never Die: 100 Days that Changed Scotland', is his inside story of the independence referendum campaign.

His next port of call was a visit to Campbeltown on Tuesday evening.

Mr Salmond is pictured with Xandra Gray, a former English teacher at Oban high school, who was 'delighted' to meet him, having also met him years earlier in Perth.



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Battle on for Ross, Skye and Lochaber



WITH the general election looming large on the horizon, the *Oban Times* focuses on the personalities and policies that will shape the battles for three West Highland and islands constituencies.

This week, Ross, Skye and Lochaber constituency is in the spotlight, where there are six candidates battling it out to represent the area at Westminster after May 7.

Public transport a priority

ANNE THOMAS - SCOTTISH GREEN PARTY



As your Green candidate in Ross, Skye and Lochaber I am prioritising public transport and cycling, community energy and support for local businesses.

I am a speech and language therapist and live in the constituency at North Kessock where our home is 'carbon-negative' - powered by solar panels, a wind turbine and a heat pump. I've also helped our church install solar panels.

I am deeply involved with environmental groups Transition Black Isle, Friends of the Earth and Black Isle Community Energy and helped organise the successful North Kessock community market and the 'Million Miles' project - reducing car journeys through lift-sharing, cycling and public transport.

I would like to see more help to achieve better health and nutrition and prevent illness. Affordable housing, sustainable local fisheries and fuel poverty are big issues here in the Highlands. Home insulation and energy saving are the best ways to end fuel poverty.

We in the Scottish Green Party are focused on raising the minimum wage to £10 an hour, empowering local communities and

keeping public services in public hands - bringing the railways into public ownership, protecting the NHS and saying no to the dodgy Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership deal.

We want to make the minimum wage a living wage and replace the complicated benefits system with a single universal Citizen's Income.

The Scottish Greens stand for people, planet and peace. We reject austerity cuts to the poor whilst multi-nationals and the wealthy avoid tax. We want to look after our planet for current and future generations.

Vote Anne Thomas on May 7.

Fighting for a bright future

LINDSAY McCALLUM - CONSERVATIVE



I'm very proud to stand in my home seat of Ross, Skye and Lochaber.

I grew up on the Black Isle, and work as chief of staff to Ruth Davidson, leader of the Scottish Conservatives.

Folk that live here know there are challenges, not least from higher energy costs, poor public transport and lesser connectivity. Often the Highlands isn't a priority because fewer of us live here. You need someone that will speak up and represent you - who doesn't accept that centralisation of services is the way forward for our Highland communities.

My grandfather, Jimmy Munro, a Highland councillor for 21 years, used to say 'there's got to be lights in the glens' and he was right. Without jobs, you don't have people, and that's critical.

The Highlands, year on year, loses young people to other parts of Scotland and the UK. I, like many young folk, moved away for my career. I live between

the Black Isle and Edinburgh, and work as chief of staff to Ruth Davidson, leader of the Scottish Conservatives.

Inverness is a thriving centre, but too often it prospers at the expense of other parts of this beautiful region. The UK government's £300m city deal bid for Inverness is a real opportunity - it's critical this also benefits Lochaber and the wider West Highlands. Where there's a will, there's a way. My message is clear - elect me and I will always put you first and fight for a bright future in our glens.

Tackling the cost of living

CHRIS CONNIF - LABOUR



The past five years have been hard on local families. Thanks to the Tories and their Liberal Democrat accomplices local families are £1,600 worse off, food banks are on the rise and the bedroom tax has been introduced.

The SNP government has done little to help, instead obsessing about independence and the centralising of services, often at the cost of our community. We can and must do better than this.

I am committed to tackling the cost of living crisis. We will increase the minimum wage and promote the living wage. We will freeze energy bills and reform the market.

We will ensure that local families can afford to heat their homes and put food on their tables.

We will make the well-off pay their fair share by reinstating the 50 pence tax rate, by taxing mansions to fully fund our NHS as well as taxing bankers' bonuses so our young people have a guaranteed job.

By voting for Labour, you can kick the Tories out of office. Voting for anyone else is simply a protest vote and risks giving the Tories five more years.

We cannot let this happen. A Labour government will govern for the many, not the few.

Vote to bring about change

IAN BLACKFORD - SNP



I live on the Isle of Skye with my wife Ann, who runs a small but busy craft.

I have a proven track record of working with businesses in Scotland and play an active part in my local community.

The SNP government in Scotland has sought to defend the interests of the Scottish people. Hard pressed voters have benefited from the council tax freeze at a time when incomes have been under severe pressure.

We have protected health and education. There are no tuition fees for university in Scotland, whilst south of the border the Liberal/Tory coalition has seen fees rise to as much as £9,000.

I will fight to improve the opportunities for people in the Highlands and islands and investment in our future by increasing government spending by 0.5 per cent per annum, ending austerity and increasing prosperity.

This is the best way to generate tax receipts and bring down the deficit. Not by punishing folk, by

cutting public services and taking money out of people's pockets.

So who do you trust? The SNP that has shown itself to be on the side of the people of Scotland, or the Lib Dems supporting a Tory government? My pledge to you is clear: I will earn your trust as a hard working MP who gives this constituency the time and attention it deserves.

A vote for the SNP on May 7 is a vote to bring about change for the better. The SNP, unlike the other parties, will always stand up for Scotland.

Pledge to redirect resources

PHILIP ANDERSON - UKIP



My name is Philip Anderson and I farm at Fortrose on the Black Isle.

Of utmost concern at present is the bogus great Scottish independence deception, propagated by SNP to the Scottish electorate.

The reality is that Westminster and Holyrood are being replaced by Brussels governance to the extent of 75 per cent. The Scottish government is now subjected to and complicit with Brussels left wing socialist policies, in as much as Scotland is becoming, by stealth, to all intents and purposes just another region of the EU.

The only real independence party in Britain is the UK independence party which pledges withdrawal from the EU to control Britain's own affairs, with devolved power to the people of Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England, with decentralised local regional authorities.

UKIP is the only party which would scrap the £12 billion foreign aid with the exception of £2 billion foreign aid obligated under inter-

national law. Of the £56 billion per day paid to Brussels, on withdrawal from the EU, UKIP would redirect these resources back into British infrastructure, ending cutbacks, austerity and food banks.

EU state control is now Scottish and Westminster state control in agriculture, fisheries, police, judiciary, health and safety, education, waste disposal, NHS, water treatment, marine conservation areas, national parks, privatisation, renewable energy, climate change, council local authorities, monetary and fiscal control, immigration and virtually every aspect of life in Britain today.

No barrier to opportunity

CHARLES KENNEDY - LIBERAL DEMOCRATS



Born and bred in the Highlands, it has been a great honour to serve as an MP in my home area for more than three decades. I'd like to ask you to spare me a thought on May 7 as I stand once again to represent you with experience, sound judgement and a proven record of delivery.

I'm pleased with what I have achieved in the last five years by campaigning alongside Liberal Democrat colleagues to deliver an £800 tax cut for everyone, a record rise in the state pension and tackling the cost of living by reducing energy bills and fuel duty for remote communities.

In this election, the most important choice is who you want as your local MP. To do a good job of representing Highland communities, where I have been privileged to live my whole life, it requires someone with the decency, integrity, trust and empathy for every ordinary Highlander and with my experience I put myself forward as that candidate. Going

forward I am ambitious still. I'll campaign on the issues that will make a difference to our day to day lives. The Highlands needs more investment for high-speed broadband, to upgrade our roads and, above all else, fair NHS funding. I'll continue to fight for people every day I am given a mandate to do so. Liberalism is about tearing down barriers whilst nationalism is about building them. There must be no barrier to everyone having the opportunity to get on in life and that is a cornerstone of my campaign.

ISLAY LETTER by Hugh Smith

Music and malt celebrations

ORGANISERS of Fèis Ile 2015, the island's annual celebration of music and malt whisky, are putting the finishing touches to this year's programme which runs from May 23 to 30.

This is undoubtedly the island's major social event which continues to attract in excess of 10,000 festival-goers to these shores.

The festivities begin with the 'fèis opener' in Port Ellen's Ramsay Hall where Skipinnish and the Rowan brothers will cater for the needs of the dancers. Both sets of musicians have strong family connections with Tiree and Islay.

On May 25 the popular whisky nosing competition and ceilidh takes place in the Ramsay Hall and folk song enthusiasts will be well catered for on May 26 at the folk night at Lagavulin Distillery Malt Mill.

The following evening Ionad Chaluim Chille Ile hosts

the traditional Gaelic concert and the Columba Centre will also provide Gaelic song and instrument workshops throughout the festival week. These will be under the direction of Katherine MacLeod.

Ballygrant village hall will be the setting for the long time favourite cloutie dumpling ceilidh on May 28 and popular Irish singer and entertainer Lee Matthews will be on stage at the Ramsay Hall the following evening.

Port Ellen hall will be the venue for the 'final fling' on May 30 featuring the six-piece Irish folk band 'The Whistlin' Donkeys' from County Tyrone.

As well as the musical input, the festival, now in its 31st year, will also feature golf and bowls tournaments as well as fishing competitions.

The island's eight distilleries, along with their Jura counterpart, will also be providing entertainment as well as hospitality including tours and whisky tasting sessions.



IMPRESSIVE VENUE: Islay House

More whisky and some jazz

ON THE day prior to the official opening of Fèis Ile 2015, the Scotch Malt Whisky Society will be setting up shop in the grounds of Islay House on the outskirts of Bridgend.

It is arranging whisky tasting sessions throughout the afternoon and an alfresco jazz concert in the evening.

Islay House was built by the Campbell of Cawdor in 1677 and extended by their Campbell of Shawfield successors.

Improvements were carried out

during the 19th and early 20th centuries and it remained the island home of Islay's principal landowners until the early 1980s when it was bought by the American pilot and Vietnam war veteran Captain Tom Friedrich.

He sold the property last year to Hong Kong-based Paul Brown and Cincinnati-born Steve Haag.

They plan to convert the impressive building into a luxury country house hotel and construction work to this end is now under way.

Ducks take to water for Bridgend derby

VISITORS and locals turned out in force on Easter Sunday for the annual duck race organised by Bowmore sports committee on the River Sorn at Bridgend.

A thousand plastic ducks took to the river and first past the post was the colourful canard backed by Nigel Carmichael, who won the £100 first prize.

Coming a close second and winning £50 was the entry wearing Stuart Downie's colours while Heather Anne Campbell's Sorn floater won for her third place and £25. Last home was the duck picked by Angus MacTaggart and sympathetic organisers gave Angus his entry money back.

It was another successful derby where the sun shone, stalls did brisk business and the Rowan Brothers on accordion and keyboard provided lively music.

Please write to or telephone our Islay correspondent Hugh Smith with any news and views at 4 Flora Street, Bowmore, Islay, PA43 7JX. Tel: 01496 810658.

Cash donation funds pool staff uniforms

THE PHRASE 'every little helps' was emphasised by the manager of Mallaig and district swimming pool last week when it received a £500 donation for new staff uniforms.

The leisure facility, used by communities across west Lochaber, was on the brink of closure last year when threatened by Highland council's budget cuts but was given a reprieve when councillors vowed to protect the funding for at least another year.

As a social enterprise, the swimming pool relies on grants from the local authority and donations and, thanks to the cash boost from Scottish Sea Farms, manager Brian O'Rourke has been able to supply new uniforms for his nine members of staff.

He said: 'A big thanks to Scottish Sea Farms for the donation. It's donations like this that keep us going, especially in the current circumstances.'

Stricken yacht towed to safety by lifeboat

OBAN lifeboat launched to help a yacht fouled on a creel buoy at the entrance to Loch Creran in North Lorn.

Mora Edith MacDonald was called out at 11am last Wednesday morning after the propeller on a 26-foot yacht tangled on a creel buoy, at the entrance to the loch.

The crew managed to release the vessel from the creel gear and towed the yacht to Dunstaffnage Marina, near Oban.

Standing for election in Argyll and Bute

FIVE candidates have confirmed they are standing for election to the Argyll and Bute seat in the UK Parliamentary Election on Thursday May 7, the electoral commission has confirmed.

They are Mary Galbraith, Scottish Labour Party; Brendan O'Hara, Scottish National Party; Alastair Redman, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; Alan Reid, Scottish Liberal Democrat; and Caroline Santos, UK Independence Party.

Scottish Field MAY ISSUE OUT NOW

AN AYRSHIRE LAD
Writer Andrew O'Hagan on the beloved hind of Bards and Beavers

IAN RANKIN - WHY I BROUGHT REBUS BACK TO LIFE

Plus PHOTOGRAPHER TO THE POB
DANIELINE SHIRES
PREMIER ART
OVERPRICED TATT
SHE'S SHED HER HAIR

10 Great Scottish record breakers

THE CLASH OF THE ASH A spectacular photo essay of modern day Scottish jousting

Andrew O'Hagan ON HIS BELOVED AYRSHIRE

IAN RANKIN BRINGS REBUS BACK

Photographer to the posh
Dunblane's dreaming spires
Is modern art over-priced?

WIN A BREAK FOR 2 TO SHETLAND
www.scottishfield.co.uk

Pair dig deep to help RNLI after charity box snatched

EUAN PATERSON
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A CHARITY that looked to have lost out on nearly £300 after a money box was stolen has had a generous cash donation from the business that helped catch the culprit.

Matrix Computer Services in Breadalbane Street set about finding the thief after discovering their Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) charity box missing.

After identifying the culprit, who is not local, using CCTV, a chance sighting resulted in her arrest.

But the money, which is donated by the shop's customers, is unlikely to be recovered.

So, Andy MacDonald and Paul Brady of Matrix decided to reimburse the charity with a generous donation of their own.

Andy explained: 'If we do a job for customers that takes a couple of minutes we will usually not charge them and suggest they make a donation to the RNLI box. I reckon there was between £200 to £300 in it at the time of the theft because our customers have been very generous.'

'I only noticed it was missing a week later. We have state-of-the-art CCTV, so we checked back and I found out who had



GENEROUS: RNLI fundraiser Willie Melville receives the cheque from Paul Brady, left, and Andy MacDonald, who now has a new RNLI charity box for the shop. 16_t16matrix01

taken the box. I then happened to see her in the street one day, she walked straight in front of my van. I nearly ran her over!

Keen sailors Andy and Paul said they were happy to support RNLI and didn't want the charity to be 'out of pocket'. They have had a RNLI charity box in their

shop for more than 10 years.

Andy said: 'The chance of us recouping the money is virtually zero, so we wanted to replace what has been stolen. It was just a goodwill gesture.'

RNLI fundraising volunteer Willie Melville received the cheque on behalf of the charity

and described the donation as 'very generous'.

He added: 'We were delighted to find that Andy and Paul were thinking of us.'

'We have a huge amount of goodwill in the town and it helps companies like Matrix that help that continue.'

Group's disbelief at pontoon ruling

LOUISE GLEN
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SEVEN years after a small group of volunteers were told they could have money to build a transit marina in Oban Bay, the council has told them the plan contravenes European competition rules.

A statement from Argyll and Bute council said 'state aid issues' were only considered in 2014 - many years after the Oban Bay Marine (OBM) group had been encouraged to write a business case to the local authority.

At a meeting, held yesterday (Wednesday), a plan was brought forward to invest £45,000 on temporary pontoons in the bay in 2016 - rather than Argyll and Bute council backing a transit marina scheme from OBM.

A spokesman for OBM said: 'To spend £45,000 on design development and pursuing consents on a potentially vulnerable temporary solution in an exposed location is not money well spent when it could be better used towards a permanent solution.'

'The council's summation of OBM's business plan is patently incorrect. The council's stance on OBM's business plan was predicated on the earlier

offer of £200,000 each from the council and HIE is absolute nonsense. On the contrary, the business plan was specifically predicated on an agreed and discussed solution, prior to the business plan being started.

'In this way the council used its ring-fenced funds to fund and own the capital infrastructure of dredging and floating breakwater. This overcomes the risk of a State Aid challenge whether the council complete the whole project or the pontoon part is installed by OBM or others.'

He pleaded with councillors: 'OBM's proposal is not a short term or temporary project but is a facility that will deliver to the local economy annually on a long-term basis. Please do not let Oban down. Show real vision, take responsibility and do the right thing now.'

'Oban is losing £1million every year that the transit marina is delayed.'

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute council said: 'The council sought advice from the Scottish government's specialist unit which advises public bodies on state aid legislation in early 2014. They advised that this level of public funding, if given directly to a third party, would be likely to raise state aid issues.'

TIMESLINE

Film spotlight on old school plans

THE FIRST in a series of 'pop-up' events is to take place at the former Rockfield primary school by Oban Communities Trust.

The trust, which is buying the landmark Oban building from Argyll and Bute council for £1,000 to turn it into an arts and culture hub, will be screening a new Rockfield Centre short film. This will highlight the trust's plan for the listed Victorian building.

There will be teas, coffees, home baking and activities and competitions for families in the Rockfield huts on Stevenson Street, from 11am-4pm.

Airport passenger numbers increase

AIRPORT numbers were up by 182 people in 2014, showing a 13 per cent rise in the number of passengers at Oban airport.

A figure of 3,516 passengers passed through the Connel airfield in 2014, compared with 3,334 in 2013.

The figures, which were discussed at a meeting of Argyll and Bute council's development committee, were hailed a 'success'.

The airport operating costs in 2013/14 were £529,231 with an income of £37,354.

'Secret' economic forum criticised

AN ECONOMIC forum set up to increase employment and business opportunities in Argyll has been accused of working 'in secret'.

Argyll councillor Anne Horn also suggested at the council's development and infrastructure that forum chairman Nicholas Ferguson had a conflict of interest as he was also a director of the Sustainable Inland Fisheries Trust (SIFT), which was lobbying for regulation in the Firth of Clyde and this was detrimental to Argyll fishermen.

Other councillors said he was 'the right person for the job'.

Fishmonger sees red as vans blocked at car park barrier

LOUISE GLEN
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'FOUL play' from ScotRail last week saw vans turned away from a fishmongers on Oban's Railway Pier, costing a 100-year-old business to berate the rail company for a lack of co-operation in the fitting of a car park barrier one year ago.

But ScotRail said only one van was turned away due to a high volume of customers in the station. They said the barrier was needed to limit vehicles into the



36-space station car park as it was regularly full.

The barrier cannot be removed as it stops vehicles from entering and parking their vehicles when the car park is full.

Alan Watt, of Watt's fishmonger, said 2014 has been the first since it opened in 1918 that it saw a reduction in sales.

Blaming the barrier and the number of people and businesses

ANGRY: Alan Watt outside the business that has been in his family for generations

who are put off coming onto the pier, he said: 'We have had four generations of the same families as our customers at Watts.'

'We've now been with this barrier for a year and all of a sudden it seems like people cannot get through again.'

'The barrier was put up without any consultation and we were promised our customers would be able to get through.'

'It is quite easy for people to decide to shop elsewhere and there will be a knock on effect of that.' Taking matters into his own

hands, Alan decided to contact ScotRail to be told nothing had changed and the barrier was still in place.

But three customers reported problems about getting through to him - and Alan himself had to make deliveries to cruise ships.

'We are a working pier and our customers need to be able to get to us.'

'There is foul play at hand here. ScotRail think they can do what they like.'

A spokeswoman for ScotRail said: 'We have a strong working

relationship with local businesses and have worked with them since the barrier was installed to ensure their customers can still collect orders without paying to park.'

'This agreement remains in place. We are sorry that on one occasion last week we were unable to open the barrier for a business customer as all our staff were assisting rail passengers inside the station at the time.'

'We will do our utmost to handle such requests better in future.'

Flood prevention owners' problem

A FLOOD risk policy introduced to Argyll and Bute councillors on Monday saw them agreeing the responsibility for prevention of flooding to properties lay squarely with property owners rather than the local authority.

Agreeing to recommend the policy for approval to the full council, policy and resources councillors decided the authority's responsibility lay only in promoting sustainable flood risk management and raising public awareness of flood risk.

Trolley dash man stopped at door

A SHOPPER in Oban's Lochside Street Tesco superstore tried to leave the building without paying for around £80-worth of goods in his trolley.

Oban police were called to the premises after the 28-year-old was stopped by security guards while it is believed he was trying to leave the store at 2.30pm on April 13.

A report on the incident has been submitted to the procurator fiscal in the town.

Driver fails road side breath test

A 55-YEAR-old man from New Zealand was arrested on suspicion of driving while over the legal drink drive limit at just before midnight on Friday night (April 10).

He was stopped in Craigard Road in Oban and asked to take the road side breath test, which he failed.

He was arrested and taken to Oban police office before appearing on Monday at Oban Sheriff Court.

Barcaldine home in drug search

POLICE searched a house in the Barcaldine area of North Lorn, under a warrant for the misuse of drugs act, at around 1.30pm on Saturday, April 11.

As a result a 20-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of offences under the misuse of drugs act and a report has been sent to the procurator fiscal in Oban.



BUILD OUR PATH: (from left) Marlyn Finnigan, Margaret Adams and Andy Sharp want a safe route for pensioners from their home to the village centre

Residents demand action on potholes and ditches

LOUISE GLEN
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POTHoles and deep ditches are stopping elderly residents from taking the safest route to collect their provisions.

But the feisty wheelchair users have now joined forces with the community council to plead with Transport Scotland to build a three-metre path.

The turning circle, in Benderloch, has long caused contention to villagers due to its unkempt and 'dangerous' state.

Last year the community council was told the land belonged to Transport Scotland and as such as responsible for the safety of the area.

Andy Sharp, who lives in

Ford Spence Court, said: 'I don't know whether the path is one foot deep or two feet deep. That means I don't know whether I am going to end up falling out of my wheelchair.'

'There is an existing path along the cycle path that makes the route easy to use - but when you get to the turning circle we simply can't get over safely.'

Marlyn Finnigan who uses a motorised wheelchair said: 'It is difficult to understand why anyone would not want to finish the path and make a good route that everyone can use.'

Marlyn and Andy say many of the 20 residents in Ford Spence Court feel the same.

Jimmy Hanlon, of Ben Lora Café, said: 'To frank everyone has tried to take on the job,

George Lyon, Alan Reid, Michael Russell and nothing has ever happened. We are still fighting it - but it is hard to understand why they would fit two paths and not join them up. They've even put a disabled ramp in at the other end of the car park that no one could use to access the turning circle because of the pot holes and poor surface.'

Margaret Adams of Ardhatan community council said: 'It seems strange that one of the best paths that allows people from Ford Spence Court to get out and about comes to nothing when people can not get to the shop from their homes by the safest route.'

'It would be great if Transport Scotland would simply come out and sort the problem.'

Landslide prone A83 needs solution

A PERMANENT solution to landslides and closed roads on the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful should be found as soon as possible, transportation councillors have demanded.

Argyll and Bute council leader Dick Walsh said he feared it would be generations before

the problem was fully resolved and said the authority should continue to lobby the government on a 'very regular' basis.

Head of roads Jim Smith told the transportation committee this week: 'Only the Scottish government can supply a permanent solution. I believe we are building a master plan

through a task force set up in 2012. The solutions to the problems at the Rest and Be Thankful all cost tens if not hundreds of millions of pounds and are out with the reach of any budgets at present.'

The Rest and Be Thankful has been closed more than 10 times in the last two years.

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Coll

FOLLOWING a successful taster day in February, Fèis Cholla is hosting the final two days of a three-day tuition festival in An Cridhe on Coll today (Thursday) and tomorrow.

Fèis Cholla is the independent umbrella of the Fèis movement, which promotes Scottish traditional music, song, dance and the Gaelic language.

The events are on between 11am and 6pm, with a final day concert Friday evening.

Activities include fiddle, instrumental group work - where attendees can bring their favourite instrument - Gaelic circus skills, baking, arts, storytelling and drama.

The events are split up by age, with primary one to four from 11am to 3pm; primary five to seven from 11am to 4pm; and secondary school pupils from 11am to 6pm.

AS A RESULT of last year's trips being a sell-out, Development Coll is putting on an extra day of seabird safari boat trips for the 2015 Coll Bird Festival.

The festival, held on April 24 to 26, is an opportunity for locals and visitors to learn more about the birdlife on and around Coll with a series of activities over the three days.

The event offers an insight into the work on the island's bird reserve, provides guided walking throughout the island to learn about key species, gives tips on spotting and recording birdlife, offers family activities in a natural environment and the option of the seabird safari to Lunga.

The safari itself lasts around four hours, with half of that time spent on Lunga.

Morar

EIGHT ladies attended the Morar Scottish Women's Institute meeting held on April 6.

The guest speaker was Geoff Thomas who spoke on MAF, a Christian aviation charity flying ill and distressed people to treatment centres, also essential supplies where needed and flying into extremely inhospitable places where road transport is impossible.

Geoff was ably and knowledgeably assisted by his wife Wendy and the talk included a short video and a slide presentation on the valuable aid work undertaken by this charity in more than 30 developing countries.

Refreshments were prepared and served by Isobel Morton and Linda McLean. The baking competition was: Pizza: 1 Heather Simpson. Painted egg: 1 Linda McLean, 2 June Foxwell and 3 Heather Simpson. The raffle was won by Nicky Parish.

The next meeting will be on May 14 when members will hold their annual general meeting.

Barra

A MISSING buoy has been blamed for a fishing boat running onto rocks last week at a Western Isles harbour.

The Nordic Way vessel grounded on Tuesday, April 7, while approaching the harbour at Northbay on Barra.

Stornoway Coastguard said the skipper had misjudged the approach to the harbour because of a missing starboard buoy, which is understood to have torn free during recent bad weather.

The 50ft boat was towed clear around 6.40am on Wednesday, April 8 at high tide by Barra lifeboat. The fishing vessel entered the harbour under its own power.

A spokesman for Stornoway Coastguard said: 'The lifeboat attended and the area flooded up enough around 6.40am for it to be towed off, with help from the lifeboat.' The fishing boat did not suffer any serious damage.



ON THE ROCKS: Isle of Barra lifeboat crew prepare to tow the stucken fishing vessel last Wednesday morning.

Benderloch

AN introduction to permaculture workshop was recently hosted at Kintaline Farm in Benderloch by the Local Origins Rural Network.

Ludwig Appletans of Earth-ways in Forres introduced attendees to the ethics and basics behind permaculture, using natural ways to take care of land.

A similar workshop is to take place on Mull this week.



Viking fun for Invergarry primary school pupils

VIKINGS RUN WILD: Invergarry primary classes chose to study the Vikings this term. They had a Viking day where they acted out Viking scenarios, made green soup and berry pancakes and built models of longhouses.



Kinlochleven volunteers receive Saltire awards

Saltire Awards for 10 hours of volunteering in the school community have been presented to seven members of Kinlochleven high school. Each pupil has been working as a teaching assistant in the local primary school or with junior pupils in the high school.

Duror school milk carton igloo a class act

AS THE west Highland winter has lasted even longer than usual this year, Duror primary school pupils followed the theme and built an igloo.

The children had been learning about hot and cold countries and used old milk bottles to build the 'frozen' house.

The enterprising youngsters also made leaflets and handed them out to local businesses and residents asking them to save empty milk bottles.

The pupils thanked Crafts & Things coffee shop, Glencoe café and all parents and community members for providing empty cartons.

FREEZING: Duror primary school pupils with the igloo they made out of milk bottles



WIN! WIN! WIN!

A meal for two at the Mishnish

To celebrate the Mull Music Festival, The Mishnish Hotel in Tobermory has teamed up with the Oban Times to offer readers the chance to win a delicious three course meal for two people.

The Mishnish Hotel are delighted to be one of the festival venues hosting bands and sessions throughout the weekend, including performances from The Mad Ferret Band, amongst others. The Mad Ferrets are a Scottish duo from Perth, Scotland, known on the folk scene for their hard hitting blend of traditional and contemporary folk music. Their lively, energetic performances are packed with fast Mandolin solos, tight harmonies, driving Cajon beats and earth-moving Guitar sounds. The influence from both Scottish and Irish folk music has helped shape their unique sound.

01688 302500 www.themishnish.co.uk info@themishnish.co.uk

To enter the competition, simply answer the following question, complete the coupon and post it to: Mishnish Hotel Competition, Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Entries must be submitted by Thursday 30th April.

QUESTION: Which band will be performing at the Mishnish Hotel during Mull Music Festival?

A: Crazy Badger Band B: Mad Ferret Band C: Nutty Squirrel Band

Answer.....
Name.....
Address.....
Tel..... Email.....

Terms and conditions: The prize is as stated. The prize can be redeemed 7 days a week for lunch or dinner but must be pre-booked. Drinks are not included. The prize is valid throughout 2015. No cash alternative. The Editor's decision is final. Photocopied entry coupons will not be accepted. Winners with the correct answer will be chosen at random. Winners must be willing to take part in publicity and their name may appear in a Wyvex Media publication and website.

HEALTH KICK: Caol primary gymnastics team performed for their classmates as part of the school's health week

CAOL primary school pupils enjoyed a week of healthy eating and exercise. Children kicked their 'health week' off with taste testing on Monday, when the infants tried all kinds of fruits and vegetables. Later in the week the gymnastics club put on a display for the rest of the school then rounded off the week with judo training from Rebecca MacLean of Lochaber leisure centre.

TASTY TALK: Lorraine McLauchlan and Luanne Coll from the local Co-op visited Ballachulish primary school to tell pupils about Fairtrade. The youngsters asked lots of questions and enjoyed sampling the products

MORVERN lines

MV Columba

THERE was a nice piece of nostalgia floating around Morvern the other day when *MV Hebridean Princess* tied up alongside Lochaline pier to allow its passengers to visit the nearby Ardtornish gardens.

The small, luxury, five-star *Hebridean Princess* is, of course, no stranger to Lochaline and the Sound of Mull. For more than 20 years the trusty vessel of 2,000 tons was employed by Caledonian MacBrayne on the mail run to Lochaline from Oban.

Up until 1989 she was the *MV Columba* and although canapés, napkins and deep pile carpets may have been absent from the saloon bar, her twice daily, five-day-a-week calls at Lochaline were welcome in more ways than one. To start with, almost without fail, she would arrive at the pier at 7.50am with fresh bread and vegetables, milk, mail and general goods.

Anyone wishing to go direct to Oban for the day was able to return that afternoon. More importantly, in the days when there were no licensed premises in Morvern, the purser saw to it that the bar opened just as she was tying up, giving non-travellers the opportunity to dash aboard to quickly quench their thirst.

History does not relate that anyone fell off the pier afterwards, although I seem to recall the odd person being carried away unwittingly for the day. Good old *MV Columba*. Named after a sixth century saint, she provided Morvern with a far more efficient public transport link with the outside world than we have today.

A nostalgic old Gaelic song

A FEW weeks ago I heard on the wireless a few verses of an old Gaelic song which used to be popular at ceilidhs in Mull and Morvern.

The tune has survived in Morvern and is often played by church organist Kate Cruikshank, Lochaline, as background music at funerals.

There have been dozens of songs and poems written about this part of the world but none to my mind quite so evocative as 'Caol Muile' - the Sound of Mull - composed by the Rev John Macleod (1801-1882), for 58 years, minister of Morvern.

The following translation, which I have given before in these columns but have been asked to repeat, is by one of Morvern's schoolmasters, the late Donald B Fletcher, who taught at Lochaline and Fiunary.

The Sound of Mull
Afar I have been,
But no place have I seen,
Like Mull's Sound the Queen of them all:
No change I desire
For no place can inspire
The love that has held me in thrall.

To the nor-ard ships sail
In the teeth of the gale,
Round the Steersman the fierce billows break;
To the south-ard they sweep
With speed through the deep,
And their furrows lie far in the wake.

With joy I've been filled
And with rapture enthralled,
While watching the storm-king at play;
But sweeter thy calm which lulled with its psalm
My soul at the close of the day.

My beloved are no more
They have gone from the shore
In silence they creep to their graves;
Oh, sweet is their sleep by the side of the deep,
But they hear not the mirth of the waves!

I cannot depart
From the joys of the heart,
Though the voices alluring me call;
For wherever I've been,
No place have I seen
Like Mull's Sound
The Queen of them all.

Into the darkness

I DON'T know how much power is generated in Morvern these days, but with four large hydro electric schemes running at full tilt - with at least a further dozen in the pipeline - and all built with public funding, it must be considerable.

Why then, I ask naively, is the peninsula frequently plunged into darkness when a fault occurs out with the area? The answer, of course, is that not one amp or ohm of power made in the Morvern hills is available to local consumers but goes into the national grid.

Surely, in this day and age, it is not beyond the wit of man to design a system that automatically switches the output from at least one scheme to a local sub-station until the primary source is restored?

Wouldn't that be a real community benefit and a better way of compensating local residents instead of 'the handful of coloured beads thrown at the natives' as my friend, former Highland councillor Dr Michael Foxley, used to describe the paltry paybacks?

Iain Thornber
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A 'quacking' way to highlight donor appeal

BALLACHULISH residents have been going 'quackers' over the appearance of knitted ducks in cafes, shops and telephone boxes around the village.

But Merriol Baldwin, the plucky villager behind the invasion, has finally revealed the reason behind the little mysteries. Since last year, the 44-year-old has been crocheting the soft toys and placing them around Ballachulish as part of the Little Yellow Duck project to raise awareness about blood, bone marrow and organ donation. It is a cause close to Ms Baldwin's heart as she is only alive today thanks to a blood transfusion during emergency life-saving surgery 11 years ago.

Each duck has a tag attached asking the finder to visit the project's website. As well as in her home village, Ms Baldwin has distributed ducks across Scotland, Sheffield and London. She said: 'I love the fact I'm making people smile. But more importantly, I believe in the message behind the project and in sharing it.'

'I'm eternally grateful to the blood donor who saved my life and I feel all of us who can help others should think about registering as life-saving donors.'

For more information go to www.thelittleyellowduckproject.org.



'QUACKERS': Merriol Baldwin has been placing ducks all over Ballachulish

Full steam ahead for 'vital' Jacobite train

ATTRACTION MUST STAY ON TRACK, SAYS COUNCILLOR

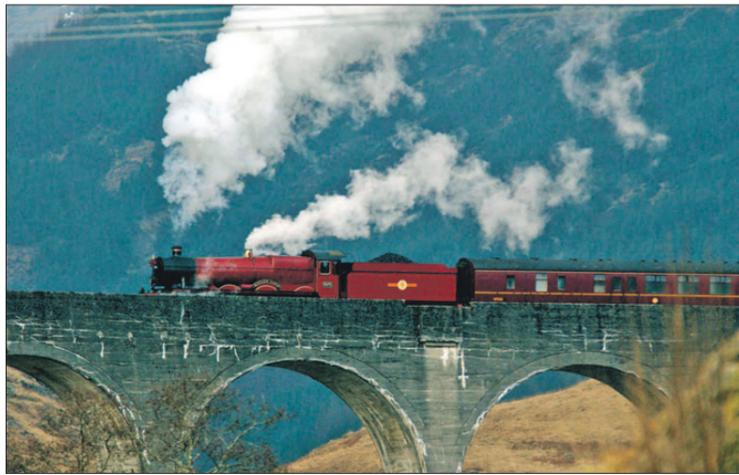
EMMA CRICHTON
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THE OPERATOR of the Jacobite steam train has announced it will be business as usual from May, despite having its licence suspended because of safety concerns.

Network Rail issued West Coast Railways (WCR), operator of the Fort William to Mallaig tourist attraction, with a temporary suspension notice after a WCR train in England came close to crashing into a passenger train travelling at 100 miles per hour last month.

The Jacobite train is due to start the world famous 84-mile round trips from May 11 but the suspension notice will be in place until May 15 and outlines a number of improvements WCR must carry out before this date. If these are not in place in time the company could permanently lose its licence.

This sparked fear among Mallaig business owners who rely on the customers brought in by the train, which massively increased in popularity after it was featured in Harry Potter. But a statement released by WCR said the company intended to



ATTRACTION: The Jacobite steam train crossing the Glenfinnan viaduct on the West Highland line

run trips as normal, using 'the licence and services of other operators'.

It read: 'A recent breach of safety regulations involving one of our trains crossing a red light has led to discussions to establish how this happened and more

importantly the preventative measures in place to ensure it can't happen again.'

'Although no one was injured in any way, West Coast Railways considers this to be sufficient to carry out a full internal enquiry with the support of Network

Rail and at this time will not be running trains under its current operator licence.'

'It is our intention, where possible, to run our trips as normal using the licence and service of other train operators. 'Should there be any changes

we will advise passengers as soon as possible.'

Allan Henderson, Highland councillor for Caol and Mallaig, said the steam train was 'vital' for Mallaig. He added: 'Absolutely anything they can do to make sure the train runs is welcomed.'

'It's vital that the train starts running as soon as possible. 'Also, the Fort William to Mallaig line is much safer than the one where the incident occurred.'

'Due to the infrequency of the trains here there isn't the same likelihood of meeting a high speed train like what happened in England.'

A Network Rail spokesman confirmed it would be possible to run the Jacobite under an alternative operator, as long as staff of the temporary operator had the appropriate licence and 'route knowledge'.

The incident causing the suspension occurred on March 7 when a WCR train in Wootton Bassett in Wiltshire over-ran a red light by 700 yards and stopped across a double line junction, avoiding colliding with a high-speed train by just one minute.

Network Rail said it was the most serious incident of this year.

Last minute appeal for Fort charity runners

ORGANISERS of a charity run have issued a last-minute appeal for people to sign up for the fundraising event.

Run Together Fort William, for Cancer Research UK, is now in its fifth year but with little more than a week to go entries are still dramatically low compared to previous years' races.

In the first few years of the five-kilometre walk, jog or run 300 people signed up ahead of the event and raised money through sponsors and more people turned out

on the day but this year just 50 people have put their names down so far.

Organiser Adam Ramsey said the event was still going ahead and encouraged as many people as possible to sign up ahead of the race on Sunday, April 26.

He said: 'I can see why people would want to leave it until the last minute because they don't know what the weather will be like and things like that but it makes it really difficult for us to organise things. Plus, if you don't sign up beforehand you won't have any sponsors,

then all the charity gets is the registration fee but by the time you take away running costs there isn't much left. 'The whole point of this event is to bring forward the day cancer is cured but if people don't support the cause it's not going to go that way.'

Mr Ramsey also encouraged anyone who has taken away an entry form to return it as soon as possible.

The race, which also includes a 10k option, starts from An Aird at 2pm but gates will be open from 11am for a range of extra fundraising activities.

TIMESLINE

Corpach marina plans resurrected

PLANS for a new £3 million marina in Lochaber have been resurrected, four years after they were first announced.

The proposal to build the facility at Corpach basin was first discussed in 2011 and a feasibility study showed it could be profitable but due to ill health of some members of the group behind the plan, it was put on the backburner.

But now a reformed group, Thomas Telford Corpach Marina Limited, has given the plans a new lease of life and says Lochaber 'can't be left behind'.

Donnie Corbett, a group member, said: 'This is a great opportunity for the area but the biggest problem is funding. We're looking into public funding.'

The group aims to have full consent by the end of this year and construction under way by 2017.

Call to speed up hospital land deal

TALKS are under way to bring forward the purchase of land for the new Belford hospital in Fort William.

At an NHS Highland board meeting on Tuesday, the replacement building appeared in the five-year capital plan and Michael Foxley, board member and long-time campaigner for the Belford, asked if purchase of the preferred site at Blar Mor could be given more priority.

NHS Highland chief executive Elaine Mead said she is already in discussion with the Scottish government about buying the land to replace the 50-year-old Belford.

The site became available earlier this year after Tesco withdrew plans to develop a supermarket on the site.



New Coll Vodafone service failing to deliver say islanders

STEVEN RAE
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RESIDENTS on Coll have claimed the Vodafone service which went live three weeks ago isn't serving the island properly.

One man has even claimed that since it was connected on March 25, he no longer gets service with operator O2.

Innes Henderson is a self-employed fisherman on Coll, having moved to the island almost 30 years ago. He's been an O2 customer for 15 years.

'There are big issues here,' he said. 'Ever since the Vodafone mast went live I haven't been able to connect to O2. At the moment I'm borrowing a friend's Vodafone phone, which isn't ideal. A mobile is absolutely vital for safety reasons while I'm out on my boat, so it looks like I'll be forced now to get a Vodafone contract.'

'Half the houses on the island don't even get signal, and the other areas you have to know where to stand to get signal. That was the same as before this mast went live, so I don't see how it's a huge improvement.'

Innes said he plans to raise the matter with both Coll community council and Development Coll.

Pat Graham, who owns a camp site and farm on the island, said the Vodafone work had been of no benefit to her. 'I still only get one bar of signal outside my house, the same as always,' she said. 'Vodafone still isn't serving about a third of the island.'

'I have people who come to the

camp site and they think they'll be able to use their mobiles but they don't get signal either. I don't think there should be the celebrations on a 'job well done' considering a lot of the island hasn't benefited.'

The £165,000 project is funded by a partnership between community-run organisation Development Coll, the Scottish government and Vodafone as part of the Scottish government's demonstrating digital programme.

George McConnachie, development manager for Development Coll, said the community company had no feedback of any technical issues since the service went live, adding that customers should address issues to mobile operators, as Development Coll acts only as the mast owner.

A Vodafone spokesman said that in an emergency, calls automatically roam to any available network.

He added: 'The mobile communications industry is regulated by Ofcom who put measures in place to make sure operators don't interfere with each other's signal. We cannot comment on the status of the O2 signal.'

An O2 spokesman said: 'Our network team has confirmed that our site in the area is carrying traffic successfully and has not experienced any issues since March 25 when Vodafone erected its mast. Based on your feedback, we have reset the site to ensure that it is not experiencing any issues. To further improve coverage in the area, we will be carrying out upgrade and improvement works at the end of this month.'

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Loch Fyne event highlights the importance of motorcyclist road safety on Argyll roads

SAFE: Duncan and Morna Turnbull demonstrate how to remove an injured biker's helmet 06_a16biker01



AN event aimed at reducing the number of motorcyclist accidents and deaths on the A83 was held for the first time in Argyll on Sunday at Loch Fyne.

Held in a marquee at Loch Fyne Oyster's car park, Bike Fyne brought together Argyll and Bute council's road safety department with First Aid Scotland, Inveraray-based Moto Scotland.com and the government scheme Safety Helmet Assessment and Rating Programme (SHARP).

Bike Fyne was the brainchild of Loch Fyne Oysters deputy man-



ORGANISERS: Martyn Paterson and Leanne Muldowney from Loch Fyne Oysters with Morna and Duncan Turnbull of First Aid Scotland 06_a16biker02



AUTHORITY: Argyll and Bute council road safety officer June Graham and road safety assistant Kay McGhee 06_a16biker03



INSTRUCTION: Clive Rumbold of Moto Scotland.com in Inveraray 06_a16biker04



BIKER: Martyn Paterson ready to roll 06_a16biker05

ing director, Martyn Paterson, 51, who has ridden bikes for 16 years.

Mr Paterson said: 'On the west coast of Scotland roads there were 219 accidents last year, with five fatalities.

'With Loch Fyne Oysters being a global brand and a prominent business in Argyll we want to use that to raise awareness of the road safety issues that we have.'

During the event, First Aid Scotland managing director Duncan Turnbull and his daughter, national trainer Morna, ran a series of workshops to groups of up to 20

bikers.

The pair demonstrated first aid that might be administered by the first person on the scene of a crash involving a motorcyclist.

Argyll and Bute council road safety officer June Graham said: 'Last year in Argyll and Bute 18 per cent of those killed or seriously injured (KSI) in accidents were motorcyclists. Bikers aged 46 to 55 were most prominent in those KSI statistics.'

Clive Rumbold, who set up Moto Scotland.com in Inveraray two years ago, is passionate about ed-

ucating road bikers, to give them the best chance of surviving an emergency situation.

He uses off road bikes to train both riders interested in purely trail riding and those who only ride on the road.

He hosted a workshop on how to use maximum force on the front brake, locking the wheel on a slippery surface and keep moving without falling off the machine.

After Clive's demonstration riders were invited to try out their new skills every participant managed the test without falling off.



Busy families are always looking for ways to make child care less stressful and these days it is easier than ever to find services and support to help keep the little ones - and their parents - happy.

When the children are out of school, thinking of new ways to keep them entertained can be a challenge, especially when faced with choruses of 'Mum, I'm bored'. During the weekends and holidays, many organisations offer days out, sometimes free, or at concession prices for kids.

The local library, in addition to offering kids' programmes, story times and books, is a great source of information about events in your area. Check the library notice board and you never know what interesting activity or event you may discover. Not to mention you'll meet other families at the library who are also looking for child-friendly activities. So perhaps you can make a play or event date with a new friend - the more the merrier.

Museums, galleries and outdoor/wildlife centres often have family-friendly exhibitions and programmes on during holidays. Here on the west coast, places such as the Sea Life Centre have profes-

sional staff who are dedicated to providing a fun and educational experience for all ages. Children will be thrilled to see sharks, seahorses and even playful otters in person (while mum and dad take a well-deserved tea break in the shop!)

And speaking of coastal fun, one of the best ways to explore the area is by boat. Taking a chartered tour or renting a boat or canoe for a fun family day of floating and fishing will be a memory your child will cherish forever. Don't have fishing equipment? Don't worry, you can hire it when you rent a boat.

Leisure centres offer indoor sports such as soft play and swimming, so even on a rainy day the kids can frolic. When cabin fever sets in and it doesn't look as if the skies will clear any time soon, leisure centres are just the ticket.

Workshops, children's theatre, and special interest groups are great for older children, allowing them the chance to learn a new skill and meet other like-minded kids. Whether your child has a scientific curiosity or is a budding artist, there is a group out there that will cultivate their inclinations. Or, hold your own art or science class at home with craft materials, scrapbooks, leaf collec-

tions or bug identification exercises.

Looking for something so unique that the kids will be talking about it for weeks? Inflatables are now the rage, so consider something like a bouncy castle, or something new and exciting such as Body Zorb. This is a large plastic ball that kids aged six and up (and their parents) fit inside and play to their heart's content - jumping, playing football, racing - there is no end to hilarious fun that can be had when you are safely enclosed in cushiony plastic.

Parenting is a challenge, but there are so many organisations and businesses that can help you encourage your children's imagination and independence - and stop that complaint of boredom.

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Village haggis bash a recipe for success

THE FIRST Highland haggis festival was a recipe for success last weekend, so much so organisers hope it will become an annual event.

The family fun day focusing on the national dish, held in Spean Bridge on Saturday, featured cooking demonstrations, haggis hunts and taster sessions and was described as 'absolutely fantastic' by Glen Wilson of organisers Glen Spean and Great Glen tourism marketing group.

He said: 'It was a really good day, absolutely fantastic, and I feel we really exceeded expectations for the first festival. It was well attended, both by locals and visitors, and the evening ceilidh was sold out, so that was a great end to the day. It's still early days so there will need to be a discussion with the whole group but I would love to make this an annual event. It was great for the area and there was something to do for the whole family.'



ALL SMILES: Hamish the haggis takes a break from his tour of Spean Bridge for a photo with Josh Webber, left, and Louis Lamont



TASTY: Glen Russell, chef at Russell's restaurant in Spean Bridge, made haggis and walnut roast with haggis and goat's cheese bon bons at the festival



MAKING THEIR POINT: Strontian residents exercise their right to visit the village cemetery

Cemetery access row steps up in Strontian

EMMA CRICHTON
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RESIDENTS of a rural Lochaber village are refusing to give up their right to visit the village cemetery, despite an ongoing row about access.

More than 50 Strontian villagers gathered for a mass walk through the grounds to promote their right to access last week after owners of nearby Drimnatorran farm put up a heavy gate and large stones on the only road into the cemetery.

The campaigners thought they had achieved a small victory when a restraining post was erected at the gate the following day, keeping the gate - which

had needed someone to hold it to allow vehicle access - open without being held, but were worried to see a new sign saying farm animals were on the site.

This caused concern among locals as goats at Drimnatorran farm, owned for the last three years by Melvin and Sally Shaw, previously ate graveside flowers and destroyed plastic tributes.

Strontian resident Tony Dobson, who has led the campaign, said: 'What animals have Melvin and Sally Shaw got in store for the community next?'

'The cemetery was trashed by the goats, until even leaving plastic tributes was not possible. A bereaved husband harassed by the goats was forced to report this matter to the local police. It

had come to the point where no tributes of any kind could be left on any grave in the cemetery. 'The goats were nowhere to be seen during our walk but the thought of more animals there is alarming. Even without the animals the gate itself is completely unnecessary. 'It's very large and daunting and it could easily put people off visiting the cemetery but we've been told, as the Shaws own the road, there's nothing to stop them having a gate there, as long as they don't lock it.'

Mr Dobson added there could be light at the end of the tunnel as at the Sunart community council meeting last Thursday a local policeman said he was hopeful an agreement could be

reached after speaking to Mr and Mrs Shaw. But in a further twist in the row, the farm is now advertised for sale with a Lochaber estate agent, first appearing on Saturday. Mr Dobson added: 'We all hope that the cemetery can return to the quiet, peaceful, pleasant and welcoming place we all remember only a short time ago.'

A Highland council spokeswoman said: 'The owners of the road are entitled to put a gate across the road. This should remain unlocked so that public access to the cemetery can be maintained.'

The owners of Drimnatorran farm declined to comment on the issue.

Back on trail after death of father

CHARLES Kennedy was back on the campaign trail this week, following the death of his father Ian.

The Liberal Democrat candidate for Ross, Skye and Lochaber and former party leader announced he was taking a break from the general election campaign after his father passed away on Sunday, April 5, aged 88, but returned to speak at the hustings held in Caol community centre on Tuesday night.

Mr Kennedy senior was well respected in his own right in his home town of Fort William and was best known for playing the fiddle.

The crofter and draughtsman used to tour all over the constituency with his son during the early days of his political career and would keep the audience entertained playing tunes until Mr Kennedy junior took to the stage.

Mr Kennedy's funeral, held at St John's RC church in Caol on Friday, was well attended by mourners.

Power cut sparks hunt for culprits

TWO PEOPLE were disturbed last week whilst trying to steal copper from a power station in Fort William.

Engineers from Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) went to the electricity substation near Old Inverloch castle at around 3am on Thursday (April 9) and saw two people running away towards Inverloch village.

A spokesman for Police Scotland Highlands and Islands division confirmed there had been an attempt to remove copper which caused a short power cut in the Inverloch and Caol areas. A spokeswoman from SSE added that while trying to steal the copper, the culprits had spilled a quantity of transformer oil onto the ground. The area and power supply were swiftly made safe.

The individuals were described as wearing dark, hooded clothing. Anyone with any information should contact police on 101.

Step into the digital age

THE GROUP behind a project to uncover the history of the Ballachulish slate quarry is offering the chance to learn how to use digital recording kits.

Anyone interested in training to use the equipment, to help with the project, is invited to the sessions in Ballachulish village hall from Monday (April 20) until Tuesday.

South Lochaber residents have also been asked to bring along any family photos or old newspaper articles relating to the quarry. Verity Walker of the project said: 'We've already got a number of interested trainees and interviewees but the more the merrier. Our trainer Anne Marie Goldie, of BBC Radio Highland, makes it easy and fun. It's something people can even try on their own mobile phones and it means you will learn how to record your own family memories.'

For more information contact Ms Walker on 07778 922407.

Access panel hits top spot

A GROUP campaigning for better access for disabled people is 'delighted' to win a national award.

Lochaber disability access panel was named 'most innovative project' at the Scottish disability equality forum awards.

The group was rewarded for its work in identifying access issues to developers at the planning stage.

Protocol drafted by the panel has been adopted by Highland council to be used as a reference point for all planning applications.

Maurin MacDonald, vice chairwoman of the panel, said: 'We were delighted to receive this award which is a recognition of all our hard work. We are a very active disability access panel with lots going on. We're always looking to recruit new members and if you are disabled or have an interest in disability, please consider joining us at our meeting at An Drochaid, Claggan on the third Thursday of every month.'

The success of the Lochaber panel has spurred a neighbouring group in Oban to consider similar action and officials at Argyll and Bute council recently attended a panel meeting to discuss future plans.

Fiona Morrison, chairwoman of the Oban panel, said: 'We are all volunteers but we are working hard to remove barriers and create access for all environments in Oban and the wider area. As with Lochaber, we are keen to recruit more members.'

More set to turn to food bank

LOCHABER food bank fed almost 600 people in the last year, but manager Alex McConachie fears this could rise again.

From April last year until the end of March the Fort William-based charity dished out 5,391 meals to 599 people but volunteers are prepared for an even higher number as more and more families are struggling to make ends meet.

Mr McConachie said: 'After the election there's likely to be more cuts to all different things and more people are going to feel it. Last month we only fed 45 people, whereas some months it can be up to 80. I think that's because hotels and places are starting to employ seasonal staff so it's getting some people back working.'

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The sums are eye-watering and the extent of the proposed cuts devastating. There can be few left who now doubt that the austerity savings or cuts, will leave an indelible mark on councils the length and breadth of the country.

Reducing Argyll and Bute council's budget by 12 per cent (approximately £27 million) over the next two years, will leave departmental managers with a monu-

mental headache and council tax payers with a reduced level of service.

Some will argue that the council should have embarked sooner on a programme of austerity savings, which would have lessened the crushing impact of the cuts that now have to be made.

Be that as it may, the raft of cuts will almost certainly lead to a fundamental redrawing of council services.



Days gone by - Rockfield presentation

Rockfield primary school head master Peter Robertson and deputy John Watson hand over £5.50 to the Oban school's chaplain the Rev George K Wiggins in March 1975. Pupils had set aside five pence from their pocket money each week for UNICEF's 'Save a Starving Child' appeal. Digital versions of flashback photos for The Oban Times can be sent to editor@obantimes.co.uk or prints sent in to Editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB. Anyone who wishes a print returned should include a stamped, addressed envelope.

Mossfield pitch to be covered for concert

Sir,
I write with regard to a letter published in the *Oban Times* of April 9 on the forthcoming concert at Mossfield in which concerns were raised about potential damage to the pitch.

The pitch is being covered by similar, if not the same, covering that is used in Hampden, Wembley and many other major sporting venues.

There have been, to the best of my knowledge, many discussions with the relevant people involved in the up-keep of Mossfield.

On another, but related matter, there are two major cup finals to be played this year at Mossfield.

The groundsmen do a fantastic job with the pitch but would you be happy inviting anyone to use the toilets or pavilion? They are a disgrace and maybe getting more use out of Mossfield might help to get something done about them.

F McIver, Argyll Street, Oban.

Governance of Oban Common Good Fund

Sir,
I was disappointed to read the article in last week's *Oban Times* regarding the Oban Common Good Fund.

In the interests of clarity and accuracy, it may be helpful to outline the governance arrangements of the fund.

The Oban Common Good Fund is open to applications from all constituted groups in Oban, large or small. It is specifically for the good of the town of the Oban and the trustees consider all relevant applications.

To ensure the people of Oban

were being properly represented and in the interests of transparency, the governance arrangements of the fund were revisited in 2012. The chairman of Oban community council and a representative from the churches in Oban were invited to attend as independent observers.

I am sure if there were any concerns about how applications from various groups were considered, these independent observers would have brought this to the attention of the trustees.

As a result of this review, and in order to support new or smaller groups in their grant funding applications, the distribution policy was changed to enable the trustees to award small grants to these groups without being 'the fund of last resort'.

The distribution policy and the criteria which applications must meet are available at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/common-good-funds/oban.

The trustees consider all grant applications which meet the criteria and applicants who are experiencing difficulties with their application are offered assistance by officers.

The minutes of all meetings are available on the website and are taken to the next area committee for noting.

The fund does not have any knowledge of an application from Soroba Young Families for monies for a Christmas party.

In relation to the use of the accrued extra revenue, no decisions were taken as the trustees felt they did not have all the required information. It was agreed this would be discussed at a future meeting once full financial information was made available.

The trustees are clear that capital funds cannot be spent and are invested in perpetuity.

Councillor Elaine Robertson, chairwoman, Oban Common Good Fund.

Relatives thanks for chance to have voice

Sir,
We thank your reporter Emma Crichton for last week's report regarding the Mackintosh Centre care home in Mallaig.

This was the first time relatives had been asked for their views on the fiasco surrounding the closure of the home.

Although we had verbally said to the staff of the Mackintosh Centre how much we appreciated the excellent care they provided to our loved ones, this was the first opportunity for them to see it in print. We'd also like to express our gratitude to ward councillors Allan Henderson and Ben Thompson for their efforts and support and the local communities and those from further afield who have expressed understanding of the stressful situation we have found ourselves in.

We cannot, however, express the same thanks to those in management positions within NHS Highland.

Despite them holding meetings on March 19 and 31, when they were able to provide information to those present, the families have still heard nothing as we write this correspondence on Monday April 13. The sad part of the deafening silence and lack of information coming from the NHS Highland management is no more than we expected. They have shown nothing but contempt for us, the relatives, the staff and the elected members since our family members were removed from Mallaig. Local GPs have also expressed their frustration at the lack of information coming to them from NHS Highland.

The families of residents of Mackintosh Centre care home, Mallaig.

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON
robertson@obantimes.co.uk

Islay Inn bloom

SPRING has most definitely sprung for the Islay Inn which has been awarded a Let Glasgow Flourish Award 2014/2015.

The award, which will be presented on Thursday April 23, is not for its tremendous selection of single malts or its renowned welcome and customer service, but for its flower display.

The news came as a pleasant surprise for staff who didn't know the pub had been nominated.

This juxtaposition between a garden and a whisky bar reminds me of the old Scotch and Wry sketch in which Rikki Fulton and Gregor Fisher impersonate the presenters of the Beechgrove Garden: replacing a bed of flowers with a tray of drams.

In superb double-entendre, Fisher warns against the dangers of the terrible crime of over-watering, while Fulton suggests gardeners space the specimens out about one every two minutes 'until maybe you're flat out on the bed'.

Ceòl mòr ostaig

A GOOD crowd turned out to hear students of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (SMO) perform alongside Dàimh in the Centre for Contemporary Arts.

Representing SMO were: Alasdair Currie, Uilleam Howard, Jemma Jane Johnson, Rhona May Lawrie, Callan MacBeth, Ellen MacDonald, Mairi MacDonald, Eilidh MacFadyen, Reece MacKay, Calum Ross, Aidan Whittle, Angharrad Whittle, and Cianan Whittle.

After the students performed, Dàimh took to the stage and finished the night off brilliantly.

Erskine cèilidh

ON FRIDAY April 17, Clydebank and District Highland Association will hold its annual cèilidh in the Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick, in aid of Erskine Hospital.

'Erskine', which has provided care for veterans of the British Armed Forces since 1916, is a worthy cause

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL
ailean@obantimes.co.uk

DIMÀIRT SEO TIGHINN bidh ceud gu leth bliadhna chun an latha bho choinnich buidheann de Sgiathanaich ann an Taigh na Cùird air Sràid Glassford ann an Glaschu agus dh'aontaich iad Comann Sgiathanach Ghlaschu a stèidheachadh.

Ged a tha am bonn-stèidh air atharrachadh bho àm gu àm tro na bliadhnaichean bhon uairsin, tha a' bhunait feallsanachd a dh'aontaicheadh air 21 den Ghiblean 1865 fhathast a' stiùireadh amasan Chomann Sgitheanach Ghlaschu.

Chuir iad romhpa càirdeas agus coluadar a bhrosnachadh eatarra; cuimhne a ghlèidheadh air eachdraidh ionadail an Eilein; agus taic a chur ri daoine a bha feumach, agus airdh, air cuideachadh airgeadach.

Chomharraich Comann Sgiathanach Ghlaschu a' chiad ceud bliadhna ann an 1965 agus chithear prògram a' chruinneachaidh bhliadhnail shònraichte aige air làrach-lìn na buidhne. Rinn an Comann rud eile cuideachd gus an ceann bliadhna àraid seo a chomharrachadh.

Toiseach na bliadhna-sgoile 1963-64 is mise air a' cheathramh bliadhna ann an Àrd-sgoil Phort Rìgh,

and this annual event is usually a tremendous cèilidh.

The evening will be chaired by the witty Alasdair MacMillan, and Gaelic songs will be given by Catriona Fair, Eilidh Munro and Paul MacCallum. Beth Street will provide Scots songs, Ian Smith will give a few tunes on the accordion, and Robert Wood and Ian MacPhee will play the pipes. Accompanist for the evening will be Kirsteen Grant.

What's on

Friday April 17: Clydebank and District Highland Association Cèilidh in aid of Erskine Hospital in the Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick.

Saturday April 18: Scottish Pipers' Association Pipe Music of the Great War, College of Piping, 7.30pm. Free entry. The Highlanders' Club Dance, Partick Burgh Hall, 8pm-11pm. £9 membership.

Friday April 24: The Glasgow Uist and Barra Association Cèilidh Dance.

Saturday April 25: The Glasgow Skye Annual Spring Concert (Wee Skye) in the Crawford Hall.

Pub scene

Park Bar: Thursday April 16: Session.

Friday April 17: Ceol an Aire. Saturday April 18: Hò ro. Sunday April 19: All day Morino (accordion) session.

Islay Inn: Friday April 17: Parting Glass. Saturday April 18: Crooked Reel.

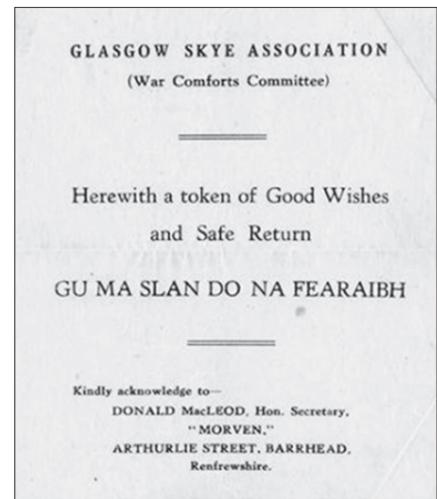
Happy birthday Glasgow Skye

ON TUESDAY April 21, Glasgow Skye Association is having a civil dinner with invited guests to mark its 150th anniversary.

This is an incredible achievement which I aim to mark in this column over the next few weeks by including some old examples of the good work of the association.

This week's example is a notice, below, sent from the association to those from the island fighting in the Second World War - along with some home comforts, no doubt.

The Gaelic words 'guma slàn do na fearaibh', meaning 'a health to the people', are taken from the title of a 19th century song written by Donald Campbell of Glangarry which talks about emigrants going overseas: words to which those in the throes of war could no doubt relate.



Ailean Caimbeul

na cruinneachaidhean, neo fiù 's fiosrachadh bho sheann phàipearan Chomann Sgitheanach Ghlaschu air dè thachair dhaibh.

Air Dimàirt 21 Giblean thèid ceud gu leth bliadhna de Chomann Sgitheanach Ghlaschu a chomharrachadh le dinnear shònraichte ann an Àrd Sheòmraichean Bhaile Ghlaschu, agus tha an Comann da-rìribh airdh air an urram! Nach biodh e cuideachd math na h-òrain a lorg agus am foillseachadh am-bliadhna!

ON APRIL 21, the 150th anniversary of the Glasgow Skye Association will be marked by a well-earned civic dinner at Glasgow City Chambers.

Fifty years ago there was a plan to publish a new volume of hitherto unpublished Skye songs to mark the centenary of the association. A competition was staged in 1963-64 and a substantial collection was gathered, but the publication never appeared and the location of the collected material is unknown.

We hope it has survived and that it can be located in 2015.

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

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

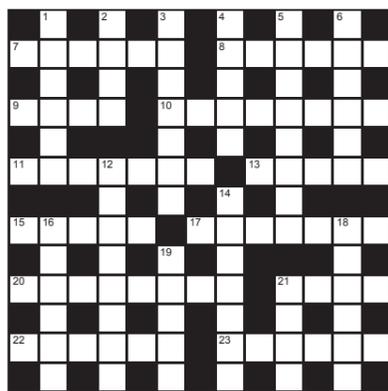
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Across

- 7 Wood-sorrel (6)
- 8 Commotion (6)
- 9 Stench (4)
- 10 Intact (8)
- 11 Austrian bake (7)
- 13 Assess (5)
- 15 Neither here nor there (5)
- 17 Loose hair (7)
- 20 Doorless (4-4)
- 21 List of jobs (2-2)
- 22 Side cramp (6)
- 23 Immense (6)

Down

- 1 Urge (6)
- 2 Blockage (4)
- 3 Made certain (7)
- 4 Sleep on it (5)
- 5 May make decisions when given (4,4)
- 6 Good-for-nothing (3,3)
- 12 City dweller (8)
- 14 Special title (3,4)
- 16 Attribute to undesirable (6)
- 18 Compose (6)
- 19 Beginning (5)
- 21 Clothing (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



hebrides

part 3: skye and the small isles

THE HEBRIDEAN Islands of Skye and the nearby Small Isles have it all - breathtaking scenery, vibrant culture and abundant wildlife.

Skye

Much of the landscape is dominated by the dramatic Cuillin mountain range, home to 12 munros and a popular destination for climbers and walkers from across the world keen to pit their skills against Scotland's most Alpine of ranges.

In the far north, Uig is home to the ferry to the Outer Isles and a start point for a stunning drive round the coast to Portree.

In the south, the mainland ferry service between Mallaig and Armadale in Sleat runs eight times a day Monday to Saturday, and six times daily on Sundays. And for those looking for a different way to go 'over the sea to Skye', a tiny turntable ferry runs during the summer months between Glenelg in Lochalsh and Kylerhea.

By road, the famous Skye Bridge, a graceful arc over Loch Alsh,

provides a spectacular entry point to the island.

Portree

Skye's largest population centre and unofficial capital is Portree, which has a scenic harbour and great views of surrounding hills.

The Isle's Highland games are held annually in Portree, typically held on the first Wednesday of August at Skye's most famous venue, a semi-natural rock amphitheatre known as 'the Lump'.

Heading north, another must-see example of Skye's buzzing culture is Ceol on the Croft.

Held in Kilmuir, the music festival is at the end of May and features Skye-native musicians as well as bands from further afield.

Organisers call the event an opportunity to entertain locals whilst showing visitors 'a good Trotternish ceilidh'. A two-day event sure to be unforgettable.

Why not take a trip out west and visit Brae Fasach, a gallery and cafe showcasing the work of Ian and Gill Williams?

If anyone has captured their own memories during their trip to

Skye the pair will even personalise one of their products with visitors' very own photograph or artwork.

Known in Gaelic as Eilean a' Cheo (the Misty Isle), Skye, which has a population of 10,000, is steeped in history and romance and is unrivalled in its offer to the modern day visitor.

Bonnie Prince Charlie and Flora MacDonald are woven into the folklore of the island. Talisker Distillery produces its famous malt at Portnalong, while the Gaelic college Sabhal Mòr Ostaig stands proudly over the Sound of Sleat as testament to the bold bid to revive the ancient language, which is still widely spoken on Skye.

Skye has plenty of accommodation, from beautiful hotels lodged among breathtaking scenery to delicate bed and breakfasts in the heart of the regions. Once checked in at at digs, visitors can take the weight off at one of the fantastic cafes and restaurants serving delicious food from light bites to traditional, locally-sourced cuisine.

Skye has certainly

made its mark when it comes to British fine dining, with two establishments currently holding prestigious Michelin stars.

Raasay

And don't forget the isle of Raasay just to the east of Skye and just a short ferry ride from Sconser.

Raasay, among other claims to fame, is the birthplace of famed Gaelic poet Sorley Maclean and is well worth a visit.

Small Isles

The Small Isles consist of Muck, Eigg, Rùm and Canna.

They can be reached by ferry from Mallaig all year round and Arisaig in the summer months. Although close to each other, the four islands are different geographically and socially.

Eigg

Eigg with its cliff-like ridge in the middle is the most recognisable and has been owned by its residents via the Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust since 1997.

The island has its own minibus service to meet ferries, camping, self-catering accommodation and bed and breakfasts.

As well as the scenery, walks and adventure tourism the islanders run a crafting museum, cafe/restaurant, and eco-tourism centre.

Muck

Muck is the smallest of the islands and is the most fertile, as well as being owned by the same family for more than 100 years.

It welcomes visitors all year round at self-catering properties and for camping and offers a real get-away-from-it-all atmosphere in a stunning landscape.

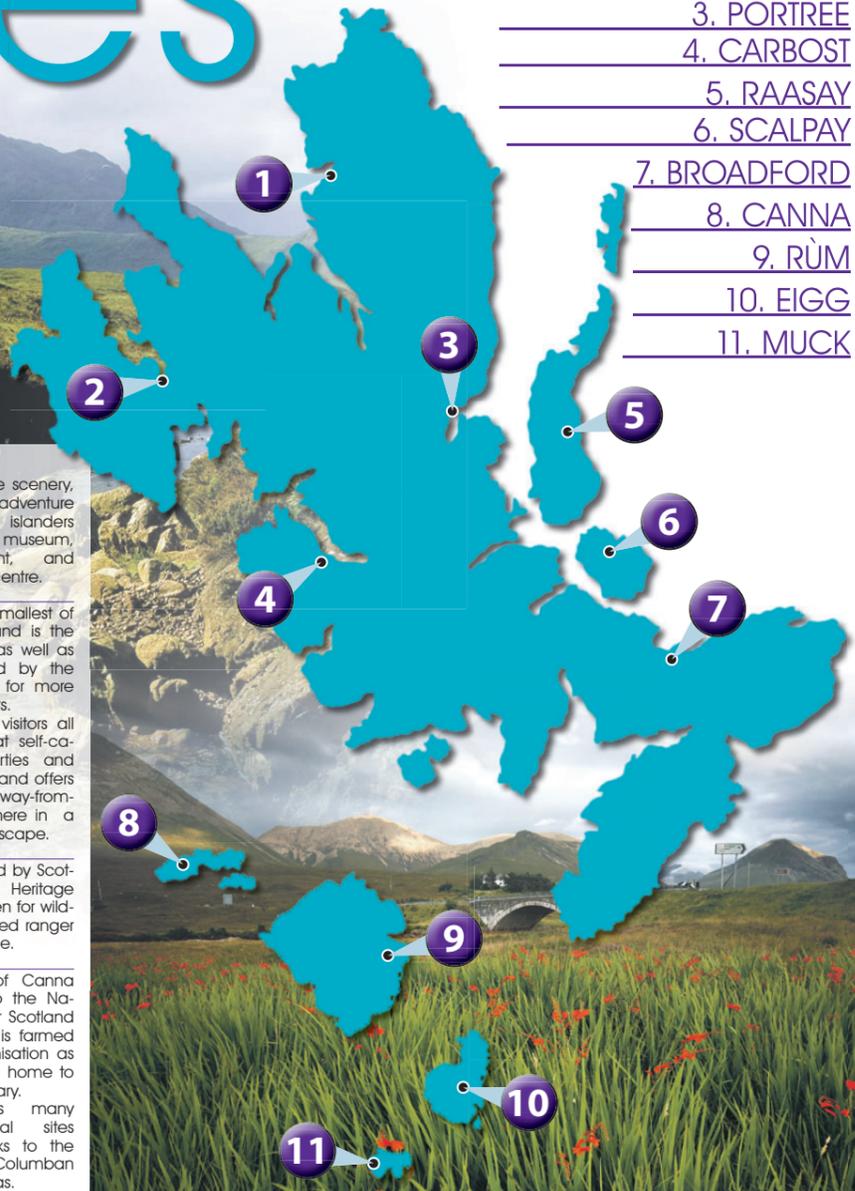
Rùm

Rùm is owned by Scottish Natural Heritage and is a haven for wildlife, with guided ranger walks available.

Canna

The island of Canna was given to the National Trust for Scotland in 1981 and is farmed by the organisation as well as being home to a bird sanctuary.

Canna has many archaeological sites and has links to the Neolithic, Columban and Viking eras.



KEY

- 1. UIG
- 2. DUNVEGAN
- 3. PORTREE
- 4. CARBOST
- 5. RAASAY
- 6. SCALPAY
- 7. BROADFORD
- 8. CANNA
- 9. RÙM
- 10. EIGG
- 11. MUCK

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Business

Centre welcomes first PhD student

WEST Highland college, university of the Highlands and Islands' centre for recreation and tourism research (CRTR), has welcomed its first PhD student, Jelena Farkić, from Serbia.

CRTR was recently awarded The Moffat Charitable Trust Adventure Tourism research studentship, co-funded by the University of the Highlands and Islands for the period of three years and Ms Farkić will be reading for a social sciences based doctorate under the supervision of Dr Peter Varley, centre director. Her study will be in the area of tourism experiences in the outdoors and the ways in which these can be facilitated and enhanced by highly skilled guides.

Dr Varley explained: 'The West Highlands, and the Lochaber region in particular, offer a massive range of adventurous journeys and wild excursions, but it is important to develop the human capital in the region to help to unlock this potential for the tourism market.'

'Ms Farkić's study will provide the building blocks of knowledge which will enable a world-class guiding community to develop in the Highlands, and ultimately what might become an exportable training programme for guides from around the world.'

Ms Farkić, who is settling in to her life in Fort William for the next three years, said she was excited at the prospect of studying in the town.

She added: 'I was working as a teaching assistant in the faculty of sport and tourism at Educons University in Serbia when I heard about this opportunity through a colleague. I immediately recognised myself in the description as I had already been working in the area of nature-based tourism. So I applied, and then found myself packing my life into a suitcase to come to Fort William.'

'I am greatly honoured to be the recipient and I'm looking forward to really becoming part of the growing research and tourism academic scene in Fort William over the next three years.'



OPPORTUNITY: Jelena Farkić, West Highland College UHI's first PhD student, with Dr Peter Varley from the centre for recreation and tourism research



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John Forteith (right) with Jon Mack, Bidvest 3663's general manager for Scotland



Owner of the Easdale Food Company, Keren Cafferty, right, with assistant Megan Gilroy. The company makes handmade preserves and jams, and operates from the Puffer Bar and Restaurant on the island, which Keren also owns



Jura Whisky operates on the island with several other distilleries across the country owned by parent company Whyte and Mackay. Martin Docherty, key account manager, said he had been to the show a few times and was always pleased with the interest garnered from it



Donald Hoy and Alison Feaks, from VisitScotland, who were promoting the Taste Our Best accreditation scheme

Top quality as chocolate firm wins five stars

ONE OF Oban's innovative small businesses has been awarded the highest possible quality rating by Scotland's national tourism organisation.

The Oban Chocolate Company has been upgraded from a four-star to a five-star tourist shop, following a recent inspection by a member of VisitScotland's quality advisory team.

The five-star award comes at a perfect time - just before the busiest visitor season during the 2015 Year of Food and Drink.

The top tourism grading is the latest in a list of awards

won by the Oban Chocolate Company, including being named as one of its top 10 Most Delicious Chocolate Shops in Europe by travel company GoEuro, and winning titles at the Scottish Independent Retail awards and the Scottish Wedding awards.

Pictured are husband and wife owners Stewart and Helen MacKechnie (right) being presented with their five-star grading plaque and certificate by VisitScotland regional director David Adams McGilp (second left) and VisitScotland industry relationship manager Alison Feaks (left).



Darlene Russell, curriculum manager for UHI, was at the show to promote courses on offer at the Oban campus, including SVQ Level 3 catering and SVQ Level 1 practical cookery

Exhibitors do a roaring trade at Forteith's event

MORE than 70 exhibitors promoting 200 brands gathered in Oban for a food and drink trade show at the Corran Hall.

Now in its 37th year, the Forteith Foodservice tradeshow gathered retailers from all over the UK in March, with local representation from Argyll Smokery, the Puffer Restaurant, the Argyll Brewery, and the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) as well as national brands such as PepsiCo, Heinz and A J Barr.

Forteith Foodservice is based in Oban and owned by parent company Bidvest 3663.

Business development controller John Forteith explained: 'There's such a wide selection of traders here, exhibiting a wide range of products including bakery,

alcohol, seafood, butchery meat, with a whole host of local produce, to some of the national brands. I'd like to thank all the exhibitors and customers who have travelled significant distances, including ferry journeys, to see the show and the large range of local, national and international products that are on offer.'

The event was also used to promote VisitScotland's Taste Our Best accreditation scheme, which ensures people have confidence they will eat quality ingredients from food, and drink establishments that are sourced locally.

Taste Our Best also helps to raise the profile of Scottish food as an important part of tourism, giving credit to those who are achieving high standards and encouraging others to aspire to them.



Andrew Smith, who is assistant brewer at Argyll Breweries, Oban, said it was a great turnout and there was a lot of interest in the brand

Dawnfresh named youth employer of the month

FISH farm firm Dawnfresh has been named youth employer of the month by Skills Development Scotland (SDS).

Dawnfresh received the SDS Award when youth and women's employment minister Annabelle Ewing MSP visited the company's Uddingston headquarters in March.

The awards are given to businesses that show continuous commitment to getting young people into work.

The company has seven fish farms in Scotland, including sites in Tervine, Braevallich and Loch Etive.

Chairman of SDS, John McClelland CBE, said: 'Dawnfresh consistently displays the core values which define this award, and I congratulate it on it. The company's commitment to young people and the

importance it has placed on offering valuable employability training and apprenticeship opportunities is to be commended.'

Uddingston-based Dawnfresh recruited modern apprentices through the food and drink sector's Tasty Jobs initiative, which incorporates the SQA-recognised Certificate of Work Readiness employability qualification.

SDS's food and drink sector manager, Gerry McBride, nominated Dawnfresh for the award.

He said: 'The company has demonstrated its support for young people from local communities in its different locations across the country.'

'Dawnfresh has shown how much importance it places on training and development and I am delighted it has been honoured on the first anniversary of the awards.'

Gael Force sails off with £2.5m three barge deal

HIGHLAND-based marine equipment and engineering firm Gael Force Group has landed a contract to build three new feed barges for the Scottish Salmon Company.

The £2.5 million deal is expected to create more than 20 new jobs across the group's workforce, taking its staff to more than 200.

The barges will supply the Scottish Salmon Company's (SSC) Outer Hebrides operations, with the possibility of the contract doubling in size, subject to SSC's future expansion plans.

The first phase will see Gael Force deliver and install the SeaMate 200T barges by August. If approved, the second phase will be completed in early 2016.

Stewart Graham, Gael Force Group managing director, said: 'It is a huge vote of confidence in the industry and

in our workforce. Coming on top of our existing workload, which includes significant orders for other aquaculture companies, we are now operating at full capacity and we have to increase staff numbers and extend work patterns to deal with the demand.'

Craig Anderson, SSC's managing director, said: 'Our contract with Gael Force represents a major investment in both our salmon farming business and the aquaculture industry supply chain in Scotland.'

'It also reinforces our commitment to developing long-term partnerships with local suppliers that help support our growth ambitions and also provide long-term, first-class aftercare. We are committed to the economic growth of rural Scotland and to the local communities where our staff live and work.'

Business dream comes true for young sailor, 16

SOME people dream about starting their own business, but for 16-year-old Lewis McFall, this dream to become a reality with the launch of Water Adventures at Portavadie this month.

Offering a range of experiences, from tours around Portavadie and trips out onto Loch Fyne to treasure hunts and family thrills, Water Adventures is a high-energy adrenaline rush.

The thrill comes from a seven-metre Highfield Ocean Master DL with a 200hp engine, the first of its kind in Europe. Lewis is an experienced sailor having been a regular face, with his grandfather Campbell, at his local sailing club Largs Yacht Haven since he was six years old. He moved on to sailing RIBs when he was nine and this year he became a Royal Yachting Association (RYA)



Your ambition. Our know-how. Together we can make your new business happen.

Free, practical advice and support to help start your business. Call your local office on 01546 605 459 or visit www.bgateway.com/argyllandbute



editor@obantimes.co.uk

01631 568000

Loch Leven salmon farm leads the way

A LOCHABER salmon farm has become the first in the UK to receive accreditation for sustainability.

The Marine Harvest Loch Leven production site was approved by the international aquaculture stewardship council (ASC), which provides certification for fisheries meeting high standards, allowing consumers to make informed choices about the fish they eat.

Marine Harvest Scotland managing director, Alan Sutherland, said: 'We are delighted to gain the first ASC approval for salmon in the UK for our Loch Leven farm.'

'We care passionately about the environment in which we live and work and are determined to ensure our top quality salmon continues to be grown in a sustainable way. This is a real pat on the back for the team at Loch Leven and we are all immensely proud of their achievement.'

'ASC accreditation is an exceptionally tough standard to meet and we always knew it would take time to achieve. We've always taken our responsibilities to the environment very seriously and this accreditation is recognition of this.'

'This is just the beginning and we look forward to gaining similar recognition for our other salmon farms in a phased programme in the coming years.'



AWARD: Marine Harvest salmon farmers are 'delighted' to be recognised for sustainability

Record-breaking number of entries for food and drink 'Oscars'

THE SHORTLIST for the 19 categories in the Scottish food and drink 'Oscars' has been drawn up.

A record-breaking 239 entries were received this year for the Scotland Food and Drink Excellence Awards, up from 153 in 2014.

Among those which have been shortlisted in categories including preserves and accompaniments, dairy, bakery, seafood, innovation, investing in people, innovation, sustainability and Scottish sourcing are: Isle of Skye Sea Salt Company, Wooleys of Arran, Arran Dairies, Gigha Hallbut, J Lawrie and Sons (Jaffys) of Mallaig, Bruichladdich Distillery on Islay, Dawnfresh Seafoods Ltd, Loch Fyne Oysters and Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) Ferries Limited.

The winners will be announced at the awards dinner on May 27 at the National Museum for Scotland in Edinburgh.

Company praised for commitment to achieving high standards

TSL CONTRACTORS were 'delighted' to be presented with the international standard for Environmental Management Systems from British Standards Institution.

Praising the company, lead environmental auditor and auditor trainer in Scotland Dr Phill Radcliffe said: 'TSL has been the contractor on many hydro electric power schemes in Scotland that I have been involved with, and I have been very impressed by its commitment to detail in achieving high environmental standards during construction works and especially during the reinstatement and restoration of semi-natural habitats.'

Skyhook chopper flies in to help with urgent land slip repair

SKYHOOK Helicopters, a division of TSL Contractors, was called upon by specialist contractors Geo-rope to attend to an urgent job at the beginning of the month to lift tools and equipment to a site 150 metres above the A82.

The helicopter was the only realistic option to access an area of a rock slip on Lochnesside because it is otherwise unaccessible.

Skyhook Helicopters responded and had a helicopter on site within 45 minutes of being asked to attend.



QUICK OFF THE MARK: the Skyhook helicopter was on site within 45 minutes of being asked to attend

All roads lead to travel expo

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

BUSINESSES from Argyll and the Isles will be attending Scotland's biggest travel trade event, VisitScotland expo, being held next month.

Mount Stuart, SGE Hotels, Open Road Scotland, Inveraray Castle, Argyll and the Isles Tourism and Love Oban will exhibit at the national tourism organisation's flagship travel trade event to be held in Aberdeen's AECC on April 22 and 23.

More than £24 million worth of business is likely to be conducted over the two days of VisitScotland expo, which takes place in just six weeks at Aberdeen's AECC on April 22 and 23, 2015.

Scotland will be promoted by more than 200 businesses from across the country with a Scottish tourism product to highlight.

Compared to 2014's expo at Glasgow's SECC, there will be at least a 33 per cent increase in new exhibitors.

Tourism businesses from across Scotland will have the opportunity to showcase the

very best the country has to offer, including food and drink, accommodation, entertainment, culture, scenery and attractions.

It was recently announced that Aberdeenshire Council and VisitAberdeen are to be official destination partners at this year's VisitScotland expo. The partnership with VisitScotland will offer both Aberdeenshire Council and VisitAberdeen stand space and marketing opportunities to further promote Aberdeen City and Shire to tourism businesses.

VisitScotland expo will be attended by almost 380 hosted international buyers and over 200 hand-picked UK-based buyers, including tour operators, wholesalers, travel agents and travel media.

Tourism companies from all over Scotland are expected to capitalise on interest from tour operators and travel agents from new and emerging markets - such as Russia and India.

David Adams McGilp, regional director of VisitScotland, said: 'I am delighted that so many businesses from Argyll and the isles will be attending

VisitScotland expo to showcase just some of what this fantastic area has to offer. Tourism is more than a holiday experience - it creates jobs, sustains communities and provides a shop window for business activity.'

'VisitScotland expo provides local businesses with a fantastic opportunity to engage with tour operators and suppliers from all over the UK and overseas. It is crucial we work together to grow tourism and I am delighted to see such commitment from related businesses in Argyll and the isles.'



BUSINESS brains: Angela Vernel and Barbara Halliday are the advisers covering the Oban area.

Adviser support for your business

ARGYLL and Bute Council's Business Gateway team is encouraging local business owners to take a fresh look at Business Gateway and get in touch to find out how they could benefit from the help on offer.

Experienced business advisers are available to meet business owners across the area. The meetings are free and confidential and can be used to discuss any issues relevant to that particular business, be it sourcing funding, improving profitability, recruiting and developing staff, finding new markets or other growth and sustainability issues.

Angela Vernel and Barbara Halliday are the business advisers covering the Oban area. They are happy to travel and meet clients locally, or to provide support by phone or email. To get in touch with a local business adviser call 01546 504555 or email business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk



Ron Ireland, left, and Tony Storr outside their new premises

Doors open at Lorn Locks

A NEW business has been established in the old Angler's Corner building on Craighard Road, Oban.

Opened by Tony Storr and Ron Ireland, who have 70 years'

experience between them, Lorn Locks and DIY Limited will provide a locksmith and key-cutting service, as well as selling electrical, security and power tool accessories.

Mull businessman director of the year

A MULL businessman has fought off competition from throughout the Highlands and islands to become the region's director of the year.

Ben Wilson, 32, has worked his way up through the ranks of family firm Inverlussa Marine Services and took over the reins as managing director in November.

He joined his family's mussel farming business straight from school in 1999 at the age of 15 and has been at the forefront of the company's progression, over recent years, into the marine services industry.

Ben recently received the glass trophy from the Institute of Directors Scotland at a glittering ceremony in Glasgow's Crowne Plaza Hotel. He said: 'Winning the award is fantastic but, although it has my name on it, I see it as recognition of the fact that we have some very talented people working with us, that is what makes it all work and wins us repeat contracts.'

Inverlussa will this year take delivery of our sixth vessel, Helen Mary, a 28-metre support vessel, at the end of April.

The company currently employs 40 people, mainly from Argyll, and the number of workers will rise to 50 once the new vessel is in place.

WINNER: Ben Wilson, left, receives his award.



Advisor's top tips on unique selling points

AT BUSINESS Gateway Argyll and Bute, the team of advisers understand how it feels to start and grow a successful business.

One of the advisers, Donald Melville, shares his top tips on how to identify unique selling points (USPs):

'A USP is the difference that sets your business apart from others who are providing the same, or similar, products or services.'

'You will need to research other businesses and determine what their USP is - look into whether they have been successful, or if they are missing a crucial component, as this is where your business can fill the gap.'

'Understanding market trends is essential if your business is to make the most of its opportunities and remain competitive. Try to get answers on the demand for your product or service, what new products are in your competitors' pipeline and how they promote themselves.'

'After you have conducted your competitor research, put yourself in your customer's shoes. Carrying out customer research on loyalty and satisfaction can make a big difference to your business.'

'If you know how your existing and potential customers make their buying decisions, then you can adapt your

sales methods to fit their needs. You can do this by having a focus group to discuss your product where you ask the participants for feedback and suggestions regarding it. Or you could send out a survey to past or potential customers.'

'Talking to potential customers is one of the best ways to gather information because not only will you get crucial information, but you may well gain some invaluable ideas on marketing your product or service while you do it.'

'Once you have done this you are well on your way to finding your own USP.'

'Your USP should be something you completely believe in and are truly passionate about, as you need to convey this passion and drive to your customers in order for them to want to buy your product or service.'

'Once you know what you are doing better, faster, stronger or more professionally than your competitors, you will have your USP.'

Some key points to keep in mind:
 Ask a Business Gateway adviser about accessing market intelligence and business information from the Business Gateway information service
 The way research is conducted will have a significant impact on the

quality of the results. Ask the right questions, talk to the right audience and engage enough people

If anyone doesn't feel confident doing it on their own, there may be the opportunity to meet with the Business Gateway Marketing expert to get started in the right direction with research.

Business Gateway runs regular workshops on a range of topics, including marketing and the spring workshop schedule will be published soon. To pre-register interest in the marketing workshops, contact the local team on 01546 604 555 or email business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk

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food and drink

As part of The Year of Food & Drink Scotland, The Oban Times has teamed up with local businesses to celebrate the wealth of variety, quality and talent in this booming industry.

Over the coming months, we will be promoting a selection of events, restaurants, pubs and producers from the west coast.

Each week, one business from the sector will be the focus of this exciting new column, along with a delicious recipe, so keep an eye out and allow us to give you a taste of the fantastic food and drink available in the area.

The Year of Food and Drink is a chance to spotlight, celebrate and promote Scotland's natural larder and quality produce to our people and our visitors.



This week...

Who is it?
The Manor House Hotel

What do they do?
Provide an exquisite dining experience from a menu focusing on the best of local seafood, meats and produce

Where can I find them?
Set in a Georgian Villa on Gallanach Road overlooking Oban Bay The Manor House has a stunning location



The Manor House
Georgian Elegance on beautiful Oban Bay

Built in about 1780 as a dowry house for the Duke of Argyll, The Manor House is now a four star, deluxe boutique hotel in Oban. Set on the southern side of Oban Harbour it has stunning views of the town, McCaig's Tower and the islands of Lismore and Mull.

Decorated in a traditional style with fine linens and tableware, the restaurant at the Manor House is a peaceful setting to enjoy a beautiful dinner.

Locals know the Manor House restaurant as the place to go for a special dinner in Oban. The complete dinner menu changes daily and you are assured of an excellent choice of fine dishes made with the freshest ingredients available from Scotland's abundant larder.

Head chef Shaun Squire has been cooking for the Manor House for over 10 years and consistently provides a truly creative menu. Shaun is an exceptional chef who shows incredible knowledge and understanding of fine food and maintains extremely high standards both in preparation skills and presentation of his dishes.

Call **01631 562 087** to reserve a table.

Manor House recipe

West Coast Scallops, Stornoway Black Pudding & Carrot Orange Puree

A delicious recipe showcasing juicy, local scallops



Ingredients
2 Peeled Carrots
1 Orange
8 Scallops
2 Slices of Black Pudding
1 ounce of Sugar

Serves 2 as a starter

Method

Simmer chopped carrots, orange zest, juice and sugar in water for 1 hour then liquidise to a puree. Grill the black pudding until hot.

Pan fry the scallops in butter and olive oil for 2 minutes on each side then set aside for 1 minute to rest.

Spoon some of the warmed puree onto a plate, then arrange the scallops and black pudding.

Serve with a peppery salad and roast baby potatoes.

Our food and drink column will appear weekly in the coming months

If you would like your business to feature here please call us on

01631 568000

Grammy award winner seeks Argyll musical talent

AN INSPIRING new project in Argyll will see professional musicians coming together to produce and launch an album Made in Argyll.

The collaboration, led by Scottish musician Joe McAlinden and Grammy award winning music producer and sound engineer David Donaldson, will bring together Argyll's musicians over three days as part of the launch of the Music Makes Me project.

The musicians will work together, writing, composing and producing, to create an album of original work. The programme will take place in Cowal, rural Argyll, where the inspiring landscapes and tranquil setting will allow music to be the main focus for the three-day event.

Music Makes Me is a Talent Development project, funded by Creative Scotland and conceived by Sadie Dixon-Spain of The Walking Theatre Company.

The project seeks to bring creative professionals together to explore, share, and develop new work and

concepts, bringing ideas into fruition, delivering exciting, engaging and excellent audience-ready work.

The programme is open to all Argyll musicians and lyricists, and provides a unique and exciting opportunity to participate in sessions led by music industry professionals, covering a variety of different aspects of creating and producing music, from song writing to performing techniques, to recording and producing their own work.

Artists will build on their original work in a supportive, friendly atmosphere, allowing creative ideas to develop within the group.

Joe, along with his Grammy award-winning colleague David, will work on-site with the musicians to develop their musical works and produce the work into an album - Made in Argyll.

Creative professionals in Argyll face unusual challenges in their diverse practices. Sadie said: 'We live

in a vast and extraordinarily beautiful environment, which can both inspire and isolate us.

'Music Makes Me is an opportunity to bring people together, collaborating to produce world class work.'

Musicians and lyricists who would like to take part in Music Makes Me should email alana@thewalkingtheatrecompany.com for an application form by noon on Friday May 8.

All musicians and lyricists will be considered, although those based in Argyll will be given priority.



Sadie Dixon-Spain of The Walking Theatre Company

The Waverley celebrates 40 years in paddling preservation



The Waverley sailing out of Brodick, Arran, last year

THE OWNERS of the world's last sea-going paddle steamer are inviting the public to join them and be part of a special celebratory year for the charity-run boat.

This year marks the 40th year that the vessel Waverly has sailed in preservation.

Sold by Caledonian MacBrayne for £1 to the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society, the ship has been oper-

ated by a charity since 1975, and preserved as a heritage asset for the benefit of communities around the UK, creating an economic impact and connecting communities.

Since then, she has carried the remarkable total of more than five million passengers and is now somewhat of a celebrity.

Her annual visit to Oban is over the weekend of May 30 until

June 1, with sailings including a visit to Inverie, home to the remotest public house in Scotland, a cruise past the Four Lochs of Shuna, Melfort, Craignish and Crinan on the way to Corryvreckan Whirlpool, and finally, an excursion to Iona.

For more information and a full timetable, visit the Waverley website at: www.waverleyexcursions.co.uk

Creative minds wanted for centenary celebration workshops

THE CENTENARY celebration of the birth of one of Scotland's most prolific poets, George Campbell Hay, will be celebrated in Tarbert with a series of music, art and language workshops.

'George Campbell Hay wrote poetry about Tarbert and Kintyre in Gaelic and Scots,' said organiser Hans Kok. 'Successful

performances by

Tarbert's all-girl folk group Na Seudan Ùr and the recent launch of their debut album has created new interest in the Gaelic language, new interest that can also help maintain the Kintyre tradition of Gaelic choirs.

'This project will endeavour to boost interest in both Gaelic

and Scots.'

The workshops will take place beginning May 2-3 and will run through November, culminating in a concert of new music and an art/photography exhibition in December.

The workshops include Gaelic for beginners, Scots poetry, photography, choral, creating musical soundscapes and art.

Top class talent at high schools' dance competition

NINETEEN high school dance groups from across Argyll met in Oban high school for the annual dance competition.

Ballet West full-time students also performed a couple of pieces, with Oban high's own Merula Hondrou performing with them, as she now studies full time at Ballet West.

Judges were Jonathan Barton, Moira Barbour and Andrew MacFarlane.

Results:
Junior - 1 Lucy Croarkin and Molly MacPherson (Oban High School); 2 (and most entertaining award) 'Flex' Hannah MacPhee, Suzanna Kane, Becky Shields, Alex Wotherpoon, Jade Graham, Jessica Lang, Angel Dalziel, Allanah MacCallum Nicola Wareham, Caitlynn Taylor, Lara Sinclair, Susanne Gillies, Niamh Baxter (Campbeltown Grammar); 3 (and best presentation) Megan Laird, Leah Gillies, Laura McClymont, Emma Masterson, Dani Den Heijer, Lauren Darrah, Molly Mullarky, Lucy Aitken, Melissa Morris, Kaitlyn Evans, Ilona Vermont, Mia Hoey (Oban High School)

Outstanding dancer award - Lara Sinclair (Campbeltown Grammar).

Senior - 1 Jake Sutherland, Morgan Baller, Laura Dougan, Melissa Hodge, Louise Davis Hermitage; 2 (and best presentation) Courtney Sutherland, Jake Sutherland (Hermitage) 3 'The Falling' Chloe Gillies, Morgan Irwin, Hannah Young (Campbeltown).

Outstanding Dancers - Courtney Sutherland and Jake Sutherland (Hermitage).



Molly Macpherson and Lucy Croarkin won the junior section.



Oban high school S2 girls won third and best presentation award.

Argyll heritage needs you

HELP the heritage of Argyll by standing as a trustee for the National Trust for Scotland (NTS).

The charity which owns and cares for Arduaine and Crarae Gardens and the Hill House in Helensburgh, as well as the island of Iona is looking for NTS members to put themselves forward for spots on its board - five trustees' terms of office are up in September.

New trustees are selected via a vote by the conservation charity's 330,000 members conducted later this year.

It is an exciting time for the trust as the senior team is changing - chairman elect, Sir Moir Lockhead, takes over from Sir Kenneth Calman in May and the search for a new chief executive is also underway as Kate Mavor moves on after six years.

Serving board member Veronica Morriss says she has found the role to be very positive and enjoyable. She said: 'It is a remarkable time to be a trustee. If you too are committed to the work of the National Trust for Scotland and have relevant skills or knowledge in whatever capacity, I heartily recommend this role.'

The charity is keen to draw applications from a wide spectrum of members - especially those with a commitment to the strategic direction of the trust.

Lochaber choir invites new members to join in singing

A LOCHABER choir is to recommence for spring and is encouraging people of all musical abilities to attend.

Formed in 2011, the Music Shed adult choir sings everything from traditional Scottish songs to pop, jazz and even musical numbers.

Led by musical directors Clare Brewer and

Valerie Rose, many members of the choir can't read music and say learning by ear is welcomed.

Rehearsals begin at St Andrews church hall, Fort William on Tuesday April 21 at 7.30pm.

All musical abilities welcome and for more information contact 07831685966.



DRAMATIC: Façade by Leonard Gray, Argyll and Bute council's painting of the month

Argyll and Bute council's painting of the month

ARGYLL and Bute council's painting for April is a mixed media work by Leonard Gray entitled 'Façade' - a dramatic image of buildings with advertising posters and brightly coloured bunting.

The local authority's Argyll Collection was bought in 1970. It is currently exhibited on rotation in Argyll and Bute secondary schools.

Leonard Gray was born in 1925 and is known for his interest in the colour pattern and texture of old buildings.

He lived in Dundee originally before moving to Dunfermline and later Aberdeen. He first started exhibiting in 1954 and more than 100 works by him are recorded.

Leonard Gray was elected to The Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolour in 1968 and has exhibited prolifically at the Royal Scottish Academy.

Rising star heads for Jura

SOUND OF JURA has announced that it is back with more live music on Jura for the 2015 season.

The first show this year combines traditional Scottish songs from a rising star on the Scottish folk scene with the long-awaited Sound of Jura debut of two highly popular alumni of Jura's musical melting pot.

Borders-born Kirsty Law has grown up learning traditional songs, mainly in the

Scots dialect.

She now combines this with her strong interests in song writing and poetry inspired by the ideas and forms she finds within the tradition.

In The Kirsty Law Band, she is accompanied by Rona Wilkie and Marit Falt Vamm.

They create a sound which is charged and exciting whilst resonating with stories, forms and melodies that have withstood the test of time.

GEORGE CAMPBELL HAY CENTENARY Celebration

Gaelic, Scots, Choral, Music/Vocal, Art, Photography workshops start in Tarbert, Loch Fyne on 2 May to celebrate poet George Campbell Hay's Centenary.

Facilitators include:

- * Mary Ann Kennedy
- * Joy Dunlop
- * Finlay Walls
- * Kenny Thomson.

Come and share your ideas and experience and create new art, photography and music inspired by Hay's poetry. Or why not learn Gaelic or study Scots poetry? All in preparation for the 5 December Centenary Celebration Concert and Exhibition in Tarbert, the Centenary book and the CD of poetry, art, photography and music.

Check out the website and Facebook page to find out more about celebrating the centenary of one of Argyll's most prolific poets.

Information 07511 797750 or gchcc@outlook.com
Follow us on www.facebook.com/GCHcelebration

Register via www.georgecampbellhay.com or gchcc@outlook.com



Dougie Maclean will be performing at Skerryvore Decade this May

Dougie announced for Skerryvore Decade

INTERNATIONALLY acclaimed musician Dougie MacLean will set Oban's Mossfield Stadium alight as the 'Caledonia' singer joins Skerryvore in marking their 10th anniversary with the 'gig of the decade'.

The special open air concert, Skerryvore: Decade, takes place on May 30, and will see the multi-award winning folk-rock band on stage alongside renowned acts such as Red Hot Chilli Pipers, Sharon Shannon, Skipinnish, Scott Wood Band, Trail West as well as a host of special guests including Jill Jackson, Mary Ann Kennedy and Stuart Cassells.

Dougie said: 'It's brilliant to be part of Skerryvore's 10th anniversary gig I've played festivals with the band but we've never shared a stage so it will be a completely unique performance. The line-up is cracking and those attending are in for an electric atmosphere with a few surprises thrown in - I'm looking forward to what's going to be a great night in Oban.'

Daniel Gillespie, founding member of Skerryvore and accordion player, said: 'Dougie is one of the most respected musicians across the globe and has an enviable career that has spanned across many decades. We get a fantastic response from fans when covering 'Caledonia' so can't wait to be finally sharing a stage with the man himself and giving those attending a real treat. 'We're really overwhelmed by the support we've had from fans attending the gig - from the original ticket allocation selling out in under 30 minutes and doubling the capacity, to those travelling from across the globe to help us celebrate - we can't thank people enough. 'We've also been told that this concert will bring in around £1million for the surrounding area through tourism, which is fantastic.'

The event is being organised in association with Bid4Oban and travel provider Calerdonian MacBrayne.

For more information, visit: www.skerryvoredecade.com

Celebration of food and drink at Corrie Cook School networking event

A NETWORKING event at Corrie Cook School at Craobh Haven saw business owners from throughout the area gather to learn, eat, chat and enjoy a day out at the centre.

More than 40 people joined the event in the five-star bed and breakfast and cook school with local businesses such as John's pies and Kate Lee's jams and chutneys being on show for visitors to taste.

Heart of Argyll tourism, which organised the event, said it was delighted with the number of people who came along to the event.

Joan and Barry have lived in the area for only a few years and were brought to the area by chance after their boat, the Jenny Wren, sailed them into the bay.

They now run a highly successful cook school

with tutors teaching skills such as bread baking, pie making and introduction to Scottish and international cookery.



DOUGH: Catherine McArthur who teaches bread making at Corrie Cook School 16_t14corrie4



PASTRY: John Bowan the pie man 16_t14corrie3



JAM: Kate Lee from Paradise Kitchen. 16_t14corrie2



CHEFS: Joan and Barry from Corrie Cook School. 16_t14corrie1

Robert Nairn Trio welcomed to Oban

OBAN Accordion and Fiddle club welcomed the Robert Nairn Trio to its monthly club night on Thursday, April 2, the last meeting of the season until October.

The band, consisting of Robert on the

accordion, his brother Alan on drums and Ross McPherson from Connell on the keyboard, played a selection of pipe, Gaelic and West Highland music.

Robert said on the night: 'I played here a

couple of years ago at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls and there was a great turnout, and is again tonight.

'There's a great traditional music scene in Oban so it's always a pleasure to play here.'



Alan Nairn, Robert Nairn and Ross McPherson of the Robert Nairn Trio 16_t15fiddle01

UISGE-BEATHA GU LEÒR WHISKY GALORE

Tionndadh ùr Gàidhlig de Whisky Galore, an nobhail le Compton MacCoinnich
Air atharrachadh airson àrd-ùrlar le Iain Fionnlagh MacLeòid
Air a stiùireadh le Guy Hollands

A new, Gaelic adaptation of the novel Whisky Galore by Compton MacKenzie
Adapted for the stage by Iain Finlay MacLeod
Directed by Guy Hollands

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ticketweb.co.uk/whiskygalore

The Corran Halls, Oban
22 April 2015, 7.30pm
Box Office: 01631 567333
ticketweb.co.uk/whiskygalore

Airson barrachd fiosrachadh, tadhalaihb air nationaltheatrescotland.com

For full details see nationaltheatrescotland.com

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Advertise in the Community Noticeboard for just £16.21 (plus VAT)

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

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

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Oban Times LEISURE TIMES

Oban Times LEISURE TIMES

Oban Times

Tobar Liosmor - an oral history of a living island recorded on film over the past two years: Helen Crossman

Saturday 18 April
Port Appin Hall
2.30pm

All welcome!
www.appinhistoricalsociety.co.uk

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

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The Rockfield Centre Pop-Up Event

Saturday 18th April
11am - 4pm

Drop in and see the brand new Rockfield short film, latest news on funding, take part in activities, tea, coffee and homebaking.

The Rockfield Huts, Stevenson Street, Oban

To advertise in our community noticeboard call 01631 568000

Entertainment Guide

Cinema

Oban Phoenix Cinema
Community owned and run
Tel: 01631 562905 www.obanphoenix.com

LISTINGS FOR 17TH APRIL - 23RD APRIL

A LITTLE CHAOS
Fri 17th: 15.40, 21.00 Sat 18th: 15.40, 21.00
Sun 19th: 15.40, 21.00 Mon 20th: 15.00, 17.40, 20.40
Tues 21st: 15.00, 17.40, 20.40 Wed 22nd: 15.00, 20.35
Thurs 23rd: 15.00, 17.30

SPONGEBOB: SPONGE OUT OF WATER
Fri 17th: 11.00, 13.20 (3D) Sat 18th: 11.00, 13.20 (3D)
Sun 19th: 11.00, 13.20 (3D)

CHAPPIE
Fri 17th: 18.30, 21.00 Sat 18th: 18.30, 21.00
Sun 19th: 18.30, 21.00 Mon 20th: 17.50, 20.30
Tues 21st: 17.50, 20.40 Wed 22nd: 20.40

I'M STILL HERE: ELAINE PAIGE
Thurs 23rd: 19.15

AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON
Thurs 23rd: 00.05 (3D), 15.30 (3D) 20.00

AVENGERS 3D
Wed 22nd: 17.40 (3D)

CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE WINTER SOLDIER 3D
Wed 22nd: 21.00 (3D)

CINDERELLA
Fri 17th: 11.10 Sat 18th: 11.10
Sun 19th: 11.10

FAST AND FURIOUS 7 (12A)
Fri 17th: 15.50, 18.20 Sat 18th: 15.50, 18.20
Sun 19th: 15.50, 18.20

FILM SYNOPSIS

A LITTLE CHAOS (12A) 117MINS
Reunited for the first time since Sense and Sensibility, Alan Rickman directs Academy Award® winner Kate Winslet in the romantic drama A Little Chaos. The year is 1682. Sabine De Barra (Ms. Winslet), a strong-willed and talented landscape designer, fulfils her chosen vocation in the gardens and countryside of France. One day, an unexpected invitation comes: Sabine is in the running for an assignment at the court of King Louis XIV (Mr. Rickman). Upon meeting with her, the King's renowned landscape artist André Le Nôtre (Matthias Schoenaerts) is initially disturbed by Sabine's distinctive eye and forward-thinking nature, but eventually chooses Sabine to build one of the main gardens at the Sun King's new Palace of Versailles.

SPONGEBOB: SPONGE OUT OF WATER (PG) 92MINS
Delightfully zany comedy for kids and grown-ups alike. Life is dandy in Bikini Bottom for SpongeBob Squarepants (Tom Kenny) and his friends Patrick (Bill Fagerbakke), Squidward (Rodger Bumpass), Mr. Krabs (Lancy Brown) and Sandy (Carolyn Lawrence). However, when the top-secret recipe for Krabby Patties is stolen, SpongeBob finds that he must join forces with perpetual adversary Plankton (Mr. Lawrence) and come ashore to battle a Finnish pirate named Burger Beard (Antonio Banderas), who has his own plans for the delicious delicacies.

CHAPPIE (15) 115MINS
Mind blowing entertainment from Hollywood's most visionary director, Neil Blomkamp. In the near future, a mechanized police force patrols the streets and deals with lawbreakers - but now, the people are fighting back. When one police droid is stolen and given new programming, he acquires the ability to feel and think for himself. While the robot, dubbed 'Chappie (Sharlto Copley)', puzzles out human behaviour, the authorities begin to see him as a danger to mankind and order; they will stop at nothing to ensure that Chappie is the last of his kind.

I'M STILL HERE: ELAINE PAIGE (U)
The incomparable Elaine Paige brings her sell-out Farewell Concert from the Royal Albert Hall to the big screen accompanied by a live set featuring special guests. Filmed for cinema, the concert features the BBC Concert Orchestra, with Elaine performing the highlights of her extraordinary 50 year career, including Memory, I Know Him so Well and As If We Never Said Goodbye. The evening will finish with a special live Q&A and an intimate performance from Elaine.

AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON (TBC) 142 MINS
Fun for the whole family as the long awaited explosive sequel finally arrives. When Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) jumpsstarts a dormant peacekeeping program, things go terribly awry, forcing him, Thor (Chris Hemsworth), the Incredible Hulk (Mark Ruffalo) and the rest of the Avengers to reassemble. As the fate of Earth hangs in the balance, the team is put to the ultimate test as they battle Ultron (James Spader), a technological terror hell-bent on human extinction. Along the way, they encounter two mysterious and powerful newcomers, Pietro and Wanda Maximoff. A special midnight premiere of the film on Wednesday is preceded by a double bill featuring the first movie outing for the colourful superhero squad 'Avengers Assemble' and 'Captain America: The Winter Soldier'.

AVENGERS 3D (12A) 143 MINS
Earth's mightiest heroes must come together and learn to fight as a team if they are to stop the mischievous Loki and his alien army from enslaving humanity.

CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE WINTER SOLDIER 3D (12A) 136 MINS
As Steve Rogers struggles to embrace his role in the modern world, he teams up with another super soldier, the black widow, to battle a new threat from old history: an assassin known as the Winter Soldier.

CINDERELLA (U)
After her father unexpectedly dies, young Ella (Lily James) finds herself at the mercy of her cruel stepmother (Cate Blanchett) and stepisters, who reduce her to scullery maid. Despite her circumstances, she refuses to despair.

FAST AND FURIOUS 7 (12A)
A dead man's brother seeks revenge on the Toretto gang.

Radio

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THIS WEEK'S LISTINGS

MONDAY:
0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Monday Morning With Andy and Stephen, 1100 Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Jim Edge, 1700 Drivetime With Danni Hay, 1900 Rosie's Highland Fling, 2000 John McLuckie's Show, 2100 David Cullen, 2200 American Jukebox with Michelle

TUESDAY:
0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show with Maggie May, 1000 Ken Hunter, 1200 Memories are Made of This with Ken Hunter, 1330 The Quiz with Danni Hay, 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 and Coll, 1900 Country Meets Rock with Len & Ken, 2100 Gordon's Grooves

THURSDAY:
0800 Maggie May's Carousel, 1100 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Gordon Covey, 1700 Drivetime with DJ Taz, 1900 Christine's Collection, 2100 Ann's Ceilidh, 2200 Margo Till Midnight

FRIDAY:
0800 Jean Ainsley Breakfast Show, 1000 Teeny and Tiny Show, 1300 CLYDE 2, 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:
0900 Maggie's Swingin' Sixties, 1000 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crowscher, 1330 CLYDE 2, 1800 Sports View with the Dream Team, 1900 Marcus, 2000 Dave Lewis

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



FUN OF THE FÈIS

OBAN

FÈIS LATHARNA is renowned as Scotland's biggest fèis and this year pulled the hat out of the bag by being able to engage more than 80 high school pupils in the group.

More than 150 young people registered for a week-long series of events to celebrate music, dance and the Gaelic language at the primary school campus in Oban, culminating in a concert on Friday.

Led by a number of internationally renowned tutors, the event always runs on the first full week of the Easter holidays. All pictures courtesy of West Loch Graphics.



Large numbers of high school pupils featured at Fèis Latharna



Fiddle workshops were a popular choice



Making beautiful music with the clarsach



Everyone is pulled together for the end of the week concert

FORT WILLIAM

THE EASTER holidays marked yet another successful Lochaber Fèis as 100 children gathered to improve their musical skills.

Workshops were held all last week in Banavie primary school and parents enjoyed a ceilidh and family dance on Wednesday night with performances from tutors. This year's fèis ended with the traditional final concert on Friday, also held in Banavie school.



The clarsach group



It is not just traditional instruments that feature at the fèis



The drums were a popular choice for youngsters attending



Shadow tutor Liam Stewart casts a watchful eye over Katie MacRae, 12. Liam, who came through the fèis himself, hopes to become a fully fledged tutor one day



Eight-year-old Anna MacKellar of Corpach practises in the spring sunshine



Tutor Alex MacLean with Laura Robertson and Donald Henderson



Young accordion players enjoy their workshop with tutor Andrew MacDonald, back left, and shadow tutor Liam Stewart



The fiddle group at Fèis Lochaber with tutor Angus Grant and shadow tutor Hannah MacRae

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Skye's radio takeover

THE BBC'S Gaelic airwaves will be subject to an island takeover next week, in celebration of Scotland's most iconic island and the 150th anniversary of the Isle of Skye's big-city 'home-from-home'.

National radio service BBC Radio nan Gàidheal will resound to the songs, stories, music and history of the island, to mark the milestone anniversary of the Glasgow Skye Association - originally set up to welcome the many hundreds of islanders who migrated to the city to work and study. Still a focus today for city-based islanders and those with connections to Skye, the GSA will launch a year of celebrations on April 21, 150 years to the day that the association was founded.

Glasgow City Council will honour the association that evening with a civic dinner in the City Chambers in George Square, attended by current and former members and office-bearers of the GSA, as well as friends from the city's Highland community and beyond. BBC Radio nan Gàidheal will be devoting its prime time hours to the Isle of Skye throughout the day with flagship programmes 'Mìre ri Mòir', 'Feasgar', 'Caitheam Ciùil' and 'Prògram Choinnich' all devoted to the music and history of the Isle of Skye and her city 'embassy' - the 'Glasgow Skye', as the association is affectionately known.

Association secretary and former president, Karen Campbell, originally from Harray in Skye, said: 'The Glasgow Skye is looking forward to welcoming fellow Highlanders and islanders to our celebrations across the year. The association still holds a special place in people's hearts, and we are thrilled that BBC Radio nan Gàidheal is highlighting our big year in this way.' Kenny MacIver, presenter of the prime time 'Prògram Choinnich' said: 'The Glasgow Skye has been at the very heart of Gaelic Glasgow for the past 150 years and it's an honour to be able to celebrate the association's place in Glasgow's and the island's past - and future.'

The award-winning Lewis-born presenter is looking forward to on-air banter based on traditional island rivalries. Several other events will also take place throughout the year, including the highlight of the association calendar, the Skye Gathering, a star-studded concert and dance, which traditionally takes place on the first Friday of December, this year in the Glasgow University Union. The gathering is a fixture for islanders, ex-pats and students alike and will feature many special guests in this anniversary year. Details of other anniversary events will be announced over the coming weeks. During its 150 years' existence, the Glasgow Skye Association has been involved in many social, political and cultural causes affecting 'Sgiathanaich' at home and further afield. Most significantly in recent years, the Glasgow Skye was in the vanguard of the campaign to secure Gaelic medium education in Glasgow, and, ultimately, throughout the country.

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Gamekeepers offer £1,000 reward to hare conservationists

A ROW has broken out between conservationists and gamekeepers over the culling of mountain hares.

This culminated earlier this week in the Scottish Gamekeepers Association offering a £1,000 reward if conservation organisations could show if management procedures on their lands produced more mountain hares than grouse moors did.

The group of 10 wildlife and conservation organisations have called on the Scottish government to impose a three-year ban on all mountain hare culling on grouse moors.

They want safeguards put in place for what they see as sustainable management to meet international conservation obligations.

Mountain hares are often found in good numbers on grouse moors with their large expanses of heather and are protected against indiscriminate methods of killing under the European Union's Habitats Directive.

But mountain hares are now routinely culled on a large scale on many grouse moors in order to protect red grouse against the tick-borne louping ill virus.

But conservationists maintain there is no scientific evidence to support this and that the tick is also spread via deer and sheep.

Duncan Orr-Ewing from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Scotland, one of the organisations calling for the ban, said: 'At present very little is known about their current numbers and population trends.'

'We also don't know what impact these large scale culls are having on mountain hares' wider conservation status which could mean that the Scottish Government may be in breach of its legally binding international EU obligations to this species.'

In December 2014, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), along with other partners, announced a three-year study to trial meth-

ods of measuring mountain hare numbers to better inform their monitoring, how to assess their population status, and identify appropriate management measures. As part of this, SNH called for a voluntary restraint of large scale mountain hare culls on grouse moors.

But Scottish gamekeepers have reacted angrily, calling it 'anti-grouse shooting publicity, gone wrong.'

'Allowing hare numbers to multiply uncontrolled over three years, as suggested, will have huge grazing impacts, including around forestry blocks, where culling currently takes place,' said a spokesman for the Scottish Gamekeepers Association.

'The numbers of tick, already a growing problem in the countryside, will escalate, endangering any bird that nests on the ground, not to mention the potential repercussions for human health. It will be bad for birds and bad for biodiversity.'

'Recent grouse moor visits by

SNH staff and scientists seeking to find suitable sites for population monitoring have shown high mountain hare numbers, even after the annual cull; something SNH will be able to verify.'

'The gamekeepers' group challenged the conservationists to prove they could manage their own land for mountain hares.'

'By adopting proper heather management, they could have the same numbers of mountain hares on their ground as are presently found on grouse moors, yet this is not done,' said the spokesman.

'We, therefore, are happy to offer a £1,000 reward to any of these groups which can prove that they can come close to producing the numbers of hares that are prevalent on grouse moors, even after gamekeepers have undertaken their controlled annual cull.'

'This is not a step we would normally take in any other circumstance - £1,000 is an awful lot of money to gamekeepers.'

Oban consulting team's newest recruit

TREE native Morvern MacArthur is the latest addition to the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) Consulting team in Oban. Having been brought up on her family's crofts at Ruig on the Isle of Tiree, Morven has a strong practical farming background with a particular interest in pedigree cattle breeding.

Her interest in agriculture was fostered further during her time studying at what is now the Oatridge campus of Scotland's Rural College and she continues to help out at home whenever she is back on the island.

'Morven is a welcomed addition to our team at Oban,' said senior agricultural consultant Niall Campbell.

'We are just starting our busiest period of the year, the annual IACS forms, so there is plenty to do over the next few months.'

Morven said: 'I am looking forward to meeting local farmers and crofters and helping with both IACS paper work and other technical issues. It is also great to get back to Argyll and closer to home.'

She joins Scotland's Rural College after a lengthy spell working with the Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate (SGRPID) in Portree. Her time with SGRPID allowed

her to develop a wide breadth of knowledge of the various subsidy schemes administered by SGRPID, their regulation and the cross compliance conditions attached, particularly with regard to animal identification and traceability.

She joins the team of seven offering advice and support to farmers and rural businesses across north Argyll and Lochaber.

Clients attending virtually every one of SAC Consulting's

locally-based centres across Scotland will see a new face or faces.

Of the new appointments, nine are business consultants while 10 more new staff will provide technical expertise and assistance with tasks such as soil sampling, data handling and mapping.

SAC Consulting provides technical, rural business and veterinary services to more than 11,000 customers in the islands as well as in the varying landscapes of the mainland.



CONSULTING: Morvern MacArthur of Tiree joins the Oban SAC Consulting office

MARKET REPORT

UNITED Auctions held its second spring sale of all classes' cattle, with 1,012 head catalogued, at Islay on April 11.

A good offering of stock in all ages was presented to a good ring side of regular mainland buyers.

The current continuous fall for prime cattle was reflected at the sale as the stronger cattle were harder to cash whilst longer keeping types held their values against last year's averages at the corresponding sale. Bulls sold to average £30.08 per kilo or £870.76 per head and Heifers levelled out at £26.88 per kilo and £783.14 per head.

Bulls sold to a top of £1,275 per head for Limousin crosses from Mr A Carmichael, Colibus whilst Corryarran Farm led the kilo prices in this section at 308 pence also for Limousin crosses.

Heifers sold to £1,145 also from Mr A Carmichael, Colibus for Limousin crosses and Neil McDonald, Bayview led the kilo prices for Limousin crosses at 285 pence.

Principal lots and prices:
Top prices per head:
Bulls: AX: £975 (7) - Craigs: £965 - Craigfad: £955 (7), £945 (9) and £935 (12) - Craigs: £925 - Tallant: £915 - Craigs: (7) and Octomore (16), BRX: £935 - Bayview, CHA: £1,175 (4), £1,135 and £1,075

(3) - Craigfad: £1,070 - Cladville: £1,055 (9), £1,035 (5), £1,015 and £995 (8) - Craigfad: £995 - Corry (3) and Ballmartin (3): £955 (2) - Gartacharra: £935 - Uiskentue: £925 (2) - Ballmartin, HERX: £935 - Kilchiaran, LIM: £1,275, £1,185, £1,175, £1,155 and £1,135 (2) - Colibus (Carmichael): £1,115 (3) and £1,105 - Uiskentue: £1,095 (2) and £1,075 (5) - Kilchiaran: £1,045 - Lossit (2), Ballmartin (6) and Balacava (2): £1,025 - Uiskentue: £1,015 - Starchmill: £1,010 (2) - Colibus: £995 - Uiskentue (4), Ballychattigan and Kilchiaran (10): £985 (8) - Ballmartin: £975 (2) and £900 (4) - Craigs, BRX: £975 - Lossit (2) and Carrabus: £965 (2) - Lossit: £955 - Craigfad: £945 (2) - Foreland Estate: £935 - Kilbride, Corry (2) and Ballmartin (6): £925 - Ballmartin: £905 (8) - Kilchiaran, LUING: £855 (11) - Duich, SH: £815 - Kilchiaran, SIM: £1,045, £995 and £935 (2) - Colibus (Sinclair): £915 (6) - Kilbride: £905 - Corry, Heifers: AX: £945 (4), £925 (3), £910 (3), £905 (2) and £900 (4) - Craigs, BRX: £795 - Bayview, BA: £885 (5) - Island Farm, CHA: £925 - Ballmartin and Eorabus (8), HER: £745 - Kilchiaran, LIM: £1,145 (2) - Colibus (Carmichael): £1,115 and £1,015 (3) - Uiskentue: £975 (2) - Kilchiaran and Corry: £945 (5) - Uiskentue: £925 - Ballmartin and Eorabus (2) £915 (12) and £905 (2) - Lossit.

SIM: £825 - Island. Top prices per kilo: Bulls: AX: 246p (3) - Callumkill Estate: 244p - Gartacharra (8) and Tallant (4): 241p (3) and 233p (2) - Ardenish: 230p (10), 227p (16), 225p (12) - Craigs: 224p (10) - Octomore: 222p - Tallant: 220p (7) and 219p (9) - Craigs, BRX: 231p - Bayview, CHA: 295p (2) - Carrabus: 272p and 261p - Tallant: 258p - Carrabus: 257p (3) - Eorabus: 253p (3) and 251p (2) - Ballmartin: 245p (5) - Gartacharra: 242p (8), 237p and 232p (7) - Craigfad: 224p (3) - Corry: 223p (5) - Craigfad: 222p - Callumkill Estate and Gartacharra (2), HER: 211p - Kilchiaran, LIM: 308p (2) - Corry: 293p - Duich: 284p (2) and 280p (2) - Lossit: 274p (2) - Kilchiaran: 273p - Grulibeg: 271p (2) - Tallant: 269p (20) - Duich: 268p - Carrabus: 267p - Carrabus: 263p (2) - Island: 260p - Carrabus (2), Corry (3) and Balacava (4): 257p (2) - Lossit: 253p (8) - Ballmartin: 252p (4) - Uiskentue: 251p (2) - Tallant: 250p (20) - Carrabus: 249p (5) - Balacava: 248p (5) and 247p (5) - Kilchiaran: 247p (3) - Kilbride: 246p - Balacava (2) and Ballmartin (6): 245p - Corry: 243p - Corry (2) and Ballmartin (7): 240p - Glengedale (Bell) and Balacava (2), LUING: 261p (11) - Duich, SH: 253p -

Kilchiaran, SIM: 252p - Uiskentue: 248p (2) - Kilbride: 237p (4) - Corry: 235p (6) - Cladville: 233p (3) - Kilchiaran: 232p - Carrabus and Kilchiaran (9), WBSH: 242p - Carrabus. Heifers: AX: 252p (3) - Craigs: 250p (4) - Callumkill Estate: 248p (4), 234p (7), 233p (7), 232p (8) and 231p (3) - Craigs, BRX: 231p - Bayview, BA: 226p (5) - Island, CHA: 276p (4) and 258p (3) - Carrabus: 258p - Craigfad: 253p (8) - Island: 245p (8) - Eorabus: 243p (6) - Island: 241p - Eorabus: 238p - Callumkill Estate: 234p (3) - Ballmartin: 231p (11) - Craigfad, LIM: 285p - Bayview: 274p (3) and 270p (10) - Tallant: 262p (8) - Duich: 261p (4) - Carrabus: 259p - Ballychattigan (2) and Lossit (2): 257p (3) - Duich: 254p (2) - Corry and Lossit (3): 253p - Carrabus (4): 250p - Corry (8) and Carrabus: 247p - Corry, Kilbride (4) and Kilchiaran: 245p (2) - Eorabus: 244p (17) - Island: 242p (3) - Kilchiaran: 241p - Octomore and Balacava (4): 240p - Corry, Lossit (9) and Balacava (10): 239p (12) - Lossit: 237p - Corry: 232p - Kilchiaran: SIM: 261p - Carrabus: 250p - Callumkill Estate: 244p (4) - Cladville: 238p - Callumkill Estate: 231p - Carrabus.

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ADVERTORIAL

Tenant demand continues to outstrip supply in Argyll... Good time to invest in a rental property?

ACCORDING to a report by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), in 1991 home ownership amongst 25-to-35-year-olds was around 65 per cent, while for 35-to-44-year-olds, the figure was 80 per cent. Now the figures are a little different having declined to less than 45 per cent and 65 per cent respectively.

So what is happening in the housing market? As with many commodities, it's all a question of supply and demand.

Demand: The fact that the average age of a first time buyer in the UK is

36, offers a clue. Many people are renting for longer in order to save a deposit. Historically, first time buyers could purchase a property with a five per cent deposit but now deposits are typically between 15 per cent and 20 per cent. Additionally, high demand in the rented sector has resulted in increased rents and tenants are finding it harder to save towards a deposit. Traditionally the UK has been a nation of home-owners, with buying your own home being a priority for many young people, but times are changing. With improvements in

the quality of property in the private rented sector, many are now choosing to rent long-term rather than scrimping and saving to buy a home of their own. Also, the days of 'a job for life' have gone and with increased competition for jobs, many are having to move quickly for job opportunities. Renting offers this flexibility and is becoming the preferred housing option for young people.

Supply: A decrease in the building of new homes following the crash has resulted in further

pressure on the housing market. Additionally, many of the ideal first time buyer properties are snapped-up by an increasing number of buy-to-let investors, thus removing that crucial first rung of the property ladder.

Buy-to-let investment has increased in recent years; with low interest rates making the return on savings less attractive, many are looking to property. Investors vary from experienced landlords expanding their portfolios, to parents purchasing a flat for their children whilst they are at uni-

versity, or those nearing retirement purchasing a rental investment to supplement their retirement income.

In summary, things are on the up in the private rented sector in Argyll. With improvements in the standard of rented property in the area, and many people choosing renting over buying, I think we are going to see a buoyant rented sector for the foreseeable future.

Thinking of investing in property? We can offer advice on becoming a landlord and the various considerations and regulations to be aware of



when purchasing a rental property. Sounds like a lot of hassle managing a rental property? Well, we can take care of all that for you. From sourcing the right tenants and preparing

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With the exception of listed and other protected buildings, any property can be transformed if you have sufficient funds, but you need to think carefully before spending more on your home than you can recoup should you decide to sell.

Get your home valued by estate agents and compare it to other properties in your area to see what scope there is to add further value.

As a rule of thumb, the more desirable the location of your home, the more it will be worth spending on improvements to it.

With moving costs taken into account, it can still be cheaper to have a makeover than to sell and move on but it's not all about money. The most important thing is that you like the way your home looks.

Firstly, photograph your home from all sides, examining the angle of the roof, the style of the windows and doors, or features that just seem out of context.

This will help you when you are consulting with any professionals you need to call on.

The UK construction sector increased by 7.4 per cent in 2014 to stand at £121.3 billion

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Property Reoover

THE SCOTTISH construction industry is on the up after a strong finish to 2014 and start of 2015, as the fear of home improvements in a recession begins to lift.

The UK construction sector increased by 7.4 per cent in 2014 to stand at £121.3 billion.

The first three quarters of last year in Scotland showed solid growth across nearly all sectors. There were particularly encouraging signs of recovery in house building.

The Scottish Construction Monitor, a quarterly survey of the membership of the Scottish Building Federation, showed that in the first quarter of 2015 industry confidence was at a new high - up 15 points compared to the previous quarter.

It was the sixth consecutive quarter where overall confidence within the Scottish construction industry had been rated positive and the highest confidence rating recorded since

the Construction Monitor began in 2008.

Commenting on the survey results, Scottish Building Federation managing director Vaughan Hart said: 'With these new survey results, it's great news that the Scottish industry was able to close 2014 on a new confidence high.

'That suggests that the industry's recovery is now happening.'

But having the confidence to build, or improve, your own home is one thing. Deciding how and what to do about it is another.

Beauty, they say, is in the eye of the beholder. But when it comes to creating a beautiful home it is all about proportions, the colour and texture of materials, window and door styles, architectural details and landscaping.

Each of these elements can be adapted and altered independently, often without having to apply for planning permission. Get the mix right and you can completely transform your home's appearance - and its value, too.



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Living on the edge: Isuzu anoints Blade model as permanent D-Max flagship

Following the success of last year's special edition model, Isuzu UK is including the Blade model as the permanent flagship in the D-Max premium pick-up range.

The special edition 2014 D-Max Blade model was a significant success for Isuzu, with twice as many as the original plan having to be built to satisfy demand and helping the brand to record annual sales of over 5,500 units.

Exclusive to the UK market, the 2015MY 4x4 double cab Isuzu D-Max Blade will be available from £25,999 (CVOTR) for the six-speed manual and £26,999 (CVOTR) for the five-speed automatic. Order books are open now with customer deliveries beginning later in the month. The Blade will be available in Cosmic Black as standard with the option of a new-for-2015 Pearlescent White paint finish.

The top-of-the-range Isuzu D-Max pick-up boasts a long list of unique style enhancements and technology upgrades to help it stand out from the crowd, some of which are new for 2015. Enhancements over the 2014 model include a 'Shadow' grey front grille and matching garnish, and a distinctive Cosmic Black finish to door mirror caps, door handles and tailgate handles. For added practicality a soft-close tail-gate damper is now fitted as standard.

Other standard features include, unique to the Blade, 18-inch, six-spoke 'Shadow' alloy wheels shod with 255/60 R18 Pirelli Scorpion Zero tyres, and customers can choose either an Aeroklas leisure canopy or a Black Mountain Top roller cover with rear style bar, both at no extra cost.

The interior also boasts premium and heated leather seats and a 'Shadow' grey headlining; bespoke side-sill scuff plates and unique carpet mats featuring 'Blade' graphics combine with Piano Black interior highlights to give occupants a premium welcome when they step into this top-spec D-Max.

Once seated inside, occupants will be greeted with a superior eight speaker audio and state-of-the-art Pioneer 6.1-inch touchscreen navigation system - complete with integrated rear safety camera technology - to provide premium infotainment, as well as greater driver convenience.

Under the bonnet, the Blade sports the same highly-efficient 2.5-litre twin-turbo diesel engine that powers every Isuzu D-Max in the range. Producing 163 PS and 400 Nm of torque, this unit enables the D-Max Blade to combine a class-leading towing capability of 3.5-tonnes (braked), while also returning an official fuel economy of 38.7 mpg (combined NEDC). Customers can choose from a six-speed manual or five-speed automatic transmission.

Like all new Isuzu models sold in the UK, the D-Max Blade comes with the company's pioneering five-year / 125,000-mile warranty.

Full details of the Isuzu D-Max Blade and Isuzu dealers can be found at www.isuzu.co.uk.



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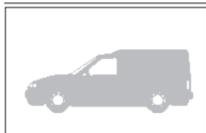


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Please send your C.V. to janewatson@inverlochy.co.uk

Farm Technicians

South Region
(Loch Linnhe)

Salary - £17,978- £22,808 plus overtime

We are currently looking to identify Farm Technicians to work in the South Region (Loch Linnhe).

The successful applicants will be required to carry out a variety of duties including feeding, net changing and other general farm tasks, and be willing to work flexibly to meet the demands of the job.

The positions are offered on a full time permanent basis working a 40 hour week on any five out of seven days.

Applications are invited from individuals who have a positive approach to this type of work and who are competent swimmers. Experience is certainly an advantage although training will be provided. A driving licence is essential.

If you are interested in applying for any of these vacancies, please submit an application in writing, by the closing date of Friday 24th April 2015 to: Gillian Dempster, Human Resources Assistant, Marine Harvest (Scotland) Limited, Stob Ban House, Glen Nevis Business Park, Fort William, PH33 6RX.



Temporary Seasonal Guides - £8.01

Oban Distillery Visitor Centre, a five star Scottish Tourist Board attraction and the home of Oban Single Malt Whisky, are looking to recruit Temporary Seasonal Guides to carry out tours of the Distillery for visitors.

We are looking to recruit confident individuals who possess a high standard of communication and customer service skills with the ability to work within a team.

We are recruiting for temporary full-time and part-time Sat/Sun roles.

Interested candidates should call Andrea Verrall, Brightwork on 0141 272 8104 or email your CV to andrea.verrall@brightworkltd.com. Interviews will be held locally.

Brightwork Ltd offers the services of an employment agency for permanent work and an employment business for temporary work.

THE MOORINGS HOTEL

BANAVIE, FORT WILLIAM PH33 7LY. 01397 772797

GENERAL MANAGER

An experienced General Manager is required to run a four star 32 bedroomed hotel in the Highlands.

The hotel caters for all types of functions including a café, bistro, fine dining restaurant, meetings and weddings, candidates are required to have a background in similar types of establishments along with a thorough knowledge of Licensing laws, EHO, H&S and other relevant legislative areas. A sound knowledge of the hospitality industry is essential.

SOUS CHEF AND CHEF DE PARTIE

Experienced chefs at Sous and chef-de-partie levels required to work within a busy kitchen brigade preparing bar meals, fine dining and function meals. Shift rota system.

Excellent salary offered plus share of tips.

Please contact - Brenda MacDonald on 01397 772797 or email bmacdonald@lochaberhotels.com

Tour Guide required

Lochawe for 2015 season,
Driving Licence req'd.

Contact derek.anderson@rullion.co.uk

TEMPORARY DISTRIBUTORS REQUIRED

Distributors required to deliver the BT Phone Book in and around:

- | | |
|---------|--------------|
| Oban | Soroba |
| Appin | Dalmally |
| Dunoon | Campbeltown |
| Rothsay | Lochgilthead |

Good rates of pay and flexible working hours.

If interested in delivering, call 01424 884177 or TEXT LOMOND to 07937 985963 Or visit www.bookyourroute.com

Oban Times RECRUITMENT

Carers Direct Limited are an independent provider specialising in care at home.

We are looking for Carers to work in the Oban Area.
Rate of pay from £8.50/hour - variable hours.
Alternate weekends essential. Car driver essential SVQ 2 preferred, training provided.
Application forms from 01631 569 550.
Registered with Scottish Care Commission.
Applications subject to PVG Scheme vetting.

J.M. BRECKENRIDGE
Driver/Storeperson
Oban
Apply to Mr C McDonald. Telephone 01631 563 711
Permanent full time position
Full clean driving licence required
• Good rates of pay

AGGREGATE INDUSTRIES
Coxswain
Glensanda Quarry, Oban
Attractive salary & comprehensive benefits

Glensanda is the largest granite-producing quarry in Europe. It runs 24 hours a day, year-round, has a staff of nearly 200 people and is unique in both its physical characteristics and its potential as a world centre of excellence.

As Coxswain you will take command and crew Aggregate Industries passenger vessels and supply barge.

Self-motivated, with a can do attitude, you will possess Boatmaster Tier 1 level 2 or Grade 2, have AB's ticket, ENG1 Medical and STCW certificates.

To apply, please email your CV and covering letter quoting Ref: 6406 to hr.deptuk@aggregate.com

We believe in Equal Opportunities for all employees.

CAMPBELL'S DAIRIES
LOCHGILPHEAD
require a
Van Driver / Storeman
based in Lochgilthead.
Tel 01546 605273

EUROPEAN CRUISE SERVICE
OBAN CRUISE OPERATIONS - LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

We are seeking an enthusiastic team player to assist in coordinating shore excursion services for cruise ships visiting Oban. Our ideal candidate must possess excellent local knowledge, organisational skills, interpersonal skills, communicate effectively, and be flexible. Proficiency in MS Office. Previous tourism and/or customer service experience is preferred.

Initially this will be on an occasional basis only and will involve pier side work.

Email CV and cover letter by Friday 17 April 2015 to: ralexander@europeancruise.no
Job description available upon request.

S D MacDougall
Mechanic required for our busy workshop, servicing all makes of cars and light commercials, must hold full driving licence, have own tools and work with minimum supervision.
5 day week Mon- Fri 8.30-5.
For more details contact Mr Keith Astles on 01631 566502/ 566470

Staff Required for Season
Crinan Hotel
Reception, Bar, Coffee Shop,
www.crinanhotel.com
reservations@crinanhotel.com
Tel. 01546 830261

51% of people turn to their local newspaper first when looking for a new job.
Regional Press

Oban Times RECRUITMENT Oban Times RECRUITMENT Oban Times RECRUITMENT

Craobh Haven & Carradale

Farm Technicians

Salary £17,978 - £22,808 plus overtime

We currently have vacancies for Farm Technicians at our seawater sites working out of Craobh Haven and Carradale. The positions are offered on a full time, permanent basis.

The successful applicants will be required to carry out a variety of duties including feeding, net changing and other general farm tasks, and be willing to work flexibly to meet the demands of the job. The positions will require working a 40 hour week on any five out of seven days.

Applications are invited from individuals who have a positive approach to this type of work and who are competent swimmers. Experience is certainly an advantage although training will be provided. A current driving licence is essential.

If you are interested in applying for this vacancy please submit an application in writing, by the closing date of Friday 24th April 2015 to: Gillian Dempster,

Human Resources Assistant, Marine Harvest (Scotland) Limited, Stob Ban House, Glen Nevis Business Park, Fort William, PH33 6RX.



Enable Scotland (L.T.W)
Now Recruiting 1 x 20 Hour Post Kintyre Area

For Further Information & Online Applications go to: enablescotlandjobs.org.uk/

A kind, enthusiastic and insightful individual is sought to join a small team of carers to support an elderly person with dementia in their own home, within 20 minutes of Lochgilphead.

Role involves light domestic duties; food preparation and prompting to eat; care of cat and dog and companionship. Will need to be able to handle a small boat as short boat ride necessary. Experience desirable, but training and guidance available. References essential.

Apply in writing enclosing CV to Box No 6 Oban Times, Lochavullin Estate, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

Glencruitten Golf Club has vacancies for the following positions:

Assistant Greenkeeper for April - September, to assist greenkeeper and maintenance of the golf course

Apprentice Greenkeeper - full time position with training and college release

Bar Staff - regular part-time work, mainly weekends

Applications to Glencruitten Golf Club, Glencruitten Road, Oban PA34 4PU

CLEANER

required for Saturday changeovers at holiday home near Tayvallich.

Would suit 2 people. £80 per clean.

Please contact Anna 07919 584413 or Julie 01309 651202

ALIENERGY
Argyll, Lomond & the Islands Energy Agency
Home Energy Assessor

Freelance work available but short term contracts considered

Home Energy Assessors required in Bute, Mull/Iona and Islay/Jura to provide tailored energy advice to householders; conduct energy surveys and sign up householders for insulation measures through the Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland Area Based Scheme or help them to access wider support to reduce fuel bills.

A minimum of the City & Guilds Energy Awareness qualification is required.

Post involves interacting with householders in their own homes on an appointment basis. Candidates will attend ALIENERGY training covering home energy assessments, insulation measures and the provision of quality energy advice.

Freelance hourly rate: £11.87

Closing Date: 24th April 2015

Contact Rachel McNicol for more information and an application form: rachel@alienenergy.org.uk 07860 774 929

Scottish Sea Farms Ltd

Scottish Sea Farms is the UK's leading producer of premium quality Atlantic salmon specific for UK and International markets. We operate a unique training and personal development programme designed to add to the skills of our staff and enable rapid career progression.

We currently have the following job opportunities available within our Loch Kishorn Marine Farm in Strathcarron.

Senior Husbandry Person

The successful candidate will have at least 2 years practical salmon farming experience and must be able to demonstrate competence across a wide range of farming disciplines including: health and safety awareness, fish health assessment, cage and moorings maintenance, feeding optimisation and skilled seamanship. You will have the drive to succeed, a well-developed sense of pride and the ability to lead and inspire others. Gifted communication skills are essential, as is a proactive ability to guide correct decision-making. Not surprisingly we are looking to invest in you and you'll take on many of the modules designed for a Management Trainee. A commercially endorsed Day Skipper qualification (or equivalent) is essential for this position.

Salary expectation: £23,250-£26,250 plus £800 for Specialist role, 1:3 duty weekend allowance, bonus, pension scheme and entry into our gym and cycle to work memberships.

Marine Husbandry Personnel

You should be able to demonstrate competence across a wide range of skills including fish health monitoring, stock appetite assessment, boat handling skills, feeding system and boat maintenance whilst being proactive in health and safety. Above all you should have the drive and ambition to improve your career through training and development. A formal boat qualification would be desirable.

Salary expectation: £18,000 - £21,750, 1:3 duty weekend allowance, bonus pension scheme and entry into our gym and cycle to work memberships.

If you have a full UK driving licence and are interested in finding out more, please contact Claire Scott on 01786 445521 or email claire.scott@scottishseafarms.com for an application pack. Closing date: **Friday 1st May 2015**

Scottish Sea Farms Makes it Happen!

Part Time Weekend Technician
Machrihanish

We currently have a vacancy for an individual to work at weekends to assist with the weekend workload at our wrasse hatchery at Machrihanish, near Campbeltown. The hours would be 8-10 hours split between Saturday and Sunday mornings. The duties would include helping permanent staff with live feed culture, broodstock management, feeding and general husbandry work as and when directed.

The hourly rate would be £8.64. No experience is needed as full aquacultural training will be given but an interest in fish would be appreciated.

If you are interested in applying for this vacancy, please submit an application in writing to Paul Featherstone, Marine Harvest Scotland Ltd, Lossit, Machrihanish, Argyll PA28 6PZ.

WTS Wind Towers (Scotland)
 Tuir Ghaoithe (Alba)

MULTI-SKILLED MAINTENANCE ENGINEER/TECHNICIANS (ELECTRICAL BIAS)

We are looking to recruit two experienced multi skilled maintenance engineers/technicians to join the team.

- must be apprentice trained or minimum HNC level qualified in Mechanical or Electrical discipline
- Electrical qualification either (16th or 17th Edition) preferable

For further information on these positions, please visit our website www.windtowersScotland.com/careers

To apply, send your CV and covering letter to hr@windtowersScotland.com or alternatively Wind Towers Scotland Ltd, PO Box 9263, Campbeltown, Argyll, PA28 6WA.

Closing date is 26th April 2015.

An Agent for NFU Mutual

Customer Services Adviser
 EDOE | Full time | Campbeltown

NFU Mutual, a leading general insurer and financial services company, has been serving the rural community for over 100 years. As their local agency office in Campbeltown, we deliver their award winning service and sell their product range across our region, championing the honest, personal approach to customer service they're famous for.

As a Customer Services Adviser within our small team, you'll play a key role in the success of an expanding local business, ensuring the office runs like clockwork and our customers are always happy. Providing exceptional administrative support, you'll handle enquiries, paperwork, sales tasks and potentially some bookkeeping admin, with a 'can-do' proactive enthusiasm. The chances are, you'll have already worked in a similar role, so will be no stranger to applying an excellent telephone manner and a flexible, people-orientated approach to everything you do. Above all though, you'll relish the challenge of being part of a truly customer-focused, ambitious team. In return, you can expect full training in a friendly and supportive environment.

If you like the sound of growing your sales career, email your CV to Rhona_Millar@nfumutual.co.uk or call 01586 552 428 for more information. Closing date: 26th April 2015.

Please note you'll be employed by an Agent of NFU Mutual and not by NFU Mutual directly.

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OUT NOW! Available from most retailers and tourist outlets

FREE

Oban Times RECRUITMENT

Trainee Housing Officer
 £19,672 - £20,859
 Post Graduate Study Opportunity
 Dunoon Ref: CMC00521

Janitor/Cleaner (Part Time)
 £13,697 - £14,970 pro rata
 Isle of Lismore Ref: CME35448
 This post is for 4 hours per week on a term time basis.

☎ 01546 604334

Closing date for both posts: 1 May 2015.
 To apply visit our website www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs

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 between the hours of 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the SERVICE POINT, LOCHABER HOUSE, HIGH STREET, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6EL and online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Any 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
15/01113/FUL	Land NE of Corrie View, 1 Garvan, Fort William	Proposed dwelling house
15/01139/S42	127 High Street, Fort William	Vary condition 2 of 12/02827/FUL to allow use between 8.30am to 6.00pm Monday to Sunday

Time period for comments is 14 days
 ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
 Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

Argyll Bute COUNCIL
 Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

PLANNING

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, Monday to Friday 9am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 5pm. On Wednesdays, the Customer Service Points will open at 10am. At the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
15/00458/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse and garage	Land North of Highfields Ardturn Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Bunnasin Isle of Mull
15/00748/PP	Change of use of shop (class 3) to dwellinghouse (class 9)	Butcher's Shop Scarinish Isle of Tiree Argyll and Bute PA77 6UH	Tiree Area Office
15/00770/PP	Alterations to fenestration and external finishing materials	Kilbowie Residential Education Centre Gallanach Road Oban Argyll and Bute	Oban Area Office
15/00849/PP	Installation of access road.	Quarry Oban Airport North Connel Oban Argyll and Bute PA37 1SW	Oban Area Office
15/00870/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and formation of new vehicular access.	Land East of Ard Mhor Guest House Ardmore Road Salen Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA72 6LJ	Sub Post Office Aris Isle of Mull
15/00903/PP	Formation of new vehicular access (part retrospective).	Land North of Ardstruan Croft Road Oban Argyll and Bute	Oban Area Office

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
15/00574/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and formation of new vehicular access.	Land to West of Portnacroish Portnacroish Appin Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Leidaig
15/00788/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and detached garage, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Land South Kinlochlich House Appin Argyll and Bute PA38 4BD	Sub Post Office Leidaig

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 1A Manse Lochgilphead Brae PA31 8RD, 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. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
15/00665/PP	Alterations and extension to existing hotel and formation of new tourism lodges.	Machrie Hotel Port Ellen Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Port Ellen
15/00789/PP	Renewal of planning permission 12/00524/PP - Erection of dwellinghouse and installation of septic tank	Land South of Lenanbue Glen Road Bridgend Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute PA44 7PZ	Sub Post Office Bridgend

Argyll and Bute council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: <https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk>

The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Central Validation Team, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead PA31 8RD.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at the above address and at all Council Libraries.

Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website.

Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered.

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL give notice that they have made **The Highland Council (A82 Trunk Road and Other Roads, Inverness Area) (Temporary Prohibitions of Traffic and Temporary Speed Restrictions During The 'Etape Loch Ness' Cycling Event) Order 2015** to enable the following prohibitions or restrictions to be introduced:

- To temporarily prohibit any motor vehicle from:
 - Travelling in any direction on the A82 Dalnottar - Inverness Trunk Road between its junction with Bught Road, Inverness, and its junction with the C1118 General Booth Road, from 05:40hrs to 07:15hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on the A82 Dalnottar - Inverness Trunk Road between its junction with the C1118 General Booth Road, Inverness, and its junction with the A831 Drumadrochit - Cannich - Beaully Toll Road, from 05:40hrs to 08:05hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on the A82 Dalnottar - Inverness Trunk Road between its junction with the A831 Drumadrochit - Cannich - Beaully Toll Road and its junction with the private road leading to Urquhart Castle, from 06:40hrs to 08:15hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on the A82 Dalnottar - Inverness Trunk Road between its junction with the private road leading to Urquhart Castle and its junction with the U1766 Dalcataig Road, Invermoriston, from 06:20hrs to 09:05hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on the A82 Dalnottar - Inverness Trunk Road between its junction with the U1766 Dalcataig Road, Invermoriston, and its junction with the B862 Fort Augustus - Whitebridge - Torness - Dores - Inverness Road, from 07:05hrs to 09:35hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on the B862 Fort Augustus - Whitebridge - Torness - Dores Inverness Road between its junction with the A82 Dalnottar - Inverness Trunk Road and its junction with the B852 Dalcrag Bridge - Foyers - Inverfargigaig - Dores Road, from 07:15hrs to 10:55hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on the B852 Dalcrag Bridge - Foyers - Inverfargigaig - Dores Road between its junction with the B862 Fort Augustus - Whitebridge - Torness - Dores - Inverness Road and its junction with the U1177 Foyers Road, from 07:45hrs to 11:05hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on the B852 Dalcrag Bridge - Foyers - Inverfargigaig - Dores Road between its junction with the U1177 Foyers Road and its junction with the B862 Fort Augustus - Whitebridge - Torness - Dores - Inverness Road, from 07:50hrs to 11:55hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in a northbound direction on the B862 Fort Augustus - Whitebridge - Torness - Dores - Inverness Road between its junction with the B852 Dalcrag Bridge - Foyers - Inverfargigaig - Dores Road and Holm Roundabout, from 07:45hrs to 12:25hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in a northbound direction on the B862 Fort Augustus - Whitebridge - Torness - Dores - Inverness Road between Holm Roundabout and its junction with the B861 Inverness - Leys - Inverarnie Road (Ness Bridge Junction), from 08:45hrs to 12:40hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on Ness Walk, Inverness, between its junction with Young Street and its junction with Ardross Terrace, from 08:45hrs to 12:40hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on Ardross Terrace, Inverness, between its junction with Ness Walk and its junction with Bishops Road, from 08:45hrs to 12:40hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on Bishops Road, Inverness, between its junction with Ness Walk and its junction with Ardross Terrace, from 18:00hrs on Saturday 25th April to 15:00hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on Ness Walk Upper, Inverness, between its junction with Bishops Road and its junction with Ballifery Lane, from 05:30hrs to 08:00hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on Ness Walk Upper, Inverness, between its junction with Ballifery Lane and its junction with Bught Road, from 18:00hrs on Saturday 25th April to 08:00hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on Bught Road, Inverness, between its junction with Ness Walk Upper and its junction with Bught Avenue, from 18:00hrs on Saturday 25th April to 08:00hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
 - Travelling in any direction on Bught Road, Inverness, between its junction with Bught Drive and its junction with the A82 Dalnottar - Inverness Trunk Road, from 05:40hrs to 07:15hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
- To temporarily restrict any motor vehicles from exceeding a speed limit of 30 miles per hour on:
 - The B862 Fort Augustus - Whitebridge - Torness - Dores - Inverness Road between its junction with the B852 Dalcrag Bridge - Foyers - Inverfargigaig - Dores Road and Holm Roundabout, from 07:45hrs to 12:25hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.
- To temporarily restrict any motor vehicles from exceeding a speed limit of 20 miles per hour on:
 - The B862 Fort Augustus - Whitebridge - Torness - Dores - Inverness Road between Holm Roundabout and its junction with the B861 Inverness - Leys - Inverarnie Road (Ness Bridge Junction), from 08:45hrs to 12:40hrs on Sunday 26th April 2015.

The Order, which is required to ensure the safe passage of participants taking part in the 'Etape Loch Ness' Cycling Event, will only have effect in relation to such part or parts of the lengths of road as are indicated by the appropriate traffic signs.

Emergency Services' Vehicles, being used in an emergency for Ambulance, Coastguard, Fire Brigade or Police purposes, and Vehicles employed to ensure the safety of the Event participants are exempt from the restrictions detailed in the Order.

Vehicles driven under escort are exempt from the restrictions detailed in the Order.

Special Forces' Vehicles, when driven by a member of the Special Forces in response to a national security emergency, are exempt from the restrictions detailed in the Order.

A copy of the Order and this Notice will be available for viewing at the following address: Highland Council, Community Services, 94 Driebught Road, Inverness, IV2 3QN

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATION

Mr A J Colthart
 4 Kinlochlich, Lismore & Appin
 0309 ha - Amenity Ground
 4.86.55397

Comments can be made to the Crofting Commission by any member of the crofting community within the locality of the land, within 28 days of the date of this newspaper.

Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW or info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk

DECROFTING DIRECTION ISSUED

N D A Macalister Hall
 Torrisdale Glen, Saddell & Skipness
 0.26 ha - Existing house site
 4.86.53397
 Conditions: 3(a), 4

Conditions

(3) Complete enclosure of the land with a stock proof fence within 4 months of:
 (a) the date of the direction
 (4) That fence shall be maintained in good order and repair by each successive owner or occupier of the land.

Any person with an interest in the application may appeal against a decision to the Scottish Land Court within 42 days of the date of this advert.

NOTICE TO NATALIE RODGERS
 Court Ref. no. B9/15

An action has been raised in Fort William Sheriff Court by Santander UK plc, a Company incorporated under the Companies Acts (Company No. 2294747) with their Registered Office at 2 Triton Square, Regents Place, London, Pursuer calling as a Defender Natalie Rodgers whose last known address was 17 Polmona, Claggan, Fort William, PH33 6QH. If Natalie Rodgers wishes to defend the action she should immediately contact the Sheriff Clerk at High Street, Fort William, PH33 6EE from whom the service copy initial writ may be obtained. If she fails to do so decree may pass against her when the case calls in court on 14/05/2015.

Robert Aberdein, Aberdein Considine, 7-9 Bon-Accord Crescent, Aberdeen, AB11 6DN, Solicitor for the Pursuer

First Registration of Croft

David A MacKenzie has registered their croft 2 Bunavullin, Bunavullin, Morvern also known as 2 Bonnavoulin, Bonnavoulin Morvern 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 1st January 2016. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C1001.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

Argyll and Bute Council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: <https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk>

The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Central Validation Team, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead PA31 8RD.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at the above address and at all Council Libraries.

Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website.

Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered.

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BIRTH



DELIN - Steven Delin and Eilidh Hopkin would like to announce the birth of their son, Connor Delin, Tuesday, April 14. A grandchild for Joe and Barbara in Kessock, Josie and Michael, The Summit, Oban.



FORTEITH - Steven and Elaine (née Nicholson) are delighted to announce the arrival of their daughter Freya Beth on March 19, 2015, a sister for Niamh. Many thanks to Oban midwives and RAH Paisley.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

CANNON - MACDONALD - On April 19, 1965 in Salen Parish Church, Isle of Mull by Rev J.F. Macdonald, Roger to Mabel.

DEATH

BLACKBURN - Felicity Cynthia - On Sunday, April 12, 2015 in Belford Hospital, Fort William after a short illness. Funeral at St Mary's RC Church, Arisaig at 2pm on Saturday, April 18 and afterwards at Rosheven family burial ground. Family flowers only and donations if desired to Macmillan Nurses and Belford Hospital Nurses.

BLAIR - Peacefully, at home, surrounded by her family on Monday, April 13th, 2015, Dorothy Ann Blair MBE, aged 89 years, loving wife of John Blair, a dearly loved mother of John and Alan, also a loving and much loved mother-in-law, granny, great-granny and auntie. The family would like to thank the medical staff of Kinlochleven Medical Practice, Community Nurses, Crossroads, Care Assistances, Home Help and Carr Gomm for their caring services. Thanks also to all friends and associates for the many messages of support by telephone calls, visits and cards. Funeral service will be held tomorrow (Friday), April 17, 2015 at 1.30 pm in Kinlochleven Parish Church; thereafter to Kinlochmore Cemetery. Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired for Save the Children may be given at the service or forwarded to John McLellan Funeral Directors, Dudley Road, Fort William.

RAINNIE - Peacefully at Lorn & Islands Hospital, Oban on March 23, 2015, in his 90th year, Donald Rennie, beloved husband of Leah, a very dear father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He will be very sorely missed by all.

PURDEN - Precious memories of our son Angus who left us April 22, 1998 aged 25. We do not need a special day. To bring you to our minds the days we do not think of you are really hard to find. In life we loved you dearly and beyond we love you still. In our hearts forever son. - Love Mum and Dad xxx

PURDEN - In loving memory of our dear brother and Uncle Angus. Time may pass and fade away. But precious thoughts and memories stay. - Frances and Andrew and Katie and William xx

RAE - In loving memory of Bill, who died April 19, 2012. Loved and missed. - Chrissie, Angus and Lindsay.

STEELE - Precious memories of our sister Morven, who died April 20, 1984. - Morag and Alan.

TIMMS - Treasured memories of a dear dad and loving grandad Arthur, who passed away April 17, 1984. Also remembering all other loved ones. Time may pass and fade away. But loving memories stay for ever. - Love Catherine, Lachie and family.

YOUNG - The family of the late Mary Young would like to express sincere thanks to family, friends and neighbours for their overwhelming kindness and support by way of cards, calls and warm words. Special thanks to Catriona at Hoey's Funeral Directors for her support. To John Roberts for his thoughtful and uplifting words at the graveyard service on such a wild weather day. Thanks to Anne Robertson and friends from across Luing who contributed to and helped at the funeral take at Toberonochy Village Hall. Finally thanks to all those who paid their last respects and so generously donated £400 to Parkinsons UK and North Argyll Carers Centre.

MEMORIALS

BUCHANAN - Willie Gerard whose 4th anniversary is on April 23. Loved and greatly missed by all the family in Connel, Morar and Glasgow. Think of you everyday.

- Ann, Mary, Katy, Hugh, Ali and Jack.

CAMPBELL - In loving memory of Linda, a dear wife and mum who died on April 14, 2007. In our thoughts every day. - William and William.

CAMPBELL - In loving memory of my dear father and Grandpa, Neil Cowan Campbell, formerly of Tirahoi, who died on April 21, 2012. Forever in our thoughts. - Inserted by his loving daughter Ann, Angus, Lorne, Gordon and Gillian, Ardness, Tirahoi, Bunnassan, Mull.

CURRIE - In loving memory of Caroline, died April 17, 1992. You are not just a memory or part of the past. You are ours to remember. As long as life lasts. - Mum, Dad and family.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of my dear husband Donald Angus MacDonald who passed away April 23, 2012. Always in my thoughts. - Ruth xx.

MACINTYRE - In loving memory of our dear parents Duncan, died December 19, 1981 and Betsy April 16, 1988, also remembering since, departed family members now at peace.

We cannot think of them as dead, who walk with us no more, along the path of life we tread, they have but gone before. Ours are they by ownership no time or death can free, for God gave to love and keep for all eternity.

- Inserted by the family late of Kilvaree, Connel and latterly Cruachan, Strathyre.

MACLEOD - In loving memory of my dear husband, our dad, father-in-law and grandpa John Alick, who passed away April 13, 2014. Dearly loved and sadly missed.

- Priscilla and family. Treasured memories of Mary Kate, darling wife of Ronnie, a loving mum, adored granny, a dear sister, sister in law and aunt who died suddenly in Australia on April 19, 2011. R.I.P.

Forever loved and sorely missed. - Your loving family in Australia, Skipton, Fort William, Benbecula and South Uist.

PROSSER - MAXWELL - In memory of my daughter Yvonne, passed away April 6, 1989. Angel wings upon the clouds. Your body softly sleeps. Hush now little princess. No more tears you have to weep.

- Daddy.

PURDEN - Precious memories of our son Angus who left us April 22, 1998 aged 25. We do not need a special day. To bring you to our minds the days we do not think of you are really hard to find. In life we loved you dearly and beyond we love you still. In our hearts forever son. - Love Mum and Dad xxx

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Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS. Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS. Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS.

Obituary - Malcolm William Macdonald July 17, 1946 - October 16, 2014

MALCOLM Macdonald's life began in Ardhchattan Manse. His father was the Rev Alexander Macdonald, and his mother Mrs Macdonald, Sandy, and he had two younger sisters, Drina and Lorna.

He spent most of his life on the north shore of Loch Etive, in Chapel House, after the early death of his father and then later at Ardachy Farm, where he lived for more than 40 years.

Malcolm was a talented student at Oban high school and later at Aberdeen Agricultural College.

A keen shinty player and academically gifted, he worked hard and enjoyed life, passing out of the college as one of the top students of his year.

He completed his training with a year's study of farm management. Practical work was undertaken on the Castle Fraser estate in Aberdeenshire before returning to Argyll, in October 1969. Shortly afterwards he took up the reins as farm manager of Ardachy Farm.

In 1969 he married May and together they had a long and happy marriage. Their two children, Sheena and James, completed the picture and there was further joy when they both married and five grandchildren arrived.

Malcolm was, above all

else, a terrific family man. Much of his short retirement was spent with his grandchildren, who called him Seanaire, the Gaelic for granddad.

Malcolm was well known within the community, generous with his many skills and a natural leader.

He could guide and direct with a gentle authority, always sympathetic to those less able or fortunate than himself and he offered help with an easiness of manner.

He always worked hard for local causes close to his heart and was at various times chairman of the Oban Mart, session clerk of Ardhchattan Kirk and a past master of the Tainuult Masonic Lodge.

These posts sum up his interests. A mason for most of his adult life, his energy and drive were put to good use and it remained one of his chief interests to the very end.

Brought up as a son of the manse, Malcolm remained true to his religion.

He served the church well, always with May's support and with his intelligence could discuss the various challenges of today's church debate with a sound knowledge and general openness of mind.

Farming was his profession, but also his passion and he was well respected in all aspects of farming,



Malcolm William Macdonald

He also enjoyed the social side of farming, judging and attending shows and sales throughout the country, where he was a well-known figure throughout the farming community.

Malcolm will be missed by many across Argyll and further afield. Our sympathy goes to his family. ST

The Oban Times

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Obituary - Donald Cameron June 24, 1923 - March 10, 2015

DONALD Cameron was raised at the remote Swordland croft beside Loch Morar in the Western Highlands and was one of eight children.

In 1940 at the age of 17 in World War II, he signed up for the army and trained at Achnacarry, Spean Bridge in the Highlands to join the new elite force of Paratroopers.

The training with commandos involved beach landings under live fire and survival skills on the land, which he had learned as a boy on the croft.

The Allied Invasion of Normandy on June 6 1944 during the Second World War required the capture of Benouville Bridge behind the German beachhead defences across the strategic Caen Canal in Normandy, France. Donald Cameron was one of Lord Lovat's Scouts who parachuted in after the Horsa gliders had landed from the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry. The object of this action was to prevent German armour from crossing the bridge and attacking the eastern flank of the Allied landings at Sword beach.

Benouville Bridge was secured by the Paratroopers and subsequently renamed 'Pegasus Bridge' in honour of the shoulder emblem worn by the British airborne forces, which is the flying horse 'Pegasus'.

Donald Cameron's later army service included 80 parachute jumps, the liberation of Hitler's Belsen concentration camp and service in Palestine.

After the war Donald returned to the West Highlands and rarely spoke of his experiences.

The medals were never on display and he remained reticent about his bravery. He joined Cameron of Lochail's estate as a shepherd and lived beside Loch Arkaig.

He had returned to look after sheep at Achnacarry Castle where he had been trained in combat skills as a Paratrooper in 1940.

His skill as a shepherd was legendary and he worked across Lochaber. He was the old crofter who would often speak to tourists on the Ben Nevis tourist path when his flock were up Glen Nevis.

Emma Briddick from Fife had been working at an envelope factory which supplied the British Army in an era before internet dating. It was the custom for the girls to slip a note of their

details in the envelopes for the troops. On return from the war the young shepherd from Achnacarry walked to Spean Bridge station in the Commando tradition and arranged to meet his blind date under the clock at Edinburgh Waverly Station.

He married Emma before eventually taking over the family croft at Swordland. The beautiful, remote Swordland croft is on the hill above Loch Morar with no road access and requires a boat for transport.

He lived between Caol and the croft with sheep in various locations. They had three children, Angus, Marion, and Catherine.

Angus tragically died of a brain tumour at the age of 31 with his parents nursing

him at home. Donald lost his Catholic faith after this personal tragedy but regained it in later years after caring for Emma in ill health until she died.

They had just celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Donald dodged medical bullets in his 70s and believed more in the health benefits of chasing sheep in his 80s than taking medication.

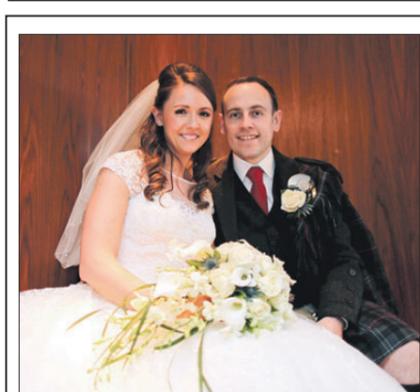
Donald remained the definitive, quiet, local hero who was still caring for his sheep and training his collie dogs at the age of 90.

Donald died peacefully in his own bed in the care of his daughters and Jake the collie dog. The family will continue the Swordland croft. JD, Fort William.



RIGHT REVEREND: Kevin Pearson, Bishop of Argyll and The Isles, prepares the Paschal Candle for lighting at the Easter dawn service at McCaig's tower with the congregation of St John's Cathedral and guests.

WEDDING



McLennan - CRAIG Cameron McLennan, son of Cameron and Angela McLennan, Lochgilphead, married Lyndsey Alexandra Craig, daughter of Catherine and Ian Craig, Newton Mearns, Glasgow at Cameron House, Loch Lomond, on Saturday 21st February 2015. A truly fantastic day was had by all.

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Saints' title hopes dented as they lose at home to Thorn

'You can't expect to win games giving away the goals we did today'

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SAFL Premier Division	

SAINTS faltering league title defence looks to have finally hit the buffers after a frustrating afternoon against Thorn Athletic on Saturday (April 11).

Playing on the well-prepared grass surface at Glencruitten for the first time since November, Saints produced much the better football against their great rivals from Johnstone but were undone by three cheaply conceded goals from corner kicks.

Saints' resources were stretched by the non availability of Lewis Cameron, Daniel Cassells, Allan MacKay, Scott Maitland and Roy McLuckie.

Ally McKerracher returned after missing the previous match at St Joseph's FP and PJ Sinclair joined the squad for the first time this season.

In the fourth minute Thorn played a long ball up to Craig McGlone just inside the Saints box, the Thorn striker was easily dispossessed by Dougal Graham however Dougal misplaced his pass out of defence and Thorn forced their first corner of the match with a long range shot from Niall Kennedy deflecting off Alex Craik.

Paul Young, so often in the past Thorn's main threat with his excellent dead ball deliveries, flighted over an inswinger from the right which gave the unmarked Craig McGlone a simple header from inside the six-yard box.

Two minutes later Thorn won another corner kick, again from a deflected shot from outside the box. The earlier corner kick combination was replicated this time from the right and Young's

outswinger was met by Stuart Robertson untracked run to put Thorn two goals up

The Saints midfield three of Myles McAuley, Paul Kerr and Donnie Campbell soon began to gain the upper hand and in the 12th minute a pin point Donnie Campbell pass picked out a good run forward from Dean Smith.

Thorn goalkeeper and captain Liam McWilliams was well off his goal line but pulled off a spectacular save to deny Dean, who couldn't believe his luck.

In the 35th minute Saints looked to have a good shout for a penalty kick when Craig MacEwan's driving run into the Thorn box saw the Saints wide man bundled over four yards from the touchline, however, referee John Scott was not convinced and awarded a goal kick.

Saints got back in the game in emphatic style with a 40th-minute piledriver from Donnie Campbell. Craig MacEwan played the ball up to Ross Maitland who held the ball up well on the edge of the box before laying it off to Donnie who thumped an unstoppable shot high into the net giving Liam McWilliams no chance.

This was just the boost Saints needed with half time fast approaching but their earlier failings were to haunt them yet again. Straight from the restart Thorn danger man Dean Scott won a corner on the left giving Paul Young another opportunity to display his set piece talents.

This time Young picked out midfielder Donald Morrison unmarked at the near post to force the ball past Thomas McCulloch in the Saints goal.

Saints dusted themselves down in this latest set back and forced another corner on the left. Ross Maitland finally found a

Football

Saints head but Craig MacEwan's thumping header crashed off the Thorn cross bar before being scrambled to safety.

Referee John Scott brought the first half to an end with the visitors by far the happier with the first 45 minutes.

With words of encouragement from manager Iain Jackson ringing in their ears, Saints started the second half in determined mood and it was clear from the outset that Thorn were content to dig in and protect their lead.

In the 53rd minute Ally McKerracher forced his way into the Thorn box and had a good effort saved by Liam McWilliams.

Saints received a welcome slice of good fortune in the 62nd minute when Paul Kerr burst into the Thorn box and was bundled over for a penalty kick which Donnie Campbell thumped high into the postage stamp corner.

With almost half an hour left to play, Saints had plenty of time to capitalise on their supremacy but failed to convert any of their many chances into goals.

In the 69th minute Dean Smith passed up Saints' best opportunity of the match when, after linking up well with Ally McKerracher, and holding off the challenge of a Thorn defender, he squeezed the ball wide of the advancing goalkeeper but also agonisingly wide of the keeper's right hand post.

One minute later Dean had another good chance but was foiled at the near post by a good save by McWilliams after an excellent run and cross from Ross Maitland.

Saints continued to dominate and were in complete control of the midfield. In the 74th minute



HEADS YOU WIN: Alex Craik, Donnie Campbell and Thorn's Stuart Robertson go for this header during Saturday's match at Glencruitten. Photo: Kevin McGlynn

Ally McKerracher was on the wrong end of close call from the referee when he had his progress into the Thorn box halted by a clumsy challenge from behind which sent him sprawling. Referee Scott waved away the loud Saints appeals heightening the sense of frustration being felt on the touchline.

After 82 minutes Saints manager Iain Jackson made his one and only change of the match replacing Dean Smith with Martin Bonar.

Martin was soon involved, sending Donnie Campbell through the inside right channel where the combined efforts of Thorn's left full back and goalkeeper prevented Donnie from picking out Craig MacEwan unmarked

on the penalty spot. In the 85th minute Ross Maitland was denied by the impressive McWilliams who did well to smother a stinging shot at his near post from the Saints wide man.

Saints had one final opportunity in the 90th minute when Craig MacEwan rose above the Thorn defence but was unable to direct his header from a Ross Maitland corner on target.

Referee John Scott, who had handled a potentially difficult fixture well, brought proceedings to a halt sending the travelling contingent into raptures.

Being the better side for almost the entire 90 minutes, this will be an extremely difficult defeat for Saints to take.

Jackson was bitterly disappointed. He said: 'This was probably one of our best performances of the season. We dominated the match for long periods but you can't expect to win games giving away the goals we did today.'

'In saying that we created plenty of chances which you've got to take while playing at this level.'

The Oban side are on cup duty this Saturday when they take on Haldane United in the quarter final of the Jimmy Marshall Trophy. The game will take place at Glencruitten with a 2pm kick-off. Referee in charge is Jimmy Litster from Lochgilphead.

The match has to be finished on the day with penalty kicks, if required, to see who goes into the semi-final.

Oban Lorne Ladies finish off the season in style

Women's rugby

OBAN Lorne Ladies played their last match of the season on Sunday in Edinburgh against Lismore RFC.

Oban started with the kick which was scooped up by Lismore's number eight, who sprinted up the sideline outpacing Oban and grounding the first try of the day with a successful conversion.

Despite some positive play Oban was only able to get over the try line once in the first half.

Captain Camilla Leslie took advantage of a penalty and crash balled it to take Oban's first points of the day.

In typical Oban ladies manner they came back in the second half with a different game head on.

The second try from Oban came from Ann Nisarath Sutherland, her first try in a competitive league fixture. The next two tries of the day were touched down by Kelly Lamont as she slipped through the multiple tackles of the opponents and a conversion by Laura McCormick brought the score to a final Lismore 7 - 22 Oban.

Player of the match was given to Oban's scrum half, Audrey Barr, who put in some awesome covering tackles and played a fine quality game. Oban ladies finish the season second in the BT's National League Division 2 narrowly missing out to Glasgow University by a mere point, but an impressive 17 points clear of the third position.

Oban ladies now move on to start sevens training for the first of the summer tournaments, Wednesday 6pm at Mossfield Park.

Finlay wins McKay Cup at Glencruitten Golf Club

Golf

FINLAY Sinclair won the McKay Cup at the weekend at Glencruitten with net scores of 64, 64 = 128, six shots ahead of Cameron Milne in second place with scores of 67, 67 = 134. John Gibb was third with scores of 67, 71 = 138.

This Saturday is the Britannia Qualifier and Monthly Medal. On Sunday the Isis Cup first round and Cancer Research takes place. There is also a Stableford on Tuesday.



Lewis scores in vital penalty shoot-out to give Scotland victory over Ireland

OBAN Saints striker Lewis Cameron (No 15) pictured with the Scottish Amateur international squad at a training session before their game against the Leinster Senior League at Leah Victoria Park, Tullamore, for the Graham Harkness Memorial Trophy.

With the score standing at 1-1 after 90 minutes and extra time it was down to the dreaded penalty shoot out.

Scotland keeper David McEwan saved one of the Irish spot kicks so it was down to Saints striker Lewis Cameron to take the pen-

Squash

alty which could win the game for Scotland.

Lewis stepped up and calmly drilled the ball home to lift the impressive trophy for his country.

Oban Otters are in the swim

Swimming

OBAN OTTERS' members are celebrating after successfully swimming more than 100,000 metres to raise club funds.

Children aged five to 15 years swam as many lengths or breadths as they could on March 26, managing 103,450 metres in total, which equates to 4,138 lengths or 87 miles.

Ladies squash

Squash

THE LATEST results of Oban ladies squash league are: league one - Jackie Kersley; league two - Iona Campbell; league three - Anna Bateman; league four - Fiona Campbell; league five - Gillian Walker.

The winners receive a voucher from Alan McKechnie of league sponsors Hair by Rutherford's, for use in the salon.



Bowling season opens at Oban green

THE FIRST game of the Oban bowling club season was held on Saturday, amidst showery weather. Club president Iain Boyd gave the opening speech thanking members for all their support over the past year, and hoping it would continue into the new season.

Bowls

After the throwing of the first jack by Iain's wife, Isobel, the traditional president vs vice president game was held. 16. (t15bowling01)

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT £2150

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE. . .



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

C McDougall
Laggan Road
Oban

G Wright
Shuna Terrace
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. 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, mistaid 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

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competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

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Camanchd Cup preliminary round on show this weekend



Fixtures

Scottish Hydro Camanchd Cup Preliminary Round
 Caberfeidh v Glenorchy
 Evan MacRae - 3pm
 Taynuilt v Skye
 David Stafford
 Beaully v Kilmallie
 John Angus Gillies - 12pm

RBS MacTavish Cup 2nd Round
 Glenurquhart v Inverness
 Innes Wood
 Newtonmore v Lochaber
 Deek Cameron

Gregor Cameron Consultancy Celtic Society Cup 2nd Round
 Ballachulish v Oban Celtic
 Graham Cameron
 Aberdour v Inveraray
 Calum Girvan
 Bute v Oban Camanchd
 Robert Baxter - 12pm
 Glasgow MA v Kyles Athletic
 David Mitchell - 3pm

Aberdein Considine Sutherland Cup 1st Round
 Bute v Kinlochshiel
 Jim Innes

Strathdearn Cup 1st Round
 Aberdein University v Kilmallie
 Ron Kennedy

Marine Harvest Premiership
 Fort William v Kinlochshiel
 John MacGregor
 Kingussie v Lovat
 Billy Wotherspoon

Marine Harvest North Division 1
 Beaully v Strathglass
 Andy MacLean - 3pm
 Glenurquhart v Kingussie
 John Matheson - 12pm
 Lochcarron v Newtonmore
 Archie Ritchie
 Lovat v Fort William
 Martin MacLean

Marine Harvest South Division 1
 Kyles Athletic v Strachur
 Ewen MacDonald
 Inveraray v Kilmory
 Ronnie Campbell

Marine Harvest North Division 2
 Boleskine v Glengarry
 Referee TBA
 Lochaber v Inverness
 Rab MacAskill
 Caberfeidh v Skye
 John Wood - 3pm
 Strathspye v Lewis
 Jim Barr - 1.30pm
 (13.30 Throw Up)

Marine Harvest South Division 2
 Glenorchy v Tayforth
 Jon Gallagher
 Glasgow MA v Ballachulish
 Graeme MacDiarmid - 12pm
 Oban Lorn v Aberdour
 Referee TBA

Throw ups 2.30 unless stated

Results

Saturday April 11
Balliemore Cup 1st Round
 Aberdour 1 - 6 Inverness
 Beaully 3 - 0 Caberfeidh
 Bute 3 - 3 Skye
 Bute won 3 - 2 on penalties
 Glenorchy 5 - 1 Taynuilt
 Kilmallie 7 - 1 Kilmory
 Oban Celtic 5 - 2 Lochcarron
 Strachur 1 - 2 Ballachulish
 Strathglass 1 - 2 Glasgow MA

Aberdein Considine Sutherland Cup 1st Round
 Aberdein Uni 1 - 4 Lochside
 Ballachulish 0 - 6 Kilmallie
 Glenorchy 1 - 3 Inveraray
 Glenurquhart 3 - 0 Kyles Ath
 Kingussie P - P Glasgow MA
 GMA unable to field a team,
 walkover to Kingussie
 Lovat 7 - 0 Boleskine
 Oban Lorn 0 - 6 Beaully
 Skye 5 - 0 Inverness
 Tayforth 1 - 10 Newtonmore

Marine Harvest Premiership
 Inveraray 3 - 6 Lovat
 Kyles Athletic 1 - 1 Fort William
 Lochaber 3 - 1 Oban Camanchd
 Newtonmore 4 - 0 Glenurquhart

Marine Harvest North Division 2
 Glengarry 3 - 2 Lochaber

Marine Harvest South Division 2
 Col Glen 6 - 0 Bute



Marine Harvest Premiership

KYLES ATHLETIC remain the team to beat in the premiership, despite managing only a point against league newcomers Fort William on Saturday.

Both sides defended well, with a Grant Irvine goal opening the scoring for Kyles in the 85th minute, only to be cancelled out two minutes later by Graham Campbell.

The draw leaves Kyles on equal points with Lovat, having played one less game than Lovat.

This Saturday sees James Perlich's side travel to face Glasgow Mid Argyll in the Celtic Society cup.

The game throws up at 2.30pm at Peterson Park.

FORT WILLIAM gained another crucial point on Saturday when they drew 1-1 with Kyles Athletic.

The late goal from Graham Campbell secured the Fort's second premiership draw of the season and co-manager Victor Smith is hoping for another result this weekend when they play host to Kinlochshiel.

He said: 'We had a good result on Saturday. We played like it was a cup final - we played against a good team, went for a result and that's what we got.'

'We're at home to Kinlochshiel this weekend so we just have to try to build on the last couple of weeks and see how we get on.'

'Shiel have been playing well this year but we'll see.'

The An Aird side will be without Stevie Stewart, James Tangney and Sean Cameron.

INVERARAY lost to Lovat at the weekend in a nine-goal thriller at home.

A goal from Lewis Macnicol and a Euan Mcmurdo brace weren't enough as Lovat managed six goals, leaving Inveraray with a win, a draw and two losses this season.

Coach Joe Fyfe said: 'To give them the two-goal start we did was just criminal, if you take the two early goals off, we didn't have such a bad start.'

'We hit the post and we had loads of chances in the first half to try and punish them.'

'It's one bad defeat; a heavy defeat as in 6-3, but that's not taking away from our performance and the effort the boys put in.'

'Lovat has every chance of winning the league as long as they keep scoring goals, we got three today and I am happy with that.'

'We will move on and we will fight another day.'

'We made mistakes and Lovat are very clinical in front of goal and you can see that they are a sharp team.'

Inveraray are away at Aberdour this Saturday, in the quarter final of the Celtic Society Cup, with throw-up at 2.30pm.

LOVAT have the chance to go top of the Marine Harvest Premiership this Saturday, when they travel to face Kingussie.

With Newtonmore and Kyles both on cup duty, even a draw would see John MacRitchie's men take the top spot.

The Kiltarity side took full points on Saturday, with a goal from Kevin Bartlett, two from Fraser Gallagher and a Greg Matheson hat-trick sealing the win in a 6-3 victory against Inveraray.

MacRitchie said: 'I'm delighted again with how the boys played. We went 2-0 up with a couple of quick goals, but all credit to

Shinty

Inveraray they came back and brought it to 3-2 at half time.

'We got a quick goal at the start of the second half and with the wind at our backs we started to dominate and play some real quality shinty, and scoring six goals you're always going to be pleased.'

Kingussie are currently bottom of the league, but MacRitchie said he knows no team can be taken lightly in such a high standard league.

'Fort William were close to bottom last week and they pushed Kyles all the way,' he said.

'There are no easy games and you never know how a team are going to be playing or who they have back to strengthen their squad. I'd like to think we will take the points though, as long as we give 100 per cent.'

Saturday's game throws-up at 2.30pm at The Dell Park.

LOCHABER secured their first win of the season on Saturday, in a 3-1 home victory against Oban Camanchd.

Stuart Callison of the host team opened the scoring early at Spean Bridge, putting Lochaber in front after just 10 minutes, but Andrew MacCuish soon equalised and the teams battled on through the rest of the first half.

But Oban were no match for Lochaber towards the end of the game and two more goals from Conor Sweeney and Brian MacDonald saw the home side collect two points to lift them to

one of top sides in the league, but beat us,' said Campbell.

'It's a potential banana skin for us and we really need to go into every game now with the attitude we would have if we were playing Newtonmore.'

'We've got Keith MacMillan and Craig MacMillan back from injury and there's a good chance they'll both start to freshen things up.'

Saturday's tie throws-up at 12 midday at the Meadows.

NEWTONMORE kept the pressure on at the top of the table with a win against Glenurquhart on Saturday.

A goal from Neil Stewart and a Glen Mackintosh hat-trick took the points for the reigning premiership champions in a 4-0 win, and leaves them in second place, behind joint league leaders Kyles and Lovat.

Lochaber will travel to Newtonmore this Saturday for the MacTavish cup quarter final, with Lochaber riding high after a 3-1 win against Oban Camanchd at the weekend.

The tie throws up at 2.30pm at The Eilan.

GLENURQUHART are hoping to improve on the 'very poor' performance of the weekend, when they went down 4-0 to Newtonmore.

Manager Billy MacLean said his team 'didn't turn up on the day' and will need to do better to achieve a win this weekend, when they welcome Inverness for the second round of the MacTavish cup.

MacLean said: 'It was a very poor performance. Newtonmore deserved the win. We definitely can't complain about it.'

'They [Glenurquhart] just didn't turn up on the day. It was a poor performance all round, the only acceptable ones were John Barr and ally MacIntosh.'

'Inverness are the league below us, so if we play at the top of our game we should beat them but if we play the way we did on Saturday we won't.'

Glenurquhart will be missing Andrew Corrigan and Calum Smith due to work commitments.

KINGUSSIE had no fixture this weekend after the team's next two opponents scheduled their 'free weeks' for Saturday and the following weekend.

Kings' were due to wait until May 2 for their next official game but have managed to shuffle the fixtures to play a league tie with Lovat on Saturday, who also had a free week lined up.

Manager Russell Jones will be hoping for a more successful clash this time round, after going down 6-1 to their opponents when they played on April 4.

KINLOCHSHIEL will travel south for their premiership clash against Fort William on Saturday.

The 'Shiel men had a free weekend last week due to a wedding but will be back in the game at An Aird and hoping for their second win of the season.'

Manager Colin Fraser said: 'I think this will be a hard game, there are no easy games at Fort William.'

'It's going to be tough but so far I have a full squad behind me so that will definitely help.'

BALLACHULISH won their second cup tie against Strachur in two weeks as they advanced into the second round of the Balliemore cup on Saturday.

The side looked to be heading for defeat, before goals from Andrew Banks in the 87th and Alan Clark in the 89th minute gave Ballachulish the win.

Ballachulish previously knocked Strachur out of the Celtic Society cup the week before in a 4-0 win away from home.



HAT-TRICK HERO: No stopping Newtonmore's Glen Mackintosh who bagged a hat-trick in his team's 4-0 win over Glenurquhart at the Eilan Photo: Neil Paterson

penalties. We needed that goal to win, it touched the net and bounced back out.

'You could actually see the net move but the referee said it wasn't a goal and the game was over after that. It was disappointing and frustrating but you've got to move on to the next one.'

This weekend Skye travel to Taynuilt for the Scottish Hydro Camanchd Cup preliminary round.

MacLeod said: 'Taynuilt are a bit unknown to us but we'll check them out this week and prepare accordingly.'

Johnathan MacLennan will be missing due to a knee problem.

LOCHSIDE ROVERS have a free week this Saturday, leaving manager Gareth Evans slightly disappointed as he had hoped to keep the momentum of the side's winning streak going.

A long journey to the east coast on Saturday for a Sutherland cup tie with Aberdeen University ended in victory for Evans' side.

Goals from Daniel Macmillan, Daniel MacVicar, Michael MacQueen, and a Scott Dempster goal in the last minute of the game rounding off a 4-1 for the Oban side.

Evans said: 'There was a strong wind but our back four held out well in some tricky conditions including a really rough pitch.'

'It was a really good result considering we were six players short - I'm really pleased with how the team handled it, especially considering we had six under-18s in the side.'

Evans' side play host to Taynuilt at Mossfield a week on Saturday in the league, with the manager confident his players can take the points.

'Mossfield suits us because it's a very large pitch and we have a lot of young players who can use their pace. After beating them away, we'd be confident to take the points at home.'

OBAN CELTIC have the first of a double-header of cup ties against Ballachulish this Saturday.

The first tie in Lochaber comes on the back of what manager Calum Fox has called the team's best result of the season, when they won 5-2 against Lochcarron in the Balliemore cup on Saturday. Four goals from Lee Askew and a Daniel Madej strike in the 75th minute were enough to see off the Highland side.

Fox said: 'That was the best result of season so far against our stiffest competition. Our forwards were all excellent and I'm sure Lee will be grateful to his team mates for the roles they played in his goals.'

'We have a tough double header with Ballachulish the next two weeks, but form couldn't be much better, we just need a bit more commitment from our squad to maintain this form.'

Saturday's game with Ballachulish, a quarter final tie in the Celtic Society Cup, throws up at the Jubilee at 2.30pm.

Sutherland Cup

OBAN LORN crashed out of the Sutherland Cup on Saturday in a 6-0 loss to Beaully's second side.

The North Division One team were too strong for Lorn, going 2-0 up after six minutes and cruising 5-0 at half time, before a 73rd minute goal rounded off the scoring.

Lorn are back in league action this Saturday, at home against Aberdour.

Jokey Martin's men will be keen to keep up their 100 per cent league record, with a win putting them top of the table after five games.

North Division Two

A five-goal thriller saw **GLEN-GARRY** make it four wins out of four in the Marine Harvest North Division two at the weekend, leaving them equal with fellow unbeaten side Skye.

Andrew Gilchrist opened the scoring after quarter of an hour but Lochaber fired back in 28 minutes to equal the scoring. On the hour mark Daniel MacLennan put Glengarry back in front, but Lochaber came back again in the 80th minute.

However, two minutes later, Steven Cameron scored the match winner, giving Glengarry the points and leaving them on eight points after four games and second behind league leaders Skye on goal difference.

Glengarry make the long journey to Inverarnie this Saturday to take on Boleskine in league action, with the game throwing-up at 2.30pm at Smith Park.

The next two weeks sees another cup double-header for Ballachulish, this time with Oban Celtic, with home and away ties in the Celtic Society cup and the Macaulay cup.

Saturday's game throws up at 2.30pm at The Jubilee, and the following weekend the match is at 2.30pm at Mossfield.

GLENORCHY take on Caberfeidh this weekend in the preliminary round of the Camanchd Cup.

The side cruised to victory in the first round of the Balliemore cup on Saturday. A first half goal from Graham Morrice and four from Alex Macpherson proved too much for visiting Taynuilt.

Saturday's tie throws-up at 3pm in Strathpepper.

TAYNUILT crashed out of the Balliemore cup on Saturday in a 5-1 loss to Glenorchy.

A Fraser Macmillan goal in 58 minutes was of little consolation to Davy Thompson's men, who are still without a win this season.

GOAL: Oban Celtic's Daniel Madej rounds the Lochcarron goalkeeper to score his team's fourth goal in a 5-2 victory in the Balliemore Cup tie at Mossfield Stadium Photo: Kevin McGlynn

MacMillan but Peter Carmichael is still suffering from a hamstring injury.

KILMORY are still looking for their first win of the season after Kilmallie put seven past them in the first round of the Balliemore cup on Saturday.

A goal from Craig Taylor was some consolation as he kept his tally to three in three games for the Lochgilphead side.

Kilmory have a local derby away to Inveraray's second side in the league on Saturday, with throw up at Winterton Park at 2.30pm.

STRACHUR lost out in the Balliemore Cup on Saturday, losing two goals in the last three minutes against visiting Ballachulish.

The home side took the lead in the 55th minute following a goalless first half, but goals in the 87th and 89th minute sealed the win for Balla.

Strachur are back to league action this Saturday, away to Kyles Athletic, with throw up at 2.30pm.

HOLDERS SKYE CAMANACHD are out of this year's Balliemore cup after they lost to Bute following a controversial penalty shoot out.

The teams were three all after extra time and went to penalties but the points went to the home side after referee John MacGregor denied Kenny Campbell's shot for Skye.

Manager John MacLeod said: 'It was a tough game, then we had the disappointment with the

one of top sides in the league, but beat us,' said Campbell.

'It's a potential banana skin for us and we really need to go into every game now with the attitude we would have if we were playing Newtonmore.'

'We've got Keith MacMillan and Craig MacMillan back from injury and there's a good chance they'll both start to freshen things up.'

Saturday's tie throws-up at 12 midday at the Meadows.

NEWTONMORE kept the pressure on at the top of the table with a win against Glenurquhart on Saturday.

A goal from Neil Stewart and a Glen Mackintosh hat-trick took the points for the reigning premiership champions in a 4-0 win, and leaves them in second place, behind joint league leaders Kyles and Lovat.

Lochaber will travel to Newtonmore this Saturday for the MacTavish cup quarter final, with Lochaber riding high after a 3-1 win against Oban Camanchd at the weekend.

The tie throws up at 2.30pm at The Eilan.

GLENURQUHART are hoping to improve on the 'very poor' performance of the weekend, when they went down 4-0 to Newtonmore.

Manager Billy MacLean said his team 'didn't turn up on the day' and will need to do better to achieve a win this weekend, when they welcome Inverness for the second round of the MacTavish cup.

MacLean said: 'It was a very poor performance. Newtonmore deserved the win. We definitely can't complain about it.'

'They [Glenurquhart] just didn't turn up on the day. It was a poor performance all round, the only acceptable ones were John Barr and ally MacIntosh.'

'Inverness are the league below us, so if we play at the top of our game we should beat them but if we play the way we did on Saturday we won't.'

Glenurquhart will be missing Andrew Corrigan and Calum Smith due to work commitments.

KINGUSSIE had no fixture this weekend after the team's next two opponents scheduled their 'free weeks' for Saturday and the following weekend.

Kings' were due to wait until May 2 for their next official game but have managed to shuffle the fixtures to play a league tie with Lovat on Saturday, who also had a free week lined up.

Manager Russell Jones will be hoping for a more successful clash this time round, after going down 6-1 to their opponents when they played on April 4.

KINLOCHSHIEL will travel south for their premiership clash against Fort William on Saturday.

The 'Shiel men had a free weekend last week due to a wedding but will be back in the game at An Aird and hoping for their second win of the season.'

Manager Colin Fraser said: 'I think this will be a hard game, there are no easy games at Fort William.'



TACKLED: Glenurquhart's Bradley Sneddon goes in to tackle Kyles Athletic's David Boyle during last Saturday's Sutherland Cup tie at Drumadrochit Photo: Donald Cameron

Balliemore Cup

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Green Machine win league title with two games to spare

Strathendrick	0
Oban Lorne	51
BT West Division Two	

OBAN Lorne secured the West Division 2 Championship on Saturday with a convincing 51-0 over rivals Strathendrick at Fintry.

The Green Machine's impressive showing at the weekend lifted them above Cambuslang by two points and they still have two games to play for in this season's campaign.

Coach Corrie Louw was in confident mood going into the game despite an early season 18-9 defeat by Strathendrick at Glencruitten. The discipline of the Oban squad has vastly improved since that game that had two Lorne players red carded and two players sinbinned.

The Oban backline were looking very dangerous with the ball in hand and were also counter attacking well from Strathendrick clearing kicks. A lineout drive in the 22 followed by successive 'pick and goes' allowed Louw to dive close for the line. The big South African was short with his effort, however, flanker Struan Smith came to the rescue as he gathered a loose ball from the back of the ruck and pounced over the line for a 5-0 lead.

Oban scored again, almost immediately from the kick off.

Captain Cammy Smith took possession 30 metres out beside the touchline with no support around him. The powerful Oban centre went on a rampaging run up the sideline beating all defenders in his wake to touch down in the left hand corner, 10-0 to Oban Lorne.

The hosts had a short period of possession, and at times looked dangerous with some quick backline runners gaining ground. Oban's defence stood still and were receiving the lion's share of penalties at the breakdown from Helensburgh referee Adam Hart.

After tasting the tryline once, Cammy Smith had the hunger for further tries as he secured a 30 minute hatrick by scoring two further tries bringing Oban Lorne's tally to 24-0 with two successful conversions from Craig Wright.

Some fantastic handling through the backline allowed winger Richard MacKay to score his first try of the afternoon taking the score to 29-0.

The hosts broke free with seconds remaining in the first half and looked certain to score before a fantastic last gasp recovery tackle from Wright halted the hosts in their tracks and allowed Oban to eventually regain possession.

Oban attacked quickly upfield from their own 22. Wright was rewarded for his impressive tackle

as he broke free from within his own half, beat two defenders and touched down under the posts to round off an impressive first 40 minutes from Oban Lorne.

Lorne knew that at 36-0 the game was over as a contest but knew that they would face a backlash from the frustrated hosts into the second half.

The Green Machine started the second period as they had finished the first as Mackay scored his second of the afternoon, almost an identical score to his first with some great handling through the Oban team to make the score 41-0.

Oban added two further tries in the next 10 minutes.

The first from winger Plato Moisiadis who gathered an Andy MacDougall offload close to the line and a second of the afternoon from Wright for 51-0.

A Strathendrick player was knocked unconscious in a tackle on 65 minutes calling a premature end to the match and dampened celebrations from the Oban Lorne team who had secured the West Division 2 title with two games remaining.

Thoughts of the club are with the injured player and everyone wished him a speedy recovery.

Oban's attention now turns to their two remaining games starting with a trip to mid table Paisley this Saturday where Oban Lorne should be presented the league trophy by their SRU representative Jim Stevenson.

The Oban Lorne squad are keen to secure two further bonus point wins to top off what has already been a very successful campaign with a league win and a run to the West Shield Final.

The last home game for Oban Lorne is scheduled for Saturday May 9 at home to Uddingston.

Argyll and Bute	81
Glasgow East	3
BT West Division Four	

ARGYLL and Bute secured their second win of the season on Saturday with a thumping 81-3 defeat over the league bottom side Glasgow East.

After going 3-0 down, the hosts replied with 12 unanswered tries including two from veteran Robert Wright and a hatrick from Mid Argyll's Dan Broderick.

The Argyll team, made up of Oban 2XV players and players from other areas of Argyll and Bute, have picked up some momentum in recent games and are aiming to fulfil all of their remaining fixtures this season.

This week the team are away to Police Scotland RFC in Glasgow.

Anyone interested in playing can contact Connor Ferris and turn out for Oban Lorne training on a Tuesday and Thursday evening from 7-9pm.

BT West Division Two	P	W	L	D	Pts
Oban Lorne	16	13	2	1	66
Cambuslang	18	13	5	0	64
Stewartry	18	11	7	0	54
McLaren*	15	9	5	1	42
Strathendrick	16	9	7	0	42
Cumbernauld	16	6	10	0	31
Clydebank	16	6	9	1	31
Paisley	14	6	8	0	30
Wayside Drumpellier	17	5	11	1	27
Uddingston*	14	0	14	0	0

*Points deduction has been applied



SPEEDSTER:John McPhee gets some last minute adjustments to his bike at the Grand Prix of the Americas held in Austin last Sunday.
Photo by Bonnie Lane

Sixth place finish for McPhee in Texas

THE RED Bull Grand Prix of the Americas took place at the magnificent Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas. It started under darkening skies with a possible threat of rain looming.

Saxoprint RTG rider John McPhee from Connel started from 15th place on the grid, following frustrating practise sessions and a difficult qualifying which had been compromised in part by a coming together with Livio Loi.

The first lap saw John trading places with Jorge Martin but moving into 14th by lap two, and then swiftly moving up again into 13th. Lap three saw John moving forward again, slipping into 12th and remaining solidly part of an extended leading group.

With 13 laps to go John dropped back to 13th and continued to trade places over the following laps. With 10 laps remaining he had moved back up to 10th.

Two riders going down with nine laps to go saw John move up to eighth as he continued his battle with Binder and Vazquez. He also benefited from the exit of Miguel Oliveira and with seven laps to go he was in sixth place.

Danny Kent had opened up a substantial gap from all the other riders up at the front and John was in the following group, taking in places two to seven.

Unable to really make any inroads into the battle ahead, John became settled in seventh place and over the following laps,

Cycling

dropped back slightly but did not lose sight of the group. When teammate Masbou ran off on the final lap, John was able to pick up one more place to cross the line in a very creditable sixth.

After the race, John said: 'After a very difficult weekend I was a little bit nervous at the beginning of the race. The feeling of the bike was quite good. I found a very good rhythm and by the end I felt very comfortable and was delighted to get some points.'

John's next race is the Gran Premio Red Bull in Argentina on Sunday.

Athletic see red but manage to share the points

Third Lanark	2
Oban Athletic	2
West of Scotland AFL	

OBAN Athletic travelled to play league leaders Third Lanark at Torgylen Sports Complex on Saturday (April 11).

Athletic took the lead after 10 minutes. A good move from Stephen Kelly and Ryan Campbell saw the ball played to Stephen Fox who made his way into the penalty area. Fox was pushed, then tripped at the edge of the six yard box only to see the referee wave play. The ball broke to Mark Robertson, who played the ball into the penalty area for Fraser McFarlane, who hammered it into the net from eight yards.

Athletic were now knocking the ball about with confidence, Ryan Campbell and Robertson winning the midfield battle.

However, in the 20th minute a loose ball was picked up by the home team's Gary McGee, who tried a high ball over the top.

Steven MacLeod was caught in two minds whether to head it or chase back but with his indecision the ball hit his hand. The referee deemed him to be the last man and ordered him off, which was considered a debatable decision.

Athletic continued to play good football with Andy Smith becoming a good out ball with his constant running. On the 35th minute Smith won a header from a Craig Campbell pass, sending

Maxwell Onyongo through. A well-timed tackle prevented Maxwell from getting his shot away.

On the 42nd minute a free kick was awarded to Third Lanark wide on the left wing. The ball was crossed over to the right six yard line and Craig Campbell headed clear.

To everybody's amazement the referee pointed to the penalty spot. Athletic captain Craig Campbell asked referee Steve McCulloch why the penalty was given and after an exchange of words, Campbell was shown the red card for dissent.

Duncan McIntyre sent Graham Douglas the wrong way with the resultant penalty. The home

team were getting frustrated by the way Athletic were keeping the ball and on the rare occasion they got forward there was no way through as the Oban defence were closing everything down with the odd shot being dealt with by Graham Douglas between the sticks.

On the 50th minute good play from Ryan Campbell and Robertson sent the ball through to Smith, who beat his marker and from 12 yards shot to the left hand corner with the keeper pulling off a great save.

Onyongo was replaced after 55 minutes with Stephan Campbell making his first appearance of the season.

In the 76th minute the home

Football

team won a corner on the right. The ball was played into the six-yard box to Fergus Hadden whose header found the back of the net to make the score 2-1.

Athletic drew level in the 88th minute when a cross from Mark Robertson to the back post found Ryan Campbell. He side-footed the ball in to the left hand corner of the net to make the final score 2-2.

Manager Donald Campbell was not happy with the referee's performance but was delighted with his team's attitude after going down to nine men.

Athletic travel to play Cokerhill this Saturday, April 18.

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WEATHER

Thursday Sunny intervals
Winds light south westerly
Temperatures 4°C to 10°C.

Friday Sunny
Winds light south south easterly
Temperatures 6°C to 13°C.

Weekend Outlook Cloudy on Saturday
Sunny intervals on Sunday
Winds light north easterly
Temperatures 6°C to 12°C.

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, April 16, 2015** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	03.50 3.7 10.00 0.8 16.12 3.6 22.19 4.0	
Fri	04.33 4.0 10.48 0.6 16.49 3.8 23.07 0.4	
Sat	05.14 4.2 11.31 0.4 17.27 4.0 23.53 0.3	
Sun	05.54 4.2 12.12 0.3 18.05 4.0 *** **	
Mon	00.37 0.2 06.33 4.2 12.53 0.3 18.42 4.0	
Tues	01.21 0.4 07.11 4.0 13.33 0.5 19.20 3.9	
Wed	02.04 0.6 07.49 3.7 14.14 0.7 19.58 3.7	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardershaig	-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

FRIDAY

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Haggis bash a recipe for success



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A 'quacking' way to highlight donor appeal

BALLACHULISH residents have been going 'quackers' over the appearance of knitted ducks in cafes, shops and telephone boxes around the village.

But Merriol Baldwin, the plucky villager behind the invasion, has finally revealed the reason behind the little mysteries. Since last year, the 44-year-old has been crocheting the soft toys and placing them around Ballachulish as part of the Little Yellow Duck project to raise awareness about blood, bone marrow and organ donation. It is a cause close to Ms Baldwin's heart as she is only alive today thanks to a blood transfusion during emergency life-saving surgery 11 years ago.

Each duck has a tag attached asking the finder to visit the project's website. As well as in her home village, Ms Baldwin has distributed ducks across Scotland, Sheffield and London. She said: 'I love the fact I'm making people smile. But more importantly, I believe in the message behind the project and in sharing it.'

'I'm eternally grateful to the blood donor who saved my life and I feel all of us who can help others should think about registering as life-saving donors.'

For more information go to www.thelittleyellowduckproject.org.



'QUACKERS': Merriol Baldwin has been placing ducks all over Ballachulish

Full steam ahead for 'vital' Jacobite train

ATTRACTION MUST STAY ON TRACK, SAYS COUNCILLOR

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

THE OPERATOR of the Jacobite steam train has announced it will be business as usual from May, despite having its licence suspended because of safety concerns.

Network Rail issued West Coast Railways (WCR), operator of the Fort William to Mallaig tourist attraction, with a temporary suspension notice after a WCR train in England came close to crashing into a passenger train travelling at 100 miles per hour last month.

The Jacobite train is due to start the world famous 84-mile round trips from May 11 but the suspension notice will be in place until May 15 and outlines a number of improvements WCR must carry out before this date. If these are not in place in time the company could permanently lose its licence.

This sparked fear among Mallaig business owners who rely on the customers brought in by the train, which massively increased in popularity after it was featured in Harry Potter. But a statement released by WCR said the company intended to



ATTRACTION: The Jacobite steam train crossing the Glenfinnan viaduct on the West Highland line

run trips as normal, using 'the licence and services of other operators'.

It read: 'A recent breach of safety regulations involving one of our trains crossing a red light has led to discussions to establish how this happened and more

importantly the preventative measures in place to ensure it can't happen again.'

'Although no one was injured in any way, West Coast Railways considers this to be sufficient to carry out a full internal enquiry with the support of Network

Rail and at this time will not be running trains under its current operator licence.'

'It is our intention, where possible, to run our trips as normal using the licence and service of other train operators. 'Should there be any changes

we will advise passengers as soon as possible.'

Allan Henderson, Highland councillor for Caol and Mallaig, said the steam train was 'vital' for Mallaig. He added: 'Absolutely anything they can do to make sure the train runs is welcomed.'

'It's vital that the train starts running as soon as possible.'

'Also, the Fort William to Mallaig line is much safer than the one where the incident occurred.'

'Due to the infrequency of the trains here there isn't the same likelihood of meeting a high speed train like what happened in England.'

A Network Rail spokesman confirmed it would be possible to run the Jacobite under an alternative operator, as long as staff of the temporary operator had the appropriate licence and 'route knowledge'.

The incident causing the suspension occurred on March 7 when a WCR train in Wootton Bassett in Wiltshire over-ran a red light by 700 yards and stopped across a double line junction, avoiding colliding with a high-speed train by just one minute.

Network Rail said it was the most serious incident of this year.

Last minute appeal for Fort charity runners

ORGANISERS of a charity run have issued a last-minute appeal for people to sign up for the fundraising event.

Run Together Fort William, for Cancer Research UK, is now in its fifth year but with little more than a week to go entries are still dramatically low compared to previous years' races.

In the first few years of the five-kilometre walk, jog or run 300 people signed up ahead of the event and raised money through sponsors and more people turned out

on the day but this year just 50 people have put their names down so far.

Organiser Adam Ramsey said the event was still going ahead and encouraged as many people as possible to sign up ahead of the race on Sunday, April 26.

He said: 'I can see why people would want to leave it until the last minute because they don't know what the weather will be like and things like that but it makes it really difficult for us to organise things. Plus, if you don't sign up beforehand you won't have any sponsors,

then all the charity gets is the registration fee but by the time you take away running costs there isn't much left.'

'The whole point of this event is to bring forward the day cancer is cured but if people don't support the cause it's not going to go that way.'

Mr Ramsey also encouraged anyone who has taken away an entry form to return it as soon as possible.

The race, which also includes a 10k option, starts from An Aird at 2pm but gates will be open from 11am for a range of extra fundraising activities.

TIMESLINE

Corpach marina plans resurrected

PLANS for a new £3 million marina in Lochaber have been resurrected, four years after they were first announced.

The proposal to build the facility at Corpach basin was first discussed in 2011 and a feasibility study showed it could be profitable but due to ill health of some members of the group behind the plan, it was put on the backburner.

But now a reformed group, Thomas Telford Corpach Marina Limited, has given the plans a new lease of life and says Lochaber 'can't be left behind'.

Donnie Corbett, a group member, said: 'This is a great opportunity for the area but the biggest problem is funding. We're looking into public funding.'

The group aims to have full consent by the end of this year and construction under way by 2017.

Call to speed up hospital land deal

TALKS are under way to bring forward the purchase of land for the new Belford hospital in Fort William.

At an NHS Highland board meeting on Tuesday, the replacement building appeared in the five-year capital plan and Michael Foxley, board member and long-time campaigner for the Belford, asked if purchase of the preferred site at Blar Mor could be given more priority.

NHS Highland chief executive Elaine Mead said she is already in discussion with the Scottish government about buying the land to replace the 50-year-old Belford.

The site became available earlier this year after Tesco withdrew plans to develop a supermarket on the site.



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Kinlochleven high school bids farewell to Beth after 25 years

STAFF, pupils and parents of Kinlochleven high school got together at the end of term to thank Beth Grant for 25 years of committed service in a surprise celebration during an end-of-term assembly.

Beth started on April 9 1990 as a cleaner in the old school and did this for about a year-and-a-half.

Beth had previously worked at Caterpillar as a secretary before she came to Kinlochleven.

When her children Donna and Cameron went to school she felt that she needed something more to do.

Her mum saw the job advertised in the *Oban Times* so she applied.

Beth said she 'never in a million years' thought she would get the job, as she had not been in Kinlochleven for a long time, but she applied and she got it.

The celebration heard that Beth had been a central character in Kinlochleven high school. The school and the village had benefited enormously from her enthusiasm and commitment.

Beth was praised for her contribution to the school over the years, not just within her working remit as clerical assistant but also all of her hard work supporting fundraising efforts and extra-curricular activities.



THANK YOU: Beth Grant, who worked at Kinlochleven high school for 25 years, was thanked at an end of term ceremony



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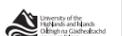
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Village haggis bash a recipe for success

THE FIRST Highland haggis festival was a recipe for success last weekend, so much so organisers hope it will become an annual event.

The family fun day focusing on the national dish, held in Spean Bridge on Saturday, featured cooking demonstrations, haggis hunts and taster sessions and was described as 'absolutely fantastic' by Glen Wilson of organisers Glen Spean and Great Glen tourism marketing group.

He said: 'It was a really good day, absolutely fantastic, and I feel we really exceeded expectations for the first festival.'

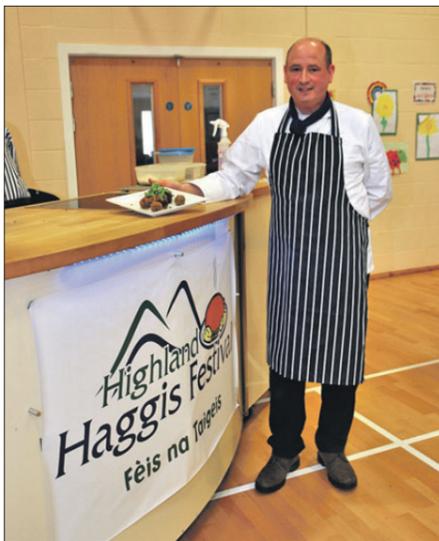
'It was well attended, both by locals and visitors, and the evening ceilidh was sold out, so that was a great end to the day.'

'It's still early days so there will need to be a discussion with the whole group but I would love to make this an annual event.'

'It was great for the area and there was something to do for the whole family.'



ALL SMILES: Hamish the haggis takes a break from his tour of Spean Bridge for a photo with Josh Webber, left, and Louis Lamont 20_16haggis02



TASTY: Glen Russell, chef at Russell's restaurant in Spean Bridge, made haggis and walnut roast with haggis and goat's cheese bon bons at the festival 20_16haggis01



MAKING THEIR POINT: Strontian residents exercise their right to visit the village cemetery

Cemetery access row steps up in Strontian

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

RESIDENTS of a rural Lochaber village are refusing to give up their right to visit the village cemetery, despite an on-going row about access.

More than 50 Strontian villagers gathered for a mass walk through the grounds to promote their right to access last week after owners of nearby Drimnatorran farm put up a heavy gate and large stones on the only road into the cemetery.

The campaigners thought they had achieved a small victory when a restraining post was erected at the gate the following day, keeping the gate - which

had needed someone to hold it to allow vehicle access - open without being held, but were worried to see a new sign saying farm animals were on the site.

This caused concern among locals as goats at Drimnatorran farm, owned for the last three years by Melvin and Sally Shaw, previously ate graveside flowers and destroyed plastic tributes.

Strontian resident Tony Dobson, who has led the campaign, said: 'What animals have Melvin and Sally Shaw got in store for the community next?'

'The cemetery was trashed by the goats, until even leaving plastic tributes was not possible.'

'A bereaved husband harassed by the goats was forced to report this matter to the local police. It

had come to the point where no tributes of any kind could be left on any grave in the cemetery.'

'The goats were nowhere to be seen during our walk but the thought of more animals there is alarming. Even without the animals the gate itself is completely unnecessary.'

'It's very large and daunting and it could easily put people off visiting the cemetery but we've been told, as the Shaws own the road, there's nothing to stop them having a gate there, as long as they don't lock it.'

Mr Dobson added there could be light at the end of the tunnel as at the Sunart community council meeting last Thursday a local policeman said he was hopeful an agreement could be

reached after speaking to Mr and Mrs Shaw.

But in a further twist in the row, the farm is now advertised for sale with a Lochaber estate agent, first appearing on Saturday.

Mr Dobson added: 'We all hope that the cemetery can return to the quiet, peaceful, pleasant and welcoming place we all remember only a short time ago.'

A Highland council spokeswoman said: 'The owners of the road are entitled to put a gate across the road. This should remain unlocked so that public access to the cemetery can be maintained.'

The owners of Drimnatorran farm declined to comment on the issue.

Back on trail after death of father

CHARLES Kennedy was back on the campaign trail this week, following the death of his father Ian.

The Liberal Democrat candidate for Ross, Skye and Lochaber and former party leader announced he was taking a break from the general election campaign after his father passed away on Sunday, April 5, aged 88, but returned to speak at the hustings held in Caol community centre on Tuesday night.

Mr Kennedy senior was well respected in his own right in his home town of Fort William and was best known for playing the fiddle.

The crofter and draughtsman used to tour all over the constituency with his son during the early days of his political career and would keep the audience entertained playing tunes until Mr Kennedy junior took to the stage.

Mr Kennedy's funeral, held at St John's RC church in Caol on Friday, was well attended by mourners.

Power cut sparks hunt for culprits

TWO PEOPLE were disturbed last week whilst trying to steal copper from a power station in Fort William.

Engineers from Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) went to the electricity substation near Old Inverloch castle at around 3am on Thursday (April 9) and saw two people running away towards Inverloch village.

A spokesman for Police Scotland Highlands and Islands division confirmed there had been an attempt to remove copper which caused a short power cut in the Inverloch and Caol areas. A spokeswoman from SSE added that while trying to steal the copper, the culprits had spilled a quantity of transformer oil onto the ground. The area and power supply were swiftly made safe.

The individuals were described as wearing dark, hooded clothing. Anyone with any information should contact police on 101.

Step into the digital age

THE GROUP behind a project to uncover the history of the Ballachulish slate quarry is offering the chance to learn how to use digital recording kits.

Anyone interested in training to use the equipment, to help with the project, is invited to the sessions in Ballachulish village hall from Monday (April 20) until Tuesday.

South Lochaber residents have also been asked to bring along any family photos or old newspaper articles relating to the quarry. Verity Walker of the project said: 'We've already got a number of interested trainees and interviewees but the more the merrier. Our trainer Anne Marie Goldie, of BBC Radio Highland, makes it easy and fun. It's something people can even try on their own mobile phones and it means you will learn how to record your own family memories.'

For more information contact Ms Walker on 07778 922407.



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Access panel hits top spot

A GROUP campaigning for better access for disabled people is 'delighted' to win a national award.

Lochaber disability access panel was named 'most innovative project' at the Scottish disability equality forum awards.

The group was rewarded for its work in identifying access issues to developers at the planning stage.

Protocol drafted by the panel has been adopted by Highland council to be used as a reference point for all planning applications.

Maurin MacDonald, vice chairwoman of the panel, said: 'We were delighted to receive this award which is a recognition of all our hard work.'

'We are a very active disability access panel with lots going on. We're always looking to recruit new members and if you are disabled or have an interest in disability, please consider joining us at our meeting at An Drochaid, Claggan on the third Thursday of every month.'

The success of the Lochaber panel has spurred a neighbouring group in Oban to consider similar action and officials at Argyll and Bute council recently attended a panel meeting to discuss future plans.

Fiona Morrison, chairwoman of the Oban panel, said: 'We are all volunteers but we are working hard to remove barriers and create access for all environments in Oban and the wider area. As with Lochaber, we are keen to recruit more members.'

More set to turn to food bank

LOCHABER food bank fed almost 600 people in the last year, but manager Alex McConachie fears this could rise again.

From April last year until the end of March the Fort William-based charity dished out 5,391 meals to 599 people but volunteers are prepared for an even higher number as more and more families are struggling to make ends meet.

Mr McConachie said: 'After the election there's likely to be more cuts to all different things and more people are going to feel it. Last month we only fed 45 people, whereas some months it can be up to 80. I think that's because hotels and places are starting to employ seasonal staff so it's getting some people back working.'

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Budget austerity threatens jobs and front line services

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

VITAL front line services protecting vulnerable adults and children could be slashed by 20 per cent as the council makes a desperate bid to balance the books.

Councillors heard last week that swingeing cuts to departmental spending was inevitable as Argyll and Bute council planned to implement draconian budgets for the next four to five years.

Opposition councillors admitted little could be done to ameliorate the proposed cuts and some believed the local authority's budget deficit may top £48 million.

Drastic savings are required by all Scottish local authorities – in part due to a reduced block grant cash settlement from the Scottish government and a commitment not to increase the council tax.

Councillors such as Dick Walsh, Sandy Taylor and James Robb all agreed that substantial job losses were inevitable.

A worst case scenario predicted job losses of between 500 – 1,000, as service budgets were slashed.

They all say the council will 'change fundamentally' and will no longer be able to provide the 'extra' services it does at the moment.

A report compiled for the council's policy and resources committee detailed how 20 per cent could be cut from essential services. Addition teams, learning disability centres, mental health support, older people's funding, child protection, looked-after children, adult learning, community centres and community development, swimming pools, classroom assistants and Gaelic education are among the 69 services on the proposed hit list.

The council plans to invest in only four areas – economic



MIND THE GAP:
Councillor Dick Walsh

development, projects and renewables, air services and communication and marketing.

However, a council spokesman said these cuts were options under consideration and not policy as the local authority tries to claw back almost £27 million over the next two years.

Presenting the plans to fellow councillors, council leader Dick Walsh said: 'In order to meet the budgetary gap of £11.5 million in 2016 – 2017 and taking into account possible lead-in times for delivery of savings, it is estimated that a savings equivalent of 12 per cent will need to be delivered in 2016 – 2017.'

Councillor Walsh also ordered a detailed report on the cost of job losses, particularly severance payments. He said: 'The council will need to consider making an allowance for the cost of severance, which could be significant.'

He said a detailed paper of staff cuts would be available by this month or May.

Argyll and Bute council's budget currently stands at £244.234 million, which means a 12 per cent saving would amount to a staggering £29.3 million.

Former council leader James Robb was less pessimistic about the council's finances. He argued: 'Given the cyclical improvement in the global economy and the lessening risk of public sector cuts, it seems unreasona-

ble to assume the worst case.

'To put that in perspective over the next two years, we will be making £4.3 million of potentially unnecessary cuts or losing 165 jobs, using the council's methodology.'

Councillor Sandy Taylor, leader of the council's opposition group, was less sanguine. He said: 'The cuts may be even higher than predicted – as much as £48 million.'

'These funding gaps have to be met, but instead of making cuts it would have been better to find them through innovation. We are working in an environment where the local authority as it stands will no longer be the same as it has been.'

'The funding cuts will mean massive job losses. In fact, it may be time for the local authority to consider taking away whole services that we are not required to provide rather than cut away at every service. It might be better to do some things well instead of running services we simply cannot afford to.'

Following the meeting on Monday, an Argyll and Bute council spokesman said: 'No decisions have yet been taken about specific levels of savings for services and how these will be achieved.'

'At this stage, services have been asked to explore options on how savings could be delivered.'

'Formal savings targets and options for services will be considered by the committee in early June; then, in October, the committee will look at detailed savings proposals. If agreed, these will go out to consultation.'

He agreed decisions taken could involve different ways of delivering services rather than job cuts, such as redeployment, voluntary redundancy and other measures to maintain jobs.

He continued: 'The council will continue to be a major employer and provider of services for people and communities across Argyll and Bute.'

A taste of the Big Apple



OBAN high school pipe band was hailed a 'credit to Scotland' by organisers when it made its debut performance at the Tartan Day Parade in New York city last Sunday.

Led by Benderloch piper Angus MacColl, the band marched behind the Honorary Grand Marshall, Tricia Marwick, the presiding officer of the Scottish parliament.

Event director of the 17th annual Tartan Day Parade, Camilla Hellman, said: 'We were proud to have Oban with us and it was wonderful to see them enjoying themselves.'

TIMESLINE

Happy tale as lost dog Jax is found

A DOG that went missing when his owner was injured on a hill-walking trip in Argyll has been found.

Boxer dog Jax was left on Ben Vane on Sunday after his owner, from Glasgow, fell and had to be airlifted with help from Arrochar Mountain Rescue team. Rescuers couldn't find the dog at the time and had to leave with the injured man.

On Tuesday, Jax was found safe and well near the scene.

Business growth for new start-ups

TWENTY-nine new businesses have been supported by Business Gateway in Argyll since the start of 2015.

The survival rate of new businesses increased to 81 per cent, according to a report published this week. The new businesses had a combined annual turnover of £1.25 million and created 34 new jobs.

Call for decision on island ferry routes

THE FUTURE of ferry services to Luing, Jura, Easdale and Lismore has still not been decided – two years after operators Argyll and Bute council asked the Scottish government to take over the running of the island routes.

At a council meeting on Monday, it was decided to ask the government for a decision.

Planners achieve fast turnaround

PLANNERS at Argyll and Bute council achieved a better than expected turnaround rate of planning applications.

A report revealed that 95 per cent of applications were approved within 10 weeks, against a target of 12 weeks, which was one of the quickest in Scotland.

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New Coll Vodafone service failing to deliver say islanders

STEVEN RAE
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RESIDENTS on Coll have claimed the Vodafone service which went live three weeks ago isn't serving the island properly.

One man has even claimed that since it was connected on March 25, he no longer gets service with operator O2.

Innes Henderson is a self-employed fisherman on Coll, having moved to the island almost 30 years ago. He's been an O2 customer for 15 years.

'There are big issues here,' he said. 'Ever since the Vodafone mast went live I haven't been able to connect to O2. At the moment I'm borrowing a friend's Vodafone phone, which isn't ideal. A mobile is absolutely vital for safety reasons while I'm out on my boat, so it looks like I'll be forced now to get a Vodafone contract.'

'Half the houses on the island don't even get signal, and the other areas you have to know where to stand to get signal. That was the same as before this mast went live, so I don't see how it's a huge improvement.'

Innes said he plans to raise the matter with both Coll community council and Development Coll.

Pat Graham, who owns a camp site and farm on the island, said the Vodafone work had been of no benefit to her. 'I still only get one bar of signal outside my house, the same as always,' she said. 'Vodafone still isn't serving about a third of the island.'

'I have people who come to the

camp site and they think they'll be able to use their mobiles but they don't get signal either. I don't think there should be the celebrations on a 'job well done' considering a lot of the island hasn't benefited.'

The £165,000 project is funded by a partnership between community-run organisation Development Coll, the Scottish government and Vodafone as part of the Scottish government's demonstrating digital programme.

George McConnachie, development manager for Development Coll, said the community company had no feedback of any technical issues since the service went live, adding that customers should address issues to mobile operators, as Development Coll acts only as the mast owner.

A Vodafone spokesman said that in an emergency, calls automatically roam to any available network.

He added: 'The mobile communications industry is regulated by Ofcom who put measures in place to make sure operators don't interfere with each other's signal. We cannot comment on the status of the O2 signal.'

An O2 spokesman said: 'Our network team has confirmed that our site in the area is carrying traffic successfully and has not experienced any issues since March 25 when Vodafone erected its mast. Based on your feedback, we have reset the site to ensure that it is not experiencing any issues. To further improve coverage in the area, we will be carrying out upgrade and improvement works at the end of this month.'

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Purdie's the 'purrfect' cat burglar, says owner Fiona

A CAT burglar who brings home socks, gloves, tea towels and cloths has become a celebrity on social media site Facebook.

Purdie, who lives with owner Fiona Campbell-Smith in a house above Pulpit Hill, Oban, has been bringing home 'odd' items since moving in four months ago.

Named after the shop on George Street, Purdie was very ill when he was born and was said to be days from death when Fiona, a cat lover, nursed him back to health.

Fiona said she has been amazed at the lengths Purdie has gone to in bringing home his 'swag'. Fiona, a home carer, said: 'At first I thought it was a fluke and that Purdie was just bringing home random things.'

'But after a couple of tea towels and various items, he came home with a rubber sock.'

'We laughed about it and wondered what he would bring home next, but low and behold a few days later he brought home the other one.'

'The same day he then brought home a rubber glove. At that point we wondered if he might bring home something more sinister.'

'But a week later, he came home soaking wet with the other glove.'

'He had obviously struggled to get it here because the glove was heavy with water.'

'It was so funny. He must have been thinking about that second glove for days.'

'It is nice he feels the need to bring home matching pairs of things - I wish my children had been able to do the same.'

Fiona would like to reunite the gloves and socks with their owners and also to find out where her cat goes to collect them.

She has put the story on her Facebook page and plenty of people have commented or followed the antics of Purdie.



It is nice he feels the need to bring home matching pairs of things

Fiona Campbell-Smith (pictured with Purdie)

Mull's roads will be 'one long car park', as RET is set to sail

LOUISE GLEN
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

PLANS to increase the number of ferries between Oban and Mull will cause 'havoc' on the roads, a meeting of councillors heard on Monday.

Argyll and Bute council leader councillor Dick Walsh launched a scathing attack on the Scottish government over a 'lack of planning' for the extra 250,000 travellers predicted each year with the introduction of Road Equivalent Tariff (RET), which will dramatically reduce the cost of ferry fares to Mull.

However, the council roads boss Jim Smith said ferries left port only two thirds full and didn't think a £13 RET fare for a car journey would 'have a huge impact'.

An islands task force set up to 'smooth' issues over RET had yet to meet and many councillors claimed to be 'in the dark' about the introduction of the scheme.

Mull councillor Alistair MacDougall called the introduction RET 'an ongoing saga'.

He said: 'It has taken a long time to come forward with these proposals and with the only two high-sided vessels on the fleet coming onto the route, it will cause havoc.'

'This year we have had many cancellations because the high-sided vessels simply cannot get off the pier on Mull.'

'If another high-sided vessel is brought onto the route, what will happen? Both boats cannot be berthed in Oban - because no other vessel can then move in our out. This will cause chaos.'

'Are significant changes to the pier in Oban needed? None of these questions have been answered.'

'There are so many things the Scottish government has not thought about.'

'Mull and Oban's roads will be



CALL FOR TALKS: Holyrood transport minister Derek MacKay

one long car park. There is no mention of the impact of RET on Tiree and the state of the island roads. People couldn't get their own car onto the boat and they had to wait three weeks sometimes to get their car off the island.

'I understand that on some sailings they are going to stop the commercial vehicles.'

'These vehicles are the lifeblood of the island and many islanders think they should come first.'

But Jim Smith, head of roads, said he had been involved in discussions with Transport Scotland and a decision on the second boat had not yet been taken. Mr Smith said: 'They may bring an additional boat onto the fleet to meet demand.'

He continued: 'On Tiree there has not been an adverse impact on the island. There has been no detrimental effect.'

'In Oban and at Craignure, we are looking at holding vehicles at marshalling areas and we are working out the feasibility for that proposal.'

'It is widely predicted that Mull will get the bulk of the traffic in terms of RET.'

'RET should not have a huge impact because the ferries are often sailing 30 per cent below capacity.'

Councillor Dick Walsh said: 'We have concerns about the lack of planning and the vessels. I had hoped to meet Derek MacKay [Scottish government transport minister] when he was here recently but the boats were cancelled. We have argued for years for additional capacity to the islands and all these issues were discussed. There have been real problems with a lack of planning in bringing this forward.'

'We have raised them and hopefully they will be listened to. What is needed is a bit of reflection to smooth the way for the benefits that we all want to see.'

Argyll and Bute council has admitted it will be a major challenge to secure the multi-million pounds worth of investment required to accommodate two vessels at Oban and Craignure. It has petitioned the Scottish government for the additional cash.

To date, no plans or costs have been drawn up - despite the service starting in October 2015.

TIMESLINE

Crackdown targets skiving employees

WORK-SHY employees who habitually take days off sick will come under the spotlight as the council cracks down on the rising cost of absenteeism.

Argyll and Bute council's development and infrastructure boss Pippa Milne reported to councillors on Monday that absence and sick days were increasing the costs of the roads and amenities services.

A report given on behalf of Ms Milne, who was herself off sick, said: 'The costs and impact of absenteeism on services are a key challenge.'

Affordable homes for Benderloch

ARGYLL-BASED TSL Contractors Limited has just won a contract to build 12 affordable homes in Benderloch.

The contract was awarded by West Highland Housing Association (WHHA) and will be funded by the Scottish government and Argyll and Bute council.

The development is of two and three-bedroom houses and one-bedroom flats.

On completion, all 12 houses will be available to rent through WHHA and will provide a massive boost for affordable rented accommodation in the area.

The project is due for completion in early 2016.

Traffic disruption set for two weeks

A SECOND fortnight of works on the A85 at Ardveich Woods, three miles east of Lochearnhead, will be carried out by BEAR Scotland later this month.

The improvements will take place between Sunday April 19 and Friday May 1, between 7pm and 7am, starting on the Friday night and finishing on the Sunday morning.

Previous work in the area was completed at the start of April. A diversion route is available, using the A822, A823, A9, A820 and A84.

Tiree islanders find space to grieve

LAST Saturday a church on Tiree 'gave a space' for the community to mourn the loss of a young couple who died after their aircraft crashed into an Argyll hillside.

Church elders organised an 'open door' meeting at Heylipol church and invited islanders to grieve the tragic death of GP Margaret Ann Rous, 37, and her husband of less than two years, David, 28, an engineer, was originally from Gillingham

in Kent. The couple died when their Cherokee Piper aircraft crashed into Beinn nan Lus, near Loch Etive, at around 1.30pm on Saturday April 3. They were flying from their home at Newport-on-Tay, Fife, to Tiree for the Easter holiday.

Margaret Ann was the daughter of Catriona Maclean and had one sister, Johann Maclean, who both live on the island.

The church sanctuary was opened for three hours. Many

of the people who gathered signed a book of condolence. Parishioners were told no date had been set for the couple's funerals.

Johann Maclean paid tribute to her sister in a message posted on Facebook.

Referring to the song 'Meet Me Halfway', by the Black Eyed Peas, she wrote: 'Big sister, it's our song, I am going to sing this to you every day for the rest of my life. You were my absolute

rock, and I promise to meet you halfway one day.'

'Today has been the hardest day of my life, I love you Minnie.' She thanked friends and family for their messages of sympathy.

Meanwhile, accident investigators used a helicopter to remove plane wreckage from the hillside last Thursday.

The wreckage has been transferred to Aldershot for examination.

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'Kingmaker' Alex writes new chapter

FORMER first minister and potential 'kingmaker' at Westminster Alex Salmond was in Oban on Tuesday afternoon for a book signing session at the town's Waterstones store.

'I'm a firm believer that it's very important if you write a book about Scotland, you go to all of Scotland - not just a bit of it,' said Mr Salmond. 'I've got great memories of Oban. I used to come here all the time to visit and also to get the ferry to Colonsay to play golf, so I know Oban extremely well.'

His book, 'The Dream Will Never Die: 100 Days that Changed Scotland', is his inside story of the independence referendum campaign.

His next port of call was a visit to Campbeltown on Tuesday evening.

Mr Salmond is pictured with Xandra Gray, a former English teacher at Oban high school, who was 'delighted' to meet him, having also met him years earlier in Perth.



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LOOK OUT FOR THE THE BATHROOM SHOWROOM



Fort throw away two-goal lead against Rothes

'Saturday at Cove is a big game too because it's the last ever match at Allan Park'

Fort William	4
Rothes	4
Highland League	



TACKLE: Darren Quigg tackles Rothes goalkeeper Khalid an Samarraie

FORT William football club have everything to play for in their final few games as they battle to stay ahead of rival teams.

The Claggan side managed to pick up one point from their two games last week in a home game against Rothes that manager Calum MacLean described as 'unbelievable'.

Early goals from the visiting team saw the Fort go two nil down in the first half last Wednesday.

Goals from Kenny MacKenzie, Nick Stein and a double from Ryan MacLeod then pulled the home side up to four goals to two but they couldn't hold on to the lead and another two goals from Rothes saw the teams each take a share of the points.

On Saturday, Fort William were away to Fortmartine United but lost 3-1 after Darren Quigg was shown a straight red card for hand ball, something MacLean said could have cost his team a point.

He said: 'They were really good on Saturday but I think the red was really harsh. It was right at the start of the second half and

Football

Darren's hands were at his chest. If it had just been a penalty it wouldn't have been as bad but a straight red was really hard.

'It really changed the game for us because we had been playing really well until then. I think we could have won it or at the very least got a point.'

Last night (Wednesday) Fort William travelled to Lossiemouth and to face third-place Cove for the last ever game at Allan Park on Saturday.

MacLean said: 'Lossiemouth are below us in the league but they're a strong, physical side. We really need to get something from this game to catch up with Keith.'

'Lossiemouth have the potential to go ahead of us too so it's a massive game. Saturday at Cove is a big game too because it's the last ever game at Allan Park so there's going to be a gala and a big crowd. It should be a really good day. It would be great to be the last team to win there but it will be a hard game.'



SHIELD: Fort's Ryan MacLeod shields the ball from Gary Ewen of Rothes Photos Iain Ferguson

Martyn beats the league leader

Darts

MARTYN Cameron beat Darren Sutherland by three legs to one in week six of the Tradewinds darts league.

This came after Cameron won three to nil against Alex MacInnes in the semi finals and Sutherland beat Paul Shearer by three legs to one.

But Sutherland is still well ahead on the league table with 35 points, 10 more than second place John Matheson.

It was a successful night for Cameron, who also scored two 180s in Tradewinds bar on Friday night. Lewis Birrel, Paul Shearer and Alex MacInnes also scored 180s.

This Friday, the darts venue has been moved to the Railway club, Inverlochy, for the annual Neil Kerr singles, with James Whyte defending his title.

League table:

Name	Pts
1 Darren Sutherland	35
2 John Matheson	25
3 Duncan Carmichael	20
4 Paul Shearer	19
5 Martyn Cameron	17
6 Robbie McFadyen	13
7 Michael Slezas	12
8= Stevie Clydesdale	9
8= Marc MacDonald	9
10 Lewis Birrel	7
11=Davy Neil	6
11=Ross MacKenzie	6
13 Alex MacInnes	5
14 John Woods	4
15 Martin Cuthbertson	3

Final winter league event for Wheelers Cycling

THE WINNERS of this year's West Highland wheelers' winter league will be announced this weekend at the final event.

Junior and adult races will be held at Nevis Range on Sunday (April 19), followed by a prizegiving and celebratory barbecue.

Registration for the children's event is open from 9.30am for a 10am race start and the adult registration from 10.30am, for an 11am start.

Ten out of ten for striker Nick

Football

STRIKER Nick Stein has become one of the few Fort William football club players to score 10 league goals in a season.

The Inverness-based 19-year-old reached the milestone in the club's home game against Rothes last Wednesday (April 9).

Stein joined the Fort last year and is thought to be one of less than 10 players in the club's Highland league history to reach 10 goals in one season.

This was last achieved by former players Sam Urquhart and Sean Ellis in 2010 and the only other current Claggan man to match the feat is 21-year-old Iain MacLennan, whose efforts saw him reach the mark in 2009.



TOP STRIKER: Nick Stein 20_116football03

Lochaber turn on the style

Lochaber	53
Garioch	19
BT Caledonia North Division Two	

LOCHABER rugby club continued their winning ways on Saturday when they entertained Garioch.

The visitors are just above Lochaber in the league so both teams had a lot to play for. As the game started it looked like it was the home side that had just stepped off the bus as Garioch piled on the pressure, so much so that in the 14th minute, after a wave of attack Garioch, scored to take the lead 0-7.

This was the spur the Lochaber boys needed and within three minutes Lochaber were level.

With the bit between their teeth, they went on to score a further three tries before half time to give the home team a 22-7 lead.

Five tries

The second half again started with the visitors pressurising the home defence.

This time they were a match for it and with the backs and forwards working well, Lochaber ran in a further five tries to take the score to 53-7.

But the Lochaber men were tiring towards the end and this,

Rugby

combined with some refereeing decisions in favour of the visitors, let Garioch in to score two late consolation tries to finish the game with a 53-19 score line.

Lochaber scorers were man-of-the-match Finlay Ireland (3), Conor Taylor (3), Jack Baxter (2), Calum Boyd (1) and Kenny Turnbull (1).

This Saturday Lochaber will travel east to take on Aberdeen university before making a similar trip to face Aberdeen Wanderers on April 25.



SMASH AND GRAB: Lochaber's Conor Taylor smashes through the Garioch defence 20_116rugby01

New season at Skye Golf Club kicks off with charity event

THE NEW season at the Isle of Skye Golf Club in Sconser began with a mixed ladies and gents event in aid of the Lucky2BHere charity. Winners were 1 Shaun Escott 37 pts (bih); June Sanderson 37 pts; 3 Willie Cowie 36 pts.

With the money raised from the competition plus donations, the club hopes to install a defibrillator in the clubhouse and will also be providing emergency life support training for members and interested local residents of Sconser township.

The new committee has been working hard in the closed season to provide enhanced facilities for both competitive and social golf at the club.

The men's section remains solid, competitive and well established so attention recently has concentrated on enhancing, refining and developing other

aspects of the club's structure. More and more ladies are joining the club and some are actively pursuing the acquisition of a handicap to allow them to play in ladies competitions.

Additionally some adult beginners, both women and men, are already to be seen on the course with their tutors as part of the Scottish Golf Union 'Get into Golf' initiative where, for a much reduced initial membership fee the players are given instruction on and around the course.

The aim is to introduce those who have expressed an interest in the game to what golf is all about, whether for social or competitive purposes.

It's also a great way to relax and enjoy some free time whilst taking in the fresh air and enjoying the views from the course.

The junior section too has

Golf

been further developed with three qualified coaches from within the club's membership now able to offer instruction and guidance to both boys and girls as part of the Scottish National Golf Strategy through the Club-Golf initiative.

Regular coaching and competition activities are already well structured and in place ready to roll.

Potential members of the club or anyone interested in the game of golf are encouraged to consult the club's website or preferably call into the newly refurbished clubhouse which is now fully open for business and have a chat with the two very helpful, knowledgeable and experienced club stewards.

Shinty festival at Kinlochleven

BUDDING shinty players from south Lochaber will come together for a tournament in Kinlochleven next week.

Almost 100 children are to take part in the festival, following six weeks of training at school from camanachd association coach David Campbell.

Next Friday (April 24) the primary four to seven pupils will put their new skills to the test against other schools in the area at Kinlochleven astro-turf pitch.

It is also hoped this will spark

an early interest in the sport and could see the debut of future Ballachulish shinty club players.

Mr Campbell said: 'I have been in the local primary schools for the last six weeks through the hygiene, healthy eating and activity in primary schools (HHEAPS) initiative.'

'It combines one hour in the classroom learning about how to live a healthy life style with an hour of first shinty for primary four to seven children.'

'It has been a fun six weeks and

School shinty

the kids have been so responsive. 'As this was the first time some of the pupils had come into contact with shinty, we started with the basics, and managed to build their skills and confidence up every week.'

For more information about the tournament contact active schools coordinators Tracey Jeffrey (07717 348510) or Jane Bruce (07766720084).

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WEATHER

Thursday Sunny intervals
Winds light south westerly
Temperatures 4°C to 10°C.

Friday Sunny
Winds light south south easterly
Temperatures 6°C to 13°C.

Weekend Outlook Cloudy on Saturday
Sunny intervals on Sunday
Winds light north easterly
Temperatures 6°C to 12°C.

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, April 16, 2015** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am				pm			
Thur	03.50	3.7	10.00	0.8	16.12	3.6	22.19	4.0
Fri	04.33	4.0	10.48	0.6	16.49	3.8	23.07	0.4
Sat	05.14	4.2	11.31	0.4	17.27	4.0	23.53	0.3
Sun	05.54	4.2	12.12	0.3	18.05	4.0	***	**
Mon	00.37	0.2	06.33	4.2	12.53	0.3	18.42	4.0
Tues	01.21	0.4	07.11	4.0	13.33	0.5	19.20	3.9
Wed	02.04	0.6	07.49	3.7	14.14	0.7	19.58	3.7

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